

CANDICE LEMON-SCOTT



JAKE IN SPACE

MOON ATTACK

***JAKE IN
SPACE***
MOON ATTACK

To my dad, for inspiring my own sense of adventure.

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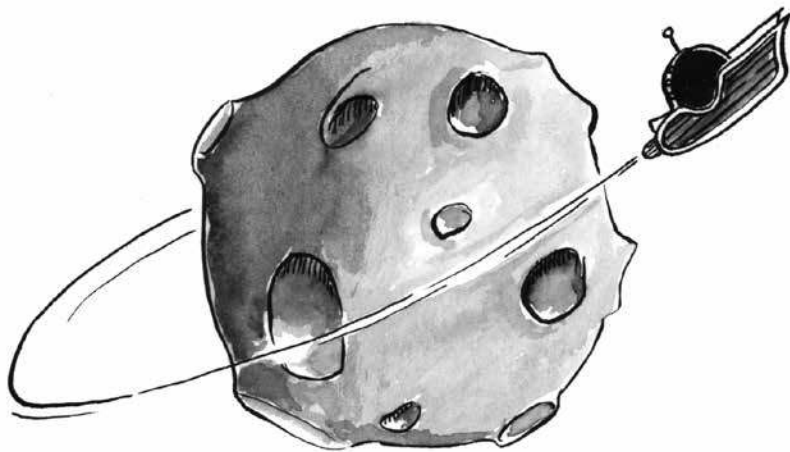
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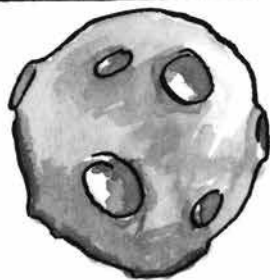
JAKE IN SPACE

MOON ATTACK



Candice Lemon-Scott
Illustrated by Celeste Hulme





Welcome, Jake.

I am pleased to let you know that you have been accepted into the Remedial Space Car Driving School program for failed drivers.

I am so sure that you will pass your driving test by the end of the week that if you don't, you will get your money back.

Please be at the Remedial Space Car Driving School, located at Moon Base entrance 303, at 2pm sharp on Friday 13 October 4040.

Please bring:

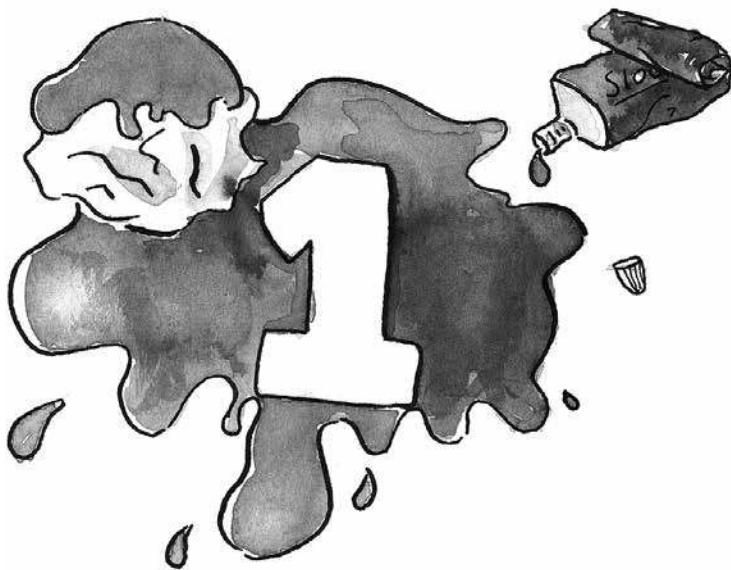
- * zero-gravity wear
- * infra-red goggles
- * suction bowl.

The following items are not allowed:

- * real reality computer games
- * disguising gel
- * lollies – including all exploding and vanishing types.

I look forward to meeting you.
Space thoughts and wishes,

Gradock
Gradock.



Remedial Space Car Driving School! Remedial! Jake thought. Why didn't Mum and Dad just put a big sticker on my forehead that said 'Universe's Biggest Loser?' He scrunched the letter up in an angry fist and threw it back at his parents – except the letter stuck fast to his fingers. He tried to shake it off but the paper just seemed to hold on tighter to his skin.

'It's Slooper Goo. We thought you might



react this way,' Mum said, shrugging.

'There's no getting out of it,' Dad added.
'You *have* to get that licence.'

'But *remedial* school? How could you do this to me? Everyone at school will find out,' Jake said, still trying to remove the letter from his fingers.

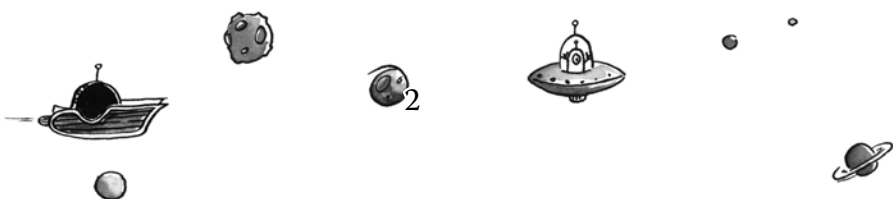
'You've failed your licence thirty times. Sorry, but we're not going to drive you around for the rest of your life,' Mum replied.

'I'll get it next time. I promise.' Jake put his hand in the kitchen sink. 'Water.'

Jets of cold water sprayed from tiny holes in the sink. He waited for the water to soak his hand before pulling it out again, but the letter just became a sticky lump in his fist. His fingers started to ache.

'You're eleven now. How many kids get driven to school at that age?' Dad said.

Jake had to admit that it *was* pretty



embarrassing getting dropped off at school by his parents. Even his best friends were driving, and they were nearly six months younger than him. And then there was his space car, sitting in mid-air, never being used except for driving lessons.

‘Maybe I just need a new driving instructor?’ Jake said, hopefully.

‘You know we’ve already tried every instructor on Earth,’ Mum answered.

Jake knew remedial school was his only chance to get his licence. But he knew it would be boring spending a whole week on the Moon. There was nothing there except for a heap of rocks and craters.

‘Gradock is the best. No-one has ever failed his driving school,’ Dad added.

Jake knew he was right but he still didn’t know what was worse: being driven to school or having his whole class know he had to go



to remedial. Sometimes he wished he lived in the atmosphere like heaps of other kids did. Instead, he was stuck on a space station.

‘We’re not giving you a choice, Jake,’ Mum said.

Jake hated it when his mum used telepathy on him. Just because in the history books mums had special instincts, he didn’t think they should be allowed to know *everything* about their kids. Mum said she only used telepathy in emergencies, but there seemed to be a lot of emergencies lately.

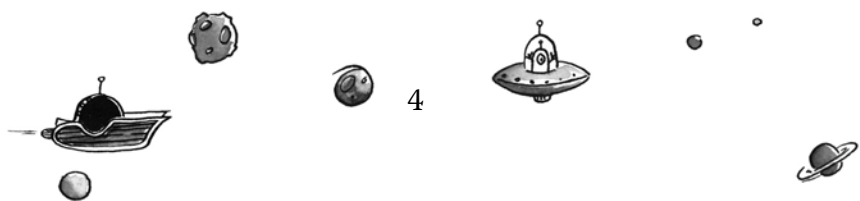
‘We need to leave in half an hour. You’d better get packing.’

‘But ...’

‘You’re going and that’s final,’ Dad stated.

Jake knew there was no getting out of it. Sadly, he held up the fist that still had the letter stuck fast to it with the Slooper Goo.

‘Oh, right,’ Mum said. She handed Jake a jar



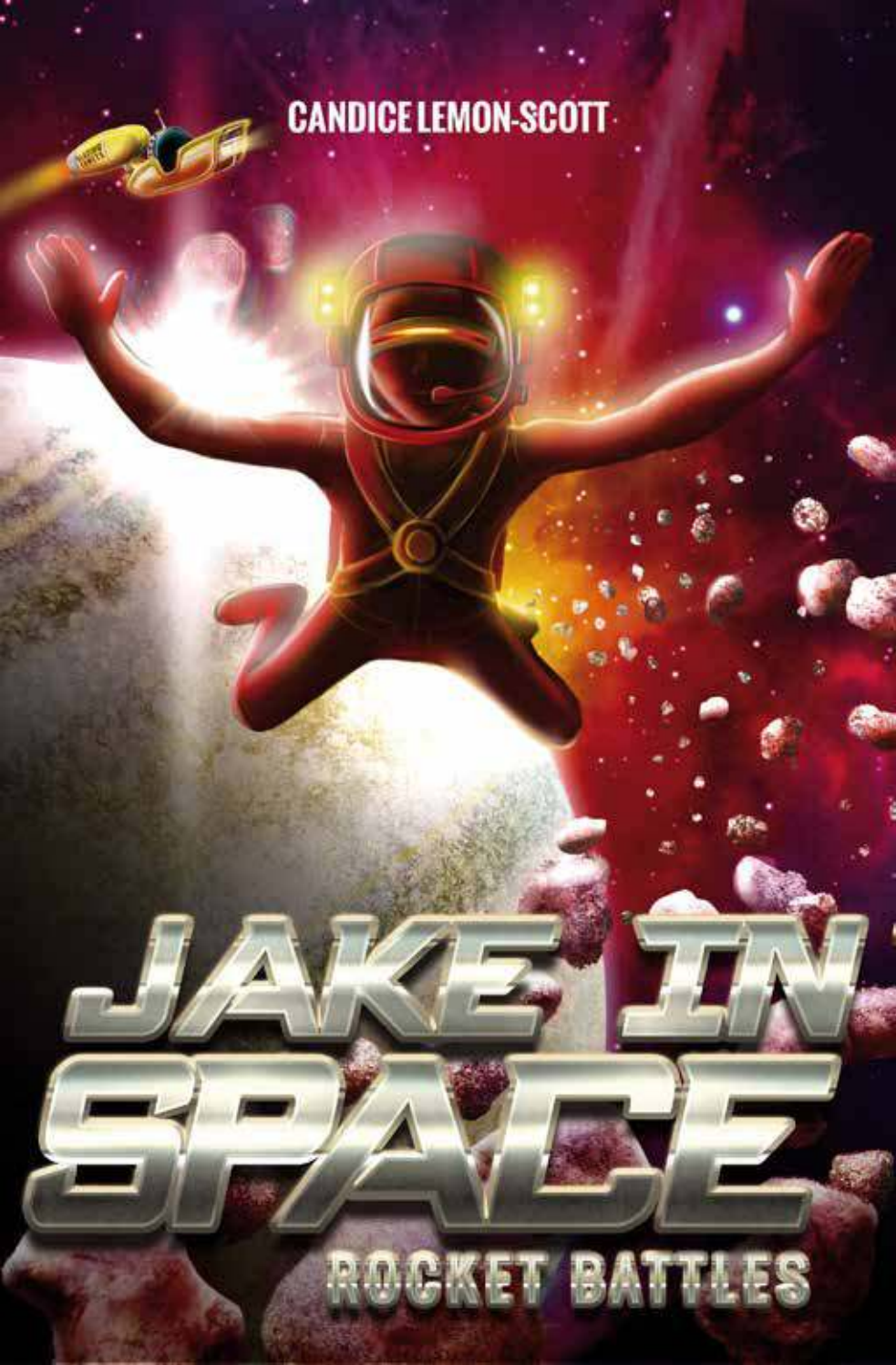
full of neon red gas. 'Put your hand in that.'

Frowning, he stuck his fist in the jar. He felt the paper melting. He pulled his hand back out, cracking his knuckles as he stretched his fingers again, then crossed the kitchen to the room teleportation chair.

He put his hands on the sensors. 'Bedroom,' he snapped at the cartoon face on the computer screen in front of him.

He hit the eject button and teleported to his room.





CANDICE LEMON-SCOTT

JAKE IN SPACE

ROCKET BATTLES

JAKE IN
SPACE
ROCKET BATTLES

In loving memory of my uncle Michael.

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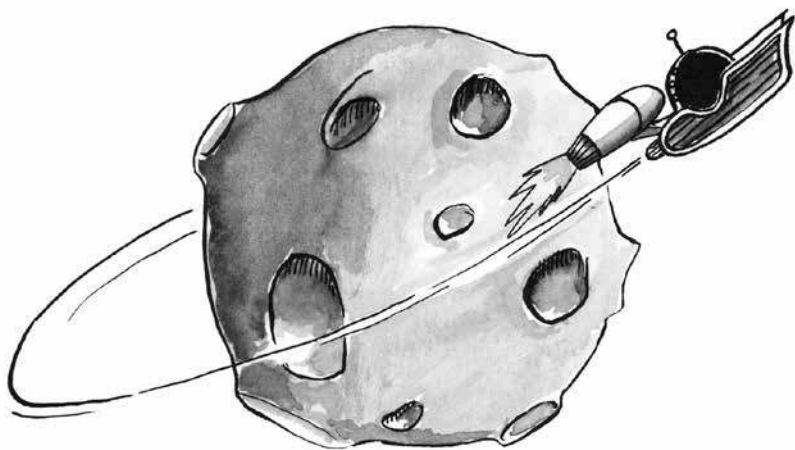
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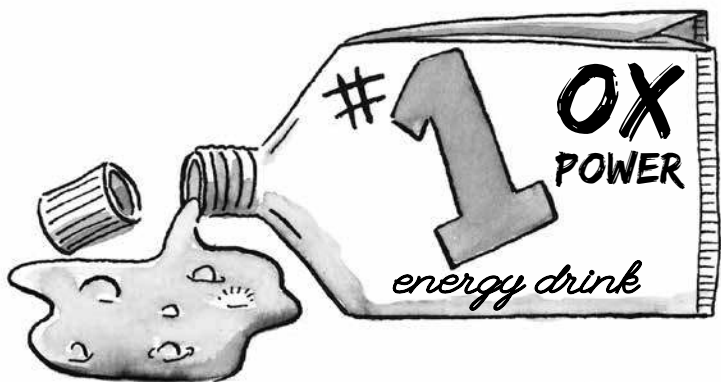
JAKE IN SPACE

ROCKET BATTLES



Candice Lemon-Scott
Illustrated by Celeste Hulme





Bright lights flashed in Jake's eyes. Squinting, he looked over at his friends Milly, Skye and Rory. They looked as stunned as he felt. There were people everywhere, hoping to catch a glimpse of the Rocket Battles racing stars. A reporter shoved a giant microphone in front of Jake's face.

'Jack, leader of the Blazing Comets race team ...' the reporter began.

'It's Jake,' he said, hearing his voice booming



around the crowded hangar.

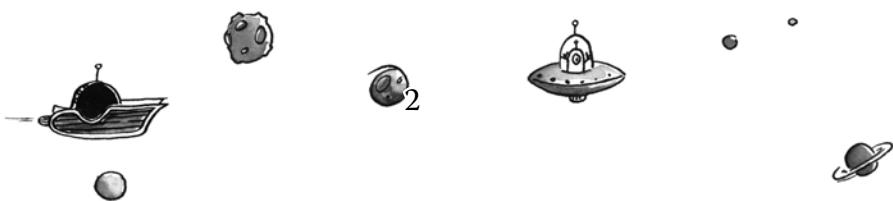
‘Okay, Jayyyyyyke. How does it feel to lead the youngest team ever to race in the Rocket Battles?’

‘Um ... ah, scary?’

Skye leaned in. ‘And exciting. We’re *very* excited to be here,’ she added.

Jake smiled, glad Skye had saved him from sounding silly. It had been only a year since he had met Skye, Rory and Milly at the Remedial Space Car Driving School. There, they had finally got their space car driving licences – and quickly become the best of friends. Now they were about to race in the biggest and best space car race in the whole solar system. Although the race was incredibly dangerous, it was every kid’s dream to race in it.

The reporter moved onto the next team. They were dressed in slick red suits. Jake knew straightaway these racers were the



Mars Misfits, even though he'd never seen them in real life before. Only the top teams were chosen for the Rocket Battles, and the Mars Misfits were so good they always made it into the race. For the past five years they had won. Their suits all had 'Solar System Design' in large letters on the front – this was the company that gave the team money to race and created their space cars. Jake could hardly believe he was going to be racing them.

The Misfits waved at the crowd, and they cheered and whistled back. Jake could only imagine how exciting it would be to be that popular.

The leader of the Misfits stepped forward with a toothy grin. His team's car gleamed beside him as he tapped the fresh paintwork of the sleek entry hatch. A couple of teenage girls at the front almost fainted. One girl even had to take a sip of OX POWER, an energy



drink with extra oxygen that was often used in low-gravity fields. It was also handy for screaming fans who got so excited they forgot to breathe.

‘Matt, as leader of the Misfits, why don’t you tell us what you have planned for the race this year?’

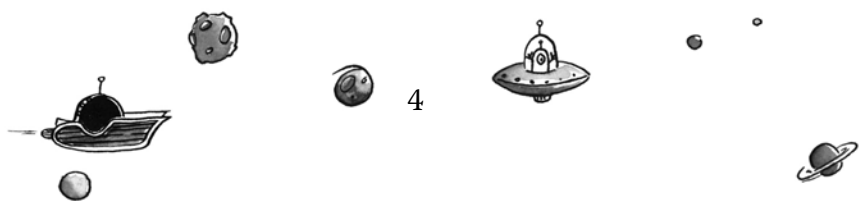
‘Now that would be telling,’ Matt said, winking. ‘When we win I’ll let you in on a few of our secrets. How does that sound?’

The reporter giggled like a little girl. ‘Okay! Good luck – not that you’ll need it.’

The Misfits waved again and the crowd cheered even louder.

Away from the microphone, Matt turned, looked straight at Jake and hissed, ‘Unlike some other teams, we *deserve* our place in the race.’

Jake turned as red as Matt's suit. Every year one team was chosen as a wildcard entry. This



year it was Jake's team – the Blazing Comets.

‘Would you listen to him?’ Rory said, frowning. ‘I think saving the Earth and the Moon is a good enough reason to be chosen for the race.’

Jake couldn't help but grin. It was amazing to think a bunch of remedial kids had stopped the evil Gradock from blowing up the planet. The Central Intergalactic Agency (CIA) had chosen them as the wildcard entry because of the driving skills they had used in stopping Gradock.

‘Don't worry about him,’ Milly added. ‘We can do this.’

Jake wasn't so sure they were ready. After all, they hadn't had their normal driving licences for long, and now they were going to race a super-performance car with mega rocket boosters! Plus, the Rocket Battles race was brutal. The only rule was that the team

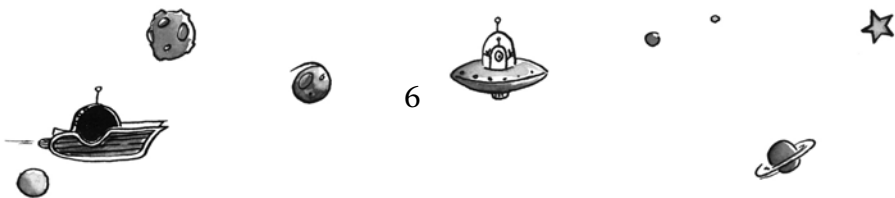


whose members made it across the finish line first was the winner. Even if only one team member made it back.

The reporter moved onto the next team, who were dressed in purple. Everyone knew the Neptune Goons had been coming in at a disappointing second place since the Misfits came along. Before the Mars team had started racing, the Goons had won twelve races in a row. But now they had lost all their sponsors. It showed in their scruffy, worn suits and the dull-looking car beside them.

‘It’s many years since you were the champions, Blake,’ the reporter said to the team leader, grimly. ‘Do you think you’ll ever regain your place as victors, or is it too late for the Goons?’

‘Watch and see. This is the year we’ll have a comeback and everyone will know who the true champions are again,’ Blake answered.



‘And what if you lose again? Will you retire?’

‘We *won’t* lose,’ Blake replied.

‘Spoken like true racers. Give it up for the Goons!’ the reporter yelled.

The crowd gave a small, polite clap.

Jake took a deep breath and turned up the volume on the communication controls. He hadn’t felt this nervous since he went for his space car licence. He was just glad he had his good friends with him.

A computerised voice crackled through the car’s speakers. ‘The Rocket Battles will begin in ten minutes. Please finish all space car checks.’

‘Ten minutes! We only have ten minutes,’ Milly cried.

Milly was in charge of systems operations. Even though she’d been studying hard, she still found it hard to remember all the



different parts. The race cars were much more complicated than normal space cars. She hurried to recheck all the signals and lights, her hands shaking. Jake realised he wasn't the only one who was feeling nervous.

Jake positioned himself for his job of forward navigation, buckling himself into the front seat. Skye sat in the back in her role as rear navigator.

'Two minutes to go,' Rory said.

Milly switched on the controls. Just as Rory was about to take his place in the driver's seat, the lower hatch opened. To Jake's surprise, Henry's head appeared. He pulled himself up and flopped onto the floor. A silver drill was poking out of his forearm. He pressed the drill against his arm and closed his skin over the top.

'All mechanical checks and updates are now complete.' He pulled down his shirt sleeve and



gave his arm a tap.

‘Henry!’ Jake smiled. It was still pretty cool knowing a real cyborg. Henry worked for the CIA and he was the one who had alerted Jake that something strange was going on at the remedial driving school. They had all become friends too – though Rory never seemed too happy to see him.

‘What are you doing here?’ Rory growled at Henry.

‘I have been sent,’ Henry replied.

‘What’s that supposed to mean?’ Rory huffed. Before Henry could say any more there was another announcement.

‘The race is about to begin. Please fasten your seatbelts and prepare for take-off.’

Henry put himself in the driver’s seat and buckled himself in.

‘Hey, that’s my spot!’ Rory exclaimed.

‘The CIA has granted me role of driver. You



are second-in-command,' Henry said matter-of-factly.

'You're driving? Are you *serious*?' Rory cried.

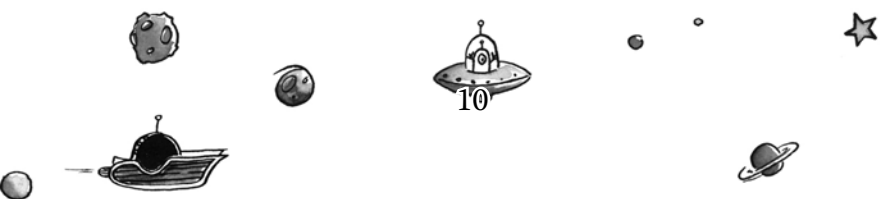
'He *is* just about the best driver in the entire universe,' Skye said.

'Have you forgotten that he nearly crashed us into the side of the Remedial Space Car Driving School last year?' Rory replied.

'You know that was just to cover up that he was really working for the CIA,' Milly reminded him.

Rory looked at Jake, but Jake knew the girls were right. The other teams were going to be almost impossible to beat. If they had any chance of winning this race it would be with Henry driving. Being the CIA's cyborg, he was the best of the best.

'Start your engines,' the computer announced.



‘You’d better buckle up,’ Jake said to Rory.

Rory sighed and sat down beside Henry. Jake brought up the forward projection screen while Skye brought up the rear one. There was a huge floating barrier in front of the racers. The cars were lined up, their bumpers almost touching the barrier. Jake panned the viewer around. Through the screen he could see the green car of the Pluto Pilgrims, the blue car of the Earth Avengers and the purple car of the Neptune Goons. The Blazing Comets’ yellow car was on the end. It was the super-performance race car they had been training in, and the CIA had loaned it to them for the race.

All the cars were specially designed for racing. They were narrow at the front for speed and wider at the back where the rocket boosters were. In this race the teams would have to zoom through the entire solar system,

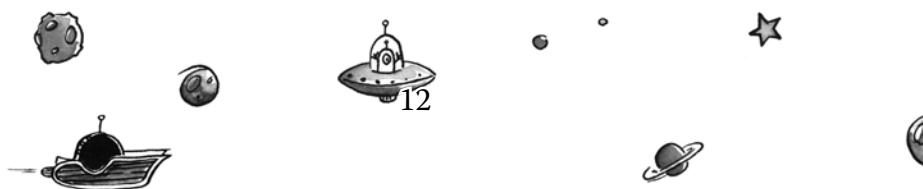


so their cars used only the fastest technology and the most modern designs. Jake could hear the engines humming and revving. It was starting to feel like space bugs were doing cartwheels in his stomach.

Skye brought up the rear projection screen. They all crowded around to look as the second row of battle cars appeared. There was the orange car of the Saturn Speedsters and the brown car belonging to the Venus Victors. Right behind them was the bright red car that belonged to the infamous Mars Misfits. The grille on the front of it gleamed like a silvery sneer. Jake shuddered as the car's lights flashed amber and then red.

There was another announcement, 'Your clue for checkpoint one is: Near side, far side. You can't always see me but I'm always here.'

They all laughed. That one was easy. 'We're going to the Moon first!' Milly laughed.



Jake couldn't believe their first stop would be the place where the friends first met. *It's lucky that Gradock is safely locked away in prison now*, Jake thought.

'On your marks. Get set. GO!'

The barrier disappeared and the race began.



CANDICE LEMON-SCOTT



JAKE IN SPACE

ROBOT GAMES

JAKE IN SPACE

ROBOT GAMES

For Harry, Zac and Xave

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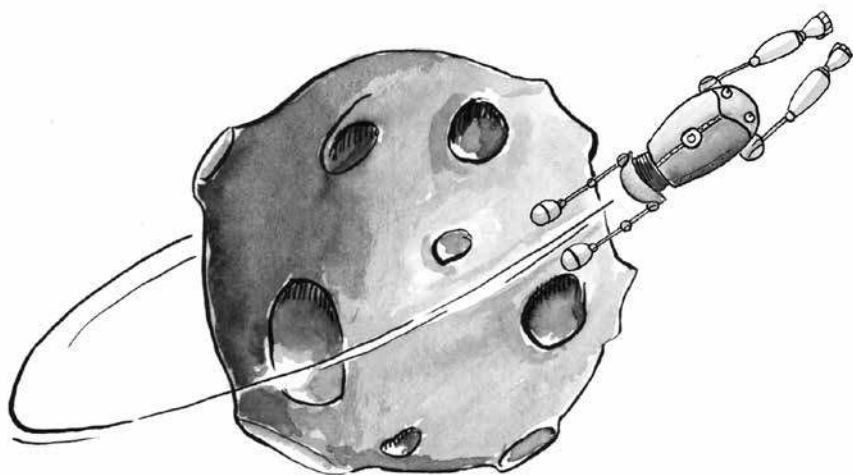
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JAKE IN SPACE

ROBOT GAMES



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Whoosh! A robot in a jet-powered winged suit flew straight past Jake and his friends. It looked like a cross between a person and a plane. Jake could smell the burning fuel as the robot shot upwards. The heat from the jets was so intense it almost burned the skin on his face.

Zoom! Another robot came out of nowhere. Jake jumped as it roared by, making him spill his super-fizz swurpie all over himself.



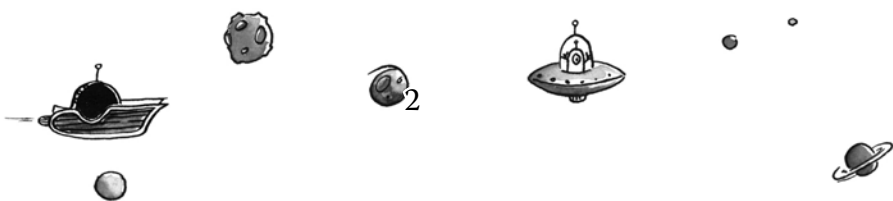
The rainbow-coloured fizzy bubbles started popping all over his pants, leaving a wet, sticky mess.

‘Great!’ he mumbled, pulling an instant-dry cloth from his shirt pocket.

He was busy trying to wipe his pants clean when Rory nudged him. Following his gaze skywards, Jake’s jaw dropped open. Eight jet-powered robots had formed a circle in midair. They hovered, wings almost touching. Then they began to spin, faster and faster, until it looked like a black disc had formed in the sky.

A computerised voice boomed through the arena: ‘Welcome to the Twelfth Forty-Year Robot Games!’

The crowd cheered loudly – the arena was a volcano erupting. Jake looked around. There were over a hundred levels in the Robot Games arena. It was so huge that Jake could hardly see the crowd on the other side.



He could only make out the flashes of cheer flares going off, bursting out in the colours of the different robot teams. Hover taxis zipped by every now and then, moving vertically or horizontally as they transported people around the arena. It was too huge for some of the spectators to even walk to the nearest toilets. People had come from all over the solar system to watch the Games.

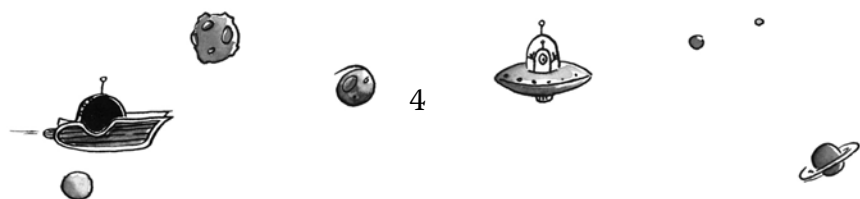
Jake and his friends – Skye, Rory and Milly – had been dropped off early that morning by their parents so they could see the whole day of events. They had been given their tickets as prizes for winning the Rocket Battles space car race, and for weeks they had been learning all about the Games from their families and at school. Mostly, the events were a chance for the inventors, engineers and designers to show off their robot creations – and they showed off in spectacular style.



Every seat was now full, except the empty one next to Jake. He wondered what had happened to that ticket holder. No-one lucky enough to get a ticket missed the Games. Fans without a ticket could watch the Games from one of the gigantic sky screens put up throughout the solar system, and huge crowds gathered to watch the day's events wherever they could.

The Robot Games were already better than he'd imagined, and this was only the opening display. He could see that his friends were just as amazed. Rory, Milly and Skye – who had also been on the winning Rocket Battles team – were all staring up at the sky.

The jet-powered robots stopped spinning, then dived towards the arena at an amazing speed. Bright red and orange flames shot from their backs, leaving eight streaks of colour in the sky. They darted around the arena one last



time before disappearing through the mid-level competitor bay. The crowd cheered.

‘Wow! That was incredible,’ Rory gasped.

‘Cool wing design,’ Skye added.

‘What’s up next?’ Milly asked.

Jake opened his notepod and typed in a search. A 3D image of robots parading the grounds came up.

‘The opening parade, and then ...’ He flicked his fingers over the screen and a miniature image of the first robot event appeared. ‘Robot high jump.’

Rory looked over Jake’s shoulder at the screen. ‘Whoa! Spring-loaded – yeah!’

‘Not that difficult considering such technology has existed for centuries.’

The four of them turned. Henry, their friend – and cyborg – sat down in the empty spot beside Jake. He opened a packet of some kind of popping snack Jake had never seen



before and poured it straight into his mouth. Jake stared at the skin on Henry's cheeks ballooning out in places as huge balls of popcorn exploded in his mouth.

'Would you care for some?' Henry mumbled, holding the bag out to Jake.

'Um ... what is it?' Jake asked, frowning.

'Gob Pop,' Henry replied.

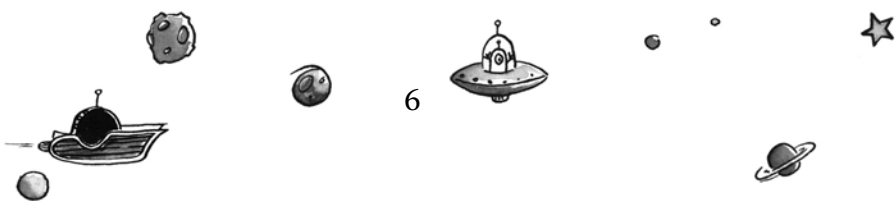
'Um, no thanks,' Jake said, shaking his head.

'I didn't know *you* got a ticket too,' Rory whined.

Henry sucked in his cheeks. Jake wasn't sure if it was because Rory had upset him, or if it was the effect of the popcorn, but he looked pretty weird.

'I was in the space race team too,' Henry said, 'in case you are experiencing a lapse of memory.'

'*You're* the one who had a memory lapse – when you forgot to mention we were only



in the Rocket Battles race to save Mars – *my* planet!’

‘I was sworn to secrecy,’ Henry said, his cheeks puffing out like balloons.

‘Guys! You’re spoiling the fun of the Games,’ Milly said.

Henry’s cheeks went back to normal. ‘Sorry. Gob Pop?’ he said, offering the bag to the girls.

‘No thanks,’ Milly and Skye said together.

‘It is an interesting taste sensation,’ Henry said before shoving another handful into his mouth.

Jake noticed that something else was different about Henry too. He just couldn’t figure out what it was.

‘Why did you get here late if you already had a ticket?’ Jake asked.

‘I was having an upgrade,’ Henry said. He opened his arm panel and showed them his brand new, super-shiny, super-techno gear.



He closed it again, grinned and tapped his head proudly. ‘I was given this special cap to wear also. Quite smart, I think.’

That was what was different about him. Jake was so used to seeing Henry with his slicked-down black hair. It reminded him of the no-gravity hair wax Henry used. Though it was the stinkiest stuff ever, it sure had helped them stop the Neptune Goons from blowing up Mars in the Rocket Battles. Jake couldn’t believe it had only been a few months ago that the Central Intergalactic Agency – the CIA – had sent him and his friends on a mission so secret they didn’t even know they were in it. Clearly Rory had remembered, though. He was still angry with Henry for not telling them about the mission.

At least today they could enjoy the Games without wondering what secret mission the CIA had sent them on, since their tickets were



the prize for solving that mystery. Henry was already enjoying his prize too. Or at least the noisy snack he was loudly munching on.

‘Where did you get that Gob Pop from?’ Jake asked.

But Henry couldn’t say any more – the popcorn had started exploding inside his mouth once again.

The great gates halfway up the side of the arena opened with a screech that was so ear-piercing that everyone covered their ears. When it finally stopped the Games commentary began.

‘We welcome the teams of the Robot Games.’

Jake heard the clunking of metal on metal as the first robot team marched through the gates. Painted bright yellow, their metallic bodies shone like a burning sun as they



entered the arena and made their way around the hovering competitor ring. They walked around in tighter and tighter circles until they formed a circle in the centre. At the same time the robot creator team was shown on giant floating screens around the arena. All the creator groups had to be made up of a man, a woman, a boy and a girl. The yellow team's four creators looked like they hadn't washed or eaten for months. Their hair was matted and the man had a full beard. They were all skinny and dressed alike. Their overalls might have once been white but were now a dull grey and marked with pen, food and other disgusting-looking things. They waved bony fingers as though they could see the crowd in front of them.

Next, the orange robots emerged. Their creators were the complete opposite of the first group. This lot had slicked-back hair and



clean, pressed suits. The orange robots took their place in a circle around the yellow team.

The rest of the robot teams came out until there was a swirl covering the floating ring. It looked like a rainbow snail shell. The last team's creators stared out from the screen. They all wore thick glasses and had serious faces.

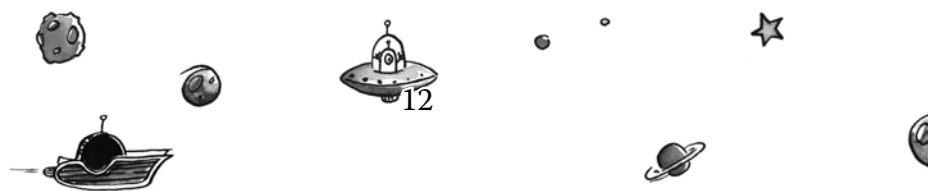
Finally, the floating screens disappeared and the robots saluted the crowd. The hovering competitor ring moved in a whirl of colour around the arena until finally it drifted slowly to the ground. The robots unfurled and ran off, waving flags the colour of their teams.

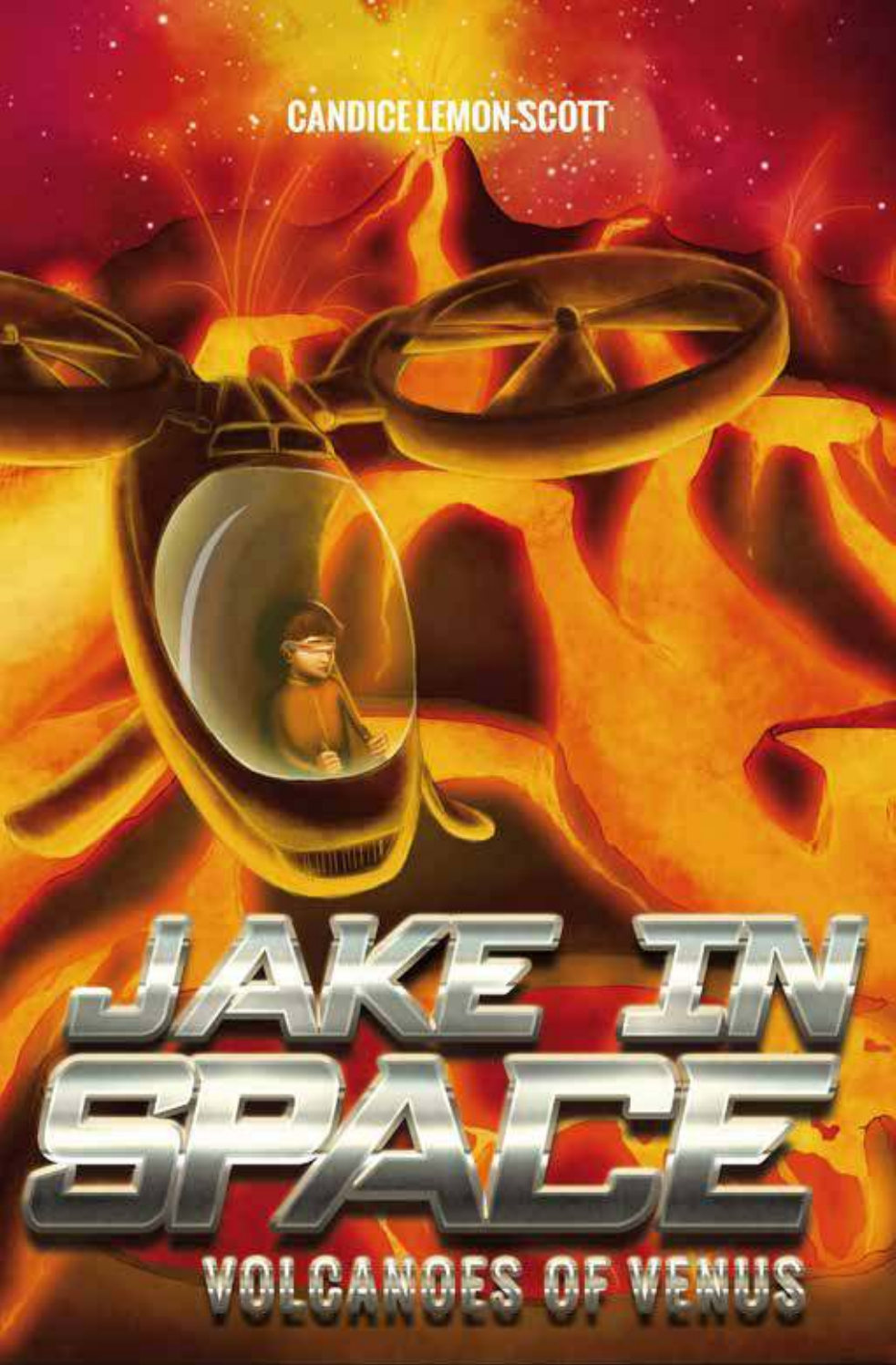
'Let the Games begin. May the best team win.'

The announcer's voice faded away and the arena began to shake as the crowd clapped and pounded their feet to mark the start of the Games. Jake looked over at Skye and



she smiled at him. This was going to be the greatest thing he'd ever seen. He just knew it.





CANDICE LEMON-SCOTT

JAKE IN SPACE

VOLCANOES OF VENUS

***JAKE IN
SPACE***
VOLCANOES OF VENUS

For Teegan and Tyrell.

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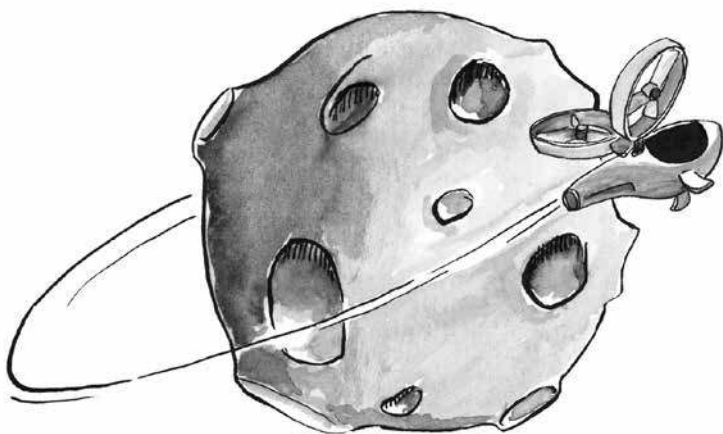
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JAKE IN SPACE

VOLCANOES OF VENUS



Candice Lemon-Scott
Illustrated by Celeste Hulme





Jake dropped his old backpack in amazement. He couldn't believe he was actually here at the Floating Hotel of Venus.

‘Wow! This is the best prize ever,’ a voice said.

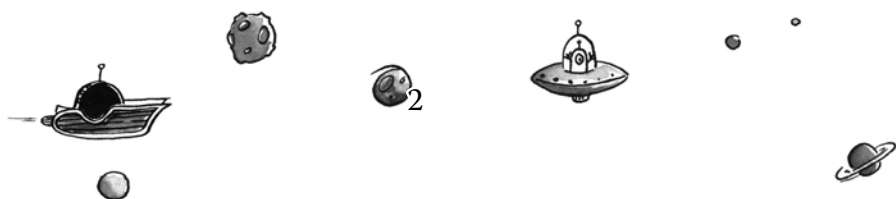
Jake turned. It was Rory, who had just arrived from Mars with his mum and dad. And Rory was right – the hotel was even more incredible than Jake had heard. The



foyer was round, with gleaming bronze pillars and walls that shimmered bright yellow like a golden waterfall. There was a flowing lava fountain in the centre of the room made from a shiny black rock. The floor was black too, and so shiny Jake could see his reflection in it. But there wasn't anyone to take them to their rooms. There was just a conveyor belt that ran all the way around the curved walls of the foyer.

Jake looked at his mum and dad standing beside him. Their mouths were open so wide they looked like they were trying to catch space bugs. A walking plant squelched past Jake. It reached out an arm and wrapped it around his mum's leg. She screamed and Jake's dad slapped the plant's arm away. It slunk away towards the entrance.

The front airlock doors slooped open again. This time Skye arrived with her mum. She



said hello then walked straight over to the conveyer belt and placed her hand on a small white square on the wall. Her mum then did the same.

A smooth voice chimed through an intercom: 'Two guests. Room 3353. Thank you.'

Skye removed her hand and threw her bag onto the conveyer belt. Her mum placed hers down carefully. The bags moved along it until a small doorway opened up and the bags disappeared inside.

'How did you know to do that?' Rory gasped.

Skye pulled her notepod from her space suit pocket. A 3D image of the hotel foyer appeared. 'It's all right here. In the hotel guide,' she said, shaking her head.

Rory stared at her blankly.

'Go on! Try it.'

Rory picked up his bag and walked over to the shiny wall. He placed his hand on the



square on the wall as Skye had done.

‘Room 3352. Thank you.’

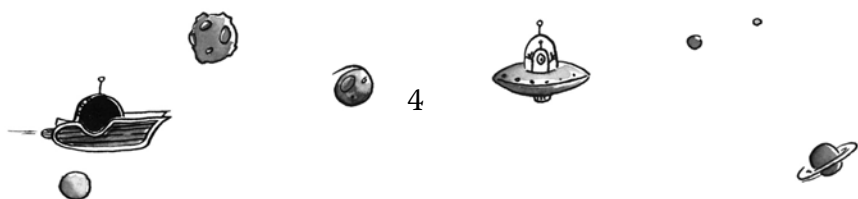
His bag was whisked away. Jake did the same and he was given Room 3354. Their parents nervously followed their lead. As the bags were taken Jake heard the front airlock sloop open once more. Milly came running in with her mum and stepdad.

‘Phew,’ she said, puffing. ‘I thought we were late.’

‘And you had such a long way to come,’ Rory joked, knowing it would have only taken her ten minutes from her home in the neighbouring Floating City.

She poked her tongue out at him, then glanced down, looking at her reflection and posing in the cleaner-than-clean floor. ‘I still can’t believe we get to stay here!’

The Central Intergalactic Agency (CIA) had given Jake and his friends each a ticket after



they stopped thousands of remote-controlled robots from taking over the solar system at the Robot Games. It was the best gift *ever* for solving a mission! Only famous people stayed in this hotel. That reminded Jake that he hadn't seen Henry, the CIA's cyborg – and their friend – arrive yet. It wasn't like him to be late. Jake was about to mention it when Milly interrupted.

‘Oooh, is that a lava fountain?’ she cried and raced over to watch the red liquid spurting out of the fountain. She reached out to touch the oozing lava but then pulled her hand back sharply.

‘Ouch! It's hot,’ she cried.

‘That's because it's lava, Milly!’ Skye said. ‘Are you okay?’ She inspected her friend's hand.

‘I'm fine,’ said Milly. ‘Look!’ She pointed at the hotel's entrance.



The front doors sloped open again. Henry had finally arrived. He slowly made his way across the foyer, his shoulders slumped forward. He looked like a turtle with his silvery backpack for a shell.

‘Good morning, Henry!’ Jake said, cheerfully.

‘Is it?’ he grumbled.

‘What’s wrong?’ Skye asked.

‘Nothing,’ Henry mumbled.

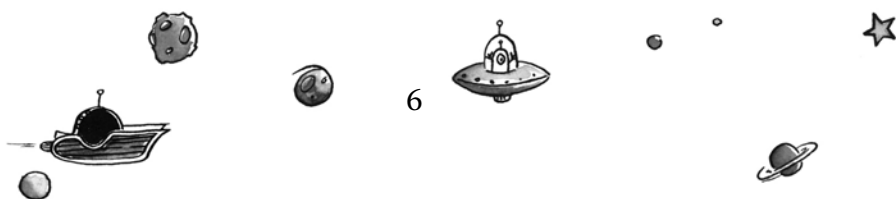
‘Come on, Henry, just tell us,’ Rory said, grumpily.

‘I have been kicked out,’ Henry said. ‘They said I could go on a holiday.’

‘That doesn’t mean you’ve been kicked out,’ Jake said.

‘Cyborgs do *not* get holidays,’ Henry insisted.

‘Well, now that you have one you might as well have some fun,’ Jake said.



‘Yeah, let’s go check out our rooms,’ Rory agreed.

‘Very well,’ Henry said sadly, and moped over to the conveyor belt.



CANDICE LEMON-SCOTT



JAKE IN SPACE

MERCURY RISING

***JAKE IN
SPACE***

MERCURY RISING

For Samara.

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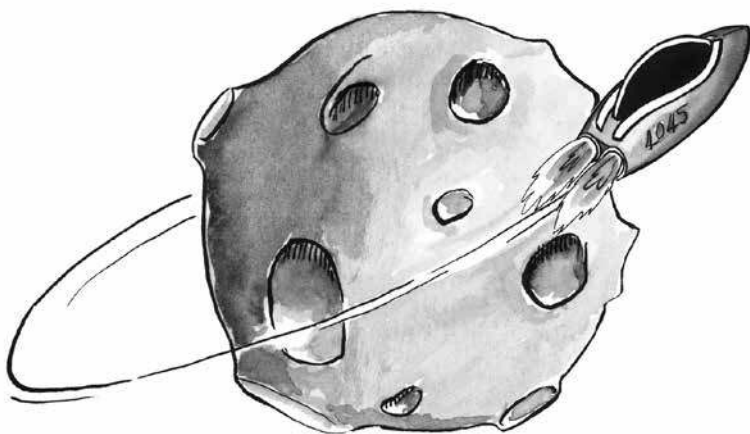
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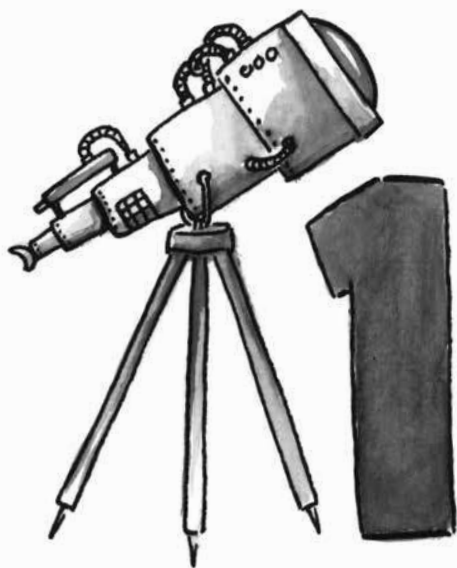
JAKE IN SPACE

MERCURY RISING



Candice Lemon-Scott
Illustrated by Celeste Hulme





“Move it over to the left. Now back a bit. A bit more to the left. That’s it.”

Jake shook his head as he looked up to see his mum and dad move the megascope for the twentieth time that morning. The planets were going to align in just six hours. Jake knew it would look spectacular but, really, how many times could you move a megascope in one tiny room?

‘Actually, I think it needs to be a bit more to



the right,' Jake's mum said.

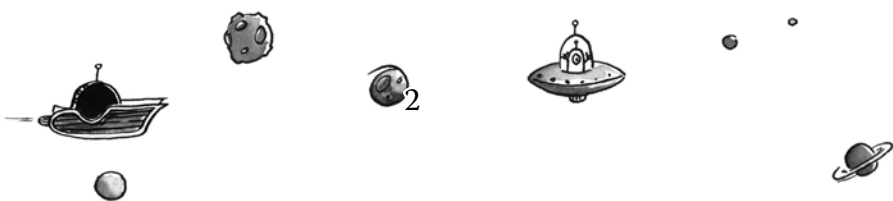
As Jake's dad started to move the megascope yet again Jake heard something land on the roof.

'Are you expecting someone?' Jake's mum asked his dad.

'No,' he replied. 'Go and check who that is, will you, Jake?'

Jake dragged himself away from his real reality computer game and made his way to the top landing. He peered through the airlock chamber and gasped.

It was the new Space 4045 super jet car with double boosters. But what was one of those doing on his roof? Someone must have the wrong address. The hatch opened and out stepped Henry. Jake couldn't believe his cyborg friend was driving the 4045! Henry had all the luck. Henry walked towards the airlock chamber. Jake opened the door to let



him in.

‘Where did you get that space car from?’ Jake cried, not even saying hello.

‘The CIA gave it to me,’ Henry said matter-of-factly. ‘There is even better news. The CIA said you can all accompany me to Mercury to watch the planetary alignment take place. Skye, Milly and Rory are already on board.’

Jake frowned. It sounded a little too good to be true. Why would the CIA give them their best new car to go see the planets align? Even though Henry worked for the Central Intergalactic Agency it didn’t make any sense that they would give him the latest and best car in the solar system. He told Henry he suspected it was really another CIA mission they were being sent on by the agents Bree and Will.

‘Of course it is not!’ Henry coughed, then fake-laughed. ‘It is your delayed gift.’

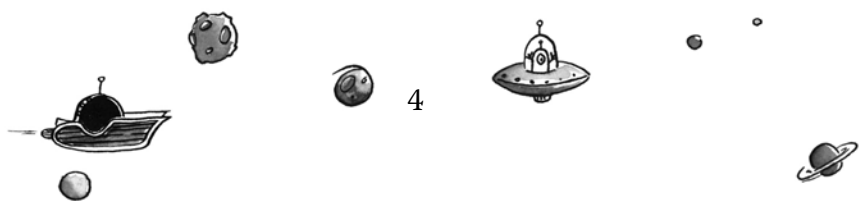


That was right! Jake remembered the CIA agents had promised them something special to thank them for capturing the evil Valerie and saving the Floating Hotel of Venus. This must be their reward.

Before Jake could say anything else his mum yelled out from downstairs, and asked who he was talking to.

‘It’s just Henry, Mum,’ he called back. ‘He said I can go with him to Mercury to see the planets align.’

It didn't take Jake long to convince his parents to let him go with Henry. The minute he said it was a 'good learning opportunity', they couldn't say no. The bad part was that he knew they would have loved to go too. As he left they were still trying to decide the best spot to put the megascope for viewing the alignment.



When he climbed on board the 4045, his friends were waiting, just as Henry had said.

‘How exciting is this?’ Milly squealed.

‘We’ll be able to see all the planets from Mercury,’ Skye added.

‘It’s going to be amazing,’ Rory said, grinning.

‘Wow!’ Jake exclaimed, looking around inside the car.

‘Who wants to help drive it?’ Henry said simply.

Jake couldn’t wait to help and he was the first to leap into the front navigation seat. Skye took up her usual position at rear navigation, Milly sat by the controls and Rory put himself in the co-pilot seat.

Soon they were zipping towards Mercury at super speed. Jake looked at the projection screen in amazement. They flew so quickly that the stars they passed looked like long



silvery trails. Then, as they zoomed between Venus and Mercury, an alarm sounded through the car.

‘What’s that?’ Rory yelled.

Jake looked in the forward projection screen.

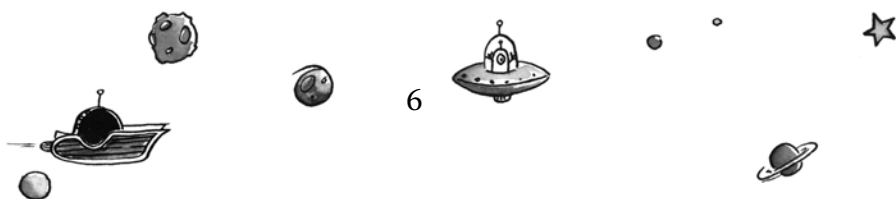
‘Oh no! Asteroid shower, dead ahead.’ He knew asteroids didn’t appear in this zone very often but they were very dangerous when they did.

Jake turned to Milly at the control panel. ‘Ah, you’d better put this racer into slow mode,’ he said. One strike from an asteroid would be enough to destroy a space car, even one as powerful as the 4045.

‘Wait!’ Henry cried from the driver’s seat. ‘There is no need for slowing down. You will ruin the fun of being in a 4045.’

‘But we could be hit by an asteroid,’ Rory argued.

‘Yeah, even with my navigation skills we



need to take it slowly,' Jake agreed.

'Full speed ahead,' Henry insisted.

'Henry, they're right,' Skye said softly. 'You know better than any of us that we'll be pulverised if we hit an asteroid, especially at this speed.'

Jake looked at his screen again. They had nearly reached the first asteroids. 'You have to slow down. NOW!'

Milly went to override Henry's command and reduce speed when Henry reached out and stopped her.

'Let go!' Milly said, looking nervous.

'We are *not* slowing down,' Henry insisted. 'Jake, tell me when the first asteroid is close.'

'What?' Rory cried. 'You're not even going to try to steer around it?'

Henry ignored Rory. 'When I give the signal, I want you to press that purple button,' he said to Milly.



Milly just frowned and held a shaking hand over the purple button.

‘Trust me,’ Henry said. ‘When have I ever crashed?’

‘Try Remedial Space Car Driving School,’ Rory said.

He does have a point, Jake thought. Henry had crash-landed before, even if it was only to hide the fact he was really a cyborg working for the CIA and not an ordinary driving student.

‘That was technically not a crash since the emergency braking system came on in time,’ Henry reminded them, ‘Plus, I know what I am doing.’

Jake had been so busy arguing with Henry he didn’t see that an asteroid was directly in front of them. It looked like they had no choice but to give Henry’s crazy plan a go.

‘Asteroid dead ahead.’

‘Hit the button!’ Henry said quickly.



With no time to think, Milly pressed the purple button. There was a huge boom and Jake felt the car shudder. Had they hit the asteroid? He looked at the screen. The asteroid had completely disappeared.

‘What was that?’ Jake cried. He turned to Henry who was looking very smug.

‘Asteroid-zapping lasers,’ Henry replied. ‘All 4045s are fitted with them.’

‘You could have mentioned that earlier,’ Rory growled.

‘It was worth it to see your reaction,’ Henry laughed.

Rory leaned in to Henry angrily but then another asteroid was in front of them.

‘Asteroid!’ Jake screamed.

‘Hit the button!’ Henry ordered again.

Milly pressed the button, vaporising the rock with the laser. Even Rory couldn’t help but smile.



‘Let me have a turn,’ Rory said.

Henry moved aside so Rory could have a go at driving. It seemed Henry was forgiven.



A movie poster for 'Jake in Space: Saving Saturn'. The background is a vibrant space scene with a large, glowing orange planet on the left, a city skyline on the right, and a bright comet streaking across the sky. In the foreground, a young boy with short brown hair and a single glowing red eye is shown from the chest up, looking towards the right. Behind him is a large, sleek, grey spaceship. The title 'JAKE IN SPACE' is written in large, bold, metallic letters, and 'SAVING SATURN' is written in smaller, similar letters below it.

CANDICE LEMON-SCOTT

JAKE IN SPACE

SAVING SATURN

***JAKE IN
SPACE***
SAVING SATURN

For Tas.

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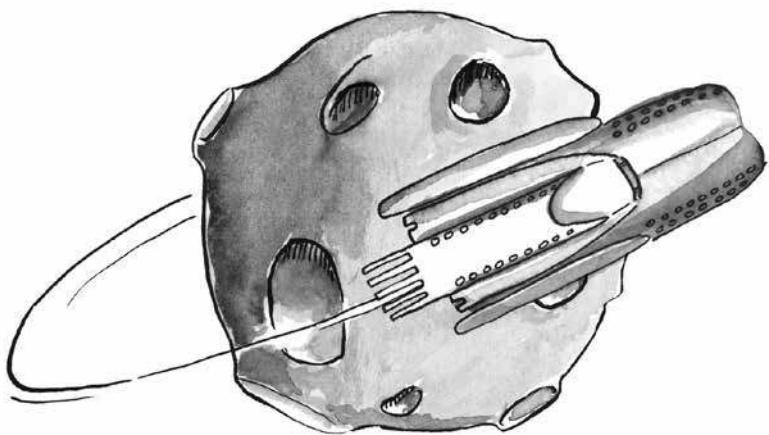
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JAKE IN SPACE

SAVING SATURN



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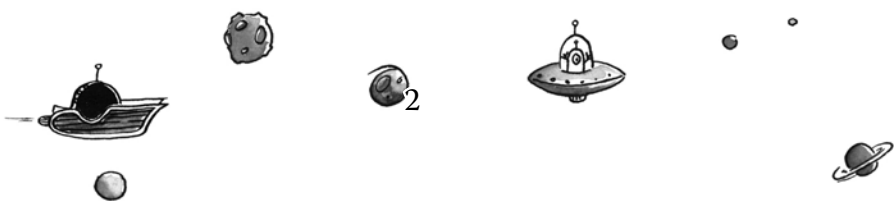
‘Come here ... come here and ... *gotcha!*’
Jake caught a floating red space jube in his mouth and munched it noisily, then sat back in his seat. He and his friends – Skye, Milly, Rory and Henry – were having the best time on their mystery flight. The flight was their reward from the Central Intergalactic Agency (CIA) for solving their last mission. Even now Jake could hardly believe that they had helped stop all the planets in the solar



system from being destroyed.

He looked around the cabin of the Galactic Explorer 5000. It was so wide Jake and his friends sat next to each other in one long row. In front of him there was a screen. He reached up and switched it on. A holographic film began to play. Even though he knew it wasn't real, Jake found himself closing his eyes when a space racer came shooting forward as though it was going to hit him.

He switched the movie off after a while and sat back up. A hover tray, covered by a clear dome, brought over floating space snacks. Jake lifted the dome, squeezed his hand under and grabbed hold of a floating ooze cake. He nearly choked as he bit into it and a shot of thick chocolate squirted down his throat. Rory laughed at Jake and grabbed a cake for himself, accidentally squirting chocolate in his eye.



‘Oooh!’ Milly squealed. ‘I wonder what this button does.’

She pressed a silver button on the side of her chair. It reclined back into a bed and the headrest puffed up into a soft pillow.

‘Wow!’ Jake said.

‘I wonder where we’re going,’ Skye said, squinting at the galactic map on her screen. Henry was silently staring at his map too.

Jake didn’t mind at all that he had no idea where they were going. That was half the fun of it. He didn’t even have to navigate. The mystery flight was running on automatic pilot and he was enjoying every minute of it. He wasn’t trying to get his space car licence or stop missiles from destroying a planet. Here he could daydream as much as he liked and no-one minded at all.

He pressed the button on the side of his chair and felt it fill with air until it was softer



than his real bed at home. He closed his eyes. He imagined himself floating among the stars, cartwheeling and somersaulting ...

Then there was a quick tap on his shoulder. It was Skye, trying to get his attention.

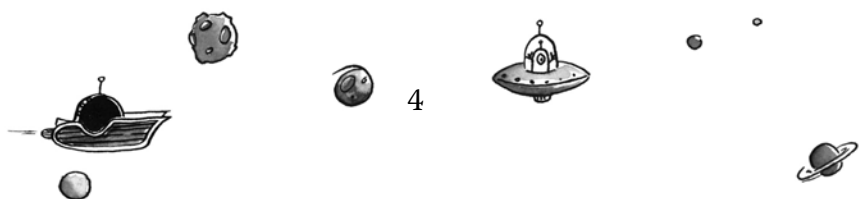
‘Enough with the space snoring! Look at your screen,’ she said.

Jake switched his screen back on but this time he set it to projection. Saturn shone out in front of their car, its rings clearer than he had ever seen before.

‘Saturn!’ Jake gasped. Milly and Rory switched on their screens too. They had all flown around Saturn before, in the Rocket Battles space car race, but they had never seen it like this.

‘What do we do now?’ asked Jake.

‘Do?’ Skye replied. She looked at him, then leaned over and grabbed a jar from Henry’s



seat tray. 'I think you should do something with your hair first,' she laughed. It was Henry's no-gravity hair wax.

'Do not use too much of that,' said Henry. He turned to look at Jake and his eyes widened. 'However, *you* may require more than is usual.'

Rory snorted with laughter. *Oh no*, Jake thought. *Is it really that bad?* He felt on top of his head. His hair had blown up into its usual frizzball in zero gravity. He pulled out a small glob of the wax and sniffed it. At least it smelled all right now. The last lot had been disgusting. He pressed his hair down flat and handed the jar back to Henry.

'Much better,' Skye said, smiling.

Jake grinned then turned to his screen. 'So, is that where the mystery flight is taking us?'

'It appears so,' said Henry, staring hard at his screen.

'Saturn?' Rory piped up. 'It's a gas planet.'



How would we land this car on it? It has a heap of fast-flying asteroids around its middle. We can't be going there.'

'Well, it looks like we're heading straight for it,' said Milly nervously.

Jake looked at his screen again. They were getting closer to the ringed planet. Icy chunks of space dust spun around at super-fast speed.

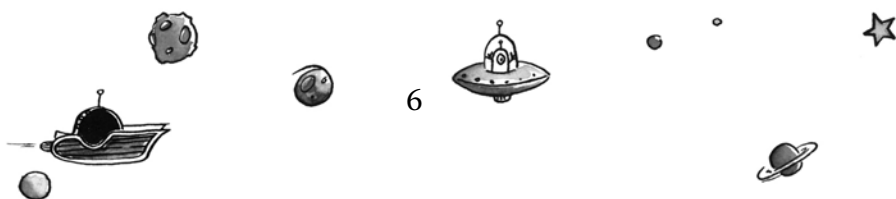
'We're on automatic pilot,' said Skye. 'We can't exactly steer away from the rings, or avoid the asteroids.'

'So, what's your advice, Mr I-Know-Everything?' Rory said, raising his eyebrows in Henry's direction as if it was all Henry's fault.

'I am certain we are perfectly safe,' Henry replied, ignoring Rory's rudeness. 'We are on a mystery flight, not a mission.'

Jake laughed, nearly choking on a jube.

At that moment, the car leaned a little to



the right. If Jake hadn't been buckled in he would have slid straight into Skye. The space car shifted upwards, moving above the rings.

'See?' Henry said, casually catching a jube in his mouth and swallowing. 'It is just as I expected. The craft is well-programmed. Now I shall take a rest.'

With that, Henry shut himself down.

'Brilliant,' grumbled Rory. 'We're trying not to get hit by flying rocks but our CIA cyborg needs his beauty sleep.'

'The Galactic Explorer 5000 knows what it's doing, Rory,' Skye said. 'And Henry's not much fun when he's low on battery power, remember?'

'I know,' sighed Rory and he vacuumed a yellow jube into his mouth.

Jake stared at his screen again. Could they really be headed to Saturn? What would they do there? He knew there were people



on Saturn but they all lived on a megaship. If it was anything like the drab grey research stations he'd seen, he couldn't imagine it would be much fun. Suddenly the mystery flight didn't seem so exciting after all.

