



Part Three
The Cheshire Bat

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Also by Robert Black,
published by Royal Fireworks Press:

Night of the Frightening Fractions
Night of the Eerie Equations



This book features QR codes that link to audio of the book being narrated so that readers can follow along.

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The Problem

“You may not believe me,” said Gil, “but there’s something weird about this town. You know, something spooky.”

“Really?” asked Lennie, trying to keep a straight face. She didn’t want to make her new friend feel bad, but she already knew more about the strange things that went on in Bailey than he did.

“Yeah,” said Gil. “I keep seeing things out of the corner of my eye. But then I turn to look, and there’s nothing there. It’s freaky.”



“That does sound weird,” Lennie agreed.

But it wasn’t as weird as the creatures she had been seeing. Word that she was “the math girl” had spread. In the days since the race between Nigel and Tony—which had ended in a tie—all sorts of strange beings had come to her for help. Lennie didn’t know which was harder to believe: the fact that such creatures existed or that they were all so bad at math.

“I’ve tried looking for them,” said Gil.

“You know, like they do on those TV shows?”



In fact, that's where I was going the first time you met me."

"Really?" Lennie ate the last of her ice cream cone and reached for the basket of fries that sat on the table between them. Eating seemed like a good way to keep from saying too much. Besides, she really liked the food at the Launchpad, Bailey's ice cream shop.

"Yeah, but I didn't find anything," said Gil. He paused. "You think I'm crazy, don't you?"

Lennie took a gulp of her soda as she tried to think of an answer. “Well, if there really is something out there,” she told him, “you’ll find it.” *I know you will if you hang out with me,* she added to herself. *In fact, chances are that it will find you.*

They finished eating and went outside to their bikes. Lennie looked over at Slurpy’s Barbecue Hut, just down the road, but she didn’t see anyone behind it—no people, and no vampires either. *Too bad,* she thought. She could have shown Gil plenty of strange stuff.



“I’ve got to get home,” said Gil as he put on his helmet. “Mom says I have to go shopping because I’m still not ready for school.”

“Isn’t it kind of late to do that?” Lennie asked him. “The first day is tomorrow.”

“I thought I was done two weeks ago,” said Gil, “but Mom says I’ve gotten too tall.”

“Well, I can see that,” said Lennie. “You don’t want—” Just then everything went dark, as if the day had turned to night in an instant. A full moon took the place of the sun, and a chill wind blew through the air.



Challenge Words

NEW WORDS

afternoon

microwave

algebra

questions

annoying

scientist

cackled

scowled

column

scowling

complaining

serious

confused

squinting

destroy

totally

different

ungrateful

explosion

weird

important

whistle

laughter