



Series

The Millennium Wolves  
Book 4 - Chapter 17

Dark Mode



Chapters

## SIENNA

Sunday morning. I was late to meet Michelle, Charlotte, and Monica.



It was traditional in the week after the Festival of Flame for the Alpha's mate to visit people, blessing their candles and distributing alms.

Monica wanted to livestream it.

I knew how important this all was to Michelle, but I wished she could just do it without me.

And I got the feeling she'd rather do it without me anyway.

After my session with Hanh the evening before, it was hard to keep it together.

They waited for me at the Pack House, the tip of Michelle's shoe tapping on the brick walk outside.

I was wearing a Selene original: a cobalt blue cashmere jacket over black silk trousers.

On the outside, I looked sleek and poised.

On the inside, I was barely holding it together.



What I wanted was to be curled up on my couch *at home* with a mocha, watching Packflix.

Or lying in bed next to Aiden, with his gentle hands stroking my skin.



*Just get it over with, Sienna. This whole thing will be done with in a few weeks, and life can go back to normal.*

Or whatever passed for normal, anymore.

I tried to push my worries to the back of my mind.

*Time to be the gracious Alpha's mate everyone expects me to be.*

## JOSH

Aiden had spent the night at the motel, insisting on trying out the bottle first thing.

I barely slept. I was so fucking tired of sleeping alone in strange beds.

It had been so long since I'd seen Michelle, since I'd felt my mate's lips against mine. We texted constantly, but it wasn't the same.

I knew she was upset that I had left her while she was doing the reality show, and I was trying to feel guilty about it.



guilty about it.



But I didn't understand why no one seemed to be taking this Konstantin investigation as seriously as I was.

That night, I dreamed about my father.

Once, when we were on a long road trip, I'd asked if I could go to the bathroom.

My dad—a bourbon bottle firmly wedged between his thighs—had told me to wait.

When I started to cry, he called me a baby. When I didn't stop, he hit the brakes, dragged me out onto the highway, and left me there.

He'd finally come back to get me an hour later.

I was four years old at the time.

But in my dream, all I remembered was red taillights fading off into the distance, and a deep feeling of abandonment.

When my alarm finally went off, the first thing I did was take a slug from the flask on my nightstand.

We got breakfast at a drive-thru coffee place. I drove, and Aiden held the bottle with the black

we got breakfast at a drive-thru coffee place. I drove, and Aiden held the bottle with the black sludge in his lap, watching it ooze.



After driving around the city for hours, he shrugged.

“You’re right, it doesn’t work like this,” he said.

“I told you.”

“Take me back to my car.”

Suppressing an irritated sigh, I obeyed.

We got out in the motel parking lot, and Aiden held up the bottle. “I’m taking it home, Josh. I’ll try putting it in a compass and see if it’s any more effective.”

I held up my palms. “Fine, Aiden. Do what you want, you’re the Alpha.”

He raised an eyebrow at my tone, but I wasn’t sorry. He’d been cutting me out of this investigation from the beginning.

Aiden gave me a tight-lipped smile and then headed to his Beamer.

I watched him drive away.



Then I headed to my motel room.



With one more quick look out at the parking lot just to be sure he was gone, I went to the dresser.

Inside, there was a bottle of black goo.

The real sludge.

*Thanks for letting me know what I was doing wrong, I thought to Aiden.*

It needed to go into something mechanical. Something it could enchant.

A compass seemed like the most logical choice, but I didn't have a compass.

The closest thing to that was the fancy watch Michelle had given me.

With care, I took off the watch and laid it on the dresser.

Uncapping the sludge, I poured it slowly onto the watch face, hoping I wasn't just wasting the stuff.

But at this point it hadn't done anything to help me, and it stank of vampyre.





If I ended up just having to take the Rolex in for a cleaning—

I caught my breath.



The tar-like substance slipped like thin oil into the watch face, seemingly a sentient thing.

I stared intensely as it filled the watch and then receded so the little dials were still visible.

And then, all of them began to turn.

I stared.

It had worked.

I pivoted with the watch, walking in a circle, and the hands began to swivel.

I circled until I was facing the window.

The arrows stopped moving and remained fixed.

They pointed to where the sun was just beginning its descent into the horizon.

West.

Konstantin was somewhere to the west.

Now that I knew, I was going to find him.

And I was going to kill him.



## NINA

I found Jocelyn hiding in a side garden, bundled into a heavy coat.

“Jocelyn, please.”

As before, she turned away.

I knew since the day she hid me in her closet that she still loved me.

But she refused to answer her door whenever I came to talk to her.

Yesterday evening was the first time she came to the cafeteria for a meal, and I'd managed to not be on shift. I was furious with myself.

People in the kitchens gossiped about the patients at the retreat though, so I heard about it.

Everyone was saying she wasn't eating. That she had lost the will to live along with her healing abilities.



I had to say something. To share her pain. Even if she wanted nothing to do with me. I needed the chance to explain.



So I'd tracked her down this afternoon. And I was determined to make her listen to me.

"Jocelyn, I didn't mean for this to happen," I said to her now as she glared at me.

Even too thin, too pale—she was beautiful.

I persisted, "I—I wanted to be close to you—as close as I could be, without being in ECP territory, so I picked this place... got a job. But I never thought you'd end up here too..."

Jocelyn made a scoffing noise and turned her back to me.

"Jocelyn, you have to start eating. People are saying you're not healing like you should."

The denim jacket I was wearing felt like nothing in the Kansas cold.

"I'm *sorry*, Jocelyn. I can't begin to understand what you're going through, and I just... I want to be there for you," I said, reaching a hand out to touch her shoulder.





She yanked it away.

I pushed on: "Please believe me. I never wanted to hurt you. I'm lower than dirt, I know that. You don't deserve any of the pain I've caused you."

"You *disappeared!*" she said at last.



My heart jolted.

"I know," I said softly. "When I saw that the battle was almost over... and you were going to be okay..."

"You *left,*" Jocelyn finished for me.

"I was afraid of what the Alpha would do to me."

Jocelyn turned to look at me. "You helped against Konstantin. He would have forgiven you."

"He thinks I tried to murder his mate, Jocelyn, he's not going to just blow past that."

Jocelyn shook her head, turning away again. "You didn't even say goodbye."

I breathed in deep.

"Not a note," Jocelyn continued, her tone dull.

"Not on a *mail*."



“Not an e-mail.”

I shook my head. “I couldn’t. He’d have tracked me down.”

“From a *note*?” Jocelyn scoffed.



“I didn’t have time for a note!” I said, pleading. “I had to escape, Joce. I’m sorry!”

Jocelyn shot me another glare.

The hurt in her eyes broke my heart.

“The trouble is, Nina, you lied to me from the beginning.”

Nodding, I cast my eyes down. “I did.”

“You *played* me.”

My face shot up and I shook my head vigorously. “Jocelyn, no! I *never* faked any of the feelings—all of that was *true*.”

Jocelyn’s mouth twisted with bitterness. “How can I believe anything you say, Nina? You lied. Over and over.”

I hugged myself. Her gaze was colder than the freezing air.

“And now you’re here, and you want me to believe it’s some kind of coincidence?”

“I... don’t know...,” I trailed off.



If I searched my heart, the truth was, I didn’t think it was a coincidence.

Behind the old cynicism that still lived within me, even after all the things that had happened, a new belief was growing.

It wasn't coincidence that had brought me to this place, of all the possible locations I could have chosen along the ECP border.

Maybe it was the hand of some divinity.

Maybe it was fate.

But I was supposed to be here when Jocelyn arrived.

I’d hurt her so badly.

And now she wasn’t eating. Wasn’t healing.

I didn’t think I deserved to be with her—I’d done her wrong.



But maybe I *was* here to help her.

To make sure she recovered.

“Jocelyn, you have every right to be angry. To hate me,” I said.



She winced and looked away.

“But I’m here now,” I said.

Her shoulders tensed.

“I’m going to make sure you get better,” I said.

There was a long pause, and then she started walking away.

But she stopped and glanced back once.

“You can’t help me, Nina. You’re poison.”

## SIENNA

We spent the whole day going from house to house, with Monica live streaming it in snippets.

Michelle checked Yapper every time we left for the next place. Sometimes she’d look pleased,

reading out a yip as the limo took us to the next location.

“Michelle Daniels looks stunning as usual in her Yves St. Laurent herringbone coat,” she read. “That’s ‘Eye for Fashion.’”



Later: “So impressed with the renewal of this alms tradition. A little bird told me this whole Festival of Flame idea came from Michelle Daniels.’ That’s from Etienne Tremblay. He’s the Alpha of the Canada Pack.”

She looked so thrilled, it lightened my mood a small bit.

I never would have guessed that our Festival of Flame party and this tour blessing *candles*, of all things, would be so popular, but people were eating it up.

They couldn’t seem to get enough.

But after the seventh visit, *I’d* had more than enough of smiling for the camera and engaging in empty small talk with strangers.

When my phone buzzed, I lurched for it gratefully.

**Aiden**

hey sweetheart, I’m back from Winston-Salem





**Sienna**  
😘

**Aiden**  
want to meet up for dinner at Dogstar?



**Aiden**  
dying for a burger 🍔

**Sienna**  
yeah, can we meet now?

**Sienna**  
early dinner?

**Aiden**  
sure

**Aiden**  
everything okay?

**Sienna**  
sort of

**Aiden**  
what's up

**Sienna**  
I don't want to talk about it over text

Sienna  
sort of

**Aiden**  
what's up



**Sienna**  
I don't want to talk about it over text

**Aiden**  
now I'm worried

**Sienna**  
I'll tell you when I see you

**Aiden**  
Sienna, I'm kind of freaking out now.

**Aiden**  
Give me some idea.

**Sienna**  
Hanh examined me. I have news.

Next Chapter