

The chapel was full of headstones of various sizes that glowed an otherworldly yellow, wrapped in a fog that was coming from everywhere, yet nowhere at the same time. In the back of the room was a giant blue sphere that was floating in mid-air like it was about to give a sermon. It was so quiet you could hear a pin drop.

A mage, dressed head to toe in various wraps and fabric, was standing over a giant bowl of clear blue water, whispering a chant while spreading a mysterious powder into it. The sphere behind him glowed a bright orange, then the water also glowed orange before an image floated to the top of the surface. Two individuals were laughing, one male and one female. The female had long dark hair, wore a black gown and was holding open a ragged book, while the male had salt and pepper hair and was dressed in a blue vest with a burgundy and white cravat. Fire surrounded them. He whispered another chant while pouring more powder on the water, but the image disappeared quickly.

“At long last. The Twins are at the Forbidden Grove, and they still have the Book. Lovely.” The man picked up his sword and staff, as well as a knapsack full of various colored potions, and left.

It was easily a three days’ journey to the Forbidden Grove. As he followed the road towards the Grove through numerous villages and settlements, the chaos and wreckage became more evident. The Twins spared no life and ransacked everything they could get their hands on. It looked like something out of a nightmare. Unphased, he continued.

The dirt and stone road slowly began to fill with red petals and flowers. A majority of them were stomped on and crushed, no doubt a continuation of The Twins and their whirlwind path of destruction, but some of the flowers were untouched and swayed lightly in the breeze that started to flow through the area.

The mage turned a corner and the area opened up into a giant field full of the red flowers that was lined with trees that lost their foliage due to the change of seasons. It was one of the most beautiful sights a mortal could ever see. Off in the distance at the other end of the field were two black silhouettes chanting as loud as they could in front of a fire, each brandishing torches that glowed bright green.

The mage continued his pace as he approached them. One hand was on his staff, the other inside his knapsack.

The Twins stopped chanting and looked him up and down. “It’s been a long time, mage. You should have never left our little trio. Look at what could have been yours.” They both threw their torches into the fire and watched as two giant green fireballs turned into dragons and flew away into the night sky. The raven haired woman closed the book and held it close to her body.

“The Book of the Damned has corrupted you both. I thought by leaving, you two would be strong enough to focus and fight against the pure evil inside, but I now know I was wrong and deeply

regret my choice. However, your chaos and mayhem has gone too far. You need to lay down your weapons and give me the book. Now.”

“Or what? You think you can stop us like when you tried the last time we met?” The Twins turned and laughed, just like in the image in the water from the chapel. The mage rubbed the giant scar that ran down his entire left arm.

“That night you stole the book from me, but I won’t make that mistake again. This ends now.” The mage whispered a chant and slammed his staff into the ground. An energy burst shot along the ground. The Twins put up their hands and the burst fizzled into dust.

“If that’s all you’ve got, this will be over before nightfall. The book has made us more powerful than you can imagine. This is your last chance to join us, instead of following us like a little puppy for all these years. You’re no match for who we are now.” The Twins started to chant a passage from the book.

“You both always misunderstood the powers of the gods, even before the book corrupted you. It will be your undoing.” The mage raised his staff again and slammed it to the ground. Giant bolts of lightning shot out of the top, but The Twins easily deflected them.

The mage pleaded to them both. “Brother. Sister. I beg of you. Please stop.”

“We cut our family ties when you left. Once we take care of you, nothing can stop us.” The Twins pulled out daggers from their belts that had glowing red crystals in them. They fired streams of energy at the mage, but his staff was able to contain them. He pulled a bottle out of his knapsack, popped the cork and threw it at their feet. It exploded and surrounded them in a giant blue cloud.

“You two have ruined enough lives. It’s time to pay for your crimes.” The mage started to whisper a chant. The Twins tried casting different magic spells, but nothing was working. She opened the book and started reading from it. They started to fade. The mage kept repeating his chant while the blue cloud collapsed on itself and The Twins disappeared. All that remained were their daggers and the Book of the Damned. The red crystals faded to black as if the life had been removed from them. The mage gathered the items, turned around and started to make his way back home.

When the mage entered the chapel, he approached the glowing blue sphere in the back of the room. The Twins appeared in front of him. They pounded at the sphere, but hit nothing but air. They tried to scream, but nothing came out. Their faces changed from anger to confusion. They were stuck in an ether they could not escape.

The mage walked away while they disappeared into the thick blue clouds of the sphere. He took the Book of the Damned out of his knapsack and placed it on a shelf in an empty spot next to several other books that looked similar, then closed and locked the cabinet.