

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

chapter 36-40

Freya's POV

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Giselle's body trembled, her wolf scent turning sour with fear. Eleanor's eyes flashed with a matriarch's rage as she lunged at me, claws just beginning to edge from her nails.

I stepped aside without a thought, letting her momentum carry her straight into the heavy oak cabinet. The thud was followed by her howl of pain.

The door slammed open with a force that rattled the hinges. Caelum strode in with two hotel staffers behind him.

For the briefest moment, Giselle froze. She had expected this to be her victory. Now, the truth was written all over her face- she knew. She knew the things I'd warned her about had reached the banquet hall.

Eleanor scrambled upright, hair disheveled, and hurried to her son like a wolf seeking the safety of her Alpha. "Caelum, you're just in time. This-this faithless female was rutting behind your back! Giselle and I caught her red-handed. I said a few words, and she attacked me! If you don't sever the bond, I'll consider myself no longer your mother."

"Mother!" Caelum's voice cracked through the room like a whip. Even my wolf stilled at the sound. "Don't say another word. Everyone out there already saw what happened in here."

Eleanor blinked, thrown off balance. "Saw... what? No-no, this is a trick. She's playing you. Caelum, you must not believe her!"

But I could **see** it in his eyes. He wasn't believing me—he was believing what he'd seen with his own eyes. The mother and sister he thought he knew were nothing like the women who'd stood on that feed, fangs bared in spite.

His gaze slid to me. I stood a few paces away, deep-blue gown still unruffled despite the fight, the scent of adrenaline still rolling off me. The gown's cut bared my throat, but I knew my posture was all steel—Alpha steel, the kind that makes lesser wolves drop their gaze.

We were mated. We had shared a bed. But those few steps between us felt like a gulf I wasn't sure either of us could cross.

"Caelum, it's all her scheme," Giselle snapped, finding her voice again. "She lured us here to frame us! You can't believe her over me and Mother!"

"**Yes**," Eleanor pressed, "you're my son, my blood. She's an outsider. Have her taken and bound—she struck me! I'll call the enforcers and have her charged." She started forward again, but Caelum caught her by the arm and yanked her back.

"Enough! Both of you! he roared, his Alpha command thickening the air until even my lungs felt it. "How much more shame will you make me endure?"

For a moment, his gaze brushed mine—and I saw it there: shame, yes, but also the helplessness of a male who could not leash his own pack-blood.

And still, they wouldn't stop. Eleanor and Giselle kept flinging dirt in my direction, desperate to bury their own stench.

"Go ahead and call the enforcers," Lana Rook's voice rang from the doorway **as** she strode in. Her wolf bristled, and her glare pinned Eleanor like a dagger. "No need. I already have." She crossed to my **side** without hesitation. "

You alright?"

"I'm fine." My answer was steady, though my head still felt faintly clouded from the haze—spell they'd tried to fill the room with. I'd taken in a few breaths before realizing what they'd done, but my years in the Iron Fang Recon Unit had left me with a resistance to most toxins. The spell was irritating, not incapacitating.

"You—what?!" Giselle's voice cracked. She understood what a report to the enforcers meant: not just humiliation, but a binding record, proof of their attempt to frame the Alpha's mate. A stain that would never wash away in the Capital's **upper** packs:

"You can't just call them!" she snapped.

"You've already shown what you **are**," Lana said, voice cold as midwinter. "Why shouldn't I?"

"Let's just... **call it** a misunderstanding." Aurora's voice broke in as she stepped in behind Caelum, her posture as smooth as

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any social climber's. "This is a Silverfang family matter, not something that needs enforcers involved. Isn't that right, Caelum?"

The air shifted. All eyes turned to him.

His lips pressed thin, and I could almost see the decision weighing behind his eyes. His gaze found mine again. "Freya... perhaps this can-"

"Be treated as a misunderstanding?" I tilted my head, letting my voice cut sharper than any claw. "Is that what you want, Caelum Grafton? For me to nod and make this all vanish?"

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The mockery in my eyes must have struck deep, because Caelum's throat worked as though he'd swallowed stones. Whatever excuse he'd been about to utter lodged there, unsaid.

Lana's voice cut in like a whip crack. "Caelum Grafton, your dam and your litter-sister just tried to drag your bonded into a trap, and you want to call it a misunderstanding? If she didn't have the training she does, do you even grasp what would have happened to her?"

Color flared in his cheeks—Alpha or not, her words landed like claws.

The door swung open again, this time admitting the enforcers.

Fear rolled off Giselle in choking waves; her wolf was practically cowering under her skin. "I don't want to go to the station. I don't want to—Brother, help me! I can't go to prison!"

Eleanor's face finally lost its imperious cast, replaced by dawning fear. She clutched at Caelum's arm. "Son, don't let them take me and Giselle!"

He looked at me then, his expression taut. “Freya... my mother’s getting on in years, and Giselle’s still young. Maybe we

could...”

Lana snorted. “Young? Your sister’s well past her first shift. And your dam didn’t look fragile when she was trying to rake Freya’s face off.”

Caelum ignored her and kept his gaze on me. “This is a Silverfang matter. A family matter. What do you say?”

Family. The word hit like ice water down my spine. My heart sank lower with each beat.

What was I expecting? That after seeing with his own eyes what happened in that room, he’d stand beside me for once? That he’d demand justice for me?

Foolish. The only thing I’d been given tonight was yet another disappointment.

“You’ve never once treated me like family,” I said, voice flat. “So how does this count **as** a family matter?”

“**You’re** my mate. How could we not treat **you** as family?” he shot back.

“**Mate?**” A humorless laugh **escaped** me. “Caelum, if it were Aurora in my place tonight, would you still be saying that?”

He **froze**.

Aurora stepped forward, calm and polished **as ever**. “**If** it were me, I wouldn’t make things difficult for Caelum. Freya, you haven’t suffered any real harm—why be so relentless?”

I smiled, sharp and cold. “Then I hope if **this ever** happens to you, you’ll keep your word.”

Her wolf bristled. “You+”

“Enough,” one of the enforcers barked. “You **can all speak at** the station.”

The two males who’d been groaning on the carpet **were** hauled out Eleanor and Giselle were next.

The glint of silver cuffs must have pushed Giselle over the edge, because **she** thrashed harder, voice breaking. “I’m innocent -it wasn’t met **wasn’t** me!”

When Caelum didn’t lift a finger to stop them, she spun and seized Aurora’s sleeve. “Aurora, help me! **Mother** and **I** were doing this for you! And you knew about it-”

That hit like a thunderclap. Caelum stared at her, stunned. “Aurora... you-”

Aurora’s composure cracked. “I... what? How could this be about me? I knew nothing!”

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+8 Pearls

“You did! You said if the money didn’t go to Freya, it could go elsewhere. Otherwise, why would Mother and I act?” Giselle shouted.

The two of them turned on each other like rival she-wolves, slinging filth back and forth.

“Didn’t you say you wouldn’t put Caelum in a hard position?” Lana’s voice dripped venom. “Why not admit what you did now, and spare your lover the trouble?”

Aurora’s cheeks flamed; the words hit her like open-handed slaps.

“Caelum, believe me—it has nothing to do with me!” she pleaded.

“How can you just wash your hands of it?” Eleanor spat. “If it wasn’t to clear the way for you to mate with Caelum, we’d never have done this!”

Caelum’s temples throbbed visibly.

“Take them all,” the enforcer captain said, tired of the pack drama. Even Aurora found herself in their custody. Then his gaze swung to me.

“I’ll ride with a friend to the station to give my statement,” I told him.

He nodded. “We don’t have room in the cruiser anyway.”

Caelum went with them, but not before giving me a long, unreadable look.

When they were gone, Lana and I headed for the lift to get to the parking deck. Heat was creeping into my skin, a slow burn that made my pulse thrum.

“You’re flushed,” Lana said, brow furrowed. “Are you sure you’re fine?”

“I’m fine. Let’s **just** get this done.” I could ride the heat out.

“I’ll bring the car around to the front,” she said.

The lift chimed at the ground floor.

“Go on to the garage,” I told her. “It’s only a few steps to the main doors. I’ll walk myself.”

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Freya’s POV

“Well, fine,” Lana said, her voice a reluctant growl.

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I stepped out into the cool night air at the hotel’s front entrance, but instead of relief, a restless heat rippled through my veins -hotter, sharper than before. The haze-smoke’s toxin was working deeper than I’d anticipated, its claws sinking into my blood.

The smoke mixed with witch potion has limited my wolf self-healing ability.

That was when a familiar, ice-edged voice curled through the air behind me.

“Miss Thorne. What a coincidence, to meet again so soon.”

I turned. And there he was-Silas Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition. The moonlight caught the clean lines of his face, making them sharper, almost predatory.

Coincidence? Not quite. I’d come here tonight partly to return his jacket. But that jacket was still in Lana’s car, far from my reach.

“Waiting for someone?” His gaze lingered on me like a weight.

“Yes,” I said evenly. “A friend is bringing her car to take me to the station.” We both knew he’d heard of the incident tonight; the pack networks carried such news like wildfire.

“Then allow me to take you,” he said.

I hesitated-only for the briefest moment-and a silver-gray Maybach slid to a stop in front of us. Before I could respond, his hand closed around my wrist-cool, inexorable-and he guided me into the car.

“Wait-“I twisted toward the door, trying to push it open.

Locked. The car was already gliding away from the curb, Silas’s grip firm around my left wrist, holding me in **place** with **casual** strength.

Somewhere behind **us**, I caught a glimpse of Lana's car turning into the driveway. I could almost hear her thoughts from here: What in the moon's name **is**

he doing with her?

I glared **at Silas**. "**What** exactly are you doing?"

"Taking **you where you** need to go."

"I don't need your help. Tell your driver to stop—I'll go with my friend."

"And if I insist?" His lips curved, but there **was** no warmth in it. His long, lean fingers tightened slightly around my wrist.

The coolness of his touch was a shock against my fevered skin, sending an involuntary shiver up my arm. My pulse jumped.

"Let me go," I snapped..

"Are you sure you want that?" His thumb brushed, **feather**-light, over the inside of my wrist—a predator's deliberate test.

A jolt shot through me, quick and electric, racing from that single point of contact until it burned in my chest, my belly. The heat in me flared hotter, almost unbearable.

"You're not well," he murmured, **his** voice so close to my ear it stirred **the**

fine hairs along my nape. "You still intend to face the enforcers like this?"

My lips pressed together, my throat felt dry. My body wanted..... no. No, not that.

I forced the thought away. Cold. Focus. Hold the line. **The haze**-smoke **was** far more potent than I'd guessed. I needed **to get** it out of my system before I made a mistake I couldn't take back.

+8 Pearls

"If it's not too much trouble," I managed, my breath unsteady, "perhaps you could take me to a hospital instead." I kept my eyes away from him; right now, Silas Whitmor was too dangerous-dangerous like fresh blood to a starving wolf. Every part of me wanted to lean closer, taste him, claim-

Stop it.

"Hospital?" His mouth tipped in faint amusement. "I can offer you something far quicker than that."

I looked at him sharply. “What do you mean?”

“An antidote,” he said lightly. “Me.”

I choked. “You—”

The man didn’t even blink.

From the front seat, Wren, his secretary, and the driver both went rigid. The silence in the car thickened.

They had to be thinking what I was thinking: Silas Whitmor didn’t do this. He wasn’t the type to murmur soft offers to women—he was the Alpha who’d once told a Capital socialite to go ahead and jump off a rooftop if she thought her life wasn’t worth living without his affection. He’d even held her over the ledge when she faltered, watching her with that same detached calm until she’d fied in terror.

That man was now offering himself as my antidote?

The thought was like a lightning strike.

“You’re not suggesting...” My voice came out low, almost a growl. “...that you mean with your body?”

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Third Person’s POV

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“Exactly.” Silas had said, leaning slightly toward Freya, the faint chill of his presence brushing against her skin. “This body of mine is.... well, not bad. If Miss Thorne ever finds herself in need, I’m at your disposal.”

Freya blinked, still reeling. She had never heard a man speak of such things so... detached, so otherworldly. “No. I don’t need that,” she said firmly.

“Really?” His cool breath whispered across her face, fingers tracing a slow, deliberate path along her arm. The chill clashed with the lingering heat from the haze—smoke,

weaving together, teasing her senses, igniting a desire she struggled to suppress. With a sharp inhale, Freya's hand shot out, pressing firmly against the pulse at Silas's wrist. Her amber eyes locked onto his. fierce and unwavering. "I only need you to take me to the hospital."

Even as the haze coursed through him, Silas's body was alive with heat, every nerve sensitive—but her resolve held steady, crystal clear, refusing to bow even a fraction to the pull of desire. His gaze lingered on her face, heart hammering against his chest in a way that hadn't happened before, something stirring, shifting.

After a long, taut moment, he gave a slow, measured smile. "Fine. I'll take you to the hospital."

Meanwhile, Caelum Grafton never imagined he'd end up in the precinct under such circumstances. The two men had confessed quickly once inside, implicating themselves with transfer records on their phones—proof that Eleanor and Giselle had bribed them to carry out the scheme.

Eleanor's testimony **was** frantic, insisting she had done nothing wrong; she'd merely given them money, she claimed, and hadn't instructed them to commit anything illegal. Giselle's defense was to shift blame to Aurora, insisting she had only acted to help her friend. Aurora, as usual, denied any knowledge, though inside she seethed, knowing the two women had tried to drag her into their mess.

Caelum slumped into a chair in the precinct's waiting area, tension knotting in his chest. Tonight had been meant for business—expanding SilverTech Forgeworks, exploring new ventures—but now, even current projects were at risk, and the company's **stock** might take a hit.

"Where's Freya Thorne? Why hasn't she arrived?" he asked, voice tight.

"She **wasn't** feeling **well**. She went to the hospital **first**. Officers will accompany **her** to take her statement,"

one replied.

Concern coiled in him. He dialed Freya's **number** immediately. When a voice answered, it **wasn't hers, but** a man's, calm and cold.

"Caelum Grafton? Looking for **Freya** Thorne?"

The tone **was** familiar, unsettling.

"Silas Whitmor," he said, **unease** prickling in **his** veins.

"Freya? Why is her phone with you?" Caelum **pressed**, anxiety sharpening.

“She’s resting. Do you need me to relay a **message**

when she wakes?” Silas’s **voice was** steady, untouched by panic or chaos.

Caelum’s fingers clenched around the phone, the tightness pressing at his chest. He had always thought Silas Whitmor indifferent to Freya, yet now she **rested** under Silas’s protection. The implication struck deep—territorial, possessive, and undeniably alpha.

Ele barely remembered ending the call before Aurora emerged from the interrogation room.

“Caelum, this really isn’t my doing.” Aurora said, **stepping** forward, **eyes** clear and sharp. “I overheard Eleanor **and** Giselle speaking about separating you and Freya, but I **had** no idea they would go this far.”

Caelum said nothing, watching her, taking in the resolute set of her shoulders. Aurora’s expression hardened. “**You** don’t

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believe me? You think I’d stoop to such vile schemes to end your marriage? Then don’t come to me again—it will only leave me open to gossip.”

She turned to leave, but Caelum moved with the precision of a wolf striking, blocking her path.

“I’m sorry, Aurora. Today... so much has happened. My head’s a mess,” he said, his voice low.

Her amber eyes softened slightly, though the steel remained. “Caelum, understand this: I don’t manipulate or scheme. If I truly wanted you separated, I would say so openly—not involve others in covert plots.”

Caelum’s guilt deepened. Aurora, always decisive, fearless, a true daughter of the Bluemoon Pack—how could she ever be implicated in petty schemes? It had been Giselle, panicked and reckless, trying to lessen her own punishment by dragging Aurora into it.

“I shouldn’t have doubted you,” he admitted, voice heavy, his wolf instincts stirred by the sight of her integrity, the subtle alpha resonance in her presence.

Aurora’s expression softened. “It’s fine, as long as you truly believe me,” she said, her voice steady yet warm.

Caelum’s gaze met hers, intense and unwavering. “Of course I believe you. You saved my life—how could I ever not trust you?”

Hearing this, Aurora allowed herself the faintest of smiles. She lifted a hand, gently brushing back the strands of Caelum's hair that had fallen over his forehead. "Exactly. I saved your life... so of course you'd believe me. Caelum, all I need is for you to keep trusting me."

To trust in her innocence, and to trust that she had—without question—once saved his life.

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Silas POV

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I set Freya Thorne's phone on the bedside table, my eyes tracing her even in slumber. The sedatives had her deeply asleep. but even in this unconscious state, she wasn't entirely peaceful. Her pale skin glowed with a faint flush, her body radiating heat that seemed to fight against the medicine coursing through her veins. Occasionally, soft, broken murmurs escaped her lips.

It was the drug metabolizing through her system—normal, and nothing to worry about.

I glanced at Wren, who had been standing silently behind me. "Tell me, Wren... why would she refuse me? There's an easier way to ease her suffering, isn't there?" My voice echoed in the quiet of the VIP ward.

Wren stiffened but chose his words carefully. "Miss Thorne is still married. She may have reservations... out of respect for her commitments."

I hummed thoughtfully. Of course, by my standards, morality is a convenience, not a rule—but even I had to consider appearances sometimes.

And if she were single... would she accept then?" I asked, tilting my head, letting the question linger.

Wren hesitated, unsure how to answer. But I didn't wait for him. I leaned forward slightly, brushing a light hand over the sheen of sweat on Freya's forehead. My chest tightened at the thought of having her near. How much more mischief could this woman stir before I lost my restraint entirely?

In Wren's eyes, I knew the truth. To me, people fell into two categories: useful... or not. But now, it seemed, there was a third: desired. And Freya Thorne had just landed squarely in that category. Whether that was good for her, I wasn't sure.

When Freya awoke, her body **a** sticky sheen from sweat, fatigue pressing down on her, she startled at a voice from beside the bed.

“Awake, finally?” I murmured, leaning back in the chair near the sofa.

Her eyes widened, and she blinked rapidly, taking in my presence. “Why... why are you here?”

“I brought **you** to the hospital. You **were** asleep, so naturally, I stayed,” I said calmly, as if nothing unusual had happened.

She frowned, recalling the events in **the car**

, the treatment, and the sedatives. “How long have I been **asleep?**”

“Eighteen hours,” I replied simply.

She **froze**. “What?” **Her gaze** flicked to me, suspicion sharpening.

“**I** stayed with you the whole time. Eighteen hours. I think a simple thank-you is in order,” I added, letting a faint **edge** of amusement **trace** my words,

Freya was silent for a beat. Our relationship was **far** from ordinary; barely even acquaintances, and yet here she was, and I had remained. No wonder the rumors **called** me unpredictable, **a** wolf whose actions rarely followed the rules anyone **else expected**

.

I raised an eyebrow, waiting.

“...Thank you,” **she** finally muttered, **her** voice **small**, tinged with embarrassment.

After a thorough check, the doctors confirmed she was fine. **She** could be discharged. Her phone, drained of power, required a temporary charger from the hospital. Once it powered up, the screen lit with over a hundred **missed** calls and messages- from Lana, the police, even Caelum Grafton.

Before she could navigate them, her phone rang again. Freya answered. “Finally! I was worried sick! Silas... he didn’t let **me** into the hospital to see you. He didn’t-”

“Nothing,” she reassured, her voice steady. “He just made sure I got treatment. I inhaled some smoke at the **hotel**, that’s all.

I’m fine now,”

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Lana breathed out in relief.

“I’m about to leave the hospital now,” Freya continued.

“I’ll wait at the entrance. You’ll see me the moment you step out,” Lana replied.

“Okay,” Freya said, ending the call. Then she turned toward me. “By the way, about the clothes you lent me from the mall... I got them dry-cleaned. I had planned to return them at the banquet yesterday, but that didn’t work out. Should I just have them shipped to Whitmor Manor?”

I tilted my head, a faint smile playing on my lips. Watching her carefully, I noted how she still carried herself with that stubborn spark even after everything. It made the idea of sending her clothes back seem secondary—almost trivial.

Somewhere deep in me, a wolf stirred. Protective. Territorial. Intrigued. Freya Thorne might not realize it yet, but she had stepped into my den—and into my attention. And I had no intention of letting her slip away easily.

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