408 JASMINE'S UNCLE

"The other side?" Jasmine asked. 1

She had never heard of that before.

"Yes." He continued. "The other side."

He left his mother's journal on the table, walked to the bookshelf, and returned to her with another book.

He opened it, and it was filled with an entirely different handwriting and drawings.

This one was more well-written and also had some drawings attached.

"This isn't my mother's work. Over the years, she gathered work from various astronomers like her on the other side." He said.

Jasmine watched, intrigued, as he flipped the pages and showed pictures.

"What's the other side?" She asked him.

"There are stories that after the goddess Selene made the wolves, there was a pack different from the others." He stated. "They were at that time the most powerful pack. But it was not enough. They wanted more. They used some very old and dangerous magic. The goddess

cursed them."

"The way they cursed the Lycans. Erik's family?" She asked.

He shook his head. "No, not like that. Worse. The power they had searched was itself cursed. And the goddess cursed it again. They were exiled from our world and made far away from the rest of us on what is called the other side."

"I never heard of this." Jasmine admitted.

"A lot of people haven't heard of them, even if they had, they just think it's a myth or some sort of story to tell naughty children." He said.

"And what about you?" She asked.

"What about me what?" He asked.

"Do you think it's just a story? Or it's more."

He sighed and seemed to think for a while. "I don't know. It's just something my mother loved to do and I do it in return because it reminds me of her. It keeps her memories fresh in my head. I know. It doesn't make sense. Doing something you obviously do not believe in."

She gently set her hand on his arm.

He looked at her. "It makes a lot of sense to me."

If it were her too, and she knew who her mother was, she would do everything within her power to remember her.

There was a silent and tenses moment between them for a split second before he went back to his books.

"My mother along with your uncle were both obsessed with the other side. From what I have gathered though their works, he was the one who started the search. She joined him. They had been looking for it for a while. There are some clues she found." He said and then he gently touched the pages. "They stopped. They seemed to be getting close to

Something and then they just stopped. No more records of anything."

"What happened to this uncle of mine?" Jasmine asked.

Xaden shrugged. "I don't know. He just disappeared. No one knows what happened to him."

This was the second time she had heard about the uncle she had never known existed.

And for the fact that he was the elder brother to her father.

First born sons were supposed to be the Alpha.

So why had her father become Alpha?

Or had he had something to do with his disappearance?

She wouldn't it put it past him.

There was so much about her family that she was yet to know.

He handed her one of the books for her to read and she blushed in shame. 1

"What's wrong?" He asked.

"I can't read." She opened up.

He rose a brow. "You're joking." 1

She went silent in shame and then he seemed to regret his choice of words.

"You're not." He finally realized.

The air was now uncomfortable and awkward.

He was going to see her as fool for not knowing how to read or right.

"Would you like to learn how to?" He asked her. 1

That was the last thing she had expected him to say.

In fact she hadn't even expected him to say

anything like that.

"Uh... er..." she stuttered and the she cleared her throat to finally find her voice. "Yes. I'll like that."

He nodded. "You can be coming here. Who would you like to help teach you how to read and write?"

She wanted to say him, but she looked down at her feet and said. "Anyone would

Be fine."

"The nanny I brought to take care of you." He said. "Do you like her?"

"She is fine. I appreciate it." She responded.

"I'm glad you like her." He nodded. "She is one of the best available. She is skilled in taking care of children and women. She has also taken care of the children of high ranking pack families. She can teach you how to read and write."

"Thank you. I appreciate this." She said.

He nodded. "If you would like to also keep on coming here. You are free to. Research on astronomy if you become interested."

If these books held answers about her uncle,

perhaps there was a way she could find more about her mother and where she truly came from.

Perhaps if she could find her uncle alive, he would know more. 8

Deep down she hoped that he was nothing like her father.

And most of all she hoped that he was alive.

"How is the baby?" He asked.

She reached down to feel her belly.

"Alright." She said. "I can't feel it yet. Marie says in two more months. It's too early."

"Of course we can-

She gasped.

At the moment he had spoken, she had felt a strong sensation.

"What's wrong?" He asked already at her side.

She held her tummy. "Nothing I just felt strange."

Nothing happened again.

"Maybe you should-

And she felt it again.

"Ouuuuf." She exclaimed as she held her tummy.

"I think we need to take you to-

She felt it again.

She put her finger on her lips and urged him to shush.

He went quiet.

Nothing happened.

"It's not painful." She said. "I know what those earlier pains felt like. It just feels foreign. Not in a bad way. It's just there."

"What does it feel like?" He asked ignoring her command to be silent.

She felt it again the moment he spoke.

It felt like a kick..!

"I think it's a kick." She said with a smile.

The irony that they were just talking about her feeling the baby's movements in two months and all of a sudden she could feel a kick!

He started to speak again and then she felt it again.

"Don't say anything." She urged him.

He didn't.

She felt nothing and then she waved her hand in motion. "Say something."

"Like what?"

And she felt the kick again.

"The baby. It knows you and it kicks. When you speak it moves." She said at the realization. "She knows her father."

Xaden's face was white unable to say a word.

"Come." She urged him.

When he refused to move, to her, she walked up to him herself.

She picked up his hand and put it on her tummy.

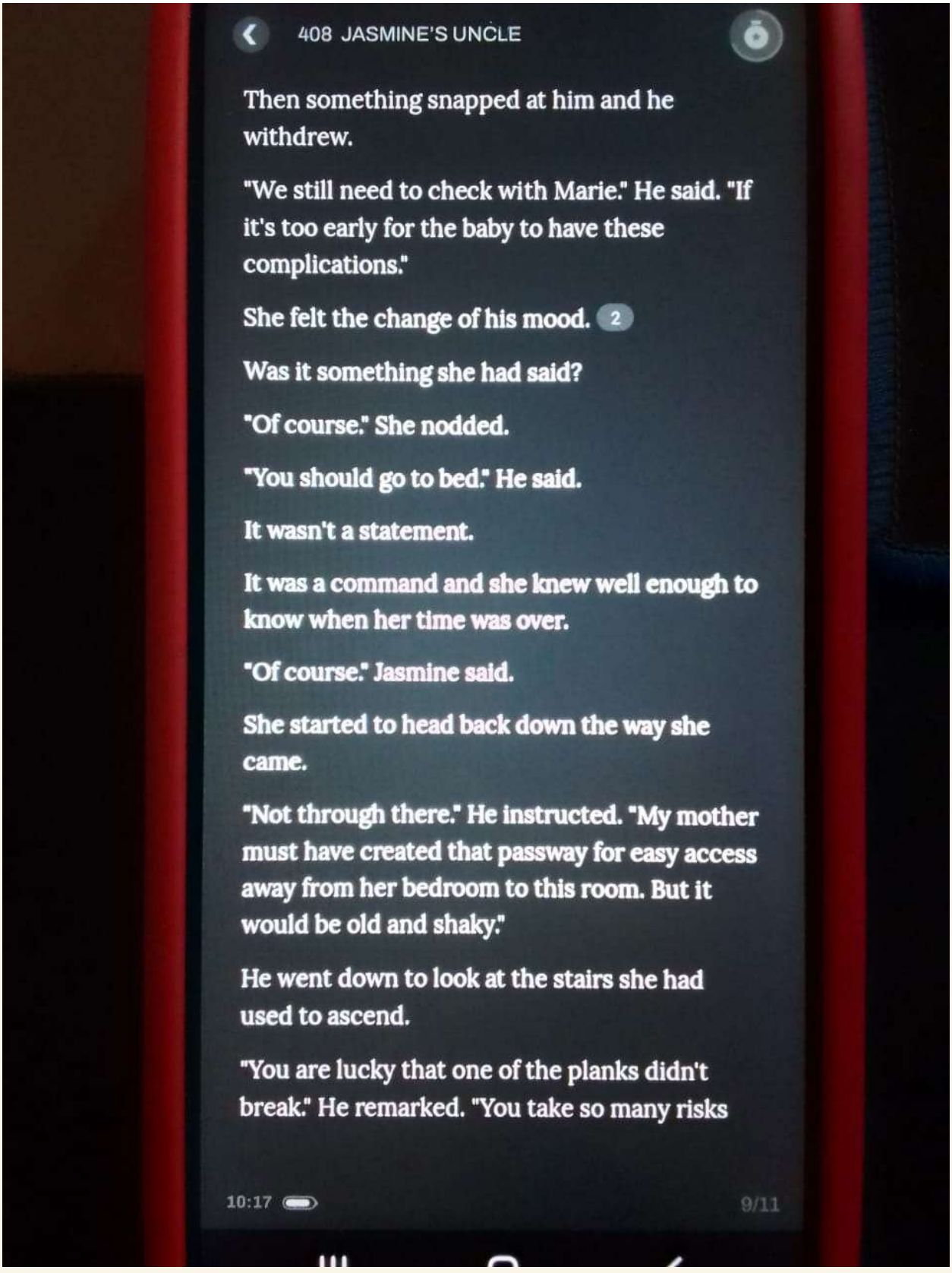
He didn't need to speak.

The baby kicked.

His eyes widened and then a smile sprang on his face.

"She knows her father." Jasmine repeated looking at him.

His hand remained there with a smile stuck on his face.


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Then something snapped at him and he withdrew.
"We still need to check with Marie." He said. "If it's too early for the baby to have these complications."
She felt the change of his mood. 2
Was it something she had said?
"Of course." She nodded.
"You should go to bed." He said.
It wasn't a statement.
It was a command and she knew well enough to know when her time was over.
"Of course." Jasmine said.
She started to head back down the way she came.
"Not through there." He instructed. "My mother must have created that passway for easy access away from her bedroom to this room. But it would be old and shaky."
He went down to look at the stairs she had used to ascend.
"You are lucky that one of the planks didn't break." He remarked. "You take so many risks
10:17
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for the conditions you're in."

He was scolding her she knew and the worst part was, he was right!

She could have fallen and what if he wasn't there?

She would have been lying down on the floor calling for help.

"I would get some of the working guards to come fix it up tomorrow." He said. "That way you would be able to access the astronomy room when you like."

He was really giving her access to this room.

Then he led her to a door and soon she was down some stairs and at her bedroom door.

She opened the door and just as she was about to step inside the room, she turned and faced him.

"Thank you Xaden." She said.

He didn't say a word.

She turned and walked into the room and shut the door behind her.

Thanks to her baby, her future was looking bright. 2