

# The ADVeNTUReS of **JEFF & REED**

A FOUR-STORY ANTHOLOGY



BOYS TOWN<sup>®</sup>  
Press

BY  
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Illustrated by Stephanie Hider

## **The Adventures of Jeff and Reed**

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## The Pirate and The Ink Blot

# CHAPTER ONE

“I don’t believe this!”

Jeff Kirkland stared into his bedroom mirror. Over his right eye was a large black patch with thin straps that wrapped around his head. “I look like a freakin’ pirate,” he muttered.

“It’s not so bad, honey,” Mom assured him. “I’ll bet your friends will think it looks cool.”

Jeff rolled his eyes and puffed a heavy sigh. “Whatever, Mom.” Jeff’s whole body felt all messed up. His palms were sweaty. His muscles were balled up and stiff with tension, and he felt as if he was about to puke. Jeff was anxious, knowing he would see his friends tomorrow. There would be questions and jokes; he’d never live this down.

“Are you KIDDING me?” he cried. “How am I supposed to play sports with this THING on my face?!”

Jeff ripped the patch off and threw it to the floor. *No big-time athlete would ever wear something like this*, he told himself.

And his buddies.... *Oh geez*, Jeff thought. *What will my friends think?* Jeff considered himself lucky to have a lot of friends. He always felt like he

belonged. But this? An eye patch? He was convinced his friends would think he was a freak. Different. Strange. An outsider.

His eye patch, however, had to stay. At least for a while. Jeff's doctor had noticed Jeff's eyes didn't always move together. A "lazy eye" the doctor called it. Wearing the patch over his good eye would force the "lazy eye" to get stronger.

In the morning, Jeff put on comfortable clothes and laced up his new high-tops. He grabbed his backpack, a granola bar, and ran out the door shouting a quick, "Bye Mom!" over his shoulder. He hadn't slept much during the night, tossing and turning as his mind raced. Jeff was a jumble of nerves walking to the bus stop.

As he stood and waited for the bus, Jeff let go of his backpack and closed his eyes. He took a few deep, cleansing breaths in through his nose and out through his mouth. He just needed to relax.

*It's fine,* he told himself as the bus rolled to a stop. *Everything's going to be just fine.*





## The Pirate and The Ink Blot

# CHAPTER TWO

Stepping onto the bus, Jeff grabbed the closest seat he could find and flopped down. The scenery began moving past him in a blur as he imagined what the day would bring.

“O! M! G!” screamed Chloe. “What happened to your face?”

Suddenly, the bus got very quiet.

Jeff felt every eye on him, and he pressed himself even closer to the window. His face turned bright red. His stomach started churning again. His WORST fear was coming true.

“Ahoy, matey!” a familiar voice shouted. It was Jeff’s good friend Andy, and he was with Ethan and Rafi. “Did we miss Halloween? What’s with the freaky eye patch?”

“Yeah, dude,” said Ethan. “You need to lose that thing. You won’t be able to play basketball with us at recess.”

Jeff’s stomach dropped. He wanted to explain, but the words got caught in his throat. His friends wouldn’t understand anyway. Besides, Andy and the guys confirmed his biggest fear. You can’t be cool with an eye patch.



His life was over. All anyone could talk about now was “The Pirate” at Noble Elementary School.



Everywhere Jeff went, people stared. He was used to being noticed – Jeff had always been good at sports – but he wasn’t used to the confused expressions and uncomfortable stares from so many strangers and gawkers. It was like he had grown three heads. Jeff felt truly uncomfortable at school for the first time in his life. He had NO idea what to do.

In science class, Jeff's teacher grouped the students into pairs and asked each pair to complete an experiment. Jeff got stuck with the weirdest looking kid in class – Reed Williams. The red-haired, freckle-faced boy had a large birthmark stretching from his face to his neck.

“Hey! Look everybody,” Andy snickered. “Pirate Face and Ink Blot together at last!”

“Yeah,” laughed Rafi. “Freak friends forever!”

“Awww!” the entire class seemed to say in unison.

Jeff hung his head in shame then slowly glanced at Reed, who was busy reading the teacher's instructions. Reed had no idea what had just happened.

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