

Chapter 3
The Wolf Hunters

12th September · 8.30pm

I eyed an open window, mulling over an escape. I almost thought about banging on Jacob's door too, grabbing his hand and taking him with me. Whatever Stamper wanted from him, it probably wasn't his autograph! But would Jacob even believe

me? Probably not. Besides... there was no time.

The door beside Jacob's dressing room was locked but the key was in the keyhole. I turned the key, slipped inside and closed the door behind me. Just in time too, as Stamper and his men marched into the corridor.

I was in a laundry room, squashed beside the washing machines, mops propped up in buckets and a single window.

Outside in the corridor, Stamper didn't bother knocking on Jacob's door.

He just kicked it down.

There was a vent high up in the wall of the laundry room. I climbed up on a bucket and peered through. I couldn't see, but I could hear everything. And I was sure I could hear a very loud GULP from Jacob.

"Jacob Galleon!" Stamper barked.

"Er, can I help you? Jacob replied.

"Galleon, I hear you've written a little book?" sneered Stamper.

"Er, oh yes. Do you want to buy a copy?" Jacob asked, hopefully.

Stamper chuckled, an evil sort of

chuckle, the kind you'd expect from a wicked goblin in a horror movie.

"Oh no. I'd like to burn a copy. Every last copy. In your book, you say you've discovered a cure?"

"That's right," said Jacob. "That's the secret of the wolf."

A CURE! My heart skipped a beat. It sounded promising, although the person who'd discovered this cure was now cornered in a room with three men who didn't find it so promising. Things weren't looking good.

“I enjoy hunting werewolves,” said Stamper. “And I get paid well for it. A cure would put me out of business.”

“You’re werewolf hunters?” Jacob gasped.

“That’s right,” replied Stamper. “Real ones, unlike you. But tonight, we’re just plain old man hunters.”

I knew I would have to act fast. I pressed my face up against the vent and...

HOWWWLLLLL!

“Next door!” Stamper yelled, and I heard the hunters charge.

My distraction worked. Too well,

perhaps, because now Stamper knew someone was listening. It was my turn to GULP, because in saving Jacob I had landed myself in it.

My eyes darted round the room, seeking a way out. I dashed to the window, yanked the handle and pushed it open. Below, there was a drop of about three metres into a rubbish skip. The big black bags and cardboard boxes inside would make a perfect cushion. Except I’d already decided not to jump.

Leaving the window open, I dived

behind the door just as Stamper and his men crashed through it.

“Look!” said one of Stamper’s goons. The three of them raced over to the window. Now was my chance! I slipped in front of the door, then slammed it behind me and turned the key, locking them inside.

“HEY!” they yelled. The lock wouldn’t hold them for long. I knew I needed to get out of there.

In his dressing room, Jacob was frantically stuffing his bag. His hair was all straggly and his face pale.

“Come with me, FAST!” I urged, grabbing his hand. We ran.

9.20pm

We sat at a table in a fast food restaurant. Everything about him looked sad, even his beard.

“I’m sorry, Jess,” he said. “I’m a bit of a fraud. My real name’s not Jacob Galleon. It’s Keith. Keith Tripper. Doesn’t sound very tough, does it?”

“I don’t care,” I said. “As long as you can help cure my gran.”

“I’m not much of a werewolf hunter,” Jacob replied, “but one thing I am good at

is research.”

He leant forward. Suddenly he looked quite animated. Even his beard seemed to perk up. “I found this old book in a library. It’s called *The Chronicon*. It has a recipe for a potion that can be used to cure a werewolf.”

He’d said it again – a cure! There’s hope for Gran!

So now Jacob is in London, to consult the book. He’s agreed to help me make a potion.

We meet again next week!

13th September · 6.00pm

Gran’s been behaving oddly. One minute she’s exhausted but the next she’s jumping about like a pogo stick. She’s also complaining of bad smells that nobody else can smell. Tonight, it was Mr Black’s smelly slippers. Mr Black lives four doors up the street!

15th September · 2.00pm

We’re off on a trip this weekend. Every year, Gran goes to the Wool Exhibition. This year it’s at Sandtown, by

the seaside, so Mum decided we should all go in the car.

“Isn’t this marvellous, dear?” said Mum as we sped down the motorway. I wasn’t so sure. Gran had her window open and was leaning her head out, her tongue dangling from the side of her mouth. And she was panting.

“Gran, are you okay?” I yelled.

“She’s just excited, dear,” said Mum.

We overtook another car that had a dog in the back. Gran started barking. Then, as if that wasn’t bad enough, she

almost jumped out the window trying to get at it.

Mum just laughed. “I forgot how much of a joker your grandmother is.”

4.00pm

Just passed a sign for Sandtown.

“Try our world-famous energy-giving toffee!”

Seaside, here we come!

6.30pm

Got to the hotel. Went out for dinner.

TOTAL EMBARRASMENT!

Gran gorged herself, eating three chicken breasts, four plates of sausages

and a triple-decker beefburger. It's bad enough that Gran licked her own plate clean, but licking everyone else's in the restaurant just wasn't COOL!

11.00pm

OUCH!

I'm sharing a bed with Gran. Her toenails are like actual nails! I had to pile cushions between us to save my legs from bleeding. Oh, does she like to scratch. The sound of her itching her back is like someone sanding wood.

16th September · 11.30am

DISASTER!

The day started off so well. The sun was shining. The air was clear. The promenade was full of people. Mum went for a massage, while I walked Gran to the exhibition.

Gran was gorging herself again, this time on Sandtown's famous toffee. She had her arm folded through mine, as she often does. You normally have to walk quite slowly so that Gran keeps up, but today was different. There was a spring in

her step. She was practically bouncing. It was me who was struggling to keep up with her.

“Oh, isn’t this wonderful, dear?” said Gran.

For a short moment, with the sunshine and the gentle sea breeze, I almost agreed with her. Almost forgot all my werewolf-y troubles. Then, all of a sudden, Gran wasn’t beside me.

I noticed a lot of commotion on the beach. A black cat was racing across it, and people were scattering in fear, for what followed closely behind was quite

scary. It looked like a large bounding dog. My heart sank as I realised that it was actually my gran. On all fours, running like a panther.

She left chaos in her wake. Women were screaming, deckchairs upended and ice creams splattered in people’s faces. A policeman yelled “Oi!” and gave chase, though he was nowhere near fast enough.

The cat and Gran soon disappeared into the exhibition centre.

By the time I got there, the Wool Exhibition had become a scene from a disaster movie. I pressed my way through

the panicking crowd. Lots of the exhibits had been toppled over, along with the people inside them.

The cat was perched high up on a beam, licking itself. As for Gran, she was sitting on the floor tangled up in an enormous, multicoloured bundle of wool. She seemed to have recovered her senses a bit.

“Hello, dear,” she smiled, meekly.

The policeman ogled her angrily.

“What do you have to say for yourself?”

“Might I have a cup of tea, please?”

she replied.

“Look at all the damage you’ve caused! You could do three weeks in the slammer for that.”

If Gran goes to prison for three weeks, she’ll be in there during the next full moon. Imagine the chaos of a werewolf loose inside a prison! I couldn’t let that happen. Besides, I couldn’t very well cure her in there.

What am I going to do?

And now you decide...

What happens next?

A) Jess thinks up a mad excuse for Gran's actions

B) Jess creates a diversion

C) Stamper and his men burst in

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