

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

chapter 131-140

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya's POV

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+8 Pearls

Two days later, I boarded the ferry with Silas. The sea wind was sharp, carrying the brine of the waves and the weight of something inevitable. We were bound for the island where the Halston Dominion had organized the groundbreaking ceremony—a show of unity between packs, humans, and industries.

I should have been focused on the event itself, on the politics that would thread through every smile and every handshake. But instead, my thoughts snagged on Silas.

“You’re sure you don’t need to see a healer for... that condition?” I asked quietly, leaning closer as the ferry rocked.

I meant the way he had lost himself in the forbidden chamber, as though dragged into a nightmare he could not wake from.

“I’ve already taken my medicine,” he replied, calm as stone. “Don’t trouble yourself. It hasn’t surfaced in years. I thought it had been buried for good.”

But his jaw tightened, betraying the ghost of memory. I could sense the storm beneath his words. His wolf flared briefly, bitter and wounded. I knew, even without asking, that Jocelyn Thorne’s meddling had triggered something—digging at scars best left sealed.

His lips pressed thin, his gaze hardening with a dangerous gleam.

The ferry moored before I could press further. We disembarked, our boots striking the dock, and the salt wind carried voices ahead of us. There, waiting with smiles sharp as knives, stood Jocelyn alongside several of my clan’s elders.

Jocelyn’s smile was sweet poison. “Alpha Silas, you’ve finally arrived. We’ve been waiting such a long time.”

She said it as though he hadn't once wrapped his hand around her throat. As if that night of fury and fear had never scarred the air between them.

Silas gave her nothing—just a fleeting glance, cold as steel, before dismissing her entirely.

But Jocelyn wasn't deterred. Her gaze flicked to me, the curve of her lips deepening. "Oh, Freya, did you know? Your ex-mate is here today. He has something he wishes to tell you."

A chill crept into my spine. I followed her look, and there he was—Caelum. He stood with Aurora, daughter of the Bluemoon. Pack's Beta, her uniform crisp, her emerald ring gleaming in the sun.

Jocelyn lifted her chin, voice bright and cruel. "Caelum, Freya is here. Didn't you say you wanted to make a clean break with her? What better time than now?"

I saw him falter. His shoulders stiffened, his jaw clenched. His eyes flicked between Jocelyn and me, caught in a vise of his own making.

Aurora leaned closer, her voice a silken lash. "You wouldn't back down, would you, Caelum? If you refuse, I won't force you. But understand this—if you keep wearing those rings you once shared with her, people will talk. I might not doubt you, but others will. And their whispers will drag us both into the mud."

His gaze locked with hers, and I saw the decision settle in his bones. He straightened, mask of resolve sliding into place.

"I am not unwilling," he said, voice carrying over the gathering. He reached into his coat, withdrawing two silver bands. Then he stepped forward, each pace deliberate, until he stood before me.

"Freya," he said, his voice low but steady, "I want us to end this—truly, once and for all."

I let my eyes meet his, cold and sharp. "There was nothing left between us to end."

He opened his palm. Two cheap rings rested there, dull metal catching the sunlight like mockery. The sight of them clawed something raw inside me.

"You left these behind in the nightstand when the Lunar Severance Phase ended," he continued. "I thought it best we dispose of them now."

I stared at those worthless rings, the kind you'd find tossed on a vendor's blanket in the back alleys of The Capital. Back then,

+8 Pearls

I had been so blind, so willing to believe. It doesn't matter if they're worthless, Freya. If his heart is true, then the metal doesn't matter.

I could still hear his voice, the promises whispered in the dark: When I earn more, I'll buy you something finer. These are only the beginning.

But the truth? When a man chooses to mark you with trinkets no better than scraps, it means you were never in his heart.

Because when his fortunes grew, when wealth poured into his coffers, the ring he bought was not for me. It was for Aurora.

My gaze drifted past the silver scraps in his hand, settling instead on the emerald ring gleaming proudly on Aurora's finger. The stone was radiant, its green fire impossible to miss.

"Why are you staring at Aurora's ring, Freya?" Jocelyn's voice lashed out, cruel satisfaction in every word. "It doesn't matter how fine her jewels are—they'll never be yours."

Before I could speak, Silas's voice cut through the air like a blade. "You talk too much."

Jocelyn flinched as though struck, color draining from her face. I knew she felt it—the phantom memory of his grip at her throat, the pain that had once silenced her. She swallowed, her bravado faltering.

I drew a breath, forcing my voice calm. "Silas, this is my affair. Let me deal with it."

Then I turned to Jocelyn, my wolf rising hot within me. "And how do you know Aurora's ring isn't mine? That emerald was purchased during my marriage to Caelum. He bought it in secret—behind my back, while I still wore his mate's bond. So yes, I have every right to reclaim it. That ring was bought with betrayal, and it belongs to me."

Jocelyn froze, her mask cracking. Around us, I felt the shift—the ripple of judgment through the crowd. The elders' eyes darkened. The whispers began.

I held Caelum's gaze, my wolf baring its fangs in silence.

And for the first time, he looked as though the ground beneath him might give way.

Send Gifts

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya's POV

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+8 Pearls

Caelum's hand trembled. The two silver bands slipped in his palm, nearly tumbling to the stone beneath our feet. The cheap metal caught the sunlight in a way that mocked us both.

Aurora stiffened at his side, her eyes blazing as she snapped, "How dare you claim these rings as yours, Freya? Caelum bought them with the money he bled for, building SilverTech Forgeworks from the ground up. If you have any pride at all, buy your own rings with your own earnings instead of clinging to the wealth of others!"

I let out a low laugh, one sharp enough to draw a hush from the crowd gathered along the pier. My gaze slid toward Caelum, slow and cutting, as if to peel back his mask. "Is that so? That money is yours, Caelum? Then may the Fates grant that you keep earning it."

Aurora lifted her chin with the arrogance of a newly risen hawk, a gleam of triumph flashing in her eyes. "Without you dragging him down, he'll soar higher than ever." Her hand brushed the emerald ring on her finger. "Especially with me by his side."

She thought herself untouchable. Fool.

"You haven't learned your lesson," I murmured, stepping past Caelum. The crowd shifted as I closed the distance between myself and Aurora, each step deliberate, my wolf prowling beneath my skin. I halted before her, so close I could hear the quickening of her breath. "Last time, I stripped a necklace from your throat—jewel stolen in the shadows, a gift he gave you while still bound to me. And yet here you stand again, flaunting the emerald ring he bought while still tied to my bloodline. Is it that you've worn another's jewels so long, you truly believe they belong to you?"

Her cheeks flamed crimson, the mask cracking. "Thief? You dare call me that? This ring was a gift. Caelum gave it to me!"

My lips curved into a blade of a smile. "Did he? Then tell me, Aurora—why was I forced to wear trinkets so cheap they wouldn't fetch a coin in the markets, while you drape yourself in a stone worth millions? Was his love so thin for me, yet so generous for you?"

The air shifted, whispers hissing like dry grass in the wind. Wolves from every pack began murmuring to one another, their eyes darting between Aurora's flushed face and Caelum's rigid stance. The taste of scorn thickened in the air.

Aurora faltered, her voice rising shrill. "Caelum gave me jewels because I saved his life! Tell them, Caelum! I pulled you from death's jaws when no one else would. What did she ever give you?"

A snarl threatened my throat. I seized her right hand, claws of my will tightening over her fingers until she gasped.

“What are you doing?!” she yelped, panic breaking through her facade.

Caelum lurched forward, fury blazing—but Silas moved like a shadow, pressing a hand to his shoulder and pinning him where he stood.

“Take another step,” Silas said softly, his voice as calm and inexorable as the sea, “and I will shatter your leg.”

The crowd froze. The menace in his tone carried weight far heavier than mere words. He was the Ironclad Alpha—when he spoke, others listened. No one dared move.

Caelum’s face contorted with helpless rage. “Whitmor, you would enable her cruelty? You’re letting Freya abuse her place, hiding behind your strength!”

Silas’s lips curled into something between disdain and amusement. “If she wishes to wield power, I will lend her mine. If she chooses to crush you, I will stand beside her. That is what it means when an Alpha decides where his loyalty lies.”

The words dropped like thunder across the pier. Gasps broke out, shock flashing across every face. Even my kin—the Stormveil elders gathered—stared wide-eyed.

Jocelyn Thorne’s face twisted in disbelief and fury. For years she had clung at Silas’s side, blinded and broken, yet he had never spoken such words for her. Yet for me—for the Bloodmoon-born wolf she despised—Silas declared himself my shield.

Her eyes burned with venom as she glared at me, teeth grinding.

But I ignored her. My focus stayed locked on Aurora. I dragged her with me, her wrist clutched in my grip, toward the edge

11:29 AM PP.

of the dock. Her breath came in ragged bursts.

“What—what are you doing?!” she shrieked, panic rising. “Freya, don’t be reckless!”

+8 Pearls

I smiled coldly. “You said you were Caelum’s savior, that you plucked him from the Blackwater when he was bleeding from eight blades. Such a feat would mean your swimming is unmatched. Surely these waters hold no fear for you.”

Her eyes widened, confusion chasing terror across her face. She hadn’t yet understood.

Then, with a swift twist, I pinched the emerald from her finger. The gem slid free with satisfying ease, glittering in my palm. And with the same motion, I released her hand.

Aurora staggered backward, heels slipping on wet stone, and plunged into the sea.

The crowd erupted.

“Help! Help me!” she screamed, arms thrashing wildly, her cries echoing against the cliffs.

Caelum surged forward, but Silas’s grip hardened, keeping him caged. Rage carved deep lines across Caelum’s face, his wolf straining against the leash of control.

From behind, Jocelyn’s voice cut the air, shrill with accusation. “Freya Thorne! Are you mad? You’ll drown her! You’ll stain your hands in blood out of petty jealousy!”

“Jealousy?” I let the word drip with contempt. My eyes swept the water, calm and glassy, where Aurora splashed like a frightened pup. Then I raised my voice, carrying it over the waves. “Strange, isn’t it? For one who claimed to dive into the raging Blackwater and drag a half-dead Alpha from its depths, she flounders here in waist-deep tide.”

I bent, seizing her by the arm, and hauled her upright. The sea only licked at her waist, no higher. Aurora’s face flamed crimson as she realized the truth—that her performance had been nothing but a lie unraveling in the open.

I turned then, my gaze locking onto Caelum. The emerald gleamed in my palm, proof of his betrayal. My wolf’s growl rumbled beneath my words.

“Tell me, Caelum,” I said, each syllable deliberate, unyielding. “Do you still believe Aurora was the one who saved you? That she, and not another, dragged you from the Blackwater when eight knives pierced your flesh?”

The silence that followed was thick, electric, heavy with judgment. Every eye on the dock pressed into him.

And for the first time, I saw doubt fracture the mask of the Silverfang Alpha.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya’s POV

+8 Pearls

Caelum just stood there, staring at me and Aurora. His throat worked, as though something heavy and jagged was lodged there, strangling his words.

Aurora's face flushed with humiliation, her hair plastered against her cheek, seawater dripping down the cheap fabric of her uniform. Yet still, she snapped with that shrill, defensive bite of hers.

"Freya, I saved Caelum's life. Everyone knows it. You can't rewrite what happened just because you can't stand it. You can't smear me."

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I laughed, short and sharp, the sound cutting across the hush of the pier. "Smear you? Aurora, you flatter yourself. You're not worth the effort."

I dragged her by the wrist back to the shoreline and released her with a violent shove. She hit the sand hard, collapsing in a heap. Sand clung to her wet clothes, to her face, to the once-pristine braid down her back. She looked every bit the pathetic thing she was, sprawled out with the ocean clinging to her skin.

My own clothes were damp from where I had waded in, but no one watching would dare call me disheveled. I carried the sea like a cloak, the storm like a crown, and I let my wolf prowl just beneath the surface.

Aurora scrambled up, her eyes darting frantically to Caelum, clinging to him like a lifeline. "It doesn't matter what she does. Caelum trusts me! Don't you?"

Caelum finally blinked, as though waking from a trance. His gaze slid to hers—hesitant, conflicted—and then his jaw tightened. "Yes," he said. "I trust Aurora."

The words landed like blades.

He had already chosen her, long ago. The fool in me had just refused to see it.

Aurora exhaled in relief and turned to me, triumphant. "You see? He trusts me. You've humiliated yourself, Freya. You're nothing but a spectacle now, a bitter wolf howling at shadows. And that emerald ring—give it back. Stop behaving like a thief who steals what isn't hers."

I tilted my head, letting my voice drop to a blade's edge. "That ring was bought with shared resources while he was still bound to me. That makes it mine by right. So tell me, Aurora—who is the thief here?"

Her smugness faltered. I took a step closer, my gaze locking with hers. "Hear me well, Bluemoon brat. Any time I see you flaunting jewels bought during my binding with Caelum, I will take them back. One by one. I will strip you bare if I must. Do you understand?"

Her eyes widened. She opened her mouth, then shut it again. Around us, the crowd whispered, eyes narrowing, some already sneering at her. She had no defense, not when the truth gnawed at her heels. Even she knew it.

I turned then, ignoring her, and walked straight to Caelum. My pulse thundered, but my voice came calm, deliberate. “You wanted an end between us, didn’t you? Then where are the rings, Caelum?”

His body stiffened. Slowly, almost unwillingly, his hand opened.

Two rings sat in his palm. Simple, cheap metal bands, bought at some marketplace stall years ago. Our marriage tokens. They looked so small there in his hand—so laughably fragile, so pitifully unworthy of the vows I had given.

I stared at them, and suddenly a bitter laugh broke free.

I laughed at the girl I had once been, the girl who had thought Caelum Grafton was a mate worth bleeding for. I laughed at how blind I’d been, giving him my trust, my loyalty, my everything—only to realize he had never given me his

Without hesitation, I plucked the rings from his hand. My claws itched to pierce the cheap metal, but instead, I walked to the edge of the dock and flung them into the sea.

The bands spun once in the air, caught the light for a heartbeat, then vanished beneath the waves. The tide seized them, pulling them into its dark belly, gone forever.

11:30 AM P P

Caelum inhaled sharply. “You-”

+8 Pearls

His voice cracked, cut off. He hadn’t expected it. Hadn’t expected me to sever the bond so ruthlessly, with no trace of regret. His eyes widened as he stared at me, as though I had torn the ground out from under him.

He had carried those rings all this time, clutching them like relics of something worth saving. And I had thrown them away like the scraps they were.

Garbage.

I turned my gaze back to him, my voice steady, final. “It’s done, Caelum. This is the end.”

For the first time in years, I felt light. Empty, yes—but empty in a way that meant I had space again. Room to breathe. Room to fight for myself.

He lifted his head sharply, staring at me as though he'd never seen me before. His hand twitched—instinctively reaching out, aching to pull me back.

But before he could touch me, a shadow moved between us. Silas struck his hand aside with casual force, his presence radiating danger.

“You’ve lost that right,” Silas said, his tone like steel wrapped in ice. “You no longer have the claim.”

Then he fell into step beside me, as though he had always belonged there.

The two of us walked away from the pier, my heart still pounding in my chest. I did not look back. I didn’t need to.

I knew Caelum was watching us, watching me leave him behind. And I knew he felt it—the hollow emptiness, the realization that what he had lost was not just two worthless rings.

He had lost me.

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Later, I changed into dry clothes in the rest chamber. The saltwater still clung faintly to my skin, a reminder of the storm I had unleashed, but I welcomed it.

When I opened the door, Silas was there, leaning against the frame, arms crossed. His wolf-shadow was impossible to ignore -looming, protective, unwavering.

“You...” I blinked at him. “Why are you still here?”

His eyes caught mine, sharp as obsidian. “Waiting,” he said simply. Two syllables, nothing more—but in them was a weight I could not mistake.

Waiting for me.

For a heartbeat, I forgot how to breathe.

Then I pulled my shoulders back. “We’ve wasted enough time. The cornerstone ceremony begins soon—we should go.”

Silas inclined his head in agreement, and together we strode toward the gathering. My wolf stretched within me, no longer shackled by Caelum’s shadow, and for the first time in too long, I felt the stirrings of something fierce.

Freedom.

Send Gifts

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

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+8 Pearls

On the trail leading toward the ceremonial grounds, Silas's voice broke through the coastal wind. His tone was low, steady, yet carried the weight of an Alpha whose words rarely fell without purpose.

"You've truly severed all ties with Caelum Grafton?"

Freya lifted her gaze toward the horizon, the salt air tangling with her scent. "What else would you call it? Whether those two rings were cast into the sea or left behind, the bond was already broken. When I abandoned them on the bedside table and walked out of the Silverfang estate, I had already shed that life. I had no use for rings, no use for vows, and no use for him."

She had not expected Caelum to bring the wedding bands here, like relics dragged from a grave.

Silas's expression remained cool, though the faintest ripple of a smile crossed his face, softening the cold steel in his gaze for a fleeting moment.

"That's good," he murmured, and though his words were simple, there was something dangerous about the approval behind them—like an Alpha marking his choice in the presence of others."

Elsewhere, in the guest wing prepared for the Bluemoon emissaries, Aurora's hands shook as she stripped off her damp clothes. She scrubbed herself raw under the shower, but no heat of water could wash away the humiliation she had suffered. Fresh garments clung to her body when she stepped out, only to find Caelum seated heavily on a leather sofa, his eyes fixed on the open palm of his hand.

The rings. His thumb traced a ghost that was no longer there.

"Caelum," Aurora ventured, her voice too sweet, too coaxing. "What's on your mind?"

He blinked, startled, and quickly closed his hand as if caught. "Nothing." His voice was firm but unconvincing. He rose slightly, searching her face. "You're unharmed?"

Aurora's lips curled into bitterness. "This is all Freya Thorne's doing. She wants me dead, First she ripped away the necklace, now even the ring you gave me. She won't stop until I have nothing."

"I'll buy you better," Caelum promised, his voice laden with guilt, "Everything she stole, I'll replace."

That placated her. A little.

But Caelum's mind did not rest. "Aurora... why were you so panicked in the water earlier? You always swam well. Otherwise, you couldn't have saved me back then, when the current nearly took me."

Aurora froze, just for an instant, before plastering her indignation across her face. "Are you accusing me? Do you think it wasn't me who pulled you out of the river?"

He faltered, then shook his head quickly. "No. Not accusing. Only... it seemed strange."

Her voice sharpened, defensive. "It was sudden. I've been abroad for years—without training, without practice. Anyone could freeze for a moment. If you truly doubt me, then stop calling me your savior. I never asked for that title. I told you before—I didn't pull you from the water to chain you in obligation. Back then you were nothing, Caelum. I owed you nothing

Shame flickered across his face. Because he had doubted her. Because Freya's shadow had seeped into his thoughts.

"I'm sorry," he whispered.

Aurora sighed, feigning graciousness. "Forget it. She's poisoned you against me. But enough of this. Focus on the future. I've heard from the Thorne elders—the city council is interested in your drone initiative. Silver Tech Forgeworks may secure the partnership. You're thriving now, Caelum. Without Freya, you're stronger."

His lips pressed into a thin line. He could not tell her that the proposal she praised was not wholly his. The designs were Freya's work, drafted in the final months before she left SilverTech. The patent—her patent—tiled during their binding

It was theft dressed as enterprise.

+8 Pearls

Still, Caelum soothed his conscience with easy lies. She abandoned the company. She abandoned me. Her work was ours, and what was ours, I claimed. It belongs to SilverTech. It belongs to me.

The cornerstone ceremony began as dusk settled over the island.

The gathering place, ringed by banners of steel and cloth, filled with figures of power: government officials, council liaisons. and the scions of the major packs who had invested in the construction of the island base. Their presence was more than ceremonial—it was a declaration of dominion, a contest of who would stand tallest when the project was completed.

Among the crowd, Silas Whitmor stood apart. Towering, dark, unmistakable, the Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition. commanded attention with presence alone. At his side, Freya drew eyes that carried whispers with them. Not all of those whispers were kind.

Jocelyn's glare was sharp enough to cut stone. The heiress of Stormveil's first branch had expected this day to be Freya's undoing. She had wanted the world to see Freya as abandoned, discarded, humiliated—a she-wolf stripped of mate and standing.

But the tide had betrayed her.

It was Aurora who had been shamed. Caelum who bore the stain of weakness. And Freya who now stood in the shadow and strength of Silas Whitmor, the most unyielding Alpha in the Coalition.

Those who watched took note. The implication was clear.

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Jocelyn's nails dug crescents into her palm. Her jaw tightened, fury smoldering beneath the mask of courtesy.

At her side, Abel Thorne, her uncle, leaned close. His voice was gravel, edged with warning. "Jocelyn. Silas Whitmor is not a man you can bend."

She turned sharply toward him, eyes narrowed. "Uncle, you told me otherwise. You told me if I could bind him to me, the first branch would rise above the others. That was the plan."

"That was before," Abel said flatly. His gaze slid toward Freya. "Before she returned. Back then, perhaps you had a chance. Silas kept women at a distance, but he bore guilt toward you. He gave Stormveil favors, in business and war. But now..." He shook his head. "Now, the path is closed."

jocelyn followed his eyes—straight to Freya, standing tall beside Silas, no longer the cast-off, no longer the broken mate. Her aura burned sharp, defiant, as if the Bloodmoon wolf within her had risen at last.

And Jocelyn knew.

The crowd knew.

Freya Thorne was not prey. She was not abandoned. She was dangerous.

The sea wind howled through the banners, carrying with it the scent of change.

Send Gifts

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A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

Jocelyn had once believed herself the woman closest to Silas.

+8 Pearls

For years, she had convinced herself that his aloofness toward females was simply his nature—that the Ironclad Alpha's blood ran too cold for passion, too controlled for affection. He was a man of power, forged of iron and shadow, who could look at queens and warriors alike and see nothing but background noise.

But what Jocelyn had witnessed at the shoreline shattered that illusion. She had seen him move—truly move—not for the defense of territory or pack, but for Freya.

The way he had stepped forward, his aura rising like a steel storm, his dominance breaking through the air—Silas had chosen to act for her.

It was not nothing.

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And Jocelyn, sharp-eyed and politically bred, knew exactly what that meant. When an Alpha like Silas bent his will to shield a woman, when the wolf stirred from within to claim rather than dismiss—that was not strategy. That was instinct. That was heart.

Her stomach coiled in resentment.

She turned to her uncle, Abel Thorne, who stood with the calm detachment of one who had seen storms come and go. “So, Uncle,” she said, voice laced with a bitter laugh, “you’ve decided that Freya is the better bet for Stormveil’s fortune? That because Silas favors her, I am suddenly... dispensable?”

Abel's sigh came heavy, weighted with the tired patience of an elder. "Jocelyn, I say this for your good."

"For my good?" Jocelyn's eyes gleamed with venomous light. "You mean to tell me that all these years I clawed my way into Stormveil's recognition, that I sacrificed more than any of your pure-blooded heirs, only for you to toss me aside the moment Freya appears? Don't forget—Stormveil stands where it does today because I paid the price. Because I lost an eye to ensure our Pack a foothold in the Ashboone."

Her words hissed like a wounded wolf's snarl.

But Abel's gaze hardened, and for once, he did not soften his tone. "Do not forget, child, that sacrifice gave you entry. You were born outside Stormveil's core bloodline. Without that act, you would have been kept at arm's length. You call yourself savior, yet it was the opening that allowed you through the gates. Do not mistake circumstance for merit."

His meaning pierced her like a claw.

It was true. The scars she carried, the missing eye she flaunted as proof of loyalty—they had allowed her to climb into the halls of Stormveil Primal Hall and sit among heirs who bore Ken Thorne's blood. But she had not risen by strength or cunning. She had risen on debt, on pity, and on Silas Whitmor's occasional indulgence of her presence.

And now, with Freya Thorne at Silas's side, even that thin thread unraveled.

Abel had spoken enough. He let the matter die, folding his arms as though her bitterness were beneath further comment. Jocelyn could only seethe in silence, her wolf bristling beneath her skin.

The ceremony stretched into its latter hours, the cornerstones of steel and stone already blessed with the oaths of leaders and signed by mortal dignitaries. At the tail end of the event, a sudden roar split the sky.

The crowd turned as one. Reporters surged forward, cameras flashing in a frenzy, voices rising into a tide of awe

Freya lifted her head, her instincts sharpening. Above the cleared strip of runway, five figures strode in formation—wolves cloaked in human guise, wearing the crisp uniforms of aviators. Their boots struck the tarmac like war drums as they approached five sleek aircraft, Zivko Edge 540s, their wings gleaming like knives beneath the sun.

At their center walked Aurora.

Chin high, shoulders squared, the Bluemoon Beta's daughter radiated triumph. She was the only female in the formation, yet

+8 Pearls

she walked as though the sky itself bent for her. The crowd devoured her presence, the journalists feeding her the attention she craved.

Her lips curved into a satisfied smile.

Aurora had been suspended from active duty; whispers of disgrace had gnawed at her reputation. But this—the flying display tied to the island’s cornerstone charity gala—was her stage for rebirth. With orphans from the Ashbourne shelters watching, and donors prepared for the post-performance auction, she would shine brighter than ever. A dazzling flight, a calculated donation, and her name would climb again, back into respect.

She would not settle for second-in-command. Not after all she had bled for. Not when she had tasted the sky and wanted it all.

Her eyes flickered, catching Freya in the crowd. A smirk twisted her lips.

Freya had humiliated her before, but the sky was Aurora’s domain. Here, she would prove their difference—one belonged to the earth, scarred soldier with nothing but fists; the other belonged to the air, celebrated, praised, untouchable.

Engines roared. One by one, the planes thundered down the strip and clawed into the heavens. Aurora’s aircraft led the formation, the tip of the spear. The five Zivkos carved through the sky in spirals, dives, and barrel rolls, painting trails of white smoke like banners of conquest. The crowd below erupted with gasps and cheers.

Among them, Jocelyn spotted Silas standing beside Freya. Her pulse tightened.

She drifted closer, her tone sweetened with false innocence. “Silas,” she said lightly, “how do you find the display? The lead pilot is my cousin Aurora—first female captain in the Bluemoon Airborne Wing.”

Silas’s gaze slid toward her, a blade of steel cutting through pretense. The curve of his mouth held something between mockery and indifference. Jocelyn felt skinned under that stare, as if he peeled away her words until nothing remained but the hunger beneath.

But she pushed forward, voice carrying venom wrapped in silk. “No wonder Caelum Grafton cast Freya aside for her. Freya cannot compare. She has no place in high skies, no gift for strategy or invention. She is strong, yes, brutishly so, but that is all. Fists are cheap. Wealth buys strength. Guards can be hired. But brilliance? That belongs to women like Aurora.”

The words were meant to bite, meant to show Freya’s unworthiness.

Silas's reply was a growl, quiet but sharp enough to chill the marrow. "Your tongue must be terribly idle, Jocelyn, if it spends itself on such useless things."

Her pride flared, but before she could retreat, Freya herself turned, her voice cutting like a hawk's cry. "And you? Do you fly, Jocelyn?"

Caught, Jocelyn sneered. "I don't need to. I hold a seat in Stormveil's council. Without me, the Thorne fortunes would not stand where they do today. That is power Freya will never hold. Compared to me, she is still nothing."

She lifted her chin high, the arrogance of survival worn as armor. But deep inside, Jocelyn felt the press of shadows, the **sense** that she had already lost something more valuable than a council seat: Silas's gaze.

And wolves lived and died by the eyes of their Alphas.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya's POV

"It's nothing more than favors handed down from the Whitmor line," I said, my tone deliberately flat, deliberately unflinching.

+8 Pearls

The words hit Jocelyn like claws across her pride. Her face cracked, the smug confidence shattering in front of Silas' gaze. She hadn't expected me to speak so plainly—not here, not in front of him.

"But those favors," I continued lazily, folding my arms, "are not yours. They can be given by others just as easily as they can be taken away. Best not to mistake borrowed power for your own strength."

Jocelyn's cheeks flushed crimson. Rage twisted her wolf's scent, acrid and sharp in the air. She snapped, raising her hand toward me like she might dare strike.

I didn't move. I didn't need to.

Silas was faster. His hand clamped around her wrist with the cold precision of iron jaws. His voice spilled out, low and glacial, the kind of sound that made the wolf in my bones shiver.

"Do you no longer value this hand, Jocelyn?"

Her breath hitched. I saw the memory flash across her eyes—the time he’d had her throat pinned, his dominance pouring into her veins until she could barely breathe. She knew the risk of defying him. She knew he didn’t bluff.

“I was only “Jocelyn stammered, her voice high, brittle.“—only angered that Freya belittled the bond between us. As if it

nothing but... exchange.”

Silas’s gaze was a stormcloud before lightning. “Exchange?” he murmured, almost thoughtful. “That’s all it ever was. You bartered an *eye* and received Stormveil’s protection and the Whitmor’s patronage. A transaction, Nothing more.”

Her entire body went rigid. The weight of his words pressed her into silence.

Before I could decide whether to sneer or simply walk away, the rumble of engines filled the sky. The air shifted; the Iron Fang Recon training in me flared instinctively, cataloging sound, distance, threat. But this was not war—it was spectacle.

Aurora’s show had ended.

The Bluemoon Beta’s daughter climbed down from her cockpit, peeling off her helmet with the practiced grace of someone who knew how to court eyes and attention. A flock of journalists surged forward, flashing cameras and shouting questions. I could practically smell the money she’d funneled into their pockets—several of those voices were too eager, too rehearsed.

And behind her, shadowing like a misplaced sentinel, walked Caelum Grafton

My chest tightened *for* the briefest moment, but I refused to let it show.

“Miss Aurora, are you and Lord Grafton in a relationship?” one reporter asked.

Caelum stiffened. I knew that posture. He hadn’t expected the question.

But Aurora? Aurora was ready. She flashed the sweetest smile, leaned toward the microphones, and said, “Yes. Caelum and I are together now.”

Congratulatory shouts exploded from the press line.

Caelum’s lips pressed thin. His eyes flickered—past Aurora, past the crowd, straight toward me.

I gave him nothing. No blink, no flinch, not even a shift of scent. To anyone watching, I was stone. Either I hadn’t heard, or I didn’t care.

And maybe that was what infuriated him most—that I could look at him, my former mate, and give less than ash

The ache he carried rolled across the space between us like smoke, but I did not inhale it. I turned my head away

Then another voice rose, sharp and calculated. “Alpha Grafton only finalized his Lunar Severance Phase recently. Some

might say it’s... quick... to already be courting again. Any comment?”

+8 Pearls

Aurora’s laugh rang false—sweet. “Caelum and I were friends long before. It was only after his severance that we realized how much we meant to each other. I thank the Fates every day that his ties were broken—otherwise, how could I have found the love of my life?”

And with those words, she turned, looking directly at me. Her eyes glimmered with mock gratitude, her voice dripping with poison disguised as silk.

“Freya, I should thank you. Without your severance, I never would have found Caelum.”

F

It wasn’t gratitude. It was declaration. It was a wolf’s challenge, dressed in mortal language.

Suddenly, every gaze in the courtyard swung to me. Reporters swarmed, closing in like vultures scenting carrion.

“Freya Thorne, what do you think about Alpha Grafton and Aurora’s relationship?”

I let out a single, sharp laugh. “No thoughts worth wasting.”

The man blinked, thrown by the sharpness. Still, he pressed again, his voice eager, overeager—the cadence of someone already bought.

“Aurora is the first female pilot of the Bluemoon Wing. Do you feel... uncomfortable.. seeing your former mate with someone so accomplished?”

Uncomfortable? The word was meant to cut. Instead, it almost made me smile.

“No,” I answered bluntly. “Not in the least.”

The reporter’s jaw worked, desperate. “But surely you have an opinion on Aurora’s aerial performance today. After all, she has skills you simply do not.”

I turned my eyes on him—slowly, deliberately. A soldier’s stare. The kind that made lesser wolyes swallow back their tongues. “Since you’re asking for critique,” I said, “then I’ll give it to you. Her performance was sloppy. She overpowered the throttle, couldn’t hold her speed steady, and needed the others to adjust around her mistakes. Worst of all, her approach speed on landing was reckless. If luck hadn’t favored her, she might’ve overshoot the strip entirely.”

The man froze. His recorder trembled in his hand. The trap he had laid for me had become a noose for Aurora instead.

Aurora’s face blanched, then hardened. “You’re just trying to discredit me!” she snapped, her wolf-scent sour with anger.

“Exactly,” the reporter chimed in, scrambling to save her. “Miss Aurora is a co-pilot of high standing. Years of flight experience. You cannot dismiss that so easily. Besides, do you even know how to fly?”

Jocelyn pounced then, her voice sharp with mockery. “Ha! She probably hasn’t even touched a cockpit. Freya can’t fly. She’s nothing more than fists and scars.”

The words hung in the air—until Silas Whitmor’s voice sliced through them.

“She was commander of the Iron Fang Recon Unit,” he said, his tone colder than winter steel. His eyes swept over Jocelyn like she was an insect pinned to glass. “Do you truly believe a commander of that caliber wouldn’t know her way around an aircraft?”

Jocelyn’s laugh died in her throat. Her smirk collapsed into silence.

And I stood there, calm and still, though inside, my wolf stretched, prowling beneath my skin. Because in that moment, it wasn’t Aurora’s performance or Caelum’s betrayal that filled me with fire—it was the knowledge that Silas Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition, had spoken for me.

And in the world of wolves, that meant more than any headline.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person’s POV

T +8 Pearls

“Even if she once knew how to fly,” Jocelyn snapped, her chin lifted in stubborn defiance, “she’s been out of service for Skills fade. She’s nowhere near as sharp as Aurora. For her to nitpick like that—what else could it be but malice?”

years.

Silas' laugh was a cold blade, scraping against the air. "Malice?" His silver eyes cut into her, making Jocelyn's wolf flinch back though her lips tried to hold the sneer. "We have others here who fly, don't we? Ask them whether her words were malice—or fact."

The pilots who had shared the sky during Aurora's performance exchanged uneasy looks. Silence stretched, taut as a bowstring, before one finally stepped forward. His voice was steady, but there was a tremor under the weight of Whitmor's

gaze.

"She's right. Thorne's assessment was accurate. Aurora's descent was unstable, her throttle uneven. If luck hadn't held, she might have overshot the strip."

The others nodded, reluctant but unable to contradict the truth. The performance had been recorded. To defend Aurora now would be to damn themselves later, once footage was replayed and dissected by sharper eyes. No pilot could afford to mark themselves a liar.,

Aurora's face darkened, her wolf's pride bristling beneath her skin. "How much did she pay you to side with her?" she spat, her voice trembling with rage.

"Nothing," the pilot said firmly. "We speak truth. If you doubt *it*, release the footage and let experts in aerial combat weigh their judgment."

Aurora faltered, her lips parting, then snapping shut. For once, she had no answer.

Freya stood silent, her gaze hard, her voice colder than the wind off the northern cliffs. "Your skill is poor. You'd do better to spend your time training than parading before cameras. If you take a cockpit unprepared, every soul strapped behind you is at risk of death. Do not mistake spectacle for mastery."

Aurora flushed crimson, the shame scorching her cheeks as cameras flashed and microphones thrust closer. She had wanted to break Freya before the crowd, to paint her as bitter and obsolete. Instead, it was Aurora herself who staggered beneath the glare of flashing lights.

The Bluemoon Beta's daughter clutched at Caelum's arm, dragging him from the press. Her wolf-tail of pride hung limp, her eyes too bright with fury. The spectacle had reversed on her, and every lens had caught it.

"She's malicious," Aurora hissed once clear of the crowd. Her nails dug crescents into Caelum's sleeve. "So what if she flew before? It's been years. Her edge is gone, her instincts dulled. Skills like that decay. She only spoke to humiliate me!"

Caelum said nothing. Her words struck against the silence inside his chest, but did not stick. Because memory rose— unbidden, unrelenting.

The last airshow before their Lunar Severance Phase. He had stood in the crowd, an outsider to the art of flight, and yet even he could see the difference. Freya, high above the earth, moving like stormwind made flesh. The iron bird obeyed her hands with terrifying grace—dives sharper, rolls cleaner, landings smooth as a hawk striking stone. No hesitation, no falter. She had been magnificent.

Not dulled. Not diminished. Certainly not clumsy.

Even he had seen it. And he was no pilot.

But with Aurora's fingers clamped hard around his wrist, her wolf radiating humiliation and anger, the truth stayed locked behind his teeth.

He swallowed it.

And then—

A scream cut through the noise of the gathered crowd. A high, piercing cry that sent every wolf's ears twitching, every instinct on edge.

123

+8 Pearls

“Child overboard! The sea's taken a child!”

The gathering had drawn orphans from Ashbourne's home, paraded here for the charity drive tied to the foundation ceremony. Now one of them had been swallowed by the tide, a small figure tossed like driftwood in the surf.

Waves smashed against the stone edge, pulling, dragging, hungry. The boy's head vanished beneath the foam, reappeared with a shriek, then was dragged further out.

Caelum's wolf surged forward inside him. His body tensed, ready to leap into the water. But before he could, Aurora's grip tightened, sharp as a trap around his hand.

“Don't,” she hissed. Her eyes were wide, not with fear for the child, but fear for him. Fear of risk. Fear of what it might mean if he went under.

For a moment he thought he'd misheard. This was Aurora—daughter of Bluemoon's Beta, a woman who had fought so hard to shine. Yet she would hold him back? While a child drowned?

The memory hit him like a blow. A different river, swollen with storm. His body limp, consciousness slipping, lungs filling with water-

and the woman who had plunged in without hesitation. The woman who had hauled him back from death with her own torn lungs, her own blood in the water. Freya.

And now, as if summoned by the Fates, another figure leapt.

Freya's body cut through the surf in a blur of strength. She hit the water, head vanishing beneath a wave, then breaking through again as she swam hard, each stroke ripping her closer to the child.

Caelum's eyes widened. His breath stilled. For a heartbeat, the two moments became one—his past and this present layered together. Her figure blurred, doubling: the wolf who had once saved him, and the wolf who now raced to save another.

The storm inside his chest cracked open.

Freya was a soldier still. A commander still. Her instincts had never dulled.

And gods, how he had forgotten the sight of her wolf when it burned brightest.

Cameras swung from Aurora to the water, capturing the Iron Fang veteran's form as she surged against the current. Every wave smashed against her shoulders, every pull of the sea dragged her deeper, but she fought, teeth bared, eyes locked on the child.

Silas watched too. The Ironclad Alpha's tall frame stood rigid, his face stone—but his scent betrayed the crack in his composure. His wolf stood frozen, blood cold, as he stared at the woman in the sea.

Waves crashed over her head. She vanished, reappeared, dove again. She was going deeper, not retreating. For a terrible heartbeat, it looked as though the ocean might take her.

Silas's blood iced. Breath halted in his chest. His mind screamed of loss—of his mother, of the woman gone beneath waves never to surface again. Would Freya be taken too? Would she vanish, swallowed in the same merciless maw?

He felt his body move before his mind decided. His feet struck stone, muscles coiled. And then he was running, the spray of the surf in his face, his body throwing itself toward the sea after her.

He could not watch her drown.

Not her.

Never her.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Silas' POV

She cannot be harmed.

+8 Pearls

The thought rips through me like a command from the marrow of my bones, more primal than the voice of any Alpha before me.

“Alpha Whitmor!” My guards burst from the shadows, loyal wolves of the Ironclad Coalition who have followed me through blood and steel. Their instincts are correct—they move to block me, to preserve the Alpha’s safety. My life is their mission, their oath.

But they do not understand.

I twist away from one, body fueled by the raw surge of my wolf. Another lunges, hand outstretched to restrain me, and I strike—shoulder low, momentum high—sending him crashing over my hip in a brutal throw that cracks against stone. The others hesitate, uncertain if they should pursue, and in that breath of hesitation I am free.

My eyes find her.

Only her.

Freya’s body cleaves through the sea, the Bloodmoon Pack’s flame drowning itself in dark waves for the sake of a child not her own. Each time the surf crashes down, my chest constricts until I think I’ll split open. I do not see the child. I do not see the crowd. I see only her—small against the vast fury of the tide, but unyielding.

And then I am running.

Running like a wolf with death at its heels.

Gasps erupt around me as I hurl myself into the ocean’s maw. The water is a black beast, teeth of foam biting, claws of current dragging me down. The salt stings my eyes, fills my mouth. But my body fights—every muscle, every ounce of strength honed from years of battle—and I cut through toward her.

They will call it madness. The Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition, risking his life in a storm for a child. No- for her. They will whisper, speculate, dissect my motives. But none of that

matters. The truth beats louder than the waves: my wolf would not let me stand idle while Freya faced the abyss alone.

I catch her at last. Her hair, dark and plastered to her cheeks, her arms straining as she hauls the limp child against her. Her breath is ragged, every stroke slower than the last. She is faltering. And if she falters now-

I surge beside her, my hand finding the boy's frail arm. I take the burden, feel the weight drag at me, and with that she gasps, freed enough to breathe, *to* keep swimming. She looks at me, startled, saltwater clinging to her lashes. But there's no time for words. We push, side by side, wolves against the sea.

Together, we reach the shore.

Hands drag the child from us, medics already descending like hawks, pounding on the small chest, forcing air back into drowning lungs. I hear the cough, the sputter, the fragile heartbeat returning, but it is all far away.

Because Freya stumbles.

Her strength is spent, her body trembling with the aftermath of the ocean's rage. She sways, and before she can fall I am there, my arm sliding around her waist. The contact sears me-skin against damp fabric, her body weak yet alive beneath my touch.

"Steady," I murmur, but my voice is rougher than I intended, torn raw by fear.

She thanks me-always so composed, even now, even when the sea has nearly devoured her. She speaks as if I am only a support, as if she can dismiss me the moment she finds her footing.

But she cannot. Not this time.

Before she can pull away, I crush her against me. My arms lock around her, desperate, unrelenting. The embrace is tight, but gods, I force my strength to bend, terrified of hurting her. Terrified of losing her.

11:30 AM P

Her voice brushes against my ear, soft, bewildered. "Silas?"

C

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+2 Pearls

I bury my face into the curve of her neck, inhaling salt and wolf-scent, the sharp tang of adrenaline mixed with the warmth that is wholly hers. I do not answer, because I cannot. Words are too weak. Only this—her pulse beneath my lips, the reality of her body held in my arms—can quiet the storm in me.

She lives. She is here.

I had thought myself beyond fear. I had buried too many—warriors, kin, even my mother beneath the cruel tides. I had promised myself never again to tremble for another life. But here I am, my hands shaking as if I were a boy, my chest shuddering with something I cannot name.

I do not want to imagine the sea swallowing her. I do not want to imagine the world where Freya Thorne vanishes beneath waves, her fire extinguished.

She asks me what is wrong. Her voice is calm, but I can hear her wolf's curiosity beneath it, the edge of concern. She tests the hold, but I do not release her. I cannot. The tremor betrays me—the quiver of my fingers against her back, the violent shiver of my frame.

Yes, I am trembling. Like prey, not predator. Like a pup, not Alpha.

Is it weakness? Perhaps. But it is also truth.

I am Silas Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition. To most, I am steel incarnate, unbreakable, untouchable. But in this moment, wrapped around the woman who flung herself into death's jaws, I am only a wolf clinging to the one thing that matters more than duty, more than legacy, more than survival itself.

She whispers, "Don't be afraid. It's over. We're safe."

Her words should soothe. But they don't. Because even safe, even here in my arms, the tremors don't stop. The fear still coils in my gut like a living thing.

It isn't the sea I fear. It isn't death.

It is the realization of how much she matters.

And how easily she could be gone.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

The fear lingering in Silas' body did not fade.

It clung to him, bone-deep, muscle-deep—a primal, choking terror.

+8 Pearls

His arms tightened around her as if the storm itself might rip her away again. Salt water dripped from his hair, slid across the sharp lines of his face, but he did not care. His wolf thrashed inside him, clawing, howling, demanding he hold her tighter.

“Freya...” His voice broke low against her ear, roughened by sea and truth. “I’ve realized—I truly love you.”

Freya stiffened in his embrace. Her breath hitched, her eyes widening in disbelief.

Had she heard him wrong? Love? He said he loved her?

610

But then Silas’s next words cut through the crash of the tide and the murmurs of the crowd, a vow clear and undeniable.

“More than I thought possible,” he whispered hoarsely. “More than I believed myself capable of. Don’t make me feel this fear again, Freya. Don’t throw yourself into the jaws of death like that.”

Her lips parted, her voice a stunned murmur. “What?”

Silas finally lifted his head. His black eyes locked onto hers, sharp as a blade yet trembling with vulnerability. His entire body was drenched, water coursing from his hair and jaw, his skin pale from cold and exhaustion. But it wasn’t the ocean that had shaken him—it was her.

Unlike the calm, icy facade the Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition usually wore, tonight his gaze was fractured, unsteady, filled with raw terror and an ache so deep it threatened to undo him.

“From now on,” Silas vowed, his voice a low growl, “the ones you want to save, I’ll save with you. The dangers you want to face, I’ll face at your side. Whatever you want to achieve, I will move the mountains and carve the rivers until you have it. You don’t need to throw yourself to the wolves of fate. You don’t need to risk your life alone.”

Every word was drenched with the weight of his wolf’s oath. He would not break it.

Freya could only stare, her pulse hammering in her throat. He was serious. The man she had untouchable—here he was, trembling, breaking, confessing.

once

thought cold, distant,

Then Silas lowered his head further. His lips brushed the back of her hand, reverent, as though she were something sacred, untouchable by the filth of the world. His kiss was not one of dominance, but of supplication, a vow pressed against her skin.

“Don’t leave me, Freya,” he breathed. His words were fragile as ash, fierce as fire. “Not in any form. Not for anyone. Not for death itself.”

The whisper drifted into the night air, but it struck like thunder in the hearts of those who watched.

Not far away, Caelum’s blood drained from his face. His wolf snarled silently inside, rage and loss clawing through his ribs. The sight before him was unbearable—Silas Whitmor clutching Freya like she was his mate, his entire being collapsing into her presence. It was a picture that seared into Caelum’s vision, a wound deeper than any blade.

For a moment, he nearly lunged forward, ready to rip her from Silas’s arms, to remind the Ironclad Alpha that Freya was not his to claim.

“Caelum!”

The sharp voice cut through his haze. Aurora was watching him with narrowed eyes.

Caelum blinked, the storm inside him barely leashed, and turned toward her.

Aurora’s lips curled into a disdainful smirk. “It seems Freya has more cunning than I gave her credit for. Imagine—she leaps into the ocean before all these witnesses, Silas follows, and now look at the scene they’ve created. Cameras everywhere. Do you not see? She wanted the attention. The headlines will sing of her heroics. It’s nothing but a staged display,”

Her words dripped with scorn, but Caelum remained silent.

11:30 AM P P ·

“Showboating.” Aurora continued, arms folded across her chest. “That’s all it is.”

+8 Pearls

But Caelum’s wolf surged violently at that claim. Showboating? No. He had seen Freya’s face as she dove. There had been no calculation there, no performance. Only ferocity, only resolve. She hadn’t hesitated. She had gone after the drowning child when no one else did.

That wasn’t theater. That was truth.

He remembered the feel of river water years ago, when he had nearly drowned, when a hand had pulled him back from the brink. He remembered Aurora's face above him, remembered believing her courage, her sacrifice. And now—he heard her words, dismissing Freya's act of pure instinct, pure wolf-spirit, as nothing but vanity.

Something twisted in him.

"That's enough, Aurora," Caelum snapped, his Alpha voice rising, sharp as a whip. "Freya was saving a child. Don't you dare cheapen that. Just as you once pulled me from the river—what? Was that for attention too? Was that for an audience?"

Aurora's expression faltered, color draining from her cheeks. "You can't compare the two! When I saved you, there were no reporters, no crowd to witness—"

"Then why didn't you move tonight?" Caelum pressed, eyes burning into hers. "So many stood on that shore. Why was Freya the first? Why was she the only one who didn't hesitate?"

Aurora stiffened, her voice sharp. "You're defending her."

22

"I'm stating the truth." Caelum's tone was iron, though his lips trembled. His eyes softened with conflict, with pain. "Aurora, once, I remembered you as someone who would leap into the water without fear, someone who risked herself to save me. That memory..." He shook his head, his voice low. "That memory is what made me believe in you. But tonight, with a child drowning, you stood still. You stopped me from going after him. And I can't reconcile that with the woman I thought you were."

Aurora's breath hitched, and for a moment, panic flickered in her eyes. "I stopped you because I care too much for you! I couldn't let you risk yourself. If Freya hadn't leapt, I would have gone. Do you not understand?"

Caelum's gaze lingered on her, heavy, searching. "Would you?" he asked quietly.

Her jaw tightened. "Do you doubt me?"

"Not doubt," he said slowly, though the words tasted like ash. "But something feels... different. As if the woman who once pulled me from the river is not the one standing here before me."

Aurora's mask cracked, and fear flitted across her expression. She reached for anger instead. "If you can't trust me, if you'd rather believe in her, then perhaps we should end this charade. I'll tell the press myself that you and I share no bond."

Caelum flinched, his wolf recoiling. “Aurora, no. That’s not what I meant. I never said I don’t trust you.” His voice dropped, weary. “I just... don’t understand you anymore.”

And as the waves hissed against the shore, as Silas still clung to Freya with trembling arms, Caelum’s heart clenched. Because deep down, he knew—he was already losing something, someone, that mattered more than he dared admit.

Send Gifts

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person’s POV

+8 Pear’s

Aurora’s voice cut sharp through the salt-washed air, her expression taut, her eyes flicking toward the distance where Freya stood with Silas.

“Then let us never speak of this again,” Aurora said, her voice edged with frost. She turned her face toward the she-wolf in question, her jaw tightening.

She would not—could not—allow Freya to unravel the carefully woven bonds she had secured. Aurora had built her place beside Caelum with precision and calculation. She would not see it undone. Caelum could never learn who his true savior had been years ago. That secret had to remain buried, for if the truth clawed its way out, everything she had worked for would collapse.

And Aurora was not the only one staring daggers into Freya.

From the cluster of Stormveil wolves nearby, Jocelyn’s gaze was like fire. Her lips parted in disbelief as she took in the sight of Silas—cold, ruthless Silas—plunging into the raging sea with Freya at his side.

Silas Whitmor. The Ironclad Alpha. A wolf who had never spared mercy, never offered kindness, a man who had watched death before and had not blinked. Jocelyn knew him better than most, had shadowed his movements, learned his rhythms. He was iron, forged without softness, incapable of bending for sentiment.

And yet tonight, he had leapt into the water. Not merely leapt he had clung to Freya before the eyes of countless witnesses, cameras flashing, recorders humming. His body wrapped around her as though she was already his chosen mate.

Why?

Her claws bit into her palms as jealousy frothed within her. That should have been her place, at his side, his arm anchoring her against the storm. Not Freya's. Never Freya's.

The journalists circling with lenses raised only worsened the torment. Every captured image, every recorded frame would show Silas and Freya -together, side by side, bound by something Jocelyn had long craved but never secured.

The child who had fallen into the waves was saved at last, dragged back from the edge of death by healers waiting on the shore. Relief rippled through the gathered wolves. Freya herself exhaled a breath of fragile ease.

Later, once the frenzy had ebbed, Freya and Silas made their way to the only hotel on the island. The sea-bound outpost was still in its early days of construction, the bones of new structures half-finished, scaffolding reaching skyward like the ribs of some fallen beast. Facilities were scarce. This single hotel was all the island could provide.

Inside the modest chamber, Freya accepted the clothes handed to her by the staff, then glanced toward Silas. He loomed beside her still, his presence filling the room like shadow and storm.

"All right," she said, voice tired but steady. "I'll wash up and change. You should take the guest room next door and do the

same."

His gaze fastened on her, unblinking, "I'll wait here until you're finished."

A sigh slipped from her lips. The way he looked at her-it was as if he feared she might vanish into mist the moment he looked away.

"I'm not going anywhere," she reminded him gently. "But you need to shower. If you fall ill, this island has little in the way of healers or supplies. And the investment conference isn't finished yet. If you get sick, we'll have to cut everything short."

Still, Silas did not move. His eyes lingered, heavy and watchful.

At last, Freya raised her hand, extending her smallest finger toward him. "Fine. We'll do it your way." She caught his hand and hooked his finger with hers. "A promise. I'll be here when you return."

Silas's breath stilled, his black eyes narrowing on the sight of their joined fingers. For a long, long moment he said nothing. Then his voice emerged low and rough.

"Very well," he murmured. "I'll go. But you'll be here"

11:30 AM P

+8 Pearls

“I’ll be here.”

Only then did he leave, and Freya at last retreated into the bathing chamber.

The water that cascaded over her was a balm, warm where the sea had been cold, steady where the waves had been brutal. The chill that had sunk into her bones slowly eased. Her body softened, uncoiling from the tension that had gripped her since the child’s cry had first split the air.

The boy had lived. That thought steadied her heart. He had lived because of Silas too. Without his strength beside her, dragging them both through the current, she might have taken too long. Minutes lost could have been life lost. She could not deny him that.

And yet... she had not expected Silas Whitmor, of all wolves, to plunge after her. To confess what he had confessed.

Love.

The word coiled through her chest like smoke.

She had thought she knew what love was once. She had believed it looked like her parents’ bond—Arthur Thorne and Myra Brown—wolf and mate, steady and whole. Love was sacrifice, care, loyalty until the last breath.

Caelum Grafton, on their wedding day, had sworn the same. He had told her he would love her, told her he would guard her always. And for three years she had believed it, had bent herself into that vow.

But she had received only betrayal in return. His heart had belonged to Aurora, not her.

And now Silas—Silas of all men—was saying he loved her.

How could she believe it? He was steel, not flesh. The Ironclad Alpha. Could such a wolf truly love? Or was this something else -possession, obsession, something darker?

When at last she stepped out from the bath, towel draped across her shoulders as she dried her hair, she found him again.

Silas was waiting.

He had changed clothes, though his hair still hung wet, droplets trailing from the dark strands onto his collar.

“You showered,” she observed, “but didn’t dry your hair?”

“Didn’t want to waste time.” His tone was simple, as though that explained everything.

Exasperation flared, though faintly softened by something she refused *to* name. “Bend down,” she ordered.

For a heartbeat his eyes flickered, but he obeyed. Slowly, the Ironclad Alpha inclined his head toward her.

Freya raised the towel and began to rub gently at his wet hair. The intimacy of the act startled even her. It was so... so unlike the storm they had just survived, so unlike the weight of his earlier words.

Yet her hands kept moving, warm against his scalp.

mundane,

“Silas,” she asked suddenly, her voice slipping past her lips before she could stop it. “When you said you loved me... did you mean it?”

The question hung between them like lightning waiting for the thunder.