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"My healer Urma had always spoken of her in high regard." Jasmine mentioned. 1

The women went mute and a pregnant silence hung in the air.

"You know Urma?" The lady who had led them in asked.

Jasmine nodded. "She was the healer of our pack. She raised me."

"We haven't heard from her in years." The other woman said to the bar lady.

"You said was? Why do you refer to her in past tense." The lady with white hair asked.

Jasmine sighed in heavily. "Urma died a few days ago."

The women went quiet once again .

No one said a word.

And then together all three women said. "Goddess lead the departed to her way home."

There was a heavy sigh and then. "She lived a good life."

The one in white looked at Jasmine, her eyes

glowing. "What do you want with the one called serpent?"

Jasmine swallowed heavily and looked up at her.

She knew that Urma had mentioned well of the serpent and obviously these women were acquaintances of the serpent.

what she was not certain of was if they were good or bad.

She did not want to hand the ancient text to just anyone.

What if it had very dangerous things on it.

She decided that she was going to hand it only to the serpent and no one else.

She cleared her throat and told half a lie. "I heard from someone that a mage in mage city could tell if a wolf is dormant, locked down or if someone is simply just an unshifted wolf."

The women looked at her.

"What?" Anna who had been at the back not saying a word throughout finally said.

"Who is this information for?" One of the women asked.

"Me." Jasmine said as they all completely ignored Anna. "I am an unshifted wolf. I wanted to know if maybe if my fate is different."

"That is why you sneaked out of camp and risked our lives?" Anna hissed. "Just because you wanted to know if your sorry life of a boring non shifter was false? Oh my God what is wrong with you?"

"We passed mage city and I decided to take advantage of the situation. I might not get this opportunity might not present itself again." Jasmine stated matter of fact.

"In rare cases." The mage with white eyes said looking disapproving at Anna. "Wolves might be unshifted, sometimes dormant. They won't want to come out and identify themselves."

"There are also some wolves who can never shift and in your situation is what you are called. Unshifted."

Then the bartender added. "In other cases there are instances where wolves are locked up. Prevented from ever being able to shift."

"So someone could have intentionally locked someone else's wolf?" Jasmine asked. "Why?"

The bartender shrugged. "So many reasons. It is not allowed but it still happens."

Anna rolled her eyes.

"Who would want to lock up your wolf if you even had any? You are not special? What could be so interesting about you that someone would waste their precious time and hide your wolf? Face it. You are an unshifted wolf and you would never ever have a mate. You are not worth being a wolf."

Jasmine felt the hurt and chills in her bones but refrained from saying anything.

She had learned that showing Anna she had succeeded in hurting her only made her happy.

So she said nothing.

Annie gave a snort. "You're so pathetic."

The other woman crossed eyes at Annie. "And who are you to state who is worth being a wolf and not?"

Anna snickered. "She is my slave. I can say anything I want about her."

The woman with the white hair glared at Anna. "Who is this creature that is so insolent and does not respect anyone and I shall soon teach a lesson she would never forget."

Anna was about to mention who she was when Jasmine stopped her by cutting her short.

"She is right. I'm her slave." Jasmine said. "I was made to watch over her but I sneaked out to find answers for myself." 1

The women crossed their brows in disapproval and said nothing for a while.

The woman with white hair pointed at a headless doll hanging by the wall.

"Do you see that over there?" She asked Anna.

Anna sneered but looked at it.

She shivered at the ugly doll.

"Yes? What about it?" She demanded.

"That was once a spoiled merchant's daughter. I turned her into a doll before using needles to torment her until I cut her head off." The woman said.

Anna's face fell instantly.

"Mind your tongue." The woman said dangerously. "Or I just might collect yours."

Anna went silent.

Jasmine was pleased.

The other women turned to look at Jasmine and completely ignored Anna.

"The serpent is a very special mage." The

bartender said. "She lives in the mage castle."

"Are you all mages?" Jasmine asked.

"Yes we are."

"So could you just see if I was a dormant wolf?" Jasmine asked hopefully.

"We are not that skilled enough to do such a thing. It take expertise and tank to accomplish such magic especially on wolf." She said wisely.

Jasmine nodded weakly. "I see."

"A very high ranking mage for that matter."

"And just no one is allowed to see her." The woman with white hair said. "But for Urma's sake we would take you to her."

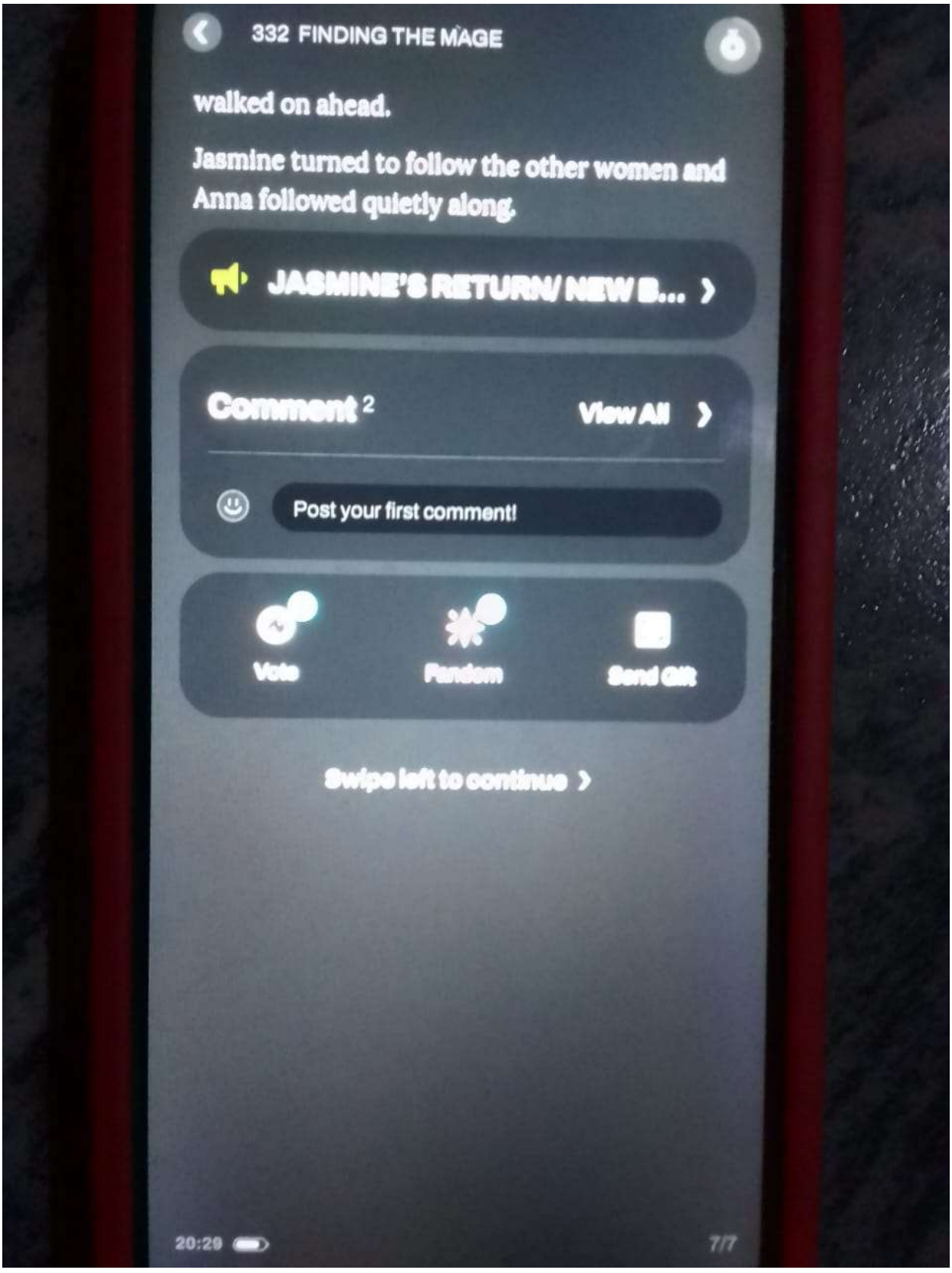
Jasmine gave a smile. "Thank you very much. I appreciate this."

And her face fell instantly. "But I have no money to pay you. What shall I offer for this service"

The women smiled back. "This is free. Consider it the little payment for all the things Urma did for us. It is sad to know she is gone."

The woman with white hair and her second with dark hair called to Jasmine.

"We would take you to the castle." The women


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walked on ahead.
Jasmine turned to follow the other women and Anna followed quietly along.
JASMINE'S RETURN/ NEW B...
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