

FOREWORD

Don't worry. The events in this book—no matter how frightening—never happened. Isn't it reassuring that nothing in these pages is real?

You won't be visited by a ghost who can't take his eyes off you, like the girl in Richard Peck's story, "Eyes on Imogene."

You'll never have to endure what Lizzie goes through in Elizabeth C. Bunce's "In for a Penny." Lizzie winds up in the same room as a hand of glory, which is the chopped-off hand of a hanged thief . . .
. . . who wants it back.

You can sleep soundly, unlike the boy in David Levithan's story, "The Skeleton Keeper." What's that eerie rattling inside his home every night? Why won't it leave him alone?

But if you can't sleep, it won't be because some long-dead person in a portrait comes calling on you, the way someone does to the boy in Margaret Mahy's story, "Bones."

You'll never meet up with a three-eyed man, as David does in R.L. Stine's "The Three-Eyed Man." David, of course, wants nothing to do with this man, but then David needs a favor. . . .

You may grow several inches in a summer, or go a couple of years without growing much at all. But you won't run across a strange woman with her own magic potion, which is what happens in "Growth Spurt" by Nina Kiriki Hoffman.

You can flip open a cell phone and it won't be haunted—like the phone in Todd Strasser's "YNK (You Never Know)." Next time you check to see if someone texted you, thank goodness there won't



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be bizarre messages about things none of your friends could possibly know.

But, while reading this book, you may begin to wonder . . .

What if the stories *are* real?

Why do they sound like actual events told by eyewitnesses?

Is that icy chill down the back of your neck trying to tell you something?

—Lois Metzger