

CHAPTER 1

“Where have you been? I’ve been waiting here for hours!” Nash had no tolerance for tardiness. Especially from the supernatural, who should know better. Time was always of the essence. Faith had opened her bedroom window in the middle of the night as she’d done for several evenings now, right on cue. But the sun was beginning to rise. “I swear, every time I use you imps, you’re a different tone. What gives?”

“Today’s Blue Day!” exclaimed Toggle proudly, for it was he whom had won the right to choose today’s gleaming by figuring out the riddle of the evening.

“Start climbing! We’re running out of time. She’ll wake soon!” Nash snarled, anxious to get the last ingredient needed for the strongest of elixirs. One that Faith would never be able to resist. “And no touching the merchandise!”

All ten imps looked up quizzically.

“You expect us to scale the wall?” Boggle squealed, with Poggle screeching, “Materialize us!” but not sure if Nash was yet strong enough to do so.

“Punishment for your lack of discretion. Of all days to be neon blue. You imbeciles!” Nash’s steel-blue eyes squinted with rage, shooting daggers in their direction. Imps were well-known for their ability to camouflage. That would not be the case today.

“But how?” Joggle questioned.

“Be creative,” Nash yawned. He’d been up all night manipulating Detective Ramos’ dreams before arriving at Faith’s, creating seductive images of her that would drive the detective wild with desire, soon pushing him over the edge, to be sure.

Each imp began making a chain, standing on each other’s blue shoulders. Goggle entered the bedroom first, his little legs kicking as he struggled to pass over the sill. He then pulled each up in turn. Hushed giggles mingled with the early morning breeze.

“If I were a hairbrush, where would I be?” Ogle posed to the others. They did not have much time to accomplish their task.

“If you were a hairbrush, we wouldn’t need to be here,” Poggle grumbled. He’d much rather be playing tricks on unsuspecting humans than be used as Nash’s evil pawn.

“We still need a lock of her flowing hair,” Boggle exhaled, having mounted Faith’s bed, picking up a strand of her wavy brown tresses. The morning dew clinging to his shoes had left teeny impressions on the sheets.

“If Ogle *was a hairbrush*, couldn’t he be Faith’s hairbrush? Then we’d already have a sampling,” Toggle theorized.

All waited in anticipation, but Ogle remained his blue-today impish self, not a hairbrush. Then quiet laughter ensued before Joggle reminded, “Nash warned no touching!”

Not a single creature thought to just pluck a few from her head.

Boggle released Faith’s mane, but not before whispering in her uncovered ear, “You have a date with the Devil! The Devil will have his way!”

Faith sighed, rolling over. Boggle was now trapped under her shoulder, feeling the crushing effects of the giant human. “Release me, woman!”

“Sh,” the others expressed in unison, jumping on the bed to come to their brother’s aid, chuckling as they dragged him out from under her silken skin. Faith turned back into her previous position, helping their efforts while still unaware of their presence.

Ten blue blurs as the alarm clock on the bedside table sounded. Faith's eyes fluttered several times before they opened and she sprang out of bed. It was 7 a.m. and once she had turned off the alarm, all was quiet.

Until Faith shut her bedroom window.

The imps waited until they heard the rush of running water before they crept out from under the bed.

"Greetings, friend!" Ogle patted what appeared to be the head of a dust bunny that had attached itself to his tiny blue slacks. Small laughter followed, which diminished individually as each realized their means of escape had been blocked.

Boggle jumped up to the window sill, tinkling against the glass. "Hello? Get us out of here!"

Nash could be seen stepping forward from against the outside wall below, having sensed Faith's presence at the window moments ago. He flashed the imp a wicked grin, gloating at their predicament, then angrily pointing to his left and slowly walking in that direction.

"He's given us a signal!" Poggle guessed. "Where is Joggle?"

Nine imps began their search, finding Joggle in the bathroom. Frozen.

"Look! He found her hairbrush!" Goggle exalted. "But what is he doing?"

Joggle was afraid to move, in awe of the naked silhouette he could see behind the dusty red curtain.

Boggle shook Joggle out of his trance, knocking Faith's hairbrush to the fluffy bathmat. They both jumped down, with six of the ten hoisting the brush up and carrying it away. It made a wonderful sled for their trip down the stairs to the bottom floor, despite the discomfort of tiny prongs against their bottoms.

'Clink' when the hairbrush fell to the landing outside. Then ten sets of little legs protruding from the front door mail slot as each tried to exit, their plump bellies preventing them from going any farther. Tiny screams upon seeing a calico cat quickly approach, plucking each by their scruffy blue collars. They now stood proudly in front of Nash, having accomplished their goal.

Nash picked up the hairbrush, looking it over. "How many imps does it take to retrieve a hairbrush?"

"Ooh, goody! A riddle," Joggle mulling it over with the rest, hoping he would be honored with the task of choosing tomorrow's gleaming.

Nash was growing impatient and snapped his fingers. Four of ten imps exploded into what looked like a glob of blue cotton candy. All evidence wiped clean by the wave of his hand.

Instead of the remaining imps trembling with fear, all laughed hysterically. Not the effect Nash was shooting for.

"I need the potion in less than an hour. And the strongest you can make. How many imps does it take to brew an elixir?" Nash smiled.

"Six! Six!" assured Toggle, Boggle, Poggle, Joggle, Goggle, and Ogle.