

(Cue dramatic shift — the Ballet Brigade approaches. The air changes instantly.)

Rebecca: *(with an overly sweet tone)* Hi guys. Exciting news about me snagging the part of Clara this year, don't you think?

Jett: *(measured, polite but firm as he keeps stretching)* I think both you and Sara did a good job. Could've gone either way.

Zoe: *(smirking)* Yeah, Rebecca. If I were you, I'd stay healthy.

April: Yep, might wanna get a doctor's check-up before you start rehearsals.

(They all stifle giggles.)

Rebecca: *(snapping)* What are you little trolls laughing at?

(Ballet Brigade walks toward them menacingly prepared to attack. Jett is the least affected by the girl drama... Mrs Love interrupts...)

Mrs Love: *(Clapping her hands to gather attention. Other dancers enter the dance studio. The energy is focused, a mixture of excitement and nerves. Mrs. Love stands at the front, clipboard in hand. Rebecca is center stage, stretching. Sara is nearby, attentive but quiet.)* Alright, dancers. For the first combination, I'll be working with a few of you while demonstrating the movement phrases. Rebecca, Sara—front and center, please.

Rebecca: *(Rising with confidence, moves forward quickly. Then notices Sara joining her. A beat.)* But Mrs. Love, I don't need an understudy. I can do this part with my eyes closed... right now. Sara will only be in my way.

(A few dancers exchange glances. The room grows tense.)

Mrs Love: *(Stops, calmly but with authority)* Excuse me, Ms. Walker, but my casting decisions are final. *(Pause)* There will be no further discussions.

Rebecca: *(Softly, with forced casualness and rolled eyes)* I was just sayin'...

(The other dancers take notice and realize she has crossed the line)