

FRIGHT TIME

3 Spine-tingling Tales for Young Readers

- OUT OF THE DARK
- IT HUNTS BY NIGHT
- KEEPER OF THE TOMBS



Baronet Books, New York, New York

Copyright © 2008
Waldman Publishing Corp.
P.O. Box 1587
New York, NY 10028
Phone: (212) 730-9590

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or copied in any form without written permission from the publisher.

Please visit us at <http://www.waldmanbooks.com>.

Printed in the United States of America

OUT OF THE DARK

by Elaine Kule

1

Fire was streaming from its nostrils. I'm not kidding. And smoke was pouring out of its ears. It was the scariest thing I've ever seen. In real life, anyway. Hey, I gotta get home. I'll call you. Bye, later."

I laughed. That was Derek, my best friend, telling me about some dragon he and his family saw at Funland. You may have heard of the place. It's a super-colossal theme park that just opened about 50 miles from our town. It has everything—rides, exhibits, shops, even a hotel that has a huge slide right in the pool.

FRIGHT TIME

Derek and I have been buds forever, so I know he exaggerates a little. Actually, I don't mind, because his version of things can be pretty funny. Like this "dragon" looking so scary? I don't think so.

I guess I should introduce myself. I'm Jonathan Ellis. I live in kind of a boring town, on an average street, in a plain old regular house. Not by myself, of course. There's Mom, Dad, my nice but basically boring nine-year-old sister Nell and my baby brother Willy. I better stop calling him that—a baby. He hates it, and he is six already. But since I'm twice his age, I practically feel like his uncle or something.

As I was saying, nothing very exciting happens around here. For a memorable adventure, you have to leave town, like Derek and his family. And even a fake dragon sounded a lot more thrilling than what I'd been doing all summer: mowing lawns and pulling weeds by day, baby-sitting at night, all for just a little spending money.

If you ask me, considering the time and labor I put in, I should have made a fortune.

Anyway, the summer was almost over, and all I had to show for it was a small pile of cash

OUT OF THE DARK

(that'll go like *that*), grass-stained jeans and the gloomy thought that another year of homework, tests and endless reading was approaching.

But then Dad, good old Dad, burst into the house and announced, "Pack your bags, everyone. We're going to Funland!"

I couldn't believe it. What perfect timing! I had never been more ready for a vacation in my life. I danced around with Willy, who looked as thrilled as I was. Actually, I had him to thank, because he'd been begging our parents to take us since school had ended.

I must have broken the all-time record for packing a duffle bag. After running around my room like a maniac, pulling out clothes and stuff from my dresser and closet, I'd say I was down in Dad's car in twenty minutes, easy. Not for long, though. Mom asked me to help Willy with his stuff. I think the kid figured we were moving there permanently or something. Little brother was trying to squeeze everything he owned in his little suitcase. Even shy Nell was prancing about while getting ready for takeoff. I guess we all needed this break.

I quickly called Derek just as everyone was heading outside. He rattled off some last-minute

FRIGHT TIME

advice: “No matter what, start with the Tunnel of Terror. It’ll take the rest of your vacation to calm down.” Yeah, right. I had to hang up when Willy started tugging at my leg. Then I locked the door and followed him into the car. We were on our way!

Despite my excitement, I slept for most of the trip. That just shows you how exhausted I was. But when I opened my eyes, I spotted the sign that had been advertised like crazy: WELCOME TO FUNLAND. Willy clapped, Mom clapped, then Nell and I joined in. Dad chipped in with a hearty “Yay.”

After a stop to register at the hotel, we unpacked our bags and went outside. I tried to steer Mom and Dad in the direction of this Tunnel of Terror. Although I knew the place was just a goofy way to scare kids, Derek had me curious. But my parents wanted to tour the grounds—Funland has these trolley cars that take you around—and besides they reminded me, “We all have to stay together, especially on the first day.” That made sense, and in the spirit of cooperation, I went along for the ride.

Yet later, when we were dropped off near the Tunnel, no one would go in with me. My parents