

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel

Souls Bound By Promise — Timothy Nelson 2

Chapter 2: Someone Like You Shouldn't Exist

Evelyn's POV

My heart dropped.

Stay calm, my wolf whispered. Don't give her what she wants.

I kept changing, pretending I hadn't heard anything. Maybe she'd get bored and move on to someone else.

The booth door slammed open. Acacia stood there with Zoey and Chloe flanking her, already in their training gear. Acacia's was obviously tailored tighter than regulation – probably hoping to catch the triplets' attention.

"I was talking to you, freak." She stepped inside, forcing me back against the wall. "Heard you made yourself a little friend today."

"I didn't do anything."

"That's the problem." Her palm slammed next to my head. "You're supposed to stay invisible. Not go around corrupting new students."

Zoey and Chloe blocked the exit, wearing matching smirks. I knew this routine by heart.

"Maybe she needs a reminder about her place," Zoey suggested, way too eager.

Acacia grabbed a fistful of my hair and yanked hard. The pain shot through my scalp, but I bit down and didn't make a sound.

Just get through this, I told myself. It'll be over soon.

"Who the hell do you think you are?" Her voice dropped to a whisper. "Beta's daughter? Don't make me laugh. You're not even worth the dirt under my shoes."

“Your mom died because even the Moon Goddess knew you shouldn’t exist,” Chloe chimed in. “What a waste.”

I stayed quiet. Fighting back only made things worse.

“I’m talking to you!” Acacia shoved my shoulder hard. I hit the tile wall, and the barely healed cuts on my back screamed. “That new girl – Nadia, right?”

My pulse spiked. No. Leave Nadia out of this.

“She’s got nothing to do with me,” I said, trying to keep my voice steady. “She just sat next to me by accident.”

“Bullshit,” Chloe snorted. “We saw you two talking and walking here together.”

Acacia leaned closer. I could smell her cheap perfume mixing with malice. “Listen up, waste. That new girl looks promising. But if she keeps hanging around trash like you, her life here’s gonna turn into hell. Remember what happened to the last girl who tried being your friend?”

Of course I remembered. The transfer student last year who’d been nice to me – her locker got trashed, backpack thrown in the toilet. She transferred out within a month. After that, nobody dared get close.

“That’s not fair.” The words slipped out before I could stop them.

Acacia’s eyes went ice cold. “Fair? You think you get to talk to me about fair?”

She let go of my hair, and the next second her palm cracked across my face. The sound echoed in the small space. My cheek burned instantly, tears stinging my eyes.

“Life was never fair, especially for freaks like you who shouldn’t exist.” She smoothed down her platinum hair. “Your whole existence is a mistake.”

Her nails dragged across my arm, leaving angry red lines. “You know what? I was having a great day too. Just got a text from Magnus. But seeing your pathetic attempt at making friends? Makes me sick.”

Magnus – one of the triplet Alphas. Acacia had been obsessing over those three since middle school, convinced one of them would be her mate.

“Maybe we should give her a reality check,” Zoey said eagerly. “Help her remember her place.”

Acacia considered this, then smiled in a way that made my blood freeze. “You’re right. Dogs need to know where their kennels are.”

She pulled something from her bag. My pupils contracted in terror.

Silver powder.

“No, please don’t-” I finally broke, voice shaking.

“Please?” Acacia laughed. “The freak knows how to beg? Too bad – too late.”

She opened the bottle while Zoey and Chloe grabbed my arms, forcing me to face the wall. I struggled, but they were stronger than me.

“Lift her shirt up.”

My training shirt got yanked up roughly, exposing my scarred back to the cold air. I shivered involuntarily.

“Look at all these marks,” Acacia mocked. “Like a diary of every time you failed. How about we add today’s entry?”

The silver powder hit my back like liquid fire. I bit my lip hard enough to taste blood, refusing to give them the satisfaction of hearing me scream.

Hold on, my wolf snarled. Don’t let them break you.

“Evie? You in there?”

Nadia’s voice cut through the locker room noise, clear and worried. Acacia’s hand froze mid-air.

“Shit,” she hissed.

“Evie?” Nadia sounded closer now. “You okay? We’re gonna be late.”

Acacia quickly capped the bottle and whispered poison in my ear. “Lucky break this time. But I’m watching you. Stay away from that new girl, or next time won’t be so easy.”

Her voice dropped even lower. “Next time, I’ll use the whole bottle. Maybe something worse. Think real hard about whether your pathetic dignity is worth it.”

The three of them slipped out fast. I slumped against the wall, gasping, the burning pain across my back making it hard to stand.

Pull yourself together, I ordered myself. Can’t let Nadia see.

I gritted my teeth and pulled my shirt down, every movement tugging at the fresh burns. At the sink, I splashed cold water on my face. In the mirror, I looked pale as death with a bright red handprint on my cheek.

Deep breath. Fix your expression. This was my daily routine – hiding pain, pretending everything was normal.

I pushed open the booth door. Nadia stood by the sinks waiting, and her face immediately creased with worry.

“There you are.” Relief flooded her voice, then her frown deepened. “What happened to your face?”

“Walked into the door,” I lied smoothly. “Come on, or we really will be late.”

She obviously didn’t buy it, but just nodded. We hurried out of the locker room, me doing my best not to let the pain in my back show in how I walked.

This was my life. The “wonderful” existence of Beta Raymond’s daughter.

The second I stepped onto the training field, some of the weight lifted off my shoulders. The air here smelled like sweat, dirt, and honest effort – the most familiar scent in my world. No matter how cruel everything else got, the training field was my sanctuary.

“Everyone start with ten minutes of warm-up!” Delta Griffin’s voice boomed across the field.

Griffin was one of the few people who actually gave a damn about me. Two years ago when my wolf accidentally awakened at fourteen, he was the one who found me unconscious in Silver Pines after two days missing. He and Luna Isabella had saved my life.

They’d been my secret guardians ever since.

I headed straight for my usual spot in the corner – a row of pull-up bars and punching bags where I could warm up alone. Nadia followed, looking around with interest.

“You always warm up over here?” she asked.

“Yeah.” I started stretching, trying to ignore the fresh silver burns screaming across my back. “It’s quieter.”

Safer, I added silently. Acacia and her crew won’t try anything under Griffin’s nose.