

# Mr. Edwards' Unraveled Life

---

## Chapter 731

Outside the hospital, Ophelia called the police to report Teresa.

Just then, a car pulled up. Kian got out, his face full of worry. "Did my mom give you a hard time?"

"No," Ophelia said as she slid into the passenger seat. "She's full of regret. Asked me to forgive her. But I can't. Not yet." She told him everything that had happened in the hospital room.

Kian took her hand. "We'll live life on our terms. I'll visit her on holidays—by myself. You don't have to see her again unless you want to."

His support warmed her. She nodded.

After clearing up Teresa's case, the two said their goodbyes to family and boarded a flight to Iceland. On the plane, Ophelia leaned against Kian's shoulder, at peace. "If only we could stay this happy forever. When I pushed for the divorce, I was breaking inside."

"That was my fault," Kian whispered, kissing her forehead. "If I'd handled my family earlier, you wouldn't have had to suffer. Let's forget it all. Sleep. When you wake up, we'll see the fjords."

"You look too," she said, lifting her head. Their lips met, sealing a promise of forever.

Back in the city, Kevin was juggling new company projects and an ongoing investigation into a shady group. Now that Kian was with Ophelia again, Kevin had planned to hand off one of the projects—but Kian's voicemail made things clear: "We're on our honeymoon. Let's talk work when we're back."

"When's that?" Kevin muttered, glancing out his office window, suddenly longing for a vacation with Norah.

"Could be a week, could be longer," Kian said, his arm around Ophelia as they stood on an Icelandic glacier, snow crunching beneath their boots. Moments like these made everything worth it. He'd worked so hard just to see her smile.

Kevin got it. After nearly losing each other, Kian and Ophelia's bond was stronger than ever. "Enjoy it," Kevin said before ending the call.

He buzzed in his new assistant, Jeffrey Lepage—Bonian Lepage’s cousin. The guy was sharp, ambitious, and had real big-firm experience.

Jeffrey walked in. “Mr. Edwards?”

“Ready for a challenge?” Kevin asked, sliding some project files across his desk. “The plan’s solid, just needs refining. You’d see it through and report to me. Think you’re up for it?”

Jeffrey studied the documents for a moment, then nodded. “I’m in.”

“You’ll get a 20% pay raise this month, plus bonuses depending on how well this goes,” Kevin said. “Do a good job, and you’ll be rewarded.”

Money wasn’t Jeffrey’s motivation—his family was well-off, and he’d saved plenty. What he wanted was growth.

Feeling better with the project handled, Kevin tried calling Norah to let her know he’d be home soon—but her line was busy.

Norah was on the phone with Pharaoh, picking up on something strange. “You’re hiding something,” she said.

“I’m just checking in on you and the kids,” Pharaoh said casually. “How’s Reina?”

“You’re a terrible liar,” Norah pressed.

Pharaoh’s heart sank. He was hiding something—but he didn’t want to put it on her. “No lies here,” he said. “Bring the kids when you can. I miss Reina’s chubby cheeks.”

He dreamed of watching her grow up—preschool, graduation, marriage—but deep down, he didn’t think he’d live long enough to see it.

## Chapter 732

Norah’s suspicions were growing. Pharaoh’s strange behavior—like saying he was too “busy” to watch Reina—didn’t sit right. Sure, elders had their own lives, but this felt off. Still, she didn’t show it on the phone. “Reina’s napping. How about we come visit this weekend when Cooper’s free?”

“Sounds good,” Pharaoh said before hanging up with a tired sigh.

His hospital room door opened, and the attending doctor walked in. “Time for your IV. Have you decided on treatment yet?”

Pharaoh shook his head. Logically, he knew he should fight the advanced liver cancer—treatment could give him years, not just months. But chemo would leave him weak, bald, and frail. He didn’t want Norah to see him like that.

“You want to live,” the doctor said. “It’s not a cure, but it gives you time. Why turn that down?”

Money wasn’t the issue—his hospital account had more than enough. But when he was first diagnosed, Pharaoh had stayed in denial, wasting time on test after test. Now, he had finally accepted reality. Birth, aging, illness, and death—no one could escape them. He’d rather spend what time he had with Norah and the kids, creating memories, than wasting it fighting a battle he couldn’t win.

“I don’t want Norah to see me falling apart,” he said quietly. “I’m a doctor—I know what’s coming. Let me think it over.”

The doctor sighed and left.

Meanwhile, Norah was making plans to get to the bottom of everything.

“Mom, we have an escape drill at school tomorrow,” Cooper said, peeking into her room. “Can you pick me up after?”

“Of course,” Norah said, hugging him. “How about we visit Grandpa with Reina in the afternoon?”

“Yeah!” Cooper nodded. He’d always liked Pharaoh—he felt the warmth in him.

“Did you finish your homework?”

“Yup! Wanna check?” Cooper grinned.

Kindergarten homework was simple, and Cooper had nailed it. After checking it, Norah let him watch TV while she played with Reina.

Then, a courier showed up with a package she hadn’t ordered. Inside were bottles of tonic and a letter from Jace, calling her “Alma.” He’d opened a new hospital in the capital and sent the tonic as a gift. She messaged a quick thank-you and stored the medicine away. With Jace’s reputation, she trusted its quality.

When Kevin got home, Norah told him about the tonics. They spent the evening enjoying some family time.

The next day, Norah dropped Cooper at school, packed up Reina’s things, and picked Cooper up after the drill. Then they all headed to the hospital.

Pharaoh hadn’t expected them. A report confirming his cancer diagnosis lay on his bedside table. A nurse came in to deliver medication and noticed it. Her own father had battled cancer, so she spoke up.

“Even with late-stage cancer, treatment can help. My dad fought and lived a year longer than they predicted.”

"I'm a doctor," Pharaoh replied. "I understand." He had already decided to go with conservative treatment—just pills, no chemo. He didn't want to become a ghost of himself.

The nurse thought about saying more but stopped when Norah entered with the kids. Their eyes met, but she stayed silent. It wasn't her place.

"Mom, is Grandpa sick?" Cooper asked, eyeing the nurse's cart.

Norah's smile faded. Was Pharaoh hiding something serious?

### Chapter 733

Norah's heart sank at Cooper's question. The nurse's cart, the report on Pharaoh's table—it all pointed to something serious. She forced a smile.

"Grandpa's just getting a checkup. Don't worry, okay?"

Cooper nodded, but he was clearly still curious. Norah brought both kids into the room, trying to calm her racing thoughts. Pharaoh's odd behavior on the phone, avoiding Reina, and now this hospital stay? He was definitely hiding something.

Pharaoh's face lit up when he saw them. "My little treasures!" he beamed.

Cooper ran to him and climbed into the bed for a hug. Reina reached out from Norah's arms, and Pharaoh gently took her, kissing her chubby cheeks.

"Look at this chunky girl," he said with a soft smile.

Norah watched them, her chest tight. The love in Pharaoh's eyes was real, but so were the IV and the sickly color of his skin.

"Cooper's hungry, and I bet you haven't eaten," she said. "I'll grab food. What do you want?"

"Hamburgers and mashed potatoes!" Cooper said, bouncing on the bed.

"Something light for me," Pharaoh replied. "More veggies, less oil."

Norah took note of the diet change—it was another red flag. "Be right back."

But she wasn't just going to get food—she needed answers.

Once she left, Pharaoh slipped out and found the attending doctor.

"Please don't tell my daughter about my condition," he said.

The doctor frowned. "If it were something minor, fine. But this is advanced liver cancer. Your family deserves to know."

"I don't want Norah to worry. She'll fall apart. If you're worried about liability, I'll sign a waiver. I take full responsibility."

The doctor hesitated. "Even if I stay quiet, your symptoms will become obvious. She'll figure it out eventually."

"Then let her find out when it's impossible to hide. I owe her so much from her childhood. I can't burden her now."

The doctor saw the pain in his eyes. "Okay. If she asks, I'll tell her it's private and direct her to you. What you share is your call."

"Thank you," Pharaoh said, heading back to the ward to be with the kids.

Meanwhile, Norah went to the doctor's office. She shut the door behind her and got right to the point.

"I want to know what's wrong with my dad. He's not okay."

"Patient privacy," the doctor said calmly. "You'll have to ask him directly."

"He's my father," Norah said firmly. "I know something's seriously wrong. I deserve to know."

"The law puts the patient first," the doctor said. "You need to talk to him."

Norah saw she wasn't getting anywhere. "Thanks," she said tightly and left.

She bought burgers for Cooper and vegetarian meals for herself and Pharaoh, still deep in thought.

Back in the room, Pharaoh said, "Norah, if you're busy, leave Reina with me. The nanny and I can handle it. You can come after Cooper's school for dinner."

Norah agreed, but the gray in Pharaoh's hair made her heart ache. Every moment with him felt more precious.

After dinner, they played together until evening.

"We're heading home," Norah said, holding Reina and Cooper's hands. "I'll text when we get back."

"Drive safe," Pharaoh said, watching them walk down the hallway. The room grew quiet again.

Later that night, Pharaoh made a video call to Baimo.

Baimo and Freyja appeared on screen, smiling from their bedroom.

"You two look happy," Pharaoh said, smiling faintly.

"We are," Baimo replied. "Are you doing okay?"

Pharaoh nodded. Seeing Baimo, Freyja, Norah, and Kevin living good lives brought him peace. If they were doing well, he could let go a little easier.

### **Chapter 734**

Pharaoh's hugs with Cooper and Reina lasted longer than usual. Every embrace felt like one less—he could feel the countdown deep inside. When the end came, he didn't want to have any regrets.

Norah watched him with the kids and let out a quiet sigh. His love was clear—there was something special between grandparents and grandkids. She hadn't believed it until she saw it with her own eyes.

Reina drank her milk, but Cooper and Pharaoh hadn't eaten. "I'll grab some food," Norah said. "Any requests?"

"Burgers and mashed potatoes!" Cooper said cheerfully.

"Something light. Vegetarian," Pharaoh replied, his choice revealing how fragile his health had become.

Norah left, determined to track down the doctor afterward. But Pharaoh had already seen it coming—he'd made sure the doctor wouldn't talk. Back in the room, he played with the kids, soaking in their laughter.

When Norah returned with food, she gave Cooper his burger and shared the vegetarian dishes with Pharaoh. When he asked her to stay and watch Reina with him, it sounded more like a plea to enjoy every moment. She agreed, shaken by how old and tired he looked.

After a fun evening, Norah took the kids home. She texted Pharaoh as promised. Alone, he called Baimo, feeling relieved that his family was doing well. That was enough for him.

But Norah wasn't going to let it go. She could feel something was wrong. If the doctor wouldn't talk, she'd find another way. The signs were too clear to ignore.

Later that night, Kevin came home. He didn't stop to play with the kids like usual. Instead, he pulled Norah into their bedroom and locked the door. Her smile faded. Something was wrong.

### **Chapter 735**

"Remember that little girl?" Kevin asked.

Norah nodded, her face hardening. That child had almost gotten Reina killed. If she could go back, she'd never have let it slide.

"I had her background checked," Kevin said. "Her family's dirt poor. Two older sisters, two older brothers, two younger kids. Dad's dead. Mom's the only one working, and they barely get by. Someone's been supporting them financially for years."

Norah's eyes narrowed. "The organization."

"Exactly," Kevin said. "They're not just helping—they're grooming. And she's not the only one. There are more kids like her. They haven't sent them abroad yet, but they're being prepared."

"They're raising replacements," Norah said, disgusted. "Keeping them alive just to use them later."

The organization was ruthless—taking in desperate kids, threatening their families, and using poverty as leverage. But without that money, those kids might not have even survived.

"I don't think I'm their only target," Kevin said. "I want to go after them. Face them head-on. But I need you to stay with Reina and Cooper."

"No way," Norah said firmly. "We're partners. We promised to face everything together. I'm not letting you do this alone."

"It's dangerous," Kevin warned. "That country's lawless—crime everywhere, no real police force. Add the organization? It's too risky."

"We're parents. We share the risks. If we both go, Pharaoh can watch the kids. I trust him."

"Does he even have time?" Kevin tried. "He was too busy last time."

"Stop making excuses," Norah said. "If you go without me, I'll follow. I'm not weak. I won't drag you down."

"I know you're strong," Kevin said, pulling her into his arms. "But I'm supposed to protect you."

"We protect each other," she said gently but firmly. "I'm going."

Kevin gave in, kissing her forehead. "Then we'll go together. Meeting you was the best thing that ever happened to me."

"And you to me," Norah said, resting her head on his chest. "But first, I need to dig into Pharaoh's condition. He's seriously sick and keeping it from me—and the doctor's helping him hide it."

She told Kevin about the hospital visit and the doctor dodging her questions. "He's a doctor himself. If he's hiding it, it's serious. Probably terminal."

Kevin's heart sank. He saw Pharaoh as family. "If he's hiding it from you, he's probably hiding it from Baimo too."

“Exactly,” Norah said. “You go after the organization. I’ll look into Pharaoh’s condition.”

They were deep in planning when Cooper showed up at the stairs, clutching a toy, unsure if he should interrupt.

“Cooper, what’s wrong?” Norah asked, kneeling next to him.

“My toy’s stuck,” he said softly. “Can you fix it?”

Kevin smiled and took it from him. “Let’s take a look.”

As they helped Cooper, Norah’s resolve hardened. She would uncover the truth about Pharaoh—and face whatever came next, together with Kevin.

## Chapter 736

“Sweetie, why are you standing here alone?” Norah asked, scooping Cooper into her arms. “Do you want to tell us something?”

Cooper looked up, a little unsure. “I wanted to play with you and Dad. But if you’re busy, I can just watch cartoons.”

Normally, even if Kevin came home late, he always made time to play with Cooper and Reina. But tonight, he’d gone straight to the bedroom with Norah. Cooper hadn’t wanted to interrupt—but he missed their time together.

“We’re done with work,” Norah said, carrying him downstairs. “Let’s hang out.” Kevin followed, and soon the three were sitting on the couch, talking and laughing. Reina was passed between them until she finally fell asleep in Cooper’s arms.

Cooper sat frozen, afraid to wake her. Norah noticed how stiff he was. “Baby, let me take her to the cradle. Your arms must be tired.”

“No, Mom, let me hold her a little longer,” he whispered, holding Reina close. Her chubby, rosy cheeks were too cute to let go.

Norah smiled warmly. “Okay. But tell me when you get tired.”

Cooper nodded and kept holding her until his arms went numb. He finally whispered, “Mom, I can’t hold her anymore.”

Norah gently took Reina and tucked her into the cradle. She stayed asleep, wrapped up in a soft blanket. Back on the couch, Norah asked, “Want to see Grandpa tomorrow?”

“Yeah!” Cooper’s eyes lit up. “I like Grandpa. Reina does too!”

Kids saw things simply. They loved anyone who loved them. Norah's heart ached. She and Pharaoh had just patched things up. Whatever he was dealing with, she wanted him to fight. Their family was small—every connection mattered.

---

Meanwhile, in the Yi community, Baimo had been swamped ever since taking over Pharaoh's duties. Even with Freyja's help, they worked late into the night.

"I made you some soup," Freyja said, setting a bowl down. "Drink it after work. You've been pushing yourself too hard."

Her heart ached for him. Being a leader meant always putting others first.

"You didn't need to cook," Baimo said, guiding her to sit. "You're pregnant—you should be resting. I should be making *you* soup."

As her husband, he felt responsible for taking care of her, especially now.

Freyja touched her belly and smiled. "You're already so busy. I couldn't ask you to cook. Have you thought of any names for the baby?"

Baimo paused. He had, but nothing felt right yet. Their first child deserved the perfect name. "I've been looking through old texts for ideas," he said. "We don't know if it's a boy or girl yet, so let's pick both. We'll use them either way."

Freyja, who loved kids, lit up at the thought of becoming a mom. Her pregnancy had been smooth so far, thanks to top-notch medical care and only mild morning sickness. "Okay, I trust your judgment."

Baimo knelt down and pressed his ear to her belly. "Hey baby, it's Daddy—" Then he laughed. "He kicked me!"

"Really?" Freyja's eyes sparkled. She placed his hand on her belly. "Say it again."

"You like Daddy? Give me a kick!" Baimo said. Sure enough, another tiny kick came. They knew it was probably coincidence, but they were thrilled anyway.

"If Pharaoh were here, he'd love this," Freyja said. "Once we pick names, we should ask what he thinks."

Baimo's smile faded. He grew serious. Freyja noticed right away. "What's wrong? Is something going on with Pharaoh?"

"I don't know," Baimo said honestly. "But something's off. When he looks at me, there's this... hesitation. Like he's keeping something from me."

That wasn't like Pharaoh. He'd never been secretive before. A sudden change like that? Something was definitely wrong—and he was hiding it.

## Chapter 737

"Have you called Norah?" Freyja asked. "She's close to them now. If anything's going on, she'd know."

Baimo wanted to, but he checked the clock, factoring in the time difference. It was evening in Norah's city—probably bedtime for her and the kids. "It's late there," he said. "I'll call tomorrow at noon. You get some rest. I'll sleep in the study tonight."

He kissed her cheek. The piles of paperwork on his desk wouldn't wait, and he'd be up till morning. Since Freyja was a light sleeper—especially during pregnancy—his late-night movements might wake her. Sleeping in the study was better.

"You're working too hard," Freyja said, clearly worried. "You've got that big meeting tomorrow—can't the prep wait?"

Baimo showed her the documents. "There was a big earthquake in the southern region yesterday. Lots of casualties, people displaced. Tomorrow's meeting is for disaster relief. If I don't prep now, we can't move forward."

He could delay if he wanted—his position allowed that—but he couldn't bear the thought of people waiting. Their pain weighed on him.

Freyja nodded. "Okay, finish up. But drink the soup before it gets cold." She left quietly, not wanting to take up more of his time.

Back in her room, Freyja couldn't sleep. To ease Baimo's burden, she took on other tasks herself, working straight through till morning. Baimo, after just a few hours of sleep, left for his meeting. Freyja finally woke past ten, tied her hair back, and sat at her dressing table to get ready.

As she stood up, a wave of dizziness hit her. She held onto the table for support, but it only got worse—then everything went black.

When she came to, she was in a hospital room. Baimo sat next to her, eyes red from crying.

"I'm fine," she said weakly, forcing a smile. "I just skipped breakfast—my blood sugar dropped. You should rest now."

"Freyja..." Baimo said, his voice cracking. Pain filled his face.

Her smile faded. "Don't look at me like that—it'll make me cry too."

Then she noticed his gaze drift to her belly. Her heart skipped. She followed his eyes—her stomach was flat. Panic set in. She touched her belly, her hands trembling. “Where’s the baby? Baimo, where is our child?”

Baimo pulled her into a tight hug. “We’ll have more babies,” he said softly. “Lots of them.”

“Why?” she cried, breaking down. “What did I do wrong?”

She had been so careful—no cold drinks, no risky foods, always mindful. And still... she lost the baby. Was this fate?

“It’s not your fault,” Baimo whispered, guilt heavy in his chest. “It was an accident.”

But he couldn’t stop thinking—if he’d kept a closer eye on her, could he have prevented this?

“Why not me?” Freyja sobbed, tears soaking into his shirt.

They’d done so much good—helped orphans, built schools—why were they the ones who had to lose their child?

“Don’t dwell on it,” Baimo pleaded, holding back his own tears. Losing their child crushed him too, but he had to stay strong for her.

“I can’t stop thinking about him,” she whispered. “He never even got to see the world.”

## Chapter 738

Baimo stayed by her side, holding her in silence until the doctor came in with the report.

“She’s anemic and malnourished,” the doctor said. “From overworking.”

“Overworking?” Baimo’s heart sank. He immediately thought of all the tasks Freyja had helped with. If he hadn’t let her push herself...

“Is that what caused the miscarriage?” he asked.

“It contributed,” the doctor replied. “But it’s never just one reason. The health of both parents matters. Blaming only the mother isn’t fair.”

Baimo nodded. “Can you prescribe her some supplements?”

Freyja had a more pressing worry. “Can I still get pregnant again?” she asked. “I read that repeated miscarriages can lead to infertility.”

“You’re still young,” the doctor assured her. “If you recover properly and wait at least six months, your chances of a healthy pregnancy are good.”

But Freyja barely heard the reassurance. Her mind was racing with fear and worst-case scenarios. Baimo sat next to her and tried to lift her spirits.

“Let’s focus on the positive,” he said gently.

“What if I can’t have children anymore?” she asked, her voice low. “You love kids. You need an heir. If I can’t give you one... maybe you should find someone else who can.”

Her words, spoken with painful honesty, tore through him. His expression darkened. “Don’t say that. Don’t push me away like this.”

“I couldn’t give you a child,” she said, wiping her tears. “The doctor said it was my health. Is it right to keep you from becoming a father?”

Baimo leaned in and kissed her deeply, shutting down her fears with his actions.

“It’s not just *your* health,” he said firmly. “It’s *ours*. We’ll try again. We’ll have children. Why are you giving up on us now?”

He knew she was speaking from grief, not reason. He wasn’t going anywhere. He’d stay and help her heal.

“We’ll have kids,” he repeated with confidence. “I know it.”

“And if we don’t?” she whispered.

“Then we don’t,” he said. “Norah has kids—our bloodline will continue. But even if it doesn’t, that’s okay. We’ll travel. We’ll live a full life together. That’s enough for me.”

His words brought her some comfort. Freyja stayed in the hospital to recover, while Baimo returned to work. Things got busy, and he still hadn’t had a chance to call Norah.

## Chapter 739

Norah brought her family to visit Pharaoh. When he saw Reina in Kevin’s arms, his face lit up. Kevin held the baby like a natural.

“You four make this ward feel full,” Pharaoh joked.

“We should get a VIP room,” Norah said. “More space for the kids to play.”

Pharaoh waved her off. “No need. I’ll be discharged in a few days.”

“You’re leaving?” Norah’s heart dropped. Was he giving up on treatment?

“Home’s better anyway,” she said, trying to sound casual. “Reina’s curious—she keeps staring at everything.”

Pharaoh glanced at the baby, who was wide-eyed and taking everything in. "Maybe I'll stick around a little longer. If there's a VIP ward, I'll move. Cooper can play with blocks."

Norah's heart softened. Just hearing the kids mentioned made Pharaoh change his mind. She remembered seeing him slide a paper under his pillow during her last visit—probably a medical report. While Kevin and Pharaoh talked about Reina, Norah lingered behind and checked under the pillow—but the paper was gone. He had hidden it well.

Just then, Reina began crying loudly. Pharaoh tried adjusting how he held her. "Is it the way I'm holding her?"

Kevin took a look. "She's hungry."

"Where's the formula?" Pharaoh asked quickly. "Don't let her go hungry."

Kevin dug through the bag but froze. "I forgot to restock it after last time. We're out."

Going home would take too long. "I'll take her home to feed her," Kevin said, lifting Reina gently. "It's okay, sweetheart. Daddy's got you."

"Go on together," Pharaoh said. "You've stayed long enough."

He knew a nurse would be coming soon with meds or an IV. If Norah stayed, she might learn the truth.

"Okay, we'll head out," Norah agreed, sensing his urgency. She held Cooper's hand, Kevin carried Reina, and the ward quieted as they left.

Halfway down the hallway, Norah stopped. "Kevin, take the kids home. I'm staying."

She needed answers. Delaying could mean losing her last chance to help Pharaoh.

"Got it," Kevin said, juggling Reina and holding Cooper's hand. "Let's go, buddy." To Reina, he whispered, "We'll get you some milk soon. Daddy messed up, but I'll fix it."

Reina settled down in her car seat. Cooper buckled up, and Kevin drove them home.

Back at the hospital, Norah turned around and saw a nurse entering Pharaoh's room. She stayed just outside, listening.

The nurse handed him some pills and prepped an IV. "Still not considering chemo? These meds won't do much."

He was choosing the slow route—just waiting for the end.

"I've thought it over," Pharaoh said. "I'll just take the pills."

The nurse sighed. "At least do regular checkups, to track the cancer's spread."

"Checkups are fine," Pharaoh said. He needed to know how much time he had, so he could plan the end of his life.

The nurse left, passing Norah in the hallway without saying a word.

Norah stood frozen. Advanced cancer, and he'd refused chemo. She couldn't accept that.

She entered his room. "So you've decided not to do chemo?"

Pharaoh, thinking she was the nurse, said gruffly, "It's my body. I get to decide. I know you mean well, but don't pressure me." Then he looked up and froze. "Norah!"

"I knew something was off," she said, walking toward him. "You've been avoiding my calls. And now I know why—advanced cancer. What kind is it?"

She'd heard enough outside to piece it together. "Don't hide this from me. You know I'll keep digging until I find out."

Pharaoh's voice was rough, but his eyes softened. "You're too stubborn, kid."

He sighed deeply. "It's liver cancer. Advanced stage. Just diagnosed. Chemo won't fix it. I'd rather take pills and enjoy what time I've got left."

## Chapter 740

"That's not true," Norah said firmly. "Active treatment can ease your pain and give you more time, even if it's not a cure. You're a doctor—you know that." She paused, guessing the real reason. "Is it because chemo might make you lose your hair? Change how you look?"

Pharaoh nodded. "I want to go with dignity, not looking like a shell of myself. The kids would be scared."

"You're not in your twenties," Norah said with a half-laugh. "Hair loss is normal at your age. Plenty of older men are bald and still look strong."

"Losing some hair isn't the same as losing it all," Pharaoh said, running a hand over his thinning scalp. "Chemo's more than that—my whole body might fall apart."

"So you're okay with Cooper and Reina losing their only grandpa?" Norah asked. "They don't have anyone else. They love you. What happens when you're gone?"

Pharaoh's eyes flickered. "You really want me to stick around?"

"I've owed you most of my life," he said quietly. "Just hearing you care—it's enough."

"I wouldn't be here if I didn't care," Norah said. "I'm a mom, sure, but I'm still your daughter. I'm not ready to lose you."

Pharaoh didn't respond right away. He'd already made peace with dying, but her words stirred something in him. "If chemo leaves me looking terrible, will you still bring the kids?"

"Of course," Norah said, taking his hand. "We love you for who you are—not how you look. You're their grandpa. Chemo won't change that. Fight—for me, for Baimo and Freyja. Their baby's coming soon. You have to meet your next grandchild."

Pharaoh's expression changed. "Alright. I'll follow the doctor's plan. I'll try to outlive every other cancer patient out there."

Norah smiled and called the doctor. "My dad's ready to fight," she said.

"About time," the doctor replied with a grin. "Kids really do change everything."

After finalizing his treatment, Norah chatted with Pharaoh a bit before heading home. She video-called Baimo. His tired face appeared after a short delay.

"Too much work?" she asked.

"It's a lot," Baimo admitted. "You only understand once you're in the hot seat."

Norah sensed something else. "Where's Freyja?"

Baimo's face crumpled. "She's in the hospital. We lost the baby."

Norah froze. "What happened?"

"She fainted after a meeting," Baimo said. "By the time she came to, the baby was gone. We didn't do anything wrong. Why us?"

Norah's heart broke. "Focus on getting her healthy. You'll have kids later."

"We're holding off for now," Baimo said. "We're too swamped to raise a child right. And if it's something physical... more losses would destroy Freyja."