

BY EVAN JACOBS



THE BAD LUCK JACKET

A decorative title box with a hand-drawn, ornate border featuring floral and scrollwork motifs. The text is centered within the box. The background of the page is decorated with faint spider webs.

THE HISTORY OF THE VINTAGE ROSE ANTIQUE SHOP

The story begins with a sorcerer named Ervin Legend. He had a talent for making money. While traveling, Ervin bought items all over the world. He would have called himself a collector. Others might say hoarder. Once he grew tired of things, he sold them for a profit. "One man's junk is another man's treasure," he used to say.

Eventually, Ervin wanted to settle down. His home was in Scarecrow, California. But he needed somewhere to put all of his things. Ervin opened the Vintage Rose Antique Shop in 1912. It was a place to keep his collections. His wife, Visalia, inspired the shop's name. She loved roses and kept them in vases all over the shop. "Roses mask the smell of old things," she would say.

After the shop opened, Ervin kept traveling. He collected pieces to sell from all over. In 1949, Ervin and Visalia went to Cairo, Egypt. While there, the couple disappeared. Nobody knows what happened to them. Some say Ervin's love of sorcery might have been to blame. He may have looked into something he shouldn't have.

Family members took over the shop. None were quite like Ervin, though. Without his passion, the business began to fail. His sister believed it was cursed.



In 1979, the Legends put the shop up for sale. Rose Myers bought it. She was odd, like Ervin. Her passion for old things was like his. "Everything has a story," she would say, with a twinkle in her eye. From a young age, Rose had looked for bargains. She would resell things for a profit. Buying the Vintage Rose was her dream come true. The place was old. It was filled with odd treasures. Plus, Rose was part of the name of the store. It seemed like this was meant to be.

Rose ran the shop for 40 years. When she passed away, it closed. The business had been left to her nephew, Evan Stewart. He was Rose's closest living relative. The Stewart family moved to Scarecrow. They reopened the shop in 2019.

Today, the shop still holds many treasures. Collectors come from all over. Some have purchased these mysterious relics. Are they magical? Do they watch over the store? We may never find out. Or will we?

A black and white illustration of a vintage shop window. The window has a decorative archway with a central circular motif. Above the archway, the words "VINTAGE ROSE" are written in a stylized font. The window is flanked by stone pillars and has a decorative border. The overall style is reminiscent of a classic book cover or a decorative title page.

VINTAGE ROSE

CHAPTER 1

KIND OF FRIENDS

You two are so cute,” I tease. “Did Mom and Dad coordinate your play date today?”

My sister, Tenley, glares at me. Her friend, Mari, adjusts her glasses and looks away. We’re all standing behind the front counter at Vintage Rose Antique Shop. This is where Tenley and I work. She decided to bring Mari today.

Tenley rolls her eyes. “No, Jay. Mari and I hang out a lot because we’re friends. You’d understand if you had any.”

I pretend to laugh. “Oh, you’re too funny.”

Tenley is in eighth grade. I’m a high school senior. We’ve never really gotten along. She and I basically tolerate each other.

My sister is ridiculously sensitive. I used to tease her all the time when she was younger. It would make her so mad. Now that she’s older, I have even

more ways to annoy her. It's great that she still gets upset too.

Mari barely talks. I think she's just as sensitive as Tenley. They're perfect for each other.

Tenley doesn't know how many friends I have. It's none of her business. I don't have many. But our family just moved to this small town of Scarecrow, California from Chicago last year. Since then, I've made more friends. Well, it's really only one. We're kind of friends.

Her name is Kathy Garcia. She has a lot of classes with me this year. The two of us usually sit near each other. I think that's why teachers pair us up for projects. Kathy and I don't talk much outside of school. Still, it's cool being sort of friends with someone who seems to know everyone.

My family moved to Scarecrow after my Aunt Rose died. She left us a house and this antique shop. We sell all kinds of weird, old stuff here. There are books, trinkets, gadgets, toys, furniture, carpets, clothing, paintings, and other random items.

When I had first walked into this shop, I thought the place reeked of dead roses. Most people say it still does. But I guess I don't notice it anymore.

I glance over at Tenley. She's talking to Mari.

While I can hear Tenley loud and clear, I can barely understand her friend. It seems like Mari only speaks in a series of mumbles.

Eventually, I take out my phone. I don't have any texts. This is such a boring Tuesday afternoon. Unfortunately, Tenley is almost spot on about my friend situation. Still, people do text me from time to time.

I keep scrolling on my phone. It wouldn't be good for Tenley to think I'm not busy. She might ask me to do some sort of real work around here.

Just then, I hear the bells on the shop door jingle. I look up and see that Carlos Perez just walked in.

He approaches the front counter. "Well, if it isn't Jay Stewart!" Then he grabs my hand and pulls me in for a quick one-armed hug before letting go.

My face is getting warm. "Hey, man. What's up?"

Carlos is easily one of the coolest people at Scarecrow High. Kathy introduced me to him. Since then, he talks to me sometimes. He even gave me his number. But we've never texted.

Carlos is a star football player with perfectly styled black hair and awesome clothes. He drives a red and black Ford Mustang that always glistens. Everyone at school wants to be friends with him.

“What brings you in here?” I ask him.

“Halloween, dude.” Carlos starts looking around the shop. “It’s on Friday. And I need a costume.”

“Oh, okay. Well, let me know if I can help.”

Tenley eyes me curiously. She knows I’m never this nice to any of our customers. In fact, I always try to give them the least amount of attention. But this is Carlos. He’s too cool not to get the best treatment.

Carlos holds up a black leather jacket. “This is awesome!” Then he turns it around to show me what’s on the back. It reads Bad Luck. The words are engulfed in brightly colored flames. The jacket looks like something a biker would wear.

“Wow, we sell that?” I ask. “This place has so much stuff. I don’t remember seeing it.”

Carlos grins and points to a clothing rack. “It was right here. He looks at the price tag and smiles. “This is only \$20. I’ll take it!”

“Hey,” I say. “Don’t worry about that. The jacket is yours.”

Carlos’s eyes widen. “Really? Are you sure?”

Tenley narrows her eyes at me. “No, he’s not sure.” Then she turns to Carlos. “I’m sorry. We only put the free items in our pass-along section.” She nods to that area.

I put my hand in front of her face. “You know I got this, sis.” Then I look at Carlos. “Just take the jacket. It’s on me.”

Tenley rolls her eyes. She knows I’m never going to pay for it.

CHAPTER 2

INVITATION

“Thanks, Jay!” Carlos says. “This jacket is perfect for a Halloween party I’m going to on Friday. I’ll be one of the best-dressed bikers ever.” He pauses. “Wait, you should come to the party too.”

“To a party? This Friday?” I can’t hide my smile. Carlos inviting me to a party is a big deal. Tenley witnessing this makes it so much better. This will shut down her annoying jokes about me not having friends.

Carlos nods. “Yeah. It’s at Chase Le’s house. He lives in a huge place near the mountains. There’s a barn on the property too. His parents are out of town this weekend. But they’re letting him have the party. It’s starting in the house. Then we’ll be moving it to the barn for a more Halloween-like feel. It’s going to be epic.”

I try not to sound too excited. Being overeager may

make me seem desperate. “Okay, dude, I’ll be there. Thanks!”

“No, thank *you* for this jacket. See you around!” Carlos waves and leaves the shop.

I hear a loud thud on the counter. Tenley has slammed the shop’s huge, ratty, blue book on it. Our Aunt Rose created the book. It lists most of the items in the shop with a brief history of each one. Items with strange backgrounds are definitely listed. My family uses the book and enters new items as we get them. If something’s origin is unknown, we check the book before a customer leaves. The goal is to be sure items don’t cause trouble for people. But that’s part of a longer story. Aunt Rose’s book is annoying to me, so I rarely, if ever, use it for anything.

Tenley taps the cover with her fingers. “You know the store’s policy. But you didn’t check this before giving away that jacket.” She glances at a customer. “I’ve got to help someone now, so look it up, Jay.”

I shrug. “Whatever. It’s just a jacket.”

The day drags on. I don’t bother looking up the jacket. Using that book is such a hassle.

Eventually, I have to take Mari and Tenley home. I hate driving around my sister and her friends. But Mari’s mom couldn’t pick her up from the shop

today. Now my mom is making me give Mari a ride. She and Tenley are in the back of my parents' old silver SUV. The car was handed down to me when I turned 16.

“Jay, can you please turn the music down?” Tenley asks. “Mari and I can’t even hear each other.”

I glance at them in my rearview mirror. “So? This is my car. My music sounds way better than your voices.”

Exploding Minds is my favorite band. Their music streams from my phone through the car’s stereo. A mix of crushing drums and loud guitars blares. The singer screams the entire time. I love it.

As I drive, I see that everything outside looks like Halloween. Scarecrow, California, is known for being overcast during the day. It’s 7:00 p.m., so the sky is as dark as midnight now. At least Chicago had sunshine. This town is so weird. I bet it’s the only one in California that isn’t sunny.

Stores and shops are adorned with Halloween decorations. The sky here and the town’s name make this place seem like it’s always in some sort of Halloween mode. But at this time of year, the eerie feeling of Halloween completely takes over.

I heard the town was founded in the early 1900s.

It was only strawberry fields and swamps back then. Scarecrows were put up everywhere to keep birds from eating farmers' seed. This is how the town got its name. Now the place is basically parks, strip malls, one real mall, and old houses. One popular hangout spot is Scarecrow Plaza. The plaza is full of restaurants and stores. Vintage Rose is one of the shops.

It's too bad that I hate scarecrows and Halloween. Scarecrows are strange. Dressing up in costumes is for kids. But I'm going to have to do it. There's no way I'm missing this Friday's party. I just need a costume.

Soon one of my favorite songs is interrupted. There's a loud rumble of motorcycle engines revving. The noise drowns out the music. I check my mirrors. A group of bikers is trailing my car. The sound of their combined engines is deafening.

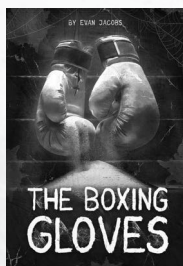
VINTAGE ROSE MYSTERIES



THE BAD LUCK JACKET
9781638899105



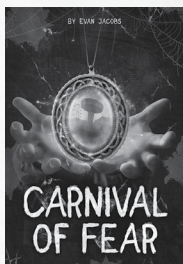
BIRD OF PREY
9781638893271



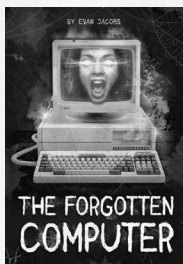
THE BOXING GLOVES
9781638898962



CALL WAITING
9781680217629



CARNIVAL OF FEAR
9781638890478



THE FORGOTTEN COMPUTER
9781638893318



LIT
9781638893288



LUCKY ME
9781680217599



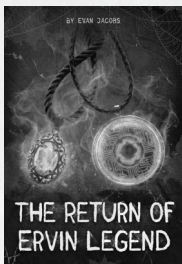
THE MIRROR
9781638893301



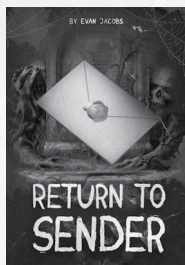
NEW PAINTING
9781680217612



THE OLD PHOTO BOOTH
9781638892755



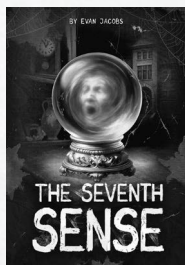
THE RETURN OF
ERVIN LEGEND
9781638899174



RETURN TO SENDER
9781638893295



THE SECRET ROOM
9781680217582



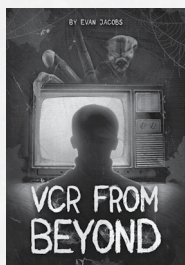
THE SEVENTH SENSE
9781638898948



THE TABLET
9781638899082



THE UNKNOWN PORTAL
9781638899129



VCR FROM BEYOND
9781680217605

WWW.SDLBACK.COM/VINTAGE-ROSE-MYSTERIES

VINTAGE ROSE MYSTERIES

THE BAD LUCK JACKET

Now that Jay has new friends, a party invite, and even a shot at school fame, he finally feels like he's fitting in. But everything starts to unravel after he gives away an old leather jacket from his family's antique shop. On Halloween night, the jacket's dark past catches up with everyone around him in full force. Will Jay and his costumed crew be enough to put an end to all the chaos?

 **SADDLEBACK**
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING
www.sdlback.com

LEXILE HL400L

ISBN: 978-1-63889-910-5



9 781638 899105