

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel

Chapter 5

Read The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel Chapter 5 -

Souls Bound By Promise – Timothy Nelson

191

Chapter 191: Everything Will Be Alright

Evelyn's POV

73%

"I watched my parents get ripped apart by the Rogue King's army. Freya's voice oook with rage, not weakness. "Then they locked me up in some place with

chains. Had to live in my own filth every damn day."

Acacia's face went white. She clawed at Freya's hands, but couldn't break free.

"They poisoned my food with wolfsbane – just enough to keep me breathing so they could hold me down whenever they wanted." Tears ran down Freya's

cheeks, but her grip never loosened.

"Don't you dare question other people's pain when you've never suffered a day in your spoiled little life." Freya pulled Acacia closer until they were nose to nose. "You're just jealous of Evelyn, so you hired thugs to beat her up. First time you left her for dead – that's what made her wolf come out early. Second time would've killed her if her friends hadn't found her."

"I... I don't know what you're talking about..." Acacia's voice cracked.

"Bullshit. Freya's eyes burned. "What you put her through is nothing compared to real torture. But you're still gonna pay for every single thing you did."

She released Acacia, who crumpled to the floor like a broken doll. For the first time ever, I saw genuine fear in Acacia's eyes.

“Sit down and shut up,” Freya said, her voice deadly calm.

Acacia stayed on the ground, shaking. Luna Isabella and Delta Diana exchanged a look before Diana stepped forward.

“Come on.” Diana’s hand landed on Acacia’s shoulder. “Got a special room picked out for you tonight. Nice and quiet.”

“Where’s she going?” I asked, watching them leave.

“The dungeons, Luna Isabella said matter-of-factly. “There’ll be a proper trial once this mess is over.”

Freya slumped against the wall, looking completely drained. I rushed over to steady her.

“Can we just not talk about her for a while?” Freya’s voice was barely a whisper. Luna Isabella, thanks for everything, but I’m really okay.”

Luna Isabella came over and wrapped Freya in a gentle hug. “You’re both incredibly brave.”

Suddenly I remembered something important. “Luna Isabella, there are still kids trapped at the school library! The tunnel collapsed and they couldn’t get through. I need to go back-

“Absolutely not. Her voice was firm. “It’s still dangerous out there. Someone else will handle it.”

‘But

“Evelyn.” She used her Luna voice, “You’ve done enough tonight. Those children have warriors protecting them. You and Freya need rest.

The adrenaline was wearing off and exhaustion hit me like a truck. My eyelids felt like they weighed a hundred pounds.

Freya had already slid down the wall with her eyes closed. I tried to stay awake, but my vision kept blurring.

The last thing I heard was Luna Isabella’s gentle voice: “Sleep, girls. Everything will be alright.

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Chapter 191: Everything Will Be Alright

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Someone lifted me up that familiar scent of forest and morning air made me relax instantly. Too tired to figure out which triplet it was, I just curled against the warmth and let myself drift off.

Magnus's POV

The battle felt like it lasted forever, but we won. That's all that mattered.

Dead rogues littered the border, blood thick in the night air. My wolf was still restless not from fighting, but from worry about Evelyn.

"Damn it, Lucian growled beside me. "Why can't we reach them through the mind link?"

"Relax," Dad's voice cut through our panic. "Your mother says they're both safe."

We started clearing bodies, dragging rogue corpses to the boundary as a warning to anyone else stupid enough to attack our territory.

On the way back, we met up with Milo and Elliot. Everyone looked beat, but we all had the same worried look.

"Any word on Evelyn?" Elliot asked immediately.

"Mom says they're at the pack house," I replied.

Boys, I need you to go to the school, Mom's voice hit our minds. Some children are still trapped there - tunnel collapsed.

What about Evelyn? I asked.

She's sleeping, Mom's voice was gentle. But she's been worried sick about those kids. All the warriors are busy, so it has to be you.

We turned around and headed for the school. Whatever Evelyn worried about, I worried about too.

In the library, we found over a dozen kids huddled in corners with three warriors standing guard. Their faces lit up when they saw us.

"Alphas!" A little boy ran over and hugged my leg. "Sister Evelyn said someone would come! Are you here to save us?"

Hearing her name made my chest tight. Even in danger, she'd thought to give these kids hope.

'Yeah, we're taking you home,' I crouched down and ruffled his hair. "Everyone ready?"

Lucian carried the two smallest kids while Orion took an injured boy on his back. The whole walk home, I couldn't stop thinking about how natural they

looked with children.

Back at the pack house, Mom led us to the basement. The moment I opened the door, my breath caught.

There she was, curled against the wall, golden hair falling across her face. Moonlight from the ventilation grate made her glow,

"

She looked so small, so exhausted. My heart hammered against my ribs.

"They're completely wiped out,' Mom said softly. "Help me get them upstairs to guest room."

I moved forward and carefully lifted Evelyn. She was way too light all that training and fighting had worn her down too much.

In my arms, she shifted slightly and pressed closer to my chest. Everything else stopped existing.

"You're safe now," I whispered, even though she probably couldn't hear me.

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She seemed to relax even more, letting out this little satisfied sigh that made my heart do weird things.

I carried her upstairs, taking each step extra carefully.

Evelyn's POV

I woke up slowly, feeling soft sheets and warm blankets. Definitely not the basement floor or my own bed.

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Opening my eyes, I found myself on a huge bed I didn't recognize. Morning light leaked through heavy curtains. What surprised me more was that I wasn't alone several little wolf cubs were curled up next to me, with even more surrounding Freya.

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"You're awake?" Elliot's voice came from the corner. He looked like he hadn't slept all night.

I sat up carefully, trying not to wake the kids. "Where are we?"

"Guest

room." He rubbed his eyes. "We tried separating you guys from the kids last night, but they wouldn't let go. You two were holding onto them too.

Finally just moved everyone up here together."

Memory came flooding back - the tunnel collapse, Acacia's tantrum, Freya's breakdown, then that overwhelming tiredness.

"Are all the kids safe?" I asked immediately.

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Chapter 192: I Want to Ask You Some Questions

Evelyn's POV

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"Everyone made it back safe, Elliot said, rubbing his tired eyes. "Magnus and the others went to get the kids from school. Would've been easier carrying you two if it wasn't for that narrow hidden door."

Lucian stuck his head in. “Heard voices you guys okay? There’s a healer downstairs for the kids. Mom’s orders you and Freya get checked too. No arguing.”

I started to protest, but his serious expression shut me up. “Fine. Give us ten minutes to wake these little ones.”

‘Need help? Lucian was already walking in, gently shaking a boy’s shoulder. “Hey there, little warrior. Time to get up. The healer wants to make sure you’re ready for the next adventure.”

The boy’s eyes snapped open. “Alpha!”

Shh.” Lucian pointed to the sleeping girl in my arms. “Mind if I carry your friend downstairs?”

Watching this usually intimidating future Alpha handle a child so carefully made my chest warm. The girl reached up sleepily, and he lifted her like she was

made of glass.

We got all the kids awake and headed downstairs. The living room had been turned into a makeshift medical station – beds everywhere, supplies organized

on every surface.

‘How wonderful! Luna Isabella called from the stairs, beaming.

“What’s wonderful?”

“Nothing important.” Her eyes held something I couldn’t read. “Get yourselves checked, then Dora’s got breakfast ready.”

The examination went smooth. Most kids were just scared, nothing serious. Watching parents pick them up one by one felt bittersweet.

But some parents were still recovering from injuries. Those kids stayed with us.

“It’s okay,” I told a teary-eyed girl. “We’ll hang out together until your dad’s better alright?”

She nodded and grabbed my shirt.

The pack house turned into a daycare for the rest of the day. Sophia ran obstacle courses in the backyard while Freya taught basic self-defense moves. Hard to believe she'd been so fierce last night.

By evening, everyone was exhausted. I brought my little shadow upstairs for a bath and bed.

'Sister Evelyn," she said quietly, 'can I sleep with you?'

"Of course. Bath first, then maybe some cartoons?"

In the bathroom, warm water melted away her tension. She even started humming. These peaceful moments almost made me forget last night's chaos.

After her bath, I put one of my T-shirts on her. It hung like a dress. We curled

Her breathing evened out pretty quick. I tucked her hair back and closed my eyes under the covers watching some kids show I'd never seen.

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Chapter 192: I Want to Ask You Some Questions

Then sobbing woke me up.

She sat in the middle of the bed, tears streaming down her face.

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"What's wrong, sweetheart?' I pulled her close.

"The window..." She pointed with a shaking finger. "It made noise, and then you appeared..."

My heart lurched. Third floor. If there really was noise outside...

Anyone on patrol right now? I sent through the mind link while holding her tight.

Multiple responses came back immediately. But the next second, my door burst open and all five boys practically fell over each other getting in.

The girl screamed and buried her face in my neck.

*Seriously?" I glared at them while stroking her hair.

"What happened?" Magnus panted.

"Sound by the window. Just checking if patrols were nearby."

They scattered instantly. Milo and Elliot bolted out – probably checking the perimeter. Orion positioned himself between us and the window. Magnus and

Lucian approached it carefully.

"It's okay," I whispered to the girl. "See? Orion's protecting us. He's one of the strongest warriors here."

She peeked at Orion, who gave her the gentlest smile I'd ever seen from him.

"They're just checking to make sure everything's safe. Like knights protecting a princess."

That got her attention. She watched the triplets' movements curiously, even giggling when Lucian nearly tripped over the curtains.

The inspection took forever. They checked the window, opened it, looked outside could tell they were mind-linking without including me.

Finally, Magnus turned around. His expression was serious until he saw the girl staring at him, then he forced a smile.

'All clear. Everything's safe.'

A knock interrupted us.

'Come in.'

An unfamiliar warrior stepped inside. 'Sorry to disturb. Alpha Adam needs the the of you in his office immediately.'

The triplets exchanged looks. Lucian started toward me. 'Orion, you

Ill stay. Orion's voice was firm. "You two go."

After Magnus and Lucian left, Orion sat on the bed's edge. The girl studied him

th big eyes.

'Are you really the strongest warrior?' she whispered.

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Chapter 192: I Want to Ask You Some Questions

Orion paused. "Maybe not the strongest, but strong enough to keep you safe."

"Will you stay? Until Sister Evelyn falls asleep?"

"Absolutely."

She dozed off quickly under his watchful gaze. I settled her properly, then looked at Orion.

The door opened again. Magnus and Lucian returned, faces grimmer than before.

"What happened?"

"Nothing major." Magnus's voice was tight. "We need to talk. Orion, can you watch her?"

Orion nodded and actually lay down on the far side of the bed, careful not to disturb the sleeping child.

I followed Magnus and Lucian downstairs, dread building in my chest.

Guys, where are you? I called to my teammates.

In our rooms, Cyrus responded. But there are guards outside. We're being watched.

Same here, Sophia sounded tense. I'm with the kids and Delta Diana in the living room, but something's off.

Elliot won't stop pacing in my room, Freya added. Won't tell me anything.

My stomach dropped.

Alpha Adam's office felt like a trap. He sat behind his desk, expression stone-cold. Luna Isabella stood to one side looking helpless. Magnus and Lucian flanked their father like bodyguards.

The door closing behind us sounded final.

'Please sit,' Alpha Adam said. It wasn't really a request.

I stayed standing. "What's going on?"

‘I have some questions about your team.’

This is bad, I warned my teammates. In Alpha Adam’s office. They’re questioning us

“What kind of questions?”

“How long have you worked together?”

So that was it. They suspected us. The attack, maybe something else but they didn’t trust us anymore.

I took a breath and started explaining. ‘Mark, Sophio, Cyrus and I met at trials to summers ago, as you know. I went through how we met, trained together, became Sentinels.

‘Freya’s someone I met when things got really dark. We went through hell toget and escaped together. That kind of bond runs deeper than blood.’

Alpha Adam listened silently. When I finished, he leaned forward, eyes sharp as ades.

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Chapter 192: I Want to Ask You Some Questions

“How well do you really know your teammates? Their backgrounds? Their pasts?”

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Chapter 193: It’s Your Own Stupidity and Arrogance

Evelyn's POV

Any news? I asked through the mind link.

Not yet. Need time to get drones outside, Cyrus responded, anger bleeding through his mental voice.

Give me something to do, I'm going crazy, Mark cut in.

Mark, do you have a computer? I can't do anything from here. Elliot's pacing like a caged animal and won't tell me what's wrong, Freya added.

Got a laptop. What do you need?

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Cover everything with blankets first so they can't hear the keyboard. Then pull up these surveillance feeds we installed.

While coordinating with my team, I kept my voice steady for Alpha Adam. "Cyrus is our tech specialist. His father was a Sentinel, so he followed that path

naturally. Freya's skills are just as solid you should see them work cases together.

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Ten warriors patrolling inside the pack house, none from our squad. Can't get the drone too close or they'll spot it. But these guys are definitely doing a full sweep of the exterior walls and windows. Mark, what's showing on the feeds? Cyrus's tension was palpable.

Mark and Sophia both come from nearby packs," I continued. "Came here for trials. Their families are warrior stock. Like Cyrus, they all completed the Sentinel marking. This marking creates a magical bond with Alpha King Nathan we literally can't hide anything from him or disobey direct orders."

I paused, studying everyone's reactions. Alpha Adam's face remained stone-cold. una Isabella looked uneasy. Magnus and Lucian...

"You really think Alpha King Nathan would place people he doesn't trust here?" My voice grew firmer. "I've explained our team's background and legitimacy. Now can you please tell me what was found outside my window and why you're treating us like suspects?"

I let my Beta bloodline aura slip out, along with just a trace of royal power. The Hoom's atmosphere immediately shifted. Everyone except Alpha Adam unconsciously leaned back.

‘Bring it out, Alpha Adam said without looking up.

Lucian stepped forward, placing a small device on the desk. “These were found outside your window. You and your team are the only ones who d use this type of equipment.”

I stared at the crude surveillance device. This workmanship wouldn’t even pass for basic Sentinel apprentice level.

“May I?’ I reached for it, maintaining politeness.

A light twist opened the shell completely empty inside. Not even basic chips.

“How many more of these did you find around the pack house?” I looked up. “Obously you’ve suspected an insider for a while. But this is clearly someone trying to frame my team.”

I started explaining the device’s flaws when Magnus suddenly slammed the table

“Enough! You think we’re all idiots? His voice carried hostility I’d never heard bore.

Lucian stood too, ice-cold eyes boring into me. “Exactly. Stop playing games. The evidence is right there.”

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Chapter 193: It’s Your Own Stupidity and Arrogance

My heart clenched. These two who once understood me best were looking at me e I was poison. Even Orion believed in me why would they

Wait.

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Something tingled at my fingertips the familiar sting of magic. I glanced down and caught a faint silver flash between my fingers looking went ou

carefully, I finally spotted it.

The entire office was shrouded in an almost invisible magical barrier. Gossamer light shadows barely rippled in the air. This level of spellcasting was way

beyond ordinary witches.

They were all being influenced. And this caster was powerful definitely beyond my current abilities to fight.

Orion could stay clear probably because he'd been practicing magic with me, building some resistance. More importantly, compared to his brothers and

to pack duty, he cared more about me personally.

Fine. I'd play along.

'I was abused, neglected, but I still held on.' My voice started trembling – not from fear, but fury. 'I left hoping to get stronger, even just a little.'

Footage uploaded to the Alpha's computer! Cyrus's excitement shot through the link

I took a deep breath, letting my rage fully surface. 'I've been here for months, constantly working with your warriors to improve defenses. My team is Alpha King Nathan's finest squad. We busted our asses helping design patrol routes and evacuation plans. That tunnel design and construction? My responsibility

To give the cubs and Luna Isabella an escape route!'

The collapsed tunnel still brought bitterness. That passage meant to protect everyone had failed when needed most.

'If I really wanted to hurt this pack, I would've acted when I first got here while you were still weak and chaotic. Not waited until today.'

'Check your computer, Alpha Adam.' My voice went cold. 'My team found the truth.'

The screen lit up with surveillance footage. Acacia walked into my room, casually closed the door, and started searching everywhere. She opened every

drawer, touched everything.

Then she moved to the window, pulled that device from her bag, and blatantly placed it on the windowsill.

Alpha Adam lowered his head. Luna Isabella covered her mouth. But Magnus and Lucian maintained those unnatural angry expressions, like controlled

puppets.

Time for the final blow.

I yanked off my shirt and sports bra, turning my back to them. Sharp intakes of breath echoed. They saw the crisscrossing scars, the silver powder burts

My voice was calm. “This is the prize for letting a habitual abuser run wild.”

I put my clothes back on and faced them.

“All your problems come from still seeing me as weak and treating her like a harmless clown. But we’re nothing like what you imagine.”

The magical barrier trembled slightly. But I couldn’t reveal the truth yet. I needed to protect my team first.

Knocking came from outside.

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Chapter 193: It’s Your Own Stupidity and Arrogance

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I tried to look both angry and heartbroken though the latter didn’t require muck acting. Seeing people you trusted being manipulated like puppets was

genuinely heartbreaking.

“Come in.”

My teammates stood outside, faces written with anger. They didn’t know what happened inside, but through our link, they felt my emotional storm.

“What’s going on?” Elliot’s voice came from the stairs, full of worry. He and Orion were hurrying over, with Nadia and Milo close behind.

I couldn’t risk getting more people caught in this magical trap.

Alpha Adam has pack business to discuss – there’s an insider here.” I kept my voice steady. “Let’s go. Patrol’s waiting.”

Sophia smoothly handed me my bag. We walked toward the main entrance together, our steps firm.

“Wait, Evie, what’s happening? Where are you going?” Elliot called behind us, voice anxious.

“Don’t leave. This has to be a misunderstanding.” His voice grew closer, but I didn’t look back.

The pack’s atmosphere had completely changed. What was once a warm home now reeked of suspicion and hostility. Magic was like invisible poison, slowly corrupting everyone’s hearts. And I temporarily lacked the power to fight it.

When we reached the entrance, more footsteps followed. Apparently we’d disturbed half the pack.

I stopped and turned to Orion. “Tell those little cubs I have a mission. Sorry I couldn’t say goodbye.”

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Chapter 194: How Did You Get Here?

Evelyn’s POV

Orion’s eyes filled with pain, tears threatening to spill, but he stayed silent.

I looked at Elliot, Milo, and Nadia. Elliot’s face twisted with confusion. Milo frowned hard. Nadia’s eyes held worry.

Mark pushed open the heavy door. Like some cosmic joke, Acacia and her father tood on the stone steps.

‘Well, well. If it isn’t our little traitor and her gang, Acacia’s voice cut through the night. “Getting kicked out? Have fun playing rogue!”

Mark growled. Freya and I barely held him back.

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“Bunch of savages, her father sneered. “No wonder Alpha King Nathan only uses you for the dirty work.”

“We’re not rogues. And we’re not savages.” Sophia’s voice was eerily calm as she picked up Mark’s bag. “You’re just pathetic puppets. Your pack got attacked

and we’ve got work to do.”

She turned to Acacia. “Come near any of us again, and we’ll show you the same kindness’ you showed Evelyn. We’re all professionals.”

“How dare you threaten me! Acacia shrieked. “Are you just gonna let her talk to me like that?”

More people came out, including my father. I watched him approach slowly, his face showing struggle. His eyes lingered on me before looking away. For a

second, I saw pain and... guilt?

But he stayed silent. That’s when I noticed the faint shimmer in the air again – scap bubble rainbows. The magical barrier wasn’t just inside the pack house.

It covered out here too.

Time to end this.

‘Wrong enemy to pick.’ My voice went deadly calm as I released my power.

Beta bloodline aura flowed out first, then royal power. The forces twisted together, creating crushing pressure.

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Acacia and her father’s faces went white. Their knees shook, bodies wanting to kneel. Bloodline suppression they couldn’t fight it.

Both hit their knees hard. Acacia’s nose bled. Her father was soaked in sweat, lips trembling as he tried to speak.

‘You’ll never be anyone’s Luna.’ I looked down at her emotionlessly. “Both of you are gonna pay for what you did to this pack.

I pulled back my aura and turned to leave.

Elliot stood in front, sadness and confusion on his face. Milo clenched his fists. Nadia’s eyes held tears.

Orion stood further back, watching me with clear eyes. Unlike everyone else's, his gaze was steady. When our eyes met, he nodded slightly, lips moving silently.

"Go quickly."

At least one person stayed clear-headed.

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Chapter 194: How Did You Get Here?

I gave him one last look, then walked into the night.

The next few weeks sucked.

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We moved to a cabin on the territory's edge, kept doing Sentinel duties. Daily patrols meant running into pack members, but we all kept distance.

The magical influence was getting worse. I could feel that power spreading like an invisible spider web around the entire pack.

I'd tried everything to break it. Always failed. Whoever was behind this was way stronger than me.

Orion had tried approaching me a few times. I avoided him every time. Not because I didn't want to see him any contact might put him in danger before I

could lift the magic.

He was the only one thinking clearly. That made him suspicious enough.

Nights were worst. Freya and I lived together again, nightmares bleeding into each other. We had to hold hands to fall asleep.

I'd sent countless messages to Nadia. Never got responses. I didn't know if she was forbidden to contact me or if the magic got her too.

Finally, on another sleepless night, I contacted Commander Taric.

"Situation's worse than I thought," I said into the communicator. The whole packs under some powerful magic. I can't break it yet."

“I’ll notify Alpha King Nathan, Taric’s voice was serious. But we can’t just send people in might tip them off. I’ll have Juniper investigate. Her magical

skills are way beyond yours.”

After hanging up, I sat by our backyard fire pit. I’d been trying to practice magic, but my emotional state made it impossible to gather power.

I reached out, trying to light the wood. Weak light flickered at my fingertips, then died.

“You don’t really want to do this magic can sense that. When you lack will, it won’t help you.”

My body went defensive, but the familiar voice made me spin around. Orion stood nearby, moonlight outlining his frame.

I shot to my feet. “How did you get here?”

He raised his hands. “Just wanna talk. I need to hear your side of why you left. I know what I saw and what we were told don’t match up.”

He sat across from the fire pit. “You’re not a traitor. And you’re way more powerful than you let on. Talk to me, Evie.”

I hesitated, then sat down. Maybe I’d been too long without talking to someone trusted.

Just as I was about to speak, something weird happened – I casually waved my hand, and the fire pit blazed to life. Orange flames danced in the darkness.

“Jeez! Little warning next time?” Orion jumped but recovered quickly.

“Wasn’t me,” I said quietly. ‘I mean, I didn’t try to do that. I haven’t been able to se magic since that night.”

But you’re talking to me now –

that’s something. His voice was gentle. “Tell me what really happened.”

So by the dancing firelight, I told him everything from that night – including the magical barrier I’d found.

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10:09 Mon, Jan 12 D

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Chapter 194: How Did You Get Here?

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“I saw those two go downstairs to see Dad, Orion said. When they came back, they wouldn’t tell me what happened. Max just said they had intel that needed private handling. I thought they wanted to tell you that you were our mat.”

His face reddened slightly. Though if you really were our mate, they wouldn’t be so calm about it.”

“Are you kidding me?!” I nearly jumped up. “That’s not what happened! They called me over to say I was a traitor. Said they had evidence.”

I described every detail – Magnus and Lucian’s sudden weird attitudes, the magic fluctuations, my final outburst.

“Jesus!” Orion’s fists clenched. All three of them ganging up on you like that.”

I know someone’s pulling the strings, I stared at the flames. “That magic’s too powerful – I can’t handle it right now. But what hurts most is that except for you, everyone else got affected.”

Actually... Orion hesitated. “It’s more complicated than you know.”

He told me about the past weeks – Luna Isabella under house arrest, Alpha making crazy decisions, the triplets living separately...

I stared at him. “Isabella’s under house arrest? Why?”

“Dad said it’s not safe outside, so he ordered Mom not to leave the pack house. She’s smart though – found ways around it.” He pointed to himself. “Like me –

she sent me to check on you.”

I nodded. “You have to protect her. I can’t imagine what would happen to this pack if something happened to her.

‘I’ve got Milo and Elliot watching her. They haven’t completely lost it – they’ve got their own thoughts.” He sighed. “They’ve all changed. Your brother’s been

stone-faced, won’t talk to anyone.”

“Even Milo’s gone quiet, Orion continued. “Probably because Nadia left.”

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The Lightning Wolf Chronicles

Chapter 195: I Should Go Back

Evelyn's POV

“Nadia left? Where'd she go?” The words came out sharper than I intended.

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Orion shook his head, moonlight cutting across his face. “Nobody knows. She just left a note saying there was some emergency and she had to leave immediately. That's it.” He paused, voice dropping. “Milo's losing his mind. She just turned eighteen we all knew he was convinced they were mates, but she

just... disappeared. I think he's terrified he's already lost her.”

My chest tightened. Anyone could see they were crazy about each other, just waiting to come of age to make it official. For Milo, this had to feel like his world was collapsing.

‘So this is where you are!’

We spun around. Dora was walking toward us with a heavy basket, wearing that gentle smile that didn't quite reach her eyes.

“Dora?” I blinked. “It's pretty late for...”

“Luna Isabella asked me to bring you some food. She set the basket down, wiping her forehead. “Said you kids probably forgot to eat again.”

Orion and I exchanged glances. Luna Isabella always looked out for us, but sending Dora with food this late felt like more than simple care.

“There’s something else.” Dora glanced around, then lowered her voice. “I need to tell you about Magnus, Lucian, and Alpha Adam.

The air got thick. I felt Orion go rigid beside me.

“What’s your take?” I asked straight out. We’d all seen the signs, but hearing it confirmed still hit like a punch.

Dora nodded slowly. “I think they ate something, then got hit with a spell. The boys didn’t get as much, so they’re still somewhat aware, but everything s...

delayed. Alpha Adam’s worse.”

She looked at Orion. ‘You were with Evelyn every day before this. Acacia’s family never got a chance to target you, so you don’t act like a puppet the way the

other two do.’

“There’s more,” Orion said grimly. “The mind link’s been cut. Not just between us all mental communication in the pack is blocked.”

Dora stood there like she wanted to say more, then just sighed. “I should head back. Can’t stay too long or they’ll get suspicious.”

Orion looked between me and Dora. “I’ll walk back with you. Should be getting back anyway.”

He turned to me, eyes holding too much. I knew what he was thinking these days, every goodbye could be the last one.

I stepped forward and hugged him tight, not caring about anything else. He tens for a second, then pulled me close, burying his face in my hair.

“Be careful, he whispered.

‘You too.’ I closed my eyes, memorizing his scent.

“Good thing it’s windy out here,” Dora said with a knowing smile. By the time we get home, most of the scent should be gone.”

I watched them disappear into the darkness, feeling hollow.

10:11 Mon, Jan 12 D

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Chapter 195: I Should Go Back

Back inside, I filled my teammates in on what Dora had told us. The silence that followed was suffocating.

‘So now we know for sure they’re being controlled, Mark finally said. “Question, what do we do about it?”

“We need to break the control, Cyrus said. “But first we gotta figure out what kind of magic we’re dealing with.”

I walked to the bookshelf and grabbed Juniper’s magic book. I’d been studying it for days without finding anything useful.

“What’re you looking at?” Freya came over.

“The magic book Juniper gave me.”

flipped through pages when something in purple ink caught my eye. Different handwriting someone else’s notes:

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“When facing powerful curses, I once tried every complex method to break them, wasting enormous magical power for nothing. Finally, an old witch told me: ‘Child,

sometimes the simplest method works best. You don’t need to destroy the mountain, st find a way around it. Her words opened my eyes. Instead of fighting

powerful magic head-on, why not find a way to cut off its influence...”

I froze. A lightbulb went off in my head.

‘I’m such an idiot!’ I slammed the book shut, practically bouncing.

“What?” Everyone jumped.

“We’ve been thinking about how to break the control, but we missed something obvious whoever’s casting this is way stronger than us.” I was talking fast now. “So instead of fighting it head-on, why not change tactics? We don’t need to break the magic, just isolate them from its influence!”

‘Isolate how?’ Sophia frowned.

I flipped to another section. “Juniper taught me to make protective charms. I only made a few for practice and never had time to give them out, but now

they might actually work!”

Can protective charms really stop that kind of controlling magic?” Mark sounded skeptical.

Individual charms might not be enough, I admitted, “but combined with isolation spells for double protection, they should block continuous outside

influence. It’s like...” I searched for the right comparison, “building a wall between them and the magic source.”

Freya’s eyes lit up. “So even without knowing exactly what magic it is, this could till protect them?”

‘In theory, yeah.’

We all jumped into action, hunting for charm materials. But we hit a wall pretty st.

‘Red agate, obsidian, moongrass...” Cyrus read off the list, face falling. “This stuff isn’t hard to find in the pack, but now that we’re cut off, there’s no way to

get it.’

I chewed my lip, thinking hard. We really were trapped in an invisible cage.

Ill try reaching Orion.*

Even with the mind link severed, the Sentinel mark gave me stronger mental connections. I could still send one-way messages. I closed my eyes, concentrated, and tried pushing information to Orion through that barely-there connection. No idea if he could receive it, or if he could even help get the

materials.

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10:11 Mon, Jan 12

Chapter 195: I Should Go Back

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Night stretched on, wind howling outside. We sat in the living room, each lost in our own thoughts. Everything felt so critical, but all we could do was pin our hopes on these tiny protective charms.

It was our only shot.

Next morning, I dragged myself to the training ground on maybe two hours of sleep. My mind had been racing all night about the charms. I didn't know if Orion got my message, let alone whether he could help.

The training ground was already busy. With most warriors on missions, daily training fell to me. Looking at these familiar faces, my heart twisted. They had no idea their Alpha was being controlled, still working hard to protect the pack.

"Today we're doing coordinated tactics," I called out, trying to sound normal. "Pa up and simulate multiple enemy scenarios."

Warriors quickly formed groups and got started. I moved between them, correcting movements and offering tips. Everything looked normal on the surface,

but I could feel the undercurrents.

As training wound down, Milo walked over from across the field. His steps looked casual, but I noticed his eyes never left me.

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel

Chapter 5

Read The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel Chapter 5 -

Souls Bound By Promise – Timothy Nelson

196

Chapter 196: I Trust You

Evelyn's POV

73%

When Milo walked past me, he suddenly slowed down and leaned in close. His voice was barely a whisper: "Midnight tonight, Silver Pines Come alone. Ori's

waiting for you.”

He kept walking like nothing happened, but my heart started racing. Finally, word from Orion.

After training ended, I headed back to find Dora already at our door with her usual basket.

‘Luna Isabella asked me to bring you some things,’ she said, but her eyes were practically sparkling. “Think you’ll need these.”

I opened the basket and nearly dropped it. Magic materials – red agate, obsidian, moongrass, silver thread, plus some old-looking spell books. A light purple envelope sat on top.

My hands shook as I opened it. Juniper’s handwriting:

Dear Evelyn,

Heard about your situation through my contacts. Can’t come myself, but these should help.

Check the back of this envelope for an isolation spell. Combined with protective charms, it’ll create a barrier between your target and whatever’s controlling them. You’ll need physical contact during casting for it to work properly.

Fair warning – this will drain your magic big time. And for anyone under deep control it’s gonna hurt like hell. But it’s the safest option we’ve got.

Stay strong, kiddo. Light always wins in the end.

Juniper

I flipped the envelope over. Detailed spell instructions covered the back in neat handwriting. I memorized every

“Thanks, Dora,” I looked up at her. “And thank Luna Isabella too.”

word.

She patted my shoulder. ‘Keep fighting, child. We’re all rooting for you.’”

The next few hours flew by as my team and I worked on protective charms. Having actual materials made everything so much easier. I made charms for my

teammates first.

“The Sentinel mark gives us some resistance,’ I explained while handing them o “but extra protection never hurts. Wear these and don’t take them off.”

Mark examined his charm. “This little thing’s supposed to work against serious gic?”

“Juniper’s stuff has never let me down.”

Time crawled as I finished the remaining charms. For the boys, I added small pics from birthday gifts they’d given me hoping the emotional connection would make the magic stick better.

By evening, everything was ready. I stared at the charms in my hands and the spel instructions. This was it make or break time.

‘You sure about going alone?’ Freya looked worried.

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10:11 Mon, Jan 12 D

Chapter 196: I Trust You

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“Milo was clear – no backup.” I double-checked my supplies. “Besides, more people means more chance of getting caught. If I’m not back by dawn...”

‘Don’t even say it!’ Sophia cut me off. “You’re coming back.”

Close to midnight, I wrapped myself in a dark cloak and slipped into the night. Silver Pines looked ghostly under the moonlight, white tree trunks standing

like silent guards.

Orion’s POV

Midnight in Silver Pines felt dead quiet except for wind through the leaves. I waited in the shadows for the person who’d been haunting my thoughts.

These past days, the constant fog in my head made me feel sick. Something kept trying to mess with my mind, but at least I wasn’t as bad off as my brothers they were acting like complete puppets.

Moonlight filtered down through the trees, and finally I saw her. That small figure in the dark cloak, moving carefully into the clearing. Even in this

darkness, I'd know her anywhere.

"Evie. My voice came out rough from all the emotions I'd been holding back.

She ran straight to me without hesitation, throwing herself into my arms. I held her tight against my chest, like I could somehow absorb her into myself. For a moment, all the pain just disappeared.

'God, I missed you,' she mumbled into my chest, her breath warm through my shirt.

"Me too. My voice was shaking. I'd been going crazy without her these past days

We just held each other. Her warmth, her scent, the solid feel of her- everything reminded me this was real.

When she finally stepped back, I didn't want to let go.

'Did you get the materials?' I forced myself to focus.

'Yeah, Dora brought them. She pulled out an intricate charm and some paper from under her cloak. 'Juniper taught me an isolation spell. Want me to try it

on you first?'"

Looking at her serious expression, I didn't hesitate. "Of course. What do you need me to do?"

Whatever she asked, I'd do it without question.

"You might feel some...

pain.' She bit her lip. "Juniper said for people under control, this process really hurts.

Pain? After the voices in my head these past days, what was a little physical discomfort?

"I trust you,' I took her hand, meeting her eyes directly. Whatever came next, as long as it was her, I wasn't scared.

She took a deep breath and started chanting the ancient words. Those syllables wed from her lips like some kind of ancient call. The air immediately felt different, making my skin crawl.

Then the pain hit.

The second she started, something ripped through my mind. Not physical pain-mething deeper, like it was tearing at my soul. I couldn't help the groan that escaped, cold sweat breaking out instantly.

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10:11 Mon, Jan 12 D

Chapter 196: I Trust You

But I couldn't back down. I gritted my teeth and forced myself to stay upright. She needed me to hold on.

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She pressed the protective charm into my palm, then gripped my hand tight. The thing got burning hot immediately, almost searing our skin. But all I focused on was the warmth from her hand that was my anchor.

-

As the spell went deeper, the pain got worse. I felt the fog in my mind fighting back, struggling to keep its hold on me. Sweat poured down my face and my whole body started shaking.

Hold on,

told myself. For her. For us.

Finally my knees gave out. I hit the ground hard, the pain almost making me black out. But I kept holding her hand.

She dropped down with me, never stopping the chant. I could feel her worry, her heartbreak, but she knew she couldn't stop now. The charm kept getting hotter, like it might melt our palms together.

Just when I thought I couldn't take anymore, she spoke the final word.

Gentle light burst from the charm, wrapping around my whole body. That light was warm and pure, slowly sinking into me. I felt the fog in my mind starting to clear, those invisible chains finally breaking.

Then it was over. Relief hit me like a wave. I collapsed completely, gasping for air. This was real freedom – my own thoughts, my own mind.

She caught me, letting me lean against her.

“It’s done,” she said softly. “You’re okay now.”

I closed my eyes, feeling the joy of being free again. When I finally opened them and looked at her, the world seemed crystal clear. My thoughts weren’t

chained to anything anymore.

“Thank you.” My voice was hoarse with gratitude and something deeper.

We sat together in the moonlight, my hand still clutching the charm that had saved me. The process had been hell, but it was worth every second of pain.

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel

Chapter 197

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Souls Bound By Promise – Timothy Nelson

197

Chapter 197: Are You Ready?

Evelyn’s POV

We sat together in the Silver Pines clearing, neither wanting to break the peace.

Orion stood first, then pulled me up. We hugged again, trying to memorize each other’s warmth.

I should head back,’ he whispered, but didn’t let go.

“Wait.’ I suddenly tensed. “You smell like me now. What happens when you get back to your place?”

If Max or Luc caught a whiff...

72%

Without hesitation, Orion pulled off his T-shirt and handed it to me. Take this. Most of the scent’s on my clothes anyway, I should be fine going back like

this.”

I took the warm shirt, feeling heat creep up my neck. Under the moonlight, his bare chest looked... I quickly looked away, my cheeks burning

‘Won’t you freeze?’

He laughed softly. “This weather’s nothing. Just get back safe.

I nodded, carefully tucking his shirt into my bag, then turned to leave. After a few steps, his voice suddenly rang in my head:

See you tomorrow, Evie.

I spun around to see Orion grinning at me. He winked, then melted back into the shadows.

I stood there stunned. The mind link was actually working! Even though it was just between us, this was huge progress. Maybe the isolation spell didn’t just block external control – maybe it accidentally fixed our severed connection too.

The thought made my steps lighter on the way home.

Everyone was still awake when I got back to the safe house. Seeing me return in one piece, they all visibly relaxed.

‘How’d it go?’ Freya was first to ask.

‘It worked!’ I couldn’t hide my excitement. “The isolation spell totally worked. Oon’s free from the control, and our mind link back too!”

‘Holy shit, that’s amazing! Mark jumped up. ‘Can we use the same thing on the hers?’

“Yeah, but...” I remembered Orion’s face twisted in agony. It’s brutal. Orion bare held on, and his control was probably the lightest. If it’s Magnus and

Lucian...”

Everyone went quiet. If Orion suffered that much, what would happen to the ones under deeper control?

“There’s another problem,” Cyrus said. “How do we even get close to them? We can’t exactly drag them somewhere private in broad daylight.”

Good point. I rubbed my temples, exhaustion hitting me like a freight train. I needed through way too much magical energy tonight.

“Let’s figure it out tomorrow,’ I said. ‘At least we know the method works.’”

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10:11 Mon, Jan 12

Chapter 197: Are You Ready?

Mark woke me up the next morning. When I cracked my eyes open, sunlight was ready streaming through the curtains.

“What time is it? I mumbled.

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Almost training time,” he said. “Dora stopped by earlier. Made me promise to make sure you eat breakfast. Her exact words were, Look how skinny that

child’s gotten.”

I realized I’d barely been eating lately. Stress and anxiety had killed my appetite completely.

After rushing through my morning routine, I headed to the kitchen. Dora had prepared a huge breakfast spread, and... Milo?

Seeing him sitting at the table, I froze.

“Morning, Evie.’ He flashed that easy grin of his.

I walked over and hugged him tight. Even though we’d seen each other at training yesterday, we’d had to act distant then.

“Alright, alright,” he laughed, patting my back. “Now hit me with that magic thing you used on Orion last night. I heard it was pretty wild.”

I remembered I still hadn’t given him his protective charm. I quickly dug through my bag for the one I’d prepared.

“You sure you’re ready?” I asked. “Orion’s reaction last night was... pretty rough.”

His eyes widened. “But he told me it felt amazing! That bastard lied to me!”

Then he put on this mock-heroic expression. “Whatever. To break free from that psycho’s control, I can handle a little pain.”

I took a deep breath, gripped his hand, and started chanting.

Just like the night before, Milo started groaning in pain the second I began. His reaction was even worse than Orion's – his whole body seemed to be getting

torn apart by invisible forces, shaking and convulsing nonstop.

Halfway through, he was already curled in a ball, gritting his teeth to keep from reaming. Sweat had completely soaked through his clothes.

“Hold on!” I encouraged him while continuing the chant. “We're almost done!”

When I spoke the final word, the protective charm exploded with brilliant light. Milo's body went limp if Dora hadn't caught him, he would've hit the flowe

hard.

‘Jesus Christ... he gasped. That was so...’

it hurt like hell! his voice suddenly rang in my mind. But being able to talk again is incredible!

I laughed. Welcome back.”

Thank you, Evie, las mental voice was full of gratitude. You have no idey how exfit was not being able to speak freely the past few days.

‘Now we still need to get Elliot, Magnus, and Lucian.’ I said. “Any ideas on huset close to them?”

Milo frowned. “Elliot's double-he's been a mess lately, spends a lot of time alone But those two are tricky. They're mined at the hip now, grad

‘And what?’

2/3

10:11 Mon, Jan 12 D

Chapter 197: Are You Ready?

“Lucian looks at you like he wants to eat you alive,” he said bluntly. “I think he'sissed at Orion, jealous that you two can still communicate.”

73%

So that was it. A mess of emotions hit me guilt, heartache, and maybe a little sisfaction. After all, they'd chosen to stay neutral at first. Now they were suffering for it, but they

were Ori's brothers and meant so much to me. Seeing them controlled hurt too. Better to fix this mess quickly.

After breakfast, we headed to the training grounds together. The atmosphere felt different today – all the warriors seemed distracted.

Training had barely ended when Cyrus rushed over. “Did you hear? Alpha Adam’s hrowing a birthday party for the boys!”

“What?” I was stunned.

“Yeah,” Cyrus lowered his voice. “Their eighteenth birthday party was supposed to happen ages ago, but got postponed because of everything. Now Alpha

Adam suddenly decided to make it up to them.”

My heart sank. Alpha Adam wouldn’t make a decision like this right now. This had to be...

“Acacia,” I spit out the name.

“Probably,” Cyrus nodded. “She’s probably planning to use this to officially announce her Luna status. If she really controls Magnus and Lucian, publicly

confirming the mate bond at a birthday party – nobody could object.”

Damn it! I wanted to punch that woman right now. Not only was she controlling their minds, she was planning to humiliate them in front of everyone, forcing them to accept someone they didn’t love at all.

“We need to move faster,” I said. “We have to save everyone.”

That evening, I reached out to both Orion and Milo through the mind link:

Do you guys know about this birthday party?

What party? they both responded almost at the same time, voices confused.

Alpha Adam’s planning to make up your birthday celebration.

After a pause, Orion’s voice came back: We had no clue. Something like this shouldn’t involve us, right?

Obviously, Milo cut in. This is definitely Acacia’s doing. She can’t wait to become Lua.

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel

Chapter 198

Read The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel Chapter 198 -

Souls Bound By Promise – Timothy Nelson

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Chapter 198: Let Us Help You

4 73%

Evelyn's POV

We had to get to Elliot first, no matter what. The best shot would be during patrol - away from prying eyes. Cyrus would handle surveillance, Freya and the others would back me up. I just hoped Acacia wouldn't try to ship Freya off some here. That woman was doing everything possible to keep Elliot away from

her, pushing him toward her little gang instead.

I couldn't wrap my head around someone willing to destroy everything just for some stupid title.

Milo said his dad could adjust the patrol schedule, but we'd have to wait for the Weekend rotation to make it look normal. Four days. Four whole days before

I could save my brother.?

It felt like the longest wait of my life. While we planned the boys' birthday party as cover, Freya and I used the time to think through every detail. Even if the party never happened, at least having something to focus on kept us from going crazy. There was no backup plan this time - this method had to work.

Sunday finally rolled around. The new patrol schedule had gone out last night and started immediately. Elliot and Orion were grouped together, just like

we'd hoped.

Freya and I double-checked our gear. Something told me Elliot wouldn't be as easy as Milo and Orion had been. He'd always put the pack first, everything else second. Since we were

kids, he'd been taught that the Alpha was always right never to be questioned. That loyalty was great until it became blind faith.

We reached the ambush point early, masking our scents carefully. In the darkness, distant footsteps approached – Orion and Elliot on patrol. My heart hammered against my ribs, palms slick with sweat.

When they got closer, Elliot suddenly stopped. His head snapped toward our hiding spot in the bushes. Shit! I'd forgotten about that weird connection between him and Freya. Even without a Sentinel mark, they seemed to sense each other somehow.?

I shot Orion orders through the mind link.

Next second, Freya and I burst from the bushes. Orion immediately moved behind Elliot, trying to pin his arms. But Elliot's reaction was lightning-fast, his strength shocking – he broke free and lunged straight at Freya.

They hit the ground rolling, Elliot pinning her down. From where I stood, their struggle looked more like some twisted foreplay than actual fighting. Finally Elliot had her pinned, hands around her throat, but I could see he wasn't really applying pressure.

Freya looked up at him, eyes calm and almost teasing, like she was saying: That's all you got?

'Let us help you,' she said softly, gently gripping his hands.

Those words seemed to flip a switch. Confusion flashed across Elliot's eyes and froze completely. Freya rolled away fast. Orion came forward again, this time successfully restraining him. Elliot still fought, but that explosive strength was gone.

I took a deep breath and started chanting. The ancient words flowed out, and magic immediately thickened the air.

Elliot started writhing in pain, his body twisting in Orion's grip. His face contorted, cold sweat breaking out everywhere. I could feel his agony that soul-deep tearing sensation but I couldn't stop. This was to save him.

When I spoke the final word, Elliot let out a bone-deep roar. Then his body went limp, collapsing in Orion's arms.

Orion carefully lowered him to the ground. I rushed forward, pressing the burning hot protective charm into Elliot's palm. The moment it touched his skin, gentle light wrapped around his entire body.

10:11 Mon, Jan 12 D

Chapter 198: Let Us Help You

Elliot's eyes snapped open. He shot upright, gasping like he'd just been pulled from drowning.

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Freya immediately moved forward, pulling him into her arms. Elliot buried his face in her neck, his body still trembling. We all waited quietly, giving him

time to come back to himself.

'Finally decided to rejoin us, Beta, Freya whispered in his ear, teasing but worrie

Elliot slowly lifted his head, looking at the charm in his hand, then at us. His eye gradually cleared.

'Fuck, I can actually talk again.' His voice was raw. "But now I'm wondering how the hell are we gonna save Magnus and Lucian? It took all three of you

just to handle me."

"We'll have to work together," I said. "And I think we need to keep them together can't separate them. They can feel each other's pain, so if we don't do it

at the same time, it might not work. If their reactions are like yours or worse, we absolutely cannot let Acacia notice. But how do we pull that off? You

nearly tore us apart just now."

"Because those were fresh orders, Elliot explained, anger edging his voice. "We were supposed to keep away from you. You guys were marked for arrest and

containment."

"New orders after I broke free? Why didn't I know about this?" Orion looked shocked.

"Because you're not under their control - they don't give a shit about you." Elliot Hulled his eyes. "Honestly, if whoever's behind this had half a brain, after

what you pulled, they might start paying attention."

We kept discussing rescue plans, but time was running short. Only two weeks until their party. Elliot walked over and gave me a bear hug that nearly

cracked my ribs, but I didn't care. It felt incredible.

"We'll figure it out, Evie," he said in my ear. "As long as you keep fighting and never give up. That's the only way we survive this."

After saying goodbye, we finished the patrol.

I tried reaching Taric and Conrad but got radio silence, though I could sense they received my messages they just couldn't respond. I didn't think they

were deliberately ignoring me, but who knew? I hated this helpless feeling of being cut off from everything. It was like being trapped on an island. Our

Sentinel mind links should work across any distance – this was all wrong.

When we got back to the training ground, several warriors were already waiting. I could feel tension in the air not fear exactly, but this mix of anticipation

and unease.

Sophia slowly walked over, studying mine and Freya's faces.

'So it worked, right?' She grinned. "You two look like you went ten rounds."

"You're ridiculous,' Freya laughed back. But yeah, you're not wrong. I just want crash now. Let me know if you think of anything."

We all nodded, watching her leave. I noticed Freya's steps were much lighter. Maybe with Elliot finally free, some weight had lifted from her heart.

Just then, Delta Griffin appeared at the training ground entrance. He walked forward slowly, raising both hands to signal for quiet.

2/3

10:12 Mon, Jan 12 DG

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel

Chapter 199

Read The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel Chapter 199 –

Souls Bound By Promise – Timothy Nelson

199

Chapter 199: You'll Definitely Be the Most Attractive One

Evelyn's POV

73%

Delta Griffin cleared his throat. 'Everyone knows Alpha Adam has decided to make up for the boys' postponed eighteenth birthday party. All warriors are required to attend for security and to make sure everything runs smoothly.'

His voice sounded off – too stiff, not like the usual energetic training officer I knew. I caught the way his jaw tensed, the slight hesitation before he spoke.

He was fighting something inside.

"Sentinels," his eyes swept over me and my teammates, "you're in charge of planning and organizing the party. Alpha Adam wants this celebration to be...

memorable.

Memorable? I nearly snorted. That didn't sound like Alpha Adam at all. He'd always kept things simple, never cared about flashy stuff.

"We'll go over the details at tomorrow's meeting,' Griffin continued. "For now, get back to training."

Before he left, he shot me a look. His eyes were trying to tell me something, but with everyone watching, he couldn't say what he really meant.

I sighed without thinking. He glanced back at me, and for a second, I saw understanding in his expression. He got how helpless I felt, but he was just as trapped. Damn Acacia. Wasn't it enough that she'd hijacked the whole pack? Now she had to take away everyone I cared about too.

After training, we headed back to the safe house. The team immediately started talking party plans. Even though we all knew this might be complete bullshit, at least it gave us something to focus on besides everything falling apart

"We could do some special decorations," Mark suggested. "If we're gonna do this thing, might as well do it right."

*Food and music too, Cyrus added. “We need everything to look normal so Acacia doesn’t get suspicious.”

I nodded, but my mind was already somewhere else. I had to try reaching the outside world again, figure out what the hell was really happening.

I walked to a corner and closed my eyes, concentrating on sending messages through the Sentinel mark to Taric and Alpha King Nathan. I laid out everything – Acacia’s family controlling people, the birthday party setup, our rescue plans.

Nothing. Radio silence, just like before.

The isolation was driving me insane. Just as I was about to give up, I thought of niper. Maybe a witch’s communication wouldn’t be blocked? I shifted my focus and tried calling her through the mind link.

Holy shit, it actually worked!

Evelyn? Finally! I’ve been trying to reach you! Juniper’s voice burst into my head, arly panicked.

Juniper! I almost yelled out loud. What’s going on? Why can’t I contact anyone else

Listen, we don’t have much time, her voice turned serious. Your territory’s been locked down by a barrier. I’m guessing you’ve felt it already – it’s blocking your mind links and most communication.

My heart dropped. So we really were trapped.

This barrier wasn’t cast by my coven, Juniper continued. You’re basically under house arrest right now. We’re working to break it from outside, but you need to find the source from within.

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10:12 Mon, Jan 12 DAG.

Chapter 199: You’ll Definitely Be the Most Attractive One

The source? What am I looking for?

“ 73%u

Could be an object, but most likely a magic circle – like what you and Freya saw when you escaped from the Rogue King.

Ice ran through my veins. That nightmare came flooding back – Brandon using that circle to control his people. Now the same thing was here, in our territory.

The anchor point should be near your territory's center, Juniper explained. Given the coverage, it'd be pretty hard to hide completely.

I need to find this circle and destroy it, but listen carefully don't touch the circle directly. Any magic circle will kill whoever makes contact.

Then how do I handle it? Confusion flooded my mind.

Trust your instincts, Evelyn. Half of magic is intuition. You'll know what to do when the time comes.

Also, her voice became urgent, we've tracked down Mia's location. Conrad's planning a rescue – we have to move before they transfer her. I need to go help.

“Wait – ”

Take care, kiddo. I'll find you when I can. Remember, watch for magical fluctuations around you it could save your life.

The connection cut off.

4

I opened my eyes to find everyone staring at me. I realized I'd been kneeling on the floor, completely lost in the conversation.

“Evie, you just went totally still,” Mark said, worried. “What happened?”

“Juniper finally got through,” I stood up, trying to organize everything she'd told me. “Our suspicions were right – the whole territory's trapped by a magical barrier.”

“Not exactly breaking news,” Sophia said, taking a swig from her beer bottle.

“What's new is the barrier's powered by a magic circle. Just like the one Brandon used to control his people.”

Freya's bottle hit the floor. Her face went white as a sheet.

“No... that's impossible...” her voice shook. “How could that thing be here?”

I moved over to steady her. I understood her terror that magic circle didn't just mean powerful control magic. It brought back her worst memories.

"We have to find it," I said firmly, "Then figure out how to destroy it. It's the only way to break the barrier and reconnect with the outside world.

"Problem is, Cyrus frowned, 'where would they hide something that big without yone noticing?"

'Near the territory center,' I repeated Juniper's words. 'And given how much are covers, it shouldn't be that easy to hide."

'So that means... Mark's eyes lit up. It's probably near the pack house!"

We all looked at each other. If the magic circle was really there, getting close would be nearly impossible. But at least now we had a target.

We spent the next few hours preparing for the birthday party while secretly planing our search for the circle. Everyone had jobs - Mark and Cyrus on

close to possible locations. technical support, Sophia gathering intel, while Freya and I figured out how to g

2/3

10:12 Mon, Jan 12 DG.

Chapter 199: You'll Definitely Be the Most Attractive On

When evening came, Sophia suddenly pulled me toward the bedroom.

"Come on,' she said mysteriously. 'Since you're going to this party tomorrow, you can't show up in training clothes."

4 ▣ 73%

Right. I'd been so focused on everything else, I'd forgotten about looking the part. Even with my mind full of worry, proper disguise was necessary.

Freya followed us in with several outfits draped over her arm.

"I picked this out especially for you,' she said, unfolding a deep blue dress. "Pretty enough but won't get in your way if you need to move fast."

For the next half hour, my two friends treated me like their personal dress-up do. They helped me pick clothes, did my hair, even applied light makeup.

'Don't forget to hide some blades under the dress, Freya whispered. "Just in case

I nodded, expertly securing several small daggers against my thighs and calves. The dress might look innocent, but having weapons made me feel better.

When they finished, Sophia stepped back to admire their work.

"Perfect, she grinned with a hint of mischief in her eyes. "You'll definitely be the most attractive one there."