

The Lightning Wolf Chronicles Novel

Souls Bound By Promise – Timothy Nelson

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Chapter 9: Today Has a Special Arrangement

Magnus's POV

At six in the morning, Dad woke us up.

"Today's got a special arrangement," he said. "I need you three to come observe a test with me."

"What kind of test? Lucian asked, still half asleep.

"Leadership." Dad's tone was serious. "We're looking for young people with real potential.

So we followed Dad and the other leaders to a hidden spot near the training field. Perfect view of everything, but nobody down there

could see us.

"The cubs are gonna pretend to lose control, Delta Griffin explained. "We want to see which students can actually handle an emergency."

"Pretend?" Milo frowned. "Isn't that kinda dangerous?"

"Everything's controlled," Luna Isabella said gently. "The children know their limits, and we can step in anytime."

Elliot stood next to me looking uncomfortable. I knew what he was thinking – his sister would definitely show up.

Sure enough, when the "chaos" started, Evelyn was one of the first students there.

What happened next completely blew me away.

I watched other students fail one by one. Some tried using force on the kids, which just made them more aggressive. Others tried sweet-talking them, but the cubs weren't buying it. Most just stood around looking lost.

Then Evelyn moved.

First thing she did was get those ‘unconscious’ kids to safety. Smart thinking, calm action. The way she weaved through all that chaos was incredible every movement perfectly timed.

‘Her skills are better than most adult warriors, Orion said quietly.

But what really got me was what she did next.

She didn’t try to overpower anyone or give empty comfort. She understood the kids were scared and used something familiar to get their attention. Then she slowly guided them down.

“Deep breath in... now let it out slow...”

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Her voice carried across the field gentle but firm. I watched those out of control kids get drawn to her, gathering around one by one.

“She knows every single child,” Mom said softly, admiration clear in her voice. “She can call their names, knows their personalities. She’s

always been thoughtful like that.”

That was the key. Evelyn wasn’t dealing with a bunch of crazy cubs she was helping scared children. That small difference changed

everything.

When she was getting ready to jump down from the platform, I saw that puddle of water. Almost without thinking, I rushed out.

The moment I caught her, I realized how light she was. All that strength, but her body was so small. When she opened her eyes to look at

me, those smoky blue eyes showed surprise and... maybe a little shyness?

“That was incredible, Lucian said when he reached us. “How’d you think to use breathing techniques?”

Evelyn’s POV

I still couldn't process what had just happened. My face was burning partly from the 'performance, partly from being caught by Magnus.

"I just... I took a breath, trying to calm down. "I thought they needed something familiar to focus on. I teach them those techniques all

the time.

Alpha Adam walked over, his presence commanding but his voice gentle: "Well done, Evelyn. You showed real leadership - not through force or authority, but understanding and trust."

"Thank you, Alpha Adam." I ducked my head, not used to public praise.

"Your connection with the children impressed me," Luna Isabella added. "You knew every name, how to comfort each one. That doesn't

happen overnight."

"I spend my free time with them a lot, I admitted. "They're good kids."

"Those reports were accurate then,' Delta Griffin said. 'People mentioned seeing you at the cub training area during your breaks."

I nodded. Yeah, when I needed to escape everything else, that place was my refuge. The kids didn't avoid me because I was 'the one who

killed her mother they just liked me.

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"That's why you succeeded, Gamma Thomas said thoughtfully. "Others saw troublemakers. You saw children who needed help.

The cubs surrounded us now, chattering excitedly:

"Evie, did I do good?"

"Alpha Adam said we had to make it super realistic!"

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“Sorry we tricked you, but it was so fun!”

I ruffled their hair. “You fooled me completely. Way too good at acting.”

“That’s ’cause we’re the best little actors!” Tommy puffed out his chest.

Everyone laughed.

“Alright, children, mission accomplished, Alpha Adam said. “You can head back now.”

The cubs cheered and scattered, not forgetting to wave goodbye. Watching them bounce away made my chest warm.

Alpha Adam suddenly addressed the five boys. “You five stay.”

“I want you to talk with Evelyn,” Alpha Adam continued. “Learn how she builds connections with younger pack members. Essential skill

for leaders.”

“Yes, Alpha Adam,” Magnus replied.

Finally, Alpha Adam smiled at me. “Classes are suspended today – don’t worry about that. Have a good conversation with them.”

The leaders and other students left, leaving just seven of us on the field me, Nadia, and the five boys.

Awkward silence.

“We’d like to take you to lunch,” Magnus said suddenly. “As thanks for today’s performance. How about Wolf’s Corner?”

I stared at him. They were... inviting me to eat?

“I should probably go home,” I said quickly. “I’ve got homework and stuff.”

Lame excuse, but I had no idea how to handle this kind of invitation. Eating with them? This had never happened before.

“Oh please!” Nadia immediately grabbed my arm. “Homework can wait, but hanging out with friends can’t. We’re going!”

“Nadia...” I tried to protest.

“No arguments,” she said firmly. “Besides, I’m starving. That whole thing took a lot out of me.”

“Then it’s settled,” Milo clapped his hands. “Rosa made special Silver Pine fruit scones today. Can’t miss those.”

“Silver Pine fruit scones?” Nadia’s eyes lit up. “That sounds amazing!”

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Looking at her hopeful face, I couldn’t say no. “Fine...”

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“Awesome! Milo cheered. “Let’s go before my stomach starts eating itself.”

The seven of us headed toward Wolf’s Corner. Nadia and I walked in the middle while the boys naturally formed a protective circle around

Wolf’s Corner sat in the center of Polaris, a family restaurant run by retired warriors. Plain outside, but amazing smells always drifted

from the kitchen.

“Afternoon, boys! Rosa greeted us warmly when we walked in. And you brought guests!”

Her eyes found Nadia and me, surprise flickering across her face.

“Rosa, we want the usual, Milo grinned. “Plus those Silver Pine fruit scones.”

“Coming right up!” Rosa beamed. “Take that big round table – I’ll get everything ready.”

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Evelyn's POV

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We grabbed the big round table in the corner – perfect for seven people. I tried to sit on the edge, but Nadia pulled me into the middle.

“This place feels so homey,” Nadia said, looking around.

“Rosa’s cooking is amazing,” Magnus said. “We’ve been coming here since we were kids.”

“Really?” I was surprised.

“Yeah,” Lucian nodded. “Every week after training, Dad would bring us here. It’s tradition now.”

“So,” Milo leaned forward with that grin of his, eyes on Nadia, “how’d you get so tight with those kids? They looked at you like you were

some kind of superhero.”

“Superhero?” I blinked. “I just... hang out with them.”

“Honestly, we thought nobody would pull it off,” Milo said. “Even though they’re just cubs, that many kids together? Total nightmare. I figured everyone would fail.”

“And?” Nadia raised an eyebrow.

*Completely blew our minds,” Orion said simply. “Evie’s performance was way beyond anything we expected.”

Magnus nodded. ‘Definitely.’

Everyone was staring at me again. My cheeks heated up. “I just thought... if I made training fun, they’d actually pay attention.”

Rosa appeared with a massive plate of food – fragrant Silver Pine fruit scones, fried eggs, bacon, fresh fruit.

“Dig in!” she beamed. “Holler if you need anything else.”

“Thanks!” we all said together.

The food smelled incredible. I realized I was starving between morning classes and the whole cub situation, I’d burned through a lot of

energy.

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“These scones are incredible!” Nadia said after her first bite.

“Told you I wouldn’t let you down,” Milo said proudly.

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Chapter 10: Lower Your Reputation

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The atmosphere was way more relaxed than I’d expected. The guys talked about training, school, pack stuff. I even found myself jumping in occasionally.

“You know, Evie, Milo said suddenly, “watching you today reminded me of my first Delta training session.”

“What happened?” Nadia asked.

“I was so nervous I face-planted in front of everyone. Talk about embarrassing!” Milo said dramatically, making everyone crack up.

Just as things were getting comfortable, the restaurant door slammed open. A voice like nails on a chalkboard cut through our laughter:

“Well, well. Look what we have here.”

My blood turned to ice. Acacia.

She strutted in wearing a tight pink dress, makeup perfect, obviously dressed to impress. Zoey and Chloe trailed behind her like matching

accessories.

“Acacia,” Magnus’s voice went cold. “Morning.”

“Morning, boys!” She walked over, completely ignoring Nadia and me. “What brings you here?”

“Lunch,” Lucian said curtly.

Acacia’s eyes swept the table. When she spotted me, her smile turned predatory.

“Oh, I see. Her voice dripped with fake sweetness. “You’re actually eating with them? How... interesting.”

“Got a problem with that?” Nadia frowned.

“Of course not,” Acacia’s smile was pure poison. “I just didn’t expect your taste to be so... unique.”

She locked eyes with me, not bothering to hide her malice. “Getting too close to certain people can really damage your reputation.

Especially those who cause chaos.”

My stomach dropped. She’d heard about this morning.

‘Cause chaos?’ Lucian snorted. “Your intel’s wrong. Evelyn solved the problem, didn’t create it.”

“Oh?” Acacia acted shocked. “She handled that little performance? I thought it was just kids throwing tantrums. What’s the big deal?”

She was deliberately downplaying what happened, trying to make my success seem worthless. Classic Acacia move.

“If you think that was just ‘kids throwing tantrums,’ Elliot spoke up, his voice deadly calm, “maybe you should ask Alpha Adam if he

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agrees.

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Acacia’s face went ugly. She obviously hadn’t expected this unified pushback.

“You’ll regret this,’ she finally hissed, her gaze burning into me. “Especially you, Evelyn.”

She spun around and stalked out, her followers scrambling after her.

The whole restaurant was staring. Awkward silence pressed down on us.

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My stomach churned. The food I'd just eaten felt like rocks. That familiar fear crept up my spine – after every confrontation with Acacia,

something worse always followed.

“I need to go.” I shot to my feet, my voice shaking.

“Evie...” Nadia reached for me.

“Sorry, I really have to leave.” I dodged her hand and bolted for the door.

The cold air hit my face as I burst outside. I gasped, trying to calm my racing heart.

You're running again, my wolf said quietly. When are you gonna stop running?

I'm not running, I shot back. I'm protecting myself. Staying out of trouble.

Sure you are.

I walked fast toward home, desperate to get back to my room where it was safe. But footsteps pounded behind me.

“Evie! Wait up!”

Nadia's voice. I stopped but didn't turn around.

“Why are you running?” She appeared in front of me, breathing hard. “What she said doesn't matter.”

“You don't get it.” I shook my head. “This isn't just about words.”

“Then what is it about?” Her eyes were full of concern. “Evie, talk to me.”

I looked at her genuine expression, feeling the urge to spill everything. But logic kicked in telling her would just make her a target too.

“It's nothing,” I finally chose silence. “I'm just... not used to scenes like that.”

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Nadia studied me, like she was measuring how much truth I was telling.

“Alright,” she said finally. “I won't push you. But I want you to know whatever's going on, you're not alone.”

She took my hand. "Come on, let's go to my place. We need to get ready for tonight."

"Tonight? I'd almost forgotten about the dinner."

"Yes," she smiled. "Remember? The welcome dinner at Alpha Adam's house. We're gonna make you look absolutely stunning."

"Nadia, I'm not sure I want to go anymore..."

"Don't even think about it!" She cut me off. "This is important."

She pulled me toward her house. "Besides, I've got the perfect plan for you."

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Nadia's house was warmer than I'd imagined. The living room overflowed with plants and books, scientific charts and family photos

covering the walls. The place buzzed with life total opposite of my cold, empty house.

"My parents are at the research institute," Nadia explained, "so we've got all afternoon to prep."

She dragged me upstairs to her room. Way bigger than mine, decorated with personality. Posters covered the walls, skincare products and

makeup scattered across her desk.

"Alright," she rubbed her hands together, eyes sparkling with excitement. "Let's do this! Tonight, everyone's gonna see the real you!"