

GO IF YOU DARE



NIGHTMOOR

AND THE CURSED MANSION

XAVIER WEVERS

BOOK ONE

Chapter 1



I'm told a fresh start would be good for me, a new house, new school, new friends. I'm really good with people so I have an easy time socializing. I was sad about moving out of the house I grew up in, but the memories inside the house were too hard to remember every single day.

We have been in the car for hours. "Are you excited about the new house?" my mother asks with a smile. "Yeah, can't wait to see it." I respond with a small smile showing on my face. "What was this place called again?" I ask her. "We are going to Nightmoor. I think this will be good for both of us to start fresh and I heard good things about the new school" she says, trying to make me feel better. After another hour we finally pull up on the street, "okay it's on the right" she says looking. "There" she points out, it's kind of hard to miss this house. It's huge in comparison to the other houses further down the street. "It looks kinda creepy, like it belongs in a horror film" I say with a shiver running down my spine. I can't help but stare at it, it just seems so out of place on this street with all the smaller looking houses. I look around the house and see a man watching through the window. I quickly turn my head around and pretend like I didn't see him.

“Ready to go?” She asks me. I look at her, then back at the window but there’s nothing there now. “Uhm yeah,” I guess I just need some sleep. I walk in the house, it looks like it’s been abandoned for a while now. It’s really dusty and there are spider webs all around us. There isn’t too much furniture, and the furniture that’s there. Looks really outdated. I walk around checking some rooms. “Which room is my room?” I shout to my mother. “Well you can have any room but I did think you would like this particular room,” she starts walking down through this never ending hallway and she opens the door. The room is huge! But like the rest of the house, it’s dirty and covered in spider webs.

“When will the rest of our stuff get here?” I ask her. “They should be here any minute, in the meantime. Why don’t we start cleaning.” “Okay, I guess I’ll start with my room.” Mom leaves to go clean one of the other rooms, while I find myself a broom in the kitchen. After about an hour of cleaning, my room starts to look pretty decent. I make my way to the storage room and when I leave the broom there. I suddenly hear a knock on the door and respond with “Mom?” But another knock follows, “you can come in” I say. I look at the door and see the doorknob slowly being turned. I take a step backwards and grab back my broom. I look at how the door is slowly being opened. “Mom?” I ask towards the door. I hold my broom tight and use it to open the door. I can hear sudden footsteps and giggling from further away. “H- hello?” I ask with a frightened tone in my voice. I decide to walk towards the door and open it with my hands. I peek left and right from the hallway but it’s completely empty. All I

hear is the wind, and some creaking floorboards to fill in the silence. I start to wander around, I look outside a window and notice it's getting dark. I presume it's like 8pm. There's still no sign that our stuff has arrived. I walk towards the living room to check the time on the clock my mother cleaned a while back.

That's strange, the clock says it's only 2pm. I run towards the front door and open it in a hurry. "Hey there." I hear in front of me. But with the speed I have, I have no time to stop and run straight into one of the moving guys. "Ouch, that hurts," I say. "Are you okay?" My mother asks. "Y- yeah... I'm fine!" I look around me and see the sun shining bright. "That is strange..." I mumble. "What is it dear?" my mother asks. "Nothing, I'm just tired." "Ah that's okay love, the furniture is coming right away. Let's start with your room so we can finish that up."

My mother grabs the papers from the moving guys and writes down everything that needs to be filled in. "Elaine Hendrikson, is that your name?" One of the moving guys asks my mother, "Yes. It is, otherwise I wouldn't write that." Elaine says with a quite irritated voice. "Sorry miss, we were just checking." Elaine tries to smile softly while she opens the front door. We step aside and let them bring everything inside. I let the moving guys place down the furniture in my room first. I show them where I want my things. My bed, closet, nightstand and everything else that I own. Slowly my room is actually starting to look good. "All I need now is paint or maybe some wallpapers."

While my room is now finished I get rid of everyone and tuck myself into bed. I place my glasses on the nightstand and close my eyes, a few minutes pass and I finally fall asleep.

“S- Sophia...” I hear a deep voice echoing through the hallways. I open my eyes and look around my room, without glasses I can’t really see anything. So I grab them back from my nightstand and notice that my door is wide open. I decide to get out of bed and walk up to the door. The hallway is empty, I turn around and take a look through my window. It’s dark. I quickly run back into the living room and check the clock once more. 7pm already?! Did I sleep for that long? I search my pockets for my phone and notice they’re empty. Where did I leave my phone?! I try to think back to when the moving guys placed the furniture in my room and remember I left it on my desk.

A loud bang echoes through the hallway, The sudden noise scares me and I hit myself against the clock making it fall down on the floor. “M- mom, is that you?” I say while looking towards the fallen clock. I don’t hear any response. I pick up the clock to hang it back up but notice some weird writings and symbols on the backside of the clock. I can’t make anything out of it. The silent ticking of the clock follows with another loud noise. I drop the clock again and quickly look in the hallway. I think it’s coming from the kitchen! I grab myself together and with shivering legs I make my way to the kitchen. The door is closed but I can look through the glass. I can see a massive shadow following the walls.

Out of my stupid curiosity, I turn the knob of the kitchen door and peek inside. The shadow turns around and stops moving. “M- mom, I’m freaking out right here?!” I shout. The shadow comes closer towards me and disappears into thin air. I quickly look around me and run back into my room. I lock my bedroom door and drop myself against it. A few minutes pass and I can’t hear anything. I slowly get my courage back, and stand up. I unlock the door and peek into the hallway, looking left and right. Nothing to see. I carefully make my way back towards the kitchen. I look through the door window, but it looks normal. I head to the living room and the clock that was on the floor, is back against the wall without a crack to be seen. “Did I just imagine it?” I say in a confused tone. The front door opens and I turn around. “Hey dear, I’m back!” my mother shouts, echoing through the hallway. I run towards her and hug my mother tightly. “W- where were you!?” I feel a few tears of fear running down my face. “I left a note on your nightstand” “Y- you did?” I quickly walk back to my room and see the note laying on my nightstand.

I decided to go visit our neighbors and go shopping at the nearby markets. I’m gonna be gone for a while, and I didn’t want to wake you up. If you have any concerns, please call me.

- Elaine

“Next time, just wake me. Alright mom?” “Sure honey, I’ll wake you up next time. But what happened, what got you like this?” “N- nothing, I just didn’t know where you were.” I quickly grab one of her shopping bags and walk towards the kitchen. “You coming mom?”

Elaine drops all her stuff at the kitchen counter, “can you help me clean this up?” she asks. “Yeah, no problem!” The empty kitchen is slowly being filled with food, spices and other kitchenware. The house really is turning out quite well! I open the fridge and ask her what we are eating for dinner?” “What do you think about onion soup with grilled cheese bread?” “Sounds fantastic!” I search through the kitchen finding the plates and cutlery.

While my mother is preparing dinner I decide to set up the table in the living room. I walk with my plates and cutlery through the hallway. When I hear sudden quiet talking, I quickly place my things on the table and follow the noise. “I- it leads to the basement.” I say to myself with a trembling voice. I open the door and walk down the stairs, I can still hear the noises. They are getting louder! I grab my phone out of my pocket and use its flashlight. The giggling is coming from behind this table. I stretch out my arm trying to reach out for the table, when I suddenly hear a loud growl and the sound of my phone dying.

Quickly, I run back upstairs and go into our storage room to find a flashlight. As I’m walking back into the hallway I’m unable to find the basement door. I look

around before walking back to my mother to ask her where the basement is. “Basement? We don’t have a basement honey, there’s only an attic.”

Chapter 11



I look at my mother. “B- but I was just in the basement?!” “Sorry sweetie, there really isn’t any basement around here.” Elaine shows me the map and there really isn’t a basement on it. I turn around back into the living room to finish up the table for dinner. I keep on thinking about the basement, could I have dreamt it? It felt so real! I walk to my room and grab my phone, hmm that’s weird. My phone is 9% charged. I thought the battery died already. I open my nightstand drawer and grab the charger. “Dinner’s ready!” “Coming mom!” I shout back. I put the plug in the socket to charge my phone. “Nice!” My phone is charging and is already at 10% battery. You never know when you might need it again, so I am rather prepared for any kind of situation, I say to myself with a smile. While walking towards the dinner table I turn myself around to check if there really isn’t any basement door. But there’s just an empty wall. I grab the chair and take a seat, “that really smells delicious!”

After a nice dinner I went to the bathroom to get myself ready for some sleep. I've already slept a few hours today, but it feels like I never slept at all. I remove the bits of makeup I have on my face and head to my bedroom. I’m exhausted, I place my glasses on the nightstand and get myself cozy. I set an alarm clock on my phone that rings at 8am. So I don’t oversleep.

Tomorrow's my very first school day at the new school. I wonder what friends I'll be able to make.

A few hours later my phone starts ringing. I open my eyes with a disgusted look. "Is it daytime already?!" I open my phone and disable the alarm, I open my window and notice it's still dark. "That's weird," I mumble. I walk back towards my nightstand and look at my phone. It says 2am, I swear I've set my alarm clock to 8am! Am I going crazy? I open my bedroom door and look in the hallway. I actually forgot to ask where my mother sleeps. I start to wander around and check the rooms. After a few minutes I start to get tired and decide to return back to my room. I place my glasses back on the nightstand. I cover myself in the blankets and hide my head under the pillow. After a few moments I fall asleep and doze off.

A few minutes later the alarm starts going off again. I reach my hand towards the nightstand to grab my phone. I can't feel anything so I remove the pillow. I grab my glasses and notice my phone isn't on the nightstand. Where did my phone go?! I notice that my bedroom door is open. I can't remember if I left it open or not. I look through the hallway only to see that it's pitchblack. All the lights are off. I walk to my window and look outside. Still dark and all I see are trees from the forest that lay beyond. I turn around and look at my bedroom door, when I look back at my window I suddenly see a shadow in the distance. It's tall and has long arms. Could it be an animal?

I tilt my head to see it in a different perspective but as soon as I blink the shadow is gone. I take a step backwards and look towards the hallway. I grab the flashlight I left in my nightstand drawer and walk into the pitchblack hallway. I turn around to see my bedroom only to realize the shadow is right there. It's just standing in the corner. "I- Is it real?" I wonder to myself. I quickly shine my flashlight towards it and the shadow disappears, nothing to see. I close my bedroom door and venture further into the dark. Walking to the living room I turn on the lights for the hallway. I don't really get scared fast, I just need to keep my head clear. Don't make stupid mistakes. I venture further through the hallway and see a door that seems really out of place. It's growing blue leaves through the creaks. I take a step closer and turn the knob. It's locked.

I try to look through the keyhole but it's too blurry to make a picture. The alarm from my phone goes off again. But it sounds like it's coming from behind this door. I turn around and head towards the storage room and grab the house keys. I quickly close the storage room door and return back towards the blue-leaved door, expecting it wouldn't be there anymore. But the door remained untouched. I try to use the keys but it seems like none of them fit. I shine my flashlight on the door and that's when it hits me. These markings on the door, they're the same as the clock in the living room! I turn away from the door and the power goes out again. I quickly grab my flashlight back and turn it in to shine it on the floor. I sprint my way back to the living room and trip over some wires. Since when are these here? These wires lead somewhere...

No, I can't get sidetracked! I walk to the lightswitch, which doesn't do anything. I think the generator is turned off. I have no idea where that generator is in this enormous house! I decide to continue in the dark and make my way to the living room. I grab the clock from the wall and notice the clock is stuck at 12am. I turn it around and look at the symbols. They're exactly the same! I bring the clock to the door and notice that the clock hands start to move. 3am, the devil's hour? I start to shiver a bit and look inside the keyhole again. I can see a blue shadow lurking behind the door. "Who are you, and what do you want?!" I ask. I hear a high pitched shriek coming from behind me. I turn around and shine the light in the pitchblack hallway. "Who is that? T- this isn't funny!"

Without any response I look back at the keyhole and immediately notice that the shadow standing behind the door is gone. "W-where did it go?!" I mumble. I start to shiver and shine my flashlight around me. I am not scared that easily, but this is freaking me out! I take a few steps back away from the door. The clock hands are slowly going back to their initial state, 12am. I notice the shape of the hands and the keyhole. They look similar. They have the same symbols! I put the flashlight in my mouth and shine it on the clock. I place my fingers under the clock hands and try to pull them out. Without any success and patience I smash the clock onto the floor creating a loud noise and pick up the hands that way. My shivering hand slowly makes its way to the keyhole and I place the clock hand inside. Without any hesitation I turn the hand of the clock and

the door gets unlocked. I slightly open the door but then I hear a sound behind me.

“What on earth are you doing!?” My mother yells at me. “Why is our clock smashed on the floor?!” I fall on my knees and feel tears rolling from my face. “Hey, what happened? Please talk to me honey.” “I don’t like this place, it freaks me out” I say. She hugs me tightly and strokes through my hair. Elaine notices the clock hand in the door and removes it. “Why is this in the door?” she asks. “I was trying to open the door, I left my phone on the other side.” “No honey, I have it. Don’t you remember giving it to me last night?” she says.

Elaine pushes the door further open and walks in. She immediately gets blasted back, hitting her head against the wall. I quickly stand up and run towards her. “M-mom!?” “Wow, is that me?” my mother says while standing on the other side. I turn around and rub my eyes. Am I seeing double? “Sophia, what’s going on?” she asks. How am I seeing myself lying unconscious there, while I’m standing right here. “I- I don’t know.” Elaine walks to me and tries to touch me, but her hand goes straight through me. “Wow, that tickles” I laugh. I grab Elaine’s unconscious hand and notice a handprint glowing on my mother. “M- my hand is glowing?!” she says frightened. She tries grabbing the flashlight but goes right through it. “Am I a ghost?” she asks. “N- no. I mean, you aren’t see-through” I say. Elaine walks towards the wall and goes right through. “How cool is this!” she shrieks.

I slowly move towards the door and open it carefully. There's writing on it. I say. Elaine comes back and looks at the writing. "It looks ancient," she says. Elaine takes a step closer through the door opening but goes straight through. I wonder what gave me that blast. I grab my mother's unconscious body and drag it towards the door. I make her hand go through the door opening and notice both of her disappearing. "M- Mom?!" I turn around and see her standing behind me. She tries touching and succeeds. "What on earth is this place?" she says. "Follow me!" I say. Elaine closes the door and runs behind me. I take a seat at my desk and open my laptop. I open the internet and type in 'Nightmoor'. "That's strange, it only found 1 result." I click the link and it opens a darkpaged website full with red markings and symbols. I scroll through the website when I notice it's 3:58 am.

I look further for information but I can't find anything that's readable. "Maybe try searching for the Nightmoor incidents," my mother says. As soon as I type in the word 'incidents' my laptop gets restarted. I turn around and look confused at my mother. "How late is it?" I ask her. "It's 4 am at the moment" That's weird. Could that be connected? 4am is when the devil's hour strikes to an end. I grab my flashlight and run towards the lightswitch in the hallway. "There's light!" I say excited.

Elaine taps my shoulder and points towards the doors in the hallway. "Weren't there symbols on them?" I quickly notice that the smashed clock is also gone. I walk back into the living room to check if it's back at its

initial position, which it is. I look at the clock and decide to take it from the wall. I turn the clock around but don't see any symbols on it. I turn the clock back around and take it close to my face. The clock hands are different, I place the clock back onto the wall and walk back to my laptop. "It's rebooted" I say. I tried typing in Nightmoor again, which now has over 10.000 results. I ask my mother which one I should click and she responds with, "just click the first one." I click on the first link that shows and read the title out loud "Nightmoor Mortuary." Did you know there's a mortuary in Nightmoor?" "There shouldn't be any mortuary, maybe we need to continue reading." She says. I zoom in onto the screen and start reading the text out loud.

In the years through 1920-1985, Nightmoor was known for having the biggest mortuary. Throughout these years the family who owned the mortuary got older, didn't have children and couldn't take care of the building anymore. They didn't want anyone taking it over because it was their property. So they destroyed the mortuary and everything they owned. Nowadays there's a village called Nightmoor. Some rumors say the mortuary still exists till this day and that it is hidden somewhere under the grounds of Nightmoor.

"Do you think that the mortuary still exists?" "They're just rumors sweetie. Don't get all focused up on them." She responds. "Let's get back into bed, you have to wake up early in the morning again." "I don't wanna go to school!" I say. "Sophia, it's important to

socialize. Especially now that you don't know anyone around, it's good to make some new friends." "Yeah yeah, I know mom." My mother walks out of my room. I wait a few seconds and sneak behind her, looking in what room she goes. Second floor? We haven't cleaned the second floor, what is she doing? There's dust and spider webs all around me. She heads to the left, over the bridge and opens the second room in the wing. I carefully try to cross the bridge but it's making too many creaking noises. I quickly turn around and return to my room. I place my glasses back onto my nightstand and go to bed. I set my alarm clock at 8am once more and close my eyes.

Chapter III



I open my eyes and hear the alarm clock. I look around the room and see it's 8am. I turn the alarm clock off and grab my glasses. With my exhausted body I make my way to the window and open it. It's sunny and the clouds beautifully hover over the forest. In the distance I can even see a slight mist. "Breakfast!" My mother yells. "Coming mom!" I quickly grab my clothes and put them on, I grab my phone and make my way to the living room. "What's this, blueberry pancakes for breakfast?" "It's good to start the first day of school with a great breakfast." She says. I take a good look at my pancake and take a bite, the sticky sirop starts pouring on my plate. "It's delicious!" I say. I quickly finish my pancake and head to the bathroom. I brush my long blonde hair and make sure that the few locks of purple I have are mixtured through the blonde and put it in a ponytail. I brush my teeth and walk to the shed, I grab my black bike with purple accents and head towards school. I don't quite know the way in the new village yet, so I have my phone to take me to my destination.

"Turn right on Star Route Street" my phone rings. I take the road to my right and see it's still a 5 minute ride. While biking I look at my surroundings and see a lot of houses and trees. I actually wonder why there are so many trees in the distance. Is this town surrounded

by a forest? I actually never did any research on this village because I really wasn't in any mood for that. I didn't want to leave my old life, but at the same time I couldn't bear withstanding those old circumstances.

As I make my way to the new school my first impression isn't good. The school looks a bit old, and hasn't really gone with the recent times. The walls are brown and have darkish tints to it. As I come closer I see a few cracks here and there, but nothing to be worried about. I set my bike into the stand and open the school doors. The smell isn't all that awful, but you do smell that you are entering a school. It smells very clean and papery. But I suppose the looks don't matter if the school itself is really good. I open my phone and look for the classroom. It says classroom 1.41. I look around for a sign that leads to the stairs. As I wander around I accidentally bump into someone.

"S- sorry!" I stutter. "Ey, you're the new girl right?" "Y-yea, that's me." "Great, we're in the same class, you can follow me." I accept and follow him. He has black hair and is wearing a jacket with pointy spikes covering a white shirt. He has black jeans with black shoes. "What's your name?" I ask. "Jake, my name is Jake Spears," he says. "It's nice to meet you Jake, I'm Sophia Hendrikson." "Likewise," he says with a smile. "The classroom is on our right." He has his hand pointing to the door and waits for me to enter the classroom. "I like those purple hair locks." "T- thanks" I say stuttering. Why am I stuttering? I've never done that before. I try to ignore it and walk into the classroom. Jake quickly

steps back in front of me and introduces his friends. “Hi, I’m Sophia, I just met Jake in the hallway.”

Jake points to his friends and says their names, “here we have, Liam Woods, Anthony Hall and Alisha Wilkins.” “Ah, finally another girl,” Alisha smirks. I join them at their table and our first class begins. “Sophia? Can you stand up for me please?” the teacher asks. I stand up and everyone starts looking at me. “My name is Janessa Sharpe, I’m your math teacher for the year. And class, this is Sophia, our new student. Please give her a warm welcome.” Everyone looks chill with me but there’s one girl looking at me with a disgusted face. “Please bring out your math books,” the teacher continues. I sit back down and grab my book. “Who’s that girl staring at me?” I ask Jake. “That’s Hannah Gibson, she has never been a kind person, always looking for fights. There are even some rumors she killed her own parents, because no one has ever seen them alive. There’s no data on them since 2019.

I look at Jake with a shocked face, and then quickly back to Hannah. “Do you believe the rumor?” “No, I think her parents died in a fatal accident.” “But if she doesn’t have any parents, then why is everyone rumoring she killed them? That’s just wrong!” “What do you want to do about it?” Alisha asks. “I’ll walk up to her once we finish this class. Maybe she just needs friends.” “I doubt it, but you can always try it.” Anthony says quietly. “Please turn your books to page 84” the teacher says. I grab my notebooks out and open them to the first page. I tear a small piece of paper and write a note on it.

Meet me after class

- Sophia

I quickly throw the piece of paper towards Hannah and accidentally hit her head. The teacher looks up to her students but doesn't notice anything. "Alright, here we have the first assignment," she says. Hannah looks around from where the paper came from and I quickly wave to her. She awkwardly waves back in a small gesture. I carefully follow the lesson and succeed in finishing all the assignments within the time given. As she ends her class I quickly go towards Hannah. "I'll wait for you in the hallway" Jake says while walking past me. "What do you want from me?" Hannah asks. "I want to know what really happened. I heard the rumors about you and your parents." "Why do you want to know that, you're just the same like everyone else!" Hannah shouts. "I might be like everyone else, but you don't know me yet. Are the rumors true?" "No!" Hannah shouts with an angry emotion. "I'll tell you the true story of what happened the night my parents disappeared."

"My parents... t- they died in a fire. We were sleeping in our house when suddenly the living room started catching fire. My parents noticed the fire and immediately ran towards my room. But I didn't tell them I wasn't in my room. Instead I was in the attic when I noticed the fire through the window coming from below. I didn't even care one bit about warning my parents I was safe. I climbed out through the attic

window myself and safely made it out. My parents entered my room and shouted for me. A few moments later they noticed they were too late and got stuck between the fires and couldn't get out. It's my fault I'm alone!" Hannah cries. "I should've just shouted I'm safe and maybe my parents would've been fast enough to leave the house before it went into ashes. "How did your house burn so fast?" I ask Hannah. "We were living by the forest in a big wooden cabin. We couldn't afford any other. The cabin was so cheap because it was discovered a serial killer lived in the house. It's distant from the town and far away from any roads. The house wasn't looking all the best, it was old and rusty but we made it our home. My father, mother and I. We were a happy family before that night ruined everything."

"How come that no-one knows your parents died?" I ask. "I made up a story that my parents left for a business trip and that I stayed home alone during the night the fire happened. They never found their bodies." "That is insane Hannah!" "Can you please keep this a secret Sophia?" "Yes of course, it'll be our secret, I promise you. But without parents, where do you live now?" I ask her. "I live with the teacher, Janessa always wanted a child but never got one, and she said she would take care of me until my parents got back. But it's been 2 years now. Janessa has been asking me more questions lately, she doesn't know if I'm saying the truth or not and why my parents haven't been found yet." Jake comes looking around the corner, "you girls ready? We need to head to our next class." "Yeah, we are coming." Jake turns his head back into the hallway and we follow him to our next class. "What's the subject?" I

ask. "It's chemistry." Hannah responds "Yuck, I hate chemistry!" We enter the classroom and join the others. Hannah stops at our table. "You can sit with us." I say. I give her a hand and Hannah sits down. "Where do all of you live?" I ask the group. Jake comes up and points everyone to their location. "Liam lives on Coach Lane Street, Anthony lives on Terrace Street, Alisha lives on Ironwood Avenue and I live on Quarry Lane. I don't actually know where Hannah lives." "I live on Star Route Street." Hannah responds. "I remember that name, Star Route Street. I went through it while biking to school." I say. "Where do you live, Sophia?" Jake asks curiously. "I live on Manor Street." I say "M- manor Street?" Anthony stutters. "Yes, is there something wrong with that." N- no. There's nothing." He quickly responds. I look at him with a stare. "Alright class, it's time to put on our lab coats." The teacher starts. I stand up and grab a lab coat. "We are gonna be working in groups of three," the teacher continues. "Before going into your groups, we have a new student. Sophia, I am Sean Ruiz. But you can call me Ruiz. I'm your chemistry teacher." I nod and the teacher continues. "Go in your groups."

We all walk through the classroom making a crowded mess in order to get a good table. "I claim Alisha and Hannah," I say. Alisha winks at the boys, "Let's have a battle. Three boys against three girls." The boys nod and accept. "Today you'll be making a chemical reaction, I've placed a paper on your table that shows you images of the results, you can cross them out if you made the correct reaction. All tables contain the same ingredients and your task is to mix them, find as many

chemical reactions as possible. But note that mixing the wrong chemicals can cause a fire. If a fire is started, hit the red emergency button on your table and water will pour out of the ceiling on your table. Note that if you do hit the emergency button you'll be disqualified and you'll need to sit back at your school desks. The group that has the most chemical reactions and hasn't started any fires will win a prize, good luck class!"

I immediately start grabbing ingredients and start pouring them together. "Sophia, do you know what you are doing?" Alisha asks worriedly. "Yes, I was a professional in chemistry in my old school." "I thought you didn't like chemistry?" Hannah adds. "True, but that doesn't mean I can't be good at it." We look around and already see 2 groups disqualified. "7 groups remaining" the teacher says. "Psst, you should use potassium permanganate mixed with glycerin and add a few drops of water. You'll see an awesome reaction." Jake whispers to our table. Hannah immediately grabs the ingredients and mixes the potassium permanganate with the glycerin. "Hold up Hannah, they are our enemies, why would they help us?" Alisha responds. "I-I think I know that formula. It causes a fire!" I say fast. Hannah quickly puts down the pipette with water and at that exact moment another table sets fire. "6 groups remaining!" the teacher shouts through the classroom. We continue mixing ingredients and I whisper to Jake. "Nice try boys, you should make a mixture of ammonium nitrate, zinc and a few drops of hydrochloric acid. It'll amaze you!" Jake smirks and ignores her saying. "4 groups remaining!"

I grab a piece of towel and use a pipette to add a drop of sulfuric acid on it. But as I do, Hannah knocks over a bottle, and the towel gets soaked in acetone, which almost makes the sulfur catch fire. "Phew, that was a close one." I say "If I had that pipette touch the potassium permanganate we would've formed manganese heptoxide that instantly sets the towel on fire!" "There are 2 groups remaining, it's Jake, Liam and Anthony against Sophia, Alisha and Hanna." The whole class looks at us as we prepare our next chemical reaction. Liam adds sodium chlorate and sugar into a mixture. Hannah pushes over the pipette which makes Anthony knock over the sulfuric acid, starting a fire. "Sophia, Alisha and Hannah have won today's chemistry lesson!" the teacher says cheerfully. Everyone starts applauding and we are called together. While everyone is cleaning up the classroom, we each get a piece of stone. "What is this prize sir?" Hannah asks. "It's a rare piece of obsidian mixed with diamonds." He says. "Here, take a look at that." He gives us each a magnifying glass and we see small crystals on it. "We all have different colors!" I say. I put the stone in my backpack and we meet back with the boys. "That was a close one," Jake says competitively. "If Hannah didn't push that pipette, Anthony wouldn't have knocked over that sulfuric acid."

I look at Liam who's looking annoyed at Anthony for ruining their winning chances. Calm down guys. It was just a little competition. Alisha laughs. "What did you girls win anyway?" Anthony asks. I show them my stone and the boys look at each other with wide eyes. "That's one cool stone," Anthony chuckles. "C'mon guys, what

were you expecting? It's just a small prize." Alisha says annoyed. We all walk up to our final class of the day. "Where is the classroom?" I ask. "Third floor, history." Alisha says. "I absolutely get annoyed by the history lessons." Liam mumbles to Alisha. We all go up the stairs and come across the history teacher. "Hey, Sophia right? I'm your history teacher Joel Green." He gives me a hand and we walk with him to his classroom. "Alright class, today the topic is the history of Nightmoor." We all open our books to page 93. The teacher starts by giving us a short slideshow with old Nightmoor images. Nightmoor doesn't even quite look alike. The history of Nightmoor was known for being this enormous mortuary surrounded by a forest. Whereby now Nightmoor is known as a village. The teacher goes through the images at a rapid pace, but luckily the information he talks about is in the book.

... Nightmoor has gone through generations. In the early 1800s Nightmoor was used as a ritual site. It was used to banish the witches and extinguish the creatures roaming the world. The years beyond the 1830s Nightmoor has been used as a place for growing crops and was lived by farmers. Furthermore, throughout the 1900s Nightmoor was used as a battle site for the first world war. All the farmers tried to escape their lands by either running away or hiding within their homes. After the first world war Nightmoor needed a rebuild so the Gibson family -

Hold up... "Hannah, your surname is Gibson right?" "Yess, why?" "It says here that the Gibson family made

the mortuary! Did you know that?" "My father did tell me about that one day, but he said that they were a different family with just having the same surname as ours." Hannah whispers back. "I don't think that it's all just a big coincidence of you having the same surname, I believe there's more behind this story." I turn my head and continue reading.

- the Gibson family started the production of a mortuary at the end of 1918. The mortuary opened its doors for the public in 1921. The Nightmoor mortuary has been used to remove all the perished farmers and soldiers during the first world war. After the Gibson family was starting to become extinct themselves, they decided to close down the mortuary and destroy everything they owned. A year later there was nothing left except an enormous forest. Throughout the years beyond 1993 Nightmoor got another renovation in time and it became an entirely new village.

"Now that we've gone through all of this information, please close your books and write down what you remember" the teacher says while handing out the papers, "and no working together! Please place your paper on the corner of your table if you think you wrote everything down."

Everyone starts writing except for Anthony. "Anthony, what is it?" I whisper. "I wasn't really paying any attention". He places his paper at the corner and the teacher comes with a frown. "And this is why we do this. Let this be another lesson for you, young man."

Anthony looks with an innocent smile and the teacher walks back to his desk. As more papers start to get picked up, Hannah and me are still writing. Do we just know so much, or does everyone else not pay attention? A few moments later we also place our paper at the corner and the teacher picks it up, immediately reading it. "Now that's what I mean," the teacher says with a smile. "Great job, Hannah and Sophia. I'm glad you listened." "I just already knew these facts." Hannah responds to the teacher. "The teacher keeps smiling and ignores the fact that he just got outspoken by a student and walks to his desk. Hannah smiles with a grin while looking at the teacher walking away. "Alright class, that's it for today, note that I wrote down your homework on the whiteboard. Please capture a photo of it or write it down. I want this made by everyone and hear no excuses." I take a photo and leave the classroom. We walk to the school entrance and Anthony already starts saying goodbye. "Hold up you guys," Alisha says. "We need to add Sophia and Hannah to our phone contacts." We give them our phone numbers and receive their contacts. "Why isn't Liam in here?" I ask. "Liam recently broke his phone so he doesn't have a way to be contacted." Jake says. I look at Liam who's looking at Hannah. "I'll get a new phone by the end of this semester" he says. "That's still 37 days without a way to contact." "I know, but that's how it is." I nod and head to my bike. "See you guys tomorrow!" Alisha says happily. I wave and get on my bike. Hannah quickly gets in front of me, "can I come with you?" She asks. "Uhm, sure?" Hannah gets on the back of my bike and we get on our way to my house. While still trying to leave the school parking lot we fall from the bike.

“Uhm, let’s walk, alright?” With a few scratches on my hands I tilt my bike back up on its wheels.

Hannah walks in front of me showing me where she lives, “here is Star Route Street” she says. “If you continue this way you’ll see the house with the plastic swans, that’s my current teacher’s home.” I look at the house and it looks authentic. Brown bricks, mossy vines, old oak fences, castle-like windows and a little pond with a bridge going across, next to the front door with plastic swans. “It looks great!” I say. Hannah continues walking, “where do you live actually?” She smiles with her head turned towards me. “You’ll see it once we get there” I grin. “Not fair!” Hannah laughs. “It was Manor Street right?” She asks curiously. “Yes, Manor Street.” “Have you seen that enormous house? People say it’s haunted!” “Heh, you have no idea,” I mumble. “What did you say?” “You really believe that it’s haunted, or are you just scared to enter it?” “N- no I ain’t scared of that!” Hannah says a little unsure. She looks away and starts sprinting. “First one at Manor wins!” Hannah shouts. I give her some time for a head start, and then I get on my bike. Within a few seconds I catch up with her and bike in front of her. “Not fair!” Hannah shouts. Hannah starts sprinting faster and is actually catching up on me. But she’s too late because I can already see Manor Street ahead of me. “I won!” I shout back. “Only because you cheated!” Hannah says exhausted. “Let me catch my breath real fast...” Hannah looks around and asks, “so where do you live?” I point to the enormous house and Hannah’s eyes widen. “W-whaaaaaaat?!”

Chapter IV



Hannah looks into my eyes and then back towards the house, "I- I can't believe you live in t- that monstrosity of a house!" I look at her and give her my hand. "You wanna enter?" I ask. "Hell yeah!" Hannah accepts my hand and we walk towards the front door. Hannah stands still at the front door and peeks through the door window. "It's enormous!" "Just wait until you get inside." I open the front door and push it open. We place our school bags at the entrance and Hannah runs around the living room. "T- this is so cool!" She says. "I can still remember when this place was all dusty and creepy looking. I often bike in the neighborhood and I always look inside through the windows, but it was so hard to see with all that dust on it. I can't believe you live here. Best surprise!" Hannah smiles at me and runs through the hallways. "This is huge! It looks way bigger from the inside than from the outside!" Hannah shouts out of the hallway. I think about what she says and question it myself. "Yea, it does look smaller from outside." I wonder what building technique they used to build this house. Could it be made with magic? I think back to last night and remember what happened.

"Where's your room?" Hannah asks. I quickly empty my mind and say, "follow me!" We walk through the hallway towards my room, but then my mother suddenly comes out of the kitchen. "Hello darling, did

you have fun today?" "Yes, it was amazing. I even already won my first prize in chemistry!" Hannah gives my mother a hand, "I'm Hannah." "Nice to meet you. I'm Elaine, Sophia's mother." "I was just about to show Hannah my room." I say. "Oh, don't let me stop you. You may explore everywhere except for the second floor. It's not safe, there are loose planks everywhere!" Elaine says with a worried look. "I'm gonna fix the second floor during the weekend, I'm quite busy with my work at the moment." "What work do you do?" Hannah interrupts her. "I work at the police," she says. "Awesome!" Hannah squeals. "Tomorrow's my first day in the new office, so exciting. It has been awhile since the last time that I was able to work, because due to the move I had to quit my old office. But now I can get back into business." Hannah looks at my mother as if she's some famous woman. "So behave girls, otherwise I'll have to shoot a bullet through your skull." Elaine says while trying not to laugh. Hannah turns her head. "Heh, will do." She giggles uncomfortably while looking at me with a worried face. I start to laugh, "she's just kidding, Hannah." "I- I know that." "Doesn't matter, let's get to my room." I grab Hannah's hand and drag her with me. Hannah looks back at my mother and waves as she gets pushed through a doorway. "This is my room." Hannah looks around and touches everything. "It's such a big room, it's amaz-" Hannah turns around and notices something in the window. "W- what's that?" She asks. I look outside the window but all I can see is the forest which is covered by a gray and cloudy sky above. "Are you sure you saw something?" "Y- yes! It had very short crooked legs, and the arms were abnormally long. Its head was covered with long black

hair, and it had a double-folded neck!” Hannah shivers, “I- I think I need some time to sit. I reach out my hand and help her towards my bed. “T- thanks...” she mumbles. I quickly walk out of my room and grab a glass of water in the kitchen. But as I come back Hannah is gone.

I look around my room and see a black figure standing in the distance. I- Is it waving towards me? I open my window and then reach for my phone that I placed on my bed. I open my camera app and zoom in onto the figure. It really is waving, I start by pressing the record button and look around the figure. As soon as my record timer reaches 3 seconds it glitches out. I open the recording and all I see is the forest. I tilt my phone back towards the window and take a photo. It seems like cameras don’t work on these things! Or am I hallucinating? I zoom in on the forest and look around at the black figure. After a while I notice Hannah’s arm laying next to it. I accidentally drop my phone and look down.

As I pick my phone back up from the floor I look towards my window. Hannah is looking right at me from within the forest. Her eyes are as dark as night, her skin is turned blue. I look closer and Hannah starts to move, her dark eyes start dripping red liquid, could that be blood? Even her skin is slowly being torn apart. I try to reach out for her but suddenly hear a glass break in the hallway, I look behind me and feel a hand on my shoulder. I turn back to the window and see Hannah climbing through my window and entering my room. She’s all crooked and leaves a trail of blood

behind her. I can hear her bones crack with every step and her jaw drops on the floor. I take a few steps back and suddenly feel a warm breath behind me.

I turn around and see Hannah looking with open eyes. “What are you doing?!” She asks. “U- umm...” I mumble. “You were walking around like crazy. What were you staring at through your window?” “I didn’t see anything.” “I- I was looking for that black figure you told me about.” “What figure?” Hannah looks at me questionably. “You know, that thing with crooked legs, long arms and a folded neck?” Hannah looks at me like I’m stupid. “What are you talking about, what thing?!” “N- nothing... I’m probably hallucinating again.” I say. “Again?” Hannah asks. “Yes, I had it yesterday when I went to the kitchen I saw a giant shadow. Or when I went to sleep and woke up to the sky being dark while it was still 3pm.” Hannah taps my shoulder and reassures me. She walks to the hallway and cleans up the mess. “How did that happen?” I ask. “You were walking to the kitchen to grab a glass of water, but you dropped it and ran into your room staring at the forest.” I look confused at Hannah. “I don’t remember doing any of that?!”

Hannah places the broken shards of glass on the kitchen counter. “Now don’t walk through this hallway, there are still some tiny pieces laying here and there.” “I’ll grab the vacuum in the storage room to remove all the tiny pieces of glass.” “Alright, I’ll wait here for you.” Hannah says with a smile. I get closer to the storage room as I notice another door. I- it’s the basement door again! I open the basement door and see a pair of stairs

going downward. Ha! Told ya, I wasn't imagining it. Now I just have to stay here and face the door so it won't disappear. "Mom, Hannah! Come here, I found something!" Hannah comes running towards me, "what is it?" she asks. My mother told me there weren't any maps of the basement. While this stairway definitely says otherwise. "Hannah looks down." Those walls don't fit with the architecture of the house. "I look at them myself "yeah, you're right!" I leave sight of the door and we both walk in, I touch the wall and it feels wet and mossy. "What happened here?" Hannah asks. "How should I know? I just found this place!" "I wasn't talking to you dummy, it was just a general question" I turn around and notice the door is closed. I turn the knob but it seems locked, "mom, are you there?" I ask. There's no response. "It's very dark down there... I can't withstand the darkness." Hannah says shivering. "M-mom!" I shout again.

We are left without any choice and venture through the darkness. Luckily Hannah and I have our phones with us for flashlights. "How much battery is in your phone?" Hannah asks. "It's 23%, why?" "Okay okay, no worries, my phone is at 31%. That's more than enough..."

"Sophia, Is that you?" I hear from the otherside of the wall. "Mom, We can't get out!" "Stay there honey" I can hear footsteps going away from the door, until I can't hear anything. "Mom?" I ask again. I look at Hannah who's looking down the stairs. "I ain't ever going down there!" She says while looking at me deeply in the eyes. "Get away from the door!" Elaine says from the other

side. We both take a step back and see an axe coming through. "Have you ever seen this door?" I ask my mother. "No, I don't honey. Just hang on. As we wait until the door has an opening big enough for us to fit we stare down the dark stairs. "I really want to know what's down there." I say curious. "You can go if you want, but I'm staying here!" "I don't think seperating is a good idea girls." my mother says in heavy breathing. "Just a few more swings," she adds. I look at the door as I see my mother coming through, she is wearing a belt with all kinds of crazy items. "M- mom, why are you carrying those items?" "Well, this gun is for protection, the flashlight for dark occasions, the handcuffs for if I ever find someone who needs them. This radio immediately contacts the sheriff's office. "We get it, mom" I interrupt her. "Who's down for an adventure?" Elaine asks. As soon as she steps on the stairs the doorbell rings. "Oh, guess this adventure has to wait. Don't stay here for too long, I feel better if you girls also leave this creepy room." We nod and follow her to the living room. Elaine opens the front door and a figure steps inside.

"Aunt Erin!" I immediately run towards her and give her a big hug. "Hey my darling, how's the new location?" "It's great, the school looks a bit outdated, but from the inside it's amazing. I made lots of new friends and this house is so enormous and cool!" "You should thank your father for that one, he owns this house." "Where is your father?" Hannah asks. "He's been missing for 2 years now. The last time we had contact he got ambushed by the enemies. He never recovered from that." "B- but does that mean he's dead?" "No, I

mean... they never found his body. "You're quite sober about the fact your dad is missing." "I hate it when people say that, that my dad is missing doesn't mean I can't talk normally about him anymore!" "We still have hope that he's surviving somewhere out there." Aunt Erin replies while giving Sophia a pat on her shoulder. Erin looks down in the hallway. "T- that door!" Erin points. "What is it doing there?!" "We just found out about that door today, it leads to somewhere down the house." I look at Erin's eyes and notice that she's afraid about it. "I- I thought I got rid of it..." Erin mumbled quietly. "What did you say sister?" "N- nothing." "She walks ahead towards the door. "What happened to it?" Erin asks. "I kinda broke the door down with an axe because Sophia and Hannah were stuck behind it. "Stuck?! I- it can't be... I thought we destroyed you!" "Destroyed what?" Elaine asks. "Azruleth!" "W- who's Azruleth? Don't start talking mysteries to me Erin!" She falls to the ground. "I- I gave up everything to protect your family." "You did what?!" Elaine says shocked. Hannah turns to me, "should I stay here or better go?" Erin looks Hannah deeply in the eyes and gives her a hand. "I think that means stay?" "Erin, please start explaining" Elaine continues. "Follow me" she says while going through the axed door. She grabs Elaine's belt and reaches for the flashlight. Down here are your answers. "As we all stand at the edge of the stairs Erin starts walking down. She slowly fades away into the darkness and is nowhere to be seen. "E- Erin? Sister?"

Chapter V



Elaine looks down the stairs and quickly follows Sophia who's already stepping downwards. "I said I wouldn't go down there!" Hannah shouts, but everyone is already gone into the darkness. "Ugh." Hannah grabs her phone and walks down the stairs. After many stairs we start to see light in the distance, it's glowing bright red. The air starts to get pretty tight and it's harder to breathe. Erin still isn't anywhere to be seen, so we continue walking down these stairs. It feels like minutes have passed, but maybe that's just because this air is so muggy. The light starts to reach near and it gets warmer. "Is that fire?" I hear Hannah ask behind me. "It feels like it, maybe torches?" "How can those torches still be lit?!" Hannah's voice trembles. We finally reach the end of the stairway and are now in an enormous circular room. "I see a sign hanging here!" I point and we walk towards the sign and read "Gibson Mortuarium."

"I- it really still exists!" Hannah says excitedly. "How did nobody know about this?" I see Hannah looking very focused at the sign, looking around it and touching it. But quickly startles and jumps out of her shoes when she hears a sudden melody. "W- where's that coming from?!" Hannah asks, scared looking around her. Elaine points into a hallway where we can see a door that looks quite small and narrow. We decide

to walk towards the noise. Erin suddenly comes from around the corner and gets Hannah screaming her lungs out. “Are you alright Hannah?” Erin asks worriedly. “Y- yeah... I’m just not used to these kinds of atmospheres and scenarios.” Hannah mumbles uncomfortably. Erin pats Hannah’s shoulder and brings her close. “It’s okay child, I was afraid of this place too when I was younger.” “You’ve been here as a child?!” Elaine says left out. “Tell me everything you know! Don’t play these mysteries with me. We’re talking about my husband’s house!” “Why don’t you ask him yourself?” “Who, my husband? He’s missing!” Elaine says being prickly annoyed. “Do you want to know why they never found his body?” “Erin... what are you talking about?”

“It all started 2 years ago...”

Your man, Sophia’s father. Got ambushed by the enemy, it was said he never recovered from that. But in reality he defeated the enemy. I never told you who his enemy was. But now that I see Azruleth is back we have a chance to resurrect your husband.”

“What?!” Elaine screeches, shaking Erin around. “Do you want to know how it continues?” “Sorry...” Elaine steps back.

“Azruleth is a mighty demon who came from what we like to call, The Underneath. Also known as this Mortuarium. As Blake, your husband. Defeated Azruleth, he was banished to The Underneath.”

“B- banished?” Elaine interrupts again. “Is he here? Why hasn’t he left this place? It’s been 2 years, bring me to him... Right now!” “I- is dad alive?” I ask Erin. “Yes, he’s alive but not as you know him.” “W-where is he! Where’s my Blake...” Erin shouts, collapsing on her knees, almost going into tears. “He’s behind that door.” Erin points. “I-isn’t that the same door where the melody came from?” Hannah shivers. “Melody? I’ve never heard a melody?” Erin questionably looks at the door.

Erin shakes her head and grabs Elaine’s arm. We slowly walk through the hallway that brings us closer to the door. It all looks so distorted and old in here, the walls are mossy and the air is very muggy. Erin walks upon the locked door and grabs a key out of her jacket. “Blake’s behind this door?” Elaine asks again for confirmation. Erin doesn’t answer and turns the key to open the door. Elaine turns the knob and looks inside. Erin carefully touches Elaine’s shoulder and says, “Don’t be disappointed...” Elaine nods and opens the door completely. We follow my mother and I see writings in blood all around us. “D-dad?” I point. Elaine turns around to where I am pointing and she sees him too. Her worried face quickly turns into a sigh of relief. Elaine runs towards him but quickly gets stopped by Erin. “Let me go!” Elaine shouts. “Ssst, be quiet. We don’t want to wake him up.” “W- why not?! What are you not telling us Erin!” Erin points to the writings on the walls, these are all the answers you need. I take an observant look through them and quickly notice some admirable drawings. “Is that dad?” I ask Erin. “And what’s that thing behind him?” Hannah adds. “Good

Eye, Sophia. That is indeed your dad, but he isn't like you know him. Take a look at this one" Erin points out. We all take a look at it and see a figure hanging above dad dragging himself out of his body. "Does that mean his soul is gone?!" Hannah asks. "Not his soul, his mind is split in two." Erin adds. I look back at the man laying on the floor behind us. "So... that's dad but without his mind?" "He has a mind, it's just split. So some of his thoughts, memories, known abilities and understandings of the human race are gone. And because of this. Azruleth infiltrated his mind letting him see things that are unreal! He made him believe other humans are evil and need to be destroyed." Elaine's sigh of relief quickly turns back into a worried face. "S- so, how do we help him?"

I turn back towards my father and notice something strange. "W- was that his position when we entered this room?" I ask the others. He's sitting up straight against the wall with his eyes closed, long black hair covering his ears and part of his shoulders. He is wearing clothing that is ripped, and his body looks so skinny you can almost see his bones sticking out. I take a step closer and see a soft smile on his face. The others turn back to the writings and I take another step closer to the thing called my father. I blink and notice his smile has changed. I close my eyes for a small period and open them quickly. As I look at him I notice he changed his position. "M- mom, I think we can better leave!"

"What is it darling?" Erin turns around. His eyes are wide open, his hair moved back revealing his ears, his

hands are laying on the floor and his head is against the wall. I quickly take a few steps back whilst not losing sight of him. Elaine takes a few steps closer looking at her husband. "T-that isn't my Blake!" She shivers "What do you mean?" Erin asks. "Look at his arm, where are the scars he got from that one trip in the jungle. Look at his eyes, they're brown, where are those innocent green eyes?" Erin takes a few steps closer. "I- ..." as we all look how Erin gets closer, that thing suddenly moves its arms and stands straight up in a single movement startling Erin. "It's not touching the ground!" Hannah trembles. Erin is now standing straight in front of him. She takes a close look in his eyes and shouts, "That's not Blake!" Erin immediately turns around and points to the door. As we all try to leave it suddenly closes, locking us in.

"ELAINE!!!" Echoes through the room. Suddenly the lit torches go out and the darkness fills the room. We quickly grab our phones and flashlight, and shine around us. "W- where is he?" Hannah asks worriedly. We look around and see nothing but walls. We all carefully step backward towards the door. Hannah shrieks when the melody starts playing again. We listen closely to our surroundings, not paying attention to the melody. "I can hear the bones crack..." Erin says. "There!" She shouts, everyone shines their flashlights towards it and all we can see is long dark hair flowing by. "C- can we please leave this place?" Hannah asks terrified. We all nod and Erin grabs her key trying to unlock the door. As she succeeds we all quickly go through the door running towards the stairs. With the melody fading away we reassure ourselves that safety is

near. As the stairs are coming within our reach I suddenly go into black. "My phone's dead!" I shout. Hannah quickly comes running towards me and we share her phone. Erin and my mother are walking behind us. A loud shriek is heard from behind us and a deep voice can be heard. "Elaine... don't leave me..." As we take our first steps on the stairway everything behind us goes dark. "M- mom?" A loud clanging noise can be heard and screams fill the room. The flashlight comes rolling over to us. I pick it up and shine ahead of us, "mom?" I ask again. Without seeing anything or anyone I pick up my courage and walk away from the stairs. "What are you doing?!" Hannah says quietly behind me. "I'm not leaving them behind!" I say.

I take a few steps further as I see three shadows coming from afar. I shine my flashlight to see what it is but it's too far away. I take another step closer when suddenly my mom comes jumping from behind me. "Run!" She says. We all run to the stairs and immediately start going up. The stairway feels so heavy as there are so many steps to it. As I slowly see the light coming from above closer to me, I feel a cold breeze come weeping in. I reach the top of the stairs with the others following behind me. The three shadows followed us all the way up. But stopped at the last step of the stairs. I look at Erin who's hiding her arm. "Erin, are you okay?" "N-" my mother bumps into her "of course my sweet darling." I look at them with a disbelieving face but turn around to Hannah. "I- I think it's time for me to go back home again" she says, trembling. I nod and walk her to the door.

“Are you sure you’re okay?” I ask her a little worried. “No, I’m not. We just discovered that the mortuary still exists, that we found your father who actually isn’t your father. That was one crazy adventure we had today. Is your family always like this?” “You mean fearless and curious? Yes...” I give Hannah a small hug and wish her the best. “Don’t get hunted by any monster now, alright.” She smirks at me. I start to laugh and see Hannah slowly walking away. She waves and walks down the street. I give a small gesture back and close the door, “she seems like a nice girl” my mother and aunt say standing behind me.” “W- wha” I look them in the eyes and just start to walk away. “What did they mean with that?!” I walk to the hallway and see a bloodtrail coming from the mortuary. I look back from within the hallway seeing my mother and aunt talking. Erin reveals her arm to her and my mother quickly goes to grab bandages. The blood is dripping onto the floor and parts of her skin are ripped apart. Leaving cuts and big injuries. I quickly turn around, like I didn’t see it, back into my room. I think back of her arm and realize she’s lucky because it’s her right arm. Whilst she’s left-handed. Wait... what am I saying, lucky? No! It’s awful. Ugh, I need some rest. I let myself fall in bed and place my glasses aside. Within a few rolls I quickly start to lose consciousness and tumble into a big sleep.

I open my eyes and suddenly see this shadowy figure staring above me. “W- what do you want from me?!” I quickly jump out of bed and the shadow moves to the door. It’s pointing towards the window. I rub my eyes and grab my glasses, I step out of my bed and look

through it. I can see Hannah walking on a stone pathway, she has earplugs in so she doesn't hear anything. The view suddenly changes and I see her walking a route that looks like Star Route Street. Hannah turns around and waves. I stand still unable to move as I see a car heading towards her, killing her on impact. Her body gets stuck between the car and a lamppost, dividing her upper and lower body. The blood flows out and starts dripping above me. I got startled from witnessing this and immediately woke up out of this nightmare.

My bed is all bloody and drips onto the floor. I grab my glasses that are laying beside me, I look at my phone and notice it's only been 4 minutes since Hannah left. I look around my room but everything looks normal except my bed. I think back about what I just dreamt about and realize... "w- what if it wasn't a dream?!" I quickly grab my phone and make my way to the shed. "What is your hurry about??" My aunt asks. "Hannah left her phone charger" I say. I grab my bike and set the navigation on my phone to Star Route Street. I look at my phone and see it's 5 minutes away. Whilst biking I message Hannah to get off the road, but she isn't receiving anything. Am I just being overly worried? A few streets have been passed and Star Route Street is slowly getting within view. I see Hannah walking on that exact stony pathway I dreamt about. I think back to what I saw and remember she got hit by a red car. I am trying to focus deeper on it and notice that the driver was reaching downwards. Not paying attention to the road ahead of him. "I-it's a vision, you're in danger!" I shout. But Hannah is wearing

earplugs. I can see the red car coming from afar and quickly make my way to her. “Hannah!” I shout again. She turns around, waving at me. “Stop, go back. I will head towards you.” Hannah stops and looks confused. I quickly step from my bike and get to Hannah. As I’m next to her I grab her hand and walk away from the lamppost. As the red car comes closer, I notice he’s indeed not paying attention to the road. But instead of going off the road, he passes by. I realize it wasn’t really a vision, just a worry. Hannah takes a few steps and turns around showing me her back. She grabs her phone and searches something up. I start to sigh of relief when suddenly another red car comes from my direction. The driver isn’t paying attention and is coming straight towards me. I loudly shout and make myself small. As I see the driver startle he turns his steering wheel, barely avoiding me. The front left tire of the car gets torn apart as it collides with my bike, destroying it completely on the sidewalk. I turn behind me and see Hannah looking at the car. “Hannah, look out!” I shout. Instead of moving, she stares as the car comes with great speed. The driver can’t control the car and goes straight towards her.

Chapter VI



The car is a meter away from colliding with Hannah, when suddenly one of her dogs comes barking by. Hannah wakes up and tries to jump away from the car at the last second. As she gets hit roughly on her back, the jump reduced her injuries. As she slides off from the side, the car goes straight into her house. I run towards Hannah, asking her if she is okay. "I- I'm fine..." she says. "Don't worry about me, check the driver." I make my way to the car and see that the driver is badly injured. The skin on his forehead has split into a very deep cut. Blood is flowing out of it and drips on the steering wheel. "I- is he still alive?" Hannah asks worriedly. "I think so..." I open the door and check his neck for a heartbeat. "I can feel it, he's alive!" Hannah's worry turns into an uneasy smile. "Now let's get him out of there!" Hannah tries to stand up but immediately falls back down, "M- my back!" She stutters. She touches underneath her shirt and her hand is covered in blood. "I- I think I need some rest-" "Hannah?"

I turn back and see her laying on the ground. I quickly call 911 hoping I'm not too late. The dog starts licking Hannah's face, attempting to wake her up. As I'm making the call I suddenly feel my socks getting wet. I look down and see the fuel leaking out. I try getting the driver out to a safe place. But he seems to be stuck. I

look down again and see the fuel leaking towards Hannah. I quickly run towards her grabbing her in my arms. I carefully lay her down on a grass patch further down the road. I try not to harm her and shove the shirt upwards revealing glass shards. I questionably try to think how that happened, when I realized she had all her weight on her back when she did that jump, breaking the glass with her big impact.

I stand up from Hannah looking back at the crashed car. With blood on my hands I run back to the car when all of a sudden it explodes right in front of me knocking me backwards. The explosion completely destroys her house. The fire spreads out catching my shoes. I quickly take my shoes and socks off and throw them away. With my bare feet I run back to Hannah. Now waiting for help to arrive.

As I hear the sirens coming closer, I try to calm myself down a bit, so I can explain everything to the aid workers about what just happened. "S- Sophia?" I hear Hannah mumble. "It's gonna be alright, help is on it's way!" I try to reassure her. I look around me and notice the dog is missing. "Doggy?" I ask in all directions. I stand up and carefully walk around, trying not to step in the rubble with my bare feet. I look around at the car hoping he didn't catch fire. I see some sort of thing laying in the rubble next to the car. Could it be the driver? I run towards it and accidentally get into something sharp with my feet. As it tears my skin, I try to hold it together and let myself fall on the grass. I take a look at my left foot and see I stepped on a piece of glass. I carefully pull it out and hold my foot tightly

with my hand. I look up and notice it's not a human laying next to the car, it's an animal. C-could it be the dog?

I can't see clearly but it seems like a dog. I carefully stand up again when I suddenly hear barking. The dog isn't dead! I feel happy and say, "doggy, where are you?" I try to walk around and hold my feet together, I don't want to make it worse. The barking gets closer and I can hear it more clearly. "Doggy, are you in here?" I look at the rubble that is left here by the explosion and see a tail wagging behind it. Carefully stepping aside the mess I see the dog with the driver in its paws. "H-how did you do that?!" I ask. The dog barks and licks my hand. I sit down next to the driver checking his heartbeat. "H- he's alive! You saved him doggy!" The dog starts to jump in circles and barks happily.

The help arrives and I tell them everything that happened. "Are you hurt yourself, miss?" "Just my foot," I tell the officer. He assists me to the ambulance and places me down. He calls in one of his assistants to treat my foot. While the others take care of Hannah and the driver, I get to immediately go home. "Go to your parents, we've called them and made sure they know about the situation." The dog barks and tilts his head against my leg. "I think he wants to come with you," the officer smiles. I nod and take him with me. The dog starts running and I follow behind him. "Thanks for everything!" I wave back to the officer and run away. After a few meters my foot starts to hurt again. I stop running and take it slower. "It's just you and me now doggy" I smile. "Hannah never told me your name, so

for now I'll call you... Rune." The dog waggles its tail and jumps towards me. "You like that name?"

I look behind me and still see the officer at the crash site. His head lightly shocks and his arms are shaking. "Rune, do you think he's okay?" Rune barks and runs in the direction of my house. I take one last look and see the officer tilt his head a bit. His smile is all crooked and his eyes are leaking black liquid. I rub my eyes and suddenly the officer is gone. I look around me but everything seems normal. I rub my eyes again and turn into the direction where Rune is. "Wait for me!" I shout. Rune slows down a bit for me to catch up and we both head straight home. As I arrive at the house, my mother and aunt are already standing at the front door. "W- what happened?" "I- I think I had a vision of Hannah, so I went to investigate." "Investigating a vision you say?" "Y- yeah, I dreamt about Hannah being hit by a car." "T- that is no vision, love!" "What?" I questionably ask aunt Erin. "It's Azruleth, he's trying to get into your head by showing you heartbreaking events. "B-but why did he show it? I prevented Hannah's death!" "That's something even I don't understand, Azruleth is smart... he does everything to make you feel like you're going crazy!" "Do you think you know where Azruleth is at this very moment?" I ask.

"From the looks of what happened in the mortuary, he's possessing your father." "My father? I saw three other shadowy figures in the distance too." "Three other figures?!" Erin looks in my eyes and then at Elaine. "I- I don't believe we'll be safe here for much longer! If you

really did see those three figures in the distance, that means his powers are growing. He has always only been able to possess one or two. But four?! If he breaks through the barrier we'll all be at war!" Erin drops to her knees and Elaine looks down at her, she sees her bleeding out of her arm. She carefully holds her up and asks, "can we stop him?" "T- there might be one thing. But it's hard to obtain. We need a black obsidian diamond ring. That ring will be able to contain the power of the doors within this house. We can use that power to make the barrier seal stronger!" "Have you made those rings before?" Elaine asks. "Yes, I have. But Azruleth got ahold of them, and since he's a demon he's drawn towards the magic. He can feel it being used and whenever he gets into contact with the magic, he either destroys it or, if the power is strong enough, it'll make him bleed instead!" "Green obsidian diamond you say? I think I have some of that." Erin looks confused and very surprised about my answer. "If you do... - we might be able to save this planet after all!" "P-planet?" I ask, shivering. "Is he really that strong, to destroy an entire planet?!" "If we don't watch out, yes! He can destroy cities all around the earth with only the press of his fingers."

I quickly head inside the house and run to my room, they follow me and we open my backpack. "I got a hold of this stone for winning the chemistry assignment." "First day in school and already winning prizes, that's my girl!" Elaine smiles, patting my shoulder. I give the stone to Erin and let her inspect it. "This isn't it, we cannot use this!" Erin gives me the stone back and shows me the tiny crystals. "They're purple, you see?"

Now all we have to do is find something similar but with green crystals inside. But how do we even give the crystal its power?" I ask Erin. "We'll have to wait it out till 3am to give the stone its magic." "How do we achieve that, giving the stone its magic?" I ask out of curiosity. "We need to carefully take out every little crystal and smelt them into one core, then carefully slide the core without breaking it, through the door the color corresponds to. Green in this case stands for protection. We need this to seal the barrier to stop Azruleth from coming to the surface. Some doors become magical at exactly 3am. They get symbols on them indicating what they'll do. The obsidian diamonds you throw through those doors will be given its magic and become obtainable after the clock strikes 4am. That's when the magic fades away."

"But with everything positive, there always has to be something negative..." Erin sighs. "The thing about this place is that these magical doors have some kind of algorithm, having the magic be located at different places. The magic isn't always exactly the same, the doors change every time the clock turns 3am. Azruleth knows this. He'll use this to his -" we suddenly get interrupted when hearing a knock coming from within the living room. We tilt our heads outside my room. We hear the knocks again and decide to head towards it. The knocks become louder and they are more aggressive. "It's coming from the front door!" Elaine takes her steps and opens the front door while Erin and I stay behind her. "Rune? What are you -" "What sick people are you to leave my dog outside!" "J- Janessa?"

Chapter VII



“Janessa, what are you doing here?” Erin asks. “I heard about the accident that happened at my house, so I came as fast as I could, have you seen my other dog?” She asks. “N- no, I haven’t” I stutter. “I left both my dogs home alone, and since this one went with you... I -“ “Aren’t you more worried about Hannah?” Elaine says trying to distract her from her missing dog. “Of course I’m worried about her, but I know she’s in good care at the hospital. What I can’t say about my dog, I have to get to my house now!” Elaine touches Janessa’s shoulder and asks her to follow her. “Don’t touch me!” Janessa yells. “Believe me, I’m just trying to help you.” Elaine points to her car and Janessa nods. “Where’s your car?” I ask Janessa gently. “Look outside, you see the sun? It’s a beautiful day outside. I walked to school and left my car in the garage, which probably got wrecked in the explosion.” I close my mouth and follow them to the car. We get in and Rune jumps in the back of the car. Erin keeps a hold of the obsidian diamond and stays behind.

“For how long have you had these dogs?” Elaine asks whilst driving to Star Route Street. “I’ve had these dogs ever since Hannah started living in my house. We found them sitting at the front door one day, without any owner or name tags. Hannah looked me in the eyes and asked if we could keep them, as long as nobody

searches for them. It's been over 2 years now and they're ours to keep." I smile towards the mirror and Janessa sees it. "I- I haven't gotten a chance to thank you. I'm sorry if I scared you, but thank you for saving my Hannah." I look at her and reassure her, "I wasn't scared, just a little shocked is all. I understand your feelings, they must all be mixed, not knowing which ones to show and which ones to hide." Janessa smiles, and nods. "You are very wise, my child. I'm hoping to get to know you more. Hannah couldn't stop talking about you, she was so thrilled to have you as her friend." "She talked about me?" I ask her. "Yes, she called me as soon as she was going home from visiting you. I'm so happy for her to open up like this again. I can still remember her, always being so happy. But as she grew up, her parents died in a fire. Her whole life felt like it was crushing on her. She couldn't bear all the rumors people were giving her when she came back to school. So instead of telling them wrong, she accepted her life. Started bullying others, and people were scared of her. There was nothing else I could do to stop her, except for sending her away to a madhouse. She was going so crazy, she even tried cutting her own tongue out so she wouldn't have to speak anymore. She felt like a whole different person, some might even say she was possessed. After a month I started getting calls that Hannah was getting better. My eyes couldn't hold it, I was so happy for her that the tears came rolling down. Another week passed and she was set free, she came crying in my arms and told me she couldn't remember a thing, she didn't know where she was. So I reassured her and told her we're going home. But what really

happened in her head, nobody knows. Since that day I decided to take full care, and make her feel -“

“I’m sorry to interrupt, but we’re here.” Elaine says with tears in her eyes. We step out of the car and let Rune out. Janessa stands still as we can see the whole house in ashes. “Let’s start to investigate it!” Elaine says whilst wiping her tears away. I look at Janessa and ask her, “How do we know your other dog is still here?” “We don’t, but since I haven’t gotten a phone call about anyone finding my dog... - Let’s not hope for the worst.” I look down and realize I’m still on bare feet, I forgot I walked home without shoes. Carefully I step around the rubble, not wanting to make the same mistake twice. Rune jumps in through the ashes and barks around, trying to locate the other dog.

“Maci?” I hear Janessa shout. That must be the dog’s name. “Maci, where are you?” I say wandering around. “Sky, have you sniffed out anything?” Janessa continues. Rune barks, slowly tilting his head horizontally. I get it. His name is Sky because of his soft white fur, like a cloud in the sky. I do prefer the name Rune, but if your name is Sky, I’m not gonna be the one changing it for you. “Ey, Sky, come here boy.” Sky comes running towards me and knocks me over. “I know your name now” I softly smile towards him. Sky waggles his tail and runs off through the rubble. “Sky, wait for me!” I try to run after him but the pain stops me. It hurts too much. I carefully sit on a big stone laying on the pathway, I tilt my feet and look at the bandage, I carefully remove it and watch my wound. It looks infected, black veins come from within the wounds

flesh, could this be another one of Azruleth's hallucinations, or a vision of what my feet will become? How will I know what's real and what isn't?! I look up and take a deep breath. I try to look at my feet again but it looks completely normal. I can hear Sky barking rapidly now, has he found something?

I put back the bandages, to cover up my wound and walk towards the barking. I avoid all the rubble laying on the floor and safely get to the other side. "Is that Maci?" I ask Janessa. "I-" as Janessa tries to speak she suddenly collapses towards her dog, hugging it tightly. "I'm sorry I wasn't there for you, Maci." She says with watering eyes. I look at what she's holding and it looks like the dog turned into stone?! "W- what happened to it, what could turn it to stone like this?" Janessa turns around, "it's not stone, it's more like charcoal. He's burnt alive!" I look at Elaine and she looks back at me, we look each other deeply in the eyes and nod. "Let's bring him with us," Elaine suggests. Janessa looks confused but agrees. We grab Maci and return to the car. "Are you okay Janessa?" I ask her. "I- I'm fine... I just lost one of my dogs. What am I gonna say to Hannah? She'll be defistated!" I try to think and suddenly get a bright light. I walk to Elaine and whisper something in her ear. "Hmm, maybe that could work!" She answers. I smile and return to Janessa. "I know how to save your dog!"

We carefully place Maci in the car and sit next to her, preventing it from breaking. Elaine starts the car and drives us home. As we leave Star Road Street, a sudden truck comes from around the corner. The truck's

loaded with logs, but one of the ropes snapped! The logs come tumbling down straight towards us. With no hesitation Elaine pushes in the breakers and takes the car in reverse. As I look through the front window I can see the truck in front of us collapsing. The road behind us starts to go down a little, causing the logs to roll faster. Elaine diversifies us around letting all the logs miss us. "Your mother is amazing!" Janessa says to me, whilst looking at her driving skills. "I know-" as the words come out of my mouth a log hits our tire causing the car to spin. Another log comes straight towards us, but doesn't just roll down. It bounces off the road! "How are you gonna avoid this one?" Janessa asks. Elaine looks at us and smiles.

She presses in the reverse and lets the car go down again. With no other streets to quickly maneuver to, Elaine is left with no choice but to try and avoid the log. She tries to time it and drives straight underneath, causing the log to only scratch a bit of the trunk. As we celebrate our survival, another log comes tumbling down without our notice. The log hits the front of the car causing it to break the glass. The glass goes straight into my mother. As she's covered in shards her consciousness begins to fade away. "M- mom?!"

I try to wake her up and move her around. I can feel the tears flowing, "I- I can't lose my mother!" I yell. As Janessa sits in the back covered in some blood, we look at each other and nod. I try to move her leg from the gas pedal but quickly notice it's stuck. "I can't move her leg away!" Janessa touches my shoulder and says for me to exit the car. She opens the door and while Elaine's

foot is still on the gas pedal, the car moves. The log in front of the car starts to slide off from the friction of the tires colliding on the road. The log rolls to the side, closing Janessa's door and causing her arm to get stuck between it. Preventing it from being reopened, the door hinges are messed up causing it to be stuck in its position. Janessa tries to move her arm but without success. I try to open the door but the hinges are stuck. Janessa suggests for me to leave the car. I moved to my side of the car, since my door stayed intact. She grabs Maci with her one arm and places her into mine. "Keep her safe." "I can't just leave you and my mother like this?!" I yell back. She pushes me through the door and I roll onto the street. I look at Maci and notice she's losing a paw, I quickly look in front of me and see Janessa struggling to get out. I look further and see the truck laying on the road, the car is heading straight towards it!

Janessa has no other way to survive, so she breaks her arm with a sudden movement and tears her skin between the door and the car. I can hear the screams and the awfully painful sounds. Without my knowing, she gets herself out and opens the other door. She tries to leave when she suddenly hears a bark. "S-Sky?! I completely forgot about you, you've been so quiet." Janessa gets in the car trunk and tries to open it from the inside. Since it got hit by a log before, it's easier to open. Sky has no other way to leave the car. She tries her hardest to open the trunk and a few moments before they crash into the truck, she gets the trunk open and jumps out with Sky. But as the car behind them explodes, a big metal shard comes shooting

downwards straight towards Janessa, impaling her in the knee.

Janessa falls to the ground, unable to move she tries to get the shard out. With more loud screams filling the air she manages to pull it out of her skin and crawls away. “I look at her condition and am surprised she still manages to stand up on her feet. As we get together, I try to help Janessa back up and notice a second explosion. A tire comes shooting straight towards me. Janessa pushes me to the side and gets hit instead of me. The tire goes straight through her head, making her head collide with the ground. I can hear the sounds of her skull breaking and see her head laying all messed up. Blood is flowing out and I don’t feel any pulse. “AHHH!!!” T- this cannot be real!? I look at my feet and quickly reveal the wound. The black veins t-they are visible! Could this really be reality? Did I really just lose my mother in a car accident?! I have to get back to Erin, she’ll have a solution, I- I can’t lose my own mother!

I close my eyes and fall to the ground, tears roll down my face, in the hope this is all a nightmare...

Chapter VIII



“S- Sophia, is that you? What happened!? You’re covered in blood! Where is your mother?” Erin sees the tears flowing out of my eyes. I shake my head and sigh. “J- Janessa?” I look down and Erin runs towards me. I let myself fall against her. “We got in an accident...” “An accident?” Erin asks worriedly.

“T- there was this truck loaded with heavy logs. We didn’t see it at first, but it came out of the bloom. We barely avoided it, but the truck collapsed and the ropes snapped, the logs came rolling down straight towards us! Mother did a pretty good job, evading the logs. But as we thought it was over, another log came rolling down smashing straight into my mother. Janessa and I immediately jumped out of the car, but due to the explosion. A metal shard came tumbling down, going straight through Janessa’s knee! Making her unable to run. Janessa managed to pull it out, she tried to crawl further away from the car. I thought we managed to escape, but another explosion happened and a tire came shooting downwards, heading straight towards me. Janessa noticed it and pushed me to the side. Letting her get hit instead...”

Erin drops next to me and hugs me tightly, so much that I can barely breath. “Janessa was a tough person, I knew her from when we were younger. Did you know

she used to assist in the army?" She says trying to distract me from what just happened. "Is th- there a way to s- save them?" I stutter in angst.

Erin stands up and grabs the purple obsidian diamond laying inside the house. "We'll use this to bring them back. But if we do so, we can only resurrect one person... But we also need that green obsidian diamond to keep the barrier sealed." I look at the time and it says 7pm. "We only get one shot at this." Erin reminds me.

"I know where to find another! Hannah and some other girl who's name I forgot. They have a stone just like I have. I can't really contact Hannah since she's lying unconscious in hospital. But I can try to get to the other girl. I'll have to quickly search for her name in my contacts." Erin looks at me and smiles. "You've already grown so much, I can't believe you aren't the little girl running around the house anymore." I softly chuckle.

"Alisha, her name is Alisha Wilkins." "Wilkins you say? I know the family Wilkins, we were very close friends. I'll come with you, if they are who I think they are, her parents can become a really good help!" I nod and we look at where she lives. "Ironwood Avenue, that's 15 minutes away from here.

I make my way to the bathroom and get rid of my bloody clothes. I walk in the shower and let the water pour on me. Cleaning myself thoroughly.

I take a look at my phone for the weather. "Still 21 degrees outside." I smile and open the closet. I grab

myself an oversized sweater, some short black jeans and a pair of sneakers. Since summer is getting near, the sunny days have been getting longer.