

Juniper's Magic

Written by

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"A bullied fifth grade witch-in-training impatiently summons a demon as her defender, but when it antagonizes her friends and terrifies her mother, she must team up with her witchy mentor to banish it."

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FADE IN

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

JUNIPER JULEP FAIRCHILD, 10, a smart, inquisitive, 5th grader, wearing hand-me-downs, half walks, half runs, away from the front of her elementary school at the end of a school day.

She carries her coat, wadded up, and a beat up backpack held together with duct tape. Anger and humiliation cross her face.

She gets to the edge of school property, drops her backpack, and struggles to untangle her coat. She drops the coat in a heap and tries to untangle it using magic. This makes the knot worse.

Laughter from the sidewalk. POLLY ABRAMSON; shallow, snotty, insecure; CHRISTA MILLER; and LAURIE SWANSON, Polly's toadies; all 9, stand by Polly's expensive SUV and watch Juniper struggle.

POLLY

Some kind of pretend witch.

EMILY HALVORSON and PAUL MULLINS, 10, Juniper's friends, arrive at Juniper's location. Paul picks up Juniper's coat and shakes it loose of its knot.

Paul is easy going. Emily is smart, although not as smart as Juniper.

EMILY

Shut up, Polly.

The trio laugh and get into the SUV.

EMILY (cont'd)

Come home with me, Juni. We can...

Juniper struggles with tears as she puts on her coat.

JUNIPER

I CAN'T. I have magic lessons, but they're stupid. Nothing I learn works. Bye.

Juniper runs off, leaving Emily and Paul.

EXT. STREET SCENE - CONTINUOUS

Juniper trudges to Janis Sullivan's house. Anger increases as she remembers the day.

JANIS (V.O.)

I am a witch; something not everyone can be. You are born with this ability and simply need to learn how to use it. I have a license to teach magic and currently tutor Juniper Fairchild, the daughter of my neighbor. She shows great potential.

INT. JANIS' LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Janis's first floor library is floor to ceiling bookshelves. Not all shelves contain books. Her computer, with three screens, overlooks the side yard with her garden. Her cats, Roslyn and Dorchester, sleep on the window seat.

JANIS (V.O.)

Most people don't like you doing magic in every day life. It's seen as an unfair advantage. It's restricted in schools and public spaces.

JANIS SULLIVAN, 63, financial analyst, earth mother-type, sits at her desk. To her left and right, animated pens take notes from the computer screens.

JANIS (V.O.) (cont'd)

Magic, as a profession, doesn't pay the bills. I am a financial analyst. This keeps a roof over my head and allows me to teach magic.

EXT. STREET SCENE - CONTINUOUS

Juniper balls her fists and breaks into a run when she spies Janis' house at the end of the block.

JANIS (V.O.)

Children are the most receptive to learning magic. They aren't jaded like adults. The key is to teach them to use magic productively.

INT. JANIS' LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Janis frowns as she looks up and around her. She snaps the fingers of her left hand and a mug rises from a table in the library and coasts to her open hand.

JANIS (V.O.)

If you don't know what you're doing,
you can blur the lines between white
and black magic. I know this from
experience.

DOOR SLAM

INT. JANIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Juniper enters the house, slams the back door, stomps into the kitchen, and flings her backpack onto the table. This pops the seam of one of the pieces of duct tape. Juniper pounds on the backpack to get the duct tape flat.

She plops into a chair, pulls out books, and a wadded up piece of paper. She unfolds it, and presses out some of the wrinkles.

Janis enters the kitchen, looks sideways at Juniper, and uses magic to make a snack of fruit punch and cookies. She steps back to lean against the sink counter.

JANIS

So, what happened today?

Juniper shoves the paper toward her rejecting the snack.

JUNIPER

She didn't like it.

JANIS

How badly didn't she like it?

Janis picks up the paper and sees a bright red "D. See me after class." written across the top.

JUNIPER

She handed out the papers in class.

FLASHBACK

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

KIDS squirm as MRS. WHITLOW, 40's, a no-nonsense, efficient teacher, who would rather be administration, strides through the rows handing out graded stories.

JUNIPER (V.O.)

She's telling everyone they did a great job as she hands them their story.

MRS. WHITLOW

Nice work, Adam. Good use of all the words, Jennifer. I enjoyed reading this, Kayla.

Mrs. Whitlow reaches Juniper's desk, which is at the back corner of the classroom, by the windows. The kids have turned around to watch Mrs. Whitlow and to listen to her comments.

JUNIPER (V.O.)

And she got to me and just sorta tossed it on my desk.

MRS. WHITLOW

Juniper, I told you to write about something other than witches. That's all you seem to write about. Write about farmers or clowns or nurses, no more witches. Redo this and get it back to me by Friday or the "D" stands.

Some kids are shocked. Some kids snicker.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JANIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JANIS

I see.

Juniper reorganizes her homework. Janis sets the paper on the table.

JUNIPER

I'm the only one who got a "D", Mrs. Sullivan. She said we could write about anything, we just had to use those dumb ol' words. I'm going to be a witch. Why can't I write about it?

JANIS

I don't know, sweetheart. It's not as if witches are a secret.

JUNIPER

Paul wants to know if you can turn Mrs. Whitlow into a frog.

Janis chuckles.

JANIS

You know the answer to that. Right now, we need to write a different story. Where's that vocabulary list?

Juniper pulls another paper out of her backpack. Janis waves her arms and the vocabulary words lift off the paper and swirl around the table top.

JANIS (cont'd)

Paper and pencil, please?

Juniper pulls out blank sheets of notebook paper and a pencil.

JUNIPER

Mrs. Whitlow said no magic in writing our stories.

JANIS

At this point, I simply do not care what Mrs. Whitlow says. We will write about a farmer, since she suggested it.

Janis waves her arms and the pencil starts scribbling across the page. As vocabulary words are used they disappear from the mass swirling above the table.

JANIS (cont'd)

Time to practice your spells.

INT. JANIS' UPSTAIRS PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Juniper follows Janis into her parlor. The room is comfortably furnished for a witch's needs. In the center of the room is a circular table covered with a green silk cloth and other spell casting items.

JANIS

Light the candle.

Juniper picks up a box of matches. Janis stops her.

JANIS (cont'd)
Magically.

JUNIPER
This is all we've done for three days.

JANIS
You can't do it consistently.

JUNIPER
It's a dumb spell.

JANIS
Show me you can do this every time and we will move on.

JUNIPER
Can we learn spells from the books in your magic library?

JANIS
That library is off limits until you learn basic spells. When you get the small spells right, we'll study from the library.

Janis points at the candle. Juniper sighs and tries to light it. It sputters, lights, and goes out.

JUNIPER
I can't do this. Everyone's right. I am stupid.

Janis puts her hands on Juniper's shoulders.

JANIS
You've had a bad day.

JUNIPER
It's all the time. I hate school.

JANIS
Breathe. Try moving things magically.

Juniper takes a step back, looks at the table and tries to move things around

On the first floor, Janis' cell phone rings.

JANIS

Ugh.

INT. JANIS'S FIRST FLOOR LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Janis grabs her cell phone. Juniper follows a few steps behind.

JANIS

Hello? Oh hello Mr. Wellington. What can I do for you today?

She covers the mouthpiece and points toward the kitchen.

JANIS (cont'd)

Check your homework.

INT. JANIS'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The pencil lies on top of the paper on the table. No words swirl around the top. Juniper reads the story.

Janis enters.

JANIS

Juniper, I'm sorry. I have to take this call. Please continue trying to light the candle. I'll be upstairs shortly.

Janis exits. Juniper watches her go into her library and looks at the stairs to the second floor.

INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Juniper arrives at the top of the stairs. She steps into the parlor, takes a match and lights the candle on the table. She exits the room to stand at the top of the stairs, listening.

Janis' voice, indistinct, can be heard.

Juniper quietly enters the magic library.

INT. JANIS'S MAGIC LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The small room contains fiction and non-fiction books about magic and witchcraft. Juniper leafs briefly through several books about magic, carefully reshelving them.

Juniper spies a black cloth on the floor in a back corner. She lifts it and finds a wooden box. She removes the lid and sees purple cloth.

She opens the purple cloth and finds a battered black leather book. Gold runes circle the front cover and vanish in front of her eyes. Juniper pulls the book from the box. It crackles with magic.

She stuffs the purple cloth into the box, puts the lid on it and covers the box with the black cloth.

INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Juniper clutches the book and closes the door to the library. She creeps down the stairs, listening for Janis' voice.

INT. JANIS'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Juniper tiptoes into the kitchen.

JANIS SULLIVAN (V.O.)
If you look at the return on
investment, though, you'll see a
better than average number.

Juniper breathes heavily as she slides the book into her backpack, removes her reading book, and partially zips the backpack shut.

JANIS SULLIVAN (V.O.) (cont'd)
Happy to help. Call me anytime.

Juniper plops into a chair, grabs a cookie, and starts to read.

JANIS SULLIVAN (V.O.) (cont'd)
Juniper?

JUNIPER
I'm in the kitchen, Mrs. Sullivan.

Janis appears in the doorway.

JANIS SULLIVAN
I thought you were going to practice
your magic.

Juniper waves the reading book at her.

JUNIPER

I did it so I'm doing my reading homework. Can we decorate your house for Halloween? We are witches.

JANIS SULLIVAN

You know I don't decorate for holidays. It's a waste of time. Back to casting. Let's try a less tangible spell.

Juniper gets up from the table.

JUNIPER

A what?

JANIS SULLIVAN

Something you can't see immediately. Let's try a friendship spell.

They leave the kitchen. The book moves inside Juniper's backpack.

INT. GRETCHEN'S KITCHEN - LATER

Juniper stands in the doorway between the eat-in kitchen and the living room of the small, two-story house.

A rear mudroom attaches to the kitchen. GRETCHEN FAIRCHILD, 34, single-mom, harried, working two jobs, shoves the door to the kitchen from the mudroom open. The door is warped and doesn't sit in the frame correctly.

GRETCHEN

Hi, sweetie. Sorry I'm late. I had to finish up at the clinic.

Gretchen wears a medical uniform. She drops her purse on the counter and steps into the bathroom.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

How was school today?

Juniper fidgets.

JUNIPER

It could have been better, mom.

Gretchen looks out the open door. She changes clothes.

GRETCHEN

I wish I had time to hear about it.
If I don't leave in the next ten
minutes, I'll be late for the
station.

Gretchen exits the bathroom wearing a uniform for a local gas station. She strides over to the refrigerator and pulls out a partial loaf of bread and an apple.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

Is peanut butter okay again tonight?

JUNIPER

Sure, mom.

Gretchen quickly makes supper.

GRETCHEN

I know, sweetie. It's always tough at
the end of the month but, I get paid
on Friday and I'll bring home a
pizza.

She sets the plate on the table, pours Juniper a half-glass of milk, kisses her on the head, grabs her purse, and wrenches the door open.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

I need to get this fixed. It's only
getting worse.

JUNIPER

I wish we knew someone with fix-it
magic.

GRETCHEN

Well, we don't. Get your homework
done. Don't go out...

Gretchen leaves and yanks the door closed.

JUNIPER

...and I'll see you in the morning.

Juniper sits down to eat her dinner.

INT. JUNIPER'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Juniper's bedroom is spartan. She reads in bed by the light of a small lamp.

She pages through the black leather book and stops at "How To Summon and Control an Invisible Servant." The page crackles with magic as she runs her finger down the list of ingredients.

EXT. SIDEWALK BY JANIS'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Juniper, Emily, and Paul walk past Janis' house after school. Juniper points out magic spells in the book, "101 Easy Magic Spells".

Janis works on the patio with her laptop. She sees the kids arrive and goes inside for drinks and snacks.

Paul looks over Juniper's shoulder at the book.

PAUL

You got this from the library.

Juniper nods.

JUNIPER

They have a section of magic books, mostly just how to do party tricks.

PAUL

Can you turn people into frogs?

JUNIPER

No.

EMILY

That's mean, Paul.

PAUL

They do it in the movies all the time.

EMILY

Paul, this is real life. No one I know does mean magic. It's all nice magic.

PAUL

But if you could turn mean people into frogs, they'd stop being mean, I bet.

A car stops even with the kids as Janis exits the back door with a tray of drinks and snacks. The back passenger window scrolls down and Polly sticks out her head.

POLLY

Oh look! It's that pretend witch who can't do any witch stuff.

JUNIPER

We're not allowed to use magic in school or are you dumb and don't know the rules?

Emily steps forward.

EMILY

Leave her alone, Polly.

PAUL

Yeah. Leave her alone.

POLLY

Or what?

PAUL

Or Juniper will do witchy stuff to you.

POLLY

Like I'm really scared. I know where you got that shirt, pretend witch. Christa's mom threw it into the clothing donation box at the food pantry.

Instinctively, Juniper runs her hands over her shirt.

POLLY (cont'd)

Looked better on Christa but it's so last year.

EMILY

Shut up, Polly.

POLLY

Maybe you don't need to come to my Halloween party.

JUNIPER

Party?

EMILY

If you're going to pick on Juniper, maybe I don't want to come.

POLLY

Only the best in the class get invited, not someone who gets "D's" on homework and wears clothes no one else wants.

She pulls her head back inside the car, scrolls up the window, and the car drives away.

PAUL

Wish we could blow out her tires like you can in my video game.

Emily hugs Juniper.

EMILY

I don't want to go to her party. Polly's always got her nose in that magazine; the one with all the fancy clothes. Clothes don't make you special, Juni. We like you just the way you are.

JUNIPER

She's going to tell the rest of the class tomorrow that if they hang around me, they can't go to her party.

EMILY

We don't care, Juni.

PAUL

I like that you're a witch.

JUNIPER

I can't do anything with all this stuff I'm learning. It's all words and waving my hands. Nothing happens.

EMILY

One day it will happen and we'll be here to see it, won't we Paul, cuz we're friends.

Juniper sighs.

JUNIPER

Thanks guys. I'm just gonna go home.

She parts ways with Emily and Paul and heads home.

INT. JUNIPER'S BEDROOM - LATER

Juniper hears the mudroom door scrape open. She picks up the wrinkled piece of paper, the paper with the vocabulary words, and the story written at Janis'.

INT. GRETCHEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Juniper, with the papers, meets Gretchen in the kitchen. Gretchen drops her purse on the kitchen table.

JUNIPER

Hi mom.

GRETCHEN

Hi Juni. How was your day?

JUNIPER

Better than yesterday. I need to tell you before Mrs. Whitlow does.

Juniper hands her mother the wrinkled story paper.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I was angry and made it into a ball.

GRETCHEN

A "D" isn't a good thing.

JUNIPER

I know mom. Here, Mrs. Sullivan helped me write a different story. Would you read it?

Juniper hands the new story to her mother. Gretchen looks at the clock.

GRETCHEN

I'll read it at work. These are the vocabulary words and you did this without magic right?

Juniper looks at the floor.

JUNIPER

Sort of. Mrs. Sullivan had a pencil write it out.

GRETCHEN

I guess that's okay, just don't do magic at school.

(MORE)

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

They want you to learn like people
who don't do magic learn.

Gretchen assembles a baloney and cheese sandwich, apple
slices and milk.

JUNIPER

I know, mom.

GRETCHEN

I'm trusting you to learn proper
magic.

JUNIPER

I am. It's all boring stuff right
now.

GRETCHEN

It's like a job, Juni. You learn how
to do basic things first. Then you
can do fancy stuff.

JUNIPER

I want to learn something fancy now.

Gretchen sets supper on the table, grabs her purse, and
heads for the door.

GRETCHEN

Sweetheart, it will come. Patience.

She leaves. Juniper looks at the baloney and cheese
sandwich, concentrates and levitates the pieces separately.

JUNIPER

I can do magic. I'm ready for more.

The pieces rotate around the plate then, suddenly, collapse,
knocking over the glass of milk.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - MORNING

Fourteen GIRLS, dressed for P.E. stand around a softball
diamond as the PE TEACHER, MR. CAMBRIDGE, late 30's, divides
them into teams. Cambridge is athletic and annoyed he has to
run grade school PE.

Polly is inappropriately dressed for this level of P.E.
Juniper's P.E. clothes are oversize. Polly and Juniper are
on opposite teams.

MR. CAMBRIDGE

You're there and you're on that team
and you're here and you're there.
Okay. You know how this works. We
swap sides when everyone has batted.
NO MAGIC, LADIES. We do this without
magic.

Emily nudges Juniper who giggles.

MR. CAMBRIDGE (cont'd)

Let's go. Juniper. You're first.

The other team takes the field. Polly stands next to one of
her teammates.

MR. CAMBRIDGE (cont'd)

Polly, I need you in shallow right
field.

Polly looks around, confused. Girls on Juniper's team
giggle.

EMILY

Doesn't she know baseball? And look
at that outfit.

JUNIPER

Shhhhh. She'll hear. She's new this
year. Maybe they didn't have P.E.,
like we do, in her other school.

EMILY

Maybe you could make the ball skip so
she misses it.

JUNIPER

I can't do that. I'll really get in
trouble.

EMILY

It would be funny to watch; make her
fall down. Would serve her right for
what she says about you.

JUNIPER

I don't want to know what she says,
Em. It'll make me sad.

MR. CAMBRIDGE

Let's go!

Juniper picks up the batting helmet and bat and steps to the plate. She lets the first two pitches go by.

MR. CAMBRIDGE (cont'd)
Um...Juni. Just hit one. You're not
Kyle Schwarber.

JUNIPER
Wanna bet?

Cambridge lobs the ball and Juniper hits it, hard. The ball sails in Polly's direction. Her teammates yell at her to catch it. Confused about how to get to it, she stands in place and watches the ball sail over the fence, bounce several times and roll into the street.

Polly turns to see Juniper rounding third base and heading for home plate. Juniper jumps on the plate and receives hugs and cheers from her teammates.

Polly looks at her hands and shirt and then at Juniper as she hatches a plan.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

The teams change sides. Juniper plays second base. Polly stands uncomfortably on first base. She whispers at JAQUIE, 9, who ignores her.

A GIRL hits a ground ball to Emily at shortstop. Girls yell at Polly to run to second. Polly runs, stops, starts again. Emily tosses the ball to Juniper who tags the base and throws it to Jaquie.

MR. CAMBRIDGE
You're out!

The runner to first stamps her foot but gives Jaquie a hug which she returns. Polly stands on second base.

JUNIPER
Um...Polly? You're out. It was a
double play.

POLLY
What?

JUNIPER
A double-play. I tagged the base
before you got here so you're out.

POLLY
This game is stupid.

MR. CAMBRIDGE
Polly, you're out. Go stand in line
with the other girls.

Cambridge turns to pitch to the next batter. Polly gives Juniper a shove as she leaves the base.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - LATER

Polly, who has obviously been crying, followed by Mrs. Whitlow, comes into the room. A small knot of children clusters at Juniper's desk. They don't see Polly and Mrs. Whitlow.

EMILY
And then she said, "Wanna bet?" and
she hit it into the street!

Paul and THOMAS JORDAN, 9, jump excitedly around Juniper's desk while she doodles on a piece of notebook paper.

PAUL
Really, Juni? You hit it into the
street? Without magic?

JUNIPER
It bounced into the street. Yes,
without magic.

THOMAS
Whoa. I don't think my brother has
done that.

JUNIPER
Thomas, your brother taught me how to
hit.

PAUL
Juni, that's freakin' amazing!

MRS. WHITLOW
Juniper Julep Fairchild, report to
the principal's office immediately
and take your books. Your homework
will be brought to the office.

The kids are startled and scramble to their seats. Juniper puts away her paper and collects her things. Emily leans over toward her.

EMILY
Whaddid you do?

JUNIPER
I dunno.

INT. GRETCHEN'S CAR - LATER

An unhappy Gretchen drives a crying Juniper home.

JUNIPER
I didn't grab her! I didn't even
touch her! I told you. She shoved me!

GRETCHEN
How do you explain the dirt on her
shirt and the torn collar?

JUNIPER
Mom! I didn't touch her. Ask Mr.
Cambridge. He was there.

GRETCHEN
Mr. Cambridge says he didn't see
anything. He told Polly to leave
second base and he turned to throw
the ball for the next batter. You
could have grabbed her when his back
was turned.

JUNIPER
I didn't!

GRETCHEN
Juni, her mother is demanding I
replace that shirt. It cost \$65. I
don't have \$65 for a shirt. When I
get called to school and I don't
work, I don't get paid. A half a day
is a lot of money for us.

Juniper stares out the window and grumbles.

JUNIPER
I need magic to make them stop.

GRETCHEN
What's that?

JUNIPER
Nothing, mom, nothing.

INT. JANIS' ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

Gretchen and a sullen Juniper stand in Janis's mudroom.

JANIS

It's fine, Gretchen. Take your uniform to the clinic, change there and go to the station right after work. Juniper can stay here until you come home.

GRETCHEN

Thank you so very much. Okay, sweetie. I'll pick up ice cream. It's been a rough day.

Gretchen gently nudges Juniper toward the kitchen, kisses her head, and leaves. Janis closes the door and looks at Juniper.

JANIS

Here we are, once again.

INT. JANIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Juniper slides past her, drops her backpack on the kitchen table and plops down.

JUNIPER

She hates me and she makes everyone pick on me.

JANIS

She strikes me as woefully insecure.

JUNIPER

I don't know what that means.

Janis sighs and sits opposite Juniper.

JANIS

Did you do magic on her?

JUNIPER

NO! I know the stupid rules!

JANIS

I'm just asking. I'm trying to understand this, so perhaps I can cast something which helps.

JUNIPER

Paul says turning her into a frog would work.

JANIS

We have talked, repeatedly, about that.

JUNIPER

What good are spells that don't work?

JANIS

What spells?

JUNIPER

The ones we're doing. You said they would make my friendships better but kids ignore me and they won't play with me at recess. They listen to Polly and pick on me. It's not fair!

JANIS

No, it's not.

JUNIPER

So what good is magic when it doesn't work?

JANIS

Maybe you don't want to be a witch.

JUNIPER

Well maybe I want spells that will stop kids picking on me.

JANIS SULLIVAN

You want to punish people? That's black magic.

JUNIPER

No! Just make them stop picking on me.

Janis looks at her lap and slowly raises her eyes to Juniper.

JANIS

Juniper, you know I won't teach you black magic. It's not good magic. It's designed to hurt people and a witch doesn't hurt people.

She reaches across the table to Juniper and takes her hands.

JANIS (cont'd)

A long time ago, when I studied to become a full-fledged witch, I saw the consequences of someone using black magic.

JUNIPER

What'd they do?

JANIS

What they did is not important. What happened was bad. People got hurt.

JUNIPER

Why can't you tell me?

Janis waves her off.

JANIS

It's not important. You learn what I teach, but if you try black magic, I will quit being your teacher. Do not go down that path, Juniper.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - LATER

Juniper enters the garage carrying the magic book and a bag of supplies. One part of the garage is for a car and has an automatic garage door. The other side is haphazard storage.

Juniper shoves aside a chair to get into the storage side. She opens the book to the summoning spell. It shows a summoning circle made of salt.

Juniper looks at the area, sets the book on the chair, and moves things out of the center of the space.

Out of the bag, she pulls a container of salt, six black votive candles, and a box of matches. She draws a circle with salt on the cleared floor and sets the candles on the salt circle. She lights the candles and looks at the book.

The page radiates a purplish black light.

JUNIPER

I don't know all the words, but I'm going to try.

She picks up the book, walks to the edge of the circle and begins the spell.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - MORNING

Juniper enters the storage side of the garage. It is gloomy. She looks downcast.

JUNIPER
It didn't work.

The golden runes on the book come alive and the book leaks white light. Juniper watches as the salt shines with an unearthly white glow. In the center of the circle is a shadowy, somewhat human, shape.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
Wait, you weren't here yesterday! It did work! I did it!

Juniper opens the book to the summoning page. Her finger follows the words of the spell. The words change color as she reads.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
"The servant is bound to you. It does what you tell it. Have it do those jobs around the house you don't have time for." THE DOOR! I'll bet it can fix the door. "But also think of your wildest desires. The servant will full fill your command."

Juniper closes the book and looks toward Janis's house.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
Sorry Mrs. Sullivan, but you're not casting the spells I need.

She sits down on the floor at the edge of the circle and looks at the shape.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
I need to give you a job, the book says. Okay. Today, you will fix the back door while mom is at work and while I'm at school. When that is done, you come right back here to the circle.

The shape seems to look at her.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
Deal?

The shape emits a hollow sound.

STEPHEN

Yes.

Juniper makes a small hole in the circle.

JUNIPER

There. You can get out. We have a deal.

She gets up, closes the book, sets it on a chair, and leaves. The shape makes a chuckling sound.

INT. GRETCHEN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Juniper does homework at the kitchen table. Occasionally, she giggles and looks at the back door.

Gretchen nearly falls to the floor when the kitchen door opens easily, and quietly.

GRETCHEN

What the...? It's fixed? How was this fixed? Do you know who did it?

JUNIPER

A friend of Thomas' dad fixed it. They gave me a ride home because of the rain. When I told them about the door, they sent the man over to fix it. Didn't take him long.

Gretchen opens and closes the door.

GRETCHEN

I don't know Thomas' parents. I should thank them.

Juniper jumps up.

JUNIPER

Oh no, mom! This was to be a surprise for you. They don't need thanks, they said. They just wanted to help us.

GRETCHEN

What nice people.

JUNIPER

It's magic, mom.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - NIGHT

The shape is more human. It stands inside the circle. It turns toward Juniper when she enters.

JUNIPER

The door doesn't squeak. It closes like mom wants it to. You made her happy.

The shape bows.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Tomorrow, I want you to mow the back yard. It's going to need to be raked, too. I'm supposed to do it after school, but you can do it while I'm at school. And then, weed the garden. Mom said that needs to be done. I guess there are tomatoes she has to pick. You can do all that, right?

The shape nods.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Good. When you're done, come back here.

Juniper leaves the room. There is a flash of dark light and what look like eyes appear in the top of the shape.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

Juniper surveys the lawn. It is mowed and raked with the grass clippings in the compost pile. The grass along the fence has been trimmed.

On the back steps is a collection of tomatoes, squash, peppers, and cucumbers. Juniper dashes happily through the yard to the garage.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Juniper grabs the salt container and pours enough to seal the small hole she made in the circle.

She walks around the circle looking at the servant. It is more human-shaped and there are clearly eyes in a face. The servant turns to face her as she walks around the circle.

Juniper picks up the book. The cover runes come alive with gold and white light. She sits on the floor and opens the book to the instruction pages.

JUNIPER

"How to control your servant. Once you have your servant, you have to give it a name. It is also helpful to give it a form. Think of someone or some thing and think of your servant assuming that shape."

Juniper looks at the misty form.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

My dad's name was "Stephen." I'm gonna call you that. I don't remember him but I've seen his pictures; tall with blue eyes.

The servant takes a vaguely man-shaped form with blue eyes.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

What do I do now?

Juniper snaps the book closed.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Can you...can you make ice cream?

A bowl of vanilla ice cream materializes at Juniper's feet. She picks it up and studies it.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

That looks like ice cream. I wish it was strawberry. That's my favor...

The ice cream changes to strawberry.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Can I have whipped cream and a cherry and a spo...?

Whipped cream and a cherry and a spoon materialize before she finishes the sentence. She takes a tentative bite.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

It's real. It tastes like real ice cream! Can you...can you make chocolate chip cookies?

Four dozen chocolate chip cookies appear at her feet. Juniper nibbles one.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
 Cookies! Can you make a plate of
 spaghetti with meat balls?

Spaghetti with meatballs appears. She pokes the spaghetti
 with her spoon.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
 Whoa!

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - NOON

Recess. Emily, Paul, Thomas, and Juniper are clustered in a
 corner of the yard away from other kids. Juniper has three
 polished rocks in a triangle on the ground in front of her.

At a corner of the school, blended into the shadows, Stephen
 watches Juniper.

JUNIPER
 It doesn't always work for me, but I
 wanted to show you.

She concentrates and waves her hands over the rocks.

EMILY
 What's supposed to happen?

Juniper grunts.

JUNIPER
 If I do it right, they rise up into
 the air and spin around. I did it
 with a sandwich and I did it
 yesterday at Mrs. Sullivan's. I guess
 I have to get better to do it all the
 time.

PAUL
 It's okay, Juni. I believe you can do
 it.

THOMAS
 Me, too.

Crunch of footsteps. The quartet look up to see Polly,
 Christa, and Laurie.

POLLY
 What's the pretend witch trying to do
 now?

EMILY

Witch stuff, which you wouldn't understand.

POLLY

We wanna see. You say you're a witch, show us. Do witchy stuff.

Juniper looks at them and crosses her arms.

JUNIPER

No.

LAURIE

That's cuz you can't do anything. You're pretend, just like Polly says.

The trio walk away laughing. Juniper looks at the ground.

JUNIPER

I am so a witch.

Stephen smirks. Paul sees the rocks rise and spin. They turn into marshmallows. He pokes Juniper.

PAUL

Um, Juni? You did it. The...the rocks.

Juniper, Emily, and Thomas turn around and watch as the marshmallows spin into the sky and out of sight.

JUNIPER

I didn't do that. That's not what's supposed to happen.

EMILY

Will they come down?

JUNIPER

I don't know. Recess is almost over. We need to go by the doors.

They hustle toward the doors into school. There is a scream from the playground. Polly, Christa, and Laurie are under a rain of marshmallows. The quartet watches as the rain follows wherever the girls go. Kids laugh as they catch, and eat, the marshmallows.

Juniper's friends look at her. Terrified at any backlash, Juniper shakes her head, "No", faces the wall of the school and closes her eyes tight.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - EVENING

Juniper sits on the floor paging through a women's fashion magazine. Stephen is more humanoid shape. A pencil works magically to finish math homework.

JUNIPER

I don't know why these clothes are important, but they are. Some are really ugly.

She stops paging and points at a photo.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I remember this. Polly said she wanted this shirt. She was mad because her mother said it cost too much.

She stands.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Can you make clothes for me that look like this?

She holds up the page. Clothes materialize, neatly folded, at her feet. She drops the magazine and holds them up.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

It's like I'm Cinderella and you're my fairy godmother, although you're not a fairy.

She pulls the clothes next to her body as she thinks. She drops them into a heap.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I don't like these. If I wear them, Polly will be mad cuz I have them and she doesn't. Make them go away.

The clothes vanish.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

It shouldn't be about me. Mrs. Sullivan said witches work for good. I KNOW! Mrs. Sullivan's garden is twice the size of ours. I'll bet she could use help picking everything. You could go there tonight, when everyone's asleep, pick everything, and leave it on her patio. Yeah! She'll be so surprised.

EXT. JANIS' YARD - LATE NIGHT

Stephen slides through the hedge and lumbers toward the garden. As ghe passes the house, he stops and convulses, magic crackling across his body. He has to back up and give the house wide berth to get to the garden.

He enters the garden. He encounters obstacles which cause him to emit purple-tinged white light. Stephen lobs the picked produce toward the patio.

INT. JANIS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Janis sleeps soundly until Stephen gets into her garden. Then, she tosses and turns, although does not wake.

EXT. JANIS' PATIO - CONTINUOUS

Three tomatoes land on the patio and explode.

INT. JANIS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Janis awakens in a sweat and panic. She looks around her bedroom as if she expects to see something. She throws back the covers. She lights a taper candle in a candle holder on a small writing desk. She mutters an incantation while she stares at the candle. The flame flickers and flares before going out.

JANIS
Another witch's magic?

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

The class does an art project to make Halloween decorations. They wear old shirts put on backwards. Juniper paints a witch in bright clothes with a pumpkin and a cat.

The kids at Juniper's table: Paul, Thomas, Emily, Jaquie, and KAYLA, 9; laugh and giggle. Polly looks at Juniper's table. Kids at Polly's table are quiet, scared to open their mouths.

Polly nudges Laurie who shakes her head, "No." Polly points her brush at Laurie and mutters something. Laurie slowly lays down her brush and moves toward Juniper's table.

She comes up behind Paul and looks at his painting.

LAURIE

Nice Paul.

He looks up, surprised to see her.

PAUL

Um, thanks Laurie.

Laurie watches the art teacher, MISS JOHNSON, 23, fresh out of college, slightly harried at having to help a lot of kids with ideas but not the skills to execute those ideas.

Laurie slides behind Juniper and shoves her arm. The brush goes across the painting. Juniper whirls around.

JUNIPER

Hey! Why'd you do that?

Emily sets down her brush.

EMILY

Yeah, Laurie. That wasn't nice.

Laurie fumbles with the words and looks at Polly, who stands with her arms crossed. The kids at Polly's table throw themselves into their art.

LAURIE

Your painting is ugly and it needed more. I gave it more.

JUNIPER

You did that to be mean. Polly told you to come pick on me.

Juniper steps toward Laurie with her brush almost touching Laurie's nose.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Stop picking on me. You leave me alone or I'll send my servant to pick on you. I am a witch you know.

EMILY

Juni, that's scary.

Juniper turns to glare at Emily.

JUNIPER

They never pick on you. Why is it always me?

Miss Johnson notices the noise. She approaches the table.

MISS JOHNSON
What is going on here?

Juniper drops the brush onto the table and picks up her painting. She points at Laurie.

JUNIPER
She came over here, bumped my arm on purpose, and made me paint over my painting.

MISS JOHNSON
Laurie?

LAURIE
I just wanted to see what everyone else was painting. Juniper screamed at me. She told me she'd beat me up.

MISS JOHNSON
Juniper, as angry as we can get, we don't threaten people.

JUNIPER
I DIDN'T SAY THAT!

MISS JOHNSON
Miss Fairchild, we do not scream. Why would you threaten her?

JUNIPER
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING! SHE DID IT!

Juniper points at Laurie, who backs away from her.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
Ask her! Why is she over here?

Laurie's lower lip quivers. Juniper steps toward her.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
Polly told you to pick on me!

MISS JOHNSON
I'm going give you a hall pass to the principal's office. You're getting quite hysterical. You need to calm down.

Juniper pulls off her shirt and throws it onto the paint bottles in the center of the table. A couple of the bottles tip over, spilling their contents onto the table.

The kids scramble to save their paintings, right the bottles and start clean up.

Juniper stamps to the front of the classroom and snatches the hall pass from Miss Johnson. Polly giggles.

EXT. JANIS' PATIO - LATER

Juniper trudges slowly after Janis as they cross the patio toward her back door. There are small bits of vegetables in the grass at the edges of the patio. There is a small pile of picked vegetables on the patio table.

Juniper notices scorch marks in the grass. Janis holds open the back door.

INT. JANIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Juniper sits sullenly at the kitchen table. Janis magically prepares a simple snack. Juniper looks at the plate. Janis grabs a cup of coffee from the counter and sits opposite her.

JANIS

I'm not angry about having to pick you up. I did agree to be your mother's backup in emergencies.

Juniper rearranges cookies on the plate, but doesn't eat them. She does not look at Janis.

JANIS (cont'd)

I'm also not going to tell you not to lose your temper.

Surprised, Juniper looks up.

JANIS (cont'd)

Sometimes, that's the only way to make your point.

She takes a long drink of coffee.

JANIS (cont'd)

You experienced the aphorism, "The person who hits last is the one who gets caught."

Juniper goes back to rearranging the cookies.

JANIS (cont'd)
What did you name it?

Juniper knocks over the punch. Janis jumps up, cast a quick spell and the punch freezes. She magics the spilled juice to the sink.

JUNIPER
Name what?

JANIS
It is unbecoming of a lady to lie, particularly to another lady. Witches know when other witches cast spells which affect their homes.

Janis leans on the table.

JANIS (cont'd)
You do not send a spell to another witches' house unless you are asked to. Do you understand?

Juniper nods. Janis stands straight.

JANIS (cont'd)
Somewhere, you found a spell for an invisible servant. I am aware of this spell. In order to have it do things, it needs a name. What did you name it?

Juniper tries to shrink into the chair. She responds in a very quiet voice.

JUNIPER
Stephen, after my dad.

JANIS
I see.

JUNIPER
I didn't know I shouldn't send it here. I was just trying to help.

JANIS
This is not a help. This is black magic. This servant will try to take over. It's what they do.

JUNIPER
You don't know that!

JANIS
Actually, I do. I am a witch and I
know these things.

JUNIPER
I am a witch, too.

JANIS
You are not! You are an apprentice.

Janis sets her coffee cup on the counter and looks out the
kitchen window. She slowly turns around to face Juniper.

JANIS (cont'd)
I told you not to get into black
magic. The witches who do that are
selfish and mean. They cause harm.
Black magic hurts. Do you understand?

Juniper looks down at her hands.

JANIS (cont'd)
I cannot fault you for wanting to try
it. The allure is strong. Every witch
wants to try. The lucky witches have
a teacher who will not let them go
into black magic. You will banish
this servant tonight, while you still
have power over it.

Juniper looks crushed.

JANIS (cont'd)
And whatever book you found which has
the spell, bring to me. Books like
this must be handled carefully.

JUNIPER
It's not hurting anyone. It fixed the
back door. It mowed the lawn and
cleaned out the garden. It's just a
servant.

JANIS
There are no buts. If you think you
can control this, you are mistaken. I
repeat, if you go into black magic, I
will have nothing to do with you. You
will be on your own. Dismiss it
tonight, after your mother goes to
the station.

INT. GRETCHEN'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Juniper looks at a picture book about farmers. Gretchen enters the living room carrying a small manilla mailing envelope. She sits next to Juniper on the sofa.

Stephen roams around the house's exterior, looking in windows. He stops when he reaches the living room window.

JUNIPER

You're gonna be late for work mom.

GRETCHEN

I'm not going in today. I don't feel like it.

She opens the envelope and slides out a photo of a young man and woman, obviously in love, standing on the edge of a corn field.

A yellow note is stuck to the front. "Dear Gretchen, I found this when I was cleaning. I'm sure you don't have this photo of you and Stephen when you came to visit. Enjoy. Aunt Chris." Juniper takes the photo.

JUNIPER

This is you and dad? Was this before I was born?

GRETCHEN

It was before we'd even talked about getting married. He wanted me to meet his family.

Gretchen gets up and gazes at photos on the wall.

JUNIPER

You miss him, don't you?

GRETCHEN

He loved you so much, Juni. All the things you are are so much him.

She takes a photo of Stephen off the wall and turns to Juniper.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

Sometimes, I curse this life that he is gone. We were going to have a farm. We were going to raise chickens and cows. After the accident, coming here to town, I felt like I'd let him down.

She rehangs the photo

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

Some days I miss him so much and then
some days, I barely think about him.
It's been seven years.

Juniper gets up and gives her mom a hug. Stephen focuses on the photo lying on the sofa.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Juniper enters the storage area after midnight. Stephen is clearly shaped like Juniper's father although he is translucent.

JUNIPER

Wow. You look like dad from that
photo.

She picks up the salt container to close the circle.

STEPHEN

Hello Juniper.

She drops the container.

JUNIPER

Did...did you just say, "Hello?"

Stephen bows.

STEPHEN

I did. Is that not the correct
greeting when one sees someone one
knows?

JUNIPER

You can talk?

STEPHEN

I can; to you.

Juniper picks up the container.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

I have been out today.

JUNIPER

But I didn't give you orders.

STEPHEN

I went to see where I could be of help.

JUNIPER

Help?

STEPHEN

Of course, Juniper. You summoned me to be of help to you and your mother. But there are others who can use assistance.

Stephen slides out of the crack in the circle and drifts around the room.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

I helped an older gentleman with his back fence which was collapsing. I helped a woman with two young children carry her foodstuffs from her car's boot to her icebox. I helped someone named "Portly" retrieve his dog named "Ickers".

Juniper thinks.

JUNIPER

You helped Bobby Tisch find Knickers. His grandma calls him "Portly" cuz it's a word for "fat". Uh...uh...uh...other kids call him that. I just call him "Bobby".

STEPHEN

That explains why he was so happy. He was not able to get under the fence to get the dog from the adjacent yard.

JUNIPER

Mr. Ceja's yard; their neighbor. Knickers keeps digging holes under the fence and Mr. Ceja threatens to shoot Knickers if he ever catches him in his yard.

STEPHEN

Well then, I shall endeavor to fix this situation tomorrow.

Uncomfortable silence.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

That other witch told you to dismiss me, didn't she? She's not lying when she tells you witches know. I can't go near her house because I wasn't invited. She should have told you this.

JUNIPER

She says you're black magic and you'll hurt me.

STEPHEN

She says that because she's jealous. She didn't call me, you did. I am under your control. Watch.

Stephen slides into the circle. He points at the gap.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

Now close it.

Juniper pours salt into the gap. Stephen tries to leave but a force field prevents this.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

See, Juniper, you hold the power to control me. Your commands lock me into what I have to do. All those things I created just for you. They made you happy.

Juniper looks at the salt container, then in the direction of Janis's house.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

Let me help more people. I will go to Bobby's house tonight and fix his fence so "Knickers"...is that the dog's name...

Juniper nods.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

...so Knickers cannot leave the yard. I shall return here.

JUNIPER

I guess one more night is okay.

STEPHEN

And what little thing can I do for your mother?

JUNIPER
Don't do anything to my mom!

STEPHEN
I won't do anything to her. I shall
provide small tokens of my esteem for
raising a charming and malleable
daughter.

Juniper thinks on this for a moment before dismissing it.

JUNIPER
You won't hurt my mom.

STEPHEN
Dear Juniper, I wouldn't dream of it.

She makes a hole in the circle.

INT. GRETCHEN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Gretchen flips the last of a stack of pancakes. She goes to
the bottom of the stairs.

GRETCHEN
Juni? Juni? Juniper!?

JUNIPER (O.S.)
Mmmmm...mom?

GRETCHEN
Breakfast.

Noise from Juniper's room. Pounding on the stairs. Juniper
lands at the bottom of the stairs, fully dressed.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
Where are you going?

JUNIPER
I'm gonna be late for school.

Gretchen laughs and sits a plate with two pancakes on the
table. She rumples Juniper's hair.

GRETCHEN
It's Saturday, sweetie. You don't
have school and I don't have to work.

Juniper sinks into the chair.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
Is something wrong? It's not like you
to forget.

Juniper grabs the plate and a fork.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
Nothing you need to tell me?
Everything is okay at school?

JUNIPER
Yes, mom. Everything is fine. We
haven't had pancakes in awhile.

Gretchen removes the last two from the skillet and drops
them on the stack.

GRETCHEN
I found a twenty dollar bill in my
purse when I was at the station. Not
sure where it came from. I bought ice
cream and thought it would be nice to
have pancakes, so I got mix.

Juniper drops her fork.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
What is wrong with you?

JUNIPER
Nothing mom! I swear!

Juniper frantically goes back to eating.

INT. GRETCHEN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gretchen watches TV in the living room. Juniper sneaks down
the stairs. She freezes when she hears the TV.

JUNIPER
What am I gonna do? I can't get to
the garage.

She sits on the steps with her head in her hands.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - AFTERNOON

Juniper scrambles through the garage. Stephen stands in the
circle. He appears to be wearing shoes, pants, and a shirt.

STEPHEN

Good afternoon, Juniper. I thought, perhaps, you had forgotten me.

Juniper collapses onto the floor, dropping her backpack.

JUNIPER

It was the weekend. I couldn't get down here because mom wanted to do things together.

STEPHEN

Ah. No matter. I have been very helpful in the interim.

JUNIPER

What did you do?

Stephen slides out of the circle and prowls around the storage area.

MONTAGE

The servant looks like Stephen Fairchild from the photo. He magically sinks the fence between the Tisch and Ceja yards.

He helps stack wood in a cord adjacent to a garage.

He fixes wooden steps and the attached hand rails.

He helps a young girl ride a bike.

STEPHEN (V.O.)

As I promised, I fixed Bobby's fence. I stacked wood for winter. I fixed steps. I taught a young child how to ride a bike.

END MONTAGE

JUNIPER

THAT WAS YOU?

STEPHEN

I see you heard.

JUNIPER

It was all Paul could talk about today. Some guy, walking down the street, helped his sister learn to ride a bike.

STEPHEN

That was me. I made people happy. You commanded me to be so, and therefore I am.

Juniper gazes at the book. The runes flash and run across the cover. She opens the book to the summoning page. White and gold light flash from other pages. The words on the page seem alive.

Juniper turns to "Banishing Your Servant". Stephen lays a hand on the page. The words fade and meld into one another.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

Have I not proven my worth? Why would you banish something so helpful? What other tasks do you have? I can do them.

Juniper looks up at Stephen's face. He smiles. She sets down the book, still open to the banishment page.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

I believe all Hallow's Eve is upcoming. Wouldn't you like help for, what is it you do, tricks or treats?

JUNIPER

I prolly won't go. No one goes trick or treating with me and stupid Polly has a party that night and I'm not invited. Everyone else is, even Emily and Paul.

Stephen circles to the opposite side of the room. He waves his hand and images of generic children's Halloween costumes appear; nurse, doctor, fireman, farmer, etc.

STEPHEN

First step is to make you a costume better than anyone's.

Wide-eyed, Juniper watches.

JUNIPER

Could we do a farmer? My dad was a farmer.

STEPHEN

Farmer it is.

He waves his hands and images of farmers appear.

STEPHEN (cont'd)
 Why don't you can tell me what the
 children who pick on you say.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Halloween party. Kids are dressed in all manner of costumes. Polly is a queen with Christa and Laurie as her princesses. Juniper is a farmer with a hoe, a small pumpkin, plaid shirt, overalls, and a straw hat.

Stephen lingers against the ceiling in a corner of the room. He melds into the shadows. No one sees him.

Polly walks up to Juniper.

POLLY
 What are you supposed to be, a bum?

JUNIPER
 I am a pumpkin farmer.

POLLY
 Oh my god. Pumpkins don't come from farms.

JUNIPER
 They do because I looked it up at the library.

POLLY
 Oh yes, the library because you're poor and don't have a computer at home. And you need to address me as "Your Highness".

Emily walks up.

EMILY
 And what are you supposed to be?

JUNIPER
 I'm a...

EMILY
 Not you, Juni. Your costume's cool. I'm asking Polly.

POLLY
 I am Queen Pollyanna of Deevon.

Emily looks her over.

EMILY

Heh, there is no such place so you're a fake queen. Come on, Juni. We're gonna play punkin chuckin'. I want you on my team.

Juniper goes with Emily to a knot of kids.

PAUL

Juni! You do this better than anyone. I want to be on your team.

JAQUIE

NOOOO! Juni's on my team!

JUNIPER

Guys. I can't be on anyone's team. That makes one team have too many and that's not fair.

EMILY

Someone has to sit out then so Juni can be on a team.

JUNIPER

I got it! I'll be on both teams. I'll go first.

The kids form into two groups. Juniper picks up a felt "pumpkin" bean bag and tosses it toward baskets with point numbers written on them.

Stephen raises a hand and every toss Juniper makes goes into the bucket with the highest points. Kids cheer and pat Juniper on the back. She glows with happiness.

Polly sits on a chair and pouts. Christa and Laurie take turns feeding her cake.

POLLY

This is a dumb party. Mine is going to be so much better.

Stephen slides down the wall and slithers across the floor toward Polly. He arrives at her feet and rocks her chair.

POLLY (cont'd)

Stop that! You're tipping my chair!

Laurie looks at the ground.

LAURIE

I am not! I'm not touching it.

Polly tips over taking Laurie with her. Stephen sneaks behind Christa and trips her as she tries to help Polly up, causing her to fall on top of Polly.

Kids in the classroom turn to look at the pile of girls struggling to get up and they burst into laughter.

Stephen slides up the wall back to the corner. Polly finally sits up and glares at Juniper who tosses beanbags, not paying attention to her.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - EVENING

Juniper, still in costume, dances into the storage room. The transformation to Stephen in the photo is 90% complete.

JUNIPER

It worked just like you said it would! Everyone played with me! Everyone talked to me! I have so much candy. The school party was awesome! Trick or treating was awesome!

Stephen floats out of the circle, extends hands at Juniper and they dance around the storage room.

STEPHEN

You mentioned a party.

JUNIPER

Yeah, there was a party at Polly's tonight, but Paul and Thomas went with me. They said they left the party because there was a dead fish in the apple bobbing bucket and Polly's parents got into a fight. I gotta go to bed. I'm really tired.

She starts to exit the storage area but turns back.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I don't understand why Mrs. Sullivan is so afraid of you.

She pats her costume and holds her treat bag to her chest.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Kids aren't picking on me. Mom's happy. That's what I want. It feels funny but thanks.

Juniper leaves.

STEPHEN

Interesting. We call ourselves "Mrs. Sullivan" now.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Kids are antsy before school starts and talking over each other. Jaquie, Emily, Paul, and Thomas are clustered in the back corner near Juniper's desk. They are holding small books which contain a play.

EMILY

What did you try out for? I want to be "Emily".

JAQUIE

You should be something other than your name, Em.

EMILY

Why? Then I don't have to remember who I am.

JAQUIE

Do we have to memorize all of it? Can we just read from the book?

THOMAS

We have to memorize it. My sister said it's hard. Last year, one of the girls forgot her words and started crying on the stage.

PAUL

I don't want to have to memorize anything so I didn't try out. What did you try out for, Juni?

JUNIPER

I didn't. When I saw Christa and Polly get all excited, I knew I wouldn't get anything. Mrs. Whitlow hates me. She'll never pick me for anything.

The kids are uncomfortable with this truth.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Besides, I don't have time to be in a play. I have to study so I can be a witch.

Mrs. Whitlow comes into the room. The kids take their seats. Paul leans across the aisle.

PAUL
Are you gonna turn people into frogs?

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Juniper, Emily, and Paul collect their coats off hooks outside the classroom door. Laurie lingers in the background where she can hear their conversation.

EMILY
It's been awful.

PAUL
I can't wait to see how bad it is.

EMILY
Polly keeps talking over everyone. I wish you didn't have to come see it.

JUNIPER
We have to go because teachers tell us to. Plus we have to cheer on our friends. I'll clap for you, Emily.

PAUL
So will I.

JUNIPER
I could cast a spell for you; one that would make you feel better about remembering your lines.

Emily and Paul stop to look at Juniper.

EMILY
Really? A real life magic spell?

JUNIPER
Sure. I do spells all the time, now. I'm getting good at them.

PAUL
Can you do potions and shit?

They gape at him.

PAUL (cont'd)
I mean, potions and stuff. Come on. My brother says "shit" all the time.

JUNIPER

I don't do potions. I haven't learned how. I cast spells. I'll cast a spell for you Emily, so you're not scared.

EMILY

Will it hurt?

JUNIPER

No. It will make you feel better when you're on stage.

PAUL

Can you cast spells to change people into frogs?

JUNIPER

Paul? What is with you and frogs? That's only in the movies. I can't turn people into frogs, but, I know spells that make things go wrong.

Laurie steps back from the group and eyes Juniper.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - LATER

Juniper sits on the floor. Stephen appears completely solid.

JUNIPER

So, Stephen, just something to make her feel better about saying her lines.

STEPHEN

I could cast a small spell to interfere with Polly...

JUNIPER

NO!

She stands up and points at the book which is emitting dark blue and black shafts of light.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I will get in trouble if you cast something against Polly. They'll find out somehow.

STEPHEN

She picks on you.

JUNIPER

I know but I don't wanna hurt her. I want Emily to feel she can do this because she can.

Stephen extends his hands toward Juniper.

STEPHEN

Very well. Come then. Let us begin.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE SCHOOL THEATER - DAY

The students mingle with administration, teachers, parents, and other classmates after the play.

Emily runs over to Juniper.

EMILY

It worked Juni, it really worked!

JUNIPER

Don't tell anyone, Emily. It's got to be our secret. People are kind of scared of magic like that.

Laurie strides up to Juniper with Polly and Christa in tow. Laurie points at Juniper.

LAURIE

Tell them.

JUNIPER

Tell them what?

LAURIE

Tell them you cast a spell on Polly so she'd fail.

Juniper starts.

LAURIE (cont'd)

See? I told you.

Polly shoves Laurie out of the way.

POLLY

You are disgusting.

JUNIPER

I don't know what you're talking about.

LAURIE

LIAR!

People near the girls stop talking and turn to look. Mrs. Whitlow and POLLY'S MOTHER stride quickly to where the girls are.

LAURIE (cont'd)

I HEARD YOU! You told Emily and Paul you cast a witch spell to make things go wrong. I knew you were horrible!

POLLY

You made me stumble and fall. You made me miss my grand entrance. YOU MADE ME FORGET!

Paul, Thomas, and Jaquie approach the group.

JUNIPER

I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING! It's not my fault you're awful.

POLLY

People were laughing at me!

JUNIPER

So what?

Mrs. Whitlow reaches the group.

MRS. WHITLOW

What's all the yelling about?

LAURIE

I heard her! She cast a spell on Polly! She said she did.

PATRICIA ABRAMSON, 38, showy, shallow, arrogant; positions herself in front of Juniper.

PATRICIA

What are you doing to my daughter?

JUNIPER

I'm not doing anything.

POLLY

She's lying, mom. She lies about everything.

PATRICIA

How dare you assault my daughter!

MRS. WHITLOW

Mrs. Abramson, we don't know that anything happened here.

LAURIE

She's a witch. She told Emily she was.

Mrs. Whitlow turns to Patricia.

MRS. WHITLOW

We have strict rules about the use of magic in school. I do not believe this child cast any spell on your daughter. It would get her expelled.

PATRICIA

Polly's reputation has been smeared. You saw how my daughter faltered on the stage. It's because this child cast spells on her to make her acting fail.

Mrs. Whitlow considers her next words.

MRS. WHITLOW

Mrs. Abramson, Polly was cast in a part which was over her head in ability. I take responsibility for this.

Quiet snickering from some kids, not Juniper.

Patricia points at Juniper.

PATRICIA

How dare you take the side of this child. I will be speaking with the administration. You, witch, are going to be expelled and you, Mrs. Whitlow, will be out of a job!

Patricia grabs Polly's hand and drags her away from the group. Polly sticks her tongue out at Juniper.

MRS. WHITLOW

I sincerely hope you didn't cast any spells on Polly because I took a risk in sticking my neck out for you.

EXT. SIDEWALK BY JANIS' HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Juniper straggles home in a light drizzle. Paul and Emily catch up to her by Janis's driveway.

PAUL

Juni! Juni! Wait up!

EMILY

What happened at the principal's office?

JUNIPER

Nothing.

PAUL

Nothing? What do you mean nothing? Polly's mom was angry.

EMILY

Did you really cast a spell on Polly?

JUNIPER

NO! You know the rules about magic in school!

EMILY

Juni, we're your friends. You can tell us. We don't like her either.

JUNIPER

I cast a spell to help you, Emily. That's all I did.

PAUL

So Mrs. Murphy didn't believe her mom?

JUNIPER

Mrs. Abramson screamed at her about how it wasn't safe to have witches in school. Mrs. Murphy looked at me and said, "She knows the rules. If she was a witch, we'd know about it." Mrs. Whitlow looked at me like she never wanted to see me again.

EMILY

You are a witch, Juni. I believe you.

JUNIPER

Well, don't believe me. I'm not a witch, at least, not a good one. I gotta go. I gotta write a paper.

PAUL

A paper? Was that homework I missed?

JUNIPER

No. Mrs. Whitlow told me in Mrs. Murphy's office I had to write it.

PAUL

Oh. Whew, I mean, for me. I don't write good.

EMILY

On what?

JUNIPER

On why you don't do witchcraft at school.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Juniper drags her backpack into the storage room. She plops down on the floor.

STEPHEN

How was the play?

JUNIPER

Fine.

STEPHEN

What happened? We cast that spell on Emily. Did it not work?

JUNIPER

Emily was totally scared but once she started saying her lines, she remembered everything.

STEPHEN

So why are you sad?

JUNIPER

I got called a witch today.

STEPHEN

Bravo!

JUNIPER

I don't want to be called a witch in front of everyone. People think I cast spells and we can't do that in school. It's the rule.

STEPHEN

Rules which make no sense and are made to be broken.

JUNIPER

Laurie started screaming that I cast a spell on Polly because she heard me say I was a witch.

Juniper stands.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

What did you do to Polly?

Stephen steps backwards.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

You cast something on her, even after I told you not to.

STEPHEN

I cannot go against your wishes, Juniper.

Stephen points at the book which flashes runes across its face.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

It's in the book, remember.

JUNIPER

Something happened because Polly made a mess of her part. I heard her practice. She wasn't bad. You did something.

STEPHEN

I did nothing of the sort. I am here to help you and you alone.

JUNIPER

Maybe I'm just a kid who can't do anything right. I gotta go do my homework.

Juniper exits, dragging her backpack.

STEPHEN
For me, you're doing fine.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE ABRAMSON'S HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

Stephen stands in front of Polly's house. He concentrates and the interior lights start flashing. Doors fly open and slam shut. Blinds fly up and down.

Across the street, Christa awakens to the noise and looks out her bedroom window. She sees Stephen in the street. He turns to look at her and has red glowing eyes. Christa screams.

EXT. JANIS' GARDEN - AFTERNOON

Juniper walks past Janis's driveway on her way home. Janis exits her garden with the last of the season's produce. She sees Juniper, drops the produce and runs toward her. She catches Juniper's arm and drags Juniper to the patio.

JANIS
Juniper Fairchild! I told you to
dismiss that servant.

Juniper freezes, her lower lip quivers. Janis stands erect.

JUNIPER
It's not doing anything wrong! It's
helped a lot of people.

JANIS
The servant is using you.

JUNIPER
You're just jealous because the
servant is better at magic than you.

Janis steps back.

JANIS
I warned you.

JUNIPER
I control it. It does what I tell it
to do.

JANIS
Go.

Juniper looks confused.

JANIS (cont'd)
I said, "Go." Leave.

Juniper shoulds her backpack and walks away from the patio. She looks back at Janis.

JUNIPER
You said you would teach me.

JANIS
I don't know how you figured out how to cast that spell but it's now yours to handle.

Janis folds her arms.

JANIS (cont'd)
And ask your servant why it attacked Polly and Christa, if you think you have it controlled.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Juniper enters the garage. Gretchen's car is in the garage which is unusual at this time of day. Juniper looks at it as she enters the storage room. Stephen is sitting on a pile of boxes. The light in the room has a purplish cast to it.

Juniper takes a deep breath and steps toward the circle. The circle crackles with magic, revealing a number of holes which would let Stephen get out. Juniper does not see the salt container.

JUNIPER
You scared Polly and Christa?

STEPHEN
A little.

JUNIPER
What happens when Polly tells everyone at school that I did it?

STEPHEN
Then I have more people to scare.

JUNIPER
I DIDN'T WANT YOU SCARING ANYONE.

Stephen floats over to Juniper. He wraps her in an embrace.

STEPHEN

Dear child, you have been bereft of a father figure for so long. Parents stand up to bullies for their children. That is merely what I did.

Juniper wiggles free, grabs her backpack and flees.

INT. GRETCHEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Juniper enters the kitchen from the mudroom.

JUNIPER

Mom? Mom? Are you home?

Gretchen steps into the kitchen from the living room. She's been crying.

GRETCHEN

Hi Juni. I was waiting for you in the living room. I...I thought you came in that way.

Juniper drops her backpack.

JUNIPER

Sometimes. What's wrong mom? You're home early.

Gretchen takes a deep breath.

GRETCHEN

Dr. Drummond fired me today.

JUNIPER

What?

GRETCHEN

He fired me. Told me to clean out my stuff and leave.

JUNIPER

Why?

Gretchen caresses Juniper's face.

GRETCHEN

I didn't do anything, sweetie, other than be myself. Mrs. Gayle came to the clinic today for her diabetes check.

(MORE)

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

She said she saw a guy who looked just like your dad walking around town. He was offering to help people.

Juniper freezes.

JUNIPER

He looked like dad?

GRETCHEN

I know that sounds silly, but that's the fourth time in two weeks someone's come into the clinic and said they saw your dad roaming around.

Gretchen paces.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

The comments shocked me. I didn't know what to say. Dr. Drummond said I wasn't organized, that I'm easily distracted.

She looks at Juniper and takes a deep breath.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

He also said I have a child who needs attention which I can't provide if I'm working. He was helping me make a decision on what was more important.

Juniper bursts into tears. She hugs Gretchen and sobs into her shirt.

JUNIPER

I'll be good mom! I'll be perfect!

GRETCHEN

Sweetie, it's okay. You're fine. I have the gas station. I'll ask if I can have more hours; maybe some during the day.

She wipes Juniper's tears from her face.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

It's just that Christmas won't be very big this year, honey.

Juniper cries with her mother. Stephen watches the two from the kitchen window.

INT. JUNIPER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Juniper models a costume for her mom. She wears a knee-length forest green wool cape and matching beret. She holds a cardboard replica of an artist's palette in one hand as she pirouettes around the room.

Stephen peers in the living room window.

JUNIPER
Whaddaya think mom? Whaddaya think? I
look like an artist!

Gretchen, dressed for her job at the gas station, agrees.

GRETCHEN
It's lovely, Juni. Did you write your
report?

JUNIPER
I don't have to write it. Mrs.
Whitlow said we should tell people
about our person. I have a whole page
of notes.

Juniper flips over the palette to show her notes taped to the back of it.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
I have everything sortta memorized.
I'm going to tell them all about
Rembrandt.

GRETCHEN
Hmmm...maybe you should write out
something before you go to bed.

Juniper kisses her mother's cheek.

JUNIPER
Don't worry, mom. I got this.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Paul stands in front of the class. He wears oversize plastic circular glasses and a man's tweed jacket. He holds a clarinet in one hand and reads his report slowly and awkwardly. Juniper fidgets. Stephen watches Juniper from outside the classroom window.

PAUL

On June 13, 1986, Good man was practicing a son ata by Jo han nes Bra hams when he died of a heart attack. He was seventy-seven years old. And that's my report on Benny Goodman.

Paul bows as the children applaud. Paul quickly takes his seat. Mrs. Whitlow walks from her desk to the front of the room. Juniper leans toward Paul.

JUNIPER

That was good, Paul.

Paul nods and removes the glasses and jacket.

MRS. WHITLOW

Juniper Julep Fairchild.

Juniper mutters to herself.

JUNIPER

Why does she have to use all my names?

Juniper strides quickly to the front of the class.

MRS. WHITLOW

And who is your report on?

JUNIPER

My report is on the artist, Rembrandt.

Juniper looks at her notes and begins.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

He is called only by his first name. He was Dutch and is considered the best Dutch artist of all time.

[10 MINUTES LATER]

JUNIPER (cont'd)

When he died, on October 4, 1669, he was poor. He was buried in the unmarked section of the church cemetery. After 20 years, the church dug up what was left of his body and destroyed it to make room for someone else.

(MORE)

JUNIPER (cont'd)

But though there is no place for us
to visit, he lasts through his art.
Rembrandt.

The class, except Polly, Christa, and Laurie, applaud. Mrs. Whitlow sits at her desk playing with a pencil. She holds out her hand.

MRS. WHITLOW

Your report, please.

Juniper flips over the palette to show her notes.

JUNIPER

I went to the library and read all
these books about him. I have notes.

MRS. WHITLOW

I required a report.

JUNIPER

You said to tell us, not read off a
paper.

MRS. WHITLOW

I will not accept your notes. Sit
down and write a report. No recess
until it's done.

Polly, Laurie, and Christa giggle. Juniper walks slowly to her desk and sits down. She wipes away a tear. Stephen vanishes.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - LATER

Juniper sits alone in a dark classroom finishing her report. She wears her cape and beret. The classroom door opens and Stephen glides in.

JUNIPER

You're...you're not supposed to be
here! What if someone sees you?

Stephen magics the pencil away from Juniper, splashes words on the paper and floats it to Mrs. Whitlow's desk. Juniper runs after it.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

NO! I'll get in trouble if she thinks
magic wrote it.

The paper lands on Mrs. Whitlow's desk. It is now too heavy for Juniper to pick up.

STEPHEN

Sign your name. You can go play.

Juniper looks at the paper. The pencil floats above it. She is forced to sign her name. Stephen opens the classroom door and shoves her into the hallway.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

And now...

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Juniper puts on her gloves and slowly heads to the playground doors. She looks back at the classroom, then to the exit doors. She sees Emily standing just outside the exit doors. She talks with Laurie.

Juniper slowly opens a door. The girls don't hear this.

EMILY

No, she's not a witch. How could you believe that?

LAURIE

She said she cast spells.

EMILY

She can't. She's no good. Just go along with it. Pretend to believe her.

Juniper closes the door. She pulls off her gloves and trudges down the hall toward the classroom, occasionally looking back at Emily and Laurie in animated discussion visible through the glass.

Juniper arrives at the classroom door. She sees a tornado of paper bouncing around the room. She flees to the bathroom.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kids line up outside the classroom as Mrs. Whitlow waits for the JANITOR, 45, to open the classroom door.

Juniper, at the end of the line faces the wall. Emily, toward the front of the line, looks back at Juniper, trying to catch her eye.

JANITOR
There you are, Mrs. Whitlow.

MRS. WHITLOW
Everyone inside.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kids enter and gasp at the destruction. Mrs. Whitlow walks in followed by the janitor.

MRS. WHITLOW
What the he...

Desks are overturned, contents strewn around. On the white board, the word "LIAR!" is written in every shade of marker. Papers are everywhere. Items dangle from the light fixtures. The janitor's mouth drops open when he sees the state of the room.

JANITOR
Sonofa... I'll get Mrs. Murphy right away.

He runs from the room.

Juniper's eyes grow wide when she gets into the room. Her desk is not upended. It is surrounded by a fort of all the books from the class. A brand new backpack rests on her desk chair.

Mrs. Whitlow strides angrily over to Juniper. She grabs one of Juniper's arms. As she does this, Laurie screams.

LAURIE
MONSTER!

Mrs. Whitlow whirls around. Laurie points at a corner of the room. Kids see Stephen standing in the corner. He is larger than a human with red eyes and a gaping mouth filled with sharp teeth.

MRS. WHITLOW
What monster?

Stephen lets out a maniacal laugh and rises to the ceiling. He opens his arms. The hands are hooks. He glides slowly toward the children who panic and back up. Paul slides over to Juniper as some class members flee the room.

PAUL
Can you make it go away?

Juniper shushes him.

Stephen swings an arm at the kids and another batch flee into the hall. Stephen laughs again and follows them out the door.

POLLY
It's a monster! Save us!

MRS. WHITLOW
I don't see anything!

Polly screams dramatically.

POLLY
I'll bet Juniper called this!

A few kids still in the room turn to look at Juniper as fire alarms go off all around the building. Lights in the hall flash.

JUNIPER
NO! NO! I didn't! I can't!

POLLY
LIAR! You said you were a witch! You did it!

A ceiling tile explodes over Polly's head covering her in dust. Horrified, Juniper backs toward her desk.

PA SYSTEM
Attention teachers, we will be evacuating the school. Please take your children to the assigned locations to await their parents. Walkers may be dismissed.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

Juniper's class stands in a huddle on the playground. No one has a coat although some wear their costumes.

MRS. WHITLOW
Walkers. You can head home. All parents have been notified. If you are not allowed home before a certain time or are waiting for a ride, you must stay here.

Juniper, wearing her Rembrandt cape, backs up until she gets to the edge of the playground near a tree.

Stephen, translucent, sits among the branches, watching.
Emily catches up to her.

EMILY

Juni! That monster! The adults can't see it.

JUNIPER

Get away from me.

EMILY

Juni, what's wrong?

JUNIPER

I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY FRIEND. I heard what you said to Laurie. You don't think I'm a witch.

Emily thinks for a minute.

EMILY

Juni! That wasn't about you! I believe you are a witch. You helped me with the play.

JUNIPER

LIAR! You're just like everyone else. Don't talk to me. Go talk to your best friend, Polly.

Juniper turns and runs away. Stephen's eyes narrow.

THOMAS

What happened to Juni?

EMILY

Laurie told me Polly thinks she wants to be a witch now. She wants to copy Juni. Juni heard me talking to Laurie and thinks I was talking about her.

Emily flops down in the dirt and starts to cry.

EMILY (cont'd)

She's my friend, Thomas. She's my friend.

EXT. SIDEWALK BY JANIS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Juniper shuffles home. Thomas catches up to her. He is out of breath.

THOMAS

Juni! Juni! Juni, wait up.

JUNIPER

Now what?

THOMAS

Juni, that thing in the classroom,
did you do that?

JUNIPER

NO!

THOMAS

It's okay if you don't want to tell
me. I still think you're the best
witch.

JUNIPER

DON'T TELL ANYONE I'M A WITCH, OKAY?

Thomas backs up.

THOMAS

Okay, Juni, I won't.

They look at each other in awkward silence.

JUNIPER

I gotta go. I promised my mom I'd
clean up the kitchen.

THOMAS

Juni, Emily told me she was talking
about Polly, not you.

JUNIPER

Polly?

THOMAS

She said Polly wants to be a witch
now. She's copying you.

JUNIPER

Polly can't be a witch. She's
horrible.

THOMAS

Emily was crying when you ran away.

JUNIPER

I can't talk to her anymore. I told her to leave me alone. No one likes me.

Thomas touches Juniper's arm.

THOMAS

Well, me, Emily, and Paul like you. We'll sit with you at the party next week.

JUNIPER

What party?

THOMAS

The Christmas party? The one Christa and Polly are having? They said everyone in fifth grade was invited. We have to dress up and bring a gift and there will be food.

Juniper shakes her head.

JUNIPER

I wasn't invited.

She runs home.

INT. EXAM ROOM IN DR. DRUMMOND'S CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

Paul and his MOTHER, ELIZABETH, 35, wait for Dr. Drummond. Paul holds his left wrist. Every time he shifts, as he sits on the exam table, he winces. Elizabeth pats his knee.

ELIZABETH

Dr. Drummond will be in soon.

Door opens and in swishes DR. DRUMMOND, 65. He's condescending with an ingratiating manner. He is followed by LARA, 38, his nurse who avoids eye contact with anyone in the room.

DR. DRUMMOND

So, you were trying to be a monkey today?

He starts examining Paul, who winces with every touch.

DR. DRUMMOND (cont'd)

Came down on this when you fell?

Paul nods as Lara types up notes on a tablet. Drummond turns to Elizabeth.

DR. DRUMMOND (cont'd)
Yup, broken. Will need a cast for at least 6 weeks.

Screams come from the outer office.

DR. DRUMMOND (cont'd)
What the ever lovin' hell?

A loud crash. Drummond opens the exam room door. Papers fly into the room. A swirling mass of gray-colored air surrounds Drummond. It pulls his coat over his head. Loose items in the exam room go flying. Dr. Drummond fights to get out of the cloud.

PAUL
That thing from school! It's here!

Lara flattens herself against the wall.

ELIZABETH
What is it?

PAUL
It's some kind of monster. It destroyed our classroom.

ELIZABETH
PAUL! Get down!

Paul holds his arm as he slides off the table. His mother grabs him and they race from the room. Lara drops the tablet and flees. Dr. Drummond is spun around and around. A maniacal cackle emits from the cloud.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emily's bedroom reflects her love of animals and cartoons. She sits in a bean bag chair writing in her diary.

Loud BANGING in her closet. Emily ignores it at first, but when it persists, she gets up.

EMILY
Sean, this is not funny. Quit it and get out of there.

She throws open the closet door and sees a greenish blobby monster before all her clothes are thrown on her.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Juniper, fists clenched, stands in front of Stephen.

JUNIPER

You went after my class! WHY?

Stephen is 8 feet tall and alternates between a demon and Juniper's father. When it speaks, its voice echos.

STEPHEN

Because they pick on you. I saw it.
They must be hurt back.

JUNIPER

NOOOOOO! I get blamed for what you
do. You can't just decide who you
want to pick on.

Juniper looks at the book. It glows all sorts of colors as the magic inside awakens.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

Mrs. Sullivan was right.

Stephen looks worried but regains composure. Juniper opens the book to the banishing spell.

STEPHEN

Dear Juniper, I am here only for you
and your desires. Who is the child
who talked against you today, Emily?

JUNIPER

No. Not Emily.

STEPHEN

I may have scared her, a little.

JUNIPER

You can't scare my friends!

She quickly reads part of the banishing spell.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I need the salt. Where is the salt?

STEPHEN

You will not find it. I have scared
those who hurt your mother.

JUNIPER

What?

Stephen folds his arms.

STEPHEN

Ask Paul.

JUNIPER

GET IN THE CIRCLE.

STEPHEN

I will not.

Stephen roars. Juniper picks up the book which, suddenly, has more weight than she remembers.

JUNIPER

I am the summoner! You gotta do what
I tell you!

Stephen laughs.

STEPHEN

I TAKE NO ORDERS FROM A CHILD
PRETENDING TO BE A WITCH.

There is an explosion of darkness which knocks Juniper backwards and fills the room.

When the darkness lifts, Stephen is gone and the circle is destroyed.

INT. JANIS'S LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Janis reads as her cats sleep in the window. Roslyn awakens and emits a low growl.

Dorchester leaps to his feet and flees the room. Janis stands and drops her book. She looks around. A wave of blackness engulfs the room, then passes.

INT. JANIS'S MAGIC LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Janis throws open the library door. She opens the wooden box. The book is gone.

INT. JUNIPER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Juniper peeks into the classroom before the day begins. It has been, more or less, restored to some semblance of order.

Kids mingle around Paul who is in the center of the room holding out his casted arm. He hands permanent markers to classmates to sign the cast.

Juniper slides behind the kids. She removes the new backpack from her chair and looks it over. It looks exactly like her old one. It's empty.

She sits at her desk and opens the top. Her old backpack is inside the desk. She pulls it from the desk. There is a gash in the front, above some of the duct tape.

She lowers the top and Emily stands in front of the desk.

EMILY

Juni, it wasn't you. It was Polly.

JUNIPER

Thomas told me.

EMILY

Juni, I don't want you to be mad at me. You're my friend.

JUNIPER

What happened to Paul?

EMILY

He was playing on the monkey bars while he waited for his mom and fell off.

PAUL

And then it grabbed Dr. Drummond and swirled around him. Stuff started flying everywhere!

THOMAS

Weren't you scared?

Paul swaggers to his full height.

PAUL

Nah. It was the same monster we saw here. I knew it wasn't going to hurt me.

JAQUIE

So then what?

PAUL

Mom grabbed me and we went to the hospital to get my cast.

JAQUIE
Did it follow you?

PAUL
Nope.

Paul spies Juniper at her desk.

PAUL (cont'd)
Juni! You have to sign my cast.

Juniper clutches her old backpack, dropping the new one under her desk.

JUNIPER
I...I don't feel good, Paul. I should go home.

She grabs her backpack and flees the room.

INT. GRETCHEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Juniper, followed by an irritated Gretchen, enters the kitchen. Gretchen slams the door. It rattles the house.

GRETCHEN
I have no idea what is going on. You were fine when you left here this morning and now you're sick. I have a phone job interview in 45 minutes. You will stay in your room until it's done. Got that? And another tear in your backpack? I don't have money to replace this!

Juniper shoulders the backpack and climbs the stairs to her bedroom.

INT. JUNIPER'S BEDROOM - LATER

Juniper lies on her bed, reading. She gets up and looks out her window toward Janis'. She can see Janis raking the last bits of dead plants in her yard.

From the kitchen below, Juniper hears Gretchen scream.

INT. GRETCHEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Gretchen holds a carving knife as she's backed against the counter.

Stephen moves around the kitchen.

STEPHEN

Think about it. Anything you could possibly want. I can make your life easy.

GRETCHEN

Get out! Get out!

Gretchen sees Juniper.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)

Juni! Go back upstairs! Go! I don't want you hurt!

Juniper steps slowly toward Stephen.

JUNIPER

You heard my mom! Get out!

Stephen shudders briefly.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I am the summoner! You have to do what I say!

Stephen shudders again. He grows in size and becomes a monster.

GRETCHEN

Oh my god. What is this?

JUNIPER

Leave my mom alone!

Stephen shudders and melts through the wall to the outside of the house. Gretchen looks at Juniper.

GRETCHEN

I need the full story; now, young lady.

INT. JANIS'S ENTRY - LATER

Janis answers the back door. Juniper struggles to hold the book which is twice its original size and moving.

INT. JANIS' FIRST FLOOR LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The book lies on the floor surrounded by candles and a circle of charcoal. It occasionally wiggles and emits a ray of colored light.

Janis sits opposite Juniper as they sip beverages.

JUNIPER

I thought it was helping people. I saw it wreck my classroom. It scared Emily. It almost hurt Paul and then it scared my mom; really scared her. I had to tell her everything and she made me come to you. She's really mad at me, Mrs. Sullivan.

JANIS

I gather it doesn't look like it did when you summoned it.

JUNIPER

It turned into a monster.

Janis sets down her coffee mug. She gets up and approaches the book. The candles flare.

JANIS

Years ago, I found this book and thought I could hide it. I summoned that servant. Same one.

JUNIPER

You called it?

JANIS

Based on what you've told me, it's the same one.

Janis turns toward Juniper.

JANIS (cont'd)

I owe you an apology. I should have explained how I knew about servants. I simply ordered you to do something and not told you why. Adults, sorry to say, do that.

A rainbow of light rays pop from the book.

JANIS (cont'd)
I have dismissed you as a little girl
trying to be a witch. You are much
smarter than that.

JUNIPER
I'm not a witch. Look what happened
when I tried to be one.

JANIS
Only a real witch could summon a
demon in the first place.

JUNIPER
A real witch?

JANIS
Yes, Juniper, you are a real witch,
not as powerful as you will
eventually be, but you are a witch.

The candles around the circle flare and the book emits more
colored rays of magic.

JANIS (cont'd)
You are the summoner, so you will
have to get it to step into a circle
of banishment. I hope you'll accept
my apology so we can work together,
to send it back where it came from.

Juniper steps toward the book. The candles flare higher than
they did with Janis. Juniper takes Janis's hand and gives it
a squeeze.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Juniper pulls her old winter coat close as she searches the
town for the monster.

EXT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Juniper spots flashes of white light by the library. She
breaks into a run.

The monster digs into the side of the library. It's at least
ten feet tall, with talons for hands.

Juniper gulps and pulls a hastily assembled talisman from
her pocket.

She mutters an incantation and the talisman glows green and gold. She slowly approaches the monster and holds up the talisman.

JUNIPER
STOP! I COMMAND YOU! I AM THE
SUMMONER!

The monster turns toward Juniper. The voice is cold as ice.

STEPHEN
What have we here? The pretend witch.

JUNIPER
You will come with me...for...I am
the summoner.

STEPHEN
You have no power over...

The talisman glows. A streak of bright green magic explodes from it and envelops the monster. It shudders and screams.

JUNIPER
You...will come with me for...I am...
the summoner.

The monster, eyes like pools of lava, grows another ten percent. It is compelled to move toward Juniper even though it does not want to. It digs its claws into the side of the building, and roars.

Juniper looks around. People go into and out of the library. No one notices her.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
Can't anyone see this? I'm alone. I'm
doing this by myself.

The monster snarls at Juniper and reaches for her. At the last second, she jumps away.

PAUL
Juni!

Juniper whirls around to see Paul running toward her. The monster freezes and trains its eyes on him.

JUNIPER
Pa...Paul! Um...hi...Um...what are
you doing here?

PAUL

Well, this is the library and they have books and I come here. What are you doing here? You don't look so good.

JUNIPER

Um...well...what if I told you there is a monster next to the library?

Paul looks at the side of the library. He sees nothing.

PAUL

That thing we saw in the classroom?

Juniper nods.

PAUL (cont'd)

Well, I don't see anything.

He holds up his cast.

PAUL (cont'd)

You left without signing my cast, Juni. You have to sign my cast.

JUNIPER

Can it wait until tomorrow, Paul? I'm kinda busy.

Paul looks at the library and back at Juni.

PAUL

Sure?

JUNIPER

Okay. Thanks Paul. Um...I gotta take care of this.

Paul looks around and hugs her.

A car horn sounds.

PAUL

That's mom. I gotta go. You're the best, Juni, the best!

Juniper watches Paul leave. Juniper looks at her talisman which is glowing bright gold. She turns back to the monster. She waves the talisman at it.

JUNIPER

I command you! I am the summoner! You
will obey me!

The monster roars, lets go of the library and shrinks in size.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Janis puts black candles at six points in the salt circle and sweeps a palm-size gap in the circle.

A lighted white six inch pillar candle sits in the center of the circle.

She chants as she lights five of the six candles.

JANIS

For the goddess, I light you.
For the goddess, I banish the dark.
For the goddess, I open the portal.
Okay Juniper, the circle is ready.
Bring it here.

A knock at the garage door. Janis hits the opener. Juniper stands in the doorway.

JANIS (cont'd)

Inside.

Juniper holds up the talisman, now glowing green.

JUNIPER

I AM THE SUMMONER! YOU ARE MINE TO
COMMAND!

JANIS

Back up slowly. When you hit my hand,
stop.

Juniper backs up. Janis positions herself next to the gap in the circle with her hand outstretched above the gap.

JUNIPER

You have to come with me.

The monster, a shadowy form, shrunk to human size, follows into the garage. Juniper backs up to Janis' hand.

JUNIPER (cont'd)

I'm really tired.

JANIS

I can't help you with this next part.
Turn around and look at the circle.

The monster looks at the circle and roars. Janis closes the garage door.

JUNIPER

I'm gonna lose it.

Janis puts her hands on Juniper's shoulders.

JANIS

No, you're not. You are the summoner.
You've come this far with it. It
won't leave you now.

JUNIPER

But my arms hurt.

JANIS

You have to finish this. Listen to
me. Enter the circle and cross
through it to the other side. You
have to go over the candle in the
center. That candle locks the monster
to the circle.

Janis picks up a small pitcher and removes the top.

JANIS (cont'd)

Salt. Once it's in the circle, I'll
close it, but you have to get out.
The spell doesn't work if you're
inside. Don't step on the edge. It
can't have a way out.

The monster roars and grows in size. Juniper waves the talisman at it and it shrinks.

JUNIPER

I can't do this. I can't. The book
didn't tell me about this part.

JANIS

It didn't because it wants you to
think you can control whatever you
summon. You are strong, Juniper. The
magic is in you. That's why you could
summon it. Remember, you are a witch.

Janis points at the circle.

JANIS (cont'd)

Cross it.

Juniper looks at the monster and slowly steps into the circle.

The monster tries to resist entering the circle as Juniper slowly crosses it. She gets to the center candle and steps over it.

JUNIPER

Whoa! That's hot!

She nearly loses her balance. The monster enters the circle. Janis quickly pours salt in the gap. She runs to the location Juniper will exit.

Juniper looks at the monster as she backs up. It changes form. Wings sprout on its back. A mouth filled with yellowed teeth opens. The eyes go from lava pools to red dots.

STEPHEN

You cannot beat me.

Juniper takes a deep breath. She holds up the talisman, now completely golden.

JUNIPER

You hurt people I care about! I don't want you here. I.AM.THE.SUMMONER!

She navigates to the edge of the circle, but trips, putting several gaps in the edge. The monster laughs.

Juniper falls to the floor. The talisman slips from her hand. The magic sputters green and gold and goes out. The monster moves toward the gaps in the edge. Janis frantically pours salt into the gaps.

Juniper gets up, grabs two handfuls of salt from the pitcher. She sticks one handful in her pants pocket and uses the other handful to fill the last of the gaps. The monster hits the invisible walls of the circle.

JANIS

Get the book. Page 185.

The book is three times the size it was. The pages wiggle and resist turning. With effort, Juniper flips to page 185. Another circle diagram.

JANIS (cont'd)
 We only have a few minutes. The
 incantation, read it.

JUNIPER
 The incan...what?

JANIS
 The incantation. The spell.

Janis crosses around the circle to the side opposite
 Juniper. A dull roar starts. Janis raises her voice to be
 heard. The monster struggles against the walls formed by the
 salt circle.

JANIS (cont'd)
 You have to read it. You called this.
 You have to send it back.

She holds up the pitcher.

JANIS (cont'd)
 All I can do is keep the circle
 closed. Juniper, it will try to
 convince you to let it stay. Whatever
 it says is a lie. Whatever it shows
 you is a lie. No matter how good.
 Understand?

JUNIPER
 I...think so. Mrs. Sullivan, what if
 I believe?

JANIS
 I don't know what happens, Juniper. I
 was older than you. I knew everything
 it told me was a lie.

JUNIPER
 Can you...

JANIS
 NO! I cannot!

Juniper freezes in terror. The roaring sound ceases.

Janis rounds the circle and takes Juniper's hands.

JANIS (cont'd)
 I'm sorry. I shouldn't have yelled. I
 can't help you. The book is clear.
 You called it, you control it. Only
 you can banish it.

Juniper starts crying. Janis holds her. Juniper sobs into Janis's shoulder.

She looks Juniper in the eyes.

JANIS (cont'd)
I did this alone. I was 17. I was terrified, just as you are. But you have one thing I didn't.

JUNIPER
I do?

JANIS
You have someone who believes in you. That's me. I can't banish, but I can yell at you what to do if you get stuck. Okay?

JUNIPER
Okay.

Janis stands and points at the monster.

JANIS
You have a monster to banish, Miss Fairchild.

Sound returns with a crash. Janis heads to the other side of the circle. She lights the last black candle and grabs a handful of salt.

JANIS (cont'd)
For the goddess, to banish the evil and restore the balance.

She sprinkles salt into the candle flame. The votives flare and emit a silver light.

JANIS (cont'd)
It's all on you.

Juniper gulps. She looks at the spell and at the demon.

JUNIPER
I am the summoner. I am the summoner. Goddess Gay Eee Ah. Anchor me to the earth. Goddess Ah Ura. Breathe the breath of air. Goddess Am...amp...hit...rite. I can't say this.

JANIS
Just try. Keep going.

JUNIPER
Goddess Amp...hit...rite. En...vel...
ope me in cleansing water.
Goddess Vesta. The fire of the
hearth, remove evil.
I call on Mother Moon to aid me.

Juniper freezes and stares at the demon.

JANIS
Juniper! Juniper! It's not real.

JUNIPER
I see...I see my dad. I see a house,
a cat, my mom, me. We're laughing.

JANIS
Juniper, it's not real!

Juniper stares at the swirls in the circle. The monster waves its hands at her.

Janis picks up the talisman. At her touch, it glows white with golden edges. She shakes Juniper. Juniper doesn't respond. She kneels next to Juniper.

JANIS (cont'd)
Damn. Promise the world. What child
wouldn't want that?

JUNIPER
It says my dad can come back.

JANIS
Your dad is gone.

JUNIPER
I just want what everyone else has. I
can have it if I go into the circle.

JANIS
You can't. If you go inside, no one
can get you out. Lies. They are lies.

Juniper shakes her head, "No." She steps toward the circle. Janis shoves the talisman into Juniper's coat pocket.

JANIS (cont'd)
Juniper, don't.

Janis puts a hand on Juniper's arm. Juniper turns toward Janis, her face ablaze with anger.

JUNIPER

Just like everyone in my life, you're telling me what to do. I am the summoner! I do what I want.

She shoves Janis, knocking her down, and steps into the circle.

INT. SWIRLING CLOUD - CONTINUOUS

The air is filled with swirling clouds. A startled Juniper inches toward a shadowed figure a short distance in front of her.

As she nears, the figure, dressed in dark clothing, removes a hood and grows to an eight foot tall creature with dark red skin and piercing eyes. It alternates between her father's form and a demon form. He smiles at Juniper.

STEPHEN

I knew you would see things my way.

Around Juniper, swirl shades of what she could have with a family. She sees her father, mother, and herself in happy times. She ages quickly from ten to eighteen and graduating high school, with her dad along side her.

She reaches toward the shades. They disappear.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

That's what you want. You want your family together, like everyone else has.

A shade appears of Juniper standing in front of her classroom. The kids and Mrs. Whitlow bow to her.

STEPHEN (cont'd)

This is what's possible, Juniper.

Juniper reaches for the shade. It melts into a scene of the class fleeing from her. Emily and Paul turn to face her.

EMILY

Juni! Why? Why? We're your friends!

JUNIPER

They're scared of me.

STEPHEN
They should be. You're a witch.

JUNIPER
I don't want them scared of me.

She swings at the shades and they disappear.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
I want them to stop picking on me.

STEPHEN
We can do all that, you and I; all that and more.

Juniper whispers.

JUNIPER
I am the summoner.

STEPHEN
And we can make them pay for picking on you...make...them...pay.

Shade of a magnificent house; almost, but not quite; like a castle from a book. Juniper sits on a throne surrounded by clothes, toys, bags of money, plates of food. Polly, Christa, and Laurie, chained together, dance.

Juniper recoils from the shades.

JUNIPER
This is dumb. I don't know what this is but it's dumb.

STEPHEN
I offer you the chance to make all your dreams reality.

JUNIPER
This isn't real.

STEPHEN
It can be. All those who hurt you...

JUNIPER
I am the summoner.

Stephen looks nervous.

STEPHEN
The man who fired your mom. I made him pay.

A shade appears of Dr. Drummond in a cage.

JUNIPER
NO! I am the summoner.

Juniper moves toward the demon. As she does this, the shade disappears.

STEPHEN
Imagine what you can do!

JUNIPER
I am the summoner.

STEPHEN
SHE told you you're not a witch.
She's wrong.

A shade appears of Janis lying in a crumpled heap.

JUNIPER
I! Am! The! Summoner!

Juniper stands in front of the demon. The shade disappears.

STEPHEN
Why do you keep saying that?

JUNIPER
Because I am the summoner and
everything you tell me is a lie.

Juniper reaches into her pants pocket and pulls out the handful of salt. She spits into it, rubs it around in her hands.

JUNIPER (cont'd)
I cast you back to wherever you came
from. I never, ever want to see you
again.

She grabs the talisman, which is glowing white, and hurls it and the salt at the monster. When they hit, there is an explosion of sound and color.

INT. GRETCHEN'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Juniper collapses. Janis gets to her feet, steps over the circle edge and enfolds Juniper in her arms.

The flame of the pillar candle flares. Janis licks her fingers and squeezes it out. The black candles go out right after she does this.

Juniper opens her eyes and sits up.

JUNIPER
I'm sorry I shoved you.

JANIS SULLIVAN
I wasn't sure you'd come back. What was I going to tell your mother?

JUNIPER
I knew I had to follow it to make it leave.

JANIS SULLIVAN
You weren't scared?

JUNIPER
Sometimes you have to not be scared even though you are.

Janis gets to her feet, and pulls Juniper up. They exit the circle.

The book has shrunk back to its original size. Juniper touches it. Nothing happens.

JANIS SULLIVAN
We have to destroy the book. I know how to do that.

EXT. BRIDGE OVER A RIVER - DAYBREAK

Janis stops her car in the middle of a bridge.

She opens the trunk. The book is wrapped in fishing net into which bricks have been tied. Janis removes a child's wagon from the trunk.

They lift the book into the wagon. Janis points toward the edge of the bridge. Juniper pulls the wagon to the edge. She looks over the railing at the swirling, black, water.

Janis puts her hand on Juniper's shoulder.

JANIS SULLIVAN
I should have done this after I banished him the first time.

JUNIPER

Shouldn't we burn it or something?

JANIS SULLIVAN

There's an old story about a warlock, which is a male witch, who does some powerful magic to get back at his brother. Once he's done his magic he decides to drown his magic books. I think that's appropriate here.

She picks up the book which comes alive and struggles to get away. Janis almost loses control of it. Juniper grabs part of the net and they heave it over the side.

Janis pulls a salt shaker from her jacket pocket. She removes the top and scatters the contents over the water.

JANIS SULLIVAN (cont'd)

But this rough magic
I here abjure, and when I have
required
Some heavenly music, which even now I
do,
To work mine end upon their senses
that
This airy charm is for,
And deeper than did ever plummet
sound
I'll drown my book.

Juniper watches as the book sinks into the river with thrashing and burbling.

EXT. SIDEWALK NEAR SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

In a snowfall, Juniper leaves school and heads in the direction of the library. She carries the new backpack Stephen created.

She passes rows of cars parked to pick up students. Kids run to opened car doors. Polly passes Juniper and bumps into her on purpose.

POLLY

You don't have to bump into me.

She stops in front of Juniper.

POLLY (cont'd)
You know, I decided I'm going to be a witch, too. You're not going to cast spells on me.

Juniper looks at Polly, shakes her head and continues on her way. Emily and Paul run up. Juniper and Emily hug.

PAUL
Juni! Juni! Two o'clock tomorrow!
We're gonna build the biggest,
baddest snow fort and have a snowball
fight.

JUNIPER
Who are we against?

PAUL
Thomas's brother and a couple of his
friends. Juni, they are talking about
taking us down.

EMILY
Ooooh! We are so gonna murder them.

PAUL
Mom wants to know if you like chili
cuz that's what she wants to make for
supper.

JUNIPER
I dunno what that is, Paul, but I'll
try it.

Paul hugs her.

PAUL
It's going to be so cool. We're gonna
pound them. You can't turn them into
frogs, right?

Juniper smirks, closes her eyes and concentrates. Screaming comes from the kids around Polly. Paul and Emily turn to look.

Polly's backpack vomits large brightly colored frogs. Some kids try to catch them. Some run away. Some laugh.

PAUL (cont'd)
Did you...?

Juniper puts a finger to her lips and winks.

EMILY

Juni, you're the best witch I know.

Paul opens his car door.

PAUL

Juni? Want a ride somewhere?

JUNIPER

I'm going to the library.

PAUL

Cool. Hop in. We'll take you there.
And your mom could come for dinner
tomorrow, too.

Juniper hands Paul her backpack.

JUNIPER

See you tomorrow?

EMILY

For sure! You'll need to bring extra
clothes...Never mind. I'll bring all
sorts of extras so you can get really
wet.

As Juniper gets into the car, she looks down the street to
where Polly and her friends scream at the frogs.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Heavy snowfall. Juniper leaves the sidewalk and walks in the
street toward home. Tracks where cars have been.

Most neighbors have Christmas lights. Juniper can see in
some windows where there are decorated trees.

Juniper's and Janis' houses have no Christmas lights. She
sees Janis close the living room curtains.

Juniper looks down at her mitten-covered hands. She sets her
backpack on the curb in front of her house and returns to
the middle of the street. She concentrates.

Gretchen looks out the window and spies Juniper.

A ball of white light forms in Juniper's hands.

JUNIPER

A Christmas spell.

She breaks the ball in half and throws half of it at Janis's house and half at her house.

The balls explode and hit the houses, outlining them in twinkling lights.

Gretchen comes out of the house. She runs into the street and stares at the twinkling lights. She gives Juniper a hug.

GRETCHEN

Now this is good magic.

Crunch in the snow behind them. Janis approaches with mugs of hot cocoa. Gretchen takes a mug.

JUNIPER

Mom, would it be okay if I go back to learning magic with Mrs. Sullivan?

Gretchen smiles and nods. Janis looks at her house.

JANIS SULLIVAN

Why do up my house?

Juniper hugs her.

JUNIPER

You said you don't decorate so I did it for you. It's magic and I am a witch.

Janis hands Juniper cocoa.

FADE OUT