

# Ivy Vines

# Visions

By  
Judy Serrano

The Ivy Vines Series  
Volume I



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Ivy Vines, Visions

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### **Author Notes**

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## Prologue

My heart was beating almost out of my chest as I drove to the restaurant to see Simone. I checked my rear view mirror often; just to be sure I wasn't followed. I parked the car and ran as fast as my legs would carry me to the front door. I felt like I was burdened with cement weights around my ankles as I forced my body to keep moving forward. Trying to catch my breath was futile when Eduardo met me at the entrance. I was in no mood for his pretentious smile and flippant tone, but still he would not let me pass.

"I need to see Simone," I told him, barely able to form the words due to the lack of air in my lungs.

"Will that be one for lunch or two?" he asked me. I almost punched him.

"Two," I answered, regaining my composure. "Simone is off in a few minutes. She'll have lunch with me, I'm sure."

"Very well then," he answered. He slowly took out two menus and sat me at a table by the window.

"Thank you," I managed. "Please tell Simone I'm here." He made an unfavorable face at me and walked away. I looked out the window and began to recapture a normal breathing pattern. I noticed an old woman walking by the creek. She had her head covered by a black scarf and she was wearing what looked like a black cloak over her body. It was warm out, being early September, and that's why her clothing caught my attention. She took off the scarf and looked at me. When our eyes touched, I could feel my blood pressure rise. My face got warm. Long grey curls cascaded down, past her shoulders and her expression got very grave. Her nose looked like a misshapen staircase and she had a mole on the left side of her face along her jaw line. She pointed her finger at me, slowly straightening it out as far as it could go and I felt a surge of fear strike through my body. I stood up quickly, pushing my chair back with the backs of my knees and felt a hand on my shoulder. I let out a shriek that was certainly noticeable and when I turned, it was Simone's hand on my shoulder.

"Ivy, what is it?" she asked. "The last time I heard you scream like that..." I dismissed her, mid-sentence, knowing exactly what she was going to say. Since that day. The day we don't dare talk about or even remember if we can help it. I turned my attention back to the creek but the old woman was gone.

I could feel her.

"It's nothing," I told her. "Are you done with your shift yet?"

"Yes, I'm done," she answered. "Eduardo is making me change my clothes first. So, sit tight and I'll be right back."

I sat back down and looked out the window again. A breeze blew open one of the side windows, unexpectedly and I almost fell out of my chair. I could hear a faint humming. It was all too familiar. There was still no old woman, but I knew she was there.

She was watching me somehow.

Simone finally came back and sat beside me. "What's going on, Ivy? I haven't seen you this unraveled in a very long time. It's a little disconcerting to say the least."

"He's after me," I told her. "He knows I'm here."

"Who knows you're here? Ivy, you're not making any sense."

“Lucifer,” I whispered, leaning into her so that no one else would hear me. “He thinks I know.”

“He thinks you know what?” she asked, looking at me as though I had gone mad.

“When Jesus is coming. He thinks I know.”

“Do you?” she asked. “Do you know?”

A hiss filled the air in the room as the wind picked up and gushed through the open window. I drew a breath but I dared not answer.

She was listening.

## Ten years earlier

I couldn't believe my birthday was finally here. I was so excited that I thought I might burst into flames. "Ivy!" my mother shouted. "Ivy! Gina's here!" All my other friends had already arrived. It was Darla, Janie, Simone, and I. We were waiting for Gina to arrive. She had the game. Her mother was a self-proclaimed witch and gave her a Ouija board for her birthday to play with. I had never heard of a Ouija board before, so I was very excited to try it out. My parents had no organized religion, so witches and Ouija boards were no big threat to them. According to my dad, the Bible was just a book of fairy tales, so what harm was a little witchcraft among friends?

It was my thirteenth birthday. I was finally a *real* teenager. Gina came barreling into the living room shouting at the top of her lungs, "I've got it, I've got it!" She had the Ouija board in her hands and the rest of us gathered together around her with mutual excitement.

"Come on," I told her, grabbing her by the arm and pulling her along side of me. We all headed for the *playroom* as my parents called it. It didn't have much more than a television, a few toy boxes, and a couple of couches. Everything in our house was old. The couches had brown throws on them to cover the holes and deformities and the carpet was only fashionable back in the 1800's. Really...

I spread out a blanket for us all to sit on and my mom brought in a huge bowl of popcorn. We waited patiently for her to leave, giggling to ourselves as she blew me a kiss and shut the door behind her. Gina opened the box and spread the board out on the floor. She pulled out a game piece, which was wooden, and heart shaped with a magnifying glass at the point of the heart and a pin going through the middle. This indicator moves around the board at the spirit's whim. We were supposed to light some candles, turn out the lights, and two of us would gently put our fingertips on the game piece, without intentionally, physically moving it. Since Gina was the witch's daughter, she summoned the spirits. It started out with harmless intentions. Darla and Janie put their fingertips on the heart shaped game piece and asked the spirits if they were going to be famous or successful and we got a "yes" or a "no." This went on for about 20 minutes. I felt the energy in the room and suddenly had a strong desire to take the reins.

Gina took one side and I took the other. "I want to ask a question with a specific answer," I told her.

"Okay," she replied. "How about that boy, Michael, who lives down the street. How about we ask if you're going to get married someday?"

"No," I continued. "Something more specific. Something that can't be answered with a simple *yes* or *no* answer," I told her. I thought about it for a minute and then a light went on inside my head and I had the perfect question. "How about we ask the spirits for his phone number?" All the girls started giggling.

"Okay," she agreed. We laughed with excitement. "Spirits, oh spirits..." she started, "let us know you're in the room. Are you here, spirits of the underworld?" Chills ran down my spine as one of the candles blew out from an unexpected wind. The game piece started whirling around the board with such force that I could barely hold onto it. Suddenly it slowed down and Gina started calling out the numbers it was landing on, while Darla wrote them down. "3, 5, 2, 3, 7, 5, 8. That's it," she said. "352-3758."

I tried to remove my fingers from the game piece but I couldn't and Gina was suddenly entranced. At first we weren't sure if she was just trying to scare us or if this was for real. It wasn't very long before we realized she had been overcome by some other energy. Her eyes went to the back of her head while a light humming came out of her mouth, which was most certainly not her voice. It was very deep and almost hoarse. "I see you," Gina said. Then the game piece moved around the board and it landed on letters that spelled out, "Ivy, I see you. You are mine." I screamed and pulled back as a wind with no apparent facilitator blew through the room and doused all the candles. We were sitting in the dark with Gina still humming. My mother came in, flicked on the lights and darted inside.

"What's going on?" she asked. "Ivy, why'd you scream?"

Gina was totally normal once the lights were on and no one said a word. Then Gina took the game and started putting it back in the box. "I think she just got a little too carried away with the game. I'll put it away now, Mrs. Vines, and we'll go to sleep."

Surprisingly, my mother didn't say anything. She rubbed her hands back and forth over her arms with them crossed over her chest, obviously trying to warm herself. "Why is it so cold in here?" she asked us. "Is there an open window somewhere?"

She walked around checking all the windows and found them all securely closed and locked up tightly. She walked out and closed the door behind her, after warning us to keep the noise down. "Were you moving it?" I whispered to Gina. "Was it you?"

"I told you, it works," she told me. "Go ahead. Grab the phone and call the number."

I picked up the phone by the side of the couch and dialed the number. This was before there was caller I.D. on every phone in every house. "Hello," the voice started.

"May I speak with Michael?" I asked.

"One moment," she answered. "Who's calling?"

"It's Ivy," I told her. "Ivy Vines."

"Certainly, Ivy," she continued, "I'll get him for you." I knew at this point that if it was Michael's mother, she would know right away who I was. I must admit, I wasn't expecting it to be the right number. I hung up the phone immediately with shaky hands, trying to catch my breath. Still in disbelief, I looked over at Gina expecting some kind of logical explanation.

"I told you," she offered. "Are you a believer now?"

"How is this possible?" I asked her. "That was Michael's mom. That was her. This thing really works," I repeated. I was both excited and alarmed at the same time.

She got up, locked the door and took the game back out.

"Are you crazy?" Simone asked. "The spirits called Ivy by name. We can't open this up again. What if something happens to her?"

"She's got it," Gina assured her. "She's special, you know."

"What are you talking about?" Simone asked, trying to mask her apprehension.

"The sixth sense. She's got it."

We all got quiet for a few minutes. I looked up at one of the windows and it was as though I had willed it to open on its own. One by one all the windows flew open and a wind blew inside, blowing our hair away from our faces, and a humming filled the room. I swear it was calling my name. The lights in the house all went out and all the girls started screaming. I'll never forget that day. I don't think any of us will.



## Chapter 1

### The Old Woman

“Ivy Vines,” he said, laughing to himself as he was looking over my application. “Who would actually name their child, Ivy Vines?”

“Let’s just say they had a sense of humor,” I answered.

“Had?” he asked. “You seem awfully young for your parents to already be gone.”

“They died in a freak accident,” I told him. “I actually grew up with my aunt Sarah. She was my mother’s sister and lived a few blocks away from my parents’ house. At least I didn’t have to switch schools.”

He looked at me from over the application and I could see a little bit of pity seep from his dark black eyes. “Michael says you grew up almost next door to each other.”

“Yes, we did,” I answered, trying to conceal a smile. “We were high school sweethearts. Poor guy. I chased him around like a love sick puppy since I was a little girl.”

“So I’ve heard,” he answered, shooting me a mischievous smile. His name was Elijah, although he made it pretty clear that he chose to be called Eli. He was the owner of this fine establishment. He was ridiculously handsome but pretentious as hell. His hair was as dark as his eyes, pulled back in a short ponytail and his skin was an olive brown. I believed he was French from the accent. The name of the restaurant was “Le Château,” or “The Castle,” in English. Michael waited tables there while he was getting through college and offered to help me land a job there.

Elijah did not like to hire women in general, but he really liked Michael, as did everyone else, and I knew this interview was simply a formality. He hired Simone, after all, so I figured I was a shoe-in. It did concern me however, that Simone and I were very different in almost every way. Her long straight, black hair, deep brown eyes, and tall svelte figure, often won her a job or two back when we were younger. I hoped that wouldn’t be a hindrance in my case. I was shorter, blond, blue eyed, and maybe a little voluptuous. Although I was thin like Simone, I still had the curves that seemed to turn a head or two when I entered a room. Nonetheless, I hoped that Eli hadn’t hired her simply because of her classic looks.

Simone and Michael went to college at Northern Arizona University, right out of high school. My parents didn’t have any money to leave behind and my aunt Sarah couldn’t afford to send me to college, so I stayed behind, like always. Michael and I drifted apart over time but after a few years went by and neither one of us had any serious relationships, he asked me to move out there with them and give it another try. Simone asked me to move in with her and help with the rent and I told Michael that we’d have to take it slow. He and I were over quite some time ago and were only intimate in high school. But we stayed friends and I needed a change of scenery.

“How old are you?” he asked me.

“Are you allowed to ask me that?” I argued.

“I own this place,” he answered. “I can ask you anything I want to ask you.” His eyes wandered back over the application and then caught mine. I suddenly got very cold.

“23,” I answered, against my better judgment. He sat up and touched the side of my long, blond hair. Then he reached up and touched my cheek. I felt an icy chill go through me and for a moment I was paralyzed.

“You’re just so lovely,” he started. “Your eyes are almost transparent and your body is small yet...” he paused, still with his hand on my face, “desirable. I can almost see through your eyes.” His touch prompted a memory: the wind blowing through the house, the windows crashing open, the ceiling falling in and the screaming; the endless screaming. He let go and I almost fell over, off of my chair. “I’m sorry,” he began. “It must have been awful.” I didn’t answer him. I wasn’t sure if it was my expression he was reading or my mind. “When can you start?”

“Tomorrow,” I answered. “I’ll be here tomorrow.”

“You can work the day shift with Simone,” he told me. “I don’t hire women for the night shift.”

“So, I’ve been told,” I answered, repeating his earlier statement. I had no idea how Michael and I were going to make this work. He went to school during the day and worked the evening shift. But I did promise myself that I would make every effort.

He stood up and shook my hand. “Don’t let me down,” he warned, while walking away. I was almost exhausted from the memory flash. That was something I hadn’t thought about in quite a while.

I sat at a table in the bar, nursing a glass of water, and waiting for Michael to get off from his shift. He blew me a kiss as he continued to finish up with his customers and I was anxious to tell him the good news. An old woman sat down beside me at my table bringing with her a rush of cold air and the stench of cigarette smoke. I looked up at her and she smiled. “You think it’s God’s will, don’t you.”

“I’m sorry, what?” I asked.

“You think it is a gift from God, this sixth sense of yours.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” I told her. I sat up and looked around to see if anyone was watching us. It seemed like no one even noticed her presence.

“The more you use it, the more power you give him. Just remember that next time.” She got up and walked away just as Michael was approaching. I was cold and sick inside and suddenly my good news wasn’t feeling so good.

“Hey beautiful,” he said, kissing me on the cheek as he sat down. “Did you get the job?”

“Yeah,” I answered, still thinking about that old woman. “Did you see her?” I asked.

“See who?”

“The old woman who was sitting with me,” I continued.

“What old woman?” he asked.

“You didn’t see her?”

“Is this another one of your... visions?” he asked, in an almost patronizing tone. “We’re not going down that road again, are we?”

“No, no more visions,” I told him. “It’s just... maybe I shouldn’t have moved out here. Maybe I should have stayed in New York.”

“I thought we wanted to be together,” he asked me. He took my face into both his hands and kissed me. “Come on, baby,” he whispered. I smiled, weakly. “We were great together back in the day. Give it a chance. Give *us* a chance.”

"This whole thing just feels weird." I looked over at Eli, who seemed to be looking at me through the corners of his eyes.

"Oh, him," he said smiling. "Don't pay any attention to him. He thinks he's irresistible. Did he hit on you? Cause if he did...?"

"No, nothing like that," I answered.

"Then what?" he asked me, still looking a little concerned.

"It's nothing," I told him. "It's just a feeling."

And it was a feeling: a feeling of foretelling.



A few weeks had gone by and Simone and I worked together side by side, day after day. Michael and I hadn't found more than a few hours at a time together. I was starting to think that this whole thing was simply not going to work. He was still beautiful. He was blond and blue eyed with short spiky hair, just like I remembered him. He was the anti-Elijah. He was light and Eli was dark. He was short and Eli was deliciously large. Michael was only a few inches taller than me, while Eli towered over me like a God. They were both very nicely built. I hated myself for even thinking about Eli's body in such a way, but there was something undeniably smoldering about him. I watched him watch me as Simone and I polished the silverware before our shift. Then I turned away.

"You're not entertaining the idea, are you?" she asked me. "He's such a jerk."

"Entertaining what idea?" I asked her, attempting to play dumb.

"I see you watching him. Michael wouldn't want to hear about that."

"Don't be ridiculous," I assured her. "Besides, Michael and I are still, Michael and I... whatever that is."

"I can't believe you haven't... you know... yet," she said, with a meek flush beginning to form around her cheeks.

"Who has time to *you know*?" I replied. "Besides, Eli is hardly interested in me." Just then Michael came sauntering through the front doors of the restaurant.

"His ears must have been ringing," Simone offered. I laughed.

"There she is," he said to me as he approached us. He kissed my cheek and took my hand. "Why don't you ask Eli for the day off and we'll go have a picnic. Just the two of us in the park. What do you say, Ivy?"

"Because I need the money and Eli will probably fire me," I answered. "I just started working here, not too long ago."

"Come on, darling, give me something," he pleaded. "Just ask him. Class was cancelled and I have all kinds of time on my hands."

"Ask me what?" We looked up and there was Eli, standing way too close to me in all his glory. "Is there something you want to ask me, Ivy?"

"No, nothing," I answered.

"Eli, she wants the day off so that we can spend some time together," Michael interrupted. "She works hard for you and come on... I asked her to move out here to be with me and we haven't had much time alone."

He put his hand under my chin and directed my eyes in his direction. "Almost transparent," he said, nearly in a whisper, encroaching upon my private thoughts. Suddenly I saw him.

I saw us.

We were in bed together. His long dark hair was hanging over either side of my face and his lips on the nape of my neck. I could feel him touching me and moving me as I struggled beneath him. My breath hitched as I found myself unable to breathe. He removed his hand and said, "Tell me what you want, Ivy."

"I... I..." was all that seemed to make its way out of my throat.

"She wants the day off," Michael inappropriately added. "Can she come with me, Eli?"

He was still looking at me. I wasn't sure if this was a vision or a fantasy. "May I have the day off, Eli?" I managed.

"Now was it that hard to ask for something you want from me?" he continued.

I swallowed hard, feeling a little damp and flushed from the vision I just had. "Thank you," I answered.

"But don't tire her out," he continued. "I want her fresh and ready to work tomorrow morning."

"I can't promise you that," Michael answered, shooting me a wink. "But I'll be sure she's here, first thing in the morning. Come on!" he grabbed my hand and started pulling me along behind him. I could barely keep my footing.

"What's wrong with you?" I asked Michael, when we finally got into the car.

"Dragging me out of the restaurant? What if Eli had fired me? Did you think of that?"

"I've waited all this time to be alone with you," he answered. "Who cares about that over privileged egomaniac. You can always find another job."

"I don't want another job," I told him.

"Ivy, please," he said, touching my cheek with his fingers. "Let's enjoy the day we have together."

"Okay," I agreed begrudgingly. "I guess you're right."

"You don't have to sound like I'm kidnapping you," he retorted. "I thought you moved out here to get me back."

I laughed. "Ego is certainly not a problem for you." He smiled. "I moved out here to get out of our old neighborhood. I was always the girl whose house was possessed by demons. I was just glad to get away from the stigma."

"Ivy, you can't tell me you don't want me." He put the car in gear and I opened my window. I never got tired of that fresh Arizona air. "You and me... we have an undeniable chemistry. Don't you feel it?"

"Tone it down a bit, Mickey," I started.

"It's Michael now," he answered, and I must admit that his tone began to darken. "I'm starting to wonder why you came out here at all."

"I'm sorry, I'll behave," I told him. "So... where are we going?"

"I've changed my mind about the park," he answered. "I know a place that overlooks the mountains. No one ever goes there. I like to take..."

"Girls there?" I interrupted. "Are you for real?"

"I was going to say that I like to take my reading there. It's nice and quiet." I didn't believe that for a moment. He shook his head in disapproval, noticing my skepticism. "You're so suspicious," he continued. "What happened to my sweet little Ivy?" I frowned at him, wishing I had never agreed to come with him in the first place.

When he finally pulled off the road, there was an amazing view of the mountains down below. “Michael,” I said, almost breathless. “It’s like a dream.”

“Hopefully not like one of *your* dreams,” he jested. He went around to my side of the car and opened my door for me. “Still a gentleman,” I observed.

“For you, always,” he answered. We got out of the car, he laid out a blanket, and we both sat down on it. “Ivy,” he said, stroking the backs of my hands with his thumbs. “I have missed you.” He leaned over and kissed my lips. He was warm and I felt a tingle, like when we were back in high school.

“You know, Michael,” I said, breaking away. “We haven’t really kept in touch. Not like Simone and I have, anyway. What have you been up to while you were out here?”

“I study most of the time, sweetheart. Eli was kind enough to give me a job at night and I make a ton of money there.”

“Isn’t this like... your fifth year in college?” I asked. “Simone graduated last year.”

“Some of us have to work full time, while we finish school,” he answered.

“Simone works,” I argued. “I was just wondering what it is that you do in your spare time that seems to be delaying your graduation.”

“Simone didn’t work all through college,” he clarified. “She only worked her senior year. I’ve been working the whole time. Her parents can afford to send her to college. My parents... well they basically told me that I’m on my own.” The part about this that didn’t make sense was that Michael did come from money. Everyone in my neighborhood did except for me. So their not paying for his education, didn’t really add up for me. In fact his father was a partner in a New York City law firm. What lawyer wouldn’t pay for his son’s college tuition?

“It’s just that your dad...” I started.

“So what if it’s taking me a little longer,” he interrupted. His face began to redden and I could tell that I hit some kind of nerve somewhere. Then he continued. “Hey, at least I went to college. You just stayed home, got a job, and blew us all off.” *Ouch*, I thought to myself. *That hurt*. “I’m sorry,” he went on. “It just started to feel like you were attacking me, that’s all.” He leaned into me and pushed me down on my back onto the blanket. “I have missed you,” he said, kissing me as though he thought I was his lunch.

“Michael,” I sputtered, turning my face away. “Michael, we’re out in the open and it’s broad daylight. Not here, not now...”

“Fine,” he spouted, sitting back up reluctantly. “I guess we can have lunch first.” He pulled out some sandwiches and a bottle of wine.

“You remembered,” I said smiling. He had a bottle of Cambria, Chardonnay, which was my favorite white wine.

“I remember everything,” he continued. “So tell me. Are you having any more visions?”

“I certainly do not want to talk about that,” I told him.

“After your family died...” He paused and poured the wine into our two glasses. “It’s just the way you were looking at Eli. It was like you saw something.”

“Of course I didn’t see anything,” I answered, trying to hide the flush that I knew must have been staining my way too revealing cheeks by now.

“What about the woman?” he asked.

“What woman?”

“The old lady you said you saw.” He picked up his glass like he wanted to toast it with mine.

“I don’t think she was a vision. I’d say more like a crazy person.”

He laughed. “There is no shortage of that around here,” he jested. The dark mood slowly lifted and we were able to relax and enjoy ourselves for a while. We visited, had our lunch, and he was right; there were no intruders. We packed up and headed back into town. “So, do you want to come back to my place?” he asked. “You’ve never been there, you know.”

“Michael,” I took his face into my hands, “I’m not ready to just take that kind of leap. We’ve been apart for a long time and...”

Suddenly I felt a flash of heat go through my fingers that burned steadily down my arm. “Ouch!” I shouted, pulling away quickly.

“What is it?” he asked, taking my hand into his. There were visible blisters on my fingertips. “More visions?” he asked.

“I don’t know,” I answered. “But maybe you should stay away from fires for a while.”

“Seriously, Ivy, what the hell just happened? Has this sort of thing happened before?”

“No,” I answered. “But let’s not dwell on it. I’m sure it’s nothing.”

“Ivy...”

“Come on, Michael. Let’s go back.”

He attempted a feeble smile and drove me back to my house.

When we pulled into the driveway I didn’t see Simone’s car yet. “Thank you for the picnic, Michael,” I told him. He pulled me close and kissed me deeply.

“Friday night,” he started. “I get off at 9 and I want to take you dancing.”

“Dancing?” I asked in surprise.

“Ivy, you came here for me but it’s starting to feel like there’s someone else. Is there someone else?”

“No,” I answered, not sure if I was lying *just* a little. “Friday is great. I can’t wait.” He kissed me again and I got out of the car.

Simone was always home by now, so her absents surprised me. I went inside and heard a noise in the bedroom. I cautiously approached, and noticed that there was a light in the corner of the room. When I got a closer look, it looked like a little boy standing at the window. I moved towards him slowly, and heard Simone open the front door and call out my name. I went to put my hand on his shoulder but he turned around before I was able to touch him. His eyes were hollow with yellow light shining through the sockets and his face had bumps and slashes branded into his skin. He opened his mouth and fangs showed like some kind of mountain lion, which frightened me. I fell backwards over a chair and took the lamp that was sitting on the dresser down with me as I crashed to the floor. “He needs more power,” he groaned at me in a deep coarse sounding voice. “You have to give in to him. We need more power. He will come for you!” He pointed his finger at me as Simone came barreling into the bedroom. I turned to look at her and then back at him.

He was gone.

“Oh my God, what happened?” she asked, walking over to me and helping me up off the floor. “You’re bleeding, Ivy. Your neck... there’s blood...”

I reached up and touched the spot on my neck where I felt the pain. “Over here?” I asked. I pulled my hand back and there was blood on it. As I watched it, it seemed to disappear within a few seconds and Simone jumped back and screamed. “What?” I asked. “What is it?”

“You healed yourself, Ivy.” She reached into a drawer and pulled out a large, hand-held mirror. “Look.”

I went to the bureau and held the mirror up, moved my hair aside and tried to find my injury. I twisted and turned into the mirror, thinking that maybe I was just not seeing it. But it was clear. There wasn’t even a scratch. “What the...”

“Have you ever done that before?” she asked me.

“Done what?” I asked; still not sure of exactly what just happened.

“Healed yourself,” she answered, slowly increasing the decibels in her tone.

“No,” I answered. “Never.”

“What happened here?” She began to back away as though she was suddenly frightened of me.

“It was a little boy,” I told her. “A demon of sorts.”

“Oh no! No, no, no...” she put her hands over her mouth in horror. I could see it in her eyes. She wanted to run.

“I don’t understand it,” I told her. “He said that he needs me to help him get more power. Who needs me? And for what power?”

“It’s the devil,” she answered. “He’s back and he’s looking for you. You need to go,” she told me. “I can’t live here with you and those ghosts. I won’t do it, Ivy. Not again.”

I started cleaning up the remnants of the lamp, which I had knocked over, trying to figure out what to do. My arm had some cuts from the glass and when I touched the scrapes with my fingertips they all healed without leaving a trace. These fingertips that seemed to be doing the healing were the same fingertips that I burned on Michael’s face.

“Please don’t throw me out,” I pleaded. “Where will I go?”

“You can move in with Michael,” she told me.

“What?”

“He never seemed too bothered by your... sixth sense.” She turned to walk away from me but stopped suddenly and turned back around. “Besides, isn’t that what you came out here for in the first place. To be with Michael? Or has that plan changed?”

“Please...” I took her hands and a rush of things-to-come ran behind my eyes. I was yelling at her and we were fighting. Then I saw Michael and me. This part was unnerving. We were fighting... physically fighting. I was being dragged. She suddenly pulled her hands back, realizing I was reading her.

“Stop it!” she shouted. “Just be normal, Ivy. Normal.” She walked out of the room and slammed the door behind her. I collected the glass and swept the area clean. Simone had left, and I was fixing the room to get it back to “normal.” I figured that she probably went to the restaurant to see Michael. I walked over to the corner and touched the spot where the boy was standing. *Was I crazy?* I asked myself. *Was he really here? Is it starting up all over again?* If Lucifer had found me again, I had to win this time. No more running. No more fear.