244 JASMINE'S TRUE PAST (2)

Who was your mother?" Xaden asked. 1

"She was a slave," Jasmine said. "I never met her. She died right after she gave birth to me. I heard that Luna Maria heard about the fact that Bale got her pregnant and was enraged. When Bale was away on some clan wars, she used the opportunity to lock my mother up in a cell. She fell into hard labor from her suffering, and then she gave birth to me. She died right after. When Bale came back and learned of all that had happened, he turned his blame on me instead of Luna Maria, who had killed my mother. He hated me because I was the one who killed her after the birth. So he always turned a blind eye to me and anything that had to deal with me. He left me at the mercy of Luna Maria."

Xaden assessed the situation before speaking up. "So you tell me that he was aware of all that was happening to you and did nothing to stop them?"

She nodded weakly. "Yes. I heard the rumors of who I was and I asked the healer and she finally told me confirming everything they had said about me."

"I can not believe that Bale would go to lengths to ignore you as his own," Xaden said She gave a bitter laugh. "Urma said I am the spitting image of my mother. My hair is everything except for the scar on my head. I look like her, so when he sees me, he sees her, and I remind him that it is because of me that she is no longer alive. He blames me, and I do not blame him for that."

She reached into her dress and unbuttoned it.

Xaden was about to tell her to stop when she simply pulled out a broken emerald necklace. "This belonged to her. Urma gave it to me. She was with her the moment she died and she helped with the birth. My mum named me, and then she gave her the emerald necklace to give me. That is the only thing that I have from her. And I have no idea who she was."

She sighed and then put it back

"My life was not swell." She said. "There is nothing for me to go back home to."

Xaden finally spoke up. "So their daughter is Jessica. She is the one whose place you took. She was the one who was supposed to be here."

Jasmine nodded.

And he went on. "And you took her place even

though they maltreated you from the beginning."

"I had no choice," Jasmine explained, but she knew that he would not understand. "Jessica would never have survived staying here. She would have been unable to deal with the things that I suffered here, or any of the chores."

Xaden began to pace in anger.

"That was the point!" He snapped at her. "I brought you here so that I could punish you! I believe that they loved you, and seeing you hurt would have hurt them. Making you suffer would have brought turmoil to their hearts the same way they had made me suffer, knowing that I had no one."

Xaden was frustrated, and he raked his hands through his hair.

"So there was no point, " he said. "So your staying here was of no use."

She swallowed.

"If any of anything you said is true. You were surrendering yourself for no reason. You were helping people who hated you." He said. 4

"It was either that or be killed, and I did not know you. But I know you now." She started to

plead, and he was shaking his head, trying to ignore or push away any of her pleadings. "Xaden I do know you and love you."

He stopped short when she said that.

She was even shocked that she blurted it out, but she breathed in and said it with her full chest.

"Xaden I love you." She said. "I care about. I have never loved another man the way I love you. I have never been in love. But being with you I know what love is." 1

He still remained standing and then he slowly turned to her and said. "What did you wish to gain from telling me that? Using those words?"

"Xaden I-

"You perhaps hope that I desire love or that you telling me you love me will change anything? Anything that you have done to me?!" He demanded through gritted teeth. 2

Now, his eyes were changing color.

And something else told Jasmine to take a step back.

She did.

"You use those words in such a flimsy way as a

means to torment me?" He demanded.

She shook her head quickly. "No, I say it because I mean it. I have known this for a while now and I kept it to myself. The timing is not perfect, but I swear that I do."

He calmed down his already-growing wolf transformation.

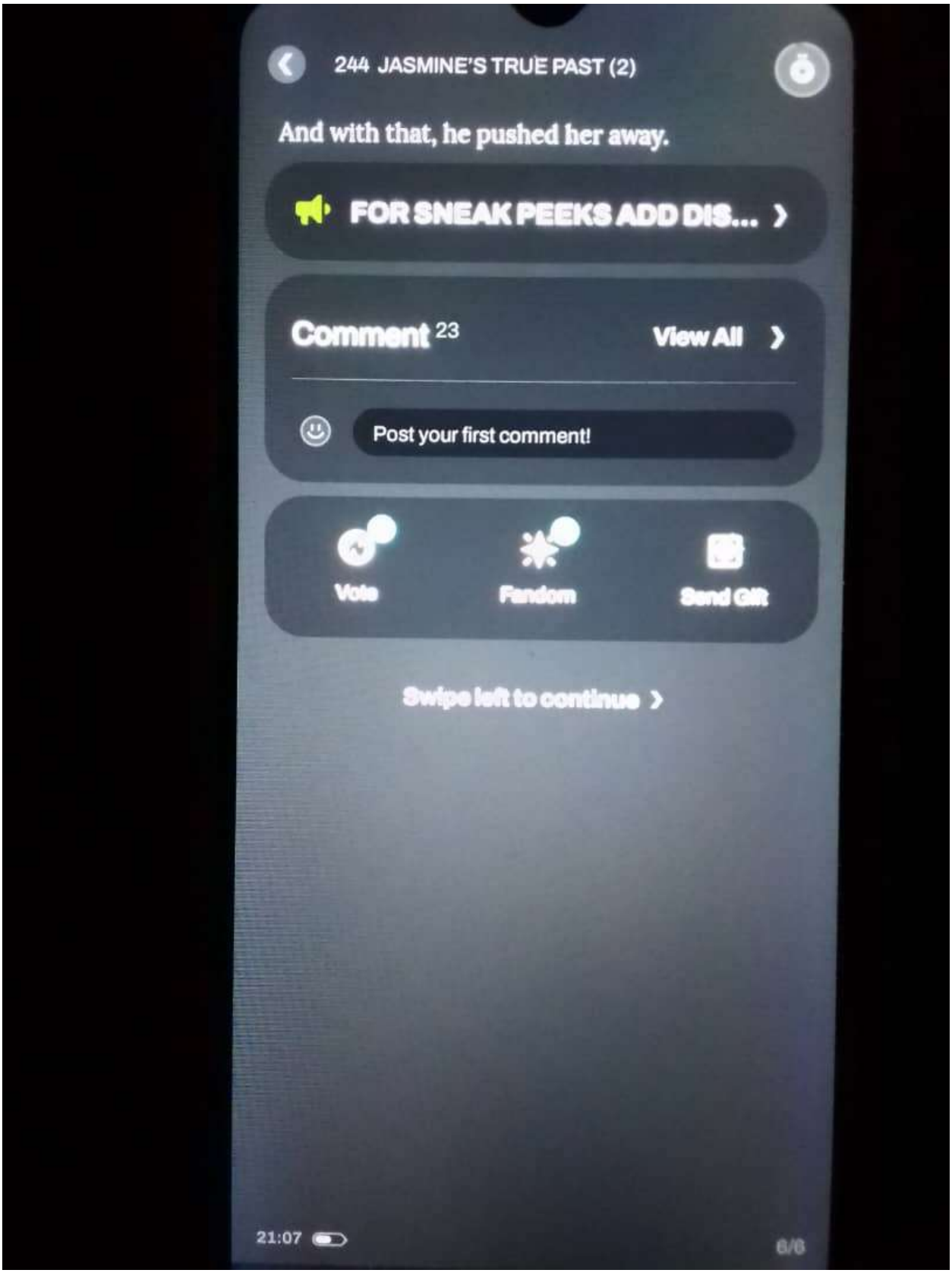
"I never want to hear those words from you." He said. "I do not care for you I-

She cut him short. "What about the things you said to me last night? What about the fact that you risked your life to save me? You turned down your mate for me. I know that you care for me at least, and perhaps you-

"ENOUGH!" He barked at her. "You have it all wrong! I risked my life for me! Not you! If you died, I would die! And all those things meant nothing! And I promise you that I will never ever give you a reason to think that I care for you because I do not!"

Then he walked up to her and gripped her arms so tight it hurt. "Your father must have been the one to kill Eleanor, murdered my parents, tortured my sister, deceived me. I will

Never forgive you. Pack your things, Jasmine. We are going to be paying your family a visit."


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And with that, he pushed her away.
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