

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

chapter 171-180

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya's POV

Finished

After leaving the hospital, I found myself back at Silas Whitmor's sprawling estate. The air was thick with the scent of pines. and polished stone, a faint reminder of the Ironclad Coalition's power and control. The halls seemed quieter now, almost serene, yet I could feel the tension humming just beneath the surface—Silas's presence was enough to keep even the walls. alert.

adjusted my jacket and looked at him. He sat casually on the edge of the marble staircase, hands folded, eyes scanning the estate grounds as though he could sense any threat before it even materialized. The faint scuff of my boots against the polished floor drew his gaze, and I felt that odd mix of comfort and apprehension that always came with him being near.

"I guess this means I don't need to serve as your bodyguard anymore?" I asked, watching him closely.

His eyes, dark as onyx, met mine. There was no mockery, no hesitation. Only certainty. "No," he said. "It's no longer necessary

I raised an eyebrow. "Because I got hurt this time?"

No," he corrected softly, yet firmly. "Because there's no reason for you to protect me anymore. When the Iron Fang Recon Unit assigned you to me, it wasn't just about my safety. There were people in the Whitmor family opposed to my sitting at this position. They feared it would disrupt Coalition projects. But now, there's no opposition left. No threat. I won't be in danger, Freya."

I studied him, my wolf instincts sniffing out the subtle undercurrent of truth in his words. There was more than just professional reasoning here, but I didn't push. I had learned long ago that when Silas spoke with such calm certainty, it was unwise to doubt him.

"You forget," he added, his voice softening, "I promised you once, I would never lie to you. I never will."

Before I could respond, my WolfComm buzzed in my hand. The screen lit up, displaying the name of Aldred—the old commander, my mentor, my anchor in the chaos of my past missions.

“Aldred!” I answered, a touch of relief threading through my voice.

“Freya, I heard you were hurt,” his tone immediately thick with guilt and concern. “You’ve already retired from active duty, and yet I pulled you back into this... I should never have asked it of you. I’m responsible for this injury.”

“It’s a minor wound,” I replied, brushing off his words. “Nothing I can’t handle.”

“Regardless,” Aldred said firmly, “you must take care of yourself. And starting now, your bodyguard duty is over. You won’t need to watch over Silas Whitmor anymore.”

I froze. That was an official order, unmistakable and decisive. The old commander’s voice had no room for negotiation. When the call ended, I turned to Silas, eyebrows raised.

“You went to the Unit about this?” I asked.

“Yes,” he admitted simply. “Orders carry more weight when they come from the Chain of Command than from me. But Freya...” He took a step closer, his gaze steady and unwavering, “you don’t need to protect me anymore. From now on, I will protect you.”

The words stirred something primal in me—the deep, instinctual relief of a wolf who no longer has to shoulder danger alone. He would rather bear any risk himself than see me fall. I felt that old, steady thrum of something beyond loyalty, beyond mere duty.

Before I could respond, my WolfComm buzzed again. This time, the name flashing on the screen was Kade. My stomach tightened, a subtle warning rolling through my wolf senses.

As I reached for the phone, Silas’s hand moved over mine, gentle but firm, a silent command not to answer.

“What is it?” I asked, curiosity tinged with concern.

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Finished

He pressed his lips together, then withdrew his hand. “Nothing,” he said casually, though I could feel the tension radiating off him. His wolf instincts had already sensed the danger Kade posed—more than Caelum Grafton ever could. Even though Silas had used every tactic in his arsenal to keep Kade away from The Capital, the sudden call had sent a ripple of unease through

him.

I answered the call anyway. “Hello?”

“Freya, your bodyguard duty... it’s finished?” Kade’s voice was smooth, tinged with that familiar edge of amusement and challenge.

How did you find out?” I asked, brow furrowed.

“I happened to be at the military compound,” he said casually. “Heard the news.” There was a pause, and then his voice shifted, almost eager. “Now that your assignment is over, when are you coming back to The Capital?”

I hesitated. Of course. My mission here was complete. My next move would be to return.

“Not just yet,” I said. “There are still matters here I need to wrap up. When I return, I’ll let you know.”

There was a faint sigh on the other end, almost human in its disappointment. “Fine. I’ll wait for your message. When you come back, we’ll meet properly. I have a lot to say to you.”

“Understood,” I replied, keeping my tone neutral.

As I ended the call, Silas’s gaze met mine. “You’ll be heading back to The Capital soon?” His voice carried that rare softness, the kind that made the air itself feel heavy with unspoken promises.

I nodded slowly. “Yes. Once everything here is settled.”

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Silas’ POV

Finished

I watched her from across the estate terrace, the evening sun casting long shadows over the manicured hedges and stone pathways of my Whitmor estate.

Freya’s hands flexed unconsciously at her sides as she spoke, lips pressed together with that stubborn set I knew all too well. My alpha senses hummed with tension; the faint scent of her nerves mingled with the faint musk of her wolf aura, an intoxicating mixture that both unsettled and drew me closer.

“Since my mission is over,” she said, her voice low but clear, “I need to settle a few personal matters before returning to The Capital. There’s work I still have to handle there.”

I could feel the subtle pulse of her wolf, restrained yet restless. She was already planning her return to The Capital, already calculating the days, the schedule, the logistics. My instincts bristled at the thought. Every mile between us was a potential threat, every passing day a chance for danger—or for someone like Kade Blackridge to insert himself between us.

“How long will you stay in Ashbourne?” I asked, striving to keep my tone casual, though the tension in my chest tightened.

About ten days,” she said. Her scent carried a soft hint of the freedom she’d cherish once the final goodbyes were said. Ten days. That was far too short, far too fleeting.

I stepped closer, letting the air between us thicken with the unspoken. “Couldn’t you stay a few more days here?” I asked, my voice low, almost a growl of desire and possessiveness. I didn’t want her back in The Capital yet, not while Kade’s presence lingered like a shadow over her. Not before she was more... certain. More tethered to me.

Freya’s eyes flickered briefly, and her lips pressed together. She was thinking, calculating, considering, as always. Finally, she spoke, her voice careful but firm. “I can stay a few more days for you,” she said, “but I won’t linger too long in Ashbourne. And

when I return to The Capital, I won’t stay there for too long either. I need to go to the go to the borderlands, search for any trace of my

brother. We may be apart at times. If that’s unacceptable to you, you should tell me now.”

Her words struck me like a blow. She was offering me a choice but the very idea of choice filled me with a primal rage. Choice meant she could walk away. Choice meant that if her affection was not absolute, she could withdraw, retreat, vanish from my life. And I... I would never allow that.

“Freya,” I said, my voice low and guttural, a predator’s growl lacing the words, “I’ve fought tooth and claw to be with you. I will not let the distance between us, the need to find your brother, or anything else, drive you away from me. You will not speak of walking away. Don’t even think it.”

I lowered my head, brushing my lips lightly over the bandaged skin of her forearm, feeling the delicate warmth of her flesh beneath the cloth. That injury was mine as much as it was hers; she had taken the risk, bared herself to the world, to protect me. My wolf rumbled in my chest with the possessive need to shield her, to mark her as mine in every way possible.

“And besides,” I murmured, letting the words curl around her senses like smoke, “if you’re going to the borderlands, I’ll go with you.”

She froze, eyes widening slightly. “You... you would accompany me there?”

“Yes,” I said, dark certainty threading every syllable.

Her brow furrowed. “But your work?”

I smiled faintly, the kind of smile that had silenced more than one rival or challenger. “Freya, in this age, work follows us anywhere. The Whitmor holdings, the Coalition projects... none of it binds me to one place. And the staff, the resources, the support? You think I’d let you risk a step alone?” My wolf growled, low and protective, at the mere thought of her walking that treacherous border without me..

Her mind raced, I could smell it—calculations, plans, memories of the past five years spent searching for her brother. She’d already been to the borderlines multiple times, scrutinized every lead, followed every faint trace, yet she still believed he was out there, alive. Her wolf pulsed with the stubborn tenacity I had come to respect and fear.

You understand, don’t you?” I said, a hand brushing against hers, resting over the delicate curve of her fingers. “I’ll go anywhere with you. I’ll fight, survive, and endure any threat. Because you **are** mine, Freya. And I will never let the world take

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you from me.”

Finished

Her gaze softened for just a moment, the scent of relief mingled with caution drifting from her. Yet she remained vigilant, wolf and human both, the duality I had come to know like a second heartbeat. “I appreciate that,” she said softly, “and I trust you. But the search... it won’t be easy. The borderlands are unforgiving, and we may face challenges even together. I want you prepared.”

I chuckled, a low, rumbling sound that carried the weight of an alpha’s confidence. “Prepared?” I said.

“I’ll go with you,” I repeated, voice low, but carrying an unmistakable promise. “But know this—wherever you go, whatever danger lies ahead, I will always be closer than it seems. I will always be the shadow at your back, the shield at your side. You are mine to protect, Freya Thorne. Do not doubt it for one second.”

Her lips pressed together, her wolf scent mingling with mine in the evening air, a blend of challenge and acknowledgment. “Then we’ll face it together,” she said. “And... Silas, I trust you.”

Her trust ignited something deep in me, a fire older than reason, older than loyalty. My wolf growled low in my chest, a protective, possessive sound meant only for her ears. I would endure, survive, and overcome every obstacle for her. Distance, time, enemies, the unforgiving terrain of the borderlands—none of it mattered.

Because she **was** mine.

And the borderlands, the world beyond these estate walls, was ours to conquer together.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya’s POV

Finished

The next few days passed in a strange, quiet rhythm. I stayed at Sila’s villa, letting the wound on my arm knit back together.

To me, it **was** a shallow cut, hardly worth noticing compared to the scars the borderlands had carved into me. But Silas treated it as though I’d been struck down by silver. He had the kitchen overhaul every meal into some carefully balanced, nutrient-dense feast. He insisted on handling the dressing of my wound himself—his large hands surprisingly gentle as they unraveled bandages and pressed clean cloth against my skin. And when it came to work? He dragged every Ironclad Coalition file, every contract, and every envoy into his home office, refusing to step foot away from me.

It was overbearing. Maddening. And yet... warming. My wolf sensed it every time he leaned close, every time his scent brushed mine. He cared. He cared more than I expected him to.

A week later, the scab on my arm was hard and dry. I could move my hand normally again, though Silas still shot me that dangerous alpha glare whenever I reached too far or lifted something heavier than a book.

That was when the WolfComm message arrived. An invitation from the Ashbourne Orphanage, thanking me for my support and asking me to attend their performance. The words were written neatly by the staff—except at the bottom, clumsy,

childish letters were scrawled across the paper:

“Auntie Freya, please come watch me on stage. Dreamer.”

Dreamer. The little pup I'd dragged from the waves on the island mission. My throat tightened as I traced the crooked letters with my fingertip.

"You're going?" Silas's voice rumbled behind me.

"Of course I'm going." I looked up at him, my wolf bristling with determination. "I want to see how he's doing."

"Then I'll go too," he said without hesitation, as if it were law written in stone.

I gave him a look, but he only smiled that infuriatingly calm alpha smile. Wherever I went, he would follow.

The orphanage was buzzing with excitement that weekend, laughter and music spilling from its old stone hall. Children in patched costumes darted about, their wolves too young to stir but their spirits radiant. Donors from the last island charity event filled the front rows, their polished shoes and jeweled cuffs glinting under the stage lights.

Silas walked beside me tall and commanding, drawing glances and hushed whispers even here. My wolf preened at his presence, though I would never admit it aloud.

And then my eyes snagged on two figures I wished I hadn't seen.

Aurora. Caelum Grafton.

Aurora in her immaculate uniform, head held high. And Caelum stiffened the moment his gaze met mine,

"Freya," he said, his brows knitting. "What are you doing here?"

A laugh slipped from me, sharp and cutting. "You're here, Caelum. Why shouldn't I be?"

His jaw worked as if he wanted to argue. And then the words came, venom-tipped. "I've confirmed the truth. The one who saved me that day wasn't you—it was Aurora. Stop spreading ridiculous lies. You only make yourself look more pathetic."

My wolf bristled, lips curling in a silent snarl.

He turned to Silas then, bold but trembling under the Ironclad Alpha's gaze. "Whitmor, you should be careful. Don't be deceived by this woman."

Silas's expression darkened into something lethal. "I always knew you were arrogant, Grafton," he said, his tone low,

smooth, and dangerous. "But I didn't know you were this stupid. Speak one more insult about Freya, and I'll tear your tongue from your mouth myself."

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The color drained from Caelum's face. I caught the flicker of fear in his eyes, the scent of it spiking sharp and sour.

Finished

I turned my gaze on Aurora, who remained silent at his side, her lips pressed thin. Then back to Caelum. "I already told you once—believe what you want. If you want to pretend Aurora saved you, then fine. But don't ever presume to judge me. You've lost that right."

His mouth opened, ready to snap back, but Silas shifted a fraction closer to me, and Caelum's wolf recoiled. He swallowed his words.

The performances began soon after. The children danced, sang, and recited with trembling voices but glowing eyes. The donors clapped politely, and flashes from the reporters' cameras sparked across the hall.

At the end, a boy barely sixteen, his voice still awkwardly changing, stepped forward as host. "Thank you, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunties, for coming today. And thank you for your donations after the island tragedy. We're so grateful. And today, we're honored to have Aurora here—our very own pilot of the Bluemoon Airborne Wing. And did you know? She was once a hero who braved the fire five years ago! Please welcome her to the stage!"

Murmurs rippled through the hall. Aurora froze for half a second before she pasted on a smile and walked up under the spotlights.

"I'm no hero," she began, her voice modest, almost humble. "I only did what any decent wolf would do. Faced with a fire, who wouldn't try to save lives? It was never about bravery. It was simply the right thing to do."

The hall erupted with applause. Cameras flashed. For a moment, the narrative was hers, every eye drinking in her image.

Then a voice cut through the clapping. Sharp. Cold. A reporter near the front raised his recorder. "Aurora," he said, "is it true you actually abandoned your comrade in that fire? That you stood by while he burned?"

The hall gasped, air sucked from the room in an instant.

Aurora's face snapped pale. "That's a lie," she spat, her voice suddenly hard. "You accuse me without evidence? I could sue you for slander."

The reporter lifted a trembling hand. “It isn’t my accusation. Before I came, I received an anonymous message. It said you watched as your fellow soldier burned alive... and you turned away.”

The silence that followed was suffocating. My wolf’s hackles rose, the scent of fear pouring off Aurora, bitter and acrid.

And I stood there, at Silas’s side, watching as the facade Aurora had so carefully constructed began to crack under the weight of truth.

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Finished

Third Person’s POV

“Miss Aurora,” he said, holding up a WolfComm device, its screen still glowing, “I received this message this morning. I believe the audience has the right to see it.”—

Murmurs rippled through the hall. The man swiped the screen open, projecting the message so that the nearby journalists and charity patrons could glimpse the jagged words. The reporter then walked forward, extending the device toward Aurora

Aurora’s face drained of color. Her fingers tightened at her sides, though she forced herself to take the WolfComm with calculated composure. Her eyes flicked down, skimming the text, and the icy calm she wore cracked for the briefest of heartbeats. Beneath the mask of poise, terror flared.

Who? The question screamed in her head. Who could possibly know what happened that night?

Her wolf stirred uneasily beneath her skin, hackles lifting, throat taut with a snarl she dared not release.

“This number is untraceable,” the reporter added, tone neutral but edged with sharp intent. “A virtual reroute. But the content is... alarming. Miss Aurora, would you care to clarify the truth of the matter?”

Every eye in the hall was upon her. Around the stage sat not only journalists, but benefactors of the Stormveil Orphanage, and even nobles of the wider werewolf coalitions. If she faltered, even for an instant, suspicion would sink its claws into her reputation.

Aurora inhaled deeply, drawing wolf-strength into her lungs. When she lifted her chin again, her expression was smooth, proud, untrembling.

“Yes,” she said evenly. “There was a fire. And yes, one of my fellow pilots fell to it. But it was an accident—tragic, unforeseen. I was not at his side in the moment of disaster. By the time I reached him, the blaze had already taken him. All I could do was raise the alarm and fight the flames with what little I had.”

Her voice carried, strong and unwavering, echoing across the vaulted hall. The crowd hushed, listening.

“The official investigation confirmed it,” she continued. “The cause was negligence. A discarded ember, a cigarette left to smolder. That was the verdict. Not murder. Not betrayal. If anything, it was a warning to us all. Fire is not merciful, and every wolf—every human, for that matter—must respect it.”

The weight of her words settled like iron. And then, as if on cue, polite applause stirred from the audience, building into something more forceful, more convincing. Aurora's pale cheeks regained their color as she pressed on, her wolf aura lacing each syllable with commanding conviction.

“I don’t know who has stooped to such vile games as sending anonymous messages,” she declared, her eyes sweeping the sea of faces before her. “But if they think lies will undo my work, they are mistaken. Justice has already spoken. If I were guilty of such horrors, would the government of the Capital have honored me? Would I have received medals, recognition, and the trust of my Pack?”

Her words grew hotter, her wolf spirit bristling just beneath her skin. “To the coward behind this—if you are even in this room—I say this: shadows and whispers will never undo the truth, Those who strike from the dark will never prevail!”

The crowd erupted into thunderous applause this time, louder and longer, Aurora tipped her chin higher, her pride restored, and descended gracefully from the stage.

She slid back into her seat beside Caelum. He leaned toward her, his steel-blue eyes softened with concern.

"Are you all right?" he murmured.

"I'm fine," she answered quickly, her sinile composed. But only she knew the slick cold sweat that clung to her palms, the Tremor she concealed beneath the tablecloth.

Who sent it? Her mind churned, frantic beneath the still surface. Who knows what happened that night?

No one should have known. No one could have known. She had been there with And he had perished in the blaze, his body consumed. The dead did not speak.

co-pilot-the only witness to his death.

1228 AM p p

And she... she had never breathed a word of that night to another soul.

Then how?

Finished

Her stomach knotted, her wolf pacing like a caged beast. Could it be the same shadowy hand that had sent the message to her own private WolfComm weeks ago?

“Perhaps we should leave early,” Caelum said softly, protective instinct flaring in the Alpha’s aura.

Aurora shook her head, sharp and decisive. “No. To leave now would look like fear. I will stay. The Bluemoon Pack does not bow to shadows.”

Her words rang brave, but inside her wolf trembled.

The event gradually returned to its usual rhythm-speeches, pledges of aid, the laughter of children echoing in the wings of the orphanage hall. To most, the incident had passed like a brief storm cloud drifting over the moon.

But not to Freya.

She sat a few rows behind, her Stormveil Pack blood keen to scents others ignored. The faint bitterness of Aurora’s fear still clung to the air, sharp as burnt ash. Freya’s amber eyes narrowed as she studied the Beta’s daughter, her wolf prickling.

Silas leaned toward her. “What troubles you?”

Freya lowered her gaze, pretending thoughtfulness. “Aurora’s face. Her words said one thing, but her wolf told another.”

“You think the message is true?” Silas asked, his voice low.

“Maybe not entirely. But she’s hiding something.” Freya’s tone was flat, thoughtful. “An innocent wolf **accused** falsely would rage, protest, howl their denial. But Aurora? She was too smooth. Too... rehearsed.”

Silas grunted in agreement, his wolf aura flickering with distrust.

Before Freya could add more, a small weight collided with her legs. She looked down in surprise as a young girl, barely ten, threw her arms around her waist.

“Freya!” the child beamed up at her, eyes bright as moonlight. “Did you see me perform?”

A smile cracked through Freya’s stern façade. She crouched, ruffling the girl’s hair. “I did. And you were brilliant.”

The pup’s grin widened. “Then come play with us! We’re playing Hawk and Hens, You can be the Mother Hen!”

Freya’s lips parted to agree, but Silas’s hand caught her arm. His gaze flicked to the bandaged gash across her forearm.

“Your wound isn’t healed,” he warned. His voice carried the edge of an Alpha’s command, protective and unyielding.

“It’s nothing,” Freya replied, brushing him off with a half-smile. “Mother Hens don’t need their arms to shield their chicks.”

But Silas’s wolf bristled. He shook his head. “No. I won’t risk you for a game.”

Freya’s wolf ached at the disappointment flickering in the children’s faces, their eager eyes fixed on her. The pull between instinct and duty warred within her—between the fierce protector who longed to bring joy to the pups and the cold truth of her injuries.

She let out a soft sigh, gaze lingering on the little girl’s hopeful face.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya’s POV

Silas pressed his lips together, his expression unreadable, then said in his deep voice, “I’ll go.”

I blinked. “You? You’ll be the Mother Hen?”

“Mm.” He nodded as though the decision were final.

Finished

I couldn’t help the stunned silence that followed. My mind balked at the image—Silas Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition, the wolf most of the Capital feared, playing children’s games on a lawn. It didn’t fit. He was forged of iron, not laughter. Yet he was completely serious, and before I could stop him, he bent toward the little girl who had begged me.

“Freya’s arm is injured,” he said kindly, his tone gentled in a way that startled me. “So I will play instead.”

Dreamer’s eyes lit with excitement, her squeal ringing like a bell. Silas shrugged off his tailored jacket, unfastened his tie, rolled his sleeves to the elbow. Then, to my utter disbelief, he strode onto the grass.

Moments later, I watched him—him, the wolf with a reputation black as night—sprint across the green with a chain of squealing pups trailing behind, his arms stretched wide in mock defense as he guarded them from the “hawk.” The sight knocked the breath from me. This was no Alpha feared by the Capital; this was a man unarmored, a wolf freed of the weight of politics and war, laughing with children as though he had been born to it.

The dignitaries and reporters lining the orphanage lawn froze. Every single one who knew his name stared, mouths parted, as though they’d stumbled into a dream.

That’s Silas Whitmor? The iron-fisted Alpha of the Coalition? The wolf whispered to be untouchable, lethal, merciless? And here he was, playing Hawk and Hens with orphans.

My lips curved without my permission. The longer I stayed near him, the more I saw pieces that defied the legend. And those pieces unsettled me far more than his fearsome reputation ever had.

I tugged out my WolfComm, capturing a few frames of the impossible moment—Silas barreling across the lawn, laughter sparking in his eyes. But before sliding the device back into my pocket, my thoughts snagged on something darker.

The fire.

The message that had shaken Aurora earlier still echoed in my mind. My thumb lingered over the WolfComm screen before, almost without realizing, I pulled up the web archives. My search turned toward the past—the Bluemoon Airborne Wing’s co-pilot who had died five years ago. The report hadn’t softened with time. Negligence, they’d called it. A cigarette carelessly left burning, a fire sparked in the wrong place.

The man had burned, yes, but worse—his family had burned with him, not by flame but by words. Wolves and humans alike had torn them apart in the public square, branding him reckless even in death. Bluemoon Pack had spent fortunes to smother the flames of scandal.

Yet... if his death had been his fault, why did Aurora’s wolf tremble with guilt today?

My eyes narrowed as I scrolled, unease rippling beneath my skin. My wolf lifted its head, scenting lies buried beneath ash.

And then—

“Freya.”

The voice snapped behind me, sharp and accusing.

I spun, instincts flaring, only to find Aurora standing several paces away. Her chin was high, but the flush beneath her skin betrayed agitation.

“Were you the one?” she demanded suddenly, her words laced with Beta fury. “The one sending those vile messages to reporters? To me?”

I barked out a laugh, sharp as breaking glass. “What madness are you spouting now?”

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Finished

“You were rattled,” she pressed, stepping closer, eyes glittering with triumph. “I saw your WolfComm. You were searching for records of the fire. For my fallen wingmate. Who else but you would feed such poison to the press?”

She lunged, hand outstretched for my device.

But I was not prey. I twisted smoothly aside, my wolf’s reflexes effortless. Her fingers swiped only air.

“So that’s your logic?” I sneered. “That because I read the archives, I must be your phantom accuser? Do you even hear how absurd you sound?”

“It’s you!” Aurora snapped, her voice rising. “Who else? You’ve hated me ever since I won Caelum’s side. Jealousy drives you, Freya. Admit it—you knew I’d stand here today, so you schemed to slander me through the mouths of journalists!”

The growl that broke from my chest silenced the air between us. My wolf pressed forward, dominance radiating. “Aurora,” I said, my voice low and edged with threat, “if you imagine I’d soil my claws with your little games over a male like Caelum Grafton, then you are more foolish than I thought. Take him. I don’t want him. But if you shriek so loudly, others will begin to wonder if that message carved closer to the truth than your speech did.”

Her face blanched, then darkened. She trembled, but stubborn pride forced her chin up. “If you’re innocent, then hand me your WolfComm. Let me search it.”

I laughed again, colder this time. “And why, by the Moon, should I hand my device to you? You’ve no authority over me.”

“You refuse because you’re guilty!” she snarled. Her wolf bristled, claws itching.

I turned away, done with her theatrics. But she lunged—reckless, blind, her hand clawing once more for the WolfComm at my belt.

My wolf answered before thought could. I pivoted, hooked her ankle, and let her own momentum do the work. She crashed to the ground with a cry, sprawled in the grass, dignity shattered.

“Aurora!”

The roar ripped across the lawn. Caelum Grafton stormed forward, his Alpha presence flaring like a blade unsheathed. He gathered Aurora up, his arm locking around her shoulders, his storm-gray eyes fixed on me with fury.

“Freya Thorne,” he thundered, “you’ve gone too far!”

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya’s POV

Finished

I almost laughed at the absurdity. “Too far?” I murmured under my breath, the memory of Aurora sprawling on the grass still sharp in my mind. Too far? Compared to the lies she’d tried to spread about me, the mockery she aimed to cast over the tragedy, she had no right to utter those words.

Caelum’s storm-gray eyes burned into me. “Freya, I just saw you trip Aurora!” His tone was sharp, edged with both incredulity and controlled anger. “Why do you hold such malice toward her? Why harm her like this?”

I could almost feel my wolf curl its lips at him. His question, his disbelief—it was almost funny. “You saw me trip her?” I said coolly, letting the edges of sarcasm cut through the tension. “Did you not see her reach for my WolfComm? Did you not see that she lunged at me?”

Caelum’s jaw tightened. Aurora’s lips trembled, her Beta pride chafing against the sharp truth in my voice. But even I could see that their minds struggled to piece together what was really happening. They had both seen what my body could do.

I had put Caelum flat on his back once during a sparring session, easy as a wolf stretching its limbs. I could crush Aurora if I wanted—and she knew it, too. She stumbled, yes, but she was alive, unbroken, and if I had truly intended to harm her, she would not have risen with her dignity intact, much less just skidded across the grass in a graceless fall.

“You see,” I said, letting the words roll off my tongue like steel, “if I wanted to hurt her, this wouldn’t be the result. A scratch, a bruise, a trip? Hardly enough. My body doesn’t work like that by accident.”

Their expressions shifted, the tension around them thickening like smoke. Caelum’s Alpha instincts flared beneath the surface, but his gaze flickered, betraying hesitation. Aurora’s eyes widened, doubt breaking her composure, even if only for a fraction of a second.

“Freya-” Aurora hissed, “if you hadn’t handed over your WolfComm, how else would I prove-?”

I cut her off with a laugh, sharp and cold. “Prove what? That you’re the victim? That some text message from a coward behind the scenes defines my actions? That’s what you’re basing your life around?”

Caelum’s lips parted slightly, but before he could speak, I stepped closer, letting my wolf’s aura expand, heavy and low, brushing against his senses. It was a silent warning, a reminder that I was not prey, nor was I someone to misjudge.

And then Caelum moved. His hand shot for my injured arm, instinctively protective, maybe a little overbearing. The WolfComm in my hand made me pause. My arm was slow-damaged from an earlier spar-but instinct, reflex, survival, all sharpened my response.

“Let go!” I snapped, my wolf flaring.

But he gripped harder, thinking he could assert dominance through concern. “Give me the WolfComm. Let us check it, or I’ll

His words faltered beneath the force radiating from me.

I lifted my leg without hesitation. My wolf responded instantly, muscles coiling like a predator about to pounce. One swift kick, precise, controlled, and Caelum was thrown back, sprawling on the manicured grass.

Shock radiated across the lawn like ripples in water. Guests, reporters, and onlookers turned their eyes toward the commotion, and I could sense their minds scrambling to comprehend the audacity of what had just occurred.

“Freya, what’s going on?” Silas’s voice rumbled like distant thunder. I looked up to see the Ironclad Alpha striding toward us,

as he took in the scene.

his black eyes narrowis

“Nothing,” I replied, voice calm but firm, letting my wolf’s posture speak for the restrained storm within me.

His gaze dropped to my right arm. The cream-colored sleeve bore a darkening streak of red.

“You’ve

reopened the wound?” he asked, concern cutting through the ice in his voice.

Just a scratch from when Caelum grabbed me,” I

said. “I’ll re-dress it later. Nothing serious,”

Silas’s eyes, however, were storm clouds ready to break. He turned, slow and deliberate, and faced Caelum, who was still

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Finished

gathering his bearings. Even as Caelum rose, attempting to justify himself, the tension was immediate and primal—the scent of dominance, blood, and challenge rising in the space between us.

“You touched her arm?” Silas asked, his voice low, lethal. The weight of the Ironclad Alpha pressed down like a living thing.

Caelum swallowed, unease prickling the hairs along his spine. “I... I didn’t know. If she’d handed over the WolfComm, none of this would have happened!”

Silas’s gaze never wavered. “Her innocence,” he said, the words cold steel, “does not need proof from you or anyone else.”

The air snapped. A single, crisp sound—the subtle crack of inevitability—echoed through the tension, though the movement had not yet begun.

And then he moved. Silas stepped forward, the sheer weight of his presence crushing the space around Caelum. His wolf surged outward, a storm of shadowed dominance, fangs of instinct and authority glinting in the subtle sunlight.

In an instant, Caelum’s right hand, the one still trembling with the misguided attempt to seize proof, was broken. The crack was audible, resonating like the shattering of bones and the release of primal energy at once.

I stood frozen for a heartbeat, wolf instincts humming, muscles tense. The air was thick with pack dominance, a dangerous, electric charge that only Silas could command so effortlessly. The lesson was clear: he was the apex, the sto

and neither

man nor Beta could challenge him without cost.

Around us, the crowd held their collective breath, the reporters sensing that this was more than a mere scuffle. This was the collision of wolves, bloodlines, and pride, and I, Freya Thorne of Stormveil's fifth branch, could feel the tremors of power shifting beneath my paws.

Silas's black eyes met mine for a brief moment. There

re was no anger in his look for me—only a measured acknowledgment of control and principle. He had intervened, yes, but he had allowed me my dominance, my assertion. The law of the pack, silent and absolute, had been enforced.

Caelum crumpled slightly, pain radiating in a way that would not soon be forgotten. Aurora's eyes flitted between us, doubt and fear warring with her Beta pride. And I? I tightened my grip on the WolfComm, wolf heartbeat syncing with mine, knowing that some truths could not be swayed by fear, coercion, or lies.

Send Gifts

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A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Silas' POV

Finished

The air still thrummed with tension when I saw Caelum Grafton collapse to the ground, his scream cutting sharp through the manicured lawn. His right hand hung at an unnatural angle, a crimson ribbon trailing from the twisted joints. Instinctively, my wolf surged. My Alpha senses flared—not for dominance, not for show—but for the protection for Freya.

Aurora rushed forward, her Beta pride faltering as she caught him mid-fall. “Alpha Whitmor!” she hissed, fury spiking her tone. “Even you, feared across the Capital, cannot—” Her words dissolved in disbelief when her eyes met mine. Especially since this was over Freya. My Freya.

I let her words hang in the air, meaningless. To anyone outside the circle, I was merely a man of power. But to my wolf, to my instincts, anyone who threatened Freya was my prey, my adversary. My jaw tightened. I would tolerate no compromises. Not here, not now.

“Anyone with complaints,” I said, voice low and steel-edged, reverberating in the space between the gathered guests, “may address them with my legal counsel. But anyone who dares harm Freya Thorne? I will not let a single one escape.” My words were calm, measured—but every syllable carried the gravity of an Alpha who would tear the world apart for his mate.

I didn’t pause for dramatic effect. My boots pressed the grass as I moved toward her, my arms shifting to cradle her body effortlessly. Freya’s protest was immediate, sharp, though laced with the amusement I had come to know. “I can walk,” she said, voice tinged with embarrassment. Her injured arm, not her legs, made this pose slightly unnecessary—but my wolf would not allow her to risk further harm.

“I do not trust anyone to handle you but me,” I said, voice flat, the wolf in my chest vibrating with protective hunger. Freya’s head tilted back, a faint smile playing across her lips. She always had a way of softening the storm in me, even when the world—or Caelum tried to bring it to a boil.

The staff from the Orphanage and my Whitmore guards fell into place around us, coordinating quietly as I carried her away from the chaos. The press followed, snapping photos, but I was oblivious to the cameras. My focus was entirely on her—the faint pulse of her blood, the shallow rhythm of her breath, the subtle tension in her wounded arm.

Once we were safely in the armored vehicle, I gently rolled up the sleeve of her cream-colored jacket. A thin smear of blood glistened along the torn fabric. My fingers hovered over it, unwilling to touch too soon, fearing her reaction. “Does it hurt?” I asked, my voice tight.

Freya shrugged, her composure unbroken. “It’s fine.” But my wolf did not believe her. I could sense the twinge of pain in her aura, could smell the iron tang of blood, could feel the tremor beneath her calm.

“You are lying,” I murmured, voice almost a growl. I bandaged the shallow gash carefully, my hands moving with both precision and possessive care. Each second I spent tending her wound, my wolf curled closer, protective, territorial. Whoever dared cross her path would feel my wrath—and they would remember it.

Freya’s lips curved into that faint, mischievous smile that never failed to disarm me. “Really, it’s nothing. By the way... did you just... break Caelum’s hand?” Her voice was soft, teasing, though she watched me carefully for my

“Yes,” I admitted, eyes locked on hers, scanning every flicker of expression, every microreaction. “D

you blame me?”

Her lips pressed together, thoughtful. My chest clenched, jealousy and possessiveness gnawing at me. Caelum had once been someone Freya considered—someone she might have trusted with her future. If there were lingering threads of affection, I would cut them all away with teeth and claws if necessary. The wolf inside me snarled at the thought of any other man standing in her path.

Freya’s voice pulled me back, steadying me. “Why would I blame you? I kicked him first, remember? If anyone **deserves** scorn, it would be me for letting him get that close in the first place.”

Relief and a shiver of pride ran through me. My wolf eased slightly, tail flicking with satisfaction. Yet the tension lingered— the need to ensure no one ever threatened her again, to cement my place as her protector, her Alpha, her shadow.

“What if he tries to sue?” Freya asked, brow furrowing in a rare hint of hesitation.

“Then let him,” I said, **voice** cold as steel. “It was an **accident**... my ‘miscalculation. The Whitmore legal team **will** handle **the** rest. Caelum will receive **no** satisfaction beyond his own **pain**

.” I allowed my eyes to flick to **hers**, letting **her** see the

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unwavering resolve in them.

Finished

Inside, my wolf was still restless. Freya’s pulse, her warmth, her very presence set it on edge. Every beat of her heart reminded me that I would guard her with everything I had. No man, no rival, no outsider would ever stake claim to even a fragment of her attention.

Back at the Whitmore estate, I worked with meticulous care to redress her wound. Each motion was deliberate, gentle, protective. “If I had known they would come for you...” I muttered, a rare hint of vulnerability in my tone, “I should never have left.”

Freya smiled, a soft, wry thing that made the storm in me recede, if only slightly. “I am not defenseless,” she said, amusement lacing her voice. “I do not need a bodyguard at every moment. I was careless this time, nothing more.”

Her words soothed the beast inside me, yet my wolf still circled, vigilant, scanning, ready to strike at any who dared draw near. She laughed lightly, eyes crinkling as she recalled a moment from earlier. “I liked watching you play tag with the children,” she said. “It’s... strange, seeing you like that. Almost... human, almost free. I like that side of you.”

I paused, a shiver running through me at her confession. “You like that version of me?” I asked quietly, leaning close, aware of the scent of her hair, the warmth of her skin, the faint iron of her blood.

“Yes,” she whispered, eyes softening. “But I like all of you. I just wish... we had met sooner.”

The words struck me harder than any blow. My wolf stirred restlessly, sensing the layers of regret, longing, and missed time. If we had met earlier, she would have been mine wholly, unchallenged, free from the distractions of other men, free from the shadows of her past,

“Yes,” I murmured, voice husky, almost a growl. “If only we had.”

The thought settled in my chest like molten metal. I would not waste another moment. She would have no other men, no interference. I would guard her, walk beside her through every trial, every danger, every sunrise. My wolf would not yield. My life would belong to her.

And so, I vowed silently: No one touches Freya Thorne. No one threatens her. No one but me will ever share her light.

Send Gifts

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Finished

Third Person’s POV

Caelum’s right hand was now encased in a stark white cast, the bandages wrapping tightly around it like a cocoon. He held it carefully, his eyes dark and stormy, the physical pain mingling with an anger that simmered far deeper.

Aurora’s violet gaze sharpened, flicking between him and the shadow of Freya she could almost still feel lingering in the room. Her Beta pride flared with indignation. “Freya Thorne—using Silas Whitmor to hurt you? That is beyond malicious!” Her voice rang out, betraying the fury she tried so hard to keep in check. “Caelum, this... this cannot go unpunished! You must do something!”

Caelum's jaw clenched. He flexed the fingers of his uninjured hand, staring at the casted one as if it alone could explain the tangled web they were caught in. "Do you want to sue Silas Whitmor?" he countered sharply, the edge of disbelief cutting through his words.

Aurora's indignation only sharpened. "Of course! He injured your hand—your hand, Caelum! Surely you're not afraid of that man, are you?" Her voice dripped with a mixture of anger and frustration, not at Silas so much as at Freya herself. If it hadn't been for Freya, Aurora would never have been left humiliated, scrambling, and exposed in front of so many witnesses at the Orphanage event.

Caelum's glare softened, conflicted. He massaged his casted hand absently, the lingering sting a constant reminder of the chaotic encounter. "If I sue Silas... then I would be setting myself against the entire Whitmore legacy. I am not foolish enough to do that lightly."

Aurora's frown deepened, her lips pressing into a thin line. She understood the implications all too well. Caelum might be Alpha of SilverTech Forgeworks, fierce and commanding, but against Silas Whitmor of the Ironclad Coalition? Any legal battle would tilt in Whitmore's favor long before the first gavel struck. Companies partnered with him could easily withdraw, contracts evaporating like mist at dawn. The cost would outweigh any satisfaction of vengeance.

Yet the sting of injustice refused to abate in Aurora's chest. "So your injury just goes unnoticed, then?" she asked, the sharpness of her voice carrying a faint tremor of wounded pride.

Caelum forced a bitter smile, twisting the casted fingers as if in silent apology to some unspoken standard. "Consider it... the cost of Freya's interference," he muttered. There was truth in the words, a begrudging acceptance of the chaos Freya had brought into their lives. He would never have grasped her wounded arm, never caused this injury, had he known what was at stake.

Aurora's eyes narrowed. "Are you still... concerned about her?" Her voice was pointed, almost scornful. "Even knowing she might have crossed you, even knowing she tried to humiliate me, you still... care that she got hurt?"

Caelum's chest tightened. "I do not care about Freya Thorne in that sense," he began, defensive, "but three years of marriage... I never imagined I would see her injured like that. And, yes, you are certain she sent that WolfComm message to the reporter?"

Aurora's breath hitched slightly, a flicker of triumph in her eyes. "If it wasn't her, then who else? The incident with the island electronic billboard, the orphanage event—she was always there. Always. This... this is jealousy, plain and simple. She envies me because I have you, Caelum. She has been plotting all along."

Caelum fell silent, uncertainty gnawing at him. Could it truly be so calculated? His wolf's instincts bristled, ears twitching as he sifted through scents and subtle tensions, trying to untangle truth from perception.

Aurora's voice rose in desperation. "And she has no proof! No evidence of your so-called neglect **of** colleagues, no truth to **her** slander. She has nothing—yet she dares to speak as **if** she **owns** the facts. Caelum... you trust me, don't you?"

He met her gaze, unflinching "Of

determination and cunning that belied the hurt pride she tried **to** mask. Why would he not trust her? **She was** Bluemoon Pack's Beta-born, sharp, capable—and undeniably his.

determination and cunning course I trust you," he said firmly. His wolf sensed the sincerity in her scent, the

Aurora's lips curved in satisfaction, a calculated smile that mixed affection with ambition. She leaned against him lightly **nestling** into the warmth of his presence **as** if to stake claim to both his body and attention. "**So** now that we are together, when shall we announce it to the world?"

Her question **was soft**, but beneath **it**, the steel of her intent was unmistakable.

Caelum's **pulse** hitched, **a flicker** of hesitation **crossing** his **features**, **Announcing** their **union**. less than **three** months after his

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Finished

divorce. The thought alone carried weight, consequences tangled with perception, reputation, and pack politics. He could feel his wolf bristle, cautious and protective, warning him of exposure and potential attacks.

Aurora noticed immediately. Her smile faltered for a fraction, frustration prickling at her composure. "You mean to say... you do not want to go public? If that is the case, why not refuse me that night? If you had, I would have accepted it, and we could have stayed apart." She stepped back, as if to storm away, the curve of her hips and the tilt of her chin a subtle show of control.

Caelum's strong hands caught her before she could retreat fully. "Aurora," he said, tone firm but gentle, "I do not refuse you. **I** want this... us. But I have only recently emerged from my divorce. Public scrutiny... rumors... it could hurt your reputation. It is better to wait, to find the proper time."

Aurora's expression softened slightly, though her calculating mind did not cease. "Very well," she murmured, masking her ambition behind a veil of compliance. "We will wait for the 'proper time'."

Inside, she knew better. The so-called protection of her reputation was merely an excuse; Caelum cared more for his empire his company, and the perception of power than for her personal whims. But Aurora had a plan. She would engineer circumstances that forced the timing into her favor, making it impossible for him to refuse public acknowledgment. She would ensure that when the world finally saw them together, it would be on her terms.

And as Caelum held her there, unaware of the silent plotting weaving itself around them, Aurora's wolf-quiet, calculating, ever-hungry-waited, ready to strike with precision when the moment arrived.

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A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Finished

Third Person's POV

A few days later, Freya followed Silas into the gleaming towers of Whitsea Group's headquarters. The building's steel-and-glass façade reflected the bright morning sun, but inside, tension lingered like an undercurrent. Many of the employees had seen Freya before—after all, she had often accompanied Silas like a shadow, safeguarding the Ironclad Alpha wherever he went. Her reputation as a vigilant protector preceded her, and the incident in the underground garage had only intensified it.

When Freya was hurt at the garage, Silas had replaced the entire security team. Even here, whispers of the upheaval in The garage reached every floor. Senior managers, executives, and any employees connected to the Whitmore family tread lightly, wary of drawing the Alpha's attention or getting caught in the crossfire.

In recent days, Silas had remained conspicuously absent from the office, which allowed the employees a small measure of relief. Yet today, with Silas and Freya arriving together, the air inside the building seemed suddenly heavier. Subtle looks were exchanged between employees—an unspoken sense that something unusual was about to unfold..

Lily, Silas's secretary, had taken over responsibilities from the injured Wren and entered the executive office, only to freeze in place.

Silas knelt in front of Freya, one hand gently cradling her right foot, his gaze intent and unyielding, fixed on the swelling redness across the arch of her shoe.

To anyone who had only known him as the untouchable, commanding Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition, this was a sight that defied comprehension. The image of the Alpha, stooping before a woman—bowing almost as if submitting entirely to her presence—was shocking enough to make even hardened executives doubt their senses.

Lily could feel her pulse race; a part of her half-expected Silas to lean forward and place a kiss upon the delicate curve of Freya's foot. The thought alone sent a shiver down her spine.

Freya glanced toward Leo, cheeks tinged with pink. "Ah... I accidentally spilled some tea on my shoe," she said, a faint awkwardness in her tone, "so..."

Lily, realizing the simple explanation, nodded in understanding, trying to suppress the disbelief still fluttering in her chest. Freya attempted to pull her foot back, but Silas's fingers remained securely entwined with hers. "I'm fine," she reassured him. "The redness is still visible," Silas murmured, lifting her with ease. Freya blinked, caught off guard. Lily's eyes widened in equal astonishment.

In the executive office, there was a small wash basin tucked into the corner. Silas carried Freya to the counter, placing her foot carefully beneath the running cold water. The sight of the Alpha, usually crisp and commanding, tending to the swelling and redness of a woman's foot, left everyone *in* the room dumbstruck.

High-ranking employees, following behind Lily, hesitated at the doorway, uncertain whether to enter. Their instincts screamed at them—what danger could befall the Alpha that required such intimacy? But as they stepped inside, the scene confirmed the unexpected: the Alpha was tending to Freya as though she were

the most precious presence in the room. Freya's face flushed as she held up her hands. "Enough, really. I'm fine now," she said, concerned about the **growing** crowd. The more witnesses, the more awkward her situation felt.

Silas, after confirming that the redness had faded under the cold water, paused and took a soft cloth from the counter. He gently dried her foot, then reached for a spare pair of shoes kept in the office, "Here," he said, sliding them onto her **feet** with careful precision.

The executives and Lily could only stare, astonishment failing to capture the depth **of** their reaction. The Alpha, stoic **and** exacting in all matters of business, now showed a level of personal attentiveness that few could **reconcile** with the

commanding leader they knew.

Freya, wanting to redirect the attention back to decorum, attempted **to move** toward the door. "**I** should **step** out while **you**

conduct your meeting," she said lightly.

Silas's hand caught her wrist. "No need. Stay

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Finished

"I'd rather sit outside for a bit," Freya insisted, her gaze flicking to the executives whose expressions were a mixture of awe and embarrassment. The lobby or the office lounge would afford her more privacy while keeping the situation from escalating.

Silas hesitated, then gave a small nod. "Very well." He turned to the desk and retrieved two boxes of medicine, checking the time carefully. "In seven minutes, remember to take these. The two doses should be spaced five minutes apart, and the water temperature should be around thirty-eight degrees Celsius."

Lily and the onlookers were astounded. Silas, usually curt and to the point in meetings, now behaved almost like a caretaker fussing over the timing, dosage, and even the temperature of water.

Freya took the medicines from him and left the office with Lily, a faint smile playing across her lips. She knew Silas's actions stemmed from genuine care, a rare vulnerability he showed only to her. Even compared to Jocelyn Thorne, the favored first branch of Stormveil Pack, Freya recognized the depth of Silas's attentiveness. Being with him meant feeling cherished, protected, and—unexpectedly—desired.

Her thoughts were interrupted by the vibrating of her WolfComm. After a brief conversation, she turned to Lily. "Please inform Silas that I need to make a quick stop at the Thorne Group. It's urgent."

Freya moved swiftly through the city streets and arrived at the Thorne Group's headquarters. As she entered, she immediately spotted Jocelyn. Jocelyn's brows knitted in irritation. "What are you doing here?" she snapped.

"That's none of your concern," Freya replied, her voice cool and measured, already moving to sidestep her.

Before she could pass, a sharp voice rang out behind her.

"Jocelyn, you called me over... why is Freya here too?"

Freya turned, and saw Aurora and Caelum entering the building. Caelum's presence radiated authority, while Aurora's Beta instincts flickered in her calculated gaze.

"I didn't call her," Jocelyn insisted, rushing toward Aurora. "Finally, you're here. The helicopter is ready, we need your help to rescue the workers!"

A sudden industrial accident had occurred on one of the offshore sites. Though authorities had been contacted, deploying law enforcement helicopters would take hours. The Thorne Group's private helicopter was ready, but the timing was critical. Jocelyn's push for speed in construction had caused lapses in safety inspections, precipitating the accident.

Aurora's eyes glinted as she looked at Freya. "Before I help, I expect a proper apology from you and Caelum," she said, a triumphant edge in her tone.

Freya's gaze narrowed, meeting Aurora's with equal malice. In that moment, an unspoken challenge passed between them- wolf to wolf, Alpha instincts and Beta cunning clashing in silent, simmering tension.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Finished

Third Person's POV

Jocelyn Thorne's brow was furrowed in confusion, her voice carrying sharp authority. "Aurora, what's going on here? Why do you want Freya to apologize?"

Aurora folded her arms, her gaze sharp and deliberate. "A few days ago, Caelum and I attended a charity event at the Orphanage. I discovered that Freya may have been secretly sending messages to the press to discredit me. When I tried to check her WolfComm, she refused—and on top of that, she treated both Caelum and me with obvious hostility."

Her words hung in the air like the scent of a storm just before it breaks. Then Aurora paused, her sharp eyes narrowing. "Jocelyn... Caelum's wrist was broken, and it's because of Freya. If she hadn't been involved, Silas Whitmor wouldn't have intervened in such a way. That's just how it happened."

Jocelyn's face went pale, the realization hitting her like an icy gust. Silas... Silas Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition, had broken Caelum Grafton's wrist? The thought was almost unimaginable. Silas was never one to act without purpose—but for Freya, he had struck again and again, crossing boundaries he usually respected.

Jocelyn spun toward Freya, her tone sharp and commanding. "Freya! Apologize to Aurora and Caelum immediately!" Freya, standing tall and unflinching, ignored the command. She had no intention of wasting time on these petty accusations. Her Wolf senses were already focused on the offshore site, where Thorne Group employees were trapped. The Wolf in her sensed danger; the call to action pulsed like a drumbeat in her veins. The Wolf in her knew that hesitation could cost lives. "You dare *try* to stop me from leaving?" Freya's voice was steady, carrying an edge of amusement that didn't reach her eyes. Jocelyn, sensing the challenge to her authority, took a step forward. "Freya!"

Aurora, stepping in with the confidence of a Beta used to asserting dominance, added, “You’re a former operative, right? You’ve always liked showing your skills... consider this your chance. If you apologize and I’m satisfied, I will pilot the chopper to rescue the stranded employees. *If* not... well, your stubbornness could jeopardize the mission. And if anything happens to those people, it’s on you!”

The accusation hung heavy in the air, but Freya’s instincts flared. Threats could not sway her. She scanned the room, sensing the small pack of Thorne Group employees hiding behind security personnel. She could almost smell their fear, the worry for lives caught offshore, the anxious pulse of a pack in crisis.

Caelum’s voice, calm and controlled, cut through the tension. “Freya, you don’t have to apologize to me. But you owe Aurora a courtesy for the false accusation. She **is** an active hero in her own right.”

Freya’s eyes narrowed slightly at the word “hero.” Aurora acting heroic She had seen enough deception and theatrics in the orphanage to doubt that narrative, “Hero or not, you need evidence to claim I slandered you,” Freya replied, voice edged with steel. “I don’t have time for your theatrics. Lives are at stake.”

Jocelyn’s face hardened. “If you don’t apologize, you won’t leave!” She motioned sharply, and security personnel moved to encircle Freya, the silent assertion of human dominance attempting to mirror pack control,

She could feel the fear and uncertainty **in** the

Freya’s wolf instincts tensed, ears twitching, sensing the subtle shifts of when no wolf was physically threatening them.

humans around her, the **way** they paled in the shadow of Alpha presence

“You’re willing to gamble **the** lives of Thorne Group employees over an apology?” Jocelyn’s voice **rose**, dripping with moral superiority. “Do you understand that every minute you waste increases the risk for those trapped on **the** island? If anything happens, I won’t forgive you!”

Freya’s lips curved into a small, wolfish smile. The humans around her could only posture. “You won’t **forgive...** and yet the **real** failure is Aurora’s,” she said, her voice low but cutting. “She refuses **to go**

because of personal grudges. That’s **the** real problem”

Jocelyn sputtered, flustered and outraged. “It’s because you won’t **apologize!**”

Before the verbal skirmish could escalate further, a low, commanding **voice** cut through **the** room. “And **why** should **she** apologize?”

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* Finished

Every head turned as Silas Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition, appeared at the door. His presence alone shifted the room, a tangible pressure that made even the confident Jocelyn flinch. His gaze swept over Jocelyn, icy and precise, and she felt the chill of a pack Alpha's wrath on her spine.

Aurora, slightly taken aback, tried to recover her composure. "Silas... Freya should apologize for the orphanage incident. Or are you going to apologize on her behalf?"

Silas' lips curved into a faint, dangerous smile. "My apology? You could never handle it."

Aurora bristled, indignation flashing in her eyes. "We don't care if we can handle it or not. If you want Freya to fly that helicopter, she has to apologize!"

The Alpha's gaze darkened, carrying the weight of a predator's judgment. Freya stepped forward, her stance firm, chest lifted, voice carrying the strength of her pack lineage. "Aurora, lives are not leverage for your threats. You may choose not to go, but I will. I'm going to rescue them."

Jocelyn froze, her authority undermined, while Aurora's disdain flashed openly. "You? You think you can? Even if you flew helicopters in the army, that was three years ago. The offshore winds are treacherous. Can you even handle it?"

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