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Xaden started to speak. "Jasmine I- 1

"What makes you even believe that I would think you would be different from my father? Different from everything that I faced? Tell me." She said, her eyes filled with tears.

"You never even wanted the baby in the first place. At least with my father, I don't know if he wanted me." Jasmine stated. "But you wanted me to kill your flesh and blood."

"It's not like that." He said weakly. "I never wanted to have a child because of what happened to my parents. I have never told anyone this, but I told you. The reason why I don't have a family today is because of what Bale did to us. He used us as leverage against my father. I never want to be in that situation."

He sighed and looked up at the ceiling.

He closed his eyes and took an intense breath before looking back down at Jasmine and saying,

"I don't want to be backed into a Corner. I don't want to have my enemies take my child and use it against me because I would fall. Because I

would not live with myself if anything happened. Even to you. I can't let my enemies take you and use you as leverage against me".

Jasmine was taken aback by his words.

"You are throwing me away." She said. "There is no way that you are-

"I CARE ABOUT YOU!" He snapped. 1

She stopped, unable to say a word, her breathing so heavy she thought she would die.

"I care about you." He repeated much more quietly. "In ways that I shouldn't care about you. You shouldn't mean anything to me".

He dragged her hand and pulled her towards the large French windows.

"What are you doing?" She asked him.

"I'm showing you." He replied.

Once they were at the French windows, he pushed the curtains open, and the moonlight showed into her bedroom.

It was already nighttime.

He turned to face her, and then he took off his chest. 3

Under his left nipple was a mark that formed

like a zig-zag.

She looked closely and saw that it was stitched.

She had never in her life seen it before.

Her mouth opened in question.

"When I told you that I never wanted to have a child. I never wanted to be backed into a corner where my enemies would use things against me; I meant business."

He looked down at his chest. "I don't have a heart."

That stopped her right in her tracks.

Her own heart beat so fast that she believed she could hear it.

"Years ago." He said. "When I decided that I wanted to pursue Bale. When I was certain that I wanted to avenge my family and my pack, I knew that love was a weakness. Love was the one thing that made my father weak. I was never going to let myself fall into such a predicament."

"So you took out your heart." Jasmine finished for him.

"I took out my heart." He confirmed. "That way,

I was never going to love anyone. I can care about my people, but I would never love anyone. When it boils down to being backed into a corner, I would make a decision based on the most logical not one based on my heart. I also took away the ability to have children. That's why I have never bred with any wolf. Never."

Jasmine was too shocked to understand the words he spoke.

He didn't have a heart? At all?

And he had also taken away his ability to have children.

"Having children would render me weak. In this part of the world. As an alpha, where I stand, children make you weak." He stated. "Look at Queen Rose; she went half insane after she lost her daughter. To this day, she has never recovered. She still feels from what happened. And it has made her vulnerable to her enemies."

Jasmine briefly remembered seeing the mark when he had first been nude in her front, but she had assumed that it was from war.

Perhaps a scar.

But never in her wildest imaginations didn't she think this was why.

"And I have only ever cared for anyone since then." He said and a dark smile spring on his face.

"But you, Jasmine." He pointed out. "With you, I've cared more. I have felt more. And I don't understand why. My seed has grown with you, and that has never happened with anyone. Why you? An unshifted wolf. You aren't even a wolf. I have met many women. Some had even reached the rank of Alpha. But you, you are so simple and yet so different."

And then he very gently tucked a loose fire curl behind her ear.

"With you, I feel more than I ever have." He said. "You broke the boundaries that I step on my soul."

She looked up at him with her green eyes, and then he cupped her cheek, staring down.

It felt like he could see her entire soul.

"My enemies would use you against me." He said. "I can never let that happen."

She went quiet for a while before finding her voice.

"Xaden we can make this happen." She said. "You can keep me and the baby in the pack that

way no one would ever use us against you. No one would harm us."

And then he quickly withdrew.

"Now you're trying to use my emotions to your advantage." He said. 1

"No." She swallowed. "I would never do that."

He out on back his shirt and it seemed like the vulnerable side of him that he had shown had vanished into thin air.

It was now replaced with rigid and aloof Xaden.

The same Xaden who never cared or showed any emotions. 1

"I have decided that I would marry my mate Lily." He said.

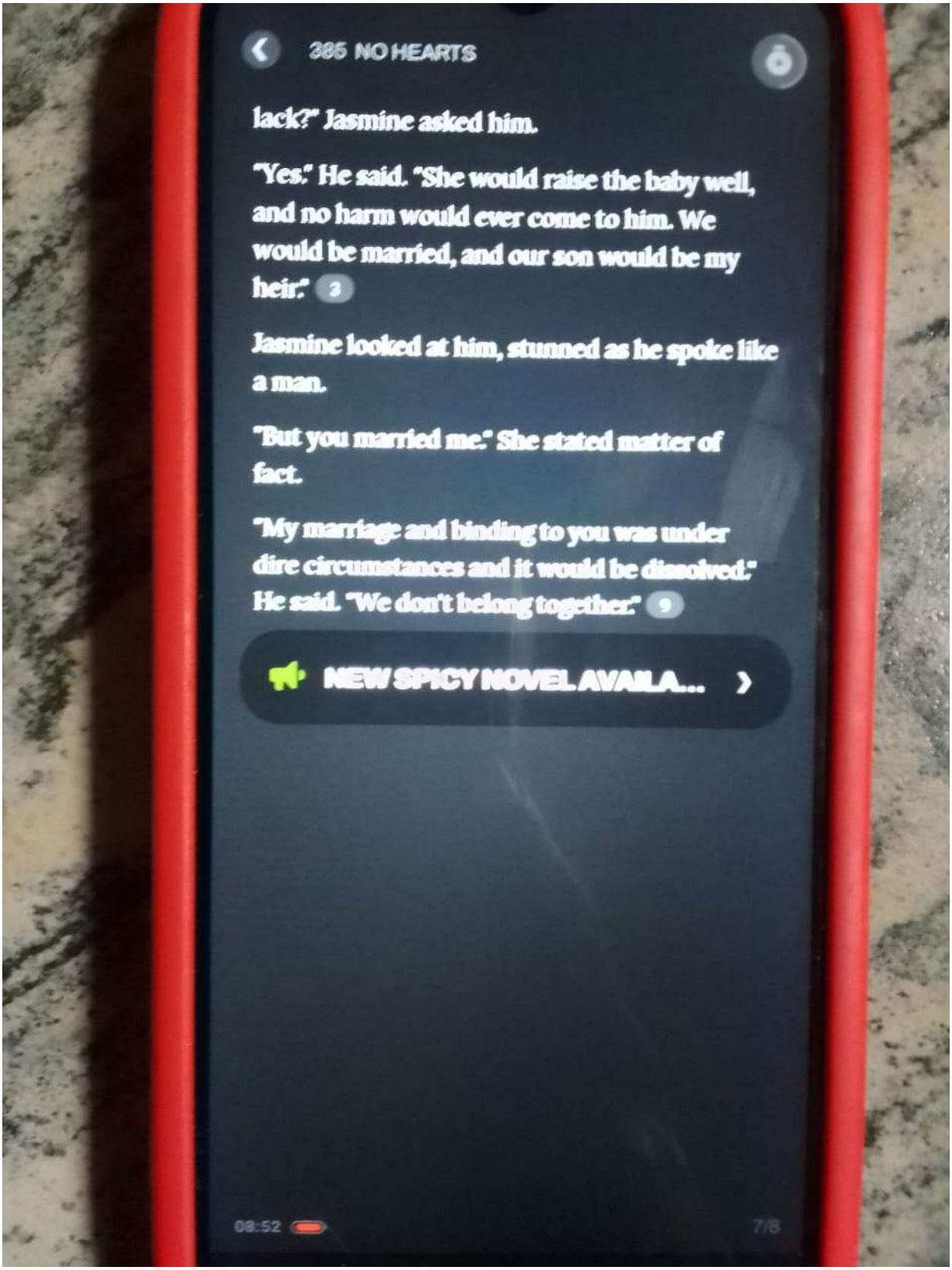
Jasmine felt she had been delivered a physical blow.

"Wh...whuu... what?" She stuttered.

"Lily is my mate." He said. "And is from a high-brow family just like mine. My uncle would fully give the rest of my father's pack once he is confident in our mating ceremony." 4

Jasmine felt her throat go sour.

"And Lily qualifies with the skills you claim I


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lack?" Jasmine asked him.
"Yes." He said. "She would raise the baby well, and no harm would ever come to him. We would be married, and our son would be my heir." 3
Jasmine looked at him, stunned as he spoke like a man.
"But you married me." She stated matter of fact.
"My marriage and binding to you was under dire circumstances and it would be dissolved." He said. "We don't belong together." 9
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