

## **Mafia God 442**

### Chapter 442: He Didn't Leave You

Yesterday, this house had been loud. Today, it was quiet. Val was already waiting. She sat on the sofa, still in a soft robe, one hand resting over her stomach.

They all knew. Val was going to need all the support she could get. Vee walked forward slowly.

"Hey, sis..."

"It's Ricardo, isn't it?"

Vee raised a brow, her throat tightening. "How did..."

"It doesn't take a genius to put it all together."

No one said anything. Val stared down at her stomach, her fingers moving slowly over the curve.

"He's been dead all these while?" she asked.

Vee swallowed.

Val looked up at her, eyes shining but not yet spilling. "He didn't leave me?"

For months, Ricardo's absence had been explained away as cowardice. Cold feet. Shame. Fear. A selfishness everyone had been angry enough to accept.

"No," Vee said softly. "He didn't leave you."

Val breathed in slowly. "Why?"

"We don't know."

Val nodded once. Then she turned to look at Marco. He had been standing near the armchair, his hands hanging uselessly at his sides. He was unsure where to place himself.

He decided maybe now was the time to give her space to process it. Maybe she wouldn't need him.

Maybe she wouldn't even want to see him in that moment but Val reached out her hand to him.

Her fingers searched the air, and Marco crossed the room immediately as he took her hand. She tangled their fingers together and held on.

Luca stood beside Vee. His face had gone carefully blank, though his eyes kept moving over Val, measuring every breath, every tremble, every crack she was trying to hide. "You okay?" Luca asked.

Val looked up at him. For one brief moment, Luca saw accusation in her eyes. It was there and gone quickly, but he saw it.

Maybe because every road somehow led back to him.

"I'll be fine," Val said.

Her voice was steady enough to hurt. Marco's thumb moved over her knuckles.

Val looked between them, then back at Vee. "Tony said there were bodies? More than one?"

"Yes," Vee said carefully. "Cassidy was with him."

Val's brow rose, confused, as if her mind had accepted one impossible thing and refused to make room for another.

"Cassidy?" she repeated. "What... Cassidy is dead too?"

Vee nodded. "Yes."

Val's eyes moved to some empty point on the wall. Ricardo dead. Cassidy dead.

Vee swallowed and forced herself to keep going. "Detective Voss might invite you in to ask questions. Do not speak with him unless your lawyer is present."

Val turned slowly toward her. "My lawyer?"

"We are both his prime suspects." Vee's voice tightened despite her effort to keep it gentle. "Whatever we say may be used against us."

Val pulled her hand slightly away from Marco, staring at her sister like she was seeing a different person entirely. "Ricardo is the father of my child," she said quietly. "And you just dismiss his death and jump into legal jargon?"

"I didn't dismiss—"

"I thought he got scared and left me with this baby."

Vee's eyes burned.

"And now you're telling me he was dead?" Val continued. "That he never left? That all this time..." She pressed a hand over her mouth, a sob catching in her throat. "All this time, he was buried behind our shop?"

"I'm sorry," Vee said quickly, moving closer. "I didn't mean to be insensitive."

Val's eyes were wet, wounded.

"It was bad timing," Vee said, voice trembling now. "I'm sorry. I'm just on edge."

"Why?" Val asked. Then she turned to Luca. Her eyes were wet, but there was fire behind the tears now. Hurt searching for a place to land. Grief looking for someone to punish. "Did you kill him?" she asked.

Marco stiffened beside her.

Vee's face drained. "Val..."

"Did you kill him because he gave your ex-wife information? Because he betrayed you?"

Luca held her gaze. He did not get offended. He understood her anger. He could see why it made sense. In her place, he would suspect him too. He had killed people for far less.

"Cassidy? He wouldn't leave Vee alone, would he? So what happened? Did you decide to clear the road for everyone?"

"Valentina," Marco said, low and pained.

Luca lifted one hand slightly, stopping him. "No, I didn't kill Ricardo, I didn't kill Cassidy either."

Vee moved closer, desperate now. "Val..." She reached for her sister, but Val curled further into Marco.

The gesture broke Vee wide open. She stopped like she had been burned, her hand suspended uselessly in the air for one awful second before she pulled it back. Her chest tightened so sharply she almost couldn't breathe.

Val had always reached for her. Always. When they were children. When their father drank too much. When bills piled up. When pregnancy scared her. When life became too heavy. Val reached for Vee.

And now she had turned away. Whatever Vee wanted to say died in her throat. She swallowed it.

All of it. The explanation. The apology. The plea. The reminder that she was only trying to protect her.

None of it mattered right then.

So she only said, "I'm sorry."

Val's tears slipped quietly down her face. She drew back from Marco to look at him. "I'm gonna go lie down," she said. "Still a bit tired. You guys finish whatever this is."

Then she walked away. The room stayed silent until her footsteps disappeared upstairs. Vee watched her sister go, the joy, the excitement, the life Val was known for completely drained out of her.

Vee's eyes filled. She looked up at Luca with glassy eyes. "She hates me."

Luca pulled her into his chest before the thought could swallow her whole. "No, she doesn't," he whispered, one hand moving up the back of her head. "She doesn't hate you."

Vee stood stiffly at first, then slowly folded into him. Her face pressed against his shirt. Luca knew exactly who Val was blaming.

And it wasn't Vee. It was him.