

Chapter 880 Genuine Friendship

Elliana's accusations landed like stones—each one irrefutable.

Rowena couldn't deny a single word, no matter how desperately she searched for an escape. Her face blazed crimson, shame and fury twisting together until they choked her silent. One thought pounded through her skull like a war drum: run.

But running wasn't an option. A dozen security guards formed an impenetrable wall around the stage, blocking every exit. Trapped. She was trapped in this public execution.

Rowena wanted to beg Elliana for mercy, to plead for a way out. But what would be the point? Adah and Elliana were ruthless—she'd known that truth since they were children. They wouldn't grant her anything. Not mercy. Not escape.

Elliana stared down at Rowena's crumpled form without a trace of sympathy. "Since you can't deny the facts, are you finally going to admit you stole Adah's mother's original work? Or are you going to claim you choreographed Moonlight Shadow when you were five years old?"

Rowena wouldn't risk such a monstrous fabrication. Had she created that defining piece as a child, she'd be a legend already, eliminating the desperate need to grovel and cheat her way into this contest. Even if she did lie, no one would believe her. Silence was her only, ugly option.

By now, the audience—both in the venue and online—had utterly detonated. Minutes ago, they'd been Rowena's most fervent champions. Now, they roared that she was a pathetic, shameless thief.

Unable to breach the barriers, the online viewers drowned the chat in righteous, hateful text. "Someone there, clock her with a shoe for me! She made us fools! I won't settle until a damn sneaker connects!"

The collective noise soared until the fragile dam of decorum gave way.

A spectator, their control shredded, ripped off a running shoe and hucked it at the stage, their scream piercing the air. "Liar! Thief! Get off the stage!"

That solitary shoe became the catalyst. Enraged faces contorted as people tore off their footwear—spiked heels, loafers, tattered boots—and flung them at Rowena, chanting a unified, ugly chorus: "Rowena, out! Get out!"

In the space of a breath, a violent squall of shoes rained down upon the platform.

"Stop, please! Everyone, stand down! Control yourselves!" the host shrieked, trying futilely to command the mob, but his voice was swallowed whole.

Elliana and Adah quickly melted back into the safety of the wings, both of them smirking as they watched the furious debris fly.

Rowena was instantly caked in scuff marks and dust, her immaculate hair reduced to a gnarled knot. She looked less like a performer and more like a scavenger. She ducked, stumbled, and screamed with raw terror, trying to evade the airborne missiles, "Stop! Please! No more throwing!"

She wasn't swift enough to juke the flight path of a pointed stiletto. The metallic heel cracked into her face, instantly blooming a fiery red bruise on her cheekbone. She recoiled and slumped, officially crushed.

No one could halt the eruption—not until the crowd had expended their last bit of footwear and emptied their reservoir of rage. Only then did the shoe storm finally die.

By the time silence returned, Rowena lay motionless under a small mountain of trash, her face sealed in her hands. She trembled violently, paralysis of shame keeping her head pinned to the floor.

Gia, Westley, and Kimberly had already ghosted, panicked that the audience's fury might suddenly shift target.

With the explosion spent, the sharp edge of the crowd's anger finally began to recede.

Seizing the sudden, strained quiet, Tristan shot an order to the security detail. "Get her out of here—now!"

The guards immediately converged, gripping Rowena by her limbs, and dragged her off the stage like a bag of refuse.

The Ublento Dance Competition was a global hallmark. It had preserved an immaculate history for years, never once scratched by public scandal—until today. The organizers were now ready to gut Rowena for destroying their flawless brand. She was the poisoned core that threatened to spoil the entire harvest.

Yet, a grim opportunity presented itself. Rowena's meltdown had instantly mushroomed into a massive headline, yanking a tidal wave of attention toward the competition. Viewership spiked to absurd levels, topping 40 million concurrent streams.

Facing this terrifying, delicious surge, the organizers were trapped between absolute dread and immense potential.

As the head organizer, Tristan immediately ordered the stage sanitized and then took the mic himself to wrestle the rest of the broadcast into line.

To pivot the crowd's focused aggression, Tristan made a calculated gamble. He initiated an interview with Elliana. As the current darling and hero, this was guaranteed to lock in the viewers and impose order.

"Mrs. Evans," Tristan said, his voice syrupy and eager, "your appearance here, standing for Adah, tells a story about your bond. Could you indulge us and share a little of that history?"

The tactic worked instantly. The moment Tristan finished, the crowd—just moments ago a baying mob—sank back into their seats, their faces now rapt with curiosity.

The live chat lit up again. "Tell us the secret! What exactly is the history between Elliana and Adah?"

Elliana didn't hesitate. She smiled confidently and spoke with natural warmth. "My mother and Adah's mother were soulmates—the kind who traded clothes. Adah and I simply inherited that fierce connection. We've been inseparable since we were toddlers. Her world is mine, and mine is hers. The one hard line? We don't share men. Everything else is open territory!"

"Aww!" A wave of collective warmth and approval washed through the venue and the online audience. That kind of pure, enduring loyalty was truly something to crave.



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