

Exposed to the CEO Behind the Mafia Mask

Chapter 13: Chapter 13 Dangerous Dinner Plans and Deadly Re

velations

Ivy's POV

When my boss finished briefing us about his upcoming territory visit, Heidi and I headed back to our shared workspace to tackle the remaining classified documents. The afternoon flew by in a blur of encrypted files and coded communications. As we gathered our belongings to leave, Caleb's office door swung open just as Xavier materialized in our doorway like a predator scenting prey.

"Quitting time for my favorite deadly beauties!" Xavier announced, flashing that trademark grin that could charm secrets from a saint. "Caleb and I have reservations at Giorgio's tonight, and I absolutely refuse to dine without the two most dangerous women in this entire operation."

My pulse quickened at the mention of Giorgio's. The exclusive Italian establishment was rumored to be a front for high-level mob meetings, where handmade pasta was served alongside discussions of territories and eliminations. Zoe had been insisting I familiarize myself with these elite venues, knowing they'd become routine once I started attending family business events.

"Such a generous offer, Xavier, but we've already committed to other arrangements tonight. Perhaps we could schedule something for later this week?" Heidi smoothly deflected, reminding me we'd planned dinner at my apartment.

I offered my thanks with a polite smile, but something in Caleb's demeanor shifted dramatically. His jaw tightened with lethal precision, and storm clouds seemed to gather behind those ice-blue eyes. When he spoke, his voice carried the edge of barely controlled violence.

"Surely you could rearrange your evening plans to accommodate your Don? I find it rather disrespectful to dismiss such an invitation so casually."

"Caleb, stop being such a territorial beast. The real discourtesy would be expecting us to abandon our commitments with zero notice. Tomorrow works perfectly well, doesn't it, Ivy?" Heidi's tone held the patient firmness of someone addressing a dangerous predator having a tantrum.

"Absolutely, Heidi. We'd be honored to join you tomorrow evening. Though if this is truly urgent business, I'm certain our friends would understand the professional obligation," I

replied, immediately wishing I could retract my words when Caleb's expression turned murderous.

"Forget it. I wouldn't dream of inconveniencing your precious companions. Enjoy your evening, just ensure you're punctual tomorrow morning, Miss Brooks."

He stormed past us with thunderous footsteps that spoke of barely leashed violence, jabbing the elevator button with enough force to crack concrete before barking "We're leaving!" at Xavier, who simply shrugged and trailed after his volatile boss. I stood there bewildered by the sudden explosion of rage, while Heidi seemed to find the entire scene darkly amusing.

We departed shortly after the dramatic exit and made our way to my apartment. Zoe welcomed us with her characteristic warmth and the aromatic promise of homemade Italian cuisine that rivaled any restaurant—legitimate or otherwise. Max was sprawled on the living room floor with his building blocks but scrambled to his feet the moment he spotted me, launching himself into my arms with enthusiastic giggles.

"Max, I want you to meet my friend Heidi from work," I said, hoisting him higher on my hip. Heidi's expression shifted the moment she got a clear view of his face, her eyes widening with unmistakable shock and what looked like dangerous recognition.

"Jesus Christ, Ivy, your little boy is absolutely gorgeous! You weren't exaggerating about those eyes—they're identical to Caleb's shade," she murmured, though I sensed much deeper thoughts churning beneath her casual observation. Something that looked like pieces of a deadly puzzle clicking into place.

The evening unfolded with surprising ease despite the undercurrent of tension. Heidi and Zoe connected instantly, their conversation flowing as if they'd been allies for years rather than minutes. Max was completely smitten with his new "auntie," dragging her around the apartment to showcase his entire toy collection and insisting she help construct an elaborate fortress with his blocks.

After settling Max in his bedroom with his favorite stuffed dinosaur, we reconvened in the living room where Zoe uncorked another bottle of wine. The conversation meandered through work stories and future plans, with Zoe gushing about her new position and Heidi expressing excitement about potentially collaborating with various "business associates," whom she described as refreshingly straightforward in their dangerous industry.

Then Heidi's tone shifted, becoming laser-focused as she studied my face with predatory intensity. "Ivy, I have to ask—what's Max's father's name?"

Heat crept up my neck as I realized I'd never explained the unusual circumstances surrounding Max's conception. The truth seemed almost too dangerous to voice aloud.

"Oh God, Heidi, it's incredibly complicated. The honest answer is that I have absolutely no idea what his name is." I watched her eyebrows climb toward her hairline as she waited for elaboration. "I know how that sounds, but hear me out. I'd been drinking that night—which isn't an excuse, just context—and when he asked me to dance, we got so caught up in the moment that we never bothered with proper introductions. Since it was an underground masquerade auction, I never actually saw his face clearly, just those incredible ice-blue eyes, that distinctive scar through his eyebrow, and that dangerous smile that completely scrambled my brain."

"You're fucking kidding me! Please tell me you have more details than that. This is like something straight out of a crime thriller—a mysterious encounter with a masked stranger at an underground auction." Her eyes sparkled with what looked like deadly fascination as she leaned forward eagerly, clearly hungry for every detail of what was starting to sound like the most dangerous coincidence in history.

Zoe nearly choked on her wine. "Wait, you told Heidi about the auction? And the scar?"

I nodded, suddenly feeling like I was walking into a trap I couldn't see. "Why? Is that significant?"

Heidi and Zoe exchanged a look that made my blood run cold. There was something they both knew that I didn't, something that connected all these impossible dots in a way that would probably destroy my life.

"Ivy," Heidi said slowly, her voice carefully controlled. "What exactly do you remember about that night?"

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