

## Grimoire

### Chapter 5

Jake stared dumbfounded at the two words.

*Hello Jake.*

What? How?

Why was his name in the grimoire?

The two words, huge and bold, began to shift, move. Red veins swirled across the page until new words had formed where the two large ones had been moments before.

*It's not just your name that I know.*

Tingles shot up Jake's spine. He hadn't said anything, hadn't touched the grimoire again. The blood was moving by itself, it answered a question he hadn't asked. Jake felt cold, the sudden realisation dawning, gnawing at him.

The red words shifted again, distorted and reformed into a new sentence that confirmed Jake's realisation.

*I can read your thoughts.*

Jake shot to his feet, backed away from the grimoire.

His mind was reeling, unable to think. What was happening? How was the grimoire doing that? How was it even possible? It was just a book!

A book of magic.

Even from where he stood, almost at the other side of the room, he could see the blood on the page swirl, new words forming where the old had been.

He swallowed down his fear, took a step forward to read it.

*I am a repository of knowledge, imbued with intelligence enough to assist the grimoire's owner.*

"Who's the grimoire's owner?" Jake ask aloud, mind instantly wandering to the old woman who'd buried the grimoire. The old woman who Jake had stolen it from.

The blood shifted again, gathered in the centre of the page in a single bold word.

*You.*

Jake blinked, tried to keep his eyes open, pay attention to what his teacher was saying. It was hard. He hadn't gotten much sleep last night. After finding out the grimoire could communicate, that it considered Jake its owner, Jake had shut the thing, clasped it and abandoned it on his desk next to the unlit Admirer's Lamp.

He'd curled up in bed, closed his eyes, tried to sleep. But it didn't come. His mind was too active, racing with thoughts.

Somehow, knowing the grimoire could talk, knowing that there was some kind of intelligence behind it, changed everything. It wasn't just a book filled with magic spells any more. A copy of an older original. It was something else. Something more.

He'd wanted to believe it was a copy, convinced himself that the trick with the blood was just that, a trick. He'd been pretending that feeling he got after revealing a page with his blood, the way it sapped him of energy, wasn't real. A figment of his imagination.

Maybe it was. Maybe he'd gone insane and there was no grimoire or magic at all, just him losing his mind.

How would he be able to tell the difference?

His head ached, throbbed from the lack of sleep. His eyes stung, bloodshot and red. He couldn't think straight, couldn't concentrate on anything.

Jake looked around the classroom, at the faces of his classmates and his teacher. All of them were so... normal. Boring.

He'd been just like them not so long ago.

And now he owned the grimoire, had access to all the magic spells inside it. Most were still hidden, sure, but even the fraction of them that he had revealed were useful.

More powerful than anything the rest of these ordinary people would ever know.

A pang of pain pulsed through Jake's head. He had to clench his fists, bite back the gasp.

He needed to know more. During the night, he'd considered getting rid of the grimoire. Burning it or burying it like the old woman had. But no, he couldn't do that. How could he give up something so useful? With it, he'd gotten to see his sister naked. That would never have been possible if not for the grimoire. He needed it if he was ever going to get further with Jess.

By the time school was over, Jake was exhausted. His thoughts were sluggish, his legs felt weak and shaky as he walked home.

Once he got there, he headed straight for his bedroom, to the book that sat on his desk undisturbed. Jake opened it, turned to the very last page. Stared at the blank sheet.

The blood from last night had disappeared.

Jake blinked at it. His tired mind took several moments to formulate the simple idea of pricking his finger again and adding new blood to the paper instead.

He did so, resisting the draining sensation, the burning in his fingertip, as much as he could.

Blood pooled on the page, swirled. Formed thick, bold words.

*Welcome back.*

Jake snorted. A book with manners, that was new. Distantly, he was aware that he shouldn't be amused, that he was in some kind of state of tired delirium. But he was too drained to care.

The red letters shifted, morphed.

*I'm not an ordinary book.*

"I noticed," Jake put a hand over his face. He was talking to a book. Maybe he was going crazy. "What are you, exactly?"

*I am the Undying's Grimoire of Body, Mind and Soul.*

Great. He was talking to a book, and the book was being a smartass. Just great.

Again, the red shifted.

*I am the magnum opus of Malath von Graas-Weix, the summation of his life's work. Created in order to preserve his knowledge and understanding of magic that it might live on after his own body failed.*

The words this time were thin, small. Jake had to squint to read it all. The grimoire, it seemed, had to make do with however much blood Jake decided to give it.

His noted it, let his attention wander to Malath, the grimoire's author. He'd looked up the man before, found little about him other than that the man had gone mad one day and had been burned alive.

Jake's heart thumped.

If he continued to use the grimoire, continued to feed it his blood, would he lose his mind too? Is that why he felt so tired after using it?

*No. Using me will not cause madness. In order to give me intelligence, will and memory, Malath had to sacrifice his own. He chose insanity.*

"Why?" Jake asked. Why would someone choose to go insane?

*No body can live forever. In creating this grimoire, Malath chose to immortalise himself in a different way.*

Jake managed to get an hour or two worth of sleep before his mother woke him, screaming about dinner being ready and how ungrateful and disrespectful he was for letting it go cold.

He blinked his eyes open, climbed out of bed.

He didn't want to deal with his bitch mother right now. He wanted to sleep. Nothing else, just sleep.

"Hurry the fuck up," his mother's shrill voice echoed from downstairs. "In you're not down here in the next two minutes, I'll throw the food away and you can starve!"

Jake's eyes flickered to the grimoire as he left his bedroom. Perhaps there was a spell in there that could sort out his mother's shitty attitude, or at least a way of punishing her for having it.

Jess was already sat at the table, food half-eaten, by the time Jake entered. His mother was there too, glaring at him.

"About time, too," she muttered loudly. "Who sleeps in the middle of the afternoon anyway? Lazy. Should be doing homework, maybe then you wouldn't be such a failure."

It wasn't anything he hadn't heard before, but it still stung. Jake felt his face begin to turn red, tried his best to ignore it and his mother. Head lowered, he began eating. Jess was looking at him, he could feel it. No doubt, she'd have the same sympathetic look on her face as always.

Save for his mother's occasional comments, they ate in silence. Neither Jake or Jess said a word.

Jess was the first to leave the table, abandoning Jake to their mother's glares. He wolfed down the food, not out of hunger but a simple desire to not be in the same room as the bitch.

She made a snide remark as he stood up to leave.

Jake walked back to his room, fully intending to go back to bed, back to sleep. That desire died the moment he stepped through his bedroom door, saw Jess standing at his desk, inches away from the Admirer's Lamp, the grimoire right in front of her. Open.

He froze, glanced at the book.

There was red writing across both pages, somewhere early on in the book. Two full spells. One of them might well be the potion he'd use to grow Jess' breasts.

His mouth opened, but no words came out.

Jess looked up from the grimoire, her curious expression turning to a smile at the sight of him.

She walked over to him, arms outstretched.

And hugged him.

The move baffled and bewildered. Why was she hugging him? Hadn't she just read the grimoire? At the very least, she should think he was odd, or strange. What?

His thoughts vanished when he felt her chest pressing into his. Her boobs, soft and firm at the same time, against his body.

Dumbly, he stood there.

His senses were suddenly overloaded. He could feel her warmth against him, even through the layers of cloth. He could smell a faint, sweet fragrance. For an instant, he could almost feel another heartbeat.

The hug lasted no more than a second or two, Jess squeezing him tight before releasing him and taking a step back.

Jake was still reeling, his mind blank, when his sister spoke.

"Are you okay?" Jess asked, genuine concern in her voice.

"I, uh..." Jake grabbed for a response, anything that he could say, but no words came.

"It's not fair. Mom is always so mean to you, and all I can do is sit there and watch it. I wish she didn't take it all out on you. Today was worse than usual - I think Dad might said something to her this morning that really upset her, but she shouldn't take it out on us. It's not fair."

Tears were welling in her eyes.

Jake blinked at her. She was upset. Angry and hurt. Usually his sister was so full of energy, so happy and confident. Seeing her like this was painful.

"It'll be okay," he told her.

The words sounded empty, hollow. But he meant them. He had the grimoire. Somehow, somewhere, there must be something in it that he could use to deal with their mother.

"I promise," he added, more to himself than to her.

Jess nodded her head, smiled.

After she left his room, Jess walked into her own, sat at her desk and continued doing homework. Jake watched it through the blindfold. He was awake now. Still tired, but not so much that he needed to sleep. He'd watch Jess again tonight, see if she decided to masturbate again.

The Lamp was on his desk, ready to be lit. He sat on his desk chair, waiting.

Thankfully, Jess decided to go to bed early. He watched as she changed out of her school uniform and into a nightie, resisting the urge to reach down and touch himself. He smiled as she walked over to her dresser, retrieved that bright blue dildo of hers. She turned the bedroom light off, climbed into bed.

The dim light made it difficult to see. Jake could make out the outlines of objects, the blanket and the walls, but he the world lost all detail and colour.

Jess was laying on her side, facing one of her bedroom walls, the blanket bundled on top of her. She set her dildo onto her bedside table, reached down between her legs.

Heart pounding, crotch suddenly very uncomfortable, Jake did nothing. Simply watched as Jess stared blankly at her bedroom wall, shuddering occasionally. Through her eyes, he could see the slightest movements of her body, the tiniest shifts in Jess' vision as she touched herself under the covers.

It was only when she stopped, retrieved the dildo, slid the hand holding it down under the blanket, that Jake acted.

He pulled off the blindfold, rushed to pull an unlit match from his desk drawer. A few green leaves and several copper flakes were already on his desk; he took one of each, placed the copper flake onto the leaf and placed that onto the bowl of water. A quick swipe of match to matchbox later, and he had the final ingredient of the Admirer's Lamp.

Jake poked the leaf with his lit match, watched in awe as the leaf instantly smouldered black, curled in on itself, went up in a slow-flowing green flame.

After blowing out the match, Jake stared at the unnatural green flame.

He'd come this far. Now to see it through to the end.

For this to work, he needed some of his own hairs. Luckily, those were easy enough to obtain. He reached up, plucked one from his head, wincing slightly. Then, without hesitation, he placed the single hair above the flame and let go.

As soon as the hair touched flame, it sizzled and curled.

Jake donned the blindfold instantly, looking to see what his sister's reaction would be.

She wasn't moving. Her eyes were open, staring at her bedroom wall - the one closest to Jake's bedroom. Jess shook her head, then everything went dark. She'd closed her eyes.

And so Jake did the only thing he could. He pushed the blindfold up and away from his eyes, plucked out another hair, dropped it on the strange green flame, and pulled the Band of Blind Sight back down.

Jess' eyes were open again, she shook her head a second time, turned her whole body around to face the opposite wall. And she continued masturbating.

Several more times, Jake pulled hairs from his scalp, forced images of himself into Jess' mind. And, after the first few, his sister didn't even stop, continued fucking herself with her bright blue dildo.

She kept masturbating. While thinking about him.

She didn't stop.

He began touching himself, thinking about her while she thought about him. That one fact, the simple truth, was almost too much for him. He almost came right away. But he held it back, held on until Jess' eyes opened and the darkness was replaced with a picture of her body. She was looking down, the blankets set aside. There, between her legs, inside her, was her dildo. Jake orgasmed at the wondrous sight.

When he entered the kitchen the next morning, when Jess saw him for the first time, his sister blushed. Her cheeks turned a soft shade of pink. She glanced away from him shyly and, for the first time, Jake allowed himself to hope.

Maybe it could happen. Maybe he and Jess could be a thing.

With the grimoire, the impossible seemed possible. Now that he had magic on his side, real magic, there didn't seem to be anything that could hold him back.

If there was a way to give a book a mind of its own, its own intelligence, then how hard could it be to alter the mind of someone else? How hard could it be to make all those fantasies about his sister a reality? How difficult would it be to alter his mother's attitude to make her less of a bitch?

She'd continued. Jess could have stopped, but she didn't.

His sister had masturbated while thinking about him.

Sure, he'd needed to nudge her in that direction. But, at the end of the day, she'd done it. Would it really be so bad if he continued to give her little nudges here and there?

The thought occupied Jake's mind throughout the day, his curiosity and desire fuelled by the now real possibility of one-day being able to have sex with Jess. How could he make it happen and how long would it take?

With what he had now, the pages he'd unlocked so far, it would take a long time - if he could fully seduce her at all. All he could do was make her think about him, or forget. He could make her boobs bigger, and that was something he'd definitely continue to do, but that wouldn't lead to her wanting to have sex with him. He needed to unlock more grimoire pages. The more spells he had in his arsenal, the more options he'd have.

Jake and Jess walked home together after school, a rare occurrence nowadays.

Usually, recently, Jake would have gone his own way, taking the longest route he could. Or Jess would have been busy spending time with friends, walking slowly with them. It was nice to walk home with her again, like they used to.

"I was wondering," Jess said during the walk. "Where did you get that cool journal? The one that was on your desk."

The grimoire. She was talking about the grimoire.

"Nowhere," Jake answered quickly. "Just found it in the middle of no-where."

"It looked really old. What're you gonna use it for?"

Something felt off. Why wasn't she mentioning the spells she'd seen written in blood?

"I don't know."

Jess looked at him for a long moment, shrugged. She began talking about some drama that was happening between some of her friends, something to do with a boyfriend and a break-up, Jake wasn't paying much attention.

When they got home, he headed straight to his room, flipped open the grimoire to the last page, cut the tip of his index finger and pressed it to the blank page.

Blood swirled out from his fingertip, formed words at the top of the page. It answered the question Jake hadn't yet asked.

*Only you can see the words you reveal. To everyone else, the pages appear empty.*

Jake paused, allowed himself a moment to think.

He leaned in, whispering.

"If I want to see someone naked any time I want, is there a spell that will help me with that?"

Of all the things he'd imagined, all the fantasies he'd had today, that seemed the most simple, the easiest to achieve. He wanted to see his sister's body again, in the light, fully exposed. If possible, he wanted to be able to reach out and touch it. Surely there must be a spell that would make it possible. One that put Jess into a deep sleep so he could go into her room, or one that made her not want to wear clothes or think that it was normal to be naked - he could erase her memory afterwards, if need be.

The red words moved, danced across the page.

*There are several spells which could be used to fulfil that desired function.*

Jake grinned, excitement blossoming.

"Which one'll work the best?"

For a moment, nothing happened. The blood didn't move, no new words formed. Jake felt a moment of panic. And then, to his sheer amazement, the grimoire's pages began moving on their own. One flipping over the other, slow at first, then faster.

When the pages stopped turning, somewhere near the middle of the grimoire, Jake blinked down at the two blank pages before him.

His eyes wandered from the paper to his still bleeding fingertip and back again. He inhaled a deep breath, felt the hope and excitement building inside himself and steadily, firmly, he pressed his finger to one of the blank pages.