



Series

## The Millennium Wolves



Book 6 - Chapter 17

**AIDEN**

As Sienna and I walked with Raphael and Eve into my office, I considered why they had come. Their expressions conveyed concern, but also something else.

Something I couldn't put my finger on.



"I'm sorry to have missed the service," Raphael said as we all sat down.

Raphael and Eve took the rust-colored mid-century modern couch and Sienna and I sat in the two matching tub armchairs.

"Yes, we heard you shared a lovely eulogy, Sienna," Eve said.

Sienna gave a little smile and a nod but said nothing.

"Who did you speak to about the funeral?" I asked. "Surely you were still in the air when it was taking place?"



Chapters



Display



Unmute



Comment



React



“The funeral is the talk of the country at the moment,” Raphael pointed out. “There isn’t a pack member in any part of the Americas that isn’t tuned in on social media.”

*In other words you’re sidestepping my question.*

*Don’t want to reveal who’s been talking to you, huh?*



“You chose to do some... unconventional things,” Raphael continued. “The flowers caused a stir.”

“Chrysanthemums were a lovely choice,” Eve put in.

“But no wolfsbane at all?” Raphael said. “It’s almost as if you are distancing yourselves from being werewolves.”

Crossing her arms over her chest, Sienna shook her head.

“I just wanted something... *unique* for Selene. Something beautiful, but also... quiet. Wolfsbane is poisonous, and— and *wild*. I wanted something calm and peaceful.”

“Werewolves are hardly calm and peaceful



creatures,” Raphael said, without malice.

“Don’t I know it,” Sienna muttered.

“The choice of burial plot has also made a lot of waves,” Eve said, patting Raphael’s hand.

I saw Sienna stiffen and figured I’d better jump in.



“I understand that it’s a break with tradition,” I said. “But that tradition formed in a time before this one. Nowadays, celebrity has become such a force.”

Eve nodded at me, her violet eyes placid and nonjudgmental.

“We couldn’t have Selene in Mahiganote Cemetery. You read about celebrity graves easily accessible by the public. Graves in Père Lachaise, for instance. They routinely get desecrated,” I said.

“You should consider making a statement to the press saying that exact thing,” Raphael said. “It may already be too late, however. Your reputation has taken some serious blows these last few days.”

*My reputation?*



He turned and gazed at Eve, love apparent in his face.

“I understand the imperative to follow your heart,” he continued. “My own mate is outside the norm.” Raphael glanced back at me. “The heart wants what it wants.”

“We do understand where you are coming from. We came here because we are concerned for you,” Eve said.



“You need to get your pack under control,” Raphael added.

“Under control?” I echoed. I glanced at Sienna. Her face was stony.

“You have a power vacuum, Aiden,” Raphael said.

Frowning, I leaned back in my chair.

“You’re not referring to Jeremy Gibbs, I hope,” I said.

“I am,” Raphael said. “You have to face the fact that you need a new Gamma.”

“Jeremy was high in the hierarchy,” Eve pointed out. She leaned forward, cocking her face as she gestured with her hands.



“The hole he leaves behind threatens to destabilize the entire pack.”

“He hasn’t left a hole,” I said, my voice too sharp. “He isn’t dead.”

*And he won’t die. Jocelyn won’t let him die!  
He won’t go the way Aaron did.*

My brother, who died when his mate died. I couldn’t stand the thought of losing Jeremy the same way.

“Regardless of that, he *isn’t* capable of performing his duties, is he?” Eve said.



With a huff, I looked away. I could not entertain the idea of replacing Jeremy.

Raphael raised his eyebrows. “I understand a third of your members boycotted the funeral.”

I scoffed. “Singh’s faction and a few extremists with ideas about blood purity.”

“Aiden, stronger Alphas than you have fallen,” Raphael said.

Sienna stood and walked to the window.



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I swallowed my anger at Raphael and said, “Let’s not go overboard.”

“The ‘Singh faction,’ as you call it, and the ‘few extremists’, are a threat you should take seriously,” Raphael said, projecting his voice a bit, deliberately making sure Sienna heard him.

She didn’t turn, but I could see the tension in her back and shoulders.

“Gregory Singh is a former Beta and a very wealthy man,” Raphael said. “You should not underestimate him.”

I caught my breath, Raphael’s words hitting me.



Underestimating Singh was, I realized, exactly what I had been doing.

*I’ve been thinking of Gregory Singh as a nuisance. Someone easily dismissed.*

*But he’s more than that.*

“You don’t think Gregory would challenge me for Alpha status?” I said.



Sienna turned where she stood at the window. “He’s at least fifty-five years old.”

“Gregory’s eldest child is in his forties,” Eve said, “so I would guess he is closer to sixty-five, actually.”

“He may be too old to go for Alpha himself,” Raphael said. “But he may still want you deposed.”

Deposed.

I had never had a serious challenger. I never worried about it as a result.

Had I been blind to such a threat unfolding right before my eyes?

With everything that had happened...



Selene’s murder...

Jeremy’s situation...

Rowan...

Singh’s machinations had seemed so minor.

But now, Raphael helped me realize. Singh was trying to oust me.

was trying to oust me.

“I’m sure he does want me out,” I said, musing.

*Of course he does. He’s made no secret of how much he disapproves of how I’m running things.*

*And like Raphael pointed out, he’s a wealthy man. He has the resources to back a coup.*

*A coup made all the more likely to succeed if it happens amid a crisis.*

*Like the crisis engendered by Selene’s murder.*

And just like that, I had a new suspect for the killer.



## SIENNA

I liked Eve and Raphael and usually I would welcome a visit from them, but not today.

Even though the rational part of me knew they were sincere, their assertions of concern made me cringe.

It felt like fingernails dragging across a



chalkboard every time one of them said something.

I wanted to go home.

Go down the hall, first, and gather up my poor, exhausted child, and then go straight home.

Worry for Rowan filled me, almost powerful enough to wash everything else away.

Why did everything have to get so complicated and hard?

I remembered holding Rowan when he was tiny.

His little hands, the pads of the fingers so small.



His feet. His toes.

His precious face, his little lips like a doll's.

I felt like I could keep my baby safe, back then.

Now? I didn't even know what was really going on with him.



He was seeing things I couldn't see.

Hearing things I couldn't hear.

And the things he could do...

How was I ever going to keep him safe now?

I mean, I get it. No parent can protect their child forever.

But this situation was a little more volatile than most.

*He can project a spirit wolf out of himself that can do real damage in the world.*

*What if he hurts someone?*

*What if someone gets scared, and hurts him?*

*I can't bear it.*

*But what can I do?*

*I'm just so tired.*

*All I want is to go home.*



*Take Rowan home.*

We'd just stay inside until everyone forgot about us.

No matter how long it took.

I turned back to the fogged up window, trying to tune the others out.

It was impossible.

"You've been lax," Raphael said to Aiden. "You've let your concern for Sienna distract you from your role."

Clenching my teeth, I lifted my hand, drawing a wolf with the tip of my finger on the glass.

Outside, it had started to rain.

"What do you suggest I do?" Aiden asked.

"Clean house," Raphael said. "You need to make an example of Gregory Singh. Demand a show of loyalty, and find a way to extend it to the rest of the pack. Anyone who doesn't comply... well, you'll need consequences."

"People in upper positions in the hierarchy



could get demoted,” Eve said. “Loyal members could take their place.”

“Shake everything up,” Raphael said.

It sounded exhausting.

Then, the sound of Helena’s unhappy voice came through the door.

“—told you, sir, he’s in a meeting! You can’t —!”

The door to Aiden’s office swung open, and Agent Enzo came inside.

I didn’t try to hide my distaste.



“Alpha Fernandez, I doubt you’ve had the pleasure of meeting Agent Enzo, of the TIB?” I said.

“We can skip the introductions,” Enzo said, his eyes narrow as he took in the room.

He held up a hand with a manila envelope.

“I have a warrant to search the Pack House.”

“What?” Aiden barked.

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“I have a warrant to search the Pack House.”

“What?” Aiden barked.

Enzo smiled. “That’s right, Alpha Norwood. And you can thank your mate for that.”

I frowned, glaring at him. “What are you talking about?”

“That little display you did, at the funeral?” Enzo said. He was practically crowing. “Making that wall with the roots and the leaves and all?”



A chill crept up the back of my neck.

The human continued, “Yeah, that shook some people up, Mrs. Mercer-Norwood. Made people wonder what else you all are hiding. It was just what I needed for probable cause.”

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