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1043 words

It was one cold night here in Burruto. All the streets are empty and dimly lit to the point where something could come out of the darkness and grab you unexpectedly.

Olivia Stevens, a curly haired girl with blue eyes, couldn't sleep. The past nights she's been having unusual dreams making her afraid to go to sleep only to wake up again, frightened by what fear her dream had to bring.

Olivia had always had a passion for reading. Her mother used to read to her when she was little . . . that was, before the tragic accident that had occurred bringing her to her death.

Her mother always used to talk about this big library just a few blocks from where they lived. Olivia has always wanted to go there but hasn't gotten her chance.

All the sudden a quiet knock followed by a soft whisper sounded from outside her bedroom window, "Olli are you awake?"

Slowly she stood and made her way toward the noise. Sliding her curtain open she realized her best friends Seth and Chloe were the one whispering. Seth had dark black hair and brown eyes and Chloe had pink hair, blue eyes, and was fairly short for her age.

"Oh, it's you guys," said Olli. "You scared me."

"You ready?" asked Seth looking at their surroundings.

"Ready for what?" asked Olli, confused.

“Remember? We’re going to the library. We planned this the other day.”  
said Chloe.

“Oh, right. I’ll meet you guys down there in a sec,” said Olli and then  
turned and shut the window.

A moment later Olli opened the window and climbed out making her  
way towards the others.

“All right, let’s go,” said Seth.

The streets were black the lamps barely illuminating the space  
around them. Luckily, Chloe brought flash lights so it wasn’t too bad.

Soon enough the big library of Burruto came into sight and three of  
them gasped.

“It’s huge!” said Chloe, her mouth hanging open.

“It looks like the white house,” said Seth in awe.

Olli was speechless. Her mother was right. This place was magical. “If  
only she were here,” she said, turning to meet her friends gazes.

The three of them walked up the big steps of the library, holding  
their breaths. They could see the sun rising in the distance, breaking  
dawn. Slowly, Seth pushed open the library door and the three of them  
walked inside. The library was normally supposed to be locked. The library  
was a vast space combining grand architecture with a wealth of books  
and art. Soaring ceilings, marble columns, intricate murals, and stained-  
glass windows, exactly how Olli’s mom described it.

Olli immediately started searching for the perfect book. One that  
would catch her eye. After searching all the romantic fiction sections, Olli

strolled down a long hallway on the second floor. Of all the sections of the library she figured this one was the least popular considering all the dusting that was needed.

The shelves were full of collections of old public records and outdated ordinances. As she browsed the shelves at the end of the hall, a book at the very top shelf caught her attention. Unlike all the leather covered books around it, this one had a wooden cover and practically blended in with the shelf itself.

Olli had never seen a book like this before and she wondered if anyone has ever seen one like this. The notion was very exciting. Olli rolled a ladder to the end of the hall and climbed up. She tried to retrieve the book but it was tightly packed in there. Finally, pulling with all her strength the book popped out of the shelf. The cover had a big red stamp over it that read BANED.

“Weird,” said Olli under her breath. “Guys! I found something!”

A few seconds later Seth and Chloe came around the corner panting. “That’s a lot of stairs,” said Seth, breathing heavily.

“Guys, look at this,” said Olli, holding the flashlight over the book so they could see it better.

“Why would it say BANED?” said Chloe, sounding scared.

“We should open it,” said Seth, reaching for the book.

“No,” said Olli. “Not here. We should go back to my place and open it there. I have a feeling it’s . . . I don’t know . . . safer.”

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Once they were back at Olli's house they all circled around the suspicious book. All together they said, "Three, two, o-"

The book flung open without them even using any force. The pages look old and crumpled to the point where you could barely see the words.

Blowing the dust off Olli said, "There's no name. The book just looks like the name was etched out. As if someone erased the title or something."

"I wonder why," said Chloe.

Flipping the page they noticed there was writing. But it didn't look like it was typed into the book. Someone must have written it in there by hand.

"You have been warned about this book. Don't underestimate its extraordinary power. Stick to small spaces at night. Don't let it get you," They all read allowed.

"Wonder what that means," said Seth, shrugging.

"Probably nothing," said Olli, yet she sounded scared.

"We should probably head back," said Chloe, still breathing heavily from climbing all the stairs.

"Good idea."

Back at Olli's house, after Seth and Chloe left, Olli started reading.

*"The vines were not just plants; they were a sentient, parasitic invasion. The first tendrils appeared like fine, dark threads tracing the lines of my skin, a sensation barely more than a persistent itch, or a tactile hallucination of insects crawling under my skin."*

I was getting late and Olli slowly started drifting off to sleep thinking about her new book.

Later that night, when olli was sleeping, something slowly crept out of the book. Something slimy and vine looking. Olli winced in her sleep, feelings tingling on her arm. Sitting up straight and rubbing her eyes, she noticed there was nothing there. *Strange. I could have sworn there was something there*, Olli thought. *Must be nothing. Probably just a dream.* Olli fell asleep as if nothing was suspicious.

The next morning Olli wasn't there, only the book still lying open, Olli's face frozen on the page . . .