283 CHANGE OF HEARTS

She was breathing so hard as she felt the blood on her face. 1

She was shocked, dazed and confused.

Everything that bad just happened.

It made zero sense to her. 1

He said that he was not her father. 1

What did that even mean.

It was as if he had been fighting with his own self. 1

When he had had the opportunity to attack her, why didn't he?

And what did he mean that she should not follow the King?

What King? They had only one king and that was King Roland.

Was it he, he was referring to?

What did he mean that she would bring eternal doom?

Her father Bale was now truly dead?

She felt like her mind was about to explode into

very tiny fragments.

She felt a hand touch her shoulder and she came crashing back down to reality.

"Hey."

She jerked and then Xaden caught her before she fell down.

"It is okay." He said.

She was still staring at him.

Still trying to gather her thoughts and understand what was happening.

He helped her stand well and then she gently pushed his hand away.

"I am fine." She said as she proceeded to stand on her own.

He let her go and then he pulled out a hankie that he had obviously had in his pocket and used it to wipe her face clean of the blood. 1

She collected it from him and did it herself as she was still dazed and confused.

"How do you feel?" He asked her.

She shrugged. "My father's blood is on my face and his dead body is divided into two on the floor right at my feet. I am not sure how I am

supposed to feel."

Xaden looked at her skeptically.

"Did he tell you anything? Did he say anything to you at all?" He asked her.

She looked up at him with her big brown eyes.

Unsure of what to say and then he sighed heavily.

"You need to have a bath and rest. It is over now." He informed her.

It was all over now?

Was it truly?

She was angry with Xaden for killing him at the moment where he had almost told her something very important.

She was tired and exhausted and she started to think that maybe having a bath would make her feel better.

So she nodded reluctantly.

And headed away from the other guards and everyone else.

She went back to her previous room where she slept at the kitchen and for a few minutes it brought back haunting memories.

Brought back trauma at the back of her neck.

"So you really had a rough childhood." 2

She turned and saw it was Erik who was leaning by the door of the kitche watching her.

"I did not hear you come in." She commented dryly.

He gave her a smile.

"I have a penchant for appearing and disappearing at will." He said. "It is one of my many techniques."

"And Kire?" She asked. "How is he?"

"He is fine. Being stubborn. I have tried my best to absorb him back into my body as my wolf." He said. "But the little monster would not even agree to that. He still wants to hang around."

"Does that have any serious effect or impact with you?" She asked.

He shook his head. "No not really. He can still do the things I want him to. I am his master. But then for some personal reasons that he has, he does not want to merge back with me. At least not yet."

"If you are his master then can you not perhaps simply make sure that he comes to join

together with you? Order him?" She asked.

"I could." He said tasting a dried fruit from the kitchen table. "But that can be risky. It can turn me into a deformed and crippled wolf."

"Well that is better than being an unshifted wolf. Anything is better than being an unshifted wolf:" she laughed bitterly.

"How do you feel?" He asked her noticing that she was merely hiding her pain underneath.

"I have no idea. I should feel something. But I am just confused. For the longest time I had wanted validation from my father and at the same time I wanted my own freedom. And now that he is dead. I have no idea how to feel. I must be crazy." She started to laugh it off.

He shook his head and then he put his hands on her shoulder and shook her gently. "No you are not crazy. Never ever say that. You are probably the bravest person that I have ever met. You need to understand that." 5

She gave him a weak smile. "Everyone hates me. So should you."

"Xaden does not hate you." He said. "If that is who you are referring to."

She nodded even though it was very obvious

she did not belive him. 1

"Right."

Erik massaged his forehead. "He just has a lot on his plate. He had always believed that his sister was dead, that he was the only one. And then his uncle came back, his mate did, and now his sister. He is overwhelmed. Perhaps belived that he lost everything and now things are slowly beginning to make sense to him."

"How is he and his sister?" She asked him.

"It is odd for him. But he is excited at the fact that she has been alive and contrary to what he belived earlier. She was being raised as their own." He said.

Jasmine nodded. "That is good to hear."

Erik started to ask. "How was Jessica, I mean Anna. How was she to you?"

Jasmine gave a very quirky smile. "She was what they raised her as."

"Spoilt and unruly." Erik said with annoyance in his tone.

"Yes. But I am certain Xaden will not believe that. She is his sister after all. Let him have her in the image he wants. Telling him what she truly is, he won't belive." She said. 2

Erik withheld the other things he wanted to say and turned to Jasmine. "You need to rest."

"I was about to." Jasmine said.

"No you have been given a room." Erik said. "Come with me."

He walked to the door of the kitchen and opened it for her.

"From who?" She asked surprised.

"Xaden." Erik said.

She swallowed hard and kept her words to herself.

Erik led her out of the kitchen and together they walked past the hallways.

It felt nostalgic, even though she did hate the memories that had enveloped her here, it was still her home.

It felt like she was a different person walking past the rooms and floors that she had scrubbed.

She felt like a stranger, even though she had lived her entire life in this very place.

Erik stopped at one of the rooms that had usually was assigned to guests.

He opened it and stood aside for her to enter.

She stepped in and looked around in shock.

The room was befitting for a princess.

One of the daughter's of the greats packs had stayed in this room.

She turned back to Erik.

"Are you sure? I can not take this. It is much too grand for me." She started to say and take a step back.

It was not like she did not want it.

She had simply been through a very traumatic life in the pack and it triggered all levels of anxiety in her.

All levels of fear.

"Jasmine. Because you were a bastard did not mean that you deserved the life you lived." Erik said to her. "You were his daughter and he treated you like you were nothing, worse than a slave. Life was cruel for you. But do not let this new change make you the same. Revel in it. You deserve it. You have suffered more than enough for the sins of others. It is time for something new for you do you not think?"

He was right.

She had been through more than enough.

He was dead and now things were different for her. 1

She deserved this.

She gave a light laugh. "You know I actually scrubbed this room for one of the Alpha's daughters during pack games."

"Damn. Which one of them?" He asked.

She rummaged through her brain for the faint memory of the girl.

"It was Casteel pack." She said. "His third daughter."

"Alice. She was and has always been a whore." He said. 2

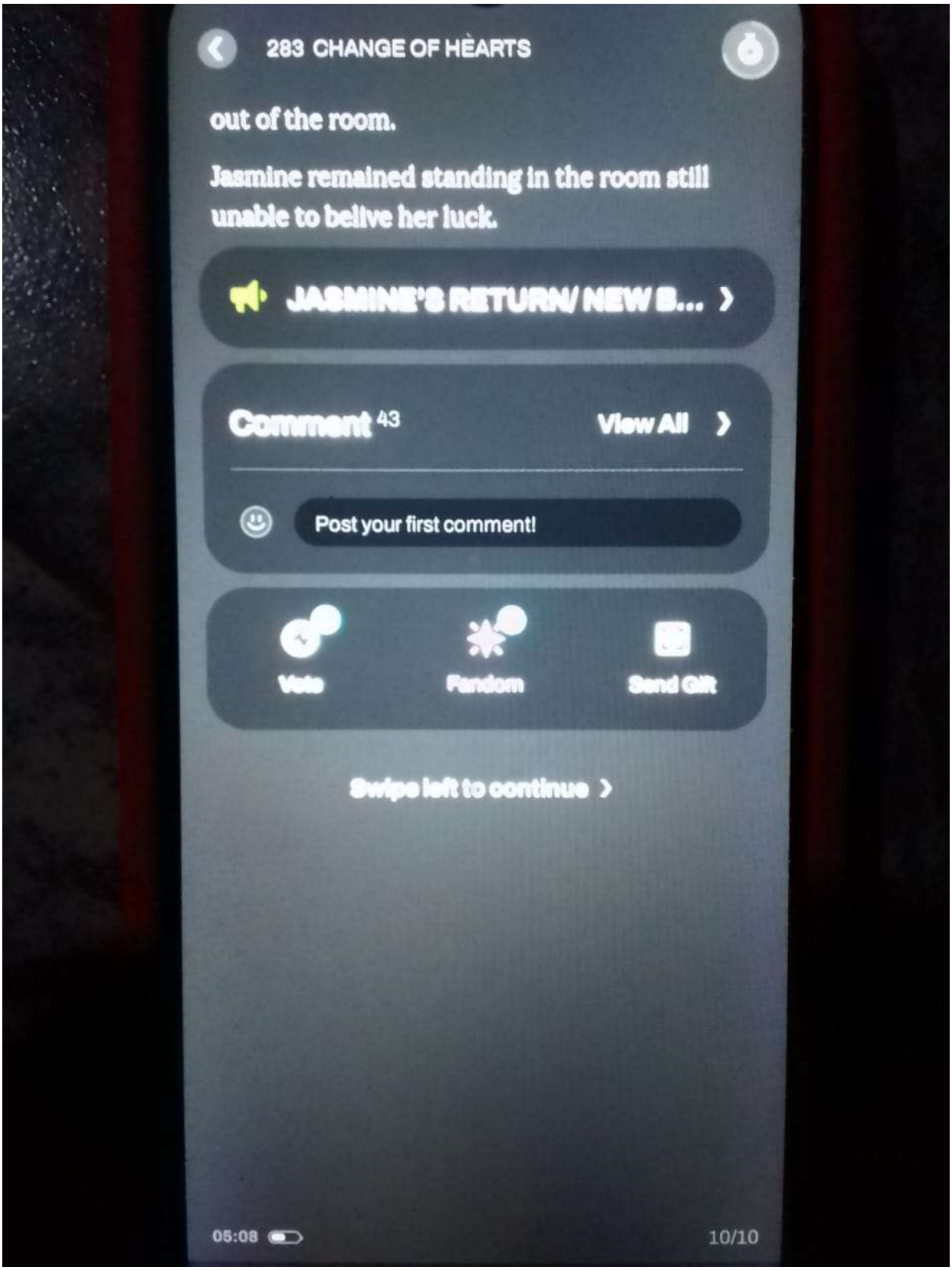
And they both burst out laughing. 1

"It is just that me sleeping in the very same room that I served in." She said and sighed heavily. "Feels weird."

"Change is always going to be weird. Embrace it." He informed her.

She nodded slightly and then he patted her shoulder. "I will give you space now."

And then he turned away from her and walked


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out of the room.
Jasmine remained standing in the room still unable to belive her luck.
JASMINE'S RETURN/ NEW B...
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