

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

chapter 61-70

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya's POV

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+8 Pearls

"It was what my parents left me," I whispered, my voice barely steady. My eyes lingered on the money that had once meant survival, but to me it carried only grief and the scent of loss.

He didn't notice. Caelum's joy, his ambitions, had blinded him then. He hadn't seen the sorrow in my gaze.

Step by step, he came closer, his voice rough like a wolf's growl caught in his throat. "Why didn't you tell me? That the money... came from your parents' death benefit?"

His words slammed into me like claws to the chest. I could feel his guilt wrapping around him, heavy as iron.

"Because," I said quietly, "I didn't want you to think of it as a burden. I didn't want that weight on you."

When I handed him that money, I had also handed him my hopes for our bond—our future. I had believed we would walk side by side until our final days. But reality had torn us apart, left our vows in ruins.

"Brother, don't believe her!" Giselle's shrill voice cut through the air, full of spite. "She just wants the money—she'll spin any lie she can!"

"Enough!" Caelum's roar silenced her. His eyes burned with regret, anguish, and a torment I could almost taste in the air.

If he had known back then that SilverTech Forgeworks was built on my parents' sacrifice, perhaps he would have treated me differently. Perhaps he would have stood beside me when I went to claim their ashes. Perhaps he would not, on the eve of our Lunar Severance Phase, still have dared to suggest replacing the debt with worthless shares.

That grief clawed at him now—I could see it in every taut line of his body.

“I’ll

get the money to you tomorrow,” he rasped, bitterness lacing his voice.

Tomorrow—the day of our final severance, when the bond would be dissolved under law.

There was no way he could replace the money with equity now. He knew, as I did, that it had always been mine. That he owed

1. me.

“

Good,” I said coldly. “Then I’ll wait for tomorrow.”

If he dared to withhold it, then I’d drag him through every court in The Capital until he bled.

His **gaze** locked on me, and for a heartbeat, I saw the echo of what had been—how once I had looked at him with warmth, **steadfast** and **loyal**, the way **a** mate would stand through every storm. But that fire had long since died.

All that was left in me was ice.

And Caelum realized it. The loss in his **eyes was** raw, the kind **of** emptiness **an** Alpha **feels** when his mate slips forever beyond his reach.

The press conference had been a spectacle, little more than **a** farce.

After it ended, I told Kade and Lana to leave ahead of me. I stayed behind to sit with Aldred, the old commander who had been like a second father after my pack was shattered.

“Tomorrow’s your severance. Should I come with you to the courthouse?” Kade asked, his dark eyes restless.

No,” I said firmly. “**If** Caelum dares drag this out, then so be it. I’ll take him to court, and when I do, I’ll demand far more than one and a half million.”

Lana cursed under her breath about the Graftons, her fury sharp enough to cut.

When they were gone, I turned to Aldred. "Uncle Aldred, forgive me. Today must have been unpleasant to witness."

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+8 Pearls

His eyes softened with something like grief. "Child, if I had known you carried so much on your own... I should have stepped forward long ago. Never forget—you always have me at your back."

My throat tightened, and I could only manage a thick, "Mm."

"When will you take your parents' ashes home?" he asked gently.

"Tomorrow. After the papers are signed, I'll head straight for the airport."

He nodded, resolute. "Then I'll see them off with you. Your father and mother deserve that honor."

A cough sounded behind him. I lifted my gaze and saw Silas Whitmor, striding forward. His presence carried the weight of steel and blood, and even the shadows seemed to bend.

Aldred cleared his throat. "There is something I must discuss with you, Freya."

My brow furrowed. "What is it?"

The old commander seemed almost sheepish. "The Whitmore enterprises and the military maintain close cooperation. But with the recent death of the Whitmore patriarch, succession has been... unstable."

Silas has already faced multiple assassination attempts in a matter of weeks. His safety has become a matter of grave concern. If something happens to him, we don't know what hand will seize control afterward. Stability is paramount."

I understood immediately. For the sake of security and alliance, they couldn't allow the Ironclad Alpha to fall.

"But here is the matter," Aldred continued. "Silas requested specifically that you be assigned as his guardian."

"What?" My shock slipped out before I could stop it.

Silas inclined his head, his voice carrying quiet command. "I've seen what you're capable of, Freya Thorne. You've saved Aldred more than once. I trust you more than anyone else to guard my life."

I almost laughed at the irony. “If protection is what you seek, there are warriors in the Iron Fang Recon Unit whose skill far exceeds mine. You’d be better served by them.”

His eyes locked on mine, unflinching, wolf to wolf. “Perhaps. But trust cannot be replaced. And the only one I trust-” his lips curved into something that **was** not quite a smile, “-is you.”

Send Gifts

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+8 Pearls

Third Person’s POV

Freya’s voice was steady, though her eyes carried the weight of grief. “Tomorrow I’ll be traveling to Ashbourne to lay my parents to rest. After that, I’ll need time to handle their estate matters. I fear I won’t have the time to serve as your bodyguard.”

Silas’ lips curved faintly, the kind of smile that never reached his eyes. “What a coincidence. I. 100, am headed for Ashbourne. You could tend to your parents’ affairs while also guarding me. I have no need for your presence every hour of the day, Freya. Only when you’re free—and only when I need your protection.”

Freya frowned. The Ironclad Alpha was not short of warriors. Why insist on her? Was it merely interest in her, or something deeper?

Aldred drew Freya aside, his voice low and weighted with concern. “You’ve already left the Iron Fang Recon Unit. I never intended to drag you into this mire. But some within the ranks insisted I at least consult you. You are free to refuse. If you do I’ll take responsibility and find another way.”

Freya could feel the old commander’s sincerity, his worry for her clear. Yet if she refused, the burden would fall heavier on his shoulders.

Her gaze shifted back toward Silas.

“I require only three months,” Silas said calmly. “Three months, and I will secure my position as head of the Whitmore family. In that same span. I’ll uncover the one orchestrating these assassination attempts.”

“And if you fail?” Freya asked, meeting his eyes.

“Then I’ll submit to whoever the military assigns in your place,” he replied evenly. “At the end of three months, you may walk away or stay, if you choose. The decision will be yours.”

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At last. Freya gave her answer. Three months was not long. And more than that, she would not let Aldred shoulder the suraim alone.

Before she left, Aldred placed a heavy hand on her shoulder, his voice carrying the weight of command and paternal care... “Listen to me, child. You’ve left the Recon Unit. You’re no longer bound by its oaths. No matter what happens, your first duty now is to survive. Do you hear me? If the danger becomes extreme, your life comes first. Always.”

Freya saw the deep lines of worry on his face, and her heart tightened. “Don’t worry. I know my limits.”

But Aldred only sighed. He knew well the blood in her veins. The daughter of Arthur Thorne and Myra could not shed the instinct carved into her bones: the soldier’s creed to see the mission through, no matter the cost.

“Freya,” he said softly, his voice low and rough, “promise me you’ll live. That is not only my wish—it is your parents’ wish as

well

Her eyes stung, numbing at the edges, but she nodded faintly.

When Aldred left, Salas remained. His gaze lingered on her, cool and assessing. “Tomorrow you’ll be in Ashbourne.”

“Yes,” she said

“Shall I drive you home tootingin?” Silas asked.

She shook her head “No need. I brought my own

He accepted this with another of his subtle

Very well. In any case, we’ll be seeing each other again soon.”

Freya pressed her lips together. Three months. That was all it would take. She could endure that.

At that same time. Caelum Grafton shed himself away in his villa

The Alpha of the Silverfang Pack entered his odme cam cumber and anat i baren. The air felt cold, stripped of scent, of

+8 Pearls

presence. The woman who had filled the room with life had erased every trace of herself. Her scent lingered faintly, a phantom on the sheets and wood, but all her belongings were gone.

It was as though Freya had already torn herself free of his world.

From beyond the door came the thudding of fists, his mother Eleanor's voice mingled with Giselle's. Yet Caelum ignored them. His eyes scoured the room, hunting desperately for something—anything—that might remain of her.

When he pulled open the drawer of the bedside table, he froze.

There, resting in silence, lay two simple rings.

The cheap metal bands they had bought at a night market before their union. They had cost only a handful of bills. He had once promised her, "When I've made my fortune, I'll buy you a diamond ring worthy of you."

But she had smiled at him then, slipping the plain band onto her finger without a single complaint. She had not cared for gold or stone—only for the bond.

Now, holding the rings in his hand, Caelum felt that promise like a knife. He had become wealthy beyond measure, the head of SilverTech Forgeworks, Alpha of his pack. He could have given her a jewel that shamed the stars. Yet when the time had come to dissolve their bond, he had not even given her that.

The weight of guilt gnawed into him.

He searched again, but found nothing more. No clothes, no trinkets, no letters. Just the rings. Just the echo of what they had shared.

And only then did it strike him—they had never even taken a wedding portrait. At first, he had thought to wait, to save money, to capture it later. But later had never come. It had slipped away, deemed unnecessary, forgotten amidst ambition.

The pounding at the door grew louder, Giselle's shrill cries cutting through.

At **last**, Caelum pulled the door open..

His **sister** stared at him, wide-eyed. "Brother, are you all right?"

Caelum's **fist** clenched tightly around the two wedding bands, his face shadowed with bitterness.

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Eleanor's voice was hoarse with fury, though every word made the bruises on her cheeks throb with pain.

+8 Pearls

"All of this—every wound, every shame—it's that wretched Freya Thorne's fault. I said from the start, Caelum, you should never have married a woman like her!"

Her words dripped with venom, but Caelum could no longer bear them. His wolf surged within, restless and enraged.

Enough!" he growled, his voice low and edged with Alpha authority. "Do not speak ill of her again. In three years of marriage, she has never wronged me. If anything—" his throat tightened, the guilt scorching—"it's I who wronged her. Without Freya, I would not have the life I have now."

"Brother, you can't mean that!" Giselle, his younger sister, bristled. "What, just because of that 1.53 million she gave you? She only contributed a bit of money to your business. The success of SilverTech Forgeworks is yours alone, not hers!"

Caelum fell silent. Once, he would have agreed. Once, he would have dismissed Freya's sacrifice as trivial compared to his own sweat and ambition. But now... now the truth gnawed at him.

"We are not yet divorced," he said, his voice rough but resolute. "I am still her husband. If I do not stand at her side, then what kind of man am I?"

Giselle froze, staring at him as if she no longer recognized her brother. "Caelum... what's wrong with you? You've never defended her before. Never!"

Her words struck him harder than claws. He staggered inwardly at the realization. Since the day he had taken Freya as his mate, had he ever stood at her side when others tore into her? No. Time and again, he had chosen the pack's whispers, his family's scorn, his own pride..... over her.

The weight of his wolf's guilt was suffocating. He clenched his fists, then turned to his family. "How much money do you still have? Give me whatever you can."

Giselle's eyes narrowed. "You can't be serious. You're not actually planning to give Freya that 1.53 million, are you?"

“Not give.” Caelum corrected, his tone sharp. “Return. It was hers to begin with.”

-I—I don’t have that kind of money,” Giselle muttered, her eyes flickering away.

Eleanor’s lips pressed into a thin, bitter line. “You asked me for funds when the company was struggling. I gave you what I had Of course I don’t have any left now.”

But both were lying, and Caelum could scent it. Their words reeked of semess. A hollow disappointment spread through

him, colder than steel! He turned away.

“Fine. I’ll find another way.”

He left the Whitmor estate without another word, his wolf’s claws **raking** at his chest, and sought out Aurora.

Aurora looked startled when he appeared.

“Aurora.... can I borrow money from you?” **His** voice was unsteady, roughened with humiliation. “SilverTech’s accounts are tied up. I don’t **have** access to liquid funds right now. **I** need 1.53 million.”

Aurora’s brows furrowed, her wolf watching him with wary calculation. “Caelum, I told you before. I can lend you ten thousand, maybe. No more. I only just became co-pilot. My salary **isn’t** much.”

Caelum’s jaw **flexed**. Desperation stung his pride. “Then... the jewelry I **gave** you. Could you pawn one or two pieces? **Just** until I can pay you back. When SilverTech stabilizes, I’ll redeem them for you. I swear it.”

Aurora blinked. “Jewelry?”

“Yes” His voice cracked with urgency. “The necklaces, the bracelets. If you sell or **pawn** them, **we** could raise enough. Later, I’ll buy them back. Better ones, even.”

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+8 Pearls

Aurora hesitated. Her heart sneered in silence—why should she pawn off her gifts for the sake of another woman? But her mind was sharper, calculating. 1.53 million could sever Freya’s tie to Caelum forever. Then, finally, Aurora could take her place as the Alpha’s chosen mate, the true Luna of Silverfang.

So she smiled sweetly. “Of course. Wait here.”

She returned moments later with a velvet tray laden with glittering jewels. Gold, diamonds, emeralds, sapphires—every token Caelum had ever placed into her hands, every offering he had given her that he had never once thought to give his own wife.

The sight seared Caelum's chest. His hand slipped into his pocket, brushing against the small, cheap bands he had once bought at a night market. Two hundred yuan rings, the promise of better ones in the future. He had told Freya, Someday, I'll give you a diamond worthy of you.

Someday had never come.

Now, looking at Aurora's tray, he realized why. He had lavished jewels upon Aurora... while Freya had been given nothing but empty promises and loneliness.

He had even betrayed Freya's only request—that he retrieve her late mother's ruby necklace at an auction. Instead, blinded by Aurora's beauty, he had gifted it to her. Only Aurora's disdainful rejection had spared it from being lost among the trinkets on this tray.

The shame was unbearable.

"Caelum?" Aurora's voice brushed against his ear, lilting, almost coaxing.

He snapped back, his eyes fastening onto a ruby ring. He picked it up, the gem burning against his palm like molten iron. "This one. Pawn this first. When the company recovers, I'll redeem it... and buy you something even better."

The ring's heat scalded him, searing deeper than flesh. His wolf recoiled. This was not Freya's. It should have been hers.

Aurora's lips curved. "Of course. You know I've never cared for jewels anyway."

He forced a tight smile, his chest aching. "Yes. You're the kind of woman who soars through the skies. These trinkets are nothing to you."

But **as** he spoke, his wolf howled low inside him, torn by guilt and betrayal. Freya had been his mate, his true Luna. The one who had stood with him through ruin and hunger. The one who had bled for his future.

And yet... he had given her nothing.

Nothing **at** all.

Send Gifts

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Caelum's mind betrayed him with images he had not called for.

Not of Aurora, the Bluemoon Beta's daughter, whose delicate smile now sat across from him.

+8 Pearls

But of another—Freya—seated in the cockpit of a roaring aircraft, steel eyes fixed on the horizon as the machine clawed toward the clouds. The memory of her daring maneuvers, the impossible aerial rolls, the sharp pull of wings against the sky—it branded itself deeper into his mind than any of Aurora's practiced gentleness ever could.

Aurora spoke, her voice steady, pragmatic.

“As for SilverTech Forgeworks, don't let the burden weigh too heavy. My mother's family is strong in the southern isles. They've begun developing the outer sea chains. They'll need a technology house with aerial expertise—particularly in drone warfare. That's where your company could break through. I'll help you.”

Her words lit a fire in Caelum's chest. In the Capital, the skies swarmed with rival firms—SkyVex Armaments and others—competition tearing at each other's throats. But in the provinces, where development was only beginning, the field was far

clearer.

It could be their opening.

“Thank you, Aurora,” he said, his gratitude genuine. “Not only did you **save** me once, but you've never stopped helping me

since.”

Aurora's lips curved in a soft smile. “Between us, why should we keep count? I only want to see you rise.”

But beneath her composed grace, ambition blazed. She wanted her branch of the Bluemoon Pack—the second house long dismissed—to stand higher than the first. She wanted every wolf who once sneered at her bloodline to bow their heads. And she would do it through Caelum, through his success.

Only then would she claim what had been denied her.

The next night, the Moonstone Ceremony.

Freya and Caelum waited in silence among the other wolves gathered on the cliffside plateau. The great Moonstone stood at the **center**, glowing faintly with the silver blessing of Luna. It was here that mates declared their bond... or severed it.

Freya's hands **were** steady as she stepped forward, voice carrying through the chill night air.

"Caelum Grafton, Alpha of Silverfang—under Luna's witness, I release you. I **reject** our bond."

Her words **cut**

sharper **than** any blade.

Caelum's **jaw** tightened. For a moment he wanted *to resist*, to fight the pull **of** finality. But then his shoulders sank with the **weight** of inevitability. **He** bowed his **head**.

"...I accept."

The Moonstone flared briefly, then dimmed. Their bond **was** broken.

Freya did not falter. She stood straighter, lighter than she had in **years**. From this moment **on**, she was no longer the **wife** bound to the Alpha **of** Silverfang—she was only Freya Thorne,

Caelum's voice **halted** her as **she** turned to **leave**.

"Wait"

She stopped, cold **eyes**

meeting his.

"Lady Thorne," **he** said, the formal address cutting him even as it left his **lips**, "I never once paid respects to your parents. **I** know it is late but may I come, and honor them **now**?"

Freya laughed—a bitter, incredulous sound. How absurd. When they had been bound, he had promised again and again to

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+8 Pearls

stand at her side before her parents' graves. Each time he had broken that promise, leaving her alone in her mourning.

And now—after rejection—he asked to go?

“My parents,” she said, voice sharp as ice, “do not need your pretense of honor.”

She did not wait for his reply. She walked past him and out into the night.

Outside the ritual grounds, a sleek black car waited. Lana leaned against the door, her expression hard but her eyes softening as she saw her friend emerge free.

Freya slid into the passenger seat, her hands curling around the urn on the seat beside her. The urn was draped with the crimson-stitched flag of honor.

“It’s done?” Lana asked quietly.

Freya nodded, a small smile touching her lips. “Done. From tonight on, I have nothing to do with Caelum Grafton.” She held up the small shard of broken bondstone that now lay in her palm—the mark of rejection.

Lana exhaled, relief and fury mingling. “Good. Three years wasted on a male who never truly claimed you. Thank the Moon there was no pup, or he’d still have a chain around your heart.”

Freya’s thumb brushed the urn’s cool surface, eyes softening. “He returned the sum—1.53 million. But to me, it isn’t coin. It’s the last gift my parents left me.”

“At least he did that much,” Lana muttered, still scornful. “When you return from Ironfang lands, I’ll take you to the temple, cleanse away this curse. Being tied to him was misfortune enough for ten lifetimes.”

Freya chuckled faintly, her gaze steady now. “Let’s go. To the airport.”

Tonight she would carry her parents back to their homeland—back to the soil of the Iron Fang Recon Unit where they had once fought and bled, to rest in the honored stones of the warriors’ cemetery.

It was their wish. And she would **see** it fulfilled.

Send Gifts

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Riley’s POV

“I’ll head in myself,” I told Lana quietly as we pulled up to the terminal. “You don’t need to see me off.”

+8 Pearls

She shook her head, stubborn as always. “You’ve still got time before the gates open. I’ll stay until you walk through. Don’t tell me you’d deny me the chance to send your parents on their last journey.”

Her words softened me. I lowered my gaze to the urn in my lap, draped in crimson cloth marked with the sigil of honor. Father. Mother. Soon, I would bring them home. Soon, they would rest in the soil of where warriors belonged.

We stepped into the waiting hall. My chest was heavy but steady.

Then a voice cut through the air.

“Freya? Why are you here?”

I looked up sharply. Aurora stood before me, clad in her crisp co-pilot uniform, the Bluemoon crest gleaming at her collar.

Of all wolves, I hadn’t expected to see her here.

“Of course she’s here to fly,” Lana snapped before I could speak. “Or do passengers need your permission to sit in the hall

now?

Aurora’s expression faltered for an instant before it hardened again. “I heard you stood before the Moonstone with Caelum today. Don’t tell me you lost your nerve, Freya. Did you change your mind about rejecting him?”

I rose, my voice colder than the steel beneath my feet. “Caelum Grafton and I are finished. From this night forward, what the two of you do is no concern of mine.”

Her breath left her in a visible sigh, relief flashing in her eyes. That relief soured quickly into something darker when she saw my **face**—unbothered, resolute, unbroken. Envy curled around her scent like smoke.

And then she played her hand.

“You’ve received the 1.53 million already, haven’t you?” Her lips curved. “That was my ring I pawned so Caelum could give it **to** you. Perhaps you owe me thanks.”

Lana bristled, fury radiating off her like a storm. “Thanks? For what—playing the leech these last **two** years? How much have you bled from him already, little mistress?”

Aurora's **eyes** flashed. Watch your tongue! I'm no mistress. Accuse me again without proof, and I'll have your name dragged before the Elders for defamation!"

I let a bitter smile curl my lips. "Proof?" My voice rang through the **hall**. "I showed the proof to every wolf in the Capital **yesterday**. Do I need to remind you? While I was still bound to him, Caelum Grafton showered you with jewels worth over fifty million. All behind my back. By law, half of it is mine."

Aurora froze, color draining from her cheeks.

"So no, Aurora," I continued softly, with a blade's edge beneath every word, "I don't owe you gratitude. You should be grateful I've yet to demand my half. But you've reminded me—perhaps I will. Perhaps I'll drag those baubles from your neck one by one, and watch you return them under oath."

Her scent soured into sharp panic. Around her, her flight crew had begun whispering, voices low but cutting. They'd all believed she had landed a powerful mate, envied **her** for catching the Alpha of Silverfang. And now they saw her truth—that she had been nothing more than a thief in another's bond.

Aurora's skin flushed red, and her **eyes** burned with something more dangerous than shame. They slid to the urn cradled in my arms.

"**What** are you carrying?" she demanded suddenly, her tone sharp with authority. "As a sworn pilot of the Airborne Wing, I have the right to demand inspection. For all I know, you're carrying contraband."

Lana's fury flared again. "You dare! That's her parents' ashes you're mocking!"

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Aurora's chin lifted, her voice laced with command. "I'm safeguarding every soul on this flight. If she carries nothing forbidden, she has nothing to fear. Hand it over, Freya. Let it be inspected."

My grip tightened around the urn until my knuckles blanched. My wolf rose in my chest, lips curling at the insult. "This urn holds Arthur and Myra Thorne—warriors of the Iron Fang Recon Unit. Their ashes have been cleared and sealed by the authorities of the Capital. No one will disturb them."

Aurora laughed, the sound brittle. "Your word alone? For all I know, that powder is no different from illicit dust. You say it's cleared, but I've seen no record. As co-pilot of this flight, I demand it."

Her hand lifted her radio, summoning the airport security pack. My heart thudded, my wolf snarling at the thought of strangers laying hands on what was left of my parents.

Steel-toed boots echoed against the hall floor as the guards approached. Aurora's voice was quick, venomous.

"She carries a suspicious item. I call for it to be seized and examined."

The guards turned to me. "Lady

horne, hand the urn to us for inspection. If it is as you claim, it will be returned,"

I stood tall, the weight of my lineage burning through my veins. "No," I said coldly. "It has already passed the channels of our law. These are the ashes of honored dead. You will not touch them."

Send Gifts

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Riley's POV

+8 Pearls

"The co-pilot has ordered inspection," one of the guards barked. "We only assist. If you refuse, we'll be forced to seize it by strength."

The air thickened, bristling like hackles raised before a fight.

Then a voice I hadn't expected cut through the tension.

"Freya... perhaps you should let them check it."

My head snapped toward the sound. My heart stuttered.

Caelum Grafton.

The Alpha of Silverfang. My former mate. My betrayer.

Why was he here?

Aurora stepped quickly to his side, her eyes lighting with false warmth. "Caelum, what are you doing here?"

His lips pressed thin, and he didn't meet her gaze. He wouldn't admit the truth—how he'd shadowed my car, seen me carry my parents' ashes, guessed I was bringing Arthur and Myra Thorne home to their resting place. He wouldn't admit he'd followed not for her, but for me.

“Don’t tell me you came because you knew it was my flight today?” Aurora teased, voice honeyed poison.

“...Yes.” He gave a stiff nod, then turned toward me. “Aurora’s only concerned for safety. It’s just a check, Freya.”

“**Check?**” My voice lashed out like a whip, sharp enough to cut flesh. “Caelum, are you saying even in death my parents will know no peace?”

“That’s not what I meant. I just thought—if there’s nothing wrong-

“**I’ve** already filed through the proper channels!” I cut him off, fury igniting in my chest. “If Aurora failed to receive the notice, that’s her negligence. And yet you’d demand I hand over my parents’ remains **to** cover her incompetence? Tell me, Caelum—don’t you find that laughable?”

His throat bobbed, but he had no answer. He couldn’t even meet my eyes.

Aurora snarled, snapping **at** the guards. “What are you waiting for? Seize the box! If it’s a bomb, who bears responsibility then?”

Her words struck **sparks** of fear through the guards. They moved, circling me like wolves closing in.

Lana tried to push through to my side, but they blocked **her path** with broad shoulders and armored arms.

I clutched the urn tighter to my chest. The military had offered escorts. I’d refused. No, it had to be me. I alone would carry Arthur and Myra back to the Ashbourne’s soil, back to the sacred ground where warriors lay.

And now, here in the belly of an airport, they dared dishonor them.

“Who dares touch this urn?” My voice thundered, sharpened by the battlefield that had forged me.

For a heartbeat, the guards froze. My killing intent slammed into them like a wave of ice. I saw it in their **eyes**—the primal shudder of prey meeting predator. None dared step closer.

Aurora barked again, shrill. “Do it! Are you cowards?!”

Their fear clashed with their orders. At last, steel scraped as they pushed forward.

My wolf surged. I lashed out.

One boot slammed into a chestplate—he flew back.

A second guard fell beneath my heel.

A third went sprawling with a cry.

+8 Pearls

They struck me, batons and fists, but I did not fall. The ashes in my arms were heavier than any weapon, more sacred than

shield. Blood warmed my skin, but my spirit only grew sharper.

any

I was wrath. I was fury. I was a daughter defending her fallen.

Aurora's voice shrieked across the chaos. "Pathetic! So many of you against one woman and still you can't take her down? Get the\urn!"

"Those are the ashes of Ashbourne dead!" Lana cried out desperately. "Aurora, are you even wolf anymore?"

Aurora sneered. "Lies. As if anyone believes that tale."

My gaze locked on her, my vision rimmed in red. My wolf snarled behind my eyes, and I strode forward, cutting through the guards like a storm.

No one dared block me now.

Aurora's face went pale as I bore down on her, the urn still clasped against my chest. She stumbled back, shrieking at the guards. "Stop her! Don't let her near me!"

But none moved. None would risk laying hands on what might truly be warrior's ashes.

I reached her, drove my boot into her chest. She crashed to the ground, the breath torn from her lungs. My foot pinned her to the tiles, pressing down, the crack of ribs threatening in the air.

Her face twisted, a mask of rage and fear. "Freya, this is an airport—you dare attack me here?"

"You dared first," I growled, voice low as thunder. "Why should I not?"

Caelum's voice broke in, frantic. "Freya—Aurora was only thinking of safety, how could you—"

My kick sent him flying before he finished, his body slamming into the steel chairs with a sickening thud.

He looked up at me, disbelief shattering across his face. He had never seen me like this. Never believed I'd strike him down.

"You have no right to speak to me of this," I hissed, eyes colder than winter's edge.

Then I looked down at Aurora, still writhing beneath my boot. "Arthur Thorne. Myra Brown. They gave their lives for this land. And you dare—"my voice dropped to a deadly whisper, "—to soil their memory."

She spar, though her **voice** trembled. "You... you think you can **keep** me from this flight? I'll see to it you never board—"

"And you think I won't break you here and now?" I snarled, my heel grinding down, ready to snap bone and end her arrogance in one strike

The hall shook with sudden rhythm—boots in formation. Soldiers. The echo of a pack trained for war.

"HALT!"

The **voice** was deep, commanding, carrying the weight of command that could silence wolves mid-howl.

Every head in the hall turned.

squad of soldiers stormed into view, their steps a thunder roll, their scent thick with discipline and authority. **At** their head, a voice like iron roared again—

"What is the meaning of this?"

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya's POV

The moment I turned my head, a flash of deep green uniforms hit my eyes.

My heart clenched.

Aldred had come.

+8 Pearls

I froze, staring at the familiar figure standing not far away. Behind him followed the old pack medic, the one who had once served beside my parents, and with them came others—wolves who had been my father Arthur Thorne’s and my mother Myra Brown’s comrades-in-arms. Two full rows of warriors marched in their wake, their formation sharp, every step echoing the discipline of the Iron Fang Recon Unit.

The air shifted instantly. The terminal went silent, every mortal and wolf alike struck still by the sight of so many soldiers in ceremonial greens.

My throat burned. My eyes stung hot.

I hadn’t shed a single tear when Aurora’s cronies shoved me, or even when the crack of the shock baton rattled against my ribs. I had clenched my jaw, held my wolf’s rage inside a cage.

But now, seeing Aidred here—seeing the pack’s warriors come to escort my parents home for their final run beneath the moon—I nearly broke.

This... this was for them.

The airport guards, who had moments ago dared to brandish batons against me, lowered their weapons at once. Their faces blanched. They no longer dared move.

My gaze swept the rows of soldiers, and for a breath, I felt the ghost of my own Iron Fang days—the oath I once swore, the blood I once spilled for the pack and nation. I had vowed never to dishonor that service. And even though fury thundered inside me, I forced myself to unclench my boot from Aurora’s ribs.

I could have crushed her further. Broken bones, torn muscle—her howl of pain would have satisfied some small part of me. But that kind of vengeance would only drag me into dishonor. Wolves like her weren’t worth the stain.

Aurora stumbled up to her feet, eyes filled with venom. “Freya Thorne, I’ll see you punished for this!”

Before I could answer, Lana stepped forward like a sudden flame. “**No**—you don’t get to twist this. **If** not for you, Freya wouldn’t have been cornered like prey by these guards, struck with a shock-baton like some criminal!”

“Shock-baton?” Aldred’s voice rumbled like a thunderclap. **His gaze** dropped to the weapons in the **guards’** hands. His aura rolled over the hall like a stormfront. “You dared? You wolves dared strike her with those? She is the daughter of martyrs! Her parents gave their **lives** for this nation. She herself bled for the pack as part of the Iron Fang Recon Unit! And in broad daylight, here in the open, you dare?”

The sound of his words split the air, snapping down like lightning. The staff and guards flinched, eyes darting, suddenly unsure of their footing.

Martyr's daughter.

Whispers slithered through the crowd. Were the ashes **in** my arms truly of fallen wolves who had given everything? And was I **-me**, the woman they had sneered at—not only the daughter of the dead, but a soldier who had once faced death herself in the name of the pack?

The guards who had laid hands on me shifted uneasily, glancing at **one** another, panic painting their expressions.

Aurora's face twisted. Disbelief flashed there. She couldn't swallow it, That I was truly of that bloodline? **That** Arthur and Myra had indeed fallen for the nation? Rather than an ordinary logistics Omega?

Her eyes cut toward Caelum Gration.

1251 PM PP

But Caelum wasn't looking at her. He wasn't even listening.

His gaze was on me.

+8 Pearls

And for the first time in so long, it was only on me. I had called to him earlier and he had not heard, but now—now his wolf's attention was locked. His dark eyes were wide, filled with something like shock. Or recognition.

Aurora stiffened, jealousy crackling off her scent.

As for Caelum... his heart was louder than any words.

I could feel his realization pouring through the bond of his gaze. That what I had said earlier—what he had doubted—was true. My parents were martyrs. They had run their last run for the pack.

And me... I had only wanted him beside me, when I carried them home.

Yet instead—memories slashed through me like claws—when I brought their ashes back, Eleanor had sneered, barring me from the Grafton home. She had pointed at the urn, calling it cursed, spitting on the honor of wolves who had given everything. And Caelum—he had stood silent then, letting me bear it alone.

I saw the way his jaw tightened now, his fists curling at his sides. Regret. Shame. The wolf in him longed to tear at himself for what he had allowed.

The burn in my throat worsened.

Before I could speak, the executives of fight strode hurriedly forward. “Commander Aldred, you honor us with your presence. And Miss Thorne—this is...”

Their words trailed off, dying against the sight of my bruises and Aldred’s fury.

“Miss Thorne came carrying the ashes of martyrs,” Aldred growled. His voice carried like a war drum. “And you—your company’s guards—surrounded her, attacked her, treated her like a threat. Explain yourselves!”

The Yunhang leaders exchanged uneasy glances. Finally, the head of Public Relations stepped forward, pale and sweating. “Someone explain. What happened here?”

All eyes shifted.

To Aurora.

She swallowed, then forced her voice out. “I... I **suspected** the urn. I thought it was unsafe. She refused to let me inspect it, so I called security. It was only to ensure flight safety—”

A snarl rolled from Aldred’s chest. “Pathetic **excuse**.”

The soldiers behind him, wolves all, bared their teeth. Their fury was palpable,

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Aurora floundered, voice rising. “If the urn had held something dangerous—explosives, toxins—then the entire flight could **have** been at risk! I was thinking of the passengers!”

My wolf snapped inside me. My voice came cold as ice. “I had filed the report. The ashes were cleared. All you had to do was check. But you didn’t check. You chose instead to accuse, to humiliate, and to seize. That was your choice.”

Aurora’s face went white, then red.

“And so what you claim is this,” Aldred said, voice like iron, eyes cutting through her. “That if a pilot doubts—then even the ashes of martyrs can be desecrated, dragged into suspicion, handled like contraband. Is that it?”

His growl reverberated through the hall. Every wolf present felt it in their bones.

And Aurora could only stand there, caught in the shadow of his fury, her lies collapsing like ash in the wind.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Third Person's POV

Aurora's voice trembled as she tried to defend herself, "I didn't know it was the ashes of martyrs!"

+8 Pearls

Lana shoved past the guards blocking her way, her voice sharp with fury. "I shouted it out loud—that it was the ashes of martyrs! And what did you do? You ordered them to snatch the urn faster!"

Aurora's face went pale instantly. The Iron Fang Recon Unit wolves standing behind Aldred glared at her with burning fury in their eyes, the weight of their collective rage pressing down like a storm.

The executives from Flight who had rushed in to mediate nearly cursed aloud. Aurora, usually flaunting herself as a disciplined and bold female wolf, had committed the most disgraceful of blunders.

The Vice President of Flight didn't hesitate. His voice cut through the tense silence. "Aurora, as of this moment, you are unfit to continue flight duty. Effective immediately, another co-pilot will replace you."

"Yes, sir!" someone answered at once, rushing to make the call to dispatch another officer.

Aurora staggered on her feet, blood draining from her face. She would have collapsed had Caelum not steadied her with a hand.

"No... this can't happen." Her voice was desperate, her claws digging into his sleeve as though he were her last lifeline. "If I'm suspended now, my future... my promotion... it will all be over. Caelum, help me! Please!"

Caelum looked down at her. Once, Aurora's beauty and pride had been like fire-bright, unyielding. Now, her pale face and pleading eyes stirred pity in his chest. His wolf bristled uneasily, but his heart softened despite himself.

He stepped forward, his voice directed at Freya. "Why not forgive her this once? If she's grounded, the consequences for her career will be too severe. Besides, you struck her earlier you've vented some of your anger..."

Aldred's sharp **gaze** fixed on him. The old wolf's growl was low, edged with command. "You've divorced her, Caelum. What right do you have to speak here?"

"I" Caelum began, but Freya's cold, cutting voice silenced him,

"Caelum Grafton, when I **was** cornered and attacked, you said nothing. Not one word, Yet for Aurora, the moment she falters, you're the first to rush forward and shield her. I told you before you've lost the right to say anything to me."

His throat worked, his pride twisting painfully. "Freya...

for the sake **of** our three years as mates—**please**, forgive Aurora just this once."

He knew Aurora **was** a fault. But still—Aurora had once been his **so**-called savior. His wolf told him that debt bound him.

Freya laughed suddenly. The sound cracked, wild and bitter, her **eyes** shining with unshed tears. The last remnants of longing she had harbored for him shattered in that instant.

"If I hadn't pulled you out of the river that night—your body torn by eight knife wounds—would you even be alive to stand here and beg me for another she-wolf's sake? Caelum, you truly are a disgrace!"

The Alpha of Silverfang froze, his pupils dilating sharply. His voice dropped to a whisper. "What did you say? That night... you were the one who saved me?"

It made no sense. He had always believed Aurora had saved him.

But Freya didn't spare him another glance.

Caelum made to step closer, but Aurora clutched at him, dragging him back. Her head bowed, shadows hiding her face, but her hands shook violently, claws scraping his sleeve.

The announcement for boarding rang through the terminal. Aldred rested a heavy hand on Freya's shoulder. His voice was firm, but softer now, like the growl of an elder wolf who still cared.

12:51 PM PP

+8 Pearls

"It's time, little one. Once you arrive in Ashbourne, don't forget to have a healer look at your wounds. Don't rely on youth and wolf blood to dismiss injuries—they will come back to haunt you."

“I understand,” Freya murmured.

Aldred straightened, the full power of a war-worn Alpha rolling off him. He lifted his hand in salute. “Escort the martyrs Arthur Thorne and Myra Brown... home.”

Every wolf soldier behind him followed suit, their movements crisp, their voices united in a thunderous vow:

“Escort the martyrs home!”

The sound rolled through the terminal like thunder across the mountains, stirring awe and silence among the crowd.

Freya’s eyes reddened, her vision blurred with mist. Her heart trembled.

Father. Mother. Do you see? Your pack, your comrades... they did not forget you. They came to walk you home.

With both hands, she clutched the urn close to her chest and bowed deeply three times to Aldred and the Iron Fang wolves, her wolf’s posture hea

with reverence. Then she turned, shoulders squared, and walked toward the boarding gate.

Her parents... she was finally bringing them home.

Caelum stood frozen, his gaze locked on her retreating back. His thoughts were chaos, spiraling. Too many questions clawed at his mind, tearing at his sanity.

Why would she say she was the one who saved me? How does she know about the eight blades, the river? Why has she kept silent all this time?

He clenched his **jaw**, his wolf restless inside him. He would find out. He had to.

But as he stared, he wasn’t the only one unraveling.

Aurora’s grip on his arm trembled violently. Her wolf cowered inside her, fear rippling through every nerve.

No... impossible. How can Freya be **his** true savior? How can this be?

The truth gnawed at her—once, she had only seen Caelum after he had been pulled from the river. She had never saved him. She had simply let him believe it. And when he gave her his gratitude, his loyalty, she had seized it, letting **the** lie take root.

Now, that lie threatened to devour her whole.

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

Freya's POV

+8 Pearls

I boarded the plane with my parents' ashes cradled tightly in my arms. Because of the urn, I'd made sure to book business class this time—more space, fewer eyes.

But when I stepped into the cabin, my steps faltered. Aside from the attendants, there was only one other Whitmor, Alpha of the Ironclad Coalition..

Of all the wolves in the world, it had to be him.

passenger—Silas

"I told you," his voice was smooth, cold, carrying that Alpha weight that pressed against my instincts, "we would meet again

soon.

I swallowed a sharp retort. He wasn't wrong. Too soon, in fact.

I slid into my seat, the urn resting carefully on the table beside me. The Fates—or the Moon Goddess—must be laughing at me, because of course my assigned seat was right next to his. And with the rest of the cabin empty, it felt as if the predator and I had been caged together on purpose.

The engines roared, the plane lifted, and silence pressed between us—until his voice cut suddenly into the air, low and unsettling.

"Today, Freya Thorne, you gave me quite a spectacle."

I stiffened. He had seen. Of course he had.

"You saw the chaos at the terminal?" I asked, though the answer was obvious.

"I saw everything," Silas replied, voice even but laced with something I couldn't place. "Saw you stand against a dozen guards with nothing but your body and your wolf, just to shield that urn. Saw the shock rods hit you, saw you stagger, refuse to let go. And I saw the moment you broke free—ashes clutched to your chest when you trampled Aurora beneath your boots and **even** sent Caelum Grafton sprawling with one strike."

His gaze lingered on me, and my skin prickled under it.

*

“At that moment,” he murmured, “you burned so fiercely I could hardly look away.”

His words unsettled me more than the memory of the fight itself. Silas Whitmor was not a wolf who felt. Not for others. His kind admired strength, valued loyalty but **life**, death, blood? He treated them as pawns on a board.

So why now? Why me?

“Because they’re martyrs’ ashes, you risked your life to protect them?” he pressed.

I lowered my head, eyes softening as they fell on the urn. “Not only martyrs. They’re my parents. Arthur Thorne. Myra Brown. They spent their lives protecting me. Isn’t it **right** that **their** daughter protect them, even in death?”

For a heartbeat, silence. Then he gave a short, bitter **curve** of the lips.

“Not all parents protect their pups.” His tone was sharp, almost mocking, but beneath it... there was something darker, a shadow **I** couldn’t read.

I looked up, meeting his **eyes**

. “True. Some parents fail their children. But mine didn’t. They gave me everything. And I’ll bleed out on the floor before I let anyone dishonor their remains.”

His gaze sharpened, and his words cut strange and sudden. “So. If someone treats you well, you repay them? That is your

nature?”

I blinked, caught off guard by the shift. “Of course. Gratitude is a wolf’s duty. A bond cut into our bones.”

“Then what about me?” His words were soft, but they struck like fangs. “If I treat you well... when I die, **will** you **guard** my ashes with the same ferocity? Not letting anyone touch a fragment?”

12:52 PM P P

+8 Pearls

A chill ran through me. His eyes were ice, but they burned on me with a hunter’s heat, unblinking, consuming. I felt bristle, hackles rising beneath my skin.

my wolf

Death. Wolves rarely spoke of it so freely. Most avoided the word altogether. But Silas rolled it off his tongue as though it were nothing but another game piece to move, another mountain to climb.

“Alpha Whitmor,” I said carefully, my voice steadier than I felt, “with your power and your reach, I imagine half the continent would rise to defend your ashes. You won’t need me.”

“Yet you still don’t answer.” His stare pinned me. “You wouldn’t repay me?”

Moon above, what kind of question was this? He hadn’t done anything for me—nothing to bind me to him with debt or duty. My wolf shifted uneasily, but I kept my tone smooth.

“You’re strong and healthy, Silas. You’ll live long. Maybe centuries. Who can say what the future holds? For all I know, I’ll walk into the Moon’s embrace long before you.”

His brow furrowed at that, the faintest ripple of irritation crossing his face. “I don’t like the sound of that. You falling first.”

Then, with a voice like an oath, he said, “If that day ever comes, Freya Thorne, I will guard your ashes myself. And no wolf will lay a claw on them.”

✧

I nearly choked on my own breath. My ashes? Him, protecting them? That was not the future I wanted. Not at all.

And yet... the weight of his words lingered like a mark against my soul.

Send Gifts

30

A Warrior Luna's Awakening

+8 Pearls

Third Person’s POV

On the other side of the city, Aurora was being called before the higher council of flights to answer for what had happened, while Caelum left the terminal alone.

His mind was still a fog, weighed down by the last words Freya had spoken before she vanished from the airport.

Who had truly saved his life?

Was it Freya—or Aurora?

When he had first opened his eyes, the face he saw had been Aurora's. The healers at the hospital swore it was Aurora who had accompanied him there, who had been at his side. And yet Freya had claimed, with that steady defiance in her eyes, that it had been her.

Was it a lie? Or was there something more?

The pressure in his chest felt like a boulder crushing down on his ribs, making it hard to breathe.

By the time Caelum reached the Silverfang Pack's villa, his wolf still restless within him, he found Eleanor, his mother, and Giselle, his younger sister, waiting in the lounge.

The moment he stepped through the door, both rose to meet him.

"Brother, what took you so long? It was only supposed to be a trip to the Lunar Severance Office. Don't tell me Freya refused the divorce?" Giselle asked with a mocking edge, her pretty face alight with cruel amusement. In her mind, no doubt, Freya would never let go of someone like him—Alpha of Silverfang, head of SilverTech Forgeworks, a wolf most saw as a golden prize.

"Don't tell me she thought one and a half million wasn't enough," Eleanor snapped, her voice sharp with disdain. "Frankly, giving her that much was far too generous!"

"Enough," Caelum growled, pressing his fingers to his temple. His voice carried the weight of Alpha command, but even so, there was exhaustion behind *it*. "The severance is done. Freya and I are divorced."

"Truly?" Eleanor's **eyes** brightened, a hungry triumph sparking in them.

"I've no **reason** to lie," Caelum replied flatly.

"Excellent. That woman was never worthy of you. But Aurora—ah, she's different. Daughter of the Bluemoon Beta, a rising pilot in the Airborne Wing. With her as my daughter-in-law, the family's standing will blaze like **fire**

. Even the elders of Ashbourne will envy me." Eleanor's delight was palpable, already dreaming of the prestige.

"Freya will regret this," Giselle said with a **vicious** smirk. "She'll never find another male of your worth, Brother. In fact, when **you** and Aurora are wed, **we** should send her an invitation—let **her** choke on her own bitterness when she sees what she threw away."

“I told you before.” Caelum said, his brow furrowing, “Aurora and I are only friends.”

“Friends?” Giselle scoffed. “Brother, you can’t fool us. Aurora has always been your white moonlight. The only reason you ever married Freya was because Aurora left the country. You were desperate, and you settled. Now you’re free—finally free- to be with the one you’ve always wanted.”

Eleanor nodded firmly, her voice decisive. “No more pretense between family. I know your heart, Caelum. Give it some time, and I’ll see to it that your bond with Aurora is made official.”

Caelum said nothing. Weariness rolled through him like a storm, heavier than armor on his shoulders. Without another word, he turned **away** and ascended the stairs to his chamber.

Even his own mother and sister refused to believe Aurora **was** only a friend.

Was it his fault? Had **his** actions, his choices, sown too much confusion?

12:32 PM PP

+8 Pearls

Yes, he had once admired Aurora—long ago, when she had pulled him back from the brink, when she had been untouchable beauty and status as the Beta’s daughter. For the wolf he had been then, she was both savior and distant star.

But admiration had been something he buried deep, disguising it as “gratitude,” as repayment for a life—debt. He had never dared dream of more.

And later, when he had bound himself to Freya, he had sworn to honor that bond. Even when Aurora returned, even when his heart still stirred with remnants of old longing, he had never once betrayed his vows.

Still, he had wanted to treat Aurora with kindness, to keep her close—but he’d hidden behind the word “friend,” thinking it would shield him.

Yet to the world, it seemed a hollow shield. To Freya, it had been nothing but hypocrisy. Her bitter words came back to him, sharp as claws: that he only feared guilt, only sought to preserve his honor, using “friendship” as a mask.

Caelum pulled the crimson-bound divorce decree from his pocket. His wolf snarled at the sight of it, his mouth filling with the taste of ash and bitterness.

The sharp ring of his phone broke the silence. Aurora’s name lit the screen.

For a moment, he considered letting it go unanswered. But no—he had questions for her as well.

He accepted the call. Aurora’s voice trembled through the speaker, tinged with unease. “Caelum... where are you? I need to see

you.

“Where are you now? I’ll come to you,” he said, his voice clipped.

“I’m still at the airport,” she replied softly. “I’ve just come from the vice president’s office.”

Normally, her tone would have triggered his instinct to soothe, to offer comfort. But tonight, his heart was hollow, drained of

words.

“I’ll be there,” he said shortly, and cut the line.

Aurora lowered her phone, her delicate fingers tightening around it, teeth sinking into her lower lip. Fear flashed **across** her pale **features**.

Caelum Grafton could never know the truth. The Alpha’s savior could only ever be **her**.

Half an hour later, Caelum strode into the vast airport hall. His gaze found **her** at once—Aurora, standing alone, **eyes** rimmed **red**, **her** usual poise stripped **away**. She looked fragile, pitiful, her wolf diminished to a trembling shadow.

And

yet

the storm in **Caelum’s chest** only **grew heavier**.