

A Warrior Luna's Awakening Chapter 12

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Freya's POV

My wardrobe was almost bare. Just like my jewelry box.

In this grand estate built with my hands, the only thing Caelum and I truly owned together... was a pair of cheap, silver wedding bands.

They'd never seen sunlight—not once worn in public. Because Caelum had insisted we keep the mating bond hidden from the pack. Hidden from the world.

I held one of the rings in my palm, its dull metal glinting like forgotten promises.

I once believed it didn't matter whether they were valuable. As long as his vow was sincere, it was enough.

But now I knew. In his eyes, I was worth as much as this ring—forgettable and easily replaced.

My phone buzzed. Lana's name lit up the screen—my closest she-wolf and my last anchor in this fading storm.

Feel like getting out?" she asked cheerfully. "I want to visit the Runestone Grounds. Heard Alpha Silas Whitmore is showing up today."

I blinked. "The Runestone Grounds?" I hadn't been there in moons.

"It's not like I want to see him," Lana rushed to say, already coughing awkwardly. "I just... heard the Whitmore Clan is eyeing drone warfare for their Ironclad Fleet. My company's got a prototype in development. If I can score a moment with him, maybe it opens doors."

I frowned, immediately picturing Silas. That steel-cut jaw, the deadened obsidian eyes, the quiet dominance of a predator that never had to growl to command a room.

That wolf was dangerous—chained lightning in fur and skin.

"You're not trying to flirt with death, are you?" I asked.

She laughed nervously, "I like my tail attached, thank you. But come with me? I need a buffer."

I hesitated. Every instinct in my bones said stay away. But Lana.. she was pack. And right now, my only one.

“...Fine,” I said, exhaling.

But when we arrived at the stone—swept clearing—surrounded by towering obsidian statues of legendary Alphas and Lunas—I caught a scent on the wind that made my hackles lift.

Caelum.

And not alone.

He was with Aurora.

They sat atop two obsidian—tusked shadowbeasts—massive lupine...ts used only for traditional displays of prowess. Both

dressed in ceremonial riding leathers, their figures gleaming under the duskligh like a royal pair.

He should’ve been in a so—called emergency summit meeting. But here he was, basking in the applause of highborns, parading beside Aurora like she was his destined mate.

Lana clicked her tongue beside me. “Seriously? Again? What are they—joined at the tail now?”

shrugged, my lips curling faintly. “Ignore them. They’ll vanish when the wind shifts.”

But Caelum had already caught my scent.

His beast turned sharply, hooves thundering across the stone before halting just in front of me. The air between us trembled with tension.

“What are you doing here?” he demanded, voice low, tinged with possessiveness he no longer had the right to wield.

“I could ask you the same,” I replied coolly. “Did your urgent summit relocate to a ceremonial proving ground?”

He looked... rattled. Briefly.

Lana didn’t miss a beat. “Guess next time the summit will be held in bed.”

His eyes narrowed. "Watch your tongue. I don't care if you're Freya's friend—insult me again and see what happens."

Lana bared her teeth. "Try me, mutt."

I stepped between them. "Back off, Caelum. If you so much as lay a claw on her, I'll announce your affair with Aurora in front of the entire Elder Circle."

His scent flared with rage. "You wouldn't dare."

I smiled slowly. "Wouldn't I?"

He went silent. He'd spent a fortune burying those first scandalous headlines. The last thing he wanted was for the rot to surface again.

That's when Aurora's mount trotted up beside him. She looked down at me like I was something clinging to her boots.

"You really can't help yourself, can you?" she said, her voice syrupy with venom. "Always playing the pitiful she-wolf, clinging to a bond that was dead long ago. Do you really think blackmail will make him love you again?"

Lana inhaled sharply, but I grabbed her wrist and stepped forward.

"You crossed into a bonded male's scent field. You're the disgrace. Don't think your title gives you the right to play victim."

Aurora's gaze sharpened. "Love isn't a crime. The real crime is you—three years and he never marked you. Doesn't that tell you everything?"

Then she snapped the reins and galloped, her shadowbeast thundering across the arena like a phantom. The audience howled in delight. The sight was impressive, I'd admit. Fierce. Feminine. And entirely staged.

Caelum's gaze followed her like a moonstruck pup.

"She's not like you," he said without looking at me. "She's confident. Wild. Free. She doesn't obsess over petty things. You shouldn't have followed me here."

My chest constricted.

"Obsess?" I repeated. "Is that what you call it when I ask for respect? When I demand you keep promises to the dead?"