

BETROTHED TO THE MAFIA LORD

Chapter 12

Luca's POV

“No! The guards stay. You can bring in your own guards if it would make you feel safer.” James answered in a smooth voice before I could begin to answer to him and I watched as the man's eyes narrowed at me for a fleeting moment before breaking the contact and focusing his eyes on James instead.

“You thought you ate that, didn't you?” The man asked James in a flat voice with a raised eyebrow and James only snorted not so quietly, which made the man's face morph into a slight scowl which only lasted for a few seconds before disappearing, leaving behind his previous relaxed expression.

He turned back to me and raised his drink in the direction of the guards standing a few feet behind

James and I, “The guards need to leave.”

I didn't take my eyes away from his face as I spoke audibly to my guards, “Leave us.”

I didn't need to glance over my shoulder to know that they'd immediately bowed their heads a little in respect before leaving quietly as instructed.

The guards left and the sound of the elevator going back down faintly drifted into the office. The man then got to his feet and walked towards us only to stop a few feet away, he was almost as tall as James and I, his head was hairless, while the broadness of his shoulders and chest was really impressive compared to James and I who were leaning more on the lean muscles side, I wasn't fazed one bit by all the authoritative vibe he was trying really hard to give off.

He was buff, yes. But I had no doubts about the fact

that I could easily take him out in a moment. I might not be as broad as he was, but I was as fast as a hare and my reflexes were a direct gift from God with how smooth they were.

Why was I even thinking about taking him out in a fight when I was here to create peace in the first place?

“Welcome to the Manzo mafia. I am Morris.” He said and picked up the conversation from there. “I am Luca, and this is my right hand man, James.”

None of us offered our hands out for an invitation of handshakes and I watched as he stared at us quietly before pointing to the couch a few feet away from the chair he was sitting in before, “Have a seat, please.”

“Thank you.” I answered smoothly as James and I proceeded to slowly perch on the tip of the couch, our

elbows placed on our knees as our eyes trailed over the whole office. From what I could see from my position here on the couch through the transparent glass walls, everything was extremely tiny on the ground and it looked like we were almost in the sky.

My eyes drifted away from the window to once again take notice of the tiny cameras on different sides of the roof, a bunch of devices which I had noticed the moment I stepped foot in here, but acted like I hadn't. I ended up my survey with my eyes fixed on the man still backing the office, he was in a white suit and had a white hat on his head. His drink was still filled up in his left hand and I had no doubt that he was indeed the man I had come to see, and not the one we've been exchanging words with.

"When's the leader himself finally gonna come speak to me himself?" I asked Morris, my gaze burning into his. Morris's mouth opened and closed with nothing

but air slipping out and James quietly snorted beside me.

The man in white finally turned around and slowly made his way forward, his forehead was shielded by his hat which casted a shadow over his face.

“Hello, Mr Ricci, it’s an honor to have you here.” The man said once he got to the middle of the office, a few feet away from Morris’s seat. I stood to my feet instantly, along with James.

“Thank you for agreeing to have us, Mr Manzo.” I answered, my hands clasped behind my back. There was a good amount of feet between the couch James and I were standing in front of, and the couch Morris was sitting in, which made a reasonable excuse for none of us to exchange handshakes.

I’d never offer a handshake to an enemy first, and

would almost never accept one until we've settled our ongoing feud, so it was pretty sensible that he wasn't offering me a handshake.

"It's about time, I guess?" Was his reply as he finally lifted his head high to stare me in the eyes, my eyes twitched a little as I took a quick look at his face, there was a thin lined scar running from the top of his cheek, down to the edge of his jaw. He was just as buff as Morris, or perhaps a tad buffer.

"This is my immediate younger brother, Morris." He pointed at Morris who was back to leaning on the back of the couch with his drink in his hand once again.

"Let's all sit?" He asked and we all took our seats, James and I still perched on the edge of the couch once again.

“It’s been a really long time since both mafias have been in a feud, for reasons we the leaders now, had no hand in it.” I started to say and Morris immediately sat up straight, his facial expression morphing into that of a serious one, a sharp contrast to the relaxed one he had been wearing moments ago.

“My father only wanted a friend...” Mr Manzo started to say in a gravelly voice and I tightened my grip on my hands, my heart constricting in guilt on behalf of my father.

My father had been a really selfish and emotionless man, he along with his father, my grandfather- were the sole reasons the mafia had so much enemies in every nook and cranny of Italy.

“All he did was to mistakenly trust your father, a mistake which he and his innocent family paid gravely for... all because he placed his complete trust in your

father.” Mr Manzo continued and I pulled in slow breaths from my nose while letting it out slowly in order to remain seated as still as I’ve remained for the past minutes.

“Like I said, it wasn’t any of our faults concerning what happened between our fathers. I know, my father should never have done that, and me apologizing on his behalf wouldn’t mean shit because the deed has been done a long time ago—” I began to say before Morris rudely cut into what I was saying.

“Damn right, apologizing wouldn’t do shit.”

I stared at Morris quietly for a few seconds until he finally swallowed emptily and looked away, down at his clasped fingers. I fixed my gaze back on Manzo before continuing, “I want to try fixing what my father has ruined years ago, I believe it is fixable seeing as none of what happened directly involved us, except to

lead us into carrying on the feud.”

“Your father was such a greedy bastard.” Manzo stated quietly, his lips pulled into a thin line, the white of his suit perfectly catching the sun from where he was seated.

“Your father wasn’t any better, he was a greedy bastard as well.” I answered immediately with the edge of my lips twitching, my voice still standing on the same octavo it has been on before.

“At least he wasn’t greedy when it comes to his friends, unlike your father. He completely trusted your father, but what did he get back in return? A fucking bullet in his brains.” Manzo's voice went higher a few pitches at the end of his sentence and I watched as he instantly got to his feet, once he was done and turned towards the nearest window, showing his back to us once again.

“I agree that my father was a greedy bastard, only that your father wasn’t any better. They had after all planned to raid a huge warehouse which wasn’t theirs in the first place, and to kill the owners, together. Stop trying to make it sound like your father was completely innocent, because he wasn’t.” I paused and exchanged a look with James who had a wary expression on, before continuing, “My father was the bad guy, agreed. But your father was definitely not the good guy in the story. There was no good guy in it, everyone in it was bad.”

“I wished I had a chance to kill your father myself.” Manzo said without turning around from the window and James immediately got to his feet daringly, Morris stood up instantly on seeing James on his feet, both men giving each other death stares.

“He got killed by someone else who got the chance

earlier, I am sorry.” I supplied an answer immediately, totally unfazed by his said wish. I’ve had a lot of enemies which started in my father’s time, say that statement to me a lot, so it didn’t do anything to me at this point.

“You sound way nicer than the amount of things I’ve heard about you.” Manzo continued, his back still facing us, but I noticed the way his once tense shoulders relaxed visibly.

I let out a quiet chuckle, my eyes completely humorless, “Believe me, I’m not. I might sound nice right now, but I really am not.”

“I never expected you to ever want to end the feud yourself, to think I’ve been planning a revenge for a while now, I guess I’ll have to cancel all my plans now.”

James exchanged a fast glance with me and I got to my feet and shoved my hands into my pants pockets before saying, "I'd have been prepared nevertheless, assuming you had decided to come attack us way earlier before I came to make peace today." I replied, still not fazed by what he had just revealed.

This was one of the thousand reasons why the whole security surrounding me on a normal day was more than a couple of body guards. Dangers was literally lying in every corners and parts, waiting for me in the whole of Italy, thanks to my over ambitious father.

"I've heard you've never been caught unfresh, I never doubted that for a second." He mused as he turned back around and faced us once again and I stared into his eyes which looked so similar to his brother's, without saying a thing.

"So, peace?" I finally inquired with a small lift of my

shoulders and I watched as Manzo and Morris glanced at each other at the same time, their eyes remaining locked for long seconds before Manzo finally broke the contact and focused his gaze on me once again. He took a couple of steps and stopped in the middle of the office before holding his hand out, I closed the distance with only a few inches separating us before taking his offered hand in mine and shaking it firmly.

“Peace.” I said, and he echoed after me. “Peace.”

We pulled away and I returned back to my spot beside James who still looked like he wanted to smack Morris over the face because Morris was still didn’t look happy about his brother’s decision to make peace between the two mafias.

“Would you like a drink?” Manzo asked and I shook my head immediately, my hands once again back to

being buried in my pockets.

“No, thank you. We'll be on our way in a few minutes now.” I replied, declining his offer smoothly. There was no way I'd actually accept a drink from someone who had admitted to planning my death, some minutes ago.

At least not yet.

“Very well then. It was an honor once again, Mr Ricci.”

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