



Series

The Millennium Wolves  
Book 4 - Chapter 5

Dark Mode



UNLIMITED

## JOCELYN

I knew I was dreaming, because Nina was there.

We sat in a rowboat, drifting as we laughed, trying to retrieve an oar that floated ever farther away.

But even as I laughed, admiring her beautiful eyes and the ebony gleam of her skin, a part of me grieved.

I hadn't seen or heard from Nina since she had disappeared from the Yule Ball.

She'd stayed and helped for a while.

And then she had run away, without even saying goodbye.

In the dream, the rowboat split in two.

It didn't let in any water—it just became two separate boats.

I reached for Nina across the water: “Grab my hand!”

She looked away from me, still laughing.

Her boat spun around so that her back was to me.





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“Nina! Nina, you’re floating away!”

But she didn’t turn back.

“Nina, please! Don’t leave me!”

I dug my fingers into the rim of the boat’s hull.

And felt soft, silky sheets.

A lavender scent.

My silver bracelet pressed into the flesh of my arm.

*Where am I?*

My entire body ached, as if every muscle in my body had been stretched to its breaking point.

My eyes fluttered open.

Rose-and-white wallpaper.

*What is this place?*

I looked around.



Sharon Lowell sat in the armchair to my left.

“Hello Jocelyn,” she said. “Welcome to the Lawrence Healer’s Retreat.”

## SIENNA

The next day, after the events at the hospital, I returned to my gallery. The bells on my door jingled as I let myself in. I locked the door behind me.

Outside, a small gaggle of reporters squawked at me, led by none other than Monica Birch, but I ignored them.

They would get an official update from Aiden soon enough.

Poor Aiden. I’d stopped by his office before coming to the gallery. He’d looked weary and frazzled, muttering to himself about Konstantin’s potential whereabouts.

I knew my mate would stop at nothing to bring the vampyre down, and it gave me immense comfort to know how hard he was working.

But still, I missed him.

This was the first time I had been to my studio



since the disastrous events of the Yule Ball.



Everything was in perfect order, but being back in this space sent a shiver through me.

Konstantin and I had spent hours together.

I'd laughed and chatted with the vampyre, and all the while he'd been invading my friend's mind.

And my own. But at least I'd managed to fight him off.

In some surprising ways, too, I thought, remembering the incident in the forest where I'd thrown a tree at the attacking vampyre.

I still had no idea how I'd done that. If I didn't know better in my gut, I'd have thought I'd imagined the whole thing.

But Michelle hadn't been so lucky. The vampyre had possessed her entirely.

I couldn't begin to imagine what she was going through.

I made my way to my studio in the back room, preparing to finally reconnect with myself through art.

What would I paint?





Something representational? Michelle in the hospital bed? Jocelyn fighting to save her?

*Jocelyn...*

She'd nearly sacrificed herself to save my best friend's life. We'd heard that she was still alive at the Healer's Retreat in Kansas, but there was no word yet on her condition.

I considered painting something abstract as a way to deal with all of these feelings.

But when I entered my studio, all thoughts of new art slipped instantly from my mind to thoughts of Konstantin.

My heart hammered against my breastbone as the image of his red ember-glowing eyes burned into my brain.

*Will you ever really be out of my head?*

*Will I ever truly be free of you?*

My breathing felt strained, my chest tight.

*Oh, Aiden. I wish you were here.*

I had almost lost the battle to free myself from Konstantin.





Even though I'd resisted him, the cost had been far too high.

With a few deep breaths, I plugged my phone into the sound system and set it to play relaxing music.

Still consciously inhaling, exhaling, I set a blank canvas on the easel and took a seat on the wooden stool that stood before it.

But my heart continued to beat a pounding drum.

Moving quickly, as if rushing would allow me to outpace my growing distress, I squeezed a bit of dark blue onto a clean palette.

I added crimson and burnt umber and swirled a brush into the colors, blending them.

What was I going to paint?

My mind felt as blank and empty as the canvas before me.

What was I even doing here?

My best friend was in the hospital, recovering from an attack that almost killed her.

My other good friend was fighting for survival in Kansas after damn-near sacrificing herself to save

Kansas after damn-near sacrificing herself to save Michelle.

And I was... dabbing at paint.



I set the palette down and stood from the stool.

*Should I call Aiden?*

Right now, the sight of my mate's face, the feeling of his lips against mine, was all that I craved in the world.

But Aiden was busy. Hunting down the vampyre who had started all of this.

I didn't need to bother him with my problems.

I wrung my hands and restlessly paced the studio.

I couldn't breathe.

This place reeked of Konstantin.

Not literally—the vampyre had always been careful to wear his magical pin when we were together.

But the studio that Aiden had given me as a mating gift, where I had so many wonderful memories, now felt... tainted.



Unclean.

Like me.



My thoughts were spinning.

*Get it together, Sienna.*

I forced myself to stop pacing.

Giving art therapy up as a lost cause, I left the gallery by the back door, wanting to avoid the members of the press still waiting outside.

I needed to talk to someone, but definitely not them.

But Aiden was busy. I had to let him work.

My heart pounded.

*Stop freaking out and think!*

*You have a lot of people in the world who love you. Don't shut them out like last time.*

Sienna  
hey

Sienna



**Sienna**  
you busy right now?



**Selene**  
hi sis

**Selene**  
kinda. Have a ped appointment for Vanessa

**Sienna**  
oh yeah

**Sienna**  
hope it goes well. Any shots?

**Selene**  
yes 🙄

**Sienna**  
aw poor baby

**Sienna**  
and poor mommy

**Sienna**  
hang in there ok

**Selene**  
i'll try but when she cries 🙄



Sienna  
yeah

Sienna  
ttyl

Of course my sister was busy. She had a newborn.

With a sigh, I tried Erica.

Sienna  
hey erica

Sienna  
don't suppose you have any free time today

Erica  
sorry no lol

Erica  
it's an all-bell friday we have every class and then after there's a game

Sienna  
oh bummer

Erica  
I have to sell tickets lol

Sienna



Sienna  
ya i see

Erica  
everything ok?

Sienna  
totally

Sienna  
ttyl

Mia? Maybe she'd welcome my coming over to hang out with her and the twins?

Sienna  
hey mia how's twinsville

Mia  
🙄🙄🙄

Sienna  
lol

Sienna  
want some company?

Mia  
Harry's mom just got here and she's going to let me take a nap



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Chapters

**Mia**

sorry hon

**Mia**

another time?

**Sienna**

of course

**Sienna**

tyl

In the dimly lit alleyway behind my studio, I slumped against the rough brick wall.

*Guess I'm on my own.*

## MICHELLE

My hands were shaking. I hid them under the blanket.

*I'm okay. I'm okay.*

I'd been repeating this mantra since I woke up.

Maybe if I said it enough times, it would be true.

The makeup artist sat on the edge of the hospital

The makeup artist sat on the edge of the hospital bed and touched up my blush.

It was late morning, Saturday. I was still recovering in the Pack House medical suite after Jocelyn woke me the day before.

Monica Birch, Pack News reporter, held up a mirror, and I gazed at my reflection.



Not bad. She'd managed to hide the shadows under my eyes.

I didn't look like I was recovering from a coma at all.

When the reporter had turned up this morning and suggested an exclusive, prime-time interview with the "brave survivor of the vampyre attack that had captivated the world," I hadn't been able to refuse her.

If anything good could come of this nightmare, I was determined to find it.

This could be my big break. My shot into the hearts and lives of the East Coast Pack.

Monica had already told me how much they loved me.

And I was fine.





Totally fine.

*The sooner I show the world that, the better.*

I met Josh's eye. He was leaning against the wall, watching the preparations.

He had barely taken his eyes off me since I woke up. Even now, the desperate intensity of his gaze was enough to make my heart leap for joy.

I smiled at him and said, "How do I look?"

"Gorgeous," he replied, his blue eyes sparkling.

My heart warmed. Just looking at my mate made me feel better.

We had come so close—*so close*—to losing one another.

Because of the vampyre. Because Konstantin had sucked my blood and possessed me, leaving me unable to fight him for days.

Tears threatened to rise, but I blinked them back. I couldn't show weakness.

"I want to strike just the right balance," I said looking at Monica. "I want to evoke... sympathy, you know, for the ordeal I've just gone through



looking at Monica. “I want to evoke... sympathy, you know, for the ordeal I’ve just gone through. But strength, too.”

Josh’s brow furrowed as he listened.



I knew he thought giving this interview was too soon.

*You don't get it, babe.*

*I almost died.*

*I'm not going to let any more chances like this go by.*

This whole thing with Konstantin had been an awful nightmare—

But I would find a way to make lemons into lemonade.

Monica had prepped me on what to say when the interview started.

It was going to blow everyone away.

And catapult myself into stardom.

Even if it meant throwing some people under the bus.

## MONICA

“You’re going to do great,” I reassured Michelle as the cameras prepared to shoot. “Excuse me for a moment.”

I went out into the hallway to untie my hair from its bun for the millionth time, retying it even tighter.

I watched through the door as Michelle made a few final adjustments to her hair while the film crew finished setting up.

I could hardly believe it.



A one-on-one exclusive with the Beta’s mate.

There couldn’t be a more perfect opportunity.

After four years at Pack News, this was it.

I could see it now. Monica Birch: Top Reporter for the East Coast Pack.

And if Aiden Norwood or his little ginger bitch tried to get in my way, I would take them down.

I eyed the Beta’s mate in her hospital bed.

She was so desperate for attention. So eager to be





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She was so desperate for attention. So eager to be loved.

It was pathetic.

But I had a gut feeling that Michelle Daniels was exactly the person I needed to get close to right now.

And I always followed my hunches.

Next Chapter

