



BOOK ONE-THE CIMARUTA-FIRST FIVE CHAPTERS

The Persephane Pendrake Chronicles

One - The Cimaruta

Chapter 1

It Begins...May, 2007

"Aggrrrrrrhhhhh!" she shrieks, smacking her head down on her crossed arms.

"Great...just great," Persephane Pendrake mutters sarcastically, slowly calming down. Persy, as she prefers to be called, sits on the steps of the back deck which encompasses the family's two-storey, board and batten house.

Usually, she loves to sit out back, watching her mother's magical, medicinal garden evolve through its seasonal stages. But not today.

Persy has kept the secret well for all of her twelve years and nine months. But today—today she lost control and it peeked out of its box.

Persephane Pendrake is an exceptionally talented young witch. Each week, as she grows closer to her thirteenth birthday, it's clear that her powers are becoming stronger and more plentiful. This is also part of her secret.

This secret, according to her parents, is the one thing about her no one must ever know. If it was revealed, she'd risk turning her and her family's lives into a carnival act, or even worse, having them examined like lab rats.

Today, however, Persy lost her cool...big time. Kyle Dunsmore, the instigator of this fiasco, lives on her street and goes to her school--Mannington Public. That he is two years younger than Persy makes it particularly galling that he got one over on her.

Kyle is well known for being a tease and practical joker but for the most part, Persy ignores him. Persy admits that this particular incident probably didn't warrant her extreme reaction, but his taunting is accumulative and relentlessly he keeps pouring it on.

It happens after soccer practice.

Persy finishes on the field, hurries to jump into a quick shower. It's getting late, about 4:45 pm and her over-protective Mom always wants her home by 5:00. Persy scampers half-dried to her locker; flings the door open, grabs her hair de-frizzer, puddles some into her hand and smears it through her long, very thick, dark hair. It's as if a light goes on...she freezes. Persy's chestnut-coloured eyes enlarge to double their normally large size!

"What **IS** this stuff?" she shrieks. She looks in horror at her palms which are very rapidly stiffening up and turning white. Someone has replaced her hair product with white glue! And she's pretty sure who that someone is.

Persy slams her locker shut, grabs her back pack and runs outside to the schoolyard to see if anyone is still around who may have seen anything. What a surprise, there's Kyle surrounded by a bunch of his friends laughing to the point of tears. She hears the words "glue" and "hair" bandied about and knows instantaneously that she's right about the identity of the culprit.

"Well! You'll not be laughing for long. You are so overdue..." she growls as she charges down the steps at warp speed, definitely bent on doing some nasty.

Out of the corner of his eye, Kyle catches her motoring in his direction and just knows by her look and speed that "glue in the hair" may have been a little over the top. It looks like he could most assuredly suffer bodily damage on this round.

"Feet...don't fail me now!" he yelps and belts down the street.

By the time Persy hits the street outside the schoolyard, Kyle is a full block ahead of her. No problem, she thinks. Years of soccer have trained her into a lean, mean running machine.

Sure enough in short order she's breathing down his neck. Then Kyle takes a quick peek off to the left and hides behind a huge old oak tree. Of course, this means they are into "you go one way - I go the other" around the tree; it's too thick for Persy to reach him by standing in one spot.

Off to the right side of the tree she suddenly spots Mr. Hornby's cranky bulldog, Gruesome. He's sitting there, staring, with his tongue lolling out of his mouth, slobbering on the sidewalk.

Persy jumps to the right and as she expects, her target veers to the left. And **THAT'S** when it happens.

She could always communicate telepathically with animals. Persy and her mother, Angelica are witches of the "Order of Silent Speech" and even short-tempered Gruesome is always up for a chat. After all, how many options doe he have? Communicating with human-kind is extremely rare. The only problem is that whenever Persy does this, a small stream of coloured sparkles arc through the air. Usually, she can choose her times, so that no one notices, but not today.

'Grues, ol' boy," she projects. "I don't suppose you could somehow nail this ninny in one spot, while I show him a thing or two about hair styling?"

Unfortunately, just as the conversation starts, Kyle leans to his left and looks directly between Persy and Gruesome. "What are those spark-..?"

He doesn't finish because in a heartbeat, Gruesome springs at Kyle and takes a whacking great mouthful of Kyle's jeans, shorts and little of what's underneath!

"O-w-w-w-w-w-w," yells Kyle, horrified at what parts could be permanently damaged.

Persy whips around the tree, grabs Kyle by the scruff of the neck with her left hand and from behind her back, shoots her right one out; in it she holds a nauseatingly, smelly wad of rotten egg and pine resin mixture, the size of a baseball; Persy smunches the mess down on Kyle's head.

"There!" she shrieks. "Style that...you little sidewinder!"

She lets him go and he takes off in a small cloud of dust.

"Thanks, Grues," she throws back at the dog as she too, runs home.

"Anytime," the dog mutters, "only excitement I get." And he waddles off.

So here she sits, mulling over her options. Persy knows Kyle has seen the sparkles; how is she going to explain *that* away?

Persy sighs deeply. "Cripes! What a muddle," she groans.

BZZZZZZZZZ-BZZZZZZZZZ...Persy glances up. "Hi Benson," she says quietly, turning her eyes down again.

"I say, Perse," Benson says. "You telling me 'the hedgehog look' is in for hair styles this season?"

Persy reaches her hand up and touches her hair. To her horror it's sticking out in pointed clumps where the wind caught it and the glue dried as she ran.

"Oh, great, on top of everything else I probably look like I'm auditioning for the role of Medusa in some pathetic Greek play," she cries.

"Not such a good day, sweet'ums?" Benson, being sympathetic, is highly suspicious.

"Not one of the best," she mutters.

Benson is her dragonfly familiar. Familiars are life time sidekicks. They show up at birth and attach to you for the duration. Benson's always claimed he's actually a dragon. Some fool bunged on the "fly" bit when he wasn't looking. How true that is Persy doesn't know, but he certainly does have the attitude and arrogance of a dragon.

He's a gorgeous little fellow although Persy never lets him know that; all glittering deep greens, turquoise and silver. The last thing Benson needs is something else to be swelled-headed about. He can fly faster than the speed of

light, making him a very handy, invisible spy when needed. He's also a veritable fount of information on just about anything. Amazing, really. He's lived for centuries, being a familiar to countless witches and wizards before Persy, which she supposes accounts for the flying database that he is.

"So why so glum, chum?" asks Benson.

Persy gives him a summation of the end of her day, post-soccer practice.

"Great Scott, Perse! Whatever were you thinking?" His voice is creeping higher by the moment--something Persy hates. It usually heralds some long drawn out lecture.

"There'll be phone calls, my dear--many, many prying calls - mark my words!" Here we go, thinks Persy as Benson's voice continues to climb.

"How do expect your parents to explain this one? You know people suspect you of being a tad odd. Now, that Kyle kid can actually say he saw something weird and ah, *that* would be another adjective frequently aligned with your name!" Benson is now shrieking.

"I know, I know," sighs Persy. "I really mucked up this time."

"AND!" Benson's on a roll now. Persy knows stopping it would be like trying to stop a tidal wave with a slotted spoon. "Where did the gob of rotten egg and pine resin come from?"

"A silent Appearance spell."

They both know that silent spells are very tricky. This is the first Benson knows of her ability to throw one. She's

maturing very quickly, much faster than he suspected—a bit of a shock to him.

“And **WHERE** did you learn to do that?” This is not good--his voice is at least three octaves above normal.

“Well, I know about them and I found Mom’s Book of Shadows and kind of, um, read up on them. As they are silent, I thought they can be darn handy without getting me into too much trouble--no one can hear me, right?”

“Blimey, Perse,” Benson sighs, his British background rising to the surface. “Ah, well, I don’t think the egg and resin thing is the hot tamale; it’s the visual fireworks that you’re going to have to explain.” He’s calming down now, voice at level one+ octave.

They sit quietly together. Slowly gliding back and forth, Benson lights on Persy’s left wrist, both are deep in thought.

"PER-SEPH-AN-EEEEEEE PEN-DRAKE!" the bellow comes. Uh-oh!

When you got all nine yards of your name from
Angelica...you're in deep doo-doo!

Persy jumps up from the step, launching Benson off into the
ethers, and runs into the house.

"Yes, Mom?" says Persy, trying, but undoubtedly not
succeeding, to impart an air of innocence.

"Persy, I just got off the phone with Mrs. Dunsmore. I
don't think I have to tell you the details of that
conversation - do I?" Angelica sputters.

"No, Mom....But....."

"No buts. You know how critical it is that we hide what we are. Didn't our family suffer enough in the Witch Trials in England? You know that as soon as anyone here suspects we are of the Magical Folk that we'll be turned into a paparazzi feeding frenzy? We'll be hounded for the rest of our days...Persy...honestly!"

"I'm so sorry Mom--but Kyle put glue in my hair product container. I guess I just lost it and Gruesome was right there." Persy grins a little. "He likes when I talk to him, so he was glad to help. Also Kyle is pretty mean to him, so it all kind of fell together. What about a Memory Erase?"

"My problem with that is...who has Kyle and even more critically, his mother, told? It's really hard to trace that, but I believe if I check the Book...there is a "Threading Charm" which will link all the conversations, and then I can throw the Memory Erase. I want your help to collect the magical objects I'll need," Angelica states.

Persy, Angelica and Benson go up to the secret attic, where all this type of work is done. They know it's best to get this done before Dad comes home.

The Persephane Pendrake Chronicles

One - The Cimaruta

Chapter 2

Persephane Looks Back

Angelica and Robert met just after she, Persy and Benson Time-Linxed from Britain, 1666; Persy was about nine months old. Persy was told that she was brought through the Time-Linx by Angelica with Benson in tow, for safety reasons. They arrived in Muskoka twelve years ago on the river bank, after finding their way through a pristine waterfall.

Robert was fishing, and astounded when they pop into his vision on the opposite bank from where he's frustratingly floating fish bait around, only to see it swiped with nary a fish caught. He was about to throw in the towel on fishing. Hamburgers really didn't sound that bad, after all.

"What in the blazes?" His chin drops and speech is a forgotten skill. The most gorgeous woman he has ever seen just walked through the falls with a baby in her arms! Holy Crow!

Angelica's afraid they may meet someone right away, so is ready. "Hello, my daughter and I are camping and somehow completely lost our way, winding up under the falls. I'm wondering if you can direct us to the closest town?" she quickly queries.

Robert sputters, "Well, of course...I mean, sure...the town is not far...well, goodness,...town, yes,.....u-m-m-m-m....I'd be happy to take you." He fumbles with his fishing rod, or rather his *not* so fishing-rod. Robert pulls it out of the water, takes it apart, and packs it into its case. He throws it in the back of his SUV after he opens the front passenger door to let Angelica in, holding baby Persy. Strange how the dragonfly flies in the door and rests on Angelica's shoulder, Robert thinks.

Robert drives them to Rockmanor, where he knows there's a restaurant that stays open late, figuring they're likely hungry. One huge problem is there's no hotel in Rockmanor and it's more than obvious that Angelica and her babe have nowhere to go.

After a home-cooked meal, although Robert isn't sure Angelica enjoyed it; Robert asks if her camper is near.

"No, and it really isn't in good shape, anyway. I'm hoping to rent something in town. Is that possible?"

"Well sure, rooms can be rented in the daytime but right now, everything is closed. What do you plan to do for tonight?"

"Have no idea what I'm going to do. My first concern is getting 'un-lost' and then going from there. Any thoughts?"

Persy's out cold in Angelica's arms. The little strange dragonfly sits on Angelica's shoulder, his wings slowly fluttering up and down, obviously asleep as well.

Robert opens his mouth to speak, when both of them hear a low pitched growl outside the window beside them.

Without saying anything, Angelica quickly places Persy in Robert's arms, and rushes up the aisle to the front door.

Looking outside, she sees a smallish black bear sitting under the window. Bears, where she comes from can be a bad omen, or a protector. This one definitely has an agenda and Angelica wonders what it is. She stands there for a moment; the bear looks up, and eye to eye, they speak. Fine, thinks Angelica, all's well. The bear's a protector, but it blocks any further details from being revealed.

When she returns to her seat, Robert is holding a very content Persy. "You okay?" he asks.

"Yes," Angelica answers, knowing a lot of explanations are in order, but please, she thinks, not now.

"Everything is fine. I just need to find somewhere for the night for my daughter and I," Angelica says, looking out the window.

"I don't suppose you, bear lady, have any answers?" she utters to the bear in Silent Speak; when Robert's head is turned, keeping the sparkles out of his sight.

Then it comes to her; the bear's name is Orsina and will be watching over her and Persy as long as they live in this world. Angelica sighs with relief, but her lodging situation is still not solved.

"Well," says Robert. "If it's okay with you, I have a guest house on my property. It's not far from here and I'd be happy to let you stay there until you find what you need." He's so afraid of offending Angelica but she gladly accepts. Unbeknownst to her new friend, Angelica has scanned his energetics and detected not one iota of harmfulness in this man. She's satisfied that he's offering shelter strictly as a Good Samaritan.

Twelve years later, they still live in Rockmanor with Robert, only now *in* the house because within a few months, Robert and Angelica were married; before Persy was a year old.

Robert is the only Dad Persy has ever known and she loves him deeply, probably as much as her Mom. Robert more than any of them, fears the unveiling of his wife and daughter. He'll be out of his mind with worry if this Mind Erase isn't done immediately.

Mom home-schools Persy in White Magic but doesn't include much about life back in Old Essex. Persy does know, however, that her name was chosen by Angelica because: 1) Angelica likes the name but more importantly 2) it has a resonance with her future, although Angelica won't elaborate. It's purposely misspelled from the mythical goddess "Perseph-o-ne" so Persy won't have to endure a lifetime of associations with the underworld queen.

Benson sometimes talks a little about the "British Times", but not often; mostly after evening tea and a couple of wee (dragonfly sized) snifters of eighteen-year-old snapdragon wine.

"Ah, lassie," he'll say, "Ya kin feel the fairy folk dancing around the flowers!" Yes, well that's Benson in his more mellow times and when he becomes too relaxed, he tends to speak his words backwards. She'll never forget the time after many snifters; he turns to her and tells her to "pis" her tea. Problem is, she's visiting a friend who, of course, can't hear him and finds Persy's raucous laughter

somewhat misplaced, as the friend is telling her about the death of her favourite parakeet!

Angelica has told both her and Robert a little of what it was like back in England during the 1600's. Although witches and wizards cannot be killed by fire, the officials would round up anyone they thought was practicing magic and decided whether they were witch or wizard, sentencing the guilty to be burned. The problem was that no real witch or wizard could work under these conditions of constant fear of exposure. If they weren't charged, and of course they have spells to slant the odds that they weren't, then anyone who worked with them or were associated with them in any way were arrested, interrogated, examined and often burned. It was a horrible time for all, magical or not.

The craziness started in the late 1400's when one of the human Popes, Pope Innocent VIII declared that the Devil was doing his work on earth through his minions, the witches and wizards. For more than two centuries, people were accused of witchcraft, mostly women, and hanged or burned.

Although it was most prevalent in German-speaking countries, France and Scotland, by 1645 Witch Hunts became the 'flavour of the month' in Angelica and Persy's Essex.

Persy's biological father, Andreas was taken one night when Persy was just over a month old and never heard from again. Angelica has an aunt who was arrested and although the officials think they burned her, she simply did a Vanishing Spell in the middle of the fire and now lives quietly in Argentina.

It's extremely difficult for "burned" witches and wizards to communicate with left-behind family, as believe it or not, the Magic Hunters have a few witches and wizards working on their side and these traitorous Magicals can pick up the energetic of communication between family members. Therefore, it's a given that if you're arrested, you don't try to connect ever, with undiscovered family or friends. They can only hope Andreas is under these constraints and all right wherever he is.

Angelica gathered what she needed and in 1666 their time, and 1995 here in the present, she crossed through the Time-Linx with her baby daughter and Benson to start a new life.

"Persy? Are you down there daydreaming? I need a black candle brought up here. Remember?" Angelica calls.

Persy grabs one out of the pantry and sprints up the stairs to the attic. Persy loves this room with all the magical herbs tied and hung upside down from the ceiling beams, precious oils in decanters on the shelves along with dried anatomical parts, poisons, flowers, gems, crystals and umpteen coloured candles.

Angelica opens her Book of Shadows which rests on its wooden stand. She holds a paper in her hand with the words "My Secret" on it, and on the other side of the paper, the actual secret, which is that Persephane Pendrake is a witch.

Angelica lights the black candle and chants as she rubs out the letters of "My Secret" one by one:

As I erase each letter away

*Your memory will lose my secret (the list of people who
were told) today,*

And after the last letter is erased and paper burned

My secret in your mind--will never return

As I say, so mote it be!

She has done the Threading Charm before and finds the list of busy bodies that were told of the day's events, so she can fit the names into the spell.

It's done and Dad's still about fifteen minutes from getting home. He works as the curator in the Alexandrian Museum in Willington, a small city, about three quarters of an hour away.

Whew! With Mom's help, Persy certainly dodges a whole mess of trouble. She feels a very quiet Friday evening is in order. And while Friday evening is quiet, this isn't the case for Saturday.

The Persephane Pendrake Chronicles

One - The Cimaruta

Chapter 3

Orsina Reveals Herself

Saturday morning begins blindingly bright. Persy finishes breakfast and with Benson on her right shoulder, strolls outside to the front porch. After yesterday's events, she's glad she isn't going to be faced with school and Kyle Dunsmore for two days.

The sun and warm spring air seem to beckon her, as she walks down the steps and onto the road. It isn't very far at all to the woods and this is most definitely the day for it.

Five minutes into the woods, there's the crystal waterfall, about ten feet high, and it drains into the clear river, bordered by moss and flower-covered banks. Persy loves it here. However, she doesn't venture too close to the falls,

as more often than not, there's a small black bear and her cub drinking from the river or catching fish. They never bother anyone, and don't seem to mind if you sit quietly on the banks.

On occasion, Persy has tried to communicate with the bear, but animals have the right to refuse Silent Speak conversations, and that is the case with this private bruin.

Persy slides partway down a bank and sits on a clump of moss. Benson lands on her forearm and looks up at her face.

"Lovely little walk down the *frog*, eh, what?" he quips. Persy grins and rolls her eyes. "Yes, that it was."

Note from Lady Ellen: Here's the deal. Benson has definitely spent a lifetime or two, too many, as a familiar of witches and wizards in London, England, particularly the

east end, fondly referred to as the home of the "Cockney". This small area of London has a very particular accent and one of their more charming and a fun habit is the use of "Cockney Rhyming Slang" (CRS). It's an idiom of speech wherein pairs of words such as 'frog and toad' are used for common words, in this case 'road'. You'll see that the second word of 'frog and toad' rhymes with 'road'. To confuse things more, cockneys won't use the rhyming word and say 'going up the toad' they'd use the non-rhyming word 'frog'. So 'going up the road' becomes going up the 'frog'. It's their secret way to communicate. Here are some other examples:

"Apples and pears" is used for 'stairs'. So 'going up the stairs' becomes 'going up the apples' (not using 'pears' which is the rhyming word}. Clever, eh? Sometimes the whole rhyming couplet is used, though; going up the apples and pears.

Son and Daughter = Water ("drinking a glass of son" - not daughter or maybe "give me a glass of son and daughter").

Adam and Eve = Believe ("you wouldn't adam it" or maybe,
"you wouldn't adam and eve it").

Al Capone = Phone

Almond Rocks = Socks

April Showers = Flowers

Pen and Ink = Stink

Butcher's Hook = Look

Push and Shove = Love

Cat and Mouse = House

Baked Beans = Jeans

Maurice Gibb = Fib

Stewart Granger = Danger

Jurassic Park = Dark

After Eight = Date

So you get it now?

There are tons of these...some classic...everyone knows them...some newer, and some you'll be told are out-right rubbish.

So have fun with this. Benson will let them drop throughout the Persephane Pendrake Chronicles, see if you can figure them out. You can also come to our official website www.lady-ellen.com/crs and we'll be talking about them there!

Don't forget to try and make up your own with your friends. Ah-Ha! A new secret code that only you kids will know...lovely!

Now, back to Persy...

Persy sits back on her elbows and within a few minutes the bear and her cub show up. Both bears glance up at her and then bend their heads to the river to drink.

Without warning, Persy hears a voice talking to her, a woman. "Persephane Pendrake, my name is Orsina, we need to speak," she hears.

Persy's mouth drops open and she bolts up straight. Benson shoots into the air. "What the...?" he snaps.

"Quiet, Benson, the bear is talking to me!"

"I know that love, I can hear her! No need to get all batty about it!"

Persy shushes him and looks back over at Orsina. She continues to talk to Persy.

"For many years I have been watching over you from a distance. Now that you are within range of the time of knowing...it is necessary I make contact with you. You are aware that you are a witch, but what you probably don't know is the depth of your power and the power you are about to gain in the upcoming years. This information, when appropriate is always passed to the individual witch or wizard by an animal spirit because we have proven ourselves

as very reliable keepers of secrets, and also as guardians of young, talented Magical Folk such as you.

Your mother knows I'm here, but has taken a vow of silence on this matter, allowing you to evolve properly. It is up to me to tell you more of your past, so listen carefully, Persephane Pendrake, this is very important for you to know, to understand your fate in this life.

The portal your mother brought you and Benson through under that waterfall is a part of the Time-Linx. The Time-Linx does just that; links all things throughout all of time. Albert Einstein of this world once proposed that time is not linear; that all is happening at the same time and he was right. It's through the Time-Linx that talented Magical Folk can travel to anytime, from 10,000 years ago; the times of Atlantis or to Ancient Egypt, at the beginning of their belief in gods, some 6,000 years ago, to eons into the future, and of course everything in between. There are situations in many eras which will need your help Persephane Pendrake, and these will be made known to you when the time is right.

When you warp from one world to the other you have the ability to land at the exact point you left when you return, so you will never be missed by the humans around you.

It's time Persephane Pendrake, very soon. You are two months from reaching thirteen years of age which is close enough to time travel. Your mother knows to prepare you for Time-Linxing. I will contact you again in exactly one month's time and we shall meet here. Until then, grow well." The conversation stops as quickly as it began.

The Persephane Pendrake Chronicles

One - The Cimaruta

Chapter 4

Persy Gets Her Affairs in Order

Persy wanders home in the late afternoon that Saturday, both her and Benson subdued by Orsina's new information. Good Grief! She's almost of age to use the Time-Linx and yet knows very little about it. Mom's told her briefly about coming here, but never that one day she could warp, travel and be a part of any time frame and place she wants --too cool for words!

As she grew up, Persy experienced varying levels of her talents; levitating her toys for fun, talking to animals, insects and even flowers on occasion, but *they* were particularly resistant to chatting, fairly indifferent for the most part. Benson explained that being rooted in one spot makes them cantankerous, bit of a jealousy thing, something you also have to watch out for in fairies.

Jealousy among the Magical Folk can be a huge barrier to overcome when you need to contact or work with any of them.

"Mom," Persy states on returning home, "I met and had a Silent Speak with Orsina by the waterfalls, today."

"Ah," smiles Angelica. "So it's time."

"Well I'm a month away from time travel, but she indicated that you would help me prepare. What do I have to do?"

"I think for the most part, she'd want me to tell you about the workings of the Time-Linx, what to expect, how to travel, you know...that sort of thing. Sit down, honey."

They both sit at the kitchen table, Benson on top of the napkin holder. "Oh, goodie a story--just LOVE stories," and he giggles. Persy shoots him a disdainful look and he pipes down.

"The Time-Linx was built at the height of Atlantean time," Angelica begins. "The scientists then were so much further ahead of even where science is today in this world. Everything was developed in complete unity with nature. The top researchers and inventors had one on one access to Gaia or Mother Earth, who was later very involved in ancient Greek Magic. That's why their science progressed in leaps and bounds, because it never harmed the planet.

The Time-Linx was evolved from an intimate knowledge of the full space/time continuum and complete respect of those laws. It is driven by energetics. To use it, one first has to be of a specific vibration themselves, a particular level of witch or wizard, and then enter a Linx portal, with their desired destiny in mind, focusing hard on that one destination. I've seen some nasty messes of people who were ambivalent about where they wanted to go and body parts were scattered throughout millennia. Very untidy and it takes an extremely talented Magical Folk to put that back together, so not recommended.

You will see yourself shimmering and feel as if you're floating, with very strong winds around you, but that's about all. You know when you have arrived as the light increases a great deal like a beautiful sunny day, even if it's not sunny where you land. Your vision clears and you simply exit the arrival portal."

"What can I do to prepare for this and not get tossed about like I landed in a blender?" asks Persy, somewhat concerned.

"Well, you know how I've taught you to meditate over the years? You should really work on that skill. Holding a focus on one thought for ten minutes or so. I know it doesn't sound like much, but ten minutes is a long time to keep your mind clearly directed at one thing. The Time-Linx doesn't require you to concentrate that long, but if you can do ten minutes, you'll have no problem with this at all. It's a training method a lot of Magical Folk use".

"Where would I go first?" Persy asks.

"We'll let Orsina decide on that...she knows where you are needed most."

"Ok, Mom, I may as well get going on this." Persy gets up and runs upstairs to her room, where she'll be undisturbed.

"Oh, light a brown candle and practice your focusing on its flame. The colour will help ground you to concentrate better," Angelica calls after her.

"You got it, Mom. Thanks!" Persy says, bounding up the last few stairs.

After closing her bedroom door and pulling a brown candle off her shelf, Persy sits down at her desk, getting comfortable and ready to work.

"Hey Perse! I've got a great idea! How about while you're practicing...I fly and buzz around you to see if I can distract you and if I don't...we know you've got it?"

Persy gives him a sideways glance and murmurs through tight lips, "Benson my fine English odonate, keep that blabbering up and I'm sure the rather hungry blue jay I happened to notice when I was coming up the stairs would enjoy a fine morsel, such as yourself." Persy grins slyly.

"Eek!" Benson shrieks in feigned horror. "At least offer to feed me to a bird of status like a pheasant...not a bottom-feeding scavenger like the common blue jay!"

Persy grins. "Ah well, I guess I would miss you if you were gone...somewhat!" she quips, now fully smiling, while rummaging through her top desk drawer, looking for her candle lighter.

"Stop...you're breaking my heart," Benson says snidely.
"Fine, fine...I'm history, you little rotter!" And he
buzzes off up to the topmost corner of her drapes, to
console himself with a sulking session.

At first, Persy finds concentrating completely for even a
minute really difficult, but by the time she spends an hour
trying; starting over again, and again, she manages to do
three minutes at a time rather well. She knows that with
daily sessions, she'll soon be up to her Mom's suggested
ten minutes and the Time-Linx will pose no problem for her.

Monday, at school is pretty much like any other school day.
Persy even runs into Kyle, not that it was her idea of a
good plan, and he says nothing of Friday's mess. She is *SO*
grateful that Mom is talented with Memory Erases, it
obviously worked like a charm. She chuckles to herself--a
"charm"--get it? He-he-he-he!

Of course Benson zones in on this, "Oh, puleeezzze," he
groans.

Persy scowls at him, "Benson, you are one tough audience to play, you know that?"

"Ah, yes my dear, but without me you might get all full of yourself, and become completely obnoxious," he grins.

"Humph. Not much fear of that, now is there?" Persy mutters as she stomps off down the hallway on to Science class.

"Hey...Persy!"

Persy turns around to see Riki jogging to catch up with her. "Hi, Rix. Where've you been all day?"

"Oh, got here late, had to see my naturopath. I seem to have this goofy rash that won't budge; even with the

herbals and homeopathics my Mom has given me," she says, now walking along beside Persy, slightly winded.

Erica or Riki as she likes to be called, and more often "Rix" to Persy, is Persy's best friend since either can remember. She has a consuming passion for all things magical and mystical. When they were younger, all their doll playing was about witches, wizards and dragons. She always loved that Persy could contribute so many great ideas into their play. If she only knew.

Riki, Persy believes, would gladly give one of her appendages to be one of the Magical Folk. And the poor kid may never know how close she is to magic, in the person she often thinks of as a sister.

"You up for a movie at my place after school?" Riki asks Persy.

"Can't today, Rix, got a ton of homework and a few things to do at home," Persy replies, thinking of her focusing practice. "Maybe at the weekend."

"No probs," says Riki, as they enter their Science classroom.

At the day's end, Persy and Riki are sauntering back to their lockers, when Persy notices a very distinct coloured light swoosh past them to her right. She turns her head abruptly to check it out.

Riki asks, "What?"

That's a yellow alert to Persy. Obviously, Riki notices nothing, so this must be magic.

"Oh, nothing...just thought I saw something...guess not," she lies. Then it happens again, still on the right of them but back the other way.

The girls' lockers are next to each other. When they arrive, Persy opens hers to put books away and as she bends in to put a few on the bottom...she sees it. A little glimmer of slivery-blue light glowing as if the light was bouncing off fog. In a matter of seconds a tiny form comes into view, of a very small individual with angular features and very pointed ears...and...yup...there they are...wings!

Persy knows about the Fairyfolk and thinks she has seen glimpses in the woods, but has never been contacted or tried to contact one. In Silent Speak she hears..."My name is Fawna...we must meet. Come to the very end of the garden at the back of your house just as the sun is beginning to set, about 8:30 tonight. Please, it's very important!" And then with a very soft "poof"...she's gone.

When the girls are walking home, Persy is pretty distracted wondering what's to come that evening.

"Persy, what do you think of that guy Jason Matchett? I'm pretty sure he kind of likes me, but I don't know. He sure can be a jerk sometimes, you know?"

Persy and Riki are having a lot more of this type of conversation lately and she feels bad she's not giving her close friend the attention she deserves and needs.

"I really don't know him that well, but guys can be pretty lame, I think, especially at our age. I think it's a guy thing so it makes it hard to know who they really are."

"Yeah, I'm probably best to just give it some time and see how things go, I've never even had a guy for a friend before--so what do I know?" Riki says, shrugging her shoulders.

"Yeah, you're probably right--I haven't either," says Persy. That doesn't include Benson she thinks, after all they were stuck with each other. Could be good...could be bad.

"Heard that!" Benson yells, silently.

Riki lives a half block closer to the school than Persy, and after they part ways, Persy very quickly walks home. She wants to get her focusing practice over with so she can think about meeting Fawna. She's now up to four minutes and climbing and she's feeling pretty good about that.

After dinner, Persy does homework and practices, steadily watching the clock. At about 8:25, she grabs her sweater, skips downstairs and out to the back garden, Benson buzzing along beside her.

"I don't remember inviting you," Persy says.

"Wouldn't miss this for the world, my **Barney Marlin.**"

She walks to the end of the garden and looks around. Not seeing anything unusual, she figures she's a tad early and sits on a bench. In a few minutes, a glimmer starts forming beside a particularly prolific rose bush Mom planted a few years back. Anything Mom puts into soil grows like it's on steroids.

The glimmer morphs into a foggy shape and then a distinct little female. Fawna smiles up at them and flits over to Persy, perching on her left knee.

"Thanks, awfully for coming," Fawna says. "Wasn't sure you would."

The Persephane Pendrake Chronicles

One - The Cimaruta

Chapter 5

Fawna's Plea

The fact is that relations between the Fairy Folk and humans or Magical Folk are, throughout the eons of time, precarious at best. Many of the fairies are very helpful and enjoy sharing times and workings with other Magicals, but there are certainly those Fairies who are tricksters, mean or even malevolent. Fawna, when meeting Persy wouldn't know what her personal experiences with the beings of her world were, so couldn't be sure this meeting would happen or if it did, that it would go well.

"I was pretty surprised when you appeared in my locker," Persy says to Fawna. "Certainly wasn't expecting that! But

I'm happy to meet with you as I sense some urgency from you. Right?"

"Oh," Fawna sighs. "You have NO idea ...I'm so glad I found you."

Suddenly Benson chimes in, "Hey then, how'd we know you're not a morphed Kelpie or Phooka? Those blighters are nothing but trouble. You could be trying to win us over only to dish up some dirty on us."

Normally, Kelpies and Phooka are very homely...and that's being kind; the Kelpies with their bulbous bodies and sharp pointed teeth and the Phooka having heads of men and bodies like horses. Both are very malicious and love to raise havoc. It would take a very powerful one to change into the visual of Fawna, but with the help of a dark wizard or witch, it wouldn't be the first time this act was used as bait.

"No, honestly," Fawna pleads, "You have to listen. I'm absolutely desperate." She looks up at Persy with the saddest eyes. "There is a horrible situation in my world...and it was your world too, Persephane, until your mother brought you here. Angelica leaving was a large part of how this could happen. If she were around, Melanthios wouldn't have been able to get away with all she's done!"

"Who's Melanthios? And what's she done...to whom?" blurts out Persy more than a tad confused.

Fawna clears her throat and begins, "A very evil witch...but let me tell the whole story from the start...it's going to make much more sense that way.

Not long after you three Time-Link'd over here, maybe a couple of weeks, things back home started to change. At first, the Fairy Folk and other Magicals didn't really notice much. The odd missing spirit, fewer flowers in the fields, waters lower in the streams, then one night everything changed.

We Fairies live in the astral plane as well as your world, switching back and forth, mostly working in concert with humans and Magical Folk, as long as we are treated well. You know how sensitive we can be, and that's when the mischief happens, if we are offended," Fawna states.

"Yes, Mom has told me all about your kind. You can be a right pain in the butt if you are ticked at someone," says Persy smiling widely.

"Oh, do tell," drolls Benson. "I once had a fairy turn my butt a shocking pink! Just because I told her that I thought her baby looked like a green jelly-bean with wings. Colour hexes are *murder* to get rid of!"

"But this had nothing to do with anyone being ticked," states Fawna. "All of a sudden we could no longer cross from the astral, to spend time in your realm...we were plain stuck in our world! It was unbelievable; no one

could figure it out. No one could venture out to your world. No One! When one tried, it was like hitting a brick wall. BAM! And you fell back on your bottom...stunned."

Fawna grins and continues, "Even the most powerful of Fairies, Our Queen Breena could not budge this Binding Spell. It's now gone on for years and the humans are forgetting about the Fairy Folk and not leaving bread, butter or the last of their crops for us to eat; there is not enough food in the astral plane for all of us to survive. Many of us live to work with humans and the Magical Folk. We love to sing, dance and celebrate the Eight Great Sabbats on that side and some of the best Fairy rings exist there...now we can't do any of that. We are sad and lonely on top of being hungry. We need someone to do something!"

"Do you mean that absolutely no one has made it over to the human zone? At all?" Persy is incredulous, because she knows very well how the Fairy Folk spend so much time in her world. She was great friends with a Dryad (tree fairy) when she was younger and learned much of her tree lore from

Aurora. Different trees mean so much to the Fairy folk and not all trees exist in their own world. Binding them to the astral plane is like cutting off half of their lives, a disaster for them.

"Well there are a few of us who have congregated together; some happened to be in the human realm when the spell was thrown. One of them, Durin, is a particularly strong fairy and was determined to put an end to the spell. He sent one of his worker fairies to the castle in which Melanthios lives...to hide in the trees nearby to try to see what she was up to. Durin didn't see that fellow for days and so went to look for him. He found him in a terrible state...dead...laying there with an arched back, eyes wide open and a horrible grimace on his face. Queen Breena says it's called the "Death Smile". We are not sure what happened," says Fawna.

"Its strychnine poisoning," states Persy "Mom told me about it when we were studying herbs and poisons. You find it in the seed pod of an herb called Dog Button or Nux Vomica and

you sure wouldn't need much to kill a small being like a fairy. Who would do such a thing?"

"As I've said, Melanthios. She's an evil witch who is on a rampage to control the world of Magical Folk and she knows no boundaries. She cares for no one. They say she has a heart as dark and cold as the bottom of the ocean.

Melanthios is determined to take over the Magical Folk and lead them all in the ways of the Ancient Evil Ones," Fawna continues. "Her followers are pushing her to show her power and she's starting with the Small Ones, us and folk like us. And to make matters worse, with us being bound, the evil fairies, like the Kelpies and Phookas, you mentioned, Benson, are running amuck. Now the only human's Fairy folk experience if they have any at all, are all bad. They are not only forgetting us but hating any they *do* see.

The worlds of fairy, humans and magic are in general chaos. We've lost the wonderful balance of our co-existing amongst ourselves and nature. Some fear she will take over all the

magical creatures next and finally, the Magical Folk...the witches and wizards of our time in Essex and next start Time-Linxing to other major magical times to poison them with her vile influence. We have to stop this madness!" Fawna's eyes fill with tears.

Persy's not only shocked and horrified at this vicious plan of destruction of everything good, but left speechless with the thought that it could actually happen!

"What ever can make a person turn that evil?" Benson asks. "I knew that witch when she was young. She always liked to try the meaner spells. If an innocent insect or small animal died in one of her rituals, so much the better. But she, for the most part is controlled by her family members and in particular her mother. I would never have described her as purveyor of the Black Arts!" Benson is clearly shaken.

Persy turns to him "Who is...?"

"Wait, Persy, there's more," Fawna interrupts. "It seems it was a shocking rejection in affairs of the heart that really turned her. She was deeply in love with a great wizard...Evander...and they were planning to wed one spring. Just prior to the wedding, Evander came upon Melanthios in a small clearing in the woods, at sunset. There, she was performing a ritual involving the sacrifice of a small rabbit. Evander's purely of the White Arts, so was decimated to find out that his lady love could be that cruel and performing dark spells. He banished her from his life on the spot and from that point forward she's sworn to uphold the Black Arts and bring them to their maximum power."

"Cripes!" exclaims Persy. "But why have you come to tell me this story? Is there something I can possibly do?"

Fawna looks a little startled. "Persy," she says, "Melanthios is a First Order Witch. Do you know what that is?"

"I don't know a lot about it; there are three orders, I believe, the First Order being the most powerful, right?"

"Yes, and now that you're coming of age. I'm sure your Mom will be explaining it in detail, but for now you need to know what a formidable force Melanthios is," Fawna says.

"Ok...so again...why tell me?"

"We need your help to break the binding spell. In less than a month you can Time-Linx, enter our world and help right this terrible wrong!"

"Fawna, as much as I'd love to put a stop to this-- whatever makes you think I can take on Melanthios?"

"Oh that's easy, Persephane Pendrake. YOU are a very powerful First Order Witch. And what's more...Melanthios is your aunt!"
