Swapping a Broken Heart for a New Start

Chapter 19

Camila Davis's face, already pale from feeling sick, turned completely white as she took in the scene before her.

She'd always known Jordan Smith didn't love her. But right now, they were still married. Maybe she could've looked the other way if she hadn't seen it with her own eyes. But even knowing she was right there, Jordan just went ahead, holding Sandra Taylor so openly, so shamelessly.

The two of them—this was just cruel.

No one else in the private dining room noticed Camila standing in the doorway.

But Jordan did.

He clearly hadn't expected Camila to come back at that moment. His expression shifted, just for a split second, before he put the mask back on.

He made no move to step away from Sandra. In fact, he sounded downright caring as he asked, "You alright? Can you stand?"

Sandra clutched her forehead, giggling a little, "Yeah, I'm fine..."

But her face was flushed, her steps wobbly, and she leaned into Jordan, almost collapsing against his chest.

Jordan didn't seem annoyed at all. He just supported her shoulders, his voice indulgent, "You're drunk. I'll take you home."

He grabbed Sandra's purse and coat, straightened his suit, and told the group, "Dinner's over for tonight, folks."

No one dared protest. They all hurried to stand, mumbling things like, "Of course, Mr. Smith, have a good night."

Jordan nodded and guided Sandra out.

Camila was still standing right outside the door.

As they walked past her, Sandra suddenly stopped and murmured, "Jordan, maybe I should just go home by myself. You should take Camila back—she had a few drinks tonight, too..."

She wore an expression of sweet concern, totally fake.

Jordan shot Camila a brief glance. “She only had one glass. She’ll be fine. Besides, you’re the one who can barely stand. If anything happened to you, Uncle Taylor would have my head.”

He didn’t say another word to Camila. Jordan led Sandra away, brushing right past his wife.

Camila, though, caught the look Sandra threw her—a sly, satisfied smile, like she’d just won a contest. There was nothing drunk about her at all.

Camila’s hands clenched into fists, but she didn’t try to stop them. What would be the point? Jordan had made it clear. She was always on her own.

There was that time, months ago, when she’d been forced to drink at a client dinner for her own job. She’d called Jordan to pick her up. He didn’t come—just sent a driver.

His work was always more important than her safety.

If he’d cared even a little, Sandra Taylor would never have dared challenge her like this.

Camila tried to ignore the pain in her chest, tried to pretend it didn’t matter.

After dinner, everyone was planning to head out for drinks at some bar, but Camila declined. She just couldn’t fake it anymore. She thanked her colleagues and slipped out.

When she reached the front of the restaurant, she realized it was pouring—fat, cold sheets of rain coming down in the dark winter night.

She hadn’t driven, knowing she’d probably have to drink. Now, ride-share apps were all jammed, a hundred people ahead of her in the queue.

Shivering under the awning, her stomach cramping again, she huddled against the cold. She’d thrown up in the bathroom before leaving—now her whole body ached.

That’s when a familiar Rolls-Royce glided past her. Its tires splashed dirty water onto her shoes and jeans. Through the window, she could see Jordan’s tall, elegant frame in the back seat, Sandra curled up against his shoulder.

Camila’s throat tightened. She blinked hard, trying not to cry, but the tears came anyway.

She crouched down on the wet pavement, hands trembling as she scrolled through her contacts. The only person she could call was her best friend, Sarah Brown.

“Sarah, can you... pick me up?” Camila’s voice cracked as she spoke.

Sarah heard the tears immediately. “Camila? Honey, what’s wrong? Where are you? I’m coming right now!”

Camila gave her the name of the restaurant.

Fifteen minutes later, a bright red Mustang screeched to a halt outside Ember & Vine. Sarah jumped out, scanning the sidewalk until she spotted Camila.

She was huddled by a pillar, hair damp, eyes red-rimmed, looking so small and defeated.

Sarah hurried over, grabbing Camila’s icy hands. “Oh my god, Camila, are you okay? Jesus, your hands are freezing! And your clothes are soaked! Who did this to you? Tell me, I’ll kill them!”

Camila just shook her head, not wanting to talk. She leaned into Sarah’s arms, desperate for the comfort, for something—anything—to hold her together.

Sarah, recognizing the look in her friend’s eyes, didn’t press for answers. She rubbed Camila’s back, whispering, “Hey, it’s alright. I’m here. Whatever it is, we’ll get through it. Let’s get you home, yeah? You’re freezing, and you’ll catch a cold if we stay out here.”

Camila didn’t protest.

Sarah got her into the car and drove them back to her place, which was only a few blocks away.

As soon as they stepped inside, Sarah started fussing. “Go take a hot shower, okay? I’ll get you a towel and find you some pajamas.”

Camila nodded, going along without a word.

After a long soak in the hot water, she came out to find Sarah in the kitchen, stirring a pot on the stove. “Come sit down, I made you some ginger tea. Lots of honey, not too spicy.”

Camila sipped the tea. It was sweet—almost too sweet—but it was enough to take the edge off her bitterness, just a little.

Sarah waited until Camila finished, then set the mug aside and gently asked, “Okay. Now will you tell me what happened?”