## Mafia Mask 55

Chapter 55 Shopping for Seduction

Ivy's POV

"Good morning, my gorgeous queen!" Zoe swept into the kitchen of our safehouse apartment, her silk robe flowing dramatically behind her as she practically radiated anticipation. "And hello to the most precious little prince in our syndicate!" She leaned down to plant a gentle kiss on Max's forehead, her voice dropping to that tender tone she reserved only for him.

Max beamed up at his honorary aunt with that boundless energy only children possessed. "I woke up really early today, Aunt Zoe!"

"Good morning, Zo. All this electric excitement is because Finn returns from the Montreal operation today, isn't it?" I teased, watching my best friend practically float around the marble kitchen island of our heavily secured penthouse.

"Oh Ivy, darling, my man comes home today and I'm absolutely desperate to get my hands on him!" She clutched her silk robe dramatically while batting her eyelashes in theatrical swooning. "Do you know how long it's been since I've had proper alone time with one of Caleb's top lieutenants?"

"Well then, let's fuel ourselves with breakfast, get properly prepared, and transform his apartment into the perfect homecoming surprise," I declared, genuinely thrilled to help orchestrate my friend's reunion with her dangerous lover.

After we finished our meal, we made our way to the luxury apartment Finn had secured just three blocks from our fortified building. Zoe had coordinated furniture and appliance deliveries throughout the week while he handled Thorne Syndicate business in Canada, and today was designated for final arrangements and thorough preparation.

Carmen, one of our trusted household security staff, volunteered to remain with Max at our place. I refused to expose him to cleaning chemicals and potential surveillance risks so soon after his recent illness, plus this arrangement allowed Zoe and me to focus entirely on creating the perfect seduction scene.

"Ivy, I've been fantasizing about surprising Finn with the most incredibly romantic evening. Well, everything except dinner since we're all supposed to meet at the family compound tonight for Caleb's briefing..."

"Absolutely not, Zoe! You're going to create a romantic evening exclusively for you two, and that definitely includes dinner. We can all gather for the family meeting tomorrow instead," I interrupted firmly, insisting their reunion should remain intimate and private.

"But Ivy, you know Finn adores you and Max, and he's been dying to see his little godson after being away on syndicate business," Zoe whined with exaggerated disappointment.

"He can reunite with us tomorrow at the compound. Let's complete this setup first, then I'll help you orchestrate this seduction properly. Picture this scenario: you're waiting here when he walks through that reinforced door, wearing absolutely stunning lingerie, with expensive wine chilling, and gourmet dinner prepared..." I painted the tantalizing scene for her.

"I'm obsessed with this plan! Since he's stopping here first to secure his weapons and change out of his tactical gear, I can absolutely ambush him immediately," she replied with a wicked sparkle dancing in her green eyes, making me burst into laughter at her shameless expression.

"Then let's finish everything quickly because we need to visit the exclusive boutiques for your seduction arsenal," I announced, feeling genuinely excited about orchestrating my friend's romantic surprise.

Immersing myself in organizing Finn's apartment provided the perfect mental distraction from my complicated situation with Caleb. It represented the absolute minimum I could contribute for my devoted friends who risked everything to protect Max and me. Once everything looked flawless, Zoe and I ventured to the upscale shopping district that catered to the syndicate families.

The moment we entered the luxury shopping center with its discreet security measures and high-end clientele, we made a direct path toward an absolutely exquisite lingerie boutique known for serving the wives and mistresses of powerful men. Zoe selected a breathtaking crimson corset ensemble that would drive any man wild, purchased a matching negligee in identical scarlet silk, and I decided to indulge myself with a pristine white corset set featuring delicate powder blue ribbon accents and absolutely stunning French lace details. I maintained a serious weakness for beautiful lingerie, especially pieces that made me feel powerful in this dangerous world.

While approaching the discreet checkout counter, I addressed my friend decisively:

"Zo, you mean absolutely everything to me, so don't even consider arguing about this. This entire lingerie collection is going to be my special gift for you and Finn's reunion."

"You've completely lost your mind, Ivy, absolutely not! This is incredibly expensive, and I know you're still being careful with money despite Caleb's... generosity," Zoe protested vigorously.

"You can and you absolutely will accept it. Unless you're planning to deliberately insult me?" I challenged her, eliminating any possible escape route. I genuinely wanted to present my friend with something special to express my gratitude for her unwavering loyalty in this treacherous world we now inhabited.

"Oh bestie, fine then. Thank you so much! I'm going to look absolutely scorching in this lingerie, don't you think?" Zoe gushed with pure excitement.

"You look scorching in absolutely anything, girl. Finn won't know what hit him," I assured her, placing my hand supportively on her shoulder.

We departed the lingerie boutique and continued shopping for Zoe's remaining romantic necessities. We wandered throughout the upscale mall, purchased everything on our carefully planned list, including adorable surprises for Max, and were approaching the main exit when a distinctly familiar voice called out behind us.

I turned around and immediately recognized the enthusiastic saleswoman from the elegant dress boutique we had visited previously during one of my rare shopping excursions outside syndicate territory.