

# Chapter 1

Swirly whirly Lollipop  
a favorite through the years



Libby climbed the stepladder and reached for the jar of chocolate frogs. *Rebecca's favorite*, she thought. They weren't real frogs, of course — white chocolate in the shape of a frog, with green coloring. A strange candy, to be sure.

Also strange? How much her best friend, Rebecca, had changed over the course of six weeks, while Libby had been away at summer camp. Try as she might, Libby couldn't figure out what had happened while she'd been away. It was as much of a mystery to her as why someone would want to eat a piece of candy in the shape of a frog.

With the jar in hand, she carefully climbed back down and went to the counter. This was her job every Saturday — to fill the jars of candy in her aunt and uncle's sweetshop.

Her uncle paid her an allowance for doing so, though Libby didn't really have a choice in the matter. It was a family business, and as part of the family, she had to do her part.

When Libby had begun working at the (*very* part-time) job at the age of ten, Rebecca had been so envious. "Think of how many sweets you can eat," she'd said. "After all, you must sample one of everything to make sure you don't have a bad batch."

"You're joking, right?" Libby had said. "My uncle would be so upset if I ate that many. And even if he didn't mind, just think of the stomachache I'd get."

"But it would be the sweetest stomachache of your life," Rebecca had said.

Now Libby sighed as she put the jar back where it belonged. She couldn't deny it; she missed her bestie. But Rebecca seemed to be quite taken with her new group of friends, especially the ones who were boys.

The bell over the door jingled, as it always did when a customer walked in. With the jar in its rightful place, Libby returned to the counter as her uncle rushed out from the back room to offer assistance. Except it wasn't someone looking to buy candy. It was someone delivering flowers.