

Chapter 871 Let's See Who's Left Laughing After The...

Melanie's words brought an abrupt end to the laughter and smiles on both Adah's and Leonel's faces.

Adah's eyes drifted to the photo of her mother resting on the table, and a heavy sense of longing settled over her. During all those days in Delta, when she and Elliana built Thorn Rose from scratch and fought their way to the top, her mother hadn't been there to see any of it.

In her mother's mind, she was probably still a gentle, defenseless child, someone who needed protection. Her mother must have spent countless sleepless nights worrying whether she was fending for herself. Soon, she would stand beneath the stage lights. If only her mother could witness that moment, maybe she could finally let go of her concerns.

There was more to Adah's ambition than she'd let on with Elliana. Defeating Rowena wasn't her only goal. Above all else, she hoped her performance would serve as a message, a sign to her mother that she had grown up into someone strong and dazzling.

If her mother was facing difficulties somewhere, maybe seeing her daughter shine would give her the strength to keep going. If her mother had lost her memory like Rita once had, perhaps this moment would spark something familiar, a light guiding her home. And if her mother was gone for good, she wished her success would travel skyward, bringing comfort to her mother's soul.

Ten days slipped by, and the dance competition finally arrived.

With Elliana's influence, Adah managed to snag a coveted spot in the contest.

Because the event's lineup had been decided long ago, organizers could only add Adah as the very last act.

The Ublento Opera House set the stage for the event, streamed live for

Even though her slot was at the end, Adah made sure to arrive early, bringing Leonel and Melanie along.

As fate would have it, the moment Adah stepped out of the car, she crossed paths with Rowena and her entourage.

Rowena emerged from the car, flanked by Gia, Westley, and Kimberly, who hovered protectively as if she were something precious.

As soon as Rowena spotted Adah, her gaze turned ice cold. "Adah, why are you even here?"

"Do I need your permission to show up somewhere?" Adah met her stare with a cool smirk.

Westley burst into a mocking laugh. "A country bumpkin like you in a high-class venue like this? Just because you're a little easy on the eyes doesn't mean you get a free pass. The Ublento Opera House isn't open to someone like you!"

Kimberly's face clouded with suspicion. "Adah, don't tell me you're here to sabotage Rowena. You're scared she'll take the crown and step into the spotlight, so you want to ruin her shot, don't you?"

Westley's face whitened with panic the instant those words were out. Rowena's victory in this competition was the linchpin for their family's fortune; he couldn't risk letting Adah jeopardize that dream.

Determined to hold his ground, Westley growled, "Adah, if you dare try anything, I'll go to war with you!"

Adah longed to send Westley flying with a swift kick, but with crowds packed around the opera house entrance, she knew she couldn't cause a scene. As a contestant, she had to keep her composure, so she swallowed her anger.

"That's right. I'm here to make sure Rowena doesn't win," Adah replied, her voice steady. "As long as I'm competing, she has no shot at taking first place."

"You!" Rowena's internal alarm bells went off instantly. "Adah, what exactly are you up to? Do you think you can get away with violence in

Adah relished the fear flickering in Rowena's eyes. "Relax. I won't lay a finger on you today. I'll beat you the right way, out on the stage."

"You're entering the competition?" Rowena looked Adah up and down and then burst into a mocking laugh. "Do you have any clue what you're getting into? This contest isn't for amateurs. You grew up in a backwater town with zero formal training, and now you think you can outperform me? What do you think you are?"

Pausing, she added, "Dancing is for the refined, not for people who have never set foot in a studio. Let's be honest, Adah, you might have a face that turns heads, but you've got no real talent, just brute strength. Maybe you could become an entertainment for wealthy men, but don't fool yourself into thinking you belong on this stage."

As Rowena finished her rant, Gia jumped in, voice sharp with scorn. "Adah, don't think you can strut around just because Allan's paying attention to you. Leave before you make a fool of yourself and us!"

Adah's glare at Gia was icy and unwavering.

Startled, Gia shrank back and then spun toward Leonel, yelling, "Leonel! Did you hear me? Why aren't you dragging your good-for-nothing daughter home this instant?"

Leonel didn't bat an eye. "You must've forgotten, I broke all ties with your family ten days ago. I'm no longer your son, and I have no obligation to do your bidding."

Gia was left trembling with fury. She had always relied on Leonel's loyalty to get her way, but now that he'd walked away, she was powerless.

Without sparing Gia another glance, Adah fixed her cold eyes on Rowena. "Let's see who's left laughing after the competition. I'll see you on stage."