

Britney A.

The Book

“I’m telling you the truth, the b-book... It knows! The book knows, why won’t that go through your thick skulls? It knows!” Shouted old man Jacob as he was forcefully pushed out of his house by his two nephews.

Those were the Vogiatzis. Our neighbors for the last decade. The crazy old man, Jacob Viogiatzis and his two nephews. Noah Viogiatzis and Caden Viogiatzis. They have been trying to drag old man Jacob to a retirement home for as long as I can remember. Jacob always stared at everyone with an intimidating unflinching gaze, he doesn’t look away until you’re completely out of sight. He was deemed crazy about six years ago. He always screamed about ‘the book’ and how it knows everything. The poor man, how badly he has fallen. I still remember when he was normal, for *our* standards.

I watched as Noah and Caden both hauled him into the car and put his seatbelt on. The old man started screaming, protesting. He was saying that he needed to hide the book before anyone found it. He tried to escape from inside the blue corvette, pushing Caden aside.

I knew that old man Jacob was strong. Just by the first glance you could tell he spent his earlier days working out. I knew this because Caden and Noah weren’t as frail and weak as you would think. Almost no one could physically push them aside so easily.

Noah and Caden ran after old man Jacob as he tried to run back to the house. Just as he was about to reach the doorknob, his nephews were able to retain him. It took both Noah and Caden to pull him back into the car and they still struggled. Old man Jacob was a dangerous man. Everyone on our block knew that and stayed away from the Vogiatzis. The only people

who tried to take some time to understand them was my family, and even we were a bit frightened.

I was outside my front porch, watching the scene unfold, when my parents came rushing outside.

They must have heard the racket.

“Eleonora, I suggest you come on in before anything happens,” warned Dad, his unreadable eyes never leaving old man Jacob and the blue corvette.

“So, they finally took him away,” stated Mom, just like Dad never taking her eyes off the man.

I sighed, “Mom, Dad, it’s fine. They’re leaving now. It won’t do me any harm to stay out here,” I assured them.

They seemed to ignore me.

Typical, it’s just like them to do that. I would be alarmed if they paid any real attention.

Noah and Caden struggled to keep old man Jacob in the car and eventually gave up. This was a routine. They would try to take him, but he was just too strong. They needed more help, but everyone was living in fear. There was once when they made it all the way to the stop sign before I saw old man Jacob run out of the car like a maniac.

My parents both sighed loudly and finally responded to my ignored question, “Ok, Eleonora. Just be very careful, we’ll come by to check on you in a couple of minutes,” Mom enunciated as she walked back inside with Dad.

I looked to the street, noticing that Caden and Noah had given up on trying to restrain Jacob. They let him run out of the car and into the brick house. I don't know why I did this, but while Noah and Caden were leaning against their car, I decided to do the undone. I slowly jumped off my porch and approached them with caution. With each step, I was determined to run the opposite way, but some invisible force kept me from doing so. I approached them nervously and before I knew it, I was face to face with Jacob's nephews. Noah seemed startled while Caden just scratched his neck.

"Um," I spoke with uncertainty, "I'm Nora. I live across from you."

Caden smiled and spoke for Noah and himself, "I'm Caden and that's Noah."

Noah looked as if he just saw a ghost. I heard him whisper something very interesting to Caden.

"Caden, Uncle Jacob said that we couldn't talk to anyone. Let's go, she might find out," Noah took Caden by the wrist and started to drag him along. Caden abruptly stopped.

"Noah, we've been living in fear our whole lives. Don't you think it's time to let someone in?"

"But our uncle- "

"Don't worry about him. I'll make sure he doesn't do anything."

Noah and Caden turned back around and asked me if I wanted to go inside their house. I looked back to my house remembering my parent's warning, but then I looked back to the two boys standing in front of me.

"All right, I'll go," I whispered.

I didn't know what I was expecting. A dungeon, a hidden monster, a house filled with weapons. Their house looked completely normal, but there was something that stood out. There was a book chained to a table 'Vogiatzis' it read.

I must've stared at it too long because Caden suddenly spoke from behind me, "That's the book our uncle always talks about. It's our family curse. The only way it can be broken is if we find out who cast it in the first place."

I stared at him confused, "Family curse?"

"If we open that book, we go insane. It's been like that for many generations."

The book probably contained many hidden secrets, it may be too much for the human brain to handle. There also wouldn't be a reason to lie about the situation.

"Nora, help us lift the curse," Caden looked at me with hopeful eyes while Noah stayed back.

"Ok, I will."

Our hands intertwined as we headed outside of the Vogiatzis's house. If my parents didn't want me to see the outside world, I would find out for myself.