

## Chapter 361 Price

Korbyn's departure left behind a cloud of uncertainty, the weight of recent events hanging heavily in the air.

It wasn't long before another wave of concern swept into the hospital, carried by none other than Harrison's distressed mother accompanied by a contingent of Moore family members.

Among them was Addie.

She was Harold's younger sister.

The voice of Harrison's mother trembled with anxiety as she approached Waylen. "How's Harrison?" she implored, her frantic gaze searching for answers. Her grip on his arm was tight enough to reflect her inner turmoil.

Waylen, despite his own turbulent thoughts, projected a calming aura as he reassured her. "There's no immediate danger, but his recovery might be a lengthy process, Mrs. Moore. I'll make sure to find the best plastic surgeon."

The words "plastic surgeon" triggered an emotional avalanche within Harrison's mother.

Her legs threatened to buckle beneath her as realization and fear collided, intertwining with her maternal instincts.

Amidst this turmoil, a doctor emerged from the emergency room, offering a momentary distraction from the mounting tension. He provided an update on Harrison's condition, the news dispelling the immediate threat to his life. The Moore family's members immediately went in to see Harrison.

Waylen heard the woman's shrill voice through the passage.

She couldn't accept the fact that her son was disfigured.

Meanwhile, the heaviness of guilt pressed upon Waylen, its weight almost suffocating.

Juliette, always a pillar of strength, offered a comforting gesture, her hand gently resting on his shoulder as she urged him to tend to his own injuries. "Waylen, attend to your wound. I'll stay with Rena. We can't afford to alarm her when she awakens."

His vulnerability peeking through his facade, he leaned on the wall and rubbed his hair angrily with his hand.

"I'm not in the mood."

As much as Juliette empathized with her son's anguish, she understood how important Rena was to him. Leaving him to wrestle with his thoughts, she assumed her vigil outside the emergency room.

The passage of time seemed agonizingly slow as Waylen and Juliette anxiously awaited news of their loved ones.

Each ticking second weighed heavily on their hearts, the minutes stretching into an unbearable tapestry of uncertainty.

Two hours had already passed, the hospital corridor standing witness to their collective anxiety.

When the door of the emergency room finally opened four hours later, it was as if the world held its breath.

"How is my wife?" Waylen hurried up.

The doctor, a figure of hope in their strained reality, removed his mask and faced Waylen's questioning gaze. His voice, a measured murmur, held the news they both craved and feared. "Mr. Fowler, our examination indicates that Mrs. Fowler didn't sustain significant physical trauma. However, her brain did suffer a moderate concussion from the impact of the debris." An undercurrent of concern ran through his words, his gaze holding

Waylen's as he continued, "Oddly, she should have awakened by now, but her response is curiously absent. It's as if her body has entered a state of slumber, a form of self-preservation."

Waylen was slightly stunned.

Furthermore, the doctor's revelation held an additional layer of gravity. "Given that Mrs. Fowler is also pregnant, it's imperative that we monitor her condition closely. If her coma persists beyond a week, it could pose a risk to the baby."

"Is there no way to rouse her?" Waylen's voice was tinged with desperation, his vulnerability laid bare.

"The pivotal point will be tomorrow morning. We will pay close attention to her condition."

With those words, the doctor retreated back into the emergency room, leaving Waylen and Juliette to grapple with their own fears and uncertainties.

Waylen leaned against the wall, as if he had lost all his strength in an instant. Juliette helped him up and said in a crying voice, "You have to hold on, Waylen! Rena will wake up soon."

Lifting his head, Waylen said softly, "Mom, I should have treated her better."

Was Rena tired of him and their life?

If he had treated her better, would she wake up immediately?

As the hours stretched on, Rena was transferred to a VIP ward, her still form a stark contrast against the sterile hospital setting.

The delicate fabric of her gown showcased her pregnancy, a poignant reminder of the fragile life intertwined with her own.

Her pale face bore the remnants of her ordeal, marked by the telltale signs of bruises.

Waylen, determined to remain by her side, disregarded his own injuries and stayed faithfully beside her. He held Rena's cold hand with his eyes fixated on her face.

Outside the room, Juliette was caught in a poignant dance of grief, her heart heavy with the weight of the circumstances.

Waylen said gently, "Mom, can you go ask the Moore family's members if they need any help?"

Juliette nodded silently, tears still cascading down her face.

Their family owed the Moore family a big favor and they couldn't leave Harrison alone.

After Juliette left, there were only two people left in the ward with an oppressive silence settling. A tear fell on the back of Rena's hand, which streamed down from Waylen's eyes.

"Rena, my regrets run deep. I should never have allowed you to attend the premiere. If I could turn back time, I'd choose to hold you close, keeping you safe within our house."

His voice quivered with emotion as hot tears continued to overflow, his anguished gaze fixed on her still features.

Yet Rena remained ensconced in a realm of unconsciousness.

Just as the doctor said, her body had fallen into dormancy. Her dreams were untroubled by his confessions, her heart untouched by his regret.

The night had draped itself in the shroud of darkness, the sky painted with obsidian hues and sparkling stars.

Waylen's gaze wandered toward the window, where the world beyond was shrouded in a veil of heavy snowfall. His voice, gentle and laden with longing, resonated through the room. "The night sky wears a snowy gown, and our children must be frolicking in delight. Rena, if you could awaken, I'd take you back home. We'd sip on warm milk and watch as our little ones



fashion snowmen, their laughter ringing through the crisp air."

His fingers brushed Rena's cheek tenderly, her skin cool to the touch.

A wave of emotion surged within him, the weight of his heartbreak threatening to overcome him. Tears welled in his eyes, a silent testament to his sorrow.

A profound ache pierced his chest, and he leaned close to Rena, his lips grazing her neck as he whispered, his voice heavy with anguish, "Rena, the doctor speaks of your potential awakening tomorrow morning, but I cannot bear even a moment's wait."

Fear clung to him, a relentless shadow that refused to dissipate.

Closing his eyes was a risk he couldn't afford, for it might mean missing the exact moment her eyelids fluttered open. As the hours gave way to dawn, the sun cast its golden glow upon the world, but Rena's slumber remained unbroken.

Her body temperature seemed to be lower.

Morning arrived, cold and crisp, a stark reminder of the world's relentless march forward.

Korbyn returned to the hospital, exhaustion etched on his features.

He shed his frost-kissed coat, its fabric heavy with the weight of the night's labor. Silently, he approached Rena's bedside, his gaze searching for a sign of change. With a hushed murmur, he broke the stillness. "Has Rena awoken yet?"

Waylen shook his head, his eyes never leaving Rena's form.

Breakfast arrived, a gesture of concern from Korbyn who recognized the toll Waylen's vigil had taken. "Your mother is tending to the children. They don't know about the accident yet," Korbyn informed softly, his gaze filled with understanding.



Noticing Waylen's eyes still fixated on Rena, Korbyn patted him on the shoulder, a comforting touch meant to reassure. He urged, "You've suffered blood loss and exhaustion. You must eat, for you cannot care for Rena on an empty stomach."

Waylen nodded.

He ate quickly and sat on the edge of the bed to keep her company.

He continued to talk to her.

He told her about the kids and wanted her to wake up.

Korbyn knew that Waylen's mental condition was abnormal, but he could not persuade Waylen as well. If it was him who was involved in this accident, he also couldn't maintain composure.

The doctor's return brought with it a pang of anticipation. Yet, the sorrow etched on his face conveyed the harsh reality.

Waylen rose from his seat, his question punctuated by the weight of his concern. "Doctor, what if Rena doesn't wake?"

The doctor, faced with Waylen's determination, offered a measured response. "The fetus would be the first to be affected. But if the coma persists, it could have significant consequences on Mrs. Fowler's health."

Uncertainty hung in the air, Rena's fate precariously balanced on the edge of her will.

As the doctor departed, leaving the room immersed in a heavy silence that only the sound of the snowflakes gently falling could be heard.

Korbyn approached the window, his own heart weighed down by the situation's gravity.

Rena was his beloved daughter-in-law as important as Cecilia in his mind. Thinking of what might happen in the future, he

couldn't help but shed tears.

Waylen's voice, laden with guilt, emerged from the shadows. "Jarrod once said I have a strong personality that I struggle with forging deep connections. Dad, is it my fault that Rena has suffered so?"

Korbyn's eyes, clouded with unshed tears, met Waylen's gaze.

His voice, raw with emotion, sought to soothe.

"You and Rena are perfectly matched, destined for one another. Don't let doubts plague your heart."

Waylen's throat tightened.

His gaze never left Rena's slumbering form as he smoothed away a strand of hair on her forehead. They just fell in love with each other. How could she abandon him? How long was she going to sleep?

The passage of each second felt like an eternity, a relentless punishment for a heart caught in turmoil.

In the quiet moments as every minute ticked away, with the world outside wrapped in a blanket of snow, he couldn't help but feel the weight of time pressing upon him.

He stood on the precipice of his endurance, teetering on the edge of his emotional resolve. At this time, no one could help him, including his parents, Cecilia, and even Mark.

The weight of his role as Rena's husband and father to their children loomed heavy, his heart yearning for a reunion that seemed to elude his grasp.

Time unfurled its relentless march, three days slipping through Waylen's grasp like grains of sand in an hourglass.

Grief etched his features, his once-vibrant cheeks now hollowed by the weight of concern.

There was no concealing the toll Rena's accident had taken on him.

Keeping the truth from their children was an impossible task. Cecilia took on the solemn duty of explaining their mother's situation to them, guiding them through the somber halls of the hospital to Rena's bedside.

The door creaked open, revealing Rena's still form lying on the bed. Alexis, her eyes brimming with unshed tears, held her emotions in check as she rushed to her mother's side.

She nestled her head against Rena's belly, the gesture both gentle and heartbreaking, a silent embrace that spanned the chasm between them.

Leonel, his own eyes glistening with tears, reached out to touch Rena's hand, his fingers tracing patterns of warmth and love.

Meanwhile, Marcus, too young to fully comprehend, babbled the word "mommy," his voice filled with longing.

Waylen, his heart aching, gathered Marcus in his arms, holding the child close. His eyes, haunted by sorrow, met his son's gaze, and in that shared moment, they found solace in one another's embrace.

The children missed Rena very much.

Their eyes, brimming with innocence and love, were fixed on her as if seeking the solace of her presence. Did she feel their longing? Did she sense the weight of their collective prayers, an unspoken plea for her return?

The thought of losing the child in her belly weighted heavily in Waylen's heart.

He was afraid that when Rena woke up one day, she would be devastated to find out that their baby was gone.

The days stretched on, a relentless march of uncertainty and



worry. Waylen spared no effort, summoning experts from near and far to unlock the puzzle of her condition.

Rena's ward became a sanctuary of vigil, her name a constant whisper in the air, a plea for her to rejoin the world of the living. Yet Rena remained trapped in the realm of unconsciousness, her form lying still, untouched by the world that continued to spin around her.

Six days came and went, a slow and agonizing passage of time that left Rena's family on the precipice of despair.

As the clock struck ten in the evening, a pivotal consultation unfolded, the corridor enveloped in an icy chill that mirrored the uncertainty that hung in the air.

Waylen, clad only in a white shirt and trousers, stood in the sterile corridor, his breath visible in the cold.

The doctor's words pierced the silence. "It has been six days. Our intensive examinations have revealed that the fetus's heart rate within Mrs. Fowler's womb is steadily declining. If she doesn't awaken within the next forty-eight hours, both the baby and her health will be in grave danger. Our unanimous suggestion is artificial interference."

The weight of those words bore down on Waylen, his grip on the doctor's collar tightening involuntarily.

"What did you just say?" he demanded, his voice quaking with a mixture of fear and defiance.

The doctor, unflinching in the face of Waylen's emotion, met his gaze with calm resolve.

A moment stretched between them, a tense silence hanging in the air. Eventually, Waylen released his grip on the doctor's collar, his voice a mere whisper. "I apologize."

The doctor's voice remained steady as he said, "Consider the option, Mr. Fowler."

Alone in the darkened corridor, Waylen found himself swallowed by the cold night, his gaze fixed on the swirling snowflakes beyond the windowpane.

The snow continued to fall, as relentless as time itself, an unending cascade of white that seemed to mirror the desolation within Waylen's heart. He knew how much Rena loved the baby, and so did he.

Six days had passed, but she remained cocooned in her slumber.

Waylen's mind raced, grappling with the unbearable possibility of a future without Rena. What if she never woke? How could he bear the weight of a world without her?

Doubt, fear, and a fierce determination battled within him.

As he lit a cigarette, the ember burned bright, a tiny flame that seemed to mirror his own flickering hope. With the passage of that cigarette, Waylen returned to Rena's bedside.

Juliette, Rena's mother-in-law, was diligently caring for her.

Waylen's hoarse voice cut through the air. "Have the kids returned?"

Tears glistened in Juliette's eyes as she nodded. "Yes. Cecilia has taken them back."

Waylen took a warm towel from his mother's hand and began to tenderly wipe Rena's face. His voice, soft and raw, filled the room. "Mom, I haven't been a good husband. I could do nothing but watch Rena in a coma."

Juliette's own tears threatened to spill as she listened to her son's confession.

With gentle strokes, Waylen continued to wipe Rena's face, his voice a whisper that carried a promise. "Even though I forgot our past, I know one thing for certain. I love her. Mom, I want to find Jarrod."

Juliette hesitated, the thought of treacherous mountain roads blanketed by snow a concern.

Caressing Rena's face, Waylen said in a low voice, "I didn't believe in God before, but now I have no choice. Since he can figure out the past and foretell future, he must have a way to wake up Rena."

Even if Waylen had to be in dire straits, even if he had to trade his life for her awakening.

As a believer of God, Juliette also knew the price.

She sobbed, "Waylen, Let's wait for your father first, and then we can talk about this, okay?"

But Waylen, his gaze unwavering, replied, "Mom, you have Cecilia. But Rena, she's the mother of my four children. I have to do this for her."

He owed Rena so much.

That included love, understanding, and an unwavering commitment. His heart ached with the realization that he could never fully repay her.

He had to try everything he could.

With Juliette's reluctant agreement, Waylen set his sights on a daunting journey.

Juliette refused to cry, believing that it was ominous to do so.

Her smile, though tinged with sadness, offered a bittersweet reassurance, as if the impending separation was but a temporary parting.

Waylen's coat enveloped him as he prepared to venture into the unforgiving cold.

He paused, leaning over Rena's slumbering form, planting a

tender kiss on her cheek. His voice, a soft and unwavering promise, brushed against her ear. "Wait for me. I will return, I promise."

His steps carried him away, each stride a testament to his determination.

The hospital window framed his departure, Juliette's gaze following him until he vanished into the swirling snow. A whispered plea escaped her lips, a fervent wish that he would find his way back, safe and unharmed. "Waylen, you must come back safe and sound."

The midnight snowfall masked the treacherous path ahead, yet Waylen's resolve remained steadfast.

His car cut through the swirling snow, stopping at the foot of the mountain. Then, he opened the door and embarked on an arduous climb. Each step tested his strength, the snow seeping into his shoes, his pants drenched by the icy touch.

Yet, the discomfort was nothing compared to his determination to reach his destination.

With unwavering persistence, he ascended the mountain's peak, a lone figure against the pristine expanse of white.

The illuminated temple beckoned, a beacon of light against the night. Waylen's breath formed clouds in the frigid air as he entered, his features pale, his eyes burning with fervor.

Addressing the young disciple, his voice carried a plea. "I need to see Jarrod."

The disciple, hands clasped in prayer, offered a gentle denial.

"Changing fate is a challenge beyond measure. Please reconsider."

But Waylen's determination was unshakeable.

His impassioned pleas filled the air, echoing through the temple's hallowed halls. Reluctantly, the disciple conveyed Waylen's request, though the answer remained unchanged.

Waylen had made up his mind to seek for Mindy's help.

Undeterred, he knelt outside the temple, his voice a heartfelt entreaty as he pleaded, "Please save my wife and baby. I am willing to pay any price."

Jarrold, enshrouded in a veil of mystery, sat in contemplation.

Despite his refusal, Waylen's fervor touched something within him. The disciple's report prompted a decision.

The veil of snow intensified, a curtain of white separating heaven and earth.

Waylen's figure, resolute in its purpose, knelt before the door.

In the temple, the disciple whispered to Jarrod, "He is still here!"

Jarrold, a figure of enigma, sighed with a mixture of pity and gravity, "Such tangled destinies. Invite him in."

The disciple immediately ran out and let Waylen in.

Minutes later, Waylen stumbled into the temple, his complexion pallid.

Jarrold's voice, a whisper of guidance, pierced the silence. "There is a glimmer of hope. However, to exchange their fate, you must embrace their suffering. Are you prepared to make such a sacrifice? But if you fall into the Inferno, not only can't you save her, but you may also be doomed and can never return to this kaleidoscopic world."

He thought that Waylen had to think about it one more time.

After all, his life would be at risk.

In the face of this dire choice, Waylen's answer came without hesitation. "I am willing to endure their suffering in their stead."

Jarrold's eyes closed briefly, a sigh escaping his lips.

"You and she are fated to be entwined by the remnants of your past. The karmic ties that bind you have woven a complex tapestry of intertwined lives." Undeterred, Waylen's resolve remained steadfast. "I accept this fate. I will bear their suffering."

Jarrold's touch, gentle yet laden with a weighty promise, settled on Waylen's head.

"As you wish."

A blinding light engulfed Waylen, a cascade of memories flooding his consciousness.

Images flickered. He saw their first encounter, love blossoming in their shared apartment, the exquisite piano that became a symbol of their bond, and the tears that marked their journey.

The past danced before his eyes, a bittersweet symphony of moments etched into his heart.

As the memories coalesced, Waylen felt himself pulled into a world of dreams, the boundaries between reality and illusion fading into obscurity.

When everything was done, the scene unfolded before his eyes was the birds' singing and flowers' fragrance that filled the air.

And then, as if guided by fate's hand, he found himself standing on the platanus-lined path of Duefron Music School. Golden sunlight bathed him in its warmth, a nostalgic embrace that enveloped him.

Before him walked a figure, graceful and youthful.

Rena, at the tender age of twenty, approached, her presence a breath of fresh air in a world hued by nostalgia and memory.