

A Warrior Luna's Awakening Chapter 25

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Freya's POV

"Brother, I told you she wasn't acting proper outside. Otherwise, why would the SkyVex deal collapse the moment she resigned?!"

Giselle's voice scraped down my spine like claws against bone as she shoved her comm crystal into Caelum's hand. "Look at this—I got it all recorded."

The screen lit up. Caelum's eyes flicked to the sleek black vehicle.

And there it was—the sigil of the Ironclad Coalition, carved into the shadows of the Maybach's license plate.

Silas Whitmor's personal car.

Then came the moment I stepped out, the book passed from his driver's hand into mine. Caelum's scent shifted—startled, then guarded. He looked from the screen to me, that sharp jaw locked with tension.

So, he had seen it.

"It's not what it looks like," I said, voice steady. "We left the aerial showcase at the same time. He offered a ride, I accepted."

"Oh, what a tidy little excuse," Giselle scoffed. "You're a mated female, Freya. What sort of twisted game are you playing, riding in another Alpha's car?"

"If we're policing rides now," I said coldly, "maybe you should ask your precious brother about how often Aurora rides in his."

Giselle's face froze.

Then Eleanor, Caelum's mother, stormed forward, her rage radiating like a crackling blaze.

Her hand came up fast, sharp and viper—quick—aimed for my face.

But I caught her wrist mid—air.

Gasps echoed through the room.

“You see that?!” Eleanor snarled, wrenching against my grip. “She raised her hand against me! Caelum, she dares to strike her elder! And you still haven’t cast her out?!”

Caelum’s boots thudded across the stone floor as he stepped between us. “Let her go, Freya.”

“She tried to hit me.”

“She’s your elder Luna. Even if she scolds you, you shouldn’t lay a hand on her,” Caelum snapped. “You’re younger. A daughter-in-bond. You should endure a few words.”

“A few words?” I echoed, bitter.

“She helped raise me alone after my father’s death. I owe her everything. You can’t endure a few scoldings for the sake of this bond?”

There it was again.

That ancient guilt weaponized like a blade.

How many times had I heard him say it?

His mother sacrificed. His mother suffered. His mother was owed.

And I... what was I? A wolf tethered for convenience?

“No,” I said, voice low. “I endured because I loved you. But I don’t anymore. So I won’t endure it again.”

The silence after that rang sharp and final.

Caelum flinched—just slightly, but I saw it. The doubt flashing across his features, the Alpha posture slipping just for a heartbeat.

His voice dropped. “Is this about him? Whitmor? You stopped loving me because someone more powerful came along?” My laughter was bitter. “This isn’t about Silas.”

Eleanor stepped forward again, venom in her tone. “Clearly your parents didn’t teach you how to respect a mate’s bloodline.” My parents?

For one brief second, I saw their faces—Arthur and Myra Thorne, the night before they left for the peacekeeping mission. Their warm smiles. My father’s hand resting on my shoulder. My mother’s scent still clinging to my jacket when I returned from Halston.

"They raised me with love," I said quietly. "Not so I could marry into your family and be beaten down by yours."

I released Eleanor's wrist.

"You want a divorce? Fine. But I take what is mine."

"You filthy-! After what you did, you think you deserve a silvermark from our coffers?" Eleanor snapped.

"Giselle accused me of cheating," I said, turning calmly toward her. "Let's clarify it. The man who gave me that book... was Silas Whitmor."

Giselle's mouth dropped open. "What?"

She paled instantly.

Even a reckless pup like her knew better than to toss accusations at the Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition.

"That's right," I continued smoothly. "So, Giselle, are you publicly claiming I'm having an affair with Silas Whitmor?"

"I-" Her lips opened. Closed. Then again. "I didn't know... I thought it was just some-

"Be silent," Caelum growled at her, voice dipped into Alpha-command.

"Take Mother upstairs," he added, colder now. "And don't speak of this outside these walls. Not a word."

They left reluctantly, Giselle sending me a glare over her shoulder that promised trouble she couldn't deliver.

Now we were alone.

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nd something more feral beneath.

The shadows wrapped around us, thick with tension and

Caelum turned to me, his eyes darker now.

"What's your relationship with Silas?"

"There isn't one," I replied.

“Then why did he send you home with a gift?”

“It’s not a gift,” I said. “It’s a book. A rare one. He knows I read. He let me borrow it.”

He stared at me, something calculating flickering behind the storm in his gaze.

I didn’t tell him that I had already researched the book before he came home.

That M’s Bestiary of Skyborne Avians had sold for twelve million credits at the last Crescent Auction.

A book Silas passed to me as casually as one might hand over a leaf.

I hadn’t accepted it—not truly.

But Caelum didn’t know that.

And for the first time in a long while, I didn’t feel the need to explain myself.