

## *The Lost Amulet*

**Veronica Neill**

A gasp penetrated the bedroom. Zeke shot up from his sheets in a cold sweat. He scanned the room, heart beating as his eyes adjusted to the darkness. His breathing slowed. He grabbed the notebook and pencil from the bedside table and turned to the next page. Flicking the light on, he started drawing the vision from his dream. The sound of each pencil stroke calmed him.

A ray of light crept through his curtains as he finished. The clock on the bedside table read 5.30. He sighed and put aside his pencil. As he stood, there was a knock at the door.

‘May I come in?’

‘Yes, Mother,’ he said.

She bustled into the room. A smile lit her face when she saw Zeke. ‘Ah, you’re up.’

‘Yeah,’ he mumbled, looking away.

‘Here, take these and then we can talk about it, okay.’ She held out medication and a cup.

With a look of disgust, Zeke took the pills. ‘Done,’ he muttered.

He sat on the bed, and his mother sat beside him. ‘So, what does the future hold?’ she asked, peering at him.

Zeke gazed into his lap. ‘I drew what I saw, like the doctor said.’

His mother grabbed his notebook. Horror dawned her face. ‘Tell me this isn’t true,’ she said.

He shrugged. ‘This kid is somewhere in the world, and he’s gonna destroy it if he finds the amulet,’ Zeke said, referring to the drawing.

‘When is this going to happen?’

‘That’s the thing. My dreams don’t tell me when it’s going to happen.’ He looked his mother in the eyes.

‘Well, best not to dwell on it too much,’ she said, breaking eye contact.

‘But if I research about it, I can try to stop—’

‘No! It’s best to just accept it.’

He looked down. ‘I should get ready for the day. I’m going to the library to study,’ he said.

His mother gave him a smile as she stood up. ‘Okay darling, I’ll get your breakfast ready.’

As the door closed, Zeke grabbed a shirt, jeans and got dressed. He picked his notes up and shoved them into his bag and walked to the kitchen. He put the piece of toast in his mouth and ate it. Putting his shoes on, he said 'I'm off.'

'Alright darling, and just forget about the dream please. I don't want you having anymore anxiety attacks.' his mother replied.

'Yeah, yeah,' he said, putting his bag on and walking out the front door.

He unchained his bike and rode to the library, his thoughts clouded by the wind gushing past him. He hid his bike in some bushes and strolled inside to an empty table and sat down. He started unpacking his notes while he tried to concentrate, but all he thought about was the amulet. He stood up and walked through the aisles. Zeke stopped when he got to the magical relics aisle. He skimmed the books trying and find one about amulets.

'You're not going to find what you're looking for in this aisle.'

Zeke whipped around to face the stranger. It was the librarian; she had big hoop earrings, a floral dress, and lots of necklaces with healing stones on them.

'What do you mean?' he asked,

The librarian laughed. 'This isn't the right aisle. If you want to find what you're looking for, go to the 'Urban legends' aisle, third shelf near the middle.' She smiled and walked away.

Zeke was confused. He looked in the direction the librarian went. 'I guess I should see if she's right,' he said to himself as he walked to the aisle. He followed the directions the librarian gave him and found books about amulets.

'How'd she know?' he said and grabbed a few of them. He walked to the front desk where the librarian was and put the books on the desk.

She locked eyes with him and smiled. 'Just these five?'

'Yes, please.' Zeke replied and watched as she scanned them.

'Here you go.'

Zeke nodded and took the books. He looked at the librarian. 'Thank you for the tip.'

She smiled wider and nodded. 'No problem.'

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When he got home, he chained his bike up and walked inside the house.

'Welcome home sweetie!' his mother said. He strolled into the kitchen seeing his mum doing the dishes and sat on the stool. 'So how was the library?'

'It was good. There weren't many people, so it was quiet.'

'You should start socialising before the world ends,' his mother said.

‘But does it have to be the end, Mum? I mean, if I do a little more research, maybe I can find the kid.’

‘No!’ she yelled, slamming her hands on the bench. ‘There is no way you’re going. You’ll get killed if you go on your own!’ She said, tears falling down her cheeks. ‘I’ve lost your father. I can’t lose you.’

Zeke looked at her. ‘You didn’t have to bring Dad into this,’ he said, tears flooding his eyes as he stormed to his room. He wiped his tears away and grabbed his bag. He took the books out and skimmed through them. He looked through four of them with no luck. As he looked through the last one, he found it; an amulet known as The Devils Serpent. It was said that if anyone put it on, they got possessed by a spirit with snake eyes. The amulet was last said to be hidden in the enchanted forest along ways north of his home.

He walked to his desk and started writing a note for his mother, before he went to his closet and snatched out a duffel bag, filling it with clothes. He looked through the closet and grabbed the pocket money he’d been saving for three years and a map that his dad gave to him before he died. He picked up the book that had the amulet information in it and put it in the bag, before opening the window and throwing his bag out. He looked back at his room one last time and jumped.

Zeke went to grab his bag but stopped. ‘My anxiety pills,’ he said and turned back towards the window. He looked in and saw them on the bedside table. ‘I’ll have to make do with what I’ve got, I guess.’ He sighed and reached in grabbing them. He heard footsteps coming towards the room and scooped his bag up.

‘Goodbye mother,’ he whispered and started running north.