

SIENNA

The sky outside was pure white, and the day looked cold and bleak.

The hotel room seemed to echo that with its sterility and emptiness.

Aiden was already at work, and I really didn't want to be alone.

Sienna
Hey Erica

Sienna
do you still have a morning prep on Tues?

Erica
yep lol



Sienna
mind if I come over?

Erica
np starts at 945

No one was going to be filming me today, so I

indulged in navy fleece leggings and an oversized cream-colored sweater.

When I entered Erica's classroom, she hopped up from her desk and hurried over, giving me a hug.

"What was that for?" I asked with a light laugh.

"Michelle may have mentioned you were a little... upset yesterday."

I sighed.

"Come here," Erica said, leading me to a comfortable area she had set up with bean bag chairs. A sign over the space said: "Reading Corner."

"I have a whole hour and a half," Erica said, tucking a stray lock of brown hair behind her ear. "Tell me *all the things*."

So I did.



I told her about not being able to paint.

About not being able to shift.

About the infertility. The stress and the dreams.

About trashing my studio, even.



Erica listened quietly, her arms folded over her chest.

“Wow, Sienna,” she said when I finally stopped. “That is a lot.”

I nodded. “Now that I’ve said it all out loud, it *does* seem like a lot.”

“Have you told Aiden about all of this?”

The thought of my mate brought a smile to my lips despite my worries. “I’ve told him some of it. He’s been really supportive.”

“Why haven’t you told him the rest?”



I didn’t have a good answer for that—except that I was tired of appearing weak in front of my mate when he was dealing with actual problems.

“He’s just... busy right now. He’s trying so hard to find Konstantin.”

Erica reached over and squeezed my hand. “I think it’s normal.”

“You do?”

She nodded. “Anyone who’s been through what you have would be... dealing with stress. Having trouble getting back to... how things used to be.”



trouble getting back to... how things used to be. Look at what Michelle's doing!"

"That's not really fair," I said automatically in defense of my best friend.

She rolled her eyes. "Whatever. I just hope getting her fifteen minutes will calm her the fuck down."

"Michelle is going through a rough time, Erica. We need to be sympathetic. Konstantin put her in a coma. And it was..." I trailed off as a sob rose in my throat.

"...and it was my fault. At least partially. I let the vampyre into my life, and he used Michelle to get closer to me."

Tears ran down my cheeks. Erica handed me a tissue from the box on the table.

"I was stupid and selfish, and Michelle almost died because of it," I continued, completely breaking down.

Erica shook her head slowly.

"Sienna, that doesn't make any sense."

I pulled another tissue from the box.

Erica leaned over and took my hand again. "Si,



what happened with Konstantin wasn't your fault."

"But you don't—"

My phone rang.

I blinked, quickly blew my nose with another tissue, and grabbed my phone out of my bag.

It was Charlotte.

Somehow, my heart managed to sink even lower.

"Hello?"



"Where are you?" Charlotte asked, irritation evident in her tone.

I dabbed my nose with the tissue. "I'm with Erica. Why?"

"Good heavens, Sienna. You're *supposed* to be at the hospital. Did you forget?"

Everything tilted.

"Shit," I hissed.

We *were* filming again today—a segment where I was supposed to go to the obstetrics ward and



we were filming again today—a segment where I was supposed to go to the obstetrics ward and bless women having difficult pregnancies.

With the whole infertility thing, I hadn't wanted to face it.

I had actually *blocked it out*.

“What is going on with me?” I breathed.

Erica gave me a puzzled look.



Into the phone I said, “I’ll be there as soon as I can.”

“See that you hurry,” Charlotte said before I could hang up.

I dropped the phone into my lap and covered my face, groaning.

“What?” Erica said.

I explained what was going on.

“Monica’s going to livestream it,” I said.

Erica was shaking her head. “I don’t think this is a good idea—what with everything you’re going through right now, Sienna...”

“I told Charlotte I’d be there as soon as possible.”

“Call her back and say you can’t make it.”

With a sigh, I said, “No. It’s no big deal. I’ll go there and get it over with.”

“Sienna...”

I patted her arm. “No, really, Erica, it’s fine. I just really needed to vent, but I feel a hundred times better. Thank you. This talk really helped.”

She eyed me.



Then she got up and went to the phone on her desk.

Hitting a couple of buttons she said, “Meredith? Yeah. It’s Erica. You’ve got a prep next period, right?”

A pause.

“Yep, that would be great. Owe you one.”

Erica hung up and looked at me.

“I’m going with you,” she said.



AIDEN

I glared at the useless compass as if I could magically make it work by sheer force of will alone.

A knock on my office door interrupted my concentration. Sayyid entered a moment later.

“I think we have something, my Alpha,” he said. He was holding a tablet in his hands.

“Tell me,” I prompted.



“You have to come. Now. If we leave immediately, we may be able to catch Konstantin.”

Sayyid came around to my side of the desk, holding up his tablet.

With a few swipes, he had a list of phone numbers. He pointed to one. “Best as I can tell, this is the last person to have spoken with Konstantin after the Yule Ball,” Sayyid said.

“Who is it?”

“Dorothy Seaver. She’s the owner and manager of the Triple Creek Hotel, just northeast of Mahiganote.”

“You think he’s staying there?” I asked. “You think he’s back in Mahiganote?”

That seems awfully convenient.

Why would he come back when he knows we’re actively hunting him?

Something didn’t feel right.

But this wasn’t the time to ignore a potential lead.

I nodded at Sayyid. “Let’s go.”



SIENNA

Erica grumbled under her breath about Michelle the entire way to the hospital.

The two of them had never really gotten along, so I tried to chalk it up to that, but my stomach was doing cartwheels by the time we got to the OB ward.

This is the actual last place I want to be right now.

And when I saw Michelle—with her hundred-watt smile plastered once more across her face and laughing with Charlotte Norwood—I actually felt a little sick.

It took a real effort to breathe deeply—especially when they made identical expressions of disdain when they saw me.

“Sienna, *finally*,” Charlotte said, coming forward.

The camera people had set up lights and equipment around the room, and there was a line of women in wheelchairs waiting in a large doorway across from us.

Erica stood at my side like a bodyguard.



If I couldn't have Aiden at my side for this nightmare, it was nice to know that my friend was watching out for me.

That's how this whole mess had started. With me trying to watch out for a friend.

“Alright, everyone, let's start rolling!” Monica said, her curly hair held back by a hairband.

A wave of dizziness washed over me. I wasn't ready for this.

“Wait,” I said, but Monica wasn't paying any attention.

My mouth felt sour. I cleared my throat. “Can we... can we wait a minute?”

It was like someone had designed this event to be exactly what would push my buttons right now.

What if that's exactly what they had done?

A camera operator made his way over to us.

The red light on the camera was steady.

Glaring at me.

Like Konstantin's glowing red eyes.

My knees threatened to give out entirely, but I tried to keep my voice steady.

"Actually, Erica's right. I'm not... feeling well."

"Is that why you were late?" Charlotte asked.

"No. I went—I went to my studio."

The lie was off my tongue before I even knew why I was telling it.



Erica tugged on my arm, and I took a step back, eyeing the exit like it was water in the desert.

"Ugh, your *studio*," Charlotte scoffed. "I still can't believe Aiden indulged that childish habit."

can't believe Aiden indulged that childish hobby. You're the Alpha's mate now, Sienna. You won't have time for watercolors if you're playing your role correctly."

I closed my eyes so Charlotte wouldn't see them roll back into my head. When I opened them, the cameraman had stepped closer to get a full shot of my face.

I longed to shove him, to take his stupid camera and smash it against the wall until that horrible red eye stopped shining at me.

"We're leaving," Erica said, tugging on my arm.

Michelle came forward, scowling at her. "Why don't you just go, Erica? You aren't even supposed to be here."



"Why the hell are you even doing this, Michelle?" Erica said hotly. "No one believes in this shit anymore. We have modern medicine."

"No one gives a fuck what you think," Michelle said under her breath. Her eyes were bright and glassy as they darted nervously to the camera.

Charlotte raised her chin. "Tradition is meaningful to most people," she said. "These women all volunteered to be blessed. I don't think any of them would say it's *silly*."

Erica turned on Michelle. "And why are *you* even

Erica turned on Michelle. “And why are *you* even here? I don’t remember any Beta’s mates being so involved in Flame blessings back when I was a kid.”

Monica’s eyes lit up.

This was probably ratings gold.

I raised my palms. “Would you two quit it? I’m glad both of you are here. Michelle has been a big help.”

“Then why don’t you let Michelle do the blessings, and we’ll get out of here?” she said.

Michelle’s eyes lit up.



“That might actually work—” I began, happy to encourage my friend.

“Absolutely not,” Charlotte interrupted.

“These women are here to be blessed by the *Alpha’s* mate,” Monica added.

Michelle looked like she’d been struck in the face.

I glanced over at the pregnant women, who were watching all of this with wide eyes.



Series

The Millennium Wolves
Book 4 - Chapter 21

Dark Mode



Chapters

Alpha's mate," Monica added.

Michelle looked like she'd been struck in the face.

I glanced over at the pregnant women, who were watching all of this with wide eyes.

A muscle started to twitch in my cheek. My throat was tight with tension.

"Okay," I said. "It's fine."

Erica started to argue, but Monica looked triumphant.

"Alright, everyone," she called out, looking at watch. "We go live in 5, 4, 3..."



Her lips mouthed the last two numbers as her hands counted down to zero.

We were live.

[Next Chapter](#)