Limits 86

Chapter 86

Eight contestants were participating in the competition. Luca, who was ranked first, was set to perform as the final act. The first to take the stage was Seth, who

ranked eighth.

As the host's opening remarks concluded, the competition officially began.

Seth, dressed impeccably in a sleek suit with his hair shining and neatly combed back, stepped onto the stage. After clearing his throat twice, he picked up the microphone and began to sing.

What shocked Jack was not Seth performing first but the song he chose to perform.

It was none other than The Night of Light-the same song Luca had been practicing every day.

Jack was intimately familiar with the piece because Luca often sought his advice whenever he encountered any challenges.

From what Jack knew, the song's composition and lyrics were created by a well- known professional in the industry. While the song had seemed fine initially, as soon as Seth performed it, its flaws became glaringly obvious.

And the problem was incredibly serious-disastrously so for Luca.

Because Seth performed the song before Luca, when Luca eventually sang it, he would likely be accused of plagiarism.

In a competition that emphasized originality above all else, such a problem was catastrophic.

Even as the top-seeded contestant, Luca faced a high likelihood of elimination. These thoughts weighed heavily on Jack, and his brow furrowed deeply.

He glanced toward the front row, where Luca was seated.

Although he couldn't see Luca directly, Jack could easily imagine his current state -panicked, restless, and likely overwhelmed with anxiety.

Indeed, no one was more shocked or panicked at this moment than Luca and Zoe, the dean of his music academy.

Everyone in the audience understood that this competition valued not just skill but also originality.

Thus, when Seth's voice rang out, both Luca and Zoe felt as if they had been struck by a heavy hammer. Their heads buzzed with disbelief-Seth's performance was almost identical to Luca's rendition of The Night of Light. The only difference lay in the parts Jack had helped Luca rearrange.

Luca and Zoe immediately realized they had been set up.

After all, the composer they had hired never explicitly guaranteed exclusivity for the song.

A sense of conspiracy loomed over Luca, filling him with intense unease. He recalled Seth's sinister glances and peculiar tone from earlier.

It was as if Seth had already known about the song and deliberately used this advantage to back him into a corner.

Luca's heart sank to the bottom, and a cold sweat broke out on his back.

Now it all made sense-why Feena had hesitated and seemed reluctant to speak earlier when she saw the sheet music. She must have known what was coming.

Luca never imagined Seth would resort to such underhanded tactics, leaving him in such a dire predicament.

What should he do?

Luca frantically searched for a solution but realized he had no contingency plan. He had no backup song, no alternative preparation. He was entirely unarmed in this scenario.

It felt as though his dream had shattered in an instant, leaving him filled with despair.

Feena, who had been observing Luca, couldn't help but feel sorry for him as she saw his despondent expression. She was well aware of Luca's talent in music, but now that talent was being destroyed by Seth's scheme.

Unfortunately, Feena was powerless to help. Seth was her senior, and she could only watch helplessly as Luca sank deeper into trouble.

In the back row, Samuel, Isaac, and Joshua were equally stunned.

They were familiar with the song Luca had prepared, and seeing Seth perform it first left them confused and furious. Yet, there was nothing they could do but pray for Luca.

Even Zoe could see Luca's frustration and despair. But she too was unable to offer any assistance despite her concern and anger.