

Chapter Seventy-Six

In Chapter Seventy-Six of "If These Wings Could Fly," we find ourselves in a scene filled with trauma and uncertainty. The characters huddle in the street, their toes numb and hearts filled with doubt. Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) assess their conditions while a police officer questions them about the events that transpired. Amidst this chaos, Mrs. Stieg arrives, offering comfort with blankets and coffee for mothers and responders alike.

As the tension rises, an oxygen mask is applied to Campbell, and the protagonist experiences a jarring moment when her dress is cut open, revealing a bloody injury where a bullet grazed her side. This stark image conveys the violence they've endured and hints at the physical toll it has taken on her.

Bill DiMarco makes an entrance, finally delivering the words they've longed to hear: an arrest warrant. He outlines the violations that led to this moment—violations that include the endangerment of children and the firing of a gun, underscoring that prison time is inevitable for the assailant. While these revelations should bring a sense of justice, our protagonist steps away, drawn toward the remains of the house that once stood. The fire chief restricts her movement, but her desire to confront the destruction fueled by violence is palpable.

Reflecting on the malevolent shadow that lurked near them, she contemplates its proximity to their lives and how easily it could have swallowed them whole. The memory is suffused with a legacy of anger and an inheritance of fear that lingers in the aftermath of their ordeal. However, unlike before, the house in ruins will not be able to erase the violence inflicted upon them. The ashes stand testament to their pain, as dark as a crow's wings, signifying a poignant end to an era marked by fear and suffering.