

The Millennium Wolves Series Book one Chapter: 02

Mom Dear Sienna. Where are you?

Sienna Mom, how many times do I have

to tell you

Sienna You don't need to start msgs with dear

Mom

But it's more special that way! Like a letter just for you.

way

Sienna

Mom Hurry home!

Mom

Your sister is here.

Mom

She brought Jeremy.

Mom

You know what that means...

Mom FRESH GOSSIP

Sienna

...cool?

Sienna I'll be back soon

Mom Great. Love, Mom.

Sienna

You don't get to decide when and where the Haze hits you.

Driving? Better pull over fast or you'll cause a fifty-car pileup

At work? Punch the clock and run for the hills or you and your boss may become a lot more than colleagues.

As I sat down to dinner, I prayed it wouldn't hit me while I was with my family—the worst possible place, in my mind.

As I helped set the table and served a plate

of homemade lasagna to Selene, I eyed the back door, in case I had to make an impromptu escape.

I sat down to eat with the whole family, who were already in the middle of a lively conversation.

"What is it, Jeremy?" my mom said, nodding to my sister's mate. "You've barely said a word since you walked in. How's work?"

"You don't have to answer that, counselor," Selene said, shooting Mom an amused glare.

"Well"—Jeremy laughed—

"if you're asking for gossip about our leadership, Melissa, you know I can't divulge that kind of information."

"Not even a nod to confirm or deny?"

"Mom," Selene said. "He's the Pack's head lawyer. His job is to keep their secrets."

"But..." Mom sighed. "I don't need to know anything of *consequence*. Just a little chatter. Like... is it true that our Alpha and Jocelyn are no longer an item and now she's dating his beta, Josh?"

"*Mom*," Selene and I said in unison.

Jeremy grinned. "I plead the fifth."

"Oh, you're no fun, any of you."

The woman acted more like a teenager than both of her daughters combined. But we loved her more for it. Most of the time.

"You could ask me about *my* work, you know," Selene said.

"I did, didn't I?" she asked through a mouthful of lasagna. "I'm sure I did."

Selene rolled her eyes. Mom had always wanted Selene to pursue a more stable career. Fashion, my mother thought, wasn't an occupation. It was a hobby.

"One day, something's in, the next something's out," she would say. "That's true with clothes and the whole industry, Selene! Think long-term."

Well, now Selene had succeeded, proving years of mother's advice wrong, and was actively working at one of the top fashion design firms in the city.

But Selene always let Mom's insults roll right off her shoulders. On every level, she was the prettier, smarter, more successful version of me.

Whenever I said this out loud, which I did

—often—Selene would shove me gently and just say, "You're still young, Si. Give it time."

But when it came to my dreams, to my future career as the world's greatest artist, I'd never been patient. One day I was going to open my own gallery

One day *soon*, I promised myself. I didn't care what Mom said. Selene had proven that she wasn't right about everything.

"That's all right, Mom," Selene said, changing the subject. "Gossip's more interesting anyway. Speaking of which...."

Selene's eyes flicked to me. I gave her a silent head shake. *Dont.*

"Any idea who might be your partner for the season, Si?"

"Ooooh, yes," Mom said, turning to me. "What, or should I say, *who* is on the menu this year?"

"A she-wolf never reveals her secrets," I said, playing coy.

For a second, my family actually seemed like they would move on.

I had a way of doing that—steering conversations, taking control, keeping the attention on anyone but me. Although I was the youngest, I had always had that authoritative ability.

But my mother caught herself.

"There she goes again," Mom said, shaking her head. "Our little dominant always making us submit to her whims. C'mon, Si."

Tell us. Is there a boy?"

"Some of us like to keep our private lives *private*, Mom," I said.

Mom shrugged. "There's nothing to hide. G I know your father is certainly looking forward to this year's Haze, aren't you, darling?"

"I'm counting the seconds," Dad said, holding up his glass of wine, smiling mischievously

"Guys. PLEASE. So gross."

It was gross, sure. But that wasn't the reason it bothered me so much. My mom had always been a sexually liberated creature. No, what I didn't like was the lying.

When I said my virginity was my secret, I meant it. Not even my mom knew.

Which was weird because we had always been so open with each other about everything. She'd never kept the truth from me.

Not about how she met Dad, who was a human. Not about how the two of them had their one and only daughter, Selene. And certainly not about how they found me.

They're not actually my biological parents.

I was discovered in an abandoned carriage outside the hospital where my mom worked. Not that it mattered, Mom had always said.

I was about to change the subject to anything, *anything* other than the Haze when it happened.

I froze. A slow, pulsing molten heat ignited within my core, making my body feel as if it were on fire.

Breathing became impossible, sweat covered every inch of my skin, and before I could resist, the seam of my jeans pressed tight into my groin.

I quivered with sudden, unbearable longing.

FUCK

A harsh gasp left my mouth before I could stop it, and when I opened my eyes, which I couldn't remember closing, I saw that everyone else in the dining room had the same reaction as me.

No, no, no

Not here.

Not around family

The way my sister stared at Jeremy. The way my mom rose out of her seat, leaning towards my dad.

I couldn't bear it. I ran from the room as fast as my feet could take me.

The kitchen.

The hallway.

The front door.

) And out into the cool night where I

collapsed upon my knees.

The Haze crawled through my body like a venomous snake. My nipples hardened and my stomach shuddered, tightening with sexual need

My throat was clogged and I fought to breathe. Even in the windy night, my clothes stuck to my skin. I wanted them off.

I wanted someone's hands on my breasts, my belly, on my sex...

Oh, God. The Haze had never been this strong

It was probably an accumulation of every sexual need and frustration I'd repressed throughout the past three Seasons.

I should've expected that. Of course, this was going to happen. What had I been thinking? I wasn't. And now I was paying the price.

I looked behind me at my home, a place where I'd normally find safety and comfort. But not right now. No way. My parents were

probably already making the most of the Haze.

The idea of Selene and Jeremy wasn't much better. But they acted more like people, less like wolves respecting boundaries, privacy, societal norms.

They'd probably make it back to their apartment downtown before they finally acted upon the urge.

I put them all out of my mind and ran for the trail toward the woods.

I passed humans, totally oblivious, minding their own business, and some wolves who were, like me, in the first stage of the Haze and trying to catch their bearings.

Easier for them. They weren't virgins. They'd had lots of sex during past seasons. Not me. I was hazed out of my goddamned mind.

At the entrance of the woods, I stripped. I didn't care if someone saw me. I needed to shift.

Right here.

Right now.

Normally, I was in complete control when I shifted, but not when the Haze was taking over. No. I couldn't stay in this human form any longer.

I closed my eyes and felt the bliss of shifting.

Usually, I would feel every bit of the change: the limbs stretching, the muscles tensing, the body growing tall, the red fur, matching my human hair, that sprouted from my skin. Covering me whole.

But not now. Now, I felt nothing but the

Haze.

I breathed and my voice was a growl. My fingers, now charcoal-black claws. Through the eyes of a wolf, everything was more aggressive, more violent.

Especially now. When the Haze was just beginning

Now in my full wolf shape, I raced deep into the woods.

The cold wind blew over my fur, the hard ground was moist under my paws, and the scents of the woods filled my nose.

Howls resounded in the woods. The unmated kind. The kind who were looking for a partner.

I cursed inwardly. In my Haze, I'd forgotten to think of the implications,

Going into the woods at the beginning of the season was like begging to be fucked. These woods were like a college bar. All thirst and stupid impulses.

Any second now, a wolf was going to get a sniff of my scent and recognize I had no attachment. They would stalk me until I yielded. More than one, I was sure of it.

A game, a challenge, for who could win the unpartnered she-wolf first.

Even if my body begged to differ, I wouldn't give in so easily. These wolves could have as much sex as they wanted. I wasn't judging.

But I was waiting

Waiting for that moment, that instant, that sudden indescribable look of recognition when two weres make eye contact and know that they're mates for life.

I couldn't wait for that to happen to me.

But out here in the woods at the start of the Haze? It was unlikely, to say the least.

I became hyper-aware of the male wolves, their every movement, their scent.

I ran brazenly, releasing pheromones into the air, luring them closer. And soon I knew they would have me cornered.

Five of them. All hungry male wolves.

My body liked it. Oh, did it ever.

For a second, I wondered if this would be the year.

Would I finally cave? Would I give into these five males, taking them all at once? Would I finally lose my virginity, right here, right now in the middle of the forest?

As the Haze took over and all my desires to wait for my mate began to melt away, I asked myself, what was stopping me? Honestly? I wanted it.

Or did I?