

FRIGHT TIME

3 Spine-tingling Tales for Young Readers

- CREATURES FROM THE ICE
- DEAD END DRIVE-IN
- STRANGE EXCHANGE



Baronet Books, New York, New York

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New York, NY 10028
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Printed in the United States of America.

CREATURES FROM THE ICE

by Eve Marko

1

This is all my sister Katie's fault.

If she hadn't gone upstairs and fooled around in Joel's attic, she would never have found the funny old boom box with the scary warnings which all came true.

And if she hadn't gone skiing with us on White Mountain close to Snowman Cave, those four ghosts wouldn't have come after us.

Come to think of it, if Katie hadn't insisted on coming with me on my visit to Joel in Hermitage,

FRIGHT TIME

Vermont, which is where he lives, none of this would have happened. Joel and I would have had a nice quiet weekend together, just the two of us, skating and skiing and having lots of fun in all that Vermont snow. But that's not what happened.

Let me start at the beginning.

Joel and I are cousins. We're both twelve years old too, so Joel's parents, Uncle John and Aunt Louisa, invited me to come visit Joel on the weekend of Washington's Birthday, in the middle of the winter. Visiting Joel up in Vermont is a blast any time of year, but it's especially great in the winter because that's when he and I go ice skating, skiing, sledding, tobogganing, play hockey and doing just about everything else you would want to do in the snow.

Naturally, my sister Katie wanted to come along. I told my parents she was going to ruin a guys-only weekend. But Katie doesn't take no for an answer. She said she wouldn't speak to anybody in the world again if she didn't come along. That would have been fine with me, but I guess it wasn't fine with Mom and Dad because when they took us up to Vermont, there was Katie with me in the backseat, looking a little fat in

CREATURES FROM THE ICE

her heavy blue parka, her red hair inside her blue ski cap, making faces at me.

As soon as we arrived I told Joel to ignore her. And when Mom and Dad left to go back home, Joel and I started making plans.

“The pond in back of the house is frozen solid,” Joel said. Joel isn’t as tall as I am and he wears glasses. But don’t let that fool you. When it comes to sports—especially winter sports—nobody can outdo Joel. “Did you bring your skates?”

“Of course,” I told him. “And my new skis, too.”

“Dad bought me a new sled,” Joel said. “It’s big enough for the two of us.” Then he looked over his shoulder at Katie. “I’m not sure it’s big enough for three.”

Katie is two years younger than we are. “Just ignore her,” I told Joel again. I was really mad she’d come along.

But Katie got mad right back. “You don’t have to take me on your new sled,” she said. “Aunt Louisa said I could have your other sled all to myself. She said it’s up in the attic and I’m going to get it right now.” She walked out and banged the door behind her.

“Are you sure she should go alone?” Joel

FRIGHT TIME

asked me. He was our host so he was trying to be polite. "I think my sled's big enough for her, too. Maybe I should go up and get her."

"Aw, leave her alone," I told him. "What's up in the attic, anyway?"

"Nothing," Joel said.

Boy, was he ever wrong!

We had dinner with his parents. Then Joel and I went back to his room. We were pretty tired. That's when Katie came into the room, swinging this big old black boom box, full of dust and dirt, in her hand. "Guess what I found!" she announced.

"A boom box," Joel said.

"How did you know?"

I looked at Joel and he looked back at me. I told you so, I said silently.

"It's really old," Katie said.

"Too bad you didn't wipe it off before you brought it here," I told her. You should have seen the dust on that thing.

"I have a new tape," Joel said. "Let's listen to it and then go to bed. I want to be up early to go skating. I love to skate before breakfast, that way I'm really hungry when I come back home." That's another thing about my cousin Joel. He