

## Grimoire

### Chapter 15

"I don't know what you're talking about," Jake lied, back-peddling as Malath approached. His back came into contact with the motel room's wall.

Trapped. He was trapped.

Malath stopped, crossed his arms.

Stall. Jake had to stall, buy time to think. He still had his plan. He could still make it work.

"Blood magic!" Jake half-shouted. "The Sinful Straw Doll, you said it was blood magic. But it uses hair, not blood."

Malath tilted his head, an amused smile appearing on his face.

"Every spell in the grimoire that uses hair as an ingredient is a form of blood magic. Hair is easier to obtain, though lessens the spells effects. Skin, bone and teeth can also be used. But blood is the most potent and powerful."

There was a strange glint in his father's eyes - as if Malath were reminiscing. What the ancient man might be remembering, Jake had no idea.

"A Band of Blind Sight made with hair will share a person's vision. The same Band made with blood will share *all* that person's senses. Touch, taste, smell, pleasure and pain."

Malath reached into a pocket, pulled out a small glass vial filled with an ugly, familiar liquid.

Instantly, Jake knew what it was.

Truth potion. The very same thing he'd used on Jess not so long ago. The thing he'd had the ingredients for in his room.

One gulp of that, and he wouldn't be able to resist telling Malath where the grimoire was hidden. Worse, the bastard might find out about Jake's plan.

He lashed out, swung for his father's head with an open palm.

If he could get a few hairs, just a few, he could run the distance to the old hag's house.

Faster than thought, Malath's hand shot out, caught Jake's arm by the wrist. The smile was still on his lips, though any joy had vanished from the man's eyes.

Malath pushed him back against the wall, unstopped the glass vial. Jake resisted as much as he could, but to no avail. His father's body was too large, too strong. Malath forced the potion into Jake's mouth, held his jaw shut and squeezed his nose until Jake was forced to swallow.

He stepped back, watched as Jake hunched over, choking and gasping for air.

When Jake finally regained a little composure, Malath spoke.

"Where is the Undying's Grimoire of Body, Mind and Soul currently located?"

Jake tried to resist. Tried to fight off the magic. He covered his mouth, tensed the muscles in his jaw to keep it from opening.

All to no avail.

"In the shed," Jake gasped, voice muffled by his hand but still audible. "At home."

Malath smiled, nodded his head.

"Thank you, Jake. I'm going to go get my book, you stay right here. Maybe think about how you can seduce your sister without resorting to magic, yes?"

Heat rushed through Jake's face. Embarrassment at having his desire for Jess spoken aloud, shame at having lost the grimoire, anger at Malath for taking it. Images rushed through his head, dark ideas of attacking his father's body, crippling it before it could carry Malath to the grimoire. Temptation stirred, hungered for the man's blood.

"You did this to me," he said quietly, glaring at Malath. "You used magic somehow. You corrupted me, made me into a what I am. So stealing my body would be easier. *You*

did this to me.”

He could do it. Jake could stop Malath here and now.

Then he'd be able to keep the grimoire. Keep Jess.

“I didn't make you who you are, boy,” Malath growled. “All I did was give you a taste of power. How you used that power isn't on me, it was all you. I didn't *corrupt* you. Everything you are and everything you've done is on you alone.”

Jake attacked, reaching for a motel-room lamp. Before he could swing it - before he could even grab the thing - Malath's fist struck Jake's stomach.

Jake crumpled to the ground, breathless, winded.

Vaguely, he was aware of Malath leaving the motel room, closing the door behind him as he left.

The beeping tone was infuriating. Waiting for the call to connect, for Jess to wake up and answer her fucking phone. Every second was precious. Every moment was vital.

Finally, his sister answered.

“Hello?” Her soft voice echoed through his phone speaker.

“Jess!” Jake shouted. He couldn't stop himself, couldn't hide the panic from his voice. “I need you to do something for me. Two things. Quickly, it's an emergency!”

She sounded dazed, confused, sleepy. But, as Jake told her exactly what to do, she didn't complain.

How long did he have? Minutes.

How many? Twenty or so. Maybe a few more depending on the traffic. Not long.

“Do you have them?” He asked, desperate.

“Uh,” Jess answered, sounding very confused. “Yes. What's-”

“No time to explain! Do you remember the address on the letter I asked you to deliver yesterday? Go there now and take the things with you. As quick as you can. Don't stop for anyone. Especially not for Dad. Go. Now!”

He ended the call, quickly rummaged through the motel room.

There weren't many places to hide things, so it didn't take long to guess the Bands of Blind Sight weren't there. Which meant Malath had them with him.

Which meant he'd know exactly what was happening.

When he found the grimoire missing from the shed, he'd know Jess had taken it. He'd put on her Band of Blind Sight, see that she was walking somewhere. The question was, would he work out where she was heading in time to stop her from arriving there?

If yes, the plan was doomed.

If not, Jake still had a chance. He could still pull it off.

Within an hour, everything would be decided.

Jake ran to the motel door, rushed outside. Began the sprint to old Vera's house, stopping only once to pick up a short wooden twig on the side of the road.

When he reached the front door to Vera's house, gasping for air, his legs and lungs burning, Jake reached out to knock on the wooden surface a bit too enthusiastically. Rather than rapping on the surface with his knuckle like he'd intended, he accidentally punched the wood hard enough to make himself wince in pain.

He waited, the seconds stretching out for eternity.

Finally, the door opened, an annoyed old woman standing hunched in the gap.

“What on Earth do you think you're doing to my door?!” She spat, anger in her eyes.

“Knocking it too aggressively,” Jake answered honestly. “No time to explain. Malath is coming. Can I come in?”

The fear in Vera's eyes was deep, the hatred in them ran even deeper. This was a woman who, Jake was certain, would do anything it took to give Malath von Graas-Weix a bad day.

This was Vera's chance for revenge, and that's what he'd been relying on and hoping for when he'd written that letter to her yesterday morning.

She led Jake through her house, out into her back yard.

And there it was, the thing which his entire plan revolved around.

A tree branch, about twice as long as Jake was tall, wrapped up completely in a single length of string. How long that string must be, its total length, was insane. How many times had it been wrapped around the branch? Hundreds? Thousands? It was impossible to tell. How much time would it erase when the branch was broken?

With hair, each wrap around a Stick of Broken Truth meant six minutes worth of memories. How far back would Malath forget with this? Hours, for sure. Days? Weeks?

What about with blood?

"Do you have the hair?" Vera asked.

"No," he answered. "No, I don't. Do you have the other ingredients ready? Honey and everything?"

"What do you mean no?" Vera's voice was shrill, accusing.

Jake let out a sigh. They didn't have time for this. Any moment, Jess could arrive - Malath right behind her. They needed to have everything ready. But he couldn't resist answering her, the truth potion compelling him to tell her everything.

A light tapping echoed through Vera's house. Both Jake and the hag jumped, raced to the door. The old woman was surprisingly quick, reaching the front door a moment before him.

She opened it, stood aside.

"Come in," Jake told his wide-eyed sister. "Quickly, we don't have much time."

He glanced at Jess' hands. One held the grimoire, its leather-bound cover shining slightly in the sunlight. In the other hand was a plastic bag filled with pinkish, blood-stained cloth. The clothes their father had been wearing when he'd fallen down the stairs, as well as the towels and sponges their mother had used to clean up the mess afterwards.

It seemed like so long ago now, though it'd only been a handful of days.

As Jess stepped into the building, Jake swept a hand through her hair, pulling a few loose strands out. His sister stared at him, eyes wide, but didn't question it. She kept glancing at Vera, fear clear on her face.

Jake was closing the front door, about to tell her everything was okay, that Vera could be trusted, when he saw a familiar car in the distance. Too far away to see the driver, but close enough that Jake knew it was his father's car.

They were out of time.

He slammed the door shut, locked it.

Jess flinched at the sound, jumped when Jake took her hand and pulled her through the house and out into the back yard. He grabbed the plastic bag, dumped its contents into an empty bucket.

The hag was at his side in an instant, pouring a tiny stream of warm water on top of the stained rags.

There was no telling if this would work. Dried blood mixed with water. Probably, it wouldn't. But without Malath's hair or some fresh blood, it was the only thing they had.

On the other side of the house, a loud knocking sounded. A fist hitting wood.

Jake ignored it, put his foot in the bucket and stomped on the clothing and towels inside. A bit of pressure might help some of that dried, stained blood get free of the fabric.

The knocking turned into heavy bashing.

Vera swept a glass cup into the bucket, held it up to the sun.

The water inside it was a faint, transparent pink.

If they could have, they'd have tried removing as much of the water content as could - make sure they had a liquid of mostly Malath's blood. As it was, they were out of time.

A sharp, smashing crash echoed through Vera's house. The sound of glass breaking. A window.

"It'll have to do," Jake said.

He looked from the glass to Vera, saw the narrowed eyes and hard lips. Uncertain determination. Then Jake's eyes shifted to his sister. Jess looked terrified; eyes bulging, body shaking, looking lost and uncertain.

He and the hag rushed to either side of the long tree branch, applied the pink water as best they could. It was the final part of the spell. If they could just get it on now, break the branch before Malath-

"I've witnessed some stupid things in my time," a deep, harsh voice spoke. "But this is on a whole new level."

Jake's head swivelled to where his father's body stood, in the doorway of Vera's house, an angry scowl on his face.

Time seemed to freeze.

He'd done his part - his side of the giant Stick of Broken Truth was done. If Vera had done her side too, all Jake needed to do was break the thing in half. Right now, the tree-branch was held up on either side by chairs. All Jake had to do was run to the middle and jump on it.

Malath's eyes hardened on the tree branch, narrowed. He knew what was about to happen.

He and Jake launched forward as one - Jake running to the centre of the branch and leaping into the air, Malath sprinting directly for Jake.

They collided just as Jake's feet came down on the tree branch. A loud, wooden cracking - followed by spiralling and tumbling, crashing into the ground with a full-grown man on top of him, pinning him to the floor.

Jake struggled, squirmed, pushed his father's body as hard as he could. To his surprise, it worked. His father's body rolled off him with little effort.

He pushed away, put some distance between himself and Malath.

Nothing happened.

Malath simply lay there, blinking up at the sun, mouth lolling open. He looked dazed, empty.

Jake looked over at Vera, confused.

Had the plan worked?

Off to one side, he heard Jess speak in a loud whisper, voice anxious, filled with confusion, fear and frustration.

"What the fuck is going on?"

"Magic?" Jess asked, sounding more than a little sceptical.

They were walking home - Jake's suggestion - as he explained it all to her. Jess stared at the charred stick in her brother's hand, the honey and paper on either side, the string wrapped around it. Her eyes grew wider when he reached into a pocket and pulled out a few strands of long, blonde hair.

The stick was the same one he'd picked up earlier. Prepared as he'd waited for Jess to arrive.

"Yes," he answered, applying the hair to the Stick of Broken Truth. "Magic is real. That book you're carrying for me, that's called a grimoire. A book of magic spells."

Jess looked down at the leather-bound, read the title again.

He could see the disbelief in her eyes. Yet, as she considered it more and more, he saw the doubt begin to fade - replaced with realisation and the beginnings of terror.

If he gave her time, she'd piece together everything. All the gaps in her memory, the odd things she'd been feeling and experiencing recently. She'd work out that he'd been using magic on her all this time. That he'd used it to seduce her.

Before she could react to the realisations, he snapped the stick in his hand, stopped and waited as Jess froze mid-step. He tossed the broken Stick over his shoulder, smiled at his sister.

She blinked, panic filling her eyes in an instant.

"What's going on? Where am I?"

"It's okay," Jake soothed. "Everything going to be fine."

It took a bit of time to calm her, to soothe her worries and anxiety. As far as Jess was aware, the last hour hadn't happened.

"Why are we here?" Jess asked, once her panic had calmed.

"Taking a walk together," Jake shrugged. "Can I have the book back now, please?"

Jess looked down at the grimoire, seeing it for the first time. She shook her head, confused, handed it to Jake.

"Thanks," he smiled at her.

"What is it?" Jess asked, curious.

"Just a book," he told her, smiled wider. "My book."

Whatever the oversized Stick of Broken Truth had done, it'd left Malath a vegetable. Perhaps all his memories had been erased, right back to the moment he'd been born. Or maybe something to do with him swapping bodies made the Stick work differently. Or it could have something to do with the diluted blood they'd used.

Whatever the case, he was unresponsive. Laying in a hospital bed, trapped in a body he'd stolen.

Jake's mother was spending less and less time at home - taking full advantage of not having a husband or commitments any longer.

A pleasant development, to say the least.

She wouldn't be back tonight at all, for instance. Giving Jake and Jess the perfect opportunity to fuck like rabbits, non-stop all day and night.

Jake was laying on his sister's bed, waiting for the busty beauty that was Jess to enter.

She was in the bathroom, dolling herself up for him.

He didn't have to wait long. After just a few minutes, the bedroom door creaked open. Jake's eyes bulged as his sister stepped into the room wearing, of all things, her school uniform.

The top buttons of her shirt were undone, showing the tight-packed cleavage. Her skirt looked shorter than normal, so short that, as she sauntered forward, her bare thighs flashed into view.

She wore very little make-up. Some light lip-gloss and eyeliner to bring out her eyes, a little bit of blush on her cheeks. Her hair was done up into two braided pigtails, the perfect school-girl look.

Jake's body reacted instantly.

Jess glanced down from his face, stared at his crotch and cock.

A smile spread her lips.

Her hips swayed seductively as she advanced, climbing onto the bed and crawling over to Jake. She took his cock in her hands, looked him in the eye, kissed it.

Rippled of pleasure washed through his body.

Her lips were warm, soft. Her breath tickled the skin.

When she opened her mouth, took his cock inside it, Jake let out a gasp. The feel of her tongue wrapping around its head, sensually teasing it, the sensation of her pushing it deeper into her mouth - pressing it against the back of her throat. Jake lost himself in it, allowed his sister to have her way with his cock.

He sat up a little, placed his hand on the top of her head. Guided her, pushed her head lower - his cock deeper down her gullet.

Soon, the room filled with the sounds of gagging and chocking, sloppy and dirty and perfect.

Eventually, Jake took hold of his sister's hair - one braided pigtail in each hand. Thrust his cock as deep as he could while pulling on her hair, forcing it as deep as it could go. He held his cock there, eyes closed at the amazing tightness of Jess' throat.

Then he pulled her hair back, forced her mouth off his cock.

A wet pop, like a bubble bursting, as the head of his cock bounced free from Jess' lips.

She panted for air, gasping for it.

He pulled her by her hair again, dragged her body on top of his.

She looked down at him, still panting, face flushed. Saw the look in his eyes, smiled. Jess straddled his waist, positioned herself above his cock.

And, without a shred of magic needed, Jake watched as his sister lowered herself onto his cock - huge tits swaying and bouncing, nipples hard and inviting.

Now *this* was the life.