

Undressed By The Mafia God #Chapter 182: You Called Me Saying 911 - Read Undressed By The Mafia God Chapter 182: You Called Me Saying 911

Chapter 182: You Called Me Saying 911

Nonnina sat in the living room, her hands folded tightly in her lap, her gaze fixed on nothing in particular. The clock ticked loudly on the wall, each second stretching longer than the last, her thoughts circling endlessly.

She didn't like this feeling.

The front door burst open with a sharp echo, breaking the silence.

"Nonni!" Luca's voice rang through the house, urgent, already edged with tension. "Nonni?" He stepped inside. His eyes scanned the room.

Nonnina rose slowly, meeting him halfway.

"I'm here," she said.

Luca reached her in seconds, his gaze sharp as it moved over her, checking for injuries, for signs of distress, for anything out of place. "What's going on?" he demanded.

"Be calm." Nonnina said it the way she always did—softly, firmly. She reached for Luca's jacket.

"Nonni? You called me saying 911. That's not exactly be calm energy."

His eyes were already scanning the room again, instincts firing on all cylinders. Windows. Doors. Shadows. Angles. Exit points. Threats.

Nonnina turned to face him slowly. "I have worked for your family for over thirty years now, Luciano," she began, folding his jacket neatly over her arm. "One of the perks of working for the mafia..." She paused, her lips curving faintly. "Is knowing when something is wrong. It sharpens your instincts."

"Okay..." he said slowly, narrowing his eyes slightly. "Are you quitting?"

That earned him a soft chuckle.

Nonnina shook her head, stepping closer, reaching up to adjust his collar. "I better die in your arms, Diavolino," she said, "or I swear, I will haunt you for the rest of your life."

"So what is this?" he asked.

"I am being watched."

The restless edge disappeared.

A certain stillness took over him. This was where he functioned best. Where everything slowed down just enough for him to think clearly... and act decisively.

"When did you first notice?" he asked.

"A few days ago," Nonnina replied. "At the market. At the store. Small places. Ordinary places." She clasped her hands together lightly. "It's subtle. But you notice when someone looks at you too long. When they linger just a second more than they should."

Luca nodded once, processing. "Same person?" he asked.

"I believe so," she said. "Or at least... the same kind of presence."

Luca stepped forward and pulled her into his arms, holding her tightly—more tightly than usual.

"I'll take care of it," he murmured against her hair.

Nonnina smiled softly, her eyes closing for just a second as she leaned into him. "I know you will," she said.

She pulled back slightly, cupping his face in her hands. "Now you can go back to Vee," she added.

"I think I'll stay with you tonight instead," Luca said, loosening his cuffs as he moved further into the house. "I need to look into this anyway... and Veronica is very distracting."

"Be gentle with her," Nonnina said after a moment. "She isn't totally healed yet."

Luca huffed under his breath as he walked toward the bar, pouring himself a drink. "Yeah, I try," he muttered, lifting the glass slightly before taking a slow sip. "But she is relentless."

"Luciano..."

He paused, glass halfway to his lips. "Yeah?"

"Will she...?" she started, then stopped herself, shaking her head. "Never mind."

Luca turned fully this time, leaning back against the bar. "Come on, Nonni. What?"

She sighed softly. "Will she carry your child?"

"Aren't you tired of babysitting?" he deflected lightly.

Nonnina wasn't amused. "I just thought..." she said quietly. "Before I die, you know... I'd like to see what another Diavolino would look like."

"If it happens, it happens," Luca replied, taking another sip of his drink. "I'm not forcing anything."

He couldn't tell her the truth. That Veronica didn't want that. Didn't want his child. Didn't want to be tied to this world any more than she already was. And for once... he wasn't sure he wanted to force her into it.

Nonnina nodded slowly. "Then I have the perfect blends to give her," she said, almost to herself. "To speed up the process. I have it in my recipe book somewhere..."

"Nonni—no—" Luca started, already shaking his head. Too late.

She was already walking away, muttering under her breath.

Luca stared after her, then let out a dry laugh, dragging a hand down his face.

"Great," he muttered. "Just great."

By the time Luca arrived at Veronica's house, night had fully settled in.

He followed the sound of her voice into the kitchen, where he found her standing between two maids, leaning lightly against the counter.

Her hair fell loosely around her shoulders, her expression bright in a way he hadn't seen in days. She was saying something, her hands moving animatedly as the women laughed along with her.

Luca leaned against the doorway, arms crossed, watching her in silence. "Should I be jealous?" he finally said.

Veronica turned instantly, but her face didn't light up as it usually did whenever he showed up. Well, that's new.

This had become his routine.

Every day after work, Luca would find himself drawn to Veronica's house first. Then, later, he would return to Nonnina's, to sit at her table, eat her food, and make sure she was still safe, still untouched by whatever shadow had dared creep too close.

He had assigned a watch to Nonnina immediately. Her driver now shadowed her every move, alert, armed, and instructed to report even the slightest irregularity. Luca had gone further. A tracking necklace was already being crafted.

In all her years as his nanny, her life had never been threatened.

She had seen blood. Cleaned it. Endured it. But it had never been hers.

Luca sat at the table slowly. His eyes tracked the maids as Veronica dismissed them with a flick of her hand.

That was when he noticed it.

The walking assist was gone.

"I'm sitting here wondering," he began, "what I could have possibly done. Make it easy for me and tell me."

Veronica moved around the kitchen.

"Let me guess," he added after a moment, a faint smirk tugging at his lips. "I breathed wrong."

(400 power stones!!! Y'all are amazing! Thank you soooo much. We have time to get to 600? Dont we?)

Chapter 183: You Said You Trusted Me

Vee ignored him. She moved around the kitchen like he wasn't there, stirring, tasting, adjusting.

"Come on, Vee," he pressed, pushing off the table and moving toward her. "How am I supposed to fix it if I don't know what I did?" He reached her just as she covered the pot, trapping the simmering contents beneath the lid. He wrapped his arms around her from behind, pulling her against him.

For a second, she let him.

Then she turned.

"When was the last time we fucked?" she asked.

The question hit him like a misfired bullet. Of all the things he thought he had done wrong... That hadn't even crossed his mind.

"Uh..." he blinked, thrown off, his grip loosening slightly. "If memory serves... that was before I went to Singapore."

Her eyes didn't leave his. "That's about a month and a half ago."

"Yeah?" he replied slowly, still trying to catch up.

"You don't see a problem with that?"

Before he could respond, she wriggled out of his arms, slipping away from him, taking a few careful steps back.

Luca ran a hand through his hair, exhaling. "Bambola, I—"

"You what?" she cut in. "Saving yourself for when you go to Italy to fuck your wife again?!"

"You said you trusted me!" Luca snapped.

"I must have been high on painkillers," she shot back instantly, turned and walked out of the kitchen, her steps uneven, her limp a bit pronounced.

"Vee—" he started, already moving after her.

She made it to the bottom of the stairs before reality caught up with her body. Her pace slowed. Then stopped. Because no matter how angry she was... her body refused to cooperate.

The betrayal of it. The humiliation.

"Going somewhere?" Luca mocked.

Veronica stilled at the foot of the stairs, her hand gripping the railing. She didn't turn immediately. When she did, her eyes were blazing. "You're an asshole."

Luca gave a small, unapologetic shrug, the corner of his mouth twitching. "I know." He stepped closer. "Vee," he continued. "You really think I wouldn't be able to fuck you, Bianca, and fifty other women and still not have the stamina to fuck you all over again?"

The arrogance in his words. Uggghhhh....

"Again?" she snapped. "You are a fucking asshole!"

Luca exhaled sharply. "Besides, what are you even talking about? We do other stuff," he added. "I thought that was enough. At least for you."

"It would be," she fired back instantly, stepping toward him despite the protest in her leg, "if you weren't flying off to your pretty, perfect, spotless wife in a bit! How do you expect me to feel, Luca? Enlighten me."

"I cannot fuck you because I don't want to hurt you, you stupid baby!" he yelled.

"What?" she breathed, the anger faltering, confusion slipping in.

"I..." He exhaled, shaking his head slightly. "Haven't you noticed?" He gestured vaguely, frustrated at himself. "I don't know how to do soft," he admitted. "Or tender. Or any of that vanilla bullshit." His jaw tightened. "You had a bullet in your thigh, Veronica. Hell," he continued, "I'd be celibate for a decade if it meant I wouldn't add to your pain."

Veronica stared at him, her anger unraveling piece by piece.

"I... didn't know that," she whispered.

"Yeah, you just assumed," Luca said. "Vee, it takes me twenty full minutes to walk away from this house every day after you are in bed. Do you know why?"

Veronica shook her head slowly, her innocence in that moment almost painful to look at.

"Because I have to wait until my erection is flaccid," he said bluntly, his gaze locking onto hers. "I do want to fuck you. Every day. Every fucking hour. But I can't," he continued. "Because all of this..." He gestured toward her leg. "You being injured... it's all my fault."

Veronica's brows pulled together, her heart tightening at the way he said it.

"I promised I wouldn't hurt you," he went on. "And yet... I have."

"You didn't do this, Luca," she said softly.

Didn't she see it? Or did she refuse to?

"Didn't I?" he shot back. "It's almost as if I pulled the trigger myself. My wife shot you—with my gun. And to protect me, Marco had to dig the bullet out of you like we were cleaning up a mistake."

"I knew loving you was never going to be easy," Vee said quietly, her eyes steady on his. "I knew it. And still...I chose you."

"I think..." he started, then paused. "I think I may have weighed you down, actually."

"...yes, you did," Veronica said. "But you did such a fine job that... that I cannot, Luca..." She hesitated, her fingers curling slightly at her sides. "I'm afraid that one day, you will wake up from this obsession... and go back to Bianca."

"You know," he said casually, "you could lock me down with a child."

Veronica groaned. "Ugghhh. Screw you," she muttered, swatting his chest as she turned away from him.

Luca caught her hand before she could fully retreat, the corner of his lips lifting slightly. "I'm just saying..."

Carefully, he guided her toward the stairs, his hand steadying her without making a show of it.

"You know..." she added after a moment, "it doesn't hurt anymore."

Luca arched a brow. "And yet you limp."

"I think the only thing you need to be afraid of right now," she said, "is trying not to shift my ovaries."

Luca paused mid-step. "Really?" he asked, genuinely curious, his brows lifting. "Can I do that? Is that a thing?"

Veronica stared at him. "...How are you even excited about that?" she demanded.

He shrugged, completely unbothered. "I like to try new things. Sue me."

"Do you have any more nasty fantasies I don't know about?"

Luca's grin widened. "Oh, plenty," he said. "I had this really hot geometry teacher—"

"Oh boy..." Veronica groaned immediately. "You men are so predictable."

"More like simple," Luca argued.

Vee laughed as they stepped into her bedroom.

(Brought to you by Mrs B)

Chapter 184: I Only Had One Before

"Would you help me with my zip?" she asked, turning her back to him.

Luca's lips curved into a slow smirk as he stepped closer, his fingers finding the zipper. He paused there for a second, his breath brushing lightly against her neck.

"I'm still not going to fuck you yet, Bambola," he murmured.

"Ugh... come on!" she groaned, tilting her head back slightly, exposing more of her neck.

His fingers dragged the zip down slowly.

"I'll make you cum as many times as you want..." he continued, "...but I'm not fucking you."

"Do you want me to beg you again?" she shot back, turning her head just enough to glance at him over her shoulder, her eyes glinting with challenge.

Luca huffed a quiet laugh. "You just gave me two reasons not to have sex with you, love," he said, his fingers brushing lightly against her skin as the dress slipped further. "I only had one before."

"And what is the second?" Vee asked, shrugging out of the dress and letting it fall carelessly to the floor, leaving her standing there in just her underwear.

Luca's gaze darkened, dragging slowly over her. "You don't trust me," he said finally.

"Luca," she replied, turning fully to face him now, "there isn't some kind of meter attached to your dick. Even if you went off and fucked those fifty women in Italy, I would not know."

"Well, true," he admitted, a corner of his mouth lifting slightly.

"So what's the point?" she pressed.

Luca exhaled slowly, his gaze holding hers for a moment longer before he stepped forward.

He reached for her.

One arm slid beneath her knees, the other around her back, lifting her effortlessly off the ground.

He carried her to the bed and placed her gently on it.

Luca stood over her, his chest rising and falling slowly, his restraint visibly thinning with every passing second. The distance between them felt fragile.

He climbed onto the bed slowly. His hand came up, brushing lightly against her cheek.

"I miss you, Luca. I miss you inside me," she whispered, her fingers curling lightly into his shirt. "I miss how you make me feel... like I am the only woman in existence."

"Okay..." he murmured. "But promise me something."

"Anything."

Luca exhaled slowly, his forehead nearly brushing hers now, his gaze locked onto her. "The next time you have a gun aimed at you," he said, "for the love of God... keep your fucking mouth shut."

Vee frowned slightly. "Hey! I'm territorial. I can't help it," she argued.

"You want me to fuck you or not?"

"I promise," she said quickly. "I promise."

"Okay..." Luca muttered. "Now that it seems like you'll promise me anything just to get what you want... maybe I should revisit the issue of us—"

"You better swallow the rest of those words," she cut in immediately, her eyes narrowing despite the softness of her position beneath him, "if you still want to be granted entry into this house."

"Yes, ma'am."

Vee chuckled as he leaned over her again. "I love you, you crazy man," she murmured.

"No," he said quietly. "That's my line now. We switched, remember?"

Her brows lifted slightly, amusement flickering back into her expression. "I thought whatever is yours is mine."

"You do make excellent points. In that case, I'm obsessed with you," Luca said, leaning down to kiss her. "You're the air I breathe, Bambola," he added, his lips brushing hers before trailing downward. He said it again against her skin, kissing her neck slowly. His fingers found her bra strap, sliding it down with intent to expose one breast to him.

"I cant get enough of your perfect body," he murmured. He kissed the top of her chest.

Then, sticking his tongue out to flick on her nipple, he let out a quiet, satisfied,

"Hmmm..." against her skin.

His hand moved again, as he slid the other strap down. Exposing the second breast to him.

His fingers took one nipple while his mouth took the other, dividing his attention.

Veronica hugged his head tighter to her chest as he pleased her, her fingers threading into his hair. Her chest pushed into him like she wanted him to swallow all of her.

He responded without hesitation, his touch and mouth working in tandem, relentless in their rhythm.

Her nipples hardened further, urging him on, her body reacting to every careful movement he made.

A soft sound escaped her as her thighs came around him, pulling him closer.

Her core sought friction instinctively, her body chasing the pleasure he was building.

Luca followed her cue, attentive even in his intensity, reading her like a language he knew by heart.

He gave her what she wanted down there, his thigh moving gently along her heat, feeding the growing tension between them.

He lapped at her nipple, sucking, biting, coaxing the sweetest moans from her, each sound feeding his hunger.

The rhythm of it grew more intense, more desperate.

He pulled away from her, breath uneven, eyes darkened with need.

Quickly, he shed his own clothes, movements rushed, impatient.

He returned to her body like he was being chased, like time itself was against him.

He slid his hard cock between her breasts, sandwiching himself between her softness.

Moving in and out of the space he had created for himself, he set a steady pace.

The friction drew a low sound from him, his control slipping further with each motion.

He threw his head back in ecstasy, surrendering fully to the moment.

Veve reached down, cupping his ass and squeezing, her fingers digging in just enough to make him hiss.

"Fuck!" he growled. He pulled away from her then, realizing she had made it her mission to be his undoing.

Her mischievous grin only fueled his desire. He slid her underwear off.

Then he turned her chest to the mattress, pressing her down gently.

His lips brushed along her shoulder as he leaned close. "You remember your safe word?" he asked.

"Crimson," she replied, eyes gleaming.

(Brought to you by Mrs B)

Just had to slip this in here before I mess with all you guys emotions once more.

Chapter 185: Shut Up And Fuck Me

"If you feel any pain..." he started to say.

"Luca... shut up and fuck me," she ordered.

He paused for a heartbeat, drinking in her words, then let a dark chuckle escape him.

"You're a fucking slut," he muttered, his lips brushing against her ear as he leaned closer.

He slid his cock inside her, the slow, steady pace intentional at first, testing, savoring.

Her moans filled the room, rising around him, dizzying him with their rawness.

Each movement became harder, faster, driven by desire he could no longer contain.

On his next thrust, he rammed into her with force, drawing the most delicious sound from her lips.

The intensity built between them, until control was impossible.

His pace lacked rhythm now, as her ass bounced beneath him. He licked his lips, eyes dark with need, smacking her ass. His hands roamed freely, fondling her. "I want to fuck you in the ass so bad," he groaned. "But I don't have any fucking tools here," he admitted, frustration edging his words.

"Tools?" she asked.

But he was too far gone to care, lost in the heat of the moment, every thought consumed by her.

His hand gripped hard at her waist, teeth clenched against the rush of sensation.

He waited, taut with need, for her release.

Her body trembled beneath him, and he could feel every shiver, every pulse of anticipation.

To speed her up, knowing he couldn't hold on much longer.

She had so generously helped him with an estimate earlier.

It had been almost two months since he had last fucked her, a starvation he could no longer deny.

He slid his hands under her, exploring, finding the places that drove her wild. His fingers landed on her clit, circling and teasing with a rhythm meant to push her over the edge.

Every motion, every touch, was a desperate attempt to merge their need, to reach release together.

That helped instantly, sending shivers through her body.

"Luca..." she trembled beneath him.

Just as her muscles tightened, a scream tore out of her lips.

Luca stilled in her, every nerve alive, his cock pulsing erratically inside her. "Oh God!" he grunted. His heart felt like it was about to fly out of his chest, beating too fast to count. "Oh my fucking God!" he exclaimed again, lost in the intensity of the moment.

Her fingers dug into his thigh, holding on as she rode out her climax, every motion driving them both higher, more frenzied.

He felt his cum slide out of her, warm and binding them together in that perfect, chaotic surrender. He rolled away from her, chest rising and falling as if his lungs could never get enough air. His body still thrummed with the aftershocks of their chaos, muscles trembling, heart hammering against his ribcage. "Jesus Christ! We should do this celibacy thing more often," he gasped.

Vee's laughter rippled through the room. "Okay, before you take a break, could you pass me my pill bottle? It's on the dresser, beside the other multitude of meds from the hospital," she said.

"I'm not getting you that," Luca said.

"What? You're going to make me—a crippled woman who just gave you the best orgasm—roll off this bed and walk all the way over there for my pills?"

"Yup!" he said simply, sliding his hands behind his head.

"You're a jerk!" she shot back, her eyes narrowing, lips pressing into a pout.

"Tell me something I don't know, honey," he quipped, his smirk broadening as his gaze roamed over her still-flushed body.

Vee, of course, was not about to let him off so easily. She made a big show of it, rolling onto her side, then sitting up with exaggerated care. Her legs swung over the edge of the bed like a sloth's, wincing, groaning lightly, exaggerating the struggle for maximum effect. Every small motion was theater, and he had to admire her commitment to it, even if it made him want to groan in frustration.

Luca rolled his eyes, standing up from the bed, the muscles of his chest taut as he watched her. "I hate you!" he said.

She chuckled softly.

"You can take a dick but you can't get your behind to get your fucking pills," Luca snapped, striding across the room. He snatched the pill bottle off the dresser with a flourish, opening it and holding one out to her. "It's like I'm helping you get rid of babies!"

Vee rolled her eyes, a laugh curling from her lips. "Would you stop whining?!" she shot back.

"Come on," he said, hands resting on his hips now, cocked head leaning slightly. "What will it take?"

"Luca," she said as she swallowed the pill he had so dramatically handed her, "standing there, naked in front of me, demanding for a baby is very distracting." Her gaze flicked down for a second, then back up.

"Answer me," he demanded, stepping closer, chest taut, eyes piercing through her.

She swallowed again, more than the pill this time—her nerves, her heart, everything caught in that electric tension between them. "Marry me."

Luca went still. Then he exhaled sharply. "You are a mean bitch!"

Vee shrugged, a sly smirk lifting one side of her lips as she flopped back onto the bed, letting herself sink into the sheets. "Are you staying tonight?" she asked casually.

"Yeah..." he admitted. "I just have to check in with Nonnina."

"So you will have dinner here?" she asked, lifting herself slightly to watch him.

"Uhhhh... I was actually thinking she could bring my dinner here," he muttered.

Vee raised a brow, catching the hesitation. "Why do you only eat her food?"

"Food poisoning," he said, shrugging. "We only eat food made by hands we trust."

"Oh... Okay," she said slowly, processing it. "Uhhh... I am not trying to compete with Nonnina—Lord knows I can't even—but I could, every once in a while, make sure to make your meals and supervise just as she would. How about that?"

"Of course."

(Brought to you by Janelle Fox)

Chapter 186: I Didn't Order That Pizza

"Something makes sense now actually," Vee continued. "The first time we met, I brought the pizza to your office, no one would touch the pizza. The receptionist said if something was wrong with it, then I get to die alone. That's how I ended up in your office..."

Luca exhaled slowly, memories flashing vividly in his mind—the brash woman entering his office with that fiery courage and naivety, unaware of the undercurrents swirling around him, of the shadows in which he thrived. She had been fearless then, fearless still.

"First of all, I didn't order that pizza, Marco did," Luca replied. "Which is why for a while, you called me Marco. And second, you interrupted a very..." He paused, looking for the right words when she abruptly threw a pillow at his face.

"Jackass!" she shouted.

"Hey, you did!" he laughed, catching the next pillow mid-flight, seizing the opportunity to press closer, to invade the space she always allowed him.

The laughter eventually died down, leaving a fragile silence. Luca's gaze softened as he looked at her, tracing the lines of her jaw, the curve of her lips, the faint flush of heat still lingering. She made him feel lighter and heavier at the same time—lighter because she

brought laughter into the darkness of his life, heavier because she reminded him of all the ways he could lose her, all the stakes that came with loving her.

"You make me so happy, Bambola," he admitted quietly. "I didn't think it would be possible in my entire damned life." Happiness was foreign, dangerous. It was a luxury he'd never thought he could claim, especially with all the shadows in which he lived, all the threats he carried.

Yet here she was, his walls completely broken down, with nothing more than her smiles, her words, her looks.

Vee's lips curled into a small, genuine smile, her eyes glimmering with the knowledge of his confession. "You make me happy too," she said softly. She wanted him to know she felt it too.

"How about this? Come to Italy with me," he said.

"What?" Vee said, wide-eyed. Her heartbeat skipped, her chest rising and falling as her mind raced. The notion was thrilling, terrifying, overwhelming. "I... Italy?" she whispered.

"Yes," Luca said simply. "Come with me. It's just for a couple of days. I don't want to be without you," Luca added.

"What?" she said, trying to keep her tone light. "Are you then going to strap me to you every time you have to go out of town?"

"If I get to have my daily fix, then yes," Luca replied without hesitation.

It shouldn't have sounded romantic. It shouldn't have made her heart stutter the way it did. But it did. Because she knew what he meant. And she felt the same way.

"Luca..." she exhaled softly. "I don't know. I don't want to disrespect your wife further."

Bianca.

The shadow that refused to leave the room.

Luca's jaw tightened, a flicker of irritation crossing his face at the situation. At the complication. At the fact that even here, in this quiet space they had carved out for themselves, reality still found a way in. "You'll be in a hotel," he said.

Veronica shook her head slightly, a faint, humorless smile tugging at her lips. "Let's not poke the dragon, please," she said. "It's supposed to be your wedding anniversary."

Luca exhaled slowly, dragging a hand through his hair, his frustration simmering just beneath the surface. "Fine," he muttered. "I was hoping after such a tedious affair, I could just collapse in your arms."

"I'll be waiting for you right here, my love," she said softly. "Always."

It was a promise.

Luca's gaze softened at that. His hand moved then, absentmindedly at first, tracing along her arm, down her waist, settling at her thigh. And that was when everything shifted. His fingers stilled slightly as they brushed over the place he had avoided looking at since it happened.

The scar.

It was healed on the surface now. The skin had scabbed.

A flicker of guilt crossed his face.

He hadn't allowed himself to really look at it before. Because to look at it meant to acknowledge it. To accept it. And he wasn't ready for that. Because in his mind, it wasn't just a scar.

It was a failure.

His failure. His fingers hovered there, barely touching.

Veronica noticed. "Hey," she called out suddenly. "My boobs are up here!"

It was so unexpected, so her, that Luca blinked, the tension breaking instantly.

He let out a quiet huff of laughter, shaking his head slightly. "You're unbelievable," he muttered.

"Yeah, I've heard that before," she replied, a smirk tugging at her lips.

She knew what he had been thinking. What he had been feeling. And she refused to let him drown in it.

His hand moved again, sliding up from her thigh, away from the scar.

"You're okay," she said quietly.

He met her gaze. "Yeah," he said after a moment. "I am."

"Now concentrate on my boobs," she teased.

God, he was in trouble.

Luca smiled. "How about I call Nonnina first and get back to you on that?" he said, winking.

"I'll be waiting, all nice and wet for you."

"—oh my God..." he laughed, shaking his head as he turned away from her, rifling through his pants for his phone. He didn't want to leave her. Not tonight. Not tomorrow. Not for Italy. Not for Bianca. Not for anything. But Luca was a man bound by chains.

When Marco's phone buzzed and Valentina's name flashed across the screen, he gave a small smile but when he read the message...

Everything else ceased to exist.

By the time he pushed back from his chair in the underground office, his body was already moving.

Marco's strides were purposeful, each step heavier than the last as he moved through the dim corridors, up the staircase, into the main club. The bass from the music above pulsed faintly through the walls, growing louder with every step he took, syncing with the violent rhythm of his heartbeat.

(Brought to you by Janelle Fox)

Chapter 187: I'm Going To Kill You

The club was alive.

Lights flashing.

Bodies moving.

Laughter and sin blending into one intoxicating atmosphere. But Marco didn't see any of it. Didn't hear it. Didn't feel it.

All he saw...Was red.

By the time he reached the changing room corridor, the music dulled slightly, replaced by chatter, heels clicking, the soft murmur of dancers preparing for the next set.

And there—was Ricardo standing too comfortably, too casually, talking, laughing.

Marco's vision tunneled. "You fucking son of a bitch! I'm going to kill you!" His voice tore through the room before chaos erupted. Marco didn't give Ricardo the luxury of understanding what was happening before it happened. His fist flew and connected.

A sickening crack echoed through the room as his knuckles slammed into Ricardo's face, sending him stumbling backward. The force of it snapped his head to the side, blood spilling instantly from his nose.

The dancers screamed, scattering, heels clattering against the floor as they fled the explosion of violence.

"Have you gone mad?!" Ricardo spat, staggering, hand flying to his face as he tried to regain his footing. Blood dripped through his fingers, staining his shirt.

Mad?

"You think this is madness? You have no idea what madness looks like."

Ricardo blinked, confusion flickering across his face despite the blood still dripping from his nose. "What are you—"

Marco shoved him backward.

Ricardo hit the wall behind him, the impact knocking the breath from his lungs.

His fist pressed into Ricardo's collar, bunching the fabric, holding him in place.

"...you better pray...fuck you better pray. Holy fucking Christ, you better pray."

Ricardo swallowed hard, his bravado faltering.

This kind of damage, Marco didn't know how to fight it.

He couldn't fix this. He couldn't punch it away. He couldn't shoot it, threaten it, or bury it. Marco felt completely useless.

"You stay away from her, you hear me? If I sniff you around her ever again! I swear to God, I will put a bullet so far down your throat it will take five medical examiners to find it."

"What the hell are you talking about?!" Ricardo snapped.

"Stay the fuck away from her!" he finished. Marco turned and walked out of the changing room, his steps heavy, the adrenaline still burning hot in his veins. The noise of the club swallowed him again as he moved through it—music, laughter, bodies brushing past him.

By the time he reached the garage, his anger still hadn't cooled.

"Fuck!" he swore as he stopped beside his car. "Fuck!" he shouted again, louder this time, kicking hard at the side of his tire.

Pain shot up his leg.

He welcomed it. He yanked the car door open and slid into the driver's seat, slamming it shut behind him.

He pulled his phone out of his pocket. He didn't need to read the message again. He already knew it.

Word for word. Burned into his mind.

Still, he opened it.

'I think I'm pregnant. My sister is going to kill me.'

A consequence that couldn't be undone with distance or silence. A connection that refused to be severed.

Marco's fingers hovered over the steering wheel, tapping once, twice, restless energy with nowhere to go.

He should have seen this coming. Should have stopped it. Protected her better.

He exhaled slowly, forcing himself to think.

Panicking wouldn't help her.

Rage wouldn't fix this.

He needed to move. To act. To be what she needed him to be.

Marco started the engine, the low rumble of the car vibrating beneath him. He didn't know what he was going to say when he got there. Didn't know if she was scared, crying. Didn't know if she wanted comfort or solutions or just someone to sit with her in the quiet. But he knew one thing. He wasn't going to let her go through this alone.

He glanced at the message one last time before tossing the phone onto the passenger seat.

"Don't worry, Val..." he muttered under his breath. "I've got you."

He told Luca.

God, he had told him.

Luca had thought he was doing the right thing. Doing right by Veronica. Keeping her sister happy. So he offered the bastard a job. Gave him proximity. Access. Trust. And now here they were.

A few minutes later, the car idled in front of the Scalese home.

He exhaled slowly, forcing the storm inside him to settle—just enough. For her.

By the time he stepped out of the car and made his way to the door, his face was composed. The anger was still there, coiled tightly in his chest, but buried.

He knocked. "Val... it's me."

Silence answered him.

Marco turned the handle and stepped inside, closing the door quietly behind him.

The house greeted him with stillness. No television. No music. No clatter of movement. Just a suffocating quiet that pressed in from all sides.

And then he saw her, curled up on the couch.

Valentina, who was usually all fire and laughter and stubborn energy, looked... diminished. Folded into herself. Her eyes were open, but unfocused, staring at nothing.

Marco paused.

This was not how she was supposed to look.

"Hey..." he said finally, slipping his hands into his pockets because if he didn't, he might reach for her too quickly. Too intensely.

She blinked slowly. "Hey..." she replied.

Marco swallowed. "So..." he started, forcing a small, casual tone into his voice. "What do you need?"

It was the safest question.

The only one he trusted himself to ask.

"I need you to save me from my sister."

He let out a soft chuckle, shaking his head slightly as he took a few steps closer. "Your sister loves you," he said gently. "It may shock her, but she loves you. You should have listened to me in the first place," he added. "When I told you to tell her you and Ricardo broke up."

"—if I tell her, she will tell Luca and Luca might take his job away. I don't want to be the reason he loses his job. I don't want that hanging around my neck. Remember he broke up with me to embrace his job more fully."

(Brought to you by Mrs B)

Chapter 188: That's A Load Of Crap

Even now, even now, she was thinking about him, about Ricardo, protecting him.

"That's a load of crap," Marco said flatly. "And now, Luca will definitely learn about this."

"Don't tell him. Don't tell him, please."

"You want to hide a pregnancy?" he asked. "For how long? Three months at least? Besides... have you confirmed you actually are pregnant?"

"No..." she admitted.

"Then why are we even having this conversation?" he asked, the frustration slipping through now.

Valentina's eyes dropped, her fingers twisting together. "I wanted you to be here."

He swallowed. "Alright," he said finally. "Do you have the tests?"

Val nodded.

"Fine," he added. "Go do your thing."

Valentina got to her feet and turned toward the hallway. "Thank you for being here for me."

"Anytime you need me, I will be here," he said.

Luca sat behind his desk. Still, silent, deadly.

The office itself carried that same energy—dark wood, low lighting.

His gaze moved slowly between the two men standing before him.

"I heard what happened in my club last night," Luca said finally. "I am guessing this has something to do with Valentina."

Marco didn't move, didn't speak.

Ricardo, on the other hand, shifted slightly where he stood, discomfort etched into his bruised face. His eye had darkened overnight, swelling just enough to distort his face. The bandage across his nose stood out starkly against his skin—a visible reminder of what happened when Marco lost control.

"I guessed as much too, Luciano," Ricardo said carefully, choosing his words.

Luca's gaze slid toward him. "You are guessing."

Ricardo swallowed. "I have no idea what it is about," he added quickly.

His gaze moved again, back to Marco. "Is it?" Luca asked.

Marco met his eyes. "Yes."

"Care to enlighten me?" Luca asked.

"I cannot."

"Excuse me?" Luca said slowly.

Danger bloomed in the room.

"Did I just hear you right?" Luca continued. "She is my wife... my girlfriend's—" he paused, correcting himself with visible irritation, "my girlfriend's sister."

"I know, Luca," Marco said. "But please... I cannot."

Luca's gaze shifted to Ricardo. "Get out."

Ricardo nodded once and turned, walking out of the office.

Luca turned back to Marco. He got to his feet, slid a drawer open and pulled out a knife. "On your knees."

Marco dropped to his knees instantly.

Luca stepped closer, the knife glinting faintly in the low light. "Care to repeat how you plan on defying me," Luca said, "or you want me to cut out your tongue?"

Marco lifted his gaze slightly. He could feel Luca's unspoken demand for loyalty.

And the truth?

Luca had every right to it. Luca had given him everything. A home. A purpose. A life.

And Marco had repaid that loyalty with absolute devotion.

Until Valentina.

"I am not defying you," Marco said finally. "I am protecting her."

"From me?" Luca asked.

Marco shook his head slightly. "If Veronica begged for your trust, would you break it?" he asked.

"It's different! I'm in love with Veronica," he snapped.

Marco held his gaze. An insistence in his gaze. A mirror being held up.

Look at it. Say it. Understand it.

And Luca did, slowly.

"Oh..."

Understanding crept in.

"Are you crazy?!" Luca demanded. "Are you fucking crazy?!!! I asked you countless times," Luca continued, "if you were in love with her. You looked me in the eye and said no!"

"Because I choose not to be," Marco replied. "I choose not to act on it. What?" Marco went on, a sharp edge creeping into his tone now, frustration bleeding through the cracks of his control. "I'm way older than she is!"

Luca scoffed, dismissive, offended by the excuse. "Oh, don't give me that crap about age," he snapped, waving a hand like Marco had just insulted his intelligence. "You're what—ten years older?!"

"No," he said. "I'm thirty. She's fucking eighteen."

"So what?!" Luca shot back.

"How about the fact that I'm your right-hand man?" Marco pressed. "I could drop dead at any time! And then what?"

Marco wasn't exaggerating.

Men like him didn't get old. They got buried.

Luca looked at him with a wounded expression. "You think so little of me, Marco..." Luca said, quieter now, the fire in his voice cooling. "You... of all people."

Marco stilled. Because that— that wasn't what he meant. Not even close.

"You really think I would leave you alone in the eye of a storm," Luca continued, "and not be in the forefront with you behind me?" Luca dropped the knife back on the desk. "You think I would let you fall?" Luca asked, his gaze locking onto Marco's.

"That's not what I'm saying," he said.

"Then what are you saying?" Luca demanded.

"I don't think little of you, I know this because I swore my life to you. I swore to your mother, that my only mission in my life is keeping you safe. I don't intend to break that promise." Marco's gaze didn't waver. "So no... I would never be behind you in a storm. I'd be your shield even when it kills me."

Luca exhaled slowly, dragging a hand across his mouth as he turned away. "So I am your excuse," he said finally. "To loving from a distance. You are an idiot," Luca added. "If you really think your life is going to be brief... then shouldn't you seize every ounce of happiness you can before it ends?"

"At first..." he began. "I didn't see it that way. At first, she was just an irritation," he admitted. "A bug. And then..." Marco continued, his brow furrowing slightly. "I thought... maybe she just represents the sister I never had."

That had been easier.

A lie, perhaps—but one he could live with, for a while.

"And then gradually...I realised I'd do anything for her."

Luca went still again because he understood too well. He was living it.

That slow, inevitable shift from irritation to obsession.

"This is a mess," Luca muttered. "You can't go punching Ricardo because you are jealous," he added, glancing back at him sharply now.

(Brought to you by Mrs B)

Today's actual Chapter will be posted by my morning. All of the Chapters from today were from gifts. Thank you for putting me to work. Made the holiday bearable. And to all my Muslim readers, happy Eid Mubarak

Chapter 189: I Can't Tell You

"That wasn't—" Marco started, then stopped. Because how do you explain that it wasn't just jealousy? "That's not why I punched him."

"Then why, for God fucking sakes?" Luca snapped, the patience he had barely been holding onto finally fraying at the edges.

Marco exhaled slowly. He could feel it—right there, at the back of his throat. The truth. Ugly, complicated, irreversible. But he swallowed it. "I can't tell you."

"Fuck!" Luca barked, dragging both hands through his hair as he turned away, pacing once more. He stopped abruptly, turning back to Marco. "I have one more question."

Marco lifted his gaze.

"How will Veronica feel about this?"

There it was. The real center of Luca's world.

Marco considered it for a second—not because he didn't know the answer, but because he was calculating the version of the truth Luca could tolerate. "She may be pissed for a minute," he said finally.

Luca's eyes narrowed slightly. "Marco...Whatever you boys do, if it hurts Veronica in the slightest..."

A pause. A breath. A promise.

"You both will wish you were never born."

"Understood," Marco said simply.

Luca held his gaze for a second longer, then waved a dismissive hand, already retreating back into himself. "Get out."

Marco pushed himself up from the floor in one smooth motion. He turned and walked out.

Luca sank slowly into his chair, exhaling through his nose as he leaned back, his fingers pressing briefly against his temples. "This is going to be a fucking mess," he muttered.

Julian adjusted the collar of his coat as the Uber pulled away, leaving him standing in front of a building that didn't belong in the version of Vienna he had imagined.

The warehouse loomed in front of him, its metal doors scarred with age and use, the surrounding area eerily still.

Bianca's instructions echoed in his head.

Take an Uber. Don't use any family drivers.

At the time, it had felt... thrilling, secretive.

Julian exhaled as he approached the door. He had landed in Vienna just last night, the jet lag still clinging faintly to his bones, but excitement had overridden it, anticipation, hope. Because despite everything— despite the tension, the distance, the disaster of that kiss— she had reached out.

He pushed the door open.

It creaked slightly. Julian stepped in slowly, his footsteps echoing softly.

"Bianca?" he called.

He frowned slightly, moving further in, his eyes scanning the space.

A small smile tugged at his lips.

Maybe she had finally caved. Because God—he wanted her to, wanted her to choose him.

Even if it had to be hidden, even if it had to exist in shadows, even if it meant being second to a life she couldn't escape.

He would take it.

"Bianca?" he called again, stepping deeper into the warehouse.

Julian stood there for a moment longer, his gaze sweeping slowly across the warehouse space Bianca had so carefully carved into something almost livable. It shouldn't have worked but somehow, she had bent it to her will.

Chairs, a low bed tucked against one wall, dressed in dark sheets that looked untouched, more decorative than restful. Folding screens dividing sections. And in one corner—an office nook. Papers. A laptop. Files stacked in chaos.

"Julian!"

He turned just as she emerged from behind a black curtained divider.

"You're here."

"Yeah..." Julian replied, his eyes still scanning the room.

"I hope I didn't make you put too much stress on your leg," Bianca said, her gaze dropping briefly to it.

Julian followed her glance instinctively, shifting his weight slightly.

The injury had healed. But there was still a faint limp.

"No... it's fine," he said, brushing it off quickly. "You needed me."

"What..." Julian started, turning slowly again, gesturing vaguely at the space around them. "What is this place?"

"My war room."

"Excuse me?"

She stepped closer, slipping her fingers into his. "Come," she murmured.

He let her lead him.

The curtain parted.

"What the fuck?!!"

"I know, right?" Bianca chuckled, stepping past him now, completely at ease in the chaos she had created.

His eyes were locked on the wall in front of him.

No—A map, a...a story.

Pictures lined the surface in obsessive order. Faces. Locations. Timelines. Strings of connection drawn in thread, linking one detail to another in a web that made his head spin just trying to follow it.

Notes scrawled in tight handwriting.

Dates circled. Names underlined.

Everything... intentional. Everything... calculated.

Julian stepped forward slowly. His fingers twitched at his side, resisting the urge to touch, to trace, to understand. "Bianca..." he breathed.

This wasn't what he expected. This wasn't a secret meeting. This wasn't a stolen moment between lovers. This was—

"What is all this?" He turned to look at her.

Faces stared back at him from glossy photographs.

Julian's eyes moved slowly, taking it in piece by piece. He recognized them.

People Luca worked with. People Veronica trusted.

He glanced at the notes.

Leverage. Weak link. Remove. Replace.

This was planning. Bianca was planning on rewriting lives.

Julian's throat went dry as his gaze moved again, scanning, processing, trying to keep up with the sheer scale of it.

Dante, Bastardi, Vito, Detective Voss. That one made his brow furrow. Even— Carol.

"Jesus..." Julian muttered under his breath.

Even Carol made it to the fucking map.

No one was too small. No one was irrelevant.

Bianca had accounted for everyone.

His gaze kept moving.

Until— It stopped.

Because there, pinned among them was him.

Julian stared at his own face for a second.

Beside it was another photo. Their father.

"Who... who is this?" he asked finally, as he pointed to a particular photograph.

"Oh, that's Cassidy Grant," she said lightly. "Vee's ex-boyfriend."

Julian nodded slowly, absorbing that.

It made sense. Of course he'd be here. Of course she would consider him.

But then— Bianca continued, casually, carelessly. "Actually, I've been having an affair with him."

Julian turned to her slowly.

Disbelief came first then confusion.

"An affair..." he repeated. "I don't understand..."

His gaze flicked over her.

"You let him touch you?"

Chapter 190: I Will Do Anything

"Don't be a child about this." Bianca snapped.

A child. That's what she reduced his feelings to.

"I told you," she continued. "I would play my cards right and get my husband back. I will do anything, Julian."

"All these... for Luca?" He dragged a hand through his hair. "You're fucking another man to get Luca," he continued, disbelief bleeding into anger. "What am I to you? Some big block of ice?"

"Julian, please..." she stepped closer. "You... you are the only one truly on my side in this family."

It was a well-placed line.

Perfect, really. Because it was true.

"On your side," he repeated under his breath, tasting the words. But being on her side wasn't the same as being chosen. "I want to get you away from Luca and to me," he said finally, turning back to her. "Not help you win him."

"Julian..." she said quietly. "You and I..." she began, her gaze steady on his. "That's never going to happen. You have to understand that," she added. "But I need your help," Bianca finished.

"Fuck my life," he muttered. This was exactly the kind of mess he should walk away from.

And yet—here he was, still standing, still listening, still... considering because he loved her.

"What do you need?" he asked finally.

"I'm trapped," she said. "I'm handicapped, operating from here. Things are moving too slowly for me." Her gaze flicked briefly toward the board behind him, irritation flashing across her features. "I am thinking of expanding my wings," she continued. "By starting a business. A clothing line, maybe."

"A clothing line?" he repeated, brows furrowing slightly.

"Yes," she said simply. "I will be pitching it to Luca and Don when Luca arrives. But I will need you," Bianca added, turning back to face him fully now, "to get me in and out of New York under the radar whenever I need to."

"Bianca..." he started slowly. "You are a Vitale. I'm sure your famiglia can handle this way better than I can."

"I cannot approach my famiglia because they cannot know that there is anything wrong in my marriage. Julian please...please..."

"You want me to be your ride," he said slowly, "to get a regular fix of your boyfriend."

"Not necessarily. My plan," she continued, turning slightly, her gaze drifting back toward the board, "is to chip at Veronica gradually...so that when I deliver the final blow," she added, "Luca will believe what has been staring at him this whole time in the face."

"And what is that?" he asked.

Bianca turned her head just enough to look at him again. "That she is there to destroy him."

"Maybe I shouldn't help you," he said suddenly, the thought breaking through. "Maybe I should help this Veronica girl instead...if her plan is to hurt my brother."

Bianca just looked at him.

A long, dry, unimpressed look that said more than any words could.

Are you listening to yourself?

Even Julian felt how ridiculous it sounded even as he said it.

"Fine... fine," he muttered, the resistance collapsing as quickly as it had surfaced. "Keep me informed." He turned away from her, his gaze drifting back to the board, locking onto Cassidy's picture.

The guy was fucked.

"Whats your first plan though?" he asked.

She moved toward the wall. Her fingers hovered briefly before settling on one photograph. "This guy... Ineri."

Julian leaned in slightly, his eyes scanning the image.

"Local thug," Bianca continued. "Disappeared after an altercation in Veronica's pizza parlour."

Julian's brows drew together.

"I'm guessing Luca had something to do with it," she added.

Julian huffed quietly. "Of course he did."

"Not sure yet," Bianca said, her eyes narrowing as she studied the photo. "But I don't need certainty. I just need to have the right words whispered into the right ears," she continued, her fingers tracing invisible lines between connections on the board.

Julian followed her movement, watching as her hand moved from one face to another.

"And for that..." She paused.

Then— "I need all hands on deck. I need these two..." Her fingers shifted, landing on another set of photographs.

A man and a woman.

Rosa. Tony. Julian studied them briefly, committing their faces to memory.

"On payroll," Bianca finished.

"And then?" he asked.

"Then," she said, her gaze drifting back to Veronica's picture on the board, her eyes lingering there, "we wait."

"Well, I'm sure you have the resources. I'm confused though..." he added. "What do I get out of helping you? Seems everyone else got something."

Rosa. Tony. Cassidy. Even the ghosts on that wall had roles, incentives, reasons to play their parts in Bianca's grand design.

No one moved for free. No one bled for nothing.

So what was he?

A loyal fool? Bianca smiled.

"I thought you would never ask." She had been building toward it from the second she called him here. From the second she decided he would be useful. She closed the distance between them slowly. "I help you get what you have always wanted."

Julian's brow furrowed slightly, confusion flickering across his face.

"You?" he asked. Because despite everything—despite what she had said, what she had shown him—some part of him still clung to that possibility. He still wanted it, still hoped.

"I wish it could be that simple. If you weren't my husband's brother," she continued, "that's payment enough."

"What else do you think I want?" he asked.

"Your father's empire in Italy."

Julian went still. "Everything," Bianca added. "Including what my family offered him."

The full scope. Julian's throat went dry.

"What are you saying?" he asked.

"Exactly what you think I am saying. When all of this works out...you will be the new Don Genovese."

"I don't..." he started, then stopped, his mind struggling to catch up with the magnitude of what she had just placed in front of him. "I don't... what?!"

Julian turned away from her, pacing once.

Don Genovese. Luca was already sitting in that shadow. That throne had already been offered to Luca's unborn child.

(Brought to you by Janelle Fox)

Okay people, Is Bianca a formidable villain or what? This is like Sharona and Tom all rolled into one magnificent, beautiful body. Sheesh!!!