



Chapter One

Gong! Gong! Gong!

“Oh my goodness!” CJ cried. She sat up in her bed and pushed the hair out of her eyes. “I’d forgotten how loud the alarm gong is!”

It was the first day of the new school year at Boo Academy, the School for Ghost Girls (affectionately referred to as Boo La La). The ghost girls were in their dorm room in Coffin Hall.

“It sounds like it’s right outside our door!” Tiny complained from the next bed. She sat up and twisted around. She preferred sleeping with her feet on her pillow and her head where her feet belonged. Being a basketball-player-sized ghost wasn’t always easy!

Gong! Gong! Gong!



“We’re up!” Maude grumbled from the third bed in the room. She took off her frilly pink sleep mask and rubbed her eyes.

“I was dreaming that it was still summer vacation,” she said. “But I’m glad that we’re all back at school.” She looked around sleepily. “I think we did a good job decorating last night!”

Tiny and CJ followed her gaze. In their new room, three twin beds were lined up in front of large windows, and three identical dressers faced



the beds. The black ceiling paint was flaking off in patches and the gray stone walls had lots of beautiful cracks. Lovely cobwebs hung in every corner. Their door, like every door in the dormitory, had a large banner saying GHOST GIRLS RULE! Their room was perfectly gloomy.

Tiny had hung three posters of her favorite basketball player, Caspera Jones, above her bed. Maude's purse collection was neatly lined up on a bookshelf. CJ's stuffed bat perched on her headboard.

Still lying in bed, Tiny said, "I can't believe we're finally back! It was a long summer without you guys!"

CJ nodded. "I'm happy that we're back together, but I'm afraid third grade is going to be so hard!" she said. "I heard that Mrs. Graves is a really tough teacher. I am not looking forward to her



Undead Language Arts class! I mean, how much work can she expect us to do? Someone told me that last year her class had to write a paper that was four pages long! And they didn't even get to choose their own topic—"

"CJ," Maude interrupted. "Don't worry! We're together again and we're going to have a great year!"

Maude, CJ, and Tiny had been best friends since almost their first day as preschool ghosts.

Now it was the first day of third grade. Maude headed to the closet to pick out her first-day-of-school-outfit. As she looked, she tried—and failed—to stifle a huge yawn.

"What should I wear?" she muttered. "It's so important to make a good impression." Maude was very fashion-forward.



“We’re already impressed with you, Maude!”
Tiny said. “If anyone, Ms. Finley is the one to wow!”

“Piece of cake,” Maude said confidently.

Ms. Finley was Coffin Hall’s new dorm mother. Coffin Hall was nestled next to the cemetery, just inside the gates of Boo Academy. Where humans saw only open parkland, any ghost could see the old redbrick buildings surrounding a grassy courtyard. Classroom buildings and dormitories were tucked under huge, dark, ancient trees. The school’s cemetery was perfect for haunting practice.

Yesterday, the school’s ancient, battered, and enormous school bus had traveled to airports, train stations, and bus terminals to collect students coming from quiet villages, frantic cities, and everywhere in between. Ghost girls came from far and wide to attend Boo Academy.

