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The entire room went hush. 1

Anna, who had been weeping, was so stunned her tears froze.

She was rendered speechless.

Erik must have realized what he said because he began to apologize.

"Anna, I am sorry." He said. "That's now what I meant.

But she jerked her hand free from her brother's grasp and glared at both of them.

"I was never welcome here. Back in the moonlight pack, I was an outsider, and now, in my own home, where I could finally call home, I am an outsider?" Anna demanded. "After everything that I witnessed in the moonlight pack. All the awful things Jasmine and her parents did to me. And now she wins? It's not enough that she torments and makes fun of me

"My own brother." She said she looked sharply at Xaden. "And my own mate?"

And then she looked sharply at Erik.

She shook her head.

"I expected this from anyone else, but not the only ones I view as family. Now I know I would never belong here

And before either of the two men could stop her, she raced out of the room.

Erik sighed and turned to Xaden.

"I'll go after her."

And then he went. "Anna, wait."

Xaden stepped into the room and closed the door shut.

Jasmine got up from her bed.

"You shouldn't be getting up from your bed." Xaden said. "You should be resting."

"I'm pregnant. Not bedridden. Plus, I don't think the baby likes staying in one place." She said quickly, hiding the fact that she had been snappy with him

He seemed to ignore it. "How do you know? Can you feel it?"

Jasmine shrugged. "I don't know. But my body. I just know what she likes and doesn't." 1

"She?" Xaden asked, surprised. "Marie said we weren't to know the gender until it had gone far along." 3

He came and stood closer to her and the setting sunlight streaked against his face and his onyx eyes were enhanced.

She felt her heart skip.

"Yes. But I know it's going to be a boy." 2

She quickly said.

He nodded and hovered around one of the tables.

"Jasmine, you are here because I want you here." He said. "Not because I want you to terrorize my sister-

She started to explain. "I swear it. That was not what happened-

He ignored her and kept on talking. "Or kiss my second in gamma."

She went red at the last part.

So he had seen Erik kiss her forehead.

She swallowed. "That's not what happened. He only kissed my forehead."

"But it was a kiss nonetheless." Xaden pointed out.

Jasmine felt herself go red again because she had just admitted it.

"Yes... uhm.. but... er not in that way." Jasmine stuttered.

"I don't take well to women whoring themselves around." Xaden said. "Especially not a woman carrying my child."

Jasmines mouth when shut.

"I'm sorry." She apologized. "But I see Erik as just a friend. He has been kind to me?"

"A friend to you? Erik?" He asked me. "You can't see Erik as a friend to you. Do you know why? Because your fathered murdered Erik's wife in cold blood while their daughter watched in a wardrobe just like I did. Your father took away Erik's life and took a mother from a child. Erik would never forget that and that's why Erik would never be a friend to you."

Jasmine felt cold.

She had heard the story of Erik's family and the unfortunate doom that had befallen them. 1

But hearing Xaden saying it all over again made her feel so guilty.

But with Erik, she hadn't sensed any hint of anger or resentment from him.

Or maybe she was too blind to see.

"And for my sister." Xaden said. "She had wanted a mate her entire life. Why would you turn Kire against her?" 1

"I didn't." Jasmine explained. "She threatened me, and Kire was upset. I told her to back off. That was all that happened."

"But all Anna wants to do is help you. Despite the awful things you did to her in the moonlight pack. She still wants to help you." Xaden said. 5

Jasmine shook her head.

Xaden would forever take Anna's side because he believed her lies that she had been unjustly maltreated by Jasmine.

There was no one else to counter the lie other than Jasmine.

It was forever going to be he said, she says matter.

"I'm sorry." Jasmine said, just for peace to reign. "I'll see her after, and I'll apologize." 2

Xaden stopped.

It seemed he hadn't expected the apology.

He shifted uncomfortably and nodded.

"I have made a decision about you and the

baby." He said.

Jasmine felt her heart begin to speed even faster.

"First of all. What do you want?" He asked her.

Since when had her opinion been relevant?

"I apologize but what do you mean by what do I want?" She asked him lost.

"For the baby, I want you to tell me what you want." He explained better.

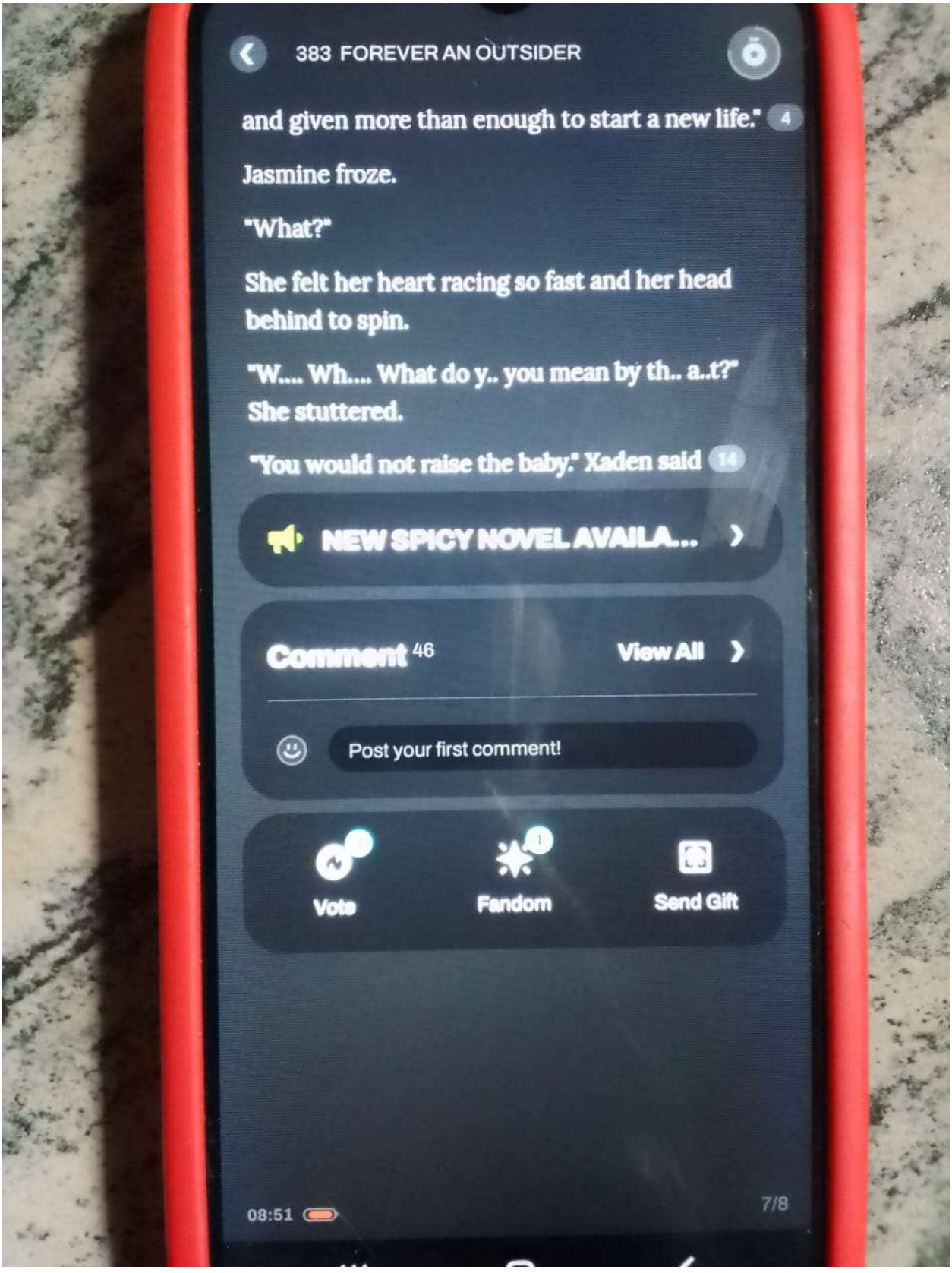
Jasmine sighed and thought about it thoroughly. "I want my baby to have a good life —the life he deserves and nothing less. I want him to grow up with love and happiness. That's all I want."

He nodded and then folded his arms.

"After much thought and deliberation." He stated. "I have decided that our child would be born and raised in this pack as my heir."

Jasmine gave a sigh of relief and closed her eyes to thank the goddess for her kindness and for answering her prayers.

"And for that to happen, once you give birth you would be free of any obligations towards him. You would also be handsomely rewarded


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and given more than enough to start a new life." 4
Jasmine froze.
"What?"
She felt her heart racing so fast and her head behind to spin.
"W.... Wh.... What do y.. you mean by th.. a..t?" She stuttered.
"You would not raise the baby." Xaden said 14
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