Mafia Mask 89

Chapter 89 Territorial Claims Made

Ivy's POV

The first round of blackjack began in Xavier's private penthouse, cards sliding across the mahogany table that had witnessed countless mafia negotiations. Finn went bust early, his face contorting with the same frustration I'd seen when deals went south on the streets. Parker followed suit, pushing past twenty-one, which brought a predatory smirk to Caleb's lips. When the smoke cleared, Brenda emerged victorious with a solid twenty, leaving Finn shifting in his leather chair like a soldier awaiting execution orders.

"Apologies Finn, but in this family we never waste leverage," Brenda announced, his voice carrying the calculated anticipation of a made man closing a profitable deal. He turned toward Zoe with eyes that gleamed like polished steel. Her smile was pure temptation wrapped in danger. "Someone keep time."

Brenda's fingers traced the delicate curve of Zoe's cheek before sliding to the nape of her neck with practiced precision. He pulled her close, claiming her lips in a kiss that carried all the intensity of a territorial claim. The room fell silent except for the sound of their breathing and the distant hum of the city's underworld below.

"Time. Just long enough," Xavier called out, though his voice carried the strain of a consigliere managing volatile emotions.

Brenda pulled back slowly, wearing a smile that could charm information from enemy informants, while Zoe looked completely dazed, her lips slightly parted. Finn's discomfort had transformed into something darker, more possessive, the kind of jealousy that started turf wars. Zoe caught her breath and turned to her boyfriend with a playful expression that masked years of navigating dangerous waters.

"See, darling? No casualties," she said with a wink that only seemed to make Finn's jaw clench tighter, his hands forming fists like he was ready to draw iron.

Laughter rippled through our crew, but Caleb's voice was a low growl in my ear, carrying the menace of a don protecting his territory.

"No other man touches what belongs to the Thorne family."

The heat in his words sent shivers down my spine, reminding me of the blood oath that bound us together.

The next round proved devastating for Jude as Silas claimed victory with twenty-one points. Silas's face lit up like he'd just secured a major arms deal as he stood and extended his hand to Nora with the confidence of a capo who always got what he wanted.

"Perfect score means no restrictions," he announced with barely contained excitement, his voice carrying undertones of controlled violence.

Silas's hands found Nora's waist, pulling her against him as his mouth crashed down on hers with the hunger of a man claiming spoils of war. This wasn't the diplomatic kiss we'd witnessed before. This was raw possession, their bodies molding together as if they were alone in a safe house. Nora's arms wound around his neck, her fingers tangling in his hair as she deepened the kiss with the passion of a woman who understood the stakes. Their bodies pressed together with an intimacy that made the air thick with tension and unspoken promises. I glanced at Jude, expecting the fury of a betrayed soldier, but found something entirely different. His eyes burned with an excitement that was almost predatory, like a don watching his strategy unfold perfectly. He was enjoying watching his wife in another man's arms.

When Silas and Nora finally broke apart, both were breathless, their lips swollen and red like they'd been marked by violence.

"Even better than I calculated," Silas murmured, his thumb brushing across Nora's lower lip with the gentleness reserved for precious contraband before helping her back to her seat.

"Now we're getting somewhere," Hunter said, rubbing his hands together with the eagerness of a street soldier anticipating action. "Deal the next round."

Tension crackled through the room like electricity before a hit as cards were distributed. I noticed Jude whispering something in Nora's ear that made her nod and smile while looking directly at Silas with the calculated sweetness of a mob wife who knew how to play the game. Ruby emerged victorious this round with twenty-one points, and without hesitation, she stood and straddled Xavier's lap with the

confidence of a woman who'd survived the streets. Her kiss was commanding, passionate, carrying the intensity of someone who'd learned that power was everything, and left Xavier looking stunned when she finally released him. As she returned to her seat, she leaned toward Beckett with a predatory smile that would make enemy informants confess.

"You're next on my list," she purred with the promise of a skilled interrogator.

"Ruby!" Parker's sharp voice cut through the room like a blade.

"What? It's just strategy," she replied innocently, though her eyes sparkled with the mischief of someone who'd learned to navigate dangerous games.

"That's never happening," Xavier said firmly, though his voice carried less conviction than his position as consigliere demanded.

"We'll see about that," Beckett challenged, his competitive nature flaring like a soldier accepting a duel.

Dominic dominated the following round with twenty-one points, immediately pulling Gemma into a kiss that made her knees buckle with the force of a man claiming his prize. The intensity between them was magnetic, drawing everyone's attention as they lost themselves in each other like lovers who'd survived countless raids together.

Finn finally claimed victory in the next round with nineteen points, taking his allotted time to kiss Zoe with a possessiveness that carried the weight of a man marking his territory in disputed ground.

But it was Nora's win that truly set the room on fire like a successful heist. With twenty-one points in hand, she pulled both Jude and Silas toward her, creating a triangle of desire that left everyone speechless like witnesses to a perfectly executed plan. Jude positioned himself behind her while Silas faced her front, creating a formation that spoke of tactical precision. As Jude's lips found her neck and shoulder, Silas claimed her mouth with the hunger of a man taking what he'd earned. They pressed her between them, creating an erotic display that raised the temperature in the room by several degrees, like the heat of a gun barrel after rapid fire. When Nora turned to kiss her husband while Silas trailed kisses down her throat, the air became almost too thick to breathe.

"Getting warm in here," Xavier announced, his voice slightly hoarse as he moved to adjust the air conditioning like a host managing volatile situations.

Several rounds passed before Parker finally claimed victory with seventeen points, celebrating as if he'd just secured a major territory expansion. He turned toward me with deliberate slowness, his hands cupping my face and angling it slightly toward Caleb before pressing his lips to my neck. The kisses were wet, sensual, designed to provoke like psychological warfare. Caleb's pulse throbbed visibly at his throat, his entire body radiating the dangerous energy of a don whose patience was being tested.

Parker continued his calculated assault on my senses, his mouth finding that sensitive spot behind my ear before trailing down to my nape where he delivered a gentle bite followed by the sweep of his tongue like he was marking territory. He traced a path to where my neck met my shoulder, then reversed course, his nose barely grazing my skin as if memorizing intelligence. A final kiss just below my ear completed his strategic masterpiece.

"Ivy, you're absolutely intoxicating," Parker whispered against my skin, his voice loaded with suggestion before giving me a conspiratorial wink that acknowledged the dangerous game we were playing.

The next round found Caleb consumed with his cards, his silence cutting through the laughter and teasing around the table like a blade through silk. When he won with twenty-one points, his eyes found Parker with triumphant intensity that spoke of territorial victory. He pulled me into his arms with possessive force, his lips claiming mine in a kiss that branded me as his with the finality of a blood oath. His tongue invaded my mouth, carrying the taste of expensive whiskey and pure masculine dominance that reminded me why he ruled the underworld. We pressed together so tightly that boundaries dissolved, becoming one entity of desire and lethal commitment.

When Caleb finally broke the kiss, he pressed his forehead against mine, his voice carrying clearly across the suddenly silent room with the authority of a don making a declaration.

"My woman and I are finished here."

He took my hand with commanding authority, leading me away from Xavier's penthouse toward his fortress. The drive passed in loaded silence, Caleb's focus so intense it seemed to vibrate through the armored vehicle. The atmosphere was charged with unspoken promises and barely contained violence that reminded me of the dangerous world we inhabited. I didn't dare speak, sensing that something fundamental had shifted between us in this deadly game of power and possession.

When we arrived, Caleb opened my door with swift efficiency, taking my hand and striding toward the private elevator with purpose that made my heart race in anticipation of what awaited in the sanctuary of our criminal empire.