

Chapter 688 Extraordinary

Despite having never performed together before and with absolutely no time to rehearse, Elliana and Taylor created magic on stage. Their natural chemistry was undeniable, and the audience was completely entranced by their unexpected collaboration.

After four and a half intense hours, the concert finally came to an end.

The crowd was still buzzing with energy, their voices rising in desperate chants for one more song, but the evening had reached its natural conclusion.

After their final number and heartfelt closing words to the audience, Elliana and Taylor made their way off the stage.

Cole, who had been watching protectively from the wings throughout the entire performance, immediately followed them.

Meanwhile, Jason took charge of coordinating with the security team to ensure the twenty thousand excited fans could exit the venue safely and in an orderly fashion.

What had started as a potential disaster had transformed into an incredibly successful concert.

Once backstage, Elliana allowed herself a quiet moment of relief. She had made a split-second decision to reveal her identity as Stellara to prevent what could have developed into a stampede, and her gamble had paid off beautifully.

As the adrenaline from the performance began to fade, Elliana turned her attention to Taylor, who was looking at her with an expression of pure joy. He spoke. "You have no idea what this means to me. You made my biggest dream come true tonight."

Ever since he'd first entered that singing competition years ago and launched his career in the entertainment industry, meeting Stellara had been his ultimate goal. Actually sharing a stage with her, singing

together in front of thousands of people—that had been a fantasy so impossible that he'd barely dared to imagine it.

Tonight had not only made that dream real, but it had been even more incredible than anything he could have pictured. He felt a deep sense of fulfillment, as if a missing piece of his soul had finally been found.

Elliana studied his expression for a moment before her own face broke into a warm, genuine smile. "You're Cole's cousin. You don't need to thank me for anything. And just so you know—whenever you have a concert in the future, all you have to do is ask. I'll always be happy to be your guest performer."

Taylor's eyes went wide with surprise. "You really mean that? You'd actually do this again?"

"Absolutely," she confirmed without hesitation.

Taylor's expression suddenly shifted, and she could see guilt creeping across his features. His voice became quieter, more uncertain. "...I don't deserve your kindness."

Elliana could read the remorse written plainly across his face, and she let out a soft, understanding laugh. "I know all about the things you used to say about me in the family group chat. How you thought I was ugly and had no class, how I wasn't nearly good enough for Cole. You were probably hoping he'd come to his senses and get rid of me as quickly as possible. Am I right?"

A wave of pure shock crashed over Taylor's features. His face went pale and then flushed red with embarrassment. How could she possibly know about any of that? She hadn't even been part of the Evans family group chat back then, let alone privy to their conversations.

While it was true that Jeff had been the most vocal critic, Taylor knew he'd been a close second in terms of harsh comments. If he'd had more free time instead of being constantly busy with his career, he probably would have been even more brutal in his assessments. The memory of his own cruelty made heat rise in his cheeks, and he felt completely mortified by his past behavior.

Elliana seemed to sense his discomfort, and her voice remained gentle and forgiving as she reached out to pat his shoulder reassuringly. "Hey,

it's completely understandable. If my brother had married someone I thought was completely beneath him, I wouldn't have been thrilled either. You weren't doing anything wrong—that was a perfectly normal reaction from someone who cares about their family. I've already forgiven Jeff for all his comments, so of course, I would forgive you. Just promise me you'll be my biggest supporter from now on, and we'll call it even."

Taylor let out a surprised laugh. They were the same age, yet he felt completely outclassed by her insight and maturity. She still had a youthful, almost delicate face, but he couldn't help but feel a profound respect for her. It made perfect sense now—the one Cole loved this deeply had to be someone truly extraordinary.

As these thoughts were running through Taylor's mind, Cole appeared at Elliana's side. He glanced between them, taking in their relaxed conversation before focusing his attention on Taylor.

"How's your throat holding up?" Cole asked with genuine concern.

"Much better now," Taylor replied, though he found himself unable to meet Cole's perceptive gaze. "I should probably go find a restroom."

Without waiting for a response, Taylor turned and quickly walked away.

Elliana and Cole exchanged a meaningful look.

Emmanuel and Lance arrived just as Taylor disappeared down the hall.

"Cole, did you notice that something seemed off with Taylor tonight?" Emmanuel asked.

Cole nodded grimly. "I did notice. I have a feeling that whoever's been orchestrating these problems isn't finished with our family yet. I'm worried that Taylor might be their next target."

Cole turned to face Lance, his expression becoming serious and focused. "I need you to keep a close eye on Taylor. Monitor everything he does, but make sure he doesn't realize he's being watched. The last thing we want is to alert our enemies."

Lance nodded with professional understanding. "Consider it done." He immediately headed off in the direction Taylor had gone.

Emmanuel stared in the direction Taylor had gone. The paternal concern

was evident in every line of his face.

"Nothing will happen to Taylor," Cole said firmly, his voice carrying the authority of someone who would not accept any other outcome. "As both his cousin and the head of this family, it's my responsibility to keep him safe. I promise you—I'll do whatever it takes to protect him."

Emmanuel gave a small nod of acknowledgment, though his worry remained visible. "I know you'll move heaven and earth to protect this family. But no matter how capable you are, there's still a chance of you getting hurt while you're busy watching out for Taylor. I'm worried about you."

His voice grew more serious as he continued, "Whoever is behind all of this has access to sophisticated technology—those chips they've been using prove they're dangerous and well-resourced. Cole, you need to be just as careful about your own safety."

Before Cole could respond, Jason burst into the room, his face tight, urgency blazing in his eyes.