**Chapter 2**

I am frozen where I stand. I can’t move. My heart is pounding in my chest. I want to scream but I can’t. *Is there really a headless body in the attic?*

I squint my eyes to try to see better in the shadows. I see a little better now. I can tell that it’s not just a headless body but that the arms are gone too!

A little voice in my head says “Well, at least it can’t grab you. Now, go back downstairs.”

Somehow, that thought made me brave enough to take a couple of steps toward the couch. Even though the floor was creaking, the body on the couch did not move at all.

*Okay. So, it’s probably not alive since it doesn’t have a head. And it’s probably not a zombie because it’s not coming after me. But if it’s a dead body, wouldn’t it be stinky by now?*

I sniff the air. It just smells dusty and old. I still smell the rotten wood. And the mothballs. I step a little closer to the couch.

The angle of the light coming in through the window has changed a little. And I can see things better.

Looking at that headless and armless body on the couch, I laugh.

It’s a mannequin used for making clothes.

I remember Mom saying that Grandma Miriam makes her own clothes. *That figures. Where would you buy some of the stuff she wears?* The last time I saw her, she was wearing a bright purple dress with puffy sleeves.

Now that I have solved the mystery of the haunted floor and the headless body, I feel safer. But it’s still hot.

I look back at the boxes. *I wonder what's in those? Probably more books. Or maybe more purple dresses?* I giggle and start to walk back to the boxes.

I hear a whisper. I stop and listen. *That can’t be real. The squeaky floor and mannequin have your imagination running wild. It’s just another attic noise.*

I take a step toward the boxes. There are about a dozen of them stacked against the wall. Most are closed but some are open. I see books sticking out of the top of a couple of them. *I wonder what those books are about? And why are they up here and not downstairs with all the others?*

My curiosity pushes me to check them. The sound of another whisper persuades me to stop. *Two times? I can’t imagine it twice. I know that I heard something. And it’s coming from the old mirror.*

I walk slowly over the creaky floor towards the mirror. I stop and listen when I get next to it. Nothing. No whisper. Not a sound.

The brave part of me wants to pull the sheet off and see what the mirror looks like. Maybe it would whisper then. The less brave part of me wants to get out of this hot, dark, spooky attic.

My brave self loses. I leave the attic, quietly folding the ladder, and closing the door. I head downstairs. Mom and Dad are still shifting boxes around to different rooms.

“Done exploring? Good. You can help with these boxes. Go ahead and take your boxes upstairs.” Dad said in his work mode voice.

The rest of the night is unpacking boxes and putting stuff in closets and dressers. *Boring! I just want to go back to the attic.*