



“That’s Zug,” Cassie said. “Just ignore him. That’s how he is to everyone.”

Gary followed the girl inside and froze in amazement. On a massive table that gave off soft, pink light, lay a big board with many dark and light squares.

“This is a chessboard, where chess battles are fought,” Cassie explained. “The chessboard is divided into equal square pieces. The white ones are called light squares. The black ones are dark squares.”



Light squares



Dark squares

“Light squares, dark squares,” Gary repeated.

Suddenly, the squares on the board quivered and darted off to the ground. Black and white, they began to dance around Cassie and Gary.

“These are my little friends,” Cassie said with a smile. “Here in the Chess Pavilion, the squares are magical.”

Soon, the squares stopped dancing, and in a flash they were back on the board.

Gary was puzzled. Did that really happen, or was he imagining things? He stepped closer to the board to see what was going on and almost fell, stumbling over something. On the floor he saw a thick notebook, the size of *The Yellow Pages*. Gary picked it up and read from the cover: “Riddles’ Pad.”

“Oh! This notebook belongs to my friend, Riddles,” Cassie said. “It’s great that you found it! It’s full of jokes, puzzles, and chess exercises. If you read it and try to answer the questions, even a little at a time, it will help you to learn the game of chess. Shall we start?”

Gary nodded, still too surprised by what was happening to speak.