

Chapter 16 Keep It Up!

Daisy was asleep.

But Arabella didn't need words—she knew if Daisy were conscious, she would be thrilled. Watching those bullies finally squirm would have made her day.

But this? This was just the teaser. The real show hadn't even started yet.

Arabella pulled out her phone and jumped onto the campus forum, curious to see if the drama had hit the rumor mill.

"Did anyone catch what happened to Joyce? She got totally destroyed!"

"I saw the whole thing! Bet she won't be showing her face anytime soon. Not gonna lie, it's kinda satisfying."

"She deserved it. But who did it? I need to know!"

"Pretty sure Daisy walked out right after. Could it have been her?"

"Joyce probably shoved Daisy down the stairs back then. Now Daisy's back, and she's like some kind of tough avenger."

The students were loving the chaos, typing away like crazy. Being anonymous made it easy to say whatever they wanted without worrying who would find out.

But then Arabella saw something that made her pause—a name she knew way too well.

It was Kenzie, of all people.

The girl used to trail after Elissa like a shadow and had helped make Daisy's life miserable.

Arabella tapped on her profile to snoop a little.

Turned out, Kenzie had flipped. She was busy dragging Elissa all over the forum.

"Elissa's got nothing going for her. She copies my work and thinks she can buy my silence with a thousand bucks? Please."

One of Elissa's followers shot back, "You serious? Show some proof."

Kenzie wasn't having it. "I don't need to prove anything to you. Keep falling for her fake smile."

Arabella kept scrolling, and her eyes narrowed when she came across a private video Kenzie had uploaded.

It was a dance performance.

Kenzie had captioned it. "This was my original work. You all keep falling for Elissa's act. She's just a smooth-talking poser!"

Arabella raised an eyebrow. "Wow, she turned on Elissa faster than I expected."

She watched the whole thing a slow smirk creeping up. This was too perfect.

The following morning..

As expected, Joyce was a no-show on campus.

Arabella ditched her classes that day and made her way to the Griridge Troupe's practice session. After rehearsals, she dropped by the Dance Association's office.

Inside, Jennifer Dawson, the vice president, was busy flipping through paperwork, and when she heard someone knock on the door, she called out, clearly irritated, "Who's there?"

But the moment she looked up and saw Arabella, her expression changed completely. Her jaw nearly hit the floor. "Oh my gosh... Isabella?"

Arabella gave a calm, knowing smile. "Surprised? Thought I'd drop by."

"Hold on—you're still a student?" Jennifer blinked, clearly caught off

guard. "The president said you were filling in?"

"Yep, just helping out for now."

"You know what? I'm naming you captain on the spot," Jennifer said, looking almost too thrilled.

Arabella gave a calm shrug her tone flat. "Appreciate it, but I'd rather go through the regular channels. Also, I'm using Daisy Stanley here, so let's keep it that way."

Jennifer looked confused for a second but nodded anyway. "Alright, noted. Let me know if you need anything."

"Will do." Arabella gave a polite nod and walked out without another word.

Not long after, Zoe strolled in.

"Good morning I brought you something to eat," she said, grinning sweetly.

Jennifer didn't react much at first but then raised a brow. "Zoe, you're one of the instructors at the university, right?"

"Sure I am. Why?" Zoe replied, curious.

Jennifer's tone turned pointed. "You've got someone special in your batch. Don't let her slip through the cracks—she's worth watching."

Zoe's face lit up. "Of course. I've got my eye on her—she's going to steal the spotlight at the next show," she said smoothly.

Over in the rehearsal space, the fill-ins were pushing hard, trying to nail their moves.

But for Arabella, it was child's play—she was dancing to her own blueprint.

When break time rolled around, the dancers grabbed water and noticed Elissa soaking up the spotlight, chatting with the core team like a celebrity.

"Elissa, that move earlier? So smooth! Mind showing us again?"

Elissa grinned confidently. "Sure thing."

She jumped right into her freestyle, not missing a beat.

Her moves were sharp and full of flair, and the crowd ate it up, cheering and applauding.

"She's legit. I haven't seen anyone with that kind of range in ages."

"Looks like the new generation's here to rule!"

Just then, Zoe walked up with an easy smile. "Elissa, you're getting noticed! Ms. Dawson couldn't stop praising you—keep it up!"

Elissa's face lit up. "Wait, seriously?"

Jennifer wasn't just any official. She was one of Scainia's elite dancers.

So getting her nod meant a lot.

The rest of the dancers couldn't help but watch her with a mix of awe and envy—it was like Elissa just leveled up in front of everyone.

