

The Whistle

By Emily Hoang

The clock rang twice, and Lisa hurried home. She had to get home, and with no time to waste. Something red caught her eye, by the river. She ran towards it, and it was a whistle, almost hidden from her view by the pebbles and stream of clear running water. She bent down, picked it up, and pocketed it. Lisa continued her way home, running through the back alleys, avoiding busy streets; she didn't like them, as they were too crowded.

She entered the old rickety house and ran to her room, taking the whistle out. She blew it and a high-pitched sound came out, along with a cloud of smoke. A blue creature, a bit like a horse without legs, appeared.

"I grant two wishes,

Two you choose,

You have until,

The next full moon"

She? he? it? chanted. "Who - who are you?" Lisa asked in surprise. Something about a talking sausage-thing made her feel wary. "I am Demetrius, one of the last Univsy, wish granters. Your first wish has been granted." he said in a robot-like voice. Lisa gasped. She did not think every single question she asked would be counted as a wish. She made a mental note to think twice before asking again. Demetrius disappeared back inside to whistle, and Lisa, forgetting to do everything that needed to be done, collapsed in her bed.

Meanwhile, Demetrius, in his small whistle apartment, was happy. He had found his next victim. He would lure Lisa into trusting him, and then steal her soul so that he would be able to live inside a human being and rule the world. There was only one flaw in his plan. His last victim was a wizard, and the wizard had cast a spell. That spell ensured that the next victim would get dreams warning about the truth of Demetrius, and he had to be truthful about the wishes he granted.

That night, Lisa had a horrible dream. Demetrius was in front of her, slowly turning red, growing a pointy tail, and sharp, pearly teeth. He grew fatter and fatter, until he was as tall as he was wide. He sprouted raven-colored sleek hair, neatly combed. Lisa screamed. She woke up, heart pounding, fists clenched. She glanced at her clock, 3:46 AM. Rolling over, she tried to get some more sleep. After a minute or so, she was in a dreamless deep sleep.

The next morning, Lisa felt around her pocket for the whistle and took it out to inspect. Nothing showed that Demetrius, or anything else, for that matter, had been inside it. It was completely hollow. She looked at the calendar: Saturday. Six more days until full moon. She thought about her dream, her strange, strange dream. Maybe it was telling her something, but what? To stay away from Demetrius? Possibly.

The next day, she had the same dream. And the day after that. With only four more days until full moon, Lisa was convinced that the dream was warning her, warning her to stay away from the whistle. She still carried it in her pocket always but had never blown it since. She tried to throw it away, in the garbage,

but somehow, she always went back to retrieve it. It was like there was a curse, a binding that forbade her to part with it. Deciding to blow for her last wish, she took the whistle, blew it once, and waited. Demetrius appeared, and said, "You have called me for your last wish. What do you want?" Lisa took a deep breath. "I want to know how to . . . how to get rid of you." No! Demetrius thought. But he had to tell the truth, no matter what. "There is an old woman who lives just north of here. She knows. Be aware, though. She isn't what you'd call friendly. Not a bit." Lisa wasn't sure whether to believe him or not, but she decided to find the woman anyway.

Demetrius disappeared, and Lisa started getting out an old map of the country, a compass, a water bottle, and several granola bars. She put all items in her backpack and started on her mission to find that old woman. Lisa set out and took out her old compass. Uh oh. North was in the direction of the Secret Thickets, where there were wolves and bears and who knows what. Lisa, now very frightened, set a foot into the forest. She heard a growl and jumped in surprise. She gathered more courage, and started walking in. She probably just heard a bear, or something like that. Little light shone down through the canopy overhead, so it looked as dark as a moonless night. She spotted a cougar den and softly walked past, not wanting to alert the pack. Lisa saw smoke rising from a small cottage chimney in the distance, and, believing that this was the old woman's house, and soon she broke into a run. She stopped about ten meters or so from the cottage and caught her breath. She observed it carefully, peered through the windows, and decided it was normal enough except for a massive

cauldron of sticky grayish paste in the center of the single room. The smoke coming out of it went to the chimney. There was an old woman sitting by the cauldron slowly stirring, with lips forming words that Lisa couldn't hear. Lisa cautiously walked to the wooden round door, which had a golden doorknob in the exact center. She knocked twice, the old woman twisted the doorknob, and the door swung open. "What are you doing here?" the woman cackled. Lisa replied, "I – I, um, I have this, um, whistle, and I, I want to know how to - well, how to get rid of it." Lisa held her breath, wondering if this woman would reply at all. "Get rid of it? After all the hard work I put into making it?" Muttered the woman. Lisa gasped. This woman had *made* the whistle? Well, now Lisa had her doubts. No wonder if the woman refused to destroy the whistle. "Well, yes, because I kind of had this dream, it was kind of scary. And, who are you?" asked Lisa. "I am many things. A witch, the maker of the Industo, or, as you refer to, the whistle. My name is Jubkyosc. But back to your question. Why do you want to destroy the Industo?" Jubkyosc said. Lisa was expecting this question. She answered, "I had dreams about the person, well, he's not really a person, but I think the dreams are telling me to destroy the Industo, and the Univsy that lives inside it." Jubkyosc shook her head. "So, a Univsy had been living inside it?" Jubkyosc asked. Lisa nodded. "Univsies are evil things. They can never be trusted. They grant two wishes to build your trust, then they suck the soul out of you, take control of you, and then use your body to become human. When I made the Industo, I did not mean for it to be a Univsy house. It was meant to be a shelter for Sprites. They were hunted, very rare. You see, the Industo had a magic in it,

a magic to block all danger. Now, Sprites have died out, and the Industo has been turned in for new use. I suppose the only way to get rid of the Univsy is to destroy the Industo” Jubkyosc said. “But how?” Asked Lisa. Jubkyosc was already putting powder and all sorts of stuff in the cauldron, forming a dark green paste. She took the whistle in Lisa’s hand and spooned the paste into the whistle. The whistle completely vanished, leaving no trace of it behind. Lisa didn’t know what she expected, but not this. The whistle had just . . . disappeared. “Now, get along with your day,” Jubkyosc said, pushing Lisa to the wall. The witch had clearly gone to her un-friendly side, as Demetrius described. Lisa did not hesitate to run out of the cottage, out of the Secret Thickets, and into her house. She flopped on her bed, and fell into a deep, deep, sleep, happy to be able to get rid of the Industo forever.

The End