261 JASMINE BELOW DECKS

The guard locked her chain. 1

"Could you a bit more careful please." Jasmine asked. "My wrists hurt." 1

The guard spat at her feet and sneered at her.

"Careful? You have the tongue you traitor. But your father was not careful when he was raping and killing our women." He said. 2

Jasmine was tired now.

Everything was out in the open.

Her secret was out there now.

Xaden knew who she was, there was not reason to pretend anymore. 1

She felt a sudden burden off her shoulders now that everything had happened.

Of course she did not want him to know who she was because she knew he would never understand.

But now that it has all come out in broad daylight there was no point in her hiding her feelings. 1

She sighed heavily and looked the man square

in his eyes. "Yes my father did those awful and horrible things to you and your family. I apologize to you for the sins of my father. Do not punish the child for her father's sins." 3

The man looked at her sharply and twisted his beard then before she even blinked her eyes, he put his knife at her throat.

She gasped choking hard.

The blade was at her neck and she was almost cut.

She had to press her head far back so that her neck will not meet her throat. 5

"You think that I want you here?!" He barked at her. "You think that any of the men want you here?! If it were left to us, you would be dead. And you will die a very painful death. Each man will take a piece of you to atone for those they have lost." 1

She was breathing so hard and her heart was racing.

"You better thank the gods that Alpha Xaden has kept you alive." The man said. "For now though. You will not be living long when we make dock at the Moonlight pack. You speak about not being punished for the sins of your

father." He said. "But you betrayed us. You deceived our alpha." 1

Jasmine turned her face away.

Then he pushed himself away from her and she quickly put her hand up against her neck to protect it.

She breathed a heavy sigh of relief.

There was blood on her neck.

But it was not so much.

The guard finished rounding up her chains and dropped them harshly.

And then he headed up towards the steps when she stopped him. 1

"What did my father do to you?" She asked. 1

He stopped in his tracks and remained standing for a while that she thought that perhaps he had fainted.

Then he finally spoke and when he did, she felt the chill in her bones. 1

"Your father came to my village." He said. "I was the head of the local pack while we had our own Alpha. He was fueding with an ally pack and because the ally pack had refused to help him in what he wanted, and helped us instead,

your father swore revenge." 1

Then he turned and saw her and Jasmine saw the face of a man who had so much trauma and had seen things he definitely should not have seen.

"Do you know what he did?" He asked. 1

Jasmine swallowed and tried to think of the most horrible things that her father could have done.

"Answer me." He said. "Do you know what your father did?" 1

Jasmine breathed heavily. "I do not wish to say."

He smiled and gave a very bitter laugh.

And Jasmine because weary. 1

"Your father came to my home and then he slaughtered. I did not say he killed or murdered. He slaughtered. Mother and children. The old, soldiers. And his men raped. I was forced to watch as my pregnant wife was killed and brutally stabbed. While I did nothing! He killed everyone in the entire town and left only me. He left me so that I could live through the trauma." 1

Jasmine felt the goosebumps all over her body and she shivered unable to stomach the

thought of what her father had done to this people.

"And he wanted me to kill my self." He said. "He dropped a blade and said if I was man enough I would kill myself. But he was right. I was not man enough. I could not bring myself to even do it." 1

He smiled bitterly and said. "So look at me. I am alive. The only member of my pack who survived the attack. The only man standing."

Jasmine started to apologize for what her father had done again.

"It will never make me see you in a different eye." He said. "You will always be the daughter of a monster." 1

Jasmine swallowed heavily unable to process what she had just been told.

"You have heard what your father did to my family. This is just a first of many of the men here. This is just one of the many stories that the men have to tell you. No one wants you here. No one cares for you and we most frankly want you dead the same way we want your father dead. We want the entire Bale line gone."

She jerked involuntarily.

And then he walked up the steps and shut the door blocking off any single ray of lights she had to see.

Then she simply turned away and hugged her knees together waiting for whatever judgment wiould be given to her. 1

Later in the night a male guard opened the door and she moved back quickly.

He came down the steps and then he flung a plate of what was supposed to be food.

"Good for the dogs." He said and he spat at her. 1

She pulled her legs close to herself and then he went back up the steps and shut the door.

Jasmine hurled herself together and leaned against the wall and willed herself to sleep even though she knew that she could not. 1

It had been four days on the ship and the journey was still far ahead.

Erik had not seen Jasmine in a while.

He had not wanted to ask so mych questions because he knew how Xaden might react. 1

But she had been nowhere on the decks.

He has reserved his thoughts and curiosity to

himself until it was a whole week and there was still not sign of Jasmine.

He went to Xaden who was busy discussing with other members of his strategy arm on how to defeat Bale.

In as much as Bale was now rendered powerless, he still had Allie's and because Xaden had gone by sea, he would be forced to make land by one of Bale's Allie's. 2

"We would have to send word to the men up there that we are coming. Jared does not like surprises so much I am afraid." One of his advisors said. 1

Xaden shook his head. "I do not want to risk letting Bale know that I am closing in on him. If he finds out that my ships are coming then he could make a rebellion and attack the rest of the men."

The men went quiet. "But Jared will not allows us to make land."

"What about the fact that the Royal family is fully backing my claim to attack moonlight pack?" Xaden asked.

Erik walked to where was quiet and sat.

"You are late." Xaden said. 1

"My apologies." Erik said with a weak smile. 1

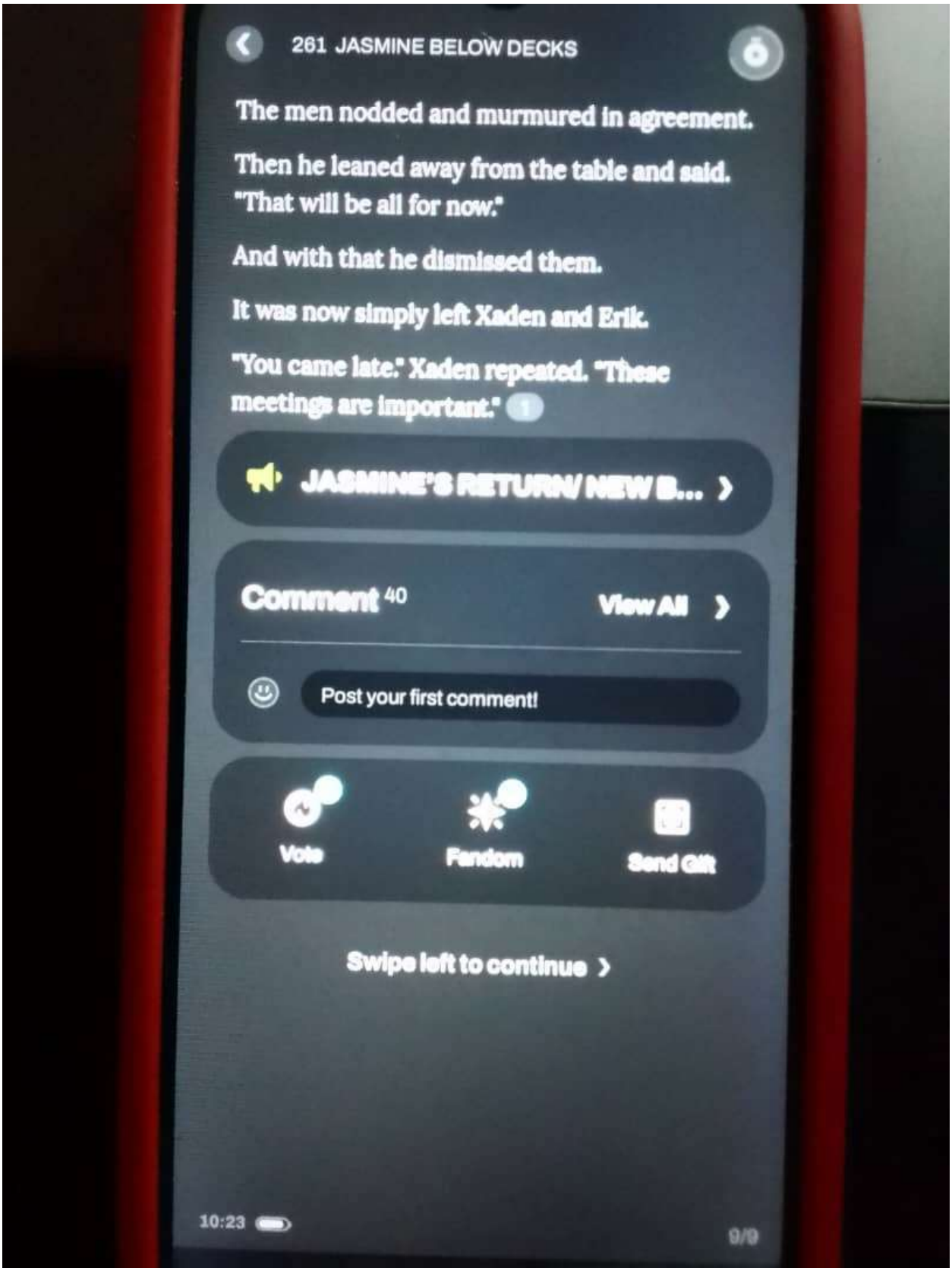
"Jared will not put much net on the royal family. He might defy them and give a false story tjat we attacked him. A lot of these pack hit answer to the royal family because they had no choice." Another of his men said. "The royal family is on the other side. So are we." 2

"That gives enough leverage for Jared to cook up his own story." Xaden said after much thought. "But the royal family has eyes. Surely he will not risk losing his pack." 1

"Jared's pack had been there for century. One of the second after the first wolf families." The maester said. "He liked to see himself as being able to make a decision on his own." 1

Xaden leaned against the table thinking of what to do.

Then he finally said. "We will not inform Jared and his pack that we are on our way. If it leaks out that we are coming then fine. But we will not. We shall simply go and a day before we reach we will send word to him. Bale's pack is about two days away from Jared. Even if Jared sends word we would have gotten to the moonlight pack by them and he would be surrendered."


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The men nodded and murmured in agreement.
Then he leaned away from the table and said. "That will be all for now."
And with that he dismissed them.
It was now simply left Xaden and Erik.
"You came late." Xaden repeated. "These meetings are important."
JASMINE'S RETURN/ NEW B...
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