

## **A Warrior Luna's Awakening Chapter 26**

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Freya's POV

The next morning, I arrived at Silas Whitmor's estate, the ancient sigils of the Ironclad Coalition etched in obsidian stone and silver above the archway. I clutched the rare tome—M's Bestiary of Skyborne Avians—wrapped in deep burgundy leather, still warm from the hearth in my study where I had pored over it all night.

"Mr. Whitmor," I said once I was shown into the marble-clad receiving chamber, "I've finished reading the book. Thank you for letting me borrow it."

He looked up from his writing desk, expression unreadable. "I recall instructing my driver to tell you it was a gift."

I stiffened. "It's far too valuable. Our relationship hasn't reached the point where a gift like that would be appropriate."

Silas leaned back, folding his arms in a way that reminded me of a predator lounging just before the pounce. "If a gift can't bring joy to its recipient, then even a priceless one is nothing more than dead paper. If you don't want it—throw it out."

I stared at him. Throw it out?

Throw out a first edition of a book last auctioned at twelve million marks?

A book I'd loved since I first saw it referenced in Halston's archives?

Absolutely not.

My jaw tightened. "What is it that you really want, Silas?"

His gaze sharpened, as if sniffing out my discomfort. "Only to thank you."

For a heartbeat, I didn't understand—then it clicked.

"You mean at the Runestone Grounds?" I asked.

His brow arched faintly. "Did I?"

"You already repaid me," I reminded him. "Didn't you fund a lunar school in my mother's name?"

He smiled, slow and razor-edged. “And you think that’s worth the life you saved?”

The air between us stilled, thick with something I couldn’t name.

“Regardless,” he added, standing now, “if you truly insist on returning the book... I’ll take it back—on one condition.”

I narrowed my eyes. “What condition?”

“Come with me to the Runestone Market, There’s a rare book fair today. You love ancient texts, don’t you? Perhaps we’ll find something even more enticing than M’s Bestiary.”

Runestone Market. The underground labyrinth of rare finds and old magic. If I refused... I’d be handing him that priceless relic back only for it to be tossed away as meaningless,

And he knew that. He had read me too well.

...Alright,” I said after a pause. “I’ll go.”

of the

Two days later, I found myself trailing Silas Whitmor through the arched stone aisle

Runestone Market. It was nestled beneath the ruins of the Old Sky Monastery—now overrun by traders of lost texts, cursed pages, and relics older than any living wolf.

And just as he promised, it was glorious.

I’d already found two rare editions I hadn’t seen since my days under Professor Hawthorne’s mentorship at Halston. One even bore a blood seal from the Second Moon War.

We paused at a rooftop bistro when our arms grew heavy with tomes.

“I’m stepping out to the washroom,” I said.

He nodded, glancing out at the twilight horizon.

The upper-level lavatories were under repair, so I took the staircase down to the second floor.

As I approached the stalls, I caught a murmur—clipped and urgent—in French. A tongue I hadn’t used since I served with the Iron Fang Recon Unit during the coalition skirmishes in the Galen Wastes.

“Oui... tout est prêt. Une fois le temps écoulé, ça explosera. Ce bâtard du clan Whitmor mourra aujourd’hui.”

Everything is ready. Once the timer is up, it’ll blow. That Whitmor bastard will die today.

My blood ran cold.

Silas.

I burst from the stall, heart hammering in my throat, but the voice had gone. Only the tail end of a shadowed figure vanished through the exit.

shoved the door open and ran into the crowd.

Too many people. Too much scent. My wolf stirred under my skin, snarling to be unleashed—to chase, to hunt—but I held her back. I couldn’t afford to shift here. Not yet.

Think, Freya.

They said when the time is up, it’ll explode.

A timed detonation.

If Silas was the target, then the bomb would be close to him—somewhere in the vicinity of the rooftop where we’d just been.

There was no time to hesitate.

I reached for my comm crystal, hesitating only a second before tapping an old contact.

Someone I swore I’d never call again.

“Freya?” came a voice I hadn’t heard in months.

I breathed. “I need you.”

Then I told him everything—the overheard conversation, the danger to Silas, the packed marketplace above us.

“We don’t know if it’s credible,” he warned. “An evacuation could cause a panic. Injuries. Maybe even deaths.”

“I trust you to handle it without chaos. Please.”

There was a pause.

“Would you have ever contacted me again if this hadn’t happened?”

My throat tightened. “...I’m sorry.”

“There’s nothing to be sorry for. I told you once—if you ever gave me an order, I’d follow it. No questions asked.”

The comm went silent.

exhaled. Finally, finally letting my heartbeat slow.

But it wasn’t over.

Not yet.

Silas Whitmor might be a calculating wolf of old blood and power, but at this moment—he was prey.

And I wasn’t about to let him fall.