

The Millennium Wolves Series Book one Chapter: 07

FOUR YEARS AGO...

Sienna

When somebody smiles in public, all by themselves, for no apparent reason, without a care in the world, that can mean only one thing: they're in love.

That was what I saw when I looked at Emily, my best friend, sitting by the bus stop, waiting for me, kicking her shoes absentmindedly. A big goofy grin on her face.

"Em!" I yelled out, waving.

She turned, shaken from her daydream, and got to her feet. She smiled at me, but it was a different smile. A more subdued, familiar smile.

Not even close to the radiance of the she kept to herself.

"Hey, Si," she said, giving me a quick hug. "So what's on the agenda for today?"

"A new gallery I've been dying to check out. C'mon!"

I figured I'd interrogate her on the way. Give her a second to catch her bearings first. After all, love was not much of a priority in my life these days.

I was only fifteen years old. The Haze wouldn't start for another year. Nothing in the world could worry me now.

But that didn't mean I wasn't curious. As we made our way through a scenic shortcut in the middle of the town, I found I couldn't contain myself any longer.

"So," I said, looking at Emily, "you have something to share, Em?"

"What?" Emily said too quickly. "I...don't know what you're talking about."

Hardly convincing. Her red cheeks and darting eyes betrayed whatever secret she was hiding

"C'mon, Em," I said, nudging her. "It's just me. You know you can tell me anything."

Emily sighed, eyes to the ground, kicking a pine cone. But I could tell she was going to cave. We were best friends. We never kept secrets. Why would Emily start now?

"You swear not to tell anyone?"

"On my life."

) And I meant it. Emily's eyes finally met mine,

*and I saw a hint of that radiant smile sneak up
in the corners of her mouth. She could hardly contain herself.*

"Remember how I told you I wanted to sleep with someone before we start Hazing?"

*"Yeah," I said. "So it's less of a shock,
right?"*

"Right. Well... I think I might have... met someone."

*I stopped, jaw dropping, grabbing Emily's
arm.*

"Are you serious?!" I exclaimed. "WHAT? When? How? Who? I want details."

"I'll tell you everything, Si." Emily laughed. "One thing at a time."

I'd known, from that look on Emily's face earlier, that there was someone. But I never would have expected it to be...that kind of someone. The kind you lose your virginity to.

"Just tell me one thing," I said, growing serious. "Are you sure he's the right one?"

"No," Emily admitted. "But he's older. More experienced, which I like. Because that means at least one of us will know what we're doing"

We giggled for a second and kept walking. But I had so many questions.

"Wait. How much older, Em?"

"Ten years?"

"Woah. You weren't kidding."

"But it doesn't matter. He's tall and handsome and so confident, my God. When I talk, it's like he really listens. With such... intensity.

And I could see from the look in Emily's eyes, from the smile on her face, that she was right. His age didn't matter one bit.

My friend was falling in love.

And I was gonna be there for her.

I grabbed her hand. "I'm so happy for you, Em."

"I mean, we'll see," she said. "Who knows if he even wants the same."

"Look at you, Em," I said, shoving her arm playfully. "How can he resist?"

"You dominants," she said, rolling her eyes.

*And now we
were both laughing, hand in hand, on our way to wherever the afternoon would take us,
our plans to see the gallery long forgotten.*

The two of us were unstoppable. Together, we'd make our mark on the world.

I woke up with a start, head still
cloudy with memories. My hand immediately shot to my neck, swollen and bruised.

Shit. Emily may have
been a dream, but this mark wasn't. This was a fucking nightmare.

A torrent of texts lit up my phone as it started vibrating like crazy.

Michelle

girl!

Michelle answer your damn phone already!

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Sienna Ughh Michelle, it's so early

Sienna What is it?

Michelle u have some explaining to do

Sienna

???

Michelle get ur ass to winston's

FIL

Michelle we'll all be there

Michelle

I rolled over in bed, groaning. The last thing I wanted to do was face an interrogation from my friends. After last night, after being marked by the Alpha...

Oh God. How was I going to cover it?!

When I took a look in the mirror, the sight **alone was enough to make me gasp.**

The bite was a massive, bruised blue spot across my neck, bigger than any bite I'd ever seen before

It didn't hurt. In fact, it almost tingled with a carnal sensation. Every time I touched it, I could feel Aiden Norwood's teeth again.

I shook off the feeling and started getting dressed. I grabbed the largest scarf I could find and wrapped it around my neck.

At the very least, seeing Michelle and the girls would get the Alpha off my mind.

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A distraction was exactly what I needed right now.

When I arrived at Winston's, our group's go-to brunch place, I saw that the entire crew was already assembled.

Michelle, who had a new partner every

Haze, was chatting to the girls about her latest conquest. Right now, I think the lucky guy was...

Ralph?

Russell?

No, Ross. That was it. Hard to keep them all straight when it came to Michelle,

Don't get me wrong. It wasn't like Michelle **was a floozy**

She just was incredibly comfortable with her sexuality and didn't let anyone tell her what she could or couldn't do.

It was Michelle who had tried to set me up with three of her friends and Michelle who kept the grapevine flowing with gossip.

"There she is!" Michelle exclaimed when I walked in.

"Hey, guys," I said, sitting down, self-consciously adjusting my scarf.

I had managed to sneak out of the Pack House without anyone noticing last night and intended to keep the Alpha's mark a secret as long as I could.

Before they could start grilling me about the event, I noticed Mia. She was positively glowing. I grabbed her hands.

"Mia, I am so so SO happy for you and Harry."

"Thanks, Si." She grinned. "I can hardly believe it's real. **One second** you're best friends, the next..."

"You're jumping each other's bones," Michelle teased, jabbing Mia's ribs.

Mia started thrusting her hips, miming sex in the middle of the diner. "Damn straight!"

"So when's the mating ceremony? Do you have a location picked out?" I asked.

"A few months. I'm not really worried about it. Harry's family has an ass-load of properties. The perks of mating with a real estate mogul's son," she smirked.

"Must be nice," I said, laughing.

"Yeah, must be nice," Erica said, not laughing at all.

Erica was never good at hiding her bitterness. Another season with no partner seemed to be making her more sexually frustrated than usual.

We all tried to ignore it, knowing this was just the effect of the Haze. Usually, Erica was the sweetest girl in the world.

It wasn't easy being alone during the Haze,

I could attest. But now **I had even bigger** problems. And it seemed Michelle was about **to suss them out.**

“All right,” Michelle said, taking over the conversation. “We’ve avoided the subject long enough. C’mon, Sienna. Talk to us.”

“It was..” I started, trying to figure out my best deflection strategy. “Fine. Not all that different from the Yule Ball or Summer Solstice. Just less people. A bit more intimate.”

“Intimate, huh?” Michelle asked, grinning.

I didn’t like the knowing look in her eyes. But it wasn’t like she could know. Nobody did. Nobody had seen the Alpha mark me. I was sure of it.

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“Yeah. My family got some face-time with the Pack House leadership. It was good for our standing. That’s all.”

“That’s not what Michelle said...” Erica snipped

“What?” I turned to Michelle.

“Damn it, Erica,” Michelle scoffed. “Couldn’t you just keep your mouth shut and let Sienna tell us for herself?”

“Tell you WHAT?!”

I didn’t realize that I was yelling until the whole diner went quiet and turned to look at us. I wasn’t mad. I was enraged. How could this happen? How could anyone know?

“Sienna,” Michelle said softly. “It’s not a big deal. We heard that you and the Alpha might have had a little moment, that’s all. Some people saw you two leaving the dining hall around the same time and....

I was so hot with rage that I had to loosen my scarf, and as I did, I saw Michelle’s eyes go wide.

“Wait,” she said. “What’s that?”

Shit! How could I have been so stupid?

I should have never left my room for the remainder of the Haze. Going out in public with this massive, ugly mark on my neck?

I might as well have worn a sign that said, "I'm screwed, thanks for asking."

The worst part was, while I was marked like this, most male wolves would avoid me. That meant another season without finding my real mate.

Another **Haze with no one to call my own**. With one bite, Aiden had taken that all away

from me

Realizing I couldn't keep the jig up for long, I sighed and slowly unwrapped my **scarf**. When the girls saw it, they all gasped and put their hands to their mouths.

"That's not..." Michelle started, disbelieving

"Yup," I said. "The Alpha marked me last night. I'm his for the Season. Lucky me, right?"

This last part I said dripping with sarcasm. But I could tell from the expression on Erica's face that it was not appreciated. She scowled.

"You could be more thankful," Erica said. "Getting marked by the Alpha of all people?"

"That's a big deal, Si."

"I know, I just,"

"Are you kidding, this is AMAZING!" Michelle exclaimed.

"Dammit, Sienna, always trying to one-up me!" Mia teased.

I sighed, unsure how to **explain this**.

The problem was none of the girls **knew my secret**. Nobody knew I was still a virgin, So how could I frame this in a way they'd **understand?**

"He didn't ask," I said. "He just...bit me. Like I was his property, and that was that."

"Si," Michelle said, shaking her head. "I know you like to make your own rules. But, man, I would kill for a chance to fuck the Alpha. You kidding? I'd do whatever he wanted. Besides, now that he's marked you, it's not like you have a choice, right? There's no one either of you can sleep with for the rest of the season."

And now I could see that, despite Michelle being paired with Ross for the Haze, there was some jealousy in her eyes. Mostly for the status, I figured.

Nobody, not Michelle, not Mia, not Erica, would understand.

I was about to try to find a way to change the subject when I received a text that made everything even worse.

If that was possible.

Selene Guess what just arrived in the mail, sis.

Selene An invitation from the Alpha addressed to YOU.

Selene I told mom to leave it, but you know she's so nosy

Sienna What is it?

Sienna What does he want?

Selene Si...

Selene He wants you to move in with him.

I couldn't take it.

Before I knew what was happening, I jumped to my feet and ran from the diner without saying goodbye to my friends.

Even the cool air outside couldn't temper the rage building up inside me.

First, he'd marked me without my permission. He took away any hope I had to find my one true mate.

Then, he summoned me like I was his pet. The world was turning upside down, and only I seemed to be able to see straight.

For a second, I thought I might shift right then and there. Split my clothes open in the middle of a busy intersection. Becoming my most animal, violent self.

That was how badly I wanted to hurt him.

I could picture my fangs tearing his throat out.

But just as I began to shift, as I saw the hairs beginning to sprout on my hands, my nails elongating, my spine bending, I stopped myself.

No.

I was going to confront Aiden Norwood face to face in his Pack House and put a stop to this once and for all. He was the Alpha, yes,

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this once and for all. He was the Alpha, yes, but that was no excuse.

The Alpha was about to find out exactly who he was messing with.

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The Millennium Wolves Series Book One Chapter: 8

Sienna

, I marched straight to the Pack House, where

I was sure to find Aiden. When I reached the entrance gate, I stopped to sniff the air.

Everything smelled of werewolves and humans, of vegetation and stinky vehicles. I scowled. I smelled everything except the one scent I was after. *His* scent.

Was it possible that marked females couldn't scent? Wouldn't that be a nice cherry on top of the already chauvinistic werewolf world.

The guard gave me a suspicious glance, so I plastered on a feminine smile and sauntered

over. "Excuse me," I said silkily, "is Mr. – Norwood here?"

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"Why do you want to know?"

"Because I'd like to see him."

Usually my conversational sway, my most effective dominant trait, would have done the trick. But this guard seemed like he'd , been trained to resist it.

“Have you made an appointment?” he asked in a condescending tone. “A lot of young girls want to see Mr. Norwood.’

I didn’t have time for this. “You’re going to let me in,” I growled. “Now.”

As my expression darkened, I allowed one of my fingers to shift into a long black claw.

I didn’t need to threaten him. The guard knew exactly what he was dealing with.

Fumbling to produce his keycard, the guard swiped open the gate.

“Thanks,” I replied, my hand returning to its human form.

And with that, I passed him, entering the premises of the Pack House.

I stormed through the front doors with a new rage burning inside of me, my wolf eyes glowing blue within my human form.

Aiden would know he’d marked the wrong woman.

The crowd parted as I headed for the stairs. Before climbing the steps, I paused and sniffed for him again.

The first scent to hit me was the sterile odor of the room then the scents of the other werewolves and humans.

I let out a frustrated growl until, suddenly, a whiff of woody essence, grassy aroma, and citrus cocktail hit me.

The fragrance was hypnotizing. It pricked my skin and made my mouth water, but I shook off these aromatic charms.

Aiden Norwood thought he could order me around like a slobbering fan girl because he was the Alpha. He couldn’t have been more wrong

I followed the scent to the third floor, where I came to a large oak door. I heard muffled voices on the other side. I put my ear to the door. I had found him. The Alpha.

Aiden

I leaned back in my chair as Josh paced across the room, working himself up for some kind of grand discourse.

I was only half-paying attention. Something else had spiked my senses.

Jocelyn, Nelson, and Rhys looked on in silence. They knew better than to interrupt Josh when he was about to get on a roll.

“Josh, spit it out,” I snarled.

“Aiden,” he started, leaning in on my desk, “We’re worried about you, and it’s not just us. Other members of the pack are starting to notice. It’s not just rumors and gossip now. People are questioning your ability to lead. They think you’re compromised. A pack can’t function when its members start questioning their alpha.”

I stirred in my seat, flexing my muscles in case he had forgotten my strength. “Josh, there’s no reason to be concerned. I found someone.”

“You marked some nineteen-year-old you hardly know. How am I not supposed to be concerned after that? You should be looking for your mate, not fooling around with some teenager with a crush.”

“You don’t know her either,” interrupted Jocelyn. “It’s not fair for you to judge her.”

Josh glared at Jocelyn, pursing his lips. “I’m not trying to put the girl on trial. I’m just saying the future of this Pack is bigger than any of us.”

“Aiden would do anything for the Pack. Are you questioning his leadership?” asked Rhys, becoming defensive.

As always, Jocelyn was quick to calm everyone. “I doubt Josh meant to call anyone’s loyalty into question, but he does

bring up an important point. Aiden, what are you going to do?”

“That melancholy is behind me now, I promise.

I debated telling them the truth, but it might still be too early. I couldn’t afford to let it slip into the open. But I knew Josh, and I couldn’t keep giving him the runaround.

“All I want is for you to be honest with us,” Josh replied. “What’s going on with you lately?”

Before I could answer, a splintering crash ripped through the air and the office door flew open.

Sienna

With my wolf in full control, I tore into the room. Twenty paces away, behind a massive desk, sat the man I’d come to see. He wasn’t alone, but I didn’t care.

Everyone's eyes had snapped to me, including Aiden's, which were looking gorgeous as ever.

Despite my entrance, he seemed shockingly unsurprised by my arrival. He must have scented me the moment I walked through the

Pack House doors.

My rage had finally reached its boiling point, and I let loose a ferocious howl that shook the room.

"You," I snarled, baring my teeth and holding his gaze, challenging him.

Aiden's eyes narrowed as he rose and walked from behind the desk to face me.

"I was wondering when you'd show up," he said. "Sooner than I predicted. I'm flattered."

If I were fully shifted, my fur would've risen at his arrogance. "Flattered? Is that what you think this is? That I'm here for you?" I growled, not breaking eye contact.

"Why else would you be here? In my office? Surrounded by my leadership?"

"To show you," I spat, "I'm not scared of you."

Now, Aiden cocked an eyebrow, taking a slow step forward. "No?" he said. "Maybe you should be."

I felt a tremor of unease go down my spine. The man's eyes were intoxicating. But his growl was that of a carnivorous predator. I would not be his prey.

"You may be the Alpha," I said slowly, "but I don't belong to you."

"That mark on your neck says otherwise."

I'd had enough of his games. Alpha or not, no one talked to me like that and got away with it.

My claws slashed out at his neck, but he caught my wrists before I could sink them into his neck

I was about to throw a knee when he spun me around and pinned me to his desk.

His hips pressed against me while one hand restrained both of mine and the other held my jaw shut

“Out,” he snapped, and for a second, I thought he meant me until I heard footsteps and remembered that there were other people in the room.

Now we were completely alone.

He leaned in so I could feel the heat of his breath on my neck. “Rein in your wolf,” he ordered.

I wasn’t ready to relent and growled through my teeth. He grabbed me harder and pressed himself into me, making my Haze blaze to life.

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“Woman,” he murmured, hovering his lips over the mark he’d given me. “I told you you were mine, and I meant it. Accept it, give

1. *in.* ”

I growled again, but this time with less conviction.

He could sense my Haze taking over and stretched out a finger, teasing my lower lip.

A soft gasp escaped my mouth. My eyes fluttered closed as his fingertip danced across my wet lips.

“That’s better,” he began again, engulfing my mark with his mouth, making my abdomen contract, hardening my nipples, setting me aflame.

Before I knew it, my wolf had retreated and all that was left was the Haze and its carnal demands. *Damn him.*

“I don’t want to fight you,” he said, taking his lips from my hot skin, “but don’t ever challenge me publicly again.”

“-But challenging you in private is fine?” I mumbled out, fighting the tremors that tore through me as the growing bulge in his pants rubbed against my aching sex.

He chuckled, the sound intoxicating and the heaving of his chest sending shivers through my body. “Oh, I’m counting on it,” he said, his voice stroking me in all sorts of places. “That’s why I marked you.”

“So, this is just a game to you?” I shot back, trying to break free of his hold.

“Are you not having fun?” he teased, planting a warm kiss on my neck.

Of course! What a fool I was to think he may actually be interested in me when the reality was I was nothing more than a new challenge.

Another submissive female for him to dominate then brag about to his boys.

Well, I wasn't about to be his fun little diversion for the Season.

The Haze that had flared to life moments ago faded as violently as it had come. If he wanted a chase, he would get one.

From here on out, it was my mission to make

Aiden Norwood the most sexually frustrated werewolf in all of North America.

“No, as a matter of fact, I'm not,” I said stiffly. “Let go of me.”

He pressed himself closer. “Are you going to move in with me?”

“No.” *What an asshole.*

He laughed again, except this time it made me want to punch his face in. “I thought not. It appears I'll have to catch you first.”

“At least one of us is amused,” I replied. “Now get off of me. I won't say please again.

“As you wish,” he said, easing the pressure on my body, “but sooner or later, the Haze will hit you again and you'll crave my touch like never before.”

I got up and pushed him out of the way. A slight smirk on his face taunted me. “You can try to catch me, Alpha, but don't expect to succeed.

He watched me go, but before I reached the door, he called out in a low, rumbling tone, “Sienna.”

I turned. I'd never heard him say my name before. “Call me Aiden.”

I made eye contact with him once more. His eyes looked more gold and less green than I'd ever seen them. But I wouldn't give him the satisfaction.

I turned and walked out the door, hearing him taunt me as I left.

“The chase is on...”

The Millennium Wolves Series Book One Chapter: 9

Sienna

When I got home, my mother was beaming. "Selene told me you made a little visit to the Pack House today to see somebody special."

Yeah, he certainly was special. A special kind of repulsive. If only she knew what an arrogant asshole Aiden was.

"You shouldn't believe everything Selene says," I replied, making a break for my room, but I wasn't quick enough.

"What's that on your neck?" my mom called out.

Shit, I had completely forgotten to cover up before coming home. "I...uh..."

"Oh, come on, honey. I'm your mother. I know everything." She laughed.

"Michelle opened her fat mouth, didn't she?" I sighed.

"Don't blame Michelle. I would've rather heard it from my own daughter, but someone is so secretive these days," she scolded. "Anything else you'd like to share?"

I glanced at my mother, hating myself a little

bit

She just wanted to be close with me, to know what was happening in my world. It was in her blood to be open about everything, Selene had inherited that 100 percent.

But me? As I was adopted, I had a few traits that were completely and totally my own.

This included my red hair, my keeping of secrets, and, of course, my not-so-subtle sway over people.

When I thought about these differences between my mother and me, my heart ached a little bit.

Who had made me this way? My mystery parents were out there somewhere.

I wondered if they were similarly red-headed. Were they also secretive? Most importantly, were they, like me, uniquely powerful?

"There's nothing to share," I lied, putting aside all these scattered thoughts.

I was not about to spill the beans that I was Aiden Norwood's "challenge" for the Season

Besides, enough people had seen me barge into the Pack House half-shifted that she probably had a good idea of what had gone

) on.

“Why are you so grumpy? You should be beaming. Not just anybody gets marked by the Alpha, let alone has a chance to, well, you know,” she said, winking.

“Ew, gross,” I spat out.

“Sienna, I don’t understand. He’s unbelievably gorgeous. What’s the matter?”

“So why don’t you go have sex with him?” I retorted, pushing past her and slamming the front door behind me.

I needed to get away from everyone before I exploded. They only knew the Aiden Norwood from their fantasies, the one they saw from a distance.

None of them knew him like I did. The self-absorbed Alpha who marked girls for the fun of it.

Not to mention this stupid Haze that made me melt whenever he came close.

I wanted to turn back time and never go to that dumb dinner. My life had been so much easier, my secret so much safer.

In times like these I would retreat to the river to clear my head, but that was one more place that Aiden had ruined for me.

I had only one refuge left to turn to: the little art gallery uptown that I’d discovered with Emily during one of our walks.

The outside was nothing more than an old metal door with flaky blue paint. You’d pass right by if you weren’t looking for it.

I ran there as fast as my legs could carry me.

I collapsed on the gallery’s red leather bench, exhausted. My chest heaved as I tried to catch my breath. I’d started to take off my coat when my pocket vibrated.

Michelle hey! are u okay?

Michelle

ur mom says u ran out of the house upset

Sienna Yeah, I'm fine

Michelle are u though? u were moody at brunch

Michelle there's something ur not telling me

Michelle it's about aiden isn't it?

Sienna I told you don't want to talk about it

Sienna My mom was asking me all these questions

Sienna I needed to get out of there

Michelle

si, what's really going on?

Michelle u can tell me

Sienna I'll be better tomorrow promise

Sienna Just need to clear my head

Michelle

where ru?

Sienna I went for a walk uptown

Michelle lets meet up and talk

Sienna I kind of want to be alone right

now

Michelle txt me when u get home, k?

Sienna Sure

Michelle I'm here for u, bitch xoxo

Michelle meant well, but she was too boy-crazed to understand. That was why I'd always liked having Emily to turn to.

I could tell her anything, and she would just listen. I never felt like I was being judged when I talked to her.

The art on the wall was an assortment of mixed media collages. Some were cityscapes while others were abstract portraits of everyday people.

One in particular perfectly encapsulated my current emotions. It was a lithograph of a young girl in her Sunday best.

She had a far-off look in her eyes that spoke to me, and a mess of trash and found objects, which the artist had glued to the canvas, spewed from her head.

The door opened behind me, and I felt a cool rush of air hit my skin. The hair on the nape of my neck stood up.

“What a hidden gem,” said a familiar voice.

I turned to see Jocelyn, still as radiant as she’d been at the Pack House dinner. She had swapped her gown and heels for jeans and a chic winter coat.

I wondered if she’d been wearing that when I burst in to confront Aiden. I’d been too enraged to notice.

Her wavy brown hair cascaded down her shoulders, and the crisp autumn air tinted her strong cheeks a subtle pink that accented her cherry lips.

“Don’t look so surprised,” she said, taking a seat next to me on the bench. “Tracking down wolves is part of my job.”

“You were looking for me?” I asked, not sure what anyone like Jocelyn would want with someone like me.

“I wouldn’t be a very good Healer if I didn’t think you needed someone to talk to after what just happened.”

She smiled a beautiful, breathtaking smile that immediately put me at ease. She wasn’t here to judge me. She was here to listen.

“What did he tell you?” I asked, too embarrassed to look her in the eyes.

“Aiden didn’t tell me anything. Even if he had, it would only be his version.”

She paused, waiting for me to say something, but I wasn’t sure if I was ready to trust her completely.

After all, she was Aiden's former lover and still one of his trusted advisors.

"You're leading him by a leash, something no woman has ever succeeded in doing."

I blinked. "A leash?"

Her chuckle intensified. "You don't know, do you?"

I paused. "Know what?"

She grinned mischievously now, which was out of place on her usually compassionate face.

"Everyone is talking about you," she went on. "You're the first woman to challenge the Alpha's Haze."

What did she mean by "the first"? Surely, if someone like me could get him worked up, he must have been going insane with a woman like Jocelyn.

"Isn't everyone Hazed in the Season?" I asked. "How could this be his first time?"

Jocelyn's grin widened. "Most werewolf rules don't apply to alphas. I've healed a few over the years, and I can tell you...during the Season? Alphas tend to be unaffected by the Haze. They have an iron grip on it, and even if they didn't, the women they mark almost usually relieve their Haze before it gets critical... *Usually.*"

"So, what you're saying is I'm the first woman to deny him and now he's feeling... frustrated?"

"Exactly." She nodded. "You've become a bit of a legend among the inner circle. After that performance in his office? Josh and the rest of the leadership can't wait to meet you properly. But," she continued, her face sobering, "you can't avoid Aiden's bed forever."

– "Why not?" I asked.

"Because his Haze will eventually reach a point where he can no longer control it, and when his grip slips, well..."

She didn't need to elaborate. Aiden would hunt me down until he got his release.

I shuddered at the realization that I had lost all agency over my body the second that bastard sank his teeth into my neck.

“He shouldn’t have marked me,” I said irately. “He should’ve gotten to know me first and asked for my consent.”

“Honestly, he usually does get to know his partners first,” replied Jocelyn. “But you must have really done a number on his senses.”

“Really?” My eyes widened with disbelief. “So why was this season the exception? Was he bored of women rolling over for him whenever he pleased?”

I saw a tinge of hurt in Jocelyn’s eyes and immediately regretted what I’d said. “I’m sorry, I didn’t mean it like that. I’m just…”

“That’s all right. I know you didn’t mean it as an insult. Being with the Alpha is a lot to handle, especially now. Aiden hasn’t been himself for the past few months. I’m sure you’ve heard about it,” Jocelyn said.

“Yeah, my mom is the town gossip,” I said, rolling my eyes.

“The Alpha has a lot on his plate. And until he’s mated, his strength, and our pack’s strength, will continue to falter.”

“But Aiden and I aren’t mates,” I retorted.

“Maybe, but he still has a Haze that needs to be tempered. It’s fun to watch him squirm, I know, but think of the Pack.”

“Is that really my responsibility?” I asked, skeptical

“I had to ask myself the same question, Sienna. That’s for you to decide. I can tell you this. I love my Alpha, and I only want what’s good for him. He’s a good man. You’ll see it if you give him a chance to prove it.’

This conversation hadn’t gone the way I expected, but I could tell that Jocelyn was sincere in her concern for Aiden.

Still, it didn’t excuse his attitude and what he’d said to me in his office.

“I’ll consider it, but he has to meet me halfway. He has to respect me.”

“Let me talk to him,” answered Jocelyn. “He’ll shape up if he knows what’s good for him. I have a feeling that you’re different, Sienna.

And before I knew it, Jocelyn had her arms wrapped around me in a reassuring embrace.

“I’ll see you around,” she said, getting to her feet.

“Yes, I’m sure.”

When Jocelyn left, I still felt warm inside. Her healing touch really did do wonders.

If a woman like that could be Aiden’s lover, he couldn’t be all bad.

I wasn’t going to forgive him, not yet, but I did understand the reality of my situation, and if I had to go through with it, I might G well make an effort to get to know him.

My phone vibrated again. This time it was my mother.

Mom

Sienna, you need to come home right now! It’s an emergency.

Sienna What happened? Is dad okay?

Mom Dad’s fine, but get home quick

Sienna Okay, I’m uptown

Mom See you soon!

My mom didn’t call something an emergency unless it was serious. So I decided to cab home.

As we pulled up to my house, I noticed a black Audi parked outside. I had never seen it before and wondered who it might belong

1. to.

My heart was racing as I ran to the front door and threw it open. “Mom? Mom? I’m home. Where are you?”

“We’re in here!” she called from the living room, quite calm and pleasant.

Something wasn’t right. I sniffed the air, and a woodsy musk pierced my nostrils, making a heat flare between my legs.

I turned the corner and, sure enough, sitting on the couch enjoying a cup of tea was none other than Aiden Norwood.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book One Chapter: 10

Sienna

, “I thought you said it was an emergency,” I

said, shooting daggers at my mother.

“What and spoil the surprise? I was just showing Mr. Norwood some of your baby photos. Wasn’t she adorable?”

“Yes, even then, you could tell she’d grow up to be a strong, beautiful woman,” he replied, casting his mesmerizing, gold–streaked green eyes in my direction. “This tea is delicious, Mrs. Mercer.”

“Please, call me, Melissa,” she replied with a giggle.

I wanted to throw up. My own mother was more smitten with my partner than I was.

I bet she thought that I would mate with Aiden by the end of the Season, but I’d looked into his eyes plenty of times now, and the recognition had never occurred.

He was just using me, after all.

“How was Uptown?” he asked, flashing a devilishly handsome grin.

Why did he care? Did he know about Jocelyn?

“It was okay,” I replied, trying not to let his looks get the best of me.

It didn’t help that his shirt gripped every inch of his broad chest and bulging arms or that his jeans fit snugly around his powerful, defined legs.

From his roguish smile, I could tell that he knew I was fighting to keep my Haze from flaring up

“I don’t think I’ve seen you with your hair up before. It suits you, especially with that mark you have.”

I had completely forgotten that I’d pulled my hair into a loose ponytail when I got to the gallery. Frizzy, windswept strands were everywhere. Dried sweat clung to my temples.

I looked messy and hideous, and he knew it. And of course the arrogant bastard would admire his own handiwork.

“What are you doing here?” I asked, not caring for formalities. I think that after this afternoon it was pointless to try and act civil.

ST

“I’m a man on a mission,” he said, amused. “I want to learn more about you and your family. I realized this afternoon that we

hardly know each other.”

Of course we don’t. *You marked me out of nowhere.*

Still, this change in tact made me think that Jocelyn had relayed my message that he’d better shape up. *That was fast*, I thought.

I folded my arms and gave him an annoyed look. “And what would that ‘task’ be?”

With wide eyes, I watched as he rose and took my hand. “Sienna, would you care to join me for dinner this evening?”

The asshole was wooing me, and dammit, it was working

So polite all of a sudden. Probably on account of my mom’s presence. She looked like she could’ve died right there and gone to heaven.

My cheeks flushed, and my heart beat so loudly he probably heard it. I was charmed. Deeply charmed. Maybe Jocelyn was right about him.

Maybe Aiden Norwood deserved a chance.

“I’m not dressed for the occasion,” I said, trying to protest.

“Neither am I,” he said, grinning. “We’ll take care of that. Shall we?”

Maybe we shall, I thought. But I made him wait for it. I wasn’t about to give in that easily. Finally, I nodded my head.

“Yes,” I replied. Then, thinking I better hedge my bets, “This time.”

Aiden laughed and shook his head, amused by my continued restraint. Without another word, he ushered me outside into his car and we were off.

I knew I wasn’t supposed to let the Alpha catch me. But, so far he’d been polite, calm, gentleman-like even. Why run when no one was chasing you?

The drive was quiet and quick. Aiden pulled up to a boutique, and we went inside.

I was still on guard, but finding it easier every second to be around him.

The saleswoman flashed an infatuated smile. "What can I help you with, Mr. Norwood?" she chirped. The two of us locked eyes, and her smile immediately shifted to a glower.

I guess someone wanted Mr. Norwood to herself.

Twenty minutes ago I would have let her have him, but I felt strangely possessive for a second. Before I could stop myself, my lip curled into a snarl.

The saleswoman quickly looked away. I blinked. What was wrong with me? The alpha wasn't worth getting worked up over. *Get a grip, Sienna!*

"Will you help me find something?" I asked her, trying to send a peace offering.

She nodded curtly and led me to a row of beautiful silky pieces.

I chose a navy dress and went to the changing room. The dress was skin-tight, highlighting all my assets and complementing my ivory skin.

The saleswoman pushed a pair of white pumps under the curtain. They fit perfectly. I let down my hair and ran my fingers through it until everything was tamed.

I took one last look at myself in the mirror before stepping out. I looked damn good.

Aiden's eyes couldn't seem to move away. His heated stare scanned my body from head to toe, lingering on my hips and chest for a second too long

second too long

"You look...breathtaking," he said, eyes glinting

My Haze, thank God, was under control for once. Not that I can understand why. We'd never shared such a one-on-one moment like this before.

It should have been blazing. But instead, I found myself blushing and looking away. It wasn't hot. It was just weirdly...nice. Almost cute.

That was when I noticed that Aiden had also changed.

He wore fitted blue slacks that left little to the imagination and a collared white shirt tailored to perfection. The man was devastatingly handsome.

After he paid for the dress and heels, we were back in the car, driving toward downtown

We parked in front of the hottest restaurant in the city, and after opening my door, he led me inside with one hand on the small of my back.

The moment we stepped through the door, everyone's eyes snapped to us.

Some were shocked, some envious, but I really didn't care. I was enjoying the evening so much there was nothing that could have distracted me.

The hostess led us to an intimate table in the far corner, away from the prying eyes of the other patrons.

We sat across from each other, and my body tensed as Aiden leaned closer.

"Is this so bad?" he asked.

"That depends," I said, and he raised an eyebrow, "on how good the food is."

We both laughed now. And I realized how much I had to learn about the Alpha. I'd never thought him capable of such easy-going warmth. He was a leader. A man to be feared. Not... this.

Just then, Aiden reached for my hand.

I flinched for a second. But then I let him take it

We both were on autopilot, it seemed like. There were no words, no clear motives or agendas to define what happened next.

Aiden brought my hand up to his soft lips and kissed the back of it.

I sucked in a breath of shock, as his kiss made the Haze erupt, spreading through my body, making my skin taut with anticipation, swelling my sex, dampening my panties.

He looked up through his lashes, eyes swarming with surprise and unhidden hunger, his Haze sparking with my own.

Neither of us had meant for this to happen. But it was happening. And now I didn't know if we'd be able to stop it.

"Sienna, you're.."

— "I know," I breathed, licking my lips. "You are too...Mr. Norwood."

“Aiden,” he growled in hunger, “call me Aiden.

“Aiden.” I tasted his name in my mouth, closing my eyes and gasping. “Oh God, Aiden. I feel so hot.”

He growled stronger this time. “Keep that up and we won’t make it past the first course.”

That sounded fine to me, but something inside my head kept nagging me, poking, trying to snap me out of my Haze.

) This was *not* a normal haze. No, it was like I barely recognized myself right now.

With one kiss to my hand, Aiden has erased everything I thought of as myself. My past. My desires. My fears.

They were all gone. I was mesmerized.

A part of me knew this was wrong, but I didn’t want it to stop. I didn’t want to interrupt the tension that was building inside me as I scented this mouth-watering man.

We barely acknowledged the waiter who came to take our orders. Aiden ordered something fancy, but the only course I wanted to taste wasn’t on their menu.

It was seated across from me.

Stop! Emily’s voice was back again. *Stop, Sienna! Save yourself for your mate!*

“Oh, for fuck’s sake, shut up!” I said aloud, not meaning to.

Aiden gave me a questioning look. “Are you going crazy?”

” You make me go crazy,” I answered seductively, one set of lips parting, the other clenching

“Is that so?” he said, eyes blazing. “I thought you wanted to be chased.”

Wait, he thought *I* wanted to be chased? Is that what he’d taken away from our conversation?

Before I could protest, his hand curled around my wrist and raised my hand to his face. Everything in my head scattered to the wind.

“Your skin is so soft,” he murmured, kissing my palm. “So silky and soft. I want to put my tongue on every inch of your body.”

My face flushed, and I moaned as he slipped one of my fingers into his mouth.

Something is wrong! Stop it!

How could anything be wrong?

“Sienna.” The sound of my name made me jump. “I can’t wait. I want you now.”

Looking into his eyes, I wanted him too. I didn’t care where or how, but I wanted every inch of him. “Take me.”

In an instant I was yanked from my seat and stumbling into a dimly lit back room.

Spreading my legs, he wrapped his strong hands under my thighs and pinned me to the wall. His mouth massaged my mark.

I had never been kissed on the lips before in my life. But these past few days, my neck had been getting more than enough action to make up for that.

I moaned in pleasure as one of Aiden’s hands slid between my legs, his fingertips teasing my inner thigh.

He inched closer and closer until I was ready to scream. “What are you waiting for?” I groaned, my legs trembling.

His fingers pressed against my wet panties, and a wave of pleasure blurred my vision.

I’d touched myself there countless times. But it was nothing like feeling a man’s hands, Aiden’s hands, on me.

I fell under the strongest Haze I had ever experienced when the voice came back, crying out in my mind.

Remember your vow!

I snapped from my Haze like someone coming out of a trance. The pleasure I felt was transformed into sheer terror as I pushed Aiden off me and bolted out the door,

I flew from the city to the woods, tearing right through the beautiful dress that Aiden bought me, shifting into wolf form.

Once I was on four legs, everything became instinctual. And right now my instincts were telling me to run

I reached the woods and kept going for what felt like miles. I stopped to rest when I reached a clearing in the trees, but my respite was short-lived.

A gust of wind brought a familiar scent to my nose.

It was Aiden, and he was headed straight for me.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book One Chapter: 11

Sienna

From the opposite end of the clearing, another wolf burst through the trees. He was huge, the biggest wolf I had ever seen, and his golden-hazel eyes were locked on me.

I snarled, baring my teeth. I didn't care if I incurred his wrath. He wasn't going to have me.

He was unfazed by my display and stalked closer, trying to make me cower with his enormity.

But the fear that gripped me had nothing to do with his mass or my safety. It had everything to do with the way he could control me now that I was marked.

I remembered my friends talking about it during our first Haze, but I had obviously never experienced it myself.

During the Season, a marked female could be Hazed unnaturally by her marking male. All it took was a special touch, and he could make his female lover as Hazed as he is.

The second Aiden kissed my hand in the restaurant, that was what had happened. I saw it in his eyes.

He didn't care about the chase or winning me over fairly. He was just trying to fuck.

Typical alpha.

Maybe that was all the whole date was. A chance to have me at my most defenseless. A chance to release his tension so he could go back to his Alpha responsibilities.

Emily's voice had been strong enough to snap me out of the Haze this time, but what about next time?

How could I escape his bed if he had this much power over me?

Aiden ventured closer, forgetting that I wasn't one of his tame she-wolves.

I didn't know my full power yet, but I knew I didn't want him any closer.

I growled deep in my wolf's chest. *Back off, bastard. Back the fuck off.*

I tensed my muscles, waiting for him to pounce.

We locked eyes, neither of us backing down.

Suddenly, our ears perked with the sound of paws trampling the forest floor.

A massive, blond wolf bounded from the treeline behind Aiden with a pack of four wolves close behind.

It was Josh, and he looked tense. Something was off. What were they doing here?

Josh's wolf glared at Aiden. I was surprised that neither of us scented them, but then again, we were focused on each other's scents.

Whatever it was, it must have been important because, at first, Aiden was furious at the sight of his subordinate.

But within seconds, he was circling around his Pack, rallying them and communicating through growls and charged looks. He was a natural leader.

I wanted to find out more. Was this about

me?

But at the same time, I wasn't going to hang around to find out if Aiden was still Hazed. I saw my opportunity to escape and fled into the woods.

As the last rays of sun faded through the trees, a shimmering figure caught my eye as I ran.

Being in wolf form made my vision much keener than when I was human, so I stopped in my tracks and could see with great clarity a woman with pearly white skin and nebulous eyes of electric purple, blue, and gray

Her hair was pitch black and fell down her back in angelic waves.

It took me a moment to realize that, while I was staring at her, she was staring right back at me. Her porcelain face was mesmerizing

I thought Jocelyn was gorgeous, but this woman surpassed her without question.

Her features and symmetry were formed with such perfection that she must be some supernatural, immortal being that came down to Earth.

Despite her otherworldly beauty, her attire was oddly pedestrian.

She wore loose-fitting, slate hiking pants with matching combat boots. Her top was a simple gray tee with a faded denim jacket thrown over it.

I thought that perhaps she was a trekker, but she didn't have a pack or any other gear on her.

What's more, there was no fear in her eyes when she looked at me. She wasn't a werewolf, I could tell that immediately, but she didn't scent like a human either.

Who was this woman?

Suddenly, the whole forest went quiet, and a droning tone began to echo in my ears. I shook my head, but it didn't stop the noise.

I locked eyes again with the bewitching woman. My headache as if it was about to split open.

I howled and thought I could hear a child screaming in unison.

My pupils dilated, and two shadows hovered over me. I couldn't tell whether they were reaching out to me or trying to harm me, but in an instant, they were gone.

I looked back to the woman just as she also disappeared into the night, slowly becoming invisible like a spectre.

The ringing in my ears stopped, and the sounds of the forest came flooding back.

The moon was now ascending to its nocturnal throne, and the sounds of the forest settled into their evening études.

I cautiously trotted over to where the woman had stood and could find no trace of her.

I stuck my snout in the air, but all I could smell was the damp musk of the woods and the usual creatures that inhabited them.

Had I really seen someone, or was my mind playing tricks on me?

If she was real, what did she want with me? Why would she expose herself then simply disappear? None of it made sense.

I shuddered to think what would have happened if Josh and the other wolves hadn't shown up or if they had arrived a few minutes later.

The whole night reminded me how little I knew about partnering and the rules that govern a she-wolf once she's marked.

I had only known the Haze for three seasons while Aiden was an experienced lover who knew all the tricks.

And on top of it all, he was an alpha, so his powers were stronger than the typical male.

If I was going to stand any chance against him, I needed to figure out a way to keep him off me while we got to know each other.

None of this helped me with the fact that I was saving myself for my mate, and Aiden was the furthest thing from a mate I could imagine.

What was the point of having an alpha if he couldn't remain in power on his own?

It all sounded a bit dramatic to me, like an elaborate excuse to sleep around the Pack until he "decided that he'd found his mate.

I wished I could fight my wolf nature and never have another Haze. It was what had driven Emily to do what she did.

I would never want to become human, but during the Season, I was envious of their unaffected state.

Human women didn't have to put up with this bullshit. They didn't have to submit to being marked and tricked into sleeping with someone, lover or not. They never lost control of themselves.

The howl of fellow wolves shook me from my thoughts. Even though I was paired, it still wasn't safe for me to be in such a remote part of the forest alone.

Only the most desperate, unpaired males were out prowling this late at night.

I could handle myself. I had literally just challenged the Alpha, but I knew I would be in trouble if more than one appeared looking for satisfaction.

Last time I'd gotten lucky. I couldn't stay here any longer.

I sprinted back into the woods, toward home.

I was almost to the forest's edge when it occurred to me that I had ripped off the dress Aiden had bought me and discarded it somewhere along the road.

In other words, I would be naked when I shifted back

It wasn't exactly taboo to go around town in wolf form, but it wasn't encouraged either.

I had never done it before, but after stopping into the Pack House half-shifted earlier in the day, I figured I could handle a few disapproving glances.

Still, it wasn't my nature to attract attention, so I took back roads and kept to the shadows until I got to my street.

As I neared my street corner, the street lamps began to pulse, and my vision blurred again. I became disoriented, all my senses dulled. *What did that woman do to me?*

I tried to bound over the fence to our backyard, but I caught my hind legs in a slat and landed with a heavy thud. I looked up to see a shadowy figure approaching me.

As I neared my street corner, the street lamps began to pulse, and my vision blurred again. I became disoriented, all my senses dulled. *What did that woman do to me?*

I tried to bound over the fence to our backyard, but I caught my hind legs in a slat and landed with a heavy thud. I looked up to see a shadowy figure approaching me.

I ran to the back door and scratched helplessly, my paws unable to work the knob, no time to shift back to human form.

I was cornered, with nowhere to run. I wanted to howl, to claw, to fight back, but I was frozen in fear.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book One Chapter: 12

Sienna

I felt like such a cowering bitch, but my mind was fried from the woods.

I felt like I'd been drugged and whatever my attacker was about to do, I was powerless to stop it.

The shadow reached down and began to engulf me, but I stopped fighting back as I felt a familiar embrace.

"Sienna," my dad's voice whispered softly. "Calm down, sweetheart. Here, I brought you a robe. Let's get you inside."

His fingers ran through my fur, and everything started to feel normal again. He placed the robe over my shivering wolf form, and I shifted, collapsing into his arms.

“What happened? Were you attacked?” he asked, concerned.

Was I? I honestly wasn't sure, but it felt like my mind had just waged some kind of war.

I wondered if this had something to do with Aiden running off with his pack. They must have been connected. I couldn't think about it too hard right now, or I'd probably pass out.

“I'm okay, Dad. I just need some rest. It's been a long, weird night,” I replied.

Aiden

My office was starting to feel like a prison cell. I was more restless than ever before, but I couldn't run off without someone noticing

Josh and I had been to the spot where the patrol had lost the roamer's scent, but I was unable to uncover any clues as to where it had gone.

I admit that it didn't look good for me to come up empty-handed, but the only alternative was lying to Josh and the four soldiers, and I was already doing more of that than I'd like.

It wasn't abnormal to have a stranger cross into Pack territory, but the inexplicable scent and subsequent disappearance had everyone who knew about it rattled.

So far it was just me, Josh, Jocelyn, Nelson, Rhys, and the four soldiers.

I made the last group vow their silence until we could figure out who this intruder was and where it was heading.

To be cautious, I dispatched small details of guards to any place or person that I thought was important.

Whatever it was, we would be ready when it surfaced, and hopefully we'd be powerful enough to confront it.

When we were alone, Josh folded his arms indignantly. “Well?” he asked. “Are we just going to sit here in the Pack House and wait?”

“What else would you suggest? I can't send everyone combing through the woods if they don't know what they're looking for. We don't even know what we're looking for.”

"Well, whose fault is that?" mumbled Josh as he began to pace his usual path in my office.

"Yours, technically," I replied, dryly. "It falls on the Beta to keep our borders secure."

"You don't need to remind me what my job is. I did exactly what I was supposed to. When it was clear we were dealing with something new, I went to find you. You're the one who's forgetting his duties."

"Stop talking in circles and say what's on your mind," I said, growing impatient.

"You're compromised, Aiden. An alpha at full strength would have been able to track the roamer." Here we go again. His persistence was beginning to wear on me.

"You said yourself we don't know what we're dealing with," I replied. "If it's powerful enough to mask its scent, of course it makes my powers look diminished by comparison. Or is this still about Sienna?"

"I lost control of my Haze. It was temporary."

"My point exactly. You lost control. That's never happened to you before. If what you told us is true, why aren't you honest with her? You're wasting her time and yours. If you let things carry on like this, one of you is going to get hurt. You need to be at your strongest now more than ever. I'm not just saying this for the sake of the Pack, Aiden. I'm speaking as your friend."

"I hear your concern, but I'm going to do it my way."

Josh let out a growl and slammed his fist against my desk. "Damn it, Aiden, we could be under attack right now, and all you care about is some girl. A girl who's *refusing* your advances so far."

"Careful, Josh."

"The point is, Aiden," Josh fumed, "we were this close tonight to uncovering something new. I know you scented what Iscented. Not human. And not werewolves.

So if it is something new, what are its strengths? What are its weaknesses? Does it even have weaknesses? I feel like you're not taking this threat seriously enough."

I was just as concerned as Josh, but I couldn't show it. A gulf of power still sat between us.

For a moment, I thought of what my brother Aaron would have done. *If he were here.* A tinge of pain surged through me, and I pushed aside that memory.

There was no time to think of the past when the present was this dangerous.

“The thought of this roamer being something new crossed my mind, but there is nothing to do except wait. Whatever it is, the last thing I want is to make it feel threatened. If it is peaceful, want it to stay that way. Like you said, we have no idea what this roamer’s powers could be.”

“And if it hasn’t come here on peaceful business?”

“It would have attacked us by now if that weren’t the case. It likely masked its scent to avoid confrontation.”

“Or it’s preparing for a surprise attack.”

“That’s enough of your theories, Josh. Go check on the patrols and let me know if you hear any new intelligence.”

“As you wish, my Alpha. Remember, you have a job outside of getting this girl to sleep with you.”

I offered no reply, dismissing Josh with a simple nod. He was right to be concerned, though. Ever since I’d marked Sienna, my head was clouded with desire.

I had never denied my Haze this long, nor had it ever been as strong as it was when I was near her.

Perhaps if I spent a few days away, I could rebalance myself. This roamer was a welcome distraction.

Sienna

I was sitting alone in the dark when I heard a knock on my door. I sat up and removed the headphones from my ears. “Come in,” I said.

“Good, I thought you might have already fallen asleep,” said my father, gently closing the door behind him. “Do you mind if I take a seat?” he asked, pointing to my bed.

“Not at all,” I replied.

He used to be quite trim when my parents met—my mom had showed me pictures—but growing older, marriage, and two daughters had added a few pounds to his frame.

When he plopped down beside me, my mattress wheezed under the new load.

“I wanted to talk about earlier tonight,” he began, shifting his gaze between the floor and my face.

"I know your mother is excited that you've partnered with the Alpha for the Season."

"That's the understatement of the

"That's the understatement of the century." I sighed.

"Yes," he said chuckling, "she isn't very discreet, is she?" There was a brief silence before he continued. "Your mother told me about how you ran out of the house earlier today, and...well, I thought you might need someone to talk to about everything that's been going on."

"Dad"

"Now, I know I'm not a werewolf, and I can't understand exactly what you're going through, but I've been around long enough to know that showing up to the house in wolf form isn't normal. Do you want to talk about what happened tonight?"

Out of all the people in my life, the last one I expected to pour my heart out to was my dad, but he was right. My head was a mess, and I needed to let some of it out.

I picked at my comforter, not sure how to start.

"Something happened at dinner tonight that, well...it feels like now that I've been marked by the alpha, everyone has these expectations. Whether it's Mom or my friends or members of the Pack, whom I don't even know, they all want something, and no one has cared to ask me what I want."

My voice started to shake, and I could feel the tears building in my eyes."I feel like I'm losing control, and I don't like it."

Finally saying it aloud came as such a release, like a thousand-pound weight was lifted off my chest.

The tears burst from my eyes and went streaming down my cheeks. My father pulled me close and let my face drip all over his shoulder.

"It's okay," he said, rubbing my back. "It's perfectly fine to feel the way you do."

"No, it's not," I choked out. "I'm a dominant. Dominants don't let stupid things like this get to them."

I didn't usually call myself that.

I knew, deep down, that it was true, that I had a dominant streak that was unable to be tamed. It was the reason I'd been so successful at resisting the Alpha's advances so far.

But saying it out loud almost made it less real. Like it cheapened the truth.

Perhaps I was just fooling myself and my nature was to be yet another submissive she-wolf who did as she was told.

But then my dad put a hand under my chin and forced my eyes to meet his.

“I don’t think what you’re feeling is stupid, Sienna,” he said. “And dominant or not, everyone has a heart.”

The nice part about having a human dad was that he was much more sentimental than Mom and Selene, or any werewolf for that matter.

Normally, we wolves would look down on this as a sign of weakness, but at the moment, I was happy to have him there.

“You know, when we first brought you home, I could tell right away that you were special. You had this confidence about everything you did, even as a baby. Watching you grow up, I’ve seen that confidence manifest in everything from how you carry yourself to your art. Having a cry doesn’t take that away from you, Sienna. You’re still the strongest werewolf I know.”

“You wouldn’t think that if you’d seen what happened tonight.”

“Do you want to share?”

“All that matters is that I made a fool of myself. I never want to see him again. I wish he’d never marked me, Dad. I wish he had just left me alone.”

A fresh round of tears poured from my eyes.

“Did you ever think that maybe he couldn’t leave you alone? That maybe he saw the same beautiful, powerful woman I do and was so overcome with emotion that he had no choice but to mark you?”

“You have to say something like that. *You’re* my dad.”

“I’m serious, Sienna. You’re not a coward, so don’t let him turn you into one. Like your mother says, he could have any woman in the Pack, but he chose you. Remember that. You don’t need him. He needs you.”

The flash of headlights flooded through my windows as a car pulled into the driveway. My dad and I looked outside to see Selene stepping out of her car.

We weren’t expecting her, and she seldom dropped in unannounced like this. We both went downstairs to greet her.

My dad opened the door before she had a chance to knock and wrapped her up in a big hug that only dads know how to give.

“To what do we owe this pleasure?” asked Dad, opening the front door wider. “Is everything okay?”

Selene was in her pajamas and had a duffel bag in tow. It was apparent she’d left her place in a hurry.

“Jeremy got a call from the Pack House and had to go into work. It’s something big. He didn’t give me any details, other than it involved a breach at the border. The last time this happened, the Pack went into lockdown. Sorry for showing up unannounced like this, but I knew I’d feel safer over here than alone in the apartment.”

Breach at the border? Lockdown? This had to be something serious.

The Alpha only put the Pack in lockdown when there was a serious threat and he had to impose martial law. And why was I hearing about this from Selene?

Did Aiden not care about my safety?

I guess I shouldn’t have been surprised that I was only a piece of meat to him, and a disposable one at that, apparently. Asshole.

The mysterious woman from the clearing still swam around my head. Could she have anything to do with this?

For a moment I thought I should tell Aiden

I guess I shouldn’t have been surprised that I was only a piece of meat to him, and a disposable one at that, apparently. Asshole.

The mysterious woman from the clearing still swam around my head. Could she have anything to do with this?

For a moment I thought I should tell Aiden what I’d seen, but if he didn’t think it was necessary to keep me informed, I would keep him in the dark too.

Besides, the prospect of seeing him, especially after what happened tonight, rattled me.

I wasn’t about to make the first move. If he wanted to talk, he’d have to come find me.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book One Chapter: 13

Sienna

Michelle

sooo sienna, what were u up 2 last night?

Mia Yeah, anything exciting????

Erica

We promise not to tell

Michelle

SIENNNAAAA

Michelle

Erica If you don't say something we'll just come over

Erica Grabbing my keys...

I'll bring the booze!

Michelle incoming in 5!

Sienna OK! What do you want to know?

Michelle EV RY THING

Sienna He picked me up and bought me a dress

Sienna We went to dinner downtown

Sienna Then I went home

Mia

Erica

Erica Getting in the car...

Sienna I gave you what you wanted, bitch

Mia

Nah, you're holding out

Mia Something about you getting dirty in a supply closet???

Erica

I hadn't heard that part!

Sienna Look, we may have fooled around a little

but it wasn't anything special

Michelle mamma wants details!

Michelle does he taste as good as he looks?

Mia

Sienna Ew. STOP

Erica How big? ?? ?

Sienna

I'm serious. Cut it out

Erica Hazed, unpartnered shewolf over here @

Erica I'd gladly take him off your hands

Michelle

girl, whats wrong?

Sienna

Sienna Nothing, just don't like you turning my life into your personal soap

opera

Michelle sorry, we thought you'd be more excited

Mia What are you doing right now?

Sienna I'm painting at home

Mia Come meet us at Winstons, bitch!

Sienna I'm not really in the mood

Mia

C'mon, Si, we're planning @

Mia I need your artist's eye Erica Mia EXACTLY!

Sienna Fine, but please no more questions

Mia

Promise!

Erica

Promise!

Michelle

...promise 63

Sienna

Winston's was packed as usual. Even though no one batted an eye when I walked in, I still felt like everyone was watching me.

At first, I was confused as to how the girls knew about my date, but of course they knew.

You didn't go downtown with the Alpha and not have anyone take notice. I was so embarrassed, replaying last night's events in my head

There were definitely a few staff members who'd seen him slide my finger into his mouth, and I knew we weren't discreet in our

flight to the back room.

I shuddered to think what my mother had heard. Thankfully, she was still at work and wouldn't be back until later tonight.

The girls were crowded around our usual table with stacks of bridal magazines and Mia's laptop

Mating Ceremonies were like human weddings, but even more important because wolves mated for life.

Mia's family was huge, so she had plenty of exposure to mating ceremonies, which I thought would make planning her own an easy affair

From the looks of things, however, she was lost in the abyss of planning.

Ketchup and mustard smudges dotted the magazines, and some pages were torn and fanned out like paint swatches.

Mia and Erica were on their phones looking up arrangements and place settings, flashing their finds at Mia, who only glanced at their phones and nodded.

Her caramel hair was unconditioned and pulled back into a lazy ponytail.

Mia always took great care of her hair, so its disheveled state was a clear indicator of how stressed she was.

"There's our coy vixen," squealed Michelle with a devious grin. "Erica, scoot over."

"I'm so glad you're here," said Mia, grabbing her head. "I'm totally overwhelmed. We need someone who knows what they're doing."

Mia's tastes were, how do I put this nicely, a bit on the gaudy side.

I looked at the color schemes she had pulled up on her computer and did my best to point her in the right direction.

She was originally looking at warm colors, which I thought would be out of place for a winter mating ceremony, so, after much cajoling, I got her to settle on lilac, periwinkle, and teal.

Michelle protested because she didn't think she looked good in those colors, but I reminded her that it wasn't her decision and that she looked good in whatever color she wore, which Erica and Mia backed up, so El everyone came away happy.

Helping Mia made me think about my own ceremony and how long it would be until I found my mate. Not everyone was as lucky as Mia and Harry

I fantasized that I would find my mate while strolling through some museum or somewhere in a park

I suppose that was where I'd met Aiden, but after his behavior last night, I'd rather just forget him. The thought of him right now made me want to vomit.

"Honestly, Si, I don't think we would have accomplished anything if you hadn't shown up," said Mia, mentally exhausted and stress eating French fries

“Who knew mating ceremonies were so much work?”

“At least you have one to plan,” bemoaned Erica. “Why can’t one of my guy friends suddenly fall in love with me?”

“I never really had guy friends. I wonder why...” Mia thought aloud.

“Because you fucked all of your guy friends,” replied Erica

“I did not,” Mia protested.

“Yes, you did,” we all shot back in unison.

“That fast life is behind me,” said Mia, turning up her nose in mock refinement. “I’m a mated woman now.”

We all laughed because, even before we started to get our Haze, Mia would go to parties with older guys, looking for men with whom she could make lots of “cute babies.”

“Si, come out with us tonight,” begged Michelle. “We’re celebrating Mia’s impending mate-rimony Erica’s brother said he can get us into this hot new club. It’s called Lupine It will be just us girls.”

The lockdown had been called off, sure. But I was still drained from the previous day and didn’t feel like being around people or packed in a dark sweaty room with music so loud I couldn’t hear myself think.

I needed to be alone and paint. I appreciated the gesture and knew that Michelle meant well, but it didn’t feel right.

“Maybe another night,” I said.

“Why don’t you want to come? Do you have another date with Mr. Alpha?”

“No, I’m just tired.”

“Tired from a long night of banging in the back of restaurants?” Michelle shot back.

I could tell by the look she gave me that she wasn’t teasing anymore and was actually starting to get upset.

Michelle, we didn’t have sex. How many times do I have to tell you that?”

“Then what’s your deal, Sienna? Why don’t you want to come?”

“Can’t you drop it?”

“We’re your friends, and we barely see you anymore. You’re dating the hottest wolf in existence and tell us nothing about it. Are you embarrassed by us because we’re not as cool as all of Aiden’s friends from the Pack House?”

“It’s not like that at all, Michelle,” I replied, trying to keep her from making a scene, which she knew I hated. “I’m just not feeling up to

it.”

The words had barely left my lips when my phone buzzed on the table.

I picked it up and cringed. I didn’t want to prove Michelle right, but at the same time, I wanted to know what the hell was going on.

“Is that him?” asked Michelle.

“Yes, do you mind if I

“Take it,” she said, coldly muddling her milkshake with a spoon

I got up and walked to the counter, where there was an empty stool, then swiped open my phone

Aiden Hey, about last night. I’m sorry Josh interrupted.

Aiden

Did you get home okay? You just took off.

Sienna Oh, you actually care?

Aiden Do you think I don’t?

Sienna I think you’re just trying to fuck me

Aiden I may have let my haze get out of hand.

Aiden It won’t happen again.

Sienna You’re right. It won’t

Aiden Sienna, I’m sorry

Aiden In my defense, you seemed pretty into it.

Sienna

It was out of my control

Sienna You weren't the only one with Haze issues

Aiden I think you knew what you were doing.

Sienna And I thought you were a

gentleman, not a fuckboy

Aiden

How can I make it up to you?

Sienna Show me that I'm more than just trophy

UNLIMITED

Aiden

Whatever you want.

Aiden

Name it.

Sienna Tell me what's going on with the border breach

Sienna Why did you suddenly call everyone to the Pack House?

Aiden How did you hear about that?

Sienna

It doesn't matter. If I'm more than a lay you'll tell me

Aiden It's complicated.

Aiden I want to tell you more, really

Sienna Then at least tell me this much

Sienna: Was I in danger last night?

Aiden I'd never let anything hurt you.

Sienna That's not what I asked

Sienna: Was I in danger?

Aiden I don't know.

Aiden Honest.

Sienna Bye, Aiden

I couldn't believe I'd ever found him attractive.

I mean, sure, he had the most delicious body I'd ever laid eyes on, but if it wasn't for this annoying Haze, I'd be too repulsed by his behavior to ever want him on me again.

I still shuddered to think what would have happened had Josh not shown up. I was probably in more danger with Aiden there then after he left

I definitely wasn't going to tell him anything about the disappearing woman now either. He was an ass, and I needed to blow off some steam

Even though he'd marked me, I wasn't his

I definitely wasn't going to tell him anything about the disappearing woman now either. He was an ass, and I needed to blow off some steam

Even though he'd marked me, I wasn't his property. Tonight I was going to reclaim everything he had tried to take from me.

Michelle," I called out, "let's get filthy."

The Millennium Wolves Series Book One Chapter: 14

Sienna

I wore my brand-new red and black tartan mini skirt with high-heeled black leather boots, black tights, and a crop top with a black leather jacket on top.

I painted my nails to match the red color of my skirt and blew out my hair into messy layers that fell down my back and shoulders like a copper waterfall.

I winged my eyeliner and applied volumizing mascara and burgundy lipstick. To finish, I put in my favorite ear cuff and silver studs along with matching rings.

I looked punk and hot, and I loved it.

When the girls picked me up, they showered me with compliments.

Michelle even said that I was sexy enough to bite, which to werewolves was the best compliment you could receive.

Like Michelle said at Winston's, Lupine had only been open a few weeks, but all the hype surrounding it meant that every night of the week there were long lines of people waiting to get in

Erica, however, had snagged us VIP passes

one of her brothers had connections with every bouncer downtown, including Lupine's—and we got inside without having to wait.

I always felt a little guilty skipping the line like that, especially when the people waiting scowled at you with envy, but tonight I didn't care.

I was there to let loose and forget about the stupid werewolf that had put this mark on my neck

The entrance of the club had a low ceiling that made it feel like you were entering a cave.

To the left was the bar, backlit with LEDs that strobed with the music in soothing patterns.

To the right was the coat check, where we left our jackets, and a staircase leading to the mezzanine that overlooked the dance floor.

It was circular in shape and opened up into an atrium, where large cages hung from the beams housing beautiful dancers who writhed sensually to the music. Humans and werewolves mingled at the massive bar as everyone jostled to order their drinks

I eyed the dance floor, which was packed with grinding bodies and twisting arms.

The DJ mixed house tracks from his perch overlooking the crowd, occasionally inciting the patrons to make more noise.

Michelle pushed her way to the bar and ordered a round of vodka shots.

"Do you think we should get more since we're here?" she shouted over the music

We had already started drinking in the cab, but Michelle was never one to pace herself.

“Two rounds at least,” replied Mia. “I am off the market now! You hear that, boys? You have no shot with this jelly,” she said, shaking her booty

We took the shots at the bar before finding.

We took the shots at the bar before finding a standing table to huddle around with our fishbowl full of blue curacao, gin, tequila, rum, and vodka.

Counting down together, we each took a straw and sucked for as long as we could manage.

Michelle and I lasted the longest, but I beat her. She considered herself the party girl of our group, so it was quite the hit to her ego.

“Tomorrow is going to suck.” Erica giggled. “I’m such a lightweight.”

“Then let’s get on the dance floor while you can still stand,” I yelled, which was out of character for me because I was, by no means, a good dancer.

The only thing I was good at in life was painting but I had enough rhythm to move my feet and hips to the beat.

We pushed our way to the middle of the floor and started to flaunt our stuff.

Men began approaching us and flirting with Erica, which was okay, since she wasn’t morbid or mated but in mu currica man

Erica, which was okay, since she wasn’t marked or mated, but to my surprise, men were hitting on me too.

They either didn’t recognize me or they didn’t care that I had the Alpha’s mark on the base of my neck

Considering recent events with Aiden, I concluded beyond a shadow of a doubt that men were pigs and willing to risk anything, including their lives, if it meant getting laid,

“I don’t understand,” I shouted over the music at Mia after I shoed another man away. “I’m marked just like you are, so why are guys still hitting on me?”

Mia shouted back, “Because my mark is a mating mark, and yours isn’t.”

Again, my inexperience with having a lover during the Season meant I’d missed out on some common knowledge

“The mating mark is a soft red around the edges while yours is more bruised and purple. Male werewolves can also sense which one is which, to avoid any serious

issues,” she explained Whether I had a mating mark or not, any of these guys would have serious issues if Aiden found out they were trying to take me home. And I loved it.

After an hour, Michelle took Erica to the bathroom because she felt sick.

I stayed on the dance floor with Mia, throwing my body around like I was at home in my room with no one watching

The drinks had hit us hard by now.

Mia and I were constantly hanging on to each other for balance, and I was glad I hadn't decided to wear heels. Otherwise, I certainly would have rolled my ankle.

The DJ put on a sensual reggaeton song that had everyone pairing up. Some guy came over to me with a suggestive grin and held out his hand.

He was an unmated—and apparently, unpartnered—werewolf, who was clearly dominant, as he held my gaze without issue

He was also pretty hot, with goldish hair, sexy eyes, and a lean, cut physique.

“Hey there, sexy lady,” he said, taking my hand and pressing his lips near my ear.

“Hi,” I replied, glancing at Mia out of the corner of my eye.

She gave me a wink and escaped toward the bar, leaving me alone with this cute werewolf. I didn't mind the privacy.

Besides, if he tried anything, I could kick his butt. I'd fought off five males alone in the woods. What was one in a club full of people?

“What's your name?” he asked, raising his eyebrows at me in open invitation.

“No names,” I said. He was simply a nice face to look at and a nice body to dance with. I wanted to keep it that way.

I know I probably should've refused. Aiden only needed to take one whiff of my skin to know another male had touched me.

This poor bastard. He clearly wanted to fuck me, but that wasn't happening.

He spun me around and put his hands on my hips, pulling my waist up against his crotch.

At first it was fun having another man's hands on me, but the longer the song went on the more uncomfortable it became.

It wasn't like Aiden's touch, which set my skin on fire and made me ache. I didn't say anything but kept dancing. After all, I was there to have fun, not get Hazed.

I felt his grip intensify as he pressed himself into me harder, rocking his lower body with mine.

When his denim-clad erection poked into me, I knew it was time to stop.

I tried to wriggle out of his hold, but he wouldn't let go. He only pressed me closer and started to pull up my skirt.

"Let go!" I yelled, my cry muffled by the bass.

"What's the matter, babe?" he asked, trying to play it cool.

"Fuck off, creep!" I shouted.

"Why?" His voice was dark with lust. "We're having fun."

"I'm not having fun with you," I snapped, heart hammering in my chest. "So let me fucking go!"

Suddenly, I realized that while we were dancing he had shuffled us toward the edge of the dance floor and now pulled me into a dark corner by the back exit.

The blood rushed out of my face.

"You should know better than to tease a Hazed male, babe," he growled, and suddenly I was outside in the frigid November air, my perspiration freezing, which, along with the adrenaline pumping through me, made my body shake uncontrollably.

He pressed me against the brick wall of the empty alleyway, his eyes luminous and lust-filled

Now I couldn't hide my panic any more. "What do you think you're doing?!" I shrieked.

Now I couldn't hide my panic any more. "What do you think you're doing?!" I shrieked.

"C'mon, babe, loosen up," he said, his hands like vises, digging into my sides.

"I want to go back inside," I shot back.

"Don't worry, we will. Let's just hang out here for a little bit, enjoy the fresh air...get to know each other."

He looked at me with devious intent. I knew what he was after, and I needed to get away from him however I could.

"I'm cold. I need to get back to my friends," I replied, trying to push him off. He leaned in, trying to kiss me. "No, stop!"

He thrust his hand onto my breast and groped it violently. "Relax, babe, I'm not going to hurt you.

"No!" I yelled, struggling against his hold.

I tried to throw punches, elbows, and knees, but he was stronger than I'd thought, and the effects of the alcohol had made me weak and uncoordinated

I felt helpless as his mouth and hands violated me.

He squeezed my breast again, and I yelped "Stop!"

But he wasn't stopping now, and he wasn't talking. He had only one thing on his mind.

He lifted me against the wall and tore open my tights, smothering my mouth with his hand.

The tears burned my eyes as he fumbled with his fly, eyes wild

No one's coming to save you, I thought. The words cut into me like the cold wind that whipped through the empty alleyway.

That was exactly what she must have thought. *No one's coming to save you*.

And for a second, I could see her. Emily. Struggling, screaming, begging for help.

I closed my eyes and tried to push away the image, ignore his icy fingers pulling on my skin, searing me with visceral pangs of anger, regret, and helplessness.

I felt myself leave my body, and as I looked down, it was Emily's form instead of mine.

I tried to scream at the bastard to get off of her, but no sound came out. I tried to hit him, but my hands passed through his body.

Emily. No. Not again. I'm here this time.

I snapped back into my body. *Somebody, anybody, help me!*

I struggled to keep my legs closed and shove my hands over my privates, but he used his thigh to wedge mine apart and ripped my hand away with ease.

Suddenly, a deep, horrifying growl filled the air, and I felt the weight of my attacker's body disappear with a gut-wrenching scream.

I opened my eyes and gasped in shock. Was it really him?

The Millennium Wolves Series Book Two Chapter: 01

Sienna

I'd never seen Aiden look so terrifying— hair raised on the nape of his neck, canines protruding from his snarling mouth, hunched over my attacker with a thirst for blood in his eyes.

The man fought back, but Aiden easily overpowered him, slamming him up against the wall.

He punched that bastard's ribs over and over again in an animalistic rage until

CRACK

I gasped in shock as I heard his ribs break. I watched him fall to the ground, just a crumpled, mess of a man now—pathetic.

Tears began to roll down my face.

Emily. Oh my God. This was what she'd gone through four years ago.

Completely helpless and afraid, paralyzed and unable to call for help. A feeling of complete darkness. No one was there for her. I wasn't there.

As I watched Aiden drag the man's limp body through the alley, I almost felt guilty, guilty that I'd survived and she hadn't.

I wanted to stand up and run away, but I doubted I could even crawl right now.

Emily, her rapist, my attacker, they all kept flashing before my eyes. I wanted to vomit up the twisted feelings inside me.

I flinched as Aiden knelt down and wrapped his arms around me. "I'm not going to hurt you," he said softly.

It went against every fiber of my being, but I let him pick me up and carry me to his car.

I'd never felt more vulnerable with him, but something about the warmth of his chest and his tight embrace made me feel safe.

My Haze wasn't flaring up. This feeling was something different.

"Where are you taking me?" I asked, my body still shaking.

"My house," he replied quietly. "I promise I have no intention of taking advantage of you. I just want to be there for you."

My friends were still in the club, clueless to the horrors that had just happened outside, and I wanted to keep it that way. I didn't want to face them tonight. Going home wasn't an option either. My parents would take one look at me and know that something was wrong. I wasn't ready for the questions, the pity, or the judgment.

Going with Aiden was my best option. I still didn't trust him, but what he'd just done for me... It made me sick to think what would've happened if he wasn't here.

Aiden's demeanor was completely changed from the ferocious man that had mauled my attacker just moments ago. It was caring and kind.

As much as I despised him for marking me and forcing me to take on the responsibility of being his mate, I couldn't deny that I wanted him to be there for me. I didn't know how long it would last since this thing between us was unpredictable as hell, but I was willing to give him a shot.

He said he wanted to be there for me? Fine, I'd let him prove it then.

Finally, I gave in, letting my head rest on his shoulder. He placed me gently into the passenger seat, and we drove in silence. As I watched the blurry buildings and trees disappear out the window, I tried to make the memories of tonight disappear as well, but that seemed impossible.

If I felt spooked by what had happened, Emily must've been absolutely haunted by what she'd gone through.

I dug my fingernails into Aiden's expensive leather seats. I never wanted to feel helpless that way again. I would never let a *man* make me feel that way again.

I glanced sideways at Aiden, and my chest tightened. I couldn't be in that car anymore. I needed to be somewhere else, somewhere safe.

Just as I began to panic, Aiden pulled into his driveway and it felt as though we had just entered into a dream, like I had manifested the safest, most inviting space imaginable.

A tiny cobblestone bridge stretched over a trickling stream, leading to a modest manor surrounded by dogwood trees and a perfectly curated garden of flowers. It was like a fairy tale.

Maybe I didn't know everything about Aiden after all? He must've sensed my surprise because he smirked at my entranced expression.

"Not what you expected?"

I didn't answer, my voice still trapped in my throat.

He could see that I wasn't ready to talk, so he helped me out of the car and placed his hand on the small of my back, gently guiding me through the doorway. I didn't mind it.

His closeness actually made me feel safe, which was never a feeling I thought I'd elicit from Aiden. This didn't feel like someone trying to control me. It felt like someone was trying to comfort me.

+

The crackling of the brewing coffee was the between us as we sat across from each other not making eye contact.

Of course neither of us knew what to say. What should I say to a man I had just watched break another man in half? What did he say to a woman who was almost just raped? Would words really make anything better? No, but at least his presence was comforting.

Finally, Aiden broke the silence, but I wished he hadn't.

"Why were you with that man at the club?"

"What exactly are you asking?" I felt my face growing hot.

"You should never have been alone with another man when you're Hazed. It's the fucking Season. Why would you put yourself in that position?" he replied.

I stood up suddenly. "Are you fucking serious? Are you implying that what happened to me was my fault?"

“Don’t snarl at me. I wasn’t saying that.”

“How did you even find me? Were you following me?”

“It’s my business to know where you are at all times, Sienna. As a marked woman, you shouldn’t be” “And whose fault is that?” I lobbed back. “You’re the one who marked me! Against my will! You forced me into a Haze, Aiden! You took my free will and twisted it to fit your own selfish needs!”

“Don’t you understand that once the Season hits and you’re marked, the Haze won’t go away unless you give in and have sex with the one who’s marked you?”

“I know that!” I snapped, furious now. “That’s why I never wanted to be marked to begin with!”

“You wanted me at the Pack House. Don’t deny that,” he countered.

He wasn’t coming onto me. He would never dare after what had happened at the club. But I still found myself flailing, unable to keep the past and present straight.

“You have no idea what I want! Just stay the hell away from me!”

He moved toward me, not in an aggressive manner, but it still felt like I was running out of space to escape, finding myself pinned against a wall once again.

“Please, you’re too close, you’re—” I cried. Moisture filled my eyes, and I looked away from him, ashamed of myself for feeling so weak.

Aiden stopped in his tracks, looking surprised. His hand clasped my chin and turned it to face him again. He wasn’t moving toward me to hurt me or to fuck me. He was moving closer to comfort me.

“Sienna,” he said. “I’m not going to take advantage of you. Not now or ever. All I want is to protect you.”

He pulled me into a hug, and I surrendered to the gesture. “You shouldn’t have marked me,” I said, my voice muffled by his chest.

He sighed and suddenly pulled me down until I was sitting on his lap and he was holding me even closer. “There’s something between us. Neither of us can deny it. I felt it when I marked you, but I even felt it the first time I

saw you, back on the riverbank.”

“You remember that?” I asked, a little incredulous.

“Of course I do,” he said quietly, tightening his hold of me. “I felt your power even then. Your scent radiated a strength and sensuality that I couldn’t resist.”

I retracted a bit from his grip. “I didn’t radiate any strength tonight. I was weak.”

“Stop. What I said a minute ago. I was wrong. Let me tell you something. Your scent hit me the moment I walked into that dinner party. It’s not something that happens in human form, so you threw me off balance.

“The Haze hit me, and I had to follow you, to find out more about you, to just be in your presence. I’ve never been so overcome by anything more powerful in my life. That’s your strength, the kind of power you have over me. That’s why I marked you.”

I got up from his lap and looked at him as if I were looking at a stranger.

What the hell was he saying? Neither of us was Hazed, yet he was looking at me with unmistakable desire in his eyes, just a different kind of desire, a desire to be close to me.

“Why are you suddenly telling me all this?”

“Because I think you might be my mate.”

Did you know that we have ANOTHER story that is set in The Millennium Wolves world ?!

Head over to the Discovery Page and dig your

fangs into...

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Eve’s very powerful, and she’ll stop at nothing to complete her newest mission: protecting the lives of two teenage girls. But there are

distractions...

See you there!

The Millennium Wolves Series Book Two Chapter: 02

Sienna

What Aiden said couldn't possibly be true, could it? Recognizing your mate happened the instant your gaze connected with the other. My gaze had connected with Aiden's dozens of times, but usually the only feelings stirred up inside me were rage and regret.

"You're lying," I blurted out, my throat dry. "I know how the mating process works, and if we were mates, we'd know by now!"

"I'm the Alpha. The rules don't apply to me. The only way I can know if you're my mate is to spend time with you and get closer to you."

"Get closer to me? Sure," I responded skeptically, "In bed, I suppose?"

"When an Alpha meets his potential mate, his emotions go haywire. He has to rely on his senses and nothing else. First he marks her, and then he lets her come willingly into his bed to feel her dominance and to see if she's capable of handling him."

My heart started beating out of my chest as

Aiden stepped closer.

"We both know that you're more than strong enough to lead a pack. You're beautiful, dominant, and you have me heeled like a damn cub at his mother's tit. No one makes me bend like this, but you."

Was he actually being submissive to me? His words were touching me in a way that made me want him to touch me *everywhere*.

What was wrong with me tonight? The Haze was becoming unbearable.

He could sense my physical need, but he also knew what I had been through tonight. He gently put his arms around my waist.

"Do you want more?" he asked.

Yes, I fucking wanted more. I was tired of repressing it, but this was the Haze, not me.

There was a chance that he was my mate, but what if he wasn't?

As I began to pull away, Aiden must have felt my trepidation because he eased up and gently put me on the edge of the bed, resting his hand on my face

Without warning, he leaned in, and his lips found mine. Everything melted away, and my world became a sensory explosion of feelings as every single one of my heightened senses went wild with stimulation.

It was everything I'd hoped for—my first kiss.

I was overcome with emotion, not only because of the kiss, but the club, the Haze, everything. As I broke down, Aiden just held me.

We fell back onto the bed, and I nestled into his body until the tears ran out. My mind finally shut off, allowing me to fall asleep in his arms.

I kept my distance from Aiden for several days after the incident at the club. I needed some space to work through what had nearly happened to me, and since the Haze didn't care what was appropriate, it felt like the best decision

But after that kiss, Aiden was all I could think about. I hadn't really gotten a chance to thank him after he brought me home that night, so now I found myself at his doorstep once again.

Before I could knock, he swung the door open.

"Sienna." He grinned. "I thought I scented you."

God, just the sight of him sends my Haze into high gear after days of separation.

"I...uh... I just came to thank you for the other night," I stammered. "You were really there for me when I needed you."

Aiden pulled me through the doorway and scooped me up in his arms. "You don't have to thank me. I'd never let anyone harm you. You need to know that."

I could see he meant it. And I wanted to thank him. I needed to thank him. Without words.

So this time, I kissed him.

And now his mouth was on mine, licking, nipping, and biting me into a state of ecstasy.

When I opened, letting him in, his tongue brushed mine and I succumbed to the melting heat.

The kiss started slowly, our mouths testing each other, sensing what the other liked, but neither of us could hold back anymore, and before I knew it, we were kissing as if we were two hungry ravenous wolves.

We stumbled backwards into the bedroom, and he threw me down on the bed, crawling over my body with pure lust in his eyes. His movements were slow and methodical,

sizing up my body, deciding where to strike next. He caressed the mark he'd made on my neck with his soft lips.

The tiny hairs on my body rose at the G sensation of him floating over my mark.

He pressed a kiss on the mark then opened his mouth and let his tongue play around the bruise, licking it with long, deep strokes that made my body shiver uncontrollably.

Then he bit down, at the same spot, and I almost exploded from the brutal sensation of the Haze. My vision blurred, and I cried out, not from the pain but from the incomparable pleasure that surged through my body.

I was sure this kind of feeling could only come from the power of a real Alpha. I lost control of my wolf, and my nails turned into claws, which I dug into his back, ripping his shirt, causing him to growl in surprise.

I was going to leave my own marks, thin and red, all up and down his back.

He flipped me over on my stomach in retaliation, hiking my dress up to my waist and pressing his bulge against my ass while gripping my hips. His hand went back between my legs, slid my panties aside, and entered deep this time.

After years of masturbating with my own fingers, I never realized how much better it would be when someone else's were inside me. Now I knew what I was missing out on.

The orgasm ripped me into two, and that was just from his fingers. I was suddenly eager to find out what it would feel like with something much bigger inside me.

God, the Haze was completely taking over. I wasn't thinking straight. I just knew the pleasure was so good I didn't want it to end.

Why hadn't I let this happen sooner? My mind was so hazy I couldn't remember. Aiden started unzipping his pants.

Would this be my first time?

No, he's not my mate yet.

But why does that matter?

My head started to hurt. Aiden began to spread my legs apart, and a nauseous feeling entered the pit of my stomach.

No... Emily. Not like this.

"No, stop...STOP. I don't want to go any further," I screamed.

Aiden cocked his eyebrow, thinking we were still playing a game. "You're still Hazed," he murmured, closing in on me again, his mouth an inch away from mine, "And so am I. Don't you want me to help you relieve it?"

"No! I don't know if you're my mate yet, and I don't know if you ever will be!" I blamed the Haze for being so harsh, but I didn't have the strength to fight off my desire in that moment.

Aiden looked like a startled pup as I haphazardly sat up and tried to compose myself. His surprise quickly shifted to realization as he looked me up and down.

"Sienna," he growled, "are you a virgin?"

My heart stopped. I wanted to tell him anything except the truth in that moment, but for some reason, I opened my mouth and uttered a timid, "Yes."

His expression of confusion said it all. It was unheard of for a werewolf to be a virgin at my age. Sex was imbedded into our very beings, but I had my reasons for staying a virgin, and Aiden didn't need to know them.

This was my burden to bear, my promise to keep.

"Why?" he asked suddenly.

I lowered my gaze to my sweaty palms. "Aiden..." I said hesitantly.

"Answer my question, Sienna."

The Haze was dying down, and my clarity was returning, but the answer to Aiden's question would never be clear. He couldn't possibly understand how deeply Emily had affected me and how I was complicit in what had happened.

I closed my fists tightly, digging my fingernails into my skin, trying to block out the bitter memories.

"I've been saving myself for my mate," I said, not entirely convincingly. "I can only truly love my mate, and I don't want to give something special to someone who isn't."

It was immediately clear that Aiden could see I wasn't telling the whole story. He walked over to me and pried my palms open. Blood trickled down as my claws retracted. He looked at me with a deep concern, but all I could do was turn away.

"Sienna, I need you to tell me what's going on. I can't just let this slide."

"Please, don't make me do this...I can't," I pleaded

"This is clearly tearing you up inside, whatever *this* is," Aiden growled. "How do you expect me to ignore this and pretend like nothing is wrong?"

CLT

"I'm not your mate. It's not your responsibility to take care of me." I retorted. "I made it my responsibility when I marked

you!"

I saw that he wasn't going to back down, but I wasn't going to either. When two people came to a stalemate, one had to compromise, and I was tired.

"Look, if you drop this, I'll—" I hesitated. "I'll do anything."

"Anything?"

Begrudgingly, I nodded yes.

"You'll move in here tomorrow so I can keep an eye on you. No excuses, no delays.

Tomorrow."

"I won't have sex with you," I told him, just so he would get any ideas out of his Hazed mind. "Not until we know if you're my mate or not. Also, you don't get to dominate me. I'm not going to let you order me around, so if you're thinking I become your property by moving in, then the claws are coming out and I'll stop playing nice."

His mouth curled into a devilish grin. "I wouldn't have it any other way." Full ..

I hugged both of my parents tightly. "You guys don't need to be worried about me. I promise."

"Yes, of course...you'll be fine," Mom said, bursting into tears. "My last daughter leaving the house and mating with an Alpha. I can't believe you're all grown up!"

I remembered how my parents had acted when Selene had moved out. It had been just the same. Even though she was their daughter by blood and I'd been adopted, it didn't make one lick of a difference to them.

It made me love them all the more for it. I was going to miss them. Biological parents or not, they were mine. And maybe my mom was being melodramatic, but, right now, I appreciated it.

"I'll be back soon, relax," I said, hugging them one last time. My mom's hug was a bit too tight for comfort.

Luckily a loud car horn beeped outside, offering up an escape.

"That must be my driver! I've got to go, but I love you guys lots!" I yelled as I ducked out the door .

The Millennium Wolves Series Book Two Chapter: 03

Sienna

"Tell me again why this has to happen?" my dad questioned, not even trying to hide the concern in his voice.

"We've been over this, Peter." My mom sighed. "The Alpha can't be Sienna's mate if we keep her locked up here. She needs room to breathe."

"We don't know he's my mate," I corrected her.

My mother's choice of words was painfully ironic considering I'd be far more stifled and confined at Aiden's house than here.

My father pulled me into a bear hug. "I know you have to figure out if he's your mate or not, but it doesn't mean I'm not going to be worried sick about my baby girl. I wish you'd stay."

The more I'd thought about it, the more I knew that this was something I had to do whether I wanted to or not. I'd never know if Aiden and I had a real chance at a relationship if I didn't at least give this a shot, though I had my doubts about his intentions. the door.

Outside, Josh was waiting for me. He had an almost suspicious grin on his face. He picked up both of my suitcases and put them in the trunk while I sat in the passenger seat.

Josh hopped in the car and revved up the engine like a frat boy about to go for a joyride. Although I very much doubted this would be an enjoyable ride.

We drove in an awkward silence for a while before Josh finally turned his head to look at me.

"It's nice to officially meet you, Sienna Mercer," he said with that odd grin. "I'm Josh Daniels, the Beta of the East Coast Pack."

“Yes, I know,” I said, still trying to read him. “It must feel good to be chosen for that position

“It must feel good to be in your position too,” Josh said with an accusatory tone. “So while we’re here, why don’t you tell me how you did it?”

“Excuse me? I knew there was something off about that phony smile.

“Don’t be modest.” His voice was soaked As of sarcasm now. “You need to tell me your technique. How did you trick the Alpha into marking you?”

I wasn’t going to sit here and take this bullshit. “Trick him? I didn’t even have a choice in any of this. What gives you the right to question my motives?”

“I’m the Beta. It’s kind of my job, and if you’re taking advantage of him when he’s in a vulnerable state, I’ll be the first to know about

it.”

“If you’re so curious about me, then why don’t you just ask your *best* friend why he marked me?” I shot back.

“Well, I would, but Aiden is refusing to answer any of my questions about you.” His scowl deepened. “He’s been so secretive about why he marked you. Everybody’s mystified.”

He glanced at me. “I volunteered to pick you up in hopes that you would clue me in on this little relationship you two have started.’

“If Aiden didn’t tell you anything, then why the hell would I? Maybe you’re just trying to get information to use against him.”

Josh massaged his temple in frustration. “ really should have just let Jocelyn handle this. She’s used to dealing with delusional people.”

“That makes sense considering her dating record,” I retorted.

Josh narrowed his eyes at me. “I’m going to be blunt with you. I don’t think you’re either strong enough or mature enough to handle a dominance as powerful as his, and it doesn’t matter that you think you’re some badass she-wolf or whatever.’

“You’re underestimating me,” I said, challenging him.

“Time will tell. Now get out of my car,” Josh said smugly.

During our argument, I had failed to realize that we had already made it to Aiden's house.

I got out of Josh's car, slamming his door behind me. I grabbed my suitcases and made my way across the bridge to my holiday Haze from hell.

One thing was for sure though. I wouldn't let Josh or anyone else underestimate me.

When Aiden opened the door, my eyes were immediately drawn to his shirtless, glistening chest. His muscles bulged with every minor movement.

My Haze started to spark up.

Fuck, is this really happening already?

He tried to grab me and pull me in, but I managed to duck underneath his massive frame and enter into the house. He thought he was clever, but he wasn't going to get me that easily

"You can bring my luggage to the guest room," I said coyly as I walked through the foyer, making sure I was several steps ahead of him. "Are you going to give me the tour, or do I have to do everything myself?"

"Oh, you've been doing it yourself for far too long. It's time you let someone else help you," he said, grinning with that annoying, sexy smile.

I just rolled my eyes. "I told you--*no sex*. That was part of our agreement."

"We agreed we won't have sex" he said

11:27

"We agreed we won't have sex," he said, starting to scowl. "It doesn't mean we can't indulge ourselves in other *activities*."

Despite my attempts to suppress it, my Haze continued to grow. I was trying my best, but it was close to impossible with his scent all over the place, and with him shirtless and sweaty, only steps away.

I might as well have just presented my Hazed ass on a silver platter.

It didn't mean I wasn't going to fight back, though. "Aiden, I'm serious," I said. "I'm not going to sleep with you. We're not mates, and we're not lovers either. I need my own room, and that's non-negotiable."

We locked eyes in a battle of wills, both asserting our dominance. I refused to back down, especially after what Josh had said. To my surprise, Aiden, growling slightly under his breath, picked up my suitcases and led me into the nearest room, throwing them inside.

I couldn't believe my eyes. Had I actually just made Aiden compromise about something? I made the Alpha of the East Coast Pack *compromise!*

Maybe I had a shot at surviving this after all. It turned out my excitement was my ultimate betrayal. However, the Haze hit me full-force in the middle of my giddiness.

Aiden's senses flared up immediately, and he, too, was Hazed. *Fuck, here we go.*

We met each other in the middle of the room, and his arms were wrapped around me in mere seconds while my hands were grabbing at his disheveled raven locks. He pushed me on the bed and fell on top of me.

He pulled down my dress straps, exposing my bra, and began sucking on my mark, driving me wild. His mouth moved down to my breasts, and I gasped as I felt his tongue and teeth wandering around my nipples.

I arched my back, trying to bring his mouth back to my neck, but instead, he continued to go lower, and I found myself wrapping my legs around his shoulders. I felt his tongue trying to break through the thin layer of my underwear, and it made me moan.

Irritation ripped through me. I wanted skin-to-skin contact.

I wanted him to take my clothes off. I wanted both of us to be naked with our sweaty skin touching. It was a form of torture to have him so close, yet not close enough.

I needed him inside me, and I needed it now.

I couldn't wait until we found out if we were mates. I had to have him right here, right now, or I would go insane.

Shit, get it under control, Sienna! I'd finally gained the upper hand and made him compromise. I couldn't just throw that away now.

"Stop!" I yelled. "Get off me! Please. Give me space to think."

Aiden looked exasperated. "Sienna, you can't keep doing this. It's a natural craving to want your sexual desires fulfilled."

“Get out,” I commanded as tears welled up in my eyes.

“This is my house,” Aiden growled. “You’re just a guest here.”

“Am I your guest?” I asked, choked up. “Or am I just a prisoner to your fucking Alpha will???”

Before he could respond, I ran to the bathroom and locked the door.

I stripped off my clothes and sat in the shower, letting the water run over my face, hiding my tears. I knew I was cursed to always feel this way because of the past.

And maybe I deserved this curse. Alpha or not, no one could take these demons from me.

To make things worse, now I had to be around Aiden every day. I couldn’t go through this again daily. Only a few minutes had passed since I’d arrived. If we couldn’t survive less than an hour together, how could we survive the upcoming weeks?

In ten minutes we’d managed to fight, to inflame our Haze, and to have an anger-filled dry-hump session that I ran away from in an erratic fit.

This wasn’t healthy

As I stood up from the shower floor, I noticed

In ten minutes we’d managed to fight, to inflame our Haze, and to have an anger-filled dry-hump session that I ran away from in an erratic fit.

This wasn’t healthy.

As I stood up from the shower floor, I noticed a thin line of blood circling the drain. I felt a pang of hope in my chest.

My period.

I hopped out of the shower and quickly checked my calendar. It was that time of the month. My period meant no sex, and no sex meant keeping my virginity and my sanity

intact for another week without having to face Aiden’s temptations.

Never, in my entire life, had I felt such gratitude to Mama Nature.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book Two Chapter: 04

Sienna

The expression on Aiden's face as he sniffed me when I walked out of my bedroom in the evening was hilarious. His nose was wrinkled in dissatisfaction, and he growled, "Fuck," before returning to his own room and slamming the door.

Blood was an obvious non-issue for werewolves, but for some reason, period blood made the male ones run for the hills with their tails between their legs. And for that, I was thankful.

At least I could avoid any more sexual encounters for a bit while I figured out a new plan, not to mention the added bonus of messing with Aiden.

As I appreciated my small victory, my phone started buzzing

Michelle hey girl, are you coming tomorrow?

Sienna Coming to what?

Michelle sienna...

Michelle really?

Sienna I'm sorry, I really have no idea

Michelle we're going shopping for mia's mating ceremony dress

Michelle you've known about this for ages

Sienna Oh my god, I completely forgot

Sienna Things have been so hectic

Sienna Since, you know...

Michelle i've noticed...

Michelle u haven't been around much lately

Sienna

I know, I know

Sienna It's just

Sienna

Aiden

Sienna and the Haze

Sienna and this whole moving in together thing

Sienna I feel like I'm going crazy

Michelle

i get it

Michelle u have a lot going on

Michelle i'm fine by the way

Sienna What?

Michelle nothing

Michelle

so are you coming or not?

Sienna I'll try

Michelle

sienna

Okay, yes I'm coming

Michelle see u there

A human hostess served us champagne as Mia tried on different dresses in an admittedly cute boutique. Erica and Michelle fussed over her train, complimenting her style choices.

I was checked out in the corner, staring down my champagne flute as if it were some magical well that held all the answers to my problems.

"Hey, Earth to Sienna," Erica called from across the room. "Are we boring you?"

"Sorry, I'm just a bit distracted," I apologized.

Michelle clicked her tongue in annoyance and started chugging her champagne as if to keep her mouth busy so she wouldn't say something she regretted.

“Come over here and help me out of this dress before I pass out,” Mia croaked, breathing heavily. “This thing is tighter than my sex before my first Haze.”

11:29

“You’ve been around the block, that’s for sure.” Michelle laughed. “Is there a man in this city that you haven’t sunk your claws into at some point?”

“Hey, I’m settling down now, okay?” Mia responded. “At least I can still live vicariously through you girls. Especially Sienna. You must be getting ravaged every damn night by that sexy Alpha. I’m so jealous, you have no idea.”

“You’re getting mated to your best friend,” Erica said reproachfully.

“Yeah, I guess that’s nice too. Just let me fantasize a little, all right?” Mia sloshed her champagne on one of the dresses.

They had no idea how uncomfortable all this sex talk made me, but I wasn’t about to reveal that I was a virgin to a group of tipsy, sex-crazed she-wolves.

“Tell me about it,” I tried to say convincingly. “There’s hardly a moment that Aiden doesn’t have me on all fours.”

“Oh my God, tell us *everything*.” Erica practically swooned.

Damn, I hadn’t thought that through. As Mia squeezed out of her dress, I noticed a unicorn tramp stamp garishly staring at me from above her ass. Oh, thank God for Mia’s poor decisions.

“No, Mia needs to tell me everything about that tattoo, and I need to know *now*,” I yelled, trying to change the subject.

Mia raised her eyebrows suggestively. “Hey, what happens at the county fair stays at the county fair. Maybe you and Aiden can get matching ones when you go together this year.”

I’d rather die. “God, Mia, you’re too much.” I fake-laughed.

“Why don’t you tell us why you left the club with Aiden during girls’ night without even saying goodbye,” Michelle asked, causing the whole room to go silent. Everyone looked at me expectantly like this was an inevitable discussion that was going to happen.

“I... I uh, I was...”

Dammit, I couldn’t tell them about how I was almost raped. I was already dampening the

almost raped. I was already dampening in mood as it was. And it would just bring up other questions that I wasn't ready to answer. So, I guess my only option was to

"Aiden might be my mate," I blurted out.

Erica's and Michelle's jaws dropped to the floor.

"Shut the fuck up," Mia screamed. "Are you serious? Oh my God this explains everything, why you've been so distant and weird lately.

This is HUGE."

"Yeah, I had no idea. That's a totally valid reason to ditch us," Erica gushed as Michelle shot her a dirty look.

"It's all happening so fast," I said, putting on my best Selene impression. "I thought I'd die

when he told me. We're still figuring it out though.

"Looks like you might be the next one down the aisle," teased Erica.

"No way, that's definitely going to be Michelle," I said, smiling, but when I looked over at her, she wasn't smiling back.

11:30

Michelle grabbed her purse and stood up suddenly. "You're really just living in your own world these days, aren't you, Sienna?" She stormed out of the boutique, leaving me totally confused.

"Michelle, wait!" I called after her. "What did I say?"

Mia and Erica exchanged looks with each

other,

"Michelle is a little on edge right now. She's been having some problems with Ross," Erica explained.

"Shit, I had no idea," I said. "They'll be okay though, right?"

Mia just shrugged her shoulders. "Maybe, but you can see why she's mad. If you'd been around more in these past few weeks, you'd have known about what she was going through

Damn, was she right? Had I been so self-absorbed with everything going on that I'd completely neglected my best friend? It pained me so much to hide the truth from my friends, but I had to do this on my own.

Hopefully they'd understand at some point but now just wasn't the right time.

* * *

I was cooking dinner, thinking about Michelle, when Aiden came home from work, still sporting the same annoyed expression from that morning

"I thought you didn't want to be considered a submissive woman who does nothing but cook for her man," he commented dryly.

I shot him a glare. "Cooking is hardly a submissive trait. If you can't make your own food, you're the one being reliant on someone

else."

He grinned wolfishly. "Am I ruffling your fur the wrong way, Sienna?" he asked, a mischievous glint in his eyes.

Suddenly he was behind me, hands on my waist, pressed against my back. His lips were grazing my ear when he said, "Do you want to hit the big bad alpha?"

I did, but I'd restrain myself for now. "Get off me," I growled, but instead, he kissed me. This time the kiss wasn't as rushed as before.

His Haze was completely under his control, and he drove me crazy. I wanted him to press harder, to shove me against the island and devour me.

He teased my lips into accepting his, sucking and biting them.

When I shuddered and couldn't keep my mouth closed anymore, his slick tongue broke through and taunted my own, making me crazed with passion. Suddenly, he stopped and pulled away with a grin on his face.

"I think that's enough for tonight," he said, echoing my own words, which I'd used against him multiple times.

That asshole. So this is how he wanted to play this game? *Well, game on, bitch. He's not the only one who's got control over his Haze.*

"Sit down. Dinner is served," I said sharply.

"Well look at you, such a cute little homemaker. It suits y—"

Aiden let out a piercing howl as I dumped a pile of hot Spaghetti Bolognese in his lap.

“Oops, sorry, *dear*. Let me clean that up for you,” I smirked.

As I grabbed a towel and pretended to clean up the food on his lap, I made sure to provide special attention to his crotch. I felt him getting hard, and his Haze flared up almost immediately.

I massaged him carefully as his eyes closed and a look of pure pleasure appeared across his face. I abruptly stopped touching him and threw the sauce-covered towel at his face.

“You’re a little messy down there,” I jeered. “You might want to clean that up. Wouldn’t want to touch you on your period.”

Aiden shot up, growling, and stabbed his fork into the table. We glowered at each other, asserting our dominance to the highest degree until –

My mouth fell open as Aiden broke into a huge smile. He started laughing hysterically, doubling over and holding his stomach. His laugh was a low, gravelly one, and it was so infectious that I burst into laughter myself. What the hell were we doing?

When the laughter subsided, we smiled at each other, and I could see his eyes softening. The silence after the laughter was the most comfortable silence I’d ever felt with anybody, and as we gazed at each other, smiling like that, it felt like everything fell into place.

Everything finally made sense. It was a surreal moment, but I wouldn’t question it.

We ate in the same silence, neither of us daring to break it. He seemed to love my cooking by the way he devoured the entire meal and came back for seconds.

Watching Aiden eat my food with such hunger, such satisfaction, it was a different kind of pleasure.

He looked up and met my gaze, eyes intensely piercing mine, and my heart skipped a beat. He stared deeply into my eyes, as if trying to read me, to appreciate me, and I found myself doing the same to him, trying to decipher his suddenly inscrutable look.

What was he thinking? What was he feeling? Maybe someday we’d actually understand each other.

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He suddenly flashed a smile and returned to digging into his dinner.

"Bon appetit," I whispered softly.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book Two Chapter: 05

Aiden

I'm in deep. There's no turning back now, not that there ever was for me.

Sienna had me on a leash. *Like a domesticated dog.* But did she hate me or have feelings for me?

I could never tell with her. If she ultimately chose to reject me...

Fuck!

I swiped my claws across my desk, knocking everything from stacks of signed documents to old sports trophies to the floor in a clatter.

Josh cringed especially hard as I scattered hundreds of Yule Ball invitations around the room, some of them hitting the ceiling fan and getting ripped to oblivion.

"That girl," I snarled. "I can't get her out of my fucking head. She's completely taken over my every thought, and it's driving me insane."

"I'm sure it's just the Haze," said Josh warily, as he tried to recover what was left of the invitations.

The damn Haze. It felt never-ending. I teased Sienna relentlessly about her control, but the truth was I was barely holding it together. When I was in her presence, everything else felt blurred — I couldn't focus.

But for me to be feeling this way when she wasn't even around? It made me want to claw my eyes out.

"How the hell are you dealing with this?" I asked, pacing in circles. "Doesn't Jocelyn distract you from your most important tasks, burrow into your brain like a parasite, and make you want to rip something in fucking half?"

"Uhhh—" Josh quickly pulled a vintage mural of my family tree out of my reach.

He paused for a moment to think about my question. "Actually, not really," he said, looking a bit confused. "I mean Jocelyn is great and all, but I can't say I've felt anything like what you're describing."

"Well, you're lucky then," I growled. "Because this is torture."

11:32

My phone started buzzing in my pocket, and I pulled it out cautiously, knowing exactly who it would be.

Sienna Hey Aiden

Sienna Got your note

Sienna Hope you have a good day at work

Sienna Sounds busy

Sienna Maybe I can find a way to make your day less stressful

Sienna

I threw my phone across the room as my Haze started to ignite again, watching it shatter against the wall.

"Josh, I no longer have access to my planner," I said without a shred of irony. "What's on my schedule for the rest of the day???"

"Just the Pack lunch," replied Josh. "Do you want me to cancel it?"

CC

"Hell no, that's exactly what I need. A testosterone-filled room. No women and *especially* no Sienna."

Sienna

I woke up to an empty house, but Aiden's scent still lingered in the air. He left a note, held by a magnet on the fridge. It said he'd gone out for some alpha business and he would be in the Pack House all day and might not make it home for dinner.

For some reason a dumb grin spread across my face as I got dressed. When I looked in the mirror and pulled my red hair back into a ponytail, I saw my mark in a different light.

For the first time, it didn't annoy me or enrage me. I was actually kind of proud of it.

I decided to text Aiden and tell him to have a good day at work, maybe even flirt a little, but after a few messages, they stopped going through and he didn't reply. He was probably swamped with work and had to shut off his phone.

What if I surprised him at the Pack House for lunch? That seemed like a good idea, considering how he wouldn't have a spare moment otherwise, today.

I was practically beaming, and I wanted to smack my own silly smile off my face, but maybe this feeling wasn't so bad.

When I reached the gate, I saw the guard who'd been there the last time I tore through the Pack House. He took one look at me and turned white as a ghost. Without even a "hello," he opened the gate and ushered me through, trying to avoid eye contact.

"Sorry about last time," I said sheepishly, making him jump. "I might have some anger management issues.

Eyes wide, he smiled nervously, nodding like a broken bobblehead. *I might need to pay for his therapy.*

When I got inside, I caught Aiden's scent, but it was somewhat obscured by several other masculine scents. I wondered if he could

scent me or if mine was masked too? As I was sniffing the air, I nearly ran right into Jocelyn.

"Hey, Sienna," she said as she smiled. "What are you doing here?"

Damn, I kept forgetting how beautiful she was. "Hey, Jocelyn," I said, smiling tentatively in return.

I still wasn't sure if I could trust her or not. Michelle constantly told me she was shady, but Jocelyn was always kind and helpful to me. Usually I trusted Michelle's judgment, but this time I wasn't so sure.

Especially since the timing of Michelle's distrust in Jocelyn aligned with her dating Josh, who I'm pretty sure Michelle had a crush on, despite never having officially met him.

"Are you here for Aiden?" she asked slyly.

"Is he busy? I could always come back later."

"No, he's just in his Pack Lunch. *Men only*," she said, rolling her eyes. "Josh is there too."

"That sounds important," I said, starting to lose my nerve. "Maybe I shouldn't interrupt."

Jocelyn grabbed my arm, giggling. "I think that's exactly what you should do. Hold on try this."

She leaned in and pulled my hair down from its ponytail, tussling and messing with it till it had a sexy bedhead look to it. Damn, her beautiful appearance was one thing, but she also had a scent that could kill. It was absolutely intoxicating. She pulled down the shoulder of my shirt, exposing my mark.

"Are you sure about this?" I asked.

"Sienna, Aiden is crazy about you. And if what Josh has been telling me is true, then he might be literally going insane because of you. You're probably the most dominant she-wolf I've ever met, and you look sexy as hell right now. Embrace it! Go into that lunch and show him you're a force to be reckoned with."

She gave me a mischievous smile and placed her hand above my heart.

"Trust me...and good luck."

As she walked away, I felt I really could trust her implicitly.

A fiery dominance had begun burning inside me as soon as she touched me. It was as if she'd activated some buried power deep within me.

Chin up and dominance radiating from my every pore, I burst through the heavy oak doors of the meeting room, striding toward Aiden and the other men with complete confidence.

They all raised their heads, dumbfounded, jaws dropping and eyes filling with lust, except Josh, who just scowled.

Aiden's Haze flared when he caught my scent, but there was a ravenous look of pride and possession in his eyes that had nothing to do with the Haze.

Arousing Aiden in front of his pack was one of the riskiest things I'd ever done, but I could tell it was working by the way he was sweating and digging his claws into the table.

It was a bold move, but Jocelyn was the right target. Not just anyone could pull this off.

Aiden tried to fight his Haze, but for once, I didn't want him to fight it. I wanted it to completely engulf him. It wasn't exactly revenge—I wanted him too—but I was enjoying every sweet second of his discomfort.

I leaned over the table and licked my lips.

"I missed you when I woke up this morning. I started touching myself, but it just wasn't as much fun without you. Your fingers are so much more satisfying."

That was all he needed. Before I even knew what was happening, he picked me up and slammed me down on the table, causing the rest of his pack to jolt.

He crawled over me, growling in anticipation, while I lay sprawled out across the table in clear view of everyone else.

"Get out," he snarled at his pack without breaking eye contact with me. "Everyone get out NOW."

The Pack hastily got up from the table and made for the exit, but Aiden was all over me before they had even left.

He grabbed my breasts through my shirt, squeezing almost painfully. I kissed him back, but unlike him, I had control over my Haze now. I managed to tease his mouth until a

growl burst out of his throat, making his chest rumble.

I shuddered

from the feeling of the vibration and laughed quietly. "Oh, someone's angry," I said seductively.

“You have no idea,” he growled and kissed me again. This time I let him kiss me as possessively as he wanted while I wrapped my arms around his neck and put my legs around his waist. I grabbed a handful of his hair and pulled it as hard as I could until he bared his fangs.

“Fucking bite me,” I commanded.

“What?” he replied, bewildered. “Since when do you—“

11:34

“What?he replied, bewildered. “Since when do you—“

“Do what I tell you. Sink your teeth into me!”

Aiden picked me up and set me gently on the edge of the table, surveying me with concern. “Sienna, what’s this about?”

“What are you talking about? Don’t you want me?” I responded, annoyed.

“Of course I do,” he said. “But not like this.”

What was I even doing? Throwing myself at the Alpha? This was such a stupid fucking idea.

Doubt began to sink in, and whatever Jocelyn had done was fading fast. All of my insecurities came rushing to the surface.

“Do you even find my scent alluring?” I spat. “What if I weren’t your prospective mate? Would you even pay any attention to me?”

You’re an alpha, a different pedigree. I’m just a commoner, a girl that was abandoned by her parents. I’m nobody.”

I started tearing up. “I can’t be with someone who’s superior to me. I can’t be in a relationship where I constantly feel insignificant and burdened to live up to your expectations. This just can’t work.”

Aiden looked stunned, but he softly placed his hand on my cheek and stared straight into my eyes.

“Sienna, I don’t view you as a commoner that has to bend to my every whim.” He smiled. “I view you as an equal.”

Now, I was the one who looked stunned. *An equal?*

“Look, I can’t explain it, but,” Aiden said, furrowing his brow. “But lately, I feel connected to you, to what you want. I can sense your desires and your doubts like they’re my own. And I know you don’t want it here—in my office, on the conference table.”

Aiden started pacing now, clearly nervous, an emotion I hadn’t thought Aiden possessed.

This was weird as hell, and I sat back in complete bewilderment, not knowing what would come next in this one-man play.

Now, I was the one who looked stunned. *A. equal?*

“Look, I can’t explain it, but,” Aiden said, furrowing his brow. “But lately, I feel connected to you, to what you want. I can sense your desires and your doubts like they’re my own. And I know you don’t want it here—in my office, on the conference table.”

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“What I’m trying to say is...” He turned to face me with a burst of confidence. “I think it’s time we go on a run.”

Oh. My.God.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book Two Chapter: 06

Sienna Hey, Selene

Sienna Are you awake?

Selene Ugh, barely

Selene This better be life or death

Selene It’s 2AM

Selene What’s going on?

Sienna When did you first know

Selene Know what??

Sienna That you were in love with Jeremy

Selene Wait, what?

Selene Sienna...

Selene Could this really not wait till the morning?

Sienna Aiden asked me to go on a run tonight

Selene WHAT

Selene OH MY GOD

Selene Why didn't you lead with that??

Selene I'm like hyperventilating over here

Selene Hold on, let me go to the living room

Selene

Jeremy is snoring

Selene

Sienna Um, okay take deep breaths

Sienna I'm the one going on the run

Selene SO YOU'RE GOING??

Sienna Yes, and I need your advice

Sienna

Like...now

Selene Okay, what do you need to know?

Sienna Your first run with Jeremy

Sienna What was it like? What did you wear? Was it intense or intimate?

Selene Well, it was magical

Selene And what you wear couldn't matter less

Selene Since you'll be shedding your clothes

Selene It's both intimate and intense

Selene It's really a spiritual experience more than anything

Selene Letting the wolf take over and giving in to your most primal instincts

Sienna What if our wolf forms don't connect though?

Sienna This could ruin everything if we aren't ready

Selene I can't give you an answer to that

Selene But if you already said yes, I think you have your answer

Selene

Sienn UNLIMITED

Thanks, sis

Sienna Gotta go

Sienna Aiden just walked in

Sienna

I looked up at the man who I was about to go on a run with—the most intimate experience two werewolves could share—and suddenly I felt a wave of nervous anticipation.

Rumor had it that a run was what had ended Aiden and Jocelyn's relationship. They didn't connect at all in wolf form.

What if that happened to us too?

"Ready?" Aiden asked.

That was a goddamn loaded question. When Aiden had first asked me to go on the run, my wolf took over and I blurted out "yes" before I could even process the weight of that commitment.

His expression was so sincerely pleased by the swiftness of my answer that I didn't have the heart to back out of it.

Now my head was screaming for me to run as far away as possible in the other direction while my wolf howled over it, drowning out my trepidation and telling me to get off my ass and go with him.

I nodded and got up as he took my hand and led me outside to the edge of the woods. We took the first step together, crossing the

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his flawless abs. He leaned back against a tree and grinned as I clutched my own shirt tighter.

"Turn around," I said, blushing. "I don't want you to see."

"Why?" He laughed. "I'll see you naked one way or another. It's only natural."

He was right. It was another unspoken code among wolves. Nudity before and after shifting was unavoidable, so werewolves didn't make a big deal out of it. It was the same as losing your virginity when the first Haze hit. But the rules became different for me after Emily

"We've already established that I'm not like all the other she-wolves you know," I shot back as I fumbled with the zipper of my jeans.

"Believe me, I know," Aiden said, suddenly looking at me with calming eyes. That look was pure Alpha, not in an intimidating way, but in a reassuring way.

Being an Alpha wasn't all about control. Sometimes it was about keeping the Pack clear-headed. "Don't worry, you look beautiful."

I turned around, but I slowly slid my pants down to my ankles and pulled off my top. Standing in just my underwear, I took a deep breath. I removed my bra and panties and swung around to face Aiden.

He was already naked, letting it all hang out without an ounce of embarrassment. He was the Alpha after all. Still, as we stood completely naked, taking in each other's bodies, it didn't feel the way I thought it would

It wasn't an aura of lust between us, but one of connectedness. We were one and the same.

Selene was right about this being a spiritual experience, and I was beginning to understand

"You first," he coaxed.

I stepped forward and stood directly under the cascading moonlight

Letting my wolf consume me, I shifted, gracefully landing on all fours. I glanced at my reflection in the pond to see my reddish-brown pelt alight like a burning fire. I'd never seen it shine this way.

Aiden shifted next, and his wolf form was just as huge as I'd remembered it.

His silky jet-black fur and piercing hazel eyes were gorgeous under the night sky. Our gazes lingered on each other in recognition, and any doubts that I had about our wolves not connecting disappeared in an instant.

He turned regally and nodded to the woods, and that was my cue. I dug my paws into the

earth and darted into the brush. Now I just had to make sure he didn't catch me.

It was a game of intimacy, but it was also a challenge. I had to show him how dominant I was to prove that I could hold my own against the Alpha.

The trees blurred around me as I raced through the woods, and the wind in my fur felt exhilarating. If Aiden was going to catch me, I wasn't going to make it easy for him. I knew the first thing I had to do was mask my scent.

I dove into a muddy puddle and rolled around before swiftly getting up and changing my direction. My best bet was to confuse him and cover my tracks as best as possible.

As I darted back and forth, a sharp howl penetrated the night's silence. Aiden wanted me to know he was closing in. He was toying with me, but he also gave me an advantage. I knew his location now.

I dove into the river and paddled to the other side. Hopefully he was in the mood to get wet. I shook my fur dry once I was on the other bank and continued deeper into the woods.

Hours had passed since we'd begun our chase. I could only imagine the frustration he was feeling. Some might say that you should let your partner feel like he was in the lead, but fuck that, this was a game of dominance.

I found a rocky hill where I'd be sure to leave no tracks. I climbed to the top and tried to get a lock on my bearings. With all the zigzagging, even I had gotten a bit lost.

My ears shot up as, without warning, a heavy thumping started echoing from the east, and it was rapidly approaching me. Aiden lunged out of the brush, claws drawn, drool flying out of his unclenched jaws.

I had only a moment. I threw my body to the side as his teeth nipped my heels. He looked wild and untamed, dirt and debris covering his previously silky coat. I wondered how much of a mess I looked.

We began doing a sort of dance, circling each other, waiting to see who would make the first move. We snarled playfully at one another.

Finally, we're at the end.

A twig snapped, and I let myself get distracted for just a millisecond. It was all Aiden needed. He charged at me, hitting me square in the ribs.

We both tumbled down the hill, smashing through rocks and bramble, landing in a heap at the bottom.

He recovered first and immediately pinned me. I yelped and thrashed, trying to escape, but he had me right where he wanted me. His tail wagged in excitement as he bared his fangs.

He let out a triumphant howl and sank his teeth into my shoulder, right where my mark would've been in human form.

This was the final act of a run between potential mates. I'd now been marked in both human and wolf form.

I was wholly and completely his now. A lover and a potential mate. No other man would dare approach me during the Haze.

We shifted back to human form, Aiden still on top of me, fangs dug into my mark. We stared at each other without moving, without speaking, without doing anything, really.

It was the most intimate and intense moment of my entire life—just like Selene had said—and I never would've thought in a million years that I'd be sharing it with Aiden Norwood.

He helped me to my feet and led me to the water. I wasn't even aware of my nakedness anymore, just my connection to Aiden.

We waded waist deep into the lake, and he tenderly washed the blood away from my mark. It stung, but a mark wasn't so much a physical pain as it was a mental connection. What I felt in that moment, Aiden felt too.

And what I was feeling was my heart being

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And what I was feeling was my heart being filled with a longing for someone like it ne had before.

I'd fallen for the Alpha.

The Millennium Wolves Series Book Two Chapter: 07

Sienna

Three days had passed since the run, and the period afterwards was like coming down from a high, which meant my emotions were all over the place.

At times I'd experience a flash of euphoria, remembering the thrill of the chase, while other times I'd hit an emotional low, thinking I'd never feel that way again.

Aiden felt it too. He'd grown more distant over the past few days, burying himself in work. Selene conveniently left out that the best experience of my life would be followed by a crippling sense of unease.

I needed to do something to pull us both out of the funk, so I decided to bake Aiden his favorite dessert, apple pie.

Jocelyn told me the Alpha had a massive sweet tooth, and I'd yet to use that weapon in my arsenal against him. This time, though, I'd use food for good.

I found myself humming and moving my hips as I sauntered around the kitchen, spilling flour everywhere. I wasn't expecting a chorus

flour everywhere. I wasn't expecting a chorus of woodland creatures to pop through the window and start wrapping me in silk or anything, but this feeling? It felt fucking great.

The oven timer dinged, signaling the apple pie was ready. It smelled like heaven. If I could've chosen a permanent scent for myself, it'd be this one. I excitedly texted Aiden to see when he'd be home. I didn't know how long I could wait to see the look on his face.

Sienna

Hey, are you on your way home?

Sienna I have a surprise

Sienna

Aiden Still stuck at work

Aiden We got our own surprise today

Aiden A last minute VIP guest for the Yule Ball

Aiden Gonna be working late

Sienna Again?

Sienna That's the third time this week

Aiden I know

Aiden It's not ideal

Aiden That's just the way it is right now

Aiden The Yule Ball is in two weeks

Aiden

Aiden It's mayhem here

Sienna Will you at least be back before I'm asleep?

Aiden Don't know

Aiden I wouldn't wait up

Sienna Oh okay

Sienna Talk to you later, I guess

All the enthusiasm I had worked up instar drained from my body. I was suddenly mad. Mad at myself, for putting so much effort into baking, like some submissive housewife. Did

I have nothing better to do than bake for a man? To wait for his validation?

But I was just as mad at how upset his texts made me. That his absence was affecting me so much.

I used to pray for this kind of distance between us. Hell, at times I'd wished we were on opposite sides of the Earth. But now I couldn't handle him being gone for a day.

And I didn't like it.

As the heat from the apple pie faded, so did its scent. Aiden's unmistakable odor—a mix of woody and manly—filled the room again. It was apparently strong enough to do that, even when he wasn't home.

The scent of him alone was enough to send a visceral pang of *missing him* through me. Ever since the run, when we'd gotten close as wolves, my inner wolf had this constant urge to be near his. It was like he radiated something that connected us, and I wanted to be tethered to that connection at all times.

Tears flooded my eyes. I placed my hand my mark as my body shook.

I knew I was being dramatic. I felt like a foolish teenage girl. But I didn't care. I just wanted him here with me, holding me, kissing me, telling me everything would work out between us.

But instead I was here alone.

Aiden

I dropped my phone back onto the table. "Dammit," I muttered under my breath.

I hated doing this to Sienna. I'd barely even seen her in the past three days because it felt like I was living at the Pack House. Everything was in full disarray since the surprise announcement that the Alpha of the Millennium would be attending our Yule Ball.

And when everything was in disarray, yours truly was working overtime.

On the one hand it was an honor to have a guest of that caliber attend our humble celebration. The Alpha of the Millennium was the emperor of, well, fucking everything. He was the beacon of power that everyone revered, and gracing us with his presence was an honor we might not get again.

But on the other hand, it was suspicious. Why would the Alpha of the Millennium decide to come to our Yule Ball, and on such short notice no less? Was he just interested in the annual celebration, in visiting our Pack, or was there something more to his motive?

I couldn't tell. But I was planning to keep my senses heightened until the Ball ended to make sure I was prepared for anything.

I had already ordered security to be increased tenfold, both at the Ball and the days leading up to it. Being the most powerful man in the world—and that was what the Alpha of the Millennium was—meant you built up an impressive roster of enemies. And with the recent perimeter breach, it was clear that there were flaws in our system.

I was certainly not going to be taking any chances.

When I ordered the increased security, some Pack members looked at me like I was paranoid. But I was willing to fight for the U defensive team I knew we needed. Even if everything went according to plan, I'd rather be safe than sorry.

I had full confidence in my Pack, in their ability to follow orders and achieve results, but lately I'd been wondering if they had the same confidence in me.

I saw the way their eyes connected with each other when I gave orders, and I heard the whispers that would float around me on occasion.

Paranoid.

Not as strong

Lonely

It wasn't that they were disobeying me or disrespecting me. That would've been unacceptable. They would've been punished and replaced immediately. I was Alpha, and I was in charge.

It was more like... they were worried about me. They wanted the best for their Alpha, and they didn't know how to help me get it.

It always came back to finding a mate. That much was clear. The looks, the whispers, none of it would happen if I'd get mated already

But then again, maybe they were right to worry about me. I couldn't let my mind drift from Sienna for a goddamn minute. I should be focused on the Pack, on the Yule Ball and the Alpha of the Millennium's appearance, but instead I was worried about a few texts?

My inner wolf growled. *Enough.* I was Alpha.

The Alpha did not second-guess himself.

I turned to look across the boardroom table, where Josh was reading through some documents. We had agreed to go through legal and get the signatures done, but Jeremy was running late.

"Josh, forget the paperwork. Call a Pack meeting. We have some things to discuss." Josh looked at me then nodded.

He walked to the room's phone and pressed a button then barked into it: "Council to the boardroom. Council to the boardroom. Alpha's orders."

Alpha's orders. That was goddamn right.

Sienna

I'd thrown myself under the bed covers several times already, but that activity did little to comfort me. It made me feel only more isolated

I needed someone to talk to. Someone who would understand this separation anxiety. Normally, that someone would be Michelle, but we hadn't talked since shopping for Mia's mating ceremony dress.

I fiddled with my phone for several minutes, trying to work up the courage to text Michelle. My inner wolf was doing somersaults in my head.

Just do it, you bitch.

Sienna

Hey

Sienna How are you?

I paused. Staring at the screen. A minute passed, then two. I knew I couldn't pretend like nothing had happened, like we hadn't had our biggest fight. I was certain that if I didn't apologize now, she wouldn't respo1

And then how would I get my friend back?

Sienna Mich I know we aren't on the best terms right now

Sienna But I miss you

Sienna I should've been there for you

Sienna I'm sorry

Sienna Really really sorry

I took a deep breath. Waiting. Still nothing. So I plowed ahead, deciding to just leave everything out there. I had nothing left to lose.

Sienna I know I have no right to ask this you

Sienna But there's so much going on between me and Aiden

Sienna And I just...I really need a friend right now

I dropped my phone on the bed, pulling the blanket over my eyes. I'd laid out everything in the open, but part of me thought she wasn't going to respond, anyway. I hadn't been there for her when she really, truly needed me.

I'd been too self-absorbed to even realize she had.

So I wasn't allowed to feel surprised, or sorry for myself, when she wasn't there for me either. Just as I was repeating that over to myself, I felt my phone vibrate. My heart leapt out of my chest. I grabbed the phone and turned it over, seeing the lit-up screen.

Michelle im sorry sienna

Michelle i just need some space rn

My stomach dropped like I was on a rollercoaster. All the hope that had welled up inside me just... popped. Like a balloon.

I knew I couldn't blame her. I wouldn't let myself do that. But still, realizing that I'd been the one who pushed her away... it made me feel even more isolated.

It was like everyone around me needed space.

Away from me.

I glanced in the corner where all my unused art supplies and half-finished paintings were collecting dust. At least my art supplies were there for me. I got out of bed, stretched a new canvas, and placed it on an easel.

If

all these emotions were going to be swirling around inside me, I might as well put them to good use. It had been awhile since I'd started a new piece.

I had no idea what would come about, but at least painting would provide a temporary distraction from how shitty I was feeling.

I started with black, which was fitting for how I was feeling. Long, wavy brush strokes.

Next, a creamy white. Soft and delicate.

Purple, I needed purple. Two circles. Piercing pupils.

Lastly, a thin, willowy frame washed out by the moonlight

I took a step back. I'd painted a woman. A beautiful, but sad woman. She looked strangely familiar. Why was she so haunting? I gasped as I made the connection.

It was the mysterious woman from the woods.

I'd nearly forgotten about her, so why was she staring back at me from my canvas now? Part of me wondered if she was even real. Maybe my mind was so desperate for interconnection

that it was fabricating hallucinations that looked real enough for the rest of me to buy it.

But I knew better than that. She was real.

I could feel her, not physically but her energy. There was something unique about her. Something I'd never sensed before.

Aiden

I jumped up on the boardroom table that currently seated my Pack members. I paced back and forth looking each and every one of them in the eye, asserting my dominance.

“Everyone, listen up,” I commanded. “Things are going to change around here, starting now. The One True Alpha is coming, and I need this Pack to be a united front. So strong that no threat can break through. Understand?”

I looked around, seeing the solemn faces nodding back at me. “This Pack will always have my full attention, never doubt that. But if you don’t trust my decisions, then we’re all in trouble. If any of you don’t feel my leadership is worthy of your obedience,” I said, pointing to the door, “there’s your exit.”

I took a breath as I looked from face to face. Nobody moved a muscle. So I continued. “If we’re divided, we’re weak. And if we’re weak, then something like the perimeter breach will happen again. That’s not a possibility. Do you understand? This is the fucking Alpha of the Millennium. If we can’t protect him, then we’re no damn Pack at all,” I barked.

I stepped over to Josh’s seat and lowered myself down, so I was crouching. Looked him right in the eye. “Josh, my Beta. I need to know that you are fully committed to your Alpha. That you will follow my orders, no questions asked.”

He looked around the room, trying to keep his expression neutral.

“What are you looking at them for? I’m right here,” I said, snarling.

“Yes, my Alpha,” he said, eyes finally locking

on mine. “I have full confidence in you as Pack leader. I will follow you.”

“Without question.”

“Without question,” he echoed.

“And the rest of you?” I asked, standing back up and looking around the table.

“Yes, my Alpha!” they shouted.

“Which Pack is the strongest from coast to coast?” I yelled, stomping on the table.

“East Coast Pack,” they echoed, stomping back.

“Fucking louder!”

“EAST COAST PACK!”

The Pack howled like the warriors they were, and I felt a surge of pride that I hadn't felt in months. This was our house, and we'd protect

it with our lives.

My phone began buzzing, and I whipped

it out, adrenaline still pumping through my

Sienna A real Alpha wouldn't leave his woman alone

Goddamn it. I was all riled up, surrounded by pure wolf-fueled energy, ready to go into battle. And here she was, questioning my Alphaness. Questioning my masculinity.

I wouldn't have it.

“Josh, as Beta, you'll run point on security for the Yule Ball. Are you up to it?”

“Absolutely. Absolutely, Alpha,” he stuttered. Clearly he wasn't expecting a promotion at the moment, but he questioned I'd just pushed him through.

“You took initiative during the breach, and the lockdown was your idea. You deserve it,” I said with a nod. Had to keep the soldiers proud, I figured.

“I won't let you down,” he replied.

“You won't,” I said back. And with a final nod to the rest of the Pack, I walked out of the boardroom with my head held high. About to enter a whole other type of battle.