Swapping a Broken Heart for a New Start

Chapter 2

Camila Davis felt a cold shiver run through her heart as she looked at him.

There were questions on the tip of her tongue, but she bit them back.

Her grandmother had always been so good to her. The least she could do now was hope the old woman could rest in peace.

This wasn't the place for difficult conversations.

Lowering her eyes, Camila kept quiet, leading little Lillian out of the funeral parlor and into the family lounge set up next door.

Jordan Smith noticed her silence, his brow twitching with annoyance. But after a second, he shrugged it off and returned to stand beside Sandra Taylor.

Sandra's eyes were red from crying, her face the very picture of heartbreak.

Jordan reached into his pocket and handed her a handkerchief. As she took it, there was an odd, almost sweet intimacy between them—completely out of place at a funeral.

Everyone's attention was fixed on the pair, so no one noticed the small boy quietly slipping out the side door.

He peeked around corners, eventually making his way to the lounge.

Inside, Camila held Lillian close, still lost in her grief.

Suddenly, the door slammed open with a bang.

Lillian flinched, clearly startled.

Camila instinctively wrapped her arms tighter around her daughter, turning to see who it was.

Sandra Taylor's son—Daniel—strolled in like he owned the place, his gaze quickly locking onto Lillian. He sized her up, then blurted, "I know you... You're Dad Jordan's daughter, right? I heard there's something wrong with your head. Is that true?"

Camila stared, stunned. She hadn't expected words like that from a three-year-old.

And... Dad Jordan?

Lillian, who had autism and seldom spoke, seemed frozen by the sudden hostility.

Daniel, sensing he was onto something, pressed on, “Why don’t you talk? Are you mute? Or just stupid? Or maybe crazy?”

A barrage of questions flew out, and then, with a smug little smirk, he added, “No wonder nobody likes you...”

Camila’s face went pale with shock.

“You—”

She was just about to step in when Lillian suddenly snapped, the cruel words sending her into a meltdown.

“N-no... no, I’m not...”

Lillian’s small voice cracked, fear and anger mingling together.

“Lillian!” Camila swept her into a hug, trying desperately to soothe her. “Sweetheart, don’t listen to him. You’re my precious girl, so smart and so good—don’t let anyone tell you otherwise...”

But Lillian didn’t seem to hear her at all.

The commotion quickly drew attention from the other room.

A few members of the press, always lurking for a story, rushed over and pointed their cameras into the lounge.

Camila didn’t notice until Jordan Smith stormed in, his expression thunderous.

Standing tall, he snapped, “Camila Davis, what the hell are you doing? I warned you—keep her under control!”

Camila, both furious and heartbroken, hugged Lillian tight. “It wasn’t Lillian’s fault! That boy insulted her on purpose, bullied her, and she just—”

Jordan cut her off coldly. “Daniel just got back to the States. Today’s the first time he’s even met Lillian. Don’t try to pin this on him!”

His eyes were hard, full of distrust.

Other members of the Smith family piled into the room, trying to keep up appearances in front of the cameras.

But Jordan's brother, Lucas Smith, didn't care about appearances.

He'd never liked Camila, and now he sneered, "Just desperate for attention, huh? Even willing to throw a kid under the bus at Grandma's funeral? If you're so uncomfortable, maybe you should just leave!"

Surrounded by the Smith family's cold stares, Camila felt her heart sink into ice.

"Get Lillian calmed down! Our family's about to give thanks to the guests. Don't make a scene!" Jordan barked another order, his tone icy.

Camila met his eyes, a bitter smile twisting her lips. "Does anyone here even see me as family? Has the Smith family ever acknowledged me as your wife?"

"Maybe someone else is better suited for the title," she added, voice trembling with grief and anger.

She couldn't stay another second.

Scooping up Lillian, Camila strode out of the funeral home, her head held high.

Behind her, Jordan's face darkened, his anger barely contained.