

Mr. Edwards' Unraveled Life Chapter 396

Chapter 396

"Mr. Edwards contacted my..."

Kian didn't dare tell the truth.

And honestly, he didn't have to.

Norah stayed silent.

Kevin had reached out to her, but not to Kian. He had cut straight to the point, leaving no room for confusion.

Nellie walked over and took Norah's hand. "Norah, last time you couldn't make it, but our drama won another award! I booked a private event at Moonlight—let's all go celebrate!"

Norah didn't respond, but before she could, a smooth, amused voice cut through the air.

"Well, what a coincidence."

Everyone turned to look.

Emani approached, carrying a bouquet of flowers.

Nellie grinned. "Then come with us."

"Wait!"

Karina's sharp eyes locked onto Kian, who had just turned to leave. She spoke firmly. "Hand over your phone."

The crowd froze.

Kian exchanged glances with Norah, and in that moment, everything became clear.

Without hesitation, Kian pulled out his phone, unlocked it, and showed his call log to Norah.

She skimmed the screen.

The first contact was Kevin. When she clicked in, she saw the call had lasted only a few seconds.

Norah didn't say a word. The tension in the air was thick.

Kian braced himself, thinking she might call Kevin back right then and there. But instead, she handed the phone back and said evenly, "I don't want the flowers. Figure it out yourself."

Kian felt like crying.

How was he supposed to deal with all these flowers? Wasn't she making things difficult for him?

Just as he was about to protest, Nellie chuckled. "It's just a couple of bouquets. Take them home, toss them in the trash, or sell them for five cents on the street—your choice."

Kian winced.

He figured it was safest to drop them off at Norah's place. If Mr. Edwards found out about this, he'd be in serious trouble.

Karina stayed close to Norah, as she had ever since handling Norah's hospital discharge.

Now, surrounded by friends, Norah should've felt comforted. But she didn't. The absence of Kevin—and the child she had once dreamed of—left a hollow ache inside her.

A boy...

If her child had lived, he would've looked like his father.

The thought stabbed at her heart. She clenched her fists, digging her nails into her palms to keep herself from spiraling.

The private room Nellie booked at Moonlight was one of the largest.

Initially, it had been just Nellie and Sasha, but thanks to Norah, both of their dramas had become major hits, pulling in over a hundred million views.

Gloria stuck close to Norah, trying to lift her spirits. She cracked jokes, sang along when the music started, and encouraged Norah to join in.

Norah went through the motions—she toasted with them, sipped juice when she couldn't drink alcohol, and forced herself to smile.

Then came the grand finale—a fireworks display spelling out Norah's initials in the sky.

Sasha had arranged it.

She wanted to make sure Norah knew how much she was appreciated. And to make it even more special, she chose blue fireworks.

She wrapped an arm around Norah's shoulders. "Do you like them? Aren't they beautiful?"

"They are," Norah whispered.

They really were.

But the lump in her throat refused to go away.

As she watched the fireworks explode in the night sky, something inside her cracked.

Kevin should've been here.

Kevin, who had given her everything.

Kevin, who had even tried to bring Steven back to her.

And then, just like that, the memories came rushing in—the child she never got to hold, the one who had been taken from her before she even had a chance to see him.

She couldn't think about it. She wouldn't.

If she did, she'd lose control.

“I’m going to the bathroom,” she murmured.

Sasha, always perceptive, noticed the redness in Norah’s eyes and followed her.

She found Norah leaning over the sink, silent tears slipping down her face.

The sight clenched at her heart.

“Norah...” Sasha’s voice was barely above a whisper as she stepped closer.

Norah hadn’t expected her to come. She had been holding it together so well, but now, in front of Sasha, the dam broke.

“Sasha...” Her voice trembled. “I have everything now—fame, fortune. Everyone’s celebrating me. I should be happy.”

Her breath hitched.

“But I’m not. I feel so empty.”

She pressed a hand to her chest.

“Completely empty.”

Sasha’s heart twisted.

She knew about Kevin and Norah’s complicated relationship. They had never been the type to openly declare their love, but it was there, in every action, in every moment they had shared.

But now Kevin was gone.

Not just Kevin.

Steven had disappeared while searching for an antidote. Jace was missing too.

And then, there was the child.

The baby Norah never even got to meet.

It wasn’t just emptiness. It was numbness. A never-ending ache that suffocated her.

Sasha squeezed her shoulder. “Norah, you have what so many people only dream of. And people don’t just disappear. Mr. Edwards—he’ll come back when he’s finished with everything.”

She said it to reassure her, but deep down, she knew Kevin had already made his choice. He had left everything he had to Norah, ensuring she would be secure, no matter what.

Kevin had loved her enough to risk his life for her.

And when he was done handling whatever had pulled him away, Sasha truly believed he’d return to her side.

And maybe, just maybe, they’d get their chance to start over.

Norah let out a bitter laugh.

Everyone thought she had everything. Money, power, status.

Everyone assumed Kevin would return.

But they didn’t understand.

She didn’t care about any of that.

She had only ever wanted one thing—

For them to face everything together.

“He left me all these things like they’re some kind of promise,” she whispered. “But if he never comes back, or if we end up apart, what am I supposed to do with all of this? Eat it?”

Material things meant nothing.

Life wasn’t about wealth or power. It was about love, about the people you held close.

Sasha’s grip on her shoulder tightened. “Kevin left these things for you to give you security. You know him better than anyone, Norah. He wouldn’t have left unless he had no other choice.”

Norah’s eyes stung.

Because deep down, she knew Sasha was right.

But that didn't make the pain any easier to bear.

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Norah didn't respond.

At that moment, it felt like a blade had lodged in her throat. Every breath intensified the pain, making everything before her painfully clear.

She had been poisoned with KA48. But after giving birth, the poison had disappeared.

Kevin had arranged everything.

Everything had been covered up—including Bianca, her fragmented memories, and her lost child.

Back then, Kevin didn't even know the baby was his. He had lost control, lashed out at her in anger. But despite that, he had still chosen to keep the child. Kevin had always cared deeply for her, even now—leaving everything behind, disappearing without a word. She knew why.

He didn't want her to suffer.

But why couldn't she want the same for him?

"Norah, you need to be okay. Otherwise, everything Mr. Edwards did for you will be in vain."

Sasha was only an observer, but she understood.

The poison in Norah's body was gone, but the process had surely been agonizing.

She said those words not just to console Norah but to remind her—if she broke down now, if she let her emotions consume her, things would only spiral further out of control. Norah had always been strong, and Sasha saw her as more than just a friend.

"I know he did so much for me," Norah murmured. "I know he left after arranging everything, and I know how hard that must've been for him. But what I wanted... was for him to tell me. To share his pain with me."

She pushed Sasha away.

A warm embrace could be comforting, but Norah knew she couldn't run from reality. She couldn't act like a child, crying every time things got tough.

Sasha understood.

Norah didn't just want to receive love—she wanted to share both joy and sorrow.

Sasha was silent for a moment before finally saying, “Norah, you have to understand—Mr. Edwards is a man. Men want to protect the women they love. They don't shed tears easily. If he poured out his heart and cried in front of you every time something went wrong, would you still see him the same way?”

Everything had two sides.

People fought for what they wanted, and they let go of what they feared.

Norah made up her mind. “I'm going to the Yi Tribe to find him.”

Kevin hadn't wanted to leave her behind. No matter the danger, she had to stand by his side.

The Yi Tribe was dangerous.

Norah's poisoning and Steven's disappearance were proof. Sasha knew the place was ruled by warring factions, with entire regions closed off from outsiders.

Kevin would've gone prepared. He always did.

“I'm not afraid,” Norah said firmly.

She had already decided—if she had to die, she would die with Kevin.

Sasha tried to talk her out of it, but when that failed, she turned to Emani, Gloria, and Nellie, hoping they could dissuade her.

But Gloria stood up and said, “Norah has made up her mind. Let her go.”

Gloria had known Norah the longest. She understood her better than anyone. Once Norah made a decision, no force in the world could change it.

And besides—

Where Norah was going, the people she loved most were waiting for her. Her childhood sweetheart was waiting for her.

Karina felt the same way, though Gloria had spoken first. So instead, she chose to remain by Norah's side, silent but unwavering.

It wasn't just about their past in the organization.

It was about Jace, too.

Tonight, the celebration party turned into a farewell party. At first, the atmosphere was lively. But then, Emani broke down in tears.

“Sis Norah, you have to come back safe.”

That was all it took. The moment she cried, no one else could hold back.

Karina stood up and patted her chest. “Don’t worry. With me there, I’ll protect her.”

It was her duty.

It was Kevin’s request.

And it was Jace’s wish.

Sasha, Nellie, and Emani got drunk.

Gloria didn’t.

Norah couldn’t drink, and Karina needed to stay alert.

“Gloria, make sure they all get home. I need to go,” Norah said, glancing at her friend.

Nothing more needed to be said.

Gloria understood. She took the jade Buddha from around her neck and placed it around Norah’s. “Stay safe.”

“I will.”

That was their farewell.

But Norah didn’t leave for the Yi Tribe right away.

First, she pulled Karina aside and asked her to teach her how to fight.

Karina understood immediately—Norah was preparing for what lay ahead.

Considering her condition, Karina trained her slowly, carefully.

Norah was a fast learner.

After just three days, she managed to take Karina down on the training mat.

Karina’s combat skills were first-class. Though she held back slightly, it was enough—Norah had learned enough to keep herself from being an easy target.

Karina couldn't help but marvel. "I didn't expect you to be this sharp."

If Norah had stayed in the organization, she would've surpassed everyone. She would've become the best.

But, thankfully, she had escaped.

The organization's brutal training and the hardships they endured were memories Karina never wanted to relive.

She pushed those thoughts away.

Before she could say anything else, Norah grabbed her hand and said, "Karina, book the earliest ticket to the Yi Tribe. We're leaving."

She needed to stay alert.

She needed to make sure no one could hurt her.

"There are no direct flights to the Yi Tribe," Karina replied. "We'll need to transfer through Port B. You've trained hard today. Get some rest first."

Karina patted Norah's hand.

She knew Norah was desperate to find Kevin.

And she wasn't looking for Jace.

Before Jace left, he had only sent Karina a single message: **Protect Julie.**

Since that day, Karina hadn't heard from him.

And Kevin—Kevin's poison still hadn't been cured. Was Jace with him?

Suddenly, Norah's firm voice cut through her thoughts. "If we can't leave today, we'll leave first thing tomorrow."

"Alright."

With Karina's agreement, Norah went to pack her things.

She checked the weather. The temperatures there soared past 100°F. She packed sunscreen, cash, food.

Most importantly—medicine. The region had been in conflict for years. Anything could happen.

“Norah, why don’t you wait here for news?” Karina suggested. “It’s safer. And you just got out of confinement—you’re not ready for the conditions over there.”

“No.” Norah’s voice was steady. Determined. “I’m going to find Kevin.”

Even if it meant dying, she would die with him.

Karina sighed.

What is love, if not the willingness to follow someone through life and death?

Kevin felt it.

Norah felt it.

Jace did, too.

And Karina—

She wasn’t so different.

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Kian was on edge.

The others remained at the Edwards estate, but with Kevin gone, there was much to handle. Lately, Kevin had been busier than ever.

When Kevin’s number flashed on his screen, a sudden rush of tension surged through Kian. He quickly answered, “Mr. Edwards.”

“Buzz... Airplanes... Buzz...”

The signal was weak.

Yi was a war-torn region, riddled with conflict year-round. The conditions were brutal.

Then Kevin’s voice came through, clear despite the static. “Kian, how’s Norah?”

No surprise there. The one person Kevin always cared about most was Norah.

Kian responded truthfully, "She followed the confinement period as instructed. After leaving the hospital, she celebrated with friends. Lately, she's been training in martial arts with Karina..."

Before he could finish, the call dropped.

Kian redialed immediately, but an automated voice cut in: "The number you dialed is currently out of service. Please try again later."

There was no signal.

His grip tightened around the phone. A sense of unease gnawed at him. He hesitated but ultimately chose to follow Kevin's last instructions.

Yi Tribe.

Kevin wasn't sure where he was anymore. Nearly two weeks had passed since he arrived, yet he hadn't found Steven or managed to enter the main city.

Explosions lit up the night sky, casting half of it in flames and smoke.

Levi and Frank stood atop a crumbling wall. Levi held a makeshift antenna, attempting to establish a connection.

The entire area had lost power and water.

"Damn it!" Levi cursed as he lost his footing and tumbled down. The antenna snapped in half against the ground.

Frank smirked. "Bullets are flying, and you fall off a wall instead?"

"Shut it!" Levi shot him a glare. "You've seen me back down?"

Frank laughed. He hadn't.

Since arriving with Kevin, they had been caught in the southern battle of Yi. They had driven back enemy forces, but the region, situated in the Golden Triangle, remained highly volatile.

A sudden voice cut through Frank's thoughts. "Get the communication line working. We need to reach command."

Kevin's tone was calm yet firm.

"Yes, sir!" Levi and Frank responded in unison.

Kevin turned his gaze toward the distant battlefield. In his mind, Norah's face surfaced.

A nation comes before a home.

He had made a promise, and right now, his duty was to defend peace and lead the battle. He still hadn't found Steven. The poison in his system remained unresolved.

But first, he had to secure the Yi tribe.

Norah didn't sleep that night.

Lying in bed, she stared at the ceiling, thinking of Kevin. And the child.

She refused to believe her baby was stillborn. She had felt her child's presence so vividly.

Yet...

She never even got to see her baby before waking up.

Before giving birth, she had downloaded a pregnancy app. It still sent daily updates—how to feed a baby, what milestones to expect. She checked it every day, clinging to that small hope.

A sudden knock on the door.

"Come in," she said instinctively.

Karina stepped inside. She had come downstairs for water when she noticed Norah's light still on.

"You should sleep. The flight from Port B to Yi takes over twenty hours. If you don't rest, you won't hold up."

Even in first class, it wouldn't be comfortable.

Norah forced a smile, but it was laced with bitterness.

She knew how exhausting the trip would be. She understood the dangers of Yi. A single mistake could cost her life. But Kevin was there.

Karina's gaze drifted to Norah's phone screen.

A sharp pang hit her chest.

The baby was gone, yet Norah hadn't let go. Karina didn't know what to say.

She stepped forward and hugged Norah, patting her back—just like Norah used to comfort her in the organization.

"I know," Norah murmured. "I won't back down. I'm not afraid."

Karina stayed by her side that night.

At sunrise, they headed to Belourvinelle International Airport, checked in, and boarded their flight.

By the time Kian learned of their departure, it was too late.

The plane couldn't be turned around.

Port B and Yi operated under separate governments. No one here could override aviation orders there. Now, Kian's only option was to call Kevin.

But Kevin's phone remained unreachable.

During the flight, Norah had a dream.

She saw Levi and Frank.

Both stood solemnly before her—one holding Kevin’s uniform, the other clutching a black box.

Their faces were steeped in grief.

“Sister-in-law, Captain Edwards...”

“No!” she screamed.

Norah jolted awake, heart hammering in her chest. Sweat drenched her forehead. The dream had been so vivid, too real.

“Norah, are you okay?” Karina turned to her, concerned.

Norah was pale, breathless.

“I—I saw them... Levi and Frank. They had Kevin’s uniform. A black box...” Her voice shook.

Karina pulled her into an embrace, soothing her. “It was just a dream. The opposite of reality. Kevin is fine.”

Norah said nothing.

She desperately wanted to believe Kevin was safe. But fear gnawed at her.

Karina kept her distracted with conversation. They talked, anything to keep Norah from dwelling on that dream.

After nearly thirty grueling hours, the plane finally descended into a small country near Yi.

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Norah sat by the window, gazing out onto the tarmac through the glass.

The airstrip was barely a third the size of Belourvinelle Airport. The small concrete surface was marked with wide white lines, and a simple iron fence enclosed the area.

The plane descended abruptly, skipping the usual landing process. The sudden jolt made Norah’s stomach churn, and a wave of nausea hit her hard.

She couldn’t hold it back and began retching.

Karina, startled, sat up straight and placed a reassuring hand on Norah's shoulder. "Hang in there, Norah. It'll pass soon."

Trained for situations like this, Karina kept her voice calm. "We're in first class. We'll be the first ones off."

"Yeah." Norah took a deep breath, still feeling queasy but managing to endure it.

Even though they had priority exit, there was no jet bridge. They had to descend the stairs and walk across the tarmac to the terminal.

It wasn't just smaller than Belourvinelle Airport—it wasn't even as well-maintained as Belourvinelle University's basketball court. Plastic waste littered the overgrown grass around the airstrip.

A gust of wind blew, carrying sand that stung Norah's eyes.

Karina took her hand. "I'll grab our luggage. You find a place to sit and wait for me. We need to hire a translator before heading to the Yi tribe."

Without a translator, they'd be lost.

"Got it."

There was no baggage carousel like in Craggaville. Instead, they had to collect their luggage manually from a counter.

Luckily, they didn't have much—a small suitcase each.

Karina wheeled her bag over to Norah. "How are you feeling? If you're still nauseous, I can get you something to drink."

Norah shook her head.

This airport was worse than a remote bus station in Craggaville. Even the signs were rusted. The chair she sat on creaked loudly with every movement.

"Let's find a hotel nearby," Karina suggested. "I need to wait for someone to deliver something."

"Okay."

Karina chose the best hotel in the area, but it wasn't any better than a budget business hotel back home.

Lying on the bed, Norah finally had a chance to relax, but exhaustion weighed heavily on her.

Steven and Kevin still hadn't contacted her.

That's right—Steven!

She grabbed her phone and quickly dialed his number.

"Beep... beep..."

After two rings, the call dropped due to no signal. Karina took the phone, made a few adjustments, and handed it back.

"You need global roaming to make calls."

"I completely forgot," Norah muttered, feeling a little embarrassed.

Kevin had once promised to take her to Foutumsally, but that never happened. The farthest she had ever traveled was to a neighboring city.

She had been too eager.

Karina reassured her. "Get some rest. Room service will bring food soon. Once we have what we need, we'll head to the Yi tribe."

"Alright."

Even as she nodded, Norah kept trying to call Steven.

The first call rang endlessly before disconnecting.

The second call had the same result.

She hesitated, debating whether to send a text when suddenly, Steven's number appeared on her screen.

She quickly answered. "Hello?"

The voice on the other end spoke in broken Chinese. She recognized it instantly—it was the same person who had called from Steven's phone before.

"It's me. Steven wanted to reach someone. My name is Norah. I'm in the Yi tribe now. Can you send me an address or give me your number? I need to know exactly where you found the phone."

She had to track down his location.

Steven had gone through so much just to leave her a recording—to help find an antidote for her. She owed it to him to find him.

As for Kevin...

She had to reach him, too. He needed to stop interfering. She didn't need him arranging everything for her.

She wasn't a child anymore. She could handle this.

Especially now that scattered memories were resurfacing, linking her to an organization called Nile.

There were things she needed to uncover—on her own.

"Sending anything near the Yi tribe isn't easy," the caller said. "But I can give you an address. You'll have to pick it up yourself. You don't need to pay me. We found the phone next to a trash can."

Norah's heart sank.

If the phone had been near a trash can, that meant it wasn't at the original scene.

It would be hard to trace back.

"Fine. Just tell me where I can find it. I'll come get it."

"Okay. You can pick it up from a watch shop. I'll send you the location."

"Thank you."

A moment later, the address came through.

It was ten hours away.

Traveling here wasn't as easy as back home, but she needed that phone. It could help pinpoint Steven's last known location through GPS.

Just as she was contemplating her next move, Karina walked in.

She wasn't alone.

A woman in her early thirties followed behind her, tall and slender with bronzed skin and small, tight curls. A red ribbon held back her hair.

"Norah, this is Julissa. She'll be our translator."

"Hello, Norah," Julissa greeted warmly.

Norah introduced herself briefly.

Karina got straight to the point. "Payment is settled daily. Bank transfer or cash."

Then, she opened her palm.

A small white pill lay there.

Both Norah and Julissa froze.

Julissa frowned. "What is this?"

Though foreign, her Chinese was fluent.

Karina remained unfazed. "We need absolute trust. The pay we're offering is higher than any translation job you've ever had. If you're not comfortable, you can walk away now."

She stepped aside, giving Julissa the choice.

Julissa's face remained calm. She considered Karina's words, then made her decision—she swallowed the pill.

Karina handed her a thick stack of foreign currency. "Wait for me outside."

"Okay."

Julissa left.

Norah turned to Karina, stunned.

The object in Karina's hand made her breath catch in her throat.

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"Take this for self-defense."

Seeing Norah hesitate, Karina didn't give her a choice—she shoved the item into Norah's hands. The cool, metallic weight sent a shiver down Norah's spine.

She had seen this before—on TV and during that terrifying time when Archer had tied her and Bianca up. Back then, she had also noticed Frank and Levi steering clear of her when Kevin was around.

"I don't know how to use this," Norah admitted, the object feeling impossibly heavy in her grip.

The thought of firing it and possibly hurting someone made her uneasy.

Karina understood her hesitation.

“This isn’t home, Norah. We need to be able to protect ourselves. Otherwise, we’re just easy targets.”

They were like fish on a chopping board—helpless, waiting to be slaughtered.

Karina’s voice was hoarse but firm. “Even if you don’t use it, you need to have it. Once we reach the Yi Tribe and find a safe place, I’ll teach you how.”

Norah tried to hand it back. “Then... you take it for now—”

Karina cut her off. “Just hold on to it. I’ll find you a smaller one later.”

“Alright.”

Norah had no choice but to grip it tightly.

She then relayed the address from the call earlier. Karina considered it for a moment before saying, “You shouldn’t go in person, and I can’t leave you alone to retrieve your phone. I’ll have someone else pick it up.”

It made more sense to head straight to their destination. Running around too much increased the risk of trouble, and in an unfamiliar country, Karina wasn’t willing to leave Norah unprotected.

“Okay.”

Norah agreed without protest. Karina made sense.

They left the hotel.

To reach the Yi Tribe, they needed a car. Karina had arranged for one to meet them outside, but before it arrived, a group of children swarmed them.

They were small, scrawny, and barely clothed. Their large black eyes were sunken, and their bodies thin. The few with clothes wore tattered, filthy rags—like they’d been pulled from a dumpster. Among them were girls, some too young to cover themselves properly.

They chattered in a foreign tongue, clustering around them, refusing to let them pass.

“What are they saying?” Norah turned to Julissa.

She could guess—they were begging for food or money. Their eyes held no fear, only a resigned familiarity, as if this was routine for them.

The sight made Norah’s heart ache.

She had grown up with loving parents in a strong, stable country. She had never known hunger like this. But she had once cared for children, and she couldn't just look away.

Julissa snapped at them in their language, but instead of dispersing, the children dodged her and focused on Norah and Karina instead.

Karina, trained in martial arts, easily kept them at bay.

Norah, however, hesitated.

One child clung to her, pointing at their mouth. Another dropped to their knees, crying.

Back in Craggaville, Norah had volunteered at orphanages, but she had never seen suffering like this.

No child should have to live like this.

"Karina, give them some of our food. And my clothes—give them to the little girls."

Julissa turned serious. "Ms. White, I know you mean well, but there are countless refugees here. If you give to them—"

Some of these people deliberately targeted foreign tourists, playing on their kindness to beg for food, money, or goods. Some even went further—luring travelers to remote areas, knocking them out, and selling their organs for cash.

Norah had read about the dangers before coming here. She knew the surrounding regions were war-torn and impoverished. But knowing it was different from witnessing it firsthand.

She couldn't pretend not to see them.

She had volunteered at orphanages because she wanted to help children—no matter where they were from.

"I understand. We don't have much food or clothing, but we can give them what we can." Norah shot Karina a look.

Karina hesitated but then nodded. She was cautious, but she trusted Norah's instincts. Still, she wasn't about to take risks—so she flashed the gun at her side to ensure order.

The children immediately froze, their survival instincts kicking in. But the moment they received the food, they devoured it like starving animals.

One child choked on a piece of bread, their face turning red as they gasped for air. Their tiny body convulsed before collapsing.

Norah's instincts took over. She rushed forward and slapped the child's back, trying to dislodge the blockage.

But before she could finish, something slammed into her waist.

She stumbled, barely catching herself before hitting the ground—Karina's quick reflexes the only thing keeping her upright.

The child had fallen limp.

Norah turned sharply to see a dark-skinned woman in tattered clothes glaring at her with pure hatred.

She hissed something in her native tongue.

Julissa's expression darkened. "Oh no. She thinks you gave her child bad food on purpose. She says... she's going to kill you."

The woman lunged.

But Karina was faster.

She pulled out her gun, stopping the woman in her tracks.

A flicker of terror passed through the woman's wild eyes.

Norah, still breathless, turned to Julissa. "Tell her—I was trying to save her child. She doesn't need to be afraid."

Julissa hesitated but quickly translated. "Your child choked. Ms. White was helping—"

But the woman saw her opening.

Like a desperate animal, she lunged again—

Just as a military vehicle screeched to a halt nearby.