Swapping a Broken Heart for a New Start

Chapter 12

Her eyes narrowed, chin tilted up in that trademark, holier-than-thou way. “Let’s not waste any more time. Hand over the project files—Jordan’s waiting for my status update!”

Camila Davis could hear the smug undertone in Sandra Taylor’s voice, and it stung—just a little.

But she didn’t let it show.

The last thing Camila wanted was to give Sandra the satisfaction of seeing her rattled.

So, Camila kept her face cool and professional, clinging to her sense of responsibility as she walked Sandra through the handover.

She explained everything in meticulous detail—she wanted to leave the team in the best shape possible, even if she wasn’t going to be part of it anymore.

But Sandra’s patience wore thin almost instantly. She rolled her eyes and waved her hand dismissively. “Yeah, yeah, I get it. You don’t have to spell everything out—I can handle it.”

Camila frowned slightly. “There’s still a section on key research directions I haven’t covered—”

Sandra cut her off with a scoff. “Old data, right? Outdated. I’ll be tossing all that junk as soon as I take over. That’s exactly why Jordan wanted me back in the first place.”

With that, Sandra got up and looked down her nose at Camila. “You can leave now.”

Camila’s lips parted as if she wanted to say something else, but then she just gave a cold, tight-lipped smile. “Fine.”

No point dragging it out.

Within minutes, Camila had boxed up her stuff—her favorite mug, a few files, a framed photo from last year’s Christmas party—and left the office.

She’d barely stepped into the hallway when the elevator dinged and Lucas Smith walked out.

He took one look at her arms full of belongings and smirked. “Well, well, look who it is—Camila Davis, right? You look like a stray puppy that just got kicked to the curb.”

He shook his head with an exaggerated sigh. “How’s it feel, getting thrown out? Told you ages ago, this job was never meant for you. Lab director, ‘Mrs. Smith’—none of that was ever really yours. Now that Sandra’s back, maybe you’ll finally see the light.”

Camila stared at Lucas, her gaze icy.

There was a time, back when she still loved Jordan Smith, that she’d tried to win Lucas over. She’d bent over backward trying to please him—and the rest of The Smith Family—hoping they’d eventually accept her.

But no matter how hard she’d tried, Lucas had always treated her with open disdain.

She’d never understood why—until now, seeing the way his eyes practically lit up when he mentioned Sandra Taylor.

Camila suddenly let out a dry, mocking laugh. “You’re right, Lucas. I used to think you were just an ungrateful brat, but now I see it. You’re just a lovesick puppy who never got what he wanted.”

Lucas’s jaw dropped. He clearly wasn’t expecting her to bite back. She’d always been the quiet one, swallowing his barbs without a word.

Now, she was calling him out—calling him a simp, of all things.

“Camila Davis, you got a death wish?” Lucas spat, his expression darkening.

“What’s wrong?” Camila shot back, her tone razor-sharp. “Did I hit a nerve?”

His face twisted in anger. “You’ve got a lot of nerve, talking to me like that. It’s not like you’re any better—don’t forget how you landed here in the first place. Pretty convenient, showing up when Jordan was drunk that night. Maybe that’s why he never loved you—maybe that’s why he couldn’t wait to clear you out and make way for Sandra. Guess you had it coming.”

Camila paled, her hands tightening on the box she was holding.

All these years, she’d convinced herself that what happened with Jordan had been a drunken accident, something they’d both been swept up in. Did he really believe she’d tricked him?

Lucas saw her reaction and puffed up even more, like a rooster that’d just won a fight. “Just wait, Camila. Getting kicked out of the company is just the start. Soon enough, you’ll be out of The Smith Family for good.”

With that, he strutted past her, leaving Camila standing alone in the hallway, her world turned upside down.