

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

chapter 251-260

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

Aurora stepped out of the hospital's glass doors beside Caelum. Her expression was glowing, her lips curving with barely contained joy.

Caelum tilted his head, studying her with a faint frown. "You're certain nothing's wrong with your health?" His voice was low, careful. It wasn't his place to pry into the specifics of her examination—wolves had pride, and even Alphas had limits when it came to delicate matters like this.

Aurora's fingers brushed across her abdomen, her eyes shining. "Nothing's wrong, Caelum. In fact..." She lowered her voice, almost trembling with excitement. "I'm so happy."

The physician's words were still ringing in her ears—confirmation that her suspicions were true. She carried Caelum's pup inside her. The future Alpha heir of the Silverfang Pack.

With this child, she would have a shield stronger than steel.—No matter what truths Caelum might discover later, no matter what shadows from the past threatened to unravel her carefully spun lies, he would never turn his back on the mother of his heir. He loved her—or at least she had convinced herself that he did. And with a child binding them, he would be hers forever.

Her eyes darkened for a heartbeat, a flash of predatory intent breaking through her smile. That damned wolf detective—Lee—who had dared to threaten her, to corner her with accusations... she would make him pay. She would make sure he carried scars from crossing her that would last his entire lifetime.

Caelum caught the shift in her energy, though he didn't understand it. His brows drew together. "Happy?" he repeated, suspicion threading his tone. "What exactly—"

He didn't finish the sentence.

A sleek black vehicle rolled to a stop at the curb in front of them. Its doors opened with precise, dangerous timing. Wolves stepped out—hard-eyed, broad-shouldered enforcers carrying the unmistakable scent of the Ironclad Coalition.

“Aurora,” one of them said, his voice cutting through the air like the snap of a blade. “Our Alpha, Silas, wants to see you.”

Aurora froze. So did Caelum.

“What?” they said in unison.

Cachum’s posture shifted, dominance surging from him instinctively. His silver aura rippled at the edges, sharp enough to make lesser wolves bow, “Why would Silas want to see her?” His voice was dangerous, the growl beneath it threatening violence.

But the Ironclad wolves didn’t flinch. They didn’t answer. Instead, with a motion of the hand, two of them moved forward in perfect synchrony and seized Aurora.

“Caelum!” Aurora’s voice rose, sharp with panic as she was shoved into the waiting vehicle.

“You dare-” Caelum’s roar cut the air, but before his Alpha command could strike, two more wolves rushed him. Even as he fought back, they shoved him into the vehicle beside her. The doors slammed, and

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with a low growl of the engine, the car pulled away from the hospital, leaving the scent of tension and **fear** lingering in its wake.

Freya stood by the river’s edge, the moonlight tracing silver across the restless water. She had always hated this place, though once it had been the site of something she believed in. Once, she had dragged Caelum from these waters, his breath shallow, his life balanced on the edge. Back then, she had not realized how that act of instinctive compassion would tether her fate to his.

And she had not imagined that Aurora—another wolf entirely—would later claim the credit as her own.

Meeting Aurora here again felt cruelly fitting. This was where it had begun. This was where it would unravel.

Beside her, Silas stood like a shadow carved from iron. His gaze never left her face. “Whatever you decide to do to Aurora,” he said, his voice carrying the weight of absolute certainty, “do it. Even if the skies themselves collapse, I will bear the weight in your stead.”

Freya's throat tightened. Her wolf prowled beneath her skin, pacing, snarling, its fury coiled tight. "Even if what I want is her blood on my hands?" she asked quietly.

Silas's lips curved, though his eyes were dead serious. "If you raise your hand, I will be your blade."

Freya's fists clenched at her sides. Before she could respond, the sharp vibration of her WolfComm cut through the night. She lifted it, pressing the call through.

"Freya!" Kade Blackridge's voice rang out, rough with excitement. "Where are you? I've got something you'll want to see."

"By the river," she replied. Her voice was calm, but her pulse thundered in her ears.

"The river?" Kade hesitated. "Strange. Because what I've found... it ties back to Aurora." His voice lowered, thick with implication. "Stay where you are. I'm coming to you."

The call ended. Freya slid the device back into her coat, her gaze never leaving the black waters.

"He's coming," Silas murmured.

Freya nodded once. "And whatever he's bringing... it's tied to her."

Headlights flared, breaking across the night as another vehicle rolled to a stop. Doors opened, and Ironclad enforcers stepped out. They dragged two figures with them—Aurora and Caelum.

Aurora's hair was disheveled, her face pale with shock. Caelum bore the marks of a fight—his jaw swollen, a bruise darkening across his cheek. His fury was palpable, thrumming in the air like the growl of a caged

beast.

When his eyes fell on Freya, they burned with outrage. "Freya Thorne," he snapped, his voice **raw** with betrayal. "Was it you? Did you order Silas to drag us here like criminals? Is this your revenge for the Lunar Severance Phase? For the divorce?" His teeth bared, his aura flashing like steel. "Is this humiliation **what**

you wanted?"

Freya's eyes didn't leave Aurora. "I've no interest in humiliating you, Caelum." Her voice **was steady**, but her wolf raged beneath the surface, straining against her control. "My interest **lies** only **in her**."

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Silas's brow furrowed. His sharp gaze turned on his own men. "I told you to bring Aurora. Why bring

him?"

One of the enforcers bowed his head quickly. "Alpha, he was with her. We feared interference. Better to control the threat."

Aurora twisted in her captors' grip, her voice shrill with defiance. "Freya! You pride yourself on law, don't you? On rules and order? Do you know what you've done? Forcing us here like this is abduction. It's a crime. I'll see you dragged before the High Tribunal!"

Freya stepped forward slowly, her fists clenched until her knuckles whitened. The river's cold wind snapped at her hair, but it was nothing compared to the storm brewing inside her chest.

"A crime?" Her voice cracked like thunder. "And what about yours, Aurora? How many crimes have you. hidden beneath that pretty mask?"

Aurora's lips parted, her bravado faltering.

Freya's wolf surged, her eyes gleaming with a predator's gold. She closed the space between them, her voice a low snarl that carried across the water.

"The border fire," she said. "The blaze that devoured the Iron Fang Recon Unit. The night so many of our brothers burned alive." Her voice broke, grief colliding with fury. "It was your cigarette. Your carelessness. You killed them."

Aurora stiffened, her body trembling.

"And then," Freya continued, her voice rising with raw anguish, "you lied. You stood before the packs, and you said you saw the Beta captain smoking. You let his ashes carry the blame while the true guilt stayed buried in your chest."

The silence that followed was suffocating. Even Caelum's anger faltered, his gaze darting between the two women, suspicion dawning in his eyes.

Freya's wolf pushed against her ribs, desperate to tear, to rip, to finish what should have been ended long ago. But she forced herself still, her hands trembling as she glared at the wolf who had stolen her fate, her family, her truth.

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Third Person's POV

Aurora's face blanched, horror flaring in her eyes as she stared at Freya.

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"You... you're spouting lies!" she shouted, her voice trembling. "I don't even smoke. How could the border fire have anything to do with me? I was part of the rescue effort—I saved lives!"

Caelum's jaw tightened, his silver-grey eyes flashing with fury. He stepped forward, placing himself between the two women, his aura sharp with Alpha dominance. "Freya," he snarled, "how far are you willing to go? You've attacked Aurora again and again, you've already cost her her position in the Bluemoon Airborne Wing. Isn't that enough?"

Freya's lips curved into a bitter smile. "Enough? You really believe I'm persecuting her?" Her gaze burned, unflinching as it locked onto Aurora. "No, Caelum. I haven't done nearly enough. It's her own trail of sins. that stripped her of her post—not me."

"She's done no such thing!" Caelum barked, his wolf snapping through his voice. "Even if she failed to save comrades that night... it was fear. Any wolf would have been afraid in that inferno. That doesn't make her a monster." He swung his gaze back toward Aurora, his tone softening. "She fought the flames. She saved others. That's what matters."

Freya's composure cracked; a growl trembled in her chest. "So her silence means nothing? She concealed the truth, soaked up praise, accepted medals and honor she never earned. Does that not weigh on you?!" Her eyes glowed faintly gold, her wolf pressing against the edges of her control. "And worse than that—she hid her guilt. She wasn't simply a coward in that blaze. She was the spark. The cause. That fire began because of her."

Aurora's head snapped up, panic surging through her scent. "Lies! I told you—I don't smoke. How could a discarded cigarette have been mine?"

Freya gave a cold, cutting laugh. Then, with a flick of her wrist, she hurled a handful of glossy prints at Caelum's chest. The photographs fluttered through the air, several striking against his face before sliding to the dirt.

“They tell a different story,” Freya said. “Look at them. Aurora’s ‘innocence’ is nothing but smoke and ash.”

Caelum bent, scooping up the photos. His eyes widened, the color draining from his face. Each image captured Aurora with a cigarette pinched neatly between her fingers, her lips parting to exhale smoke in practiced streams. There was no awkwardness, no hesitation. She wasn’t a novice. She was practiced-

seasoned.

His mind spun. He had believed Aurora despised smoking, that she avoided it with disdain. He had never once seen her indulge. Yet here, frozen in film, was proof that she had been lying for years.

Aurora’s own breath hitched, her mask cracking. These these can’t be real,” she stammered, her voice rising to a shrill pitch. “They’re fabricated—yes, forged! Someone stitched them together!”

“Then test them,” Freya said icily, her eyes glinting with challenge. “We’ll see whose lies stand when the ink is stripped away

Caelum pressed his lips into a tight line, his thoughts a whirlwind At last, he said hoarsely, “Even if even

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if she smoked... that doesn’t prove she caused the fire. The Fire Corps and the tribunal already ruled. They said it was the Beta co-pilot—he died, his cigarette was found at the site. That was the verdict.”

“That verdict was convenient,” Freya shot back, her fury lashing out like claws. “The co-pilot was dead. Easy prey to pin it on. He could not speak, could not deny. If he had lived, do you really think he would have carried that blame?”

Caelum’s expression hardened, conflict warring in his eyes. “You have nothing,” he said. “No evidence-”

Before he could finish, Freya's hand darted into her coat. She drew out another set of prints and flung them at his chest. This time, the images were sharper, crueler: still frames from old surveillance footage, carefully restored. Aurora, at the edge of the border runway. A lit cigarette glowing between her fingers. Her hand flicking it to the ground. Ten minutes later—the fire had raged.

“Here.” Freya's voice was like a blade across stone. “These are from the restored tapes. This was Aurora, standing exactly where the blaze began. Ten minutes before the inferno swallowed. Tell me again it wasn't her.”

Caelum's hands shook as he gathered the photos. The face was blurred by shadow, but the silhouette—the curve of her jaw, the angle of her shoulders—he knew it. He knew it too well. Aurora. His Aurora.

Aurora herself recoiled, her body trembling as if the earth had tilted beneath her. Her mind screamed questions. Who had filmed her that night? Who had hidden this evidence for so long? And how, in the name of the Moon, had Freya gotten her claws on it?

“You're framing me,” Aurora rasped, her voice brittle. “These shadows don't prove anything. It could be anyone!”

Freya stepped forward, her presence crushing, her wolf surging through her every breath. “Let the courts decide. Let the Tribunal strip away the lies. But understand this, Aurora—” she closed the final distance, her voice dropping to a snarl—“I came here tonight not for their judgment. I came for mine.”

Her fist snapped forward, colliding with Aurora's cheek. The sound cracked through the night like bone splintering. Aurora stumbled backward, blood flooding her mouth, the world spinning. She would have hit the ground if Caelum's arm hadn't shot out to catch her.

Aurora's fingers pressed against her throbbing face, her eyes wide with disbelief and rage. “You dare strike me? Who are you to lay a hand on me?!”

Freya's teeth clenched so hard her jaw ached. She seized Aurora by the collar, jerking her forward until their foreheads nearly touched. Her eyes blazed molten gold, wolf fire burning behind them.

“Who am I?” she hissed, every word vibrating with fury. “I am the sister of Eric Thorne. He burned in that fire—your fire. Five years he's been gone, swallowed by the ashes you created. My brother. My blood. You stole him from me with your carelessness, your lies, your cowardice.” Her voice broke, then rose again in a roar. “Tell me, Aurora. Do I have the right to strike you now?”

Aurora's mouth opened, but no words came.

Caelum froze, his heart lurching violently. He remembered—Freya had spoken once, briefly, of an older brother lost to the border fire, Eric Thorne, a warrior of the Iron Fang Recon Unit. A ghost swallowed by

flame.

And if what Freya claimed was true... if Aurora had been the one who cast the spark that consumed him—

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The thought clawed through him, threatening to split him apart. He stared down at the woman trembling in his arms, the woman he had trusted, the woman carrying his heir, and for the first time, a seed of dread took root in his chest. 1

Could it be true?

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Third Person's POV

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Aurora's face drained of color, her eyes wide with trembling outrage as she pointed at Freya.

"You... you're spouting lies! I don't even smoke. How could the border fire possibly have anything to do with me? I was fighting the flames that night—I saved lives!"

Beside her, Caelum's fury ignited, his Silverfang Alpha presence crackling in the air as he glared at Freya.

"Freya, how far will you go? You've hounded Aurora over and over, ruined her reputation. Isn't that enough?"

Freya's laugh was sharp, bitter, echoing through the dim-lit hall like a wolf's snarl.

"Enough? You think I'm tormenting her? No, Caelum—she destroyed herself. All I've done is drag the truth into the open."

Caelum bristled. His protective stance widened, as if shielding Aurora from Freya's words.

"What truth? Aurora's only crime was fear—yes, she froze, she faltered. But who wouldn't, in a firestorm like that? Fear is human. She didn't abandon anyone out of malice. And she did fight the fire, she did save lives. Doesn't that matter?"

Freya's eyes burned, wolf-gold flecks flashing like blades in her irises.

"So hiding her cowardice was nothing? Wearing the badge of 'hero' while burying the truth under ash? That's fine with you?!" Her voice rose to a howl, cracking the fragile civility in the room. "She didn't just abandon her comrades. She started that fire. She lit it with her own careless hand—and then she basked in the glory while my brother vanished into the smoke!"

Aurora shook her head violently, tears spilling, but her voice cut like a whip.

"I don't smoke! The fire had nothing to do with me. The report said it was the co-pilot's cigarette that started it. That's official! You have nothing."

"Nothing?" Freya sneered, reaching into her coat. With a sharp flick, she hurled several glossy photographs into Caelum's chest. They scattered across the floor like feathers torn from a broken wing. "These are from before the fire. Aurora with a cigarette in her hand, her lips curled around the smoke like a seasoned addict. Don't tell me she's innocent."

Caelum froze. His eyes tracked the images—Aurora in uniform, a cigarette burning between

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her fingers, smoke streaming from her mouth. The Aurora he knew, the woman he swore to protect, had always claimed she despised the habit. Yet the woman in those photos held the cigarette like she'd done it a thousand times. His chest tightened.

"Aurora..." he whispered, disbelief fraying his Alpha steadiness.

Aurora's mask cracked. For the briefest second, fear flickered across her face. Then she snapped, voice rising to a desperate pitch.

"They're fake! They're doctored! You think I'd throw away my honor, my career, for a filthy smoke?!"

Freya's reply was cold as a grave.

“Test them. You’ll see. And I have more.” She produced stills pulled from repaired surveillance footage, shoving them at Caelum. “This is her, at the ignition site. She smokes, she tosses the ember, and ten minutes later, the flames devour the border outpost. Tell me again she’s innocent.”

Caelum lifted the photos with shaking hands. The face wasn’t clear, but the body, the stance, the arch of the jaw—he knew them like his own breath. He knew Aurora. And this... this was her.

Aurora staggered back, eyes wide, her wolf howling inside in panic.

Why did Freya have these? Who had captured her in that cursed moment?

“You’re lying!” Aurora cried, her voice cracking. “Blurry pictures mean nothing. You can’t condemn me with shadows.”

Freya’s voice was steady, low, vibrating with barely checked fury.

“Then let the law decide. Let the packs’ tribunal weigh your lies. I’m not here to argue guilt— I’m here to speak for my brother, Eric Thorne, whose body was never found because of you.”

Aurora barely had time to gasp before Freya’s fist lashed out, striking her across the face. Aurora reeled, crashing backward, pain flashing like fire across her cheek. She would have collapsed if Caelum hadn’t caught her.

Aurora clutched her face, snarling, through the sting.

“Freya! You dare strike me?!”

Freya’s grip shot forward, seizing Aurora’s collar. Her teeth bared, her wolf within snapping at the leash.

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“My brother vanished in that blaze. My family mourns at an empty grave in the Ashbourne Legion’s Hall of Martyrs. Do you think I don’t have the right to strike you down?!”

Aurora froze, her bravado shrinking into silence.

Caelum's face darkened, his Alpha aura surging as he stepped between them.

"Enough! You can't do this, Freya. You can't just spill blood in the streets. These photos, this fury—it isn't proof!"

"Move," Freya hissed, her power vibrating through her bones.

"I won't!" Caelum roared back, and for the first time in years, their wolves clashed, his power against hers.

Freya's answer was swift and merciless. Her boot slammed into Caelum's chest, sending him sprawling across the stone floor. He gasped, pain lancing through his ribs as he hit the ground hard.

Freya advanced, slow, deliberate, her eyes locked on Aurora.

Aurora stumbled backward, only to crash into a wall of muscle. Silas Whitmor's enforcers closed in, blocking every path of escape.

Her heart thundered. She turned wild-eyed, desperate.

"Freya! You were Iron Fang Recon. You swore an oath to discipline and honor! How can you dishonor the military's name by attacking me like some rogue beast?"

Freya's laugh rang out, sharp and bitter, but her eyes gleamed with tears.

"You want to know why you still breathe? Because I've held back. Because the Iron Fang oath still chains me, even after I left the battlefield. But I'm not just a soldier, Aurora. I'm Eric Thorne's sister."

Her voice broke, raw with anguish, and then she lunged, fist arcing toward Aurora once more.

Caelum, battered but not broken, surged up to block the blow.

"Enough!" he gasped, dragging Aurora behind him. Aurora clutched him like a lifeline, her sobs desperate, shrill.

"Caelum! Protect me!"

"Freya, you've made your point," Caelum said, his voice strained, breath shallow. "Two

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punches, that's enough."

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Freya's laugh was venom, her eyes burning like wildfire.

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"Enough? For a blaze that swallowed an outpost, for the screams of dying warriors, for my brother who vanished into smoke and ash? Two punches are nothing, Caelum Grafton."

Caelum faltered, struck silent by the weight of her pain.

"Stand aside," Freya snarled.

Caelum's jaw clenched.

"When Aurora saved me, I swore to the Moon Goddess I would protect her. If you want her blood, you'll have to go through me."

But before the tension could snap, another force entered.

A boot slammed into Caelum's side, sending him sprawling again. This time, the strike wasn't Freya's. It was Silas Whitmor.

The Ironclad Alpha pressed his heel onto Caelum's face, grinding him into the stone.

"Then I'll deal with you first," Silas growled, his voice a rumble of steel.

Aurora screamed, terror twisting her features. Silas's enforcers seized her, holding her fast as she writhed.

Silas turned, his eyes glinting with dark promise.

"Freya. If you want Aurora's life, I'll grant it."

Aurora's blood ran cold. Silas was no soldier bound by honor. He was a predator, ruthless, unhinged. If Freya said the word, Aurora knew he'd end her without hesitation.

But before any final blow could fall, headlights cut across the night.

A black car screeched to a halt, and from it stepped Kade and Lana. With them was a man bound and beaten—Lee, the investigator Aurora had thought safely tucked away.

Silas's boot withdrew from Caelum's chest as he narrowed his eyes at the newcomers. His enforcers pinned both Aurora and Caelum like prey.

Aurora's face blanched, her wolf whining in panic. Why was Lee here? He should have been locked in a police cell, far from reach.

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Lana's eyes blazed as she strode to Freya's side.

"What's happening here?"

Freya's answer was iron, her voice carrying the weight of justice and blood.

"I found the proof. Proof that Aurora caused the border fire. Proof that my brother vanished because of her."

The hall fell silent, tension coiling like wolves before the killer

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

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The night was heavy, clouds swallowing the moonlight whole. Inside the riverside lodge, tension thickened like a storm waiting to break.

Freya stood off to the side, her wolf restless beneath her skin. She had said little, yet her presence alone gnawed at Aurora's carefully woven mask. Aurora's smile faltered every time her gaze landed on Freya. And tonight, that mask was about to shatter.

Kade shoved Lee forward, boot colliding hard against his back. The rogue staggered and hit the ground, spitting curses.

"Not even a greeting?" Kade's voice was cold iron laced with mockery. His wolf's eyes gleamed. "Strange. You and Aurora were friendly enough to share a lodge room just now. Care to explain that?"

The word lodge struck like a spark.

Caelum stiffened. The Alpha turned sharply toward the woman beside him. “Aurora,” he said, voice darkening, “what is he talking about? You and this man...”

Aurora’s face drained of color. She forced a trembling laugh, clutching at his sleeve as if his touch could anchor her. “He lies! Caelum, I don’t even know this man. It’s Freya—she and her people staged this to frame me. Don’t listen to them.”

The man on the floor—Lee, scarred and furious—snorted, coughing blood onto the floorboards. “Frame you? Don’t twist this, bitch. You think I’ll take the fall for you?”

He dragged himself upright, fury burning through his humiliation. His words cracked through the room like a whip.

“You promised me fifty million. Said I’d get my cut once the last transfer cleared. And what did you do? You sent the money, then called the enforcers on me. Accused me of fraud and extortion. If I hadn’t run fast, I’d be rotting in a cell right now. You wanted me locked away so you could have your precious secret all to yourself!”

Aurora’s breath hitched. She had rehearsed this lie a hundred times, but Kade’s intervention had smashed her timing. Now the pieces scattered.

Caelum’s brow furrowed, confusion tangling with suspicion. “Fifty million?” His voice edged low, dangerous. “Extortion? Aurora, you told me you were broke. Where would you find that kind of money?”

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Aurora’s pulse raced. Her mind clawed for excuses, but the words tangled.

“I—I only—”

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Caelum’s wolf surged, connecting threads she had prayed he wouldn’t. His voice cracked like thunder.

“The loan. The fifty million I transferred last week. You said your uncle required a capital verification, that the funds had to be frozen for seven days... Don’t tell me—”

Sweat beaded across his brow. If those funds had not gone into SilverTech's reserves, if Aurora had funneled them elsewhere—then the lifeline for his crumbling enterprise had vanished into dust.

“No!” Aurora blurted, eyes wide, desperate. “He threatened me, Caelum! Lee forced me to move the money first. But it doesn't matter—he committed extortion. Once the enforcers finish the investigation, the credits will be returned to us. There will be no loss. I swear it.”

Her wolf cowered beneath the weight of his glare.

Kade's laugh was a blade. “A moment ago you claimed you didn't know him. Now he's suddenly threatening you? Which is it, Aurora?”

Aurora's cheeks burned, her excuses unraveling.

Caelum's voice lowered, heavy with ice. “What leverage would he possibly have over you, Aurora? What could he hold that would make you pay him such a sum?”

Lee's lips twisted into a vicious grin. His life was already ruined; if he couldn't have his share, then he would tear hers apart.

“Why? Because she's no savior, Alpha.” His words rang out like a death sentence. “She never pulled you from those waters that night. She's a fraud. She bought my silence. She gave me fifty million to keep my mouth shut, so you would go on believing her lie—that she was your rescuer. But she wasn't. She's been living off a stolen story all along.”

The air turned to stone.

Aurora clung to her role, voice breaking as she pleaded. “Caelum, no! He's lying. Freya's behind this, can't you see? They've bought him to smear me. You're my mate. You know me— you trust me!”

Caelum's throat tightened, his wolf snarling at war inside him. His gaze, tortured and searching, slid past Aurora... and landed on Freya.

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His voice cracked. “Freya... you never saved me. Did you?”

Freya's lips curved into a cold smile. Her eyes, stormlit, held no mercy.

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“Caelum Grafton, do you realize how laughable you are? You raised Aurora onto a pedestal, called her your white moonlight. For her, you betrayed vows, tore your own bond to shreds. You excused her crimes, shielded her from judgment. All because you believed she once saved your life.”

Her words cut deeper with every syllable.

“But if that foundation crumbles, if she never rescued you at all—what then? Who is Aurora to you now?”

“No,” Caelum whispered, shaking his head like a man drowning. “It can’t be. It was her. It was always her.”

“Test it.”

The new voice was a growl, rough as iron. Silas Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition, stepped forward, his power rolling like thunder through the room.

Before Aurora could react, his hand clamped around her throat, lifting her as though she weighed nothing. Her feet scrabbled against the wooden planks as he drove her back, pinning her against the river’s stone embankment just beyond the window. Moonlight spilled over his bared teeth.

“Drop her,” Silas snarled, his eyes burning molten gold, “and we’ll see if she can swim. We’ll know if she ever saved anyone from drowning.”

Aurora’s scream tore into the night, mingling with the roar of the river below.

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Third Person’s POV

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The river’s current churned beneath the embankment, black and hungry, reflecting the pale glow of the moon like liquid steel. Aurora’s lungs burned, heart hammering as she struggled against Silas’s unyielding grip. His fingers clamped around her throat with terrifying precision -not enough to crush, yet enough to remind her that a single slip would send her tumbling into the roaring water below.

Her body teetered over the stone railing of the riverside embankment. Every heartbeat screamed warning, every fiber of her wolf screamed survival. Her paws—if she were fully wolfed—would have dug into stone for purchase, but now she was human enough to feel the powerless fragility of her body, with Silas’s threaten, she could not shift. One wrong move, and the river would claim her.

“Don’t... don’t! Let go! Please!” Aurora’s voice cracked, panic lacing every syllable. She clawed at Silas’s hand, at his iron-hard fingers, but they didn’t budge. The strength in his grasp was a wolf’s strength, disciplined and lethal, honed to precision by decades of pack dominance.

From the corner of her eye, she saw the river surge beneath her. Even if she could swim, the violent currents were no gentle brook where she could paddle to safety. This was a river with teeth, with a wolf’s cunning, ready to pull her under at the slightest misstep.

“Caelum, help me!” Aurora’s desperate gaze landed on Caelum Grafton, his broad shoulders tense, wolfed senses flaring with distress.

Caelum’s golden eyes flickered, torn between his logic and the gnawing, instinctual pull of fear. He knew her history, knew the story she had told him for years. He had trusted her, believed she had saved him. But doubt clawed at the edges of his mind tonight.

“I know you trust me, don’t you, Caelum?” Aurora shrieked, her voice raw, trembling as she twisted her body against Silas’s grip. “You said you believed me! You said I was your rescuer!”

Caelum’s jaw tightened, wolf instinct snarling beneath the skin. “Silas... release her!” His words were steel and warning, laced with the edge of a wolf alpha protecting his packmate. “Who saved me back then... has nothing to do with you. But if she falls now, if something happens to her, do you think you will escape accountability? You will answer to the pack, Silas!”

Silas’s amber eyes gleamed like fire in the moonlight. His wolf was unleashed in that gaze, and his voice came out calm, chilling, dangerous. “You think it doesn’t concern me?” he said, leaning slightly, tightening his grip just enough to send shivers down Aurora’s spine. “My mate is being accused, being slandered. How could I stand idle? I will prove she tells the truth—or I will see that the one who doubts it pays. And if she plunges.... we shall see who answers to the

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law, Caelum.”

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Caelum's teeth ground, the wolf within him roaring in fury, but he was restrained. Silas's two lieutenants pressed against him, their hands like iron shackles. He could move only in small increments, each one painstakingly measured.

Freya stood a few paces away, her eyes glittering in the pale light. Her wolf prowled, bared teeth just enough to show warning, but her expression was merciless. "You worry about her survival, Caelum?" she called, voice slicing the tension like a blade. "You still believe she saved you all those years ago? Fine. Let's test it."

The wolf's instincts warred inside Caelum. He wanted to leap forward, to snatch Aurora back from the brink, but he was shackled by both the human and the wolf law: he could not challenge Silas Whitmor openly without risk of a civil war within the pack coalition.

Aurora's body tilted precariously over the stone barrier. The wind tore at her hair, tugging at the hem of her uniform, teasing the boundary between safety and oblivion. Silas's hand did not loosen, but neither did it tighten. She could feel each subtle shift as he pushed her closer to the edge, testing both her balance and her fear.

"Freya, do something!" Caelum's voice broke through the roar of the river, desperation crawling through every word. "If she falls... I swear—"

Freya's eyes were sharp, cold as steel. Her wolf pressed against her ribs, tense and alert. "If I cared about your forgiveness, you might matter. But you? You've been irrelevant to me since before this river existed. Let her prove herself, Caelum. If she could save you from eight knife wounds, can she now survive the water you claim she mastered?"

Caelum's mind wavered, doubts slicing through years of belief. Could she really have saved him? Was she capable? Or had she always been a fraud?

Lana, standing beside Freya, smirked slightly, her wolfed senses intrigued. "To rescue a man struck eight times... her swimming must be exceptional. Shall we see?" Her tone was sharp, mocking, yet underneath it, curiosity glimmered like a wolf scent on the wind.

Aurora's cheeks burned red, shame and terror mixing. Once she had basked in the attention of being called "Vice Pilot Aurora." She had reveled in the respect, the admiration. Now, stripped of title, stripped of control, that same sound grated, twisted into an accusation she could not

escape.

Kade's patience snapped, a low growl rumbling from his chest. "Enough talk. Throw her. Let's see if she can float or sink!"

Silas's lips curved into a faint, terrifying smile. In one swift motion, his hand loosened.

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“No! Wait! I—I’ll die! I’ll die!” Aurora screamed, thrashing wildly, her body twisting as gravity finally pulled her weight forward. “I didn’t save him! I didn’t! I found him after someone else rescued him! I just followed the ambulance! The medics... they thought I saved him... so I went along with it to the hospital!”

Her wolf howled internally, instinct screaming that her survival depended on more than words. The river’s teeth were waiting, black and merciless.

Caelum’s senses screamed at him, but he could only watch, tethered by Silas’s dominance and his own hesitation. Freya’s wolf observed coldly, calculating the truth in Aurora’s panic and fear. The water churned below, and the river seemed to whisper promises of reckoning.

Tonight, every wolf in that dockside scene knew one truth: survival was no longer a question of skill, but of courage, of truth, and of which wolf-human or beast-would dominate the pack’s reckoning.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person’s POV

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Aurora slumped to the cold stone ground, legs trembling, chest heaving, as Silas’s shove sent her sprawling. The icy wind off the river whipped through her hair, carrying the roar of the dark waters below, the same river that had nearly claimed her moments ago. Her lungs burned, her throat raw, and her body shook with adrenaline and lingering terror.

Caelum barely dared to breathe. His amber eyes burned with disbelief, his wolf coiling within him like a storm, sensing the betrayal of every expectation he had clung to for years. She hadn’t saved him. Aurora’s frantic confessions earlier, shouted with desperation and fear, had shattered the fragile truth he had built his trust upon.

No... it wasn’t Aurora who had rescued him in the river that night. That realization clawed through him, a wolfish ache in his chest that made him stagger back a step. Even when he’d heard about the five million transferred to Lee as part of some mysterious

transaction, his gut had told him something was off—but he had buried the doubt, refused to confront it.

And now... the words were like cold steel across his ribs. Aurora had not saved him. Not her.

Caelum's gaze drifted, inevitably, to Freya. She stood at the riverbank like a statue of steel, long hair whipping in the wind, her stance proud, her spine straight and unyielding. The icy determination in her amber eyes made the moonlight glint off her high cheekbones, her sharp jawline, her commanding presence. A warrior through and through.

"Is it... you?" Caelum's voice was low, strained, almost a growl, but each word trembled with the weight of a man on the edge of revelation. He took a step forward, another, drawn by instincts older than logic, by the wolf's primal need to find the truth. His muscles tensed; his body wanted to sprint, to leap to her feet, to demand answers.

His rational mind screamed that perhaps it was safer to stop, to leave the past buried in silence. But the wolf within him urged him on, compelling him to confront the truth, to hunt it down like prey until the final answer was laid bare.

Before he could reach her, Kade's boot connected with his chest, sending him sprawling onto the stone embankment. Pain shot through his ribs, but even lying there, gasping, the wolf inside him bristled with fury.

"Caelum, you have no right to come near Freya!" Kade barked, eyes glinting with the cold logic of a pack enforcer.

Coughing and clutching his bruised chest, Caelum struggled to rise, amber eyes fixed like molten fire on Freya. "Freya... tell me... was it you? The one who saved me that night in the

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river—was it you?" His voice wavered, torn between hope and despair, the alpha wolf in him. demanding truth.

Lana let out a derisive chuckle, wolf ears flicking at the tension in the air. "Oh, Caelum, you're asking now? Not long ago, you swore it was Aurora who saved you, right?" Her words carried a sharp, mocking edge, yet beneath it lingered the wolfish curiosity of one sensing the shifting hierarchy.

Pain contorted Caelum's face, his jaw tight, his fur bristling as he ignored Lana's sarcasm. Nothing else mattered. Only the woman before him—the one who had been there, silent and unseen all these years. His chest heaved with betrayal, with longing, with the raw, animalistic ache of knowing that his trust had been placed in the wrong wolf.

“Do I need to answer that?” Freya's voice cut through the wind, cold and precise. Her wolf prowled beneath her skin, ears alert, fangs barely bared in warning. “Whether I did or didn't, Aurora was never your savior. Believing otherwise... was always a joke.”

Silas moved to her side, a predator beside his mate, amber eyes scanning, wolf instincts coiled, ready to strike if anyone challenged the pair. “What will you do with her, Freya?” he asked quietly, yet every word held authority, the weight of pack command and lethal intent.

“Hand her over to the authorities,” Freya replied smoothly. “And include all the evidence that could incriminate her. Let the law decide.”

Silas inclined his head, signaling his enforcers. Aurora was hauled to her feet, stumbling against the cold stone as she struggled, her breath catching in sobs. “No! You can't... I haven't done anything! Caelum, help me! Please!”

But Caelum stood frozen, muscles tense, golden eyes fixed on her with the weight of revelation pressing down. He could not move, could not speak, could not act—not yet. The wolf within him growled at the injustice, at the helplessness, at the cruel twist of fate. Aurora's rescue—or lack thereof—had rewritten everything he thought he knew about the past, and now he was forced to reckon with it.

The men hauled Aurora to the waiting vehicle, the engine rumbling like a growl from the depths of a slumbering wolf. Freya's gaze turned to Lana and Kade.

“You two?” she asked, voice still calm, yet tinged with the lethal precision of a hunter.

“Of course,” Kade replied, nodding toward the figure still restrained. “This one goes to the authorities as well.”

“Very well,” Freya said, the alpha's aura radiating off her in waves. “To the authorities, then. Together.”

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The vehicles moved, tires scraping against stone and asphalt, carrying the captured wolves of misdeeds. Caelum watched as Freya slid into her vehicle alongside Silas. She did not glance back. Her amber eyes were steel, unyielding, a reminder of the distance that now existed between them.

Before stepping in, Silas's gaze flicked toward Caelum, sharp and warning. No motion, no question, no hesitation—an unspoken decree: do not approach her.

The vehicle rolled away, and Caelum's hands clenched into fists, the alpha wolf in him roaring at the unfairness, the betrayal, the helplessness. He had once been closest to Freya, once the one she had considered in every choice. Now, even the smallest glance from her was withheld.

He turned his eyes to the river again, dark, relentless, churning like it had that night when his life hung in the balance. The memory came unbidden: a voice, strong and certain, cutting through the despair. "Don't be afraid... I'll save you. You'll be fine, with me here."

He remembered the warmth, the hope, the promise in that voice, and the promise he had made himself: that if he survived, he would repay her.

And yet... here he was, three years of marriage behind him, standing by as the truth unraveled. The one who had saved him had been here all along, silent, watching, unacknowledged, and he had squandered every moment, every memory, every gesture.

The river roared, the moonlight glinting off its restless surface, and in Caelum's chest, the wolf howled—not with hunger, not with rage, but with infinite, aching regret.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

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Aurora's amber eyes blazed with fury and desperation as Freya handed over every shred of evidence she had collected against her to the authorities. The documents—contracts, intercepted messages, financial ledgers—clinked against each other in a metal tray like the cold chimes of fate. Aurora knew what it meant. By law, she would be detained. She would be taken, at least temporarily, by the officers, facing scrutiny, interrogation, and possibly arrest.

Her glare fixed on Freya, venom coiling in every flick of her gaze. “Freya, don’t think this means you’ve won!” she spat, her voice sharp with outrage. “Those so-called ‘evidence’ won’t convict me. You can’t do this!”

Freya’s eyes, cold as the winter river, met hers without a flicker of emotion. “Whether it’s enough to convict you,” she said smoothly, voice low and measured, “that’s a matter for the judge and the jury, not you, and certainly not me.”

Before Aurora could retort, Kade and Lana stepped into the police precinct, flanking a restrained figure—Lee. The moment Lee’s gaze fell upon Aurora, it darkened, claws of greed and vengeance scraping at his composure. “You filthy bitch,” he seethed, teeth bared, fangs glinting. “You dared to scheme against me? Just wait. If you ever get out of here, I swear I’ll make you pay with your blood!”

Aurora’s lips curled into a sneer, her wolf coiling, ready to strike, yet she spoke through the tension in her jaw. “You were greedy first, Lee! You demanded five million! If you hadn’t pushed me to the edge, do you think I’d have needed to take such drastic steps? Blame yourself!”

Lee’s laugh was bitter, almost feral. “Greedy? And you? Don’t tell me you weren’t after Caelum’s fortune! Admit it—if you really liked him when he was a poor pup, why didn’t you stick around? Only after he became the Alpha of SilverTech Forgeworks did you make your move?”

Aurora froze, the words like claws scraping across her ribs. Her gaze darted past Lee’s sneer to the one she truly needed—Caelum Grafton. The moment her eyes locked with his amber gaze, panic flooded her chest. “Caelum... don’t believe him!” she cried, voice breaking. “I’ve always loved you! I was with you because of that!”

Her heart hammered with desperation. She couldn’t let him think she had betrayed him for power or wealth, not now, when Freya had discovered the old evidence of the border fire—the same fire Aurora had inadvertently caused years ago. Every moment, every shred of her credibility, hung by a thread, and she needed him. She needed Caelum to fight for her in court, to defend her against Freya’s calculated strikes.

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Caelum’s expression was unreadable, wolf instincts warring with human emotion. He had rushed from the riverbank, hailing a taxi to the precinct, only to hear Lee’s venomous

accusations. Could it be true? Could it really be as Lee claimed—that Aurora had only sought him once he had risen to prominence?

He remembered the earlier days. When he had been a struggling wolf, just another member of Bloodmoon Pack trying to find his place in the world, Aurora had appeared briefly, tending to him in the hospital after his injury. She had visited only twice, citing busyness, claiming she had no time. And yet, once he was released and began building his life, she began to appear more often, contacting him voluntarily, her presence growing persistent.

Caelum's wolf growled low in his chest, claws scraping at the invisible chain of confusion and pain. He wanted to believe her. He had loved her once; he still... but how could he trust now?

Aurora's desperation rose as she saw him hesitate, the hesitation feeding the wolfish anxiety coiling inside her. "Caelum, don't you believe me?" she pleaded, voice quivering, claws flexing, ears twitching.

Caelum let out a bitter laugh, the sound low, almost a growl. "Believe you? How can I? You claim to love me, yet you never told me the most important truth of all—that you weren't the one who saved me in the river!" His amber eyes flashed, wolf instincts demanding retribution, even as his heart ached.

"I... that was—" Aurora began, but Caelum cut her off, his voice snapping like the strike of a wolf.

"Aurora! You've lied to me in more ways than I can count. That five million... it wasn't for verification. I confirmed with your uncle. He had no knowledge of any partnership or verification process. You took it to silence Lee, didn't you? And to secure your own advantage? Is that it?"

Aurora's eyes widened, her chest tightening. The distance in his gaze, the absolute lack of trust, was like a knife to her wolf heart. He would have forgiven her once—if only she had taken, lied, or stolen for him—but now, after everything, after the truth about the river... she could feel the gulf between them widening.

"I didn't mean to deceive you!" she gasped, claws scrabbling at her own wrists as if to claw the words out of her throat. "I only... borrowed the five million temporarily. I reported it—so no one lost anything! I was going to help you and my uncle with the collaboration—I swear, I was!"

Caelum's gaze hardened, wolf eyes like twin coals burning. "Enough, Aurora. Enough of your excuses. Our bond... ends here."

Aurora's amber eyes widened in shock, the words slamming into her like a blow. Ends here?

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After all she had sacrificed, all the schemes she had endured, all the nights of lying and fighting to protect him... this was the end? Her wolf snarled, teeth bared, instincts screaming that she could not, would not, let it end.

Desperation and resolve burned through her veins like molten steel. Her him, words raw and urgent. "Caelum... I'm pregnant!"

gaze flicked up at

"What?" His amber eyes widened, pupils dilated, wolf instincts snapping to life with a surge of protectiveness and alarm. The word hit him like a jolt of lightning. She... carried his blood, his legacy. His wolf roared inside him, instincts clawing, demanding that he protect, that he claim, that he respond.

Freya's brow furrowed slightly, watching Aurora with a calculating eye, though the faintest shadow of concern flickered. Even the alpha wolf inside Caelum recognized it: she still mattered to someone.

"Yes," Aurora said again, her voice shaking but resolute, claws digging into her thighs. "I'm carrying your child, Caelum. Don't think you can end this between us. Not when it matters more than ever."

The precinct seemed to still, time stretching as Caelum's wolf growled low, muscles tensing, heart pounding. Aurora's declaration had changed the battlefield. Not with weapons, not with evidence, but with life itself, a life born of him and her—a connection deeper than any pack rivalry, deeper than any betrayal, and yet as raw and precarious as the river that had once claimed him.

He could feel the pull of instinct and heart, wolf and man, blending into a maelstrom of emotion. And as he stared into her determined eyes, amber against amber, the world outside -the precinct, Lee's curses, Freya's cold calculation-faded, leaving only the predator and the mate, and a bond that even deceit could not fully sever.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

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At that moment, Caelum finally understood the weight of Aurora's sudden revelation—her declaration of pregnancy. His wolf growled low in his chest, instincts trembling with unease. Could their bond truly end now? Could it ever end? Not when she carried his blood, his legacy,

inside her.

A sharp, mocking voice cut through his turmoil. Lana, standing a few feet away with a sardonic tilt to her lips, sneered. "Well, congratulations, Caelum. You're going to be a father. I can't wait for the wedding between you and Aurora. When that day comes, do remember to send me an invitation—I'll bring a very... special gift." Her words dripped venom, each syllable striking like a whip against the raw nerves of his pride.

Caelum's body froze, rigid as if encased in ice. His heart pounded like a drum in the chest of a hunting wolf. A child... so soon? How could it be? He and Aurora had shared only a handful of moments, fleeting encounters that were never meant to lead to this.

Freya's voice, calm yet unwavering, cut through his chaos. "Let's go."

It snapped him back to reality. He watched as Freya moved toward the exit of the precinct, her tall, commanding presence leaving no room for hesitation. His wolf stirred, claws unsheathing instinctively, urging him forward—but before he could take a single step, Silas's men intercepted him, forming an impenetrable barrier between him and Freya.

"Move along!" Silas' voice was cold, precise, carrying the weight of Ironclad Coalition authority. He took Freya's arm, guiding her with gentle but firm control. Kade, shadowing their steps, followed silently, his eyes scanning for any threat.

Lana's disdain didn't soften. She turned to Caelum, fangs glinting under the harsh precinct lights. "You, Caelum... how can you still have the nerve to interfere with Freya? But I must say, you and Aurora make a perfect pair. You exploited Freya's loyalty, feasted on her efforts, and then—what did you do? You handed over the wealth she earned to Aurora, under the guise of repaying a lifesaving debt. Ha! And now, the so-called savior has schemed against you. Sweet, isn't it?"

With a flick of her wrist, Lana walked away, her movements predatory yet elegant, leaving Caelum staring after her, his chest tightening with a mixture of shame and bitter clarity.

Inside the precinct, Caelum's eyes shifted back to Aurora. Every piece of luxury she now wore

-designer threads, jewelry glinting like moonlight on ice—had come from his own hands. And yet, as Lana had pointed out, every coin, every asset, was earned by Freya. Without

Freya, the company would have already collapsed into chaos. Even the five million loan, supposedly

for collaboration, had vanished into Aurora's hands.

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His jaw tightened, wolf instincts urging retribution even as human emotions tangled within him. The metallic clink of the handcuffs echoed through the corridor as officers led Aurora toward the interrogation room. Her eyes locked onto his, amber flecked with desperation, and she called out, voice trembling yet commanding: "Caelum! I'm carrying your child! You cannot abandon me now!"

Caelum's wolf growled, nostrils flaring, heart slamming against his ribcage. But no words came. No promise, no reassurance, no denial. He simply stared, silent, as the officers ushered her away.

Step by agonizing step, Aurora disappeared from view, leaving Caelum staggering like a lone wolf bereft of pack. He bowed his head, a bitter laugh escaping his throat, hoarse and broken. "Ha... ha... hahahaha... hah..."

The laughter echoed through the precinct, cruel in its mockery, each note a sting that reminded him of his past follies, his blind trust, his naïveté.

Outside, Freya and her group had found a quiet corner in a nearby restaurant, the hum of civilian life contrasting sharply with the storm of recent events. Lana leaned back, fingers tapping against the table, eyes sharp as steel. "So... what's your plan now?"

Freya's expression remained stoic, jaw set, eyes distant as she contemplated the threads of fate she had yet to untangle. "I'll wait for word from the military. They've recovered the last drone belonging to Eric Thorne. Based on its final recordings, they've determined he went missing during the border fire. The Iron Fang Recon Unit is now reexamining all incidents involving injuries and casualties from that time." Her voice, calm but laced with unspoken grief, left the word death unspoken—because to speak it would make it real, irrevocable.

"Military investigations are faster than civilian channels," Lana noted, her tone pragmatic, wolf instincts attuned to strategy. Ordinary authorities cannot access the same level of classified intelligence, she knew.

Freya nodded faintly. "If the final reports come back and there's still no trace of Eric, I'll go to the border myself. I have to find him."

Lana sighed, shoulders tense with unspoken concern. Eric had been missing for five years. Freya had already risked herself three times, traversing the dangerous borderlands with little more than resolve and instinct.

“I’ll come with you,” Lana said, eyes firm.

“No,” Freya replied, her voice steady. “The mission’s unpredictable. I cannot estimate how long I’ll be gone. Besides, you have SkyVex Armaments to oversee. You’ve already given me too

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much of your time.”

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Lana’s eyes softened, worry hidden beneath layers of practicality. “Your safety comes first. Joining SkyVex doesn’t change that. If you go alone, anything could happen. The border is volatile—wolves, mercenaries, environmental hazards... you can’t handle it alone.”

Freya’s gaze hardened, wolf instincts bristling. “I’m aware of the risks. I’ll manage.”

Before Lana could argue further, Silas Whitmor’s voice cut through, calm and authoritative. “I’ll accompany her. There’s no need to worry. My presence will ensure she’s protected.”

Freya glanced at Silas, a silent acknowledgment passing between them. In the heart of wolves, protection and trust were as primal as the need to hunt and survive. And for now, with the border’s dangers and Aurora’s schemes still unresolved, she would need both.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya’s POV

I froze for a moment, staring at Silas as he spoke. “I told you, Freya, if you’re going after your brother, I go with you. If you’re going to the border, I go with you. How long you stay there doesn’t matter. You really think I’d let my girlfriend go into danger alone?”

I blinked, caught off guard. The border was unpredictable; I had no idea how long it would take to find Eric. Yet, hearing him say this made a warmth surge through my chest.

Silas reached out, taking my hand in his. His thumb brushed lightly over my palm, almost teasingly, but the gesture carried the weight of an unspoken promise. My cheeks burned, though I kept my composure. Not that Lana or Kade weren't still around, observing every subtle movement, every flicker of emotion.

Lana smirked and clicked her tongue. "Good. Freya, with Silas by your side, I can rest easy."

Kade poured two glasses of wine with a precise hand, then set one in front of me. "Sis," he said, his voice tinged with an unusual mix of excitement and solemnity, "now that we finally know why Eric disappeared back then, it's only a matter of time before he's found. That calls for a celebration, don't you think?"

I smiled, lifting my glass, letting the cool liquid slide down my throat. "Indeed. We've waited long enough to know this much."

Kade drank in unison, and I couldn't help but chuckle at the synchronicity of it. Then, as the warmth spread through me, my thoughts softened and memories bubbled to the surface. Memories of the Iron Fang Recon Unit days, long patrols, late-night strategy sessions, and relentless drills.

"I remember those days," Kade said, his tone almost wistful. "Working with you in the unit... it was some of the best days of my life."

I laughed softly, already feeling the tipsiness of the wine. "The best days, huh? You mean all the times I beat you up for slacking?"

"Exactly those times!" he said, lifting his glass with a grin. "I'd go back in a heartbeat. Even if you hit me every day, I'd still be grateful."

I had to bite my lip to keep from laughing too loudly. Kade was always dramatic, but hearing such earnestness from him now, with that wolfish loyalty shining in his eyes, made my chest

ache with warmth.

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Lana leaned back in her chair, eyes flicking between us. Only in the Capital could someone like me make a wolf like Kade admit that getting beaten was a pleasure. She could only shake her head silently, knowing full well that now Silas's presence made Kade's affections bittersweet.

"I often think," Kade continued, "if I could just go back to those days in the unit..." He filled another glass of wine, his amber eyes catching the light like molten gold. "I'd tell you, Freya, everything I never said back then..."

“Wait, Kade!” Lana’s voice snapped like a whip through the air. The sudden command startled me, and I almost forgot to sip my wine. Whatever he was about to confess, I hadn’t caught it entirely through the haze of drink.

“Nothing,” Silas said smoothly, removing the glass from my hand. He gave me a look, calm but commanding, like the Alpha he was. “Freya, you’ve had enough tonight. Let me take this from you.”

His eyes

flicked toward Kade, a silent challenge flashing between them. A tension rose, almost palpable, a predator-to-predator standoff. I could feel it in my bones—the electric charge in the air as two wolves tested one another. Silas’s hand squeezed mine, steadying me, grounding me against the rush of memories and the sharp sting of alcohol.

Kade’s

gaze didn’t waver, though. His wolf growled low, protective and unyielding, while Silas’s stance radiated the quiet authority of an Alpha used to commanding respect without raising a hand. For a moment, the two men were locked in silent warfare, their intent slicing through the room like a sharpened fang.

I leaned back slightly, letting out a breath I hadn’t realized I’d been holding. My hand still tingled from Silas’s touch. The wine was starting to warm my veins, loosening the tight coils of stress that had bound me since the events at the border and the revelation of Eric’s

disappearance.

It was strange, thinking back on everything. How I had chased shadows for five years, following clues and whispers, surviving the treacherous borderlands and hostile territory alone. How many nights I had lain awake, hearing the wind whistle through Runestone Grounds, imagining Eric somewhere in the cold wilderness. And now, here I was, surrounded by people who were as close to family as any pack could get outside of one’s own bloodline.

Lana’s laughter, low and amused, pulled me out of my reverie. “Freya, don’t get too sentimental. But yes, it’s good to see you alive, smiling, and a little tipsy.”

I chuckled, taking another sip of wine. “I suppose I can allow myself a moment of celebration.”

Silas’s grip on my hand tightened just slightly, a silent reassurance, and Kade’s glare softened- but only a fraction. Their presence reminded me of the delicate balance in our world: loyalty,

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pack hierarchy, and the thin line between trust and rivalry.

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I raised my glass again, feeling the warmth seep through me. “To finding Eric,” I said, voice strong despite the wine, “and to surviving the chaos along the way.”

“To Eric!” Kade echoed, lifting his own glass.

“To surviving,” Lana added, clinking her glass lightly against mine.

And Silas, holding my hand, raised his own silently, a subtle promise that no matter how dangerous the world got, he would not let me face it alone. The warmth of his touch lingered even as the alcohol clouded my mind, grounding me in the knowledge that I wasn’t alone in this hunt, this life, this pack.

Tonight, we celebrated victories small and large: the discovery of Eric’s trail, the unraveling of lies that had once bound Caelum and Aurora, and the unwavering bond among those who would fight, bleed, and survive together. The wolf in me growled in approval, a silent oath to honor loyalty, justice, and the pack that was mine—chosen by blood, by trust, and by the unyielding will to survive.

And as the night deepened, I let the warmth of the wine and the presence of my allies wash over me, knowing full well that the hunt was far from over—but for tonight, the pack was safe, and for that, I could allow myself a rare moment of peace.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person’s POV

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Kade’s amber eyes were fixed on Silas, and Lana frowned, stepping closer. “Kade, you’ve had enough already! Don’t drink too much—I don’t want to have to carry a drunk wolf out of here later.”

Kade’s lips pressed into a thin line. His gaze didn’t waver from Silas as his fingers tapped nervously against his glass.

Silas finally set his own glass down and reached for Freya. “Freya’s had enough for tonight. I’ll take her home.” His voice was calm, authoritative, like the Alpha of Ironclad Coalition he truly

was.

“Fine, you take her first,” Lana said quickly, stepping aside. She had no desire to see Kade’s

flare into chaos; he was stubborn when he drank, and unpredictable when drunk.

temper

Silas’s hand found Freya’s, steadying her as they moved toward the sleek waiting vehicle outside. Lana’s gaze followed them, frustration and amusement mingling in her sharp features. “Really, Kade? She’s with Silas now—you know that, right?”

Kade let out a bitter laugh, the sound rough around the edges. “I know,” he admitted. “I know all of it. I just... I can’t help it. I met Freya first. I should have spoken sooner, acted sooner. Maybe then...” His voice trailed off, swallowed by the warm haze of alcohol and regret.

“Freya only sees you as a brother, Kade,” Lana said flatly, stepping closer, her tone warning. “And if you try anything foolish—*if* you even try to interfere with Silas and Freya—I swear I won’t go easy on you.”

Kade’s head tilted lazily, a smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. “Go easy on me?” His voice dripped mockery. “You really think you have that power? Or are you planning to send my little uncle after me?”

Lana *froze* mid-step. “Don’t—don’t bring him up in front of me! I’ve got nothing to do with him anymore!”

Kade’s laugh was low, dark, and teasing. “Nothing to do with him? Lana, for the sake of your friendship with Freya, I could remind your uncle of a few things. He’s nostalgic, obsessed with what he loves. My mother says he used to cling to a single toy when he was a boy. Sleep with it, no matter how tattered *or* broken it became. When my grandmother tried to throw it away... he went after it himself, rummaging through the trash without making a sound.”

Lana blinked, incredulous. “He... searched through trash? That doesn’t sound like him at all.”

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Kade's smirk widened. "Of course he did. And he didn't find it at first. Got scolded, too, but he didn't give up. Told the adults that if he didn't find it, he'd come back to the dumpster every day until he did."

"That's... stubborn." Lana murmured, clearly impressed despite herself.

"Exactly," Kade said, leaning back, glass in hand. "Eventually, the adults had to help him find it. Even then, the wheels were broken, the paint chipped, but he took it apart. Piece by piece. He never let anyone else touch it. Why? Because it was his. He loved it. Destroyed it rather than letting it go to someone else."

Lana shivered, gooseflesh rising along her arms.

Kade's eyes glinted, almost wolfish, as they locked onto Lana. "And you? You're the only woman my little uncle ever truly acknowledged. What he loves... even if it's destroyed, no one else touches it."

Lana's lips twitched in a dismissive smirk. "You're joking. He didn't care that much about me. I had to chase him—he only agreed because I wouldn't let it go."

Kade shook his glass, letting the wine slosh gently. His wolfish expression softened ever so slightly, though the predatory edge remained. His uncle—Victor—was a cold, calculating wolf. No one could simply coax him. And yet, all of that resolve, all of that control, was mirrored in the loyalty and protective grip he now held over Lana.

Kade's smirk returned as he poured himself another drink. "By the way, don't forget. If I get drunk, someone's gotta make sure I make it home. You don't want me wandering the Capital streets alone."

Lana sighed, finally giving in. "Fine. Drink, Kade. But don't make me regret it." She remembered her own nights of drowning heartbreak in wine—some wounds were best numbed, if only temporarily.

Meanwhile, Caelum stumbled back toward his mansion, almost dazed. The villa was a sprawling fortress, a statement of wealth and power built over the years after he rose as Alpha of Silverfang Pack. Freya had left him with nothing after their Lunar Severance Phase—every personal belonging gone, all except for the cheap wedding bands. And even those weren't safe

in the end.

these

"Caelum," Giselle chirped, stepping into the room with her usual haughty poise, "you finally returned. Look at these—Mother went to the matchmaking agency today. She says women are far superior to Aurora!"

Eleanor, his mother, smiled smugly as she set a stack of glossy profiles in front of him. “You spent all that money building your company, Caelum. Don’t waste my investment now—you

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owe me this!”

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Caelum’s face darkened, eyes narrowing into slits. “Investment? Do you even realize that my company’s cash flow is on the brink of collapse? And you spent money... on this? Do you want to see me ruin myself completely?”

Giselle clutched the papers closer, slightly pale but defiant. “Brother, mother spent a fortune. Surely you can at least humor her?”

Caelum’s wolf growl reverberated low in his throat, a warning and a curse rolled into one. His mind churned with fury—not just at his mother, but at every injustice that had been piled upon him: Freya’s departure, Aurora’s manipulation, the chaos in his finances. The wolf within him stirred, claws unsheathed, craving vengeance.

Every shred of civility and human restraint was being tested tonight. And in the cold, sterile light of his mansion’s study, Caelum felt the full weight of his failures—both as an Alpha, and as a man who had underestimated the wolves around him.

He picked up the top sheet of the profiles and slammed it down on the mahogany table. The paper rattled like distant thunder. “I don’t want women. I don’t want introductions. I want control—over my company, over my life. Over everything that’s mine!”

Giselle and Eleanor flinched. Even they, used to Caelum’s temper and commanding presence, sensed the predatory storm building. In that moment, the Alpha of Silverfang Pack was not just a man; he was a wolf cornered, his pride and territory violated, and nothing—no matchmaking, no maternal interference—would satisfy the hunger for retribution simmering deep within him.

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