

## **A Warrior Luna's Awakening Chapter 17**

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Freya's POV

The next morning, I went to meet Lana at SkyVex Armaments.

We had already agreed—I would officially join her faction after I escorted my parents' remains home to be buried in the Southern Territories. There was something grounding about knowing where I belonged, and SkyVex was offering me not just a position, but a chance to start over.

At noon, during lunch, I scrolled through my WolfComm feed and saw a post from Giselle.

A photo.

A man's hand—holding a bowl of steaming bone-broth porridge. The other hand carefully scooped from it with a carved silver ladle.

The caption?

“Brother Caelum made porridge for his future mate. Smells better than a Moonblessed brew!”

I stared at the photo, at the familiar veined knuckles, the way he held the bowl.

So that was what Caelum had been so busy with in the kitchens this morning.

I remembered the time I fell ill during an inspection run—fever burning at 40 degrees, limbs heavy as lead. I could barely get out of bed. But Caelum? He said the company needed him and left me to fend for myself.

Even after my fever broke, he ordered me back to the Foundry to lead project evaluations.

I was still hooked to an IV when I signed those damn reports.

He didn't so much as buy me a meal, let alone cook one. I had to order my own rations.

And yet now—he was waking early to make porridge... for Aurora?

So this is what it looked like—to be cherished. The difference between love and obligation was glaring.

“What’s got your hackles up?” Lana leaned over my shoulder, catching a glimpse of the post. Her eyes widened. “Wait—is that... is that Caelum making porridge for Aurora? While he’s still legally bound to you? That bastard!”

“It doesn’t matter.” I locked the screen and stood up.

“Where are you going? You’re not storming the infirmary, are you?” Lana asked.

“No,” I said simply. “I’m going to visit my parents.”

I didn’t owe Caelum anything—not even my anger.

But as I stepped out of SkyVex’s headquarters and headed for my car, a black armored cruiser pulled up beside me.

A tall man in a dark suit stepped out and bowed.

“Lady Freya, Alpha Silas sent me. He’d like to invite you to lunch to thank you for saving his life.”

“I already told him,” I replied, brushing past, “if he really wants to thank me, he can fund a Moonhope Academy. No need for

lunch.”

I climbed into my own vehicle and pulled away.

Half an hour later, I arrived at the Runestone Mausoleum, where the ashes of war heroes and honored wolves were kept. My parents’ urns were housed within a glass cabinet, covered by the crimson—and-gold battleflag of the Southern Pack. “Mom, Dad,” I whispered, bowing my head, “I used to think Caelum owed you an apology. I wanted him to kneel here and say he was sorry. But now? I see it clearly. He’s not worth the air it’d take.”

The silence in the mausoleum was heavy, but comforting.

I clasped my hands in front of me and bowed deeply, offering a warrior’s respect.

“I’ll bring you home soon. Just wait a little longer.”

Then, a low voice behind me cut through the stillness.

“You’re leaving the capital?”

I whipped around.

Silas Whitmor stood there, towering and calm, as though he belonged among these sacred stones.

“What are you doing here?” I asked, startled.

“You refused my assistant,” he said. “So I came to extend the invitation myself.”

His presence left no room for evasion.

nodded. “Alright. Since you’ve come personally, I suppose I can’t keep refusing.”

He stepped closer, his gaze settling on the name plaques below the urns: Arthur Thorne. Myra Thorne.

“These are your parents?”

“Yes.”

“Not just any wolves get battleflags,” he murmured.

“They were soldiers,” I said, my voice proud. “Ordinary, but also heroes.”

They’d served thirty years between them—facing death every season, standing watch while others slept.

As a child, I’d once begged them to stop. To come home.

But my father had knelt and held me close. “Freya,” he said, “we don’t just protect our den. We protect the Pack. The whole nation. That is what a real wolf does.”

Now, I finally understood him.

After I graduated from Halston Combat Academy, I enlisted too.

And if not for the day the death scrolls arrived... I would still be wearing a blade, not a badge.

“I’ll come back to visit again,” I whispered, bowing one last time.

When I turned, Silas was still standing there.

“Aren’t you coming?” I asked.

He didn’t reply.

Instead, he strode forward, stopped in front of my parents’ urns—and bowed.

Three times.

Deep and deliberate.

Each motion precise, solemn. Not a mockery of form, but a warrior's respect.

My throat tightened.

This was what Caelum should have done.

But instead, the man most feared in the North—the mad Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition—was the one bowing to my parents.

When he straightened, he turned to me and said simply, “Let’s go.”

I opened my mouth, but words caught in my throat. “Why did you...”

“Bow?” he cut in. “They died for the Pack. They earned it.”

We left the mausoleum.

Outside, his armored cruiser was waiting, door held open by a silent guard. I slid into the backseat beside him, still lost in thought.

The car carried us to a private establishment hidden in the shadowed part of the Inner Ring.

A place of high ceilings, silence, and power.

“Ever been here?” Silas asked.

“No.”

“You’ll like the food.”

He wasn’t wrong. The dishes that arrived were fragrant and complex—meats slow-cooked with wild herbs, root-seasoned broths, seared rootbeast slices.

I ate fast. Old habits.

In the field, you learn to finish before the next order comes.

After I’d had enough, I looked up—and caught myself staring

Silas’s hand.

Long-fingered, pale, strong. Wrapped around a pair of bone chopsticks like they were weapons.

It was a beautiful hand—but also a dangerous one.

The kind that could cradle or kill.

“You keep staring,” he said suddenly, voice low.

“Sorry,” I said without flinching. “Your hands are... striking.”

He tilted his head, like he was analyzing that thought.

“If I die before you,” he said with unnerving calm, “I’ll have them removed, lacquered, and sent to you in a glass box.”

I blinked.

“What?”

“So you can keep staring at them.”