

Grimoire Prequel

"I don't know what it is," Devon sighed, his beautiful brown eyes locked onto hers. "I can't stop thinking about you. No matter what I do or where I go, I can't seem to get you out of my head."

Vera smiled, played innocent. "Yes?"

"I, well... I've been thinking. Would you like to go out some time, catch a movie or go dancing?"

Finally, all of her hard work was paying off. How much had she used the Admirer's Lamp to get to this point? How many times had she needed to break into Devon's house, put him to sleep with a charm and pluck some hairs from his head?

She'd needed a lot of hairs, to be sure. You'd never have known it by looking at him but, over the months, Vera had plucked hundreds of individual hairs from Devon's scalp.

All to make the magic possible.

"Sure," Vera answered after a calculated pause.

Devon grinned, Vera's heart stuttered at the sight.

Only a few pages left. Almost the entirety of the grimoire was filled in at this point, only a dozen pages or so remained to be unlocked.

She was tempted to do it there and then. A quick cut to the tip of her thumb and she'd probably be able to finish the grimoire in one final sitting. Only it would leave her tired. Exhausted, even.

Not ideal when her date was in an hour.

When she got back, then?

Vera shook her head. No. If everything went according to her plan, she'd be spending the night with Devon.

Tomorrow. She'd fill in the last pages of the grimoire tomorrow.

Right now, she had to get ready.

She'd already put on the dress and dolled herself up, but there was more that needed doing yet. She'd prepared everything in advance, of course, but double-checking was a necessity. Everything must go perfectly. No mistakes.

Stick of Broken Memory? Check.

Band of Blind Sight? Check.

Philtre of Obsession? Check.

Sinful Straw Doll? Check.

That was everything, all the spells she'd hopefully need tonight. Vera scanned over the collection of oddities again, triple-checking.

The Stick was a familiar sight. She'd made countless numbers of them by now. An ordinary stick with some string wrapped around it, little bits of paper on either end.

A black blindfold lay next to the Stick, again a very familiar sight. She'd used it - and others like it - many times. To spy on Devon, his family, friends - all to learn more about the most popular guy in school. Through it, she'd seen wonderful things. So many moments of vulnerability, so much nudity. Technically, Vera had no use for the Band tonight. But she liked to keep the Band of Blind Sight close at all times. It was like keeping a part of Devon with her everywhere she went.

The vial was next. A small glass bottle, not even large enough to fit a mouthful of the potion. But Devon didn't need a mouthful for it to work. Just a few drops, really. As close to a love potion as the grimoire possessed, it was paramount that she have Devon drink it tonight.

And the Sinful Straw Doll. A small effigy in the vague shape of a human, made out of straw. She'd have to be careful that no-one saw it. The other things, she could explain away with a simple lie. The Doll was far more conspicuous. It looked *sinister*. But, of all

four, it was the most important for her to bring along.

Satisfied, she stowed all four into her purse and waited for Devon to come pick her up for their date.

"You live nearby, don't you?" Vera asked, looking at Devon.

He was driving her home. To her house. That wouldn't do, not at all.

No, it was time to act.

"I do, yes."

"Would you mind stopping by there? I need to use the restroom and I'm afraid I don't think it can wait."

Devon glanced at Vera. He was blushing.

"I don't know if that's appropriate..."

"Please?" Vera said softly.

Devon shifted uncomfortably.

He didn't say anything, nodded his head and turned down a different road - now headed in the direction of his own home.

She'd seen this bathroom so many times before. More than she'd ever be able to count. And yet, until now, she'd never actually been inside it. She'd broken in to this house numerous times, and never once had Vera wandered into this one room.

She looked in the mirror, at her own reflection.

Plain, ordinary. The make-up helped, but not much. If not for the grimoire, Devon would have never noticed her. If not for the spells and the book's advice, tonight would have never been possible.

Here she was, in Devon's house. Invited.

He was waiting in another room for her to do her business so that he could take her home. A gentleman. But Vera had no intention of going home tonight. Devon's parents wouldn't be home until tomorrow. That left a perfect opportunity.

The Doll. The Sinful Straw Doll. This was where it came into play. She pulled the Doll out of her purse, along with a small piece of torn paper with the word 'lust' written on it.

All she needed to do was slip the paper into the Doll. Simple.

Vera hesitated. Inhaled a deep breath.

Was she really going to go through with this?

After everything she'd done to get to this point, it would be wrong *not* to follow through. Destroying Devon's now former girlfriend's reputation with the Crown, breaking into his home to steal hairs, stealing money from her parents to pay for everything she'd needed along the way, erasing memories...

No, she'd come too far to stop now.

There was no going back. Only forwards.

Using her thumb, she pushed the paper into the Doll, placed it back inside her purse. Two minutes later, she emerged from the bathroom to find a flushed Devon waiting for her.

The heat was clear in his eyes. A ravenous, sexual hunger.

Vera smiled at him, began lifting the hem of her dress.

His eyes dared down instantly, watching as more and more leg came into view. His eyes rose, wide, to Vera's chest. The potions had done their work well there, too. Giving her a perfect pair of breasts for Devon to ogle.

She could see the conflict in his eyes. He wanted her, but was trying to hold himself back. Trying to be a gentleman.

"You have a nice house," Vera said, voice laced with raw sexual desire. "Why don't you give me a tour? Maybe we could start with your bedroom..."

It was the final push Devon needed. He stepped forward, pressed Vera up against the wall.

Clothes were torn off both; Devon pushing away the straps which held her dress up, pushing the fabric down to her stomach and exposing the ample breasts beneath. Vera tore at the buttons of his shirt, tugged at his black leather belt. Heat and haze and magic took over.

He was like an animal possessed, all charm and politeness gone, replaced with pure lust and desire.

Vera was lifted off her feet, pressed harder against the wall as the hem of her dress was pulled up past her crotch, as Devon dragged down her underwear.

His cock was out, hard and huge and amazing.

And, a moment later, he was inside her, and she was bouncing on him as he held her there, mouth biting hard down onto one of her breasts.

Electricity rippled through her body, heat and static and pure, blissful pleasure.

Somehow, they found their way to his bedroom. Vera lay back for him, gasping as Devon took her, fucked her. His body, his perfect body, thrusting atop her.

When he was close, about to climax, Vera wrapped her legs around him. She thought he might come to his senses, try to pull away before it was too late. But the lust, the heat of the moment, removed all concern and worry from his mind. He kept going, harder and faster. And Vera lay there, took it all, enjoying every thrust, losing herself in the overwhelming sensation of being filled so completely. When it happened, she climaxed along with Devon, cried out his name as he leaned over her, eyes mad with lust.

Devon was a gentleman, honourable. If Vera got pregnant, he'd have no choice but to marry her. And, once they were married, it was only a matter of time before she stopped needing to use the potions to make him love her. He'd grow to love her on his own. She was certain of it.

Soon, she'd have her perfect little life with the man of her dreams. All thanks to the grimoire.

It sat in front of her right now, open to the last page. The page the grimoire used to speak to her. She pressed her bleeding fingertip to the page.

"What will happen once I unlock the last page?" Vera asked.

The blood moved, formed words.

Once every other page is revealed to you, turn back to this page and give it your blood. The last spell can be revealed only after you have unlocked all the others.

"You've already told me that. What's the secret last spell?"

A secret. I cannot tell you, you must find out for yourself.

That wasn't very helpful. In everything else, the book told her exactly what she wanted to know. Why was it being obtuse now?

"Do you know anything at all about what the last spell might be? Why it's so important?"

I know everything about it. It is the most useful spell in the grimoire, the ultimate summation of Malath's life's work.

"Yes, yes. But what is it?" Vera asked, annoyance flaring.

A secret.

Vera rolled her eyes.

"What about you? If this page is filled up with a spell, how am I supposed to talk to you?"

There was something odd about how the words shifted this time. Vera couldn't put her finger on it, couldn't explain why. But, for some reason, she thought the book seemed amused at the question.

When you have the last spell, you won't need to talk to me any more. Are you ready

to unlock the last pages, Vera?

Vera couldn't help but feel a pang of loss at that. Even if it was just a book, she'd spent more time talking to the grimoire than anyone else for a what felt like the longest time. Without it, who would she plot and plan with?

She nodded her head, forced a smile.

"Yes, I'm ready."

Pages flipped over by themselves, just a few this time, not huge portions of the book as had happened in the past. It landed on the first of the dozen blank pages.

With a sigh, Vera pressed her still bleeding to the page.

The last one. This was the very last page. The one the grimoire used to talk. It was blank, ready. The last spell. Time to see if it was as amazing as the grimoire claimed.

Vera reached out, pressed fingertip to page, readying herself for the usual wave of fatigue.

The instant her skin made contact, she knew something was wrong.

Pain shot up her arm, across her body. It felt like fire, like every inch of her was burning. Her skin, her insides, all ablaze. She opened her mouth to scream. No sound came out. She tried to pull her finger away, but it wouldn't move. The pain. It was everywhere. A thousand thousand needles stabbing ever part of her at once.

And then... nothing.

The pain disappeared, replaced with all-encompassing numbness.

She felt detached. Somehow apart from herself.

For the first time, she saw what her blood had become on the grimoire's last page. Runes and symbols, not a word of English in sight. What was going on?

She tried to move her finger again, failed. Tried to stand, to turn her head, but her body wouldn't obey her.

Vera watched in horror as her arms moved unbidden. It was like she was examining them, turning them this way and that, looking at them. Only it wasn't her moving them, it wasn't her doing the examining.

"Intriguing," a voice said. Vera's voice. "I've never been a woman before. This will be an interesting experience, if nothing else."

What was going on? Why couldn't she move? Who was speaking using her mouth?

"Hello, Vera," her voice said. "I'm afraid I'm going to have to borrow your body for a while. You probably have some questions you want answered, but I have a life to live so you'll have to wait for those answers. Long story short, my name is Malath and I'll be commandeering this body for the foreseeable future. Don't worry, I'll keep it nice and warm for you."

Her hands moved again, grasped the covers of the grimoire and closed it. The moment the book shut, Vera's world went black.

The grimoire was open again. The only time Vera could think, was even aware of herself and her own existence, was when the grimoire was open.

How long had it been this time? Months? Years?

From the wrinkled look of the hands in front of her, decades had gone by since the last time Malath had needed the grimoire's information. He knew so many spells by heart. Most of them, if not all. It was always for something special when he came back to flick through the pages.

But, unlike every other time in the past, he simply sat there, staring at the last, blank page.

"Hello again, Vera," an old woman's voice spoke. It took her a moment to realise it was her own aged body's voice. "Do you remember what I told you the day I took your body?"

Silence followed the words.

"Yes," Malath continued, as if having a casual conversation with someone else and not sitting alone talking to a book. "I told you I was going to be borrowing your body for a bit. Well, now it's time for me to give it back to you. Too old and frail for me to bother with any more, too unusable and unreliable. I can barely hold my shits these days. No, not much time left at all for this vessel. And so I'm giving it back to you. You're welcome."

For the first time ever, Vera watched as Malath cut a finger, bled it onto the blank grimoire page. And, for the first time in many decades, Vera felt something. The very same burning agony she'd felt all those years ago.

It was indestructible. She'd tried burning it, tearing it apart, she'd tried running it over and shooting it. Not so much as a scratch marred the leather-bound grimoire. Vera tried everything she could think of and nothing worked. She couldn't destroy it.

So she'd do the next best thing. She'd hide it where no-one would ever find it.

She couldn't hide it at home. Not when she was so old, so close to death's doorstep. Someone would inevitably find it amongst her belongings. Nor could she simply throw it away and hope for the best. It had to be buried.

There was a construction site nearby. Run down and unlikely to draw anyone's attention. One day it would be filled in with concrete. If she buried it there, it would be lost forever.

The Pit, as people called it. Yes, she'd bury it there.