

Chapter One: The Pumpkin Patch

The trees grew sparse at the forest's edge, their bare branches clawing at the sky like blackened fingers. Hazel pulled her shawl tighter around her shoulders, shivering in the late autumn air. Normally the cold didn't bother her. But something was wrong here. She could feel it in her bones.

The land ahead was dim, shadowed as though some unseen veil had drawn across the sun. Even as evening settled across the countryside, the plot of tilled earth before her seemed unnaturally dark. A wide sprawl of pumpkins sat on the soil, their skin mottled and pale, vines coiling like serpents across the ground. No crickets sang here. No birds called. The place was silent. Watching.

Hazel swallowed. She had walked all day through the forest, gathering mushroom caps slick with dew, the shavings of bark from ancient ash trees, and herbs so bitter they burned her tongue when she tested them. And now, the last thing Irina had demanded: pumpkin flesh. A great deal of it, she'd said, though she hadn't explained why.

Hazel rubbed her aching shoulders and frowned. Of course Irina and Yvonne had insisted *she* fetch it. They always did. "Hazel's the youngest, Hazel's the strongest, Hazel has nothing better to do," she muttered bitterly. They mocked her, snickering about her youthfulness, her buxom figure. They were just jealous, Hazel knew, but it still hurt her to be treated in such a way.

Still, she had done everything they asked. She always did. She wanted peace in the coven, even if it came at the cost of her pride.

Her gaze swept back to the pumpkin patch. Something thrummed there, faint but insistent – a steady current of transformation magic woven into the very soil. Hazel hesitated at the crooked wooden fence that marked the border. Her instincts screamed to turn back, to find pumpkins elsewhere, to forget this cursed ground altogether.

But the hour was late, and the coven was to meet tonight. She glanced at the setting sun, a blaze of orange on the horizon. The coven was to meet in the center of the ancient forest, and it would be a long walk. There was nowhere else to find pumpkins nearby, either.

Her hand drifted to her throat, fingers brushing the talisman Yvonne had pressed into her palm that morning, shortly after Irina had mentioned the location of some pumpkins in this part of the woods. "A ward, in case you stumble on trouble," Yvonne had said offhandedly, her sharp nose wrinkling. By "trouble", had she meant the pumpkin patch? It was odd to ask for pumpkins in the first place – the coven met only rarely, but in the decades since Hazel had been attending, she'd never once seen pumpkins used as an ingredient. Nor had she been asked to trespass on cursed ground before, to acquire such a component.

Hazel rubbed the talisman slowly between her thumb and fingers. She had doubted the hags' kindness then, and doubted it still. Yet the charm was warm now, almost alive. Would it be enough to protect her? She couldn't judge – the spell on the pumpkin patch looked quite powerful, and she couldn't tell its exact effect. One thing she did know – if she returned empty-handed, she'd be treated harshly at the coven tonight.

Hazel's jaw tightened. "It has to be enough," she whispered, and gripped the talisman tightly. She stepped across the threshold.

At once, the air changed. Cursed energy, emitting a sickly green hue, rose from the soil around the pumpkins. Coils of power, reminiscent of the vines themselves, lashed at her, sharp and eager, seeking her flesh. Hazel cried out, staggering – but the talisman flared with violet light, pulling the corruption inward. She felt the current redirect, the poison sliding into the stone at the center of the talisman, rather than into her blood.

Her heart raced. The sheer force of the spell made her knees tremble. Whoever had laid this curse was powerful – far more powerful than she or the other two witches of the coven could ever dream. A seemingly endless river of energy poured into the necklace, tendrils whipping wildly around her as they sought her flesh, but not touching her. The talisman protected her, but for how long would it last? There was so much power at work, here.

Hesitating at the edge of the pumpkin patch, Hazel nearly abandoned her quest. She considered skipping this coven meeting altogether, to avoid the shame of telling Yvonne and Irina of her failure. But instead, she hardened her resolve. "Quickly now," Hazel urged herself, forcing her legs to move.

She hustled over to the nearest gourd and knelt, driving her knife in, cutting away the flesh and scooping the orange meat into her basket. Again and again she worked, ignoring the sticky juice that coated her hands, ignoring the hum that grew louder with each moment she lingered, and the green energy coiling around her chest.

All the while, the talisman pulsed hotter and hotter, greedily swallowing the curse. Hazel could feel its weight increasing, the chain of the necklace becoming heavier, as though the stone itself were filling up.

Her breaths came short and rushed as she worked with furious speed. She scraped the last of a fifth pumpkin into her basket and rose quickly. The patch seemed to tremble beneath her, vines twitching faintly in the corner of her eye. The wind rose around her, carrying a foul stench in the air. Something was coming. And it would be none too pleased to find her there.

Hazel bolted. Clutching the basket tight, she dashed through the dead trees, seeking the safety of the forest. Her breasts heaved as she ran, bouncing with each hurried step. She wished she could slow down, but the curse loomed behind her like an unseen hand about to touch her shoulder.

She didn't look back, but she felt the surge of power in her bones. The talisman was hot, burning her skin each time it touched her chest. She forced herself onward, ignoring the pain.

Passing through the edge of the woods, Hazel finally felt the danger recede, as if the cursed energy had hit a barrier. She kept running for a few steps anyway before slowing down. As her pace slowed back down to a walk, she took deep breaths, her heart racing. More than her sprint, it was the fright of whatever had almost befallen her that affected her so. Back there, she'd felt it – the talisman had been close to being overwhelmed. The curse had nearly won. She shuddered to think what would have happened if she'd fallen under its power.

She glanced behind her, looking back up the hill, and gasped. Atop the place where the pumpkin patch was, a mass of cursed power seemed to be expressing frustration. Angry tendrils of green energy whipped about in a writhing pile that covered the whole hillside. As if the curse itself was furious at having failed to protect the pumpkins.

Hazel shuddered as she turned back towards the woods. She couldn't even imagine succumbing to whatever foul energy that curse was imbued with. Dropping her basket, she took a moment to cast a cleansing charm on her hands, removing the sticky residue left over from harvesting the pumpkins. Then she looked down at the talisman Yvonne had given her.

It glowed with purple energy as it rested against her collarbone, and it was hot against her skin. Hazel made to grab it, to inspect it more closely, but as her fingers touched it, the stone at the center pulsed with a crackle of energy and a flash of heat. Her hand recoiled automatically as it singed her fingers. "Ow!" she exclaimed, bringing her fingers to her mouth. As she sucked on them, however, the pain faded immediately. She hadn't actually been burned – it just felt like it.

The amulet itself didn't seem any hotter against her chest, either. It continued to glow with a strange purple energy, but didn't seem to be doing anything else. She raised her hand again, bringing it close to the talisman, and the polished stone crackled ominously, shooting small sparks around as her fingers approached it.

She sighed in annoyance. Whatever the talisman was doing, it seemed she couldn't take it off at the moment. At least it had done its job to ward off the curse. She couldn't help but wonder in suspicion at the way that she'd been led to infiltrate the pumpkin patch, though. And coincidentally given a strange amulet capable of absorbing the curse therein. A powerful curse, meaning this was a powerful talisman. Not one to be given away lightly. Yet Yvonne had seemed almost dismissive when she'd handed it to Hazel that morning, as if it was of trifling importance.

She'd have to question Yvonne more closely tonight. In the meantime, she picked up her basket and started her long trek through the forest. She'd have to hurry - the sun had almost set, and the coven awaited her at moonrise.

Chapter Two: The Forest

The weight of the basket bit into Hazel's palm as she trudged through the deepening woods, her steps muffled by a carpet of damp leaves. The air was dank and heavy, carrying with it the earthy musk of moss and rot. Overhead, the canopy knitted tighter as dusk crept in, branches stretching like ribs across a bruised sky.

She shifted the basket to her other arm and rubbed her aching shoulder with a soft hiss of breath. Even before reaching the pumpkin patch, she'd been tired - Hazel had been scampering around the forest since morning, chasing down every obscure ingredient Irina and Yvonne had ordered of her. Soggy mushrooms that stank up the sack she carried them in, tree bark that she'd had to harvest from the middle of the bog - at least the fact that she walked barefooted allowed the muck to have dried off her feet by now. Last and worst of all, the cursed pumpkins, whose flesh weighed heavy in her basket.

Her lips curled in a sneer. Of course they'd made her do all the toughest work. *Hazel is the youngest, Hazel is the spry one, Hazel has the strong back and the soft hands*, they had said that morning. Never mind that she was over a century old herself, with magic running strong in her blood. Never mind the risks she took wandering the darker corners of the enchanted forest alone. To them, Hazel was still the child, the servant girl.

And worse - they mocked her. Any time when she was around them, hardly a minute went by that they didn't comment on her body. Snickering at her curvaceous figure, the way her dresses strained over her chest. Her slim waist accentuated her breasts even more, and her hips were quite shapely as well, giving her a prominent hourglass appearance. It wasn't like Hazel could help it. It was just how she looked. And she'd been nothing but friendly and helpful to the other witches since meeting them. Still, that didn't stop the constant barbs.

"Too buxom to be a proper witch," Yvonne once hissed, her long nose turned up at her. She folded her bony arms over her own chest, which was completely flat, and glared at Hazel in disapproval.

"Looks like she belongs in a brothel," Irina had cackled in response, baring a grin of yellow teeth, with many missing. She was quite voluptuous herself, but her rotund figure spoiled the image somewhat, and her flesh sagged with age. Not to mention her bad hygiene. The woman spent most of the time in a fetid swamp, and she looked like it, with warts bubbling over her skin at odd spots, and she emanated the smell of decay.

Hazel clenched her jaw. They mocked her for her youthful figure, but really they were just envious. They thought she was too pretty to study the deep magics they spent their long lives perfecting. But Hazel knew better. She was young for a witch, but she'd lived long enough to tell that some people just developed bad attitudes, and were generally nasty individuals for no

reason. Looks had nothing to do with being good at magic, and they had nothing to do with how much respect a person deserved. Had they only been nicer to her, Hazel would have enjoyed spending more time around the other witches – she didn't judge them for their appearance, or the way they lived.

After all, it was a lonely life sometimes, being an immortal witch, dedicated to studying the craft during the long years spent in their isolated homes. Hazel had once thought to seek out her fellow witches, to seek some guidance from her elders. And perhaps to foster a sense of companionship in the only other witches she'd met since she'd taken up residence in the forest. They had disabused her of the notion when she'd actually sought them out, however.

When she'd visited Irina in the southern forest, stepping carefully through the rotting swamp to avoid falling into one of the many festering pools dotting the landscape, Hazel had tried to stay positive. Irina was over five centuries old, and Hazel had watched her effortlessly wield powerful spells that she'd never seen before. Mostly focused on conjuration magic, Irina was a blunt woman, who seemed somewhat simple-minded, or perhaps just easily prone to distraction. But there were powerful things to be learned from her, regardless.

Plump and wrinkled, with eyes like muddy water and a few teeth missing, Irina seemed content to sit amongst the swarms of flies that hovered over the piles of bones and rotting flesh that lay around her hut, sitting on a small rise in the center of the swamp. The strange woman squatted in her bog like a bloated toad, summoning swamp-things to fetch her meals, and occasionally luring travelers to her lair so she could harvest their souls for spells. Hazel had brought her some useful spell components that day, but Irina had little appreciation for the gesture. She snatched them from her immediately and told her to leave.

Hazel tried to linger anyway, but Irina made it clear that she didn't want to be disturbed during her meal, which was soon to arrive. Hazel still shuddered at the way Irina had licked her slimy lips while describing that the swamp golems were bringing her favorite delicacy: unborn fawns, stolen from their mothers' bellies. She'd left the swamp in a hurry after that, feeling queasy.

Visiting Yvonne had been no better. Tall, skeletal, her thinning hair tucked always beneath a hood, Yvonne was not so crude as Irina. She carried herself with an air that was somewhat dignified, but in Hazel's eyes it usually came across as haughty, instead. Yvonne scorned both Irina and Hazel, though at least she seemed to have a begrudging respect for Irina. Any word out of Hazel's mouth only seemed to make the woman scoff.

Yvonne lived in the western woods, on the edge of the scrubland where the forest broke into desert. Her home was a bare hilltop, winds howling about it like spirits. Hazel remembered approaching her once while she worked her weather spells, standing on a stump, staff raised towards the horizon, her thin lips moving as she spoke the ancient tongue.

Her expression was grim, as always, but as Hazel had approached, Yvonne turned her head, and a nasty scowl crept onto her face. Hazel had been humble and respectful, but the horrid crone had

shouted at her for being a distraction, and had spat venomous words at her until she left. Hazel hadn't even been able to get a word in about the rare spell components she'd brought Yvonne, something she'd hoped to be an offering of friendship. Yvonne just continued an unending screed of insults until Hazel had dropped her basket of gifts and retreated.

Hazel could never understand why the other witches had been so unwelcoming, particularly to one who should have been a sister to them. She herself had built her home on the eastern cliffs, where the sea smashed endlessly against black rock. Her cottage was small but cozy, ringed with gardens. She honed her magic at the water's edge, and while the activity took concentration, it wasn't all she cared about. Had either of the other two women deigned to visit her, she would have welcomed them into her home, and pampered them as honored guests.

But they had only ever arrived at her cottage once, both coming together to summon her for her very first coven ritual, over 4 decades ago. She'd encountered each of them separately in the woods before, but this day, they'd arrived together, hovering at the edge of her property until she had come out to greet them. She invited them inside, but neither accepted. Instead, they tersely informed her of the impending moon cycle, and their intention to pool their powers together for the ritual offering. Hazel had been honored to accept their offer, in that moment wondering if she would be able to grow closer to the other witches. Her sisters of the woods.

But the insults and jabs that they relentlessly threw at her that day made it clear that they were only doing this because they wanted her assistance. After all, Hazel was powerful enough that she made a significant contribution to the ritual. Both women seemed to disdain even asking her, and they eyed her humble cottage with barely veiled contempt.

Hazel lived close enough to the village that she could buy rare herbs or slip into town on occasion. The others mocked her for it. "Suppose you like living in this nice, soft garden," Yvonne sniffed. "I see you like to be near the village so you can flaunt yourself in the town square when you like." Her grimace of distaste showed what she thought of such behavior.

"Parading yourself for mortal men," Irina sneered, licking her lips grotesquely. Hazel had ignored their jabs. She cared nothing for mortal admiration. But unlike her sisters, she held a curiosity for the fleeting lives of humankind. Their joys, their sorrows, their small magics. Besides, certain ingredients simply were easier to find in the market.

In spite of their harsh treatment though, Hazel had agreed to join the coven. It made sense, after all, to pool their resources, their expertise, and their magical powers. Hecate, the goddess of witches, demanded powerful offerings, and when it came to performing arcane rituals, the whole was greater than the sum of the individual parts. Hazel's offering in previous years had been meager in comparison, and ever since joining the coven, she'd found herself growing stronger at a much faster rate than she had managed on her own – evidence of Hecate's blessing being bestowed. At this rate, she was catching up to Irina and Yvonne in terms of raw magical ability, despite the difference in years.

As Hazel trudged through the dim forest towards the ritual site, she wondered if that was another reason they scorned her – they felt her growing power, and were envious that the gap between them was narrowing.

The forest grew denser the deeper she pressed, its tangled undergrowth clinging at her skirts. Night had fallen, and the light of the stars was swallowed by the thick canopy above. She pushed forward in the darkness, guiding herself not by sight, but by the threads of enchantment woven into the trees. Her magically sharpened senses hummed, helping her avoid bramble patches and knotted roots. Still, it was rough terrain to be traversing, particularly carrying a full basket of ingredients.

The moon had begun its climb, peeking now and then through cracks in the branches above. Hazel caught a glimpse of it between the trees, full and bright, its pale glow urging her onward. She quickened her pace. To be late to the coven's gathering would be yet another insult the other two would gleefully seize. The night would already be uncomfortable enough – she did not need their scorn to worsen it.

She adjusted the basket once more, muttering under her breath. "One night. Just one night to endure them. Then I can return home."

But even as she said it, the dread in her chest deepened. Something about tonight felt heavier than the rest. The forest seemed to close around her, pressing her toward the heart of its darkness.

And there, at its center, the others waited.

Chapter Three – The Cauldron

Even before Hazel reached the clearing, she heard voices carried on the breeze. The sharp tones were unmistakable – Irina's low, grating rasp punctuated by Yvonne's shrill inflections. She slowed her pace, straining her ears as she approached through the thick undergrowth.

"She's late," Yvonne said, her voice tight with irritation.

"She's always late," Irina growled in reply. "We should start without her. If she can't keep up, that's her failing."

Hazel's chest burned with indignation, but she forced herself to quicken her steps, breaking through the final line of trees. "I'm here!" she called out, louder than she meant to.

The witches turned toward her, their expressions cold.

"Did you get lost?" Irina asked, one brow arched, her mouth curling in a sneer.

"Do you have the ingredients?" Yvonne demanded, her voice sharp and demanding.

“Yes,” Hazel said, trying to steady her breathing as she stepped into the clearing. “I have everything you requested.”

She walked toward the center, where the cauldron loomed above a pit lined with stones. A foul steam curled upward from the concoction already inside, the fumes glowing faintly green as they rose into the darkening air. Irina and Yvonne stood nearby, long ladles in hand, stirring with deliberate rhythm. The odor struck Hazel’s senses immediately—an earthy stench laced with something acrid and metallic.

“You retrieved the pumpkins as well?” Yvonne asked, skepticism dripping from her tone. She looked as though she fully expected Hazel to confess her failure.

“Yes. All five.” Hazel lifted the basket slightly. “Just as you demanded.”

The two elder witches exchanged a glance, a flicker of surprise flashing across their faces before they concealed it. Hazel caught it nonetheless, and a strange knot of unease twisted in her stomach.

“I wanted to ask you,” Hazel continued, unable to hold back. “That patch – there was a curse on it. Something heavy and strange. I’ve never encountered anything like it before.” She glanced from one witch to the other. “Did you know about it? Is that why you gave me this talisman?” She touched the amulet at her throat, the one Yvonne had handed her so casually that morning.

Irina cackled, though there was something sharp and mean beneath the laughter. “The talisman did what it was meant to. That’s all you need to know.” Her beady eyes looked towards Yvonne, as if there was some sort of inside joke between them.

“Nothing to trouble your little head with,” Yvonne added, her tone dismissive as she waved her hand in Hazel’s direction. Her focus was on the concoction brewing in the cauldron before her, lighting up the witches faces from below with a green glow. “Now that you’ve arrived, we can finally begin.”

Hazel bristled at the insinuation that she was somehow slacking, at the way they always found a way to twist her every effort into insult. But she said nothing. She placed the basket of ingredients by the cauldron and took her place in the circle carved into the ground. The moon was rising above the tips of the trees, bathing the clearing in its pale light. It was time to begin the ritual.

The chanting began.

They spoke in the old tongue, a steady cadence rising from Irina and Yvonne, voices falling into rhythm as the ritual dictated. Hazel followed suit, letting the syllables pass her lips as she drew each ingredient from the basket in turn.

The moss harvested from the northern stones: into the brew with a hiss, the cauldron glowing brighter, threads of green flickering across its surface.

The powdered bones of a hare: stirred in until the concoction deepened, pulsing with dull light like a heartbeat.

The feathers of a crow, still black and glossy: dropped into the surface, disappearing with a sharp crack as sparks leapt upward.

The ash bark shavings, the pungent mushrooms, those went into the pot as well. One by one, each item she had gathered was consumed by the potion, and each addition made the glow within the cauldron swell brighter, until the green light spilling from the rim lit the clearing even stronger than the moonlight.

At last, only the pumpkin flesh remained.

Hazel brought it forward, but as Irina and Yvonne began to add it, their voices changed. The rhythm shifted. The words – they were not the ones Hazel had learned. The language was alien to her ears, its harsh cadence grinding against the ritual she tried to continue. Confused, she faltered, her voice breaking.

The cauldron responded violently.

The glow turned orange – a brilliant, searing tangerine light that spilled out of the pot and illuminated the trees around them as though it were daylight. The brew bubbled furiously, frothing over the edges. Thick smoke poured upward, rolling and curling, cascading over the rim and pooling around the witches' feet.

Hazel stumbled back, uncertain. But Irina and Yvonne leaned forward eagerly, inhaling the fumes. Hazel gasped as she saw them begin to transform – right before her eyes.

The deep creases in Yvonne's face smoothed, her skin softening, her hair thickening until it fell in golden waves over her shoulders. Irina's crooked frame straightened, her swollen body shedding its sag as new vitality reshaped her flesh. They were becoming more youthful, more beautiful with each heartbeat, as they inhaled the orange smoke.

But even stranger, was what happened to their chests. It was most noticeable on Yvonne, who was flat-chested to begin with – suddenly, her dark robes began to fill out, the bright light from the cauldron illuminating it clearly. Her breasts were growing.

Hazel's eyes widened as she watched the lumps under Yvonne's robes swell larger with each breath of the cauldron smoke. Then she turned to Irina, and saw that it was happening to the other witch as well. The short woman already had plump breasts, but now her belly seemed to be less prominent, and her bosom became even larger – perkier as well.

The blessing of youthful vigor had run its course – both women looked to be about Hazel's age, now. But they continued to greedily breathe in the smoke, their breasts swelling larger beneath

their robes until the fabric stretched tightly. Finally, Irina stepped away from the cauldron, and then Yvonne. Apparently satisfied with how much they'd grown, they inspected themselves in the light still brimming from the cauldron.

Yvonne ran a hand along her jaw, marveling at the smoothness. Irina cackled in glee, baring a mouth now filled with perfect white teeth. Both looked down at their youthful bodies and turned back and forth, admiring their suppleness.

“Well,” Yvonne said, gazing down at herself, “that was... rejuvenating.” Formerly a twig of a woman, she had now filled out nicely – not only in her chest area, Hazel realized, but her hips looked more shapely as well. With the added softness to her frame, she no longer looked quite so intimidating. Her breasts were as big as Hazel's, now.

“Hecate be praised,” Irina agreed, clutching at her breasts and laughing as she gave them a firm jiggle. Her previously rotund figure had tightened up considerably, and her breasts, formerly saggy, now sat high and proud atop her chest. They were even bigger than Yvonne's, about the size of the woman's head. With her gleeful expression, she now could pass for a tavern wench, if she wanted to.

Hazel stood frozen watching her sisters, her heart pounding. They looked so different now - youthful, beautiful, and curvaceous. They could be her sisters by blood, from their appearances. For an instant, she wondered if perhaps, with them no longer bound by envy, they might treat her as an equal at last.

But then they each turned toward her, and the disdain remained in their expressions. Only now, the contempt wore younger, prettier masks.

Hazel swallowed hard, her brief hope extinguished. There was no sign of welcome in their gaze.

Yvonne's preferred expression, the haughty sneer, returned to her face. “Well, sister?” she asked scornfully. “Are you not going to accept the blessing of Hecate?” Her mouth twisted with grim expectation.

“Oh, yes,” Irina echoed. “It would be an insult if we were the only ones to receive her gift,” she cackled.

Hazel took another step back, eyes widening again as she glanced at the frothing cauldron. “No, I... couldn't possibly...” she trailed off, looking back and forth between the other two witches with their cold expressions. They couldn't expect her to inhale that same smoke, could they? Her breasts were already large enough, and she felt no need for youthful rejuvenation. Hadn't they mocked her for her body enough, already? Now that they were equal to her in appearance, why would they want her to undergo transformation as well?

Suddenly, she began to feel quite strange.

The amulet around her neck pulsed – once, then again, harder. She looked down, startled, as the talisman glowed with purple light and lifted off her skin, tugging against its chain. It pulled toward the cauldron, straining against the back of her neck.

“What’s happening?” Hazel demanded, looking wildly between them.

Neither answered. They only exchanged sly glances, grins widening. It seemed like they had been expecting this.

The pull grew stronger, dragging her step by step toward the cauldron. She dug in her heels, leaning back, but the chain dug cruelly into her throat as the talisman yanked her forward. The air thickened, the clearing seeming to tilt toward the boiling brew.

“No!” Hazel gasped, fighting the invisible force. She braced her hands against the lip of the cauldron, desperate to resist. But the amulet slithered upward, tugging toward the rising smoke.

She turned her head, holding her breath, but the pressure forced her closer, closer. The chain cut into her neck, and at last her lungs betrayed her – she inhaled.

The orange smoke filled her chest.

And instantly, Hazel felt a rising pressure. Her black dress tightened around her breasts, the fabric stretching as the flesh beneath swelled. She choked, trying to hold her breath as she pushed feebly against the lip of the cauldron, but another gasp of air slipped in, and with it another surge. Her chest strained against the confines of her bodice, her breasts pushing outward.

“No...” she whimpered, fumbling for the chain around her neck. She tried to rip it free, but pain lashed her fingers, white-hot. She recoiled, coughing – and inhaled again. The swelling accelerated. Her dress was getting tight, the threads creaking as they painfully dug into her flesh. Her cleavage bulged above the hemline, pushing up towards her chin.

To either side of the cauldron, the laughter of the witches rang out, cruel and mocking. She couldn’t see them beyond the hazy orange glow that engulfed her, but they sounded farther away than before.

With a roar of effort, Hazel summoned her magic, enveloping her hands in shimmering wards. This time, when she grasped the chain, the searing fire did not stop her. She strained, every muscle trembling, until at last the links gave way with a sharp snap.

The amulet shot forward, landing in the cauldron with a splash.

The brew exploded.

Orange light flared, then blazed a brilliant violet hue, flooding the clearing with its glow. Hazel stumbled back, coughing, falling hard to the ground as the cauldron spewed its contents skyward. Her breasts swelled a bit more, still reacting to her last inhalation of the orange smoke.

As she landed on the ground, she noticed something else odd, as well – the landing had been softer than she expected. She reached down, thinking she had landed on a cushion of moss, perhaps. But she found nothing underneath her rump. Instead, she came to the realization that her butt had swollen as well, becoming plumper. At least it had cushioned her fall, but the shock of noticing this additional transformation distracted Hazel for a moment, as she squeezed her thigh, feeling out just how much bigger her rear end had become.

Suddenly Hazel was drawn out of her self-inspection by the changing light in the clearing. The laughter of Irina and Yvonne had ceased, and the witches were nowhere to be found. She looked upward, and her breath caught in her throat. A vast cloud of glowing smoke had spewed from the erupting cauldron into the night, but it had not dispersed naturally. Instead, it had coalesced into a swirling maelstrom, a miniature storm steadily rotating in the air above the clearing, casting an ominous purple glow over everything.

Hazel's mouth fell open in horror as a tendril of violet mist snaked downward - toward her.

She scrambled to her feet, her new assets jiggling, throwing off her balance. She ran blindly into the trees, heart pounding as she tried to put as much distance as possible between her and the smoke cloud. Her bare feet pounded against the damp earth of the deep forest, and she ran, guided only by what little moonlight filtered through the thick tress, and her own instincts.

Hazel ran for several minutes, ignoring the traitorous jiggling of her swollen breasts, the restrictive tightness in her chest, and in her dress's hem around her thighs. Cursing Yvonne and Irina for what they'd done to her, she ran through the woods with tears streaming down her cheeks, until her lungs began to burn.

Ahead, the moonlight was becoming brighter. She was approaching a clearing in the woods. As she burst through the treeline, Hazel risked a look backwards. What she saw made her scream. The instant she turned, purple light filled her vision. The cursed fumes had been keeping pace with her the whole time, following her through the woods like a hunter, and they already were almost upon her.

The shock gave her a momentary burst of speed, and she raced through the clearing, desperately trying to escape. But it was no use. As she reached the center of the large field of moss and grass, the corners of her vision filled with purple smoke, and then she became engulfed by it.

She tried to hold her breath. Tried to resist. Tried to keep moving, though the smoke surrounded her, blinded her. But her lungs burned from her sprint, and she couldn't hold out for long. At last she faltered, gasping for air. But there was no clean air to breathe, only the treacherous smoke. The glowing purple fumes poured into her lungs, making her cough, and provided no reprieve for her oxygen-starved body. She could do nothing but choke on the cloud surrounding her, inhaling more of it with each breath. Her vision blurred, her body trembled, and she collapsed to the earth, still coughing. Darkness swept over her, and she lost consciousness.

Chapter 4: Cursed Fumes

The forest was silent when Hazel awoke.

She lay flat on the damp ground, her cheek pressed into moss, the taste of iron thick on her tongue. For a long moment, she dared not move. She wasn't even sure if she could. Her limbs ached, heavy as stone, and her lungs were sore, as though she had been drowning.

When she finally stirred, the world above her swam into focus.

The clearing was empty. Irina and Yvonne were nowhere to be seen. The only light came from the moon, full and bright, suspended in the black sky like a lidless eye. It spilled silver over the trees, over the bed of moss, over Hazel's prone body.

She sat up slowly, rubbing her temples, disoriented. "What... happened?" she whispered aloud, though there was no one around to answer her.

Then suddenly it all came rushing back. The smoke in the cauldron. The laughter of the other witches. The pull of the talisman's chain around her neck. It came back to her in pieces at first, then all at once, as she recalled why she was in the clearing. With a gasp, she looked down at her chest, her eyes wide with fear.

A deep valley of pale cleavage greeted her, her breasts bulging obscenely out of her neckline. The effects of breathing in the orange smoke. But what of her last memory – the cloud of purple fumes, chasing her? Surrounding her, forcing its way into her lungs...

Suddenly a strange twinge bloomed in her chest, sharp enough to make her gasp. She pressed a hand against herself instinctively as the sensation deepened. A pressure, heavy and insistent, thrummed beneath her skin as though something were pushing outward from within.

"No... wait..." Hazel said fearfully, her eyes widening. She knew what was happening. The cursed fumes were still inside her, and their power was stirring.

Hazel clutched her breasts in fear, as if trying to contain what was coming. But the pressure kept rising, regardless. And then, it began.

Her boobs surged against her palms, swelling so quickly she moaned aloud. They ballooned outward, the snug fabric of her bodice groaning in protest. Her fingers pushed into the soft flesh, trying desperately to hold them back, but they pressed forward all the same, rounding fuller, heavier, bulging over the top of her dress as they grew to the size of ripe pumpkins.

"Stop – please stop!" Hazel whispered, horrified, her arms straining to contain the growth. But the swelling didn't slow. Her dress creaked, stitches snapping, threads splitting apart. She

stumbled to her feet, clutching herself tightly, as though brute force could contain the magic coursing through her.

The moon shone brightly above, a silent witness to her transformation.

Hazel tried a countercharm, her voice quavering as she traced runes in the air. The glyphs sparked weakly, then fizzled against her chest, unable to slow the effects of the curse inside her. Another wave struck, and her breasts surged again, swelling heavier, fuller, dragging her balance forward. She staggered, nearly falling.

“No, no, no—”

The fabric finally gave way with a violent rip. ***SHRRRRRIIPPP!*** Her bodice tore open, scraps of black cloth falling useless to the ground as her breasts surged unbound into the moonlight. Free from their confines, they bounced heavily against her ribs, the bottoms of them slapping her thighs. Hazel wrapped her arms beneath them, trying to lift, trying to hold, but they spilled over her embrace, far too large for her to manage.

Her knees buckled under the weight of her breasts, and she collapsed on top of them. “No!” she shouted as she landed atop rapidly swelling masses. The pressure within was unrelenting. Each second, the curse fed upon itself, swelling her breasts larger still. They rose higher like inflating balloons, slowly lifting her knees up off the ground. She tried to push herself up, to regain enough leverage to stand, but the growth was too fast, and the weight dragged her down, pinning her like an anchor.

The curse had no mercy.

Her breasts spread across the moss, heavy and unstoppable, expanding outward beneath her body. She was forced to lie on top of them, each of them now individually bigger than the rest of her body. They gradually lifted her off the ground, swelling into a vast, quivering mound of flesh that grew higher and higher, hoisting her upward as though she were a doll perched upon a grotesque pedestal.

Tears pricked Hazel’s eyes. She clutched uselessly at her breasts, willing them to stop somehow. Just then, she felt the hem of her dress getting tighter around her thighs as well. “Not that too...” she whimpered, glancing behind her. Her bottom had begun to swell, too. Her thighs became plumper, her legs beginning to splay apart as they pushed against each other. She groaned helplessly as her ass ripped through the bottom of her dress, exposing more pale flesh to the moonlit clearing.

Meanwhile, her breasts kept growing, much faster than her bottom, their massive forms swelling ever larger, stretching wider across the clearing. The curse inside her refused to relent.

“Help me,” Hazel whispered to the empty forest, her voice breaking. But the only answer was the silent gaze of the moon above, shining down as if to witness her humiliation.

And still, her body swelled.

Chapter 5: The Bargain

Tears blurred Hazel's vision. The silence of the forest pressed against her like a second weight, heavy and stifling. There was nobody to save her.

They did this to me.

Her lips curled back as the truth settled in her gut. Irina's sly cackle. Yvonne's sharp, dismissive tone. The insistence that she gather the pumpkins, that she carry the talisman. She had thought them cruel, yes – but not like this. Not *monstrous*.

Hazel grit her teeth so hard her jaw ached. She hissed the old words, guttural curses in the tongue of their foremothers. Her voice trembled with rage, with betrayal, each syllable sending ripples through her flesh. "May your cauldrons sour. May your tongues blacken. May Hecate herself spit on you both!" These curses and more she unleashed, foul execrations that she never thought herself capable of uttering. She swore to get revenge on her sisters if she ever managed to reverse the spell that afflicted her.

But the forest swallowed her words, indifferent. The other witches were too far away for her curses to have any effect. There was nothing she could do.

The growth did not relent. Her breasts surged again, a great heaving swell that tore a gasp from her throat. They spread wider across the clearing, creeping over the moss and rocks. The moonlight gleamed pale across her curves. Each pulse lifted her higher, farther from the earth. Her ass continued to swell too, much slower than her chest but still obscenely plump. The cold night air kissed her back and shoulders like a cruel reminder of how small the rest of her body had become by comparison.

"Please..." Hazel whispered, desperation cracking her voice. "Please, no more."

The light of the full moon shone on, heedless to her plea. Her breasts continued to swell, tireless and inevitable, fulfilling the dark will of the curse. Hazel's face twisted in anguish. *Will they ever stop?* She wondered. This went beyond a simple prank. Her sisters had doomed her with their trickery.

Her heart thundered. Fear gnawed at her rage, her defiance. The clearing felt smaller with each breath, each surge, each tremor beneath her. She began to feel her breasts pressing against the tree trunks that ringed the glade. What would happen if she didn't stop growing?

And then –

“My, my,” came a voice, low and imperious, from somewhere below her. Feminine, sharp, commanding. It was quiet, but made its way up to Hazel’s ears, caressing them like silk sliding across skin. “What have we here?”

Hazel’s breath caught in her throat. She froze, trembling atop her rising pedestal of flesh. Her wide eyes darted down, though she could see nothing past the curve of her swelling breasts. The voice was unfamiliar, yet carried the weight of authority.

Her heart hammered harder. There was only one sort of woman who would be at the center of the enchanted forest, on a night like this. Another witch, one she’d never met.

“H-hello?” she asked nervously. “Is someone down there? Please, help me!”

There was only silence below her. She felt a sinking feeling as she waited for the stranger to respond. Her breasts kept swelling in the meantime, pushing against the massive tree trunks. She had nearly filled the entire clearing.

A few seconds passed as Hazel waited for the stranger to say something. Then, a shape rose slowly into Hazel’s field of vision.

A woman sat astride a broomstick, gliding upward with ease, her posture straight and regal as if she were perched upon a throne rather than a shaft of wood. The moonlight revealed silver hair wound tight in elaborate coils, a sharp face lined with age yet aglow with authority. Her dark eyes glittered, cool and calculating, as she hovered level with Hazel’s head.

“I am Rowena,” the woman said, her voice steady and imperious. “And you, child, must be the one who violated my pumpkin patch.”

Hazel’s breath caught. *Rowena*. The name rang like a curse itself. She had heard whispers of her for decades, always spoken in hushed tones – an ancient witch of great renown, feared even among her own kind. Hazel’s stomach knotted. This was no chance encounter.

“I–I didn’t mean to,” Hazel stammered, her voice cracking. “Irina and Yvonne – they tricked me, they gave me the amulet, I only – ”

Rowena silenced her with a dismissive wave. “Do not bore me with excuses. I came here tonight to exact revenge upon whoever dared steal from my garden. But...” Her lips curled into a cold smirk as her eyes swept over Hazel’s swollen form. “...it seems fate has already dealt you punishment enough.”

As if in cruel affirmation, Hazel’s breasts surged outward again, swelling monstrously, shoving against the trees around her. Bark groaned. Branches snapped. She whimpered as she felt herself running out of space, trapped in a prison of her own flesh.

Rowena turned her broom in the air, floating away with casual grace, as though already dismissing Hazel from her thoughts. “Yes,” she said coolly. “I believe I’ll leave you to your fate. Grow and grow until the forest breaks beneath you. A fitting end.”

“Wait!” Hazel cried out, panic raw in her voice. “Please, you can’t... you can’t just leave me here!” She reached a hand up to the sky, pleading. But the woman kept climbing slowly upward. She almost couldn’t believe that someone could be so merciless – but the betrayal of her sisters had already demonstrated the bottomless cruelty of witches. The legendary Rowena was surely capable of just leaving her here. And then she’d be completely helpless. “Please!” she choked out in desperation. “Please help me. I’ll do anything!”

Rowena slowed, pausing mid-air. She turned to regard Hazel again, her eyes glinting like polished onyx. As Hazel’s breasts surged with growth again, she felt the tree trunks constricting ever tighter on all sides.

Rowena began tapping her lips with one long finger, considering Hazel’s offer. “Anything, you say? Very well.” She drifted closer, circling Hazel like a hawk. “Serve me. Swear yourself as my apprentice – for one hundred years. A century of obedience. In exchange, I will end your torment.”

Hazel’s mind spun. *One hundred years*. The thought clawed at her – an eternity, even for one such as her. But the trees pressed tighter against her flesh, bark biting into soft skin as her breasts continued to swell. She was either going to die here, or just keep growing endlessly. She had no choice.

“Yes!” she gasped. “I accept. I’ll serve you. Just... make it stop!”

Rowena’s smile widened slowly, sealing the trap. She raised a hand, speaking a word in the old tongue. Power rippled through the clearing, and Hazel felt the world reverberate. The ripple reached the edges of the glade, stopping her breasts’ growth instantly. Then she felt it rebound back into itself, condensing into her core. She felt power swirling in her chest, and suddenly, she gagged as a tendril of violet smoke coiled out of her mouth, drawn from deep within her lungs. The smoke poured toward Rowena’s hand, and with it, Hazel’s breasts began to shrink.

Hazel let out a shuddering breath as she felt the curse diminishing, her breasts becoming smaller. The smoke curled out of her mouth steadily, pooling into a swirling point centered on Rowena’s palm. The witch followed Hazel down as she slowly approached the ground, shrinking faster than she had grown.

Smaller. Smaller still. The impossible volume of flesh evaporated, the cursed growth reverting, until Hazel lay trembling atop the bed of moss, her body returned to its normal form. Gasping, she clutched at her chest, dizzy with relief. Her dress was completely ruined, but at least she was herself again.

As she inspected herself, something appeared on her chest out of nowhere, startling her. An amulet hung now around Hazel's neck, its surface glinting faintly purple in the moonlight – eerily similar to the one Irina had given her that morning. When she looked up, Rowena hovered before her, eyes gleaming with cruel satisfaction.

“Never remove it,” Rowena commanded, her voice like a lash. “So long as you wear it, the curse will remain bound. Take it off, and you will swell again... and this time, I will not save you.”

Hazel nodded frantically, too shaken to speak.

Rowena turned her broom toward the darkened forest, then glanced back, her smirk sharp as a blade. “Come, apprentice. You belong to me now.”

Hazel staggered to her feet, the amulet heavy against her skin. She swallowed, wondering what sort of grim fate was in store for her in the next century. Glancing back at the clearing she'd filled entirely only moments ago, she realized that anything had to be better than being trapped by the curse. With a shudder, she followed Rowena into the waiting dark.