

# A Warrior Luna's Awakening

## chapter 191-200

# A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Finished

Third Person's POV

The studio lights burned like moons overhead, bright and merciless. Freya felt every stare as though it were a claw scraping across her skin. Her heart had already been unsteady when Silas leaned down, his lips grazing the sensitive curve of her ear, his voice pitched low enough to rattle through her bones.

“Freya,” he murmured, the sound more growl than whisper, “you made our bond public. I can’t tell you how that makes me

feel.”

Her breath caught. Heat raced up the side of her neck, her ears prickling beneath the scrutiny of dozens of curious gazes. The Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition had never been subtle, but this was something else—claiming her, here, before the eyes of the packs

Before Freya could recover, the sharp, unrestrained scent of Silverfang fury cut through the air. Caelum Grafton shouldered past the startled crowd, his amber gaze blazing like a wolf caught in bloodlust. His voice carried, harsh and commanding, echoing through the cavernous hall.

“Where did you take Aurora?”

Freya froze. “What?”

The air shifted *at once*. Silas rose to his full height, his presence radiating a dangerous chill. His eyes, usually storm-gray, turned almost obsidian, a predator’s promise glinting within.

Caelum stepped closer, jaw tight, but before he could close the distance, Silas’s hand shot out, barring his path. His claws had extended, just enough to flash in the light, just enough to make a point.

“You want the other hand broken too?” Silas asked, voice pitched soft but lethal.

The temperature in the room seemed to plummet. Caelum faltered for a breath, the memory of his past wound flickering across his face. His wolf bristled but forced him to retreat half a step. Still, his gaze cut daggers toward Freya, as though she alone bore the weight of his rage.

“You’d better bring her back,” Caelum snarled, his voice cracking with the edge of desperation. “Aurora’s gone missing, and you’re the only one who would dare-”

Freya’s eyes flashed, the Bloodmoon fire in her blood surging. “I don’t know what you’re talking about. I’ve been recording this entire time. I don’t

the gift of splitting myself in two.” Her tone was sharp, edged with insult.

“That’s rich,” Caelum spat. He lifted a WolfComm, the sleek device glowing with the faint sheen of pack-tech. “Aurora’s phone. Found outside the rest chamber. But she—she’s gone. And the last call she received came from a strange number, one that goes dead every time I ring it.” His chest heaved, his fury barely contained. “Don’t play innocent, Freya. We all know you despise her. Don’t tell me you wouldn’t hire someone to finish what you started.”

The hall buzzed, wolves shifting uneasily, the scent of suspicion thickening in the air.

Freya’s lips curled, the Alpha-born daughter who had been scorned too long refusing to bow. “Then take your suspicions to the enforcers. File your complaints. But if you dare accuse me of abduction without proof, I’ll make sure your precious SilverTech Forgeworks is dragged through the mud in the courts for defamation.” Her voice rose, sharp as a blade. “And while we’re clarifying—what exactly do you believe I ‘resent’ her for?”

The Alpha faltered.

Freya pressed forward, her words tumbling out like claws raking across flesh. “For being the mistress you paraded in broad daylight? For worming her way into a marriage vow you treated like a contract to shred? Or perhaps I should resent the fact that while you bought me a trinket of rusted steel for a wedding band, you were slipping Aurora jewels worth more than five million into her palm.”

The hall erupted in murmurs, heads snapping toward Caelum. Those who had known him as Silverfang’s charismatic Alpha now stared with narrowed eyes. Betrayal, dishonor, infidelity—such things stank worse than rot among wolves. The once-lauded savior of the packs suddenly looked like carrion.

Finished

Freya’s voice cut cleanly through the chaos. “No. I don’t resent Aurora. She isn’t worth the heat of that emotion. What I do is thank her. Because she tore away the veil from my eyes

and showed me exactly what you were, Caelum. A man who never deserved three years of my loyalty.”

Caelum’s face twisted, his breath hissing like an animal cornered. “Then who else would want her gone? Who else, if not you?”

His suspicion clung like tar, thick and suffocating. His gaze darted toward Silas, the implication hanging sharp between them. Everyone could see the thought forming: Freya wanted vengeance, Silas had the power to deliver it.

Freya’s expression iced over. “Why don’t you find out, Alpha? Call your patrols. Alert your enforcers. Perhaps they’ll track her. better than your nose can.”

And then, as though summoned by the very gods, the hall’s massive screen flickered. The audience turned as one. The image changed from idle blue to the grainy feed of a hidden camera.

A derelict space filled the frame—an abandoned factory, littered with rusted pipes and dust.

Gasps rippled through the crowd as the figure on the floor came into focus. Aurora. Bound, gagged, her wings clipped by coarse rope.

Her body jerked when a shadowed hand slapped her awake. The sound cracked through the speakers, harsh and jarring. Aurora blinked, disoriented, then screamed. “Who are you? Why am I here? Let me go!”

The camera shifted. The captor entered the frame—a lean male, his face hidden behind a crude mask. His voice slithered out, distorted and dripping venom.

“Who am I? The one here to balance the scales. You think you’re a hero? A savior? You’re nothing but a murderer cloaked in glory.”

The room stilled. Aurora struggled, shaking her head frantically. “No! I’m not—please, you’ve made a mistake!”

The masked wolf laughed, a chilling sound. Then, from a speaker off-screen, a recording crackled to life.

“Don’t... don’t go... Aurora... the extinguisher... I’m burning—please-!”

A dying man’s plea, raw and ragged, filled the hall. Every wolf’s ears pinned back at the sound. Aurora’s eyes went wide, her skin blanching until she looked like death itself.

Freya stood frozen, her wolf straining against her ribs. Beside her, Silas's growl thundered low, his aura wrapping around her like iron chains. Across the hall, Caelum's face drained of blood, his fury cracking into something else—fear.

And the hall of wolves once skeptical, now boiled with unease. The so-called “hero” of the Bluemoon Airborne Wing was bound before their eyes, exposed by a phantom who claimed to know her darkest sin.

## A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

+20 Free Coins

The entire hall of broadcast chamber had gone utterly still. Dozens of wolves-elders, pack members, and human stall alike-stared at the massive screen in disbelief.

A supposed “hero” of the Bluemoon Airborne Wing, a figure the packs had praised for valor, was being revealed as something else entirely. A killer who had let another wolf burn alive.

Gasps rippled through the crowd. Whispers sharpened into shocked growls.

Could it be true?

Had Aurora, the so-called savior, really stood by and watched another wolf die screaming?

The scent of outrage began to fill the air-sharp, acrid, and dangerous.

Questions rose like howls from every corner: Who had switched the broadcast feed? Who had control over the pack hall's screens? And where, spirits above, were Aurora and her masked captor now?

Caelum was the first to break free of the stunned silence. His Alpha aura slammed outward in a blast of fury, rattling chairs and making younger wolves flinch back. His hand shot into his coat, pulling free his WolfComm. With a snarl that echoed across the chamber, he barked into the device, “This is Alpha Grafton. I'm reporting a kidnapping. An active hostage situation. Track the signal-now!”

The hall erupted further when, from the audience, a young wolf cried out, “Moon above-it's a live stream! That feed's not recorded-it's broadcasting in real time!”

At once, dozens of wolves yanked out their WolfComms. Fingers flew, searching the underground net. Within moments, snarls of confirmation broke out.

“They’re right-this is live.”

“There’s a channel. The bastard’s streaming it to anyone who can watch!”

“Look at the viewer count. Thousands are piling in!”

Freya stood rigid, her gaze fixed on the masked figure on the screen. Her wolf prowled beneath her skin, hackles rising with unease. Something about that lean frame, the way the shadow moved-her instincts. clawed at her mind. Recognition teased her, infuriatingly just out of reach.

Her eyes narrowed.

Beside her, Silas leaned close, his breath a low rumble against her ear. “You recognize him, don’t you?”

Freya shook her head once. “Not fully. But his movements... they’re familiar. I’ve seen him somewhere before.”

Silas’s mouth curved into something cold and knowing. “Then the rumors weren’t smoke after all. The message your journalist friend received at the orphanage-it was real. Someone has been warning of Aurora’s secret. Perhaps the same shadow decided it was time to expose her.”

12:49 pm Pppp.

+20 Free Coins

Freya’s pulse stuttered. She remembered it now-the orphanage event. A blur of a figure just beyond her sight, slipping into the edges of memory. The outline overlapped too perfectly with the man on the

screen.

Her lips pressed tight. She unlocked her own WolfComm with swift, precise movements, her mind racing as she pulled up searches, digging for threads she should have tugged on long ago.

Meanwhile, on the screen, Aurora had gone pale beneath the harsh factory lights. Her eyes darted wildly, terror clouding her expression.

“Why...” she stammered, her voice breaking. “Why do you have that recording? Who are you?”

The masked wolf chuckled, a sound as chilling as claws scraping stone. He pressed a button, and the hall filled once more with the hideous screams of a dying wolf.

“Don’t-don’t go! Aurora, help-fire, it’s burning me-ahhh!”

The voice was hoarse, drenched in agony. The sound of flames devouring flesh was all too clear, the stench of imagined smoke filling the minds of every wolf present. The cries stretched on, dragging claws across every listener’s spine, until at last the wails cracked, withered, and went silent.

The hall of Stormveil smelled of bile, dread, and cold sweat. Wolves shifted restlessly, ears pinned, eyes wide with horror.

That voice-the wolf had called Aurora’s name. He had begged her for help. And he had burned alive without her lifting a claw to stop it.

“No!” Aurora’s shrill denial broke through the broadcast, her face twisting. “No, that’s false! It’s fabricated! Lies!”\*

Her denial reeked of desperation. Her wolf, even through the grainy footage, seemed to shrink back, pressed into a corner.

The masked wolf tilted his head. His voice oozed mockery. “Fabricated? You mean to tell me you don’t recognize the voice of your own mentor? The wolf who took you under his wing when you first joined Bluemoon Airborne? The one who fought to secure you a position, vouched for you again and again? He burned alive that day, screaming your name, and this is how you repay him?”

Aurora’s eyes went wider still. Her lips trembled, her breath hitching into short, panicked gasps.

The masked wolf pressed on, his tone merciless. “This isn’t some trick. Run it through a voice match if you like. The truth will hold. That recording was captured on the borderlands during the great fire. At that moment, your mentor was calling his son. His body ignited mid-call. The device fell, but it kept recording until he died”

Gasps echoed again through the chamber. Wolves muttered, horrified. Some bared their teeth outright, glaring at the screen as though Aurora herself stood before them.

Onscreen, Aurora’s entire body shook. “N-no there must be a mistake. A misunderstanding...”

She clung to the thought of Caelum. He had seen the broadcast. He would bring Silverfang’s enforcers. He would save her. If she could just endure long enough-if she could stall until the packs broke through- she might still walk out alive.

12:49 pm P Ppp.

+20 Free Coins

“Misunderstanding?” The masked wolf’s laughter curdled the air. In a flash, his hand clamped into Aurora’s hair, jerking her head back until her throat strained. His palm cracked across her face, once, twice, again and again.

The sound of flesh meeting flesh thundered through the chamber. Wolves flinched, some growled. Blood blossomed across Aurora’s lips, her cheeks swelling, crimson dripping from the corner of her mouth.

“You dare speak of misunderstanding?” the captor roared. “Do you know what it was like for his son, listening helplessly on the line, hearing his father burn alive? Hearing him call your name, begging, while you stood by and did nothing? You had an extinguisher. You could have acted. But you chose not to!”

Aurora sobbed, shaking her head violently. “No! I wasn’t there-I was separated from him! I didn’t even know he was calling me-he must have been hallucinating from the flames-”

But her words rang hollow, and the wolves of the hall knew it. Instincts never lied. And in that moment, Aurora smelled of fear, deceit, and cornered prey.

The broadcast carried on, merciless, while the packs looked on in shock.

And Freya, standing tall at Silas’s side, narrowed her eyes until they gleamed like a wolf catching the scent of prey. Somewhere deep inside, her instincts whispered the truth: this wasn’t merely an exposure. It was the beginning of something larger, darker. And the packs would never look at Aurora the same way again.

12:49 pm P

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Third Person’s POV

+20 Free Coins

The moment the kidnapper’s hand released her hair, Aurora collapsed to the ground with a hollow thud. Before she could draw a steady breath, the man hefted a white plastic container and upended its contents across her body. A reeking liquid splashed over her uniform and skin, soaking her instantly.

Aurora shrieked, thrashing against the ropes that bound her wrists. “No! Don’t-what are you doing?”

The kidnapper’s laugh was guttural, feral. “Doing? I’m giving you the same mercy you showed my father. Let’s see if you hallucinate while you burn alive.” He tipped another container, the pungent fumes stinging the air even through the live broadcast.

In the studio, a horrified gasp rose from the audience. “Spirits above-this isn’t water. It’s oil! It’s fuel!”

Caelum’s chest constricted as his gaze locked on the massive screen. His wolf strained inside him, ready to tear down walls, but he was caged by distance and circumstance. His claws dug crescents into Aurora’s discarded WolfComm device in his hand. His voice, raw with anguish, tore from his throat. “Why, Aurora? Why are you in this nightmare?”

But no amount of dominance, no command from the Alpha of the Silverfang Pack, could alter what the cameras showed. All he could do was trust that the City Guard or his pack’s trackers would find her before it was too late.

He turned suddenly, fury sparking, eyes blazing like molten steel as they fell on Freya. “This is your fault!” His voice cracked like a whip across the hushed studio. “If Aurora suffers even a scratch, if she burns alive -her blood is on your hands!”

Freya’s amber eyes narrowed. Her wolf stirred, cold and indignant. “On my hands?” Her voice was low, dangerous. “Caelum, have you lost your mind?”

“You schemed against her!” he roared, advancing, every step echoing with Alpha force. “You set her up during the interview, played that cursed recording to humiliate her. If not for you, she never would have stormed back to the resting chambers, never would have been caught alone. You drove her straight into a predator’s jaws!”

Freya’s lips curved into a sharp, bitter smile. The audience flinched at the sound-it was not the laugh of a frightened she-wolf but of one who had long learned to bleed without breaking. “You’re still the same, Carlum. Always so eager to cast your guilt on others. If Aurora is your precious fiancée, where were you? Why weren’t you at her side when she left?”

“You-“Caelum faltered, rage colliding with shame. His wolf snarled, but his human tongue stumbled. “Don’t twist this, Freya! If Aurora dies, I will never forgive you.”

He had barely finished before Silas moved.

With a blur of motion, the Ironclad Alpha drove his boot squarely into Caelum’s chest. The Silverfang Alpha crashed to the ground, air bursting from his lungs. His right hand, still bandaged from his last battle, buckled uselessly beneath him. He tried to rise with his left, but Silas was relentless. Another brutal kick struck him down, sending him sprawling again on the polished floor.

“You dare threaten Freya?” Silas’s voice was thunder, his aura flooding the studio like a crushing tide. His

12:49 pm



+20 Free Coins

wolf bared its fangs through him, promising blood. “Then hear me now, Caelum Grafton: if you so much as touch her, I will hunt you until one of us is ash and bone.”

The words rang out like a blood oath, a vow of eternal vendetta. Not until death. Beyond death.

Gasps rippled through those who stood nearest the stage. Though the wider audience could not hear over the roar of the broadcast, every wolf close enough felt the oath’s weight. The Ironclad Alpha had spoken, and his vow was poison and iron: Not even the grave will save you.

Caelum’s eyes widened, shock battling with fear. The oath speared him through the gut, the venom of it lodging deep. His wolf trembled under the raw dominance, drenched in sweat though his body had barely moved.

Freya stared at Silas, her chest tightening. She had known, of course-how could she not? Silas’s loyalty had always been obvious in the way his gaze lingered, in the battles he had fought at her side. But this? A vow like that was more than devotion. It was obsession. It was the kind of love wolves carved into their bones and bled with until their last breath.

For a heartbeat, warmth flooded her chest, unbidden, unsettling. Her wolf shifted, restless with recognition. If the room had been empty, if the pack eyes had not been burning into her back, she might have done something reckless-like answer that devotion with her lips.

But the studio was not empty.

And Caelum, bloodied but defiant, staggered upright once more. His glare burned with desperation. “Freya Thorne,” he spat, “you’re nothing without Silas Whitmor shielding you. You hide behind him like a pup. If Aurora dies in flames, you’ll answer for it. Her innocence will weigh on your soul.”

Freya turned slowly, her voice cutting like ice. “Innocent?” She lifted her chin toward the screen, where Aurora’s soaked body trembled under the kidnapper’s hand. “We don’t yet know if she is truly innocent.”

“She is!” Caelum snapped. “Aurora is kind, selfless. She risked herself for others. She would never let someone burn alive!” His chest heaved with righteous fury, his words ringing with conviction. “There must be a reason-something we don’t understand!”

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12:49 pm PP PP

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Third Person's POV

Freya's lips curved into a cold, cutting smile.

"So that's it?" she murmured with quiet derision.

+20 Free Coins

On the massive screen, Aurora trembled violently as the kidnapper's voice snarled from the shadows. The momentary flicker of guilt that had crossed the Bluemoon she-wolf's face when the recording had first played was proof enough. To wolves, instinct rarely lied.

The recording was real.

Aurora had let someone burn alive.

But was the kidnapper truly intent on torching her body with the gasoline he had poured across her skin? Or did he have another purpose?

The audience held its collective breath. Aurora writhed, her oil-soaked clothes clinging to her, her panicked screams spilling into the live feed.

"No, please don't do this! Tell me who sent you! I can pay you. I'm Aurora, daughter of the Bluemoon Beta. My fiancé is Caelum Grafton, Alpha of the Silverfangs. He is rich, powerful—his company, SilverTech Forgeworks, just went public! Whatever you want, he can give it to you. Just name your price!"

The kidnapper laughed—a hollow, jagged sound that reeked of grief and madness. "Price? I don't want your money. You claim your colleague only screamed your name because he was burning, delirious, hallucinating. Very well. Then I'll burn you too. Let's see if you hallucinate."

With that, he lifted a lighter.

Snap!

A flame bloomed, wicked and alive.

Aurora shrieked again, body convulsing. The liquid soaking her clothes caught the light, a field of kindling ready to explode into inferno with the barest spark.

Memories flashed across her wide eyes: the co-pilot she had abandoned, writhing, engulfed, screaming her name until his throat tore apart. She had watched him burn alive. The smell of charred flesh, the sound of cracking bones-they surged back like a tide.

Her terror reached a breaking point.

“What’s wrong?” the kidnapper sneered. “Even a murderer can still fear fire?”

Aurora shook her head violently, tears spilling. “I... I’m not a killer. It wasn’t me-”

“Not you?” The lighter inched closer, its heat brushing her skin. The man’s voice grew darker, dripping with rage. “You dare say you weren’t there? That you didn’t stand by his side as he screamed for help? You let him burn. You left him to die in agony.”

173

12:49 pm PPPP.

+20 Free Coins

“No! No, it wasn’t like that!” Aurora broke, voice cracking. “The flames-they were too strong. Even if I had grabbed the extinguisher, it would’ve been useless. I couldn’t-”

The studio went utterly silent.

Every wolf froze, hearing the confession for what it was. Aurora realized it too late; panic tightened her

throat.

A low, terrible laugh filled the broadcast. “So it’s true. You were right there. You could have saved him, and you chose not to. You stood still and watched him burn alive. Why, Aurora? Why?”

The kidnapper’s accusations struck like claws. Aurora crumbled, sobbing, her pleas spilling like blood. “I was scared! The fire was everywhere-I couldn’t go near him. I didn’t mean to, I just... I couldn’t. Please, forgive me! Please don’t kill me!”

The live-stream chat detonated.

“Spirits damn her-she let her own comrade burn?”

“She admitted it herself! She had an extinguisher within reach!”

“Liar. She built her reputation as a hero, but she’s a coward! She’s no savior-she’s a fraud.”

“She watched him die and then accepted medals for it? Disgusting!”

Unseen in the studio, thousands of wolves across the packs spat curses at the screen.

In the front row, Caelum felt the ground crumble beneath his feet. His wolf thrashed inside him, howling denial. The woman he had worshiped—the pilot he had painted in his mind as a fearless savior, the she-wolf who once pulled him from drowning waters with iron will—was unraveling before his eyes.

She was not a hero.

She was a coward who had chosen self-preservation while her comrade burned to ash.

“No,” Caelum whispered hoarsely, his face drained of color. “No, this isn’t true. Aurora wouldn’t...” But her desperate pleas on the screen left no room for doubt. Every word was a dagger, carving through the trust he had built, through the devotion he had bled for her.

The pack hall was silent, save for Aurora’s sobbing and the kidnapper’s laughter. Then, with sudden finality, the feed cut to black.

Not system interference. The kidnapper had ended it himself.

Freya narrowed her eyes. Something in her gut twisted—not sympathy, not pity, but a sharp awareness of the kidnapper’s intent. If his goal had been Aurora’s death, he would have struck already. No, he wanted the truth laid bare, stripped before every eye in the Capital.

Aurora’s survival was not the point. Her destruction in the court of public opinion was.

Freya lowered her gaze to the WolfComm in her hand, scrolling through the fragments of intelligence she had gathered in the last twenty-four hours. Her instincts aligned, her wolf bristling with clarity. The identity of the kidnapper was no longer a mystery. The man wasn’t driven by coin or random vengeance. He was bound to the Iron Fang Recon Unit, to the ghost of the one Aurora had abandoned.

12:50 pm P PPP.

+20 Free Coins

Her lips tightened. So it was revenge—pure, unrelenting, the kind that fire alone could not quench.

Around her, the Stormveil and Ironclad wolves muttered, their emotions sharp with anger and disbelief. Yet Freya stood still, her posture unyielding. While others drowned in outrage, she was already calculating the storm that would follow. Aurora had fallen from her pedestal. The packs had seen her true face.

And Caelum Grafton's desperate defense of his fiancée had just shattered in front of them all.

2:50 pm P ppp.

## A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

The image on Freya's WolfComm glowed faintly in the dim backstage light.

A photograph-grainy, taken days ago at the orphanage.

+20 Free Coins

In the picture, Aurora had been called on stage to speak, a teenage boy standing beside her as the young host. His frame-slender, sharp-edged-was painfully familiar. The same height, the same set of shoulders, the same restless energy as the masked kidnapper she had just seen on the broadcast.

Freya's mind tightened like a snare.

The boy from the orphanage... and the one who had dragged Aurora into the firelit trap on camera... they were the same.

Which meant the orphan was their suspect.

Her wolf bristled as she pieced it together. Every thread led back to that orphanage-five years ago, the scandal news leak, the staged ambush with reporters, and now this. Even the message to the media before tonight's broadcast. The stage was always the same. The orphanage.

And there was more.

She had researched the officer who perished in the Border Fire-Bluemoon Wing's vice-captain. The man had been a widower, raising his only son alone. When he died screaming beneath the flames, his boy had been just eleven years old.

Eleven years old... which would place the youth on that stage, and the kidnapper's age now lined up perfectly.

Her chest grew tight.

The boy hadn't vanished-he had grown up, carrying the fire of vengeance in his lungs.

Freya didn't hesitate. She dialed the local enforcers, her tone clipped as she relayed her findings.

When she ended the call, Caelum's voice cut across the space between them. His silver-grey eyes burned with confusion.

"Why help Aurora?" His words ground like stone. "You despise her. Why risk yourself?"

Freya turned her head, her stare glacial.

"I don't like Aurora," she said, her voice low, her wolf's growl simmering beneath each syllable. "But I was a soldier once. And soldiers don't choose who deserves protection. They act because it is their duty."

The blunt conviction hit Caelum like a blow.

His heart stammered, and for a moment, he couldn't look away from her.

Soldier.

12:50 pm PP PP.

+20 Free Coins

He had dismissed it before. To him, her years in the Iron Fang Recon Unit were nothing more than a footnote, a rugged past that gave her scars and grit, but no power. Because she's just a low-level Omega soldier. He had thought her talents ended there—that she was simply a woman who knew how to take orders, endure pain, and march.

He had even looked down on her once.

When they married, it wasn't for her worth. It was because in his lowest moment—when Silverfang Pack had been crumbling, when his life felt like ash—Freya's quiet steadiness made him believe he wasn't entirely lost. She, an orphan of war herself, had seemed to him like a mirror of survival. They had both been broken. With her, he felt less ruined.

So he had married her. He had sworn he would treat her well, honor her as his mate, be faithful.

But things had shifted, hadn't they? He couldn't say when. Perhaps it was when work swallowed him. Perhaps when he first heard whispers Aurora would return from Bluemoon skies. Or perhaps the precise moment was when he saw Aurora in her pilot's uniform, striding through the terminal, sharp-eyed and untouchable, while Freya stood small and ordinary at his side.

He had chosen wrong. That was what he had told himself.

And during the Lunar Severance Phase, he hadn't regretted the divorce. He had told himself Freya would regret it instead-because he had the future, the empire, the rising power of SilverTech. And she was just a discarded soldier.

Yet now, standing in her presence, feeling the raw edge of her integrity cut through the air like a blade, Caelum's wolf stirred uneasily. He felt stripped, small, almost ashamed.

The crew ushered him away before the cameras, trying to soothe his frayed emotions. The broadcast had cut abruptly when the kidnapper had shut it down, and the show's interviews carried on with forced normalcy. No one was listening anymore.

Later, when the lights dimmed and the hall emptied, Freya's WolfComm chimed. It was the enforcers.

We have the suspect."

Freya stiffened. "Already?"

He was waiting for us," came the reply. "Just as you suggested-he's the son of the fallen vice-captain. He offered no resistance. The liquid he poured on Aurora wasn't gasoline-it was a simulated compound. If ignited, it would have produced only low-heat flames. Frightening, but not lethal."

Freya's throat tightened. "May I speak to him?"

"I'm afraid not. He's under protective custody. Only legal counsel can see him. He has no lawyer at

present,"

The line went dead.

Freya turned, her gaze falling on Silas. She hadn't yet asked the question when he spoke.

"I'll send a lawyer," Silas said simply. "The boy will not face this alone."

Her lips parted. "Thank you."

12:50 pm P P

+20 Free Coins

He met her eyes steadily. "You don't owe me thanks. Whoever you choose to protect, I will protect too. Whatever you ask, Freya Thorne, I will see it done."

Her chest ached. The boy hadn't truly meant to kill Aurora. He only wanted the truth carved into the open, to force Aurora to confess what she had buried-that she had left his father to burn. He had chosen a cruel way, but his intent was never blood.

At last, the tangled strands aligned in her mind.

Meanwhile, Caelum rushed to the infirmary the moment he heard Aurora had been rescued.

She was there, washed clean of soot, lying in the hospital bed dressed in a pale gown. Her body bore scratches and bruises, but no mortal harm.

She looked small, fragile. But in Caelum's chest, there was only the heavy weight of what he had witnessed -that her pleading, her confession, her cowardice had been broadcast before every pack, every Alpha, every soldier of the realm.

The mate he had once defended... the hero he had sworn could never be a liar... had been stripped bare before his eyes.

And the woman he had abandoned-Freya-stood unyielding, soldier to the bone, unafraid of the truth.

12:50 pm PPP

## A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

+20 Free Coins

The enforcers left after taking Aurora's statement, their boots echoing down the sterile hall. The room fell quiet, heavy with the tang of antiseptic and the faint musk of fear.

The door opened. Caelum stepped inside.

Aurora stirred immediately, struggling upright despite the bruises painting her arms. "Caelum!" Her voice cracked, desperate. "I never thought I'd live through something like that. He was feral-completely deranged. If the enforcers hadn't arrived when they did, I'd... I'd never have seen you again."

Her words trembled, rehearsed yet frantic, her wolf curling submissively toward him as though clinging to protection.



Caelum's eyes lingered on her, unreadable, his silver irises clouded with something she couldn't name. "How's your body?" he asked at last. His tone was flat, more Alpha protocol than tenderness.

"The healer says it's only surface wounds," Aurora answered quickly. Then her expression hardened, the sweetness burning off in a flash of bitterness. "But I will prosecute him, Caelum. That boy will rot in a cell. I'll make sure of it. He dared to humiliate me, to lay hands on me. He'll pay for every scar he's left on me."

The venom in her words startled even him. Her wolf's snarl was not born of fear-it was born of

vengeance.

Caelum studied her, the woman he had once seen as light itself. Now her voice sounded unfamiliar, edged in cruelty.

"You can take him to trial," Caelum said slowly. "But you should know... the one who attacked you may be the son of your fallen comrade. He only wanted the truth for his father. Because-Aurora-you did abandon him to the fire, didn't you?"

Aurora froze. For a heartbeat her mask cracked. Then she forced a laugh, brittle as glass. "What are you talking about? How would you even know that?"

"I heard it myself." His jaw tightened. "Freya called the enforcers. She laid out the truth. And while you were bound to that chair, you admitted it-to his face."

Aurora's skin went pale as ash. "Admitted...?"

Carlum's voice dropped. "The boy had you live-streamed. Every word you spoke was seen across the Capital. The audience. The crews. Everyone."

Her mouth fell open. The world seemed to tilt beneath her. "Live? You're saying... I was being broadcast?"

"Yes" His wolf aura pressed against her, heavy with grim certainty.

"No. No, that's impossible." Aurora shook her head violently. "I didn't see any equipment, no transmitters, nothing" But memory surged in, every desperate plea, every broken admission she had made, believing they would vanish in smoke. Her breath came ragged. "My WolfComm. Where is it? Give it to me. I need

10 sec."

Caelum handed her the device recovered at the scene. Her hands shook as she pulled up the feeds. Though the stream itself had been shut down, dozens of clips already flooded the nets, each one a shard of humiliation.

On the screen she saw herself-tear-streaked, pleading, then crumbling as she confessed. Yes, I left him. I couldn't save him. The words echoed, merciless, her own voice damning her.

Aurora's face blanched, her pulse thundering in her ears.

No. No, this couldn't be her life. She had been the hero, the savior, the pilot the packs adored. Now comment after comment scrolled beneath the clips:

"What hero? She's a coward."

"A murderer, not a savior."

"Bluemoon should ground her permanently."

"If the fire had taken her instead, it would've been justice."

Her hands shook so violently she dropped the device. It clattered across the floor, the feed still running, her name drowned in curses.

Her wolf whimpered in panic. She had lived her life basking in praise, in deference. Never had she tasted public scorn. Now the same voices that once worshipped her were howling for her downfall.

"No..." she rasped, stumbling back against the pillows. "No, this isn't how it ends. I won't—"

Her breath broke into sobs. She reached blindly for Caelum, clutching his sleeve. "Delete it. Please. All of it. You have influence-Silverfang still answers to you. Bury this for me, Caelum. I can't—"

Caelum's features hardened. "The storm is too high. Even I can't silence every voice. In time the flames will cool, but for now, nothing can erase it."

Her lips moved soundlessly, then she whispered like a chant, "It will fade... it has to fade. When the heat dies down, they'll forget. I'll still be their pilot. I'll still be admired."

She spoke as if trying to weave a spell, to convince herself.

"Rest, Aurora," Caelum said, pulling his arm free. "The healers need you calm. I must return to the enforcers and give my account."

He turned, but she caught his hand again, her nails digging into his skin. “Caelum-listen to me. What they saw, what I said... it wasn’t the truth. I lied. I only said those things to pacify him. You believe me, don’t you?”

Her eyes gleamed with a desperate, feral edge. She clung to him like a drowning wolf to driftwood, her voice fevered.

Caelum looked down at her, torn. His wolf stirred uneasily. He wanted to believe, wanted to hold onto the image of the woman he had once defended against all odds. But the echo of her confession, the raw terror in her voice when she spoke it, weighed heavy in his ears.

## A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person’s POV

+20 Free Coins

Aurora’s voice trembled, but her words carried a desperate sharpness that filled the sterile air of the infirmary.

“Caelum, you have to believe me,” she insisted, struggling upright against the crisp white sheets. “Everything I said during that broadcast-it wasn’t the truth. I only said those things to appease the kidnapper, to survive!”

Caelum stood at the foot of her bed, silent. The Alpha of the Silverfang Pack had faced insurgents across borders, negotiated with hostile coalitions, and crushed dissent in boardrooms at SilverTech Forgeworks. Yet in this moment, confronted with the woman who clung to him as if he were her last tether, he felt only a grim heaviness settling into his bones.

Because he knew she was lying.

Her words during the live stream had not sounded like a performance. They had not borne the cadence of a woman trying to coax her way free. No-the way her voice cracked, the way her composure shattered, the slip of her tongue that had cut too clean... it had been the truth breaking loose.

For a long stretch of silence, his gaze rested on her pale face. He could see the flicker of panic tightening her jaw the longer he withheld his answer.

Aurora’s eyes narrowed, her tone sharpening. “You don’t believe me, do you?”

Caelum exhaled slowly, pressing his lips into a tight line. His wolf stirred uneasily, torn between logic and loyalty. “Aurora,” he said at last, his voice low, heavy, “even if you

did... even if you once failed, I have no right to condemn you. You saved me once. That debt remains. And I will help you.”

It was not absolution, but it was a vow.

For she had once dragged him, bloodied and half-conscious, out of a wreckage when no one else dared. She had been his salvation, his anchor in that chaos. That memory chained him to her, whether he liked it

or not.

Yet instead of relief, Aurora shoved him away with a sudden burst of strength. Her fingers clenched the sheets, her chest rising and falling with raw fury.

“You don’t believe me!” she cried, eyes flashing with the feverish glow of her wolf. “Caelum, I thought even if the whole world turned against me, you would stand by my side. But now-you doubt me too!”

Her words pierced deeper than she knew. Caelum gave a bitter smile, one corner of his mouth twisting. Believe you? How can I, when the truth already clawed its way out?

But he said nothing of it.

Instead, he spoke with the weary pragmatism of an Alpha who had seen the court of public opinion devour many before her. “Even if I believe you, will others? You’ve seen it yourself-the comments, the outcry. The packs are baying for blood.”

Aurora’s face drained of color. Her hands tightened on the blanket until her knuckles blanched. Then, with

12:50 pm Pppp.

+20 Free Coins

stubborn defiance, she lifted her chin. “Let them curse me. Let them spit my name into the dirt. I don’t care what they think. As long as you believe me, Caelum, nothing else matters.”

Her voice cracked, but her eyes gleamed with a strange light. She had gambled and lost in front of the world, and now her wolf knew only one path forward: cling to her strongest card. Cling to him.

“If you don’t believe me...” Her voice dropped, soft and trembling, but edged with calculation. “Then sever us. Pretend we never stood together. Let me fall alone. I won’t beg you again.”

Caelum's chest tightened. The words cut deep, dragging guilt into his marrow. He saw the shimmer of moisture in her eyes, the vulnerable curve of her lips trembling as if she were already preparing for abandonment.

And he broke.

"Forgive me, Aurora," he murmured, voice rough, pained. He stepped forward, taking her hand once more, holding it tightly as though that grip could anchor them both. "I do believe you. I should never have doubted. I trust you."

Whether or not it was true no longer mattered. His wolf, bound by instinct and memory, had made its choice.

Aurora's tears dried instantly, replaced with a smile that bloomed fragile and radiant across her face. She leaned into his hand, her wolf purring with triumph. "I knew I didn't choose wrong. With you beside me, I can face anything."

Caelum forced a smile, though unease coiled like smoke in his chest. The storm brewing beyond these walls would not relent because of his faith. And he could not shake the creeping doubt: Would his presence truly be enough to shield her from the tide of truth?

Night deepened over the Capital.

Freya sat curled on the leather couch of her apartment, her WolfComm glowing in her hand. Her eyes raked the flood of news spreading like wildfire across the networks.

Aurora's kidnapping had climbed to the top of the global feed. The Fire Commission had released a formal statement: they would reopen investigation into the Border Fire. Deepmoor City-the very

trough that had once honored Aurora with the title of "Hero of the Flames"-now announced an inquiry into whether that honor had been built on falsehood.

Bluemoon Airborne Wing had already acted. Aurora was suspended from duty as vice-captain. Her future with the unit would hinge on the outcome of the investigation.

And worse-audience-shot footage from the talk show earlier that evening had begun to spread.

One clip showed Aurora, radiant under the studio lights, announcing before the world that she was bound to Caelum Grafton as his chosen mate, his future Luna.

Another captured her being cornered by the host, fumbling to explain her so-called heroics in the Border Fire, only to be confronted by other rescuers who had been there. The revelation that she had never even reached the site of the trapped civilians had drawn audible gasps.

The internet tore her apart.

12:50 pm

“Fraud.”

“Not a hero. A coward.”

“If Bluemoon lets her keep that post, I’ll never fly their wings again.”

“She should feel the same fire she let others die in.”

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Freya scrolled through them silently. A mixture of cold satisfaction and lingering bitterness swirled in her chest. Once, Aurora had basked in untouchable glory, upheld by every pack’s praise. Now, in a single night, she had plummeted from the sky she claimed as her own.

“Still awake?”

A deep, rough voice brushed against her ear.

Arms slipped around her waist from behind, drawing her back into a chest broad and solid as iron. Silas’s presence filled the room like stormclouds, his scent dark and grounding, his breath warm against the curve of her neck.

Freya stiffened slightly, only for her wolf to betray her by leaning into the comfort. The Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition had always been like this-unyielding steel wrapped in quiet heat, relentless in the way he anchored her.

The word rose unbidden in her mind: intimate.

The WolfComm rang sharply, fracturing the moment. The caller’s name lit the screen.

Kade Blackridge.

Her younger brother in arms, the one who had always hovered on the edges of her life like a restless shadow.

Freya reached to answer, but Silas’s hand caught hers, his thumb pressing lightly against her wrist. “Don’t.” His voice rasped, thick with possessive warning.

She huffed out a laugh, soft and incredulous, shaking her head as she pressed the call through anyway.

“Freya.” Kade’s voice carried across the line, taut with concern. “Tell me straight. Are you really... involved with Silas Whitmor?”

12:50 pm PP P

PPPP

## A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya’s POV

+20 Free Coins

The moment I admitted it aloud-that I was truly seeing Silas -I could almost feel Kade’s silence hanging like a weight through the WolfComm line.

“Yes. It’s true,” I said firmly, not giving myself the option of retreat.

For a moment there was nothing but the faint crackle of the signal, and my heart twisted with unease. “Kade?” I asked softly.

Freya... -” His voice caught, a low rumble of frustration and something else. But before he could finish, a sharp breath escaped my lips.

Because Silas had leaned down and pressed his mouth against the curve of my ear.

His lips were hot, brushing lightly against my ear lobe. His breath skimmed over my neck, sending a shiver all the way down my spine. The touch burned and tickled at once, like an Alpha testing a sensitive bond- mark.

‘Freya...” Silas’s voice was low, rasping, vibrating against my skin. “How long are you going to keep talking? It’s late. Time to join me in bed.”

Kade’s growl crackled through the phone, sharp enough to make my wolf bristle. “He’s there. Silas is with you, isn’t he?”

“Yes,” I admitted, swallowing. “He’s right here. Why? What were you trying to say?”

The line went dead a moment later. Just like that, Kade was gone. He’d called only to ask that? Only to confirm what he already knew? I lowered the WolfComm slowly, staring at the darkened screen. That boy... what was he really trying to tell me?

“What are you thinking about?” Silas’s voice cut into my thoughts again, thicker now, edged with something possessive. He plucked the device neatly from my hand and set it

on the low table, out of reach. Then, with a deliberate roll of his shoulders, he caged me between his body and the sofa cushions.

“Nothing.” I shifted, flustered. “I was just on the call with Kade and then you suddenly-kissed me like that. He probably heard... it’s embarrassing.”

A wolfish smirk tugged at his lips. “Do you dislike it?” His mouth was already on my ear again, tracing it with soft, teasing kisses that made my skin prickle with heat.

That sensation-sharp, sweet, maddening-spread like wildfire. My cheeks burned. I tried to push him away, but he moved with me, a predator yielding only to trap its prey more effectively. One of his strong arms curled around my waist, and with a sudden shift, I found myself sprawled across his chest, breathless.

His obsidian eyes fixed on me, unwavering. “Do you hate it?” His voice was no longer teasing. I could feel the tension in the hand at my waist, rigid, as if bracing for my rejection.

My wolf stilled. He was bracing himself. For me.

I swallowed, then forced a cool smile. “And if I did?” I countered. A small sting of mischief in my words-1

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wanted to make him pay for that interruption.

+20 Free Coins

But the light in his gaze dimmed instantly. The black shimmer of his eyes dulled, lashes lowering, his entire face shadowing with a self-mocking gloom. “If you hated it... then I won’t do it again.”

My chest tightened. The raw honesty in his tone, the flicker of vulnerability in a man who was Alpha to an entire coalition-it twisted something deep inside me.

“Freya,” he whispered, not as the Ironclad Alpha but as a man stripped bare. “Don’t hate me. Please.”

Something ached in me then. “I don’t hate you,” I murmured, my fingers brushing his cheek, wanting to erase the shadow from it. “Not you, not what you just did. It’s only... embarrassing. That’s all.”

His eyes lifted, alight again, a flare of wildfire in the dark. “So you don’t hate it.”



“No,” I breathed. “Not at all.” I leaned down, close enough that he could feel my lips ghosting his ear. “It only..... tickles. I’m not used to it.”

And then, on impulse, I mirrored his earlier teasing. I caught the curve of his ear lobe between my lips and kissed it gently.

The effect was immediate. The mighty Alpha of Ironclad stiffened beneath me, a tremor running through his frame. His ear flushed crimson, and to my astonishment, even his cheeks burned with color.

“Freya...” His voice cracked into a husky growl, his breath ragged. His eyes-those dark, alluring eyes- gleamed with a dangerous shine, like a predator fighting restraint.

I froze, realizing what I had unleashed. Silas Whitmor, pinned beneath me, looked devastatingly beautiful in that moment. The heat in his gaze could melt steel, and yet he trembled, undone by the smallest kiss.

Goddess help me, I hadn’t meant to fall into this snare. I’d only wanted him to understand how it felt-but now I was the one caught, trapped by his voice, his eyes, the sheer raw pull of him.

Did he not realize what he was doing to me?

That night, I had to summon every ounce of restraint I possessed to keep from surrendering to the instinct clawing at both our wolves. It wasn’t about being unmarried-I had long stopped clinging to that human notion. No, it was about certainty. I wanted to know my feelings weren’t born of heat or impulse. I wanted them to be real, solid, unshakable.

Silas seemed to sense it. And though desire burned in his eyes, he only gathered me against him, his arm around my waist as we lay side by side. His breath stirred my hair as he whispered, low and raw, “Freya, I love you. I’ll wait until you love me too. And when you do.... you’ll want me. Won’t you?”

He sounded almost boyish then, like a wolf begging for his mate’s acceptance. For the first time, I saw the side of Silas Whitmor no one else in the Ironclad Coalition would ever imagine-the side that could cling, that could crave, that could love.

And it undid me.

12:50 pm P p pp.

## A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya’s POV

+20 Free Coins

The next morning, we left for the Stormveil outskirts. There was an old Thorne estate, long abandoned in the shadow of the Runestone Grounds, and I needed to see it with my own eyes.

Silas insisted on driving. I didn't argue. Part of me wanted him there, even if it meant facing the ghosts of my family's past with his presence a steady anchor beside me.

By the time we reached the little town, the sun hung just past its peak, and my stomach gave a small growl. It was almost noon.

I glanced at Silas, his profile sharp in the light streaming through the windshield. "Would you be able to stomach something from a small tavern here? The food's not fancy-just local fare."

He turned his head, his dark eyes steady. "Food is food, Freya. There were days when I ate nothing at all. Compared to that, even stale bread was a feast. I'm not picky."

His words pulled at something inside me, but I didn't dwell on it. "There's a place I used to visit often," I said, my voice softer now. "Every time we came into town, my family and I would eat there. I don't even know if it's still open."

The word family caught in my throat, twisting bitterly. Once, it had been the four of us-Mother, Father, Eric, me. Now... only me.

I forced a smile that didn't quite reach my eyes.

"Then we'll go," Silas said, his tone leaving no room for argument. "I'll go with you."

I blinked, surprised at how easily he said it. For a moment, my wolf stirred, brushing against his Alpha aura. Maybe I wasn't going alone after all.

The car rolled to a stop in front of the tavern, and to my shock, it looked almost exactly as it had five years ago. Weathered wood, faded paint, but alive. A place caught in time.

The owner stood at the doorway, his face older, lines carved deeper by the seasons. But his eyes brightened as they landed on me. "Freya Thorne. Goddess, it's been years. How have you been, girl?"

"I've been... well enough." I managed a small smile.

"And your parents? Your brother? They didn't come with you?" His question was innocent, but it pierced straight through me.

My smile faltered, the air leaving my lungs for a heartbeat. “Not this time,” I said quietly. “I came back alone just to take care of some things.”

“Oh His voice softened with understanding. He gestured toward the tables. “Come, sit. Let me get you a

menu,”

I slid into a booth with Silas across from me. As I settled, I noticed his gaze shift, caught by the far wall.

There, dozens of photographs were pinned haphazardly, forming a collage of memories. The faded

12:50 pm P ppp.

+20 Free Coins

Polaroids showed people laughing, clinking glasses, posing with plates of food. A ritual of sorts, a way to mark their presence.

“It’s a tradition,” I explained. “Patrons take a photo before they leave. It becomes part of the tavern’s memory.”

His eyes lingered. “And yours?”

I lifted my hand and pointed to a corner. My voice softened unconsciously. “Right there. That’s me. And beside me... my brother, Eric.”

Silas’s body went rigid, so faintly that perhaps anyone else would have missed it. But I didn’t. His face didn’t move, but the shift in his energy was unmistakable-like a ripple in still water.

“That’s your brother?” His voice was low.

“Yes.” I smiled faintly, unaware of his reaction. “We don’t look alike, do we? I have my father’s features. He had our mother’s face. But we were inseparable.”

Silas’s gaze burned into the image. Eric Thorne, tall and clean-cut, eyes sharp with a quiet strength. My chest tightened with memory.

The owner came back, setting menus down. “Have you chosen yet?”

I shook myself from the past and reached for the card. “Not yet.” I glanced across at Silas. “What about you? Anything stand out?”

But he wasn't looking at the menu. His eyes were still pinned to the photograph, expression unreadable.

"Silas?" I raised my voice slightly.

He blinked, as though surfacing from somewhere deep. "What?"

"You're pale. Are you not feeling well?"

"Fine," he said quickly. Too quickly. "Perhaps I didn't sleep enough last night."

I tilted my head, unconvinced. But I let it go. For now. His hand, resting on the table, was tight, knuckles pale.

I pushed the menu toward him. "At least choose something."

"You order," he said. "I don't know what's best here."

So I did Dishes I'd shared with my parents, with Eric, long ago. My voice cracked once, but I forced steadiness as the owner scribbled them down and left.

The silence that followed pressed heavy. Then Silas spoke, his words deliberate. "You and your brother... were you close?"

My heart squeezed. I lifted my eyes to the photograph again. "Yes. Closer than anyone. That picture... it was the last time we ate here together. A silly moment, posing for fun. But it turned into our last picture."

The memory dragged me back, vivid as a scent trail. Eric Laughing, his arm thrown around my shoulder/3

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calling me little wolf. His scent always carried steel and cedar, sharp but safe.

+20 Free Coins

"After that day, he returned to the Capital. Soon after, he was deployed to the borderlands." My throat tightened. "He was always protecting me. When we were cubs, if anyone tried to bully me, he fought back, even if he was smaller. He'd take the bruises, the scolding-never let me stand alone. He used to say, 'No one touches my sister. Not while I'm breathing.'"

A wet laugh escaped me, shaky but real. My eyes blurred. "He was a good brother. The best."

Silas's voice was quiet, almost reverent. "Yes. He sounds like one."

I swiped at my eyes quickly, forcing a smile. "When I find him, I'll introduce you. You'll like him. Everyone did."

Silas's lips pressed tight. He said nothing more. But his hand beneath the table had curled into a fist, and for the first time since I'd known him, I smelled a thread of nervousness in his scent.

12:50 pm P ppp.

## A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

+20 Free Coins

Silas lowered his gaze, unwilling to let Freya see the flicker of recognition that had unsettled him the moment her words touched on her brother. There were things he needed to be sure of. If Eric Thorne- the lost heir of Stormveil's Fifth Branch-truly was the man he had once crossed paths with... then everything would change.

The tavern keeper returned just then, laying out steaming dishes, breaking Silas's thoughts apart.

"Eat first," Freya said softly, masking her exhaustion with a small smile.

"Of course," Silas replied, bowing his head as though the simple act of eating demanded reverence. He took up his chopsticks without argument and began to eat in silence.

Freya, however, spoke as she always did when comfort and memory collided. She shared fragments of her past-her father Arthur Thorne's iron discipline, her mother Myra's gentle wisdom, and most of all, the warmth and shadow of her brother Eric. Every detail of her tone, every subtle shift in her face revealed how deeply she still held on to him.

Silas listened but barely tasted the food. The venison stew might as well have been ash on his tongue. His movements were mechanical, as though his body remembered the act of eating even while his mind wandered far, circling an image of a young man with sharp eyes and a commanding presence.

When the meal was done and the tavern keeper returned to tally the bill, his curiosity finally broke through.

"Freya, it's been a long time. What brings you back here today?"

She placed her utensils down with care. “I came to settle the matter of my family’s ancestral estate.”

The man nodded knowingly. “Ah. The estate in Stormveil’s old quarter. I thought so. Most of the families from that district have already signed the redevelopment contracts. Word is, the demolition begins in a matter of days.”

Freya froze. Her eyes widened, her breath stilled. “Demolition?”

“Yes,” the man said, surprised by her reaction. “You didn’t know? They’re tearing it all down. The paperwork’s been moving for months now.”

Her silence was sharper than denial. She had heard nothing. No letter, no summons, no WolfComm notification. Nothing.

Outside, Silas studied her face, reading the storm brewing beneath her calm mask. “Do you still want to see the estate?”

Her voice was clipped, her anger leashed. “No. First, we go to the Redevelopment Bureau. I need answers.”

By the following morning, the scandal surrounding Aurora of the Bluemoon Pack had only spread wider. What began as whispers had erupted into wildfire across the networks. Despite her family’s desperate attempts to choke the blaze-despite even the Thorne family’s influence-it was not enough. Aurora’s name was everywhere, her title of newly appointed pilot of the Bluemoon Airborne Wing now poisoned

12:51 pm P P P P

+20 Free Coins

with shame.

Her parents had arrived in Ashbourne overnight, faces tight with desperation. They threw themselves at the mercy of the Thorne elders, begging them to intervene. “With Stormveil’s weight behind us, we can silence this!” they pleaded.

Inside the council chamber, Abel Thorne listened, his expression grave. Beside him sat Rowan, James, and Lennon Thorne. The air was thick with politics and desperation when the chamber doors suddenly pushed open.

Every head turned.

Freya entered with Silas shadowing her like a wolf carved from iron. Her presence cracked through the stale air like lightning over a battlefield.

“Freya?” Abel asked, genuinely surprised. “What brings you here?” His gaze flicked uneasily to Silas-Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition.

Freya ignored the murmurs. Her eyes locked onto Lennon Thorne. Cold, unflinching. “I came to ask my third uncle why the compensation contracts for Stormveil’s Fifth Branch estate bear his name.”

The words fell like a thunderclap.

The room stilled, and every eye turned toward Lennon.

A flash of annoyance crossed his face, quickly masked with a sneer. He had known this girl would become a thorn the moment she strode into the Stormveil Primal Hall weeks ago. And here she was, proving him right.

Abel’s voice cut through the tension. “Lennon? What is she talking about?”

Lennon spread his hands, feigning reason. “The estate belongs to Stormveil. It is ancestral land, not some private property for one branch to hoard. And what then? The Fifth Branch is reduced to one daughter. Do you truly expect us to hand over the compensation to her? When she marries, it will be lost to another pack’s bloodline. No. Better to keep it within the Thornes where it belongs.”

Freya’s laugh was bitter and sharp. “What age do you live in, Uncle? Since when can a she-wolf not inherit? Fifth Branch property belongs to Fifth Branch blood. You are neither.”

Lennon’s expression hardened, disdain leaking from every word. “Blame your father and your brother for dying too soon. If they were alive, it would be theirs. But they’re not. And you...” His lip curled. “You cling to ghosts,”

The word struck her like claws across flesh. Rage flared hot and savage, her wolf snarling in her chest, her vision tinged red. Her father Arthur, her mother Myra, her brother Eric—their absence weighed like chains, and Lennon dared to spit on their memory.

Her hands trembled, then stilled, then lifted—fingers curling into claws as her wolf surged. She didn’t care that he was her elder. She didn’t care that this room reeked of politics and tradition. She would not let the

insult stand.

But before her hand could strike, another moved faster.

Silas Whitmor’s arm shot forward, his fingers closing around Lennon’s throat like an iron vice. He

+20 Free Coins

slammed him back into his chair, dominance crashing from him in waves that rattled the very air. The scent of raw Alpha power filled the chamber, sharp as steel and salt.

Lennon gagged, his hands clawing at Silas's grip. The room fell silent save for the choked gasps of the elder wolf.

Silas's voice was low, cold as a grave wind. "Careful, Thorne. You speak of the Fifth Branch as though it's yours to pilfer. But Freya is Arthur Thorne's daughter, Eric Thorne's sister. She carries more worth in her blood than you ever will. Insult her family again, and you will beg me for death before I grant it."

The other elders shifted uncasily, their wolves cowed beneath the weight of Silas's dominance. Freya stood still, her chest heaving, fury and pride warring within her. For the first time, she saw someone strike on her behalf with the same ferocity her brother once had.

Her hand fell back to her side, clenched tight. Her eyes, however, burned like embers, fixed on Lennon's paling face.

"My brother is alive," she said quietly, the words steady, a vow carved into stone. "And when he returns, you will answer for every word spoken here today."

The chamber echoed with her defiance.