My Great Escape Led Me to You

Chapter 2

The Lane Estate, in the vast, echoing living room.

Emily Blair stared at her own delicate, youthful hands, and only then did she truly believe it—she had been given a second chance at life.

In the center of the sofa, Kevin Lane's sharp gaze landed on her. His voice, deep and weighted with age, filled the room.

"Emily, are you sure you want to travel with Andrew to Cabinda for this business trip?"

Emily's lashes fluttered.

This was it—the pivotal moment of her previous life.

Andrew Lane's trip to Cabinda had been a business trip in name only. In reality, he was going there to meet his first love, Isabella Austin.

When Emily found out, she'd insisted on tagging along, refusing to let him go alone.

Her father had been Kevin Lane's driver, and he'd lost his life saving Kevin. Out of gratitude, the Lane family had taken her in, giving her everything she could ever want. She was practically the family's unofficial Miss Blair.

So when she'd begged to accompany Andrew, Kevin Lane had agreed without hesitation.

Emily glanced toward Kevin's side.

Andrew Lane sat there in a perfectly tailored black suit, every button fastened up to his throat. He lounged carelessly, one leg crossed over the other, a lock of hair falling over his cold, indifferent eyes and habitually pursed lips.

The instant she laid eyes on him, Emily felt her breath catch. Memories came flooding back—every painful moment, every humiliation.

Her heart nearly stopped; her whole body turned cold.

This was the man who had controlled her life. The man who'd never seen her as anything but a nuisance.

She hated him.

Hated him to her core.

Every day and every night, the image of Andrew Lane's contempt haunted her.

Andrew's impatience was written across his face. His fingers tapped rhythmically on his knee—a sure sign he was losing what little patience he had left.

He'd already assumed she would cling to him, as she always had.

But not this time. She wouldn't make the same mistakes again.

Before she could speak, her mother, Emma George, rushed to fill the silence, her voice meek and pleading. "Of course, of course. Emily and Mr. Lane are so close— wherever he goes, she wants to be by his side. She absolutely has to—"

"That won't be necessary."

Emily's quiet voice cut through her mother's words.

All eyes in the room turned to her-except Andrew's, whose face remained as cold and unreadable as ever.

Emily raised her chin, her clear eyes meeting Kevin Lane's. Her voice was calm and steady.

“Grandpa Kevin, my college entrance exams are coming up soon. I need to focus on my studies, so I won't be joining Andrew on his trip."

A flicker of surprise crossed Kevin Lane's eyes.

Emma George, flustered, hurried over and grabbed Emily's wrist, whispering frantically, “Mr. Lane, don't listen to her she doesn't know what she's saying. You all know how much she wants to go."

"Mom," Emily said, pulling her hand free. "I really do want to focus on my studies."

Her mother couldn't see what she saw.

Kevin Lane's apparent kindness was nothing more than polite indifference. He kept her around, but only as a token, never as family.

In her past life, when disaster struck, Kevin hadn't spared her a single glance. Not even for his own granddaughter, Daisy, had he ever shown real warmth.

Emily straightened her shoulders and repeated, even more firmly, "Grandpa Kevin, Andrew, I was foolish before, but I can see now that Andrew's busy. This time, I won't get in his way."

Before Kevin could respond, Andrew stood abruptly, as if his last shred of patience had evaporated.

His dark eyes flicked toward her, unreadable, his voice as cold as ever.

"Suit yourself."

He left without looking back.

Kevin didn't press the matter. With a wave of his hand, he dismissed them to their rooms.

Emily let out a soft sigh of relief.

Outside, in the Lane Estate's driveway, Aaron watched Andrew Lane in the rearview mirror, careful not to intrude.

As Andrew's personal assistant, he knew more than enough about the Lane family's dramas. He was certain that Andrew's return home this time could only mean one thing-the troublesome, ever-restless foster daughter had stirred up trouble again.