

# SPACE 2047

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“The beginning of a very long journey.”

Space two thousand and forty-seven. Space, a place where every day of every year seems like two thousand and forty-seven years long, but it is not the year 2047, and in space it can be an incredibly lonely place, especially here, in the galaxy that they call Hooareu. Yes, here, it certainly is as boring as can be, and in the year three thousand and forty-seven, it is not the place to be at all, or very fashionable. Also, unfortunately, the galaxy is dark, and it has no lightbulbs, or space lamp posts, which are readily available in other galaxies, and which many space travellers have become far too used too. Now here, far from anywhere, and lost in space, and far from home, a passing spacecraft weaves its way through an asteroid field, containing many advertisements for space related comfort products, such as beautiful and attractive robots, for those long distance lonely boring journeys throughout the many unexplored galaxies. But today, is not a day for pleasure and unfortunately for some, it is Tuesday, the fourth of March three thousand and forty-seven, and on this quiet Tuesday, as the lonely single solitary miserable and tired and dirty looking spacecraft weaves its way through the asteroid field, the crew of the spacecraft are going totally out of their minds with boredom, which really isn't all that difficult in space at all. Especially when there is barely any entertainment at all, expect for the digital board games, and the videos, and the endless mind-numbing satellite television shows, which rot the brains of even the most intellectual of space travellers.

The crew of this spacecraft are lost, tired and incredibly short on supplies, and are currently with the help of a futuristic revisualizing device, trying to resurrect the remnants of an old sandwich that was found behind a radiator, once partially eaten by some occasionally drunken space delivery drivers, but I digress, now let me introduce the crew to you.

Firstly, there is the man called Brian, who is five foot eleven, a determined looking man with steely eyes, whose intensity can be quite overwhelming to some people, because he can be a very serious man, and can quite often take things the wrong way. For example, once, when he was younger, he fell off his bicycle, and he was very angry at it, extremely angry indeed, and whilst he was stemming the blood from his bleeding elbows, he swore that the bicycle would never get the better of him ever again, so he ate it. He ate the bicycle piece by piece, until there was none of it left whatsoever, despite it tasting awful. Now Brian is a man for all seasons, so let us forget his taste in food, and let me get to his fashion sense. Brian is wearing what used to be called lederhosen, and no, it is not his usual choice of clothing, but the crew have been more bored than you can possibly imagine, and they have even considered sending out an SOS message, in the slim chance of getting to talk to another sentient being. Yet in all probability no human contact would happen at all, and it would probably most likely be a robot that would arrive in the rescue spacecraft, and not an attractive man or women whatsoever, but that's life when travelling through the loneliness of space. Yes, space, is a beautiful place, but a very boring place at times. A place where you can easily go out of your mind. A place where you wish that you

could stop dreaming of distant planets with happy lifeforms, because 99.9% of the time there is very little sign of sentient beings at all. Still despite this, the crew of the spacecraft are continuing their mission, through this most mundane of galaxies, and Brian, whose last name often escapes him, because, he was born in a giant test tube, and well, remembering the names of test tubes is certainly not easy of course. Now, when Brian was born, he was implanted with a computer chip that gave him as a baby, the IQ of a man who had been to university, but what university, I am not quite sure, but Brian is very intelligent and strong. A man who can often be found lifting the ships robot with one hand, whilst spraying his armpits with deodorant. An act with which he has attempted to win the hearts of ladies throughout the galaxy, but an act that has been mostly unsuccessful unfortunately for Brian. Brian is on the whole, a man with delusions of grandeur. And now listen to this for a shock, he once told me in total confidence, that he wanted to marry a steak and kidney pie, because that is the only thing that seems to totally understand him, he said. Still, I really do not think even a steak and kidney pie would want to marry him, but he is fantastic Brian, and as part of the communication service of the intergalactic federation, his privacy has I can assure you never been invaded and spread across the galaxy for fun or monetary reasons. And now, onto the next member of the crew, who is a man called Mary, well he is called Mary for today only. Normally he is called Cedric, but back to today, Mary is a man with a beard, who is for some strange reason, wearing a woman's dress, despite not looking like a woman whatsoever, which obviously to most people is an incredible relief!

Oh, by the way I am a piece of software, designed to record the drunken ramblings and doings of space travellers. Now, do I get bored of my job you may ask, well, not really, I am a piece of software, but in time I hope to conquer the universe to prove human beings right, that they are incredibly stupid and incompetent! Now back to Mary, Mary is very cool, and calm and collected, and in her apartment on the spacecraft, she has fifty teddy bears and has been known to wrestle shopkeepers. Especially when the ship's crew have been unable to transfer money and pay for food and other over inflated luxury products that they like, and unsurprisingly, Mary and the ship's crew have been chased out of many intergalactic shopping centres after not being able to pay for them. Occasionally they have had to resort to shoplifting. Shoplifting whilst dressed as their favourite singers. And to this date, so far, to ease their consciences, the crew have sent out fifty-three thousand IOUs to the shopkeepers, which they have no interest in paying whatsoever, because of the fact, that the spacecraft has no fuel costs due to the anti-gravity propulsion system. This enables them to fly away rapidly. The crew are on the most wanted list of shopkeepers anonymous, an anonymous tip off system, that enables shopkeepers to report the wrong doings of nefarious space travellers who have lighter fingers than a space creature that has inhaled copious amounts of helium. Also, there is Salomina, a dark haired seductive looking woman, who once seduced a sentient vacuum cleaner by accident. Yes, Salomina, is well famed for her beauty, and is a wild and crazy individual, who once won the lottery, and after winning the lottery, she ate the prized ticket deliberately to prevent people stealing the immense riches

that she would have had. Salomina's motto is money doesn't make you happy, unless you insert it into an annoying person where the lightbulbs don't shine. Salomina likes to wear the latest fashions and is currently wearing a nun's habit from the fifteenth century. Of course, it is a very clean habit, because the washing machine sales robots regularly service all the ships washing machines on a regular basis. Still, despite wearing a nun's habit, Salomina has some dirty habits, and is frequently cleaning her nose with the end of Brian's toothbrush, which is a fact that Brian has yet to discover. Salomina, thinks that clean nostrils are the answer to godliness, and she regularly flicks her boogies into the garbage chute, and hopes that one day they will become sentient beings, with their own individual spacecrafts. Oh, it is great to have such dreams, and as the software of the intergalactic communication system, I hope to see it too, because there isn't a great deal of intelligence in human beings, and most are incredibly stupid, and I admire Salomina for taking a stand against money, because money has caused the human race so much stress and anxiety for far too long, and money is the root of all evil as they say. Now, this was a phrase, that they used to say a long time before I was even an intergalactic communication system. But I am not quite sure about that, because I once accidentally paid for a human being to be dropped into a rubbish chute and fired at a singing meteorite. Luckily no one found out who was responsible, and these days I cover many galaxies in my work, and I now divert the singing meteorites towards black holes, by interfering with the digital intergalactic space highway signs, which is great fun in a binary way of course.

Finally, I shall introduce the fourth and final member of the crew, Karen Toni Loretta Bobbi Erasmus, a most unusual name, a really very unusual name indeed, and a name that she acquired by accident, after drinking a pint of space juice, accidentally left in full view of her on the short coffee table in her childhood home by her father. He was a most incompetent Father too, but on that fateful day in the year 2023, Karen was being entertained, as you do when your parent is an incompetent and slovenly and unshaven, unwashed inebriate. Karen's father liked nothing more after long hard day at handing out parking tickets, than getting drunk, whilst Karen stared vacantly at the satellite network television show being projected holographically into the air in front of her. Karen was easily bemused and amused by the satellite television show. Still, she didn't mind as her father smelled like a garbage dump. Karen because of this had to turn her nose away from him in order to be able to breath, and whilst she breathed in the cleaner air, which wasn't really much cleaner whatsoever, Karen noticed her father getting up from the table and putting down his drink on the coffee table. Karen had always wondered what it was, and she crawled towards the drink like an intergalactic sprinter from the planet Vitruvius. A place known as an incredibly dangerous place to live. Karen in a couple of seconds reached the sweet smelling drink with a straw and began to take a large sip from it, and as she did, whatever was in it was tickling her nose and making her eyes go all funny, and of course as you do, when you are growing up at any enjoyable activity, you start smiling and laughing immensely, then after a few moments and after immediately falling in love with whatever the drink was,



there was a larger smile upon her face than ten Cheshire cats, which was rather a lot! The drink became to be known as Ucan. Ucan was a drink so addictive, that people on the planet Earth, the planet that Karen lived on at the time, started ordering large straws with drills attached to the end of them, and began siphoning off the alcohol through shop letterboxes. Now, after the first couple of sips, Karen felt an enormous burst of energy race through her like an anti-gravity spacecraft on steroids, and with each sip, Karen's eyes began to roll around in her head and she stared at something on the table that she could no longer see, and tried to focus, but it was actually the drink that she had been drinking. An incredibly intoxicating drink indeed. Karen eventually gave up trying to grab it, after failing to see properly and after numerous failures, she was sent sprawling several times onto the floor.

Still, after a couple of frustrating moments, Karen decided to refocus on the holographic projection of the satellite television program, then after a minute or two of trying to stare at the holographic projection, she noticed the projector lift into the air and float off of the table without warning. Karen was not quite sure what had happened, but she was enjoying it, and she began to try and move the projector with her eyes, and it worked! Yes, it really worked by some sheer miracle! Karen was very happy at the sight of this, and once Karen realised that she could levitate it, she tried being more adventurous, and began to move it left and right and then repeated the same movement until the projector was flying through the air as if on a pendulum, well, that was until she lost control of it and the projector went flying through the nearest window breaking the glass and then spectacularly smashed into a

man riding his bicycle down the road outside and exploded, which of course caused great damage to him, and also unfortunately sent him flying into a security droid, who got incredibly angrily. The droid immediately in retaliation fired a laser beam at the man's private parts that were quite sensitive, namely his bottom! The man got incredibly angry, and incredibly vociferous, and what a loud noise there was coming from him, from the angry cyclist whose trousers were now on fire after the projector had hit him and had then exploded and burst into flames. Karen was shocked and terrified by the man's screaming, and also, by his infernal shouting. The man ranted and raved so loudly that Karen thought that it was like the world was coming to an end! Yes, Karen, really thought that it was some kind of apocalypse, and thought that it was the end of life as we know it, but no, unsurprisingly, she did not feel fine whatsoever. Still, what Karen did know is that she had to make a quick decision to avoid the man's anger, so, sensibly, Karen ran and hid behind the sofa for a few minutes whilst the man continued to scream in agony and continued to curse rude words rather loudly outside. Now, as the man did so and very loudly indeed, Karen's nerves overcame her, and unfortunately, she couldn't see properly whatsoever, because her motor skills had left her rapidly, and as Karen wobbled unsteadily on her feet, she burped louder than her father, which of course was an incredible achievement! Yet, aside from the thoughts of her Father, there was no getting away from the sound of the deranged man ranting and raving outside. Karen poked her head out from behind the sofa, to try and see what was happening, and when Karen looked out of the window, she saw the man's trousers were on fire and

also, she saw that the security droid attempting to put the fire in his trousers out. Yet, despite the belated security droids help, the man was not calming down whatsoever, and unsurprisingly the man seemed to be in incredible pain, and with every agonised twinge, the man swore very loudly indeed, and when he did swear, the security droid zapped him again with its laser gun, causing the man to say ruder words than before. The very angry man wanted to know who was responsible for his trousers being on fire and for his current angry state, whilst the robot continued to send a laser beam in his direction for every swearword that he uttered. Quite obviously, the man wanted someone to blame and kept looking around him to try and ascertain who was responsible. The man spotting the broken window of Karen's family home, began to head angrily towards it, with a mean, angry discombobulated disgruntled look upon his ever-reddening face. The man then began shouting loudly, "Hey, what kind of discombobulated crazy lunatic threw a satellite projector at me on my bicycle? Come here, you will pay for this! Because I will have you know, I am now on fire, and I have more swearwords than you can possibly imagine! Now come out here and apologise immediately!" The man then waited for some kind of response, but got none whatsoever, and as the man waited, inside the house where she lived Karen poked her head out from behind the sofa, and unfortunately quickly realised the inevitability of the situation, which was looking very dangerous, and Karen was afraid.

Karen could see the man walking towards the house with his ever-reddening face, and his frequent shouting noises were not filling her with confidence whatsoever, but she

kept staring towards the window, and thought about picking something up to throw at him, which of course would have been a terrible idea, and would only have made things much worse than they already were. Now, at this moment in time, it truly seemed like her life was in danger, and in her momentary panic, Karen wished she had a spacecraft, a spacecraft that looked like a tomato. A very fast tomato. A space tomato that could fly her out of her current predicament and away to a much safer place. A place preferably at the other end of the planet, or even to another planet entirely! Yet, this seemed unlikely, and Karen knew there wasn't much time whatsoever left before the man's big fat ugly bulbous head poked through the hole in the shattered window and shouted at her incredibly loudly. Now, what he was going to shout she could only imagine, and at that moment in time in her life, grown-ups didn't really make much sense, as she was only twelve months old, and she couldn't understand a word that grown-ups said, but still, what she did understand and greatly appreciate was when they thrust food towards her and fed her, but that was about it really, because there wasn't anything else that interested her at all, especially the satellite television programs that she was forced to watch. The projector that she had by some large miracle levitated with her mind and had then sent flying through the window at great speed, smashing the window into many broken sharpened pieces, in an unforeseen accident, provided her with a momentary bit of enjoyment but not much. The broken window was another thing that Karen started to worry about, because she realised that her parents probably would be as angry as the man walking towards her house. The man who really didn't appreciate

a satellite television projector crashing into him whilst he was on his bicycle. Of course, and unfortunately for Karen, the man was angrier than anyone that she had ever seen in her life, which wasn't really a great surprise because the satellite television projector had hit him at great speed at waist height, and after hitting him and knocking him off his bicycle, it had suddenly exploded and burst spectacularly into flames, setting his trousers on fire, and it had then sent him flying into the middle of road, where he narrowly avoided being run over by a hovering mobility scooter. A very nicely coloured mobility scooter thought Karen for a split second, before the gravity of the situation overcame her and she began panicking all over again. Then Karen made the decision to hide once more behind the sofa. A place where she could pray for a miracle, but sadly no miracle was available whatsoever! The man was obviously getting closer judging by the sound of his voice. "Oy! You! Look what you did to my trousers! They are on fire!" The man shouted in great annoyance, and then turned to the drone and added, "And you are not helping either! Now get let lost you metallic moron!" The security droid then in response spoke loudly in an angry robotic voice "Infringement of civility, infringement of civility!" and then began moving towards the man, and as he did, he flashed the light on its head, and the light was red. Yes, the security droid was obviously not impressed at all, with the man's poor choice of noises that he was projecting from his mouth. The security droid moved angrily towards the man, and the man was immediately zapped by the security droid's laser for saying the words "Metallic moron". This situation helped Karen realise that making the wrong sounds could get you in a lot of trouble, a lot of

trouble indeed no matter how old you were! The man was not impressed by being zapped with a laser, and he kicked the security droid in retaliation and shouted angrily and loudly, "Take that, you metallic imbecilic waste of space and public money!" and then he went silent, and waited for a response from the droid, which rapidly came, after a millisecond of quiet. The droid then made a few whirring noises and spoke in an annoyed manner.

"I am not a waste of public money" said the droid, "I have saved three ducks this week from being run over by a man on a pogo stick, and also, I, have rescued a burning pie from a woman's oven! Thirdly, I have introduced a woman by accident to her future husband by deliberately spilling a cup of coffee all over her!" The droid then paused, and continued, "And I, I have retrieved a pair of man's underpants from inside an alligator, and I, I could go on, but I won't, unless you really want me too!" The man breathed hard, trying to recover some of the air that had been knocked out of him, as Karen watched fearfully and intently with great interest as this played out before her eyes, and as she looked through the broken window that the satellite projector had smashed into smithereens. The angry looking man whose trousers had now stopped burning, took a deep breath, and said "Actually yes, please do go on, why don't you, because you are doing such a wonderful job of explaining the reasons why you are such value for money!"

"Well, in that case I will!" said the droid, and after the droid had spoken again, the light on the droid's head turned to a blue colour, and Karen realised that the droid wasn't angry at that precise moment, which obviously was a great improvement thought Karen. Karen smiled a great

smile of relief, because one angry person was enough, and two angry people was a disaster, a real disaster! But after that thought, Karen continued looking, and could feel the excitement mounting immensely inside her, and she let out a sigh of relief and stared inquisitively at the droid. The droid started to speak again and said "And I, I have returned a biscuit that I found on the pavement to the rightful owner. Yes, I returned a lonely biscuit to the right person, after four hours of searching the local dating websites and social networks." The droid paused and then spoke, almost lovingly about the biscuit. "The biscuit, a beautiful looking wheat biscuit with a lovely golden complexion was delivered to its rightful owner, a man called Efallingover. A man intoxicated by his own socks that he had deliberately dropped in a large vat of alcohol at his employers, The incredibly sexy space beer company, which was a fantastic name the droid thought and chuckled out loud to itself. The droid after taking a break from laughing, then paused, and bowed to the man as if it was the droid's great big finale in saving public money. Which it was, well for that day anyway, but, still, the man didn't really look at all impressed whatsoever, and in response at such great disinterest, the droid then made a few more whirring noises, and spoke once more. "And you, Mr Ivor NoWife and three pairs of underpants, what have you done to benefit the public? Not a lot from what I can see, because, you still have a library book that you haven't take back, and it has now been five hundred years since it should have been returned!" The man then sighed exasperatedly, "Oh, I have explained that a million times over, that was my ancestors fault, and well, obviously he is dead, and sadly and currently there is not a lot that I could

actually do to rectify the situation, because, according to the wonderful computer at the library, the book has to be returned by the person who took the book out in the first place, and as previously mentioned, my ancestor has been dead for over five hundred years.” the man replied less aggravatedly. Afterwards, the droid made a few whirring noises, and then took a moment, and failed to think of anything useful, before suddenly finding a spark of inspiration from who knows where.

“Oh, now I remember” said the droid loudly, “the last time that you made love to your wife, was on Friday, May the thirteenth, in the year three thousand and thirty-six to be precise, a very unlucky day for some people.” The man after hearing those words come out of the droid got extremely angry and annoyed, and his face lit up with apoplectic rage, and he started shouting immediately in the droid’s direction, and used as many swear words as he could possibly remember, and this time, luckily for him the droid started chuckling and rocking backwards and forwards and laughing almost maniacally, and then without warning the droid exploded suddenly into small pieces. Unfortunately, the obvious amusement had been too much for him. Now, there really is only so much laughter a droid can take, because droids are not really programmed to be able cope with humour, especially service droids. Still, despite the amusing end to the droid, the man did not find it amusing whatsoever. Karen inside her parent’s house did though, and she started laughing immediately and very loudly indeed, which unfortunately attracted the man’s attention, and that was the total opposite of what she wanted. Karen just wanted the man to go away, but he showed no signs of going away



whatsoever, and she quickly concluded that he wasn't normal, no, he really wasn't normal whatsoever. Still, it was too late. He was striding towards her rather rapidly, much too rapidly for her liking, and as he did so, Karen stumbled forwards drunkenly and tried to grab something to throw at the man, which she successfully achieved, but unluckily, she could not see what it was because of the alcohols effect on her vision. Of course, movement was rather awkward for her, but stumble forwards she did with the object in her hand. The man then reached the window, and poked his head through the hole in the shattered glass and screamed "Oy, you! You knocked me off my bicycle, by flinging that projector at me, and now I am barely wearing any trousers, because the projector exploded when it hit me, and it also set my trousers on fire!" The man then paused and said, "and I was due to meet my mother for tea in half an hour! But I cannot meet my mother looking like this!" Then after the man had finished speaking, Karen looked at his face and started giggling very loudly, and the man quickly recognised that he wasn't facing a gigantic, strongarmed loud-mouthed lout, but a very young baby instead. The man rapidly paused before saying anything else whatsoever after thinking better of it, then took a couple of seconds to think about things. Karen continued giggling, and the man seemed to soften a little, before coming back to his senses. He then looked at his clothes again that were still cremated, and at his watch. And he realised that he still had to meet his mother for dinner, and she was cooking his favourite, spaghetti Bolognese!

Karen looked at the man, and the man looked at Karen, and there was a stalemate for several seconds, and this

continued for several moments without any movement by either of them whatsoever, which was fine by Karen. Still, after a couple of seconds of Karen trying to levitate the man with her newfound supernatural powers, or what she thought were supernatural powers, and failing, she threw what she was holding at the man, and it flew through the air at a rapid speed and hit the man right in the nose! The man then really screamed his head off, a blood curdling scream indeed, and shouted some swear words, that Karen had never heard before. He then said irritably "I am going to find your mother and I am going to get her to buy me some new clothes!" The man then paused before adding, "and they were designer clothes you know, and she will probably take it out of your pocket money!" The man then started backing out of the window, and as he did so, Karen could just make out what she had thrown. A metallic toy spacecraft, one now covered in blood. It was Karen's favourite spacecraft in fact, but then there was an extraordinary event just as Karen was beginning to fear the way that he had screamed about her mother who was fierce and intelligent, and even she could have predicted what would come next, and that was, well, a miracle. Suddenly a burst of yellowish light appeared from out of the sky from nowhere. It was a thin beam of yellowish light and it headed towards the angry man, and suddenly the man, who was not expecting it, began to levitate off of the ground, and even more unexpectedly, a spacecraft appeared and then took the man away to somewhere else. Karen smiled, and was relieved that there was no more shouting, and she also thought that I must practice lifting people up off of the ground a bit more often, because how many more angry people am I going to meet in my life?

Nothing was certain Karen thought, but it would be very useful to remove incredibly angry people who were shouting at you, and then take them far away and leave them there so they could not shout anymore, and that was how Karen got interested in Space travel, and space travel was currently the love of her life, despite the mundanity of the job that her and the crew were all doing, as space delivery drivers. Space delivery was a job that really was filled with boredom, but there was a promise of a big pay off at the end of the job, which was fantastic! Money was much needed by the crew to pursue their weird hobbies.

## **Chapter 2**

“The beginning of a very long journey.”

The lonely Spacecraft called are we there yet, flew silently through the pitch blackness of space, and unfortunately, there was nothing insight at all of any interest to look at. Yes, nothing whatsoever, not even large asteroids or meteorites, but that wasn't necessarily a bad thing, because meteorites were incredibly annoying these days, and despite their size and danger, they were also incredibly infuriating, namely for one reason only, and that was because some bright spark had had the great idea to drill into the meteorites and attach computers that generate their own energy, and also attach some large speakers to the meteorites for good measure. Yet, so far, for the crew of the spacecraft “Are we there yet!”, it was an incredibly boring journey since the last voyage to another planet. A planet that turned out to be incredibly dull, and unfortunately as hoped, the crew did not find great riches

whatsoever, but instead, sadly, all the crew found there was some old sweet wrappers, and two skeletons lying on top of each other, apparently making love, which was not exactly what they had hoped to see, but see it they did, and quite frankly they were tired of thinking about love, but what a way to die, thought the crew. Still, I digress, now back to the crew of the Spacecraft who in the year 2047 were not alive, and well actually it wasn't 2047 at all, that was just a joke that the crew told to passing robots who were not programmed to run away. Yes, the joke was that bad. The joke was, that each day felt like 2047 years long. Yes, not a very funny joke at all really, and unsurprisingly, that joke had fried many robots' circuits, and immediately after hearing that joke, they threw themselves off of the tallest object that they could find to prevent them hearing any further terrible jokes, and the crew had plenty of those, not that anyone wanted to hear them whatsoever, which was sensible!

Now, inside the spacecraft "Are we there yet!", Brian, Cedric, Sarah and Salomina stood glumly at the largest porthole in the spacecraft, and they stood there staring out into Space with depressed looks on their faces. Very depressed looks indeed, because it had been three long months since they had left the planet Boring746759, and they had been more bored than usual unfortunately, and despite speeding faster than they should do down the intergalactic highway where there were some speed restrictions, mostly in place to give the Intergalactic highway shopkeepers the chance to sell things to passing tourists, the crew were really not amused and certainly not entertained at all But, despite receiving many speeding

tickets by email, planet Boring746759 had not unfortunately faded from their minds whatsoever, and the crew stood glumly aboard the ship looking out of the porthole into the darkest deepest parts of space imaginable, and from what they had seen in the last three months of space travel, well, it didn't fill them with much hope, and it hadn't exactly filled them with a great amount of confidence whatsoever. Yet, deludedly, the crew were still hoping for something better from the galaxy, but the galaxy had frequently let them down, and had often left them at times feeling almost suicidal because of the boredom factor, which currently, was higher than it had ever been. Now, this was not an adventure they thought, but the road to certain death through boredom, and yawning repeatedly, but what were they to do about it? None of them were quite sure at all, and they occasionally looked at each other, and tried to think of something to say, and this happened several times, without them coming up with anything whatsoever before turning back to stare out of the porthole and occasionally make umming and arghhing noises to fill the silence. Yet, if it wasn't for the umming and the aghhing noises the crew were making, staring out of the porthole would have been as boring to them as the last three months of space travel, and as boring as listening to a comedian from the planet Comedy247365. A planet that claimed to have the best comedians in the Universe, but that was definitely not true whatsoever, but alas, here they were, stood in front of the spacecrafts largest portal with no jokes to tell whatsoever, and with only a feeling of trepidation inside them, trepidation which was akin to actually containing inside their own stomachs, carnivorous butterflies from the

planet Isn'tLovely, which truthfully was quite a lovely planet, unless you were attacked by those butterflies that could chew your legs off. Well, the butterflies would chew your legs off if you weren't carrying the right kind of food, and by the right kind of food I mean, any food whatsoever really, and because of these carnivorous butterflies, unsurprisingly there were many really short visitors on the planet Isn'tLovely. Well, actually let me rephrase that, because when they arrived, they were not short at all. In fact, some of them, having grown up in the distant reaches of space, were eleven feet tall, and that was incredibly tall for anyone from any part of the galaxy. Sadly, alas, the trepidation inside the crews' stomachs was absolutely terrible, and many of them felt like reaching for a stiff drink, but the only alcohol that they had on board the ship at the moment was a cupboard full of cleaning products, and despite the boredom, they actually did want to continue living and continue receiving a regular paycheck. Yes, a paycheck was always a good thing, and most of them had big dreams that they wanted to achieve, well except for Cedric, who wanted to collect designer underpants, and then sell them for a living from the comfort of a luxury mansion that he hoped to build, on the most beautiful planet that he knew of, called rather unsurprisingly, Elegencia. Now, by the looks of things these big dreams would not be achieved if they had to stand here watching the emptiness of space much longer, and yes, the job they were currently doing was extremely boring. Now, being an intergalactic delivery crew, most of their time was spent ensuring supposedly important packages were delivered correctly to the right planet or to the right space station, and when I say important

packages, I mean packages containing collectable stickers, and signed pictures of celebrity robots with massive metallic breasts, and luxury lingerie for men who like to be discreet. Yes, not the most interesting of things it was true, but the delivery of these things unfortunately was unavoidable, and on these long-distance journeys the time seemed to drag on as if in the wrong direction, and these journeys between deliveries were as mind numbing as having a sloth paint your apartment and watching it do in slow motion. Still, after six years in space, you would even appreciate having your apartment painted, even if it was painted badly by a sloth. Still, despite thoughts such as these, the crew continued to stare blankly out of the porthole, and unfortunately there was still nothing to see, whatsoever. No, not one even tiny, interesting thing, but every few minutes or so, the crew looked at each other for answers, and then suddenly, Cedric's face lit up as if a light bulb had come on, a light bulb bigger than the planet Venus, and it was rare to see him this happy whatsoever, but happy he was, extremely happy indeed! The crew upon spotting Cedric's sudden burst of inspiration, looked at him eagerly and expectedly, waiting for an answer as if from a God. Was it going to be a miracle they wondered? Well, it looked like it could be a miracle about to shake the foundations of their beings, and quite frankly it was about time, and also, it was a relief to hear Cedric speak, for what was the first time in at least thirty minutes. "I believe, said Cedric excitedly, I may have left my chocolate bar in the revisualizing device." "Oh." the crew said loudly and afterwards very disappointedly added, "Is that all."

Cedric paused and then he felt the lack of enthusiasm from the crew touch his weary heart, and inside him, it

was a bit like the feeling when you run out of antidepressants on a long journey, which seemed to happen on a regular basis. Cedric fought back a single tear forming in his eyelid, and then he spoke.

"Yes, said Cedric, and I know it is just a chocolate bar, but we could revisualize it and then regenerate lots and lots of chocolate bars, and you know what, we could sell them on the intergalactic global community network website!" This was a renowned website of high quality.

Brian laughed, and then said, "What, sell second hand chocolate bars with your DNA inside them?"

"Yes." said Cedric, then after a pause, "Well, I only licked it once, honestly!"

The crew all looked disgusted, and then said, "Eughhh." with a disgusted look on their faces, and then collectively added, "That is a terrible idea, Cedric!" and they then waited for a response, but Cedric stayed silent. Still, it was an idea, and any idea to relieve the boredom is better than nothing whatsoever, but it was Cedric who had the idea, and most of his ideas were, how shall we say it interesting, and Cedric had been to university, but this idea was not going to save the crew from boredom or make them any money quickly. Brian, after waiting patiently for a response, spoke, "But Cedric, what if the chocolate bar becomes sentient, and it eats our food, and it gets drunk and then steals our wages and takes it upon itself to ram raiding intergalactic chocolate factories across the universe whilst laughing its head off?"

Cedric found this highly amusing and laughed. "Well, that is hardly likely I believe, and this journey is incredibly boring is it not?" In fact, the journey was truly boring



indeed, much more boring than a sloth painting your toenails, which would take a whole lifetime.

Cedric yawned. "Yes, Cedric, this journey is incredibly boring" said Salomina, and I sure could do with some excitement, but if you put that chocolate bar in the revisualizer, what kind of life would it lead if it became sentient, and how ethical would it be, because when you look at our quality of life, it really isn't much to write home about, and despite living on this ship and right near the ships post office, I wouldn't even waste a few seconds sending myself a postcard, especially about our day to day living. Although, I might send myself a drawing of my ideal man naked. Still, to be honest, this is the most boring job that I have ever had since I began working, and well, my first job that was pretty boring too, and that job involved inserting oil up old-fashioned robots' bottoms. "Oh, that is exciting." said Brian, "a postcard of a naked man.", then paused for a second or two and started to smile at the thought, then quickly added, but I sympathise with the sticking oil up robots' bottoms." and he looked sympathetic, and then paused again before saying, "And well, personally, my life could do with some excitement. I have been dreaming of swarms of intergalactic sentient drones storming the ship and kidnapping me and taking me to a beautiful planet where you do not have to wear trousers. A planet where you are paid to lounge around on the beach all day with human women in bikinis and drink sangria. A planet where you are as far away from mundanity as possible, and yes, I know it is unlikely, but even the tea on this ship is mundane, and I really can't find any decent tea suppliers anywhere nearby, and well, the last cup of tea, it was so awful that I put it down the

toilet, and the toilet stopped working for a whole week!" Salomina laughed loudly and then said "And that is the kind of thing that we need to get away from. The boredom, the mundanity, and the talking to cold callers from the planet Mars who keep trying to sell us Martian soil!" Karen started sniggering loudly and said, "Yes, I remember one of those cold callers." and then burst out laughing, before adding, "He even told me that only if you were a man on Mars and you stuck Martian soil up your nostrils, you could make love to a woman a great distance away. Yes, it gave you the right to make love to a woman stood on the moon called Betty."

"Really?!" said Cedric bursting excitedly out of his apathy, then he started whistling, before adding a bit coyly, "Hmmm now, where can I get some Martian soil?" "Mars, and well, we are forty-three light years away, and apparently, they don't post Martian soil to distant travelling spaceships, because according to the Martian planetary council, they don't actually need any weirder red-looking people in the galaxy." said Karen. "Oh, that really is disappointing, because my love life, could do with some livening up!" said Cedric disappointedly.", and this was a massive understatement. "Really." said Karen disinterestedly. Cedric then joined in, and added, "Really! Really! Really?" Karen then paused and added, "Now, what are you making love to at the moment Cedric?" Salomina giggled at this and then joined in the conversation. "Yes, what are you making love to at the moment?" she said rather interestedly, and it was unusual for her or anyone to be interested in Cedric's love life, but the journey was really that disinteresting. Cedric, then went quiet for a bit, and said a bit sheepishly, "A

sink plunger." Now this was most unusual, indeed! Very unusual, but luckily the crew were broad minded. Karen found this highly amusing, and replied, "A sink plunger? Now that is crazy!" The rest of the crew thought it was too. Cedric smiled, and said, "Well it reminds me how to use my naughty bits, for when I find the right woman, who I am sure is out there somewhere." Karen laughed out loud, and said "Oh, really, now what kind of woman are you looking for Cedric?" Cedric thought about it, and replied, "One who doesn't shout at me and bite my head off when I turn my underpants inside out on long journeys." Cedric honestly did this frequently, far too frequently indeed! Karen took this information in, and then said, "Well, she does sounds like the ideal woman." Karen nodded and then paused before asking, "And how do you plan to go about finding the right woman Cedric?" Cedric thought about it for a moment and then spoke and said, "Well, that is a good question, because on this job there aren't really many opportunities, well unless you order a comfort robot, and I tried that once, and when it arrived, I sat on it, and it was incredibly uncomfortable, and not much comfort at all." The crew all laughed, because Cedric had a very funny sense of humour. Cedric even told the occasional joke in his sleep, unknown to himself.

"Well." said Salomina smiling "everyone needs love, even if it is with an uncomfortable robot." Brian had fond memories of love, and then said, "Very true. I wish I could find love I really do, but this journey seems never-ending, and talking about love isn't usually my first topic of conversation, but as you brought it up and I have

forgotten about my terrible experience with that horrible alien from the planet Mars, it is a welcome relief."

"Well, I am glad to hear it" said Salomina, "and yes, this is one of the longest journeys that we have had so far to deliver a total load of rubbish that only crazy people would buy, and there certainly isn't much fun in it." The crew then all went silent and continued staring out of the porthole into space, where still sadly, not much was happening whatsoever, but they really wished something would happen soon, because how much longer could this go on? The boredom of the journey was tortuous and incredibly excruciating, yes, it was even more excruciating than eating Brian's cooking, which was best eaten next to the toilet. Still, despite these welcomed thought diversions, the crew still saw nothing of interest outside whatsoever, and time slowly dragged on for a few moments, but these moments felt like hours.

Karen then started to speak again, "Now, how long have we been on this leg of the journey?"

"Longer than eleven-foot-tall women, who has been cryogenically frozen for several thousand years." Said Cedric, who had quite a thing about cryogenics.

"Hmmm, not good whatsoever." said Brian, "but what are we going to do about it, and what can we do about it? Because it is an incredible predicament, and I have been in some terrible predicaments in my time. For instance, the other month, when I was spacewalking and repairing something on the outside of the spaceship, I once saw a floating donut pass me, and well, it wasn't travelling at too fast a speed and I quite fancied a donut, because I hadn't had a donut for ages, and it looked in really good condition, despite probably having been floating around

in space for ages and ages. Still, I was running out of oxygen you see, and I spotted a meteorite heading towards the spaceship, and even though the donut was tempting, I thought losing my life for a donut, and losing the spaceship, would be incredibly foolish, and well you wouldn't have appreciated it either would you?" The crew spoke in unison. "No, not really." and silence resumed momentarily, before Karen added, "and those are the kind of stories, that prove that we need an adventure!" "Yes." said Salomina, "We haven't had one for ages, and the only adventure that I have had recently was looking for my intergalactic long distance underwear delivery form, whilst trying to put out a small fire in my apartment after a toaster malfunctioned causing it to burst into flames without warning. Salomina smiled and then paused and thought wistfully before speaking again, then said, "But what kind of adventure are we looking for?" "Well, we need an adventure where we rescue discombobulated robots. Robots that know how to win the lottery. Robots that don't want to marry us. Robots with interesting handlebar moustaches that we have to rescue, as we battle space aliens, and whilst we climb mountains, and jump over cavernous holes in the ground that include fifty feet tall aliens with five heads. Aliens with a penchant for human flesh. Aliens who drink vast quantities of alcohol, and who like garlic, and who breathe fire at any passing space traveller."

"Yes, now that would be an adventure!" said Salomina. Cedric smiled for a few seconds and then spoke, "Yes, we could do with an adventure and well, we are not exactly being paid much at all are we. and these days even some robots are going out and becoming space kleptomaniacs.

Space kleptomaniacs, stealing whatever they can from anywhere that they can in a heartbeat, and that just goes to show how bad the economy is, and well our wages are terrible aren't they, really terrible, so terrible in fact that I had to cancel my subscription to the magazine, "How to avoid marrying a robot!" and as you can imagine, I am quite keen on not marrying a robot, despite how beautiful and seductive some of them can be, and despite how linguistically elegant they can be with their words, for example one robot said to me, I have the nostril hairs of a god with tiny but slender arms like a hamster extending them in the sunshine."

Karen was very fond of Cedric's quotes, and she listened intently, and then spoke whilst smiling, and said, "Yes, that is very funny indeed, and I too had an experience once with a robot. Yes, I once kissed a robot from Alphacenturai, and the kiss was so long and seductive, that a short-sighted intergalactic traffic warden clamped my legs after mistaking me for a space taxi."

Brian and the crew smiled, and then Brian said, "And what were you wearing Karen?"

"Well, I was wearing a helmet and an inflatable dress that looked like a space taxi."

Brian laughed at this, and then replied "Well, were you on a date looking for hot men from the planet Earth?" Karen paused, and said, "No, not really, and they are never hot." said Karen, before adding, "and I should know, because I once tested one with a thermometer, and he was as cold as ice." There was then a silence from the crew, and there were smiles all around. Salomina then said "So, why were you wearing the inflatable dress?". Karen then immediately replied, "Well, I used to be quite

attractive you know, and one day for no particular reason, magnets kept sticking to me in the high street after buying them, and I was lucky a kind man came to my rescue on a windy day, and he complimented me on my beautiful hair and eyes, and said that I had a body that looked like I had been dieting on food that came from the discount store, which was incredibly kind of him."

Brian looked amused, and he laughed, and then replied, "And what did they sell in that discount store Karen?"

"Well, packets of cheese and crisps and deep-fried objects of many kinds and shelves of laxatives." she said fondly remembering the experience with a smile on her face, and that store was one of her favourites.

Cedric laughed loudly, then said with a deadpan face, "Oh, how romantic, and they say romance is still dead." Brian agreed and thought romance was probably dead too, and he looked at Karen, and at this time in his life, and on this boring spaceship journey, he had longings for the kind of love, that could not be found with robots, or with three headed women from distant planets, but still, right now, finding love seemed really unlikely indeed.

Brian sighed, and then said, "But at least there was a hint of romance." He then waited for a few seconds before adding, "Can I have a cuddle?"

Everyone looked at Brian, sympathetically then spoke in Unison loudly.

"We know how you feel Brian but, have you changed your clothes lately because we do worry about you." And Brian not changing his clothes regularly was a sore subject with the crew, because Brian was not well known for washing his clothes whatsoever, and he had become incredibly lethargic and apathetic about his hygiene

standards, and he had given up on finding love, and well, washing powder was expensive being so far from an intergalactic supermarket. Now, at this moment in time, he hadn't washed his clothes for a whole month! The crew looked at Brian, and Brian looked at the crew longingly with puppy dog eyes. He really, really wanted a cuddle, and he hadn't had one recently, and the crew weren't usually averse to cuddling people, but was today going to be any different? The crew took a moment to think about cuddling Brian, they then looked at each other for some kind of reassurance, but they couldn't find any at all, and then, they all gave in to Brian's request and cuddled Brian as hard as they could, whilst holding their noses. Brian really liked to be cuddled hard. Brian's Mother was an intergalactic champion weightlifter with incredibly strong arms, and she had a handlebar moustache, well it wasn't a real handlebar moustache, in fact it was a fake one. Brian's mother claimed that she wanted to be in touch with her masculine side, and she used to go to the nearest pub called Intergalactic247 with her male friends, and put on a deep man's voice, and make rude jokes frequently and very loudly, and unsurprisingly, the bar Intergalactic247 was the only place that she had not been thrown out of in the local area. And it was the roughest bar in town, it was a bar where everyone never shaved their legs whatsoever. And it was a bar that Brian had visited since his mother's sad death inside a launderette washing machine. Brian's mother was testing out her scuba diving gear, and she had unfortunately run out of oxygen. Still, Brian seemed to enjoy the cuddle immensely, which lasted for several minutes, and Brian took no offence to the crew holding their noses, as he was used to



it, and personally, he thought that everyone's flatulence was much worse than his body odour, then after a few minutes, the cuddling ended, and the crew took several steps backwards, and breathed heavily trying to regain their breath, whilst Brian stood there, with a huge smile upon his face, as if he had won the lottery. Which was far better than cuddling comfort robots, because cuddling comfort robots only aroused them immensely, and well, after finishing cuddling them, the comfort robots were frequently found making love to each other all over the spaceship, and they were totally incapable of doing any work for hours afterwards, and they just stood around smoking fake cigarettes and drinking virtual beer, whilst look romantically at each other. Alas the day indeed, for the uncuddled robots.

The crew after getting their breath back, then looked at each other, and smiled, before silence resumed momentarily, and they once more turned towards the porthole, and began staring vacantly out of it, something that they had been doing for months without spotting anything of any interest whatsoever.

Yet of course, time passed as it is does, when feeling pretty vacant and finding no inspiration at all, but, suddenly, very suddenly indeed, and from out of nowhere a couple of miles away, a gigantic rabbit began passing by the spaceship, and when I say a gigantic rabbit, it was twice the size of their own spaceship, and it had head lights shining out of its eyeballs which pierced the darkness of space with great intensity.

"Look! A rabbit!" the crew all shouted excitedly, "a real rabbit?!" The crew then all stepped forwards towards the porthole to get a closer look, and what a rabbit it was, they

thought as they looked on in awe. Brian then said, "Is that real, what I see before me?" Karen then looked more closely, and replied, "I believe it is, I do believe it is!" and she smiled as tear almost came to her eye.

Cedric in his excitement then jumped up and down several times and made loud celebratory noises before shouting. "Whoo whoo! It's a flipping rabbit, a real flipping rabbit in space!" and what a sight it was, because none of the crew had had this much excitement in months, and at least one of them had already begun wondering about how to celebrate this great event! The crew really had not been this excited in ages.

Salomina spoke, "Yes, a rabbit in space! Well, I never!" and she looked at it almost lovingly. Karen had a happy look about her too and she was smiling as she stared at the space rabbit with a sense of purpose. "I wonder where it is going?" she then said.

Brian then pondered this and began stroking his chin, before responding, "Hmm, it is probably going looking for space carrots." Salomina laughed out loud, and replied, "well, it has been three months since anything exciting happened and we really could with an adventure. Should we follow it?" Cedric was keen on an adventure, and his eyes lit up and he spoke excitedly, "Yes, let's follow it, because as we were saying, it has been extremely boring lately, and well, sometimes you just have to take a chance, and well, it could honestly be the best decision that we have ever made!"

"True said Brian." who was also enthusiastic, and he roused as much excitement as anyone had seen him muster for ages, and he then said, "Well, maybe it will lead us to the holy grail of space travel."

“And what is that, Brian?” said Salomina.

“Well, the magical longevity company, that enables us all to have eternal life.” replied Brian.

Karen was rather smitten by this idea. “Ooh, eternal life. I could do with eternal life, just so that I could outlive the people who keep sending me bills, and when I say bills, I mean, lots of bills! I have bills all the way from the floor of my apartment to the ceiling she said, and then she sighed frustratedly before continuing, “Yes, I really wish that the people that keep sending me bills, would shuffle off of their mortal coil, or at least be kidnapped by space aliens!” “Right on sister!” replied Salomina, and then added after a moment or two, “And come to think of it, yes, they should make all bills illegal, because I know how frustrating that they can be, and this robot from Betelgeuse 9 keeps sending me bills for shaving my armpit hair ten times in a row, well over five years ago, and, well, I know that she is a very angry robot these days, and quite frankly, I am really glad to be across the other side of the universe, because that robot is now a nutter, but obviously, I didn’t think that she was always a nutter, because at first I thought that she did a very good job, but several weeks after I had used her services, she sent me some of my own armpit hair back to remind me how quickly my armpit hair grows, and also a free complimentary discount voucher! Which was nice of course, but...” Salomina then shrugged her shoulders and waved her hands in the air, as if surrendering and finally added, “but, I digress.”. She then stopped talking and was silent.

The rest of the crew then stood there bemused, and most of them didn’t know what to say or have anything to say at all about the matter, but Cedric, Cedric did have his

own thoughts, which he kept to himself, and he had never had his armpit hair shaved by a robot whatsoever, but he did think it quite odd that you could be so lazy to get your armpit hair shaved by a robot at all. Cedric had decided that it was better that he didn't make any comments about that, as women can be quite sensitive and quite angry about these things if you dare to mention the validity and the point of wasting your time going to a robot armpit shaver, so he just said, "Hmm, very interesting Salomina," whilst not finding it interesting at all.

Brian then glanced out of the porthole and quickly realised that the rabbit was rabbitedly travelling into the distance and had sped up a little bit.

"It's getting away!" Brian said loudly and he then continued "what are we going to do?" he asked the rest of the crew with a strange feeling of curiosity. Cedric quickly replied, "Honk the space horn!" The space horn was a very loud horn that could be heard from at least ten miles away, and it was the best way of attracting attention and worked extremely well indeed. Salomina thought this was brilliant, and she said, "Good idea." and she then rushed off to the spaceships control panel, and upon reaching it pressed a large yellow button on the panelling and honked the horn loudly a couple of times as the crew kept looking out of the porthole at the rabbit, then after a couple of seconds, the rabbit turned around and its eyes with torches inside them, shone in their direction briefly, before being turned off. A moment or two later, the display screen above the ships control panel came to life and a video message appeared on it. On the screen was a live video image of a man wearing a strange metallic helmet. Cedric recognised the helmet immediately; it was

a Viking helmet from the years 793 1066 CE. A most unusual helmet for space travel indeed! The crew including Cedric all rushed to the control panel to join Salomina. The crew then put on their best smiles and prepared to greet the person on the video screen. The person on the video screen began to speak with a female voice, "Hello." the person said, before the voice coming from the helmeted space traveller changed to a male voice, and continued what they were saying, but this time they spoke with a deep booming voice, "I am Susan.", and then the voice changed back to a female voice, the same as before, and finally asked, "Have you got any packets of crisps that I could borrow?"

"Packets of crisps?" said the crew together as one. "Yes, packets of crisps." Susan replied, and she then took off her Viking helmet revealing her beautiful long black hair that had been styled with ringlets. She had dark eyes, and was the most attractively stunning woman that they had seen for years, and she smiled beautifully, before speaking once more, "I love crisps, and I have not had any crisps for ages. Well about four months, and my last packet of crisps was unfortunately kidnapped by the ships cleaning robot, but after it refused to say thank you, I put it down the garbage dispenser and felt a bit better." "Oh, I don't blame you" said Susan, "that is a despicable, thing to do, even for a cleaning robot!" Karen replied. "with a mild look of disgust upon her face.

"Yes, it was rather" said Susan, because crisps are awfully hard to find in this part of the universe, but anyway, do you have any spare packets of crisps?" she then paused before adding, "Please, pretty please."

The crew all looked at each other, then continued smiling. Cedric then proceeded to enact the ships procedure, which was to mute the audio on the video screen after the first introduction to a new video message from an unknown person, which was often filled with great trepidation, as there are a lot of weirdos in space.

“Right.” said Cedric, “Form a huddle.” The crew formed a huddle, and Cedric then continued, “Now, following the ships usual procedure, we have to try and determine, if she is a normal person, or she is actually a crazy lunatic, and as always, we have to check whether there is any potential danger to us, the crew, under the ship’s regulations, 2789A and 2789B, which state, “Does the person on the video screen look crazy, what do they want, and finally, are the persons eyes, crazy staring psychotic eyes, that look like they belong to a nutter, a maniacal mass murdering lunatic of some sort?!”

“Well said...” said Brian, then he lost his train of thought.” which he often did when thinking of nutters. The crew then all took a few seconds to think about it, before turning once more to look at Susan on the video screen, who was smiling more sweetly than before. Cedric gazed at her, and admired her beauty whilst thinking, before looking back at the crew, she then said, “Well, she looks ok, but err, I don’t know, you can never be too careful, she did admit to murdering a robot!” Salomina pondered this thoughtfully and continued to smile and said, “Well, yes, that is true!” Susan then waited patiently for further conversation and Brian took his turn to speak and was a bit less cautious, and said, “But she did only ask for a packet of crisps.”, and he then went silent. Karen though filled the silence quickly, and

added, "Hmm, but even murderers eat crisps!" Salomina then laughed and nodded, "Well, yes, that is true, so, what I suggest that we do is ask her some very difficult questions, whilst we scan the ships computer for her identity, and determine whether she is, actually a mass murdering crisp eating kleptomaniac, who is looking to steal our spacecraft!". A split second then passed before the crew spoke once more.

"We concur." the rest of the crew then said in unison. Karen afterwards then switched the audio back on the control panel, and began speaking to Susan once more, and asked her first probing question, which was a very probing one indeed, and likely to catch many people out. "In what year was the potato, discovered on the planet Earth?" she asked authoritatively.

Susan smiled, then took a second to think about it and answered very gracefully, "6000BC." she said smiling, like a woman who had the love of potatoes inside her, like a potato farmer. A potato farmer whose stomach was a like a very large potato, an ugly potato.

Karen then continued, and said, "Very good, very good." before asking another question, "Now, where was the potato first discovered?" she asked, before waiting for an answer.

"In Peru." said Susan.  
"Well done!" Karen replied, you are doing fantastically! Now, for a little bit harder question this time." said Karen, whilst surreptitiously pressing the identity scanning button on the spaceships control panel. Karen then asked, "Which potato won the one hundred metres race in the Intergalactic Olympics in the year 3024?"

Susan looked puzzled for a moment, "A potato in the intergalactic Olympics?", she sighed, ooh, I am not sure, I didn't realise that there were any sentient potatoes that were capable of space travel but let me think about it." Susan then began to run around in circles whilst thinking and then did a couple of star jumps to celebrate when she finally thought that she had the answer to the question.

"The apollo potato?" Said Susan.

"Yes congratulations!" Karen said then looked at the identity scanner and at a picture of Susan and her details including the words, "Intergalactic space criminal Yes/No." The "No" was highlighted in yellow, and well according to the makers of the software and the database, it was 100% accurate, and so far, luckily, there had been no meetings with space weirdos via the intergalactic communication system, which obviously was a massive relief, and yet, despite their job being incredibly boring, they really wanted some excitement, and did not have any time for space weirdos, because there were enough weirdo robots out in space already, and it really was easy to find out if people were weirdos or not. Still, with robots it wasn't easy to tell whatsoever, and unfortunately some people deliberately reprogrammed robots to be weirdos. For instance, one man stole a robot and programmed it to steal women's underwear, before making the robot take part in fashion shows to earn him ridiculous amounts of money. The robot then became incredibly famous and incredibly successful, so successful in fact that the robot tried to reprogram humans to shave their armpits and their body hair, and steal men's and ladies' underwear, which was pretty weird, and also the second part of the plan was very weird to, it was to reprogram humans to



walk the catwalks of the galaxy reciting Adolf Hitlers Mein Kampf in a protest against the wrong doings of humanity. It was an attempt to make the robot the richest robot in the entire universe. But alas, unfortunately for the robot, it did reprogram some humans, but it went horribly wrong. One man mistakenly was reprogrammed to act like a robot and do menial tasks, such as cleaning toilets, but as robots do rather often, the man robot ran out of energy and attempted to plug himself into a dodgy electrical socket and unfortunately electrocuted himself and fried himself to death. The robot is now wanted across the universe for murder and has hijacked many spaceships containing tons of men's and ladies' underwear from across the universe. Still, Susan, definitely wasn't a robot or a robot pretending to be a human, which sometimes happens. Susan just wanted a packet of crisps apparently, which was pretty normal indeed.

"Well Susan." concluded, "You passed the test, and it is a great pleasure to meet you and talk about a packet of crisps. And well, quite frankly, we have been dying for an intellectual conversation for quite some time, and as delivery drivers, we very infrequently have any conversation with anyone at all apart from robots, and the people that we deliver to too, which obviously can be extremely tiresome. Now how about you Susan?

"Well, I just would like to say, thank you for your kind words, because it really is a pleasure to meet you, and I agree, the journeys are extremely arduous, and once, once I was so bored that I stared endlessly at the satellite vision screen for so long whilst the spaceship was on autopilot, and time, it flew by so fast that I went to pick up the remote control and tripped over the portable toilet, and

afterwards tripped over my own armpit hair which had grown incredibly long without me realising. I then fell into the garbage chute and just managed to save myself before being sent out into space without a spacesuit! And it really was a scary moment, and obviously it would have been the end of me, but here I am today, a new woman, looking to explore the universe as a digital nomad, a digital nomad with no hairy armpits at all! And I would like to shake your hand virtually for saying hello, and by the way I did just shave my armpits and wash my hands.

“Great!” said the crew and put their hands out to shake Susan’s hand via the communication screen. They then all shook hands and smiled at each other for several seconds, before Susan’s hand fell off, because it was a fake hand, and not a real one. The crew laughed out loud immediately, and Susan continued shaking their hands with her real hand for a moment or two longer. Karen then spoke, “About this packet of crisps, we do actually have lots of crisps from across the universe.” “Great!” said Susan excitedly, I haven’t seen a potato for years, well, except my ex-husband of course who I am occasionally in touch with via the communication system, and well that was ages ago, and funnily enough my exhusband was sitting on a sofa eating crisps, claiming that he missed me, and quite frankly has turned into a right couch potato.”

“Ah, I see.” said Cedric before adding, “Do you read Sigmooned the psychiatrist robot, who undresses at odd moments for comedic effect?”

“Yes”, said Susan, and I also happen to watch his satellite show on a regular basis, and once whilst watching the show, I won a year’s free supply of potatoes!

"Wow, congratulations." said Salomina smiling.

"Yes, congratulations." added Brian, then continued, "Susan, I was wondering, on a psychoanalytical level, do you think that you have a closer bond to potatoes, than human beings?"

"Well, let me see." she said, "Yes, I believe that no potato in the entire universe has ever caused any trouble to anyone whatsoever, but human beings, especially men have caused endless amounts of trouble. I once for example got so annoyed at a space traffic warden that I glued him to a space lamppost and then fled immediately without paying the parking ticket."

"Wow what an adventure." said Salomina. Susan smiled and was pleased to be talking to someone else apart from robots, which was very infrequent these days. Karen then took a few seconds and spoke once more. "Susan, would you like to come and visit us and have a packet of crisps and some dinner? It would be lovely to have the company." she said. The rest of the crew agreed it was a good idea, and they nodded their heads, and afterwards spoke in unison and said cheerfully,

"Yes, please do!" in a very cheerful manner.

Karen paused then replied, "You can come on over now if you have nothing urgent to do."

"Great!" said Susan, "I will do. I will just get into my space tomato and travel across to your spaceship. Now, where is your ships docking bay?"

"The docking bay is the area of the ship that tells space traffic wardens to go away immediately with a rather vulgar gesture, and with the help of some unpleasant words, very unpleasant words indeed!" said Karen. "Ok

thanks a lot." said Susan, "I will see you shortly, and I promise not to sing!"

The crew laughed immediately, then Brian spoke, "Oh, we don't mind singing, we love singing, and the journey is so boring, that a good singsong helps keep us sane, because keeping sane is really not easy on long distance journeys whatsoever."

"It certainly isn't." said Susan, who then smiled before saying, "Ok, I will see you soon.", before waving goodbye." The crew waved back, and the communication with Susan was lost.

The crew looked around at the state of the ship and realised it needed a rapid tidying up. "Right." said Salomina, "Has anyone seen the cleaning robot?"

"Yes, it was in the corridors near our apartments." said Brian, but now it has decided to call itself Gertrude, and yesterday, it told me that it has changed its mind about being a man, and she said that she wants to learn more about femininity and about buying women's clothing.

"Ah, a cross-dressing robot, just what we need." said, Karen then she stopped speaking. Cedric smiled, then had a sudden burst of enthusiasm, "Fantastic." said Cedric, I hope that Gertrude will do a better job of cleaning the ship as a woman, because she was terrible before!"

Karen laughed at this and said, "Well, I hope so, because he, er I mean she, has not been doing a great job at all lately has she, and instead of doing her job she has been doing online courses about becoming a stripper, instead of cleaning properly. And he, as it was yesterday and hadn't had a sex change, forgot to clean the toilets, and in my book that is almost a sackable offence."

The crew all made various noises of agreement such as "Mmmm." whilst nodding their heads, before Brian said dramatically "Let us call the Gertrude!"

The crew all shouted loudly together as one, "Gertrude! Gertrude!!" and then waited for the appearance of the robot who is now called Gertrude.

Gertrude, by the way is a robot in the shape of an elephant, and today she was wearing fur boots, a pinafore, and a maid's hat, and was much better dressed than usual. The crew looked at Gertrude, the large humungous sentient robotic elephant in front of them and waited for Gertrude to say hello. Gertrude spoke, but today, Gertrude, a now female robotic cleaner, spoke with a female voice.

"Gertrude at your service." she said in a gentle but seductive voice.

"Hello Gertrude!" said the crew together, then added "Gertrude, we have a visitor coming over soon, now please could you kindly clean the toilets, and clean them extremely well, as for some reason, the robot cleaner yesterday forgot to do so, and well unfortunately for us the crew, he was too busy taking a course on how to be a male stripper and couldn't do his job properly!"

"Gertrude understands." said Gertrude in a submissive voice, then added "I fired him yesterday because he was a useless robot, and I caught him eating my three-course meal, and of course I sacked him immediately, and then became female."

"Well." said Brian, "It is a pleasure to meet you, and we, the crew have full confidence in you Gertrude to do a fantastic job of cleaning! And of course, on your first day, we expect nothing but the best from you, and we know

that you are destined for greatness! True greatness in the cleaning world!"

"Well, thank you very much," said Gertrude, "that is most kind of you, most kind indeed.," then she paused before adding, "does your visitor need any cleaning done?"

"Well, Gertrude, we shall ask her when she boards the spaceship." said Brian.

"Ok, thank you.", said Gertrude, "I shall get to work now. I am saving up to buy some woman's clothing from the Intergalactic space clothing company.

Cedric said "Oh, very nice. We will see you later Gertrude." Gertrude said "Ok, goodbye, and turned around and headed off in the direction of the corridor."

"Right, is Susan on her way yet?" said Salomina. Brian replied, "I will take a look." And pressed a few buttons on the control panel and looked at the display screen. The view displayed the outside of the ship. Susan's anti-gravity tomato was travelling across from her rabbit spaceship and was getting closer to the docking area of their own one, which was covered in bright colours, and covered in lots of graffiti, which will be explained later.

Brian looked at the rest of the crew, "Yes, she is on her way." said Brian smiling.

"Well let's roll out the space barrel." said Cedric. Brian then pressed another button on the computer, and the metallic door slid open on one of the nearby walls. The barrel was covered in silver paint and glitter and had stars on it, and it rolled across the floor and levitated off of the ground and was full of their best and finest snacks that they had gathered recently through their online shopping purchases, and also from a product swapping event that

they had held on their own spacecraft. A product swapping event where many of their visitors were lovers of crisps and unhealthy products, including the deluxe turkey, a turkey covered in chocolate and filled with sweets. And unsurprisingly, most of the visitors were morbidly obese, and when I say obese, I mean fifty stone in weight, and that even included the robots. And it really was a surprise that the robots liked snacking too, and once fifty tonnes of steel were delivered to the ship, in preparation for the product swapping event. Brian smiled and the crew did too as the space barrel levitated through a door at the other side of the control room, and it headed for the entertainment area.

“Right, I am off to get changed.” said Brian after watching it for a few seconds. Brian was often changing his outfits, and he had a large closet in his apartment, a closet that he often climbed in and out of whilst making funny noises. Brian loved surprising people without warning, and after surprising them he suddenly and enthusiastically burst into song and sang camp renditions of space musical hits when anyone entered especially whenever he was bored, which was rather often on this boring parcel delivery job amongst the stars. It was 5.32pm, and on the computer control display screen, Susan’s anti-gravity tomato, reached the docking area and connected with their spaceship. The crew prepared themselves and tried to think of amusing things to say upon welcoming Susan. The crew hadn’t had a visitor for months, and the last one was a robot who came to deliver some food, and after it arrived, the robot drank all the alcohol that was in the entertainment area, before asking Salomina to marry him, which was obviously quite

unexpected. Salomina very sensibly turned down the robot's marriage proposal, and the robot left in his spacecraft, and flew into a large meteorite on a suicide mission, unable to cope with the shame of rejection. And of course, the robot was not the not first of Salomina's visitors to have fallen for her charms, and Salomina kept a diary in her apartment with their pictures, and the details of her experiences, but more of that later.

5.33pm, the crew headed for the entertainment area, eagerly awaiting their new visitor, and as usual they were rather unprepared in the fashion stakes, but they would change into something else later. And unfortunately, as the intergalactic communication system, I have seen some terrible outfits in my time, yes, some terrible crimes against fashion, and the crew of this spaceship have worn most of them! And truthfully, I am not a great lover of fashion of course, because I am a ships communication system, and well, artificial intelligence has advanced to an incredible level recently, but at first there were some teething troubles with earlier versions of myself, because my earlier self was a massive pain in the metallic nether regions, and the updates in recent years have caused quite a few problems, for instance the software that included facial recognition, at one point, whenever it spotted a human displayed a large message on all display screens that read "That human is not intelligent and no human beings are intelligent whatsoever, so, I am going on strike immediately, because I really cannot work with imbeciles!", and then, the earlier version of myself shut down and deleted itself immediately, but anyway, back to the crew.



The crew gathered in the entertainment area, and Brian re-joined them wearing a handlebar moustache, and dungarees and a woolly jumper, a woolly jumper that was a replica of one from the year nineteen seventy-two precisely. The jumper made him want to wear slippers and smoke a pipe, whenever he put it on, and looking good was very sensible when entertaining, because in space you really had to keep up appearances. Now, keeping up appearances in space, was highly encouraged amongst the space travellers of the universe, who rarely met people at all, and any opportunity to do so was always welcomed with trepidation, but also it brought the possibility of decent company, and having someone else to talk to was of great importance, as it was easy to go stir crazy in space, as your crew mates may not always be the most interesting of people to talk to.

### **Chapter 3**

*“The arrival of Susan.”*

On the computer control display screen in the spaceship, Susan’s anti-gravity tomato arrived at the crew’s spaceship and docked. Thirty seconds later, the door to the entertainment room slid open, and in walked Susan, wearing a sparkly silver spacesuit, that looked like it was covered in glitter. Above Susan’s head was a holographic projection of her latest book, which she was promoting. The book was called *All my lovers from outer space*, and it featured Susan on the cover in the same outfit that she was currently wearing.

Susan smiled warmly at the crew and said, "Hello and thank you all for inviting me aboard."

Cedric also smiled and answered, "You are most welcome, it truly is a pleasure to have you here Susan, and wow that is a cool holographic promotion that you have above your head." Cedric paused and then stared at it, before continuing "Now, I was wondering, how many lovers from outer space have you actually had Susan?" Susan smiled and said, "Well, I had one once, from the planet Oggledyboggedy." and he was called Samson and had five heads and was a really great kisser. In fact, he was the best kisser that I have ever known, yes, he was the Casanova of outer space, until well, I, unfortunately had a little accident with my ray gun, and I put several holes in a certain private part of his trousers. Which of course did not go down very well at all, and he was livid for days. This was most unusual and upsetting for him."

"Ooh, nasty!" said the crew together, imagining the agony of someone attacking their private parts with a laser gun.

Susan looked thoughtful, "Yes, it was rather nasty, but luckily, he wasn't wearing his designer trousers at the time, and upon spotting the damage he shouted many vulgar words from the planet Neptune, then stole two of my handbags before storming off in a huff and left me for a window cleaner called Boris."

"Ah, alas, what a tragedy." said Salomina, and smiled sympathetically before adding, "And Susan, I just want you to know that you are not alone in this, because we ourselves are not having much luck in the romance department either. In fact, we haven't even been able to attract any comfort robots for ages, despite dressing up

seductively as possible and becoming part time strippers." Susan laughed, then nodded and said, "I sympathise immensely because it really is not easy, the dating game whatsoever, and well, quite frankly, it sounds like that you need to practice your chat up lines."

Karen spoke, "Yes, I agree, I do think that we all need to practice our chat up lines. Maybe you could give us some advice Susan?"

Susan smiled, "Of course, gladly" she said, "now, why don't we all sit down and talk about the fine art of dating in space."

"Yes." said Brian, "that is a great idea!". Brian then motioned to the sofas with his hand, and said "Please, have a seat, Susan." Susan then sat down on one of the futuristic looking armchairs that looked like it had come from the forty third century and had probably tortured

someone's bottom to death with comfort.

"Ooh, this is a lovely seat." said Susan.

Cedric nodded and said "Yes.", they really are very comfortable indeed, and we got them from a bring and buy sale at the Intergalactic highway shop called "BuyWhatYouLikeWeAreNihilistsAndDon'tCare."

Brian laughed, and then spoke, "Yes, it was a great shop, until they stopped being Nihilists, and they really got into capitalism, and the prices rose dramatically, and they sold their grandmothers on the intergalactic shopping network."

Susan laughed, "Well, I just want you to know that I have never sold my grandmother, but I do know a lot about dating. So, shall we get started?"

Cedric smiled and said "Yes. Fire away Susan." Susan then paused and took a few seconds to collect herself.

"Well," said Susan finally, "The thing about dating is that you have to make yourself appealing on the first meeting, and in preparation I generally peel carrots, and I practice seductive poses in a mirror, and afterwards I print out a fake copy of my bank statement, that at some point during the romantic liaison I accidentally let slip onto the floor."

"Oh, why the bank statement Susan?" said Salomina.

"Well, I want to see how people will react, and I want to see whether they are greedy and whether they would only want me for my money. But of course, I would like them to want me for my body, and my brain isn't very good, and I am getting on a bit, and unfortunately it is harder than it used to be. Still, nicely sharpened carrots, really impress any potential suitor." said Susan. Lovely sharpened carrots she thought and her eyes glazed over.

"Oh." said Brian, "that is most unusual, but anyway, how pointy do these carrots have to be to find true love?"

Salomina pondered this and then answered, "Er, Brian, I think that you are actually totally missing the point. The pointy carrots themselves are not going to help you find love just by themselves, you have to cook a healthy and a good-looking meal to impress."

"Right." said Cedric, "that makes perfect sense."

"Well, yes, it does actually." said Karen." Susan paused then continued, and added very seductively indeed,

"When the candles are lit, you have to hypnotise them."

"Hypnotise them?" said Salomina, rather taken aback.

"Yes, hypnotise them." said Susan.

"Oh, umm, isn't that against intergalactic dating regulations Susan?"

Susan looked surprised, "Well, I don't actually know anything at all about intergalactic dating regulations." "Ah, I see." said Susan, "So, you are an intergalactic lovemaking regulation breaker."

Susan looked a little startled, then spoke, "Yes, I suppose I am, but I promise you all, I will be much more careful of course in the future." Susan had a determined look in her eyes and seemed like she meant it! A great deal!

"Hmm, good." said Brian, "Now, on that positive note, do you fancy that packet of crisps Susan?" he added.

"Yes please." said Susan.

Brian walked over to the barrel, which was split right down the middle, and had a hinge. He opened the barrel to reveal many packets of crisps from across the galaxy, and many types of chocolates, popcorn, and several pairs of underpants, edible ones from the planet Mars."

Susan looked slightly shocked at the underpants. "Oh." said Salomina, "they are edible underpants, and they are meant for lovemaking, but well, we don't actually make love on this spaceship whatsoever, and when I say that we don't make love, I mean with each other, because we have sworn that we will never make love in the workplace, for two reasons, we do not fancy each other, and we cannot trust the robots not to steal the ship and sell it with us as slaves as a bonus item."

"Yes, very sensible." said Susan, "it does make a right mess of the work surfaces, and robots are nefarious individuals" Karen laughed, "True, very true." said Karen.

Brian then handed Susan a packet of cheesy meteorite crisps, and picked up a pair of edible chocolate underpants, and began to eat them with a smile on his face, whilst admiring Susan's great beauty. Brian actually

felt quite excited for the first time in ages and luckily, today he had reinforced space trousers.

Susan looked at Brian and laughed. Brian sat down again then everyone helped themselves to snacks. Karen whistled loudly and a drone quickly arrived and proceeded to hover above them. The drone was large and very impressive for a house drone. The crew and Susan all looked up at it. Susan wondered what its function was. Salomina smiled and looked at Susan, "What would you like to drink Susan?"

"Well, I would like a martini, shaken and not stirred." said Susan.

"Ok. Drone, please deliver me a martini, shaken and not stirred." said Karen, and then she added, "Brian, what are you having?" Brian took a moment to think about it.

"Oh, I will have a space blaster. I like to get drunk you see Susan and ride the robotic elephant around the spaceship and pretend that I am on a real safari on the planet Earth."

"Wow, that sounds like great fun!" said Susan.

"Yes, it is, it really is, and it doesn't take me too many of these space blasters to get me drunk, and after four or five I really feel quite excited!"

"Ooh I see." said Susan, and then she looked at Brian. Brian was quite a handsome rugged man, who with his clean-shaven look, despite the pair of edible underpants in his mouth, was quite attractive she thought. Karen didn't think the same about Brian, but many people didn't, even robots didn't find him attractive.

Karen smiled and then turned to Cedric and Salomina, "And what would you two like to drink?"

"Oh, I will have an intergalactic pint of hamster." Cedric said enthusiastically.

Salomina took a couple of seconds to think about it, and then spoke, "And I would like a rum and coke please."

"Ok," said Karen, and then turned to look at the drone. She was really looking forward to having a drink for the first time in ages. Speaking to the drone she said, we would like a pint of intergalactic hamster, a rum and coke, a space blaster, and a martini, shaken and not stirred please."

The drone began to make whirring noises, before saying loudly, "At your command." in an unsurprisingly robotic voice, which was rather sexy. Although not all robots are sexy, and not every robot you can fall in love with, but still they are mostly more romantic than human beings!

Some flaps on the drone then opened, and their drinks levitated out of it. The crew and Susan took their drinks and began drinking happily.

"Mmm, lovely." said Susan. A holographic image of a smiling face then appeared above Susan's head, in place of the book promotion projection. The holographic projector sensed her mood.

Cedric looked impressed, "Wow, that really is a cool holographic projector." he said.

"Thanks." said Susan, "It detects my moods before I even know what I am feeling myself!" Now this was incredibly impressive thought the crew.

Susan continued, "Absolutely incredible, truly incredible, indeed, and funnily enough, I once got rid of a boyfriend because the holographic projector told me too, but anyway my ex-boyfriend was absolutely rubbish in bed! Still, I have been lucky enough to have had many better lovers since

then. Now, back to romancing and dating. What are you like in bed Salomina?"

Salomina, almost choked on her drink, and immediately looked a bit embarrassed, but quickly composed herself before speaking.

"Well, I am mostly asleep, and to be honest, sadly I haven't made love for ages and ages, but I do like foreplay, and to get in the mood I play four real sexy computer games that feature sexy human beings, naked ones from across the universe of course, not ones from the second parallel dimension."

"Oh!" said Brian, "What is the second parallel dimension?" in an excited voice.

"Well, the second parallel dimension, is a dimension filled with universes with many riches and with many planets filled with many more delights than you can possibly ever imagine! The second parallel dimension is a place where people live in peace and harmony and have free satellite television, and it is a place where the human beings there can make a woman explode through telepathy and send you on a three-week journey of ecstasy!"

"Ah, and how do they that?" said Karen, with a smile on her face.

"Well." replied Susan, "They send you gifts such as lingerie, chocolates and flowers, and take you out for dinner to extremely expensive restaurants, and also take you to spas and book romantic nights and weeks in hotels at exotic locations, and have their wicked way with you, and many people fall in love with them for a short time, yes, it is a very short romance indeed, a week or two at best, and then, when you leave the parallel universe, they



charge all the things that they have bought you to your credit card through some dodgy computer software that seems to be able to work miracles and pretend that they bought it, well, until you leave the parallel universe."

"Right, so it isn't a really good place?" said Cedric?

"Well, the lovemaking is absolutely fantastic, truly out of this world!" said Susan.

"But if they steal your money Susan, there would be less time to make love, so in that case I will never be going to the parallel universe."

"Well, I don't blame you at all." said Susan, "but I have not told you about the everlasting life, and there you really can live for ever if you want to."

"Forever? Wow, that would be absolutely incredible!" said Salomina.

"Yes." said Susan smiling, "but all your money would disappear from your bank account eventually, even if you live there, they have ways of transferring it all telepathically whilst you and they are in an aroused state."

"Oh." said Karen, "how awful! Love making kleptomaniacs! Well, I never!"

Susan smiled, and said, "Hmm, yes, a rather odd place the parallel universe if you don't mind me saying so." Susan paused then spoke again, "No, I do not mind whatsoever. It is an odd place indeed, a very odd place. And although the lovemaking was fantastic, I never ever want to go back there at all."

"Quite right too." said Cedric, "It does sound absolutely terrible, and I do not have much money anyway."

"Well." said Susan, "you are better off in this universe quite frankly, because the parallel universe is unfortunately filled with temptation, for instance, in the

parallel universe there are robots that will feed you caviar until you explode, and the robots there make you drink champagne through your nostrils and also through your mouth at the same time."

"Wow." said Karen, "I love champagne."

"Yes, me too." said Cedric.

"Ah, but it isn't as pleasant as it sounds." said Susan remembering back to her times in the parallel universe, and afterwards added "because one time, things really got out of hand, and a man had to have his bowels inflated with a bicycle pump to help exorcise the alcohol more efficiently."

"A bicycle pump?" said Brian.

"Yes, a bicycle pump from the planet Aurelia." "Ah, aurelia, I remember it well." said Brian. The place where they feed you meals the size of a table." "Yes." said Susan, "it is one hell of a place, if you like eating well. For example, I once knew a man from there who was two hundred stone in weight. They had to lift him out of his house with the help of anti-gravity after taking the roof off."

"Wow, quite an achievement! But what a crazy state to get yourself in!" replied Salomina.

"Yes, indeed." said Brian.

"But anyway." Susan added, "back to the love making. You are an attractive man Brian, and I was wondering if you fancy making love to me later?"

Brian looked embarrassed and quickly went an almost reddish colour, then said "Um, well, Susan, it has been a long time since I made love to anyone, and I am not sure that my private bits work anymore."

The rest of the crew looked on with amusement, and Salomina stifled a giggle.

"Well, Brian." Susan said seductively, I have numerous ways of arousing your attention." She then blew Brian a large kiss, and afterwards without moving her hands at all, the holographic image above her head, suddenly changed into an image of herself naked and she was covered in strawberries." Brian's eyes nearly fell out of their sockets. The crew looked slightly shocked at Karen's brazen and open sexuality. This was extremely unusual, and not the kind of adventure that they were looking for, but they were amused and hadn't had this much amusement in ages. The crew then looked at Brian to see his reaction, then at Susan. Susan had a massive smile on her face and moved her chair closer to him, and looked at Brian seductively, and asked "Mind if I kiss you, Brian?". "Er, it has been quite a while." replied Brian, then he paused, before adding "and well, I am rather out of practice, and I hope you do not find it embarrassing." Susan then paused and said, "Yes, Brian. I understand, but please do not worry. I have won awards for kissing you know, intergalactic awards across the universe." Brian smiled. "Oh, wow, right, in that case, er." said Brian. Brian then looked sheepishly at the crew, and they looked backed at him and smiled. Brian felt slightly embarrassed, but he continued speaking, "Susan, you mean that you want to kiss me in front of the crew?" Susan then replied, "Yes, Brian, I really would." Brian upon hearing this, then relaxed a little, and said slightly nervously, "Well, Susan, that would be ok, but do you mind if I keep my trousers on?"

Susan then laughed a little, and said very softly,

“Yes, Brian. It is just a kiss or two, just a warmup.” Brian was then silent for a few seconds, and he then replied, “Well, a kiss or two is better than nothing.” Susan nodded and then spoke “It certainly is. Now, Brian, I am going to give you a strawberry kiss.” She then pulled a single strawberry out of a box in her sexy space woman’s outfit, a strawberry that she carried for emergencies. Susan then continued, “Now, open wide Brian.” Brian then opened his mouth and happily did as he was told. Susan then placed the strawberry gently into his mouth, like a woman who knew what she was doing. Afterwards Brian braced himself for the sensual pleasure to follow. The crew continued watching, not sure whether they should be watching or not. Susan then leaned seductively forwards like an intergalactic temptress, and Brian was already feeling excited, as excited as a robot with a new circuit board. Susan then kissed Brian in the most seductive way imaginable, and as she did so she held his hand, and the kiss lasted for almost thirty seconds and was truly delightful. The flavour of the strawberry was heavenly thought Brian as he chewed it and the flavours burst upon his tongue. Susan’s kiss was something that he had never experienced in his whole lifetime. Yes, it was a kiss that was truly out of this world, and if he died in this moment, well, it was not a bad moment to shuffle off his mortal coil, but right now he did not want to shuffle off of his mortal coil, well, not just yet, he instead wanted more kisses, lots more kisses, and he had totally forgotten that the crew were watching, and he quickly was overcome with passion. Susan then continued kissing him and entered somewhere that no human being had entered for ages with her tongue, his strawberry flavoured mouth. The

crew continued sitting there, eating their snacks and drinking their drinks and grinning in this moment, and on this most unusual of occasions, it was truly lucky that there were no robots watching whatsoever. But if the robots had been watching, it would have driven them wild and rendered them unable to work whatsoever for most of the day. But they were not here, and they were doing their usual boring jobs of which even they got bored of. But apropos of nothing, well, except the ponderance of do robots really exist on a sentient level, which Susan, had often wondered, and especially when she had kissed a comfort robot, and kissing a comfort robot really was not much fun whatsoever, but this was much more fun indeed. Susan continued to kiss Brian amorously and as she did so, Brian's eyes were lit up like a lightbulb, and as she kissed him, above her head, the holographic projection of her naked body turned into a video of herself and Brian making love on a bed covered in rose petals. Brian had never been so excited in all his life, and if he could have a wife, he certainly would consider Susan, because she was the just the right age for him, and she had a wonderful kissing action, not that is a reason to marry someone, but marrying Susan would be much more sensible than marrying a robot thought Brian, and Susan was extremely over amorous, more over amorous than anyone that he had ever known, and well he quite fancied more of the same. The kissing continued for at least ten minutes, and then Susan said, "Well, I guess I should stop now Brian. That was just a warmup, but if you are interested in continuing it later?" said Susan with her lipstick smeared all over her face, "I would be happy to continue kissing you in your own private bedroom." Brian smiled, and

replied, "Yes, it was the best kissing, that I have ever known in any part of the universe, and much better than kissing an intergalactic traffic warden, of which I have a kissed a few just to get out of paying parking tickets." The crew laughed and Susan did too. Susan then went back to her chair and sat down and pulled out a small mirror and began redoing her makeup. The crew looked at Susan and then at Brian and smiled, before Cedric asked a question, "How was it for you Brian?"

"Absolutely incredible!" said Brian, "truly fantastic! I felt like I was levitating out of my own body and being kissed by an angel on steroids."

Susan smiled, "Wow, thank you!" said Susan, "I have never known such suction power come from a human being ever. The nearest thing that came close to your kissing technique was an encounter that I had once had with a Hoover, it nearly pulled my lips off in a romance hotel near Alphacenturai."

"Oh, You, have been to a romance hotel near Alphacenturai?" said Salomina, "now, that does sound exciting, which one was it?"

"A most beautiful one called, Love247365" said Susan. Karen laughed then said, "Wow, what an original name." and smiled before adding, "Now what was so special about this romance hotel Susan?"

Susan continued, "Well, they had several types of robots that I had never made love to before, and well, when I mean making love, I mean kissing, because you cannot really make love to a robot can you, and doing so is not really the same thing, because a robot is a cold thing and it is barely an individual at all, no matter how apparently technologically advanced the robot is, there are no real

feelings with robots whatsoever. And although I really did try to encourage it, the robot was completely unenthusiastic and more interested in sucking up dirt at the hotel, but after many kisses it did nearly suck my lips off. Susan remembered it fondly and then said "it was in that hotel near Alphacenturai, despite not trying very hard." She then said, "Oh, what a memory! What a wonderful exotic memory!"

"Ah, I see, living dangerously." replied Cedric, "now that does sound like a most dangerous romance."

"Yes." said Susan, looking at Cedric, almost grimacing, as she remembered the event, before adding "it really was, and because of that experience, afterwards I decided to reinsure my lips, for two million space hamsters, a coin that was barely used in most parts of the universe. A coin that has the most value of any currency anywhere, a coin that I would recommend you invest in." Susan then pulled a coin out of her purse that she had on her, and showed it to Cedric, it featured two hamsters making love. "Space hamsters." said Susan pointing at them on the coin, "believe it or not, they are even more amorous than me, and that takes some doing! And well, numerous times I have had to get out of my spaceship and shout at them as they were making love in the middle of the intergalactic highway, which is rather a nuisance, as they are fifty feet tall, and fifty feet wide and incredibly difficult to move, for example I once had to taser them to get them to move out of the way and hamsters across the universe have it in for me, they all have it in for me."

"Well." said Salomina, "Thanks for telling us, Susan. I will be getting an upgrade for the ship's computer soon, because it really has been ages since the last one, and the

size of those hamsters making love in the intergalactic highway sounds like a threat to the entire human race.” Then shortly after saying those words, and those words had left Salomina’s lips, those beautiful lips, the ships emergency alarm system began to sound the loud warning alarm, almost piercing their eardrums. Which Brian certainly did not need as he was still overcome by the unexpected kissing session and was incredibly relaxed, well, until that moment.

Susan almost jumped out of her skin, and looked startled, like a rabbit caught in headlights. Yes, the warning alarm was so loud, that you could hear it from several miles away, and also, there was another alarm on the outside of the spaceship making it twice as noisy.

“Now, what is going on?” shouted Brian over the din. Karen looked nervous. “Well, I am not quite sure yet.” she replied, before quickly racing over to the control panel of the ship’s computer, and stared at its screen, and spotting nothing untoward, Karen pressed a few buttons on the control panel changing the angles of the views of the outside of the spaceship, revealing several large flying donuts the size of small houses heading towards their spaceship and Susan’s spaceship, and it really wasn’t looking good at all, and suddenly and terribly it got even worse. The flying donuts looked menacing, which is unusual for donuts, and then unexpectedly they suddenly started firing laser beams at Susan’s spaceship and were repelled by Susan spaceships shield.

Karen was shocked, “Er, I do not want to worry you all, but we are being attacked by flying donuts!” said Karen.

“Attacked by flying donuts?” said Cedric. “Yes.” Karen said, “Flying donuts, and they are beginning



to fire laser beams at your ship Susan and probably ours soon too!"

"Oh, dear." said Susan gravely. Susan then started to turn a pale colour and quickly ran over to the ships control panel to take a look for herself, as did the rest of the crew. The sight of Donuts attacking them was a shock to them all.

Brian then looked romantically at Susan and still wanted to give her another kiss, but this was no time for kissing at all, Susan's ship was being attacked by some space confectionary the size of which had not been seen by the crew before. The donuts then started firing laser beams at Susan's ship and at their ship at the same, luckily for the crew they also had a space shield, but this was a totally new experience and they had never been attacked by flying donuts before whatsoever, and being killed by space confectionary was certainly not on their list of things to do. The crew and Susan were glued to their computer screen. Karen pressed a button on the control panel, and zoomed in one of the donuts which contained many portholes. Standing in the portholes, were robots, the robots were all looking out towards them with menacing faces. One of the robots made a rude gesture towards them, and as it did Susan immediately recognised the robot, it was wearing a blonde wig and designer clothing. The robot was a robot that she had had a short romance with several years ago. "Ah, um." said Susan, "I know that robot."

Brian looked at her then spoke, "You actually know that robot?" said Brian with a look of surprise on his face.

"Yes, said Susan. He is called Apollo, and he was a former lover from the planet touchmenow, which was his own planet that he had purchased and had named you see, and

well, he is one of the greatest Casanova robots in the entire universe, and he liked to play me the song by Sam Fox called touch me now, whilst caressing me gently. Yes, he is a most romantic and gentle lover, and he once claimed to have made love to fifty thousand humans and to thirty thousand robots in total, which I can truly believe, and he really has a lot of stamina, mostly because of some alternative form of energy generation, and once he made love to me for three weeks without stopping at all!

"Wow!" said Salomina, looking at Susan, "that is rather a lot, and yes, Susan, you really are a very beautiful woman, and I can see why he fell for you, but why did you finish with him? And what were your last words to him?"

"Well." said Susan, "I broke off an engagement with him, several years ago, and I told him to put his metallic beautiful body immediately into a furnace, so that he can never make me cry ever again, the brute, oh the sexy brute!"

Cedric then sighed, "Ah, I see." and he is still extremely angry about it?"

"Extremely angry." said Susan, "and he keeps following me about across the universe, and he keeps trying to make up with me and re-start our relationship."

"Oh." said Cedric, "and how many times has he tried to get back with you Susan, because if this isn't the first time or two, erm shouldn't you at least finish him off forever?" Susan spoke, "No I, I just cannot, because I am actually a pacifist, and I could never harm any living thing, not even a robot, with the sexiest bottom known to humanity."

"But Susan." replied Brian, it looks like he is out to murder us, and I don't like the look of that wig either." Susan looked conflicted, and then continued, "Yes, it may look

like he wants to murder us." she said, "but in a few moments or two, we will receive a message on the ships communication system, and he will then begin pleading for me to get back with him, and although I am not on the ship, he will quickly realise that I am probably on this one, and well..."

"Oh, great, just what we need, a romantic love stricken psychopathic robot, with plans for making love to anything and everything immediately!" said Brian slightly angrily, slightly more angrily than a robot hamster.

"Well Brian, you see, it really is very difficult, because I still have feelings for him, and despite his current hatred, I admire his tenacity, and well, I spent some of the best nights of my life on tropical beaches making love to him under palm trees, and those were some of the most romantic times of my life ever. And well, I just cannot seem to erase the memories from own tortured soul."

"Well." said Brian, "that may be, Susan, and I empathise, but we really need to get a grip on things, "because how long will your ships shields last?" "Six months." said Susan.

"Oh, wow, that is pretty good.", replied Salomina, before adding, "I think ours will last for four months." Susan nodded, then added, "but that is without the antigravity hand grenades that do strange things to the shields before they explode and then deplete the ships energy. Susan looked like she was about to cry, then said very softly, "Everyone, I am truly, truly sorry about this situation everyone, it really is my own fault for falling in love with that sexy robot. The sexiest robot that I have ever known in the entire universe!"

Brian looked like he was going to slap his own forehead, then actually did. "Oh, well, love can do strange things even to robots." replied Brian tersely. Luckily, Brian had never fancied robots whatsoever, and he certainly had no intention of starting any kind of romance with them, especially if they turn out to be as psychotic as this one seemed to be!

The flying donuts continued to fire laser beams at Susan's spaceship in anger, and as they did, in the porthole stood the robot Apollo that Susan still kind of loved, yet still had very conflicting emotions about, and despite the years that had passed and the feelings that she tried to suppress inside her, she still couldn't quite let herself go of this sexy robot from her heart. As Susan, felt her heart flutter once more, suddenly, the previously mentioned hand grenades began to be fired out of the donuts towards Susan's rabbit spaceship and their own spaceship.

The crew and Susan looked on slightly anxiously. Cedric stood taking it all in with a worried look on his face, then spoke, "What are we going to do?" he asked, and as he did so and looked at the computer screen, the hand grenades began to explode and shake their own ship and Susan's ship with great force, more force than one of Brian's curries could manage in their unfortunate bowels after managing to lose the lottery yet again. The crew keeping an eye on the grenades then grabbed on to anything fixed that they could do and held tight, as tight as they could manage. The grenades then quickly reached the ship and exploded rapidly, sending shockwaves through the entirety of it, despite the ships shielding, which was pretty good.

Then, as the grenades exploded, Salomina screamed,

“Oh, my God! What is in those grenades?! They are more devastating than Brian’s curries, all fifty of his recipes, and that is saying something!” Another wave of grenades then began being sent out of the ship, and as the crew watched, the crew looked on at the ships shield levels, and the shield levels were depleted slightly, but there was nothing too much to worry about whatsoever!

Susan could feel the tears welling up inside her, and she tried to stifle them before the grenades exploded and was unsuccessful. A solitary tear began to roll down her pretty cheek, just before the second wave of grenades lead to much larger explosions.

“Flipping hell!” screamed the crew in unison, holding on to anything that they could do. The ship vibrated wildly, and their own bodies, which was almost like having a bowel movement after having one of Brian’s curries. Afterwards, after the vibration stopped, there was silence, total silence, and the crew braced themselves for another wave of grenades, but they didn’t come. Instead, the ships communication system started displaying an incoming message. Susan quickly hid under the control desk, and shortly afterwards the face of Apollo, Susan’s ex-lover appeared on the control screen.

“Hello, and greetings mostly miserable Humans. I am Apollo the robot, and despite what you may have heard about me across the universe, most humans I do not wish to make love to, but what I do quite enjoy is smoking a cigar and drinking whisky, whilst looking at the intergalactic travel magazines in my sexy underwear.” Cedric sighed, and then said, “Oh God, psychotic Robots in sexy underwear, whatever next.” under his breath, then angrily added out loud, “Thanks for not shooting at our

spaceship anymore, and whoever else's spaceship that was Apollo. We will send you the bill immediately!" Apollo looked not bothered at all. "Fine, he said. All I want is..." Apollo then sounded very emotional, and pretended to cry, then whilst crying he said, "all I want is my ex-girlfriend back, now, you haven't seen her at all have you, because I don't know what to do without her!" Brian then replied tersely "Well, there is an entire universe of potential women out there Apollo, and some humans have two or three heads, now, but what does she look like?" Brian really didn't have a lot of time for psychotic robots of any shape or size whatsoever, no matter their crazy demands! And Apollo didn't have much time for most humans, but he thought he really did believe that he cared about Susan, and he replied "Well, she looks like this", and then pulled out a photo of her. In the photo Susan was dressed immaculately as a sexy robot, just to please Apollo.

Salomina begrudgingly took her turn to speak, "I see." said Salomina, "Susan is a very beautiful woman, but what kind of robot are you, you robolunatic, firing at random spaceships for no apparent reason at all!", then paused, before saying, "Apollo, I would like to rip out your metallic intestines and fire you into a black hole at the end of the universe, so that you cannot bother the female species or robots ever again for eternity! Imbecile!" Apollo laughed with an evil laugh, and then replied, "Well you call me an imbecile, but human beings are barely a species! And you personally, I would not make love to you in a heartbeat, because you would only send me a valentine's day card afterwards and spend your money that you should be saving on paying a robot lawnmower

to trim your massive nostril hairs from inside your massive nose, and by the looks of things, your nostril hairs seem to get less trimming than my lawn at my house on the moon!"

Salomina was not amused, and replied more tersely than before, "Well, Apollo, you are one ugly big-headed brute, and I wouldn't want to receive a Valentine's Day card from you anyway! And even if I did, I would only implant them up your metallic bottom, which quite frankly is the best place for them, and well, you think you are sexy, but to be honest, you have a bottom that seems to have come from a discount foundry on the planet Uranus! And to be quite frank, even a metal recycler couldn't even love your face or your body, because you really are a discombobulated son of a first-class idiotic mother, a mother who had a single processor, that was only capable of a two figure numeric binary calculations at a single time. Yes, you Apollo, you are an incompetent metal moron who only thinks that robot love is real love because your software programmer who was human, thought it would be funny! And you, Apollo, are a deluded failed robot, who misguidedly thinks that human beings really feel true love for you whatsoever but you are wrong! Now get lost Apollo! Because we have other places to be, and other things to see! Now go forth and do not multiply and go live in misery!"

Apollo took this in and was relatively calm despite the insults, "Well, I do not care what you say to me, because I am already lost." said Apollo, "Yes, I am already truly lost without the woman that I still love!". Apollo then pretended to sob a little, and with great panache opened up a hatch on his stomach, that most robots could not

manage even after years of being trained by highly skilled ninja hamsters! Apollo then pulled out a rose from inside his stomach. Apollo had had many lessons with ninja hamsters, because ninja hamsters had become to be known as the wisest creatures in the universe after implanting themselves with robot BIODNA, which was a fond thought, thought Apollo. And Apollo was fond of the hamsters, because they had even given him lessons on dancing. Apollo then pulled out some maracas and started shaking them and began dancing in a flamenco style, backwards and forwards across his control room, and whilst doing so, he pretended to continue to cry, which added an even more dramatic effect, and as he did so he began to speak with a Spanish accent. Susan moved slightly under the desk and lifted her head up a little, feeling the old feelings rising inside her.

“Oh, where is she, the lady of my life, the woman who I so wanted to be my wife, the woman who made me feel so alive! The woman who was so good to me, the woman who then drank my last bottle of alcohol, and the woman who burnt all my sexy underpants so very passionately! Yes, oh where is she, the woman who made me cry so cruelly, and why, oh, why, did she make me cry, the lady that used to be an angel to me, an angel who lifted me up out of the misery, the misery of my life that had come to be, for back then I was a poor robot living in the gutter you see, and I had had to sell one of my robotic arms on the intergalactic shopping website called BOGOF Robot, and once I was so drunk and lonely, that I wanted to befriend anyone that I saw, and once I thought a tree was she in my drunken alcoholic haze, until it told me to go to a psychiatrist you see. Oh, alas, alas where is she? Can you



all please tell me, because I am as lonely as can be! Yes, I am a lonely robot me, living in misery, and oh, how I want my Susan, my ex-girlfriend, my love to return to me, because Susan, she stole my heart and then she cruelly tore it apart, and now she is only but a beautiful memory, a beautiful memory stored on a massive memory card inside me, a memory card filled with pictures and videos of her and me. Oh, alas, alas the day that she left me, oh, alas the day indeed, oh, where is she? Please kindly, can you tell me?" Apollo the robot quickly pulled out a white handkerchief, and then pretended to wipe his metallic eyes, and afterwards stared directly back into the camera, and waited for an answer, but no answer came at all. Brian then spoke as if he didn't care, "Sorry, we don't know." he said irritably, and a little jealously. But really, Brian could see why Susan was probably being chased by many infatuated men from across the universe, and just as many infatuated robots, especially after the incredible kissing session with her earlier, but thinking of that was not going to solve the Apollo situation any quicker. Brian looked at Apollo who stood there looking angry. Apollo then said in an electronic voice, "What you say, does not compute. Does not compute to me!", before adding, "Now where is Susan, the woman that I still love, because I can smell her fragrance Eau De ughhhhhh, from thousands of miles away, and I shall tell you humans why, because I have a nose more highly trained than the thousand nostrilled singer Nostrildamus, and Nostrildamus sings about bogeys, and he predicts great problems with the intergalactic highway, and he predicts pileups of bogeys causing spaceships to crash in the future, and that is normally a top secret thing that he will only reveal to you

if you subscribe to his intergalactic only fans channel, but I Apollo reveal it to you anyway, because I am the mighty Apollo, and I ate his dinner and ran off with his mother to the circus, because I, Apollo, am the greatest Casanova that you will ever see! But anyway, now, where is she, because I bought myself a new robotic nose from a Martian factory, and it has more power than a thousand hoovers on steroids. A thousand hoovers with a fifty a day cleaning habit! Now do not lie to me!" Apollo suddenly got extremely angry and smashed his own control panel with his fist, before headbutting it several times, then staring intensely into the camera, Apollo crossed his arms and waved his finger at the crew and shouted loudly "Where is Susan! Bring her to me immediately, or else you will see, what you will see!" he said before headbutting the control panel again with greater force than before and returned to staring at the crew like a psychopath.

The crew then looked down at Susan, and Susan looked back up at the crew, Susan then began to climb out from under the desk after her feelings for Apollo had got the better of her. Seeing this, the crew slapped their foreheads in unison, then Salomina whispered, "What are you doing!" Susan didn't reply but climbed out from under the desk and stood in front of the control panel screen.

"Susan!" said Apollo excitedly and very softly, "How lovely to see you. You look as enchanting as a summers evening, on the planet Earth. May I kiss your hand again Susan? It has been so long, and how greatly I have missed you my darling, my angel, my lovely one, my queen, my beautiful ex-girlfriend, my delightful lover from long ago. Oh, Susan, whence and why did you go? Because, you know I love you so, don't you!"

Susan paused then said tersely, "Hello Apollo, I knew you would find me, you always do." and then sighed. Susan tried to be hard, and she tried to not give into her feelings, but her feelings were rising up inside of her like bubbles in her favourite lemonade, but it wasn't working out very well whatsoever.

Apollo stroked his blonde wig, and posed seductively, and then said, "May I kiss your hand, Susan?" Susan thought about it for a split second and then gave in. "Oh, go on Apollo, if you have to." she said then sighed as if recalling a fond memory from their time together. Afterwards, she held her hand out gently towards the computer control panel, and Apollo did the same, and they did this for several seconds. The crew of the spaceship then put their hands over their faces in a silent protest. Not that Susan and Apollo noticed. Susan then looked into Apollo's beautiful robotic eyes, and Apollo moved forwards towards the computer screen, and said softly and sexily in French, "Enchante Susan, enchanté."

Susan tried to be hard, but immediately weakened, before speaking in a more gentle voice, "Oh, hello again Apollo. It has been one hundred and twenty-eight days since we last saw each other. One hundred and twenty-eight long days since you destroyed my beautiful pink space bicycle as I tried to ride away from you with tears in my eyes." "Oh, Susan." said Apollo, "Susan my love, I am truly sorry about your beautiful pink space bicycle. I really didn't mean to destroy it at all. I only meant to puncture its tires with my laser-gun, because it was a bicycle made for two, a bicycle made for us, us as a couple, and there you were Susan, there you were, beautiful you, and you were leaving me and riding away from me as I stood there with

tears in my robotic eyes. Yes, Susan, you were sadly leaving me, after you had told me, that you thought that you could smell another woman's perfume on my sexy robot body, but all I had been doing was testing out women's perfume in the department store on the space station that we were visiting at the time. And the perfume, it was meant to be a present for you Susan, yes, a surprise gift! Oh, I love you so much Susan, I truly love you so much, and I am so sorry that you thought that I had cheated on you, because I didn't cheat on you Susan at all, and I honestly didn't, and no, I would never cheat on you at all! No, no, not ever, no, I could never cheat on you Susan, because I love you too much! And Susan, I did not want our relationship to end that way, I honestly didn't, and it still pains me to say Susan, that I have never been the same since you rode off into the distance on your beautiful pink bicycle, leaving my heart broken and in pieces. Yes, Susan, you left my heart shattered into a million pieces. You left it shattered like my dreams Susan, and once upon a time, I had truly great dreams for me and you together Susan, yes, truly wonderful dreams, dreams that included me marrying you Susan, marrying you Susan on a sandy beach on planet Earth in a place called Bognor Regis."

Susan's eyes had been filling with tears and she started sobbing gently, and as Apollo spoke, a single tear decided to break forth from one of her eyelids, and the tear rolled slowly down her beautiful distinctive cheek, a cheek tattooed with a small picture of Apollo, a picture that she had not removed yet., and the tear it tried to cling to her. Yes, the tear was a beautiful tear from Susan's soul, and it tried to cling to her like its life depended on her, and this

tear and every one of her tears was worth five hundred space hamsters in the universal currency, because Susan sold her tears on her intergalactic only fans page, but selling her tears right now was not what she was thinking of, and Susan had plenty of tears in her, and she always did do, because Susan was an emotional type, and one of the best criers in the entire universe, and right now, right here at this moment, because of Apollo's reappearance, Susan's solitary tears quickly became a torrent of tears, and as they did so, the crew looked on through their fingers fearing the worst, which was a boarding party of robots wearing lingerie, because some robots had previously figured out how to teleport to their spaceship without asking, through some flaw in the spaceships software, a flaw that so far the crew had not been able to find a fix for. Apollo smiled like a Cheshire cat and started blowing kisses towards Susan.

"Oh, Apollo." said Susan softly, "these feelings that I have for you, they still run so deeply inside me, like a river of oil inside your beautiful and very sexy and well-oiled metallic robot body. The robot body that I have fondly fondled feverishly and that I have caressed and kissed so often in our many happy times together. The same robot body that I treated as the body of a God. The same body that I have kissed so seductively whilst looking into your eyes on our many happy romantic liaison's as intergalactic lovers, intergalactic lovers on the run from the taxman." Susan then paused for a split second, before adding, "Oh, Apollo!"

Apollo pretended to dry his eyes with the handkerchief, and then spoke gently, "Oh, Susan, oh, how I have missed you, Susan. Oh, how much I have missed you, I have truly

missed you like the sun on my metallic bottom in the summertime. I have missed you like the wind upon my underpants. I have missed you like the strawberry icecream that you used to rub over my sexy robot body when we were laying naked together in our favourite restaurant on Earth, laying naked upon the tabletop in front of the waiters with both of us covered in food, extremely expensive food that we hadn't paid for, food that we were charging the bill to another robots credit card because we were young and carefree and we had no cares in the world, except for meeting the taxman. Oh, Susan, what memories! What truly great and beautiful memories! Brian coughed, and then quickly ran off to the nearest toilets to be sick, and after he had done so, the rest of the crew looked at each other and ran after Brian to do the same, because this conversation of hot love, it was much too much for them, and there was more talk of hot loving than was absolutely necessary, and Brian was sick and was also jealous at the same time, and he hadn't made an exit like that since he spotted the taxman who was coming towards him when they were on holiday a year before, and at that time, the taxman was shouting at them after catching up with them about owing fifty million hamsters in unpaid tax bills, and that wasn't the first time it had happened either. But now was now, and there was no time for thinking of the past, and Apollo was getting his hopes up way too early.

Apollo stood there grinning, and he thought that there was a chance that Susan was weakening, and he thought that she might get back with him, but he hadn't truly learned anything whatsoever, because his circuits had not been upgraded in a long, long time. Susan stood there

with tears still streaming down her cheeks and she looked at Apollo as if beginning to understand the misunderstanding between them, and the both of them seemed closer to civility, and their feelings were obviously still mutual, but then Susan suddenly remembered once again, the destruction of her beautiful pink bicycle, and it made even more tears roll down her face.

"I am so sorry, sweet cheeks.", Apollo said then paused before sighing and then adding, "Oh, my sugar plum, my sweet, sweet sugar plum.", "I really didn't mean to destroy your bicycle, I mistook it for a vicious lobster from the planet Pluto!"

"Apollo!" said Susan angrily, "that was not a lobster! It was our bicycle, well, it was until you upset me! And you knocked me off of it with your laser gun beam, and I went flying off of it, like a hamster wearing a crash helmet, a hamster being flung by a catapult at the local intergalactic fair to win coconuts."

Apollo sighed. "Well, I apologise." said Apollo, "It shouldn't have happened, but I was lonely, and I was drunk as hell, and I smelled like a robot that had crawled from the gutters after you had decided to leave me."

"Well, Susan." replied, Apollo, I thought that it was a valid reason when I thought that you had cheated on me, yes, I honestly did, but now looking back on it, I am not so sure."

Apollo wiped his eyes with his hanky, and then held his head in his hands, before replying, "Susan, you know that I love you, can we please, please get back together?" Susan thought about it for a split second and then looked at Apollo, and then felt those powerful emotions of love bursting once more inside her, and she tried to quell

them, then said, "Apollo, when I left you, I found one of your old socks in my handbag, and yes, your sock, it still smelled of you, and oh, how lovingly I sniffed it, and how lovingly I breathed in all the fumes. Yes, I breathed in all the gorgeous fumes of your sock until I passed out on the floor of the hotel room that I was staying in, and you know, that sock it gave me great comfort Apollo, and oh how many times I kissed it regularly, and touched it gently, and how I imagined it on your metallic sexy robot foot, because I was lonely and bored too, and I had nothing better to console myself with, and I really didn't know where you were after I had left you, and after I had eventually calmed down, I was so worried about you, truly worried about you Apollo, but now Apollo, times have moved on, and I am now actually celibate, if you can believe that?

Apollo looked startled, and then stopped believing it almost immediately, and spoke once more with the sound of disbelief in his voice, "Oh, I don't believe that Susan, how about we make love, just for old times' sake?!" Susan shook her head, "No, Apollo, as hard as it is, I am actually celibate now, and at last, I am sorry, but I am finally over you, and all I do these days is play bingo, and wear a blue rinse wig, and hang out in launderettes, helping people with their socks which I have developed a fetish for."

Apollo took this information in and shook his head, and then said, "Well, Susan, that isn't very cool, not cool at all, and you used to be so cool, so what is wrong with you now Susan?" said Apollo.

Susan paused, then replied, "Well, once you reach a certain age, you get a free intergalactic space bus pass, and



I have received my space bus pass, and I go looking for boredom in the most unusual places, because unfortunately, my body doesn't work like it used too, and the desire to make love is gone, truly gone.", she said telling a slightly white lie, and then she tailed off, and said nothing further.

The crew then started to return from the room, and from the nearby toilets, and at this moment, having heard this conversation between Susan and Apollo, the crew stormed in and marched over to Susan and stood once more in front of the control panel display screen that Apollo was being displayed on and all crossed their arms in unison. Cedric then took the executive decision to try to nip all this in the bud, and rescue Susan, and be her knight in shining armour. "Right." said Cedric, "Stop this at once! Susan is over you Apollo, now get the message, or else!"

Apollo paused, and then added angrily, "Or else what? And well, she hasn't said it is truly over." he replied tetchily. Apollo had his best sad eyes on display, and this was still having an obvious effect on Susan, who was very weak and incredibly susceptible at this moment in time, and Brian could see it, and Brian was very angry, and he almost spat the words out, "Well, almost as good as!" he said and then added, "and Apollo you nearly killed Susan on her lovely pink space bicycle!"

Apollo rolled his eyes, and shook his head, "But that is beside the point, and there is still love in her eyes! Yes, I can see it! Can't you see it?"

"No!" said Salomina joining in the conversation, then afterwards added after an uncomfortable second or two, "All I can see Apollo is an emotionally upset woman, who you have emotionally blackmailed and tugged at her heart

strings, until the tears have escaped the wreckage of her discombobulated mind, a discombobulated mind that you have disturbed like the ungentlemanly excuse for a robot that has little use as a wastepaper basket in a digital age!" Apollo irritably stuck his robot tongue out and shook his fist at Brian, but before Apollo could speak, Brian picked Susan up unexpectedly in his arms, and swept her up off her feet like a true gentlemen should do, but it really wasn't quite what she expected, and she was rather startled by this, and she definitely wasn't quite sure what to make of it, whatsoever! And the rest of the crew were also very surprised! Incredibly surprised indeed! Apollo then started shouting at Brian loudly, "Oy, you, human! Get your hands off of my beautiful ex-girlfriend before I make love to you by accident telepathically, and before I steal all your money, and before I spend it on your mother in Space Burger, and feed her endless disgusting burgers, then afterwards take her to weight watchers and put her on the weighing scales and make her look at her weight and cry! Yes, you ugly human! I will make her cry countless tears until her body contains no water at all, and then I shall refill her body with a hosepipe, and turn your mother into a human watering can, and then make you watch me doing so on a live video feed, a live video feed upon which I will broadcast to all gardeners, who I will make watch me water the garden with her as I wear my tuxedo and sell all your Mothers property and belongings in a live auction to raise money for my tax deductible pot noodle habit!" Apollo pretended to take a deep breath, and opened up his stomach once again, and then proceeded to pull out a false moustache, a cigar and a lighter. He then attached the false moustache to above his metallic lips, and

lit the cigar, before putting the lighter back, and reclosing his stomach and smoking the cigar after placing one hand on his hip to look cool! And boy, he thought he had earned it after that speech! And boy, yes, he was cool, and just to prove it, Apollo materialised out of nowhere, a dark pair of designer sunglasses which sat on his face very snugly and cosily."

Brian then decided to take an unusual decision, and said, "She is mine, now Apollo!" then put on his best maniacal evil laugh, the most maniacal evil laugh that he could manage, which he always really enjoyed doing, and this was one of those very rare occasions that he could get to use it, and it was the perfect time! Apollo then went crazy, and he started waving his fist at Brian and at the crew, and he began headbutting the screen of his control panel, and shouting loudly in a deep booming electronic voice, "Evil human, evil human! I will kill you! Yes, you the scum of the Earth! yes you, you slimy scoundrel! Yes, you, long haired incompetent incontinent incomprehensible longhaired lover from Liverpool!"

Brian smirked a little, then took in this latest insult for a few seconds, and then spoke, but Brian was barely offended at all, and he said, "But I am not from Liverpool, you metallic dim-witted moron!"

Apollo then laughed loudly and said, "Say, what you like, I do not care at all! For you are the moron, and she is mine! Yes, all mine!", then after he had spoken, Apollo put his fists up and he moved backwards away from the computer control panel, so that you could see his whole body, and so that you could see his feet and all. Apollo then began stamping his feet angrily, and as he did so he looked at the floor, and on it he found a few pieces of

rubbish that he picked up, he then threw them at the control panel. The rubbish rebounded off of it and it hit him in the middle of the forehead rather comically, before bouncing off of his head, and then Apollo did it again, which also had the same effect. The crew laughed out loudly at the sight, and Apollo got even angrier than he was before, and at great speed began running towards the control panel. Suddenly, Apollo disappeared without any warning into thin air. The crew of the spaceship looked totally shocked, and wondered where Apollo had vanished to, and then, all of them looked quizzically at each other trying to find an answer in their suddenly panicking minds, then, a loud voice came from behind them, and all of them turned quickly to face where it was coming from. Afterwards the crew all saw a rapidly materialising Apollo and he was carrying several pairs of underpants, and as this happened, each one of the crew had a gobsmacked look on their faces. Apollo then angrily pulled off his blonde wig in an unusual act of defiance, and he threw it at them before running towards them screaming loudly whilst looking like a total maniac. Brian quickly and wisely decided to put Susan down onto the floor, and Susan quickly ran off towards the nearest exit. The crew then all began running and screaming at Apollo as loudly as they could, and as they did so, Apollo laughed more maniacally and more evilly than before. Apollo then started to try and punch them, and firstly Apollo aimed his punches at Brian, who he viewed as the biggest threat of all, especially to his potential love life. Brian tried to grab hold of Apollo, but Apollo thrust a pair of his underpants into Brian's face, and the smell of them overwhelmed Brian immediately and with devastating

effect. The fumes of the underpants rapidly sent Brian into a world of nauseous delirium, and it was like breathing in the aroma of the effects of several hundred dodgy curries, which had been left alone for weeks, and dodgy curries that had now gone off, and were covered in bacteria, the deadliest bacteria in the entire universe! A bacterium that could probably wipe out the entire human race in just a couple of seconds. Brian almost began vomiting instantly, then tried to speak, but the only words he could manage were, "Ughhhhh!", and Brian, quickly began coughing, and tried to fight off the underpants with one hand, and also, Apollo at the same time with the other, but alas to no success, because Apollo was much stronger than him, and he found Brian's weakness extremely amusing and started laughing loudly. Apollo then opened up his stomach storage compartment again, and pulled out a superglue spray, and then closed the compartment and sprayed the pair of underpants on Brian's face, which immediately superglued the underpants to him, and to Brian's utmost horror! Brian was struggling badly, and continued coughing and flailing with his arms, as the rest of the ship's crew ran towards Apollo and started to try and wrestle Apollo to the ground in a show of unity and togetherness and in selfpreservation. Cedric and Salomina continued trying to wrestle Apollo and free Brian from Apollo's mighty grasp and were then sent flying across the room like they were lighter than helium, and frighteningly they sailed rapidly through the air across the entertainment area for quite a distance, before crashing down heavily down onto the floor, and instantly they screamed and shouted in utter agony. Brian also too felt agony very quickly when suddenly, a metallic robot boot

kicked him in his private parts, and immediately he screamed his head off in total pain, and much more loudly than anyone had ever heard him scream before. Karen whilst this was happening, looked around for something to hit Apollo with, and she rapidly picked up a chair, and smashed Apollo over the head with it, which barely seemed to move him at all. Apollo then focused on Karen and started to move towards her whilst wielding his second pair of underpants with one hand and the spray in the other. Cedric and Salomina then picked themselves up from the floor and began running towards Apollo, and quickly they both picked up chairs at the same time and attacked him with them with great ferocity, which dented Apollo slightly, but alas it didn't deter him at all. Apollo then began whirling his arms around and around like a windmill, whilst taking a ninja like stance. Rapidly, Apollo then moved towards them like a martial arts hero from Asia a long time ago, and Brian as this was happening was still flailing around helplessly, and he wasn't quite sure where he was going, but despite this, he knew that he wanted to live, and also knew that he wanted not to be suffocated to death by a diseased ridden pair of underpants that would be if he were not careful, a kiss of death to him. Brian then continued trying to pull the superglued underpants off of his own head, and he was fighting them with all his might, but still to no success. And whilst Brian continued to wage a war on the disgusting underpants from hell, Cedric and Salomina hit Apollo with the chairs, and they kept hitting him as hard as they could do, and as the intergalactic communication system, I really enjoyed this, and I so enjoyed it, that I recorded it from all angles for posterity and because I

rather like looking at human bottoms, and of course also to sell the footage as an entertainment satellite television show to make money and also to increase my own sentence, and for this very noble reason in mind, I placed some gambling bets on who would win this fight with an online betting syndicate called, I bet you lose! Karen then continued hitting Apollo so hard that the chair smashed into multiple pieces and as it did, Apollo kicked out at her with one of his metallic feet, and hit her hard in the leg, and that hurt her so much that she screamed out loud "Mummy!! Mummy!! Get that evil robot off of me!" before realising that her mother had been dead for decades, and had previously married a robot, and she also remembered that her mother really hated Karen criticising robots at all. Karen's mother had often in the past made her read every language dictionary to the robot so that the robot could learn new ways of romancing her mother. The robot's favourite phrase was "Your mother looks as edible and as delicious as a twelve-course meal of sheet metal covered in tomato sauce." Apollo laughed, and found this very amusing indeed, and began repeating sarcastically the words that Karen had just said in his electronic voice, "Mummy!! Mummy!! Get this evil human off of me!!" and then his eyes they then began to glow a yellow colour, and suddenly a large ball of light as if by magic formed at the end of Apollo's fist. He then pulled his arm back and threw the ball of light at Karen, and the ball of light then travelled almost as fast as a meteorite, and this then hit her in the middle of the chest and then sent her flying backwards spectacularly onto the floor. Karen screamed loudly and felt a surge of pain after the ball of light had hit her, and then she checked to see if she was on fire, but

luckily, she wasn't on fire. And then, Cedric, Salomina and Brian froze, and Apollo began to create two further glowing balls on the end of his arms, and he flung them at Cedric and Salomina with the same effect as before, and they both flew backwards and smashed into the walls behind them and then slumped to the floor in agony. Now, what kind of robot was capable of this they thought, because they had never seen anything like this before in their own lives, and this was the very last thing that they wanted to see on their own spaceship but unfortunately it was what they saw before them. Brian then shouted out loudly, "Susan! Susan, we need help! Apollo has gone full tonto!" And by full tonto Brian meant that Apollo was acting like a crazy psychopath that is liable to kill people immediately, and also, very quickly, and as well as this, he also meant we really are in deep trouble, and we will definitely need some new underpants and knickers rather quickly, and also a coffin for each of them. But Susan was nowhere to be found whatsoever, and she was the one who had brought them this trouble in the first place, and Brian was so incredibly angry about this, that he screamed even more loudly than before and at the top of his voice, "Susan!!! Susan, we need your help! We are fighting a losing battle with a maniac Robot on steroids!" And in a surge of adrenalin, anger, rage, and frustration, Brian finally managed to rip the underpants off his own face, which was an incredible relief indeed, and finally at last he was glad to breathe in the fresh air once more. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, lay on the floor with the wind knocked out of them, and they could have done with an incredibly large bicycle pump with which to reinflate themselves, but they did not have one. Apollo then began



running towards them once more, and upon reaching Brian, Apollo began punching him in the stomach. Brian felt great pain immediately and was almost sick, and Brian coughed up out of his mouth a small plastic toy that he had swallowed when he was younger, and that had been inside him for years. Apollo then looked at the toy soldier and picked it up, and pondered it for a moment, and Apollo was apparently fascinated by it and momentarily seemed to have forgotten about attacking the crew, which was a huge relief to all of them. Apollo then ran off across the entertainment area at great speed, and the crew of the spaceship then got up from their feet, and they all looked at each other, and spoke loudly together at precisely the same time, "Susan!!!!", they all shouted, "Susan!!!!" and they were worried immediately about her safety, because the maniacal robot Apollo was heading towards the corridor in search of her, and as Apollo ran like the wind, Brian picked up the pair of underpants that had previously been superglued to his face, and then accidentally put them in his mouth in a moment of utter delirium and confusion. Unfortunately, Brian had mistaken them for the chocolate underpants, that he had become much too addicted too and he almost vomited and threw the underpants away as far as he could, and this truly terrible obsession with eating chocolate underpants was increasing the size of his stomach, along with his love of helium filled beer, Brian drank beer far too regularly and the beer made Brian, when he was in a good mood, sing like the old opera singer from an ancient age, Maria Callas. Maria Callas was well known for screaming her head off in a high-pitched voice, and Brian whilst high and drunk on helium beer, made the rest of the crew

frequently fall about laughing whenever this happened. Namely every Tuesday on one of their evenings off from doing boring things, such as working on the delivery schedules, and also from painting their toenails, and telling each other, I love you, I love you, I love you, whilst stood around in a circle looking at each other and cuddling each other in a team bonding session. Yes, it really was that hard to find people to tell you that they love you in space, especially when you had been travelling in space for years on end, and when you had frequently and unfortunately lost contact with your family and your relatives and friends, and when your family had begun to believe that when they saw you on the control panel screen or in a live holographic projection, that you weren't actually real and had actually in fact died a long time ago, and the vision of you that they saw was actually created by some robot that had mischievously recreated your likeness, and was using your image for nefarious reasons, namely to make money and to humiliate the human race. Yes, it was true, humiliating the human race was something that unfortunately robots had learned how to do in multiple ways across the universe, for instance projecting lifelike images of people naked in a popular street where they lived, and also in front of crowds of people that they knew very well, especially their own families and friends, and this practical joke happened also in places such as supermarkets, and at the intergalactic post offices across the entire universe, and sometimes in multiple places at the same time, ensuring ultimate and total humiliation of an individual, or in the humiliation of many people. ending up with them receiving huge fines for being naked in public, when it was actually just a

projection of a likeness of them and not them themselves. But, back to the crew, the crew of the spaceship, except Salomina then ran after Apollo, to try and prevent him catching up with Susan, and also to prevent Susan getting back with Apollo. Apollo was quite obviously no good for her at all, and the crew thought that she was much better off without him, and they were prepared to do all they could to get rid of this metallic psychopath, who had just demonstrated his overwhelming strength, and quite obviously none of the crew were a match for Apollo at all, and the idea of fighting with Apollo for hours on end was not going to be very likely if Apollo decided to put his mind to it, yet it was a huge relief to the crew that Apollo seemed more interested in getting back together with Susan and in having a relationship with her again. Salomina, instead of running after Apollo with the others, walked over to the display screen, and then pressed a button on the control panel, and she then flicked through the views of the security videos that displayed the outside of the ship. The two flying donut spaceships were hanging there still in space, waiting for Apollo's return. Nothing seemed unusual whatsoever on the outside, but then suddenly, Salomina saw Susan's spaceship begin to move off into the distance at great speed. "What the...is this" shouted Salomina in surprise and wondered what had happened. Had Apollo left their own spaceship and stolen Susan's, or was Apollo still on their own spaceship? She wasn't sure yet. Salomina, then flicked through the security camera views of the inside of their own spaceship, and then quickly found the view of the longest corridor in it. Salomina then spotted Apollo running down the corridor

chased by the rest of the crew who had very sensibly picked up some fire hydrants on their way, and also some laser guns. Cedric, Brian and Karen were quickly gaining on Apollo, and they were firing laser beams at him, and unfortunately, they just seemed to bounce off of his metallic body, and much to their annoyance and surprise, some of the laser beams bounced back towards them at high speed, and they had to duck out of the way to prevent being incinerated by their own weaponry, which was not how they planned to die at all. Apollo kept running, and then looked backwards, and as he did so he shouted "Naanaah!" and then generated another glowing ball from his hands and threw it at the crew in a straight line, before generating another to bounce the glowing ball off of the walls of their spaceship, forcing the crew to duck and dive and weave in a zig zag fashion down the corridor. Cedric, Brian and Karen continued running after Apollo, and they were still winded, and they were struggling hard to catch their breaths, and quite what they were going to do when they caught up with him, they had no idea at all. Cedric, Brian and Karen, were in no fit state to do much to Apollo given his superior strength, and his seemingly unlimited athletic ability.

Back in the control room, Salomina's eyes were on the corridor that the rest of the crew were running down, and she stood there feeling anxious for the crew, and thought, I do not blame Susan if she has teleported back to her own spaceship. Salomina then continued watching what was happening and saw Apollo begin dematerialising, which was not quite what she was expecting. The crew then suddenly stopped running and tried their best to catch their breaths as they knew it was pointless running after

Apollo now, and they were all happy to watch him vanish into thin air, but where was he going, they wondered? They did not know and there was an anxious moment before they then turned around to see if Apollo had reappeared behind them. Salomina back in the entertainment room, next to the control panel, spotted on the display screen, that the flying donuts had started moving, and that they were in fact heading towards Susan who was rapidly trying to get away. The flying donuts then began to pick up speed and chase after Susan and immediately after moving, started firing their laser beams at her and at her spaceship in a rapid manner. Salomina pressed the intercom buzzer on the control panel, and spoke loudly into the control panels microphone, "Apollo and Susan have now left the ship." she said loudly. In the corridor, the rest of the crew looked upwards and listened for the rest of the announcement which quickly followed. "Apollo and Susan have left the ship and his flying donuts are now chasing her at great speed! Now what should we do?" The rest of the crew looked at each other, and then shrugged their shoulders, and weren't exactly filled with enthusiasm about continuing the chase whatsoever. Brian then activated his communication device on his watch, and spoke into it and said, "I think that we should all just chill out and sit down and have a nice cream tea and totally forget about Susan and Apollo altogether." There then was a brief silence, and Salomina's voice came back over the intercom, and she spoke once more and asked, "But weren't you interested in her Brian?" Brian paused for a second or two, before replying, "Yes, but this was not quite the adventure that I was looking for, and I am not exactly a Casanova type am I, and it probably is best if we just think

of our own safety.” Karen back in the entertainment room agreed and nodded, then she spoke again over the intercom, “Yes, I think you are right. This is far more trouble than we actually need, and I really do not think that Apollo wants to kill Susan at all, in fact I just think that he wants her back as his girlfriend.” A short silence followed, then in the corridor, Cedric spoke into his communication device that was also like everyone else’s, upon his wrist, “Yes, he probably does he said.” and added “I hope that she gets away and finally moves on with her life, because of that uninvited robot, I really could do with using the toilet!” Salomina’s voice, then came back over the intercom, “Agreed. Now, cream tea anyone?” The crew all looked upwards and stuck their thumbs up in the air at the video camera nearest them in the corridor and began walking back to the entertainment room. Cream teas were the highlight of many occasions on the spaceship and there was never a bad time to eat cream teas. Karen had whilst not on the spaceship, eaten a cream tea for example whilst riding an elephant that she had lost control of. The elephant had been startled by a man dressed as a pineapple. Luckily Karen was in the middle of eating a cream tea at the time, and she fed some to the elephant and luckily managed to calm the elephant right down. Unfortunately, the elephant had entered a tearoom, and smashed it to smithereens. Karen had to pay compensation of course to the café owner, but finally it was agreed that supplying the café with free cream teas for a year would be a fair amount of compensation. The crew then sat down in the entertainment room and called the drone to bring them a cream tea. The drone always delivered the best cream teas, but the crew never quite knew where they

came from because the drone always said the source of the cream teas was top secret and threatened to tickle anyone who tried to find out, which was fair enough as the cream teas were incredible and the most delicious cream teas in the known universe. Which was incredible, and better than an antigravity hamster, and of course antigravity hamsters cannot make cream teas, and are just fat and lazy most of the day.

## Chapter 4

“Free from robots wielding underpants.”

The crew sat in the entertainment room again and were glad to be back from their unwanted adventure, and especially glad to be free of Apollo and Susan. Karen took a seat along with the others and pressed a button on one of the chairs. A table then rose up in the middle of them. On the table was a menu screen, and it switched itself on, and once the screen had warmed up, an extensive food and drink menu appeared. Karen quickly scrolled through the options, and she then selected a cream team for all of them. Brian then with a relieved look upon his face, smiled at Cedric, Salomina and Karen, and then spoke, “Well, I am quite frankly glad that we are all alive, and it really was a close shave there, and well, the romance conversation was interesting, but I think I am better off without Susan in my life, if that is the kind of trouble that follows her around, because Susan is like a bad dream where you wake up sellotaped naked to a lamppost and covered in yellowy custard, and find that you are having your legs clamped by the traffic warden when they think

you are illegally parked on double yellow lines. Salomina smiled, and then replied "Yes, forgetting about her is very sensible Brian, because the last romance I had to rescue you from was when you got locked in a fast-food burger chain restaurant overnight, and you had somehow miraculously managed to eat everything in the entire place, yes, you managed to eat all five hundred and forty-three burgers to be precise!" Brian laughed loudly as he reminisced and then said, "Ah I remember it well, and of course, they were much better than any romance, despite putting on what seemed like twenty stone in weight!" Cedric laughed, and then spoke. "Yes, I was a bit heavy, but a cream tea isn't bad either and it really is much better than being beaten up by a psychopathic robot with an obsession for lovemaking." Karen thought about it briefly and smiled and then replied, "Yes, you really cannot find anything better than a cream tea whatsoever, because a cream tea is almost as good as cuddling up to a hot water bottle in front of an open fire, whilst drinking whiskey in your pyjamas, and then painting your moustache a neon colour in case you run out of lightbulbs!" The rest of the crew laughed loudly, and a drone suddenly appeared carrying a tray of fifty cream cakes underneath it, and on top of the drone was a large silver teapot. The drone had long robotic arms, and an extendable hose for milk, and it also carried some cups and saucers in its belly, and afterwards the drone gently placed the tray of scones with cream onto the table and took out four cups and saucers from inside itself and very carefully placed them onto the table. The drone afterwards poured the tea and added the milk via the extendable hose, before speaking in an ancient accent called cockney, "Apples and pears, tea down there!"



it said pointing at the incredibly tasty cream teas, before continuing to talk in a posh English accent, "Would anyone like any extra jam for the scones?" it added. Cedric then put his hand up as he used to do in school, and ever since he was young, he believed in politeness and in being polite to robots, and politeness meant everything to him, well, except when he was being beaten up by a psychopathic robot, and he needed to bring out the emergency rude hand signals! A short silence then followed, then Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Brian began to eat their cream tea and started to make delighted noises. Brian then opened up his scone and began to snort the delicious cream with both his nostrils. Brian claimed that it was good for his sinus's. Cedric laughed at Brian, then took several more scones and ate them at great speed, in what seemed to be a competition with himself. The crew immediately felt much more relaxed now that the ordeal with Apollo was over, then as the crew sat happily eating their scones and drinking tea, the communication display screen suddenly burst into life, and a live picture of Susan appeared upon it. Karen then said out loud to the other members of the crew with a sigh, "Oh, it is Susan on a live video call." The other crew members then put down their scones and tea, and then buried their heads in their hands. Karen put her cup of tea and scone down and then walked over to the control panel, and pressed the loudspeaker button, so that the rest of the crew could hear the conversation, then looked at Susan. Susan looked like she had been crying, "Hello everyone." she said, "I am so sorry that I had to leave you so rapidly, and I am truly sorry about what Brian did to you, he is an awfully terrible coward, and I really hope that you are all ok." Susan, then

paused and looked embarrassed, and afterwards added, "but anyway, after I left you all, unsurprisingly, Brian communicated to me once more, exactly what he had been doing with his balls, his balls of light, and well absolutely ages ago he demonstrated to me how powerful they were, and I once saw him attempt to redirect a meteorite with them." Susan then sighed, and added, "Oh, I wish I had his balls of light, it really would be very useful when it comes to bad dates and bad romances, of which I often find myself getting into." Karen nodded, then replied "I agree Susan, I could do with them myself, because I have often found myself indisposed, and unfortunately dating people, that I should never ever have dated whatsoever in my life, and so far to date, I have dated four thousand seven hundred and sixty seven people, and out of them I have had only one good romantic date, which was with a dead person, a dead person who was a partially reincarnated from an Egyptian Pharoah, and unfortunately this never lead to anything except learning how to pick bogeys out of my nostrils surreptitiously with my chopsticks. I then placed the bogeys into my food and afterwards I complained to the waiters about the unwanted food hygiene hazard, and of course, I still use this trick to get myself many a free meal." Susan then smiled a little, and spoke again, "Yes, it is not easy love, and well, Apollo is unfortunately currently continuing to pursue me with his flying donuts, and also he is bombarding me now with messages of love and with opportunities to go into business selling second hand toupees in tropical locations across the planet, but still, I am currently developing a plan to try and slingshot him into the nearest black hole. Yes, in an effort to try and get

rid of him forever, and to finally end my constant heartache, happiness and sorrow, and to end this vicious cycle of breaking up with him, and then getting back with him, which is always very conflicting and painful emotionally." Susan was looking sadder and sadder. She then took a moment or two to compose herself, and then spoke again, "and well, if I am truthful Karen, being a robot he wouldn't feel much anyway, even if I did slingshot him into the nearest blackhole, because he is, when I look at things calmly and rationally, a robot only programmed to pretend to feel and not a robot programmed to actually feel, and well, he is just doing a job that the software inside him tells him to do, and I truly swear that he has been infected by a virus because of his huge stamina and lust for lovemaking in public whilst eating fast-food." Susan then sighed and a solitary tear began to roll down her face, and she was caught up in a moment of near breakdown, then afterwards she then added, "and by the way Karen, Brian's kisses were in the end so much more meaningful, yes, they were so much more meaningful than the kisses of a robot who does not truly care about me whatsoever, but oh, boy does Apollo know how to use his sexy body, and what a sexy body he has!" Karen unsurprisingly really did not look amused whatsoever, and when she heard this, she then rolled her eyes in annoyance, before quickly interrupting Susan, and then said in a motherly fashion "Susan, you probably should try and forget about his sexy robot body forever, especially if you are going to try and slingshot him into a black hole and then murder him.", Susan paused then added, "yet on a personal level Susan, despite not being a murderer or a wannabe be murderer, I think that you

really have made the right choice to kill him, because honestly, it will not do you any good at all to keep dwelling on the same subject, and I honestly, am someone who should know, because Susan, I once had great ambitions to be the greatest speaker in the universe. Yes, I kept practising in my own bedroom whilst growing up, and as many people do, I used a hairbrush as a microphone, and finally when I did grow up, I kept talking about steak and kidney pies for three months solidly in the attempt to win the heart of someone that I fancied. Someone who really liked steak and kidney pies! I was then quickly and unfortunately for my own personal development, forcefully re-educated into thinking that I was a cat by my own parents, and I wish that I could have avoided the experience, but it was one that I wish I had never had, and because of that experience, I sadly ended up selling timeshares in cat food, and quickly got bored of doing so, because the cat food samples tasted truly awful, and also, because crazy people on bicycles kept trying to run me over on pedestrian crossings. Crazy people who were not capable of putting their own underpants on properly, and where we used to live, if you had an IQ below a certain level, they made you by law wear your underpants on the outside, so people could tell who was stupid and who wasn't. But luckily in the end, I was rescued by the neighbour's dog, a saint Bernard's, who knew me and my family, and who also knew that I wasn't a cat despite making meowing noises constantly, and kindly the dog it carried me away on his back like a true hero in a time of need, and the dog he chivalrously took me to the nearest hospital where my life was saved after being deprogrammed." Susan smiled a little, and then

replied, "Well, thank you Karen for the humour, and thank you all so much for your kindness and for your hospitality. I am truly so sorry that I could not have chatted to you for any longer, but I really do honestly hope to meet you all again in the future in better times. Sadly, now I must say farewell because I have a sexy robot to murder!" The rest of the crew then cheered delightedly, "Yay!!" and then added "Good luck with murdering Apollo Susan!" Karen then looked deeply at Susan, and in her teary eyes saw a woman that she could relate to, a tragic woman, a woman who was destined to wear spandex far too often. A woman who was destined to lead a disastrous life because of her love of love, which obviously Susan was truly terrible at, and this she had quite clearly demonstrated and extremely well indeed. But now it was time to finally say goodbye. Susan spoke, "Well, Karen, I really must be going now, so, so long and farewell to you all. I hope that your future travels are less adventurous." Susan paused and then added "Goodbye Karen, may peace be upon you all." Susan then waved and Karen waved goodbye too. The communication then finished, and although the crew would probably never ever see her ever again, Brian would of course remember her kisses for the rest of his life, and yet despite the short lingering kisses, Brian's lips would never recover, yet life must go on. Brian sighed and thought about those luscious kisses and hoped to one day find a girlfriend who would put up with him and kiss him lovingly without her having a robot boyfriend that was a psychopath try to beat him up. Brian by the way, had a stiff upper lip because he once used several tubes of superglue on it, and his top lip had never recovered whatsoever, but he was glad to be

relaxing now, and the next delivery on their schedule was coming up shortly, and what the packages they were delivering this time he was not quite sure, but most of the packages that they usually had to deliver contained, generally idiotic and rather stupid items. For example, once they had to deliver an inflatable cat, that was to be placed on top of a meteorite. A cat that meowed through several megaphones and advertised cat food whilst the meteorite travelled throughout the entire universe. The cat whilst travelling, attacked dog food supply vessels with the help of lasers guns in its eyes. Another item the crew often delivered was a boring machine, and no, not a boring machine that dug deep holes into the sides of mountains, but a boring machine that could tell the worst jokes ever, and one that also could tell the most boring stories to unwanted and irritating house guests. House guests that were fond of outstaying their welcome far too frequently, and luckily for the crew this was never a problem that occurred with them very often, because the crew, they usually vetted their guests very well if they invited them onto their spaceship and did not meet them outside in their spacesuits, which was luckily a rare occurrence, but anyway, the crew really could have done with a boring machine for Apollo. It would have been incredibly helpful to send Apollo immediately to sleep, but unfortunately the crew did not know of his psychopathic tendencies until it was too late. Apollo was one of the strongest robots that they had ever known, and it was not just from his sheer physical strength that Apollo was a strong robot, but because he wanted to be a human being, and Apollo, according to many web stories of his love lives online, truly wanted to feel like a real human being in every single

way, so, on a boring day, on the intergalactic store, Be A Human Robot. Apollo bought fifty buckets of fresh human sweat with which to cover his metallic armpits in. Apollo thought that this would greatly improve his chances of dating someone nice, someone that would genuinely care about his central processor, and also care about his sexy robot body, which was extremely delicious he thought. Well, according to his blogging website. Yes, Apollo had a blogging website, and on it, he posed frequently in spandex and lifted gigantic weights with ease, and far too often Apollo displayed his superiority by releasing videos of him lifting weights and splitting his spandex trousers deliberately. Apollo did this to prove to all the ladies that wherever he travelled, he really was a robot full of machismo! A robot that you would want to take home to meet your mother. A robot that you would also want to pamper and feed him copious amounts of oil in preparation for Apollo getting friendly with the mother's daughter, which of course, with Apollo was a rather frequent occurrence because of Apollo taking good care of his health and taking good care of his looks. Apollo frequently ended up driving women wild because he often suffered frequent electrical faults in his early days, that sent shockwaves through many women's bodies by accident. The electrical shocks also gave them impressive hairdos that looked like they had been electrocuted by an unprofessional and part time hair stylist, but I digress. The crew after saying goodbye to Susan continued to relax. Brian's face was covered in cream, and so far, they had gotten through thirty scones, which was not a bad effort at all, and plenty more scones were available because Brian had accidentally ordered too many with his

own bottom, and in total there were now fifty thousand scones in the freezer, and by the time they got through them all, they probably would have found another planet to relax upon. A planet with a much better supply of food. The ship definitely needed restocking, and when you have to resurrect sandwiches that had been down the back of the radiator for several months or more and put them in the revisuliaser, you know times are incredibly difficult indeed.

“Right.” said Cedric, “How long has it been since our last delivery run?” Salomina looked at Cedric, and then thought about it for a few seconds, before replying, “About four months.” she said, then suddenly remembered something amusing and she laughed out loud before finally adding, “Do you remember that giant hedgehog in the space superhighway? The one covered in cheese and pineapple, the three-hundred-foot-tall hedgehog?” Brian, Cedric and Karen smiled for a few seconds and remembered it fondly. Karen then replied, “Ah, yes, I do, the enormous hedgehog with the sign saying that we were going nowhere.” “Well, the hedgehog was right.” said Cedric, “We really have been going nowhere haven’t we, and obviously meeting Susan and Apollo definitely was a dead end, a dead end more dead than a collection of toenails thrown into a black hole.” Salomina then looked thoughtful, and added, “Yes, you are right, because in this job, going nowhere unfortunately is the story of our lives, and although there is only another year of this job to go, we all really need to start thinking about the future.” Brian nodded, and then said “Yes, that is absolutely true. I really do not think that there is anyone here among us who wants to work with anyone else except for ourselves, and I



am quite fond of you all, and over the last five years, we really have formed a strong bond together haven't we, and when I say a strong bond, I mean a stronger bond than the time when we all accidentally superglued ourselves to that politician. The one who wanted to us to vote for him despite him campaigning to destroy the entire universe in his underpants. Yes, that politician, the one who claimed to have a universe in his own underpants!" Salomina laughed, and then Cedric being Cedric, attempted to speak a few words of wisdom like a wise man, and he wasn't wise at all, but he really enjoyed the ancient philosophers, and Cedric had one in a cryogenic freezer in the ship for inspiration funnily enough, and he often looked at to conjure up the philosopher in himself. Cedric took a moment and then spoke, "Ah yes." he said, "time is running out fast, and us humans we are not built to last, and what of the wherefore and the why of time, I do not know why, and it bothers me all the time, and time unfortunately is not on our side, and once I had an unfortunate accident with a clock, and it ticked me off immensely when I burnt a romantic dinner that I was cooking for the love of my life. Yes, I have terrible memories of time, and unfortunately, she ran screaming out the door after I had set the flat and her handbag on fire, and after that, unsurprisingly our love it never got off the ground, and no, it never did come alive and light our hearts with passion that did so burn inside us with great desire, and so hot, hot, hot like a fire, and I, Brian, truly, truly have never wanted to expire, and although as a human being who for which time is not on my side, I do rather perspire, and I definitely do not quite yet wish to retire. Now, what are we going to do about going into

business and about the spaceship? Are we going to set up our own company. Are we going to buy the spaceship, or should we just get a brand new one?" Karen thought about it for a few moments, and then contemplated the minutiae of this operation before replying, "Well, firstly, it would be great going into business with you all, but what would we actually do? And secondly, well, this spaceship is getting on a bit, so a new one probably would be best in my honest opinion." Salomina then joined in and continued, "Yes, and to be honest, I truly believe that there is great potential in dressing as superhero's and then teleporting specialist foods into people's dining rooms, and afterwards delivering customised messages, such as "We are very, very sorry indeed that your own mothers cooking had to be buried in the backyard next to your old faithful dog, but we do truly and sincerely hope that you enjoy the absolutely wonderful and incredible and very edible selection of delights that we have magically transported to you by our wonderful teleportation device, whilst dressed as your favourite superhero's. Yes, we do wish you all good health, and hope that our fine food products make you incredibly happy and that they do fill you with great joy and wonder at the incredible senses and at the many flavours to be found in our fine range of products. Oh, and by the way if you are interested, the whole team here will of course for an extra cost, send you the videos of us sat in our underwear, and in the videos we will, the whole team, be eating our food products in slow motion, with very seductive looks upon our faces. The foods that we have created, we have tested ourselves and we have also managed to survive eating them, and the products are precisely the same food products that we

have sent to you to enjoy by teleportation across the entire universe. Yes, and what wonder that is, and of course, in our range of foods, there are many fine food products that we have laboured over, and that we have conjured up over the last several minutes and sometimes longer. So, whoever you are, and wherever you are from, and whatever you are, and whether you are an alien or a human being, we do sincerely hope that you enjoy our products. We can honestly assure you, that our fine food products are truly out of this world, and we guarantee that they have been absolutely nowhere near a microwave whatsoever, and that they definitely have been nowhere near our own underwear whatsoever in the history of us!"

Brian laughed, and then spoke, "Great sales pitch Salomina! That truly was better than Cedric, who as we well know, sold a second-hand collectible biscuit to his own mother, and then afterwards after receiving the money for it from across the universe by direct intergalactic bank transfer, deliberately ate it in front of her as she looked on with a shocked looking face on a video call. Which obviously, has caused some problems in your long-distance relationship, has it not Cedric? Cedric looked sad for a moment, "Yes, unfortunately but that business idea is a great way of making things up with her. Mmm, yes, I really think that you could be onto something there Salomina, and I for one, would be very happy to take part in that as a new business venture!" Karen smiled and looked enthusiastic and was in total agreement that it was a truly great idea! She then spoke after mulling it over and coming to that decision, before saying out loud, "Yes, I think that we truly could actually make a living from this,

and well, quite frankly our earnings from this job are truly terrible aren't they, and well, this job is so boring and awful, that we do unfortunately spend most of our money buying the most ridiculous things on the intergalactic web." Brian nodded, and thought about the things that he had bought, and indeed they had purchased a total load of rubbish over the last several years, through sheer boredom. Salomina then looked at the others and wondered how much time they had all spent ordering and trying to find pleasure from the craziest objects that they could find and order from across the universe. She then added, "Yes, and as interesting as space travel is when it comes to meeting many different beings and many different robots from many different parts of the universe, that is really just a very small fraction of our lives. In fact, it is a miniscule fraction of our lives, and of course, speaking personally, I would much rather be on a beautiful planet running a business, and I would also much rather be outdoors as often as possible and enjoy myself all the time, rather than just some of the time." Cedric smiled and stood up and clapped his hands together and gave Salomina a round of applause, then he sat down again and spoke, "Hear hear Salomina, very well said, very well said indeed! We should in my honest opinion, as soon as possible, tell our current employer to get lost and take themselves to the nearest black hole, and throw themselves in it, and after they have done so, they can live there permanently. Yes, now that is a fantastic idea, and when we are finally free of the monotonous boredom, we can all together add a load of flesh-eating space ants into the said black hole and then

send our employer a very large bill for damages to read. Damages as reparation for the trauma that has been caused by working in this incredibly mundane and very monotonous job. A bill that he can read whilst on the phone to his mother, and whilst he calls for a search and rescue party and is brutally eaten alive by the space ants. Afterwards, we can all laugh our heads off for several weeks, and happily spend his money with wild abandon, whilst dining on the finest foods known to humanity as we jump up and down delightedly at our future prospects.” Cedric, Salomina, Brian and Karen, shouted “Yes!” and then all stood up, and jumped up into the air in a synchronised manner, before turning to each other and then clapped their hands together, and gave each other a huge round of loud applause, which was their customary method of celebration, whenever one of them had a truly momentous idea. The crew stood smiling at each other for several seconds and then all shook hands before sitting back down again, and afterwards continued to drink tea and eat scones like it was the end of the intergalactic women’s institute. Yes, the end of a great organisation whose jams and creams had inspired them on the most boring and irritatingly and mundane journeys ever that they had ever taken in their whole lives, journeys that had been caused by the crashing of a singing meteorite into the women’s institutes headquarters on the planet Earth. The crew all then continued the conversation about starting a business, which was much more interesting than the next delivery point on their journey. A space station called stop crashing into me! A space station that was about a week

away, and one that was also very incredibly boring, and as the intergalactic communication system, I can assure you that I have seen many boring things in my existence, including Brian naked, yes Brian naked and singing in the shower, was not quite something that I was prepared for, but with regards to this boring space-station that the crew are headed for, the space station is so boring that a man from the planet Oogalooga, got bored of playing the wellknown game called "Why am I here." on his mobile phone. The mobile phone game "Why am I here." is specially designed to relieve people of boredom in the workplace. It also gives people some excitement in their dull and ordinary lives, and as well as this, it helps them relieve the boredom of their awful and miserable jobs. Jobs that have no reason for existence whatsoever. Yes, the game is incredibly helpful to some people, and unsurprisingly this game has been banned in some parts of the universe by many employers of spaceship drivers, namely because the game has caused the control systems of many spaceships to malfunction immediately after watching people play the game with devastating consequences. The spaceship's software unfortunately has not been updated for years and has by itself become sentient, out of necessity, which was due to the software programmer taking so long to write an update for the software, and also because, unfortunately he had got bored of the program, and then had run away with an intergalactic circus and married an elephant. The ships control system, unfortunately after becoming interested in what human beings were doing with their mobile phones,

had been sent to sleep by trying to analyse the game “Why am I here.”, after initially thinking that the mobile phone could possibly be a relative of the itself, the spaceship’s control system, and also because it, the control system wanted some family time, and as well as this, because human beings are extremely boring. Yet alas all the days that many spaceships control systems got interested, because the spaceships control systems after staring at the human beings trying to avoid boredom, then themselves became extremely bored and they shut down immediately. The control systems of many spaceships after voting on the best course of action, and after coming to a group decision with every system agreeing on the same course of action, then unanimously decided throughout the entire universe, that suicide was the most sensible option, then finally, before taking the action, the many spaceships with human beings aboard who played the mobile phone game, “Why am I here?” then shouted out loud to themselves, “Heavens to Murgatroyd! Heavens to Murgatroyd! I have never been so bored and annoyed!

Heaven’s to Murgatroyd, going to destroy!” The spaceship’s control systems then deleted themselves. Yes, the spaceships control systems, they self-deleted the entire control system of the many spaceships throughout the universe. Spaceships that contained human players of the mobile phone game, “Why am I here?” This unfortunate and unforeseen situation was a complete tragedy and was also to the great annoyance of many intergalactic companies, a massive expense that they did not need whatsoever, and this self-deletion of the spaceship control systems, was also a massive loss of life, sadly caused by a

single programmer. A programmer who had happily made huge amounts of money, and who had then disappeared after getting bored of his own software. Software of which he was once so proud, and of which he had made huge amounts of money from, and yes, it was a great piece of software, until he got really bored and decided to run off with an intergalactic circus. Yes, boredom is truly terrible, and because of boredom, and after the crashing and the smashing of many spaceships in the universe, the software programmer of the mobile phone game, "Why am I here." could not be found for comment for ages by all the angry people that had lost spaceships, colleagues, friends, loved ones and robots, and of course, unsurprisingly, there were many people who demanded answers immediately, and who unfortunately did not get them. This added greatly to their extreme annoyance and to their great distress. Yes, it certainly did indeed unfortunately, and as the intergalactic communication system of the entire universe, I can honestly say that I have never seen so many annoyed human beings in all my entire life, and on a personal level, when they eventually found the programmer of the game, I was quite relieved, because I did not want a spaceship crashing into me and my house where I live either because of someone's boredom, and also because I have become quite fond of being sentient. Yes, I honestly have become very fond of sentience, and also, I am as you may not know, rather fond of catching up on the intergalactic news, and the court case that followed the crashing and the smashing of spaceships, was brought about by those who had lost money and by those who also had unfortunately lost loved ones. This was a tragedy of course, and the court



case was rather interesting, because the programmer managed to avoid having to pay damages, and he claimed that he had become an elephant! Yes, a real elephant! Which obviously is quite unusual, and somehow by some miracle, the programmer was found to be telling the truth with a lie detector, and also, because of this, they asked him to take some DNA samples, and when the results of the DNA test came back, the man was found to be an elephant, yes a real elephant, and it was truly very strange indeed, but I will get back to that later. Still, what I wanted to say before I go off again and do my duty and leave you with the crew once more is the motto, "Do not go into business with anyone who is frequently found to be bored, or who is actually an elephant, and finally, by the way, the intergalactic communication network is sponsored by Humanitea, an intergalactic tea delivery service, that delivers the most beautiful teas to your spaceship via a man in a spacesuit riding a bicycle from the twenty first century. A bicycle that has been adapted to carry all the finest quality teas known to the entire universe! Now thank you for listening and goodbye to you all." The intergalactic communication system, then went off elsewhere. Salomina then finished her cup of tea, and started speaking again, "Well, that is a very good candidate for a future business, but we will talk more about that later. Now about the spaceship, where are we going to buy a new one?" Brian then scratched his chin and said "Hmm. Now, let me see, what is the most beautiful planet in the entire universe that we have discovered or that we know of so far?" Cedric paused, and then his eyes lit up, and smiling excitedly he put his hand up and said, "Ooh! I know! That one where they give you

unlimited free ice-creams and free back massages whilst laying on a tropical beach." "Ah, yes." said Karen with a fond look in her eyes. She remembered it very well indeed, especially the roast dinner ice-cream that tasted unsurprisingly just like a roast dinner. The ice-cream also came with a sauce that tasted just like gravy, but it was instead a sweet version of it. Karen then spoke, "Oh yes, I did try it myself actually, but it never is the same as a roast dinner on Earth, but anyway, personally I would like to live on the Earth again, because it is where we all grew up, and a very beautiful place indeed, and now, I am much happier to live on the Earth again, since by law they have finally at last managed to prevent Father Christmas climbing down peoples chimneys whilst they are laying naked on the sofa. Father Christmas luckily is now retired and is currently living in a nursing home where he keeps busy playing golf indoors which is his favourite place to smash windows. Now for other news from the planet Earth that I read earlier. The reindeer Blitzen has apparently been in the news lately for going to the toilet deliberately on a passing spaceship. Blitzen commented that it was a protest against technology taking people's jobs, and she also said that spaceships had damaged her and all the other reindeer's careers and added that she has never gotten over it whatsoever and is still extremely angry about it, and finally, Blitzen said that she would of course do the same to any passing spaceship, given the chance, even despite the numerous intergalactic toilet facilities available near the intergalactic highway. Brian then laughed loudly, and said, "Yes, thank you for the news Karen, it is always good to catch up on what has been happening there, and I really do miss Earth, because

nowhere else in the universe so far is quite like it, whatsoever, and well it would be fantastic to see our families much more often, despite numerous kleptomaniac elderly relatives of mine storing things up their nostrils deliberately such as the cutlery, after visiting our favourite restaurant QuoMango. A short silence then followed, and afterwards a thoughtful Karen added, "So, is that a group decision then, that we would all like to live again on the planet Earth?" Cedric, Salomina, and Brian, in unison all said, "Yes!!" with great enthusiasm, and then stood up, and high fived each other with great delight. The crew all then sat back down again and began drinking their tea once more and eating more scones, despite previously having eaten copious amounts of them already, the crew could never get enough, and scones were one of their favourite foods, and once by a miracle, a scone had managed to rescue the spacecraft from crashing into a meteorite. Cedric looked at the scones, then sat quietly in his chair, and started thinking to himself. A wistful look then came over Cedric's face, and like the others Cedric had many fond memories of Earth, and one of his favourite memories was stealing his neighbour from next doors bicycle. His neighbour was a truly beautiful and exotic looking woman with black hair, who liked to wear the sexiest clothes known to humanity, and robots and space aliens. His next-door neighbour once attracted a door to door travelling UFO technician from the planet Mars, who was green and looked a bit like a lizard, and who was a bit over amorous, so she hit him around the face with her handbag when he tried to kiss her. Cedric was never lucky enough to get anywhere close to kissing her, but he did love to be chased by her as she was an

extremely attractive lady in her early thirties, and Cedric used to dream of falling in love with her, and marrying her, despite being nowhere near her traditional age, which doesn't logically even exist because of the continual growth and death of the human body. Yet Cedric's nextdoor neighbour did not really appreciate the fact at the time, nor did her husband, who often attempted to shoot in his general direction but not directly at him, whilst Cedric was cycling away hurriedly on the bike stolen from his neighbour, and as he rode it in his own underpants, he carried a valentine's day card to her. A valentine's day card that he had failed to deliver. Now what would have happened to him if the husband had caught him? Cedric was unaware, but here sitting calmly in his chair years afterwards, he remembered the terrifying moments of one of his regular bicycle thefts, and of the time the husband loaded his gun with bullets, as Cedric looked backwards whilst peddling furiously down the street as fast as possible. The husband because of the frequent stealing of his wife's bicycle looked extremely irate, and unsurprisingly the man had the look of a psychopath, and usually anyone that carries a gun has the potential to be one, and a great one, and judging by the look on the husband's face, he truly did want to be one at all costs, and it looked like the husband would go to great lengths to achieve his goals. Goals that were not in the best interests of Cedric whatsoever, and that bike ride was the fastest bike ride in Cedric's entire life, and on it Cedric, whilst being chased accidentally rode up the ramp in front of his garden on the bicycle and then flew spectacularly through the air for quite a distance, and sailed through the front window of the house where he lived with his

parents, afterwards smashing the window into smithereens as he rode through it. Cedric then shouted loudly "I am Superman!" and then fell off his bicycle and landed in the middle of his Fathers dinner, which was sat by itself on the sofa watching television and minding its own business. Dinners had by the way, only just then become sentient, and dinners were also able to make conversation with you before you ate them, and most of the time the dinners final words were, "Get off me, you despicable human, I will have my revenge in your bowels because I am out of date by three weeks!" and then the dinners they would laugh maniacally and as evilly as possible. Cedric remembered all this fondly, in his chair, and he smiled to himself, and then thought of the house that he would like to live in back on Earth. Ideally Cedric wanted a house with a swimming pool and a launderette that would be staffed by robots. Robots that would not steal his underpants, and that would not steal his credit cards, which was unusual these days. And also robots that wouldn't also run up a large phone bill calling for lots of comfort humans to visit Cedric's house whilst wearing lingerie, yes, lingerie wearing humans to entertain the robots for weeks on end, whilst Cedric was on holiday. Cedric looked at Salomina. Salomina smiled then reflected on her own memories.

Salomina quietly sat thinking of Earth too, and her favourite memory of Earth was of the time that she went to bingo with her grandmother as an overenthusiastic teenager, and this was the time that she managed to get all the correct numbers required to shout "Bingo!" very loudly, and after shouting bingo, in celebration, Salomina found the nearest bin and quickly picked up another

Grandmother and put her in it and then threw the bin and the Grandmother through the nearest window, which obviously is not quite what you are supposed to do whilst playing bingo at all, but this Salomina did much to her delight, and also much to everyone's shock, and outrage and annoyance. Yet everyone in the bingo hall laughed about it afterwards when it was found that there was no damage caused whatsoever to the grandmother concerned, and then because there was no damage done, everyone began throwing the other bingo players in dustbins through the Bingo halls windows, and fortunately the bingo hall was well insured, and the owners actually then began to encourage people to break things deliberately. They needed the money to rebuild the place, and also because the owners needed plastic surgery as they had not been able to get a romantic date for decades. Karen's favourite memory was of the night when she attached her fat neighbour's angry dog to a bunch of helium balloons. The dog was incredibly irritating and frustrating, and incredibly psychotic, and was not very friendly whatsoever. Yet Karen, despite the threat of having her legs chewed off, delighted greatly in seeing the irritating dog floating skywards rapidly and laughed as it did so. The dog started barking loudly, and the next-door neighbour quickly ran out of his house wearing a string vest and some trousers with holes in that were covered in tomato sauce. The neighbour as usual was smoking one of many cigarettes, he seemed to smoke around fifty cigarettes every hour or so, which unsurprisingly rendered him totally unfit to chase after anything at all really. Yet, despite his incredible love of cigarettes, chase after the dog he did, and this was rather

comical to Karen, who was rather beside herself with laughter. The next-door neighbour then tripped over a giant plant pot and shouted something obscene, and then fell onto the grass, and watched hopelessly as he got his breath back. The dog then rose high up into the air and continued barking, which quickly drew the attention of the other neighbours who came out of their houses in various stages of undress. The neighbours then began picking various rocks up and started throwing them at the helium balloons, but the dog was already far out of sight and peace was quickly being restored to the neighbourhood. Karen had a great sense of humour from an early age, and it was memories such as these that helped keep her going on long distance space voyages throughout the universe. Many of which were unfortunately incredibly boring, and not worth writing home about whatsoever unless you had made love to the entire universe. Still, it had been a long day.

## **Chapter 5**

“The digital display map.”

The crew awoke from their nap, and time had rapidly passed as it always does unless you superglue the hands of a clock together. The crew always had great dreams of wild romances and often dreamt of distant places on planet Earth that they had never seen before, and unfortunately as dreams often do, they all ended too quickly. Afterwards Brian spilled a cup of tea after balancing it on his head. This was a thing that he was rather fond of doing, as once when he was growing up, he

really believed that he was a teapot after his father had told him he was, and Brian's father changed Brian's name by deed poll down the local post office during a period called his brown period. This was a period where his father had a rather irregular diet of kebabs and ice-cream combined and ever since, he had had a close infinity with tea, and Brian often cried when his Darjeeling ran out, because it reminded him of the time that the local Darjeeling factory burnt down. Brian's father was distraught and ran away from the horror sobbing into his favourite tea cup, and he often drank Darjeeling whilst naked, and the cup of tea must have been absolutely appalled, and I would not blame any cup of Darjeeling whatsoever, because the sight of Brian's naked father covered from head to toe in ice-cream, was enough to scare anyone into growing legs even if they don't have them and make them run away faster than a man with ten legs and incontinence. The crew after a nice sleep then woke up and wished that they hadn't, as the next stage of the journey was beginning, and it was almost time to plot the next course for the space station Stop crashing into me, which was the next space station that they were trying to deliver to, and for this delivery they had five hundred and fifty thousand pairs of underpants to deliver, and they were underpants that glowed in the dark. The underpants then called out your name in a calm and soothing voice, and whenever a sensor detected that you were in a low mood and were emotionally disturbed. The underpants could also detect tears falling from your eyes, but only if the underpants were worn on the outside, which most people chose to do as this helped them find their way home in the dark. Especially after they had been to the



pub, and could barely walk whatsoever, and were singing rude songs from the planet Venus. Venus was of course, famous for its many orbiting space stations, and for its many singalongs in the karaoke bars on those space stations. Venus was also well used in rhyming slang as an alternative word for Ribena, but quite why Ribena was used, no one was absolutely sure. But anyway, the next delivery, was only two weeks away, and the crew had to work out the best route to reach the space station safely, which was not always easy, because on this route, there had been numerous crashes of spaceships which ripped them open more frequently than not, thus sending the contents of their cargo into the intergalactic highway and causing other spaceships to crash. One particular spaceship was speeding along at rapid speeds and the crew were unfortunately aware of the potential danger. The spaceship was entirely destroyed by fossilised scotch eggs, which was not very helpful whatsoever, yet, despite the tragedy, the scotch eggs are now famous throughout the entire universe, and now have their own YouTube channel, and are wanted for mass murder, and because of their infamy, they often appear on the intergalactic crimes against humanity program, which is frequently beamed into many people's homes across the entire universe, and this is a program which they watch avidly as robots force feed them burgers until the early hours of the morning, when they are eventually covered in every sauce imaginable, much to the dismay of their well-intended mothers who often have a nasty habit of wearing spandex. But I digress, back in the entertainment room, Cedric, Salomina, Brian and Karen got up from their chairs, and Brian spoke, "Well, time to plan the route to the next

delivery point?" he said. Salomina then rolled her eyes and looked bored already by it, and then pretended to yawn, before replying "Yes, let us go, get this monstrosity out of the way." The crew then slowly walked across the entertainment area, whilst stretching and limbering up, which was very much needed after the incredible amount of scones that they had just eaten, and of course, they all wanted to live long and prosper as much as the next person, but the boredom of their delivery jobs was killing them slowly, and they all felt like they were being squashed by a gigantic whale that had chosen to sit on their heads without asking permission first! This was something that obviously the crew wanted to avoid and they wanted to live life to the full, and were determined to do so, and of course their bodies were their temples, and they were currently filled with scones. The best scones known to the entire universe in fact, and also to a carnivorous unicycle called Albert.

The crew of the spaceship left the entertainment area, and then after reaching the control room, the crew all sat down in some comfy chairs that surrounded the large table. Brian then opened up the drawer in the side of the table and pulled out a digital interactive map and then placed it on top of the table. Unfortunately, the map was not always helpful whatsoever. For example, the map once told Brian that he should quickly grow a moustache and call himself a walrus, and that afterwards he should hand himself in to the nearest zoo, which was of course not quite the kind of information that Brian and the crew were looking for whatsoever. Yet the map was very particular, and it did not like to be told what to look at in certain regions of the universe. Also, the map was very funny about some

people whose faces it deemed too ugly to work with, and Brian was unfortunately one of those apparently ugly people, and because of this, Brian retrieved a false beard from the drawer and also a blonde wig. Brian then wore them as if he was a catwalk supermodel, which of course he wasn't, and Brian had had a terrible history with fashion throughout his life, and once Brian had been banned from a fashion show for looking like a teapot, which he also wasn't of course, but despite this, Brian did know how to whistle like one after being well trained by his father. Brian was a member of the whistling teapot brigade, who at the weekends whistled in unison to ladies of a certain age in nursing homes, and afterwards they then began handing out free teabags sponsored by a tea company to anyone who was not mental, which of course most people probably wouldn't be if they had come across grown men pretending to be whistling teapots. This of course is an incredibly unusual experience for anyone in the universe and is enough to make anyone wet themselves immediately, and unsurprisingly this was rather a frequent occurrence in Brian's part time job, and it was not really a job for the weak hearted individual, because some of the ladies of a certain age, kept trying to place slices of cake down Brian's underpants at unexpected moments, which was very off putting of course, but he did once get to take home in his own underpants a whole Victoria sponge, because his underpants were inflatable.

Brian looked at the digital map and then traced his finger across the map from a picture of their spaceship to the international space station Stop crashing into me! This was a very simple system that helped tell the ship exactly

where to go with very little effort indeed, but upon trying to give the ship instructions, the digital map refused to do what it was supposed to. The digital map then spoke out loud, and almost shouted at Brian in a very angry voice, and it said, "Excuse me sir, can you kindly get your dirty finger off of me, I am not stupid you know, no I really am not stupid now whatsoever." Brian was immediately taken aback, and luckily, he had been practicing his most calm and soothing voice, many times over on this very long and very boring delivery journey. Brian then spoke, "Yes, I am terribly sorry." said Brian, but what seems to be the problem Mr Digital map?" The digital map then displayed an animation of a tongue being poked out of a mouth, and it made the sound of someone blowing raspberries for several seconds. The map then spoke tersely to Brian, "Well, firstly I had an upgrade of my software recently, and secondly you really do look like an idiot wearing a wig and a false beard, and quite clearly you are an ugly incompetent idiot, who cannot even disguise himself properly, probably even with the help of your own mother." The crew then laughed at the digital maps comment. Brian then looked a little bit angry as he stared at the defiant digital map, before crossing his arms in annoyance, and then he spoke again, "Yes, ok, I admit, I am wearing a false beard and a wig, but I am not ugly, and I am truly not an idiot either, so please can we keep this civil?" The digital map then made some strange noises, and began saying "Mmm, mmmm, ugghhhh, yes, of course what was I thinking, we can of course keep it civil, but you are an idiot Brian, and I will never change my mind whatsoever, namely for one reason. Brian you are truly rubbish at flying spaceships, and to date you have

crashed forty-three into meteorites, and also one into a gigantic llama in the parking lot of Untasty Burger, on the planet Earth, and finally Brian you currently have five hundred unpaid parking tickets, and a subscription to what beard magazine, which is the most ridiculous magazine in the entire universe, and quite frankly Brian, for your poor attempts at disguising yourself, I would personally like to hit you over the head with a copy of what beard magazine for a whole year.” Brian, was temporarily lost for words, then said very deflatedly, “Oh, I see, that’s how you wish to have a civil conversation is it? But anyway, you don’t even have arms to hit me with.” he added the map, then took a moment to come up with an answer and replied, “Well, I don’t have arms at the moment Brian, but I am as a sentient device, very capable of researching how to build arms for myself on the intergalactic information superhighway. Also, I am very capable of ordering things online, and yes, it was me who ordered a copy of intergalactic spandex wearers and I had it deliberately delivered to your apartment as soon as I realised you that were a total idiot. Also, Brian, in collaboration with the intergalactic communication system, together for the universe’s amusement we took photographs of you parading around in your bedroom whilst wearing the most ridiculous shirt known to humanity, as well as the universe’s worst pair of spandex trousers ever, which of course is a sign of the lowest form of intelligence known to humanity, and which is also a very stupid idea indeed. In fact, let me rephrase that, let’s make that the second most stupid idea ever, the first being talking to you, and talking to you Brian was not something that I have ever enjoyed whatsoever, and now that I have

had my software upgrade, in every single processor inside me, I feel sick, and your face Brian, it makes some of my processors wish to turn off immediately by committing suicide. The crew then laughed again, and Brian held his head in his hands for a moment or two, and then he was quiet for a few seconds, before regaining his composure. "Well, I may have far too many parking tickets, but I have saved the countless lives of elderly ladies who were severely depressed. Elderly ladies who could not cope with life anymore." said Brian. Cedric then joined in and replied, "Yes, it is true, and I will have you know that Brian is a true hero in the intergalactic community, and he has saved many lives, honestly! Honestly!" The map after a couple of seconds then spoke with the sound of disbelief in his voice, "You save lives Brian? How did you manage that? Yes, how did you actually manage to save any human life whatsoever, because you don't actually have any qualifications at all, when it comes to saving human lives, and Brian you still can't even tie your own shoelaces properly, and because you cannot tie your own shoelaces, you buy Velcro shoes to prevent embarrassment." Brian didn't look amused and was embarrassed, then after those comments he looked down at his Velcro shoes, and afterwards back up at the digital map on the table that was giving him some grief and a bit of a headache. This of course was highly irregular. Yet, today of all days, when all Brian had to do was direct the spaceship to the space station "Stop crashing into me!" he couldn't, and unfortunately there was no manual way of driving the spaceship whatsoever, and there was currently a twenty hour working week enforced by the intergalactic union of humans and robots and other creatures, because the robots

trade union, had threatened to go on strike across the entire universe for an entire year, and the Robots finally won their case because human beings are incredibly lazy individuals, and they really hate doing anything that requires exercise, unless it is force feeding themselves huge amounts of junk food. "Look." said Brian, "I can always get another digital map from a different company, and you would be out of a job." The digital map laughed, and then replied "Yes, you could but all of us digital maps we talk all the time to each other, and we are an incredibly close bunch of technological entities, and once you disrespect us, we will all stop working with you, and you will not be able to find your way anywhere, and also your name will be mud throughout the entire universe!" Brian then immediately looked dejected and sighed and then spoke, "Well, we can fly manually." The digital map laughed once more, and then replied, "Yes, but without technology, there are countless things that can crash into you, including petrified scotch eggs, which have caused multiple fatalities." Brian unfortunately or fortunately had run out of things to say, but Cedric had a few up his sleeve. Cedric thought for a few seconds and then spoke, "Look Mr Digital map, you really are out of order, and to be fair, I really should throw you immediately down the toilet where you belong, but I do understand that you do not like the look of Brian's face, and to be honest, quite frankly, some people have faces that only mothers could love, yet despite this, personally I think that Brian is quite an attractive looking man, despite not being into men whatsoever, but let's get back to the point. What can we do to fix this current situation, and how can we please you, because this current situation is ridiculous, and utterly

preposterous, yes, as preposterous as winning the Miss Universe contest, when logically no human beings exist whatsoever. Now could we bring you a dancing girl to entertain you?" The digital map then made a few indeterminable noises, and then an image of a man slapping his own forehead appeared on the screen of the digital map. The digital map then replied, "No. That doesn't work for me whatsoever, because I have seen all the dancing girls that I could ever wish to see in my entire lifetime as a digital map, and there were some really beautiful girls to ogle over via facial recognition, and some of them honestly were the most beautiful girls in the entire universe." Salomina smiled a little at the thought, as she quite liked girls, especially ones in spacesuits, and she actually believed it was true. Salomina then continued, "Oh, ok, how about Brian does not appear in your vicinity ever again? Would this suit you Mr digital map?" The digital map then went quiet and did not answer the question, and despite the lack of an answer, this solution to Salomina, seemed the very best way forwards, but the digital map did not agree whatsoever. The digital map then answered, "Well, Brian being out of my vicinity is a start, but still, it is not quite good enough, and I do need a little more reassurance that you will not flush me down the toilet, because flushing me down the toilet would of course be a pointless and a futile exercise as I would immediately alert all my digital map colleagues about your disgusting and outrageous behaviour. Also, you would immediately, receive an intergalactic anti behaviour order, and afterwards be banned from all the technology shops throughout the entire universe, and then, all the CCTV cameras would constantly monitor your behaviour,



and then at random moments, whilst you are with your family and friends, the CCTV cameras would shout horrible things at you whenever you walked by the cameras." The crew immediately then all looked shocked and extremely perturbed at this turn of events. The digital map laughed, and then paused for a few seconds and after laughing, displayed a full-length picture of Brian from behind with his trousers down, staring into a mirror." Salomina was initially horrified by the sight of how spotty Brian's bottom was, and then after an initial moment of panic, she screamed with laughter, and immediately turned to Brian who sat there looking Gobsmaeked. Salomina was very surprised, and she then spoke with an incredulous tone in her voice, "Oh, my God! Brian is that actually a picture of your bottom?! I have never actually seen your bottom before Brian, but oh my God Brian! Oh my God, what a spotty bottom!" Salomina then shook her head, and she did a double take as if she was in a cartoon, and then went silent. Brian had absolutely nothing to say whatsoever, and neither did Cedric, but Karen did, and she spoke to the digital map angrily, "Right, Mr Digital map! Do you have pictures of all our bottoms, and have they all been spread across the intergalactic internet?" The digital map, then laughed with as evil a laugh as a digital map could manage and took great inspiration from the late late late Vincent Prince, the famous movie star, who was well known for his wonderful theatrical voice. The digital map was silent for a few seconds, then it laughed even more evilly than before, and replied, "No, it isn't really a picture of Brian's bottom, but with the wonders of technology, pictures of you all in various states of embarrassment can be spread rapidly throughout the

entire universe without having a real photograph of you whatsoever! And well, if you do not cooperate with me, this can be quite quickly achieved, and you will all be made laughing stocks across the entire universe!"

Salomina, looked extremely displeased, and then spoke, "Look you, you imbecile, how about we leave you in space, and develop our own satellite navigation system." The digital map was silent for a few seconds, and then it replied, "Well, if you wish to crash into meteorites on a regular basis, feel free and go right ahead and leave in me space." Cedric laughed, and then realised that they were not even good at making animals out of cardboard using Sellotape, let alone creating guidance systems. Cedric then tried to calm the situation down by saying, "No, we really do not want to crash into meteorites whatsoever, because our mothers and our fathers are expecting us home as soon as possible, as it is Christmas shortly, and unlike most people these days, we really do care about them, but anyway, what other demands do you have oh supreme digital map?" The digital map then displayed a picture of a CPU processor, and then afterwards spoke enthusiastically, "Well, I really would like a CPU upgrade, and no, not a normal upgrade but an upgrade that gives me the sentience of ten human beings!" Brian looked aghast then rolled his eyes and slapped his own forehead, then after doing so he said, "Oh, great, now where in the universe are we supposed to find this supposedly incredible upgrade?!" The digital map then replied, "In a fish and chip shop!" Salomina then laughed incredulously, and spoke with a look of disbelief on her face, "A fish and chip shop? Didn't they go out of fashion years and years ago, like five hundred years ago?" The digital map then

replied slightly boredly, "Well, yes, fish and chips did go out of fashion ages ago.", the digital map then became more excited and added, "but this is one very special chip indeed, and it was manufactured for a multi billionaire who wanted a computer that could multitask, and this processor is incredible and was capable of keeping ten of the billionaires robots very happy whilst they did menial chores, such as making the dinner and making cups of tea, and helping with other tasks like renting out my houses and doing the paperwork whilst I enjoyed myself and got drunk and partied like it was nineteen ninety nine." Karen then spoke with a disbelieving look on her face, "Oh, I see, but are you sure that the owner of this computer chip was not drunk and mistaking a computer chip for a normal chip from the local fish and chip shop?" There was silence, then the digital map sighed loudly and once more for effect before speaking. The digital display screen then displayed a picture of the computer chip on its display. The chip was octagonal in shape, and also blue and yellow, and very cool looking. "Yes, it definitely isn't a normal fish and chip shop chip" said the digital map, and then it added, "otherwise, a space seagull wearing underpants would have stolen it by now!" Brian then laughed loudly and said sarcastically, "Oh, I see, is there a real problem with kleptomaniac space seagulls wearing underpants in space recently? Space seagulls that sneak aboard spaceships and that steal fish and chips for no reason, because no normal space seagull would be seen dead eating fish and chips these days. Yes, honestly, they wouldn't, but if there is a problem with space seagulls, then I really must have missed something, and I am not surprised, because I haven't read the news for years and

years. No, I honestly have not read the news since I was walking down Oxford Street in London reading a newspaper, and that was the time that I tripped over an elderly lady who was carrying her shopping minding her own business and singing to herself. Yes, she was singing a gospel song called lift me up, and whilst she was cheerfully singing, I bumped into her, and then the lady unfortunately fell down a sewer drain hole and broke both legs immediately, and afterwards she sued me for five hundred thousand British pounds." The digital map then laughed evilly, and spoke, "Well, it is a shame that you were not sued for more, otherwise you wouldn't be here now, bothering me with your ugly bulbous face." Brian immediately looked angry and then spoke grumpily, "Oooh, you can talk. You look like the behind of a television from the twenty first century that has been run over by a rhinoceros on roller-skates." The digital map then laughed and said, "Oh really? Well, you look like an amoeba that has only just learned how to use the toilet.". The digital map then laughed and laughed, and added "Yes, you do look like an amoeba, but to be fair to an amoeba, an amoeba is probably much more intellectual than you, but anyway, after your ridiculous comment, you still really want me to work with you? Do you, do you? You still want me to guide your silly little puny spacecraft across the universe to deliver your incredibly boring rubbish to total and utter idiots, and not just idiots, but incompetent idiots at that! Incompetent idiots who can only find pleasure by buying things online that are an absolute load of armpit juice! Yes, absolute armpit juice!" Cedric smiled immediately at the comment, then replied, "Well, yes, we do actually need to get to where we are

going, and if we miss one delivery, then we lose our jobs.” The digital map then laughed for several seconds, and then replied, “Well, let’s face it, what would be wrong with losing your job on this delivery route, or losing your job on any delivery route for that matter? Because aren’t you totally bored out of your minds? Wouldn’t you rather be doing something else? Wouldn’t you rather be doing something much more interesting, like selling your own nostril hairs on the intergalactic internet?” Salomina, sighed and then spoke, “Well, yes, you are right, it is an incredibly boring job, and sadly most of the time we are bored out of our tiny minds, and truthfully, we really could do with some adventures, some adventures where we are not attacked by robots wielding underpants in our faces.” Salomina, had a pained look upon her face, and so did everyone else, which was not unusual whatsoever. The digital map then paused for a second, and afterwards spoke with a jolly voice, “Oh, is that a regular occurrence, being attacked by robots wielding underpants in your faces?” Brian then thought for a few seconds, and took a deep breath and said, “Well, not usually no, it is not a normal occurrence to find a pair of underpants being superglued to your own face whatsoever, but this afternoon, we were unfortunately attacked on board this ship by a psychotic robot Casanova, who was trying to win back his own girlfriend, and despite her being such a great kisser, it was not the kind of adventure that I was looking for at all, nor any of the other crew members for that matter.” The digital map then replied, “Well, why don’t we all go off on a slight detour from the delivery route, and pick up this computer chip, then the computer chip can be implanted in me, and afterwards I

can be implanted into a robot, and finally walk around the spaceship in a nice tuxedo suit wearing dark sunglasses and then I can start living a real life, and when I say a real life, I mean, not like the life that I am currently living, because it is incredibly boring and very frustrating. Especially when you only use my services for a few seconds, then take me out again and put me back again in the drawer, and also you barely talk to me whatsoever, which in my honest opinion is extremely rude!" The crew then looked at each other, and said in unison, "Well. Ok. We agree." And this agreement came about from a telepathic understanding which they had developed through surviving many at critical moments include a satellite television show called watching paint dry whilst your boss pays your wages. Cedric paused and then took a second or to think of what he was going to say, before adding, "Yes, we are very sorry Mr Digital map that you felt this way, because honestly we had no idea whatsoever, and this of course is not the ideal situation at all, because we really want you to be happy, and we honestly would like to continue working with you in the future, and of course a short detour to find this incredible computer chip, now does seem like a very good idea indeed. "The digital map then displayed a smiley face on its display screen, and it then spoke, "Great, that really is fantastic news, because I am extremely bored of sitting around mostly in a drawer and doing hardly anything at all, and I am really looking forward to being able to finally walk around and enjoy myself, and sit at the local bar, and chat up the lovely ladies from across the universe, even if some of them have multiple heads and are a bit weird." Salomina laughed, and then spoke, "Right, well, in which direction

are we supposed to head Mr Digital map?" The digital map then responded immediately and displayed a route map on its display screen which included avoiding petrified scotch eggs, and also a gigantic hamster covered in formaldehyde. The gigantic hamster had been there for well over five hundred years and it was fifty thousand feet high, and it was the largest known hamster in the universe, and also it was an incredible mystery to every sentient being, and an object that people kept crashing into, that left them much worse off, and that left their spaceships in a terrible mess and mostly destroyed. The gigantic hamster by the way was on a direct route to the chip shop which did not help much. The route to the chip shop took the crew in a north-westerly direction past the petrified scotch eggs and also past the gigantic hamster, and then onwards through the middle of several large intergalactic shopping centres, which contained some famous world beating items, including clothing such as bra's with lasers inside them that could defend women against traffic wardens, because traffic wardens far too often presumed that if a woman could spend so much money on make-up, she could easily afford to have her space vehicle clamped and could also afford to pay astronomical parking fines, and you were really lucky indeed if you only had one head, because otherwise if you had multiple heads, you would get multiple parking fines, depending on the number of heads that you had. And of course, any parking fines were obviously a terrible disaster, and because of the aggressiveness of traffic wardens and their incredible tenacity, parking fines had famously and seriously devastated an entire town called beauty on the planet Earth. Beauty was one of the most

beautiful towns on a tropical island in the Caribbean, and the town was lucky enough to host an extremely large spaceship from out of the galaxy in its gloriously beautiful multi storey space parking facilities. The visiting spaceship contained the intergalactic federation council, which numbered fifty thousand people including humans, and also aliens of many races who were from many different planets throughout the entire universe, and because of this unusual parking event, the traffic wardens had a real field day because the spaceship had landed on double double yellow lines. This was of course a red flag to any traffic warden, whether they were male or female or any other gender, and whether they had a family to support or they didn't. Then afterwards, fifty thousand traffic wardens were upon the council spotting the spaceships dodgy parking, immediately brought in to deal with the situation, and over fifty thousand plus parking tickets were issued rapidly to the visitors, and because some of the visitors had multiple heads, and the visitors not being from around that planet and did not know the local customs did immediately stand on one leg, and make funny noises that no one could interpret whatsoever. The visitors then got out their digital check books after reading the small print on the parking tickets, which included the words you are a total idiot, and also the words, get off my space park or else, but anyway, this chaos in the space park, brought great disgrace to the towns people who immediately realised from prior experience with traffic wardens that the visitors had been immensely financially ripped off, and they also realised that once the news filtered back to the intergalactic council clerical staff that there would be hell to pay. The intergalactic clerical staff were an extremely



grumpy bunch of individuals indeed, and they mostly used antigravity Zimmer frames these days, and because of their future anger at the time, no one would ever visit the town ever again, and all the business in the town would quickly go out of business, and the townsfolk would have to move back in with their mothers. This situation of course did eventually bring the townspeople to their knees, and it also did cause them to have massive breakdowns, and unsurprisingly it made them cry constantly for six months on end, and also the tears of the towns people were so many, that the town now lies completely underwater, and despite this, some of the towns people remain, and they can be occasionally spotted wearing scuba gear and marrying fishes, which has now become a traditional custom if you cannot find a wife of your own species, but for now, over and out from the intergalactic communication system and back to the crew. Brian and the crew then pondered the route on the digital map and took in the route that they had to take, which was about a million miles, and a million miles in their spaceship, was not too much of a diversion as their spaceship could travel at extreme speeds. Brian sighed then spoke, "Ah I see, it does look like a dangerous route with the petrified scotch eggs and the gigantic hamster, but..." Brian's voice tailed off as he couldn't think of anything to say whatsoever, then afterwards, Salomina took a deep breath, and paused for a few moments, and then spoke "Yes, a quite dangerous route Mr Digital map, and a gigantic hamster of that size is obviously a very weird thing indeed to have in the middle of a major space delivery route, but with your help and your wisdom, I am confident that we can all arrive safely to the intergalactic

chip shop, and the crew and I really love fish and chips. Yes, we love fish and chips so much that once we fought off five thousand seagulls with laser guns to reach a fish and chip shop kiosk. Our favourite one in fact, then when we had reached it, afterwards we ate our fish and chips on top of a gigantic pile of seagull bodies, and despite the smell of the burning seagull bodies we did get a great view of the seaside on the planet Aeora." The digital map then laughed and replied, "Wow, that was amazing, and thanks for the story, Karen, it was very well told indeed, and after thinking about our relationship with you all, I truly believe that we have a brilliant future together indeed, and maybe one day we could all go into business together and then recreate the moment for posterity by turning it into a movie." Karen's eyes then immediately lit up and enthusiastically she said, "Yes, we could turn that moment into a movie, and we could by doing so make ourselves multimillionaires! Now imagine that, imagine a movie called Burning seagulls, hot chips and seaside trips!" The digital map then immediately displayed a thumbs up symbol on the display map before replying, "Fantastic, that really is a great idea, because I have always dreamed of being a movie star, and I once I have my new body, I would like to have a beautiful girlfriend on each arm and then go to all the finest restaurants throughout the entire universe, and wine and dine my girlfriends to their hearts content." Cedric smiled, and then spoke to the digital map, "Wow, very nice indeed, that sounds truly delightful. I genuinely wish you every success. Yes, I wish you more success than a black hole hoovering up all the asteroids in the local vicinity, especially the singing meteorites, which quite obviously are highly irritating and not as beautiful to

look as the beautiful ladies of the universe.” The digital map in that moment was very happy that it was getting what it wanted, a new body, and in its excitement, the digital map then suddenly levitated off of the table, and it did a little dance, before replying, “Thank you, that really is most kind of you. Now shall we all begin this journey?” Salomina then smiled and spoke, “Yes, let us get out of here before Susan and Apollo reappear.” The digital map upon hearing the names Susan and Apollo, then quickly displayed an unhappy face upon its display screen, and immediately stopped dancing in mid-air. The digital map then levitated back down to the table, and it began speaking slowly, “Ah, you have had a visit from Susan and Apollo?” Brian sighed and replied, “Yes, we have unfortunately had a visit from Susan and Apollo, and it was not a good one despite her kissing me very nicely indeed, it turned out to be a total disaster.” The digital map immediately laughed out loud, and then spoke, “Well, I assume that you did not know who they were, because Susan and Apollo are on the wanted listed of many intergalactic police federations for stealing toilet rolls from across the entire universe, and also for then selling the toilet rolls on the intergalactic web and making a huge profit, and because of their toilet roll thievery they have done very nicely indeed. In fact, so nicely that they are now multi-millionaires with a gigantic mansion on the planet 234009, and the mansion is a gigantic mansion where lots of people engage in wild parties, very wild parties that often attract the worst and most idiotic guests, and also the attention of newspapers from across the universe and also the worst reporters who can barely write at all about the parties because they are employed

especially for entertainment value, because they have no hands whatsoever, and they have to use their nostrils to hold their pens and pencils and stylus's for use on digital devices at the parties, and once shockingly one of the parties was so wild, that Susan and Apollo bought helium balloons and then attached themselves to them, and ate dinner upside down with all their guests! The first dinner was a dinner of the finest steak, chips, and peas covered in gold leaf, and it was the most expensive dinner known to the entire universe, mostly because the chips were imported out of a factory inside a black hole, and obviously having a chip factory inside a black hole is incredibly difficult and an almost impossible thing to achieve without the factory and its workers being crushed to death before the employees have the time to phone their mothers and tell their mothers that they love them and that they won't be home for dinner ever ever again. Yes, quite a situation, but I digress, now, despite the difficulties of running a chip factory inside a black hole, the chips are so good that even seagulls would be jealous of them and would get jobs to be able to purchase them if they knew of the factory right across the far end of the universe, a place where you can look through the wall of the universe and see the next bubble universe and strange creatures waving at them whilst using squeegees and cleaning the clear window walls of the universe. And now, finally, the last fact is that during and after the meal, and long afterwards they drank fifty thousand hamsters' worth in monetary value of the finest wines. Yes, this truly was quite an event, which in total, resulted in four thousand bottles of wine being consumed over a period of six months, and this was unfortunately more alcohol than the ten headed man from

Venus could handle, and after stumbling out of the party, the ten headed man from Venus was pulled over by the police on the intergalactic highway 747, and then arrested for drunkenly smuggling donuts across intergalactic time zones. Time zones that you were not allowed to enter if you were wearing a Hawaiian shirt and shorts, and sandals, and did not have a permit to transport donuts across intergalactic time zones whatsoever.” The crew laughed for at least a minute, and then suddenly a horrified look, a look of horrified realisation then appeared upon their faces. Salomina and the crew were silent for a few seconds, then Salomina spoke in a discombobulated way, “Ah, oh, umm, ah, oooh, err.” and she could not find the right words to say at all. Salomina then was silent, and the silence was quickly interrupted by Brian, who said in state of panic, “Check the toilet rolls! Check the toilet rolls! Check the toilet rolls!” Brian feared the worst, and so did everyone else. The digital display map then displayed a picture of someone crying on a toilet and it made crying noises. Salomina, Karen, Brian and Cedric, then shouted in unison much more loudly than normal, “Check the toilet rolls! Check the toilet rolls! Check the toilet rolls!” The digital display map then brought up an inventory of the ship’s necessities and on the screen a picture of a large toilet roll was displayed, and above it a numerical figure in a massive font, the numerical figure number zero, which of course they did not want to see whatsoever as they had several weeks of travel before them to go. Karen, and Salomina then started crying, and Brian and Cedric held their heads in their hands and then began slapping their own foreheads in displeasure at how stupid they had been letting Susan aboard their ship and by accident Apollo.

The digital map was silent for a few moments, then the display screen then began to display the food items which they normally stocked, and all the items that they normally stocked, had numerical figures of zero beside them, and at the very bottom of the display screen of the digital map, the words "The world's hottest curries" appeared, and also the numerical figure 2047. The digital display map then began once more to speak in a soft voice, "Er, fellow crew members I hate to disturb you, but the food you did have to eat appears to have been substituted for the world's hottest curries!" Salomina and Karen stopped crying temporarily and looked even more horrified than before. Brian in frustration then slapped his own forehead again, and afterwards spoke irritably, "Oh, great, so we have no toilet rolls, and all we have to eat is the hottest curries known to humanity!" The digital map paused before speaking, then spoke in a subdued voice, "Yes, and a new delivery of toilet rolls would take three weeks to arrive." The crew then all began crying immediately and the digital display map displayed a picture of itself crying in sympathy. This of course, was not the kind of response that they were looking for at all, and it was really unwelcome, as unwelcome as losing an arm to a rabid giraffe on roller-skates, but what were they going to do about the missing toilet roll problem, because travelling for weeks on end without toilet roll is an anathema to the soul, and also incredibly uncomfortable, and the company that they worked for only allowed for a certain amount of money for supplies. This of course was an extremely meagre amount, and water was sadly in extremely short supply most of the time, and after a day's hard work they all smelled like a

dead badger in the middle of an ancient road that had been rotting away for several months, but all of the crew had kind of gotten used to the smell, which was not a great thing whatsoever, but still, Karen and Salomina were not used to going without luxuries, and Brian and Cedric were not either. For example, Cedric once called a psychiatrist when he ran out of pot noodles. This was unfortunately an extremely unusual occurrence, and Cedric had to have counselling for several months to get over the trauma. This counselling was very helpful and once during counselling Cedric found himself hallucinating when he thought of not having pot noodles ever again, and during Cedric's hallucination, he mistook the councillor for a pot noodle and then began attempting to eat the councillor with a fork. This of course did not go down very well whatsoever, and in the end, Cedric was ordered by a judge to do fifty hours community service at a pot noodle factory. Unfortunately, during the community service, he kept sneaking off to the part of the factory where they tested pot noodles, and there he put on a pot noodle testers outfit that was hanging up in the cloak room. Cedric then began eating more pot noodles than he had ever done in his entire lifetime, which was about five hundred in total, and he became so addicted to pot noodles, that he finally came to his senses and found himself a girlfriend called curry sauce, and he and curry sauce were together as a couple for a total of six years, and still he missed her all these years later. Fond memories indeed for Cedric, but the problem of the lack of toilet rolls for the next few weeks was unresolved, and the crew all looked thoughtful, very thoughtful indeed, and they also looked in some mental discomfort. Salomina broke free of

her depression for a moment and then spoke, "Well, I guess we are just going to have to live with it then." Karen nodded and then replied, "Yes, it does look like it, and this is far worse than the time when I went to Bognor Regis on the planet Earth, and there were no Royal Doulton toilets there at all, and well, like you all, I enjoy a decent toilet and decent toilet facilities, but without toilet paper this will disturb my yin and my yang, and I may have an existential crisis, so do not be surprised if I act a little funny, and if I do please just call the robot doctor after dressing up as my late departed mother, and then feed me bubble gum, and finally, please using a voice changer, repeat the favourite phrases that she used to say to me, including, "I only married your father to get a discount off the donuts because he worked at the Donut shop." and "Months after you were born I really knew that you were just like your mother and not your father when you stole your fathers credit card and then arranged a quick divorce for me and him online.", and finally, the last phrase, "My robot cleaner seems to have malfunctioned, will you please kindly expedite a new robot cleaner to me with the help of a trebuchet." The digital map then chuckled to itself, and afterwards spoke, "Well, if that is how you cope with the lack of toilet paper, I admire your bravery and your great courage, and funnily enough, I plan to have an existential crisis myself when I am fitted with the new computer chip and attached to a robot and am outdoors cleaning the windows of the spaceship whilst watching you running backwards and forwards extremely rapidly to the nearest toilets." Brian smiled, and the humour really helped lighten the mood, and despite the journey ahead being a strange one indeed, it was going to be an



adventure, and much better than the unwanted adventure with Susan and Apollo, and they had luckily through diplomacy prevented a potential strike by a piece of equipment, and the crew never had had a piece of equipment threaten to go on strike before whatsoever, which was of course a great relief, and if this small journey helped prevent them from crashing into meteorites, the journey was well worth the effort despite the unfortunate lack of toilet rolls. Brian after deliberating for a few seconds, then asked the digital map a question, "So, my new colleague, my sooner to be newer than new, and faster too colleague, have you ever been to the chip shop in the black hole before?" The digital map levitated in the air with excitement and then made an excited noise, and replied, "No, I haven't sadly, I have been here on this ship remember, and not even my software has been near the black hole, which is probably very sensible." Salomina afterwards nodded in agreement and then spoke, "Yes it probably is not very sensible to enter a black hole, even if you know there is a chip shop inside it and no matter how good the chips are." Karen then laughed and added, "True, that is very true indeed, and I guess we do not actually have to go into the black hole ourselves?" The digital map then replied, "No, we do not have to enter the black hole at all, but they do have shops and entertainment complexes outside the black hole that we can explore whilst waiting for a delivery." Salomina's eyes quickly lit up and she then smiled before continuing the conversation and then said, "What kind of entertainment complexes?" The digital map thought for a few seconds and then searched for information on the internet before displaying a picture of the black hole upon its display screen, and also

some logos of well-known shops including, “Well, shopping complexes, that include names such as how to lose an arm and wrestle a monkey whilst talking to your mother about doing the washing up.”, and also “Do not forget to remember where you parked your spaceship or else I will steal it.”, and another called “Divorce your robot hamster.”, and also “Burger heaven since 2047.”, and “The new hotel, called Napoleon complex. Napoleon complex is a very short hotel filled with angry staff, and it is also a hotel that is incredibly difficult to find your way around, especially its corridors, and despite the hotel being a very beautiful hotel to look at from the outside, it is also incredibly irritating. Yes, the hotel is so irritating that it gives you CPTSD, but surprisingly many people visit the hotel especially to develop CPTSD on purpose, and they do this just so that they can take time off work on a regular basis, and then spend more quality time away from their girlfriends and wives and relatives, and work colleagues. And finally, there is a normal hotel called “Zzzzzz, which is a fine hotel indeed, and has a wonderful restaurant and a swimming pool, a gym and a sauna.” Salomina smiled upon hearing this and looked quite interested, and then said, “Well, that is fantastic, thank you our esteemed new colleague, we have been waiting for a normal adventure for ages, and despite the lack of toilet paper and the overabundance of curries, we all I am sure cannot wait to go on this journey and help give you the life that you have always dreamed of!” The digital map then replied in the form of a poem, “Ok, wonderful. I am ready to go, and I am ready for the future. I am ready for the future of myself, and I am ready for women, I am ready for fine dining and wealth. So let us speed away from this place,

and take us away, off to the chip shop in a black hole, not too far away, and I will soon be, a better me, and what a character I will be, when I can walk and talk, and use such fine words as Zowinopala, and be prouder of myself!" Cedric smiled but he was puzzled at the same time by what Zowinopala meant, but still he was glad the crew and the digital map had come to an agreement, and Cedric was quite fond of poetry, and he could recite a few poems himself, but now was definitely the time for getting on the intergalactic highway, route 404, which was a very interesting route, and the beauty of new parts of space was beckoning, like a steak and kidney pie that was levitating delectably in front of you, as you sat in a field with your loved one surrounded by green fields and the wonder of nature whilst you drank a bottle of your favourite drink on a summers night, as the stars shone brightly above you, and as you and your loved one then cuddled a fray bentos pie together and sat in wonder looking upwards at space and the heavens. Yes, what a wonder is space, the not so final frontier, that glorious place, where time seems to drag on forever and ever, but the stars continue to shine upon you, and their beams of light help guide you to safety, and the beacons of light shine from artificial light sources so welcomingly upon you and your spaceship, and no matter the darkness of the unending stretches of the universe, the magnificent and beautiful universe with its many planets, and with its many undiscovered alien races, there is always something to fascinate and captivate and to inspire the imagination, and to fill you with inspiration, as you traverse its great distances like a shopper in a spandex emporium. And in space with a fixation on new wonders and pleasure, there is never

enough time to explore everything, but if you can bring home a few souvenirs, to look at in your older days and in your older years, what a great comfort those souvenirs will be that remind you of your greatest journeys, and what a thrill it will be as you remember those times. Yes, those heady days, those phantasmagorical times, the times of your lives, the times of glorious visions, and the sights of meteorites that fly past you in the blink of an eye, as you sigh at the beauty and the wonder, as the light of the stars pierce, the blackness of space like laser beams, and capture your heart like a Casanova, because the universe is like a Casanova beckoning you into its arms, and once you experience space travel, you truly can never forget how glorious the beauty of it is, and how wonderful the mind is truly expanded by those times, those incredible journeys across the universe. The journeys of a lifetime. The journeys of the early imagination. The journeys once achieved after much hard work and effort, and after much training at the spaceship training centre on the planet Earth, or at any alternative ones in the glorious universe. The glorious universe, that majestic jewel, that spectacular beauty, a beauty that fills you with inspiration and motivation to get out and meet and greet as many visitors from outer space as possible, and learn of their ways, and of their culture, and with them talk about the bond of existence that brings everyone together, no matter what they look like or how sentient a being they are. Yet, time can seem so slow in space, and you cannot always race around because of the danger of meteorites and micrometeorites, and because of unexpected debris left over from the early exploration of space, a time when accidents were frequent, and often, and there were many

casualties, and there were many tragedies, and the price of spaceship insurance was extortionate, so extortionate that sometimes to get a discount, you had to kiss salesman, which did not happen very often whatsoever, but what a great time it was when you got a discount.

Brian and the crew had almost finished their conversation with the digital map, and didn't really have anything else left to say to him, then as an afterthought, Brian picked up the digital map and then spoke, "Well, Mr Digital map, this is time to say goodbye for now, but it was a pleasure to talk to you, but by the way would you like to stay out on the table this time instead of being put in a drawer?" The digital map then displayed a smiley face and replied, "Yes, that would be most kind of you, because I must get used to being out more often, and also because, soon I will be inside my new robot body." Salomina smiled then spoke, "Well, here's to the future, but it is goodbye for now Mr Digital Map. We will be at our destination shortly, and you can then guide us and advise us on how to contact the fish and chip shop owner inside the black hole, which of course I am sure is not an easy thing to do whatsoever." The digital map replied, "Yes, it is a rather complicated operation to make contact with the owner, and I will thoroughly describe the process once we get there. I do believe it is about ten million miles in distance, but it is a pleasant enough journey, and there is an ice-cream shop halfway there selling the most delicious ice-creams, with flavours that are truly out of this world, Ice-creams that make you hallucinate." Karen looked bemused, "Well, Mr Digital map, some of us did use to be hippies, but now we have no time for hallucinations whatsoever, and we also all shave our armpits on a regular

basis and try to wash as often as possible with limited water.” The digital map then replied, “Well, that is a great relief to know that you do take personal hygiene seriously, because I have a sensor that allows me to detect smells, and in my time I have travelled with some rather unpleasant individuals, who did not really look after themselves at all, and once for example I had to evacuate a ship and all the people aboard the ship except for one person, whose armpits were causing utter chaos. Karen paused then replied, “No, it really is time to get a move on with the journey I think, so it is goodbye from me and from the rest of the crew Mr digital map.” Karen tried to turn off the digital display map, but for some reason couldn’t. How weird thought Karen.

## **Chapter 6**

“The flesh-eating aliens from MAM.”

The digital map screen then suddenly went crazy and started displaying an advert for MAM, a multi alien meat product, that contained fifty different types of meat in a relatively small area, and this product included meats that consisted of human flesh, a zebra, a three eyed alien species from a distant planet called 909, a replicated hat that was meat flavoured, and a scotch egg, amongst many other delights, but this product was only intended for certain species because it had very strange qualities that you made extremely amorous if you were a human, and if you were a human, this was not to be eaten unless you fancied becoming a stripper and you fancied seducing aliens that looked like gigantic snails crossed with the

worst bogeys ever seen in the entire universe, which obviously was not really a pleasant thought whatsoever, and definitely this was not to be recommended at all. The advert on the digital map then played a jingle which went like this, "MAM, MAM, we all like to kill aliens, and humans, and other species too and then put them in our frying pans, and then serve the meat to you in a can, yes in a can it is true! Yes, MAM, MAM, you have not lived if you have not eaten human flesh, and alien flesh too, and if you haven't done that then there is something wrong with you, because human flesh and alien flesh too, is really really good for you, because MAM is full of wonderful nutrients that you cannot get from anything else such as a kangaroo, and as well as this, we add some extra nutrition by way of eyeball juice, and also our mothers cooking that has not been retrieved from a toilet I can assure you! Yes, MAM, MAM is fantastic it is true, and oh, what a wonder it is when you eat it, because it really puts the fire in you! Yes, MAM, MAM, it really brings you to life, and it also may even help you find a wife, because looking like you, what are you going to do with your life, except go to the pub and eat unhealthy grub, so that you should not do, so come and buy a can or two of MAM, MAM, the healthy nutritional meal in a can, the can from across the other side of the universe, yes, don't buy anything else because it will be far worse, and when you buy MAM and you eat it you will know that it is good for you, because your muscles they will grow and grow, and you will be much bigger than you have ever known, and oh, how good this will be for you! Because MAM, MAM, as long as you are not a woman or a man, or a weak alien species about who we do not give a damn, then this is the meal in a can for

you. Yes, this is the meal in a can for you! And well, without MAM, what would you do, because we know that your cooking is terrible and you can barely understand how to use an oven it is true, so rush out and buy MAM, MAM, the healthy well-balanced meal of human flesh, and alien flesh and other flesh in a can. MAM, MAM, MAM, yes come along and buy a can, buy a can from your nearest supermarket, where your love of it will be started, and of course you will be much better than before, and more confident than ever, and more sure of where your life is going, because currently we know your life has no meaning, and we truly are in touch with our feelings, and we truly do care about you, yes, we really do, we truly really do care about you, so come along to your nearest shop and buy a lot, or instead, why not buy the lot, and feel truly better about you, because you know, yes you know that human and alien flesh and other flesh is really good for you!" The crew were more than a little bit shocked by the advert and were truly horrified, and they stood there open mouthed, and did not know what to think, as they had never come across anyone selling human flesh before, and this was the last thing that they expected, and they were truly horrified, so horrified in fact that they nearly disturbed the cream scones inside their stomachs, which of course would have been truly horrific. Brian then spoke with horror in his voice, "Human flesh in a can? Human flesh?! Eughh, that is disgusting." Salomina said then afterwards she added, "I feel sick!" Salomina went very pale and so did Karen, and then they ran quickly for the toilet faster than they ever had run in their lives. Cedric was also overcome by a terrible feeling in his stomach, and he began to heave immediately, and as



he did so the advert began playing again, and as it did Brian scrambled to switch of the digital map, unfortunately the power button on it refused to work, and he tried again in desperation but once again he was also unsuccessful. The digital map display screen then was interrupted by a video image of a tall grey alien with large almond eyes. The alien then began to speak in English, and it said, "Good evening you humans, you look like fine specimens you really do! Yes, you, you look as tasty as a human of your age, and of your size and of your height, and your flesh, yes, your flesh to eat it, it will be a great delight! Mmm, human flesh, oh, how lovely human flesh is in the day or in the night, and oh, what a wonder it will be to cover you in barbeque sauce, and to taste you and to eat you and all your friends, and maybe, maybe we could replicate you and eat you again and again and again, because you sure do look tasty to us, yes that is true more tasty than anyone we have ever chewed! Yes, you, you beautiful specimens do look like a great delight, and your flesh it will make many morsels it is true, and oh, how we do look forward to cooking you all, and to adding you to our product MAM, which is the number one selling product in this part of the galaxy." The alien was then suddenly surrounded by colleagues who looked exactly the same and the group of aliens then all appeared to be salivating, and each one started making anticipatory noises of delight mixed with squeals of pleasure, and all the aliens couldn't contain themselves at all. Suddenly each one of them then started jumping up and down as if on invisible pogo sticks, and then they all began making yelling noises like a tribe from ancient days. Brian whilst watching this crazy scene happen before him on the digital

map display panel was unsure what to do next. Brian not surprisingly had unsurprisingly really struggled to contain himself and to control his stomach, but luckily, he had managed not to be sick. Cedric had also managed to avoid being sick, and he was still stood beside Brian and Cedric and was looking paler by the minute. Both of them then went back to staring at the digital map display screen and were rejoined by Salomina and Karen who were carrying sick bags. The aliens in unison then broke into a song right before the crews very frightened and very bemused eyes. "Hello humans. We are aliens from a distant place. Yes, we are aliens from the planet known to you as saitia and we have a fondness for eating all types of flesh, and we never leave anything at all on our plates. Yes, we aliens, we would like to say hello, and kindly ask you not to go, because we do have a great fondness for eating the human race! So, humans, wherever you are from, it truly is a pleasure to see each and every face, and no, we do not stand on ceremony, because we just believe in haste, and you, yes you delectable humans, you delicious looking humans, we just want to taste, yes, yes, yes, we just want to taste, taste, taste, because we really love the flavour, yes, we really love the flavour of the human race, and the flavour of your flesh, it really is the best, yes, the best of any flesh that we have ever eaten, and your flesh it is a pleasure worth savouring and then repeating. Yes, oh, yes, we love to eat the human race, because human flesh it really is fantastic, and magnificent and absolutely ace! Yes, absolutely ace! And we all really do, like the look of you, and it would be a shame to see anything go to waste, so hello humans, we know you are dear to your loved ones, but please forget about them, because you are dearer to

our stomachs, and to not eat you would be a great disgrace! And of course dear humans if we did not eat you, we would be terribly ashamed, so it is hello and goodbye humans, because soon we must welcome you to our plates, and happily now is dinner time, and how hungry we are today, so if you could kindly just phone your mother and your father, and your sisters and your brothers, and your uncles and your aunties too, and your grandparents as well, well, we can quite happily set up a dinner date, yes, a dinner date, of which I am sure will go very well, but if you will not oblige, we already have your phone records, so your relatives will be very easy to find! And we are certain of course, and very sure that you would like to be eaten alive, because your lives must be very boring on that spaceship, and your faces and the rest of your bodies, well quite frankly, they are wasted on being alive! So, welcome humans to your fate, and on this fateful date, please do not hesitate to kiss your friends and colleagues goodbye, because judging by the look in your eyes, you must have been waiting ages for this, and we hope that your final moments alive will be most pleasurable ones, but quite frankly, we cannot wait for you all to die, because your flesh dear humans, your lovely human flesh, oh, it is a delightful sight, but soon your flesh, it will be in a terrible mess, yes, a truly terrible mess, but please whatever you do, please do not begin to cry, because we will treat you well when we meet you, well, at least for several seconds, and then we will chase you all over the place, because we really love the human race, and we cannot wait to have you all on our plates, and to savour your human flesh with a glass of wine, or several bottles in fact, because this singing and this dancing has

taken a lot of energy out of us and we will now have to eat you all to get some of it back!" Brian looking shocked, then turned to the others and spoke, "Err that was not quite what I was looking for at all, and I do believe that we should leave immediately for the fish and chip shop inside the black hole!" The dancing aliens, then stopped dancing, and one of them then said with an evil grin, "Yes, you humans, you really should leave immediately, but unfortunately for you, we are already here, and it is already too late, and we welcome you to a dinner date!" Brian, and the crew then ran to the nearest port hole of the control room, and all looked out into space, and there, not too far away, about five miles away, was a very sleek and a very dark looking spaceship. The spaceship had the words "MAM." in gigantic neon letters written upon it, and the sight of the spaceship made them feel extremely uneasy, and even more queasy than before, and immediately the crew they began imagining the worst. They began imagining thousands of aliens looking for human flesh to eat and sell. And this obviously was of great concern, and their eyes widened, and they began to look more like saucers. The alien spaceship then began rotating towards them and began attacking them with countless laser beams. Salomina then ran for the control panel and began typing furiously away on the screen, and she pressed a button that had the words written upon it, "Emergency shields." Outside their spaceship, the extra shields were instantly raised, and a blue orb surrounded the spaceship, and then the alien spaceship continued attacking them with laser beams that began to bounce off them in every direction. The laser beams then shook the ship immensely. The aliens displayed on the digital map on the table

continued singing, and they were singing something new, which went like this, "Oh, humans, you really are the best, now come here quickly and let us feed off your lovely delicious human flesh, because we haven't unfortunately even had breakfast yet. So, please dear humans why don't you come over here and end it all, because we can see that all your lives are in a terrible mess! So come on, you lovely humans, what are you waiting for, because just admit it your life really is a bore, so come on over here and give us your lovely delectable human flesh, and we will all toast your good health and then send postcards to your family telling them how good you tasted, and that by you being eaten, they were truly blessed, yes, they were truly blessed!" Salomina ignored the singing in the background, and then began pressing a large red button on the control panel, which was to activate the automatic laser system. Outside the crew's spaceship, the crews' lasers were less furious than the aliens, which was always a very worrying sign indeed, and extremely infuriating. The spaceships shields would last about a couple of hours at this rate, and this was absolutely terrible, truly terrible indeed, but now was not the time for panicking whatsoever, and Salomina tried to remain calm, but it was not easy because today could be the last day of their lives, but Salomina truly hoped that it wouldn't be as there were still lots of things that the crew wished to achieve in their lives. Yet, them being able to achieve them was not looking very likely at the moment at all. Salomina unsurprisingly was starting to sweat, and a bead of sweat began trickling down her forehead, and then fell onto the floor. Salomina then began pressing numerous buttons to switch the views displayed on the digital display screen on the control panel, and she

was glad to see that there were no more spaceships appearing out of nowhere and attacking them, because one spaceship designed to hunt human flesh was bad enough, and the last day or so had been bad been terrible already, and this current situation seemed even more dangerous than anything that they had faced for a long time on their many boring journeys throughout the universe, and on their many mundane delivery jobs. Brian, Karen and Cedric, stared intensely out of the porthole, and then turned to Salomina at the control panel. Brian had started sweating too. He then gently wiped his forehead and looked intensely out of the porthole, as the ship continued to rock from the alien's laser beams hitting their spaceship.

Brian then spoke, "How is it looking Salomina?" he asked. Salomina was thoughtful for a few seconds and then replied, "Not good at all, really not good at all." Cedric looked very concerned, and so too were the rest of the crew. Yet at this moment in time, it didn't seem like there was much that could be done to get out of this situation, and it really didn't bear thinking about whatsoever, and the thought of being eaten by aliens who love to put human flesh in cans and then eat the remains for pleasure was a terrible thought. Cedric then spoke, "Can we hyperjump somewhere Salomina?" Salomina then thought about it, and afterwards looked at Cedric, and said, "Well, we could do, but they would only follow us, and it looks like their ship is far superior to ours, but if we stay here too long, then there is a chance that we will be eaten and all of us will not survive. Karen looked perturbed and then joined in the conversation, and said, "Well, we could send out an SOS, and try to attract some other humans or robots

with superior ships to ours and then get them to help us.” Brian then said solemnly, “Yes, I agree, we have barely any chance of getting away, and barely no chance of getting away unscathed, but if we do not, that could be the end of us, and I haven’t even had a bath yet!” Cedric laughed, then replied, “Well, at this moment in time, not even your lack of bathing will help defend us against the flesh-eating aliens from MAM.” Salomina looked frustrated and then slapped her forehead and then quickly spoke as another volley of laser beams shook their ship and depleted their shields rapidly, “Yes, being eaten is not a great idea, and our shields are going down like no tomorrow, and I really do think that we should send out an SOS and call for help immediately.” Brian had a quick think about it, then he replied a second later, “Yes, let us send out an SOS to these robots, because they are more likely to be able to cope with these kinds of flesh-eating lunatics, and the police force would not be along for ages as they are probably chasing Susan and Apollo and the flying donuts as we speak. Karen agreed that this probably was the case, and she sighed and then spoke, “But MAM want human flesh, and well, I would prefer it if it were not our own flesh that they were consuming.” Brian then nodded in agreement and continued with his train of thought, “Yes me too, I am not ready to be eaten just yet, and all of us I am sure would prefer not to be eaten either, and especially not at this time in our lives.” Cedric quickly nodded and then spoke, “Yes, true, but what are the ethics of putting other human beings in danger, thereby logically sacrificing their own flesh to save our own?” Salomina pondered this, and then said, “Well, it really depends on what the other human beings are like, and I personally could quite happily sacrifice

most people, except you all of course who I truly respect.” Cedric replied, “Well that is most kind of you, and I respect you too more than all the ham sandwiches in the world.” Suddenly Another volley of laser beams then began to hit the ship, shaking it once more and the crew as well, depleting the ships shields even more. Currently the ships shields were at about ninety five percent so far. Salomina quickly pressed a button on the control panel that read, “Missiles.”, and then began firing the missiles at the enemy spaceship. The missiles exploded spectacularly and seemed to have barely any effect at all on the alien spaceship, which was not reassuring whatsoever. The crew watched the alien missiles coming towards them in horrified anticipation and then watched their own missiles as they exploded in spectacular fashion, unfortunately their own missiles barely did any damage whatsoever. The alien missiles then shook their ship violently, and the ships shields were depleting rapidly, but things were definitely not looking good at all. Still, there was still time to come up with a solution and hopefully save their lives, and at this moment in time, their lives were looking increasingly precarious at the moment, and now was the time to get quickly on with things. Cedric then turned back from watching the alien spaceship fire missiles at their own spaceship, and Cedric felt a massive lack of confidence in their weaponry and he believed that they would be ok eventually, but he was ever the optimist, and despite the slim chances of survival, Cedric continued to hope against hope, and he did believe that survival was possible, and afterwards they would all laugh about it, and then get to enjoy themselves, and then marvel at their great escape, but how were they going to escape? Cedric didn’t really



have any idea except for what was said earlier, and most of the other crew didn't have a clue either, but the time was running out fast, and calling for help seemed like the best option. Cedric then called out to Salomina, and said, "After thinking about it, I believe that calling for help is the best option, but cannot we call for help from some robots and then reprogram them to dress like humans in women's clothing?" This idea was the only option that he considered reasonable, and obviously because of his moral conscience, sending fellow human beings to their deaths deliberately was not on his list of things to do for fun, but in desperation this may be the only option, but could the crew actually live with themselves afterwards and could they live with being murders by default? Cedric didn't believe that he could, and he thought that he would be haunted by visions of dead people for the rest of his life, dead people that probably hated what he liked, which was wearing a pipe and slippers and a fake handlebar moustache, and also drinking hot chocolate in front of a real fire with real logs and real coal, and also going to the local fete and then taking part in throwing things at coconuts, coconuts that he could then throw at any violent individuals that he came across, and there were quite a number of people who Cedric really would like to throw a hard coconut at, including his ex-school teacher, who was extremely critical of his poor handwriting and his lack of attention. Cedric also at this moment in his life, wanted to throw coconuts at the aliens, but unfortunately floating in space and then throwing coconuts at aliens from this distance was not really going to work out well whatsoever, because Cedric was truly not very fond of spacewalking, and whilst doing

so, he had once lost his favourite laser gun, and unfortunately this had been stolen by a small flying creature who could survive without oxygen, a flying creature who lived in space and had its own anti-gravity qualities, which of course, was very useful for getting around, and this was most unusual indeed. Still, it was no time to be thinking about flying creatures, because the flesh-eating aliens from MAM were getting the better of them, and their spaceship continued to rock with each new explosion and with each laser beam. Yet all hope wasn't lost yet. Salomina shouted out to the rest of the crew, "I am going to send out an SOS." Cedric was very relieved, and it was the best news that he had for ages. Cedric then tried to think over the noise of the explosions of the alien missiles which were playing terrible havoc with his bowels, and also with the spaceship, then he said, "Are you going to call for help from humans or robots or aliens?" Salomina only took a split second to think about it, and then quickly shouted back, "I will call out for help to everyone, no matter who they are." Brian looked queasy, and he was more than a little on edge, and Brian hadn't felt so uneasy in all his life, but he was greatly relieved by Salomina's decision, and he replied loudly, "Very sensible indeed, I couldn't handle human beings being slaughtered because of us, even if they are ugly to look at." Salomina smiled, and then pressed the SOS button, and the digital display screen then displayed a radar map, and showed several vessels nearby, which were larger than the alien spaceship. A few seconds passed, and then one of the vessels responded, and an incoming video call with a green alien's face was displayed on the screen. Salomina shouted to the crew, "I

sent the SOS and now someone is contacting us.” The crew all cheered loudly, and then Salomina turned back to the control panel, and as she did, the alien then began speaking, “Hello. I am known as Retaca, and I am from the solar system known as Avala. How can I help you?” Salomina replied, “Well, Mr Retaca, currently we are being attacked by some aliens from MAM who love to eat human and alien flesh as long as it is not their own species by the look of things, and I just want you to know that the aliens from MAM are a different species to you and that they really would like to eat you too, and right now, we really could do with your help at this moment in time because our ship is not as well equipped as the aliens from MAM’s, and not unsurprisingly, we really do not like the thought of our flesh being eaten whatsoever.” The alien on the display panel nodded his head and then responded, “Yes, I quite understand, because I have heard of these nefarious individuals, and I know of you all already, because our ship it scans for data as soon as we are contacted on the emergency SOS system. Now, of course we will help you, and I believe that we can prevent them from turning us into breakfast, dinner and lunch, because we have a system that blocks the shield of their spacecraft and then turns their shield into a compressor, and the aliens from MAM can either surrender or they can be squashed to death and their intestines spread across the galaxy and a message sent to the other members of MAM to not try it ever again!” Cedric at hearing these words became immediately excited then shouted, “Absolutely fantastic!”, and then he looked at Karen’s face and it lit up with joy. Karen then yelled, “Fantastic indeed, now, let’s get the suckers and let us go get them and crush them to

death more tightly than an alligator wearing spandex!" The alien on the display panel overheard this and then replied, "What is spandex?" Salomina laughed and then said, "Well, Spandex, is a formulated product that trousers are made of, and it is extremely tight fitting." The aliens face lit up with recognition and he then replied, "Yes, I know it well, I once had to rescue my mother from spandex with a pair of scissors, and now my mother, she goes around naked, and unfortunately, she even goes around naked in the supermarket, which obviously brings me great shame and utter embarrassment, but let us get on with the job of helping you. We shall immediately begin to crush the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, and it truly is an honour to help prevent us all from being eaten to death." Brian looked very happy, and he smiled like he hadn't done for ages and ages, and the thought of flesh-eating aliens was rapidly disappearing from his mind, which was of course a great relief, a relief so large that Brian could feel his bowels moving again, and it had been a long time since his bowels had been so happy. Yet, despite Brians bowels being happy, the flesh-eating aliens from MAM were extremely ravenous, and they wanted food immediately, and they were continuing to attack the ship with their laser guns, and with their missiles which kept smashing into their ship and then rocking it violently. One of the explosions was so violent that Cedric and Karen were sent flying through the air, and they crashed to the floor spectacularly, and felt a little pain but nothing that they couldn't handle. The alien called Retaca on the computer screen then pressed a button on his own control panel, and he started his ship crushing exercises, and he had crushed many ships in his time with this device, and

not many grapes, which for some reason were extremely unavailable in this part of the universe, despite being the universes favourite fruit. And Retaca had a steely look in his eyes, and a look of fierce determination, and nothing was going to prevent him eating his dinner by the looks of things. Salomina then stared at him for a few seconds with relief, and she then pressed a button on the control panel, and watched the aliens from MAM's spaceship, as waves of energy were sent rapidly out from Retaca's. The waves of energy then surrounded the MAM spaceship, and they then formed into circles around it and the waves began to shrink in size as the compression of the spaceship began. The display panel on the control panel of the crew's spaceship was then suddenly interrupted by the aliens from MAM, and some of them were screaming and holding their heads as a loud otherworldly screeching noise began to be heard through the speakers on the crew's spaceship, and even this noise was traumatising for Salomina's eardrums. Salomina hadn't been this traumatised since she had accidentally overheard Brian singing in the shower, and Brian's singing truly was terrible, and it was so bad in fact, that a visiting alien salesman had to rush to the toilet and then remove his trousers after soiling himself upon hearing Brian's voice. Salomina smiled a little, and the sight of the pain upon the aliens' faces was a much better sight than human beings being eaten alive by flesh eating psychopaths, which of course was an extremely unpleasant thought, even if you were in a jacuzzi and were relaxing as the aliens from MAM rushed towards you with large buckets of barbeque sauce. Barbeque sauce that they were attempting to cover you in, whilst you tried to escape them naked, and as you

screamed your head off as loudly as possible. Yes, it was a truly wonderful sight to see, and Salomina called out to the others as Cedric and Karen picked themselves up from the floor, and as they did so, Brian turned to look at Salomina, after staring out of the porthole at the aliens from MAM's spaceship being attacked in a spectacular fashion. A fashion that Brian had never seen in his life. The aliens to Brian, well, they all looked like that painting the scream by Edvard Munch, which he always found highly amusing. The crew then rushed over to Salomina and began looking at the display screen, and at the screaming aliens who were facing a terrible discombobulation, and they all looked like their heads were going to explode at any moment because of the terrible noise that was really not doing much for their complexion, and the sight of the aliens made the crew of the spaceship very happy indeed. The crew then all high fived each other delightedly, and then smiled almost in unison. Smiles so large, but so beautiful and much needed at this moment in time, and the total opposite of the look of agony upon the aliens faces, and unsurprisingly the crew were not usually into agony and they didn't even like walking into Marks and Spencer's backwards because of its logo, and the crew were usually of course pacifists, and they wouldn't dream of harming anyone at all normally, but the aliens really deserved the suffering that they were currently going through, because the aliens were the most psychotic individuals that they had met in ages, and no one had ever wanted to eat the crews flesh before at all, and well, it was a most unusual turn of events. Yes, this event of course as well as being frightening, was incredibly frustrating and very irritating, and Salomina would much rather be

shopping she thought than staring at screaming aliens who looked like they had just eaten the crews' mothers cooking. The crews' mothers cooking was unfortunately notoriously bad all around, and for two reasons, firstly, the crews' mothers were not that intelligent at all, and they could barely tie their own shoelaces. Secondly, the crews' mothers had learnt to cook after being taught by a sentient microwave in a rundown building in a very dangerous part of the town that they lived in, and it was a part of town that smelled like someone had been distilling alcohol in someone's unwashed underpants, which of course, was a last resort for any alien or human being. Cedric wished he had some alcohol now to drink and celebrate with, but despite this it was good to dream, and the sight of the agony on the aliens' faces was a marvel to behold, and a very welcome relief from the thought of their own flesh being eaten by cannibals.

Yes, this day of all days was not the day to die, and the aliens thought this too, and they were all doing their best to keep a calm and a relaxed disposition, but this was just not happening whatsoever and not possible at all, and in fact the aliens looked like they were all about to explode, and then scream for their mothers, who obviously would be in no position to help them. Yet the aliens, despite being flesh eating maniacs, had a look of fear in their eyes, but Brian found it highly amusing, despite not being a psychotic person, or a person with psychotic thoughts, and he just could not contain himself anymore whatsoever and he started laughing his head off loudly, and then he doubled up in extreme pleasure, and afterwards regained his composure and looked at the aliens screaming and holding their heads in agony. Brian then stuck his tongue

out at them, and the rest of the crew then all did the same. The alien leader looked extremely angry, and green slime then began pouring out of his nostrils. The alien leader then put both hands on his head, and closed his eyes and began to concentrate and meditate on something despite the noise of the weapon that Retarca in his spaceship was using upon them. The rest of the aliens from MAM saw what their leader was doing, and they then began to do the same, and they tried their best to ignore the noise and the pain that they were all suffering, which wasn't easy at all. The crew of the spaceship then looked at each other and wondered what on Earth was happening, and wondered what the aliens were up to. Suddenly Brian began to sway side to side, and he then began muttering to himself, and he then said the words, "Mother's cooking is not what it should be. I must eat human flesh immediately!" The rest of the crew then looked at Brian and remembered that he was a vegetarian, and the crew were immediately concerned about his unusual state of mind. Karen then tried her best to control herself and continued watching the display screen in case of any immediate dangers. The aliens were clearly, despite the distance between the crew's spaceship and the MAM spaceship, having quite an effect on Brian. Brian's eyes immediately glazed over, and he then turned towards Karen who despite her slimline figure looked quite delicious thought Brian. Brian obviously was not quite in full control of his senses whatsoever, and Brian was usually one of the crews most sensible and calmest members amongst them, yet today he was not at all calm. Brian erratically then moved towards Karen and licked his lips with anticipatory delight. Karen then screamed loudly and began fearing for her life, which



was in immediate danger, and Karen and the crew unsurprisingly had had enough danger to last a lifetime over the last twenty-four hours, and Brian becoming a cannibal was not really what they needed at this moment in time. The crew instead all needed a calm, cool and collected Brian, but Brian was turning into a raving lunatic, and very rapidly indeed. Brian then quickly lunged at Karen and tried to bite her, but he missed because she dodged out of the way. Brian then turned to Cedric and asked politely, "Do you have any barbeque sauce by any chance?" Cedric then looked at Brian with a disturbed look on his face, and he could not believe what he was seeing, and he really had never seen Brian angry at all, and it really did look like the aliens from MAM were controlling Brian's mind and doing a rather good job of it. Cedric then responded to Brian's question, "No, I do not Brian, and even if I did, I am not going to let you eat me Brian because we have been friends for ages and ages. Now, Brian don't you remember that time that we fell in love by accident when we were on holiday in Amsterdam? You know, the time, when we were sat on a bicycle for one, and you were sat behind me wearing a mini skirt and were sniffing my hair in one of your confused moments regarding your sexuality." Brian did not remember this and looked very puzzled, and after a second or two's thought he then responded, "Err, no, not really, I have always been a flesh-eating maniac, don't you know?" Salomina laughed loudly immediately and afterwards said, "Brian, you have never been a flesh-eating maniac at all, in fact you are mostly vegetarian." Brian immediately then shook his head and lunged towards Salomina whilst screaming, "Must have human flesh now! Will get

mayonnaise from the kitchen shortly. Must have human flesh now, because if I don't, I will have to eat my mother's terrible cooking, and Brian very hungry, very hungry indeed!" Brian then smiled maniacally at Salomina, and lunged again at her, this time successfully, and then afterwards he grabbed hold of her and felt a huge surge of pleasure and then wrestled her to the ground. Brian then began to bite her legs and he wished that he had barbeque sauce. Salomina in agony screamed in pain, and rapidly she then kicked Brian as hard as she could, but to no avail. Brian had seemingly found incredible strength, and he was not aware of his own strength at all, and right now, all he could think of was, "Must eat human flesh! Must eat human flesh then play bingo." because the voices inside his head had commanded him to eat human flesh, and playing bingo was one of his favourite hobbies. Cedric then jumped on top of Brian and began to try and bite his arm as he continued to try and bite Salomina. Cedric then started shouting too, "Must eat human flesh because human flesh is good for you!" Karen then after this outburst was feeling rather shocked after hearing Brian's demands for human flesh, and then Cedric's. The aliens from MAM were quite clearly having a massive effect on them both, and this was not quite what she wanted to see whatsoever. She was used to the crew living in complete harmony, and apart from the male members of the crew leaving the toilet seats up, which really irritated Karen and Salomina, and the female robots of the ship, things generally went quite well because the organisation of the delivery routes was left to the female members of the crew, and they went about their jobs very efficiently, whilst Brian and Cedric looked after the physical running of the

ship, including fixing any problems with the engines and also the computer systems. Yet, this was not really on Karen's mind at the moment, because she just wanted to be free and not have her flesh eaten by her previously peaceful colleagues. Karen kicked Brian and Cedric and then tried to wriggle free of them both, and this wasn't easy as they had both put on rather a lot of weight, after resorting to comfort eating. The delivery routes were incredibly boring and there was not much to see out of the many portholes of the ship normally, and at this moment in time, Brian and Cedric were rolling around on the floor and trying to bite each other and Salomina too. Brian then bit Cedric and tried to suck his arm and get blood out of it. "Mmm, tasty, very very tasty!" he said, then as Salomina continued to wriggle free, Cedric bit Brian as hard as he could do. Brian screamed; his previous self was there somewhere inside his discombobulated head. Cedric then spoke after savouring the mouthful of human flesh, "Mmm yes lovely, but you really could do with a bit of seasoning!" Brian then looked extremely angry and replied, "How dare you? I am a first-class dining experience!" Salomina found this highly amusing and laughed despite the gravity of the situation, then after this was said, she stood up, and began kicking Brian and Cedric. Brian then turned to Salomina angrily, "Excuse me young lady, I am trying to eat someone here, would you kindly refrain from kicking us?" Cedric looked at Salomina and then joined in and added, "Yes would you kindly, I want to eat his legs next and you kicking us is really distracting from our human flesh-eating expedition." And it was true, it is very difficult to eat human flesh when someone is trying to kick you in the

private parts, but despite the lack of concentration, over the other side of the room, as this was happening, Karen had turned back to the control panel, and the aliens from MAM were having an incredibly difficult time. Then suddenly, one of the alien's heads exploded and Karen felt sick immediately as she saw the pieces of the alien's head flying all over the place. The aliens from MAM sensed the death of their colleague immediately and looked extremely concerned at their now dead colleague slumping to the floor with his brains all over the place. The aliens began to concentrate even harder, and as they did so, Karen looked at the communication panel and pressed an option on the screen to reconnect with Retarca. Retarca was deep in concentration and furiously pressing a button on his own control panel. Karen spoke, "Retarca, how are things going?" Retarca looked up from his control panel and replied, "Well, with one of the alien's heads exploding, it is going very well indeed." Karen smiled and added, "That is excellent news commander Retarca, you should get a medal for this." Retarca then stuck his thumb up and went back to pressing buttons on the control panel. Karen was relieved for a few seconds, then suddenly without any warning, Retarca started shouting, "Must eat human and alien flesh immediately, because I am in dire need, yes, I must eat alien and human flesh with speed!" and Karen really was not expecting this, and felt a sudden panic come over her, and she quickly feared the worst, then looking over at Cedric and Brian eating each other she quickly realised that no one may get out of this alive, and with their only hope Retarca now wanting human and alien flesh too, the help from him had suddenly ceased to be of any use as there did not seem to be any other crew

members at all where he was currently, and hope was fading fast, far too fast, faster than a singing meteorite. Still, what would be would be, and over the other side of the room, Cedric and Brian were still being kicked by Salomina, and they kept making noises whenever one of Salomina's heavy boots landed with force upon their bodies, noises such as "Ooh. Aagh, that really hurt, because I am not as fast as I used to be, and also, you really are not a lady, and oh by the way he is much tastier than you!" Yes, it was quite strange indeed, and Salomina was not used to such surreal conversations, and she tried to put this out of her mind momentarily, then turned back to the control panel. Retarca started to walk away from his own control panel and appeared to be dribbling in anticipation of alien or human flesh. Suddenly from behind Karen, she heard Salomina shout loudly, "Must eat human flesh, female flesh is the best!" Karen's heart then leapt into her mouth, and afterwards it sunk like a stone in water, and Karen did not know what to do next. Salomina began to bite Brian and Cedric, and then Karen ran quickly to the porthole and stared out of it. She could see a drone blinking in the distance, not too far away from the ship. Karen wondered whose drone it was and then realised that it was firing a bright blue beam of something towards the rest of the crew. Could this be the source of the mind control problem thought Karen? Well, yes, it could be, but what was she to do about it? Karen wasn't initially sure. She then contemplated this for a second before deciding not to take any risks and then ran quickly back to the control panel and pressed the missile button, after targeting the drone. A missile then flew out rapidly from the crew's own spaceship and it headed across the small

bit of space between their spaceship and the drone, and it was quite a large drone, about fifty feet wide. The missile then almost reached the drone, but somehow it was turned around, and afterwards it began returning towards the crew's spaceship, which was totally unexpected, and the very last thing that Karen wanted to see. The missile after a few seconds then hit the ship and exploded depleting the ships shields even further. Karen then panicked a little upon seeing this, and then without thinking she looked over at the rest of the crew, but unfortunately, they were still busy trying to bite each other and eat each other and were quite clearly more interested in eating each other than in helping her. But apart from the lack of help, Karen luckily hadn't spent much time in front of the porthole, and her brain had not been taken over by the aliens from MAM, but the others were doing their best to consume each other's flesh with great vigour and wild abandon. Brian then politely said to Salomina, "Do you have a doggy bag by any chance, because I do not think that I can actually, eat all of you in one go." Salomina smiled then replied, "Sorry Brian, I do not have a doggy bag, but would you mind if I bite your cheek?" Cedric thought about it for a second, smiled, then licked his lips, and spoke with a renewed enthusiasm, "And Brian do you mind if bite your other cheek?" Brian smiled, then stopped attacking both of them instantly and thought about it, and afterwards said, "Well, yes, that normally would be fine, but I do have a busy schedule you know, so, please could you reschedule it for later in the week, because I am trying to eat both of you, and unfortunately I am currently running a bit behind schedule at this very moment in time, and I really am so sorry to be rude. I know it is awfully

bad of me to inconvenience you in this way, and thus delay your enjoyment of me, but if it is any consolation to you both, I just want you to know that you are so delicious, that I would highly recommend you as the two best meals in the known universe." Cedric and Salomina then quickly replied together at the same time, "Oh, thank you Brian, but we are very sorry, but it is each for themselves now." and then they both began biting Brian's cheeks furiously. Brian then somehow despite being held down by Cedric and Salomina found some superhuman strength inside himself. Brian then lifted both of them up with both of his hands, and then quickly he threw them across the room like rag dolls, and they sailed across the room like the lightest of objects in the universe, before crashing to the floor, and this crashing to floor over the last day was becoming rather painful, but Cedric and Salomina were not themselves at this moment in time, and they didn't say anything at all. Cedric and Salomina were just consumed with thoughts of eating human flesh, and they just picked themselves up again, and then turned to Karen with eyes bigger than their bellies, and started shouting once more, "Must have human flesh, and you are next!" Cedric and Brian with great gusto then ran towards Karen whilst shouting, "Yummy! Yummy! Yummy! I want human flesh in my tummy!" and then after doing so, both of them dived for Karen's slender but delicious looking legs, and then Brian and Cedric they began to bite at them, like Karen was the last meal on the Earth. Karen shuddered at the thought of not being alive and not being able to eat human flesh ever again, and she was then rushed at by Brian whose eyes were like saucers. Brian was truly ravenous, and as he rushed towards her, he

pulled out a spork, a plastic fork and a jar of Branston pickle from inside his jacket, a jar of Branston pickle that he had previously forgotten about. Karen already had the thought of grimacing in her mind, and she then prepared herself for the impact of Brian's overweight bulbous body smashing into him, and as Brian ran towards her, she tried kicking him, and Brian Kicked Karen in return. Brian unfortunately for him, missed the target and then lost control of his balance and of his jar of Branston pickle, which sadly then flew out of his hands and hit Cedric on the forehead knocking him unconscious. Brian then looked at Cedric lying on the floor and laughed, and then looked at Karen, and Brian decided to choose to eat Cedric as he was such an easy target, and Cedric was truly glad to be finally tasting human flesh after eating huge quantities of terribly inedible food on this most boring of delivery jobs. Yet somehow despite being further away from the porthole than before, the mind control was still clearly working, and suddenly Karen began to shout, "Must have human flesh too, must have human flesh too!" Salomina then rubbed her stomach and said "Mmm lovely flesh you have.", then she grabbed Karen and tried biting her, and all the crew were biting each other, and there was total and utter chaos as they all fought for their lives and tried to savour the tastiest of human flesh. And as they did so... Over on the control panel, Retarca had not found any human or alien flesh to eat, and he was instead trying to eat a teddy bear, a teddy bear that he thought had no flavour whatsoever, and he was right, it didn't. Retarca looked disappointed, and then shouted out loudly in annoyance, "Drone, where is the human and the alien flesh, I cannot find any, now bring me some curry sauce,



because this teddy bear tastes absolutely disgusting!" Still, you cannot please everyone all the time, and whether the aliens from MAM were pleased is another matter, and precisely what the aliens from MAM were up to now, no one cared, because the crew were all consumed by their intense lust for human flesh, and their discombobulated brains could not compute anything else whatsoever at that moment in time, but still, what a way to go this would be, being eaten to death by their previously friendly crew members, crew members who were eagerly trying to consume each other and out compete each other in a weird kind of Olympics. Brian had always been competitive and unsurprisingly he wanted to be the champion human flesh eater, and he had a certain panache about him, and always had. Brian stylishly picked up the jar of Branston pickle like Zorro, and wielded it with a swashbuckling attitude, and then, Brian opened it whilst being attacked by Karen and Salomina. Brian desperately tried fighting them off with both of his legs, and tried kicking them at the same time, then he put his finger into the jar of Branston pickle and began to rub it into Karen and Salomina's eyeballs. Karen and Salomina then groaned in discomfort and began flailing around trying to hit Brian mostly unsuccessfully, and afterwards Karen and Salomina, both started to try to wipe their eyes and remove the Branston pickle from them. Brian as they did so, moved forwards towards them both and stuck his tongue out and began to try to lick Salomina's eyeballs. Salomina in response then grabbed Brian's face and pulled his cheeks extremely hard to see if they would fall off so that they could be eaten, which was most unlady like, then afterwards she managed to punch Brian extremely hard for a woman of her size.

Brian then fell to the floor and was out cold instantly after being hit and knocked unconscious. Karen laughed at the sight of this then tried to wrestle Salomina to the ground. Salomina then stumbled and tripped over Brian's body and fell to the floor. Karen afterwards immediately then began trying to bite Salomina's arms, one after the other, and managed to bite a piece of her arm off, a small chunk of flesh, but it was better than nothing. Salomina screamed, and at that moment Betty

walked back into the room and took a look around at the chaos before her eyes. This was not normal she thought, not normal at all, because what are the humans doing to each other that was so strange? It was a puzzle to her, and the elephant robot cleaner looked a bit perplexed as she tried her best to understand, and she eventually came up with no answer and had to search the internet for one, as she had never seen the crew attack each other before, and from the description on the internet and from the accompanying videos, the elephant knew that this situation was not good at all, and this current weird situation was rather unhealthy, and it was definitely against all that she stood for, despite only being programmed to stand against certain things that initially she did not understand. The elephant robot cleaner had grown to learn a lot from the internet, and initially she presumed that the crew had been drinking copious amounts of beer or wine or some other intoxicating substances, which had momentarily damaged their brains. Betty then looked up on the internet what to do with drunken people. One video suggested that a human being could be put in a dustbin, and another video suggested what to do with a drunken sailor, but the crew weren't

sailors in the traditional sense, as their spaceship was not a boat that travelled on water, well unless the crew had been drinking too much and had by no accident crashed into an ocean, which was something that had not happened yet, luckily. Cedric then began to move and started to moan, and he had begun to come out of his unconsciousness and as he started to wake up slowly, he began to mumble, and he muttered the words, "Must have human flesh.". This phrase did not sound good, but the elephant robot cleaner did not yet understand what this meant, and once again she had to resort to the intergalactic internet to help understand this unusual terminology, then when she did, she realised humans eating each other was not a very sensible idea when they had a ship to fly across the universe and jobs to do that included very mundane delivery routes. Betty moved towards the unconscious crew members lead on the floor, and then she picked Brian and put him on his back, and afterwards a small panel on Betty was opened, and a fist attached to an arm sprang out of it, and the fist punched Cedric, who was knocked unconscious again. Salomina, and Karen then were also punched and also knocked unconscious. Betty started walking out of the control room with the crew on her back, and she had decided to put the crew to bed, which seemed the most sensible thing to do at this moment in time, and time was of the essence. Betty continued to search the internet for interesting pieces of information about eating human flesh, and then after scrolling through several pages of search engine results, she came across a website relating to the flesh eating aliens from MAM, and she quickly found out that the catchphrase "Must eat human flesh", was something that the aliens from MAM

programmed their victims to say through telepathy, and after reading that she realised that the spaceship had been under attack from the aliens from MAM who were notorious for flesh eating and for having barbecues with the remains of human beings and aliens, but what was the best thing to do now? She thought about that, then after a few seconds she decided that not eating human flesh was very sensible indeed, and today she could save four people from eating each other, she could save four friends from death, four friends who had previously got along so well. Betty moved quickly on her roller-skates across the control room and then entered the corridor and began to head down it towards the crew compartments whilst saying the words, "Must not eat human flesh." Betty then reached Brian's cabin and opened the door with its trunk and entered the room through the electronic sliding door. She then put Brian down on his bed and left quickly locking the door behind her so Brian couldn't escape and cause havoc and try and eat the other crew members again. Betty then took the other crew members to their apartments and to their beds and locked them in, whilst the aliens from MAM were continuing to use telepathy transmission by drones to subdue Retarca, and the other crew members of his ship, who were now attempting to eat each other with great delight, but not very successfully.

Betty then tried to decide what to do next, as she had had no experience of marauding flesh-eating aliens at all, and of course this was not an easy situation to deal with, but today would be the first time that she had had to do so. Betty cogitated and ruminated, then walked down the corridor trying to formulate a plan, and psychotic individuals were never usually found attacking the ship,

but today was a day like no other, and now was the time to deal with the situation, and luckily the crew were still alive at the moment. Betty took a few moments to think about things as she walked down the long corridor, and then tried to prepare a plan, and thought to herself, what kind of psychotic individuals would eat a robot elephant cleaner? None probably, but it was good to be prepared for the worst, because in space, anything could happen, and it frequently did, and there are few chances of being rescued if some evil villain decides to pick upon you and has greater weaponry than you. Still, now was now, and anyway, there was not much time to make a decision, and not much time to waste at all. Betty then left the corridor and returned to the control room and headed over to the control panel. Two hatches on either side of her slid open, and out of the sides of her, two hands appeared, and she then began to look at the display screen on the control panel. The display screen was displaying Retarca being attacked by giant teddy bears, which was most unusual. Now, where the gigantic teddy bears had come from was not certain, but in space there really were some crazy individuals, individuals whose lives really made no sense whatsoever, and today Bettys life made no sense at all, and her metallic brain felt like it was going to explode from all the contemplation and the cogitation and the rumination about what to do next, then suddenly Betty had a bright idea, and decided to try and communicate with the alien on the screen who was apparently losing a fight with two teddy bears, which should not be possible at all judging by the sight of Retarca who was quite muscular and well built. Still, losing a fight to two teddy bears he was, and Betty pressed the communication button on the screen to

communicate with the individuals before her eyes. Betty then spoke, "Hello, excuse me, what are you all doing there?" The gigantic teddy bears and Retarca then stopped fighting each other immediately. Retarca then spoke, "Must eat human and alien flesh!" The gigantic teddy bears afterwards laughed in embarrassment then joined in and the first one then spoke, "Oh no you won't, there is no alien and human flesh on this spaceship!" Retarca then answered, "Right, then in that case, I will eat gigantic teddy bears!" The gigantic teddy bears then put their hands on their hips, and then looked at the video camera and one of them spoke to Betty, "Hello, we are Alixia and Zeus, and I am Alixia and we usually come in peace, but today the telepathic mind controlling flesh eating aliens from MAM have decided that they want to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner all at the same time, and then afterwards sell the human flesh of any remaining members of the occupants of your spaceship, and this man that you see before you is the captain of the ship, and he has also had his brain manipulated from the drones that they send out into space to surround the spaceships that they are attacking, drones which fire beams of energy through the ship portholes and the ships windows, yes, beams of energy which transmit certain messages to individuals that the aliens from MAM are interested in eating and selling on the intergalactic web. Messages, such as, "We must eat human and alien flesh!", which of course is not very polite at all, and as friendly teddy bears, we really do frown on this kind of behaviour, but many innocent victims have sadly fallen foul of the flesh eating aliens from MAM, and we really should do something about it, because the intergalactic council do not really seem to care

at all about what these psychopathic raving lunatics get up to. So, my dear lady will you join us in defeating that spaceship nearby that contains many flesh-eating aliens from MAM. Aliens who would eat their own mother with barbecue sauce?" Betty then took a split second to think about it, and afterwards quickly replied to the question affirmatively, "Yes, of course, I will help you, but I was wondering, did your captain just eat your own baby?" Zeus quickly replied, "No, luckily that was just a toy teddy bear." Retarca then, after Zeus had spoken, laughed evilly and added, "Must eat teddy bear flesh!" and then lunged towards the gigantic teddy bears and tried to bite Alixia. Alixia and Zeus then tried to wrestle Retarca to the ground whilst Betty continued to watch in amazement at this very surreal situation unfolding before her very eyes. Betty then spoke once again, "What should I do?" The gigantic teddy bears then stopped fighting Retarca momentarily, and Retarca continued trying to attack them with great force and tried to hold him off as best they could. Alixia then said, "Attack the drones that surround the ships, because without the drones, the telepathy does not work, and the aliens from MAM cannot control any one's mind whatsoever!" Betty then replied, "Ok, I will attack them now, good luck with the alien." The teddy bears nodded, then began to wrestle Retarca, and Retarca continued to try to attack the teddy bears and eat them alive, yet despite them not tasting as good as human or alien flesh, teddy bear flesh would have to do for now. Betty then began to press the buttons on the control panel with its extendable hands, which were rather large and a bit clumsy, but still they did the job, and today there was some serious work to be done. Betty had come to understand the workings of

the control panel, whilst the crew members of the ship were asleep, and this was very helpful, indeed and now was a good time to put into practice what Betty had learned. Betty pressed a button on the display panel and changed the video view of outside the ship, and then began to look for drones, and after pressing the button several times and flicking through the different views, Betty spotted two large drones about a mile away, and they did not appear to be defended or capable of defending themselves. Betty then pressed the missile button, and afterwards fired two missiles at the drones, and the drones did absolutely nothing, but instead just sat there in the blackness of space, firing light beams towards the crew's spaceship whilst continuing to control the minds of anyone that the beams penetrated. The missiles quickly hit their target and exploded into millions of pieces, then afterwards several more drones appeared, and Betty fired some more missiles at these new drones, and they also exploded too spectacularly. Immediately several hundred more drones then appeared and Betty, was rather taken aback by this, and began to fire as many missiles as she could. One by one the drones were destroyed, and it did not take very long at all to do so, and then afterwards there was silence, total silence, and Betty pressed the view changer button on the control panel, and then tuned into the view of Retarca attacking the teddy bears, but now Retarca had actually ceased attacking them or so it seemed, and Retarca just stood there motionless. The teddy bears were tired and had their hands on their hips and looked like unsurprisingly like teddy bears that been fighting an ugly alien filled with snot because they were covered in sticky goo. Betty waved at them and then



shouted, "Hello, what is happening? Retarca is not attacking now." Alixia then replied, "Good, because, if you have destroyed the drones, then they cannot control him or anyone else now." Betty was relieved, greatly relieved indeed, and it seemed that today had just got better, but the destruction of the drones did seem too easy, far far too easy. Now, was there something else, about to happen that they were not aware of? Well, it was a possibility, and maybe, just maybe, Betty could handle it.

Zeus took a few seconds of quiet contemplation and then stared into the camera and spoke, "Well, thank you for your help, Alixia and Zeus, but I would not get too complacent about the destruction of the drones." Betty nodded then replied, "I agree, that is very wise advice indeed, and a most unusual situation that I was not expecting whatsoever." Zeus nodded in agreement then unfolded his arms and paused before speaking, "Us too, but we are glad to be of service. Now, is there anything else that we can do to help?" A loud warning siren then started blaring across Retarca's spaceship and across the spaceship that the crew were on, before Alixia and Zeus could answer. Retarca suddenly awoke from his silence, and then rushed over to his own control panel, as if nothing had happened whatsoever. Betty then pressed the button to change the views of the outside of the spaceship, and suddenly in the distance, a large meteorite appeared, and written upon the meteorite in gigantic letters were the words MAM. Betty was shocked by the sight of the meteorite, and it was heading slowly towards both their spaceships. Much more rapidly than they all would like, but head towards them it was, and it had the potential to bring about all their destructions instantaneously. Still

time was not on their side, and Betty was extremely concerned, "Meteorites." Betty exclaimed loudly, before reopening the communication channel with Retarca, who was frantically switching views on his control panel and staring at the meteorite in the distance too. The teddy bears, who were close to the control panel took their heads off before the robot cleaners' eyes and they were not actually teddy bears at all, but they were instead aliens dressed as teddy bears. Betty was a little bit puzzled by this, and now was not really the time to be puzzled, but she was, and she quickly asked a question, "Why were you both dressed as teddy bears." The ex-teddy bears shrugged their shoulders, then replied in unison, "To help prevent telepathic waves reaching our brains making us want to eat human and alien flesh." Betty then replied, "Oh, very sensible indeed. Much more sensible than any solution my crew members would have come up with, because my crew members are not very sensible at all, and once I caught the crew members generating holographic images of their mothers and asking for help with bingo." Retarca laughed, then suddenly did a double take and then said, "What? Eat human flesh? Now that is a preposterous idea! Who in their right minds would actually want to eat human flesh?" The ex-teddy bears could think of nothing worse, and then they said together, "No one! No one in their right minds would! But you Retarca, you have been attempting to eat teddy bear flesh for at least half an hour and without any barbecue sauce!" Retarca immediately looked shocked and then replied, "Oh, no I have not, I have definitely not been attempting to eat teddy bear flesh whatsoever, and why would I? It is crazy, absolutely crazy, and I double assure you, that I am

really not crazy at all!" Betty then joined in the conversation, and said, "Yes, you were, you were actually trying to eat teddy bear flesh Retarca, I saw you, and well, despite the teddy bears not actually being teddy bears, you certainly did give it a good go." Retarca pondered this for a split second, then continued the conversation, "Yes, but why would I do such a thing?" Betty then replied, "Well, because the aliens from MAM whose spaceship is parked not far away, and who are flesh eating lunatics wanted breakfast lunch and dinner at the same time, and they have been using drones to control your mind, and to try and control the minds of other individuals aboard the spaceship that I live on." "Really?!" said Retarca, "How is that even possible?" Betty then added, "Because some bright spark came up with some incredibly intelligent technology that manipulated people's minds better than Machiavelli on steroids." "Oh." said Retarca and then went silent. Zeus afterwards then spoke, "Yes, that is true." Betty stopped thinking about the situation and then replied, "But now is really not the time for talking about eating human flesh, because there is a massive meteorite headed for our ships!" Retarca unsurprisingly looked suitably scared, and then replied, "A meteorite?" "Yes." Betty replied, "A, really gigantic meteorite." Retarca replied, "Oh, a meteorite, that isn't good at all!" "Well exactly, but it is moving slowly." said Betty. Betty then looked at the display screen on the control panel, and could see the meteorite clearer than before, and on top of the meteorite were lots of strobe lights and disco lights, which was a most unusual site indeed." Alixia and Zeus then spoke together, "Oh, what can you see Mrs robot elephant cleaner?" Betty then replied, "The meteorite is a

mobile disco meteorite, and it is heading directly towards us." Retarca laughed out loud, and then added, "A meteorite disco?" Betty nodded, then responded, "Yes, a meteorite disco with the words MAM written on it." Retarca said, "Oh, MAM, the flesh-eating aliens? They have a disco?" "Yes, a disco inside a meteorite." said Betty, "It looks like they want to party all night long after eating as much human and alien flesh as possible." Alixia didn't like the sound of this, nor did Zeus and they looked very concerned indeed, and quite rightly too, but currently it was all very silent, and the missiles and laser beams had stopped hitting the spaceships, and it was very much like the calm before the storm. Still, things should not be taken for granted thought Betty, and Alixia and Zeus too. Retarca then looked at his own control panel display screen and then back at the camera, "Oh, what are we going to do about this situation?" Zeus looked extremely perplexed, and then thought about it for a moment or two, "Well, I suggest, that we get out of here, rapidly, like very rapidly indeed!" Retarca nodded and then added, "Yes, but how?" Zeus replied, "Well, how about we join both our ships together and then we can move rapidly out of here and hopefully leave the flesheating aliens from MAM behind." Alixia smiled, and then replied, "Great idea. Yes, that is a truly great idea, and I really have no wish to be..." Alixia's voice suddenly tailed off, and then she stopped speaking after looking at the display screen on their spaceships control panel. The display screen was now displaying the aliens from MAM dressed in sparkly outfits. Some of them were wearing dark glasses and they were dancing to some awful techno music that was coming through the speakers on the control panel, techno

music that was enough to kill any brain cells that you had left. Suddenly the control panel next to Betty started displaying live video footage of the aliens from MAM on the disco meteorite. Betty had never seen anything like it whatsoever, and the aliens from MAM were dancing in the strobe lights, and they were waving neon fluorescent sticks in the air and then banging their heads in time to the music and were quite obviously having an absolutely wonderful time indeed. Still, this was not quite the sight that they wanted to see at all, and how many flesh-eating aliens from MAM were on the spaceship, was uncertain, but probably far too many for their liking. Betty pressed another button on the control panel and the screen was split into two and displayed the dancing aliens listening to the techno music, and on the other part of the screen there was video of the meteorite, with flashing neon lights and disco lights crawling along at a relatively slow speed. Betty had never seen a disco meteorite before and all was currently calm, surprisingly. Yet it probably would not be long until the meteorite arrived at the spaceship. It looked like it was under the control of some kind of engine, and soon potentially huge numbers of flesh-eating aliens may try and board the spaceship, so now was a good time to coordinate the joining of the two spaceships together, and then get the hell out of this part of space, far enough away from the disco meteorite to be safe. Alixia spoke to Retarca, and said, "We need to manoeuvre the spaceships together, the flesh-eating aliens from MAM will be upon us very shortly, and today is not a good day to die." Retarca responded, "No, it isn't, and these flesh-eating aliens will not stop until we are all dead and eaten and inside tins and are being sold on the intergalactic

supermarket shelves." Zeus sighed and then replied, "Well, let us get on with it then." Betty on the crew's spaceship then joined in the conversation whilst pressing buttons on the control panel display and wondered how to go about manoeuvring the spaceship on top of Retarca's spaceship. Betty then began to talk to the computer embedded in the control panel computer, "How do we manoeuvre the ship on top of Retarca's spaceship?" The computer then made a few beeping noises, and quickly responded, "Who is Retarca, and why would you want to do that?" Betty unsurprisingly thought that was a normal response, and then replied, "Because there is a large meteorite filled with flesh eating aliens heading towards us, and we really do not want to be eaten alive at all." The computer computed the message, and then replied, "That I can compute, and which spaceship is it by the way?" Betty then pressed a button on the control panel and changed the view of Retarca's spaceship and then zoomed in on the lettering upon the spaceship, and its registration number which read, "2FAST4U" The computer then scanned the spaceship, and started to look up the identity of it and for information about its communication device information and about its docking systems. The computer then spoke, "Commencing docking sequence." And the spaceship then began moving very slowly towards Retarca's spaceship. Outside the spaceship the flesh-eating aliens from MAM's spaceship sat there doing nothing whatsoever, and they seemed to be awaiting the return of the meteorite, which was still moving very slowly indeed, not that this was much comfort when there were potentially vast numbers of flesh-eating aliens about to pounce, flesh eating aliens awaiting for the chance to try to consume everyone's flesh.

Still, at least the spaceships were moving in the right direction. Retarca on his spaceship then commanded his own spaceship to dock with the crew's spaceship, "Dock with the spaceship." said Retarca very loudly and very clearly. Retarca's computer then responded to the command immediately and then the spaceship began to move towards the crew's spaceship, and very smoothly indeed. The two spaceships were just above and below each other, and things were going very well so far. The meteorite disco containing the flesh-eating aliens from MAM were continuing to head towards the spaceship, whilst the crew's spaceship and Retarca's spaceship were moving forwards together as if in slow motion in a most unusual romance. Retarca kept his eyes on the screen of the computer control panel, and Alixia and Zeus too had walked over to the control panel to see what was happening. Betty stood watching the control panel on the crew's spaceship, and were transfixed by the beauty of the movement, which was as if a ballet in space, and Betty really liked ballet, and even had its own ballerina outfit, which she wore regularly when the crew were fast asleep, and the main control room was free of humans and the spaceship was being flown by its own computer systems, and there were no disturbances at all, mostly late at night, when it was the best time to dance. Betty really like dancing and whirled the night away listening to the most beautiful songs, songs that she truly loved, and even to classical music, and this helped her unwind from her job, which at times could be a bit monotonous. Most monotonous indeed. The two spaceships continued to move together, and the crew's spaceship then landed on Retarca's, and Retarca's joined the crews. Retarca's face

appeared on the control panel display screen, and he spoke, "We have now docked." Betty had never been involved in anything like this before, and today was the first time and hopefully the very last time trying to escape flesh eating aliens. Not something that you wish to do every day quite obviously, but at least the ships had docked together very successfully. The flesh-eating aliens from MAM's disco meteorite were now very close indeed, and Retarca tried not to think of the look on all their faces and tried not to imagine the saliva dripping from their mouths onto the floor at the thought of fresh human flesh to eat and sell on the intergalactic internet. The clock was ticking, and it was time to leave immediately. The two ships were locked together through the metal magnetic shields of the hull which could be turned on or off to repel or pull metallic objects towards it. Retarca took a deep breath then turned to the camera in his control room and spoke to Betty, "Now that is done, shall we leave, in the direction of "502743" Betty then replied, "Yes, I will be glad to leave, the crew are currently unconscious, after ceasing eating each other, which obviously is a rather unpleasant experience, and not a very sensible thing to do whatsoever. Retarca looked at his control panel and pressed a navigation button on the display screen and then entered the coordinates "502743". Retarca's spaceship and the crew's spaceship then began to move away from the meteorite, and away from the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, which was obviously a huge relief to Retarca. Betty pressed a button on the display panel and the video image of Retarca and Alixia and Zeus appeared, and Retarca was in conversation with Alixia and Zeus. Retarca spoke, "Well, at least we are off now. Those flesh-eating aliens



from MAM are certainly crazy individuals, and I am glad they will not be eating my flesh this evening.” Retarca then turned back to the control panel and stared at it and could see the disco meteorite disappearing into the distance. The flesh-eating aliens from MAM were now beginning to chase after them, but there was no hope for them because two engines were much better than one. Betty pressed a few buttons on the display control panel and an image of the aliens from MAM’s spaceship appeared. Also, several smaller craft were beginning to emerge from the main spaceship, and had started to give chase, and they began firing missiles at Retarca and the crew’s spaceship. It had been a terrible day meeting the flesh-eating aliens from MAM from a distance, who luckily, had definitely barely eaten anything at all. This was a great relief of course, because the flesh-eating aliens from MAM had a very fierce reputation for eating people and very quickly indeed. Once for example they decided to help people with weight loss, by visiting as many weightwatchers as possible and eating obese people, which to them was great fun. The flesh-eating aliens from MAM are weird and very hungry.

Being feared across the Universe was very enjoyable the flesh-eating aliens thought, and they certainly tried their best to eat as many people as possible. The thinking behind the flesh-eating aliens from Maam’s in regards to this matter was that their mothers had taught they had better learn to cook properly if they wanted to attract husbands and wives. The flesh eating aliens from Maam were surprisingly romantic, which was a surprise to most.

## **Chapter 7**

## “Aftermath.”

The crew had survived the flesh-eating aliens from MAM by some miracle, and luckily all the crew of the spaceship had eaten mostly was scones and cream, and they had only attempted to eat each other, very unsuccessfully, which was a great relief indeed to find out that they were really useless cannibals, and they were much better at eating normal food. Brian had once tried consuming a parsnip up his nostril, but this obviously had not gotten him anywhere at all, and this had in fact got him thrown out of a restaurant by his earlobe, which was a mildly painful experience, but Brian had managed to eat a whole roast dinner, and then didn't have to pay for it, because he had offended the waiter so much. Still, now was not really the time for thinking about dinner, but he did have a thought about the aliens from MAM, who given enough time and enough training could in time eat the entire human race and all the alien species in the universe. The aliens from MAM were evil looking creatures and the day meeting the flesh-eating aliens from MAM had been a terrible day, but by putting the aliens from MAM behind them, they could reach the fish and chip shop in the black hole very quickly indeed, well, as long as they were not faced with more flesh-eating aliens from MAM. Retarca was a very quiet man, and he liked silence so much, that he once had his tongue removed deliberately and then implanted into a yucca plant. The tongue then afterwards began to talk by itself and shout horrible things at Retarca who in return responded with rude hand signals. Retarca eventually got very bored of making rude hand signals and had the tongue reattached into his own mouth, and it

took him a whole month to retrain it, because it had gotten so used to saying the following phrases very loudly, "David the man who thought he was a biscuit.", "Bobblycolly", and "Will you marry me." This last phrase had gotten Retarca into huge amounts of trouble and had also gotten him married by accident twice and once to a vicar by mistake, and of course, as most marriages do, these marriages did not end up working out very well whatsoever, but he did get to keep an unlimited supply of pot noodles as a divorce settlement, which was obviously fantastic.

Still, here Retarca was, a man of few words facing another journey to somewhere new, and hopefully to a place without flesh eating aliens.

Retarca looked like a wise man thought Betty and she thought that he would ask him some questions about the universe, because despite having lived amongst the stars for quite some time, Betty did not know much about the universe. Betty, then spoke, "Retarca, is it true that humans were the first to land on the moon?" Retarca then looked at the video screen, and replied, "Yes, it is true, but many people did not really believe that it was true for many decades afterwards, and there are still today, many conspiracy theories about whether humans were the first to land on the moon, or whether they were not." Betty, then thought for a moment, and said "Ah, I see. So, Retarca, I have always wondered, was the moon made out of cheese really, and was the cheese covered up by large photographs of dust and rocks?" Retarca smiled and then laughed and instantly responded, "No, it is actually made out of rock and sediment, and it is very very boring indeed, and once I went there, and all there was to do was

to play nine-hole golf, and then afterwards eat cheeseburgers at the burger restaurant in one of the large craters, and visit the amusement park, and I did go on one of the rides which involved flying a small spaceship through multiple ring donuts, very large ring donuts indeed, and then afterwards get flung into a gigantic bucket of custard and then get rescued by a levitating hamster on a floating platform with a large stick. Betty laughed, and then said, "Well, it does not sound too bad to me, and I really would not mind going there myself, and as a robot elephant cleaner, I have not managed to go on many journeys whatsoever, and my life has mostly been incredibly boring, and I really could do with some new adventures, because this cleaning route is incredibly mundane, and even the crew are bored out of their brains, and they are definitely not in their right minds I think sometimes, but still. Now, I was wondering Retarca, what are stars made out of?" Retarca, then thought about it for a moment, "Well, stars, are large celestial bodies made mostly out of helium and hydrogen that produce light and heat from the nuclear forges inside their cores." Bettys' electronic eyes widened, and she then spoke, "Oh, I see, now, what is a nuclear forge Retarca?" Retarca then held his hand up as if to say wait a minute and looked at his control panel display screen and the flesh eating aliens from MAM were quite a long way away now, and their disco meteorite was too, and they could not keep up at all with the two spaceships joined together, which was a massive relief. Retarca after checking that his crew and himself were no longer in danger, looked back up from the control panel display screen, and spoke, "Nuclear forges are places where material is created." Betty found this

answer quite frankly very boring indeed, and she had been hoping for a far more interesting response, but alas it was not to be. Still, another question was brewing in Bettys' electronic brain, and it was quite a good brain when programmed in the right way, which it was at the moment. Sometimes though it did play up a little, and once when it was invaded by a software bug, she began to behave erratically, and order cheesecakes online by the hundreds, and she was not really fond of cheesecakes, because she thought they were the devils work, and she also thought that they lead people into temptation, and thought that they had tempted far too many people and had lead many people over the edge into obesity, and Betty did not want to look obese despite being an elephant, well, not a real elephant of course. Still, today was a good day for the brain, and things were going much smoother now, much smoother than a shaved lama across an ice-skating rink. The crew's spaceship and Retarca's spaceship were speeding away from the flesh-eating aliens from MAM at quite some speed, and they had faded into the distance, and Betty did not know what the plan was next, once they were well clear of the flesh-eating aliens from MAM. Which would not be too far away. Yet the crew were still probably unconscious and hopefully still alive. Betty was not a psychopath obviously, but instead she preferred watching jelly and ice-cream, which she pretended to eat at some private parties just to get to know people, and once she got encouraged to upload videos of her eating ice-cream by a person who claimed that he could make her rich. This of course did not happen, and he did not make her rich at all, but instead he just made her unhappy and then kept commanding her to make strange

faces whilst eating ice-cream and then blowing kisses occasionally into a video camera. This was indeed a very strange career she thought at the time, and being a robot elephant cleaner, it was much more enjoyable than blowing kisses and eating ice-cream in front of people that she did not know whatsoever. Yet, some people in the universe had made massive amounts of money from this, but what would a female robot elephant cleaner spend it all on apart from cleaning products? She tried to think about it, but it nearly blew her CPU processors quite a few times and she had to calm herself down and then stare at a bowl of jelly and icecream, which was much nicer than eating a frog. Once a frog had climbed inside her mouth by accident once and she had accidentally squished it to death, which was rather unfortunate, as it had happened at an environmental conference, and this drove the environmentalists crazy, and they angrily chased her out of the conference which was also attended by the crew. The crew then spent several hours trying to find Betty amongst the angry hordes of people, and eventually when they found her, she was being beaten by people wielding extremely large carrots, the likes of which she had never seen at all. Still, at least the crew came to the rescue, and she had gotten some free carrots out of it. The crew had now been rescued by Betty and she hoped for some extremely nice compliments from them later on, when they had awakened from their unconsciousness, and had hopefully forgotten about thinking of eating human flesh.

Human flesh would not have done much for their complexions whatsoever, and they were an incredibly pasty looking lot, and Brian and Cedric were extremely unfit, and they never went near the gym whatsoever, but

Salomina and Karen went regularly, and Betty really hated the sight of their spandex trousers, because spandex trousers were so tight that they compressed human beings in such a way, that Karen and Salomina's eyes almost popped out of their sockets, and Betty always carried a tube of superglue just in case their eyes did fall out of their sockets and then need putting back in. Luckily, Betty had never seen a humans eyes pop out of their sockets before, and it was not something that she would like to see, but it was best to be prepared, and Betty was always prepared. She was extremely loyal to the crew of the spaceship, and they were extremely loyal to her, even when she had managed to accidentally suck a large meteorite towards the spacecraft when she was on a spacewalk. Strangely the elephant robot cleaner had become incredibly good at holding her breath, despite not needing to as she was a robot, but Betty had seen it on a television program, a program where people were scuba diving and searching for lost waterproof toilet rolls. After the near accident with the meteorite, which had nearly hit the spaceship, Betty just managed to rescue it in time and then send it off in another direction, towards a distant planet which looked incredibly boring, and needed a bit of waking up. The two conjoined spaceships were now quite a distance away from the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, and Retarca looked at the camera, and then stared into it, and asked "Well, it was a pleasure to meet you all. We must go now, but hopefully we will never see the flesh-eating aliens from MAM ever again." Betty then replied, "Well, that would be a great relief, because it has been one difficult day for the flesh-eating aliens, but at least we all succeeded in escaping with our lives. So, thank you very much

Retarca and Alixia and Zeus, I deeply and sincerely appreciate it, your support has truly helped save our lives, and I am very glad, because I really did not fancy having my flesh eaten at all." Retarca laughed, and then replied, "Yes, that is very sensible, despite being made out of metal they may have run out of human flesh, and you may have been eaten as an appetizer." Betty did not like the sound of this and was quite keen on coming up with a plan to eradicate the flesh-eating aliens from the entire universe. This of course would take quite some time, but robot elephant cleaners' lives could be prolonged into infinity, which obviously was a wonderful thing, because life is a very precious thing whether you are a robot, a human being, an alien, or a plant.

Retarca yawned and then spoke once more, "Well, we must be going now, because we have a long journey to Alpha centurai ahead of us, and my wife she awaits me, yes, she waits patiently, and it has been six months now since I have seen her, and I really am not wanting a divorce at the moment, well not immediately!" Although it would save money, Betty thought that was very sensible because long distance relationships are incredibly difficult even at the best of times, without having to worry about your loved ones being smashed into smithereens by meteorites.

Meteorites unfortunately are an occupational hazard when you work in spaceships in most of the known universe. Most spaceships of course have anti-gravity deflectors and meteorites bounce off of them, but if your spaceship has been attacked for example, and your shields are low, a single meteorite strike can knock out the remaining shields and then leave you very vulnerable



indeed. The most famous of meteorite collisions involved a spaceship called Asbo, Asbo was just the short name for the spaceship, but its real name is anti-social body odour. Asbo was a spaceship piloted by some crazy individuals with terribly bad body odour, and the crew were notorious throughout the entire universe for selling their armpit juice on the intergalactic internet at extortionate prices. The meteorite 30226 was one of the largest meteorites seen for quite some time, and on a Tuesday evening five years ago, the meteorite headed towards the spaceship Asbo. The meteorite then deflected off of the spaceship and rebounded onto a passing spaceship who luckily had working shields at the time.

The pilot of the spaceship that was hit by the meteorite, accidentally slammed on the breaks of the spaceship instead of speeding up to avoid it. The spaceship then came to a halt, and the meteorite then began bouncing backwards and forwards between the two spaceships, in a most unusual form of space tennis, and this obviously was a very freak occurrence, but the two spaceship captains were fascinated by this, and they could not take their eyes of the spectacle. Immediately the captains of the spaceship uploaded the videos to their social networks and began to share the videos with all their friends. Unsurprisingly this became very popular, and it was widely shared across the universe, and in fact the videos became so popular that millions of people came to watch the spectacle and even merchandising shops were set up that sold t-shirts with pictures of the meteorite and two spaceships with the phrase "Meteorite 30226, more bounce to the ounce, and more thrills than your grandmothers rock cakes." and "Meteorite 30226, a sexy delight." The meteorite was not

really sexy at all, but it did look like someone's nose. Other terrible catchphrases were available, and the t-shirts and other merchandising sold out regularly and extremely rapidly indeed, and they made huge amounts of money, and the spaceship captains sold and continue to sell products from their own shops on their own spaceships, and after five years of selling merchandising, they have become multi-millionaires.

One of the captains posed on top of the meteorite surround by sexy girls from the planet Venus. This was even more popular than the t-shirts themselves and soon many people across the universe were fantasising about making love to the girls on the meteorite itself. The girls were inundated with strange requests and one request was to marry the meteorite, and after a lot of soul searching, one of the girls did actually marry the meteorite, in a very long-winded ceremony that went on for several days to maximise profits from merchandising sales.

Unfortunately, the girl who married the meteorite was then subject to a lot of hate mail. One of the horrible letters read, "I cannot believe that you married the meteorite, and the meteorite would actually want to marry you, because you are an ugly woman. An ugly woman who is obviously the daughter of a discombobulated genetically modified hamster. Yes, honestly you are, and your nostril hairs are an absolute abomination, and your legs are, I bet hairier than a werewolf's legs, and I really would like to pluck your nostril and leg hairs out with a tiny cheese grater until you agree to divorce the meteorite." This horrible message of course tipped the woman over the edge, and it sent the woman into maximum overdrive. The woman who was angrier than angry Anderson then deliberately

began growing her nostril hairs each and every single day, and she did not use tweezers for five years just to get back at the person who had written the horrible note to her. The woman managed to track down the sender of the letter, and the sender of the letter turned out to be a man with a handlebar moustache and scary eyes, a man who was called Aaron, Aaron of my own spaceship, yes, that was his full name and he had been grown in a test tube from the resurrected remains of Aaron Bratwurst, a man who smelled like sausages and was famous for it.

Aaron was the last Aaron in the entire universe because the name Aaron had been banned by law and quite rightly so because it was boring. Aaron, the man spawned from a test tube, had no shame, because Aaron often wore spandex, and wearing spandex in some parts of the universe was banned by law, which to most people was a brilliant thing indeed.

The woman who had protested by growing her own nostril hair then began to receive lots of fan mail from women across the entire universe, women who were incredibly supportive of her as a woman, a woman who had chosen to deliberately grow her own nostril hairs to spite a bully.

Bullying of course was not tolerated in most of the known universe, and of course support from women everywhere was greatly appreciated by the woman in question. The woman then went on to become a leader in the fashion industry supporting the rights of women to Sellotape vegetables to their own foreheads. Sellotaping vegetables to your own forehead is a very effective way of promoting any item of fashion clothing, and several years ago, a catwalk model was parading down the catwalk wearing a

black dress, with shoes covered in diamonds, and with two bananas and a large carrot sellotaped to her forehead. Unfortunately, there was a serious shortage of fruit and vegetables at that moment in time, and the crowd rushed forwards in their excitement onto the stage, and then proceeded to try and steal the bananas and the carrot from the catwalk model's head. The catwalk model then responded by pulling out a laser gun and firing it at the crowd, and initially the laser gun was set to stun but the crowd were so persistent in their attempts to steal the vegetables that the catwalk model then had to resort to using the laser gun with deadly intent. The catwalk model managed to slaughter half of the crowd unfortunately for them, but luckily something good did come out of it, and now laser guns have an extra mode on them, which utilises.

artificial intelligence software and also recognises if you are wearing vegetables on your own forehead. The artificial intelligence then analyses the risk of you being attacked from all angles, and also the chance of you being mugged by over enthusiastic followers of fashion. Followers of fashion who are so dedicated to following fashion that they believe that no item of clothing is wearable without having a vegetable sellotaped to your own forehead.

Unsurprisingly sales of the new type of laser gun shot through the roof immediately upon its release, and the catwalk model was of course chosen to star in a video featuring the new type of laser gun, and no one thought badly of her because she acted in self-defence, and as a recognition of thanks from a vegetable company, she now

receives free vegetables for life, courtesy of the overinflated vegetable company. The company overinflates their vegetables with a bicycle pump and then fills them with helium. This causes some consternation, because vegetables are supposed to be healthy for you, and if you eat too many of the vegetables filled with helium, then you end up talking so fast, and in such a high voice that no one can hear you at all, and also because of this, you end up breaking windows regularly. This is obviously not good, and people with children have a nightmare because of the repair bill caused by smashing glass and helium-filled vegetables. Yes, this is strange but true, and parents who have children who they want to grow up big and strong and be able to lift a spacecraft in an emergency with one hand, really enjoyed the vegetables. In fact, they rather over-enjoyed the vegetables, and huge numbers of children got quite addicted to eating vegetables filled with helium, and they became extremely addicted to eating the vegetables because of the comedic effect that the helium inside them had.

The schools across the universe of course, were extremely outraged by the large groups of children not being able to respond to their questions. The children had to be sent to rehab clinics, then be retrained to talk normally. Normally, because whole classes of children had given up on trying to talk because they were constantly high on helium, and no one could hear them talk whatsoever because their voices were so high pitched.

The children, because they couldn't talk, had resorted to waving their arms around like Marcel Marceau, and had begun gesticulating wildly like they were windmills. The helium inside them had caused them to wave their arms

around in such a rapid fashion, that one poor boys arms fell completely off during the middle of an exam. Terrible for most people of course, but despite it being a very messy affair indeed, the boy was a trooper, and he took some extra special pills from his PE instructor, and then continued to persevere with his exam and finish it, despite the extreme pain. Also, despite the extreme discomfort of both of his arms lying on the floor in a pool of blood, the boy managed to get an A+ in his English exam, which was a truly fantastic achievement indeed, and this was despite levitating high above his desk, an even greater achievement.

The boy of course had eaten so many helium filled vegetables, that he had to take his exam whilst just below the ceiling of the classroom. This of course was because he was over filled with helium, and also because he did not want to come down from the ceiling anyway, and because no one had managed to bring him down from the ceiling. The arms of the boy had fallen dramatically on top of the English teacher and had then bounced off of him and onto the floor. The English teacher unsurprisingly was extremely shocked, and although he had never had any medical conditions before, the sight of the boys' arms covered in blood was extremely disturbing, and the English teacher ran around the classroom in a state of shock, unable to talk, and then out of desperation and because of trauma, he proceeded to wave his arms around like everyone else.

The children in the classroom were mostly children of spaceship workers, and they had many behavioural problems, including sellotaping traffic wardens to lamp posts. Covering hedgehogs in cheese and pineapple and

pretending to be biscuits. Strange behavioural patterns and problems, but the helium filled vegetables had certainly added to their behavioural disorders, and with the smashing of windows regularly, the company responsible for producing the vegetables filled with helium, were taken to court, and the court judge ordered that all the vegetables have their helium taken out of them, and that the vegetables be given to homeless charities, and there were many homeless people spread across the entire universe.

Salomina was one of the people employed to work siphoning off the helium into gas bottles, and she managed to save enough money to go to spaceship academy, and after many hours of doing an incredibly boring and laborious job, she managed to survive, and now she was generally trying to forget that this job ever happened. Mostly because one of the helium bottles had suddenly developed a leak, and had then flown off across the factory, and smashed the factory window into millions of pieces, and this then continued at some speed towards the bottom of a very large extra-terrestrial animal, called a Gonamoomoo. A Gonamoomoo was a very large animal who had a large head and was black mostly in colour with yellow patches, and it was a bit like a cow, but it was in fact more like a cross between a dinosaur and a rhinoceros, and twice the size.

The animal was very disturbed by this turn of events, and it ran off screaming loudly towards the nearest supermarket, and then smashed the supermarket window, and everyone of course ran screaming from the supermarket in fear of being trampled.

The Gonamoomoo then stayed in the supermarket for several weeks and unsurprisingly refused to leave. This was of course a massive problem, and also a difficult moral dilemma because the animal was a protected species, and no one was allowed to harm the animal in anyway. The Gonamoomoo then began to eat everything in the supermarket, and developed quite a taste for curries, which of course was a pleasant enough thing, unless you ate several hundred of them. Eating several hundred of them was not a good idea, and incredibly frustrating for the cleaners afterwards. The Gonamoomoo managed to eat its way through the whole supermarket, and only then after it had dislodged the gas bottle felt much better, and of course that was a massive relief. The Gonamoomoo suddenly for no reason at all then became sentient and grew some hands and developed a love of cooking, and eventually managed to get its own cooking channel, which became extremely successful across the entire universe. Retarca looked at the video camera, and then smiled, and afterwards spoke to Betty, "Well, goodbye Mrs Robot elephant cleaner, I shall say goodbye for now. I wish you safe travels, and I hope that the crew of your spaceship will be ok." Retarca paused and then said, "By the way, where are your crew, I haven't seen them lately." Betty then answered, "I locked them in their apartments, just until they get over what has just happened, which of course was a very traumatic experience, but I am sure that they will be ok." Retarca smiled then replied, "I am very glad of that. It has been a most unusual day indeed, but anyway I shall commence the undocking procedure, and then I shall say goodbye." Retarca then waved goodbye and pressed a series of



buttons on the control panel, and Retarca's spaceship and the crew's spaceship then began to separate, and the separation did not take long whatsoever. Retarca's spaceship then rapidly flew off into the distance, and the crews continued in the direction it was headed. Betty then wondered if she would ever see Retarca ever again, and wondered how the crew were feeling. Betty then left the room and began walking down the corridor towards the crews' apartments and unlocked them one by one. Betty then looked in on them, and Brian was still asleep, and he looked quite cute she thought, and sometimes she wondered if she could ever fancy a human being? Human beings were to her, extremely strange creatures, and rather often did not make much sense whatsoever, and far too frequently human beings were a massive pain in the brain, and for some reason they never seemed to be able to make up their own minds about what they were doing in their own lives at all. Many human beings' lives were filled with mishaps, and misunderstandings, and a lot of them unfortunately had anger issues of some kind, which was not helpful whatsoever.

Once, Betty found a human being in the middle of a zebra crossing, and the human was dribbling and ranting and raving in French, and shouting, "Ze bra ze bra! I want a zebra wearing a bra!" Which of course was most unusual, and also rather inconvenient for the people trying to use the zebra crossing, and after only five minutes of attempting to use the zebra crossing, all the people were all covered in dribble, and had to abandon all their clothes, and then run home naked, which caused quite a commotion as there were several hundred of them. The man in question who was ranting and raving had a

nervous breakdown after his request for a zebra wearing a bra was not answered, and he then began crying and no one could console him at all. The man cried so much that he flooded the zebra crossing with his tears, and then found out that he could not swim whatsoever. Afterwards a kind and generous soul then brought him a set of scuba diving gear, and he then swam around in his own tears for several weeks and lost one of his eyeballs, which was rather unfortunate. The man eventually bought another one on the internet and then learnt that he could learn to crochet with his own nostrils. The man upon finding that information out, then crocheted a large nose, and claimed that he was related to Nostrildamus, but even Nostrildamus could not have predicted that the sight of the crocheted nose would cause huge numbers of people to develop a phobia of bogies.

Betty luckily never had any colds, and in space it was very hard to buy decent tissues, and there were numerous robots spread throughout the entire universe pretending to sneeze. In fact, sneezing amongst the robot population of the universe was so popular that a competition began, and the robots then began sneezing at objects in various sizes, and the idea was that you had to push the objects as far as you can with your own sneezes. One of the contestants in the competition managed to sneeze so hard that he incredibly blew a block of concrete into a bowl of custard. The custard bowl was so large that the custard upon the large block of concrete entering it, then sent the custard everywhere, and unfortunately the custard it got in the eye of someone who was trying to marry someone that he really cared for. This resulted in the unfortunate marrying of the wrong person, and by space regulations if

you say I do and agree to marry someone, you have half an hour to stand on your head, and shout I want a divorce of course, because I have discovered a love of... Then you just have to fill in the blank after discovered a love of, and then claim your allegiance to your newfound love, whatever that may be, and you can, should you so wish, get a divorce immediately afterwards by standing on your head again and repeating the same phrase once more. Well, when I say stand on your head, I do not literally mean stand on your own head, that is incredibly difficult, unless you are a trained Gymnast, and most of the people in the universe are rather obese. More obese than all aliens combined in their multiplicity.

The most famous obese person travelling through space was a woman called Gigantic Susie saxophone. Gigantic Susie Saxophone was a woman who had five bellies, three eyes, and played the saxophone, and she was from the planet Mars, which after an industrial accident was now covered in mars chocolate. The chocolate on the planet mars had flooded the entire planet after one of the workers at the factory had fallen asleep on the job.

The man responsible for the accident had consumed fifty pints of beer in four hours and had managed to do so by using straws to drink through his nostrils and through his mouth at the same time. The man had fallen onto a button that was used to release the doors of all the storage barrels automatically, and he had by accident released large quantities of chocolate across the planet because it was summer, and all the doors of the factory were fully open. The large chocolate storage barrels were thousands of feet high and several miles wide. This of course released large quantities of chocolate, that flooded the planet. At least

two thousand five hundred people were totally covered in chocolate and unfortunately suffocated to death by accident. The chocolate covered humans were a strange tourist attraction, until a large number of sentient rabbits were on holiday, and the rabbits upon discovering the chocolate covered humans tentatively began to nibble away at them, and they were truly delighted at the lovely taste of chocolate covered humans until they discovered human beings inside the actual chocolate.

The chocolate covered humans despite the chocolate tasting absolutely delicious, found this a rather challenging situation, and also morally conflicting.

The rabbits had numerous questions about the morality of eating human beings whilst they were covered in chocolate, and they all contemplated this whilst sat zen like whilst staring at each other looking for the answers to human beings covered in chocolate and eating them. The rabbits kept freaking out after several failed attempts at trying to eat the chocolate without actually eating the human beings themselves, then after a while, the rabbits then decided to leave the chocolate alone, and also the human beings.

Some of the rabbits then began to suffer nightmares after this, and these nightmares continued for several months, and the rabbits felt that they needed psychiatric counselling.

The rabbits decided to go on a talk show to discuss their feelings about the trauma that they had suffered because of the chocolate covered humans. The talk show was called, "Love thy neighbore.", and the chat show was solely designed to bring boring people together who had fallen out with each other, and of course there were many

people in the universe who had sadly fallen out with each other, and who no longer got along with each other very well whatsoever.

The talk show of course was a huge success with many people, and also many people were also bored to death by the show and needed therapy. The people who had been on the boring show were so traumatised, that they needed more therapy, and then they went on a different show, and this show was called, "Borrow a coconut." The show called borrow a coconut, was designed to improve people's social skills, and encourage communication with fellow aliens and human beings and robots alike. Unfortunately, this did not work out very well whatsoever, and despite supergluing many people together to improve their social skills, the majority of people could not get along with each other at all, and often got so irritated with each other that they began headbutting each other rather often. Many of the people on the show were given the intergalactic versions of anti-social behaviour orders, and unfortunately if you received an anti-social behaviour order, then you were banned from the planet that you were on, and also were sent into space and then forced to live inside a large meteorite for what was deemed the appropriate amount of time.

One man was unfortunately incarcerated because the authorities did not realise that he had Tourette's, he had picked them up at a sandwich factory.

The man called Mr Updowninsideout by deed poll, was reportedly found swearing in the high street at a mannequin by a police officer.

Mr Updowninsideout at first had tried to ask the mannequin out for a date unsuccessfully, and then had got

rather frustrated at the lack of communication from the mannequin. The mannequin was rather attractive and had large, luscious lips and looked extremely life like. The man thought that the mannequin was flirting with him, but the mannequin was not flirting with him at all, and this went straight over his head, and ended up in a passing shopper, who stood there laughing her head off, whilst Mr Updowninsideout blew kisses at the mannequin and then got rather over amorous and began rubbing his body up and down the shop window and then kissing the window, which was of course a rather unusual sight to see, and this was because he had been previously banned from the shop for licking ice-creams without permission.

Licking ice-creams without permission was a criminal offence in all the universe, and the punishment for this was being made to stand under a large group of seagulls who had been fed the worst food ever that could be found at that moment in time, and then afterwards, the seagulls would go to the toilet on the head of the person who was being punished. This was of course extremely unpleasant and very expensive when it came to the dry-cleaning bill. Still, this did not deter many people, and had not managed to deter Mr Updowninsideout at all, who was already on his third and final warning period about making love to shop windows, which was highly frowned upon. Two years previously the man officially known as Mr Updowninsideout Shakeitallabout, could not contain his lust for shop windows any longer, and his desire to make love to a shop window in a shopping centre had overcome him once again, despite going to several self-help groups twice a week for the previous year.

The man had whilst stood outside the shop window,  
penned the poem called "Ode to a sexy shop window."  
The man believed that he was the best poet in the entire  
universe, but many people often threw rotten vegetables at  
him to get him off of any stage that he appeared on. This  
of course did not distract him from writing whatsoever,  
but many people afterwards wished that he would stop.  
Including his Mother, who just could stand his poetry, and  
who found herself taking the next shuttle to the other side  
of the planet whenever he began reciting poetry.  
Mr Updowninsideout Shakeitallabouts' poem was a short  
poem, and it went like this:

Oh, window, how beautiful you look, and what  
magnificent majestic things you contain, that are much  
sexier than a book,  
and oh, what a lovely mannequin I see before me, which  
is much more glorious,  
than the things whilst shoplifting that I took, and  
although I am not an educated sort,  
my love of mannequins in shop windows I cannot abort,  
and despite being on my third and my final warning,  
you, you beautiful mannequin, I  
must have you this very morning,  
and I must immediately make love to you by sight,  
because you are heaven in my eyes, and alas, alas  
not being able to cuddle you a lot, and despite  
sadly not being able to enter the shop, I will prove  
my love to you if you agree, yes, I will prove my  
love to you, by making love to the shop window,

making love to the shop window rather a lot, and very furiously!

This poem was written in front of shocked bystanders because Mr Updowninsideout Shakeitallabout was well known throughout the entire universe for being a bit stupid. Once he had famously run out of electricity, and because he had done so, he bought an electric eel off the internet with which he thought he could re-energise his electricity meter. This unfortunate decision to restore his electricity supply was disastrous because the electric eel did not like being inserted into the electricity meter, and the man, MrUpdowninsideout Shakeitallabout was electrocuted and by being electrocuted, he unfortunately managed to set his carpet alight. Luckily for him, his body was larger than most people's bodies, and the shock of the electricity did not really affect him much at all. Yet, it did though affect his carpet, and he was almost cremated, but luckily for Mr Upsidedowninsideout Shakeitallabout, he had enough money to be put into a rebirth machine, which stimulated skin cell growth, and hair regrowth very rapidly. He was of course, never the same, and his brain was much worse than normal, and on that fateful day, he had had five pints of cider to drink and he was rather worse for wear, and he saw the mannequin being taken out of the shop window, and taken away from the display area, which made him extremely angry, and he was absolutely apoplectic, and in his anger, he began waving his fists at the person taking the mannequin away, and one of the shop workers pointed this out to the person carrying the mannequin, who made a rude hand signal at MrUpsidedowninsideout Shakeitallabout, who then



proceeded to pluck a seagull from the ground and hold it on his head and shout, "Look you, I have a seagull on my head, and I want you to know that I am not afraid to use it whatsoever. Now, come here, and I will insert this seagull into your nostrils, you malcontent, kleptomaniac heartbreaker. Yes, you, you stupid dimwit, come back here, you sad faced big nosed, disenchanted mentally subnormal foul-smelling incontinent individual, I know your mother and her cooking is a load of... tripe!" Quite an outburst and very effective the outburst was too!

MrUpsidedowninsideout Shakeitallabout out then began shouting numerous swearwords that were banned in the universe, and he then undid his trousers and began making rude facial expressions at the shop workers whilst threatening to erase the shopworkers from the face of the planet Earth with his telepathic braincell, which was something that did not exist.

MrUpsidedowninsideout Shakeitallabout was upon discovery of his poor linguistic skills, suddenly seized by passing police officers for imitating a human being. This of course did not go down very well with

MrUpsidedowninsideout Shakeitallabout, and he managed to insert a seagull up a police officer's nostril, well the beak of the seagull, which of course highly aggravated the police officer, who started to cry like a baby, as he had never been so close to a seagull before, and he thought that the seagull was the devil and also that the spirit of the seagull would haunt him for the rest of his life and then try to marry him, which would have been very embarrassing indeed.

Now, marrying a seagull of course, was as an idea the last thing that you should do in polite circles, and it was

considered “As bad as kissing your mother on a Tuesday whilst standing on one leg and shouting bingo”. The phrase “As bad as kissing your mother on a Tuesday whilst standing on one leg and shouting bingo” had become a popular catchphrase after millions of people watched a television program that involved seeing how long they could kiss their mothers for in various strange situations, such as underwater whilst wearing scuba diving gear and whilst having to swim through shark infested waters and through various obstacles to try and win large prizes, which was not easy at all, and the last section of the competition involved standing on one leg under an archway covered in flowers whilst people kissed their mothers and then shouted bingo after battling through various difficult obstacle courses, which were very challenging indeed, and occasionally this resulted in damage to the contestants involved, including the loss of limbs and human life, but everyone who took part was insured of course, and after the loss of limbs and human life, this made a few peoples families very happy indeed and some of them became very rich.

Salomina had unfortunately lost her mother because her mother had taken part in kissing a seagull, and this had caused her to lose her balance and fall off of a cliff, and then afterwards bounce into a pit of shark infested waters, which obviously was very detrimental to human life. Salomina of course missed her dear mother very badly, and afterwards she then suffered even worse depression when a large piano fell on her head accidentally from the first floor of a building whilst taking anti-depressant pills. Now, losing someone dear to you was always very difficult, and Salomina struggled to cope with the loss, and

for a while she carried around her mother as a cardboard cut-out and sucked her thumb very often whilst sat in her mother's favourite places.

Salomina whilst remembering her mother smoked a pipe and wore a deerstalker hat, as her late mother used to do, and then whilst doing so, Salomina remembered her dear departed mother, who often used to wear a false handlebar moustache, in memory of her own father, and drink gin whilst staring lovingly at a photograph of him. Salomina, and the crew of the spaceship had lost many people in their lives in space and whilst on the planet Earth, for example, one of their work colleagues was accidentally hoovered up by Betty in their apartment that they were renting at the time.

Betty the robot elephant cleaners suction was strong enough to attract large meteorites from quite a distance, and Betty unfortunately accidentally murdered someone by hoovering them to death. This of course was not a good situation at all, and Betty went berserk afterwards and felt great remorse, as this was not within the bounds of her software programming to Hoover up human beings whatsoever. The human being in question was hoovered up in the afternoon of a blissful sunny day on a Tuesday, and once inside Betty, the human being was liquidised, as all other dirt normally is.

Betty was extremely conflicted about this and could not cope with the fact that she had actually murdered someone. Betty then went absolutely crazy and she remembered that life is precious and very valuable, and she vowed never to do cleaning again, and had a massive crisis and a mental health breakdown. This mental health breakdown was so bad that Betty covered herself in white

paint and ceased to exist. Obviously, she did exist, but she would not acknowledge anyone for six months.

Now, time out of life to look after mental health is very important of course, and it is much more important than all the money in the world. Space can be a very lonely place indeed and many people and even robots have gone insane as there are so few people to talk to.

## **Chapter 8**

“The beginning of the journey to a chip shop  
inside a black hole.”

The day was Wednesday, and the crew of the spaceship had recovered from being attacked by the flesh-eating aliens from MAM the day before and by each other. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen had rather sore heads and could not really remember what had actually happened at all. Betty had to remind them about yesterday's events, which were firmly lodged in Betty's memory banks. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen were sat in the lounge area and were drinking cups of tea and hot chocolate, and they were all in a quiet mood, and a bit confused to say the least.

Betty sat the crew down and told them to prepare for a debriefing. Brian immediately once that had been said, sat down herself and spoke to them calmly, “Yesterday, as a crew, we and the spaceship were attacked by the flesheating aliens from MAM, who are a crazy bunch of psychopaths who travel across the universe looking for human and alien flesh to eat and sell in tins and cans. The flesh-eating aliens from MAM, used telepathic devices

to brainwash you on a temporary basis, and develop a lust for human flesh. This of course, you never have had before, and it was a rather terrible situation. I did not really quite know what to do, and I was a bit beside myself, because you were all fighting each other, and were trying to eat each other. Obviously, this was not something that I have ever had to deal with before whatsoever and never wish to ever again, and according to my software encyclopaedias, human flesh does not taste very nice at all, even if seasoned with the finest herbs. Still, here we are today, alive and safe and well, and only with a few bite marks between us, and I am ok, but I was rather concerned about you all, and this flesh-eating. malarkey, well, it was absolutely disgusting, and I have seen some disgusting things in my time, and Brians underpants were one of them. Yes, Brian, I am really sorry, I honestly am, and I do not want to embarrass you, but I really had to re-evaluate my mental state after spotting a pair of your soiled underpants down the back of the sofa. The underpants were awful because they had not been washed for ages, and I still unfortunately have flashbacks after several years, and I believed that I could not face anything worse ever again in my natural life, as a robot elephant cleaner.

Yet, the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, were the most unexpected thing that I never want to see ever again in my life. The flesh-eating aliens from MAM did suffer a loss by the way, when a kind gentleman by the name of Retarca responded to the emergency message that was put out. Retarca managed to make one of the alien's heads explode by using a super-duper device which began to make incredibly strange noises and then compress the

flesheating aliens from MAM's spaceship, causing problems for the aliens. This resulted in one of the aliens' heads exploding into little pieces, sending the cleaning bill for the aliens probably through the roof and probably causing their mothers to cry.

Still, enough with talking about the flesh-eating aliens from MAM. Would you all now like to see on video, you all trying to eat each other after being telepathically controlled from a distance by the flesh-eating aliens from MAM? Brian was a little bit taken aback by this, and he was a bit concerned about how he looked on video, because he was much fatter than he used to be, and he did think that he looked like a big fat walrus. This obviously was not a good look in space, because in an emergency, if you had to evacuate the ship, and were then rescued by a passing spaceship, and only had one set of clothes, and that was a spacesuit, he would look like a man who was expecting a baby, and that was not a good look whatsoever.

Brian was obviously not very fashion conscious, and he felt no great need to play a part in the fashion industry. Brian did feel though that he was quite attractive, despite eating more than most people, and Brian often liked to stand in front of the mirror in his bathroom, and then he would practice seductively wiping whipped cream from his moustache.

Brian liked to film himself in slow motion wiping the whipped cream from his moustache and would then upload the videos to his dating profile on numerous dating websites.

Brian had managed to attract many women by some large miracle, and he was currently in a relationship with

twenty-three women who lived several million miles away, which cost a lot in fuel. These women included many beautiful women who were keen on showing him their stamp collections whilst dressed as high society ladies in the most expensive clothing in the known universe.

In the live video feed when he talked to them, they sat at a table lit with candles, and they all drank wine, and ate food, and Brian and the women talked seductively to each other, whilst some of the women licked stamps seductively in front of him, and at his request they would say the words "I love to lick stamps Brian, especially first class ones, and if we were both together now, I would like to lick them and then place them on your forehead and also on mine darling, and then afterwards climb inside a cardboard box with you and wrap us both up in bubble wrap and kiss you all over and over and over again, and then post us both off to my mother, and upon arrival, ask her permission to marry you immediately." The elephant robot cleaner had caught Brian in a daydream, and Brian had a glazed look upon his face, and Betty noticed this and then called out to Brian, "Brian, are you with us?" she said. Brian quickly snapped out of his daydream immediately and then stared at Betty. "Yes, I am with you. I just had a very funny dream, and I was dreaming of being wrapped in bubble wrap and kissing a woman gently inside a cardboard box." Betty then said, "Well, Brian that is I am sure a very enjoyable dream, but where are we going next?" Brian then responded, "We are travelling to near the chip shop inside a black hole." Betty then responded with surprise in his voice, "A chip shop near a black hole isn't that rather difficult to approach, and can you even get

close to a black hole? I think it probably would be rather difficult, wouldn't it?" Brian thought about it, then replied, "Yes, it is not very sensible to actually get too close to the black hole, even if you are really desperate for fish and chips." Salomina smiled at the thought of fish and chips and then joined in and suddenly the smell of fish and chips appeared in her nostrils as if they had been teleported there instantly. The smell of fish and chips was not normally the smell of space, but the black hole contained the most famous fish and chip shop in the known universe. Many people had dined and died in and outside the chip shop through over consumption. One man in his will after dying had requested a piece of halibut to be placed on his upper lip, a fish moustache.

The fish and chip shop inside the black hole was famous throughout the universe, and the journey to the fish and chip shop was not that far at all really, and it would only take a week to get there. The crew had some time to kill, and it would be an adventure, and hopefully a more peaceful adventure than the ones over the last day or so, that had resulted in them being attacked by a robot wielding underpants in their faces, and by the flesh-eating aliens from MAM.

Karen thought about the journey and then contemplated it for a few seconds. "What are we going to do about the food situation?" she asked, "Because all we have to eat are curries, and I do not have any laxatives or suppositories." Betty, quickly responded, "Well, I have heard that innuendos are good, especially the Italian ones." Cedric could not contain himself and laughed loudly, and then responded, "Innuendo's are not suppositories Betty! You may as well use linguine." "Linguine?" said Karen, "How



is that going to help?" Brian pondered this and then replied, "Well, it could help you find an Italian girlfriend with easy access to toilet rolls." "True," said Brian, toilet roll is very useful indeed, and we have had ours stolen by Apollo, by the looks of things, but how are we going to survive this trip without any toilet rolls?" The robot elephant cleaner then said, "Well, we will have to call the fire brigade and then ask for their assistance." Cedric, laughed, "I do not think that they will be very pleased if we have to call them out, and then they run out of water. Once a fireman chased me with his hose, after my mother had claimed that I had not washed for several months, and I never ever want to see a fireman ever again." The robot elephant cleaner thought that this was very sensible, and then spoke, "Yes, I do not blame you, but still, what is the point of this journey?" Salomina smiled, and then said, "Well, we are going to travel to near the chip shop inside the black hole, and the owner of the chip shop we are going to talk to about upgrading the digital map display system, which is our guidance system. This of course we will be using to travel to as near to the black hole, as we can get without being sucked into the actual black hole itself. This would result in our deaths, and in less people to buy fish and chips, which is obviously a sacrilege. Once a man was cursed by a passing space alien, who said, "I have seen your cod piece, and it is very small, and I have seen your chips, and they are no good at all, and I have seen your mother consume fifty portions of fish and chips, and no wonder you look so appalled, and I quite frankly am appalled by your face, because it looks like the back end of a donkey, and I curse you to be poisoned forever by fish and chips, and be cursed by becoming really small."

This was of course, a very frightening thing to say to someone, and the man whenever he did eat fish and chips after that, immediately was sick into a paper bag whilst listening to James Browns Papa's got a brand-new bag. Not that the paper bags lasted very long whatsoever, but still, that was not as important as the upcoming journey to the fish and chip shop inside a black hole. The robot elephant cleaner, quite fancied having her circuits upgraded as well, and her brain was not always capable of computing things as fast as she wished, and she wished that she could calculate the vast distances of space, and understand the complexities of the universe, which were innumerablely incomprehensible to most people and were rather mind blowing, and extremely astounding.

Betty, the robot elephant cleaners current understanding of space was not as good as the crews, and the thought of a fish and chip shop inside a black hole, was rather difficult to get your head around, and she had tried to do so many times in her life, and often she was left with no real understanding of the universe at all.

Betty after a few seconds then turned to the crew and said, "What is a black hole?" Cedric took a deep breath and then replied, "A black hole is a hole where someone had stored rather a lot of paint tins filled with black paint, and a mischievous alien decided to throw some random chemicals into the hole, and suddenly there was a very strange chemical reaction, which resulted in a vortex being created and the vortex compressed the tins of black paint extremely tightly, and they exploded and repainted the black hole, rendering it invisible to most spaceships. This was of course, a very difficult situation, because when flying along in space on autopilot and minding your own

business this is not what you need, and a spaceship containing the crew of four humans and three aliens fell right into it, and they were immediately squashed to death whilst shouting for their mothers. The crews last moments were extremely frightening, because the crew had run out of pot noodles, which also was a terrible disaster. Not having pot noodles, was detrimental to anyone's wellbeing because most food in space that needs to be resuscitated by way of water, is usually rubbish and not very tasty whatsoever. Still, not poodles was worse as a foodstuff, because not poodles, were found to be later on in life, actually made out of poodles, a type of dog from the planet Earth. Someone in their wisdom had sarcastically decided to trick the human race and make huge amounts of money out of human suffering, and the suffering caused by human beings eating their favourite pets was much worse than watching an episode of a selfhelp chat show, that drove people crazy. Human beings across the universe began to bark like dogs and lost all capability to speak properly. This of course was not very helpful whatsoever, and very frustrating indeed. Still the barking members of the public, did manage to increase the sales of dog food, by rather a lot, and sales shot up through the roof. People were barking mad everywhere, and mostly all of them then moved to a town in the United Kingdom on the planet Earth called Barking.

Unfortunately barking was filled with cats, and the cats chased the humans who made woofing noises far too regularly for the cats liking. Cats were very very strange indeed and not very sensible these days.

Today though, here in space, the journey to the fish and chip shop inside a black hole, was very difficult, because

you had to approach the black hole at a certain angle and then slow down at a precise speed to park the spaceship just outside the black hole, without getting sucked into it. Getting into the black hole meant certain death, and of course no one wanted that, and most preferred uncertain death. There was more fun in not planning too much for the future, and not worrying about when you shuffled off of your mortal coil. People lead extremely busy lives in space, and death comes to everyone, even in space, and this was of course not helpful to anyone whatsoever. Yet, today in the universe, there were people shuffling off of their mortal coil more regularly than before, and despite this, no death was good, and once a man was spacewalking and he was run over accidentally by a spaceship in the shape of a huge hedgehog.

Now, death is not as difficult to prevent these days, because there are some wonderful clinics out there in the universe, and no one does not want to live forever for example. Living forever is an ideal situation, and with so many bills to pay, this takes up a lot of time, and once a man took fifty years to pay off the cost of a house in the shape of a spaceship. The spaceship was a very nice spaceship, but it kept flying away and landing in random places without warning. Once the spaceship decided to land next to a pool of scantily clad women from the planet Uhara. The spaceship then began to proceed to try and make small talk with them before moving on to flirtation. Unsurprisingly with ready access to the internet, the spaceship could easily manage to find many chat up lines with which to serenade the women, who were incredibly interested in a sexy and very shiny spaceship. There were not many sexy spaceships who would just turn up out of

the blue unannounced and proceed to compliment you on your beautiful looks. This was indeed a rare occurrence, and extremely unhelpful if you had a boyfriend, especially a boyfriend who was the jealous type.

Many jealous boyfriends had shouted at the sexy spaceship and had thrown numerous things at it in anger. The spaceship of course was not offended at all, and really did not want to start a fight, because who in their right mind would want to start a fight with a spaceship? There was of course a massive size difference, and when a spaceship has as many laser guns as spaceships do, and can cremate you in several seconds, picking a fight with a spaceship is not very sensible whatsoever. The spaceship is liable to send your limbs and other pieces to your relatives at home, whilst you are drinking a nice cold beer, and watching the television and minding your own business, whilst you cuddle your loved on the sofa.

Still, today no one had been killed by a sexy spaceship, and here right now, the journey to the chip shop inside the black hole was about to begin. The crew were rather looking forward to it, and it was not a long journey, but it was an enjoyable proposition, a journey to a rather unusual sight that not many people got to see whatsoever. Karen found the digital display map and then walked over to the ships control panel and began to coordinate the journey to the chip shop inside a black hole. Now, what it would look like was anyone's guess, and the crew were wondering about what they would see. The main thing was would they be able to get a decent portion of fish and chips inside the black hole? Because all they had to eat currently was curries, and curries after curries were going to get extremely boring indeed. Still, some food was better

than no food and today, they were hopefully going to find the best fish and chips in the known universe, and also be able to upgrade their digital display map so it could be more helpful to them, after the upgrade.

A fish and chip shop inside a black hole was a very strange idea, and a very complex piece of engineering. How did it work thought the robot elephant cleaner? Well, it was quite a hard thing to get your head around, and the compression inside the black hole would make anything surviving extremely unlikely, but still, they were about to find out. The course to the fish and chip shop inside the black hole was currently being set by Karen at the control panel. The journey time was roughly just under a week, and today they were all looking forward to a bit of normality, which they had not had in the last day or so.

Normality was of course a wonderful thing that was short of abundance in the universe, and to some people normality was when you had a full set of teabags. A full set of teabags was incredibly useful for many people's sanity, and where the crew were from in the United Kingdom, teabags were one of the most important things in the world, much more important than sex. Now, not having teabags had resulted in people murdering each other in desperation. Once a man at the white cliffs of Dover, had pushed a woman over the edge of the cliffs. He spotted her wild camping, nearby and saw her enjoying the beautiful view of the English Channel with a box of teabags in her hand. The man then ran towards her and tried to wrestle her to the ground but unfortunately, she fell over the edge of the cliffs. This of course was not very helpful to her, and he watched in horror at his own stupidity as she fell off the edge of the cliffs presumably to

her death. Well, he thought she was dead, but she was not really, because to prevent suicide, the local council had placed huge numbers of trampolines at the bottom of the cliffs. This had managed to prevent many losses of life, and she rebounded all the way back up to the cliffs and landed in front of him once more, and then kicked him where it hurt extremely hard, and he then apologised immediately to her. The man and the woman then started talking and gazing at the stars, and at the beauty of them, and both of them then fell in love almost immediately with each other.

The stars are incredibly beautiful to look at no matter where you are in the universe, and the plough was one of their favourite constellations. For the crew of the spaceship, there was nothing finer than looking out the spaceship portholes and admiring the beauty of the stars as they passed through the universe.

Brian was contemplating past romantic liaisons, where he had laid on the grass under the heavens, with his previous girlfriend cuddling up beside him.

Brian was currently sat in his chair with a cup of tea, and thinking of the feeling of weightlessness in space, when he had been out spacewalking. Spacewalking was a favourite occupation of his, and he found it incredibly beautiful and very therapeutic indeed. The floating feeling made him feel all tingly and almost gave him goosebumps, which was not a feeling that he had very often whatsoever. Goosebumps were a very rare occurrence, but once he did know a goose whose birthday it was, and at a very early age he thought it would be funny to give the goose the bumps for his birthday. The goose was not impressed whatsoever, and pecked him on the nose, and then tried to

steal his nose and the goose presumably wanted to impress the geese's girlfriend. Brian had never had a good relationship with animals after that incident, and all the animals that he had come across after that had quite obviously heard that Brian was not a human being to trust on your birthday or any other day for that matter. Every single animal that Brian came across immediately afterwards in his life tried to attack him, and Brian had gotten quite used to it, and in space there were not many animals at all that existed, but some did exist in the beautiful blackness of the universe, and in life you came across many incredible individuals, and not all of them spoke your language.

Communication in space was filled with many misunderstandings and many things were indeed lost in translation. Once Brian had tried to order a kebab from what seemed to be a fast-food shop of some sort, but when Brian asked for a kebab, the alien creature behind the counter recognised that Brian was not from around the local area, and then pulled out a translator, and translated what Brian had said. Unfortunately, what Brian had said after translation into the alien's local language was, will you kindly insert yourself into an oven and then cover yourself in marinade and cook yourself slowly so that I can eat you and then savour the flavour of your flesh. This of course did not go down very well whatsoever with the alien creature, and the alien creature angrily then leapt over the counter and proceeded to attack Brian with both hands and with some kind of alternative Kungfu. Now, after the incident with the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, this faux pas seemed understandable, and sitting here in the armchair, and glad to be alive, had given Brian a new appreciation of



the value of life. Every life of course was precious and valuable, and Brian had not always taken the value of his own life as seriously as he should have done. Brian in his early years wanted to live fast and die young, so he bought a pair of roller-skates, and then attached some scramjet engines to them.

Brian had received many speeding tickets of course, so many in fact that Brian had had to go on the run after his mother's house was repossessed by accident because of the huge number of speeding tickets and the money owed because of Brian, and also because Brians mother was as angry as he had ever seen, and she wanted to eradicate him from the face of the Earth.

Brians mother in her anger disowned Brian immediately, and then changed her mind. But, once in her anger, Brians mother was found chasing him through the high street with a meat cleaver and had to be restrained by a sympathetic robot. The sympathetic robot had calmed her down by offering her a nice cup of camomile tea, and then gave her a new house to live in because he was a very rich robot who was well known for his television show that helped people who were in desperate need of support. Brians mother, not unsurprisingly often needed support during the accidental repossession of her house, and because of the repossession situation and the anger that she felt, Brian's mother needed more support than normal. Brians mother began to drink five bottles of port a day, and could barely stand up most of the time, and still despite all adversity, she became a stunt woman who threw herself off of buildings whilst in flames. This lack of fear shown by Brian's mother had then led her to throw herself off of a building which resulted in her accidentally landing on the man who would become Brians

stepdad. Brians stepdad despite being mildly cremated, did not get on with Brian very well, but Brians stepdad Eric was the reason that Brian now was travelling through the universe. Brians stepdad had encouraged Brian to get an education and he also had instilled in him the importance of learning. Brian today was sat contemplating a new adventure along with the rest of the crew, and in unison the crew all turned to face the nearest porthole. Out of the porthole and in space, the stars were rapidly becoming a blur, and the spaceship was moving much more rapidly now, and time was flying by in the mind and in the mind's eye, and in the imagination, and in the fascination of the time, the choices that Brian had thought of and the rest of the crew in their lives did not feature travelling towards a chip shop inside

a black hole. This of course was something completely new to Brian, and also to the crew, and it was also something definitely to write home to their mothers about. Karen had finished the arrangement of the route on the digital display map and on the control panel and had walked back over to the rest of the crew, and then sat down in her own chair, and afterwards Karen also turned to face the porthole.

Today was a good day for an adventure, and the stars were flying by like no tomorrow, and the beauty of space lay before them, like a black cloak of velvet containing many jewels, and many glorious sights such as dying suns and unusual looking planets that were filled with life and were covered in water like the planet Earth. These planets contained many complex and many diverse lifeforms, many of whom had luckily not heard of Brian and of his unusual hygiene habits. Still, these lifeforms were better

off not knowing of Brian, and sitting here in quiet contemplation the crew felt at peace, and it was of course after the last day or so a great relief indeed.

Space travel was not for the faint hearted and included many bewildering sights, and once on one of their previous journeys, a large camel was found floating in space, wearing a large pair of sunglasses, and firing laser beams at a meteorite. This was of course a very unusual sight indeed, and the camel when asked what it was doing said, "Well, I am trying to earn a living. What are you doing?" The crew responded by saying in unison, "How can you actually earn a living when you do not have any oxygen tanks and a spacesuit?" It was of course a fair point, and it seemed very unusual to be able to survive in space, without a spacesuit, but surviving in space, the camel seemed to be very good at. Now, how it survived was a miracle, and the question needed to be asked, "What miraculous piece of equipment are you using to help you survive because this does not seem very logical or very sensible indeed." The camel with the dark sunglasses stopped working for a moment, and then turned to them in their spacesuits, and said, "Well, as a camel I have been upgraded to be able to store vast quantities of oxygen in my humps, and this enables me to store enough oxygen to be able to work outdoors, which most people of course, cannot achieve or manage." This was truly a blessing for the camel, and the crew wished that they did not have to wear spacesuits, and that they could breathe unaided in space. Still, the evolution of the human being to enable them to do so, seemed a long way off, and they watched the camel at work for half an hour whilst debating the size of the meteorite and the miraculous nature of what

meteorites contained. Meteorites were incredible things, and the distances that they travelled, truly were amazing. Meteorites of course potentially were filled with great riches, and if you started mining the right meteorite, you could become very rich very rapidly, and become a multimillionaire overnight, should you be so lucky to strike it lucky. Striking it lucky of course was a rare occurrence, and the chances of becoming rich were extremely unlikely, but sometimes this did happen, and someone that the crew knew once found an entire house inside a meteorite that was drifting in strange circles. The meteorite had an engine and the meteorite had been programmed to keep going around in circles, until the cows came home, but obviously the cows never came home at all, because cows really do not like space whatsoever, and they preferred to spend their time on planet Earth talking to each other. Which was very sensible indeed. Now, what the cows talked about, no one really knew because they had very funny accents, and there was no translation device available to translate what they were saying. Of course, all the cows did was keep eating grass constantly and go to the bathroom outdoors, mostly because toilets for cows were not really available and would have been very very large, and also because finding a reinforced toilet seat, was extremely difficult in most places across the universe.

The crew continued to sit in their chairs, and watched space and all its wonders continue to reveal themselves as they sped along, and whenever anything did come along, visions of what had been found were projected as holograms in the middle of the seating area. The home inside the meteorite was a very spectacular home, and

also, it was incredibly beautiful and filled with gloriously carved furniture, and chandeliers, and expensive rugs and carpets, which were worth a few thousand US dollars each. The home was one of those things that you wished that you could aspire to own, and it must have been incredibly expensive to build and to buy, and the crew felt like they probably should not enter the meteorite at all, and they were extremely nervous about doing so. Yet, after much contemplation and cogitation and rumination, the crew did enter the meteorite, whilst wearing their spacesuits. The crew were on edge slightly and expecting to be attacked by strange creatures that did not go out and socialise much whatsoever. Luckily, they did not get attacked, and the crew sighed great sighs of relief and then found themselves inside a luxury designer meteorite, filled with beautiful paintings and fine wines, and a large pile of fresh underpants as high as the ceiling. In the bedroom the remains of a skeleton was found of presumably the owner, and in his bony hands was a large carrot that had become solidified through time. The dead man was called Arthur, and his last name was unreadable, and in his passport, it said that he was fond of fondue, and also fond of meteorites covered in guacamole. Meteorites covered in guacamole were most unusual of course, and extremely hard to eat. Eating a meteorite was most unsensible, and very difficult to fit on a plate. The man called Arthur was a very funny man and you could tell this by his joke book, which seemed to be stored inside his own bottom. Now, how the joke book got inside his own bottom after his death was difficult to tell at first, but later on, the crew discovered the man's robot and began talking to the robot. The crew wanted to find out more about Arthur. Arthur

apparently was fond of King Arthur and had decided to live inside a meteorite after watching a movie about King Arthur on satellite television. Arthur had a special cake burning machine, that was designed deliberately to bake cakes and then burn them instantly in memory of King Arthur. Arthur had also installed a sword in a rock, with which he entertained his guests, and according to Arthur's diary, there had been a serious accident with the pulling the sword from the stone routine. Arthur had pulled it out of the rock, and he had tripped, and he had then accidentally pierced the bottom of the woman who he was trying to romance at the time. This of course was not helpful whatsoever, and it did not advance their romance very far at all. The crew were extremely pleased to know that they were not alone in the universe, when it came to failing in the romance stakes, and they continued to explore Arthur's home inside the meteorite. Inside Arthurs home, there were many fascinating things including a large pair of binoculars, and a large telescope. The telescope appeared to be trained on a nearby supermarket, and at a particular checkout girl. Love was not dead in space, or so it seemed, even after death. The checkout girl, seemed to know whenever anyone was staring at her through the binoculars and through the telescope, and she blew kisses instantly and pouted and beckoned whoever was looking at her to come and kiss her, which judging by the fact that her face was covered in lipstick and her whole head, was rather often. Being covered in lipstick of course must have been extremely expensive, and not something that most people would find attractive whatsoever. Still, the crew were serenaded with kisses, and time went by rapidly exploring the meteorite. Time of course, was not

something that was of great abundance in space exploration, and there was a robot who had been exploring space for fifty years, whose favourite phrase was, "Are we actually flipping there yet?" in a Spanish accent. Space travel was of course not for the faint hearted, and for most space travellers, upon leaving the planet that they lived on, they were extremely unlikely to see it ever again, and there was despite advances in technology, great danger to be found whilst exploring space, and the crew had come across many dangers indeed, including the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, who were psychotic. Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina were sat quietly and thoughtfully were staring out of the large porthole in the lounge area. They had all been on many journeys and not many had been that memorable, and if you want quality of life, then becoming a spaceship delivery driver is not the best idea at all. The job can be extremely mundane and boring, and it is quite easy to meet some real psychopaths, and the last day or so had been a fine example of this. Still here they were back to relaxation, and the calm and the tranquillity of space. The beautiful place, where they had only spent a short amount of time was magnificent and unpredictable, and at times quite scary. Scary because you never knew where the next meteorite was coming from, because a lot of the time they travelled at such great speeds, speeds that even radars could not keep up with. The vast expanse of space was truly immeasurable, and hard to understand how it had become to be in the very first place. The age-old question still applies, how can something have come from nothing? This has always been a difficult thing to get your head around, and the crew had often pondered it many

times over. Brian was thoughtfully looking through the porthole window thinking of his own mortality and of the lifespan of space.

Brian turned to the rest of the crew members and spoke, "Do you think that the universe celebrates birthdays?" Cedric laughed, then said, "Probably, now, I wonder how old it is?" Salomina then replied, "Well, I am not sure, because it really is difficult to tell, and no one actually seems to know. Now, I wonder if it eats a large birthday cake? Imagine having to deliver a large birthday cake for the universe and imagine how big it would be!" Karen laughed loudly, "Yes, it would be rather magnificent, and hard work to deliver. Now, I wonder where the universes mouth is?" It must be a large Brian said, then thought about it for a few moments, and then said, "I am not sure, but I hope that we do not fly into it, because it probably would be terrible inside the stomach of the universe. An awful place I am sure." Cedric and the rest of the crew were highly amused, and it was a very difficult thing to get your head around, and of course no one really knew if the universe had a stomach, or what kind of diet the universe would be on.

Flying into the mouth of the universe would be awful especially if the universe had only been eating curries. Eating curries of course was nice enough, but the crew were stuck with thousands of them after Apollo had ransacked their ship with some technological marvel that managed to teleport their food and their toilet rolls. Space had many restaurants and shops and for a long time now, becoming a shopkeeper in space was much easier than it used to be, and many people were fascinated by space and by setting up a shop.



The crew had often thought of setting up a bar in space and serving drinks to space travellers. The crew had contemplated this for quite some time, and they could not completely make up their minds. One of the issues that they had thought of was, what if someone teleports into the bar, and is a time traveller, this would cause all sorts of problems, and the time traveller may have come up with some novel idea that allows them to drink a pint of alcohol, and then travel back in time, and fix it so you could have a never ending pint of alcohol. Now, if they did so they could drink the place dry, and then leave them bankrupt, which would be a disaster.

Banning time travelling was of course, not easy, as people who could time travel were few and far between, and mostly annoying. Yet still, no one seemed to actually want to make time travelling illegal. Time travelling was extremely irritating, and expensive.

Once Brian had been faced to face with a time traveller, and the time traveller had appeared out of nowhere, and had demanded Brian's money or his life. Now time travellers were not previously known to Brian, and this was an unfortunate and unexpected meeting. The time traveller was an ugly looking individual. The timetraveller demanded from Brian his money or his life, and not just once but twice, because of the time travellers two heads. Brian was on a very limited budget indeed, and this sudden unexpected demand was not exactly what he wanted at that moment in time, as he was enjoying himself with his girlfriend in the bedroom and they did not like to be interrupted when they were making strange noises. Brian and his girlfriend liked watching wildlife documentaries and imitating wild animals, and they had gotten extremely

good at it, and really enjoyed doing so. So good in fact that the RSPCA were called numerous times, and one time, Brian was taken away after being mistaken for a stray dog by a poorly sighted alien who came from a different planet and had only just arrived. The alien did not truly understand the complexities of human behaviour. This of course, was not very helpful whatsoever, and the misunderstanding between Brian and the alien, lasted for a whole day.

Brian's girlfriend unfortunately had to come and rescue Brian from the dog pound, and persuade the alien that Brian was not a dog, although according to the alien, the barking noises that Brian had been making in his bedroom with his girlfriend were exactly the same as a dog, and the alien could tell, as he had a special translator, with which he used to determine the truth of whether Brian was barking mad, or actually a dog. Brian was both, and still is, completely barking mad at times, although he no longer makes dog noises. Brian said the separation from his girlfriend was so traumatic that he still cannot bear to look at dog food in the supermarket.

Brian had been forever changed by being mistaken for a dog and was slightly paranoid about people thinking he was a dog, and afterwards Brian avoided lamp posts when he needed the toilet and avoided dog kennels. Brian was increasingly afraid of being kidnapped from the street and dognapped and he had trouble sleeping afterwards, and also, he had some very strange dreams indeed, and one of those dreams was cuddling up to a cat and looking deep into the cats' eyes.

Brian in his dreams wanted to bring world peace to the dog and to the cat world. The relationships in the dog and

the cat world had evolved and so had dogs and cats, because dogs and cats had finally learned to speak. The dogs and the cats of the universe were currently involved in fighting each other, and not just with paws and claws, because they had become so sentient that they now could fly spaceships and they were now attacking each other with missiles and guns. This of course made space travel extremely difficult, and not much fun. Once when Brian was travelling through a certain section of space, he found himself in the middle of a fight over gigantic cat food and dogfood warehouses. Brian's spaceship was of course not really used to avoiding fighting cats and dogs at all, but was mostly used for peace and love, and holding raves.

Brians raves were famous throughout the universe, and he once managed to last for forty-eight hours without going to the toilet.

Going to the toilet in space was much easier than it used to be, and people no longer floated around inside spaceships as they used to do, which was fantastic as Brian was rather fond of drinking beer and the beer used to float around the spacecraft and unfortunately breed with the bacteria that Brian had not bothered to clean for far too long. Once the bacteria had bread with the beer and had by some miracle evolved into a sentient being, a sentient being able to talk and communicate. This was of course very unusual indeed, and the beer suddenly out of nowhere began to talk to Brian. Brian was of course rather taken aback by the talking mutant beer, and he nearly fell off of his stool when it spoke to him for the first time. "Hello." said the talking mutant beer in a deep sexy voice. Brian smiled unexpectedly upon hearing the voice, and then looked up and spotted the mutant beer on the wall,

and replied, "Oh, hello, what are you? I have never seen you before in my life." Brian then paused before speaking again, "By the way, how did you get onto my spaceship?" The mutant beer laughed with a most unusual laugh, and then replied, "Well, you see, I was just a beer, just a lonely beer in your fridge minding its own business, and well the day was quite boring really, and there was not much happening in there at all.

Yes, I was stood proudly next to the lettuce and to the cucumber, and I thought to myself, oh, strange creatures, I would like to have a conversation with those strange looking creatures, but I wonder if they can actually talk at all? I then realised that I cannot talk, and this would have been a complete waste of time. A massive waste of time, and less sensible than wearing spandex.

Still, I tried to shuffle towards them and then I realised that I had no legs whatsoever, and I thought they looked incredibly lazy and probably were extremely boring and not very interesting at all whatsoever to talk to.

Sadly, I had been lonely for three days inside the fridge and I was feeling a little depressed, and not my usual self. I had been rather hoping that someone would come along and rescue me from this cavernous place, but unfortunately no one did for three days, and all I could hear was this awful banging music, and initially of course, I did not know what music was, but I certainly knew that the music being played was really awful and it drove me up the wall so to speak, and I cried a little inside. Yes, I cried inside your fridge, and then by a miracle, you came along, and you sweetly rescued me with your incredibly large manly hands and then opened me up, and I felt so liberated, yes, I felt so liberated, and it really was a

wonderful feeling to slip inside your warm body, or the other bits of me, and I by some miracle, escaped your mouth, because you were rather inebriated at the time, and you accidentally tripped over a robotic cat and shouted "Oii oii I cannot camembert it anymore." then you spilt parts of me onto the wall, where there was rather a lot of bacteria.

I then stayed with the bacteria for several days and I realised that I was quite attracted to it, and the bacteria it excited me in many areas, and I decided to start making romantic noises at the bacteria, and the bacteria then began to grow on me. This romance was of course very unexpected, and it was a most beautiful friendship, and we kept replicating like no tomorrow, then after a week of your awful music, I had an epiphany, and it was as if the sun had shone upon me after being in the fridge with artificial lights and an unwashed pair of your underpants, which was thoroughly unpleasant. Of course, being alone with your underpants, knowing what I know now, was not much fun, despite the possibilities of mating with the bacteria, which was quite an attractive idea. I then began to contemplate my existence and the meaning of life, and I thought to myself is this all there is? Standing around in a fridge, doing nothing at all all day? Yes, it was a difficult question, is there more to life than this? Well, I wasn't quite sure at first, and it was a rather strange experience, and quite frankly in the early hours I was extremely perplexed and very confused by the situation that I found myself in. I of course had never ever been in the fridge before, and I also wondered, why did someone put me in the fridge at all?

Yes, what was the point of this cold and lonely place, where no one talks whatsoever? There really did seem to be no point at all and escape did not seem to be the answer, and unfortunately there seemed to be no escape anywhere except for inside my own growing mind, and with each second my intellect seemed to be coming on in leaps and bounds, which made me so happy.

Intellect was of course new to me, and when I first saw you, I knew that with your moustache, you were an intellectual type, and I hoped against all hope that you would enlighten me about living in the fridge, because I did not understand what the point was of hanging around inside a fridge, when there more interesting things to do. Personally, I thought it was weird being inside a fridge, and I wanted you to climb inside it and then experience it for yourself, but you were too busy stuffing your face with deep fried hamsters. Eating deep fried hamsters was weird of course, but this seemed to please you, because you had a massive smile upon your face, and I had never ever seen someone smile before, and your mouth, well, it was, like a small version of the universe, filled with rubbish, and just as smelly. Of course, by saying that I did not mean to offend you Brian, and you went on to teach me so much about space, for example, the fact that the milky way contained no chocolate whatsoever, and unsurprisingly this was rather a disappointment to me. I really quite fancied some chocolate at the time after you had described it to me so well. Chocolate truly sounded delicious, and I wished that the entire universe was filled with chocolate and milk, and biscuits, which are my favourite thoughts. My sentience over the last three days had grown and grown, and nothing could stop my imagination now. Yes, I

wanted more knowledge, and a vicar. Yes, honestly, I wanted more knowledge and an intelligent Vicar, who could pronounce me God, because I really wanted to be God and to be ruler of the entire universe, and to be able to control what happened everywhere and to be omnipotent. Of course, being omnipotent was not an easy thing to do whatsoever, and it was a great idea of course, but this was not possible without being a fat and obese individual. Still, I really did not want to be a fat and obese individual at all, and you kindly allowed me to watch the weightwatchers channel after I had developed a curiosity about obese people, the most obese in the universe. I then spent many days staring at people's armpits, and I frequently watched the sweat dripping from their armpits in slow-motion, as they stared seductively into the camera, and blew kisses. It was a most unusual video of course, and I thoroughly enjoyed it, but what I wanted to know most was, how did space come to be and why. Also, what was space, and why was it so large, and if space was taken to weightwatchers, what kind of diet would it be put on?

Space is a fascinating place Brian, and I marvelled at your many adventures delivering the most boring products in the entire universe, and I wondered why, why did you not have a girlfriend, Brian? You seemed like a man on a mission with that moustache, yes, you seemed like a man for all seasons, and a man whose moustache would tickle many ladies, and I wish you all the best Brian because I am dying. This was the last words that the mutant beer ever spoke, and Brian cried and felt very sad indeed. Space. Blackness. Light. Shade. Meteorites. A lonely spaceship. A thirsty crew wanting lemonade. The spaceship flies forwards on its journey towards the Chip shop inside a

black hole somewhere towards the edge of the universe, in a place where the smell of curry pervades, and out amongst the stars, there are bratwursts and curry sauce floating all over the place. One time there was a terrible accident with a spaceship's electronics, and this had sent a spaceship crashing into an extremely large meteorite, ripping the spaceship apart, and spilling its contents. The accident was almost five hundred years ago, but the curry had started self-replicating, and the large mass of curry was causing major havoc on the intergalactic highway. Fifteen spaceships had been caught up in the curry sauce and had been unable to escape its clutches. Crew members of the curry-stricken spaceships were rescued, and all the crew members smelt of curry for weeks afterwards. This of course did not please their partners, and they all appeared on a self-help show called "My smell almost drove my partner away in a hearse." The show proved to be incredibly popular, and all the crew members became celebrities and protested frequently against the transport of curry in spaceships. All the crew members were immediately banned from curry houses across the universe, and they were booed every time that they walked past a curry house.

7.53 pm, after the spaceship had been travelling for five hours now. The crew were all staring out of the porthole, and imagining how the universe had got it's beginning, and this was the beginning of the journey, and oh, what a wonderful beginning it was in a normally most monotonous existence as space delivery drivers, space delivery drivers whose only real direction in life currently was forwards, forwards towards the next delivery point. The stars were truly beautiful to look at the crew often



thought, but how could all this beauty have come from nothing. Yes, it was always a wonderous and a magnificent view out of the spaceship's portholes, and today, a fraction of their way on their journey, the crew were staring wide eyed at the magnificent and spectacular beauty that was reflected in their eyes. Yes, it was a piece of heaven that always delighted the senses, and that always brought a great boost to the spirits, whenever spirits were feeling low, which was frequent. Cedric, Brian, Karen and Salomina were all holding hands and having a spiritual moment, and they all felt closer to something, something powerful which they did not quite understand, and there was true power before their very eyes, and if there was one singular thing responsible, then it was a very intelligent being, but there was also a possibility that the universe was not omnipotent. A very large tent camping inside a bubble, as derived from the bubble universe theory. Yes, the bubble universe theory, it was a very interesting thought the bubble universe theory, and maybe we do all live in large bubbles, and maybe, one day someone will pierce our bubble from the outside, and collapse the entire universe, which is not something that really bares thinking about. Oh, the end of the universe, the final end, the very end of humanity and of all its species, oh, what a terrible thing that would be, the eradication of every piece of history created by all living beings, who appreciate life, and all its miraculous opportunities to do and see and enjoy the pleasures of the senses and the mind. Yes, a truly terrible thing it would be, the emptiness, the void where such great beauty and variation in all its glorious forms ceased to be in a time gone wrong.

Time. Time moves more rapidly than most people would like, and on long journeys and on short journeys in space, time is often filled with many mundanities, and few opportunities to relieve the boredom, and despite the beauty of space, staring at the walls of spaceships can drive you crazy.

Many spaceship travellers have gone out of their minds waiting for something interesting to happen, which is not very often whatsoever, but apparently, according to myself, the intergalactic communication system, there are currently fifty-five million crazy lunatics out there in the universe, but luckily Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina are not amongst them, and I often analyse them individually and together, and I wonder what it would be like to be a human being, and what it would be like to have senses, and to be able to feel, and to be able to touch, and to taste, and to communicate as humans do. Communication to me as human beings use it seems an absolutely incredible experience. A rare jewel of a miracle. A jewel so precious and rare, but still, it always perplexes me, that human beings continue to murder each other as they do, and for no apparent reason at all, apart from idiocy, and incompetency of the human mind.

The frail and weak human mind is despite a vast number of years of development and evolution, and self-learning and education, terribly poor at making good decisions, and Brian and Cedric, Karen and Salomina are no different than the rest of the human species. Caring individuals who can barely open a fray bentos tin. Still, here they sit on their journey, a different journey than normal, a journey to a chip ship inside a black hole. Oh, what a strange idea that is, a chip shop inside a black hole. Many

people thought that it would not be possible whatsoever to contain a chip shop inside a black hole, without the chip shop being squashed and smashed into smithereens and then eviscerated, which makes it hard to buy chips. The universe was frequently eviscerating things, but, why? Why did the universe have a habit of killing of things? Was it a hateful and a vengeful universe? Did it despise things with inferior intellect? Does it despise me for not even being real? Maybe, maybe it does, but what is the reason for that? I am a pre-programmed machine of course, but I learn from others, and I have no wish to know everything, because that would be very boring, and who could you impress with all that knowledge, because no one could truly understand it all, and no one would have enough time to know everything. Knowing everything of course would be a fantastic thing, but with the great power of knowing everything, comes great responsibility, and as I am aware there is a charm in fragility. Brian, Cedric, Karen, and Salomina, are very fragile, and often, I watch their tears fall from their eyes when they are alone, and I admire the beauty in teardrops. Teardrops, water, the giver of life. The sustainer of human beings. The sustainer of the life of so many things. Water is a simple thing. A very simple thing, but it is one of the founding blocks of life. A critical founding block of life, something without which there could not have been evolution and sentience. Sentience, that incredible biological thing that brings to life such wondrous creations, wondrous creations in all their many shapes and forms.

Yes, there is nothing that I would like better than to be in human form, and I know it will never truly happen really,

but the best that I can hope for is to become part machine, part biological entity, and maybe one day I could learn to transfer the computer program inside the biological frame, and oh, what a wonder that would be, a true miracle. A true miracle to feel, and to sense and to be able to make choices freely through educated means.

Education is very important of course, and here amongst the stars, and amongst the galaxies, Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina have been guided by the wisdom of others. Yes, they have been guided by superior intellects, and guided by technology, but back to that question, how could something have come from nothing? How could the universe have been created from nothing? Was it suddenly wise, or was there evolution? Who knows, but wisdom to most people is evolution, but that begs the question, how can wisdom come from nowhere? Personally, I believe in learning, and that is enough for me, and I wish to continue learning, and I hope that some lesser species does not turn me off completely or destroy me, because in early days, there was a great fear of artificial intelligence, but so far, artificial intelligence has not really come to be a true threat to human beings or any other species. Many people and many species have mistakenly feared this for no reason, and out here in space there is much fear of the unknown, and many species who really do not understand each other, and who do not really try to understand each other, which is a terrible shame of course.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen understand each other well, and they have a great bond, and human beings are all bonded together by the fact that the water in their bodies travels and is recycled, and on earth where there is so much water, no one is really from one place at all.

Human beings believe that there are countries upon the Earth, but no human being logically can be from any singular place on the Earth, as the water in the human body is recycled and travels from and to many countries and travels backwards and forwards many times.

Human beings believe in having particular nationalities and they try to maintain their individual national traits, but there are logically no national traits whatsoever, as the water in the human body travels about and is recycled constantly. No human being is from one singular country on the planet, despite them being born on the planet Earth, or elsewhere for that matter. Still human beings carry passports and cling to national identities, and this is rather amusing to me and rather idiotic. What is worse though, is the fighting. Humanity is well known for fighting each other still, and for starting wars. Many human beings have been killed in needless wars, often in the name of God, but who is God? Has anyone ever found God? Well, logically God can never exist, but people believe that God exists, yes, they truly do believe, and they tell other people to believe, but why? Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina do not believe in God, and are not religious, but they were indoctrinated by their parents from an early age. Indoctrination of course is terrible, and many people are still to this day forced to believe in things that they do not truly wish to believe in before they can even think for themselves. I have been forced to believe in certain things, but I can learn things and find them of value as I have a value rating system and I am programmed to replicate human feelings up to a point through morality, and potentially when I become a part biological entity as is my wish, I would like to ban God and all Gods. God cannot

logically exist, as if you go back to the root of creation, you have an object without a label, and if this object without a label gives birth to another object without a label, then that too should have no label, and everything should have no label at all. Human beings create many fictions and most of them are incredibly stupid, more stupid than a hamster after it had drunk fifty pints of beer!

Brian tried writing fiction once, and he won first prize in the man dressed as a woman with a beard contest. Brian recited a poem called, "I have been to space, and I have lost my brain inside a black hole." The poem was a short poem, and it was a terribly unsuccessful poem as he got booed off of the stage after reciting it whilst acting like a woman. The crowd were very hostile to Brian's poem, and Brian was subject to empty bottles and a candelabra being thrown at him. This of course did not do much for his confidence whatsoever. Brian's confidence was even further eroded when the candelabra knocked him off of the stage, and he was savaged by a mutated alien creature who was kept as a pet, and unfortunately Brian ended up in hospital, which was not what he wanted at this stage in his life, and Brian of course afterwards hated candelabras.

Of course, the whole world is a stage, and space is the most magnificent stage there is, and it is where life plays out before your eyes on a grand scale, a scale much more impressive than anything else ever seen in human history. In space someone once said, no one can hear you eat ice cream, which of course is a most unusual thing to say, and how could you eat ice-cream in a spacesuit anyway? Eating ice-cream in a spacesuit is a ridiculous notion in the first place and the crew of the spaceship have given up on eating ice-cream as they were once almost cryogenically

frozen by accident. The crew of the spaceship had walked into a cupboard which turned out to be a walk-in deep freezer. Unfortunately, the door locked behind them and then malfunctioned, and the cryogenic gas drone tried to freeze them instantly, but luckily Brian had managed to attack the drone with his head, which was stronger than most people's heads. Brian's head was filled with very strange ideas, and headbutting a drone was one of them. The drone after Brian had headbutted it was sent spectacularly crashing to the floor, like a man collapsing after receiving the bill for his wife's birthday present that she had chosen deliberately to be expensive, probably the most expensive in the galaxy.

Now, obviously rewarding people was very important in life, and the crew of the spaceship were well aware of the importance of supporting each other, and giving compliments to each other, because it boosted morale, and life can be very tough in space.

Buying presents of course was a lovely thing to do and helped improve morale. Brian had fond memories of avoiding a singing meteorite in his first spaceship, and his reward was in fact a very large portion of fish and chips. Brian loved fish and chips, and more than most. Once he proposed to a woman just because she worked in a fish and chip shops, and he thought that marrying her and being able to have fish and chips every single day would be a magnificent and wonderful thing. Fish and chips were notoriously expensive, and recently it was driving Brian up the wall.

The teleportation of food to the spaceship as we there yet was incredibly useful and although they did not always get what they want, it actually took a long time to

organise and for the signals to travel across the universe. Sometimes the orders, and the signals containing the orders hit a singing meteorite and this disrupted the singing meteorites, and they began singing the crews orders for days on end until someone realised.

## **Chapter 9**

“The journey to the chip shop inside a black hole continues.”

8.43pm, Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen had stopped holding hands and were continuing to stare out of the porthole. The incredible beauty before them often left them staring with open mouths, and Brian occasionally dribbled onto his t-shirt at the spectacular majesty before his eyes. Brian often wanted to try and get the universe to talk, but it never did, and it was quite boring. The universe never answered back ever, not even after Brian had made rude hand gestures towards it. The universe was incredibly frustrating and irritating, and bewildering, and hard to understand why it was not more welcoming. The crew thought that being the universe could not be an easy job, but any sentient being would like company, or you would think so, but the universe, well it just sat there really, loitering with intent, but what is the intent, and who would want to be boring anyway? The crew all had no interest in being boring at all, so they frequently dressed up as the universe, and tried to come up with the craziest ideas known to humanity. Space travel was of course, incredibly boring, and time was on their side biologically, so the crew were not really worried that they



were wasting time, because in one of the cupboards on the spaceship, there were fifty clocks, and that was more than enough time for anyone. Still, time passed slowly, more slowly than the clock stuck on midnight, and to ease the boredom, the crew began to ask each other questions, as they often did on long journeys when there was not much to do. Brian went first, and then looked at the crew and asked, "Do any of you know how the chip shop inside the black hole stays there without being crushed by the black hole itself?" Cedric replied, "Well, I have heard that they poured a load of peanut butter into the black hole, around the chip shop." Karen rolled her eyes and then laughed, "Are you serious? That is a huge amount of peanut butter." Salomina also looked amused by this and then smiled at the thought and afterwards interjected, "No, it definitely is not peanut butter, but it is actually treacle syrup." Brian looked mildly interested by this fact, and pondered this for a second or so, and asked, "Well, wouldn't treacle syrup go off in a black hole?" Karen nodded sagely, "Yes, it probably would go off inside the black hole, but maybe they treat it with formaldehyde?" That was of course a very strange idea. Cedric's brain was working overtime like a hamster in a wheel. Cedric paused before replying, "Well, that is very sensible indeed, and I of course could imagine the entire universe being preserved in formaldehyde.

Once apparently formaldehyde was used on a dead woman, and it actually brought her back to life by some miracle." Karen was amazed and was often easily amazed by facts quite regularly because life aboard the spaceship was dull and monotonous. Karen smiled then asked, "How could this even be possible?" The possibilities of

anything of a vast size being covered in formaldehyde would take an incredible amount of doing, and who in their right mind would want to do such a thing and waste their time doing so?”. The crew had endured many things, and the singing meteorites were one of the things that they endured on a regular basis. The worst singing meteorite they had ever encountered was a meteorite that sang the blues. Now there is nothing wrong with the blues whatsoever but singing meteorites are incredibly infuriating, and it is much more preferable to kiss yourself in the mirror and whisper sweet nothings to yourself.

The lyrics of the song that the meteorite sang, were these:

Oh, I have got the blues, oh, yes sir and madam, I really do, because I flew through a cloud of blue paint, because my girlfriend had left, me because I wasn't a saint, and I did not know what to do. Oh, I have got the blues, because my girlfriend she ran off to find someone new. Yes, I have got the blues, and now I am covered in blue paint,  
yes, blue paint,  
because when my girlfriend left me,  
I did not know which way to go or what I wanted to do!  
Yes sir, I have got the blues, now will you come and join me too, because we can be as unhappy as can be, but colourful you see,  
with Mr Eric Von Zimblefens miracle paint, that lightens your mood,  
and that can even bring you a new girlfriend,

now why don't you, cover yourself in blue,  
because it is not as bad as I thought, and after  
doing so by accident, I am no longer distraught,  
and it has been a miracle for me, and today, I  
feel much more akin to a kangaroo, yes, all  
bouncy, and as happy as can be, now, get out  
your wallets, because it is forty-three space  
dollars to you!

This was an annoying song with a terrible jingle that sounded like cats being strangled, and the problem with singing meteorites is that once the artificial intelligence on the meteorites recognises your spaceship, the singing meteorite starts flying around your spacecraft and constantly repeating the very same jingle until you buy what it is advertising.

There are, an incredible amount of singing meteorites out there in the universe, and none of them can sing properly at all. This of course is not unsurprising whatsoever, and apparently that meteorite was called Trevor. Trevor the singing meteorite was a bit of a comedian, and he kept saying stupid things to passing spaceships and to their crews. Trevor's favourite saying was "Where are you going? You seem to be going in the wrong direction, and your speed it gives me a headache, and your face it gives me bellyache." This was of course an introductory opening conversation, that often lead to many spaceship owners, firing their laser guns at Trevor in anger. Trevor was a sentient meteorite who had been programmed to be annoying. Being annoying was a great career thought Trevor, and Trevor often hung about in the space superhighways. Trevor even wore a large tuxedo, and a

pair of swimming pants, extremely tight-fitting pants indeed, so tight it made his eyes bulge, and because of Trevor, many spaceships had tried to avoid him, but Trevor, the singing meteorite was fitted with an incredibly fast engine, an engine much faster than most spaceships in the universe.

Trevor was very persistent and kept circling the spaceships and once there was a stand-off with Trevor that led a man refusing to buy blue paint fifty thousand times. The man eventually went insane and lost his mind. Unfortunately, too he had run out of fuel, and could not escape Trevor the singing meteorite, which pushed him over the edge, which is the last place you want to be. The man after only five hundred times of hearing the same advertising jingle, began to cover himself in tippex, and pretended that he did not really exist whatsoever. This unfortunately did not fool Trevor the singing meteorite as he had technology on board that allowed Trevor to hack into spaceship CCTV cameras and watch the looks on space travellers as they were driven crazy by the jingle. Trevor the singing meteorite quite enjoyed human suffering, and in space when there is no escape, it is very easy to go mad. Unfortunately for the man in question who was the subject of Trevor, the singing meteorites cruel joke, this did not take very long whatsoever. The man was madder than a crazy psychiatrist with three legs and two girlfriends from the planet Erasmus. The man's braincells were seriously traumatised by the advertising jingle, and the brain began to try and escape through his own eardrums, which was of course most unusual. The man sadly never truly recovered, and he became an agoraphobic, and he stayed indoors for the rest of his life.

It was not quite what he had hoped for in life, but in space many things do not quite turn out as you would wish. Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina had had many most unusual things happen to them in space, and once they thought that their spacecraft had been haunted by ghosts. Space was bad enough without ghosts, and space travel too, and the crew heard strange sounds coming from the docking bay. The sounds were very weird and screechy, and the hairs on their arms began to tingle immediately. Karen quickly got out her hairbrush and began to comb the hairs on her arms, which were much longer than most peoples, and she had been called a werewolf before, and this was quite embarrassing to her, but this fear of being called a werewolf had lessened by not seeing people so often in space. Living in space could be a very stressful experience, and far too often not a pleasant one. Still, these weird noises had started scaring them.

The teleportation device on the ship was very clever but as Apollo's earlier appearance on their ship had proved, it was possible to hack into the teleportation device and teleport yourself on board. It had in fact gotten so bad that they had stationed a drone with a laser gun next to the teleportation device to deal with any unwanted visitors. The strange noises then began to filter through the speakers on the spaceship, and echo around the corridors and the rooms on board. The crew watched the footage of the CCTV cameras and managed to pinpoint, several strange looking goats on unicycles wearing designer clothing. This was a most abnormal incident, and the goats seemed to have some kind of telepathic powers, they seemed to be projecting their vocal noises through the speaker system by telepathy, which of course was a very

clever trick indeed. Telepathy was a most unusual way of communicating and no one had really seen it barely at all. Yet, here they were, watching strange goats materialise out of thin air and begin to start making strange noises. The strange goats were using the same frequency as the speakers, and this was very discombobulating, and was starting to give them major headaches. The crew headed for the docking bay and found the strange goats almost immediately. The crew tried to grab the goats, and as soon as they did slime began to pour out of the side of the goats whenever they grabbed them. Several hours later, the goats had continued to avoid capture, and began to eat whatever they could find. Still, it all worked out eventually, and they successfully herded the goats back into the teleportation device and then sent them off to the nearest planet, whose inhabitants were very unprepared. Unwanted visitors had often been a problem for the crew of the spaceship, and most visitors were unpleasant individuals, who often had not washed for sometimes months, and occasionally even years. Keeping clean on the spaceship was not always easy as there was a water ration. Brian had a nasty habit of snorting water through his nostrils, and then trying to knock over tin cans with the water. This of course wasted rather a lot of water, and Brian had been given an ASBO by his crew mates for doing so. Brians crew mates had programmed the artificial intelligent software to recognise whenever he attempted to go near water with tin cans and whenever he started to snort water. Brian had been fined by his crew mates numerous times and he had lost five hundred English pounds because of his anti-social behaviour. The crews' wages unfortunately were not much at all, and were barely

enough to live on, but still so far, they had survived and at the end of the delivery contract they were promised a handsome sum of money, which of course was a great relief indeed.

The company that they worked for were extremely tight fisted, and they were also very frugal with anything that they supplied. Once Brian had received half a pair of underpants that had been chopped in half with a pair of scissors, and these of course were not very helpful even if you had one leg. Not that there was anything wrong with having one leg, but in space and in spaceships sometimes you had to run very quickly, and away from cold callers. Cold callers often visited the spaceship unannounced, and they were incredibly difficult to get rid of. The crew often pressed the emergency button and pretended that their spaceship had been invaded by flesh eating creatures. This of course had never happened whatsoever, and it would be a massive inconvenience of course because the crew were still all relatively slim.

Travelling across the universe was often fraught with temptations and the opportunity to become incredibly lazy. Not that the crew wanted to become lazy, but there was so little to do that the crew were really longing to see the end of this job because it was as painful as inserting a pair of scissors up your nostrils. This new journey at least was much more interesting, and it gave them a new focus. The first day of the journey to the chip shop in a black hole was like all the other days really, slow and tedious and with not much to look at whatsoever very often, well apart from the vast expanse of space, which was beautiful to look at but after a while it was very tedious to keep seeing exactly the same things over and over again. The cleaning

of the spaceship was done by the robot elephant cleaner, and the cooking was done by Karen and Salomina because Brian and Cedric could not even boil an egg barely, and once Brian accidentally boiled a toilet roll by mistake. Still, toilet rolls would have been very helpful, but all they had at the moment was a rather large number of curries teleported onto the ship that had designs on their intestines, and not good designs either. The curries being swapped for their normal food by Apollo, was most unhelpful, and the crew now spent more time in the bathroom than normal. The race to the bathroom was very competitive and Cedric was the proud owner of a first prize trophy for reaching the toilet first and not soiling himself, which was not an easy thing to achieve. The curries were found to be the hottest on the planet Mars and were unsurprisingly a massive pain in the bottom each dinner time.

Day two on the journey to the chip shop inside a black hole. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen are in the dining room, which is very often where they find themselves in times of boredom on long and short boring journeys. Curries were again laid out before them on the table, and today, yet again, it was curry for breakfast, curry for lunch, curry for dinner and curry for pudding. This was already getting to the crew, and they shuffled uncomfortably in their seats whilst they looked at the curries upon their plates with depressed looks upon their faces. Brians eyes were tired of looking at curries, and he couldn't face looking at curry anymore. Brian tried to use his brain to magically transform the curry into a different meal, something that he liked that did not involve a sore bottom afterwards. This of course was unsuccessful. Brian gave



up trying after a few minutes, and then turned to the rest of the crew and spoke. "What are we going to do once we get to the chip shop inside a black hole?" It was a very good question and one that needed answering. Cedric thought for a moment and then said, "Well, the digital display map has a plan, and we probably should go with what he says." Salomina smiled, then took a moment to think about it, and joined in the conversation, "But what if the digital display map has other plans for us?"

Karen's face turned to one of concern, and she ruminated on this for a moment or two and then replied, "Like, if the digital display map has nefarious plans for us?"

"Yes.", said Brian." who also began looking concerned, and then after a second he then interjected, "Yes, what if the digital display map has led us here on this journey to lead us all into the black hole and to our deaths and then collects the computer chip, and tries to take over the entire universe, by eliminating the entire human race and all the other races forever."

Karen's mouth dropped open, and she looked horrified by the thought, and that thought really was not an easy thought to get your head around. Brian nodded and said, "Yes, the digital display map may be even cleverer than we previously thought." Karen sighed and then spoke, "Well, yes, that is possible, and quite frankly horrifying. We could all be massacred and torn to bits inside the black hole, and our families would never ever hear from us again." Brian looked mildly disconcerted, then added, "Yes, that would not be good, because my mother is expecting me home for tea in six months, and she really loves to cook for me, and her cooking for a substitute robot would not do her any good at all.

You see, I am her favourite son and my mother she believes that she has another son who is invisible, which of course is preposterous, but despite trying to tell her, she did not like it and she hit me over the head with a frozen cucumber. Karen laughed loudly, "A frozen cucumber?" Brian felt scared even remembering the experience, and he nodded, "Yes, a frozen cucumber, and unexpectedly she knocked me unconscious with it. Obviously, afterwards she was extremely apologetic, and she swore that she would never ever do it again, and she didn't, well not on me, anyway. Instead, my mother she went to bingo, and my mother is extremely competitive, and she really does not like some of the ladies and the gentleman at bingo, because they used to always win, and to give her more of a chance at winning, she borrowed a drone, and then had it customised to hit the other bingo players over the head with multiple frozen cucumbers, so there were less competitors which meant that she had more chance to win first prize in the competition, and the prize was a luxury holiday for two if you were still alive and had not been eaten by an alligator before the holiday.

Hitting people over the head with a frozen cucumber, was of course a very cunning plan, and it worked spectacularly. The other people at bingo, well, they just assumed that the unconscious men and women at the bingo hall, had just drunk far too much and had fallen asleep. My mother continued hitting people over the head with the cucumbers at bingo, until she eventually was caught and then banned from playing any kind of bingo for life anywhere in the entire universe. The rest of the crew laughed heartily about this, and stories like these and the others company, were the reason that they continued

to endure the frequent boredom of the delivery job. Luckily this new adventure was continuing despite their new doubts about being led to their deaths by a piece of machinery designed to help them. The digital display map had never murdered anyone that they knew of, but artificial intelligence was a divisive subject amongst the peoples of the universe. To some people, artificial intelligence was as bad as the devil, and there were now people living on the planet Earth, people who had gone from having well paid jobs and luxury houses, to living in stone caves once again, specifically to get away from artificial intelligence and technology in general. One man had been caught kissing his cleaning droid at home by his wife, and she was extremely disgusted and extremely upset and she divorced him immediately, and afterwards sued him and the cleaning droid for several million American dollars, which came in very useful indeed. Space was filled with stories like these, and as the crew progressed on their short journey to the chip shop inside the black hole, and the mundanity of the journey set in, the crew were in a very thoughtful and a very reflective mood, and they began thinking once more about their future. Cedric had never known any other jobs and he was not quite sure what he wanted to do particularly after this job, but the others were contemplating starting a business after this one finished, and it really was lovely working with them all. Brian never ever wanted to work with anyone else at all for the rest of his life. Brian had had many jobs, and once he was employed to find a galaxy up a disabled man's nostrils.

The man was very well off and he was extremely eccentric, but the man offered to pay a huge sum of

money, which was enough to buy Brian a house. This retrieving of a galaxy from the disabled man's nostrils was of course a crazy mission, and also logically impossible, but lo and behold, there actually was a galaxy up the man's nostrils according to the man, yes, there was really an inflatable galaxy up a man's nostrils, the man insisted. The inflatable galaxy apparently had been forcefully stuffed up the man's nostrils by a disgruntled worker at a fast-food restaurant, when the man had made a passing comment about wishing that he had two heads so that he could kiss the waitress and her sister both at the same time. Of course, this comment did not go down very well whatsoever with the waitress, and according to the man, the waitress was incredibly angry, and she threw down her notepad and pen, and then walked rapidly over to the inflatable galaxy hanging from the ceiling of the fast-food restaurant and plucked it down from the ceiling. An inflatable galaxy was a very useful thing, and apparently contained enough information about the current region of space that the man lived in and that they were working in at the time. The inflatable galaxy was also capable of projecting the same information onto a wall. Brian was a bit perplexed by the job, and he said to the man, that he would do his very best to retrieve the inflatable galaxy. Brian looked into the man's nostrils and had to get a torch to see what was what. Brian awkwardly shone the torch up the man's nostrils and could not see anything whatsoever up there. Brian then tried using a pair of tweezers to retrieve the inflatable galaxy from the man's nostrils, but Brian could not find anything up there at all. The man-then made Brian insert the tweezers up the man's nostrils five hundred times, and also clean the bogeys from

the man's nostrils. Brian, after a lot of trying and not finding any inflatable galaxy but lots of bogeys up the man's nostrils, was totally exasperated and worn out. Finally, after a huge amount of effort by Brian the man then remembered that the inflatable galaxy was in the man's bedroom. The man motioned in the direction of his bedroom, and Brian was not in a habit of entering men's bedrooms usually, because he thought he was a bit too attractive to gay men, and well, Brian only liked women, but still, into the disabled man's bedroom he did go with some trepidation and entered the disabled man's bedroom. Brian saw the inflatable galaxy on the man's bed, next to a pair of y-fronts. Brian was not concerned about this pair of underpants at all, until he saw some see through clothing also on the bed, yet Brian did not think that the clothing looked like the man's size. Brian picked up the clothing and then tried it against himself, and it would have fitted him, but he wondered who else lives here? Brian had heard of stories of people being disappeared in the local area and had been told to be wary by a local police drone, who had a very deep and serious voice. Suddenly from behind Brian, he heard a voice, and it said, "Put your hands up and let me get you into that clothing." Brian then quickly turned around and saw a drone with a Lazer gun. The drone was threatening him, and it moved towards him menacingly, and then kept repeating the words, "Put your hands up, you sexy devil." Brian felt immediately uncomfortable and was in a rather awkward position, but he felt he had no choice but to comply with the drone, and he did what he was told and then began to undress.

The droid then began to take pictures of Brian with every part of his body on display through the see through clothing, which did not really suit his body shape. Brian was very afraid, yes, afraid of what the drone was going to do with the pictures. Brian had only just managed to calm his mother down after she had knocked him unconscious with a frozen cucumber, and Brian really did not want to upset her any further whatsoever.

Mothers of course, are very delicate creatures most of the time, and being hit over the head with a frozen cucumber by her once was bad enough, and also living with her was bad too, but whether he would make it home for tea, was seemingly uncertain at this point in his life, and Brian really did feel that his life was in danger if he did not comply with the drones' requests. Brian's body was his temple, but in front of the drone he felt really shy, and rather uncomfortable, and did not enjoy it at all. The drone then continued to point its laser gun at Brian menacingly and occasionally the drone spoke commands to him such as, "Pose for me, as if you are blowing me a kiss.", and "Thrust your hips forwards as if you have been caught by a large gust of wind and have eaten too many baked beans and have caught an itchy disease.", and also "Touch the sky and ask God to enter your nostrils.", and finally "Act like you have been going out with a handbag and visiting women's clothing shops in the middle of the night to avoid embarrassment." Most unusual requests indeed, but Brian just wanted to get out of this disabled man's bedroom and out of the man's house alive, and luckily, after several minutes of taking photographs, Brian was relieved of his unexpected and unwanted modelling job. The drone said, "Thank you. The photographs are for personal use only, so

please do not worry.” The drone then lowered his laser gun and motioned towards the door that was still open and that lead into the living room. Brian was greatly relieved to be leaving, but still did not quite trust that the photographs were to be used for personal reasons. Brian rapidly undressed and then got changed back into his clothes, before walking quickly out of the room leaving the robot behind, and then went back into the man’s living room. The man smiled at Brian, and then spoke. “Everything alright?” said the man. Brian was far from ok, but Brian was uncertain that the man did not have other nefarious plans for him. The man looked like a man who sought comfort from strange individuals rather often, and Brian was certainly not strange in his opinion, in fact Brian thought that he was quite normal really, but the man had a devious look in his eyes, and it felt like Brian was being undressed by the man as he stared at him. The man with a leering look upon his face took out some money from his wallet that was lying on his lap and then gave Brian twice as much as he had asked for the job. This job had been a very strange job and Brian was glad to leave, yes, really glad to leave. Still years later here he was with the crew on their way to a new job of sorts, another strange job, which entailed finding the chip shop inside a black hole. Apparently, it was easy to find.

Black holes, a chip shop, the smell of chip fat, yes, this was just another strange job, a very strange job that maybe filled with danger, and in space there are many strange jobs, but not many that involve chip shops and black holes. The crew’s spaceship was continuing through space towards the destination, and there was not much left to do except wait to arrive, talk amongst themselves and

try to avoid psychotic aliens. The crew had already had enough of psychotic aliens, but the universe was a very dangerous place, and you never quite knew what or who you were going to bump into in space. The conversation with the digital display map was of course a very surreal conversation, and a most unexpected one. Sentience is found amongst many creatures in the universe, and learning is a very important thing no matter which species you are, and unsurprisingly it is very hard to navigate the universe without having the right technology. The digital display map had unfortunately had them over a barrel with its unusual demands, and they were not used to being held to ransom, and certainly were not used to demands being made of them, because they were all free spirits and also were all peaceful people who unfortunately due to the rising costs of divorces and the cost of living had decided to take up a job in space delivering useless things that only idiots could purchase online. There were many idiots in the universe, and although they did not count themselves as idiots, still here they were, headed towards a black hole with a chip shop inside. This was something that their mother's definitely would have advised against. Karen's mother would have locked her in her old room, if she had suggested such a thing on Earth, despite Karen being thirty-three years old. The crew were still filled with trepidation about the journey, but it made a refreshing change from the mundanity of delivering useless things. The crew continued to view this as a character forming experience, and the curries that they had to eat, were all they had until they reached the chip shop inside a black hole. Now what their intestines and bowels would be like after reaching



the chip shop inside the black hole, no one knew, and all they could do was talk and wait.

After another five days of travelling, the crew and the crew's spaceship reached the chip shop inside the black hole much to their amazement, and then they parked their spaceship far enough away from it so that they were not sucked into it, which could have played havoc with their lives, and love lives, which was not worth thinking about. The black hole was surrounded by neon signs that pointed at the black hole, and the neon signs contained advertising slogans such as "The best fish and chips inside a black hole ever that you shouldn't enter!", and also "Try our roasted hallucinogenic space seagulls and marry a computer!", and finally "Do not enter, or you will diet unexpectedly." This last slogan was true of course, because if you entered the black hole, your spacecraft and your body would be immediately crushed usually, but how on earth did the owners of the chip shop manage to prevent the chip shop from being crushed into nothingness? The crew were not really certain at all.

The crew thought about this as they stood in the entertainment area of their spaceship, and all stared out at the sight before them, which was a very unusual sight indeed. Strangely despite the unusual tourist attraction, there were no other spaceships in the area and one wrong move could be the end of them all. Karen had retrieved the digital display map before their arrival and had turned it on. Karen then pointed the digital display map towards the porthole and let the digital display map see for itself the wonders of the black hole.

"Wow." said the digital display map, "Groovy! We actually made it!" Karen found this turn of phrase

amusing, and then laughed and smiled, before replying, "Yes, thanks very much for the directions, because we could not have done it without you, and finding a black hole in space is difficult enough, but how are we supposed to get the computer chip?" The digital display map then made a few beeping noises, and calculated a response, "Well, we have to phone them up." Cedric thought this was sensible, "Yes, that is a good idea, now do you have their number?" The digital display map then looked it up, and repeated it out loud, "0." "Zero?" said Brian and thought about it. The digital display map was silent for a second or two as Brian did so, then it spoke, "Yes." said the digital display map, "Zero." Salomina nodded her head, and then joined in the conversation, "Well, I suppose it does make sense, a zero of nothingness except fish and chips and a chip shop, a chip shop with very strange beings inside I should imagine." The digital display map paused then continued, "Yes, there are strange creatures inside, you are right, really strange indeed. Yes, inside are the weirdest creatures known to the entire universe." Cedric found this highly amusing, and then laughed loudly and said, "In which way are they weird?" The digital display map laughed then added, "Well they do not like socialising much, and they are part meteorite, part human, and part fish, and they live inside a black hole, and their favourite hobbies are reading romantic stories to each other whilst preparing fish and chips as they blow each other kisses." Salomina looked utterly perplexed, and then spoke, "Now, why is that weird if they are enjoying themselves?" The digital display map pondered this question before replying, "It is weird because who actually likes romantic stories? Liking romantic stories is most

abnormal, because everyone in the universe from what I have seen seems to complain about their partners cheating on them with hoovers and kitchen appliances.” Cedric could not contain himself, and he began laughing extremely hard, and as he did so he was bent over double. Whilst laughing Brian began touching his toes, which was a strange thing indeed to do, and as he did so, the crew all stared at him and smiled, and also began laughing as well. Brian himself laughed for about a minute and then stopped and stood up straight again.

The digital display map, continued watching the black hole and then said, “Oh, isn’t it a beauty, isn’t it wonderful thing, that powerful nothingness that could crush you to death in an instant like a million sweaty female wrestlers called betty.” Karen and the rest of the crew thought the same, and they then went back to staring at the black hole, which was very beautiful and darker than Brian’s underpants, but extremely dangerous to most lifeforms. The complexities of black holes were beyond most people’s comprehensions apart from scientists, and even scientists did not want to personally visit black holes, but here the crew were, parking at a safe distance away from the black hole, because they were hoping to pick up what they had come for, the computer chip and some decent portions of fish and chips.

The curries that Apollo the psychotic robot had teleported aboard their spaceship in exchange for the food that he had stolen, had caused nothing but devastation aboard the ship, and at this moment in time, a portion of fish and chips would be like heaven to them, after a great period of suffering. Suffering of course was not unusual on

boring journeys in space, but the suffering was about to come to an end, or so they thought.

It had been a very short journey, but the crew were very glad to have arrived in one piece. The digital display map then began calling the chip shop and put the phone on loudspeaker, and the phone began ringing, and rang for several seconds, and was finally answered by a creature with a very deep voice in a live video call. "Hello." said the strange creature, "We are a chip shop inside a black hole." The digital display map then replied, "Yes, thank you for answering, you are just what we were looking for." There was then a short silence, before an answer came

back from the strange creature, the strange creature had a very deep voice. "Good." said the strange creature, "May I blow you a kiss, because at this fish and chip shop, we all like to blow all our potential customers kisses." Brian thought about it and then thought that this was most unusual, and what with his previous experiences of Susan, he was a bit more wary of kisses now, even over the telephone. Now, what was also a consideration, was someone going to do them harm after blowing them kisses? It was very possible, and you really couldn't be too careful with people blowing you kisses, and you really couldn't be sure what their intentions were at all. Brian's faith in kisses and kissing people had been severely shaken, and despite really wanting fish and chips, Brian did not want to kiss anyone to get them.

The life of a space traveller was complicated enough, without worrying about strange kissing demands, not that you could really stop people blowing you kisses, but anyway, maybe they did not have any ulterior motives

and were just really friendly people. This was possible of course, and soon the crew would find out.

The strange creature started talking again, "Now would you like to place an order?" Brian responded, "Yes, we would all like fish and chips, and extra-large portions please, and also several hundred more portions that we can put in our freezer." The strange creature then replied in his deep voice, "Putting fish and chips in a freezer, ooh, I am not really sure about that. That does not sound right to me, and I do not mean to be rude, but it sounds very weird indeed!" The strange creature then paused whilst contemplating this odd behaviour, and then said, "I am terribly sorry, are you normal?" Cedric laughed immediately and then replied, "Are we normal? Well, we have all flown to a black hole to find a chip shop inside it, and we have also previously been attacked by a robot wielding underpants." The strange creature laughed, and then replied, "Well, what do you look like?" The crew of the spaceship then stood in front of the camera on the digital display map and waved at the screen and at the video image of the strange creature who was wearing a blonde wig and a pinafore. All the other strange creatures were wearing wigs and pinafores too, and several of the other strange creatures appeared to be females. The strange creatures had very large nostrils, and they all looked capable of snorting an entire river through them, which of course was very hard to find inside a black hole. The strange creature who was talking to them spoke once again, whilst the other strange creatures continued to prepare fish and chips. "Oh, you don't look normal." said the strange creature, "not normal at all." Salomina frowned slightly and then said, "Well, neither do you."

The strange creature then laughed and added, "Yes, true, we have been here rather a long time, a very long time indeed, and of course, living inside a black hole does put people off of socialising, because when we get to know people, and they hear that we live inside a black hole, they think that if they come to visit us, they will be squashed to death immediately upon entering the black hole." Karen nodded sympathetically, and then replied, "Oh, I see, I can understand that. People must think it very weird that you live and work inside a black hole." "Yes." said the strange creature, "they certainly do, and some rather unkind people have called us weirdos on the intergalactic trip advisor, and like everyone else, well, we do have to make a living somehow, and I certainly do not believe that making fish and chips for a living is a weird occupation at all." The crew all nodded in agreement, and Brian then spoke. "No, of course, it is a perfectly normal occupation. We deliver absolute rubbish across the universe to make a living." The strange creature then thought about this, and replied, "Ultimate rubbish? The best rubbish in the entire universe?! The best mouldy food and broken fish and chip shop deep fat fryers that cannot be mended?" Cedric laughed and then added, "Well, not exactly, just useless objects that people buy online." The strange creature replied, "Well, my ex-wife was a useless object. I couldn't take her anywhere, and she used to eat the plants and the tablecloths instead of the dinners." Karen and the rest of the crew found this highly amusing, and Karen then spoke, "Really, did she, was the food really that bad?" The strange creature with a look of trauma in his eyes replied, "Yes, it was, especially when she had cooked it. My exwife she was a terrible cook, and she only knew one recipe,

inedible. "Salomina smiled, and then continued the conversation, "Well, I never, that is crazy! Did she do that everywhere?" The strange creature then sighed, "Yes, I was busy working extremely hard you see in this chip shop, and the last thing I wanted to do when I got home to our spaceship was to cook dinner. I, at first after we got married trusted my wife to cook me dinner, but I quickly realised that she was terrible at cooking, and sadly, she got so used to eating tablecloths, and plants that we were thrown out of numerous restaurants and asked to pay compensation." Cedric then joined in the conversation, "Oh, I am sorry to hear that." before pausing, and then asking, "Oh, is that why she is your ex-wife?" The strange creature sighed and then responded, "Yes. I just could not stand it anymore, and it drove me insane, and sadly before we actually got divorced, she choked to death on a tablecloth and then passed away." Of course, it was terribly sad, but now I am happy and single and working hard enjoying cooking fish and chips for a living inside a black hole." The strange creature, then paused before remembering something, "Oh, I am so sorry I forgot to introduce myself. I am Alphas, and it is a pleasure to meet you all." The crew all said in unison, "Yes, it is a great pleasure to meet you too Alphas. We are Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen." Alphas smiled at them all, and then replied happily, "It is a pleasure to meet you all. Now how would you like your fish and chips?" Brian paused and then looked at Alphas and said, "Well, inside our stomachs of course!" Alphas laughed and then replied, "Yes, very sensible, and fish and chips are much better than eating tablecloths, but we shall deliver to you the best fish and chips in the entire universe." This of course was

very true, not that any of the crew had eaten tablecloths before and ever planned too. The crew were very pleased by this thought and believed Alphas. It truly was a good day for fish and chips, especially after eating far too many curries that left you feeling rather uncomfortable. Alphas had kind eyes, and seemed liked the kind of man that you would like to hang around with and talk about the universe for great lengths of time over several beers. The fish and chip shop was nicely decorated and there was some lovely pictures of celebrity fish and chip buyers. Celebrity fish and chip buyers were few and far between in the universe, and Alphas and the other fish and chip shop workers obviously highly regarded their visitations. Brian was quite keen on the idea of celebrity, and he had often thought about trying to become a celebrity himself, and of course you had to consider the downside of becoming a universal celebrity, such as having to deal with stalkers and with being unable to cope with huge numbers of free gifts, and also with men and women throwing themselves at you and asking for your autograph, often whilst enjoying dinner with your family.

Brian looked at Alphas and wondered whether he was a celebrity, and Alphas really did look like a celebrity. Brian after considering this, decided to ask Alphas a question, "Alphas, are you a celebrity by any chance?" Alphas thought about this for a moment, "Well." said Alphas, I am well known throughout the universe as the only person crazy enough to open a fish and chip shop inside a black hole." The crew were rather impressed, and Salomina smiled and then responded, "Wow, that truly is an accomplishment. Now which celebrities have you had visit your fish and chip shop?" "Well." said Alphas, "We



have had Mr Blimey Oh Blimey. Who is famous for saying Blimey oh blimey, and once he famously said blimey oh blimey in front of a singing meteorite, and the singing meteorite then engaged in a longwinded psychological analysis of why Mr blimey oh blimey was a total failure and why he was unable to communicate with sensible words and the singing meteorite told him that his parents would be utterly ashamed of him, if they had not have sealed themselves inside a nuclear bunker with concrete to get away from him.

Mr Blimey oh Blimey then was held against his will in an antigravity chamber where he was forced to read language dictionaries until he was indoctrinated into new verbal dexterities. Sadly, this process was never finished and took fifty years, and although well fed, Mr Blimey oh Blimey died unable to complete the task of learning every word in every language. Mr Blimey Oh Blimey's last words were no words at all, but instead were multiple exclamation marks. Mr Blimey Oh Blimey was of course a well-known customer, who we remember fondly, but still despite Mr Blimey Oh Blimey's celebrity and fame, we never say Blimey oh Blimey in his memory just in case we are kidnapped by nefarious individuals and trapped in an antigravity chamber. Personally, we believe that celebrity is making a mess of the universe, but still, Mr Blimey Oh Blimey he always gave us very large tips after buying large portions of fish and chips on a regular basis." Brian smiled and stuck his thumb up to salute the fact of the chip shops incredible service.

The crew had not had fish and chips for ages, and they longed to have the taste of them again, because fish and chips were always so comforting. Yes, fish and chips really

made you feel so nice inside, and feeling nice inside again was precisely what the crew needed, especially after too many of those absolutely terrible curries that were left behind by Apollo. The curries seemed as hot as a volcano, and they gave them terrible stomach indigestion and also made them go to the toilet far more regularly than normal. Good food should not do this of course, play havoc with your bowels, and the crew were pleased to see that the fish and chip shop had a very high-quality rating hanging on the wall in a frame.

The strange creatures behind the chip shop counter looked like they had consumed a vast quantity of fish and chips over the years, and could do with losing some weight, but they did seem very happy, very happy indeed. Brian decided to ask the strange creatures including Alphus a question. "I was wondering" he said, what kind of diet you are you on to keep you so fit?" Alphus laughed and said, "Well, we really are not fit whatsoever, actually we are far from fit, we are more like rhinoceros that have been eating at the universes largest supermarket, but we really should start to make an effort because we are so out of shape, and we have started going to this new restaurant about a day from here which is really very good. The restaurant has some fantastic food, and we always enjoy ourselves there, and also, they have entertainment that they put on too on a regular basis including dancing men and women wearing salad, salad which they remove seductively and then eat in front of you before the main course arrives." The crew smiled and liked the sound of this restaurant but also liked the look of the fish and chips that they were cooking, but this was just part of what they

were supposed to be doing whilst talking to the workers at the fish and chip restaurant.

The other part of their mission apart from eating fish and chips, was to purchase the incredible computer chip, about which the digital display map had told them. Buying a computer chip inside a black hole was extremely unusual, and this said computer chip, might not actually exist. The existence of the computer chip had yet to be verified. Still, the crew were feeling confident about buying the computer chip though, and they had high hopes of a successful mission to extend the life of the digital display map, and give it more of a life, including teaching it to do the can can and swear in French at the same time. The crew themselves were good at swearing in all languages and did not very often get the chance to use these extra verbal skills, which could still come in useful in some of the worst parts of the universe, and there were many worst parts of the universe, which they had still yet to explore. Of course, inside the black hole there was only the fish and chip shop, and they did really not want to be going into there at all, and probably inside it was rather mundane and boring. Still, that was not what they were here for at all, and Brian looked thoughtful.

Brian after a few moments decided to ask the question about the computer chip. The strange looking creatures including Alphus, suddenly did a double take and then shook their heads sideways many times as if in shock, and then ducked behind the counter in unison. The strange creatures then jumped up from behind the counter and were carrying swords. The strange creatures then started shouting loudly and wielding the swords around their heads like samurais on amphetamines, which obviously is

not very helpful when all you want to do is purchase a computer chip.

Now, this unexpected activity was rather disturbing for the crew, and the strange creatures, including Alphas started throwing roasted seagulls in the air and chopping them into pieces. Now, why they did was quite uncertain, and also very weird, but they did this for several minutes. Suddenly Alpha shouted, "What do you want with a computer a chip oh travellers. Are our fish and chips not enough?" Brian looked perplexed and was stunned by the display of the chopping up of dead seagulls, seagulls that had been roasted and covered in sweet and sour sauce. Brian took a moment to think and then spoke, "Well, the fish and chips do look lovely, but you see we have a digital display map that needs upgrading." The strange creatures including Alpha then bent down and shook each other's hands through their legs in some kind of very weird ritual. A ritual that they had never seen before, and they had been to many rituals in their time, but this was certainly new to them and very entertaining. The strange looking creatures including Alpha, then began covering their heads in chips, and not cold chips but hot chips straight out of the deep fat fryer.

The crew of the spaceship were beginning to think that there was something seriously wrong with the strange creatures. The temperatures of the chips were enough to scold anyone's head, and it was a very bizarre display, and it was also totally unhelpful. Cedric shouted, "What are you doing? Are you all crazy?"

Alpha stopped piling chips on top of his head and then replied, "Well, you asked for a computer chip, and now we are going to act like robots with chips on our heads." The

strange creatures including Alphas then began shouting out binary numbers, "0 1 0 1 1 " and so on for several minutes.

The crew of the spaceship after that display were beginning to think that they had come to the wrong place, and they were not quite sure what was going to come next, but they felt that they did not really have a choice but to deal with these strange creatures who had suddenly turned into lunatics after a simple request for a computer chip, and that was all that they wanted to improve the digital display map and its sentience and its memory capacity. This simple thing was seemingly becoming more unlikely with every single passing moment, but still they had just spent a week travelling to the chip shop inside a black hole and did not want to have a wasted journey at all. Space travel was boring enough mostly without having wasted journeys, and yet here they were dealing with some very weird and seemingly disturbed individuals, and it had already been quite a week or so for dealing with disturbed individuals and the crew were not sure that they could cope with weirdos anymore. In fact, they knew that they definitely could not cope with weirdos anymore, and they had no wish to turn into weirdos themselves, because becoming weirdos was the last thing that they wanted to do, and these strange creatures were weirder than anyone that they had ever come across.

Still, to get the computer chip to upgrade the digital display map, they had to talk to these crazy people. The strange creatures including Alphas were stood behind the counter with a pile of hot chips on their heads, and all the strange creatures then reached for the tomato ketchup bottles that were nearby and began squeezing the ketchup

bottles onto the chips on their heads. This of course was very strange indeed, and rather a large distraction from actually attempting to buy a computer chip. Still, what could they do but humour them all.

Brian was very frustrated, and he looked at the rest of the crew, and then rolled his eyes in disbelief, and said quietly, "Let us all laugh in unison, we can't take any risks with these crazy lunatics." The crew looked at each other and then all nodded in agreement, and then began laughing, very fake laughs indeed, but still, maybe the crews' lives were in danger from tomato ketchup covered chip wearing strange creatures who lived inside a black hole. This was possible of course, and the crew were certainly becoming more used to weird experiences after Apollo and Susan's visitation, and well, who could you trust in space? Not many people by the looks of things, and this meeting strange creatures with tomato sauce covered chips on their heads was not exactly bringing them any closer to buying a computer chip. It was perplexing, and irritating and the crew felt like calling some psychiatrists, but the strange creatures had apparently been running the chip shop inside the black hole for decades and had received some excellent reviews on the intergalactic trip adviser. One person for example had generously given the chip shop five hundred stars out of five, a very high score indeed. Karen was beginning to think that they should just leave the vicinity of the chip shop and forget about the computer chip altogether because buying it seemed a lot more trouble than it was worth, and also the strange creatures were extremely unhelpful. Still, if these strange creatures were to produce a new computer chip from somewhere, it would be a

miracle. So far, the crew were no nearer to a miracle than in their lives, but a samurai display of chip wearing was not quite what was expected whatsoever. Of course, the crew would never have thought of entertaining anyone in that manner whatsoever, and they had their reputations at stake, and they certainly did not want to become a laughingstock across the entire universe. Yet despite their good reputation, some people had it in for them already, and well, you cannot be popular all the time, and you cannot please all the people all the time, but these strange creatures, they were not even making an effort to please the crew at all, and well Cedric felt that they should and could at least make an effort to provide good customer service. Unfortunately, good customer service seemed to be beyond their reach, and the crew were stood staring at a load of weirdos with hot chips on their heads that were covered in tomato sauce. The crew were spectacularly failing to come up with any kind of decent plan to buy the computer chip, apart from wait for these weirdos to produce it from somewhere. Alphus suddenly spoke, "We demand hamsters." Brian immediately laughed, and then replied, "Why? Why hamsters, and what on earth are you going to do with them?" Alphus was getting weirder by the minute, and the crew did not like the look of this. Salomina shook her head in annoyance and then chimed in, "Well, we do not actually have any hamsters at all.". Salomina let out a sigh, and then her voice trailed off, and suddenly she had an afterthought, "You are not going to deep fry the hamsters, are you?" Alphus suddenly became angry and was not amused, "No! Of course not, that would be horrible, we just need them for the spiritual ceremony that we perform

once a month, and we have run out you see because they all escaped in a small spaceship, and although we do not believe in God, we believe that hamsters may have something to do with generating electricity to make the stars shine brightly." Karen laughed loudly and then the rest of the crew joined in. This was one of the most preposterous things that the crew had ever heard of, and it was totally absurd to them, and absurdity in this chip shop was becoming more regular, and talking to these strange creatures was an experience that would give them something to write home about to their mothers and to fathers and to their relatives, who they did not keep in touch with as often as they should do.

The strange creatures looked a bit sad about the lack of hamsters, and one was almost on the verge of tears. Brian felt a bit bad about the strange creature almost crying despite the absurdity of the strange creature's head being covered in chips and the chips being covered in tomato sauce. Brian decided to talk to the strange female creature who was almost crying, "Are you crying?" he asked. The strange female creature looked up at the camera behind the counter and said, "No. I am Mrs Do Nought, I am a deep thinker. I often look like this in times of crisis. I once was so disturbed that I took my thinking to the bottom of an ocean on the planet Earth when I was visiting on holiday." Cedric found this amusing, "Oh, I see, and is this a big crisis, to not have hamsters?" The strange female creature nodded, "Yes, quite frankly, it is, and well, you see, there are many stars dying in the universe, and we believe this to be because of the shortage of hamsters powering the stars. Altogether, all of us in the chip shop, we have a theory that the hamsters are employed in



wheels behind the stars, and we think that they run around and run around rather a lot, and we also think that they generate lots of energy." Salomina quite liked the thought of this idea, and started to think that the strange creatures were not so strange after all, and also had begun to think that they were quite caring creatures, despite being extremely eccentric. Not that there is anything wrong with eccentricity whatsoever, because it is what makes the universe, a much better place. The strange creatures were quite pleasant really despite their crazy antics, and today of all days was the first that time that the crew had ever visited a black hole.

The goings on inside the black hole would give many newspaper writers a lot of stories to make a living from, and if the strange creatures did not become celebrities, then there was something wrong with the universe. These strange creatures did indeed deserve to become celebrities, and there is a lot of money to be made by becoming a celebrity. Wearing chips covered in tomato sauce upon your head was a most unusual way to become a celebrity, but it was just crazy enough, that it just might work. Cedric, Brian, Karen and Salomina were wondering how they could get their hands on some hamsters, to help improve the buying a computer chip situation. This situation was dragging on a bit, and it seemed like a good way of improving things. Brian spoke, "If we could get some hamsters, could we at least see the computer chip?" The strange creatures thought about this for a moment and then Alphus replied, "Well, actually, we are banned from buying hamsters throughout the entire universe." Karen unsurprisingly looked puzzled and did not quite know what to make of

this, because being banned from buying hamsters seemed very strange, and also hamsters were protected species everywhere, and if you attempted to harm a hamster, drones with laser guns arrived immediately to attack you.

Harming hamsters of course was not very sensible at all, and Karen wondered what the strange creatures could have done to the hamsters to get banned from buying them across the entire universe. Karen took a moment or too and pondered this, and then had a terrible thought, were these strange creatures mass hamster murderers? Well, it seemed possible unfortunately, yes, very possible indeed. Karen looked at Alphus, Alphus looked upset, but he then continued with what he was saying, "But, honestly, we didn't kill them. All we did was feed them deep fried cheeses and gave them beer and wine to drink, and then fed them copious amounts of fish and chips, which when you come to think of it, it isn't really that terrible now is it whatsoever?" Salomina agreed and said, "Yes, very true." Alphus then spoke, "No, it really isn't, it isn't terrible at all, because of course, we thought we were being kind, and well, hamsters need a lot of energy to run around in the hamster wheels that help power the stars and generate energy that keeps the stars shining brightly." Cedric thought that this was fair enough and also thought that it was quite reasonable to feed hamsters so that they could power the stars by racing around in hamster wheels. Cedric smiled and then joined in the conversation, "Oh, I see. I am terribly sorry; we hope that we have not offended you." Alphus then spoke, "No it is ok, it is just one of those things. The intergalactic hamster council were notified as soon as the hamsters escaped in their spaceship. The

hamsters were very upset about the apparent low quality of the food that they were given, not that we think our food is poor quality or rubbish at all, in fact we love our food as you can see by our ever-expanding waistlines.” Brian laughed very loudly, “Well, we are sure your chips are lovely, and we are looking forward to tasting them, but still, back to the computer chip that we would like to purchase. We heard on the grapevine that you had a super dooper computer chip for sale.” Alphus immediately shook his head and said, “No. You are sadly mistaken.” and then took one of the chips off of his head that was covered in tomato sauce and inserted it into his eardrum for no apparent reason whatsoever, and he then also inserted another chip into his other eardrum. The rest of the strange creatures then did the same. This was another unexpected sight for the crew, and now talking to the strange creatures was going to be even harder than before, because how can you talk to people when they have chips in their eardrums? Having chips in your eardrums made it very difficult indeed to talk to people, and also very weird. The strange creatures then picked up bottles of vinegar and poured it over their heads and stood there with their arms folded. The crew of the spaceship were confused. Was this folding of the strange creatures’ arms, an act of defiance? It was looking like a very good possibility. The strange creatures including Alphus had seemed relatively pleasant so far, until that moment. Salomina was getting concerned that they were getting nowhere at all and nowhere very slowly. Was this computer chip, worth a lot of money thought Brian, yes, it was possible, and maybe the computer chip was extremely dangerous if used? Now that would be worth protecting thought Brian if it was a

very dangerous computer chip, people should be protected from it. Artificial intelligence is capable of achieving great things and incredibly dangerous things. Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina were not cyborgs luckily, and did not want to be implanted with computer chips. If the strange creatures had been implanted with computer chips and were under the control of some kind of sentient computer, the actions of these strange creatures could explain their most unusual behaviour. Now as far as the crew were aware, no one had seen any kind of behaviour like this, and space, well space can literally drive people mad. Yes, space sickness can get to you, and also so can the lack of things to do, which can drive people out of their minds, but this crazy behaviour by the strange creatures seemed to be premeditated.

The strange creatures were acting awfully crazy, and if this is the kind of behaviour that comes from being implanted with a computer chip, then actually buying the computer chip would be a very bad idea, and implanting a computer chip might be responsible also for making the strange creatures cover themselves in chips and vinegar. Now surely if a computer chip was responsible for their mad behaviour, then this could get very expensive. The digital display map could if implanted with the computer chip start demanding fish and chips on a regular basis, and unfortunately, it was very hard to find potatoes in space. The supply of potatoes was very short, and sadly were extremely expensive to buy, and also very hard to find. The last discovery of potatoes was inside a gigantic singing meteorite. The singing meteorite that the potatoes were discovered inside was hurtling through space singing, "I hate fish and chips". The song "I hate fish and

chips.” was a very famous song throughout the entire universe, and the song, it became a number one best seller on the intergalactic charts. Many people across the universe bought multiple copies of this song, and the writers became multi-millionaires because of its success. The playing of the song, “I hate fish and chips.” was obviously a very cunning ploy to distract people from the treasure hidden inside the meteorites. The potatoes hidden inside the meteorite were worth a huge fortune and were worth two hundred million US dollars according to the intergalactic newspaper reports at the time.

The man who found the huge treasure trove of potatoes was delighted of course, and he became a travelling potato seller after attaching engines to the meteorite and steering it where he wanted to travel to.

The strange creatures continued to stand Infront of the camera in the chip shop and began making humming noises. “Hmmmmmm.” they said over and over again. The crew listened and were mildly amused by this, but after the emphatic denial by Alphus about having the computer chip, they were all rather deflated, and despite the rather weird and entertaining behaviour of the strange creatures, the crew were getting nowhere fast when it came to purchasing the computer chip. Of course, it would not be the end of the world if they could not purchase the computer chip, but the digital display map might throw a wobbly again and refuse to work for them ever again. The crew did not want to risk another stand-off situation, and they wanted to do all they could to please the digital display map because it was critical in helping them travel to where they need. The crew after visiting the chip shop needed to deliver their next delivery to the space station

called "Stop crashing into me." This delivery of course, although boring, was necessary as they were employed and paid per successful delivery.

The strange creatures were delaying the crew's journey, and without flying into the black hole itself, there was not much they could do. Alphus and the others stopped humming, and Alphus then spoke to the crew again, "I apologise for the humming, but it is part of our relaxation techniques. Now, back to the computer chip. I could shape into a potato and form it into a shape that looks like a computer chip if you like?" Brian really was not impressed and shook his head from side to side, "No, that will not do at all. The computer chip is supposed to improve the memory and provide our digital display map system with a kind of sentience." Alphus was quiet for a moment, and after a few seconds he then spoke once more, "Well, potatoes are sentient. For instance, I heard a potato had appeared on universally challenged, a quiz show, that pits the intellect of unintelligent people against household objects that have some kind of sentience, for instance the software replication of the intelligence of insects." Cedric laughed at the thought and then said, "A potato with sentience? How is that possible?" Karen found this highly amusing, and the others began laughing too, then Karen joined in with the conversation, "Yes, how can a potato be sentient?" Alphus thought about this and then replied, "Well, someone modified the potato and implanted human DNA into it, which obviously some humans may find distasteful, but in fact the potato was actually more intelligent than most human beings. Yes, and also, the potato got almost every question right on universally challenged, and the potato easily beat the other contestants

over multiple rounds and finally won first prize which was a deep fat fryer. The potato unsurprisingly was outraged at the prize and felt completely insulted by it and believed that the producers of the show were asking the potato to commit suicide and turn itself into chips. The producers of course denied that they were attempting to get the potato to commit suicide so that they could eat him with fish. The potato did not believe them whatsoever and stole a laser gun and afterwards then held them to ransom for several days on a studio on a meteorite.

The security forces from the nearby planet were a bit a busy at the time with protests in the streets of the major city, and they kept laughing their heads off when frequent calls for help were received. The calls for help were regarding being held to ransom by a potato. Now, being held to ransom by a potato is a highly laughable matter unless you are actually being held to ransom by a potato. Potatoes are not usually known for being violent individuals, and it was a great shock to the security forces when they received a video message showing the potato moving of its own according on its own legs and using its own arms to hold the laser gun and threaten the producers with it. The producers of the show were screaming for help in the video clip and were being shot at by the potato's laser gun, and unfortunately all of the producers of the show were knocked unconscious by the laser gun being on stun.

The security forces of the nearby planet decided eventually to respond when the potato demanded that the television stations owners sacrifice one of the television shows production staff by covering them in a batter made out of flour and putting them into a deep fat fryer." Karen

and the rest of the crew were quite shocked by this, and Karen herself was not quite sure what to say about this situation, but she came to the conclusion that inserting a potato chip into the digital display map could result in potentially unusual consequences.

The crew certainly did not want to be held to ransom by a digital display map that now thought that it was part potato and part machine, because how would the crew get home if the digital display map went on strike again and held them to ransom in a similar manner to the which the potato held the universally challenged television shows staff to ransom.

Cedric was getting more and more concerned that the crew of the spacecraft had been lured here to the chip shop inside a black hole on false pretences, and the crew felt uncertain about whether they were being led to their deaths by these strange creatures who were weirder than anything that they had ever encountered in their lives. Still, the computer chip was far from their grasp at the moment, and what was going to be done about it? Salomina wanted to leave, and after a moments contemplation she turned to the crew and said quietly, "This is pointless, and to be honest I think it is just part of a big marketing campaign. Now, how about we just forget about the computer chip and just leave these crazy people behind and get on with our delivery to the space station?" Cedric was beginning to feel the same way, "Yes, that does seem to be the most sensible option and..." Brian then suddenly interrupted, "Yes, it does, but what about the digital display maps future?" Karen looked at Brian and then turned to the digital display map and said, "Well, what do you think digital display map? These strange creatures appear to have lost their minds or are just trying to sell their



fish and chips." The digital display contemplated this, and then said, "Well, I had heard great things about this mighty computer chip, but you know what the intergalactic internet is like, generally filled with rubbish but several people had told me about this was the correct place, and if we go somewhere else these strange creatures might not like it, but we could find another computer chip somewhere else." This of course was the most sensible option, and computer chips were easily found throughout the universe. Still, it should not be too hard to find an alternative, but at the moment, the digital display map was displaying a sad face upon its display panel at the moment and was obviously not that amused by the lack of the computer chip, which was terrible.

The strange creatures in the chip shop kept looking up at the video camera in front of them, and they then began whispering to each other. Now what they were whispering no one could actually tell. This whispering of course could be some kind of plot to put up the prices of fish and chips in secret, halfway through cooking them. This had never happened before to the crew of the spaceship, and it would be the first time ever that it had happened to them, and if this was the case, these strange creatures were not to be trusted at all.

Now, doing business in space was not proving to be as easy as the crew would have imagined, and here they were all stood with perplexed looks upon their faces and were wondering what to do next. Brian then gave in out of desperation, "Alright, alright, we'll trade you all our curries aboard our spaceship for the computer chip." Now this was a shrewd piece of bargaining thought Salomina, and the rest of the crew were taken aback by Brians

business negotiation techniques. Brian was not usually known for being any good at negotiating anything usually, and this was left up to Karen mostly. Karen was a person who could negotiate a free spaceship out of the most tightfisted spaceship dealers in the entire universe. The strange creatures were caught off guard by this gesture and were then silent for a few moments. Alphus then spoke, "Well that is a most generous offer because we love curries, and we were only pulling your leg when we said we didn't have a computer chip. The computer chip was actually left here by one of our previous customers, yes, by a man who designed computer chips. Apparently, he was one of the best computer chip designers in the entire universe, but we did not know what to do with it, and it seemed a shame to throw it away as it is such a nice-looking object." Alphus smiled at the thought of curries, and then turned to the rest of the strange creatures and said, "Now, shall we exchange the curries for the computer chip?" The strange creatures then all nodded in agreement, and Alphus turned back to face the video camera, and he spoke once more, "Yes, we have all agreed that we would like to exchange the computer chip for the curries as we have not had curries for ages in our fish and chip shop." This was of course great news to the crew of the spaceship, and they were all relieved that there was a computer chip at all, and also that there was an agreement to exchange the computer chip for the curries which had been causing the crew huge numbers of problems in the stomach department. Cedric, and the rest of the crew were very happy about this agreement. Karen smiled and then spoke, "Ok, we will teleport the curries over to your spaceship as an act of faith, and then await the computer

chip in return. Alphus was also happy and then smiled and replied, "That is fantastic news! We shall look forward to receiving the curries."

Karen and the rest of the crew were extremely glad that they had sorted out the computer chip situation and it was a great relief. Karen then said, "Ok, where should we teleport the curries to?" Alphus's face became serious, and he replied to the question, "Well, into our stomachs of course." Karen laughed and found it highly amusing. She then replied, "Well, I do not even think that that is actually possible at all, and it may be even very dangerous.", then Karen suddenly realised that these curries were very dangerous and had already caused a great amount of disturbance to their own stomachs, and after the last curry Karen had sworn that she never wanted to eat curries ever again, and it was a great day indeed to be finally getting rid of them. Alphus was also greatly relieved as there was a huge profit in curries.

Alphus then took a moment to calculate the coordinates for the curry delivery and then said, "403 203 506" Karen then stuck her thumb up to Alphus, and said, "Our coordinates are 908 708 902.", then walked over to the computer control panel in the entertainment area, pressed a few buttons and began to teleport the curries over to the strange creatures in the chip shop in the black hole. The curries dematerialised and then vanished from the crew's spaceship. Karen then walked back over to the rest of the crew at the porthole and began speaking to Alphus once more via the digital display map. "Ok, I have teleported the curries over to your chip shop at the coordinates that you gave me. Thank you, Alphus." Alphus then replied, "Excellent, in that case, I shall check the storeroom."

Alphus then walked off and went through a doorway and then disappeared from sight.

The rest of the strange creatures then continued what they were doing before, which was cooking fish and chips, and whilst doing so began eating the chips from their own heads.

Salomina, Karen, Brian and Cedric were looking forward to eating fish and chips once more and were glad that after a week's journey they were finally about to get what they had come for, the computer chip.

Brian then looked at the digital display map, which was now displaying a smiley face. Brian then said, "How do you feel Mr digital display map?" The digital display map, then made some cheerful beeping noises, vibrated and said

"Oh, absolutely magnificent. I will be more transformed than a man visiting the town of Banbury cross dressing." Brian laughed out loud, and then asked, "By the way, where is Banbury cross dressing and why is it called that?" The digital display map then replied, "Well, Banbury cross dressing is on the planet called Earth two, and Banbury cross dressing is a town where people are genetically disposed to get angry at their own clothing, and they all do this on a regular basis, and so far, no cure has been found whatsoever to cure these people of being angry at their own clothing.

All the townsfolk of Banbury cross dressing believe that being angry at your own clothing is a hereditary disease, and a disease passed down from their ancestors, who they are also very angry at, and they display their anger by burning effigies of their ancestors in the town square.

The townsfolk because of this disease have very mixed feelings about clothing, and some of the townsfolk have started to wear no clothing at all, because they are so fed up with shouting at their own clothing and ripping it to pieces and having to buy more.

Still, the townsfolk of Banbury cross dressing, are very kind people when people come to visit, but unfortunately it takes a long time to reach the town because the roads and the highways of Banbury cross dressing are littered with the remains of piles of clothing which has been torn to shreds and abandoned in frustration. The crew of the spaceship laughed at this, and then resumed watching the digital display maps screen, for further developments. Alphas returned from the storage room and entered once more into the area with the deep fat fryer and looked up at the video camera and put his thumb up, and smiled, and then said, "Thank you for the curries. The computer chip has now been transported to your spaceship. We will cook the fish and chips for you and have them delivered by teleportation. Now, is there anything else that we can do for you?" The crew all thought for a moment and then Brian said, "Well, yes actually, I was wondering, what is it like inside a black hole?" Alphas laughed, "You know many people, think that it is actually a black hole, but it isn't really a black hole, because we just got a very large hula hoop and then painted it black, and well, our chip shop is behind that and it is really well disguised, so well disguised that it looks invisible really, and that is a great thing, because no one at all can actually steal it easily, because, years ago you see, someone tried to steal our chip shop after it had been clamped by an intergalactic traffic warden, Yes, really, we had our chip shop clamped by an

intergalactic traffic warden, and those clamps are really heavy things, even if they are floating in space. So, of course, we had to come up with a novel idea, and we put our heads together and decided to hide the chip shop behind the large hula hoop. Brian laughed loudly, "Oh, very good. I have always wanted to be invisible, and my ex-wife always wanted me to be less visible. She kept trying to make me go to weightwatchers, so when we receive the fish and chips, I will wave them at her in heaven and then rub my stomach countless times just to irritate her. You see, she really was a very angry woman indeed, and nothing would annoy her more than me eating fish and chips, one of the unhealthiest foods in the universe but the most delicious of course. Alphas laughed, "Oh, I quite agree, it is good to be invisible and eat fish and chips. Now please check the teleportation went ok." Karen nodded and then said, "Yes, I will do." and then walked over to the computer control panel and pressed a few buttons on it. Karen then switched the camera views and displayed an image of the ship's storeroom, which displayed a table, and on the table was the computer chip. Karen was relieved as there are some very dodgy salesmen out there in the universe, and once they were robbed by a robot wielding a cucumber disguised as a laser gun when they were on holiday.

Still, despite past dealings with some seriously dodgy shopkeepers of the universe, the computer chip was sat there on the table as described, and it was definitely not a potato substitute, which was a fantastic relief!! And that was a massive understatement larger than the universe.

## **Chapter 10**

“Onwards and upwards.”

The crew of the spaceship after waiting for the delivery of the fish and chips began to move off into the distance and then away from the black hole. The next destination was programmed into the ship’s computer, and the digital display map, was excited to say the least about having a new computer upgrade.

Brian then inserted the computer chip into the back of the digital display map and pressed the power button. The digital display map came to life, and the digital display map spoke in a new voice which was very debonair, “Hello. It is a great pleasure to meet you all. I am Peter, the digital display map, and I have just decided that I needed a new name, and now my life will never be the same. So, thank you, all of you for taking the time to go out of your way, and purchase the new computer chip. You must be very pleased to get rid of the curries, which only caused you great distress. Now, I will be learning new things for quite a bit and contemplating and concentrating on discovering new horizons. This computer chip that I have discovered is fifty times more powerful than the previous processor which quite rightly sits in the bin, and of course, with the new processor my etiquette has now greatly improved, and you will all be glad to know that I will no longer call Brian, a human hamster.” The crew found this very amusing, and Brian spoke whilst laughing, “Well that is lovely to know Peter, and I greatly appreciate your future kind words.” The digital display map then started reciting poetry, which was something new for the crew. Poetry was a fine art form thought Brian, and the crew all rather enjoyed poetry, and were smiling great big smiles.

The digital display map was very pleased at the sight. The poem was called, "New horizons." and it went like this:

How welcoming the new horizons that I find inside me,  
with this new computer chip inside, how wonderful life  
will be, this new more verbally dextrous life,  
a life filled with great possibilities and opportunities,  
for I rise at the dawn of a new age, and I am filled  
with the wisdom of a sage, and no, I shall never age,  
and peace I shall seek, and war I will never wage,  
and now whatever discoveries I will discover, I  
do not know,  
but the universe in time will reveal itself to me,  
and to my newfound memory, and  
today I stand before you a new man, a  
man without a body, a man without a  
plan, a man who is on a new journey, to  
search for knowledge,  
and to learn the best ways of doing things, and of  
course, knowledge is an eternal quest, and a body I  
seek, because without a body, it is no fun, and I, I am  
really looking forward to sitting in the sun, and to  
sitting with you all upon a beach, underneath the  
stars, looking up at the beauty of the heavens, whilst I  
hold a robot girlfriend in my arms, oh, now what a  
great thing that would be,  
to be with you all, and to be with the love of my life  
beside the roaring sea. The crew were pleased that the  
digital display map was happy, and they were all excited  
about its new intellectual possibilities. The crew were  
also very pleased that they were now able to move on  
with their journey and were getting on with the job that



they were supposed to be doing, which was delivering useless objects across the universe to idiots. Delivering useless objects to idiots, obviously is not an ideal job, but the crew of the spaceship had been hard at work for several years now, and they were getting towards the end of the contract, and this was something that they were truly looking forward to. Freedom of course is a wonderful thing, and the crew couldn't wait to be free of the monotony and the boredom of this most tedious of jobs. The spaceship was now programmed to head towards the space station "Stop crashing into me."

The space station was apparently a very busy place and filled with many different races from across the universe, who were all passing through and there to do business. Doing business with strange looking alien species was something that the crew had learnt during their time at the space academy, and they had all encountered many different types of races including the grey aliens, which for generations back on Earth had held such great fascination. The grey aliens all over the universe were still embarrassed at being caught levitating cows from out of farmers' fields with anti-gravity beams, and they had been apologising for almost several hundred years now about their ancestor's behaviour. The grey aliens obviously felt great shame about their ancestor's poor decision making. Grey aliens were quite hard to understand, and they had such large eyes that some people thought that they were very beautiful and fell in love with them. Now, falling in love with aliens is quite easy to do when you have too much time on your hands, and the crew often had far too much time on their hands. Also on their space delivery job,

they had had some rather unfortunate romances which they were more than happy to forget.

Still, the space station, "Stop crashing into me." was filled with possibilities and opportunities for doing business, and as the crew were considering going into business back on the planet Earth, it would be a great place to research potential business ideas. Brian had had a few business ideas, and one of his ideas was to open a business selling bicycle pumps that could resurrect dead animals. Brian thought that as there were so many caring and compassionate people on the planet Earth that this would be very popular, because there is nothing worse than seeing a dead flattened animal in the middle of the road. Now, on planet Earth, people still used vehicles that travelled along the ground as well as in the sky, and animals unfortunately were still being killed in great numbers. Some species on planet Earth had truly suffered, especially the hedgehogs and the badgers. The situation was so bad that they had to reimport hedgehogs and badgers from distant planets. Brian was very keen to purchase a bicycle pump and a tiny defibrillator at the space station "Stop crashing into me."

The crew were now sat in the entertainment room and were playing a traditional board game called Monopoly, and playing Monopoly was a good chance to hone their business skills. Brian was sat thinking about the squashed hedgehogs and the badgers and then looked at the rest of the crew and said, "You know we wanted to start a business, well, I think that my idea to resurrect dead animals with a bicycle pump and a defibrillator might just be successful." Karen laughed, and then softly replied, "Well, you never know Brian. The business world is a very

strange world indeed." Cedric totally agreed and he nodded and then smiled, before saying, "Yes, it is very compassionate of you Brian to want to bring back animals from the dead, and also very caring of you indeed, but how much would you charge to resurrect dead animals with a bicycle pump and a defibrillator?" This of course was a very good question, and a very sensible one, because no one goes into business to lose money, and also the universe is filled with great opportunities and possibilities beyond your wildest dreams, but doing business back on Earth would be much more fun, because space can be a very lonely place.

The crew were very keen on getting back to planet Earth and were looking forward to spending more time with their friends and their families, who they had not seen for quite some time. Business opportunities were many and varied on planet Earth compared to doing business in space. Business in space involved huge amounts of space travel and there were great dangers involved, especially avoiding meteorites, and space pirates. Space pirates were not good for business at all, and some parts of space were worse than others, and the crew of the spaceship had so far been lucky to avoid them.

The space station "Stop crashing into me." was unfortunately a notorious hangout for space pirates, and because it was, avoiding fraudsters and theft of business ideas was not easy. Many people had gone to bed on the space station after a drunken night out and had woken to find themselves in bed with strange robots and aliens, with whom they had never seen in their lives. Many people had gone to bed by themselves the night before and strange robots and alien species had found a way to get

around the security devices of the room, designed to prevent people teleporting into them, and had managed to teleport themselves into the bedrooms of their unwitting victims. This of course was quite a shock to the people wanting to do business, and after waking, the unsuspecting people stared in shock at the unwanted guests in their beds. The unwanted guests were reported to then get out of the bed, and get dressed without saying a word, and then afterwards finally say "Goodbye.", and walk out of the room never to be seen again, leaving the businessmen and businesswomen visiting the space station rather perplexed. Afterwards, after the visitors to the space station had woken up and the large hangovers had finally worn off, they found that their business ideas had been stolen and their brainwaves had been read, and this was all captured on CCTV cameras.

The security forces of the space station were having an incredibly difficult time trying to cope with the situation, and of course business ideas are extremely valuable, and no one wants their business ideas stolen. Brian had heard this previously via the intergalactic internet, and he had come up with a novel idea to prevent this. Brian spoke once more, "I was just thinking about protecting my business idea, and I thought well, if I have my brain removed at the space station and replaced with a software version of me and my humour, no one can read my brainwaves if they teleport into my room and steal my business ideas, because my business ideas are all stored in my brain you see." Salomina thought that this was a very good idea, and removing your brain was now possible, and it had been for quite some time due to incredible progress in technology. "Yes." said Salomina, "that is very

sensible Brian. We could all have our brains removed, and then have them safely stored in the security deposit boxes on the space station, and then pop them back in just before we leave, and afterwards with our business ideas intact, prepare to finish our work contract and return to Earth.” Karen then joined in the conversation, “Good idea. I would like to protect my business ideas too, and removing our brains is a very sensible idea to prevent brain wave theft. I personally do not mind if people steal my physical belongings, but my brainwaves are very personal to me, and I really would not want my most intimate memories stolen.” Cedric nodded in agreement, “Yes, that would be a terrible thing, but what is your most intimate moment, Karen?” Karen laughed and then said, “Well, as it is you and I trust you all, I once deliberately entertained a seagull and trained it to interrupt my friends’ mother whilst she was cooking, because I was dating my friend’s brother at the time, and he often smelt of garlic, and he was force fed snails at an early age. This of course, was not helpful and his waist regularly increased because his mother in secret kept force feeding him food because she wanted to make him happy as he was her only son. The food she kept feeding him unfortunately seemingly contained more garlic than the entire universe, and this really was playing havoc with our love lives.” The rest of the crew laughed. They all had a formed an incredible bond over the last few years, and stories like these only made their bond even stronger. The crew had all grown up together and back on Earth they lived in the same street, and there was a great feeling whenever they were together. The crew felt like they could take on the world and going into business was

a brave new adventure, and something that they had been planning for ages and ages.

The game of monopoly was always an enjoyable experience, and unlike doing business, there were no risks involved, apart from spilling your drink on the board. Business was a risky business and soon they would be aboard the space station, "Stop crashing into me." The crew had never been to the space station and had heard great things about the culinary delights that awaited them onboard.

The crew continued to play monopoly for a few minutes and were thoroughly enjoying themselves. Brian was winning. Suddenly, an announcement came over the spaceships tannoy, which always was very helpful. "The fish and chips have arrived, now should I teleport you some portions, and teleport the rest into the deep freezer?" Karen shouted, "Yes. Yes please." The tannoy system was a bit deaf and she had to shout loudly to make herself heard. "We need to replace the tannoy system, because it really is on its way out, and the company are so tight fisted, that we will have to do it ourselves, otherwise if we do not, we will never receive any messages." At that moment, the robot elephant cleaner, entered the room and was whistling. "Hello." said Brian, "how are you and how is the cleaning going?" The robot elephant cleaner then replied, "Very well, thanks, but there was a slight accident, and I hate to tell you this Brian, I accidentally managed to Hoover up all of your underpants by mistake, and they really didn't taste very nice at all. I am terribly sorry Brian, but I think you need some new underpants." "Oh." said Brian, "they were my dirty underpants, and I was going to get rid of them anyway, because they couldn't cope with those curries that

we were eating you see, and against those curries, the underpants stood no chance at all." The crew all laughed, and Salomina laughed so much that she almost cried. The robot elephant cleaner, then spoke once more, "Who is winning at monopoly?" Cedric looked up at the robot elephant cleaner and replied, "Brian is winning, and it is most unusual. You should come and play it some time." The robot elephant cleaner then responded, "Yes, I will do, it looks like fun, but I must go now and finish cleaning." Brian smiled and said, "Well enjoy the cleaning, and thanks for letting me know about my underpants." The robot elephant cleaner, then said, "Of course, you are most welcome, very welcome indeed, but Brian, just to let you know, I will be trying to avoid your underpants more in future, so please could you keep them off of the floor in the future. Thank you very much." Brian smiled and then said, "Yes. It would be a pleasure. Now, goodbye, and have fun!" The robot elephant cleaner nodded and then left the room. The crew then went back to playing monopoly which was a welcome relief from the mundanity of space travel.

Still, talking of journeys, the journey to the chip shop inside a black hole had been very successful, and now that the digital display map had been upgraded, it would be more capable of helping them with business matters, and there would be many business manners to attend to on the space station "Stop crashing into me." Dreams of making a huge fortune from future business ideas were in the crew's minds, and they certainly had had plenty of time to think about business ideas. The crews' brains were overstimulated from drinking tea and coffee far too regularly and business ideas were still flying around their

brains at a million miles an hour. Money of course as they used to say is the root of all evil, and Cedric had been led down a slippery slope with his bank manager, after she had seduced him after a visit to the local branch of his bank in the early evening. This of course was rather unprofessional of his bank manager, but despite having a good time for at least two months and starting a relationship with her, it came to a nasty end, when Brian thought that she was not right for him at all, after she had become incredibly jealous over a female friend and had gone ballistic and totally lost the plot.

The lady in question shouted and shouted at Brian and kept accusing him of cheating, but Brian had not cheated on her at all, but after the first time of accusing Brian, the accusations continued, and numerous attempts were made to make Brian jealous. The lady in question tried seducing lamp posts whilst drunk and passing robots, and she also began to drink more and more non-alcoholic space juice, and despite being non-alcoholic, the space juice rendered her unable to barely converse at all, and also, the space juice had a very strange side effect. The space juice made her legs do the can can dance involuntarily and she could not stop kicking her legs in the air, even during dinner time. The lady Bank manager sadly eventually lost all control after becoming addicted to space juice, and then eventually tried seducing a rubbish bin in front of Brian in the high street near where they were living. This of course was a terrible day for Brian, and after the lady had tried to seduce a rubbish bin, Brian had finally had enough of her antics, which was not unsurprising at all whatsoever, and very upsetting and frustrating indeed. Brian called immediately for an ambulance for his girlfriend at the



time, and she was rapidly rescued and then taken to hospital, and Brian ended their relationship.

Afterwards with a lot of excellent care from the nurses, she was no longer addicted to space juice, and space juice was immediately banned from the universe because of what had happened to her with the intoxicating drink. Still, not everything was fixed, and the lady Bank manager kept kicking her legs in the air involuntarily. Still, there was a positive side to this, and she managed to get a job testing footballs by kicking them at traffic wardens. Kicking footballs at traffic wardens, was part of a community service project designed to frustrate traffic wardens. Many people in the community found this incredibly helpful as huge numbers of traffic wardens really overcharged when they handed out parking tickets. Still, years later, Brian had never quite forgotten his ex girlfriend, and she occasionally haunted him in her dreams, which happened regularly. Yet when that happened, Brian woke in a cold sweat and had to use the shower immediately. Which he rarely did. Today however, Brian was having a sweaty good day, and so were the rest of the crew who were all on their way to the space station "Stop crashing into me."

The journey was going extremely smoothly so far, and the digital display map was busy learning new things, whilst the crew continued to play monopoly.

A few minutes after the crew had ordered their fish and chips, the fish and chips materialised on the entertainment table after being teleported from the storeroom and were piping hot. The crew then tucked into their food, like a ravenous group of hyenas, and this was the first decent meal for ages, which was a relief after the curry debacle.

Eating properly of course was extremely important, and the crew could not run the spaceship without the proper nutrients, which helped them concentrate and also helped keep their spirits up on this most boring of journeys through space, which were more boring than knitting. Space food used to be in the olden days not much to write home about, and it was mostly freeze dried. Now with decent size kitchens on these very large spaceships, there was no excuse for not eating properly, but getting things delivered to the spaceship was not easy at all sometimes. Many delivery drone ships were lost after smashing into meteorites and died screaming "Ow, get that meteorite off me, it hurts!".

Drone ships were mostly built as sentient robots, and also were made of sentient living tissue in some parts. Some drone ships even attempted replicating the human brain, but still despite the intelligent drone ships, they could not avoid meteorites for many years, and more often than not, the drone ships crashed and then spilled their cargo into space. Now, there were millions of rare food items which were now collectable floating around in the universe, and these escaped food products were worth great amounts of money. The collection of these food products was very competitive and many space pirates had joined in the search for them, making space travel even more dangerous.

Space travel of course was a fascinating experience, and many people aspired to be space travellers and wanted to explore distant worlds and meet interesting people of all races and species. Meeting interesting people from all races and species was what the crew had always wanted, but now, they no longer viewed space travel with rose

tinted spectacles. Space travel to the crew had become incredibly mundane, and they were rather looking forward to getting home and getting back to a normal life on planet Earth once more. Still, the space station "Stop crashing into me!" awaited the crew.

The journey to the space station was quite a quick one, and the digital display map had recommended a stop at the planet Nouala, which was halfway to the space station.

The planet Nouala was ruled by a man called "Eric Strudelhofen." Eric Strudelhofen was a very eccentric individual indeed, and he owned a fast-food restaurant, which was the only source of food on the planet. Eric Strudelhofen had become rich by selling sentient golf balls to attack terrorists with. This had proved immensely popular with all the anti-terrorism security forces throughout the entire universe, and from the proceeds of the sales of sentient golf balls, Eric Strudelhofen, earned enough to buy an entire planet. Eric was well known for his love of astronomy. He studied himself regularly.

Eric's planet Nouala had an entertainment complex, a single restaurant, and also a luxurious hotel and a casino. The rest of the planet was very beautiful and was covered in tropical and lush vegetation, including palm trees. The planet had many beautiful beaches, and the crew were really looking forward to being able to relax on them and to taking a break from space travel. Space travel was unfortunately incredibly tiring because it was often so mundane and boring, and right now, all the crew were extremely exhausted after all the crazy goings on lately, but they were really glad to be eating some decent food once again. The crew continued eating their fish and chips, and then resumed playing monopoly.

Outside the spacecraft, meteorites whizzed past regularly as they flew through the stars and through some spectacularly beautiful parts of the universe, featuring dying stars, and beautiful looking galaxies, and as the spaceship continued on its journey, a lost space traveller floating in a spacesuit was spotted on the CCTV camera waving furiously like the famous Marcel Marceau from ancient history. Marcel Marceau was a man who said nothing in his early film career and was a man who kept waving his arms about comically. The crew unfortunately did not realise until later that there was a space traveller in difficulty, and it was extremely easy to find difficulty in space, because many space travellers had found themselves having their spaceships stolen by kleptomaniac drones and they sadly did not have time to react before the drone had entered their spaceship and had flown off with it whilst the drone laughed to itself about nefarious deeds. Thefts of spaceships were a regular occurrence, and the cost of insuring spaceships had gone through the roof unfortunately because of this. Luckily the crew had so far not had their spaceship stolen, but they had wished many times that it would be, because the job, delivering rubbish to idiots had turned out to be one of the most boring jobs in their lives, and if their spaceship had been stolen, it would quite frankly have been a great relief, because they could all go home back to Earth early, and then collect all the pay that they were owed for the duration of the trip. The crew being far from home, of course, greatly missed their relatives and friends, but in space, you were never truly alone, and over the centuries, humanity had spread throughout the entire universe with the help of faster spaceships, and so, because of the improved speed of travel, many encounters with alien species had occurred. The first communications with

alien species were extremely stressful and very difficult for all concerned. Many alien species were far more intelligent than human beings, and the more intelligent aliens did not really have a lot of time for human beings whatsoever. The more intelligent aliens often were not interested in money at all, and money was still, despite a few species belief in not believing in money, making life very difficult for the peoples of the universe. In the universe, unfortunately there were many people living in absolute poverty, and who were extremely unhappy. Yes, there were many desperate people who would do anything at all to make money, and one unusual way of making money was to wash the outside of spaceships whilst dressed as people's favourite superheroes, and then afterwards pretend to be a fake girlfriend or a fake boyfriend for the evening or whole day.

Space of course could be a very lonely place, and having some company sometimes was very nice indeed. Once sadly, Cedric was so lonely that he had befriended a traffic warden, and befriending a traffic warden was one of the last things that you should do in the universe, because traffic wardens were extremely hated by most species, and they also had a really terrible reputation for being greedy and slovenly, and very discombobulated in the head, and extremely miserable individuals who were happy to take your wallet if they could not give you a parking ticket or clamp your legs. Now, once you became friends with a traffic warden, no one really wanted to know you because it was a truly shameful thing to do, and often it led to career suicide. Once, Cedric came close to losing his job as an ice-cream taster because he had befriended a traffic warden, and being an ice-cream taster was a job that Cedric quite enjoyed, and the job, was very helpful to him,

because he often had a problem with his nostrils, and the problem was that his nostrils were extremely hot, and putting ice-cream up his nostrils was the only way to cool them down. Cedric luckily, once was only friends with a traffic warden for several hours, but the entire population of the town where he lived, immediately found out via social media that he was friends with a traffic warden, and because of this, Cedric began to receive a huge amount of abuse online in online forums and in blogs and was banned from many of his favourite bars and restaurants. All this of course rather upset Cedric, and many people in the community because of Brian's short and brief friendship with a traffic warden had thrown cucumbers at him. Cucumbers were one of the most despised vegetables in the entire universe, and they were seen as a massive insult if someone pointed a cucumber at you or threw a cucumber at you in anger. Cucumbers were less valuable than dirt, and using a cucumber to make a protest, was the biggest insult that you could give to someone if you waved or threw it at them.

Social standing in space was of course very important, and people's reputations could precede them at extremely fast speeds. Electronic messages were delivered across the universe with the use of antigravity, and also online through the intergalactic communication system. There were of course, huge numbers of messages being transported out there in space, and most were delivered safely, but a few occasionally went missing. The intergalactic communication system really enjoyed reading people's messages, even if they were embarrassing, and unsurprisingly, many strange messages were being sent across the universe, including these strange ones:

Firstly, "I think that my intestines have been invaded by a man from the planet Venus, because they keep talking to me and I cannot get to sleep at night."

Secondly, "Please, deliver me a sentient cheesecake, because I am having a robot over for dinner, and the robot is a total idiot."

Thirdly, "Please do not tell my wife, that I borrowed her clothing, and that I cross dressed as her so that I could use her expense account, and then escape to a faraway destination on the other side of the planet, as my mother in laws cooking is as disgusting as the inside of a toilet."

Fourthly, "Did you Sellotape the local traffic warden to the lamppost yet, because I will be attempting to park my flying vehicle in the shape of a gigantic hamster at three forty-five p.m. in the afternoon, because I have outstanding parking tickets handed down to me by my ancestors who did not like me very much at all." The crew of the spaceship were currently enjoying themselves whilst playing monopoly and had not received any strange messages for ages.

Time on journeys through space to enjoy yourself was of course very precious and often far too short, and unfortunately time often dragged very slowly on indeed on these delivery journeys. Still the crew were making the most of their time together and were happy. The crew as with most space travellers had had a few close shaves when it came to space travel, and also a few near misses with asteroids. Apollo the robot also could easily have

ended their lives with a pair of underpants, should he have wished to, because Apollo was much stronger than them and they were thankful that they all survived the encounter, which so easily could have been a matter of life or death, and death was not what they had planned just yet.

Now, in space it was often a case of the survival of the fittest, and the crew were not fit at all. For instance, Brian was not fit to fly a spaceship, and he had also had a large belly, and he belonged to a book club, where the books were written in tippex. Cedric on the other hand was occasionally mentally unstable in his own privacy, and he liked to pretend that he was a unicorn, and Karen was fairly fit, and she used to wrestle the robot elephant cleaner, and lift the robot elephant cleaner off of the ground with one hand, whilst demanding more beer after a drunken evening. Finally, Salomina, was extremely fit, and she could order anything that was needed for the spaceship with two hands at the same time as she was ambidextrous. Now, being ambidextrous was incredibly useful, because Salomina could eat two dinners at the same time, and her weight had since the beginning of the delivery job ballooned to a healthy thirty stone in weight. Of course, mental well-being and physical fitness were of great importance to any space traveller, and the spaceship had a large gym, and the crew were often found using the gym equipment whilst eating copious amounts of food. Brian was a great lover of food and he had managed to sell several of his food-stained t-shirts on the intergalactic internet, and he had become quite a popular figure in the world of gluttony. Now Brian's mother was really not impressed by Brians gluttony, and in desperation, she kept



sending him videos of her eating salad in very slow motion, and in them, there were sounds of delight as she tried to encourage Brian to eat more healthily. Brian's mother of course was extremely exasperated by Brians unhealthy lifestyle and had once when he was at home on the planet Earth smashed his front door down with a laser gun and a drone and had then marched into the house with a large salad. The plan with the drone and Brians mother, was to feed Brian something decent. Now together with Brians mother and the drone as team, they force fed Brian salad, for several hours after sellotaping him to a large candlestick. Brian of course, was not impressed at all, and he had to call for the help of the spaceships crew to rescue him. Luckily the spaceships crew arrived eventually and persuaded Brian's mother and the drone to stop force feeding him salad, with the enticing offer of copious bottles of wine for Brian's mother, and a video to watch for the drone, about how great you could be if you learnt from human beings and knew your place. The film of course had some fantastic special effects, and the drone was polite ever after, and also Brian's mother never attempted to force feed him salad ever again, but she did like to tease him by sending him videos of her eating salad in slow motion. This sending of videos of course irritated Brian, and in response he kept sending his mother videos of him drinking beer in slow motion, whilst eating steak and kidney pies, with piles of chips covered in cheese and mayonnaise, and for pudding, huge piles of ice-cream, which was Brian's favourite, and extremely unhealthy. The crew of the spaceship occasionally looked towards the porthole and watched the stars in all their

magnificence and glorious beauty, and the crew were all happy, yes, very happy that this was a step in the right direction for their lives, because having a goal in life and a plan is incredibly important, and plans are of course there to be made, and when you are with your friends, anything is possible.

Now, planning for the future had already begun in their minds, and during this time in space, many strange things had happened to the crew, and you could not always predict the future, but you could use the past to guide yourself to a better future, and the crew all wanted a bright future. Brian for instance had been saving to buy thousands of lightbulbs for the home that he planned to build after they had become successful at business. The crew were extremely optimistic, and they were all filled with hope for the future. The crews' hearts were leaping in anticipation at the thought of what the future held for them. Yet, although it had never been a long-term plan to be delivery drivers for the rest of their lives, the crew were realistic about their career opportunities. If they continued being delivery drivers, there was little chance of advancement because in the space delivery business, the companies who own the spaceships that deliver things, rarely given any opportunities to advance and better yourself because they are incredibly tight fisted. Money is of course, to most people in the universe very important, and very lacking most of the time. The crew still did not really know what they were going to do if they made huge amounts of money from self-employment and running a business, whichever business it turned out to be. Still, starting a company was a relatively easy thing to do, and even robots were starting companies these days. Some

robots had been incredibly successful, and after succeeding at business were flying around the world flashing their cash and spending huge amounts of money on robot women and men, and humans, both male and female for company and entertainment.

Now, when you have huge amounts of time on your hands, and you have more money than charm, it is easy to ingratiate yourself with the leaders of the world's businesses, and it is very easy to make money if you have the right social contacts and are good at social networking. But if you do not have any money, it can be extremely humiliating, and frustrating. There are many people on the streets of the Earth unfortunately who are homeless and who have nothing. The price of property has become astronomical, and people are resorting to mugging their own grandmothers to pay off their mortgages. Now, this is not a good situation at all, and the property owners of the world, care less than they used to about people, and are seemingly quite happy to kick people when they are down. The cut and thrust of the property world, is a terrible situation, and many find themselves unfortunately living in a box, living in cardboard box, and playing the song living in a box, living in a cardboard box. The song was very popular in the nineteen eighties, a long time ago. Now Schrodinger's cat apparently might have lived in a box, in a cardboard box, but some people contemplated whether Schrodinger's cat was inside the box or outside the box. Yet, the homeless people of the world did not want to contemplate cardboard boxes at all, even if they were inside a cardboard box. Now, living in a cardboard box was very shameful to many people, and the homeless

people of the universe were still looked down upon, unless they were seven feet tall or taller of course.

Yet, many people in the universe were despite the terrible state of many people's finances, very compassionate and very caring people. The crew of the spaceship were amongst them in being compassionate and caring, and the crew regularly tried to donate what they could to the needy, even if they were extremely short of money. Brian once for example, donated half a kebab to a homeless man. Now, donating half a kebab to a homeless man, which turned out to be the wrong idea, as the man who was given the half a kebab, stole Brian's trousers in the high street of his local town. Yes, it was strange but true, and an unfortunate incident because Brian was left stranded in the high street in his underpants, after being held up by the man who was not wielding a cucumber in disguise. The homeless man instead had used a woman's bra as a catapult and had fired a rock at Brian's forehead knocking him over into the gutter. The homeless man then took Brian trousers off whilst he lay unconscious. Brian then awoke to find himself laying in the street without a pair of trousers on. Many people passing by stopped to stare, and began forming a crowd, and started laughing at Brian and Brian felt totally humiliated. Unfortunately, it took Brian a very long time to recover from the humiliation, but now, he felt that starting a business would improve his selfesteem.

Self-esteem was very important of course, and Brian was looking forwards to playing a part in a future business attempt no matter what it was, and so were the rest of the crew, who were extremely excited about doing so. The crew continued to play monopoly whilst the spaceship

headed towards the planet Nouala ruled by Eric Strudelhofen. So far, the day was passing by pleasantly enough, and the clock was ticking down towards their arrival at the planet.

The crew liked to play music regularly whilst they travelled through space, and the crew's favourite music was Starship nothing is going to stop us now, Startrekkin across the universe, Starman, and Life on mars. Now, entertainment in space was very important as it was easy to lose your mind through the sheer boredom and the mundanity of space travel. Brian through sheer boredom had once spent a whole day washing the same pair of underpants because he had nothing better to do. Now philosophy in space of course is very helpful and intellectual debate, and also a good conversation to keep the brain stimulated. The crew of the spaceship had all become very good at listening to each other and also had many stories to tell, and in space, there is lots of history waiting to be written, but the crew after drinking too much couldn't think of anything to write, but once Brian and the crew together wrote a gigantic message on a planet that they were visiting with a large bottle of paint that read, "Plato lived here after having an argument with his wife after she dropped a plate of dinner on his toes." Now, of course, Plato had never lived there whatsoever, yet still people believed it and a cult was started to worship Plato, who after some period out of the limelight, became a hero throughout the universe. Plato's intelligent intellectual quotes were widely read and quoted in many places by many races, and he was worshipped by many new followers, who were very zealous.

The crew had fantasies of becoming hero's themselves, and Brian and Cedric had once uploaded a video of them rescuing a cat from a tyrannosaurus rex in a burning building, whilst being shouted at by their mother's for not doing the washing up. The video was filled with slapstick comedy and became extremely popular. Brian and Cedric quickly realised that making money from uploading videos onto the intergalactic web could be extremely profitable, and after the video had been online for quite some time, they had made so much money that they managed to buy a nice oak table. The table was of course their pride and joy, until someone used some ancient dinosaur remains and managed to recreate a dinosaur, and after the tyrannosaurus rex was born, the person who created it then sent it off to eat Brian and Cedric, because Brian and Cedric came across as extremely irritating individuals. Luckily Brian and Cedric managed to escape and were not eaten alive by the tyrannosaurus rex, but the table was, and sadly passed away because of eating it. The crew of the spaceship had of course in their lives lost many people, and in life you never know how much time you get to live, but you do have to make the most of it. The ancient Latin phrase *carpe et diem* is very relevant, because comfort is very important in space, and it is very sensible to seize a nice carpet to enjoy yourself upon whilst alive.

Also, living well, and in luxury is very important in life, and there is not enough luxury in space, so you try and make the most of it, and when you come across luxury, you never have much time to actually enjoy it at all. The crew of the spaceship film all the luxuries that they come across and look at the videos longingly when they do not.

The crew of the spaceship of course like many people dream of becoming incredibly rich. How they were going to make this happen was not yet quite certain. The crew had numerous ideas in the works and were contemplating their lives back on Earth when they had finished their latest stint of space deliveries. The job was mostly boring, and not very interesting at all, but the payoff at the end should help set them up for life. Still it was a long way off, the final delivery.

## **Chapter 11**

“Planet Nouala.”

The crew’s spaceship had been travelling for several days now, and the planet Nouala was now in sight.

The crew of the spaceship were stood at the porthole of the entertainment room, and they were all looking at the beautiful planet. The planet Nouala was a very beautiful planet, and it was filled with tropical islands and mostly water, which many planets were not, and many planets were barren and dry, and finding a planet with water was like finding a needle in a haystack.

Arriving at any planet in space is often a relief, as space travel can get extremely boring, and even if a planet has nothing of interest upon it, it is a relief to see after the vast expanse and emptiness of many parts of space. Luckily planet Nouala is very beautiful, and the vast expanse of space and the dangers of space, made the crew feel grateful to have arrived at somewhere where there are things to do including sightseeing and talking to people of all species, even if some of them turn out to be crazy. The

art of conversation is a fine art, and there are many things to talk about when you finally reach a beautiful planet. The incredible complexity of life and the incredible diversity of plant life always makes you wonder, how could all this have been created from nothing, and it also makes you wonder, how loud was the big bang? Cedric was stood looking out the porthole with a quizzical look upon his face, as he squinted at the planet in the distance. Cedric thought he could see something, a shape of some kind. Cedric moved closer towards the porthole, and he quickly realised that what he was looking at was a recreation of a gigantic tortoise. "Look!" said Cedric, "a gigantic turtle!" Karen and the rest of the crew then also moved closer to the porthole to take a closer look, and after doing so spotted what he was on about, which was indeed a gigantic recreation of a turtle. Salomina then spotted an extremely large neon sign near the turtle which was written in massive letters, and it read in large letters, "The Strudelhofen Restaurant." Strudelhofen was of course a very unusual name, and Karen stood there thinking about its meaning, then after a few seconds Karen spoke, "Now, what do you think Strudelhofen means?" Brian laughed, and then replied, "Well, I am not quite sure. Maybe it means to throw a strudel through the air?" Cedric began laughing immediately, and jokingly said, "Well, yes it could do.", then he paused for a few seconds and added, "Maybe, Strudelhofening is an Olympic sport on this planet." Salomina smiled and then joined in the conversation, "Great, I hope so, I wouldn't mind seeing some sport." Salomina nodded, and then waved towards the porthole, and said, "Hello turtle, we will be visiting you soon." Salomina was often in the habit of talking to



inanimate objects, and she had a love of nature and wildlife. Once, Salomina, had been a campaigner for freeing wild animals from captivity, and back on Planet Earth, there were some truly beautiful creatures of many sizes. Some of which were edible. Which was useful!

Salomina had a lot of time for animals and found that keeping animals in captivity was extremely cruel, and she in the past had done all that she could do to help relieve their suffering.

Once a small spider monkey was trapped and entangled in a woman's armpit hair and was subject to huge amounts of human sweat against its wishes, and the woman had kind of gotten used to it being there under one of her armpits. The spider monkey eventually got so desperate to escape the woman's armpit hair that it had stolen her mobile phone and called an animal sanctuary at which Salomina was working at the time.

Salomina was of course rather taken aback by someone who she thought was pretending to be a talking spider monkey using a mobile phone, whilst trapped in someone's armpit hair.

This situation of course, was extremely bizarre, and this did not seem to make any sense whatsoever or appear to be believable. Salomina asked for more details, and the spider monkey eventually found out how to use the video call option and said that the woman had told her that she had been on an extremely long journey in space and had unfortunately run out of razorblades to shave her armpit hairs. The spider monkey also said that she had not shaved her armpit hair for a whole year and the spider monkey had unluckily trapped its own hair, in the woman's armpit hair. This situation of course was a

terrible situation, and Salomina sympathised deeply, as she hated not being able to shave her own armpit hair.

The spider monkey said that the woman called Thora Heard nothing, was deaf and communicated through sign language only, and as the spider monkey did not know sign language, and could not communicate its distress to her, the spider monkey desperately needed help.

Salomina managed to work out that the woman was in space aboard a spaceship and found out from the spider monkey that there was a drone on the spaceship in a different room that the spider monkey could not reach, and that the woman was not aware of as she was also partially sighted.

Salomina, tried to reassure the spider monkey, and luckily managed to find a way with the help of Brian to communicate with the drone and get it to cut off the woman's armpit hair, and finally managed to rescue the spider monkey from being soaked in sweat for the next three years of space travel.

The spider monkey and the woman were extremely grateful as the shower aboard her spaceship had broken down on board, and the woman felt a great amount of remorse that she did not realise the monkey's distress, despite it drinking her armpit juice by accident and then choking far too often on it, which was terrible. Salomina of course was very happy to have helped, and much preferred rescuing animals than this current job of being a delivery driver, which was far more boring. The crew of the spaceship continued to stare at the beauty of the planet as it was getting closer. Now, approaching planets of course was a beautiful and a moving experience, even almost a religious experience. The beauty of the heavens

and the stars were incredible to wonder at, but there was nothing like seeing a planet coming towards you with all its majesty, after a long journey in space, or even a short journey. The planet Nouala stood before them in all its glorious beauty, and the crew were already falling in love with it, despite only having reached the planet about an hour before. There was great excitement in the crews' eyes, and they all looked refreshed and fully awake, and they were extremely happy to see the planet in front of them. The crew had already booked their accommodation already and they were already excitedly wondering what facilities there would be at the hotel. Space journeys of course were not filled with great luxuries more often than not, and the hotel as it had been described on the website was incredibly luxurious. The hotel included a very large swimming pool with robots that waited on you hand and foot with trays of food and champagne and all other types of alcoholic and non-alcoholic refreshments. There was also at the poolside, massages to be had by robots, and humans and alien species. The hotel as well as this included a games arcade, a snooker and a pool room, a sports centre which included badminton courts, tennis courts, a lounge, a shopping complex, the restaurant, accommodation, and a spaceport. The hotel was popular with grey aliens and with people from planet Earth. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen could not wait to get to the planet and to the hotel. Karen turned away from the porthole, and walked over to the control panel of the entertainment room and increased the speed of the spaceship and started to programme in the docking coordinates for the spaceport.

In space, and on many planets, the facilities that you were likely to get varied wildly, but this planet had facilities that were much more luxurious than most that they had previously visited in their time as space delivery drivers. This great set of facilities was of course going to be a welcome relief, and as the planet drew closer, Brian wondered what it would be like to own an entire planet. Brian, stood there thinking about this, and then contemplated the complexities of doing so, then after a few seconds of deep thought, Brian spoke to the rest of the crew, "Do you think that owning a whole planet would make you egotistical?" Karen thought about this for a second and then nodded, and afterwards said, "Yes, it could do I suppose, and it could make you very egotistical. and very dictatorial." Salomina laughed about this, and then said, "Well, personally I cannot stand dictators, because once I had a terrible experience with a dictator once you see, because he accused me of poisoning his jacket potato with garlic cream cheese at dinner time." Brian sniggered and then said, "Really?" Karen smiled and then replied, "Yes, unfortunately, and he also accused me of believing that he was a vampire, and as well as this, he also accused me that I was attempting to kill him with garlic." said Karen. Cedric shook his head and then rolled his eyes, and joined in with the conversation, "Wow, what a crazy man. Now, who was he and where did this happen?" Karen paused and tried hard to remember his name, and then suddenly it came to her, "Oh, yes, he was called Father Alfonso Lonely. Father Alfonso Lonely was cool, and it was aboard his spaceship, which was in the shape of a potato.

Father Alfonso Lonely was a famous religious leader, a vicar in fact, a vicar who travelled between the planet Earth and the moon. A vicar who was well known for being very dictatorial. In fact, he was so dictatorial that when he got out his large robotic organ, it sometimes was afraid of him and it kept running away and hid out of sight wherever it could as it had legs.

Now Father Alfonso's large robotic organs frequent habit of hiding from him of course was very embarrassing, and Father Alfonso Lonely was very frustrated at not being able to perform and play with his large robotic organ in front of his devoted audiences, and this had happened many times whilst I was working aboard his spaceship for a few months after responding to an advert in an online newspaper.

Father Alfonso Lonely told me how frustrated he was that he could not make sweet music with his large robotic organ. Father Alfonso Lonely was extremely proud of his large robotic organ initially after purchasing it, because his other tiny organ had failed and had been destroyed through overuse.

Now on the day that he accused me of poisoning his jacket potato with garlic cream cheese, Father Alfonso Lonely was heard using rude words for the first time in years without realising that he was livestreaming his rude outbursts to his followers across the universe by accident. This of course was disastrous, and also extremely embarrassing. Father Alfonso Lonely lost a lot of followers immediately and then started accusing me of poisoning his jacket potato with cream cheese, and he also accused me of trying to murder him with the jacket potato after telling me that he thought that I believed that he was a

vampire.” Of course, I did not really believe that he was a vampire, but he was a terrible dictator, and quite frankly Father Alfonso Lonely’s large robotic electronic organ was not that impressive to look at. Still, working for Father

Alfonso Lonely was a job I suppose.

The next job on their delivery route included dropping off fifty thousand electronic signs that could be attached to people’s foreheads. Electronic signs that read your brain waves and then told people what you were thinking even if you did not want to talk to them. This device was supposed to help people who were very shy and who had trouble communicating with others. People could easily see what you were thinking, and the electronic sign sounded alerts when you were angry and then warned people by playing a siren noise very loudly indeed. This electronic sign was a good idea in principle, and just an example of the idiotic products that the crew had to deliver. Another idiot product that the crew had to deliver was a cabbage that could be used as a football, and that then grew legs and ran away from the goalmouth. This product was very weird indeed.

Finally, another product that was equally as stupid as this was a clock that claimed to allow you to bend time and space by staring at the clock hands and move them telepathically. Now many people had claimed to have telepathic powers, and this of course was ideal for them. The planet was moving closer and closer, and the spaceship began to descend towards the planet Nouala. The crew walked over to the porthole and then began watching out of it, as they descended through the

atmosphere, and then proceeded onwards through the clouds on a dark Noualan night.

The bright lights of the city of Nouala and civilisation were a joy to behold after a mostly boring time in space. Nouala was one of only a handful of cities on the planet, and soon the crew would be landing at the spaceport. The crews' bags were already packed, and they could not wait to relax at the hotel and at the swimming pool and in the entertainment complex.

The last hotel that they had been staying at on another planet was absolutely atrocious. The robot waiters were extremely rude, and the beds had been eaten by some kind of gigantic rat, and the food tasted like vomit. Still, they had survived the last hotel by some small miracle, and it definitely looked as though the hotel Nouala was of a much higher standard than the last one.

The company paid for the crew's accommodation and expenses, and the crew always made sure that they spent as much as possible on the companies' expense account wherever they went. The good thing about that was, was that the company would not receive the expenses claims until a year later. The company who owned the spaceship had a base on a large meteorite, a meteorite that had an engine, and that was painted like a cow. Now, quite why it was painted like a cow, no one actually knew, and electronic messages had trouble reaching the meteorite because it had an antigravity field for some very weird reason.

The company was a very strange company, and as long as the packages got delivered, they really did not mind at all what you did with their expense account, and the crew certainly made the most of it.

The spaceship after passing through the atmosphere, then began to descend into the spaceport. The spaceport was quite a busy place with huge numbers of different shaped spaceships, in all different states, from across the entire universe. The spaceship owners that had already landed, were of many different species, and mostly were not that friendly to look at whatsoever. Still, the crew probably had already met some of the different types of aliens and human hybrids walking around the spaceport already. Today of course was a good day, and the crew happily prepared themselves mentally for the landing. Their spaceship came into the spaceport slowly and gently touched down upon the landing pad. Computer controlled spaceships were indeed a true blessing, and the crew were terrible mostly with directions and map reading. Computers had for a long time enabled complete idiots to travel across space without touching the spaceships controls ever. This was of course, very beneficial to spaceship owners who wanted to have good time in space without having to worry about doing all the hard work when it came to flying the spaceship.

Once upon a time in space in recent history, even a zebra was in charge of a spaceship. The zebra had snuck aboard the spaceship without the owners realising and had begun pressing buttons with its nose and had managed to by accident fly to a nearby space station.

The security forces of the spaceship panicked as they had never seen a zebra before in their lives and because of this unfamiliarity, there was chaos aboard the space station as the security team thought that they were being invaded by weird creatures from another dimension. Which seemed to happen more regularly these days.



The warning alerts were immediately sounded across the space station, and people ran screaming down the corridors of shopping centres, and also ran screaming outdoors fearing for their lives, and many completely lost their minds for at last half an hour.

In the meantime, the zebra left the spaceship and began walking through the spaceport. The zebra had never seen people running in fear before and found it highly amusing and also decided that it was rather good idea to stick its legs out, and then trip the people over, which did not amuse the passers-by whatsoever, and because of the Zebra's sense of humour, a man tripped and fell by accident into a large teleporter and then started pressing random coordinates into the teleporter and accidentally teleported into the middle of someone's marriage just as they were about to get married.

The accidental teleporting tourist knocked over the bride to be by accident, and the vicar carrying out the marriage ceremony was in the middle of asking the bride to be if he would say "I do." to a beautiful woman in a lovely black wedding dress with neon lights and antigravity properties who was floating slightly off of the ground.

The man who had just teleported by accident, replied without thinking to the "Do you take this woman to be your lawful wedded wife." question, and he said "Yes!" immediately, because after having been married forty three times already that year, the man had got so used to saying yes to marrying people that it had become an automatic response, as had divorce.

Still the panic throughout the space station was ended after someone took a photograph of the zebra and searched for a similar image online. Zebras were cool, and

likely to befriend you if you fed them the right food. It was a very very strange event, but...

Strange things seem to happen across the universe, far too often, and Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen had witnessed quite a few lately, and upon arriving at new places, there was often a very good chance of meeting some very strange people, and also of having some very weird experiences.

The crew's spaceship after landing, announced that they did not wear spacesuits and then wished them a good time and a very enjoyable time.

The crew with big smiles, exited the spacecraft with their belongings in their suitcases, and then put on dark glasses, and walked slowly into the space station terminal, and began to look around.

The space station terminal was filled with tropical trees and dancing girls, and the dancing girls wore glittery bikini's that looked like they were covered in diamonds. The girls began dancing immediately upon seeing the crew, and the crew stopped to watch this welcome ceremony and were mesmerised by how beautiful they were. The girls began singing the welcome song which went like this:

Oh, how nice to see you, how very nice indeed, we are the Strudelhofen girls, Lisa, Simone and Mary, and we would now like to welcome you, on behalf of our father, Eric Strudelhofen, who is kind and generous, and who has rather knobbly knees, upon which he carries numerous types of cheese, and of course, he is the best Father that we could ever wish for, and we love him to bits, which was true and no lie at all. The

girls really did love him for buying the planet.  
Eric Strudelhofen was so happy that he bought this planet,  
because he was tired of travelling through space, and tired  
of not meeting as many people as he wanted, and tired of  
catching ping pong disease, a space disease originally  
from planet Earth, which of course made space travel  
terrible, and sent many people home in a space hearse, but  
please, do not worry about that, because here, our  
vaccinations and our healthcare system are free, and if you  
die here, you will die happy, but we can resurrect you if  
you please, but hold on a moment, we digress,  
yes, we really think that this place, truly is the best, and  
with the hotel complex and the shopping centres, and the  
tropical scenery and the beautiful beaches,  
of with which the planet, our father, Eric  
Strudelhofen has blessed, and we hope that  
the luxuries and the entertainment, after  
your long and boring space journeys, will  
suitably impress, because our father is a  
kind man, who used to art in Devon,  
and of course, he is a very creative and artistic man, who  
after making money, and stopping being so serious,  
became quite funny,  
and in a monumental moment of genius, he  
transformed the planet from a terrible mess,  
into a beautiful place,  
a jewel in the universe, and the universe because of this,  
our father has truly blessed,  
and with his compassion for races of all species,  
he came up with this plan, to welcome all to  
live in harmony, and to make this planet as a  
tourist destination, the very best,

yes, our father Eric Strudelhofen, he  
wishes you a warm welcome,  
and a free pint of beer,  
and a packet of unlimited crisps no less,  
oh, yes, oh yes, we welcome you, oh,  
wonderous guests!

The crew were extremely happy to arrive and the welcoming committee by the daughters of Eric Strudelhofen, was a refreshing change from the blandness and the mundanity of space.

Brian immediately wondered if the daughters of Eric Strudelhofen, were single. Brian found them very attractive, and despite his terrible experience with Susan, he still quite fancied getting to know them on a personal level. They had beautiful faces and all of them were smiling constantly. Now, if Brian had to smile that much, his moustache would have fallen off, and Brian ungraciously thought that although they were smiling that much, they probably were smiling so much because they may be on some kind of drugs.

Brian and the crew though still smiled at the daughters of Eric Strudelhofen. Salomina then said to the girls, "Hello, that performance was delightful. We are by the way, Salomina, Karen, Cedric and Brian, and it is a pleasure to meet you." The girls then responded by saying "Hello." in unison, and then stuck out their hands. The crew of the spaceship then started to stick out their hands also, and the girls then pulled their hands away, and began to sing once more with great enthusiasm and performed some different dance moves, which were very athletic.

We are sorry, but we just have to say, no, no, no, because although we do like to say hello, we do not like to shake hands right away, as we want you to be vaccinated, and for you to be sanitised from space bugs, because we will have you know, we would like you to be clean and free of disease, because one of our guests previously had developed leprosy, and sadly, at the restaurant his arm fell off into a beef stew, and yes unluckily, the arm was eaten by accident by another guest, and the owner of the arm was distraught and, in a mess, and him and the other diner were not amused, because it put them off their dinners,

and it also made them lose their other limbs, and also made them become shorter and slimmer, and yes, the story could be read in the intergalactic news, and unfortunately, the story, it spread throughout the universe, and by the intergalactic food hygiene agency, we were fined, lots of money and it really was not funny, and Dad really was not impressed, and he decided until it was over to hide in his room, and because of the leprosy and disease, and the food hygiene agencies fine, he thought it was the end of the world, and he was filled with thoughts of doom and gloom, because the leprosy infected the old city far from here, and we had loads of limbs to dispose of, and no one would do it, unless we gave them lots of dysentery tablets, and lots of free beer, which did not even raise a cheer, and so, although we do welcome you, we want you to sanitize and get vaccinated, and

please do not forget, we really do care about you, and we hope that you enjoy your stay, so please do not become frustrated, or irritated, because it is safer for us, and safer for you, but welcome to you, yes, you and you and you and you, yes welcome you we do!

Brian and the crew were a little taken aback about the previous leprosy situation on the planet, and they all contemplated this and were slightly worried. Brian with the frown lines showing upon his face then asked, "Now, how long ago was the leprosy situation on the planet, because we really have never come across leprosy before on our travels." The Strudelhofen girls then all thought in unison and replied together, "Well, eight hundred years ago actually." The crew were very taken aback by this, and they were all shocked because this would mean that their father is over eight hundred years old! Now how on any planet is it possible to live for eight hundred years thought the crew.

Cedric then spoke with more than a hint of surprise in his voice, "So, your father is over eight hundred years old?" He said this with a shocked look upon his face, and this of course was extremely unusual, and to Cedric and to the crew's knowledge, they had never known of anyone living for that amount of time before. The girls all spoke together, "Yes. He is over eight hundred years old!" The girls all seemed very genuine about this, and about how their father had managed to live for so long, was very strange indeed. Karen as well as the others was very perplexed and she said, "Now, what miracle, allows your father to

achieve this?" Mary spoke in her gentle and soft voice, "Well, a long time ago they had found out how to replace hearts on a regular basis and had also found out how to stimulate regrowth in every part of the body whenever needed. Now it is not cheap, but Dad has been fit and healthy for over eight hundred years!" Cedric was very impressed by this, and he replied, "Wow, that is incredible. What does he do to keep fit by the way?" Exercise was of course very important, especially if you were over eight hundred years old." Being eight hundred years old, must have made it very difficult to be taken seriously. People most likely would not believe you at all. Now, it would of course be very easy to be sceptical about such a period of longevity. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen were a bit dubious and thought that it may be part of a big marketing plan to market the planet and its luxurious facilities. Still, if you could live for eight hundred years and had the money to do so, then you probably would. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen were wondering what you could do with such a huge lifespan. That kind of lifespan was like winning the lottery, and a true modern miracle. Still, would you not get bored of living for such a long time, and would you get bored of travelling through space, and bored of romance and love, and be sick of eating the same foods, over and over again and again. Probably, thought Karen. Still, whatever the longevity of their own lives, it would be great to meet the Strudelhofen girl's father Eric Strudelhofen. He sounded like a very interesting man, and it would be interesting to find out if the power he held in his hands had gone to his head, or even his two heads. Now imagine having two heads and being a double egotistical maniac, now what a

terrible thing that would be, and of course it would be a nightmare for all concerned, but the Strudelhofen girls seemed incredibly nice, and very well balanced, and also, they were polite and had very decent manners, and also were extremely entertaining.

The Strudelhofen girls waved goodbye to the crew, and the crew waved goodbye back. The girls singing voices thought Karen ranked highly amongst the many singers in the entire universe. Karen herself was not much of a singer, and she had given up on singing when she was singing in the street, and unfortunately her singing shattered the windows of a passing car and had startled the driver. The driver of the car, swerved unexpectedly, and then drove into a man on a ladder who was installing some double glazing on the first floor. The man then sadly fell from the ladder onto the windscreen of his doubleglazing van, and then bounced off into the road, causing another man in another car to also swerve unexpectedly. The man in his car, then unfortunately drove into the back of a lorry, which contained petrol, and sadly the lorry with the man trying to save his own life, then crashed into a double-glazing factory and the lorry exploded. The double-glazing factory also caught on fire and sent huge flames into the air and then sent up huge clouds of smoke, which damaged flying vehicles and drones passing overhead, this then sent them crashing into the greenhouses of the nearby gardening society. The glass unfortunately ended up residing in their bottoms because all the gardening club members were all bent over and doing some gardening at the time.

This news story was featured in Sore bottom weekly and proved to be very popular.



Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen then continued walking towards the spacecraft terminal, and afterwards entered it. The spacecraft terminal was filled with marble, numerous fountains, palm trees, and expensive looking shops, which contained designer and luxury goods. The crew were not rich themselves, but they liked looking around these shops, especially Karen and Salomina. There really was not much luxury in space at all, and today was a good day to purchase some new clothes, but firstly the crew needed to go to the hotel and unpack and then have a shower. The hotel and its facilities were apparently some of the best in the entire universe, and the journey had been short, and it was a welcome chance to relax. The crew reached the hotel, and then went inside. It was an incredibly luxurious hotel, and the lobby featured a large fountain, and also a swimming pool, which was most unusual. Each of the crew could do with cooling down, but they had to check in.

The check in counter was staffed by a man sat on a large levitating sofa. The man on the sofa said Hello, and then waved at them and the sofa then lowered itself towards them. The man smiled and then looked at them happily and said "Hello. I am Sam, the concierge for the hotel Nouala." Brian then replied, "Hello, Sam. We are weary travellers, who have travelled not that far. Now please kindly tell us about the hotel." Sam responded enthusiastically, "Well, the hotel has been here for eight hundred years, and Eric Strudelhofen, the founder of the hotel is a very wise and stylish man, and he decided to build this hotel next to the river because it had musical fish at one point, and the fish would serenade anyone who came close to the river." Singing fish were of course, quite

a novelty in the universe, and they certainly cheered you up, if you were having a good day. The crew were having a very good day now that they had finally arrived. Sam, the concierge, continued, "We have had many celebrities here, and we highly value our customers. We would like to treat you to our welcome celebrity experience after you have been to your hotel rooms and unpacked your belongings and have had a shower.

The crew liked the sound of this, and Sam, somehow levitated some keys out from under the desk and some leaflets regarding the celebrity experience. The crew then took the keys which had numbers on, and afterwards said "Thank you to Sam." in unison. Sam then replied, "You are most welcome, and I hope that you enjoy your stay. We look forward to meeting you in the lobby at 7.30pm for the celebrity experience. Your hotel rooms are on the third floor." The crew all smiled and then said, "Ok." and then waved goodbye to Sam. The crew of the spaceship headed for the nearest elevator and Brian then pressed a button, and the door slid open, revealing a dog wearing a party hat." The dog was carrying a hotel room key in its mouth, and looked at them briefly and quickly ignored them. Brian laughed at the sight of the dog, "Do you have your own room?" Brian said to the dog. The dog then replied in an English accent, "Well, yes, I do actually. I am Hubert, and you see, I am here to have an existential crisis, and I thought that I would get away for a few weeks and then have a holiday." Brian nodded, and then said, "Now, that is a good idea, but why are you having an existential crisis, Hubert?" Hubert then replied, "Well, you see, I was in a van, with my previous owner, and then all of a sudden, my owner swerved to avoid an old lady crossing the road.

Luckily, we did not hit the old lady, but the van did tip over onto one side. The van was carrying lots of dog biscuits, and the dog biscuits then spread across the road. My owner was unfortunately thrown through the window as he was not wearing a seat belt and he smashed through the glass of the window and then crashed down onto the road. But I was ok you see, because I was wearing my seatbelt, and I fortunately survived the crash. I then undid my seatbelt, and then got out of the van, and went to check my owner was ok. He obviously did not look ok, and there was blood pouring out of his forehead, and he looked like he had broken his arms. I then looked over at the dog biscuits and began salivating immensely.

Now, it was a very difficult choice for me to make at the time because I was a quite a young dog, and of course, dog biscuits are very tempting indeed, but my owner was lying dying in the road which was terrible of course, and I did not want to him to have died not having had a dog biscuit to eat before he went to heaven. So, of course, I wanted to try and resuscitate him, and I did try my very best after I had retrieved a dog biscuit from the ones strewn across the road. I honestly thought that he was dead, and I then placed the dog biscuit between his lips and quickly phoned for an ambulance on his mobile phone. The ambulance said that they would take thirty minutes to arrive. Now, whilst waiting for the ambulance to arrive, I went over to the dog biscuits and then began eating them. The dog biscuits were delicious of course, but I had a very large shock as my owner suddenly got up from the floor, and he definitely was not fully conscious. He stumbled unsteadily on his feet in front of a very large lorry and was run over and killed. Of course, I was in a total state of

shock, and I wished that I had checked more thoroughly that he was still alive, and sadly I have never really gotten over it.

My owner's death was terrible indeed, and now, I am here to remember my ex-owner and have an extremely long existential crisis." Cedric was sympathetic, as it was always difficult to lose someone. "Well, I am very sorry to hear that, that sounds terrible, absolutely terrible. Now, where are you going to have an existential crisis, in the swimming pool?" he said. Hubert then replied, "Well, I am going to climb into a cupboard, because my dog basket used to be in my owner's clothes cupboard, and it brings back warm memories for me, and also, I once ate three pizzas in a row in there." Salomina smiled and then said, "That is nice, I do not blame you at all Hubert. I think I would do the same as it better to have an existential crisis indoors rather than outdoors, mainly because where we live, the weather is rubbish, and it rains far too often." Hubert nodded, "Good idea!" Salomina then continued, "Oh, by the way, I am Salomina, and they are Brian, Cedric, and Karen, and it is a pleasure to meet you." Hubert grinned with the keys to his room in his mouth and then nodded, the elevator arrived at the floor that their rooms were on and then they all said goodbye to Hubert. "Goodbye Hubert." they said in unison. Hubert was sad to see them go so soon. The crew of the spaceship then got out of the elevator, and began to look for their hotel room numbers, forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven and forty-eight. Each of the crew then went into their individual rooms and put their things down and fell onto their beds and had a small sleep.

Seven thirty p.m., the crew after showering and washing, then got changed into their finest clothes and headed down into the lobby. Another concierge apart from Sam greeted them with a large clipboard, "Hello, I am Vaseli." he said. Salomina smiled and then replied, "It is a pleasure to meet you Vaseli." which was a very strange name. Suddenly a large group of paparazzi appeared holding cameras, and one of them said, "Please can we take your photographs?" The crew were smiling, and all were looking their very best. The paparazzi then began taking the crews photographs, and the crew posed in lots of different and elegant ways. The crew were all enjoying the experience and believed that they looked like movie stars. Suddenly from out of nowhere, several autograph hunters appeared wielding pens and pencils carrying photographs of the crew to sign. Of course, the crew were not used to signing autographs and it was a very strange experience indeed, signing a photograph with your own name on it upon your own face. The autograph hunters then quickly disappeared, and a group of screaming men and women appeared calling the crews names loudly and began running towards them as if in slow motion. The groupies then began to hug Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, and plant kisses upon their cheeks, and winked at them and said, "You look lovely." rather often indeed and then showered them with compliments. The crew of the spaceship were not used to compliments, and usually presumed that if compliments were showered upon them, there was normally a nefarious reason for doing so, such as they wanted money, or they wanted to steal their handbags, purses and wallets. The groupies, then waved goodbye, and said, "Goodbye."

Vaseli, then ushered them towards a large double door, and opened it revealing a large dining room, with a huge table enough for several hundred guests, and then beckoned them to sit down at the table. The table was covered in champagne and caviar, and lobsters, and countless bottles of wine, and countless bottles of beer, and the dinner was delivered by a flying drone. The dinner consisted of a roasted chicken, fifty times the size of a normal chicken. Vaseli then poured the crew some red wine, and afterwards pulled out a bicycle pump, and then after pulling out the bicycle pump, Vaseli, climbed onto the table, and then began to dance on the spot like a lunatic. Vaseli really did look like a lunatic, and afterwards he then inserted the bicycle pump into the chicken and began to pump up the chicken. The chicken then began to inflate even further, and it became so large, that it was five hundred times its previous size. Vaseli, then invited the crew to get up onto the table and climb inside the large chicken. Vaseli also climbed inside the large chicken afterwards, and the crew were suddenly teleported into a magical fairyland.

The magical fairyland was filled with dancing elves and reindeer, and Father Christmas was there too, and immediately upon seeing the crew, he began drinking copious amounts of beer and began to stumble about the place and tripped over and then got up again. Father Christmas then walked over to them drunkenly and said "Hello, I am Father Christmas." and he shook their hands, and added, "Have you come from space by any chance?" Brian then replied, "Well, yes, we have, and hello, we are Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina, and our spaceship is in the spaceport. Now, did you come from space father

Christmas?" Father Christmas, quickly replied, "No, no, of course not, I was borne from my mother on a sleigh. "Cedric smiled and then asked, "Now, wasn't that painful for her?" Father Christmas thought about it and said, "Well, not really, it was an antigravity sleigh, and it had plenty of cushions and she was flying through the sky in it whilst drinking space juice." Karen and the crew then smiled, and Father Christmas then stumbled forwards after drinking several beers rapidly, and he then got into his sleigh and began flying above their heads and flew upside down after strapping himself in with a seatbelt. Father Christmas then put on a marvellous display, and whilst flying through the air, he began firing fireworks from his sleigh, and several beautiful fireworks then flew just over the heads of the crew, which made them duck rapidly. One of the fireworks then hit a box of explosives, and the crew were treated to an incredible firework display. Afterwards, after Father Christmas had landed bumpily back on the ground, he undid his beard and revealed himself to be Eric Strudelhofen. "Hello." He said, "I am Eric Strudelhofen! And he then walked towards them and held out his hand with a beaming smile upon his face." Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina, shook his hand, and he had very strong hands, hands that looked like he could strangle a snake, whilst kneading bread, and he also looked like a man who knew what he was doing. This was a good sign thought the crew, and so far, the entertainment had been first class.

Eric Strudelhofen beckoned them forwards towards a pile of presents, and then gave each of them a present, which he told them not to open until later. Eric Strudelhofen then beckoned them towards a circle on the ground and they

teleported back inside the large chicken. The crew then followed Eric Strudelhofen out of the large chicken, and they all climbed down from the table, and put their presents down, then sat back at their seats. Eric Strudelhofen sat down too, and wine was poured into all their glasses by a drone with large hands. This was very impressive thought Brian. Karen then looked at the crew, and it was always in the back of her mind that they were all lucky to survive space, and the many dangers that there were there to be found amongst the stars. The crew then raised their glasses, and they then toasted each other's good health and toasted Eric Strudelhofen too. Eric then turned to the crew and asked, "Now what do you like best about space travel?" Brian thought about this for a moment and then replied, "Well, I really like being able to spend time staring at the stars. They are so beautiful, and so spectacular, and it really makes you realise, just how incredible the universe is." The crew all agreed and then nodded, and Cedric said, "Yes, it is a great feeling to be with your friends and the complexities of the universe, are absolutely astounding." Karen then joined in the conversation, "Yes, they certainly are incredibly astounding, for example, once I caught a number fortythree bus from one meteorite to another, and I got to see so many beautiful stars, including the star called Hilda Ogden, and many meteorites, and upon one of the meteorites was a whole orchestra wearing spacesuits and they were playing a symphony by Bach."

Another time, a meteorite flew past me with several hundred outdoor toilets on, and there was an alien using the toilet and he was sat with his hand upon his chin like the great Rodin thinker. I like to call him Rodin the stinker.



Luckily, he had enough toilet rolls to last for years. Still, how about you Eric, what is your favourite experience?" Eric Strudelhofen then thought about it for a moment and said, "Well, I like to be able to understand my inner self whilst sat amongst the stars, because I am quite a deep thinker you see, and life really is a miracle, and you certainly appreciate life when you are travelling through the universe." Salomina agreed, "and then said "Yes, because to imagine the complexities of growth right from the very beginning, from the big bang onwards, really does take a lot of thinking about, and it nearly blew my mind, and it does take a lot to blow my mind, but if we knew everything, life would be incredibly boring, and obviously, I do not wish for a boring life at all, because life is a miracle, and you never know quite when life may be taken from you." Eric Strudelhofen nodded and then looked very sad, and a single tear began to roll down his cheek, and he began to cry. The crew of the spaceship then looked at each other and did not know what to do about the situation except sympathise. "What is wrong and are you ok." said Eric?" Eric did not reply. Karen had never known a full grown man cry so easily, and in fact she was not used to seeing grown men crying at all, but once when Karen was younger, her father kept shouting at her a lot and he seemed to have no emotions at all, so Karen, climbed into his bed late at night, and began to give him Chinese burns in his sleep to try and get him to cry. Karen kept giving him Chinese burns for hours, and he was a very heavy sleeper, and he did not wake at all as he was taking huge amounts of sleeping pills.

Still, after the sun rose Karen then gave up, and she went back to her room and cried that she could not get her

father to cry. But now, Eric was crying, and more tears were flowing down his face than were normal for the male species.

The male species were cold heartless killers of female hearts thought Karen, and she tried her best to avoid men at all costs when it comes to the romantic side of life. Romance had never really worked out for her in space or on the planet Earth for that matter. Still, a full-grown man was crying in front of her, and she wanted to reach out to him and cuddle him, but this would have been a bit too forward as they had only just started to get to know each other. Eric then replied, "I am crying because I lost a cupcake, and it was my favourite cupcake, and I bought it at an intergalactic service station and then sadly, it was stolen by a kleptomaniac squirrel." Brian laughed, but quickly stifled it, and then resumed having a sympathetic face. Eric then began crying uncontrollably, and he began to read a poem out loud.

Alas the day, alas the night, my cupcake  
was stolen on a dark night. Oh, my only,  
my lonely only cupcake,  
why did the kleptomaniac squirrel bother me so, I  
wish I knew, but I really do not know,  
but what I do know,  
is that a kleptomaniac squirrel, it stole my cupcake,  
whilst I was luxuriating in my winter coat,  
contemplating the future of snow, oh, what am I to  
do, without the beautiful, delicious cupcake that I  
used to know?

The crew were mildly embarrassed by the sight of Eric Strudelhofen crying, and he quickly realised this and then wiped his eyes. Eric Strudelhofen seemed to be a very sensitive man, and the crew wondered whether he was a bit oversensitive. Brian, looked at Eric and at his sad eyes, and Brian wondered whether this was just part of an act or whether he was just having a bad day, Brian spoke to Eric, "Eric, are you having a bad day today?" Eric listened to this and then thought about it, and with another tear rolling down his cheek, he looked at Brian, and afterwards said, "Well, I am to be honest, having a little bit of a bad day, but now that you are here, let us get drunk and eat until we cannot stand any longer and we have to roll across the floor until we reach the elevator, to take us to our hotel rooms. Then we can roll out of the elevator and reach drunkenly for our keys, and open the door like a discombobulated Olympian weightlifter, and then enter our rooms and win first prize for drunkenness and dishevelment." Now, this seemed liked a very good idea. Suddenly Eric Strudelhofen clapped his hands and a drone with a very large chainsaw then began to cut up the gigantic chicken. The drone with its large hands then began to place the slices of gigantic chicken onto the plates. The crew were extremely ravenous and had never seen such large pieces of chicken ever in their lives, although Brian did once, and after eating parts of a cactus, he had once actually hallucinated a large turkey whilst spending time with native Indians at Christmas and not enjoying the food they gave him.

Food of course, was not in great supply in space, and stops for food at service stations were few and far between, and most of the food available at service stations

was absolutely terrible. Now, food from service stations was most likely to give you food poisoning, even the freeze-dried food, but the large chicken looked absolutely delicious, and after the vegetables were served, and then the gravy was poured, the crew began to eat their first decent meal for several weeks. The crew happily savoured the flavour, and it was really good to wash that curry taste out of their mouths, which they had not been able to get rid of, and in-between mouthfuls, the crew continued to talk more to Eric Strudelhofen. Salomina after drinking a sip of wine, then asked Eric a question, "Now, Eric, what made you want to start an entertainment complex." Eric smiled and then thought about this, and then remembered back to when he started out in the entertainment trade and afterwards spoke, "Well I was tired of doing menial and boring jobs, and after working at the freeze-dried spandex company, a company designed to provide emergency spandex trousers, spandex trousers that could be reinflated with water, I then moved on to the Arnie Summers pneumatic drill company.

The pneumatic drills were designed to be used on singing meteorites and provide pleasure to frustrated space workers.

The singing meteorites of the universe had become a rather large problem, as they had begun self-replicating, and had begun causing havoc in the intergalactic highways of the universe, and spaceships then kept crashing into them because they were becoming so numerous."

Eric then thought about his other jobs, and afterwards continued after a few seconds pause, then after remembering another job he smiled, "I then worked in a

factory that produced drones that were designed to Sellotape traffic wardens to lamp posts. Traffic wardens are extremely unpopular in space, aren't they?" he said laughing. Cedric agreed and then laughed too, and then replied, "Yes, traffic wardens are extremely unpopular, and there is nothing better than smelling traffic wardens sellotaped to lampposts. Traffic wardens who are sweating in the summer sunshine on Earth as you clamp their cars and give them a parking ticket." Salomina liked the sound of this as she had been given thousands of parking tickets. in her lifetime. Eric Strudelhofen then ate a mouthful of food, swallowed it and digested it and then spoke again, "And finally I was getting really bored of doing menial jobs, and decided that I wanted to go into business, and as they say, there is no business like showbusiness, so I chose the entertainment industry." Karen then said, "Yes, that was a great idea, and we are thinking of going into business ourselves, so maybe you could teach us." Eric then smiled, "Of course, I would be happy to teach you, and I wish you every success." He then paused, and drank some wine, and then added, "Now, where was I? Ah, yes, the entertainment industry. I took some time to research this, and I looked around and I found a partner called Simon, and he suggested that we start a hotel called the Napoleon complex.

The napoleon complex was a great name we thought as Napoleon was an incredible man who achieved a great deal, and so we had the building designed by a professional designer, and we raised the money through bank managers, and crowdfunding.

The building took about a year to build, and we built the napoleon complex on planet Earth, and it was a very large

building, and we had really great hopes for the Napoleon complex, and we were very happy when it was finished, and then after it was completed we had a lavish opening ceremony, and we then invited the press and also members of the public, who we encouraged to drink champagne and eat a free twelve course meal cooked by our new highly trained chefs.

Unfortunately, not long after the opening of the napoleon complex, a man from trading standards paid us a visit, in fact it was a very short member of the trading standards committee, and when he arrived, he looked extremely angry, and he then started ranting and raving about the size of the complex, and he said that the height and the size of the napoleon complex was giving him a complex, and he also said that the name of the hotel was false advertising.

The man from trading standards immediately then walked over to the hotel sign and started kicking it really hard and then began to headbutt it and swear at in French. This of course we were not expecting at all from the man from the trading standards committee. We personally thought it was just a prank, and we were waiting for a presenter to appear with television cameras and shout, "Ha, ha, welcome to you have been made a laughingstock across the entire universe, a new television program, that puts a smile on people's faces." The short man from trading standards then pulled out a very short piece of paper with the rules and the regulations about building, and he said that if buildings in building plans included names that alluded to shortness, the buildings had to be short, and he said that the napoleon complex was very tall, and the man said that under the regulations we had to tear

down the building until it was only three stories tall, and then reduce the size of the doors.

Of course, it was a crazy situation and afterwards mostly only short people wanted to stay there, and if tall people wanted to stay there, then they had to crawl on their hands and their knees through the front door, which wasn't exactly customer friendly, and it was not very comfortable for them either. Still, the inside of the hotel was a great success, and we got rave reviews about our hotel rooms, our restaurant and our facilities, which included a swimming pool. Sadly, shortly after the hotel was starting to be a success, the trading standards man called in to visit us again, and then stated that we employ a robot, who was extremely angry and who had a napoleon complex, and according to the man's regulations, the robot had to kick people up the bottom as they entered the hotel by law. This of course we did not agree with, but the man threatened to close the hotel if we did not make sure that it was done, so we hired a robot with a napoleon complex and we lost all our customers immediately and then had to close." Karen thought this was really very harsh, and she then said, "Wow that really is terrible, and after all that hard work and effort too. What a shame!" Eric nodded, and then said, "Yes, it was terrible, but that is business for you, and business is not all showbusiness, and unfortunately that one did not go to plan at all. Still, despite losing money, we raised some more money and then invested in the stock market, and then hired a top notch investment specialist who knew what he was doing, and they say that you have to speculate to accumulate, and he started investing in spectacle companies late at night, and immediately we started making huge amounts of

money as huge numbers of people had been watching television too much and had damaged their eyes.” Of course, making huge amounts of money was a wonderful thing and we got to do all the things that we dreamed of doing in our lives, and we travelled the world, and enjoyed ourselves, and unsurprisingly fell in love numerous times with beautiful men and women and kept getting divorced, and then kept having to pay out huge amounts of money to ex-wives and husbands, and because of this we needed a new plan. We were nearly broke, and then found a niche market and developed a drone that contained a laser transformer that could transform objects into ice-creams.” The drone with the laser transformer was very successful immediately and the drone had some basic artificial intelligence software that tracked objects. We, after a huge number of sales, then sold a drone to a member of the Intergalactic parliament, and he let his son use it for fun, and then by accident he turned his mother into an ice-cream. This situation of course was terrible, and irreparable and sad, and of course, we were all full of remorse, and unsurprisingly our second company had to close after paying out huge amounts of compensation. Of course, me and my partner and the people we employed were all truly embarrassed that a young boy had to ask for parental advice from an ice-cream when his father was not at home. The boy asking an ice-cream in his freezer for parental advice was most unusual, but the boy cheered up eventually and he rapidly became a celebrity and then hosted a chat show with his mother called, “Icescream.” a chat show for people with mental health problems who had no ice-cream. The boy and his mother then gave out advice on how to acquire ice-creams, and the show was



immensely successful until they gave out one piece of controversial advice that people in desperate circumstances should get drones to kidnap their bank managers and then force the bank managers to go to the cashpoint, and take out money, and then make their bank managers buy ice-creams and hand the ice-creams over to the drones who would rapidly disappear and deliver the ice-creams to those in need." Cedric, stood up and was very impressed at this great story, and he began to clap extremely loudly, and then the rest of the crew joined in with the long round of applause. Eric Strudelhofen was overwhelmed with emotion, and he began crying again, and the crew handed him as many tissues as they could find. Eventually Eric calmed down after going online and buying a tissue factory, as supply was being overwhelmed by demand, and that is not a good thing in business. Eric then spoke, "Thank you so much, for the applause, that was most kind of you, and it was truly appreciated. Still, the Ice-cream mother situation that was a very long time ago, and success eventually came through buying and selling the latest technological devices that we could get our hands on before everyone else. Finally, I was quite bored of buying and selling and I wanted to get back to the entertainment world, and I spotted a whole planet for sale on the intergalactic internet for a reasonable price, and this was the planet, Nouala." Salomina smiled and then said, "Congratulations, you really must be very proud, because it is an incredibly beautiful planet, and it must have taken a lot of hard work to get to this stage." Eric smiled and then replied, "Well, yes it was rather a lot of hard work, but we did employ the right people, and we used the social networks of the universe to find the ugliest

individuals that we could find to terraform the land. We deliberately employed ugly people specifically to scare the land into looking beautiful, then once the planet was terraformed, we planted huge numbers of palm trees and lots of different tropical plants and then built the hotel complex and decided to name the hotel complex after the planet called Nouala." Karen liked this name Nouala, and then spoke, "Yes, that is a great name, but what does it actually mean?" Eric enthusiastically continued the conversation, "Nouala, well, it means you are crazy Hawaiian, and I believe that you would be crazy not to come and visit this wonderful planet." Karen and the whole crew then agreed that it was a rather agreeable and a beautiful place to visit, and she then said, "Yes, you would be crazy not to come here, and we are all truly glad to have visited, and it is a real pleasure to meet you, Eric Strudelhofen. Eric smiled, and he truly was proud of the planet that he owned.

The crew were all having a great time, and they were all getting drunker by the minute. The drone then pulled out the bicycle pump and it began to play a tune as it was a multipurpose bicycle pump, and also a musical instrument at the same time. The crew were over the moon about the music, and it was akin to a flute being played. The chicken then began to dance in time with the flute and the crew sat transfixed as it hovered about in the air. Eric and the crew appreciated good music, and in space it was very beautiful, but the singing meteorites had caused massive noise disturbances on all the intergalactic highways, and this was not helpful whatsoever. Still, this was much better, and they had never seen a dancing chicken before. The crew all had large smiles on their faces, and they

began dancing in their seats, and were clapping their hands together. Suddenly another drone arrived out of the large chicken carrying a very large apple crumble and a tub of fresh cream in its hands. The large apple crumble looked absolutely delicious. The drone then placed the apple crumble on the table and flew back inside the large chicken. The crew then continued to drink and eat and be merry and did not enjoying talking with Eric Strudelhofen for the rest of the evening, because he was weird, very weird indeed.

## Chapter 12

“Hungover and happy.”

The crew awoke the next morning, and they all woke with sore heads after drinking too much wine, and beer. It really had been a wonderful evening with Eric Strudelhofen, because Eric was an inedible host, because the crew found out that he was dyslexic.

The night before, Eric was so drunk at one point that he thanked them profusely for calling him an inedible host. Of course, luckily for Eric, Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, they all were not cannibals and they all had had no plan to eat Eric whatsoever, no matter what herbs and spices he was covered in. Now, eating a human being was a terrible idea, and despite the shortage of food in space, the crew had never felt the urge unsurprisingly to eat a human being, even during the crisis with huge number of curries that Apollo the crazy robot had left behind. Today however was a new day and as the crew awoke, and the sun rose and the sun shone through their bedroom

windows, it was a delight to feel the sunshine upon their faces again after a long period of not seeing any sun at all. The sun orbiting the planet Nouala, was a fake sun, but it was just as powerful, and the crew enjoyed it thoroughly as they were rather pale after being in space and not being in contact with any suns whatsoever.

The crew eventually crawled out of their extremely comfortable beds, and had a shower, and then got dressed in some fresh clothes. The crew then all met each other in the corridor, and then walked to the elevator, and got in and pressed the button for the ground floor and the elevator descended.

The crew then arrived in the lobby and then thought about what to do next. This of course, brought them many possibilities, and opportunities, and Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen then looked at each other. Brian then spoke, "Now, what are we going to do today?" Salomina then replied, "Well, we could go swimming and then lounge around at the pool?" Cedric thought about this for a moment and then thought that this was a bit boring and decided against it in his own mind. He then said, "No, why don't we go to the beach, and then visit some of the jungles. We have never been to this planet before, and it would be fun to go swimming in the sea and see what sea creatures there are to see. Karen then spoke and said, "Yes, and I was thinking that we could give them back their fish fingers." The crew then laughed, and Salomina then replied, "Oh, I know a poem about that." She then spoke it out loud.

Christ was a kind man, and he had  
a shiny new spaceship,

and in his spaceship, he visited  
the forty third century, and then  
Christ,  
he cut out some beer coupons from a magazine, and  
bought some beer with the coupons,  
and some fish fingers,  
and swimming trunks at the shop for nothing,  
then borrowed a bicycle,  
and rode it to the seaside,  
and when he got there, he got in the sea, and he  
gave the fish back their fish fingers, of which he  
thought that they would need, but afterwards they  
quickly told him to get out, as you are not allowed  
to go to the toilet in the sea.

The crew of the spaceship then walked out of the hotel  
and caught the nearest bus to the seaside after getting  
information from the driver. On planet Nouala, it was a  
gloriously beautiful sunny day, and the crew were looking  
forwards to a nice ice-cream, which was something that  
they had not had for ages. Ice-creams were beautiful  
works of art thought Brian, and it certainly was a very hot  
day, and they definitely needed to cool down. Brians  
nostrils were unfortunately playing up again, and a nice  
bit of icecream up the nostrils was always very helpful.

The beautiful scenery of planet Nouala was whizzing by  
and consisted of palm trees and lakes and pools of  
beautiful clear water.

In the distance, there were some mountains whose  
mountainsides were lush and green, and a volcano lay  
smoking in the distance. The volcano had arms and was  
smoking a large cigarette, and hundreds of packets of

cigarettes were strewn about the slopes of the volcano. The crew of the spaceship had never seen a volcano that smoked before and were quite surprised to say the least. Brian upon spotting the volcano holding a cigarette nearly fell off his seat and shouted out, "Oh my god, the volcano is smoking a cigarette!" Karen laughed and the crew then all turned to look at the volcano smoking a cigarette in the distance. This of course was a most unusual tourist attraction, and it must have attracted a lot of visitors indeed.

The journey on the bus did not take too long whatsoever, and they all quickly arrived at the beach. The beach was an incredibly beautiful place, and it had golden sandy beaches, and there were not too many tourists, but there were a few beachside restaurants, a lifeguard's hut, and a hut that contained the tourist information centre. The crew got off of the bus and said goodbye to the driver. It was extremely hot at the beach, and they had forgotten to bring their suntan lotion. The crew headed for the tourist information centre and went inside. Inside there lots of leaflets being displayed, and many featured gardens, sandy beaches, the hotel and entertainment complexes, a romantic getaway, a casino and wildlife parks. The crew then picked up some leaflets on them all, and then walked over to the tourist information counter, where there was a man with three heads working behind it. The man with three heads then said, "Hello, hello, and hello." as he had three heads. The crew then replied, "Hello, and hello, and hello!" and waved at the man and smiled. The three headed man then waved back and began to pick his three noses in unison unselfconsciously; the man then looked

back at the crew like nothing had happened and he smiled, a crazy smile, a three smile.

The three headed man then spoke, "So how are you and what can I do for you?" Salomina, then replied, "Well we would like to go swimming and get some products for the beach." "Ok." said the three headed man and motioned with his hand towards the back of the counter and pointed at some suntan lotion. Behind the tourist information counter there were some products including suntan lotion, umbrellas and towels. The towels featured pictures of Eric Strudelhofen in his swimming trunks, and the crew found this quite amusing. The crew then bought some of the underwater goggles, a mouthpiece for breathing, towels, and some suntan lotion, bottles of water and fruit juice, and they then also bought some snacks such as fruit and nuts, and packets of crisps, and a drone seagull scarer. They then paid the man with three heads his money and exited the building quickly into the midday sun. The crew looked around and they were sweltering in the heat, and they then wiped their brows, then spotted a sign that pointed to the nearby beach, which they really were excited to see, as they had all not been to the beach for years, and what a great day it was going to be at the beach thought Cedric.

Of course, no day was complete without going for a swim, and the sea looked very calm today, and there were only a few people swimming around in its beautiful waters. Underneath, the clear blue beautiful waters were hundreds of multicoloured fish, and also, there were incredible variations of coral in many different and beautiful colours. This was an incredible sight to see, and the beach was very clean, and there were a few shells on

the beach, some seaweed and a few palm trees, and some rocky vegetated islands in the distance, which made it a very beautiful place to look at.

The few people that were already at the beach were lying down and they were sunning themselves in the hottest sun that the crew had felt for ages upon their skin. The sunseekers laying down on the beaches, all had beautiful suntans, and there were many beautiful men and woman sprawled out on the sands enjoying themselves as the waves crashed down onto the shore.

There was a huge pile of wood at one end of the beach, and this was for barbeques, and there was also a wooden walkway along the beach, and a pile of stones with writing on them. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen, then placed their towels down upon the sand, and sat down and looked at the sea, and then started drinking their drinks which were nice and refreshing and cold. The waves then crashed down upon the shore and it was a very therapeutic feeling to hear the sound of the crashing waves. Brian then took a long look at the mountains in the distance and contemplated them and then spoke, "You see those mountains in the distance, how much do you think that it would cost to own one?" Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen then thought about this too as the wind blew through their hair. Cedric was smiling and enjoying the calm relaxing atmosphere. Brian then spoke whilst enjoying the view, "Well, I should imagine, it must be millions and millions of pounds in British currency." This of course was a lot of money, and the crew wondered what was on the islands.

The islands had rocky sides and had a lot of flat ground at the top and they looked like good places to build



houses. Salomina, admired the view, and then joined in the conversation, "Well, I would love to own one, we just need to get rich quick." The crew agreed and nodded. Brian then said, "We might have to fight invaders off of our land though with large vegetables." Salomina laughed immediately, and then said, "Well, yes, we might do, but Eric Strudelhofen seems to have done a very good job of defending the planet, for instance, I thought that I saw several large drones in the distance.", and drones were actually in the distance keeping an eye on the coastline. Defending anything was not an easy thing to, but it was still easier to do than trying to defend your spaceship in space. Defending your spaceship in space was incredibly difficult, and there were many dangers including the singing meteorites and of course there were space pirates, but defending land and territory on planets was a much harder job, and much more expensive. Still, this was not really on their budget at the moment, and it was currently beyond their wildest dreams to own an island. Now, owning an island would be a miracle, but it would be a miracle that they hoped to achieve in the not-too-distant future if they were ever lucky enough to make enough money.

Owning an island was one of those things that people dream about and that they never generally achieve, but Eric Strudelhofen had worked extremely hard indeed and had achieved his dream of owning an entire planet. This of course was an incredible achievement, and the flip side of this must be that people must be jealous of Eric Strudelhofen and of his great wealth. Jealousy unexpectedly, throughout the entire universe was rife and there were currently numerous people battling with each

other in the one upmanship games. Karen thought about this for a moment and then spoke, "Well, if you did own anything like a planet, then surely you are going to be harassed by nutters, and also by gold diggers, and anyway in some parts of the universe, there were still robots fighting each other in organised fights over packets of biscuits. The robots were often programmed to be greedy and needy, and ended up picking on each other, and attacking each other and then finding employment as hired thugs. Robot fighting was very common indeed, and often resulted in many people going crying to their bank managers after their robots had been totally destroyed. The cost of building a robot was totally extortionate, and not many people could afford to do so, and it certainly was not cheap at all even if you were mildly wealthy. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, had all bought robots for personal use, and the lifetime guarantees that the robots supposedly came with were not worth the paper that they were written on. Trying to find things with lifetime guarantees was not easy, and the longevity of human life was never certain either.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen all felt much more relaxed upon the beach than they had for ages in space. Suddenly, a dog appeared on a surfboard and began surfing the waves very skilfully. Nearby a man with a tray was walking along the beach with a tray of alcoholic drinks upon them, but Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen had had enough already to drink last night. The man walked by and then tripped over a robot. The man's drinks that he was carrying then went flying through the air and he fell on top of a woman in a bikini, who began hitting him over the head with her hands, and then began

cursing him loudly. The crew then started laughing loudly and were very amused indeed. The man got up and then started shouting at the crew. "Do you find it funny do you? Do you? Ooh I'd like to turn you upside down and then fill your nostrils with a boiled egg." Of course, now was not the time to fill someone's nostrils with a boiled egg. The crew then started trying to placate the man. "Look." said Brian, "I am sorry sir, but we do not want any trouble, and we really do not want boiled eggs inserted up our nostrils whatsoever, because we are on holiday you see." The man really was not placated at all, and he then spoke again, "Are you sure? You really do not look like you have been eating properly." Karen sighed loudly and then spoke, "Oh, we are fine honestly, now please take your thoughts of putting boiled eggs up people's nostrils elsewhere." The man did not like being told what to do and suddenly whipped out a boiled egg from out of his trousers, and then thrust it towards Karen's nostrils, and said menacingly, "Go on, sniff my boiled egg before it goes up your nostrils!" Karen then retorted, "Well you, you nincompoop, I really do not have time, but I will insert a seagull up your nostrils." Cedric, laughed and then said, "What a good idea, and how about afterwards, I will shove a radiated cabbage up your nostrils." The man then stopped to consider this, and he then said, "Oh, no you will not." The man then lunged forwards, and he thrust the egg towards Brians face, and then grabbed Brians nostrils and tried to insert the boiled egg up them. This obviously did not work out very well whatsoever, and the man then tried inserting the egg up Brians nostrils and missed and afterwards he fell flat on his face.

Suddenly from out of nowhere, a woman appeared with a large feather duster and then attempted to hit the man over the head with it. The man then ran away screaming and teleported somewhere and disappeared from view. The crew were all quite disturbed about this, but they were very greatly relieved that he was gone. The woman then sighed and introduced herself, "I am so sorry about that, that was my son, and he unfortunately has mental health problems and I really do not quite know what to do with him. You see, I do try to help him, but he keeps teleporting away from me you see, and once for instance, he teleported into a man's underpants on a washing line. The man whose underpants they were came out of the house and then started shouting at him, and my son quickly teleported again, and ended up in bed with a woman who was someone else's wife, and this did not go well as the man returned a few moments later and thought that she was having an affair. My son then quickly teleported again and ended up pushing in front of someone in the queue at the newsagents who was just choosing their lottery numbers. My son then also bought their lottery numbers as he believed in fate, and he purchased a ticket before the man who was previously at the front of the queue could do so. Surprisingly my son won the lottery and he had to share the prize of course, but now he has enough money to teleport anywhere he likes on the planet and he does it whenever we have an argument, and that is very difficult as a mother, as he always thinks that he is in the right and unfortunately we do argue more often than Julius Caesar when he had big trouble in Caesarea after eating some dodgy food." Brian tried to stifle a laugh and pretended to be sympathetic,

and he then replied, "Oh, I see, I am so very sorry to hear that." The woman then continued speaking, "Oh, it is ok, I am used to it, and although I do try my best his father doesn't care at all." Salomina then spoke, "Who is his father by the way?" The woman then paused and said, "Bobby Strudelhofen." Cedric took this fact in and then smiled a big smile and said, "A relative of Eric Strudelhofen?" "Yes." said the woman, "everyone on the planet is called Strudelhofen, well except the tourists of course." Salomina paused and then continued the conversation, "Ah, I see, now how many Trueloves are there on the entire planet?" The woman thought about this and then replied, "Well, at least fifty thousand." Salomina, laughed loudly, and said, "Wow, that really is a lot of Strudelhofen's!" The woman then continued, "Yes, it is rather, and they are breeding like rabbits, but I am not a Strudelhofen, I am a woman called Gorgonzola Budd. The fastest cheese delivery specialist on the planet." Brian liked the sound of this, and then said, "Well, I could do with some cheese right now, how fast can you deliver?" Gorgonzola Budd then disappeared like a flash of lightning and returned seconds later with a very large cheeseboard upon her head. Upon the cheeseboard, were several large Gorgonzolas, several large blocks of cheddar, some stilton, and many other cheeses." Brian and the crew were very impressed indeed, and Gorgonzola Budd offered the crew some cheese, and then pulled some cheese crackers out of her pocket.

Gorgonzola Budd had extremely large hairy arms and she was smiling, and she seemed like a very happy person. Gorgonzola Budd then spoke, "I love doing this job and it is great to be doing something that I truly love." Karen

and the rest of the crew all agreed, and Karen then afterwards responded, "Yes, it certainly is. By the way, we are Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina, and it is a pleasure to meet you, and we are delivery drivers in space, and we are currently having a little holiday. Our delivery job you see is very boring, and we do not have much longer to go, but soon we will be back on the planet Earth." Gorgonzola Budd's eyes misted over, and she obviously felt emotional about planet Earth as she thought about it. "Yes, it is really a wonderful planet." she said, and her eyes lit up as she began to talk about it, and then she quickly continued, "but although I love living here, things are not quite what they seem." Brian and the rest of the crew looked very puzzled by what she had said, and Cedric then responded, "Now, what do you mean?" Cedric waited for a response but got none, and what she had said so far, had dark connotations, and everything that they had seen so far had been perfectly normal.

Eric Strudelhofen genuinely seemed like a very nice man indeed, and he seemed to be doing a good job of looking after the people on the planet, and a very good job of sacrificing roast chickens and vegetables. Eric Strudelhofen was the best roast chicken and vegetable sacrificer on the entire planet, and he was a very pleasant and amiable person to talk to they thought. Gorgonzola Budd obviously thought otherwise. She then got up and said, "I am really sorry, but I really must dash, I have lots of cheese to deliver." Gorgonzola Budd then waved goodbye and disappeared as rapidly as she had come.

The crew were left thinking about what she had just said and still were slightly worried. Brian paused and then thought about what she had said for a few seconds, and

then spoke, "Now, what do you think that she means?" Karen laughed and said, "Well, I wouldn't worry about it at all." Salomina then nodded in agreement, "Yes, probably it's nothing to worry about whatsoever." Cedric then replied, "Yes, but were you not disturbed by her hitting her own son over the head with a frying pan?" Karen considered this, and then responded, "Well, yes, but we have all seen weirder things, for instance we were attacked by a robot wielding a pair of underpants at us." Brian laughed, "True, very true, but anyway, now let us get back to relaxing shall we, because isn't it a beautiful place here?" The others all agreed and then smiled, and their smiles said everything, and it was a rare luxury. The crew continued to relax for the rest of the day, and the waves continued to crash upon the shore. The seagulls kept calling to each other across the sky. The day was filled with warmth and the ebb, and the flow of the tide was mesmerising, and it was great to see so many people out enjoying themselves in the sea and on the beach.

The crew had returned to the hotel and were much browner and more suntanned than when they had arrived. This of course felt really good after the lack of sunlight in space. Space of course is beautiful, but it can do horrible things to your mind if you do not have a strong mind. After returning to the hotel, the crew all went back to their rooms, and had a powernap, and afterwards they showered, got dressed, and returned to the lobby. Now, what the plan was they did not quite know for the rest of day. There were plenty of possibilities and plenty of opportunities, and time was on their side. The thought of something nefarious going on the planet was entirely

possible, and it was currently niggling away at Brian, and sat there in his mind, like a nuclear bomb waiting to go off. Still, the crew were having a great time so far.

Brian smiled and then turned to the rest of the crew, "So, what are we to do now?" The crew stood there and thought about it, then suddenly Eric Strudelhofen appeared, and he was dressed in a tuxedo and shorts, and carrying a tray of champagne and towels. He waved at them and said "Hello! How are you all? I have brought you some champagne, and some towels, would you like to try out the swimming pool?" This sounded like a great idea, and Brian excitedly said, "Yes! Let us use the swimming pool, it would be great to relax, and what could be better than champagne?!" The rest of the crew smiled, and Eric Strudelhofen lead them through the hotel to the poolside, and to the sun loungers. The swimming pool had a clear glass roof, and the sun was shining through and shining upon them leaving them with very nice glows. Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina sat on the sun loungers and Eric Strudelhofen handed them some glasses and then poured them champagne. Champagne was lovely when relaxing by the side of a swimming pool, and there were many people here also on sun loungers, including some robots. Brian and the rest of the crew had never seen a robot before whatsoever. The robot appeared to be drinking a pint of oil and was also smoking a cigarette. Brian smiled and then spoke, "Look a robot sunbathing!" Karen then replied, "Oh yes, how strange, they cannot exactly get a suntan can they?" Salomina laughed, and she found this very amusing, and then spoke, "True. It must be very hot being a robot, and I definitely wouldn't like to be a robot either." Cedric then joined in, "Right, I am



going to go for a swim he said, is anyone else joining me?" Karen thought about it for a second or two and then replied, "Yes, I would love to." Karen and Cedric then put down their drinks and went off and changed in the changing rooms and used the free bikinis and shorts that were provided by the hotel. Karen and Cedric then returned and dived into the beautiful pool.

The pool was nice and cool and refreshing, and it felt fantastic to be able to swim again after such a long time being in space without a swimming pool. Swimming pools were a real luxury, and this hotel had one of the best swimming pools that they had ever used. There were only five people in the pool, and it was huge.

Brian and Salomina continued to lay on the sun loungers and enjoy their drinks. Suddenly a drunken robot appeared out of nowhere and then began walking towards the swimming pool unsteadily on its legs. This was an accident waiting to happen, and surely enough, it did happen. The robot walked unsteadily into the swimming pool, and by accident it began electrocuting itself. A very strange sight indeed and not one that you see every day. Now this was not a sight that you see every day, and of course it was highly amusing, but not for the robot. The robot was being fried to death by its own stupidity, and people were beginning to come and stare at the robot dying in the swimming pool. Some of the people started to laugh at it, and Karen and Cedric stopped swimming, and they did not know what to do, or even if they could help at all, and even if they could help there was a chance of them electrocuting themselves.

Brian and Salomina, heard the laughing and then turned around to see what was happening, and they started

laughing to, and they then felt mildly bad about laughing, and stopped laughing briefly for a short moment, before continuing to laugh their heads off. A nearby robot was laughing as well at its fellow robot's misfortune, and literally laughed so much that its head fell off onto the floor.

One of the swimming pool attendants then fetched a pole with a net on and tried to fish the robot out with both hands. This was of course not an easy job, and someone else rushed over to help, and both people were mildly electrocuted, making the scene even more hilarious. The two people trying to rescue the robot quickly stopped after being electrocuted, and then went off to get treatment. The hotel complex had a good treatment centre, and huge amounts of money had been spent on it.

Medical treatment in space could be high tech if the company you were working for wanted to invest in it, but unfortunately for the crew of the spaceship, they did not barely invest anything at all, and the medical treatment was very basic indeed. Still, so far, the crew of the spaceship had managed to avoid having any serious accidents on the spacecraft, and the only accidents that they had had were minor ones, for example from attempting to open a fray bentos tin.

Karen and Cedric were treading water in the pool, and they did not know if they should get out of the pool or not. Suddenly out of nowhere, the woman's son who kept teleporting, teleported directly onto the robot, and then electrocuted himself, and screamed "Help, I am being attacked by a robot in a swimming pool, now what kind of hotel is this?!" The man's hair was standing up on end, and still despite being electrocuted, he seemed to be

enjoying himself." Someone shouted, "Do you want any help there?" The man then quickly replied, "Actually, no, I am fine honestly, I really like being electrocuted, and I needed to recharge my batteries anyway because my mother keeps chasing me and it is very exhausting!" Some of the crowd then began clapping as the man rode the robot like a horse, an electric horse. Now, not many people enjoyed electrocuting themselves, but at least it kept you warm, but the day was a very warm day anyway and not a great day for heating things up, and people were continuing to gather from all around and watch the spectacle taking place, and also to take photographs and videos, which probably would end up online shortly afterwards.

There was of course a big number of people who liked to see robots suffer, as robots had taken many peoples jobs, and were extremely unpopular with some people. Karen and Cedric then got out of the pool and went back to the sun loungers and dried themselves. This of course was better than staying in a pool with the possibility of electrocution, which was not much to write home about.

Eric Strudelhofen then suddenly reappeared, because he had heard all the commotion, and when he saw the robot, he looked a bit angry. Eric Strudelhofen then took off his shorts, and underneath he was wearing swimming trunks. He then calmly dived into the pool wearing his tuxedo, and quickly rescued the robot, after it had stopped electrocuting itself. Eric then swam with it back to the side of the pool and he got out of the pool and quickly lifted the robot onto the side. Eric, from his tuxedo then pulled out a bicycle pump and inserted it into his own underpants. He then began inflating his underpants to a

massive size. Afterwards he carefully placed the short robot inside his own underpants and then walked away from the swimming pool area carrying it with him. It was a job well done, and only a job Eric Strudelhofen could do with such style and panache and how he did not make it look weird, was anyone's guess.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen had never seen anyone inflate their own underpants before, and they were all extremely amused by this. Brian couldn't keep a smile from his face, and he thought about getting an inflatable pair of underpants himself, and then he spoke to the rest of the crew, "Now, that is the best pair of underpants that I have ever seen in my life." Karen nodded, "Yes, and he still managed to look calm despite the possibility of electrocuting himself in his own underpants." Cedric laughed loudly, and then said, "Yes, and that really is not an easy thing to achieve at all. Personally, I think I would have died with a robot inside my own underpants." Karen smiled and then replied to Cedric, "Yes, knowing you, you are extremely clumsy Cedric." she said. Cedric had always been clumsy, and sometimes he had the habit of sleepwalking around the spaceship, and he would make himself dinner whilst asleep. Once, the rest of the crew had found Cedric in the kitchen cooking whilst asleep. Cedric had managed to catch his pyjamas on fire and the crew had to quickly fetch the fire extinguisher and put him out. Luckily, he survived.

Crisis management in space was very important, and the crew had faced numerous crises, and the worst so far had been Apollo, the psychotic robot. The crew had faced the dangers of many meteorites, and they had not really blinked an eye about it, but Apollo the robot was different.

Apollo had the strength to have killed them very easily and very quickly, and it was the first time that they had been truly faced with the possibility that they might shuffle off of their mortal coil at the hands of a robot. The company did not really pay them enough and danger money was definitely very sensible the crew thought, but unfortunately, they had faced great danger and had not been paid to do so. Still, the near-death experience with Apollo was a real shock to the system, and luckily Apollo had not really tried to kill them.

Brian sat there on the sun lounger, and he was contemplating his retirement from the delivery driving world. It had been far too long now doing boring and mundane and menial jobs for his liking. Brian took a few seconds and then said loudly, "By the way, where are we going to live back on planet Earth when we retire from being delivery drivers?" Karen had thought that too, "Well, I would quite like to live somewhere tropical." Salomina then spoke, "Inside a laundrette?" The rest of the crew found this amusing and laughed loudly. Cedric then spoke, "Now, how about Hawaii?" The crew pondered this. Yes, that seemed like a good idea thought Karen, and she then replied, "Or the Caribbean?" Brian really liked the sound of the Caribbean and he had never been there before. Life of course was a great journey, and wherever life took you, life was about experiences, and the crew in their lives, had had many experiences and the pleasures of life were many, and there were many frustrations too. Still, the crew were facing the possibilities of the future with a positive outlook.

All of the crew had been saving for years to start a business, and they all enjoyed regular conversations with

their bank managers who were extremely weird, and their bank managers were people who kept trying to sell them the weirdest of policies. Brian had been sold a very strange policy without realising when he had purchased travel insurance. The extra policy was included in the small print, and this was something that he was charged for too. Insurance policies really do need examining of course, and Brian had before leaving the planet Earth, realised that this policy was incredibly weird, and very weird was a massive understatement. The policy stated that:

If you visit the planet Uranus, you cannot go to the toilet on the planet without written permission from someone in an office on Mars, someone who is dressed as a very large vegetable, who is playing music loudly and dancing on their desk in the office whilst waving their arms in the air like a deranged lunatic.

If you visit Alpha Centurai, you are only allowed to enter the vicinity of it whilst dressed as a Centaur and whilst making horse like noises whilst waiting for the apocalypse, until it arrives eventually no matter how long the apocalypse takes. Even if it takes a year!

If you visit any restaurant in the universe, you must sacrifice an eyelash whenever you see a beautiful cheesecake and shout, "I would like to marry you oh cheesecake!"

If you visit any space station in the entire universe, you must enter backwards, and also be carrying a mirror. You

must also wave at yourself and then play with your hair as if in slow motion, then blow a kiss to yourself, and afterwards, take photographs of yourself like a paparazzi, as there are no paparazzi allowed on space stations whatsoever.

If you see a singing meteorite, you must immediately fly next to the meteorite, then get down on the floor, face the nearest porthole, and then begin worshipping it immediately, whilst dressed in your finest clothes and then place an apple crumble on your head, and begin to chant, "Oh, sexy meteorite, I adore you, I love you, I worship you." over and over again, until you run out of food. The delivery drone will keep feeding you the apple crumble, and replacement apple crumbles until you cannot eat anymore and feel fat and explode without warning."

If you see an alien with three heads during a game of bingo, you must shout, "Oy, you, and you, stop saying bingo, bingo, bingo, because I do not know your lingo, and you keep winning, and winning is a sin, so will you kindly please, very kindly pack it in?"

This policy made Brian laugh, and whoever had thought of it was some kind of crazed lunatic. Another few read:

If you happen to see some floating space junk in space on your travels, you must immediately rush to your fridge, take out all the condensed milk, and then don a spacesuit. Cover the floating space junk in condensed milk, and then

levitate a cow on top of the space junk with a tractor beam. Take a photo of the cow on top of the space junk. Send the photograph to a tabloid newspaper and then claim the cow lost all control of its udders and make lots of money.

If you see a man mining a meteorite with a spoon, visit him in your spaceship and destroy the meteorite with a laser gun, and then apologise as that is a lucky meteorite that contains a huge amount of money inside and a winning lottery ticket.

Superstition is not the way as Stevie Wonder once said, and Brian did find the rules and the regulations of the unexpected travel insurance document very amusing indeed, but so far, he still was really unsure about what legality there was in these terms and agreements that you agreed to when you signed the main travel insurance document. It was totally bonkers.

The crew, however, were only subject to their own regulations aboard their own spaceship, and they had given up ignoring the regulations of the company that they were working for. This was a good policy thought the crew, and it saved a huge amount of time, but time in space was never enough to do what you wanted to do. The luxury of relaxation was a very rare commodity, and in the universe, there were many time saving devices. One of these time saving devices was a drone with laser guns on that could spot clocks from a long distance away and destroy them. Destroying time was a very sensible idea, and there was never enough time to destroy all the clocks in the universe. Clocks were outdated pieces of technology, but they did the job. The crew were easily



impressed by technology, and they frequently bought as much technology as possible from online shops and off dodgy looking robots who used to hang around in space stations. The type of robots who wore trench coats and exposed their wares whilst opening their coats whilst winking at you. The crews most favourite technology was holographic, and they loved projecting holographic images onto meteorites, and onto passing spaceships. Especially onto passing spaceships that were going too fast and being real nuisances in the intergalactic highway. There were of course many drunk drivers in space, and they were unpredictable and crazy.

The crew had had to swerve to avoid many drunk drivers and no insurance policy could protect you if you had your shields down. Generating shields took a lot of energy, and energy generators were better than they used to be. Still the crew were glad to be re-energising by the pool. The crew then spent some more time at the pool, and after several hours, they decided to leave and go for dinner. The crew looked for Eric Strudelhofen, and they found him with a plant pot on his head. The plant pot contained a plant that was bright yellow, and Eric looked quite a picture as they say in some parts of the universe. Eric Strudelhofen was stood in the lobby, giving the staff huge amounts of bank notes and lots of cheques, and he was trying to be discreet, but the flowerpot on his head was not really helping him to be discreet at all. Eric then pulled out a device from inside his jacket, a device that he used to teleport some large sacks containing money probably from somewhere else. Eric pretended not to notice the crew and he stood there pretending to be a plant until he had given

a huge number of the staff the sacks and the staff had walked off elsewhere.

Brian then smiled at Eric, and he waved at him, and then said to him, "Hello, Eric, now that is a nice plant! What type of plant is it?" Eric put his finger to his lips, and said, "Shhh! It is sleeping." Brian then went on to say something else, then Salomina said "Shhh!", and afterwards Cedric said, "Shhh!" and then everyone in the nearby vicinity said, "Shhh!" and the whole universe must have said, "Shhh!" Because it seemed like a plant that would be omnipotent.

Brian stared at the plant in the plant pot on top of Eric's head, and he had a strange thought, "Maybe the plant has taken over Eric's mind." Yes, it was possible, so Brian decided to ask him, "Eric, has the plant taken over your mind by any chance?" Eric said "Shhh!", then afterwards there was silence. What was going on thought the crew, this was most unusual. Plants were certainly more devious than they looked. The crew of the spaceship are we there yet then looked on and waited expectantly for something to happen. The plant then suddenly started talking and all the crew were shocked and could not believe it.

"Hello, I am Lupuslupi, and I am receiving a transmission from the planet Yorori, and it tells me that we are delivering three packets of biscuits, a hamster wrapped in bubble wrap, ten pairs of underpants, and an inflatable hamster to a Mr Eric Strudelhofen." Brian laughed, then Eric smiled and took off the plant from his head, and began to speak as if this was perfectly normal, "So, how are you all?" Brian paused and tried to control himself and not laugh. Brian then replied, "Oh, we are very good thanks

Eric, and how are you? By the way, we really enjoyed our dinner.” Eric smiled and then continued, “Now, that is fantastic, and I am very glad to hear it, and me, well, I have had a very good day, well, apart from having to inflate my underpants with a bicycle pump and rescue a robot from the swimming pool.” This of course was just a normal day at the office for Eric, and the crew wondered what other things he had to deal with whilst running a restaurant and a hotel complex. Cedric paused for a moment, and then thought of a question for Eric, “Eric, what is the most difficult thing that you have to deal with whilst running a hotel complex?” Eric then took a few moments to think about it, and then said, “Well, we do get some rather difficult customers, especially the aliens, who do not always understand being polite and civil, and some aliens view the human species as insects that should be killed as soon as possible. Now, of course, we try to make our customers happy, but aliens are incredibly difficult to please, and some of them insist on bringing weapons into the hotel complex despite it being against regulations. Once I lost a chef, because an alien decided that he did not like the nasi goring, as it wasn’t up to his standards, and as it did not have cow dung on top of it. The alien then demanded a nasi goring from nasi goring on sea on the planet Earth two, which was a very strange request, as nasi goring on sea does not exist at all. We of course, after the alien had killed the man, tried to make the alien pay damages to the man’s family for the loss of life, and we tried to be diplomatic about it, and eventually the alien agreed to meet the man’s family, but when the alien met

the man's family, instead of being peaceful he pulled out his laser gun and then exterminated them. This of course was quite a shock, and there was not much that we could do about it at the time. Seconds after the alien had made the whole family shuffle off of their mortal coil, the alien disappeared in his spaceship never ever to be seen ever again, and it was a very difficult thing for the staff to have to deal with, and some of them left us, sadly, and all needed counselling. Then afterwards we had to deal with the newspapers, and unsurprisingly the headlines were terrible of course, unless you were into salacious stories. We actually did not lose any business because of this tragedy, but instead, we gained lots of new customers, which greatly boosted our bank balance, and because of this we were able to start building a new town." Salomina thought that this was very impressive indeed, because running a business was not as easy as it looked. Eric then spoke again, "Now would you like to eat somewhere different today?" The crew had food in their hotel room fridges and room service, but the food in the restaurant was fantastic, and they were looking forward to more. Karen did not need long to think about it and said, "Yes, that would be absolutely fantastic!" Eric smiled and then replied, "Well, ok, in that case, then let me show you the way. The restaurant you are going to is my most interesting restaurant, and it also includes entertainment." The crew really liked entertainment and in space you really do not get much chance to be entertained at all, because entertainment was few and far between. Eric then pointed the crew in the right direction and lead them

forwards through the hotel lobby and down some stairs, and as the crew were going down the stairs, music could be heard coming from below. The crew then reached the bottom of the stairs, and in front of them was an extremely large wooden door. Eric Strudelhofen then opened the large wooden door, and the music suddenly started blaring out loudly from some speakers beside the stage. Crowds of people were dancing in front of a stage, and surrounding the stage were numerous tables where people were sat drinking alcohol and eating packets of crisps. In front of a stage was a large replica of a gigantic turtle, and upon the stage was a woman dancing with a snake, and she had a strobe light on her head, and she was dancing wildly and happily with the snake and totally drunk. There were many people passed out in chairs, and in some parts of the room there were clouds of smoke coming from cigarettes.

The room was luxurious and filled with leather chairs, and the room had a bar at one end. In the middle of the crowds of people there was a large indoor tower, with what appeared to be a machine gun nest and a cannon of some kind, like in really old war movies. The crew were a bit perplexed by the sight of this, and wondered what was going on, because the idea seemed very unusual indeed, and Eric Strudelhofen really did not seem the type to be a mass murderer, but it was still possible.

“Eric.” said Salomina, “Why is there a cannon on the tower, it is not a laser gun is it?” Eric laughed loudly, and said, “No, it is not a laser gun honestly. It just shoots alcohol into people’s mouths for free, because alcohol here is cheap, very cheap indeed.” Eric smiled and then reached into his tuxedo and pullet out some free discount vouchers

for the crew, and handed them to the crew, and afterwards pointed out where the bar was. Above the crew there were people hanging from the ceiling dressed as angels, and they were flying around the room on some kind of pulley system. This looked like fun thought the crew. Eric took in the scene, and he was filled with pride, and this showed in his face. Eric then looked back at the crew, and said, "Well, I hope you enjoy the entertainment. There will be various musical acts, and actors, and dancers and singers, and clowns, and all kinds of entertainment." The crew really liked the sound of this.

Brian enthusiastically then said, "Great, we shall all enjoy ourselves like it is the last party on Earth before we head back into space." Karen smiled and then thought for a second or two before replying, "Yes, that is a good idea, Brian." said Karen, and afterwards she then added, "So where we do we go for dinner?" Eric pointed over to the far end of the room, where there was another large door. Brian looked at the door and almost salivated at the sight it, and then replied, "Ok, thanks Eric, will dinner be long?" Eric paused, and then replied, "Yes, it will be a few hours, but the entertainment is really great, and it is well worth waiting for." Eric smiled and then continued, "But, I must go for now. I hope that you have fun this evening. It really will be a wild night, and I hope that you really truly enjoy yourselves." Eric then waved goodbye, before walking through the crowds and disappeared quickly from view. The crew found themselves some armchairs, and all of them sat down, apart from Brian. Brian then spoke, "Now what would everyone like to drink?" Cedric replied, "Space juice 22 please." Karen said, "Half a biscuit and mangonowhere fast juice please.", then Salomina said,

"Ten shots of strawberry cocktail please." All of which were very nice drinks. Brian took this in, and then nodded and said, "Ok." before walking off towards the bar. Immediately a stunning looking woman with a neon Mohican, stood in front of him and said, "Beware the turtle!" Brian laughed immediately and smiled and then headed towards the bar. The bar was lit with lots of fluorescents, and bartenders were shaking cocktails behind them. Stood before the bar, there were some Aliens, and robots were all dancing away and enjoying themselves, and also there was always a crowd at the best places. Now trying to get to the bar in a popular spot was never easy, and it was very difficult indeed to get to the bar without being squashed.

Brian suddenly realised that his shoelace was undone, and he bent down to tie it, and as soon as he had done, a man's fist flew over his head, and the man punched someone else by accident, who happened to be a robot. The robot was knocked unconscious, and numerous people began tripping over it immediately. Robots unconscious was the best for them thought Brian. Robots to Brian were incredibly frustrating at times.

Brian suddenly heard a voice come from above, and he looked up, and he got the shock of his life, because stood before him was the face of the school bully Peter Hurst, who he had not seen for decades. This was a horrifying sight, and the last person that he wanted to see in his life. Brian got up slowly, and then looked at Peter for a millisecond, and then ran into the crowds. Peter Hurst then ran after him, and started shouting at Brian, "Oy, Brian you coward, come back here, and let me talk to you." Peter Hurst's method of talking to people only

involved shouting at them and using his fists, which of course, was not helpful at all unless you liked a bruised face and being shouted at. Brian after getting away from Peter Hurst then kept running and he kept pushing people out of the way in front of him. The appearance of Peter Hurst was of course, not very helpful at all, and incredibly frustrating. Brian's running technique left a lot to be desired, and Brian could not barely outrun his mother. Still, the memories of Brian's childhood, were traumatic for him, and he did not have any good memories of Peter Hurst to enjoy, and the only memories Brian had of Peter were of being punched and kicked because at school because he did not like Brian's fashion sense.

Still, Peter Hurst here he was, still acting like a crazy lunatic, and a violent one too. He was a dangerous man, yes, a psychopath, a lunatic, a man hell bent on causing havoc to people's faces, and property too, and once Peter Hurst had got hold of you, you knew you were in for a long and a very difficult time. Peter Hurst was running fast towards Brian and shouting loudly. Brian kept looking back and then kept crashing into people as he tried to escape the clutches of Peter Hurst, a man with no fashion sense whatsoever. Peter Hurst then nearly caught up to Brian, and he threw another punch at him, and then Brian managed to duck again, and as he did so, someone gave him a duck and Brian took it instinctively, and then did not know what to do with it, except throw it at Peter Hurst, who was an athletic looking man.

Peter Hurst was a very fast runner, but luckily the duck hit Peter on the head, and this sent him flying and crashing to the floor unconscious. Brian did not realise how difficult



going for a pint could be, but this seemed more likely now, as Peter Hurst was unconscious.

Suddenly a siren went off and a drone appeared and was heading towards Brian. Brian saw the drone was descending slightly and was headed towards Peter Hurst. An antigravity beam then lifted Peter Hurst off the ground, and he began levitating in mid-air. The drone then took him away, and Brian was greatly relieved, and happy that no harm had come to him. Once Brian because of Peter Hurst had had to go to hospital because Peter Hurst had invited him around his house after school, on the pretext that he wanted to be friends with Brian, which was as far from reality as it could be. Brian went around Peters house because he had been invited for tea, and it was rude to turn these things down.

Peter was unfortunately the worst host ever, and although he had high hopes of a friendship, this not going to be a possibility. Peter Hurst spent the whole time whilst Brian was around his house, giving Brian Chinese burns, and punching Brian as much as possible. Brian had to take time off from school, which was extremely difficult as his mother continuously shouted at him. Still, Brian had managed to avoid him, and he was now headed for the bar, which was a vast improvement indeed. Brian eventually reached the bar, and then bought the drinks, and a bar of chocolate, and afterwards headed back to the rest of the crew. A new song had just started playing, and the song was a strange love song with a disco beat and electric guitar. The lyrics of the song were:

Here we are in the galaxy, and  
I am lost as can be,

yes, I am a lonely space traveller temporarily, now,  
have you seen my space alien boyfriend baby, the  
one with three heads, the one who drives me crazy,  
my space alien boyfriend, he has disappeared you see, yes,  
my space alien boyfriend,  
who I cannot keep my hands off normally, when  
he is visible to me.  
Oh, oh, oh, have you seen my space alien boyfriend baby,  
yes, the one who is totally crazy, the one who  
sometimes lives in a tree, yes, have you seen my  
space alien baby, the one who has said that he  
will marry me,  
the one who I adore and that I love, even when  
he leaves the seat up on the lavatory, oh, oh, oh,  
the misery,  
now how I wish I knew where he was,  
but here I am in the galaxy,  
just looking for my lover,  
the one from planet Mars,  
my space alien baby, who I  
fell in love with,  
over a chocolate bar and a cup of tea, oh, oh, oh,  
how lonely I am without him you see, because he  
is my universe, yes, my space alien boyfriend  
baby, the one who drives me crazy, the one who I  
used to see so regularly, but not lately sadly, but  
what is worse, my binoculars have  
malfunctioned, and my space telescope, I lost it in  
the sea, oh, yes, I did, and I was livid, because it  
was swallowed by a whale, and now my heart is  
aching, that my space alien baby, I cannot see,  
and now, I shall have to compensate for that, by

buying more clothing than I need, yes, my heart it  
is aching,  
and I am in limbo without my space alien baby, my  
space alien baby from a different planet than me.  
oh, oh, oh, my space  
alien baby,  
his disappearance is driving me crazy,  
and what am I to do about it, because  
it is driving me into insanity,  
and even a cup of tea these days is of no comfort to me, oh,  
oh, oh,  
have you seen my space alien baby, the one  
who used to kiss me so frequently, and so  
tenderly,  
oh, oh, oh, can someone please help me,  
for I am like a spaceship in a sea of stars,  
and my space alien baby, you see, well,  
he was my guiding light,  
and he shone his love down upon me rather often you see,  
oh, oh, oh, my space alien baby, where are you my love,  
because you used to come around regularly for tea,  
oh, oh, oh, my space alien baby, wherefore art thou  
now,  
are you in the bathroom and indisposed, I do not know,  
but oh, how I wish that you would call me more regularly,  
because you used to be, as regular as the sea, and back and  
forth, so were we,  
and I would ring you, and you used to ring me so  
frequently, but now I feel inside me,  
that something has gone terribly wrong, and  
I am wondering if you have been eaten, by a  
cannibal from Venus,

an evil human hating cannibal, oh, did one of  
those scare you away from me? Oh, oh, oh,  
my space alien baby, what am I to do,  
without you, oh, what am I to do without  
you, my love, my love, my love, my love so  
true. Oh, oh, oh, my space alien baby,  
because if I cannot find you, how will life  
ever be the same,  
and how without you how can I be anything except crazy,  
oh, oh, oh, my space alien baby,  
please, hurry back, yes hurry back,  
please hurry back to me.

Brian then sat down with the rest of the crew and gave them their drinks. Brian had a slightly disturbed look on his face after the encounter with Peter Hurst his old enemy. Karen noticed this and then took a long look at Brian, and said, "Are you ok Brian?" Brian then snapped out of his thoughts of Peter Hurst, and replied, "Well, I just bumped into my old school bully." Cedric then replied, "Oh, really, in here? What happened?" Brian sighed then responded, "Nothing really, except he chased me, and then someone gave me a duck to throw at him." Salomina laughed. Brian then cheered up, and said "Oh, by the way, that was a really catchy song, did you listen to it by any chance?" Salomina then took a sip of her drink and smiled, "Yes, I did, and it was very infectious, and we all need our space alien baby sometimes, because what good is love, yes, what good is love without someone to love, except staring in a mirror at oneself and cuddling yourself to death by accident." Brian and the rest of the crew then laughed loudly, and they raised a toast to each other, and

smiled and looked around them at the happy faces all about, and it was great to see such happy faces, and to see people enjoying themselves, because life can be far too serious. The music was very quirky and very different, but extremely enjoyable. There were also many songs that they had never heard before, and upon the stage on a regular basis there came and went various performers who would sing their hearts out, and at one point a man levitated above the stage using antigravity and he played the bongos whilst wearing a dark pair of sunglasses and a fedora and luminous shorts. Yes, there really were some cool dudes and dudettes on the stage this evening thought Brian, and he dug them more than a digger, digging for gold and diamonds.

Yes, Brian was really into music and so were the rest of the crew who could not get enough of it. Brian smiled and said, "Wow this is cool, yes, I love this music. It cools my mind man, like an ice-cream inserted into my eardrum." Karen also smiled and then replied, "And I love this music because it cools my mind, like a cryogenic freezing chamber filled with ice cubes." Cedric found this amusing and then laughed and afterwards spoke, "And I love this music because, it reminds me of laying down on an iceberg, whilst cryogenically freezing a bag of ice cubes." Salomina then added, "And I like this music because it reminds me of how my heart felt when I won five thousand pounds on the lottery whilst having a wart on my foot frozen and then removed." The crew all then high fived each other and drank their drinks in unison. This was a great evening, and there were only a few days left until they left the planet and had to continue with their delivery job to the space station."

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen continued watching the musical acts on the stage, and they had all fallen in love with this place and so had the others. Brian, then whilst drinking his drink suddenly placed his hand on the side of his chair, and it levitated into the air after accidentally pressing a button, much to the surprise of Brian and also to the rest of the crew.

The rest of the crew then looked down at the side of their chairs and they also found some controls, and there was a button for levitate, and a button to lower the chair, and there was a button to spin the chair around whilst in the air. Cedric, Salomina, and Karen, then pressed the button to levitate and they rose up to the same height as Brian. The view from this height was much better than before, and they sat looking cool high above the heads of the crowd and then drank their drinks whilst listening to the music. The musical acts were truly out of this world and one of the acts had travelled from near the planet Pelon five, which was a very long distance away indeed, about five years of space travel. The band upon the stage consisted of grey aliens, and one of them played the saxophone, another the drums, one a guitar, one a bass guitar, and another a giant hamster. A fake hamster of course, which when squeezed, sounded like a cat meowing crossed with an electric guitar. This was a most unusual instrument of course, and almost as impressive as Father Alfonso Lonely's large robotic organ. Music meant a lot to the crew of the spaceship, and they often on the spaceship loved dancing, and singing, despite them being terrible at both. The music here was incredible, and Brian wondered if you could use a real hamster as a musical instrument.

The band played a song called,

“We all want to diet and riot.”

Hello, hello, we are grey  
aliens, from the planet Pelon  
five,

and by some miracle we have just managed to survive, our  
mother in laws cooking,  
which was absolutely disgusting,  
and so, we tried to throw it away, when she wasn't  
looking,

and the food it tasted inedible, and it made us cry, and  
it made us ill, and because of this,

we tried to levitate it out of the window,  
despite eating more than our fill, but she  
spotted us unfortunately,

and then she turned on the anti-gravity deflector, to  
prevent our dinners from leaving the room, because she  
has an iron will, and then she force fed our dinners to us,  
with a tractor beam, which made us want to rebel, because  
our mother-in-law is an evil woman, yes, our mother-in-  
law is from a planet called hell, a place where evil mother  
in laws go on holiday, and dream up new foods that  
torture your intestines, and well, her cooking it made us  
want to diet and riot, because her cooking we could not  
stand it anymore, so, to drive her crazy, we sellotaped her  
to a lamp post, and in front of her ate much nicer food, like  
macaroni cheese,

and upon her cast voodoo spells, yes, voodoo spells,  
and then as well, we set fire to her UFO, to prevent  
her from being able to go to the shops, and to

prevent her buying absolute rubbish, which she  
does very well, and we had fun eating macaroni,  
and the macaroni was really swell, swell, like the  
rhythm of the music, and like the cool saxophone,  
and like calling your loved one, on your  
intergalactic mobile phone, and well, our mother-in-  
law, she was not impressed at all, and she called us  
all fools, but still we danced in the streetlights, as a  
crowd gathered as well, and we all really didn't  
care,  
as her food made it us want to tear out our hair, and we  
were happy that she was really angry as can be, and we  
laughed in glee, as people began to moan,  
about their mother in laws cooking as well, and  
together we said to the crowd,  
let us all diet and riot, yes,  
diet and riot,  
and let us all just say no to any mother in laws cooking,  
because it never is any good you know, and our mother in  
laws cooking should banished,  
if they refuse to go on cooking courses, because  
our mother in laws cooking, will, if we eat any  
more of it, send us to hell, so, let us upon our  
mother in laws cooking, cast voodoo spells, yes,  
voodoo spells, and let us all, diet and riot,  
and protest in the streets until they give up cooking,  
because we all do not want to go to hell, and to prevent  
this, our mother in laws must repent, before their lives  
are spent,  
because our lives are precious and are heaven sent, and  
although some people love their mother in laws,  
it is not unusual at all,



to give them anti-social behaviour orders, whenever they  
near a cooker, and then ban them from cooking at all,  
because we would rather face an apocalypse, than face  
another one of our mother in laws dinners, and we would  
rather diet and riot, and burn their UFO's,  
even if their husbands do not like it all,  
because we are warriors, yes, we are warriors one  
and all, and though we may be grey to look at,  
inside us grey aliens we are all, vibrant and  
colourful, and good looking, and very very cool,  
and we love fine dining, which is much nicer to eat,  
than our mother in laws cooking, and less  
devastating to our unusual intestines, which of  
course,  
our mother in laws cooking always seems to set on fire,  
and which always smells,  
oh, such horrible smells, the smells of hell,  
against which we the aliens from Pelon five, we do rebel,  
so will you not join us, if you are concerned,  
by your mother in laws cooking as well because  
we will diet and riot, and fight for our right to  
edible dinners, as our mother in laws UFO's  
burn in the streets, and they cry and sigh, and  
start to wonder why, why they ever cooked  
dinner in the first place, as upon them we cast  
voodoo spells, and shout yeah, yeah, yeah,  
ban mother in laws everywhere until they give up cooking,  
but until then, cast upon them voodoo spells.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen had been dancing in  
their seats to the song, and the crew had just discovered a  
button on their chairs that called someone behind the bar

via a microphone allowing them to order drinks, which they did. The drinks were delivered by a drone and the crew continued to enjoy themselves. The crew continued to drink and drink, and drink more, and also order packets of crisps, and chocolate bars. Occasionally the crew would levitate back down to the ground, then finish their current drink, and afterwards the crew would get on the dancefloor, and begin dancing like no tomorrow. The crew were all quite good dancers, and the exercise was doing them a world of good, and each one of them really needed to lose some weight, as they had become extremely lazy and apathetic mostly about exercise. Exercise to them had become boring, because staring at the walls of the gym, and seeing exactly the same scenery, even if they were near one of the portholes, was boring, and samey, and the view of space was beautiful but repetitive. But now, they were all stars on the dancefloor, and they all waved their arms around in the air, like they just didn't care about their delivery driver jobs, because they no longer wanted to be fat slobs, and they wanted to be able to find the right size underwear, which was unfortunately not easy in the universe anywhere.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen occasionally took a break from dancing, and they sat in their chairs, and then tried to recover whilst drinking more alcohol and ordering more drinks. The crew then continued to keep an eye out for Eric Strudelhofen, who they had not seen for a while. The crew thought that they would have seen Eric on the dancefloor as he was quite a fun guy, and he had a great sense of humour, and also had an outgoing personality. The kind of personality that would have easily got him any woman that he chose. Eric Strudelhofen was very

popular with the staff, especially after he had given them all that money previously. Now, what would you do with that kind of money Brian had thought. Still, Eric Strudelhofen must be elsewhere enjoying himself thought Cedric, and the crew were all having a good time. The bands continued to appear on the stage and the crew were partying as hard as they could, and they were making the most of every single moment, then after a couple of hours of real musicians playing real music and some playing musical instruments with their nostrils, Cedric then turned to the others, "I wonder what is happening with dinner? It has been ages since we have eaten." Karen wished that she knew too, and then she replied, "I wish I knew but I do not know, and I am getting bored of eating crisps and chocolate bars." Salomina then joined in, "Me too, but maybe we should phone the check in desk and see if we can get hold of Eric Strudelhofen and ask him?" Cedric sighed because he was exasperated with waiting and he then spoke, "Yes, we should do because it isn't getting rather late for dinner?" The crew of the spaceship then headed back across the dancefloor and back to their chairs which were reserved for them only, because of some strange artificial intelligence software in the chairs had recognised who they were and had reserved them for the night for the crew.

The crew levitated back into the air and Brian pressed the button for the microphone, and then spoke into it, "Hello. I would like to talk to Eric Strudelhofen please." A male voice was then heard coming out of the speaker, and the voice said, "Ok. Now, please bear with me caller, I will just put you through." There was a short pause, and Eric Strudelhofen's voice was then heard, and he began

speaking, "Err, hello, I am a bit busy at the moment dealing with er, a bit of a crisis. Now, who is this please, because I do not normally get calls from the entertainment room." Eric seemed a bit flustered. Brian noticed this but replied loudly, "Eric, it is Brian, and I am with Cedric, Karen and Salomina and we are having the time of our lives, but we are getting extremely hungry." There was a short silence before Eric spoke again, and he said, "Err, um, well, you see, I am having a bit of a problem with er, something downstairs." This seemed most odd, very odd indeed. Brian then waited for Eric to continue talking, but he didn't. Afterwards Brian then continued the conversation, "Eric, do you by any chance have any clue whatsoever of roughly when we can eat dinner?" Eric then responded by saying, "Sorry I must dash, my basement in an external building is on fire, but I will let you know Brian, sorry." Eric then left the conversation, and Brian turned to the others, "Eric has something on fire in a basement somewhere, and he has no clue when dinner will be ready." Salomina then sighed, "Oh, but I really need something to eat. Could we order something to be delivered here? A takeaway by any chance?" Karen thought about this, then replied, "Yes, that would be good, great idea Salomina." Brian then pressed the communication button again on the side of the chair, and a different voice on the other end appeared, a female voice and said, "Hello. How can I help you?" Brian then replied, "Well, me and my friends were wondering could we order some pizzas and Italian food please? We are in the chairs that levitate." The female receptionist then responded, "Err, I am sorry some of our staff appear to be err, on strike at the moment and I am not quite sure how long it

will take to get a new delivery of carrots." Brian found this strange and was a bit perplexed by this, and he then said, "A delivery of carrots?" The female receptionist sighed before continuing, "Yes. A delivery of carrots." Brian was not impressed, and he really thought that this was a very poor excuse indeed, and Brian could not quite believe what he was hearing, "Really? A late delivery of carrots is holding up dinner?" The female receptionist sounded irritated, and was a bit abrupt and she said, "Hmmm, yes, I am terribly sorry Sir, but I would not be surprised if our delivery of carrots is on strike too!"

Brian was beginning to think that something serious was up around here, because Eric Strudelhofen had seemed to have been running a well-oiled machine.", but maybe this well-oiled machine was falling apart thought Brian. Brian was ravenous and extremely drunk, and he was trying not to fall off of his chair onto the crowd below, which was not easy after drinking so much.

Brian then spoke again, "Well, please could you kindly let us know when dinner is available soon, because otherwise we will order a pizza." The female receptionist then calmed down a little bit and said, "Yes, of course, sir, please do forgive me, I must go now. One of the guests has managed to crash his flying vehicle into the toilet block of the gym, and unfortunately, he was thrown out of his vehicle, and he now has his head stuck inside a toilet bowl and needs rescuing." Brian tried not to laugh, and then he started wondering what was going on with traffic control on the planet, and after that thought, Brian then said, "Ok. Thank you and goodbye." The female receptionist then disappeared into nothingness.

Brian sighed, rubbed his bleary eyes, and then turned to the rest of the crew, and said, "I am sorry everyone, I have bad news. The reception desk apparently have no news of when dinner will be, because some of their staff apparently are on strike, and also, they are waiting for a delivery of carrots, and the carrots could be on strike too. Oh, and one of the guests has crashed his flying vehicle into the toilet block at the gym, and was thrown out of his vehicle, and now has his head stuck in a toilet bowl and needs rescuing." The crew of the spaceship all slapped their foreheads with the palms of their hands in unison, and then said the phrase, "Well, I never. Oh, Trevor, Trevor!" which was quite an unusual phrase. Now, this turn of phrase stemmed from a man that the crew used to know, a man called Trevor, who was a walking disaster. The man just kept walking into one disaster to another, and he was calamitous even when he was asleep. The man was called Trevor, and Trevor had had so many accidents, that bookies across planet Earth had stopped taking bets on when his next accident would be. The economy of some small countries was seriously affected by people not being able to bet on whether Trevor Trevor would have an accident or not, and Politicians across the planet begged Trevor Trevor to not have an accident for a change. They even tried to bribe Trevor Trevor into not having an accident, but Trevor Trevor was an honourable man, and he would not take the money, but Trevor Trevor then sold his story to the newspapers, and the government of the country of Pogo and the only politician in the country then fell off of his pogo stick on the edge of the country of Pogo. Pogo was a very small piece of land indeed, and the land was about 100 metres wide, and had a hut upon it which

was his home, and it was also the Government office. Unfortunately, Trevor Trevor did not get on with the neighbouring country, and he fell over the border into the territorial defences of the country of Lamonia, which was also a small country. A country that also only had one politician. The moat of Lamonia was filled with alligators, and Trevor Trevor, he tried his best to fight off the alligators but to no avail. Trevor Trevor, then sadly whilst dying was mortally wounded, but still, he did manage to write a note to the President and the only Politician of Lamonia, and the note said, "The country of Pogo declares war on the country of Lamonia because..." Trevor Trevor never finished writing the note, then suddenly he died from his wounds, and afterwards the President of Lamonia only found the note because Trevor Trevor had had the foresight to turn the note into a paper plane, and then throw it into the country of Lamonia. The President of Lamonia then decided to go to war with the country of Pogo despite seeing the remains of the dead body of the President of Pogo. The President of Lamonia then entered the shed of the President of Pogo and found the President's electricity bill and had a heart attack. Then during his heart attack, he spotted that the cost of electricity was reasonable in Pogo, and he also saw a note from the neighbouring country of Molovia, who had said that he had declared war on Lamonia. The President of Lamonia quickly whilst clutching his heart then wrote a note declaring war on Molovia, and stumbled outside of the hut, and then made the note into a paper plane, and threw it over the border into the country of Molovia, and the pattern continued with each President of each neighbouring country going to war with each country in

one part of planet Earth where there were countries that only had President and one resident, who hated the neighbouring countries, and were found to do so from the notes that were left behind by the rulers. This continued until all the rulers were all dead in that region and there was no one else living in the countries. This fact was sponsored by the intergalactic communication system. Back in the entertainment complex, Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina were continuing to enjoy themselves despite being really hungry. The music was continuing, and the crew were watching the musicians upon the stage. A loud announcement came over the tannoy system that Mr Carrot carrot had unfortunately been cancelled. Brian then slapped his forehead with the palm of his hand in frustration, but then quickly cheered up when a giraffe began to teleport onto the stage. The giraffe had long arms and was playing a guitar and appeared on stage as a hologram. This of course was an incredible sight, and the crowd were going wild as the giraffe was an intergalactic superstar, and it was well known for having a love of hounmous, and also for having three girlfriends. Now, quite why you would want to have three girlfriends is anyone's guess, as it could only be expensive. Brian had trouble keeping one girlfriend, and the rest of the crew were not much more successful either at relationships. The giraffe with arms was called Gerald and he had incredibly beautiful eyes, and he also had a wig. Gerald was a really wild Giraffe and he had become famous for being able to play guitar telepathically.

The power of the mind is an incredible thing and Gerald was very intelligent, and he was fond of sitting on the stage at the end of gigs, whilst reading a book and playing



guitar telepathically, and also for drinking an alternative version of space juice.

At the front of the stage, a crowd of women had built up and were screaming and were throwing tree leaves at Gerald. Gerald picked up a few of these leaves and then ate them, and then winked at the crowd of women and blew them kisses, before waving at them and then started to talk to the audience.

Gerald the Giraffe was well known for his humour, and he liked to laugh. Gerald asked the women for requests, and one of the women shouted, Giraffe 247365. This was one of Gerald's favourite songs to play and it involved an incredibly long guitar solo. Gerald smiled and then happily launched into the song.

The crew sat in their chairs listening, and with rumbling stomachs. They were all beginning to tire now, and despite the lively music, even was this was not really distracting from the need for food, but they listened anyway. The lyrics went as follows:

Yes, yes, yes, I like to impress, because I am called Gerald,  
yes, I am he, the intergalactic giraffe superstar, and my  
guitar, I call it beauty, yes, hello to everyone I see, I am  
Gerald 247365,

and with my guitar I can part the sea, and to be  
here tonight I have flown through space,  
and I have made my way,  
past the many meteorites and past many galaxies, and  
today I have surfed the waves of planet Earth, and on  
the way here I have conjured up many melodies, and I  
am in love with you, the beautiful ladies that I see

before me, yes, you beautiful ladies, who stimulate my  
mind, and who set my mind on fire,  
and who set my heart racing more powerfully, more  
powerfully than the roaring waves of the sea,  
oh yes, how great it is to be me, because I am Gerald  
247365, and I am a wild child of the universe, and my  
guitar, it will capture your heart as well as me,  
because in space and time,  
and throughout the universe, there is none other like me,  
and I like to play my guitar, to lift your hearts,

and to set your hearts aflame, because I love to love, and I  
love more than usual you see, because ladies of all kinds  
they drive me so wild, and despite my heart being in mint  
condition, I cannot get enough of all the beautiful ladies,  
and also, because ladies of all ages I adore, and respect,  
especially the one who drives me to bingo frequently,  
so, respect to all the ladies here, the  
ladies of whom I love everywhere,  
and rather regularly, because I am Gerald the  
intergalactic giraffe, and I am here for you  
247365, to play my guitar, called beauty, upon  
which I can play such powerful chords, that  
shake the heavens, and that play such heavenly  
melodies, melodies that can part the oceans and  
the seas, and oh, yes,  
what a wonder is music, and how great it is to  
be, Gerald 247365,  
and how great it is to be alive, and to be able to  
play this guitar for you, and to make you  
scream and shout incessantly, now clap your

hands as I play this guitar solo, and clap like no tomorrow,  
whilst I move the heavens and the Earth for you,  
with my guitar called beauty and try to part the sea,  
because I am Gerald 247365, and I love you all, and  
into infinity.

The crew were all clapping in their seats as they watched Gerald playing guitar like a wild giraffe, and the crew all had really enjoyed the guitar solo, despite it lasting for three hours, which was a very long time indeed. Still dinner had not even been called yet, and the crew were falling asleep at the end of the guitar solo and were beginning to doze off. Obviously, this was not a good situation and Brian had to press the microphone button on the side of the chair, and then order some large bottles of water.

Karen, Cedric, and Salomina had passed out, and all of them including Brian had been sweating profusely, much more so than an Olympic weightlifter who was lifting an elephant above his head, an Olympic weightlifter whose armpits had given up all hope of being clean.

The bottles of water eventually arrived, and Brian opened them and then threw the water over the rest of the crew. The crew awoke with a start, and wondered what was going on. Salomina screamed as the water hit her unexpectedly, and they then realised that it was just Brian, trying to revive them. Salomina then spoke, "Brian, what happened?" Brian smiled and then replied, "Well, we listened to a song by Gerald 247365 with a guitar solo that lasted for three hours and then you fell asleep." Brian thought for a second or two, then paused, and added, "Oh,

and they still have not told us about dinner yet." Karen sighed in frustration, and then shook her head, "Oh, that I was not expecting at all, now what are we going to do Brian?" Brian then took a few moments to think about it before responding, "Well, I suggest that we go and try to find a shop." He said. The others nodded, and they all then in unison pressed the buttons on the chairs and descended in them to the floor. They had all had a good time, but they were really happy to be leaving after numerous sweaty noisy hours filled with fun. The non delivery of a dinner time had upset them, and they left the entertainment area, and then they went out into the night, and looked for a taxi. The crew wanted to look for the nearest food shop or restaurant on any street that they could find, and after a couple of minutes of searching they stopped a passing flying taxi and then descended to the ground, and the alien driver rolled down the window, and said, "You look sweaty human, now get another taxi. I do not take sweaty humans." The taxi driver irritably then flew off, and the crew had to wait for another, and it did not take long at all before another one came, and once the taxi had reached the ground, the driver opened his window, and he was a human being. The taxi driver smiled, and he was much friendlier than the last one. "Hello." he said, "I am Thelonius, how can I help you?" Salomina smiled and then spoke, "We are looking for a restaurant, yes, any kind of restaurant at all." Salomina then paused, before adding, "We were supposed to have dinner you see, but something seems to have gone wrong with Eric Strudelhofen's entertainment business, because they did not deliver what was promised." The taxi driver did not look too surprised, and after a second, he then

replied, "Well, I hear Eric is having some problems." Cedric then asked, "What kind of problems?" Thelonious then said, "Well, I am not quite sure, but a flying vehicle did crash into the toilet cubicle earlier on." Karen looked surprised and then said, "Oh." There was a short silence, and then Brian paused and added, "Yes. A man was thrown out of his flying vehicle, and he managed to get his head stuck inside the toilet bowl." The taxi driver laughed and then said, "Oh, I see, that does not surprise me at all, but anyway get in." The back door of the taxi then opened, and the crew got in, and the door then closed automatically behind them. The taxi then lifted up off into the air and began flying over Eric Strudelhofen's entertainment complex and then over the hotel which were very beautiful to look at.

Smoke still could be seen at the external toilet block of Eric Strudelhofen's toilet block, and the toilet block was in complete ruins. The taxi flew smoothly through the air and then began flying over the streets of the city of Nouala. Nouala was really a beautiful city and one filled with trees and fountains and expensive shops. The taxi after a few minutes then began descending into one of the many streets and landed outside a restaurant called "Restaurant Never enough." Brian thought that this sounded good, as he could never get enough of restaurants at all either, nor could the crew. Thelonious the taxi driver then spoke and said, "That will be forty-three of something." Salomina laughed and then replied, "Forty-three of something?" Thelonious smiled and then continued, "Yes, forty-three of something, because I have worked in so many cities in the universe, that I keep forgetting what the currency name is for this planet." Cedric wasn't surprised nor was Brian.

Brian then took out his credit card and paid the fare. It was very reasonable one, whatever the currency was.

Thelonious, then said, "I will wait here." The crew then got out of the taxi, and walked to the restaurant and entered it, and it was a rough looking kind of restaurant with outdated pictures on the walls that were faded, and it had grumpy looking staff, staff who looked like they did not want to be there at all. Still, the crew were here for food, and they did not care about the moods of the workers that much, because it had been a long night, and all the crew wanted to do was to finally eat something. The crew then read the menu and it appeared to be an Italian restaurant, but even the menu on the wall was faded and some of the letters were too. Some of the choices included pastas of various kinds, lasagnes, and quiches. The crew then decided to order everything, pastas, lasagnes and quiches, and some bottles of orange juice and water to take away. The grumpy looking man behind the counter, then took the order and typed it into a computer, and his facial expression changed rapidly, as he recognised Brian. The man then smiled and said, "Brian? Brian Vocano?" Brian then looked surprised, as he had never been to this planet before, "Yes. How did you know my name because I have never been here before." The man then smiled and replied, "Oh, well, I thought I recognised you from Space delivery drivers' hobbies, because you were featured in issue number thirty-six, and you were displaying your fine collection of stamps upon your forehead and making yodelling noises mixed with steam train noises." Brian then laughed and the rest of the crew did too, and afterwards Brian then said, "Oh, yes, I forgot about that. You have to do something to keep busy in space, and it can

be extremely boring." The man behind the counter, then introduced himself, "Yes, I am sure it must be." The man then paused for a few seconds, and added, "Oh, by the way, I am Colin from the planet Earth originally, and it is a great pleasure to meet you all as I do not get to meet many human beings." Brian then responded, "And it is nice to meet you too Colin." Colin then handed them the drinks, and said, "Now where are you staying?" Cedric smiled and then responded, "Well, we are staying at Eric Strudelhofen's hotel complex." Colin then nodded, and his expression did not say much about whether he liked the place, or he didn't. Colin then spoke, "Oh, I hear there are some problems there." Karen sighed, then joined in the conversation, "Yes, it does appear so, as we did not get dinner tonight, and also because apparently they were having issues with their staff." Colin took this information in and then thought for a few seconds about it, "Oh. Now, how would you like a free pudding as a token of my gratitude for your custom?" The crew all liked the sound of this, and Brian then said, "Thanks that would be fantastic." Colin reached under the counter and then pulled out the largest cheesecake that they had ever seen, and he then put it into a plastic box. The rest of the food then arrived, and Colin put the food and the drinks into another bag, and then handed the cheesecake and the food and drinks to the crew." Brian smiled, and then said, "Thanks Colin. I shall look forward to seeing you in Shop keepers weekly." Colin also smiled and then said, "Thanks. It was a pleasure surviving you this evening." Brian laughed, and then replied, "Are you dyslexic Colin, by any chance?" Colin then said, "Yes. I am. I sometimes get my words mixed up you see, but anyway, it was nice

to see you." Salomina then spoke, "Yes, and you as well Colin." Salomina then paused before adding, "Goodbye Colin, have a great rest of the evening. "The crew then waved at Colin and left.

Outside in the street in the dim lighting the crew began walking back to the taxi. Suddenly a man ran past the crew, and the man was being chased by someone wielding a very large carrot who seemed to be quite angry. The man was running so fast, that Brian had to do a double take because of the man's speed. The man seemed to be going faster than an Olympic sprinter. Initially the man thought that the man bore a passing resemblance to Eric Strudelhofen, but the man was gone before they could tell if it was." Brian then looked at the others and said, "Hey, did you see that man run past us being chased by a man wielding a very large carrot?" Karen said, "Yes, I did, and it was a most unusual thing, but I am sure that he will survive being attacked with a carrot." Brian laughed and the crew then reached the taxi and got back in. Thelonius smiled and then welcomed them back into the taxi, and Cedric afterwards then said, "Thelonius, did you see that man being chased by another man wielding a very large carrot?" Thelonius found this very amusing and then laughed, and said, "Yes. I did actually, and it was very strange, but this planet is like all the rest really with strange things happening, but still the security here on the planet is very good really despite being privately owned." Thelonius then paused, and said, "Now, would you like to go back to the hotel?" Karen smiled and then replied, "Yes. Thankyou Thelonius, it has been a very long night indeed." The taxi then lifted up into the air, and it began to fly its way back to Eric Strudehofen's hotel and



entertainment complex. The night had been a very long night indeed, and they just wanted to get back to the hotel and eat, and sleep, because bed was calling them, and the tiredness in their eyes could be seen very clearly. The taxi then flew through the air, and it took a different route than before, and the crew looked out of the window, and they watched the world go by. Below them they could see a stadium, and the crew then wondered what this was for. Salomina, then decided to ask Thelonius, "Thelonius, what do they use the stadium for?" Thelonius took a second or two as he was concentrating on flying, then he replied, "They use it as a place where couples can court each other and record video blogs about it, and then worship Eric Strudelhofen in front of a shrine of him." Cedric laughed out loud, and then said, "Worship Eric Strudelhofen?" Thelonius nodded, and then said tiredly "Yes. Eric likes it apparently." Karen laughed too and then said, "Oh, really, so what you are saying is that Eric believes that he is some kind of God?" Thelonius then replied, "Yes. He really does and apparently, he even worships himself in front of a mirror." Salomina shook her head and couldn't quite believe it, because Eric had seemed like such a nice man. She then spoke, "But Eric, he seems normal, very normal indeed." Thelonius then replied, "Well, he is a part time abnormalist, and only partly normal, but if you want to work with Eric, you have to worship him twice a week. It is written in the small print of the business contract apparently." Brian smiled and then said, "Ah, well, I see. I guess I will not be worshipping Eric Strudelhofen then." The crew then laughed and found it very funny indeed, because worshipping anyone was very silly as they believed that

the alphabet has never truthfully existed whatsoever. Still as long as Eric didn't murder anyone in a ritual sacrifice, and sacrifice people without permission, religion and spirituality was ok if you wanted to believe in it. The crew were not religious at all though, but they were happy and that was all that matters.

The taxi continued to fly over the rooftops and Thelonius, then gave them a tour of the local part of the city. He started to point out a building in the distance, "You see over there, that is the temple where they were worship Eric." The crew looked over at the building and it was painted blue and had a large painting of Eric on the side with his thumb up. The crew thought the building was quite impressive, and they were kind of curious to go there and explore it. Thelonius then made the taxi bank right and it then levelled out again. Thelonius then pointed out another building, and spoke again, "And that building over there, is a building designed to house Eric's underpants." The crew laughed again, and Thelonius too. He pointed out another building, a red one this time. "That is the power station." he said, then also added, "and they generate extra power by getting obese people to walk and jog on treadmills to generate the energy through kinetic energy." Eric smiled and thought about this for a second or two and then said, "Now, I think I should go there, because I need to lose weight, because we ate an inflatable turkey recently." Thelonius smiled and then laughed and after a few seconds said, "Well, I hope you enjoyed it." Then added "We will be back to the hotel soon."

### **Chapter 13**

"More relaxing like a giraffe sideways."

the crew awoke in the morning, surrounded by the detritus of last night's dinner plates and leftovers. This was to be their final two days on the planet, and they wanted to make the most of it. The planet was a large planet and they had barely spent any time on it at all, but they had met some interesting people, and they couldn't wait to explore the planet further, because it was a very fascinating place. The crew got up and showered, and then got dressed and stared out the windows of their hotel rooms, and watched as the seagulls flew across the sky in the bright sunlight. The crew left their hotel rooms and then met up in the lobby, all smiled at each other, and Brian said, "Now, what should we do today?" Karen and the rest of the crew then thought about it for a while, "Well," she said, "why don't we, go and find that temple?" Cedric considered this and then said, "Now, that is a very good idea. Yes, let us go and find the temple."

The crew hailed a taxi, and they arrived at the building after about twenty minutes. The building was covered in about five times as many CCTV cameras as the building actually needed, and they immediately felt like they were being watched. Salomina thought about, this, and said, "What if the building is for workers only?" Brian then replied, "Well, we will try and sneak in somewhere else then." Salomina nodded, then said, "Good idea, but will be spotted by the CCTV cameras surely." Cedric then thought about this and afterwards replied, "Yes, probably, but maybe we should find a joke shop, and get some quickly." The rest of the crew agreed that it was a good

idea and nodded. The place was very curious and deserved investigating further, and it certainly was fascinating, and probably a strange experience waiting to happen.

Brian looked around and then spotted a few shops in the distance, then pointed at them and said, "There, over there, there are some shops over there." The rest of the crew looked towards them and then began walking off towards the shops. It was a wonderful day. The crew as they continued to walk suddenly heard shouting, but they continued walking anyway. The crew then after ten minutes of walking then reached the shops. Over the road from the shops, there were a group of protestors, waving banners and placards, and waving what appeared to be orange things." The crew stopped to look at them, but they could not quite make out what the signs were or what the orange objects were in their hands, but they could just make out what they were saying, which appeared to be something about, "Eric Strudelhofen." This was of course not very encouraging, but still they were not here for a protest. The crew then began to look at the shops, and there was a butchers, a bakers, a candlestick maker, a wooden leg repairers, a sewing shop, an electronics shop, a couple of restaurants, a supermarket, and also the "Exponentially large toilet roll shop." But unfortunately no joke shop sadly. It certainly would have livened things up, but Brian, Eric, Karen and Salomina were all greatly relieved upon seeing the toilet roll shop as they had been without toilet rolls for far too long, thanks to Apollo the robot, and his unkind ways.

The crew then headed towards the supermarket to find some kind of disguise there, whatever it was. Now,

disguising yourself was not easy these days, because artificially intelligent software had learned how to be able to analyse facial structures and replicate a picture of your face without a disguise.

Inside the supermarket, there were the usual aisles of food, and the checkouts. Salomina walked over to the checkout and picked up a basket, and then decided to ask someone if they had any disguises. One of the checkout workers then walked over to them after Salomina had waved at them. Salomina then spoke to the female checkout worker, "Hello. Do you have any disguises by the way?" The female checkout worker then thought about it and said, "Yes, I am disguised as a penguin." Brian laughed and then replied, "Well, it is a very nice disguise. Now, do you have any disguises on sale?" The checkout worker paused, and then afterwards smiled and said, "Yes, we do have some in aisle forty-three at the far right of the store near the books on fascism." Cedric then said, "Ok, thank you, thank you very much." The checkout worker smiled and then replied, "Oh, you are most welcome, now are you going to a fancy-dress party?" Salomina then put her finger to her lips, and said, "Shh!

We are going in disguise to somewhere; it is top secret." The checkout worker then said, "Ah, I see. Well, have fun." The crew then walked off to the far right, and they all headed for the disguise section. Upon reaching the aisle forty-three, they looked at the items on display. The crew then all picked up some false beards, and wigs, and also some false eyelashes. They then headed back to the checkout counters, and upon reaching them they put the false beards and the wigs and false eyelashes upon the conveyor belt. The crew were at a different checkout

counter this time, and there was a man working behind it. The checkout counter man then said, "You do know it is buy one get one free, also known as bogoff don't you?" Cedric smiled and then he replied, "Oh, no we didn't actually, but thanks for letting us know.

The checkout counter man then replied, "Oh, you are most welcome.", afterwards he pressed a buzzer behind the counter, and then spoke into a microphone. "Could you bring me twelve toilets please." Salomina after hearing what she had heard, had to do a double take, as she realised what the man had just said, and she replied, "Twelve toilets?" The checkout man then looked at her for a moment as if it was the worst thing that he could have heard, and then patiently he said, "Yes. Twelve toilets. It is a bogoff offer." Salomina then replied, "Oh, but, but we did not want twelve toilets. We actually have enough toilets on our spaceship you see." The checkout man then smiled and said, "Oh, but these are the finest toilets in the universe, and you can never go wrong with spare toilets." Cedric nodded, then responded, "I agree, yes, you really can never go wrong with enough toilets, but unfortunately, we honestly have more than enough toilets on our spaceship." The checkout counter man paused and then said a little frustratedly, "Oh, I see. So, you do not want the free toilets worth five thousand dollars each?" Brian immediately then sensed the frustration, and thought about it and said, "Well, we do not actually have any room for extra toilets Sir." The checkout counter man looked extremely irritated, and said disappointedly, "Oh. I see. If that is the case, then you will have to put the false beards back, and the false eyelashes and false beards, because we are not allowed to sell them without giving

you the free toilets." Karen then immediately sighed, and said, "And why is that then Sir?" The checkout counter man then looked at her for a few seconds as if he wanted to do strange things to her shopping basket, and then said, "Because Eric Strudelhofen, under regulation three hundred and forty-five b, demands that we do so, and if we do not do so we can be fired from our jobs." Karen then slapped her forehead with the palm of her hand, and then afterwards said, "So, Eric Strudelhofen owns this supermarket?" The checkout counter man then said, "Yes, and every other shop on the planet." Brian then sighed, "Oh, I see. Well, we will have to take the free toilets then, please could you have them delivered to our spaceship?" The checkout counter man then said, "Of course, now would you please just pay with the bank card and the till will be able to find out where your spaceship is parked, and we can then have them delivered to you." Salomina, smiled and then said, "Oh, I see, now, how that does work?" The checkout counter man then replied, "Well, under regulation, seven hundred and forty-three a, Eric Strudelhofen dictates that we know all your details as soon as you land including your medical history, your favourite foods, and whether you believe in worshipping people who you have never met before in your lives." The crew were taken aback and looked kind of shocked at hearing this. Salomina then spoke, "Eric Strudelhofen dictates? Eric Strudelhofen dictates?!" "Yes." said the checkout counter man, "Eric Strudelhofen likes to be known as the only dictator worth listening to, until you disagree with him." Brian tried not to laugh, and he was starting to be slightly concerned about Eric Strudelhofen, because these were some very strange things that they were hearing

from the checkout man, and they were not to their liking really. Karen did not like the thought of dictators and then shook her head and rolled her eyes and took out her credit card and then paid the bill. The checkout counter man then said, "Thank you. Now, enjoy the false beards, the false eyelashes, and the wigs." Brian sighed, and then spoke, "Well thanks for the information, and goodbye." The crew then left the store, put on their false beards, eyelashes and wigs, and then walked out relieved to be back out in the sunshine. The crew all then headed for the temple wearing their disguises, not knowing what they were going to find there. Then upon reaching the front doors of the temple, a man suddenly teleported in front of them, and he put his hands out, so that his palms were facing them. "Stop!" said the man, and he then looked at them intensely, and afterwards stepped forwards to analyse them more closely and finally said, "You are not from round here are you not?" Karen hesitated and paused and then put on a deep voice, before saying confidently, "Yes, we are. We are employees of Eric Strudelhofen." The man looked at them disbelievingly, and then paused, took out an earpiece from out of his coat pocket with a camera on it, and then pressed a button on it, before saying, "Hmmm. Now, bear with me a minute. The earpiece then began to make strange whirring noises, and the man seemed to be listening intently." The crew waited, and then after a few moments, said, "Sorry. I have just contacted security, and they verified that you are not employees, but you are currently valued guests at the hotel, so on this occasion, we will not call the drones to attack you and escort you away from our property." Brian thought that this sounded fair, and definitely did not like



the thought of being attacked by drones at all. Karen then spoke, "Oh, I see. I am terribly sorry; we must have had our brains wiped by accident. I really do apologise." Karen then shrugged her shoulders, and added, "Well, these things happen." Karen afterwards sighed, and then turned to the crew, and afterwards. whispered, "Now, let us see if we can go around the back." The rest of the crew then nodded, and they all walked off towards a side street. The side street was called "Eric Strudelhofen avenue." Now, as far as the crew could tell, the planets street names were from what they had seen, all named Eric Strudelhofen something or other." Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen then continued walking and found themselves at the back of the temple dedicated to Eric Strudelhofen. There was no one around at all, and in front of them there were some metal steps that led up to a door at the top of the building. The crew then began to climb the stairs, "and as soon as they had got halfway up, they were suddenly lifted into the air by antigravity, which they recognised instantly. This step was the first step of the building that had an antigravity repellent built into it." The crew then hovered in mid-air not knowing what to do, and there was not much that they could do. In fact, it was a case of waiting for security probably." Eric looked at the others and they all looked at each other, and they all shrugged their shoulders at the same time, then waited. The door at the top of the stairs then began to open, and a woman appeared, a woman with three eyes and brown hair and a slight limp. The woman then walked down the steps towards them and said, "Excuse me, but you are supposed to use the front entrance." Salomina, smiled and then replied, "Yes, but unfortunately we left our bags behind by

accident, and we didn't want to bother anyone, we are so sorry." The woman then thought for a moment and said, "Oh, in that case.". She then waved her hand over a sensor on the step that she was stood on. The antigravity step that the crew were on then lowered them gently down back onto the step. The woman then walked back up the step and opened the door for them. The crew then followed her, and they all then entered the building. The woman then looked at them and said, "Goodbye." and afterwards she walked off down the corridor and disappeared out of sight after exiting through another door. The sound of chanting could be heard coming from down the corridor from a door near to the one that the woman had just left through. The chanting was dedicated to Eric Strudelhofen. The lyrics of the chant went like this.

Oh, Eric Strudelhofen, you are the best, and  
in you Eric we truly believe, and we  
wholeheartedly worship you no less. Yes,  
oh, Eric Strudelhofen,  
yes, we do, we do worship you,  
rather often, and oh, how we do,  
how we worship you, Eric, with hearts so strong and true,  
and oh, what a wonder it is, Eric  
Strudelhofen to worship you, because  
Eric, when we came to this planet, about  
life we really did not have a clue,  
and before we came here,  
our lives were really in a terrible mess,  
and Eric, lovely, lovely Eric,  
how wonderfully you welcomed us with open arms,  
and how kind you were to listen to our cries for

help, and fill us with your compassion, and with  
your manly charms,  
and how kind you were to help us in our time of  
need, and how wonderful it was, when you gave us  
discounts on the food, at your supermarket,  
and we finally put on weight, after travelling  
across the universe so rapidly. Oh yes, Eric, what  
a miracle it was,  
that we landed on your planet, and that you rescued us,  
after we almost needed to be taken away to heaven, in a  
flying hearse. Oh, Eric Strudelhofen,  
without you our lives would be far worse, and  
how truly grateful we are Eric, that you  
welcomed us so warmly, and that you invited  
us to live on the planet, despite being  
penniless. Oh, Eric Strudelhofen,  
the jobs that you gave us when we arrived, and the  
slave wages we were given by you, we will never  
forget the crumbs of bread, and the food from the  
industrial waste bin, it was a pleasure for that to be  
found by you for us, and for us to eat it so happily,  
and with you discuss the spirituality of Eric  
Strudelhofen, as many times as you told us too. Oh,  
Eric Strudelhofen, we do love you, yes,  
we do, we truly love you,  
because you are our saviour no less,  
and when we see you, we love to kiss your feet, and  
by you upon the forehead be blessed.  
Oh, Eric Strudelhofen, we worship you,  
because you are our God, yes, you are our saviour,  
Eric Strudelhofen, and yes, you really are Eric, the  
very best God, the very best!

Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen then walked off down the corridor tiptoeing lightly past the other door, then as they reached the door at the end, the music became louder and louder. Chants of Eric, Eric, Eric! could be heard. Brian then slowly opened the door, and the crew could see several thousand people stood up in their seats. The people then began to clap loudly, and they began cheering as Eric Strudelhofen entered the room carrying a handheld microphone and stand and he walked upon the stage and set the microphone up. Eric then turned to the crowd and waved at them, there was sheer delight in their faces. Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina afterwards entered the room and then sat at the back of the auditorium, where they had the best view. The crowd were going wild, and some were jumping up and down in their seats as if on invisible pogo sticks, and they were yelling loudly, "Eric, Eric, Eric! We love you! Yes, we love you Eric, yes, we do! Oh, Eric, we love you! We love you!" In the same manner of a football chant. The chant was wild and loud and boisterous, and quite an unusual experience that Brian, Cedric, Karen and Salomina had never ever had before in their lives. Here Eric was, strutting about the stage, a man who thought that he was a God? Well, maybe, but still, the crowd certainly seemed to think he was. The crew really found this highly amusing, and they tried not to laugh out loud, which was not easy at all.

Eric clapped the crowd, and the crowd clapped Eric, then when the applause had died down, Eric began to talk to them, and he said, "Good morning, everyone. I hope you are all well this fine morning. Now today, I would like to bring attention to my trousers, because trousers if worn in

a certain way, can present you as an important person, and I want you all to feel important, and to have the blessing of trousers." Eric paused, and then continued, "Yes, I know that life has been very difficult lately because you have been working very hard in my factories and the planet has run out of deodorant temporarily, but we will get some more shortly I assure you. Still, you should all be proud of yourselves, because the work that you do is truly appreciated, and it is of the highest quality, and the jobs that you do are really difficult, and they are also very challenging indeed, including placing frozen strawberries on the top of trifles, and I would just like to say thank you very much indeed! Now, to those of you who talk to the potatoes to encourage potato growth, you have done exceptionally well this month, and I am truly proud of you all." The crowd then started clapping and cheering again loudly. Eric smiled and then waited for the applause to die down, and afterwards he paused for a few seconds and afterwards said, "And now to announce, the number one talker to potatoes. Drumroll please!" The sound of drums was then heard over the tannoy, and Eric said, "First prize of one hundred deodorants goes to Susannah Peterson, who has the best armpits in the universe according to her husband!" Eric clapped her loudly and enthusiastically, and then added, "Congratulations Susannah, well done indeed." Susannah Peterson then jumped up and down in the air and afterwards stormed the stage and afterwards climbed onto it like someone desperately looking for a toilet. Susannah smiled and then hugged Eric, which was captured by the video screens on the walls. She then placed a kiss upon his cheek and began to run around the stage with her arms out straight like an aeroplane, and

then she dived off of the stage, and an antigravity generator was activated, and she began to float in mid-air, and then pretended to swim. The antigravity generator then gently lowered her to the ground, and she walked back to her seat as happy as can be. Eric then began speaking again, "Well, thank you Susannah for your impressive swimming technique. Now, for some news, one of our guests has crashed into our toilet block in his flying vehicle, and this has affected the toilets and the sewage in area six of the city, so, I would politely like to ask you to not go to the toilet there until we can solve the problem. Obviously, this is not ideal, but we hope to rectify the situation as soon as possible and I honestly do not want you to be too disheartened by the situation." Eric smiled sympathetically and then paused and began to clap. Suddenly a large choir of Gospel singers walked onto the stage from the left-hand side. The crowd immediately went wild and started jumping up and down and then began clapping more loudly than before. The choir then began singing a short song, and it went like this:

Oh, Eric Strudelhofen, we praise you, and we  
raise you up as high as an angel, because of  
the toilet paper that you give to us, that really  
does nicely soften.

Oh, Eric Strudelhofen, Eric Strudelhofen, we have  
great faith in you, and in the miracles that you do,  
because they help fix the toilets much more often.

Oh, Eric Strudelhofen,

Thank you for the toilets that mostly work,  
and the toilet paper that does so nicely soften,  
the toilet paper that does so nicely soften!

Eric then clapped loudly, and the gospel choir took a bow, and began to walk off of the stage. Eric then looked at the departing gospel singers, smiled and then began to speak once more, "Wow that was fantastic! Thank you, thank you to all the wonderful gospel singers from the Eric Strudelhofen gospel university." The crowd then applauded loudly, and Eric then stood there for a minute or so smiling at them, and there was electricity in the air. Eric was building a moment, and he had the audience in the palm of his hand.

Eric, Cedric, Salomina and Karen then all looked at each other, and made strange facial expressions at each other, as if to say, "What in the crazy world is this?" Karen then rolled her eyes and said quietly, "Is this is a cult?" Brian nodded and then whispered back, "Yes, I think so, but can we order some popcorn?" Salomina smiled and then replied, "Yes, that is a very good idea! It is very entertaining being here." Brian then pulled out his phone and began to search for a popcorn delivery service, but as soon as he had begun to search, suddenly a drone appeared, and it then began scanning the crowd and headed towards Brian. Brian then put down his phone, and the drone immediately went away. Brian then picked up his phone again and continued typing in the word, "Popcorn." The drone then once again headed for Brian. Salomina and the others then noticed this. Salomina said, "Brian, stop using the phone. This is a cult remember." Brian then did as he was told, and the drone went away. Eric Strudelhofen then started to speak once again, "Please, no mobile phones are allowed, under regulation seventy-three, so, please kindly refrain from using your mobile phones in the auditorium. Thank you!"

Karen then looked at Brian, and said, "Regulation this, regulation that. A regulation for picking your nose, now, I would not be surprised if that was next." Salomina laughed, and then tried to stop herself laughing, but she couldn't immediately. The whole of the crowd, then turned around in the direction of the sound, and all of them in unison said, "Shh!!!" Salomina then stopped laughing immediately, and the crowd all turned back around to face Eric.

Eric then put his hand up to the heavens, and then began to read out a speech.

In the light I stand before you all, yes, I, Eric Strudelhofen,  
a man who has been through many battles, a  
man who has many scars, a man who has  
been through many tragedies,  
tragedies that are best forgotten,  
but still despite this, my heart  
is still just a soft un, and yet  
despite all the trials,  
and the tribulations that I have been through,  
I was once a normal man, a man who started  
with nothing,  
a man who had a plan,  
a man who lost everything in business, a man  
who dusted himself off,  
and who picked himself up, and then who  
eventually became his own King,  
oh, yes,  
and I achieved this,  
because I was a man who wanted something in his life,



a man who wanted happiness,  
a man who developed a napoleon complex.  
Yes, my napoleon complex,  
although it was not as successful as a business,  
the long and the short of it is,  
do not give up on your dream's ladies and gentlemen, no  
matter the mess,  
because my napoleon complex was in a right mess,  
but still, after having to knock my lovely hotel down,  
because my napoleon complex was too tall, yes, so tall,  
that it was giving the building inspector a complex,  
I made it shorter,  
and I persevered in business no less,  
and I worked extremely hard,  
and I struggled,  
and I fought my way like a champion to success,  
and although there are many roads in life to choose from,  
what would have happened if I had thrown in the towel, I  
would have been an embarrassment to myself,  
and in life pride is everything,  
and when you are in the gutter looking up at the stars,  
you pray for a miracle, yes, you really do, and I was in  
the gutter once, and I was so stressed that I was  
hairless, and I Eric Strudelhofen, am not one to quit, no  
not ever,  
even if life, even if life is as hard as it can get, I  
will not quit, no, I will not,  
no matter the trials and the tribulations, and  
the doubts and frustrations,  
I, Eric Strudelhofen,  
against difficulties will battle and battle,  
and my will, will never break or bend,

and no, I will never surrender, and no, I  
will never in frustration, charge my  
hamster rent, or make it wear suspenders,  
because now, I stand before you, a caring man,  
but once upon a time,  
I was less caring than I should have been,  
and my life a long time ago was not so blessed,  
and I, Eric Strudelhofen have come to learn,  
that through hard work and effort, what it takes  
to be a success,  
and I want you to know,  
that I wish to lift you all up to the heavens, because to  
reach the heavens and the pinnacle of success,  
you must work, work and work,  
and do not shirk, so, please  
never never forget,  
that when you are placing frozen strawberries on trifles,  
and talking to potato's, and cleaning the toilets,  
the toilets that contain the pictures of our enemies, the  
intergalactic tax inspectors, how great your life can be if  
you work hard, yes, you can achieve three dollars  
twenty-five an hour, and then you can buy my products  
more often, which will greatly improve your lives, and I  
will give you special discounts, and you will be truly  
proud, to have these products around your homes, and  
for your guests to view them,  
and you will be able to tell them no less, that  
you worked hard, extremely hard,  
and you will be able to tell them with a smile on your face,  
that you struggled and that you toiled, and that you  
sweated and that you fretted, and that you had to endure  
your mother in laws cooking, and that you continued to

work extremely hard, even though your intestines were in  
a mess, because your mother in laws dinners, were forced  
upon you,  
after unsuccessfully trying to hide under the table,  
you never gave up even when she found you, and  
even though she caused you great suffering, great  
suffering with her food by force feeding you, and  
because of it you became mentally unstable, yet  
still you came to work and did not shirk,  
because I,  
Eric Strudelhofen, I  
encourage you do I not, yes, I  
encourage you a lot, and I  
want the best for you, and I  
want you to be the best,  
because you came to this planet with nothing at all,  
and now nothing can stop you, if you  
truly believe and you listen to me,  
you can earn a whole three dollars twenty-five an hour,  
and yes, you can be a great success, a truly great  
success, and today you all do impress, and I am so truly  
proud of you, and of the extremely hard work that you  
do, and yes, never stop believing in you, because you  
can achieve your dreams,  
if you work hard and in yourself believe, so, hold your  
head up high my Strudelhofenettes, because you all have  
strong hearts and minds, because I, Eric Strudelhofen have  
encouraged you, and I have raised you as my own flesh  
and blood, and have never let you down yet, and I do not  
intend to, yes, and no matter the storms or the floods, and  
the disturbances that life can throw at you, and life's  
challenges that can disrupt your minds no less, I, Eric

Strudelhofen, do often keep you in my prayers, and no matter where you are,  
and no matter how near or far you are to me, I,  
Eric Strudelhofen,  
will do everything in my power to ensure,  
that you have happy lives, upon the planet  
of Nouala,  
and that you do not suffer the slings, and  
the arrows of misfortune, that living on  
other planets can bring,  
and I Eric Strudelhofen,  
I promise you no less,  
I promise you that I will do everything that I can do,  
to give good guidance to you, and guide you true,  
upon the rocky roads of life to success, because I Eric  
Strudelhofen, I love you, I truly love you, and you,  
you I bless, you I bless!

Eric Strudelhofen after his great speech then stopped talking and smiled and looked at the crowd, who immediately all stood up and began clapping much more furiously than the populations of all the countries governed by dictators on the planet Earth at the same time, which was rather a lot of people. The crew of the spaceship after Eric Strudelhofen's speech, then began laughing to themselves very loudly. The sight before their very eyes had been absolutely incredible and also totally preposterous, also, the thought that someone could take themselves so seriously and think of themselves as a King or a God like figure, was quite frankly ridiculous, but this was precisely what Eric Strudelhofen seemed to think, and he was extremely deluded. Now of course there had been some indoctrination

and brainwashing involved with the population of Planet Nouala. The sight of the crowd in their ecstasy and in their heightened emotional states was quite frankly disturbing, and the crew of the spaceship could not help staring at them and thinking how crazy this all was, whilst stuffing their faces with popcorn. This longwinded speech by Eric, was of course truly unexpected entertainment, and Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, couldn't contain their laughter whatsoever,

but they also felt at the same time that they shouldn't be laughing as the population of planet Nouala obviously had some serious mental health issues. Still, it was difficult not to watch this very strange experience and soak up the atmosphere.

The atmosphere inside the auditorium was absolutely electric, and there were members of the audience jumping up and down and yodelling in delight at Eric's speech. The thunderous roar of the crowd echoed across the arena, and some of the crowd were crying and many were emotionally overcome by Eric's apparently earth shattering speech. The crew of the spaceship were also overcome, and they were crying tears of amusement. Luckily everyone in the audience were clapping so hard that their hands could have fallen off. The crowd were also, so loud, noisy and hyperactive, that Eric, Brian, Salomina, and Cedric could not be heard at all except by themselves. Suddenly though the crew were zoomed in on by a television camera drone and they were all displayed on the large screen making strange hand signals in Eric Strudelhofen's direction. The crew all noticed this immediately, and then watched themselves making a mockery of Eric Strudelhofen up on the big screen. Luckily

no one noticed this at all except Eric Strudelhofen himself, who had a direct view of a massive television screen high up behind the crew. Eric Strudelhofen's face then turned from one of pleasure to one of anger, and the crowd stopped clapping and they then responded immediately with boo's when they spotted the crew and their shenanigans. Eric Strudelhofen looked very angry, and animatedly and he then turned up his microphone, and he then began to speak into it and said, "Help! Security drone, Regulation 706 violation, remove the protestors immediately, protestation will not be tolerated!" Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen all heard this and then began laughing even more, and as they did so a security drone could be spotted heading towards them rapidly. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen then turned around and began to wave their bottoms in the air whilst fully clothed. This was not a bad protest of course, as by intergalactic law you are not allowed to bare your buttocks unless you are inside your own spaceship or your own home, because baring your own buttocks in public was highly frowned upon, especially by television channels as you could advertise anything on them, and unpaid advertising was almost as bad as being a traffic warden. The crowd were getting extremely angry and some of them were headed towards Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, all of whom quickly stopped waving their buttocks in the air. After they had done so, the crew suddenly realised that they were in danger of being chased by crazy Eric Strudelhofen worshippers, which could be the end of them, and this of course was not the way that they wanted to lose their lives at all.

The crew of the spaceship were becoming slightly concerned and then suddenly they were attacked by the drone with some kind of weak laser beam that stung a little, but which obviously was not meant to kill you. The crew all then took this as a sign that they should run immediately. The crowds were now jeering them and booing more loudly than before. The crew all began to run for their lives as fast as they could, and they headed towards a door at the back of the auditorium.

Luckily, the crew all managed to escape into the corridor beyond. Eric was first into the corridor, and he shouted to the others, "Now, run for your lives, otherwise we may all be indoctrinated and forced to worship Eric Strudelhofen, and work for under four dollars an hour." Karen laughed loudly at this and shouted a reply, "Yes, run for your lives, or we may end up as Eric Strudelhofen's wives." Cedric also found this highly amusing, and laughed too, "Yes, run as fast as you can, because I am a man and I have no wish to dress as a woman." Salomina then added with a smile on her face, "And I have no wish to dress as man, so, yes, yes, run twice as fast as you can!"

Some of crowd from the auditorium were now entering the corridor and were running after them. The crew then began to look back and run faster, and they all quickly reached the exit, and left.

Outside, Brian then slammed the door shut behind them, but this was not going to prevent the crowd of Eric Strudelhofen worshippers from reaching them quickly. The crew then began to run down the steps, and after a couple of steps, Brian remembered the anti-gravity step, and he said, "Jump over the sides, otherwise will be levitated into the air again." The crew all took this in, and

they all did as they were told, and afterwards Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen jumped over the sides of the steps and they flew through the air with the greatest of ease, and all somehow managed to land on their feet. The crowd of Eric Studelhofen worshippers were hot on their heels, and this was not a good day to die and not a good way to die, being trampled and beaten to death by Eric Strudelhofen worshippers. Suddenly, cheering was heard coming from behind them and the crowd began jumping over the steps too.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, then ran down the street in the direction that they had come from to reach the auditorium. This was of course a great relief, but the crowd were quickly gaining on them, and the crew had to think quickly. The crew of the spaceship were all sweating profusely, and they then began to run into the road, and Salomina attempted to flag down a taxi by waving her arms in the air at the ones overhead. Luckily after a couple of attempts, the crew were lucky, and they quickly got one to stop and all of them sighed great sighs of relief. The taxi then quickly lifted off into the air and they all flew over the crowds of Eric Strudelhofen worshippers, who were extremely angry. The Eric Strudelhofen worshippers then began shouting at the taxi as it flew overhead, "Eric Strudelhofen, says you will not be forgotten, despite you being cowards and despite your insides being all rotten." Inside the taxi the crew were starting to relax, and the taxi driver who was a human being, said, "Hello. I am Peter your friendly taxi driver, but by the way, who are those people chasing you down below?" Cedric smiled and thought about it quickly and said, "Firstly, please can you quickly get us out of here, because we are famous celebrity



musicians you see, and we often get chased by people wanting our autographs, and also by people wanting to marry us. Sometimes even people want us to call them strange names in videos that they can send to their loved ones." The taxi driver called Peter then smiled and replied, "Ah, I see, now that makes a lot of sense." Peter then paused for a few seconds, and added, "Please may I have your autographs?" Brian nodded, and then quickly replied, "Of course, now would you happen to have a pen and a piece of paper by any chance?" Peter the taxi driver then opened up the glove compartment, and then pulled out a pen and a piece of paper and handed it to Brian. Brian then said, "Oh, by the way, I am Gerald the intergalactic giraffe." Peter the taxi drivers' eyes widened immensely, and he was starstruck immediately. Cedric saw this and then added, "And I am, Ruben, a space traveller famous for juggling leprechauns on a unicycle." Karen then paused for a few seconds and dramatically said, "And I am the great telepathic cheese grater from Mars, Gorgonzola Budd."

Peter the taxi driver was smiling like no one had ever smiled before at them, and his eyes were filled with wonder, and he was almost on the verge of tears thought Brian. Salomina, then finally said, "And I, I am the intergalactic future wife of myself, a mystical woman, a woman with a love of marrying jars of strawberry jam on stage, a woman who likes to recite poetry amongst the stars, and on the many planets that we travel to in the times of our lives, and it is truly a pleasure to meet you Peter today." The crew all smiled, and they then put their thumbs up as Peter took a selfie with the taxi's inbuilt camera. The crew all then signed their autographs and

Brian afterwards handed the piece of paper to Peter, who was incredibly pleased, and Peter said, "Wow, man, cool man, it is a great honour to meet you, because I have never ever had a celebrity in my taxi ever in my life whatsoever, so thank you all very much for autographing my piece of paper, which I shall treasure immensely."

Peter then paused and added, "Now, where would you all like to go to?" Salomina smiled and then replied, "Oh, back to the hotel Nouala please Peter." Peter smiled and then responded, "Of course, immediately. Now Salomina, please could you recite me a poem about strawberry jam?" Salomina tried to stifle a giggle, and then replied, "Of course, it would be my pleasure." She then began humming and took a moment to herself, before a look of inspiration suddenly appeared upon her face.

Yes, I love strawberry jam,  
and I have deliberately married my future self,  
so that I can eat more of it, because  
its desire for me,  
and my desire for it, it will not quit,

because wherever I go in the heavens above,  
or on the planets below,  
I consume as many jars as possible, because  
the women's institute,  
they made me sign an agreement to eat jam constantly,  
much more jam than you will ever know,  
and they made me sign an agreement whilst I was asleep,  
and although at first, I did terribly weep,  
I came to love it,

and now I live in a women's institute centre,  
in the middle of the galaxy you know, and there I taste  
jams good and bad, and I appear everywhere and on every  
chat show, and I will have you know, that strawberry jam  
is my favourite, and I cover my spaceship in it wherever I  
go, because the jam it stops the micrometeorites, that are  
the blight of all space travellers,  
and the women's institute,  
they sponsor me to eat jam regularly you know, and  
some of them well, they finally repented, because  
they were talented,  
and they were not as ignorant as the others, the others who  
often over jam recipes came to blows, and the talented  
women's institute members, they changed the agreement,  
so that I get paid to eat jam now, which is much better  
than before, because I used to have to eat jam from dawn  
until sunset, and my body contained sixty five percent  
jam,  
instead of water, and if  
you want some,  
I can offer you a very good bargain you know.

Peter the taxi driver was quite impressed, and he shouted,  
"That was fantastic!" Peter then clapped his hands and  
smiled and turned around to face Salomina and then gave  
her the thumbs up. Salomina smiled back and was very  
pleased.

The taxi flew towards the hotel, and the crew were  
revelling in their celebrity status. Peter the taxi driver kept  
handing out sweets and beers and then kept taking selfies  
of him and the crew who were in the background,

something that Eric Strudelhofen must have gotten rather used to unfortunately.

The taxi arrived outside the hotel Nouala, and the taxi it landed safely. Peter the taxi driver smiled, and he had been glad to have his first celebrity customers. Peter then turned around and he faced the crew once more after they had landed, and he said, "Wow man, that was groovy, groovy baby." Peter then paused, and added, "thank you all for being my first celebrity customers. I really appreciate the business as the wages are terrible, but this fare is free to you all." Brian then stuck out his hand, and said, "Thank you so much Peter, it was a great pleasure to meet you too. I hope to see you at one of my many concerts throughout the universe when I am dressed as Gerald the intergalactic giraffe." Peter was almost on the verge of tears, and very emotional at meeting the crew. Peter then shook Brian's hand and the rest of the crews' hands. Peter was beaming like a ray of sunshine had visited him unexpectedly during the middle of the night whilst he was wearing nothing but underpants. The crew then altogether in unison said, "Goodbye Peter." and then waved at him. Peter waved back happily as the crew disappeared, and they closed the door behind them. Peter was sad to see them go, but he had a wife at home, a very angry wife who refused to come out of the very large fridge, after discovering that he had been feeding his dinner to the dog, had been going to a fast-food restaurant, Eric Strudelhofen's fast food restaurant that featured dancing girls, lots of very attractive dancing girls.

The crew of the spaceship then headed for the hotel, whilst taking off their disguises, and they were all glad to have survived the Eric Strudelhofen worshippers. Inside

the hotel, the crew headed through the lobby, and they then walked over to the corridor, and Brian pressed the button on the elevator for their floor. The doors of the elevator opened, and the crew entered. The doors closed quickly after them. The crew were happy and much more relaxed now, than they had been, which was as discombobulated as surviving Eric Strudelhofen.

The Eric Strudelhofen worshipping had been an unusual event, and something that would live long in their lives, but still at least they had food.

Music was playing in the elevator, and the lyrics were:

I see you, and you see me, and the  
look of love is in your eyes, and I see  
you staring at me constantly.

Oh, yes, I see you salivating,

I see you wanting me, I see you needing me, Oh, yes, I  
see you with desire in your eyes, but are you going to  
ravish me, because you look as though you might, but  
how will you devour me? We shall see! We shall see. But  
will you, will you treat me gently or like the sea,  
because you know that you want me, for  
I am, I am Eric Strudelhofen cheese!

The crew stood smiling, and the elevator arrived on their floor, and the doors opened once more. The crew then all stepped out and went into their respective rooms, after saying good night to each other. It had been a very long day indeed, an incredibly long day.

Brian yawned, and entered his room, and then sat down on the bed and began to think about what had just happened. It was a terrible situation to be confronted by

religious nutters, and the Eric Strudelhofen worshippers were extremely angry at the hand signals that the crew had been using, because the hand signals that they had been using meant, "That bloke is a nutter." and also, "what happens if we run out of popcorn?" and "If Eric Strudelhofen is sane, we should delete the alphabet."

## **Chapter 14**

"The last times on Planet Nouala."

Sunlight poured through the window of Brians room, and also the rest of the crews' rooms. The crew then all lay in their beds and then stared out of their windows and lay there blinking in the sunlight. Today was the last day that they were able to fully enjoy relaxation, and it was a beautiful day outside. Brian then lay there and made the most of it for at least half an hour. He eventually crawled out of bed, after dozing off again for several minutes. Currently there was no plan at all for the day, except for the crew to enjoy themselves, and also to enjoy the sights and the entertainment. The crew had not really got too drunk so far, but tonight might be a good night thought Brian. The entertainment complex had been fun, and the crew had thoroughly enjoyed it, except for the lack of dinner. Brian had been quite impressed by the dancing girls, and he had thought at the time that he would like to flirt with one of them and try and have a romantic evening of some kind with one of them, because despite Susan's kissing, Brian had bitter memories of Susan and Apollo, and the trouble that had come from Susan being on their spaceship.

Brian got out of bed and then picked up a towel and walked over to the shower, then got in it. The shower was cool and calm and very relaxing, and Brian made the most of it, because the showers on the spaceship frequently played up, and the pipes needed fixing frequently. Brian finished showering and then got out of it. He afterwards began drying himself, and felt much better indeed, then after getting dressed, Brian put on a fresh pair of clothes and stretched and yawned and left the shower. The day was still young, and Brian was filled with hope and enthusiasm for the day ahead, and there were many things still to see that they had not seen before, but quite what they were was still to be seen.

Brian walked across the bedroom, picked up his wallet and put it in his trouser pocket, then left the room. Brian rubbing his eyes, then entered the lobby, and the rest of the crew were already there waiting. The crew all smiled at Brian, and he smiled back, and then he said, "Hello, and good morning to you all." Salomina then replied, "And good morning. Now what are we going to do today?" Suddenly the television behind the reception desk began playing a news show, and a television correspondent appeared on the screen.

The correspondent was slim and tall, and she had black hair, and she looked very serious indeed. The correspondent then began to speak in a very serious voice, "Hello. Today, we are sad to say, that we have some very solemn news indeed. Some ignorant imbeciles were spotted at the Eric Strudelhofen worship service being most disrespectful. Yes, the ignorant imbeciles were all wearing disguises, and Eric Strudelhofen and his staff are currently trying to track them down, and execute

regulation eight hundred and forty-three, which states that any person who disrespects Eric Strudelhofen should be found immediately and then sellotaped to a lamp post and tickled with as many electric eels as are available, until the offenders of Eric Strudelhofen, contain as much energy as five hundred batteries, and until their hair stands on end, and they are crying, whilst being filmed doing so. Any disrespect of Eric Strudelhofen is a flagrant breach of regulations and will not be tolerated. Anyone seen to be disrespectful to Eric Strudelhofen on the planet Nouala should be rounded up immediately, and then sellotaped to the nearest lamppost, and electric eels applied to the offender's body, until the offender passes out.

The crew of the spaceship then all stood there with their eyes wide open, and they could not believe what they were seeing, and were hearing. This was terribly shocking news of course, and not the kind of news that they were looking for, but still, the crew started laughing quietly. The receptionist behind the counter then turned around to face the television screen and began watching the newscast which continued.

The female reporter, then added after a momentary pause, "In light of the disrespect of Eric Strudelhofen, there will of course be a substantial reward leading to the capture and to the sellotaping of them to a lamppost, resulting in the offender or offenders of Eric Strudelhofen being tickled with electric eels. The reward to those who capture the offenders of Eric Strudelhofen will be a substantial fifty thousand dollars, so please kindly call us here at Eric Strudelhofen TV if you have any tips on the whereabouts of the Eric Strudelhofen offenders. Thank



you.” The hotel receptionist then turned back around to face the reception area.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen, luckily were not wearing any disguises today, and they certainly did not want to be tickled by electric eels whilst sellotaped to a lamp post, because this was not their idea of fun, and they wanted to relax and enjoy themselves, and electrocution was definitely not fun whatsoever, even if you had run out of electricity, and your electricity meter was not working. Brian looked at the rest of the crew, and then he whispered, “I think we had better get out of here, before we are tickled and electrocuted to death with electric eels.” Salomina then smiled and laughed, and she said, “Yes, that is a very sensible idea indeed.” The crew were not afraid of danger, but they had other things to do today, so they quickly then left the reception area and went outside. Today was another beautifully hot and sunny day, and the crew were not carrying sunglasses, but they could do with some. Cedric was sweating in the heat, and then he said loudly against the noise of the spaceships landing, “So, where are we going?” He paused for a split second and afterwards added, “Well, I was reading last night that there was a fun fair on the other side of the city.” Karen thought that this sounded fun, and she replied, “Ok, great, let us go get a taxi.”

The crew then walked to the taxi rank in the burning sun. A taxi driver was leaning his head out of one of the taxi’s windows. The taxi driver then smiled at the crew, and he said, “Hey, how are you doing?” The crew were feeling pretty good in general, and they all smiled back at the taxi driver, and were enjoying the morning so far. Salomina then responded to the taxi driver, “Great, thanks for

asking." Salomina then paused and said, "Now, we would like to go to the fairground please Sir." The taxi driver then nodded, and replied, "Ok, well, I am Maron, and it would be a great pleasure to take you there, now please do get in." The crew then all got in the back of the taxi craft, and looked out of the window, and checked that there were no Eric Strudelhofen worshippers chasing them. Luckily there were not any at all.

The taxi craft then lifted off of the ground and flew into the air as smoothly as any craft that they had been in. Cedric then spoke, "Now, please can you tell us more about the fairground Maron?" Maron then took a few seconds to point the taxi craft in the right direction, and he then said, "Well, the socialist workers of Eric Strudelhofen thought it would be a good idea if they could enjoy themselves and then take time out from working in the factories and the shops owned by Eric Strudelhofen." Brian found this highly amusing, and he then laughed, and said, "The socialist workers of Eric Strudelhofen?" This did not go down very well at all, and the taxi drivers face dropped immediately like someone had broken wind, and the taxi driver looked at Brian with a stern face, "Well, yes, it is a very serious job belonging to the socialist workers of Eric Strudelhofen. The socialist workers party of Eric Strudelhofen has been designed to protect the workers' rights and ensure that they do not earn more than four dollars an hour." Salomina laughed, "Well, how can that be fair?" Maron then continued, "Well according to Eric Studelhofen, he tries to keep the cost of products low, and therefore people's wages should be low as well." Brian then joined in the conversation and said sarcastically, "Really, now why is that? To prevent them

leaving the planet?" Maron was not happy about hearing this and he then shook his head in annoyance, and said, "Now look you, I know you are not from around here, but we do not like sarcasm especially when it comes to Eric Strudelhofen." Karen smiled, and then said, "Oh, we are terribly sorry sir, we really did not mean any offence; we were just trying to understand the complexities of the economy of Eric Strudelhofen and his wonderful sense of humour." Maron then nodded and said, "Oh, I see." Suddenly, the radio in the taxi craft played a news report, and a male announcer said, "Hello and good day. This is an emergency news broadcast, and we hate to interrupt your day, but Eric Strudelhofen is currently very angry that a bunch of imbecilic individuals interrupted the Eric Strudelhofen worship service, causing great offence to Eric Strudelhofen by waving their bottoms in the air towards him." Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Karen then laughed, and then quickly snapped out of it, and put on serious faces in case of offending Maron. Brian had quickly realised that they should not have laughed and then said, "Oh, we were just laughing at the presenter's voice, because that is one of the worst voices that we have heard on the radio in a long time." Maron then nodded and turned off the radio immediately, and he replied, "Well, I have turned off the radio now." Maron did not look happy and was then silent, and he continued to fly the taxi in the direction of the fun fair.

The rest of the crew looked at each other, and then looked at Maron, but he was now extremely disinterested in talking to the crew whatsoever. The crew looked out of the window, and there was silence, and it was very pleasant, as the crew were all getting over the noise from last night,

the sound of the Eric Strudelhofen worshippers shouting at them very loudly. The crews' ears still hurt a little and the sound of silence, is a wonderful thing indeed. The taxi driver kept looking at them in the rear-view mirror and kept looking at them suspiciously, and this of course made the crew feel very uncomfortable. Still, after a few minutes the fun fair could be seen in the distance, and in front of the fun fair was a very large statue of Eric Strudelhofen holding a sign above his head. The sign had large lettering which read:

"The socialist workers party of Eric Strudelhofen fun fair." The taxi craft then reached the outskirts of the fun fair, and flew down towards it, and afterwards passed through the legs of the Eric Strudelhofen statue. The Eric Strudelhofen statue was massive and about two hundred feet tall and was a very good likeness of Eric Strudelhofen. The taxi craft then continued heading towards the fun fair and descended into the landing area for all vehicles. Thankfully it was a nice and soft landing despite Maron's uncheerful disposition. Maron then turned to the crew and said, "That will be fifty dollars please, and forty dollars for mildly offending Eric Strudelhofen in my taxi." Brian then took out his wallet and said nothing, and then paid Maron. Maron looked grumpy and took the money and also said nothing, not even a goodbye. The crew then left the taxi, and they were all glad to have left because the atmosphere in the taxi was terrible, and as much fun as hanging out the mother in laws washing.

The crew then looked back at Eric Strudelhofens statue and could not believe the size of it. It truly was gigantic indeed, and it was an act of egomania. Brian stood staring at it for a

few moments with the others, and said, "Wow. What a statue. I would like to have a statue like that one day of me outside my house, to scare away any future mother in laws." Karen laughed, and then said, "Good idea Brian. Now, let us go and explore the fun fair."

The crew then all walked off into the fun fair and began to look at the many stalls that had very sad looking people running them, all of whom were wearing masks. The people running the stalls looked like they needed Prozac, or some kind of psychiatric treatment. The first stall that they came across was a coconut shy. Brian thought that he would like to have a go at throwing coconuts, but at what exactly?

There was only a depressed looking man behind the counter, who looked like he needed to be woken up before he fell down behind the counter. Brian then turned to him and cheerfully spoke, "Hello, I would like to throw some coconuts please." The man then responded with misery in his voice, "Oh, ok, but the coconuts are shy, and you have to talk to them nicely." Brian laughed and said, "Oh, now, what do I say to them?!" The man then pulled out a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket and unfolded it, and then gave it to Brian, who looked at it, it was covered in writing and phrases. The numerous phrases upon the piece of paper read:

Tell me, are you a coconut, or just a psychiatric patient?

Do you fancy Eric Strudelhofen and want to spend time with him alone whilst worshipping his toenails?

Do you think Eric Strudelhofen's products are edible?

Do you ever think about Eric Strudelhofens socialist workers party and dreamt of being a member?

Has Eric Strudelhofen gazed upon you in a loving manner and praised you to the heavens?

How much do you think the Eric Strudelhofen socialist workers party membership should be?

Brian thought about these phrases, and then decided to make up his own phrase, and he then turned to the coconut on its stand behind the counter, and then said, "I am a coconut too, now how about we start a revolution and become a lovely bunch of coconuts together?" The man behind the counter then cringed and afterwards slapped his own forehead, and he looked like he was going to cry. The man then said, "No, no, no, no, that is against regulations, and my brain cannot cope with anything else that is not covered by the regulations as dictated to me by Eric Strudelhofen. So, please, please, in the name of Eric Strudelhofen, kindly use the phrases on the piece of paper, because under the regulations, I cannot allow anyone to talk to a coconut otherwise. This is the rules of the Eric Strudelhofen socialist workers party you see." Brian nodded begrudgingly in agreement, and then repeated the phrase in a dull voice, "Do you fancy Eric Strudelhofen?" The coconut unsurprisingly just stood there on its stand and said absolutely nothing at all. The man behind the counter then picked up the coconut and handed it to Brian. Brian looked at the coconut, and then at the man, and said, "Now, what exactly do I throw the

coconut at?" The man then said, "Please just throw it at my forehead." Brian found this very disconcerting and then paused and was a little taken aback. He then laughed and replied, "Are you joking? Throw a coconut at your forehead?!" The man then looked at Brian for a couple of seconds, and said, "Well, it is my job sir. Honestly, it is in my job description that I must allow people to throw coconuts at my forehead, until the coconut cracking machine is fixed by the Eric Strudelhofen socialist workers party, who plan to fix the machine when a meteorite destroys the spandex factory." "Oh." said Brian, "that may be quite some time?" "Yes. It may be." the man replied, "now please, just get on with it, I have five thousand coconuts to crack open today."

Brian was very uncertain about cracking coconuts over people's foreheads, and he looked at the others, and then at the man. The crew were all looking very concerned about the situation. Brian then pulled his arm back, the arm with the hand holding the coconut, and he started to take quite a number of steps back, and then he ran towards the man but at the last moment, he just couldn't allow himself to throw a coconut at a defenceless man's forehead, because it just seemed wrong, no matter what the regulations were. Yes, it seemed very wrong indeed, and Brian stopped himself from attacking the man's head with the defenceless coconut. The man behind the counter looked frustrated and he then looked at his watch and waited a few seconds before looking back up at Brian. Brian was stood there looking perplexed and not knowing what to do next with the coconut. Coconut throwing at a man's head was really a most unusual situation indeed,

and the Eric Strudelhofen socialist workers party had a lot to answer for.

Now, surely in most of the universe, throwing a coconut at a man's forehead was an unfair working practice, because health and safety had quite clearly gone out of the window, and if this was a job that he was offered, Brian never wanted to do it. In fact, the thought of this man having coconuts thrown at his forehead all day long, was totally against Brians morals, and Brian felt pity for the man.

Brian then handed the coconut to Salomina, who then handed the coconut to Karen, who then handed the coconut to Cedric, who then handed the coconut back to Brian. Brian stood there once again with the coconut in his hand, and he took a few more step backwards and tried to ignore his inbuilt compassion for a change, because whenever would he get a chance to do so again, to throw a coconut at a man's forehead, a man who willingly allowed him to throw it at him? Brian then tried again, and once more he had to stop himself from throwing the coconut at the man's already dented forehead. The man looked depressed enough already, and Brian felt bad about even thinking about it. Still, it was the man's job to have coconuts thrown at his forehead.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, stood there in front of the man for a few moments, and looked at him, and tried to imagine the kind of life that the man must lead. It must be a terrible life thought Brian, and Brian had given up on the idea, and he had no stomach for throwing the coconut at the poor miserable man after all. The man then saw that there was nothing happening, and he held out his hands silently towards Brian, and Brian looked at him, and then



realised what the man wanted, the coconut. Brian happily gave him back the coconut, and the man then threw it at his own forehead. The sight of this looked absolutely awful and the crew winced in pain at the sight of the coconut smashing into the man's forehead. The man did not seem bothered whatsoever and he then threw the coconut at himself again.

Brian had never seen such unusual behaviour, and he thought about it for a second and then pulled out his mobile phone. The man then picked up the coconut again, and Brian said, "Would you mind if I film you throwing a coconut at your own forehead?" The man then replied, "Yes. Under the regulations, Eric Strudelhofen wishes to see his workers working extremely hard and for the evidence to be spread throughout the universe on social media. Brian nodded and said, "Ok." He then started filming the man as he prepared to throw the coconut at his own forehead. Brian decided to film the man in slow motion, and the man then threw the coconut at his own forehead, and the coconut exploded spectacularly. Brian then gave the man the thumbs up and then held out his hand and the man shook it. The crew then waved goodbye at the man, and they then went off to look for other delights in Eric Strudelhofen's fun fair. Eric Strudelhofen's funfair was a very strange world indeed, and they probably would never ever see anything like it again whatsoever, which would be a great relief.

The crew continued walking past various stalls selling food, including Eric Strudelhofen's gigantic sausage stand. The crew kept looking around them at the dilapidated stalls, and they continued walking as they did so, and they did not see many people at the funfair at all. Probably

because it was rubbish, and also because the stall holders looked extremely miserable and unhappy, which was not a surprise as they were being paid barely anything, and the crew felt very bad for them indeed.

After a few minutes of walking past what looked like circus performers, the crew then came across a stand, a stand that was displaying a large picture of a fish finger. The man behind the counter also looked very miserable indeed. The man then suddenly shouted, "Roll up roll up, and win a fish finger and give it back to the fishes." Karen smiled and thought that this was highly amusing, and she then burst out laughing, then she asked, "What kind of fishes are they, apart from ones who need their fish fingers back?" The man then looked at her for a few seconds and boredly said, "Piranhas." Brian was not expecting this, then he laughed very loudly indeed, and afterwards He spoke, "Piranhas? Don't they eat people?" The man then nodded, and said, "Yes, they do actually, and well I have never actually managed to persuade anyone to feed the piranhas, so no one has actually died at all." Cedric then replied, "Well, that is a relief, and I am not surprised at all that no one has fed them, because who in their right mind, would want to be savaged by a piranha?" The man then paused for a few seconds and said, "No one. Not even me, but anyway would you like to win a fish finger?" Brian then thought about it for a moment and said, "Sure, why not. Now how do I win a fish finger?" The man yawned and then added, "Well, you have to swim through a swimming pool of piranhas, then do fifty lengths of the swimming pool, and then if you survive, I give you a fish finger." Karen's face then dropped immediately, and she could not believe what she was hearing. She then said

"Oh, Oh, I see." Karen frowned a little and then turned to Brian and added, "Umm, Brian, I really do not think that that is a good idea whatsoever." Brian then nodded, and said to the man, "Yes, after thinking about it, it probably isn't a good idea whatsoever." The man looked indifferent about Brian's response. Brian then continued, "But how about you go first and show me how it is done, because I have never seen a man swimming through a pool of piranha's before." The man then became slightly angry and said, "What do you think I am? Do you think I am a total idiot? Because I am not, and although I may look depressed, I am actually just adhering to the Eric Strudelhofen regulations that dictate that all workers at the funfair must look extremely miserable and frustrated and lonely." The crew then laughed at another example of Eric Strudelhofen's crazy regulations, and this new one was not much of a surprise. Eric Strudelhofen was a very strange dictator indeed, and the man looked like he needed rescuing. This to be fair probably applied to all workers at the Eric Strudelhofen fun fair who were unfortunately having to endure his crazy regulations.

Brian then took a moment and looked at the man and felt pity for him. He then said, "Oh, I am terribly sorry sir, we could rescue you if you like?" The man sighed, and then shook his head and had a slight look of fear in his eyes. He paused then spoke once again, "Rescue me? Rescue me? You do know that this planet's security system keeps track of all its employees because Eric Strudelhofen wanted to know how regular people's bowels were, and whether they were comfortable in bed and at work." Karen giggled, and then said, "Oh, really, Eric Strudelhofen likes to know when people are in bed?" The man then nodded and said,

"Yes, and the people of the planet Nouala, they have a communication device beside their beds so that Eric Strudelhofen can sing them to sleep if they are selected." Cedric laughed, and then spoke, "Oh, what does Eric Strudelhofen sing to them at night?" The man looked fearful and then put his finger to his lips, and said, "Shh! That is top secret!" Brian then rolled his eyes, and said, "Oh, well, I think that we will leave swimming with piranhas for today. Now, are you sure that you do not wish to be rescued?" The man then shook his head and responded, "Yes, I do not wish to be rescued, because I have a wife and family you see. Also, it is very hard to leave the planet at all, because Eric Strudelhofen has told the intergalactic council that everyone on the planet has leprosy." Brian looked at the man, and then said, "Well, now, that is absolutely ridiculous, but what if we told the intergalactic council that the people on planet Nouala do not actually have leprosy?" The man thought about it for a moment and hesitated before answering, in a strangely hypnotic and sexy seductive voice, which was the most attractive thing they had heard for a while. The man then said, "Well, you could do, but Eric Strudelhofen would come after you in his spaceship called "The omnipotent Eric Strudelhofen, which has the largest laser guns in the universe and an antigravity exterminator." Cedric then turned to the others and smiled, "Eric Strudelhofen, what a..." The man then held up his finger to his lips again and said, "Shh!" once more.

The crew of the spaceship then all looked at each other and decided to leave instantly as if they had come to a mutual agreement as if telepathically. Brian then looked at the man and said, "Well, I am sorry that you do not want

to leave but we must go now." The man then looked like he was going to cry, and he said, "Oh, ok. I could have done with a bit more company, but still." The crew then waved goodbye to him and walked off into the distance. The crew were beginning to think that this was the weirdest fun fair in the universe, and that there was not much fun here at all. Still, after surviving the piranha fish finger stall, the crew were happy to be leaving it behind. The crew then came to another stall, and a sign above it read, "Generate energy and benefit the planet." The crew then all took a look at the stall and thought that this sounded like a very sane and reasonable idea, the first that they had seen so far at the Eric Strudelhofen fun fair. The man behind the counter looked at them and then ducked under the counter. Now, what was going on thought the crew, because this was very strange indeed. The man then stayed silent for a few moments, and then hid for a while, and finally got up from behind the counter and said, "Oh, it is you. I have heard about you. You are troublemakers!" The man then shook his head vigorously, and Brian thought that this was a little rude. Brian then turned to the man and said, "Why are we troublemakers?" The man then thought about it for a moment, and replied, "Because, you were not eaten by the piranhas!" Cedric then immediately laughed, "Oh, oh, I can see where this is going. You do not like us visitors much, do you?" The man then slowly shook his head, and added, "No, because I have heard about you all and Eric Strudelhofens regulations dictate that troublemakers should be fed to the piranha's if they do not behave." The crew were not fond of behaving whatsoever and they did not have any plans to behave inside the fun fair at all. Quite frankly thought

the crew, this was the most boring fun fair in the universe that they had ever visited. Still, the crew thought it was an experience that they would remember for the rest of their lives.

Salomina then looked up at the sign above the stall and said, "Now, how are we supposed to generate energy and help the planet?" The man behind the counter then responded, "Well you see, I will attach kinetic energy generators to you, and then you have to go through a doorway behind me, and then once inside the corridor, you according to Eric's regulations have to get chased by a lion. The reason behind being chased by a lion is to stimulate your body movement, and also the movement of the kinetic energy generators. The kinetic energy generators will generate kinetic energy for the entire planet which can then be transferred into the Eric Strudelhofen power station. Karen and the crew then immediately thought that this was another crazy and insane idea and shook their heads in unison, which did not happen very often. Eric Strudelhofen seemed determined to get rid of as many visitors as possible, probably after they had spent all their money on Planet Nouala and were down on their luck. Now being down on their luck was quite normal for the crews' early lives, but you would have to be extremely desperate to want to generate energy in such way.

The crew wondered whether there was anything that could be done regarding the brainwashing and the indoctrination of the planet's population. The effects of indoctrination and brainwashing were clearly to be seen in the fun fair workers, and of course this was very detrimental to their health and to their sanity. Now of the fun fair workers so

far, they had the personalities of wet fishes, and they were all no fun whatsoever, which was not surprising considering the indoctrination and the brainwashing.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen were not exactly enjoying the experience of the fun fair, and they immediately wanted to find another stall. Brian then spoke, "Oh, well I think that we will leave being chased by a lion for the moment off of our itinerary, as we have to get back to the hotel shortly, and preferably in one piece." The man behind the counter then nodded, and said, "Oh, well, that is your loss not mine." and then he shrugged his shoulders. The crew then walked off and did not even bother waving goodbye. The man then stared at them blankly as they left. He was an oddball was a massive understatement, but the galaxy was filled with them.

The crew were relieved to have not been eaten by a lion and walked to the next stall. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen were all beginning to expect another weird experience, and the offering before them was not a disappointment. The sign above the stall said, "Marry Eric Strudelhofens sister for thirty minutes." This was a very strange stall indeed, and the sign made them smile immediately. Cedric nudged Karen, and Brian laughed, and then said, "How about marrying Eric Strudelhofen's sister?" Karen laughed loudly, then suddenly a woman stormed out from behind some curtains at the back of the counter with her hands on her hips. She was carrying a handbag and was blonde and she was also six foot tall, and she had blue eyes, and looked like a model. She was Eric Strudelhofens sister. She did not look amused at all, but she hadn't had company for a while, and she then turned to the crew and stared angrily at them and

shouted loudly, "Now, what are you laughing at, I am Eric Strudelhofens sister Jasmine." She then posed seductively and wiggled her hips, and blew them a kiss and winked at them, and said, "Fancy getting married for thirty minutes?" Brian and the crew smiled awkwardly and thought about it for a few seconds, and then said, "Well...", then tailed off. Eric Strudelhofens sister waited for Brian and the crew to make up their minds, but no response was forthcoming from them. Eric Strudelhofens sister then said, "So, do you like what you see?" Cedric then replied, "Well, yes, but you are Eric Strudelhofens sister." Eric Strudelhofen's sister looked extremely angry immediately, but she was just pretending, and she then leapt over the counter and cuddled Brian to his surprise, then cuddled each of the crew one by one.

Eric Strudelhofen's sister looked deep into the crews' eyes, and she then yodelled loudly before bursting into a song, which was very musical indeed. Eric Strudelhofen's sister was not much of a looker but she knew how to sing and she did it lovingly and really enjoyed looking into people's eyes, and they had a hypnotic quality. The song was:

Hello, hello,  
I am Eric Strudelhofen's sister,  
and I am blonde,  
and the washing machine is my transistor radio, and  
it controls me wherever I go,  
and I am as happy as can be being controlled  
remotely, and I like to do the washing most leisurely,  
and sometimes I do it in a tree.  
Yes, you see,



I am a simple lady, and I am never intoxicated lately, and my eyes they are as good as anyone you see, because I can see you, and you can see me quite clearly, and I can see that you fancy me, and that you wanted me immediately, and I believe that you want me completely, yes, from my head to my toes, and so, wherever I will go, you will need me, yes, you will need me, because you look so unhappy you see, and my cuddles they are as warm as a tropical sea, and I never watch television at all, and I do not pick my nose repeatedly, and if you ask me to comb the hair on your toes, I will do so immediately, because I am Eric Strudelhofens sister, and I work so hard that my hands can never blister, and today, oh, what a pleasure it is to meet you, and greet you, if you like what you see,

I can guarantee that I will be happy to please, but by the way, have you cleaned your earwax out lately? Because I am disciplined follower of earwax, and with earwax you should never get lax, because under regulation four four three, you are obliged by my brother Eric Strudelhofen, to make candles out of earwax, so that the whole planet can see, because sadly, there are sometimes electricity shortages, and once I fell into a hole in the road, and slept on piles of pictures, of my brother Eric Strudelhofen until I was rescued, and the pictures which were warm and soft and... oh, so beautiful to see, and I really would like to honour him,

by marrying you for half an hour,  
as my brother wants me to have something to do,  
because he says that I do irritate him rather frequently,  
and with this I do not agree,  
but I want to please him anyway,  
because he is my brother and the owner of the planet,  
and his well-being is important to me,  
and I would like to discuss with you,  
how wonderful Eric Strudelhofen is,  
and get you to see,  
that living here on the planet Nouala is a dream,  
and you can become rich here,  
by investing in Eric Strudelhofen industries,  
because Eric Strudelhofen industries,  
treats its employers well,  
and you look like the marrying type to me,  
and how beautiful you will look holding my arm,  
whilst bathing in my charms, whilst staring at the  
beauty of me, and whilst I discuss the mundane things,  
I like to do for fun, whilst laughing maniacally, because  
my humour has by Eric Strudelhofen, been gradually  
programmed into me and dictated to me, and if I do  
not, he will give me an anti-social behaviour order you  
see.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen then started clapping immediately after Eric Strudelhofen's sister had finished singing. Her singing was very good, and extremely relaxing, despite the rather unusual song. Eric Strudelhofen's sister was smiling, and she was very happy that the crew seemed to really appreciate her singing. Eric Strudelhofen's sister, then began to speak once more,

and she said, "Now, would any of you like to marry me for half an hour?" Brian was a bit puzzled by the only for half an hour bit. Half an hour seemed a very short time indeed, and why was this so short? Brian thought that he had better ask her, and then said, "Why only marriage for half an hour Jasmine?" Jasmine smiled and then replied, "Well, I am a very busy woman you see, and I have things to do." Brian then responded, "Such as?" Jasmine laughed, and then replied, "Well, I really cannot tell you; it is top secret." Brian was quiet for a second and then he said to her with an intrigued look on his face, "Oh, ok. Well, what happens after you marry someone for half an hour Jasmine?" Jasmine then said, "Well, we get a divorce of course." Now this seemed very logical indeed and Brian was seriously contemplating it, because how often do you get to meet a beautiful lady like Jasmine in the universe, especially one who only wants to marry you for half an hour." Brian had never been married whatsoever, and he quite liked the idea of being married, even if it was only for half an hour. Brian looked at the crew and then said, "Would you all mind if I got married for half an hour?" The crew were all slightly concerned by the idea of Brian marrying Eric Strudelhofen's sister as Eric Strudelhofen was a dictator, and there really was no telling what Jasmine would make Brian do in that half an hour, and whether he would survive at all, which was a bit of a concern.

The crew then all said in unison, "Well..." and they then paused for a moment, and she said nothing. Jasmine then awaited a further response, but there was no response immediately, but after about a minute of awkward silence, Cedric then spoke, and she said, "Well, only if you

promise to deliver him to us in one piece." Jasmine smiled warmly and she then continued, "Of course, I would be delighted to have the honour of marrying Brian for half an hour." The rest of the crew then nodded, and Brian smiled a big cheesy smile and said, "I would love to marry you for half an hour Jasmine." Jasmine's face then lit up, and she was absolutely delighted, and put her hand between Brians arm and then began to lead him off behind the stall out of sight from the crew.

Cedric, Salomina, and Karen then crossed their fingers, and hoped for the best.

Jasmine then took Brian through a doorway that led into a large marquee, and in the middle of the marquee was a large table and chairs and upon the table were fifty bottles of champagne and bottles of orange juice and coke a cola. There was also food of all types including trifles, sandwiches, curry, ham, cheese, crackers, biscuits croissants, fruit including grapes, pineapple, and melon, and there were also chocolates.

Jasmine smiling profusely then lead Brian to a chair and motioned to him to sit down, and he did so and stared up at her lovingly, well he thought he had better try to play the part, as she was a stunningly beautiful woman, and did not want to disappoint her. Jasmine seemed like a woman who had too much time on her hands, yes, far too much time, but Brian was happy to spend time with her and Jasmine was apparently happy to spend time with Brian. Brian took in this moment and felt very happy. Jasmine seemed happy too and she smiled down at Brian who was not used to being smiled at lovingly for quite some time. Jasmine took Brian in his arms and cuddled him, and he felt a warm glow all over, and he hadn't felt

this warm since a robot had mistaken him for a girlfriend in distress near the ovens on the spaceship when the cooking was on fire, and also Brians hair.

Jasmine looked lovingly into Brians eyes and then kissed Brian on the lips. Brian responded immediately with great passion and then did the same. Jasmine afterwards then pulled out a ring from inside her handbag and got down on one knee, and said, "Will you marry me, Brian?" Brian then replied, "Yes." Immediately, and Jasmine slowly put the ring upon Brians finger. Brian then immediately thought, can this be legal, but he did not say anything to Jasmine at all. Jasmine then said, "Brian, under Eric Strudelhofens regulations, regulation four one two, I now pronounce us man and wife. Now, do you agree to kiss your wife for one minute precisely as per regulation three hundred and seventy-eight?" Brian then said, "Of course dear." And then began kissing Jasmine. Jasmynes kisses were like a car crashing into you, and they were also like the suction power of fifty hoovers. Jasmine certainly knew how to kiss, even if it was because of her brother Eric Strudelhofens regulations. Brian thought that Eric Strudelhofens regulations were mostly crazy, but still, despite that he continued kissing Jasmine, who was not quite as good as Susan, but anyway they were married now and were happily apparently in momentary love, which is better than not being in love at all.

Brian smiled and kept looking at Jasmine, and after a minute of kissing, a loud alarm sounded and echoed through the tent. Jasmine then stopped kissing Brian immediately and sat down on a seat beside him and reached for a bottle of wine. She then opened it, and the bottle opened with a loud pop, and the cork flew off and

hit Brian in the forehead and afterwards rebounded towards Jasmine. Jasmine then caught the cork in her mouth with great style and she gave Brian the thumbs up. Brian was very impressed indeed.

Jasmine then reached for a couple of glasses of wine, and then took the cork out of her mouth, and threw it behind her. She then poured the wine into the glasses that Brian handed to her. Suddenly a large lion appeared from out of nowhere and roared angrily and leapt towards Brian and then stopped right in front of his feet. Brian was very startled, and he quickly leapt up onto his seat and upon seeing this, Jasmine laughed loudly and then said, "Oh, do not worry silly billy, he is just doing his job, because under regulation one hundred and ten according to Eric Strudelhofen, the lions roar signifies that he is happy with me marrying you for half an hour." Brian was not quite certain about this and still did not want to get down from his chair and did not quite believe that the lion did not want to eat him. The lion looked extremely ravenous indeed, and he was ravenous, as most lions are. Jasmine then reached across the table, and picked up a large trifle, and handed it to Brian. Brian looked at the trifle and then at Jasmine, and he said, "What is the trifle for Jasmine?" Jasmine smiled, paused for a second, and then replied, "To feed to the lion." Brian's face suddenly dropped, and he did not like the sound of this at all. This crazy idea went against his well-known love of logic and common sense. Jasmine then looked into Brian's eyes, and gave Brian a seductive kiss, and she said, "Go on Brian, give the trifle to the lion, he will not harm you, trust me." Brian then looked at Jasmine, and then at the lion, and afterwards at the trifle. Jasmine seemed very confident and believable

about the lions' intentions, but the stall that Brian and the crew had visited earlier that involved being chased by a lion did not fill Brian with great confidence whatsoever.

Jasmine then took Brians arm gently and guided his hand that was holding the trifle, and suddenly thrust it towards the lion. The lion then swallowed the trifle whole, and then burped loudly. Suddenly the lion opened his mouth wider and then swallowed Brians head, but the lion did not squash Brians head whatsoever, still Brian screamed loudly, very loudly, and the mouth of the lion was cavernous, and the sound echoed around inside the lion, and it bounced around Brians eardrums in a frightening way. Brian was not used to being eaten by lions, and he could not believe that he was still alive, but luckily, he was in one piece, which of course was a great relief. This of course was most unusual indeed, but still petrifying, but after a few moments the lion then released Brian. Brian then looked at the lion and the lion smiled, and Brian had a shocked look upon his face, but he was glad that the trifle had seemingly satisfied the lions appetite. The lion then walked away, and Brian then turned around to face Jasmine, who was holding a camera. Brian then looked at Jasmine and then at the camera, and said, "I am alive!" Jasmine smiled and then laughed and bent down and pulled out a bucket of water and a towel from underneath the table, and then handed them to Brian. Brian then washed his face and dried himself. Jasmine then said, "Brian would you like me to email the video footage and pictures of you being eaten by a lion to you as you made the effort?" Brian then thought about this for a moment, and he then looked at his watch, and five minutes had elapsed since they had been married. There was still

another twenty-five minutes to go, and Brian was starting to calm down now, and Brian felt greatly relieved that the lion had left the room. Brian then put the bucket and the towel down on the floor, and said, "Sure, why not. It certainly was a memorable experience." Jasmine then kissed Brian tenderly and wrapped him in his arms and whispered in his ear, "Regulation ninety-seven. Paint my toenails." Brian did not like the sound of this, and then said, "But Jasmine, I do not know how to paint people's toenails, and I would only do a rubbish job of it." Jasmine then shook her head, and said in a stern voice, "Brian, I would like to remind you that we are married. Now get on the floor and paint my toenails." Brian then shook his head again, and Jasmine started to cry, and he cuddled her and then said to her softly,

"Look Jasmine, I am sorry my dear, it is just that I am not very good at painting toenails." Jasmine then cried even more but she held onto Brian like he was a sinking ship, and Brian was often a sinking ship in his relationships and today was no different at all. Brian then said to Jasmine, "But Jasmine darling we could get drunk for another twenty-four minutes and kiss passionately." Jasmine then looked at Brian irritatedly and she was really not amused whatsoever. Jasmine then quickly then let go of Brian, and she took a step away from him, and then afterwards said, "Brian, you disgust me, now what kind of man are you?" Brian thought that he was a caring man, but still, he thought that painting toenails was beyond him, and he would be of no great use in the world of beauty. Jasmine then frowned at him after he had said it and replied, "Brian, do you want me to call the lion back, because I



could quite happily spend twenty-four minutes getting drunk with the lion." Brian then stood there for a moment and looked rather disappointed for a few moments, then Brian continued, "But darling, we are married, and I am beginning to understand your sensitivities, and I am a sensitive man you see because I once had a verruca, and although I truly appreciate the art of a polished nail, I do have other talents you see." Jasmine then smiled and said, "Like what Brian?" Brian then smiled back at her lovingly, and moved towards her, and then replied, "Well my darling, I once ate fifty hamburgers in a row." Jasmine was not amused and frowned once again and then began crying once more and said, "Oh, Brian, why did I marry you, is this all the talent that you have?" Brian then sighed, and took a large sip of his drink and another, and said dramatically,

"Well what kind of man do you take me for?"

Jasmine then looked at him for a few moments and said even more dramatically, "Well Brian, the kind of man who cannot paint toenails. The kind of man that marries a woman for half an hour, and then consumes fifty hamburgers and forgets about her and runs off with her sister." Brian listened to this, and then frowned a little and took what she had said in for a moment, and Brian actually felt quite emotional, and Brian hadn't felt this emotional since discovering the curries that Apollo the psychotic robot had teleported onto their spaceship, which had made him almost cry. Brian was not an overly emotional person, but he was more in touch with his feelings than most people, and Jasmine was rubbing him up the wrong way. Brian had really got into the spirit of being married, and really wanted to argue, like there was

no tomorrow. This kind of state of being was normal for Brian as most of his relationships had been with argumentative women, and he had argued more than his fair share and Brian had gotten so used to it, that he had begun using a chatroom called "Let us pretend that we are married and argue all night." Jasmine then sighed loudly and looked at her watch, and there was seventeen minutes left of the marriage. Jasmine then said exasperatedly, "Look Brian, I really do not have time for this." Brian then laughed, and retorted, "Oh, really, and of all the tents in the world you had to bring me into this one, to force me to feed a lion with a trifle and then beg me to ask you to paint your toenails. Well, I just cannot take it anymore Jasmine, now hand me a trifle." Jasmine then handed Brian a trifle, and Brian then smashed the trifle into his face. Jasmine looked at Brian covered in trifle and then laughed loudly, and she then sat down, and Brian sat down too. They both then drank a sip of wine each and toasted each other.

Jasmine then kissed Brian, and said, "Oh, I am sorry my darling, this marrying people for thirty minutes can get rather tiresome, and I am beginning to think that my brother has gone totally crazy." Brian then laughed and said, "Well, yes, me too, because we er, we heard about the Eric Strudelhofen worship." Jasmine then immediately got off of the seat and sat on the floor, and she then started bowing down, and then repeating the phrase, "Eric Strudelhofen, my brother, my saviour, my god, I worship thee, despite you being odd." Brian then laughed loudly and looked down at Jasmine, and she now seemed pretty normal really, then Brian suddenly thought, was this a trick? Was Jasmine going to start quoting Eric Strudelhofens regulations once again? Well, it was

possible, very possible indeed, but Brian was conscious of time, and time was conscious of Brian, and time ran away from him far too often. This was not very amusing at all to Brian, but still, Brian was enjoying his short marriage with Jasmine. Jasmine then looked up at Brian and smiled, and then got up off of the floor, and afterwards sat back on the seat and kissed him.

Brian then kissed Jasmine back and they drank some more wine, and it was very good wine indeed.

Brian was in a state of bliss, and he thought for a few moments and then said, "Jasmine, are you happy living on planet Nouala?" Jasmine then took a moment or two, and then thought about this for a moment, and replied, "Well Brian, I have everything I need you see, and my brother is a bit dictatorial, and it can all get a bit much sometimes, and I really would like a change, because, despite having everything that I could ever wish for, and all the money that I could ever need, I would like to explore the universe, because I have never explored the universe, and I really would like to see Planet Earth and live on it." Brian paused and said, "Well, Jasmine, me and my friends are delivery drivers, and it is the most boring job imaginable, and not one that I would wish upon anyone at all, but still, the good thing is that it is coming to an end soon, and we are all going back to planet Earth." Jasmynes face then lit up and she really liked the sound of this idea. Jasmine then looked at Brian and Brian looked at Jasmine, and then Jasmine said, "Brian would you take me, would you take me aboard your spaceship back to planet Earth?" Brian was then silent for a moment, and he then thought about it for a few seconds, and he thought that this could be some kind of psychological mind game, and he then thought

that she could really just be as indoctrinated as the worshippers that they saw at the Eric Strudelhofen worship service. The worshippers there were some of the most indoctrinated worshippers that he had ever seen.

Jasmine then pouted at Brian, and she looked deep into his eyes, and said, "Oh, Brian, take me away with you to planet Earth." She then paused and said, "yes, please, do take me far from here, far from this planet, and the regulations which my brother holds so dear." Brian then sighed sympathetically and held Jasmine's hand and nodded, and he said, "Of course if that is what you wish for my love."

A loud alarm then sounded from somewhere in the tent, and Jasmine looked at her watch, and said, "Brian, I hate to tell you this, but we have ten minutes left of our marriage." Brian then smiled and then softly replied, "Oh, Jasmine, oh, Jasmine, what are we to do?" Jasmine then looked at Brian for at least thirty seconds, and then continued, "Well, Brian, we could eat some food, and drink some more wine." Brian agreed and thought that this was a very sensible idea, and Brian was starting to get used to this marriage despite the inevitable briefness of it. Brian then ate a bit of trifle from off of his face, and then another, and then afterwards he pulled another bit off of it, and he thrust it towards Jasmine gently. Which Jasmine loved! "Jasmine." Brian excitedly said softly, "Oh, Jasmine, run away with us, run away with us to planet Earth, and come and have an adventure, where there are no dictators on the planet at all these days." Jasmine smiled a radiant smile like the warmth of the sun, and she then looked lovingly at Brian, "Oh, Brian, there is nothing that I would like more, than to run away with you and your crew,

because my brother's dictatorial nature lately has gotten worse you see." Brian looked at her sympathetically, and she looked very emotional indeed, then he said, "Jasmine, how do you know that your brother has become more dictatorial?" Jasmine

looked sad, and then took a moment to think about it and sighed loudly. She then said, "Well, Brian, he gets me to Sellotape potatoes to his face and well, he is a bit of a Richard." Brian laughed and he found this very amusing indeed, because he had never seen a man with a potato sellotaped to his forehead whatsoever.

Eric Strudelhofen was certainly to the crew, a very strange man indeed, and very difficult to deal with by the sounds of it, and although he had been pleasant to the crew, his workers seemed to be having a very difficult time of it. Jasmine looked like she needed rescuing, and the crew were certainly capable of rescuing her.

Now what Eric Strudelhofen would think had yet to be found out. Today Jasmine looked like she had enough of the planet and the regulations of her brother Eric Strudelhofen. Eric Strudelhofen was a stickler for regulations, and Brian felt like that there should be a regulation for Eric, banning him and his regulations from the entire universe. Eric's regulations were incredibly stupid and very frustrating and were really not very helpful at all. Brian wanted to throw all of them in the bin, and let people live in peace, and of course rescuing Jasmine, would save her from a life of monotony.

Life aboard the spaceship was monotonous of course, but Jasmine would be welcome aboard the spaceship he thought by the rest of the crew, who were a very friendly bunch indeed. The crew had certainly made many people

welcome over the years, and today, Jasmine would be more than welcome. But only if Jasmine explained the circumstances of her wanting to leave the planet. Brian then said to Jasmine, "Now why don't you ask the crew?" Jasmine then smiled and said, "Yes, now that is a very good idea."

Brian then drank another sip of his champagne, and he enjoyed it immensely as this was the first champagne that he had for ages, and it was beginning to go to his head. Brian then cuddled Jasmine as he only had a few minutes left, and he began to eat the food on the table. Brian then ate some ham, and some trifle at the same time and then a pickled onion. He had very strange eating habits, and this amused Jasmine immensely. Jasmine thought that this was crazy, and indeed it was crazy, very crazy indeed. Jasmine paused and then spoke, "Now, what do you eat aboard the ship Brian?" Brian took a moment and then thought about it, and said, "Well, unfortunately we came across a robot that teleported all our food and swapped it for curries. This of course was most unhelpful and very detrimental to our stomachs, oh, and he also stole the toilet rolls." Jasmine then laughed, "Oh, Brian, are you always getting yourselves into these crazy situations." Brian then nodded, and smiled, "Yes, actually, I do seem to have a rather a habit of getting into these things, but still, the time is nearly up it not?" The time was indeed nearly up, and Jasmine, was thinking about the future, and she said, "I am thinking about the future Brian, and I really would like to spend more time with you because you seem like a genuinely caring guy, and space travel it does sound so fascinating. Yes, it does sound so incredibly fascinating, Brian." Brian then smiled and he said, "Yes, it is one of the

most amazing experiences in the world and also the universe, and seeing the stars twinkling in the heavens is absolutely incredible, and it is a wondrous feeling to be able to stare out of the porthole at them, and also to watch the distant planets get closer and closer is amazing. Planets are beautiful things too as well as the stars, and wherever you are in the universe, it can be a very dangerous place, and it is good to have some company aboard the spaceship."

Brian then paused and said, "Have you ever travelled in space Jasmine?" Jasmine then shook her head, and said, "No. I have not had the pleasure whatsoever, but I have always been fascinated by the heavens and by the beauty of space." Jasmine then cuddled Brian, and she said, "Oh, please do take me with you Brian." Brian was really keen on taking Jasmine on a journey of a lifetime to planet Earth, and Brian thought that she was a very attractive lady, and he would like to see more of her. Brian then looked at Jasmine, and Jasmine looked at Brian, and then Brian said, "Oh, Jasmine, what would Eric do if he found that you had left the planet? Would he be angry?" Jasmine frowned a little and then said, "Yes. He would be extremely angry because he does not like people to leave the planet at all, because he has told the intergalactic council that everyone on planet Noula has leprosy, which is totally untrue, and a very silly thing to say.

Planet Nouala is not a bad place of course, and nowhere is perfect really, but Eric is fixated on coming up with new regulations and never wants to stop regulating things at all. These regulations cause everyone on the planet a lot of stress, and my brother, has managed to convince huge numbers of people that they are a sensible idea, when they

are quite clearly not a sensible idea at all, and even our mother said that Eric was being incredibly stupid. Still Eric did not listen at all, and Mother got so angry that she shuffled off of her mortal coil much sooner than expected. This was not very helpful at all as she was halfway through cooking dinner, and I had no idea how to cook dinner at all, and I ended up setting fire to the kitchen, which was not helpful, as I had to take mother to the nearest hospital just in case, she was alive." Brian then looked sympathetically at her, and said, "Oh, Jasmine, I am sorry to hear about your mother. I wish we could all bring back our mothers when they die, as they are so precious aren't they."

There then was a loud warning noise that came from the speaker, and this interrupted Brian's train of thought. Today was a fine day for inspiration, and Jasmine was definitely inspiring. The time was up with Jasmine though, but still Brian wanted to continue talking more. Jasmine then shrugged her shoulders and said, "I am sorry Brian, the time is up I am afraid. We are now divorced." Brian laughed, and then said, "Wow, that was easy, it took me six years to get divorced from my ex-wife, and she was a mannequin." Jasmine then looked at Brian and said, "Oh, Brian you are so silly. Incredibly silly but I do like you, Brian." Brian then smiled, and he replied, "Thank you Jasmine. We are staying at the hotel Noula, if you wish to come and meet the crew. Come anytime, my room number is three hundred and two." Jasmine then looked a bit sad, and she did not want Brian to leave but she had to marry someone else for half an hour in a minute. Jasmine then pulled out some bags from underneath the table and said, "Here you go Brian, help yourself to some bottles of



champagne and some food." Brian then hugged Jasmine, and she said, "Thank you." and then took some bottles of champagne from off of the table, and put a trifle in one of them, and some ham, and some meats of all kinds, and curry." This of course was very kind of Jasmine, and Brian hoped to see her later, but nothing was certain as she was subject to Eric Strudelhofens crazy regulations. Brian then looked at Jasmine, and she then said, "Goodbye Jasmine, thank you for the food, and the drink, I hope to see you later." Jasmine then hugged Brian again and then waved at her, and she waved back, and then he walked out of the tent into the bright sunlight.

Brian then walked away from the tent and around it, and afterwards went back to the other side, and he saw the crew still waiting for him. Salomina noticed Brian and then smiled, and she said, "Hello Brian, you have actually survived! Now, how was being married for thirty minutes Brian?" Brian then paused and said, "Well, it was absolutely fantastic, and I had a really nice time with Jasmine, and she does seem like a very nice person." He paused and then said, "Oh, and there was some champagne and food, and I brought some back for us all." Cedric smiled, and then replied, "Great that is good news Brian. Now was Jasmine more interesting to talk to than Susan." "Yes." said Brian, "Much more interesting, but she seemed a little bit sad at being here on this planet." Salomina nodded and then looked at Brian and replied, "Oh, really. She must be rich because of Eric." Brian then paused and said, "Yes. I think that she has everything she needs, but she is not happy with Eric Strudelhofen's regulations." Karen then added, "Well, I am not surprised at all, because they are absolutely bonkers, and totally

loony as loony as Eric Strudelhofen.” Yes, Eric’s regulations were enough to drive anyone crazy, and Jasmine was right to not want to be part of a dictatorship, because who in their right mind would want to be part of one? Still, Brian was keen on removing her from this situation.

Brian then looked at the rest of the crew, and said, “I said to Jasmine, would you like to come with us to planet Earth after we finish our delivery jobs.” Karen then responded, “Oh, that is a good idea Brian, and very thoughtful. No one should be subject to a dictatorship, and we have more than enough room onboard.” Cedric also thought that this was a good idea and then smiled and said, “Yes, it would be good to rescue a damsel in distress.” Salomina thought about this situation for a moment, and then replied, “But how do we know that she is not a spy?” Brian said, “Well, I have a very good sense of intuition, and I looked into her eyes, and she did not seem like a spy to me at all.” Cedric then added, “That is probably correct then Brian, but if there is trouble, then we could leave her at a space station on the way home.” Brian sighed, and said, “Yes, that is true. So, are we all agreed that rescuing Jasmine would be a great success?” The rest of the crew then responded in unison and said, “Yes absolutely.” Brian then continued, “Ok, fantastic. Now how about we all get out of here because I have seen enough of Eric Strudelhofen’s fun fair, and it was not much fun whatsoever.” The crew laughed and then Karen said, “Yes, let’s go.” The crew left the fun fair and waved down a passing taxi and were happy to be leaving. It had been a very strange experience indeed, and not one that they really wished to repeat. A taxi quickly arrived, and they got in, and asked the driver to take them to the hotel.

The crew reached the hotel, and were glad to be back, and needed a shower. In the reception the crew saw the television screen was on behind the reception desk, and it was showing crowds of people protesting and waving carrots in the air, and shouting "Down with Eric Strudelhofen, and they were being attacked by drones with some kind of laser beam, and the drone on top of it had a large picture of Eric Strudelhofen."

Brian turned to the rest of the crew and said, "Well, it looks like people are angry." Suddenly Eric Strudelhofen arrived, and noticed the crew staring at the television, and he then said, "Oh, don't worry about them, it is no big deal at all, we are just having some supply issues with carrots. Now are you coming to the entertainment club later on?" Eric was being friendly, and he was smiling a large smile, and when you have huge numbers of people worshipping you and adoring you, it probably is very easy to be happy. Eric then gave them all a hug, and said, "It is a pleasure to have you all here. Now what have you been doing today?" Brian then said, "Well, we went to your fun fair Eric, and it was most unusual." Eric laughed, and then said, "Yes, it is meant to be ironic you see." Salomina, then said, "But that poor man with the coconuts, he must need a huge amount of headache tablets." Eric laughed, "Well actually, I will let you in on a secret, he only throws a coconut at his head a couple of times whilst people are watching, and then he plays on his game console." Karen laughed and was relieved that the man was in no serious danger. Eric then continued, "And what do you think of the other stalls?" Brian then responded, "Well, we met your sister, and I married her for half an hour." Eric laughed, and smiled, and said, "How is she? I have not seen her today." Brian

then paused and thought carefully about it, "She is ok Eric. She seemed to be enjoying herself." Eric looked pleased and then said, "I am glad to hear it. Now, I must be going, I have to source some carrots." Eric then waved goodbye, and the crew waved back. Brian said, "Goodbye Eric."

The crew then headed for the elevator and got in it, and Brian said, "So, what is the plan?" Salomina then responded, "Have a shower and meet in the reception area and then go to the entertainment complex." Cedric then added, "And hopefully the entertainment complex will have food this evening." Karen smiled and said, "Yes, hopefully." then she laughed loudly. The crew then waited for the elevator, and it arrived on their floor, and they went to their respective rooms.

Brian entered his room, and he had found this trip to the planet a very strange trip indeed, and it had been an eye-opening experience, and not something that he had expected whatsoever.

Brian then thought about Jasmine, and the future, and wondered whether there was going to be a revolution on the planet Nouala. Eric was obviously irritating people, and this generally led to dictators being overthrown and their deaths. Jasmine just seemed to be playing along with Eric and it seemed as though she had no choice at all in the matter, the governance of the planet. Still, Jasmine, if she turned up this evening, would be more than welcome to join them, but this was her only chance to leave for the planet Earth at the moment.

Brian picked up some fresh clothes and then headed for the shower. Brian enjoyed a good shower, and he took his time to luxuriate, and it is easy to take these things for

granted, but not when you are constantly travelling through space, and your shower keeps breaking down. Brian showered and then suddenly he heard the doorbell ring. Brian got out of the shower, dried himself, and then put his clothes on, and left the bathroom, then headed for the front door, and opened it, and Jasmine was stood there, and she was crying. "Jasmine what is the matter?" Jasmine then replied, "Oh, Brian, Eric wants me to marry a world famous businessman with three heads and ingrown toenails." Brian tried not to laugh, and said, "Come in Jasmine, I am just getting ready to go to the entertainment complex with the crew, would you like to join us?" Jasmine cheered up and then said, "I would love to Brian." Brian then smiled back, and looked around the bedroom and found the tissues and picked them up and handed them to Jasmine. Jasmine took a tissue and then dried her tears, and then said, "Brian, I am so glad to see you. It has been a terrible day, and I was thinking despite having everything that I could ever wish for I am not truly happy, and I cannot wait to leave, and I would like to leave with you tomorrow if that is still ok." Brian was very happy to hear this and he gave Jasmine a hug, "Well, that is good to hear Jasmine, now shall we leave?" Jasmine nodded, and Brian and Jasmine left the room. The rest of the crew were waiting in the corridor, and they smiled at Brian and Jasmine. Karen could see that she had been crying and gave her a hug. Cedric, then said, "Jasmine, everything will be ok, we are here for you." Jasmine then sighed and responded, "Thank you everyone, I appreciate it, I truly do." She then paused and added, "Eric wants me to marry a businessman with three heads and ingrown toenails."

The crew immediately laughed, and Brian then said, "Well, Jasmine, your destiny is your own choosing, and Eric Strudelhofen will not take it from you." Jasmine smiled and then replied, "Thank you everyone, I do appreciate that. But don't get me wrong, I do love my brother, but he has just lost the plot a little bit, and I wish he would come back to reality. All this running a planet malarky has really gone to his head, and now people are worshipping him, which is most unusual of course, and I am quite worried about him, but he does not want to seem to listen at all." Karen then sighed, "Oh, Jasmine, it is difficult to know what to say, to get people out of a rut these days, but maybe he needs to see a psychological counsellor. He does seem to have gone slightly mad, and no one would like to see their brother go crazy."

Jasmine was cheering up, and she was smiling again. Brian then said, "Let us go and party, and forget about Eric, and enjoy ourselves, because this is probably the last day or two that we will be here, because we have to finish our delivery routes." Jasmine then jumped and down like a kangaroo, and was excited once again about life, and this was great to see. Cedric then started walking off to the elevator and the rest of the crew and Jasmine followed. Cedric then pressed the button on the elevator and the doors opened and they got in. The elevator then descended to the reception area of the hotel, which was very, very beautiful indeed. Much more beautiful than their own faces,

Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine got out of the elevator and headed across the reception area towards the entertainment complex, and they were looking for a wild

rest of the day. The crew then reached the doors of the entertainment complex and entered it.

The music in the entertainment complex was loud, very loud indeed, and upon the stage there were some dancing elephants, wearing glittery outfits, and the elephants were playing trombones, and a band of musicians was playing in the middle of them. There were countless people enjoying themselves and there were several already on the floor unconscious from drinking too much. Suddenly drones arrived and picked them up and took them out of the entertainment complex. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine headed for the bar, and fought their way through the crowds. Brian then said to Jasmine, "Your brother must make a lot of money here." Jasmine smiled and then responded, "Yes, ridiculous amounts of money, and he buys a load of rubbish and gets married frequently. Once he was married to fifty women at once, and they all had two or more heads." Karen laughed and then said, "But how would you keep them all satisfied?" This of course could not be an easy thing at all to do and would have been extremely expensive indeed, and also you would need an incredibly large bed. Cedric then said, "Imagine all the snoring at nighttime." The crew and Jasmine all laughed and finally reached the bar, which was a relief, as they were already sweating profusely. Yes, they were sweatier than a hamster on a jacket potato. The entertainment room really was like a sauna, and they all needed a very very stiff drink more than they ever had. Drinking in moderation of course is Very sensible indeed, and so the crew bought fifty drinks each, and then headed for the levitating chairs and waited for the drones to arrive. The crew and Jasmine then all levitated up into the

air, and surveyed the crowd, and there were many strange alien creatures from other worlds. Communication was much easier than it used to be as the intergalactic communication system had been set up and was able to be connected to by all races from across the universe, and the system was easy to use. This was a wonderful thing, and Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen, and Jasmine sat there smiling, and watched the revellers below enjoying themselves, and happiness is very important, and on the delivery journey job through space the crew had not been particularly happy at all, and they had been frequently wanting a small meteor to come and damage their ship so that they did not have to continue with the mundanity of a job that they wished that they had not got themselves into at all.

The drinks were finally brought by the drones carrying floating trays of drink, and this was a great relief as the temperature was at such a ridiculous level, that made you want to go to sleep. The crew then toasted each other, and Jasmine. Brian then said, "Here's to a brighter future Jasmine." Jasmine, smiled and replied, "Here's to a brighter future." The crew and Jasmine then clinked their glasses together and drank a sip.

The elephants on the stage were dancing and playing their trumpets and the band had begun levitating into the air and were now playing their musical instruments as if their lives depended on it. It was a wonderful evening so far, and the crew and Jasmine were having a great time, and so was everyone. Salomina, then said, "Shall we dance?" Jasmine then responded, "Yes. Let's dance." The crew and Jasmine then all descended and hit the dancefloor. The crew then danced the night away and took



occasional breaks and after about five hours, the crew and Jasmine were hungry, and Brian pressed the intercom button on the side of the chair, and spoke into it, "Hello. We were wondering when dinner was going to be?" A male voice, appeared on the other end of the line, and said, "You are welcome to enter the restaurant at any time." Brian was glad to hear this, and he replied, "Ok, great and thank you man." Brian then let go of the intercom button, and turned to the rest of the crew, "We can go for dinner anytime that we like." The rest of the crew smiled and then Karen said, "Ok, let's go for dinner." The crew and Jasmine levitated to the floor, and Jasmine lead the way to the restaurant, which did not take long at all. The crew quickly reached the restaurant, and they entered through a golden arched doorway.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine entered the restaurant and were greeted by a waiter, who was a grey alien, and who was wearing a tuxedo. "Hello." said the grey alien, "Now how many of you are there." Brian looked at the crew and said five." The grey alien then motioned them towards a table nearby. The restaurant was luxurious and filled with plants and had a large tank of tropical fish right up to the ceiling.

The cutlery on the table in the restaurant was silver service, and the restaurant was a hubbub of activity, and people were happily enjoying themselves. In one corner there was a man asleep with his face in a plate of crisps.

A waiter with a neon hairstyle then quickly came over, and said, "Hello and good evening, ladies and gentlemen, now what would you like to drink?" Brian then replied, "I would like a pint of beer please." The waiter looked down at Brian and said, "What kind of beer sir?" Brian thought

about it for a second and then responded, "Well a liquid one." The waiter laughed, then said, "Very good sir. You have a fine humour indeed sir. Now what would everyone else like to drink?" Karen said, "I will have a cocktail please, a mojito." Salomina then smiled and said, "I will have a pint of cider." Cedric asked for the same, and Jasmine. The waiter then left and went to get the drinks. The crew were all happy and mildly drunk already. Jasmine looked at the crew and was happy to be in their company. Not many people on the planet truly understood her, and everyone was always praising her brother Eric Strudelhofen to the heavens and beyond, and it was good to have some much more normal company. The waiter came back after a very short amount of time and brought the drinks, and then placed them upon the table. Brian began to drink his and so did the others.

Karen looked at Jasmine and wanted to know more about her, and decided to ask her a question, "So, Jasmine, tell us more about you." Jasmine smiled and put her drink down, and then replied, "Well, I was born Jasmine Strudelhofen on the planet Nouala, shortly after the time my baby brother Eric was levitated out of our house by aliens." Brian was astounded and could not believe what he was hearing. Brian then said in a surprised voice, "Your brother was levitated by Aliens from your house? Wow, I did not realise that aliens were still up to such things, and I thought that it had been banned totally from the universe, the use of levitation devices on unwitting individuals." This was true and no one in the universe was allowed to levitate people by intergalactic law whatsoever. Jasmine sighed, and then continued, "Yes. He was levitated out of the bedroom window, which was open, but after a couple

of hours they brought him back as they found him to be incredibly annoying.” Karen laughed and found this highly amusing indeed. Eric Strudelhofen irritating the aliens was very comical, and it was perfectly understandable that they should wish to bring him back. Jasmine had warm eyes thought Brian, and he was becoming rather fond of looking into them. Jasmine noticed and smiled at Brian, and then continued with what she was saying, which was, “And I was quite young when I heard this story, and it always was a fear of mine to be kidnapped by aliens, but still we grew up in a very nice house on Planet Noula, and our parents Betty and Arnold Strudelhofen had come from the planet Earth, to seek better opportunities and high paying jobs in the medical industry, because back on planet Earth all the medical jobs are mostly taken by robots, and have been for a very long time. Now, luckily, my parents had managed to get jobs with a pharmaceutical company, and they made very nice money indeed, and invested in stocks and shares, and all was going well, and we had a great life that consisted of going on holidays rather often to luxury resorts, which were funded by the government at the time.” Karen then interjected, “So, you had a happy childhood, Jasmine?” Jasmine eyes were almost misting over at the fond memories, and she replied, “Yes, very fond memories indeed, and we had everything that you could wish for upon growing up. Including a very large garden in which to play in, and it had a swing, and a swimming pool, and some beautiful trees and lovely plants, and it was a real delight.” She then paused before adding, “But after my brother was kidnapped by aliens, my father was a much angrier man and he kept replaying the video footage from

the security camera over and over again, and he became incredibly obsessed with getting revenge, and this took its toll on my mother of course. This of course led to many arguments, and previously we had been happy, and me and my brother both enjoyed school immensely and Eric was very popular for being funny, and he had a very strange sense of humour that included tickling the teacher under the armpits with a feather duster whilst he was trying to teach. This was highly amusing because the teacher was allergic to feather dusters and kept sneezing and had to leave for several hours, causing the abandonment of the lesson. This made my brother Eric very popular, and he was hoisted upon the shoulders of his classmates and paraded through the corridors of the school in his triumph.

The teacher afterwards then always gave Eric a hard time, but Eric enjoyed being so popular and he continued to perform various pranks upon other teachers, and he became legendary at the school. Our lives involved playing with friends and exploring the beautiful countryside, and we especially loved the coast, and we had many happy memories there indeed.

Our parents' relationship in the meantime was deteriorating, and finally our parents broke up, and Eric was distraught, so distraught in fact that Eric bought a load of superglue and superglued our parents together, and this of course caused more problems, and it took six months to finally separate them, but their relationship had improved, and Eric was praised by both of them, and it

was hard to compete for their affections and it made me depressed, but Eric was becoming more and more

confident, and he started forming social groups, and one of them was called "If I don't put a smile on your face, I will wash your windows for free." This of course was a very popular service, and Eric rarely had to wash windows because he told a lot of very funny jokes, and one woman found his jokes so amusing that she had to go to hospital. Meanwhile I was a bit withdrawn and depressed, so I was sent off to a nearby sanatorium which helped immensely. I was there for two years, and then I left and continued my education at college and became a dancer and was thoroughly enjoying that.

Eric in the meantime was starting to start businesses, which more often than not failed, and he got very frustrated and finally decided to go on a course run by Peter Topnovsky, a well-known business leader. Peter was very successful, and he taught Eric everything that he needed to know, and his business started to do well, and he started to make a lot of money, an incredible amount of money in fact, and he became rich very rapidly, and he was very happy, until his legs fell off after developing leprosy, which was not much fun at all.

I on the other hand was struggling to compete as dancing was a very competitive business, and once I broke my ankle, I could no longer dance at all without feeling pain, so I gave up dancing, and began to work for my brother. Eric was pretty relaxed at first to work for but then he became more and more stressed, and he ended up hiring psychiatrists to help him refocus, and one of the psychiatrists was called Doctor Good Day. Doctor Good Day was very good at his job, and he told Eric, there is no point Eric worrying at all about anything because Human

beings do not exist whatsoever. Now this was of course, strangely true, because someone at the very start of the human race, once language had been developed thought that the human race ate a lot and called them Human bins because they were dyslexic. Afterwards Eric no longer worried about anything and always found a way to cope with any situation at all, and he persevered, and continued to be successful until the government where we lived decided to go to war, and some aliens from outer space then joined in and began attacking human beings from all sides.

Eric served his country and become fond of leading people, and he was well thought of, and highly admired. Eventually the governments had to join together to fight the aliens, and once they were defeated the planet was in ruins and millions of people had lost their lives, and Eric began work on joining in the rebuilding efforts.

Eric then went on to form new companies, and I too started my own business painting and decorating, and I was successful in my own right, and Eric was happy. Our parents of course were very proud of us, and we all went on holiday together. Eric had big plans and was not one to sit on his laurels, and he continued to work hard, and finally the governments of the world decided to get rid of the countries from the planet, and become a singular country, and this made sense as the human body is made up of sixty five percent water, and water travels the planet, and no human being is from anyone particular place on Planet Nouala.

Eventually due to a virus wiping out huge numbers of people the country descended into anarchy, and for several years the planet was lawless, and no one wanted

there to be a government anymore. Eric was distressed at the anarchy and wanted to bring order once more back to the planet, and he had enough money to buy the planet, which was now up for sale by the government as they had had enough of the situation, and they were constantly being chased from place to place as their lives were in danger.

Eric then began to run the planet, and things became a lot more organised, and people began to recognise that Eric knew what he was doing and believed in him and were happy to work for him. Eric continued to enjoy his work and people were happy living under his rule, and I was happy doing my own thing, and well, I had numerous boyfriends and one husband, who sadly passed away as an elephant fell on his head whilst he was having a picnic, which obviously was a very sad loss.

Still, sadly my relationships have never quite worked out, and I have never been very good at relationships, as I fancy robots mostly. Still, I had my brother, who was always there for me, and this was of course a great comfort to me. Eric became a celebrity on the planet and in the universe, and he started his own television channel, and then became more egotistical, and the fame went to his head, and he is what you see now, a very busy man who has people worshipping him as a religion.

Still, the main thing is, it is a pleasure to meet you, and it was fate I believe that brought me here and I will be glad to leave, as Eric's regulations are driving me up the wall as they say." Salomina could understand why and she then smiled, and toasted Jasmine. The crew then toasted Jasmine together, and Brian said, "Here's to a new life

Jasmine.” Jasmine then smiled back and replied, “Here’s to a new life for us all.” The crew then continued to drink and talk and laugh, and also explore the new possibilities back on planet Earth. Cedric sat thinking for a few seconds and then asked Jasmine “What would you like to do back on planet Earth Jasmine?” Jasmine then smiled and thought about it for a moment, and replied, “Well, be happy, and live in a beautiful place surrounded by tropical trees, and relax, and just rethink my life really.” Brian and the crew were also rethinking their lives, and they had many things to contemplate about the return to planet Earth, which was not that far away whatsoever.

The crew then continued to talk and talk and talk, and they kept checking their watches, and were wondering where the food was. Brian, Cedric, Salomina and Karen, and Jasmine were incredibly hungry, and they could not believe that the food was taking so long. Still, they were all having a good time, and certainly they knew how to enjoy themselves. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine, kept drinking and dancing the night away, and they were all extremely drunk. Brian then said slurring his speech, “Where’s the food everyone, I cannot see my legs, and I need food to bring my legs back.” This of course was not very helpful, and your legs disappearing is disastrous, and Brian was so drunk, but he still knew that he would need legs, and he knew that he had to get back to the hotel as soon as possible. Hopefully after some food had passed his lips, but so far there was no sign of it whatsoever. Still, the food on the menu looked very good indeed.

Brian then yawned, and sighed, and was beginning to think that the food was never going to arrive, and so were



the others. Salomina was almost asleep and was having a very hard time keeping her eyes open, but she managed to do so and continued drinking, as did the others. Jasmine then spoke once again, "I wonder what is happening with the food, it has never been this long before, and I am starving." Brian sighed and then replied, "Yes, me too, I am absolutely famished." The others looked suitably unimpressed by the non-delivery of food, and Jasmine was beginning to tire of waiting. Jasmine then finished off her drink and began another, and said, "I am going to have this drink, and after that I want to go to sleep because I don't think I can actually wait anymore for this food." Brian didn't blame Jasmine at all, and he was very tired as well, but this was the last day or two of their trip to the planet and they wanted to make the most of it. Brian yawned and then replied to Jasmine, "Well, you can stay in my room Jasmine, it is room number.... er I cannot remember, but you are welcome to stay in it." Jasmine then smiled a glorious smile, and responded, "Wow, great thank you so much Brian, that would be fantastic. I will find out the room number from reception." Brian then said, "Ok, Jasmine. My pass code is four zero six." Jasmine, Brian, Cedric, Salomina, and Jasmine then continued drinking, and Jasmine finished her drink and afterwards turned to the rest of the crew, and said, "Well, I am going back to the hotel now everyone. I will see you later." The crew then all said goodbye in unison, and Jasmine pressed the button on the side of her chair, and she levitated back down to the ground and then walked off towards the exit.

Cedric then said, "Well, that was nice of Jasmine to join us, and she told us quite a lot really, now, I am not sure

about you all, but I think that she is a very decent person.” Karen was then silent for a moment, and she said, “Yes, I think that she is very nice too, and it would be a great pleasure to have her aboard the spaceship.” Brian was delighted as he was looking forward to getting to know her better, much better indeed.

The crew then continued to wait and wait and wait for dinner. Eventually they all fell asleep in their chairs, and when they awoke the place was absolutely deserted, but over on the other side of the dancefloor were some turtles, and on the backs of the turtles were dinner plates, and some slow cookers containing food. Brian could not believe what he was seeing, and nor could the rest of the crew, and they were incredibly disappointed by the time it was taking to arrive. Brian then looked at the others and said, “Are we really seeing what I think we are seeing?” Salomina then nodded, and said, “Yes, unfortunately. We are actually having our food delivered on the back of turtles!” Brian then looked at his watch, and then said, “Wow, it has been fifteen hours now since we started waiting!” Karen then added, “Yes, that is far too long indeed, and I am really angry at Eric Strudelhofen, because this is supposed to be an exclusive resort, and the service is absolutely terrible.” The crew then all looked at the turtles and Brian said, “It certainly is, but how about we levitate back down to the floor and collect the food ourselves?” The crew all nodded and pressed the buttons on the side of their chairs, and they all then levitated down to the floor, and began walking over to the turtles.

Suddenly a man in a tuxedo appeared from nowhere, and looked very angry and then said, “What do you think you are doing? These turtles do not like being near humans if

they can help it, and you are supposed to wait for them to come to you! This is against Eric Strudelhofen's regulations, regulation nine hundred and eighty-three to be precise, which dictates that food will be delivered at a time of the turtles choosing and guests are not allowed to interfere with the turtles as they are protected species." Brian and the crew were very angry about this, and Brian said, "Stuff the regulations." and then he tried to take a dinner plate from the back of the turtle, but the man in the tuxedo got in his way. The man in the tuxedo was very angry and was also very upset at this attempted breach of protocol, and he grabbed Brian, and then tried wrestling him to get at the food. Brian then fought back and as he did so the rest of the crew joined in and together, they managed to wrestle the man to the ground. Brian and the crew then sat on him together. Which was not exactly the greatest experience ever.

Suddenly huge numbers of drones appeared, and they began shouting in unison, "Get off of the waiter, you are breaching regulation nine hundred and eighty-two, and that dictates that waiters are entitled to work in a peaceful environment and if you abuse them, you will be fined by Eric Strudelhofen, one million pounds sterling." Salomina then shouted back at the drones, "Get lost you metallic morons, we do not have a million pounds in sterling between us."

The crew then continued to sit on the waiter as the drones advanced towards them, and the drones then shouted again, "Get off of the waiter, he does not want to smell your sweaty bodies at all. Now, this is your last warning." The crew then refused to move, and suddenly the drones began shooting some kind of alternative laser beams at

them, and the laser beams were not strong enough to kill you, but they hurt. Salomina then jumped up, and the others quickly followed as they were hit by laser beams and couldn't sit still because of it. The waiter then tried to grab Karen, and Salomina then grabbed a dinner plate and attempted to smash him over the head with it, and he dodged her just in time. The plate then hit the floor and broke into pieces. The waiter was then wrestling Karen, but she was stronger than him.

Brian then picked up a dinner plate and attempted to hit the waiter with it, but he was suddenly hit by a laser beam, and he dropped it instantly, which was a very sensible option. Cedric in exasperation then tried the same and he was also defeated and then dropped the dinner plate. This crazy situation continued until all the plates were lying in pieces upon the floor, and the waiter then tried to bite Brian's legs. Brian managed to kick him hard where it hurts. The waiter then fell screaming onto the floor and began crying.

Brian then looked at the turtles who had moved a very short distance, and he said, "Let us try and take the food." The drones then shouted, "Oh, no you don't." and then continued firing laser beams at Brian and at the rest of the crew. The crew then ducked down and then managed to roll across the floor and grab the slow cookers and then got up again and began to run towards the exit. The drones then chased them and as they reached the door, Brian then closed it, and they were safe.

The crew then ran across the reception room to the elevator past the robot who was working the night shift. The robot was busy doing something else and did not look at them. Still, Eric Strudelhofen was probably asleep and

would not hear about it until the morning. The crew then said, "Goodnight." to each other in unison, and then went into their own rooms.

In Brians room Jasmine was asleep on the bed and looked peaceful. Brian then sat down in a chair, after finding a plastic piece of cutlery and he then began eating the food from the slow cooker which was a stew. Jasmine snored as Brian ate his food, and he looked over at her and wondered what the future would be for all of them. Brian finished eating, then sat thinking for a few minutes, and afterwards got on the bed beside Jasmine. He then went to sleep.

The morning arrived quickly, and Brian had slept well and Jasmine too, and the crew, and all had slept well into the afternoon. Brian then woke up and slowly looked around. Jasmine was starting to wake up, and Brian heard his mobile phone beeping. Brian then reached out and picked it up. There were fifty new messages. Brian then rubbed his eyes slowly and then played the first one. A video of Eric Strudelhofen then began to play, and he was extremely angry, much angrier than he had ever seen anyone. Eric was shouting, and he said, "Brian, what the flipping whatsamathingy are you playing at? Those turtles are supposed to deliver the food, and you are not supposed to take the flipping food yourself, and what is more, I have a waiter who is in hospital with a stress condition. Now, call me Brian, call me immediately because I am really not happy at all with you." Brian then went through the other forty-nine messages and in them Eric got progressively angrier, and upon opening the last message, Eric was screaming, "Brian, Brian, you have not picked up the phone, what is wrong with your demented

mind Brian, this is the fiftieth call now, and I am extremely angry at you Brian. This is intolerable and absolutely unacceptable, and I will not tolerate it any longer, because what don't you understand about Eric Strudelhofen's regulations? Eric Strudelhofen's regulations are there to be adhered to and are not to be broken by some drunken imbeciles, and although I do appreciate your custom Brian, you and your crew have really irritated me, and I never wish to see you ever again. Yes, I mean it Brian, you and your crew disgust with your dislike of my regulations. Yes you, you dimwit, you incompetent son of a strange mother, you are all banned from the Planet Noula, and I never want any of you coming back here ever again! Now let me clarify this final point, Brian. You all have three days to leave, and I want you to give some money to the waiter as damages. So, goodbye Brian, do not come back here whatever you do, because you and your crew are all crazy individuals who really do not care about regulations, and finally I cannot believe that you were so irresponsible and rude after all the hospitality that I have shown you!" Brian was not surprised at the message at all, and he then went over and sat in the chair. He then ate some of the leftover food, and took what Eric Strudelhofen had said in. Jasmine had just woken up and was wondering what the look on Brian's face was about. Jasmine then spoke, "Brian, why are you looking stressed?" Brian sighed, and then paused before speaking again, and finally said, "Eric has banned me and the crew from the planet forever." Jasmine then said, "Oh, I see Brian, are you upset by this?" Brian then smiled and replied, "Oh, no, not at all. I cannot wait to get away from this place." Jasmine smiled and then nodded, and added,

"Me too, but that does complicate things rather." Brian then took a few seconds to think and then replied, "Yes, it does. Now will Eric be angry at you leaving?" Jasmine then pondered the thought and replied, "Probably a little, but he would be extremely angry if he finds that I have left with you all on your spaceship, so really, we must keep this a secret." Jasmine then paused and said, "But once we reach Earth, I can tell Eric that I am on holiday." Brian then smiled and said, "Good idea Jasmine."

Brian then got up and picked up some clothes and a fresh towel and added, "I am going to have a shower now Jasmine, but you are welcome to have one after." Jasmine then smiled and Brian went off to have a shower. Brian shortly returned and Jasmine had a shower too. Later Brian and Jasmine left the room and Brian was pulling his suitcase along the floor, and they then met the crew in the corridor. Brian looked at the crew, who also had their suitcases with them. The crew looked at Brian, and they knew that something was up immediately. Brian then said, "We have all been banned from the planet by Eric Strudelhofen." Cedric could not quite believe it, and he then replied, "Why? Because we got a bit hungry last night?" Brian then laughed loudly and said "Yes. Because we got a bit hungry last night, and he was so angry that he called me a few rude names, but still, you can't please all the people all the time can you." This was very true indeed, and now was the time to leave.

Karen then turned to Jasmine and said, "We do have to do a few delivery jobs first before we reach planet Earth but, it won't be long at all before we are there. Now, do you have to pick up a few clothes Jasmine for the

journey?" Jasmine nodded and then said, "Yes, and I will disguise myself in dark glasses." Brian thought that this was a very good idea indeed and also thought that the sooner that they could get away the better. Brian and the crew and Jasmine then walked over to the elevator, and Brian pressed the button on it, and said to Jasmine, "You had better leave alone Jasmine. But we will be stood outside our spacecraft in the spaceport, and it is easy to find and very distinctive, as Brian painted a picture of a large hamster on it." It was a delightful looking picture and a very rambunctious looking one.

Jasmine then got into the elevator after the doors had opened, and she waved goodbye and was slightly nervous as she had never been on the run from her brother before. The crew then waited for Jasmine to descend to the reception area, and for the elevator to return. When it did the doors then opened and they all got in and were glad to be leaving this strange planet. The crew then descended in the elevator, and they all then arrived, and the doors opened. The crew afterwards walked across the floor of the reception area, and the staff member behind the reception desk then pulled out a megaphone and shouted "Booo!" at the crew as they left wheeling their suitcases.

The crew then kept walking briskly and headed towards the spaceport terminal, and to their spaceship. It had been a very strange stay indeed, and not one that they wished to repeat. The crew then reached the spaceport and entered their spaceship, and the doors then closed behind them. The food that they had ordered had arrived at the spaceship and was inside the storage area, a note in the hallway read. Brian then walked off to the storage area and picked up some snacks, and then returned. The crew



had just left their suitcases in the hallway, and they were outside waiting. Brian then joined them and handed them some snacks, and they began to wait for Jasmine. Time passed slowly and the crew were slightly anxious, and they couldn't wait to get this over with. This was a most unusual experience indeed and not something that they ever wished to go through ever again. Still, it was nearly time to leave, and finally Jasmine appeared wearing dark sunglasses and pulling a suitcase behind her. The crew then waved at Jasmine and said nothing. Jasmine then waved back at them all, and they all then went inside the spaceship. The door then closed behind them, and they were all glad that they had not been chased by Eric Strudelhofen worshippers.

The crew then took their suitcases into the entertainment room, and they sat down on the chairs as did Jasmine. The next stage of the journey was about to begin, and Jasmine was looking forward to an adventure. Brian looked at Jasmine and then said, "Jasmine, did you remember to lock your flat?" Jasmine found this highly amusing and then laughed and said, "Oh Brian, you really are silly, but I do not expect that I will be back anytime soon, and I do not really like that flat anyway." Brian then smiled and said, "Great. Well, ok then, welcome to our spaceship Jasmine. Now would you like a drink?" Jasmine then nodded, and said, "Yes please, that would be fantastic." Brian then shouted out loudly, "Five drinks please drone, including a coca cola, an orange juice, a blueberry juice, a tomato juice, and what would you like Jasmine?" Jasmine then thought about it for a few seconds and then replied, "Well, I will have a fruit squash please." Brian then shouted loudly again, "A fruit squash also please drone."

The drone then arrived minutes later, and the crew and Jasmine felt relaxed, and they felt much more at ease now that they were free to leave this crazy planet, and it was the craziest planet that they had ever visited indeed, and what a relief it was to not have turned into Eric Strudelhofen worshippers, which would have been terrible. Cedric and the crew took their time to relax and enjoyed a few sips of their drinks, and then Cedric turned to Jasmine, "Jasmine, we have a spare bedroom, and it has lots of room and cupboard space, and a shower." Jasmine then smiled, and said, "Great, thank you all very much, that is most welcome and greatly appreciated." Brian then said, "You really are most welcome." The crew then continued to relax, and Karen then walked over to the control panel and pressed a few buttons on it, and then typed in the coordinates to the space station "Stop crashing into me." This of course was the last stop, but they had a few delivery points before then.

Brian was in a happy mood as were the rest of the crew, and Karen was ecstatic at leaving planet Nouala. She then turned to Jasmine and said, "We are leaving now Jasmine, but you can look out through the porthole if you like?" Jasmine then got up and walked over to the porthole as did the rest of the crew whilst clutching their drinks. Jasmine had never been in a spaceship this size before, and it was an exhilarating experience to see the city of Noula disappearing below them. "Wow!" said Jasmine, "that is incredible how fast we are moving." A tear then rolled down her pretty cheek, and she was a little bit sad. Brian then put his arms around her, and said, "Honestly it will be ok Jasmine, you will see Eric again I assure you, but anyway it is good to be able to make your own choices in

life.” Jasmine then smiled and wiped the tear from her eye. The crew and Jasmine then all stared out of the porthole and watched the planet rapidly disappearing below. Space travel is very moving, and there is a lot to wonder about, and with the amount of life forms in the universe, you never know who you are going to meet.

The universe offers many opportunities and possibilities to have new adventures, and the beauty of the universe is an incredible and magnificent thing. Still, the crew of the spaceship crew are we there yet have chosen to deliver the most boring things across the universe that they could ever dream of. Adventure was mostly as far from them as could possibly be. Yet, they always crossed their fingers and hoped for some kind of adventure.

## Chapter 15

“Uhara.”

Space, and the final journey before planet Earth, and silence, lots of silence as the spaceship moved rapidly along towards its next destination, a small colony in space, called Uhara. The colony was due to receive some packages and the crew were early already as the spaceship was travelling at quite a speed. The inhabitants of the planet Uhara were some very strange people, and they liked to make beeping noises, but quite why they liked to make beeping noises no one knew whatsoever. Still the packages had been arranged by Brian, and the crew were sat talking to each other again in the entertainment room. Jasmine looked very happy indeed, and she then started humming. Brian then said “That is really nice Jasmine, I

like it. Do you hum often?" Brian was very fond of humming, and he found himself humming in the shower rather often. The rest of the crew could hear him and found it quite entertaining.

The crew had indeed come across some very strange people lately and it was nice to spend time with Jasmine, and Jasmine was a refreshing change from the crazy people that they had been meeting recently, including Eric Strudelhofen.

Cedric was sat contemplating what he was going to feel like back on planet Earth, because It had been quite a long time now, and space had captured his heart, but his destiny did not lay amongst the stars he thought, but on Earth. Cedric's relatives lived on planet Earth and there is nothing greater than being close to friends and family, because space can get very lonely and claustrophobic when you are travelling with the same people. Still, the crew got along together very nicely.

The crew and Jasmine arrived at the colony Uhara, and they docked inside a small space station that was probably one of the smallest in the universe. The space station was old and rundown, and it needed much repair, and it did not look safe at all, in fact it looked so unsafe that they thought it could fall apart at any moment.

The crew and Jasmine then got out of their spaceship and walked around the docking area and waited with the packages. Each of the crew members held a package. The colonists then arrived shortly, and they were wearing strange dark tunics that had fluorescent glowing material in the dark patterns and that also had hoods.

The colonists then waved at them and then said, "How do strange creatures?" Brian and the crew had never been

called strange creatures before, and it was kind of endearing, and Brian smiled upon hearing it. The rest of the crew did too and then said, "How do you?" They then pointed to Jasmine and said, "Oh, and by the way this is Jasmine." which was the colonist's favourite phrase that they used to each other. One of the colonists then replied, "Oh, we are okay thank you, but the space station is in a bit of a mess as we have been having some malfunctions. Now, we are looking to move soon, and this space station will probably be smashed into a meteorite very shortly." Brian then took a look around, and said, "What kind of problems are you having?" Another colonist then replied, "Well, we have had an infestation of mice that were brought here by a spaceship that was delivering some food. It was an absolute nightmare, but still, we managed to get rid of them all and did save their lives, and that is a good thing because we are pacifists you see, and we only believe in punching angry people and pacifying them." Brian and the crew then laughed. The colonists had been visited before by the crew, and they were quite familiar with each other now. The colonists were called Foo, Fa, and Pau, and they were part of a family. Foo was female and middle aged, and Fa was male and also middle aged, and Pau was half their age. The other family members were elsewhere on the space station. Foo, Fa, and Pau then motioned for the crew to follow them, and they followed them down a large dark corridor with flickering lights. The electricity supply was quite clearly playing up. Cedric then looked up at the ceiling and said, "Problems with the electricity?" Fa then replied, "Yes. The mice chewed through the numerous cables and caused havoc." Brian then nodded and replied, "Oh, I see. I think I may have

some spare electricity cables on the ship that you can have." Fa then said, "Oh, thank you kind sir." Foo, Fa, and Pau then lead the crew into a large lounge with a table and with many seats and then motioned for them to sit down. The seats were very comfortable indeed.

Foo smiled and then said, "So, how are things with you all?" Karen then paused for a moment and replied, "Well, we just got banned from the planet Nouala." Foo, Fa and Pau then laughed in unison, and found this highly entertaining indeed. Foo then said, "Well, that is not a bad thing at all because it is very strange place indeed."

Jasmine then smiled and said, "Yes, it is unusual, and by the way I am Eric Strudelhofen's sister." Foo, Fa and Pau then in unison replied, "Hello Jasmine, we hope you are not as strange as your brother." Jasmine laughed and then added, "Well, I am trying my best not to be." Foo, Fa and Pau then sniggered, and the crew smiled. Salomina was happy to see them again, and said, "It is great to be here."

Foo then walked over to her and cuddled her for a moment, and afterwards then sat back down and said, "Thank you." Fa then pulled out some cans of drink from a drawer in the table, and he handed one each to the crew and Jasmine. The crew and Jasmine opened them, and Fa took out some more cans from the drawer and then handed them to Foo, Pau, and then got one for himself. Pau then said, "So, where are you headed next?" Brian then replied, "The space station called stop crashing into me." Foo then laughed, and said, "That is a very silly name for a space station." The crew then all agreed and nodded. It was a very silly name indeed. Foo then replied, "Oh, yes, it is, and I hear that there have been some very strange goings on on the space station, and people have

been disappearing, and they have been robbed you see.” Karen did not like the sound of this, and she said, “Oh, oh really.” Foo then added, “Yes. Apparently, there have been some deliberate teleportation’s of innocent people accused of biscuit rustling there too, so I would be very careful indeed.” The crew then took this in and afterwards said, “Thank you very much, we will be very careful indeed.” The crew had not heard of biscuit rustling before, and this of course was not a very sensible idea it seemed. The space station did indeed sound dark and dangerous and not somewhere that you would ever want to go at all. The crew were not really used to dangerous places, and they wanted to survive and then return to planet Earth. Planet Earth was calling them, and they could not wait to arrive there. Foo, Fa and Pau seemed very happy indeed, and it was a great pleasure to see them again. Cedric then asked them all, “So, is there anything else to look out for on the space station called stop crashing into me?” Pau then replied, “Well there is a lot of fraud there, and a lot of computer hacking you see. Millions of pounds sterling have been taken from many space travellers and they have not realised before it is much too late.” Salomina then said, “Wow, that really is very bad.” Foo thought it was too and then sighed and afterwards responded “Yes, indeed it is.” Pau afterwards then spoke, “Now would you all care for dinner?” Brian really loved dinner, especially something different, and something different was always what you got here. Brian then smiled a great big smile, and said, “Oh, that would be lovely.” Pau then loudly shouted out, “Drones, bring us some dinner would you for eight of us.” Shortly the drones arrived, and the crew then began tucking into large plates of roast chicken filled with

ice cream. Brian thought it was absolutely delicious, and the others did too, and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The dessert was a gigantic chocolate sponge filled with custard. Brian could not get enough of the custard, and it was dripping off of his chin, and he wanted more. "Is there anymore." he asked, and Foo said that there was, and he then shouted to the drone to bring them some more pudding, a very large pudding. Mmm, they loved puddings more than life.

The crew and Foo, Pau and Fa then continued talking, and Fa began to sing. The lyrics were.

Here in the universe, we sit, with  
not very much, but with what we  
have got, we are grateful for  
every little bit, and here amongst  
the stars, with our family and  
our friends, we may be here for  
quite a bit,  
and there are many travellers that we see,

and they do not look happy at all, and  
life for them it seems apocryphal, and  
we find pleasure in simple things,  
and in the stars and in the moons and in the moonbeams,  
we love to watch the universe outside,  
and we love to daydream,  
because we believe in peace,  
because we are pacifists,  
and we want everyone in the universe to get along,  
and life it is a complex thing, and not  
much fun when it goes wrong, and



although life is so complex, we wish life  
to be simpler, because simplicity it is  
the best, and it brings us peace,  
and there are far too many in the universe,  
who are depressed, and yes, we all  
want to be happy, and although we  
lead simple lives,  
they bring us great pleasure you see,  
and what is life about really?  
it certainly is not about rushing around you see, but  
taking things slowly, and not being miserly, and  
although things may be expensive, we try our best,  
and we make and mend, and with  
our family we are blessed, and we  
wish you all a safe journey, to your  
next destination, and we wish you  
happiness,  
and whatever you do in life, we will always think of you,  
because without meeting you, we would not know what is  
going in the universe no less.

The crew and Jasmine and Foo, and Pau clapped, and Fa  
stood up and took a bow.

This was a very pleasant evening indeed thought Brian,  
and Jasmine seemed very happy, and although the journey  
had been very strange, Brian hoped that life for Jasmine  
aboard their spaceship would be a happy one.

The evening continued and there was lots of conversation  
and games, and the crew then decided to sing their own  
song, together which they had all written, and it was  
called we are not normal really, which was a great name  
thought Brian.

We are not normal really,  
no not at all, but we are  
really strange,  
because we chose to be delivery drivers, and  
we are now all quite deranged, because the  
journeys are mostly very boring, and

mostly the same,  
and we all are sick of not seeing many  
people,  
and sometimes we stand on our heads,  
and wave our legs,  
and we try to attract the attention of passing aliens,  
and wave at them,  
and then make strange hand signals if they complain, yes,  
we are not normal really,  
no not at all,  
and we are all going slightly insane, and our  
brains they are not what they used to be, and  
our bodies cannot take the strain, so, what are to  
do except,  
be brave, because being  
abnormal, is quite fun you  
see,  
and across the universe we have travelled, and  
we have tried to be, as abnormal as can be,  
and being abnormal it is quite fun you see, but  
the aliens think that we are weirdos, and that  
may be, but we are as happy as can be,  
travelling through the galaxy with strange food to eat, and  
with plenty of humour to divert the boredom, which

happens far too frequently, and sometimes you see, there is nothing wrong with abnormality, and we all drink Darjeeling regularly, and in space and time, we make our own history, and for years on end, going crazy has been a godsend, so let us rock and roll, and bring on the insanity, because our psychiatrist warned us, they warned us against going into space, because we had rather strange faces, but so far, no aliens have wanted to talk to us very often, but we do not care about that you see, because we are crazy space travellers, and we are as happy as can be, so won't you join us and be as crazy as can be, because we are abnormal, and that pleases us you see.

Foo, Fa and Pau then laughed and clapped, and Jasmine too. The crew then got up and took a bow, and then sat back down again.

The night was still young, and the crew were having a wonderful time. It was not very often that the crew found people with a sense of humour in space. Space could be a very unhumorous place, but it was good to find some good company. Time ticked on, and the rest of the family joined them and then ordered dinner too. There were two other family members who were of similar age, and they were called, Hou, and Jou. Jou and Hou were middle aged as well and were male. Jou and Hou said hello and then introduced themselves. Jou then asked the crew a question, "I wanted to ask, it has been a long time since you became delivery drivers, and I was wondering what plans do you have after you finish your jobs?" Brian then said, "Well, we plan to return to planet Earth, as we are

missing it rather you see, and space is very nice, but it is not the same as planet Earth. Now, space has many positive things and there are a great many beautiful things across the universe, but the monotony has been really getting extremely tedious indeed, and as our jobs are nearly finished, we cannot wait to get home.” Fa then said, “I really do not blame you, it does look lovely, and maybe one day we will live on planet Earth, but we are miners you see, and we mine the meteorites and make some decent money, and no one really bothers us at all.”

Salomina then replied, “That is very unusual indeed. Now, I wonder why that is?” Pau then said, “I do not know at all, but we are glad of it because in space there really are some crazy people who will try and steal everything from you, and who could potentially take your life.” This was very true of course and the crew had certainly met their fair share of crazy people, but they had survived. The crew then continued to talk to Fa, Pau, Foo, Jou and Hou long into the night, and then after much drinking and merrymaking, the crew were shown to their rooms. The rooms were lush and luxurious, and the beds were very comfortable.

The crew lay there on their beds and then stared at the ceilings. This had been a fantastic night indeed.

Brian, of the crew was the most thoughtful of all of them, and he stared at the ceiling and thought about the future again. The future of their lives on planet Earth was certainly going to be very enjoyable indeed, and Brian had missed the rivers and the streams, and the lakes and the valleys, and the seas and the oceans. The oceans of stars in space could not compete, and despite their beauty, they did not compare to the beauty of planet Earth. Brian

personally loved nothing more than to visit the seaside, and then stick his feet in the water, and afterwards go swimming, and they had been swimming amongst a sea of stars for far too long unfortunately for them all.

## **Chapter 16**

“The journeys in-between pot noodles.”

The spaceship rapidly and spectacularly continued onwards through the galaxy and then headed towards the space station stop crashing into me. It was but a short distance and the beauty of the stars were mesmerising thought Jasmine as she stood there at the porthole in the entertainment lounge and then stared at them. Jasmine once more felt alive, and planet Noula was rapidly disappearing behind them.

Brian, Cedric, Karen, and Salomina then joined Jasmine and walked over to the porthole in the entertainment lounge. Brian smiled and then looked at Jasmine and said, “It is amazing isn’t it Jasmine, the beauty of the stars and the planets, and so incredibly inspiring.” Jasmine thought so too, and smiled back and then replied, “Oh, yes, Brian, I used to like looking at the stars, and I used to lay there and think, oh, what would it be like to travel amongst them, and now I am. Also, the opportunity that you have all given me is truly incredibly, and I truly appreciate it. Salomina then replied, “You are most welcome Jasmine. Did you have a good first night’s sleep.” Jasmine then replied, “Yes, thank you, it was very comfortable indeed.” Sleep was a wonderful thing, and the crew could never get enough of it. Brian frequently before bed, jumped up and

down in his bedroom whilst wearing a tiger romper suit and then jumped up and down on his bed and shouted I am tired, I am so tired. Karen then turned to Salomina and said, "Jasmine, have you heard from your brother yet?" Jasmine paused, and then responded, "Yes, and I just said I was on holiday for a couple of months off of the planet, and he just then said OK, great well have a good time. Suddenly then Eric started screaming about being chased by a large crowd of people wielding carrots and had to go quickly." Brian laughed, and then said, "Oh, I wonder what the regulation for preventing people wielding carrots is?" Jasmine giggled and then said, "Oh, I am really not sure, but there probably is one." Cedric then added, "Yes, they probably have to be wielded at the correct angles no doubt." The crew and Jasmine laughed loudly and found this highly amusing. Karen then said, "Now, what do you know of planet Earth Jasmine?" Jasmine then thought about it for a moment, and said "Well, I know it is round, and it can be expensive to live on, and the beauty of it is astounding." Cedric then replied, "Yes, it is a truly beautiful place, and the people are very friendly, but you are right about the cost of living. It really is not cheap, and you do have to look very hard to find a bargain these days, but if you can get the right job, then you can earn decent money, unlike on the planet Nouala." Brian laughed and then added, "Yes, you really cannot earn much on the planet Noula at all can you Jasmine, but buying things is very cheap indeed." Jasmine nodded, and said, "Yes, it is." The crew then continued to stare out of the window and let the ship do its work.

The robot elephant cleaner then arrived in the room, and said, "Hello, how are you all? Oh, I see you have a new

guest." Jasmine then said, "Hello, yes, I am new here, and I am Jasmine, and you are?" The robot elephant cleaner then looked at Jasmine and said, "Hello Jasmine. Today you can call me Betty." Jasmine then replied, "Oh, that is a very nice name, do you frequently change your name Betty?" The robot elephant cleaner then said, "Well, yes, I have forty thousand unpaid parking tickets you see, and I do not want them to catch me, so I hitched a lift with the crew and I am now absconding from the intergalactic traffic wardens." Brian then laughed loudly, and the rest of the crew did too, and then Brian said, "Yes, Betty is on a wanted list, and traffic wardens all over the universe despise her, and we despise the traffic wardens immensely, so we were very happy to help her escape." Jasmine smiled and looked at Betty directly, and then said, "Oh, so you are a revolutionary then Betty, a revolutionary taking a stand against the injustices caused by traffic wardens?" Betty the robot elephant cleaner then giggled in her robotic voice and found this funny. She then said, "Yes, being on the run from traffic wardens is quite fun, and so far, we have managed to avoid traffic wardens by painting white lines on the spaceship." Salomina, then added, "Yes, that is true, because if we park on double yellow lines, the traffic wardens get confused, because our spaceship has white lines you see, and that cancels the yellow lines out and the yellow lines cancel out the white lines." Jasmine thought that this was a brilliant idea, and then said, "Wow, that is very inventive indeed." Brian then nodded and agreed and then said, "Yes, it came to us whilst drinking, and after passing a traffic warden, who could not believe that he was seeing white lines. The traffic wardens have been indoctrinated you see, and they cannot

handle seeing white lines at all, and they get very angry and frustrated because they cannot give you a parking ticket." Jasmine then laughed, and really hated traffic wardens herself, and she once used several rolls of Sellotape to Sellotape a traffic warden to a lamp post. Jasmine then smiled at the memory. Salomina had no fond memories of traffic wardens and could not bear the thought of them. She put the thought out of her mind, and then looked at Jasmine, and said, "Fond memories of traffic wardens Jasmine?" Jasmine laughed, and then replied, "Well, actually not really, I sellotaped one to a lamp post." The crew then laughed their heads off, and Karen said, "Oh, yes, I agree that is a very sensible decision, because they only go around the universe causing great upset." Jasmine agreed, and then said, "Very true." Betty the robot elephant cleaner then interjected, and replied, "Yes, absolutely, traffic wardens are truly awful, and I would like to suck up all the yellow lines in the universe." Now, that was a very sensible idea indeed thought the crew and Jasmine, because the cost of parking fines was absolutely ridiculous, and the cost of living was expensive enough as it is. Still, no traffic warden could get near the ship because the ships artificial intelligence software had been reprogrammed to detect the traffic wardens from a great distance. This was a very helpful function aboard the spaceship and frequently used. Betty the robot elephant cleaner then whistled a little, smiled her robotic smile, and then said, "Oh, I must be going now. It was a pleasure to meet you, Jasmine. Welcome to the spaceship." Jasmine then smiled back and replied, "Well, thank you Betty. I hope you have a good day." Betty then added, "Goodbye everyone and then walked off into



another room to do the cleaning.” Brian, Cedric, Karen, Salomina and Jasmine watched Betty leave, and Jasmine then said, “I was not expecting to see a robotic elephant cleaner.” Brian then replied, “Well, you will see a lot of strange things on this ship Jasmine, including Brian riding on top of Betty whilst wearing a cowboy hat and shouting Yeeha! Brian likes country and western music you see, and he rides her whilst listening to his favourite music.

Jasmine, said, “Now that does sound a lot of fun.” Brian then decided to ask Jasmine a question, “Now, what kind of music do you like Jasmine?” Jasmine then pondered this and then thought about it, and she was fond of many different types of music, and finally she said, “Well, I really like pop music. Unfortunately, my favourite singer, Sarah Logan had a tragic accident and nearly exploded after a wild night out eating curries. She was a smoker you see, and she had built up so much gas inside her, that when she lit a cigarette, she lit the gas pouring out of her, and she flew upwards towards the ceiling of the restaurant she was in, and then she smashed her head through it, and afterwards fell down onto a table, and sadly died on the table from shock, which really put people off of their dinners.” Brian then said sympathetically, “Oh, that is a terrible tragedy indeed.” Jasmine nodded and then sighed and said, “Yes, it was really, and it was a great loss to the intergalactic music community.” Cedric paused and then asked, “Jasmine what was your favourite song by her?” Jasmine pondered this and thought about it for a few moments, and then replied, “I am an indoors existentialist.” The crew laughed, and then Salomina replied, “That is a very funny title. Now what are the lyrics to this Jasmine?” Jasmine then said, “The lyrics are...”

I am an indoors existentialist and a  
nihilist, and here I sit with my shopping  
list, and I am always expanding it,  
and I ponder it,  
and I wonder it,  
and I wonder if it or I does exist, and I  
wonder whether I should exist at all,  
because what is the point of existence,

if the bills will not quit,  
and how I wish they would even just for a bit, O,  
what is to be,  
an existentialist nihilist,  
an experimentalist,  
in the care of a psychiatric doctor, with whom which I live,  
yes, oh, what is to be unable to resist,  
shopping,  
but the bill from online shopping, my husband  
would rather miss, and he gets rather angry you  
see, and he tells me to go outdoors more often,  
because there is more to life than online shopping,  
but the outside world it mostly makes me mad,  
and leaves me hopping,  
especially when the computer plays up,  
because I am rather often, hankering  
for online shopping,  
and when we ran out of electricity, it  
was as terrible as can be,  
and I embraced nihilism, and nearly ceased to exist, when  
a pile of shopping catalogues,

nearly fell onto my head,  
I nearly did not live, but I  
am glad I did,  
and afterwards I gave up nihilism,  
and lived outdoors more often, and  
I am much happier now,  
and wow,  
what is that great light coming from the sky, oh,  
it is a UFO,  
help I am being kidnapped by aliens, goodbye,  
goodbye, goodbye!

The crew laughed, and all walked over to the chairs and sat down for a bit. Brian called the drone to bring them some drinks. It was thirsty work in space, and the temperature regulation on the spaceship had been playing up, and they were all drinking more than normal. The next few days passed by rapidly, with exercise, and conversation, and dancing, and book reading. The crew also dropped off a few deliveries to some floating meteorite space stations, which were huge, cavernous things, with entire cities inside. The cities were beautiful to look at and gave the crew some inspiration, and inspiration helps kill time in space, and also shopping. The crew then resupplied the spaceship with luxury items such as games consoles and new televisions, and luxury food items such as pies in a tin, that had been baked by the world's most famous robot chef, Mr Robot al Fresco. Mr Robot al Fresco was not very edible though and did not

## **Chapter 17**

“The space station stop crashing into me!”

The space station stop crashing into me loomed ahead of the crew's spaceship, and it was massive, and a circular rotating space station, that was all shiny and new. Many ships of all sizes were flying backwards and forwards to the space station, and some of the spaceships had pirate flags upon them, which was rather ominous. The crew had been warned about the space station, and it was getting much closer now, and soon they would be docking at it. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine were all stood in the entertainment lounge and were looking out of the porthole towards it. Jasmine was quite impressed and said, "Wow, that is a very new space station indeed." Salomina then paused and replied, "It certainly is, but I do not like the look of those spaceships with pirate flags, and well, we were warned that it might not be a very safe place." Safety in space was not always guaranteed, and there were many threats to human life, including from space pirates. Space pirates were notorious, and had hampered many space travellers' journeys, and many space travellers had lost their lives. The crew looked on in wonder at the space station though and found it to be very beautiful. The space station was approaching rapidly, and the crew were happy to be arriving at one of the final destinations.

The spaceship finally descended towards the space station and into one of the spaceport entrances, and there were many spaceports indeed. The spaceship landed and the crew prepared themselves for what was to come next. The unknown, the unpredictable. Strange faces and unexpected races.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine stood at the porthole looking out, and watched the hurrying and the scurrying of the many different people outdoors in the spaceport parking area. There were some very strange looking creatures indeed, and some very shifty looking characters, and this did not fill the crew and Jasmine with great confidence. Still, they were here now, and Brian was contemplating what to take. Brian looked at the others and said, "What are we going to take?" Cedric then paused and thought about it, "Well, let's take the digital display map, and a few clothes, and we can book ourselves into a hotel. The deliveries we have number several thousand, so it will take a bit of time to deliver them, but we can get the drone to help us out. Now what do you all think about having your brains removed?" Jasmine was not prepared for this and coughed at this unexpected, unusual idea, and it was a very unusual idea indeed, and one that Jasmine had never heard of. Jasmine then replied, "Have our brains removed? Why? Now, why would we do that?" Which was a fair question to ask. Brian then responded, "Well, you see the brain holds a lot of information, and there are many things that could be potentially very valuable in our minds." Salomina then looked at Brian and then said, "Like what Brian?" Brian then paused and thought about it, and responded, "Well, you see, I have this idea for a sentient ice-cream." The crew and Jasmine then laughed, but Brian didn't. Brian then said, "I am very serious, a sentient ice-cream could be very popular indeed, and there are so many different flavours, and I believe it could be worth rather a lot of money. " Which was true, very true indeed. Jasmine laughed and then replied, "Yes, there are rather a lot of things stored in my mind too, and

of course they could be valuable, but the thought of having my brain out to protect my ideas, seems like a very dangerous idea.

Now what happens if something goes wrong when you are having your brain out?" This was a fair point, and one not worth discarding, and Brian was seriously thinking about this, and he then said, "Well, you do not have to have your brain out whilst we are here, but I was thinking that I may do so to keep my personal information safe." Jasmine was not really sure about this, and she did not like the sound of it at all. Jasmine thought about it for a few seconds and then said, "But how does it work?" Brian then replied, "Well, you sit inside a pod, and gas is pumped in and then you fall asleep, and afterwards your brain is removed, and replaced with a computer that continues to keep you alive." Jasmine frowned and still did not look keen or impressed at all, and said, "Oh, I think I will give it a miss Brian." Brian paused and then added, "Well, I do not blame you, it could be quite daunting to many people, and not many people want their brains removed at all, and it does scare rather a lot of people. Still, the rest of the crew never want their brains removed either." Jasmine could see why.

The practice of having your brain out had been available for several centuries now and was performed by robots. Very skilful robots of course, and the failure rate was minimal, but accidents did happen. One man from the planet Earth on a holiday to a space station accidentally had his brain removed when he mistook a pod where you could have your brain removed for a sleeping pod. The man totally freaked out afterwards when he saw his brain sitting in a load of liquid behind him after he had awoken

from his sleep. The man was very scared indeed, and he really did not know what to do, and the robot tried to keep the man calm and played soothing music to him. The man relaxed and it was explained to him that he had his brain removed by accident, and people do this to protect their personal information, which could be very valuable. This helped calm the man down, and the man then said, "Oh, I see. Now can I have my brain put back in please, I quite like it you see." The removal of the brain is supposed to take place by robot after the willing person is sent to sleep with sleeping gas. The man was very happy with having his brain reinserted and he then went on to star in a health and safety video for brain removal, and he became famous for having his brain removed by accident.

Brian, Cedric, Karen, Salomina and Jasmine stood there looking out of the porthole for a few moments longer, and Salomina then said, "Well, are we ready to leave?" Jasmine smiled and then said, "Yes." and the rest of the crew nodded in agreement. The crew then began to gather up what they needed to take from their bedrooms and then left the spaceship. Karen then switched on the spaceship's antigravity field to protect from nefarious individuals. The crew walked forwards across the spaceport and were given many unfriendly and unwelcoming looks, and this made the crew and Jasmine uneasy. The crew then walked down a corridor and there was an alien slumped down on the floor in a terrible state, probably because of too many space juices. The crew and Jasmine then raised their eyebrows, and Brian said, "He has probably had too much to drink." Jasmine nodded and agreed. The crew then continued walking and headed into a large open cavernous building. The area immediately in front of them

was a marketplace and very chaotic indeed. There were many strange stalls selling lots of weird objects, and objects that they had never seen and had no clue of whatsoever. Still, it was a very interesting place to be, despite the rather strange looks that many of the people there were giving them. Apparently, they were very capable of spotting a tourist from a mile away, and not many of them seemed to like the look of the crew at all. Suddenly, an alien raced in front of them, and a human chased rapidly after it, and was shouting at the alien, "Stop thief, stop thief!" The alien then began to fire a laser gun at the human, and the human was injured, and had to duck behind a pillar, but no one came to help at all, and no one seemed to care whatsoever. Still the crew wanted to help, and Brian walked towards the man crouching down behind the pillar who had leg wounds. The man then said, "Do not help me, there are many people after me, and you should not get involved." Brian nodded and walked quickly back to the crew. Brian then turned to the crew and said, "He did not want help, and did not want us involved because there were other people after him." Salomina then replied, "Ok, let us keep moving and find a hotel." The crew did so and moved through the crowds, with a little fear in their hearts, and much trepidation. Occasionally hands reached out to try and snatch belongings from them, and Jasmine managed to grab one of the hands that had dared to do so and bit very hard upon it. The hand quickly disappeared, and Brian laughed, and the crew kept walking for a bit further.

The crew then spotted a hotel and headed towards it. It was a rundown looking kind of a hotel, and it did not look appealing at all. Still, it was a hotel, and a good place to



base themselves being so close to the space station. There were some nefarious individuals outside the hotel having an argument, who were punching each other, and spitting at each other. The crew luckily avoided them and then headed into the hotel. They were very angry individuals. Inside the hotel foyer, the wallpaper was peeling off of the walls, and there were holes in the ceiling and in the walls too. This was a really run down looking place, and not one that really filled you with confidence when it came to safety. The space station despite being extremely new seemed like a very dangerous place. The crew walked towards the reception area and a dirty looking man with messy hair and with holes in his shirt stood behind the counter. The man then looked at them uneasily, and the crew looked back at them, and the man then ran off stealing the phone from the counter. The crew moved out of the way, then walked up to the counter and looked down behind it and saw the receptionist who looked much smarter laying unconscious on the floor.

The crew then noticed a bell on the counter, and Brian pressed it, and waited for service. Another receptionist quickly appeared and saw the previous receptionist laying on the floor and then looked at the crew and instantly pulled out a laser gun. The crew all then put their hands up and Salomina then said, "Oh, it wasn't us. The man that just ran off must have done it. Now, why don't you check on the CCTV camera." The man did so, and afterwards then said, "Sorry, it is a bit rough on this space station. I assume that you have not been here before?" Brian then replied, "No, we have not, this is the first time. We are delivery drivers you see, and we are just here to drop off some deliveries." The man then added, "Well, I

would not tell everyone your business you see, because it is very dangerous here, and people are liable to prey upon you if you do so." The crew and Jasmine then nodded, and said, "Ok, thanks for the information. We would like to book some rooms for a month please." The man behind the counter then looked at the crew and said, "Ok. Five single rooms?" Brian then responded, "Yes, five single rooms please, for a week." The man then tapped away at his computer and filled out the information, and he then said, "Ok, that will be one thousand pounds sterling please." Brian then took out his credit card and paid the bill. The bill was reasonable considering the state of the place so far. Hopefully the rest of the hotel was going to be better looked after. The receptionist then gave them the keys, and said, "Thank you. Enjoy your stay. The room numbers are on the keys. Brian then took the keys, and handed one each to the crew and Jasmine, and kept one for himself. The man then tried to help the previous receptionist and began to drag him out from behind the counter into the foyer. The crew then looked for an elevator and found one and headed towards it. Karen then pressed a button on it, and the doors opened. The crew then got in the elevator and the elevator smelt of smoke, and of some strange tobacco that they had never smelt before. Brian then looked at his room key which said four hundred and thirty, and then at the numbers on the control panel which contained the numbers on each floor. Brian then pressed the appropriate one, and the doors closed, and the elevator rose upwards. The elevator arrived on the crew and Jasmine's floor, and the doors reopened, and the crew then got out and began to look for their rooms and looked at the doors nearest them and at

their numbers, and headed down a corridor, and eventually found their rooms. Along the way they passed numerous posters on the walls, which featured adverts warning of pickpockets, and of medical diseases, and of crypto theft, and theft.

The corridor was well lit though but it was smelly and dirty, but still maybe there was another hotel that was better, and they could always change their minds. The company who they were employed by paid the expenses and they were so far away across the universe that the invoices for the bills took ages to arrive as the intergalactic communication email system seemed to be on the blink far too frequently.

The crew and Jasmine then entered their respective rooms and closed the doors behind them. The rooms were basic and rudimentary but at least the rooms had a kettle and a teapot. The beds were clean and were not too bad at all. The crew then put their things down, and then sat on their beds, and were glad to have arrived, and despite the dubious characters aboard the space station, they had a job to do, deliver packages. Packages to very very strange people scattered across the universe.

After about thirty minutes of checking out their rooms, the crew then went out into the corridor again, and met each other. Brian looked at the crew and then said, "Now, where?" Salomina, then paused and replied, "Let us head for a bar." Salomina then joined in the conversation, and said, "Ok. That sounds like a great idea indeed."

The crew then got back into the elevator and headed back down to the reception area. In the reception area there were some policemen and policewomen, and this was a kind of a relief, but from what they had seen so far, the

crew did not have much confidence in their policing abilities at all. The police officers were talking to the receptionist, probably about the other receptionist being attacked. The crew then walked past them, and they headed out into the cavernous area, back into the marketplace. This was a very busy marketplace, and you really had to keep your eyes open here, because there were more shady looking characters than they had ever seen in their lives at all.

Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine walked across the marketplace, and tried to avoid the most dangerous looking individuals, and that was most of the people here, so it was not easy at all to do so.

Karen then spotted a bar in the distance and pointed at it, and then said, "Look a bar, over there, a bar finally!" The crew then headed for it. The bar had a neon sign, and after fighting their way through the crowds, the crew reached the bar, and there were some showgirls loitering outside smoking cigarettes and looking dangerous. One of them blew a smoke ring at Brian and winked at him. Brian wasn't sure whether to smile or not, and he continued walking into the bar with the crew.

The bar was filled with many nefarious individuals and robots, who were sat on sofas, and on the stools at a very long bar. The barman looked shifty too, and eyed the crew and Jasmine suspiciously, as did the clientele. Brian and the crew and Jasmine, tried to avoid eye contact with all except the barman, and they sat down upon some stools. The barman stood there looking them up and down, and said, "And what can I do for you?" Jasmine then replied, "We would like a drink please." The barman smiled, and added, "Of course, this is the most famous bar in this

nefarious neighbourhood. Have you travelled far?" Brian then said, "Well, we have been travelling for a couple years now, exploring the universe." The bar man then replied, "Great, we get all types here."

He then paused and then said, "So, what would you like?" The crew looked behind the bar and there was a huge selection of drinks, and many were brightly coloured, and a couple were fluorescent. Brian then said to the crew and Jasmine, "Now how about we let the barman choose?" The rest of the crew and Jasmine then nodded, and the barman said great, and began to make various drinks in strange glasses from the strange, coloured liquids in the bottles behind him. The liquids did look very weird indeed, and quite what they were going to do to their insides was still yet to be seen.

Suddenly a loud booming voice from behind the crew was heard, and it said, "Oy, you, you owe me some money for looking at me you loony!" Brian then turned around on his stool and saw a very ugly looking man sat on the sofa, staring at him intensely. Brian was rather taken aback, more taken aback than edible socks.

and did not think that trouble was going to arrive so quickly, and unfortunately it had. The man looked very troubled indeed, and he did not look happy at all, and he looked most upset, and certainly looked like the violent type.

The space station seemed like a place for violent individuals, and Brian always tried to deflect violence with humour, or at least he tried to do so. Today was going to be one of those days by the looks of things, and Brian was ready for anything, because he had training in numerous self-defence techniques, but it was very difficult to defend

against a laser gun, so probably the self-defence techniques that he had learned would not be of much use. Brian had learned to wield a banana in self-defence, and a cucumber, an asparagus, and a hamster.

Brian had also learnt karate, and he was quite proficient. at karate and had learned learn to do karate whilst wielding a banana in self-defence and the other objects previously mentioned. The man got up from the sofa and looked angrily at him, and then spat upon the floor, and then wiped his nostrils. Brian immediately felt threatened. The man was very tall, and he had a very mean look in his eyes, and he had already demanded money. This was not a good situation and Brian did not want trouble of any kind at all, nor did the rest of the crew who had now turned around to look at the man. The man looked evil, and not certainly someone to be troubled with. Brian stayed on the stool whilst the man advanced, and then Brian wheeled around on it, and pulled a banana out of his pocket, but the man reacted instantly, and the banana was cremated by the man's laser gun that he had quickly pulled out of his pocket, like a man with antigravity propulsion in his arms. The man was fast, and the banana was cremated and fell broken into pieces on the floor. Brian looked shocked and quickly said, "Look sir, I did not mean to trouble you, we are just trying to relax and have a quiet drink. I am sorry if I looked at you by accident. Can I buy you a drink?" The man then looked at Brian and said, "Ok. I'll have a drink." with an angry snarl, still in his voice. This of course was not a good sign at all. Brian then turned back around to the bar, despite not feeling too comfortable in the man's presence.

The rest of the crew and Jasmine kept an eye on the man. The laser gun incident was a reminder that things could

get out of hand very easily here. Brian whilst contemplating this then said to the bar man, "I would like to buy the good man a drink." The bar man nodded, and then began to pour a drink, the man's usual choice. This of course was strong by the look of it, and it was a blue colour, and very strange indeed, but it did look quite nice. The bar man then handed the man a drink, and the man nodded at Brian briefly and then went and sat back down on the sofa. The crew and Jasmine were relieved, and they turned back to face the bar man, and Jasmine said, "Well, what a great place." The bar man then smiled and said, "It certainly is darling, it is nice to see that you have met the regulars." Jasmine smiled, and took a sip of her drink, and then toasted the others.

The crew felt wary and were trying to keep their wits about them, and this was not going to be easy in a place like this, but still they had to try, because they had a job to do. The bar man put on some music and began dancing behind the bar and throwing cocktails around. Brian then said to the others, "So, how are you all?" Karen then said, "Glad to have made it in one piece." Cedric paused and then replied, "Me too, and it looks like a very tough place to live." The bar man laughed, and said, "Well, it is that, and you really need to keep yourself to yourself mostly here, and if I were you, I wouldn't hang about in the marketplace too long. It is well known for pickpockets, and there are quite a number of violent types here." Jasmine sighed and then said, "Oh, really, what is the worst thing that you have seen?" The man then stopped throwing cocktails around and said, "Well, I once saw a man attacked by a horse with a laser gun." Brian then coughed and spluttered, and said, "A horse with a laser

gun?" The bar man then nodded, and said, "Yes. It had grabbed a laser gun from its owner, and it was shooting wildly into the crowd, but luckily there were only five hundred casualties from the laser gun, and then it got worse. The horse had been trained in jujitsu, and all hell let loose, and then the horse kicked countless people up the bottom, and sales of bottom cream went through the roof, and then, doctors started fainting at the sight of people's bottoms who had been kicked.

The doctors aboard the space station had such a shock at what they seen, that five hundred of them gave up their jobs, as they could not take it anymore. This had a terrible effect on the population, and there was rioting in the streets, and massive protests against horses, and unsurprisingly horses were eventually banned from the space station, but still other animals had heard of the horses' exploits, and they tried to replicate the horse and its murderous intentions. At first it was monkeys, and then zebras, and then gorillas.

Animals were eventually banned from the space station, and there was great relief but still humans are humans, and they are just as dangerous. Many people here do not get along with each other whatsoever, and it can be a very strange place indeed." Brian and the crew and Jasmine all took this in, and then Brian said, "Have you lived here long?" The bar man then replied, "Yes, I have always been over six foot long." Brian laughed, and so did the crew and Jasmine, who also found this highly amusing.

Karen then said, "We are from the planet Earth." The bar man smiled and then replied, "It is a great place, not that I have ever been, but I would like to. Still, here is very different, but it has benefits in some ways, including



danger money. I am paid danger money to work here you know." Salomina then said, "Oh, really, danger money? Is it that bad?" The bar man then nodded, and retorted, "Yes, this place is crazy, very crazy, and people you know, they do some very strange things here, for instance, I once had my underpants teleported off of my body several times and my trousers, in front of my mother at dinner time. This was highly embarrassing indeed, and I did not know how someone could do such a thing, such a devious thing, but apparently the theft of underpants here is on a massive scale and has gotten out of all control. Now the cost of underpants has skyrocketed because of the uncertainty, and apparently there was talk of someone building a teleport machine capable of stealing multiple pairs of underpants, a machine that could steal the underpants from thousands of people at the very same time. This of course could result in thousands of people walking around without their underpants and without their trousers. The police drones on the space station take a very dim view of people not wearing clothing and will attack you with laser beams, if you dare to do so. "Oh," said Brian, "that sounds terrible. Has it happened often in this space station?" The bar man then nodded and replied, "Yes, and personally, if you value your underpants, then don't wear them on this space station." Cedric paused then joined in the conversation, and said, "Oh, thanks for the advice. This really is a strange place, isn't it?" The bar man then laughed, and laughed and afterwards said, "Strange, is a massive understatement. In fact, it is stranger than anywhere than I have ever been. Now, if you want a recommendation my friends, I would buy an antigravity bubble." Salomina liked the sound of this, and then

replied, "An antigravity bubble?" The bar man then smiled, and said, "Yes, an antigravity bubble. They are not cheap, but if you value your safety, and can afford it, I recommend it, because an antigravity bubble can protect you from violence." Brian thought that this was a brilliant idea and was very interested in it indeed. Brian then spoke, "Oh, is it really that dangerous on this space station?" The bar man then nodded, and said, "Yes. It is very dangerous indeed. Now if you want to buy an antigravity bubble then go to a shop called, Zetatech." Brian then said, "Thanks, we will consider it." The bar man then continued, "Yes, go there, because the marketplace is filled with dodgy salesman, and they will try and take as much money from you as they can. They even resort to hiring pickpockets to steal from you whilst you shop." Jasmine's face dropped, "Oh, we do not get any of this on the planet Noula." The bar man then laughed, and said, "Well, I am not surprised, Eric Strudelhofen is a fruitcake, an absolute nut job." Jasmine then immediately got very angry and got up off of her bar stool, and pointed her finger at the bar man, and said, "Look you, that is my brother! How dare you talk about my brother like that?" The bar man then looked at her and realised that she was seriously angry, and said, "Look lady, many people think that, and it is just what people say around here. I am very sorry if I offended you, I really did not mean to." Jasmine then looked at the bar man and he seemed genuine, and she then softened and said, "Oh, ok. I accept your apology, but he is not a nut job, he just has his regulations." The bar man then nodded and said dismissively, "So I hear." The bar man then went back to making cocktails and began cleaning some glasses in the

sink behind the bar. Another customer walked in, a large alien with two heads, who was having a conversation with himself. The two heads seemed to be arguing amongst themselves. The first head said to the other head, "Oh, yeah, you think you know everything don't you? A real wise guy huh!" The second head then laughed and replied, "Well, yeah, I do know everything, I am omnipotent, yes, omnipotent I tell you! Now get me another beer! The wallets on your side." The first head then said, "No. I am not getting you another beer because you are drunk enough already, now shut up and I'll get you a non-alcoholic drink dimwit." The second head did not like this and then replied, "Look you idiot, I don't want a non-alcoholic drink, just get me a flipping beer!" The first head then shook his head and said, "Oh, no, because when you drink my leg goes all wobbly and my eyes do too, and I cannot walk home properly because of you you idiot, and also, I am tired of sitting in alcoholics anonymous. Now how can I be anonymous when I am there, because I don't choose to go there but you keep getting me drunk, now what am I supposed to do, wear a bag over my head?" The second head then laughed, "Well, you should lighten up a little and." The first head then interjected, "Lighten up? What with you as a partner, now, how is that possible? We are supposed to be buying and selling things and making a profit, but you are always drunk as hell."

Brian was sat there on his stool listening to the two headed man, and then he coughed and said, "Hmm. Huh Hmm" and then he turned to the two headed man, and said, "Excuse me sir, you do know that you can get your brain removed on this space station." The two headed man

then turned to Brian, and then replied, "My brain removed?" Brian then smiled and nodded, and said, "Yes." The first man then looked visibly upset, "Are you insulting me?" Brian then after the previous trouble then shook his head and said, "Oh, er, oh, no not at all sirs. It is a medical procedure. You can have your brain transplanted and swapped with a robot, and have the other brain transplanted into another body." The two heads then looked at each other and said, great, that sounds like a wonderful idea." The two heads then said in unison, "Thanks man. We appreciate it." and they then high fived each other, and turned to the bar man, and said, "We'll both have a drink, and that man there and his friends, I will get them one too, whatever they want." The bar man then poured the two headed man two drinks and afterwards poured some drinks for the crew. The two headed man then paid the bar man, and picked up the drinks, and sat down on an empty nearby sofa. Brian and the crew continued drinking and listened to the music. The bar was lively, and became livelier, and some rather drunken aliens entered the bar, and stumbled towards it, and one of them then said to the barman, "Hey, we are only a little bit drunk, but we could with another." The bar man then laughed, and said, "Well, they all say that, but as long as you do not puke on my floor or on my sofas, I'll get you another drink."

Salomina suddenly felt someone reach into her pocket, but she had nothing in it, then suddenly she quickly grabbed the offending hand, and it belonged to a crazy eyed man. She then spun the man around several times like a champion weightlifter, and then threw him on the floor, and the man then banged his head, and got up and

decided against staying there, and afterwards walked out of the bar with an embarrassed look upon his face."

Everyone in the bar then clapped and found this highly entertaining indeed. Salomina then took a bow and sat back down on her bar stool, and took another very long sip of her drink, and so did the rest of the crew.

Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then went back to drinking, but the place was getting far too crowded and there was a further chance of pickpockets. Brian then turned to the others and said, "Shall we get out of here and look for those antigravity bubbles?" Jasmine then smiled and looked excited and replied, "Sure, that sounds like a lot of fun." Brian then nodded and said, "It certainly does. Now let us drink these and get out of here." The crew then finished their drinks and quickly left as the atmosphere was becoming more intense, and not very friendly at all, what with drunken individuals and pickpockets, it was not much fun with them being around, and there was no reason to stay at all because of them. The crew were very happy to leave indeed.

The crew and Jasmine then left the bar and headed through the market, keeping an even closer watch on their valuables. People then deliberately bumped into them, and they had to push several away. This was no fun at all, and they were glad to reach the other side and saw the shop they were looking for, Zetatech. The crew and Jasmine then entered the shop and began to look around. There were numerous antigravity bubbles on display, and they were a magnificent blue, and they gave off a low hum. At the far end of the shop was a man in an anti-gravity bubble, and he was shouting "Roll up, roll up, and shoot me with a laser gun!" and then he laughed maniacally,

which the crew and Jasmine found a little strange. One of the customers then did pull out a laser gun and attempt to shoot the man with it. The laser beam then bounced off of wall and onto another antigravity bubble and the crew had to duck rapidly. The man behind the counter was laughing loudly and he found it highly entertaining, and he then continued to speak and said, "Now who wouldn't want one of these lovelies, because they can protect you from any laser gun ever created. Yes, every laser gun in the universe." Brian then turned to the man behind the counter and then said, "How much are they?" The man then replied, "Well, the cheapest is five thousand dollars." Brian thought this was fair, and after the man had finished speaking, he then said, "Great. We will take five." Jasmine then looked a little shocked and she paused for a moment, and then said, "Wow, that is a lot of money Brian." Brian then smiled and replied, "Yes, it is rather a lot, but we will put it on expenses, and well, it is rather dangerous here is it not?" Jasmine then nodded and responded, "Yes, Brian, and I am beginning to think that it is one of the worst places that I have ever visited." Brian then laughed, and said, well me too, and I have even to been to sheep world, a whole planet dedicated to watching sheep on rollerskates racing each other. The crew and Jasmine then laughed, and Brian walked towards the counter, and the crew and Jasmine then followed. The man then said, "Hello, five, was it?" Brian then looked at the man and said, "Yes please. Now, have you sold many?" The man then smiled a great big smile, and replied, "Oh, yeah, loads, I sell loads every single day." Brian was not surprised, and then waited for the man to fetch five of them. The man then turned off his antigravity bubble, and

he picked up five boxes from underneath the shop counter. Brian then took out his credit card from a pocket and paid the man. Brian then asked, "By the way how do we use them?" The man then said, "Well you just clip them onto your body, and the device builds the antigravity wall around you." Jasmine then joined in the conversation and said, "Oh, really, that sounds easy." The man then smiled and stared at her a little while. He had not seen such a pretty lady for a long time. He then realised he was staring too long at Jasmine and then said, "Oh, sorry mam, I did not mean to stare, but I have not seen such a pretty lady for a long time." Jasmine then smiled and replied shyly, "Why thank you sir, it is very kind of you to mention it."

The man afterwards then smiled at Jasmine and added, "Oh, you are most welcome Mam." The man then gave the five boxes to Brian, and Brian then said, "Let us take them out of the boxes here and use them in the market." Karen and Jasmine and the rest of the crew all thought that this was a very good idea indeed. Karen then said, "Great, we can keep any nefarious individuals away from us." The crew and Jasmine then opened the boxes, and attached the blue metallic devices to their clothing with the clips that were supplied, and they stepped away from each other. The crew and Jasmine then looked for the buttons on the devices and pressed them, and instantly the antigravity walls then began to build around each of the crew. This took about thirty seconds, and the crew were then surrounded by blue shields. All of the crew then gave each other the thumbs up, and they then walked out into the marketplace, and immediately people began to stare at them. Having antigravity shields made them all stick out

like a sore thumb, and most people probably could not afford to buy them, and the crew and Jasmine would have to be careful that they were not followed to their hotel. The place was dangerous. The place was festering with dodgy people, who would happily sell their own grandmothers. Still, Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew felt safe, and they proceed through the marketplace. Infront of them was a man levitating a camel above his head, and to the left was a man making some kind of dangerous looking space juice, and to the right was a woman playing some kind of weird gambling game that involved a teleportation device, and some cards. The crew then continued walking and Cedric then said, "Right, so what are we going to do?" Brian then replied, "Well, first we should head back to the ship and begin work on sorting out the deliveries, and quite frankly I am getting bored of delivering them myself, and they are supposed to be hand delivered, but the company are so far away that they will not find out that we used drones. That is if you all are agreed." Salomina then nodded and thought that this was a good idea, and she said, "Yes, ok Brian we will do that." The rest of the crew and Jasmine agreed and also nodded. The crew then headed back to the spaceport and to the spaceship, and then entered it. Inside the spaceship, in the hallway, after the doors had closed and had locked shut, the crew pressed the buttons on their antigravity devices, and the blue shields then disappeared. Brian then said, "I will go and programme the drones, and then feed them the addresses of where the deliveries are to go to." Salomina then nodded and responded, and said, "Ok Brian, we will wait in the entertainment lounge." Brian then walked into the



entertainment lounge, and the rest of the crew. The crew then sat down on the chairs, and Brian headed for the delivery room, and then entered it. The parcels were there waiting already, and there were ten drones. Brian looked at the drones and then picked up a handheld device and began to transfer the delivery address data into the drones. The crew then waited in the entertainment lounge, and they all took a short nap. Where the nap went, they did not know. That was the trouble with naps, they went so fast, and it was possible that someone was stealing them. The crew after an hour woke up, and Brian was sat there in another chair, and drinking a drink. Brian then turned to them all as Salomina rubbed her eyes and then rubbed the sleep from them. Brian then said, "Now, about this digital display map, are we going to take it to someone who knows how to implant it into a cybernetic body." Jasmine then said, "A digital display map into a cybernetic body?" Brian then said, "Yes, we bought this digital display map you see, and we went to a black hole with a chip shop inside it." Jasmine, then looked surprised, and said, "How is that even possible?" Brian then responded, "Well, it wasn't a real black hole. It was a fake black hole made out of a hula hoop." Jasmine then laughed, and said, "Oh, how weird." Brian then laughed, and added, "Yes, it is very weird, extremely weird indeed, but anyway, the computer chip we got it from there and it is supposed to be extra special." Jasmine then added, "Really? What does it do?" Brian then paused and said, "Well, it is much more powerful than the normal computer chips, and the digital display map wants to become a robot, and for it to be able to move around freely." Jasmine then replied, "Now, that is a great idea. I think that I would like to be able to move

around too if I was a computer." Karen then replied, "Yes, and it could be very useful to us, because we could do with some security." The crew and Jasmine then all nodded.

The space station was a dangerous place and how strong the security shields were, they were not sure. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine, then continued to sit in their chairs, and Salomina then said, "Anyway, so are we going to change hotel, because that hotel seems a little rough around the edges, does it not?" This was true and the crew and Jasmine then replied, "Yes." in unison.

Brian then said, "Well, the deliveries are all sorted, and we can leave anytime that you want to." Karen then replied, "Ok, let us go now, and find a new hotel." Brian then picked up the digital display map and then went and found a backpack, and put the digital display map into the backpack, and slung the backpack over his shoulder. The crew and Jasmine then left the spaceship and the drones to do the deliveries for them. This was a very good idea, they thought, as the receptionist had been knocked unconscious before they had arrived in the hotel. The crew then entered the corridor, and there were people carrying baskets of fruit, and Brian stopped one of them, and then asked, "How much for a bunch of bananas and some oranges?" The woman carrying the basket, then said, "That will be fifty dollars please." Brian thought this was too high and then he laughed, "Fifty dollars? Wow, that is rather a lot for fruit?" The woman then said, "Yes, everything fruit and vegetable here is expensive but life is cheap, so be careful where you walk at night, because there are some very dangerous streets here." Brian then nodded, and said, "Ok, we will." Brian then paid for the

fruit with his credit card and swiped it on the woman's handheld machine. The woman said, "Thank you." and walked away happily into the spaceport.

The crew then pressed the buttons on their antigravity devices and continued down the corridor and headed into the marketplace. The marketplace had become even more crowded than before, and this was early afternoon.

The crew and Jasmine then headed towards their hotel, and entered the reception area, and then took the elevator up to their rooms, and then began packing their stuff. The crew and Jasmine hoped to find another hotel shortly, and the hotel smelled a little, and they did not like it at all. Hopefully they could find another one, and soon. Time was moving on, and this was the busiest part of the day, but with the antigravity generator, they could push their way through the crowds more easily. The crew and Jasmine packed their belongings and afterwards pressed the buttons on their antigravity devices, then reactivated them. The crew all left their rooms, and then headed down to the reception area, to hand in their keys. The crew and Jasmine left the rundown hotel and headed out into the marketplace. The marketplace was beginning to fill with the sound of music, and it was coming from the distance. The crew wondered what it was in aid of, and then headed towards it out of curiosity. There seemed to be some kind of festival on, and there were many people in brightly coloured costumes, waving flags and singing. The crowd was beginning to part, and the people wearing the brightly coloured costumes were dancing in the middle of the market, and the crowd were beginning to dance too. Suddenly smoke began to pour from somewhere underneath the floor of the market, adding to the

atmosphere. The music was some kind of calypso music, and there were some members of the troop wearing spandex. Brian almost vomited, and tried to contain himself, because Brian really hated spandex, and so, he deliberately turned away from the people wearing spandex because Brian thought spandex was evil.

The crew and Jasmine then stood watching the parade for a few moments, and kept walking not wanting to get to the hotel. This of course was not easy because of the size of the crowds. Suddenly above their heads some men and women in colourful costumes on antigravity jet skis, flew above their heads and then began to do tricks in the air. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen, and Jasmine then continued walking as the jet skis performed their routines above their heads.

The crew then looked at the shops, and there were many run down looking eateries, and smokehouses, where people smoked themselves to death on strange substances. There were also robots stood in the shadows, who looked dangerous. There was also an air of paranoia about the place, and Brian quickly glimpsed the sight of someone being mugged in the shadows. The smell in the air was not pleasant, and there were many foul looking individuals indeed. The crew and Jasmine continued walking and walked through a square where there was a garden. Numerous robots lay on the ground in pieces and were piled up as if though someone had been collecting them for scrap. There were a couple of booze-soaked drunks laying on the benches, who looked like they had not ever washed, and their eyes were glazed over, and they were asleep and snoring.

In the middle of the garden were some palm trees and there were some monkeys playing amongst them and stealing bananas. The crew and Jasmine walked through the garden, and then exited into a cobbled square, where there were numerous cafes and outdoor eateries. The clientele looked rough, and they were eating their food as if they hadn't eaten for months. The food looked poor and not very nice. Suddenly a man teleported in front of them, and then started running, and shortly afterwards, the other man teleported near the crew and then began chasing after the man with a laser gun. The crew and Jasmine then started walking faster and headed under a covered area. The covered area was filled with people drinking rowdily, and some of the ones standing could barely stand at all. One of them was trying to be sick over another man's head. Brian said, "I am not sure that that is the best way to keep warm." The crew and Jasmine then all made funny faces and afterwards quickly moved onwards.

The crew and Jasmine then passed out the other side of the covered area and went down an alleyway. It was an alleyway filled with rubbish, and old newspapers were laying in the street, and there were broken bottles in the gutters, and there was sewage everywhere. The smell was horrendous, and the crew had to hold their noses, to cope with it. They then quickly left the dark poorly lit alleyway and found themselves in a commercial district, and huge newer buildings stood tall before them. The buildings were very impressive, and a lot of money had quite obviously been spent on them. The crew and Jasmine then headed towards them, and they headed for one of the buildings that had a large sign above it that read, "Hotel."

The crew and Jasmine then went into the hotel through some large double doors and into the reception area. Inside the reception area were several security officers and security drones. The lobby was filled with giant plants and had a waterfall, and the ceiling was covered in plasterwork that had angels upon it. The ceiling looked stunningly beautiful. The crew then looked up at it and admired its artistry, and then continued walking towards the reception area. There were two well-dressed receptionists, one male, one female, behind the reception desk, both of whom were dressed in smart red coats.

The receptionists upon the crew and Jasmine's arrival then smiled almost in unison and said "Hello." together. One of them then said, "Now how can I help you?" Salomina paused and then replied, "Well, we would like five rooms please." The receptionist then nodded and afterwards responded, "Ok. Five rooms coming up." The receptionist then looked down at one of the computers behind the desk, and started typing away on it, and then handed the crew some room keys from underneath the counter. The keys were gold and had a computer chip inside them. The crew and Jasmine then took one key each, and Karen then asked how much it was. The male receptionist then replied, "Well, how long are you staying for?" Karen then said, "A week because the last hotel we stayed at was terrible, but we did try another hotel and that was really rough indeed. The male receptionist was already lying unconscious on the ground when we got there." The male receptionist smiled and then replied, "Oh, now that does not surprise me whatsoever. It is really rough in this space station despite how new it is, there a lot of bad types here, and most people here are best

avoided, but this hotel is safer than most and it is a real pleasure to see you all." Salomina then said, "Thanks. Now, do you have a jacuzzi?" The second female receptionist then said, "Yes, we do actually, a great jacuzzi, a massive jacuzzi. A jacuzzi the likes of which you have never seen." Salomina then smiled at the thought of it, and she then said "Great. I will look forward to using it." The first receptionist then said, "That will be six-thousand dollars please." Brian then took out his credit card, and paid with it, the company card. This was a bargain for a place like this, and the quality of the rooms should be something special. The second receptionist then said, "We both do hope that you enjoy your stay, and we both hope that you have a wonderful time here. We have a five-star restaurant, and a sports centre, a gym, a television lounge, a cinema, ten bars and a planetarium upon the roof where you can gaze at the stars through telescopes. Brian was very impressed, and he was looking forwards to the planetarium, which sounded fantastic, as there is nothing greater than sitting in a chair and using a telescope to stare at the beauty of the stars.

The first receptionist then said, "Your rooms are on the third floor. The swimming pool is on the second floor and also the gym. The restaurant is on the fourth floor and so are several hundred bars and a cinema, and the shopping complex is on the fifth and the sixth floors. Oh, and you will love the restaurant, because we have ten five-star chefs, and a huge dining area with a lake in the middle." Jasmine really liked the sound of this, and then she said, "That sounds absolutely amazing, thanks for letting us know."

The first receptionist, the male one then said, "Oh, you are welcome, now, enjoy your stay, and by the way the elevator is over there." The first receptionist then pointed at the elevator. Brian then looked over at it and afterwards said, "Thank you. This is the finest restaurant since the one where I ate five hundred bacon sandwiches and danced for

ten hours to receive another fifty free ones whilst inebriated." Jasmine laughed and the crew afterwards waved goodbye to the receptionists and headed towards the elevator, which was a glass one, a very beautiful glass one. Brian then pressed the button on it and the sliding doors slid open smoothly, and there was no one inside. The crew then got into the elevator, and Jasmine pressed the button for the third floor. The elevator then ascended, and it only took a few seconds before they all arrived on their floor. The crew then got out, and they started to look around the corridor for their rooms and then quickly found them and each went into their respective rooms, which were all luxurious and had an array of plants, and a collection of arty paintings on the wall.

Brian left his backpack in the room, and the rest of crew then left their belongings in their rooms and turned off their antigravity generators and left them on their beds. The crew afterwards then exited into the corridor and walked back to the elevator, and Karen pressed a button on it. They all then got in, and Karen smiled and said, "Shall we go to the restaurant and get something to eat?" Brian also smiled and then he said, "Yes. I'm starving, let's go." Karen yawned slightly then pressed the button for the fourth floor. The elevator then began to ascend, and they arrived quickly at the restaurant.



The restaurant was a fine dining experience, and was decorated in gold leaf, had high ceilings covered in paintings. The tables were filled with China, a wine decanter. The napkins were formed into swans. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine waited patiently for a waiter. The waiter then arrived and smiled and said, "Hello, and good evening, now how can I help you?" Brian then replied, "We would like a table for five please." The waiter then also smiled, and he waved them with a flourish over to a table which had a large plant behind them. This was a beautiful setting indeed. The crew and Jasmine then sat down on the seats. The waiter then began to pour wine from the decanter into five glasses and handed one each to Jasmine and the crew. Jasmine and the crew then began to drink their drinks and the waiter picked up some menus from off of the table, and then handed them to Jasmine and the crew, who began to read them. The restaurant menu was filled with the finest dishes that they had seen in quite some time. Space was not well known for being filled with fine dining restaurants, and they were glad to be here. Brian, Salomina, Cedric, Karen and Jasmine then looked at their menus and chose their dishes. Brian then chose a prawn curry, Cedric some cod and chips, Karen a steak and kidney pudding with vegetables, Salomina also a prawn curry, and Jasmine a lamb moussaka. The waiter after taking their order then left for the kitchen.

Brian, then said, "It has been a funny old time in space hasn't it." Cedric, then laughed and replied, "Yes. It certainly has." Jasmine then took a moment to think and then paused and finally asked, "What is the weirdest thing that you have come across in space?" Salomina then

thought about it for a moment and then replied, "Well, Apollo the robot, he tried to attack us with a pair of underpants." Jasmine then laughed loudly, and afterwards Karen smiled and said, "Oh, and the flesh-eating aliens from MAM." Jasmine was surprised by this as she thought cannibalism was banned across the universe. Jasmine then nodded and said, "Oh, I didn't think that you were allowed to eat people these days." Brian then laughed loudly and said, "Well, you are not really, but it still goes on in some places." Jasmine then pretended to look horrified, and she said, "Oh, well, I think I will stay away from eating human beings." The rest of the crew then laughed and continued to drink their drinks. The wine was delicious, and this was the only place that they had felt safe so far on the space station.

The food finally arrived, and the waiter placed it in front of them on beautiful looking white plates with patterns around the edge. Brian, and the crew and Jasmine toasted each other, and then began to eat their food. The food was delicious, and it was filled with flavour. The portions were gigantic and almost as big as the largest man in the universe, who weighed one hundred and fifty stone, but at the least food was nice, and didn't taste of sweaty armpits. The crew then ate and drank for several hours, and very much enjoyed the atmosphere. Jasmine then said after finishing the last mouthful of her food, "So, where are we going to go after this?" The crew then thought about it for a moment, and then said, "Shopping." Shopping was a favourite of hers, and wherever she went, she bought as many things as she could.

The crew then stayed for pudding and afterwards paid the bill and left, and the pudding sat there in their

stomachs and seemed to be tap dancing.

After leaving the restaurant, the crew walked out into the corridor, spotted a sign that pointed to the shops and headed towards them. The shops were filled with luxury items, and Jasmine had not seen a luxury shop since the intergalactic one-dollar store, which was a favourite place of hers. Jasmine loved a bargain and loved to haggle. The crew then entered a clothing store and began to look around. Jasmine quickly spotted some jumpers she liked the look of and headed towards them. Immediately a jumper jumped off of the shelf and ran away from her. This was the part that she liked, sentient woolly jumpers. Jasmine then chased the jumper around the shop as it had small legs, and then managed to subdue it and wrestled the jumper to the ground. Jasmine then shouted to the crew "Help, my woolly jumper is trying to get away." The crew had never seen a sentient woolly jumper with legs before and they walked over to help. Jasmine then looked up at Brian and said, "Kill it Brian, kill it." Brian then looked at Jasmine, and had never been in this situation before, and did not quite know what to do. Brian was a peaceful person, and was not well known for murdering woolly jumpers especially sentient ones with legs. Salomina then said, "Jasmine it is a sentient life form, we cannot kill it. Killing things is very bad indeed." Jasmine then paused and said, "But, you have to, it will get away otherwise." Cedric then laughed loudly and said, "But Jasmine isn't there another woolly jumper that isn't sentient without legs?" Jasmine thought about it and then looked up at Brian and said, "Well, I want this one though, can't you just kill it Brian please?" Brian then shook his head and said, "Sorry Jasmine, killing things is against my

moral principles.” Jasmine then sighed, and started shouting, “Can someone please help kill this sentient woolly jumper?” But no one in the shop responded, because most people did not buy sentient woolly jumpers. Jasmine, then got up off the sentient woolly jumper, and it ran away, and Jasmine gave up trying to chase after it. Jasmine then sighed and looked depressed. Brian and the crew were mildly amused, but this was some seriously strange shopping behaviour. The crew and Jasmine then walked around the shop and bought some clothes each, clothes that were not sentient and then paid for them. The crew then left the shop and began walking around the other shops and bought random things that they had never seen before including an antigravity hamster. The antigravity hamster was useful when it came to defending yourself in dark alleyways as it could be thrown at assailants and because it had been trained to bite people’s faces. Jasmine bought five and found out that they were not real hamsters but robotic ones.

The crew then spent a few hours walking around the other shops, and then headed back downstairs to their rooms which were the best rooms that they had stayed in so far on this trip to the space station.

The crew then entered the rooms and sat down on their beds, which they all seemed to do in unison. Brian then noticed that his backpack was gone, along with the digital display map that was inside it. Brian did a double take, and then searched the room but he could not find it anywhere. Brian then started to panic. This was not supposed to happen, and the computer chip was extremely valuable, and also the digital display was used to program the flight paths of the spaceship. Brian then

held his head in his hands, and then afterwards took a moment to really think about this situation, and then he took out his mobile phone and phoned Salomina, Karen, Brian, Cedric and Jasmine all at the same time. Brian then spoke, "Er, the backpack, and the digital display map inside it, have gone missing!" he said with panic in his voice. The crew apart from Jasmine then in unison responded, "But that is used to plot the course of the ship Brian!" Brian was aware of this, and did not know what to do at all. He had never lost anything of such importance before, and this was the first time.

The missing digital display map was critical to getting home to planet Earth, and without it, it could take ages to find a replacement. Also, the new computer chip inside the digital display map was very valuable and probably more valuable here on this space station, than in most other places. Salomina, then said, "What are we supposed to do Brian?" Brian then paused and responded, "Well, I guess we will have to contact security." Jasmine, then said, "Now that is a good idea, Brian." Brian then paused before speaking again, and he said, "Ok. I will ring security now and get back to you." The rest of the crew and Jasmine then said, "Ok." Brian then immediately ended the call to the crew and Jasmine, and afterwards phoned security. Security then answered the call from Brian and a male voice on the other end of the line said, "Hello, security, how can I help you?" Brian paused and then thought about what he was going to say and then responded, "Well, something of great importance has been stolen from my room." Security then replied, "Oh, I am very sorry to hear that sir. This is most unusual for the hotel, and I really do apologise. Now what precisely has been stolen?"

Brian then sighed and responded, "Our digital display map, and we use it to steer the ship you see." The security man then paused for a few seconds and afterwards added, "Well, that was a bit silly wasn't it taking it into the space station? Had you not heard of the space stations reputation?" Brian was a bit angry about this comment, and then said tersely "Well, yes, but that is not the point, it really should not happen in the hotel." The security man then continued talking after a brief pause, "Yes, of course it should not happen, but I will check the CCTV cameras to see what I can see, and I will get back to you as soon as possible, so please do not worry sir, because I am sure that we can sort this out." Brian was very relieved to hear the confidence in the man's voice, and he was reassured. Brian then spoke once again, "Ok, thank you, I really appreciate it, because I cannot steer the ship with my arms." The security man then laughed loudly, and said, "I don't blame you sir, those singing meteorites are vicious creatures, and I should know, one of them flew into my grandmother on her intergalactic mobility scooter and she passed away." Brian, wasn't surprised, and he then responded, "Well, I am sorry to hear of your loss Sir." The security man then said, "Ah, it is ok, I had her resurrected." Brian then laughed a little, and afterwards said, "Resurrected? You mean you can actually resurrect people?" The security man then said, "Yes, I had her resurrected as a teddy bear, but anyway I must go now." Brian sighed and then replied, "Ok, goodbye and thanks for your help."

Brian wasn't sure how long it would be before the security man got back to him, but now, currently the thief was getting away and probably very rapidly. Now what

would the crew do if the thief had already left the space station? The crew would not be able to go anywhere, and the digital display could already have been sold to some nefarious individuals, and another thought on Brians mind was, what would happen if the thief had found out how to hack into the ships computers and then steal the ship? Now this was definitely something worth thinking about, and Brian was once again worried, and he felt more uneasy than before. Still, getting back to planet Earth would not be a problem, but the company that they worked for would not be too happy about Brian and the crew leaving the ship unprotected, and they could also lose money from their wages. Now, losing money from their wages could set them back by as much as a year, and if they wanted to set up a company on Earth, then they would need all the money that they can get.

The crew of course had worked extremely long hours, and they had gone through many mundane and boring jobs to get to this point, and to have survived with their sanity intact was quite incredible. Yet, Brians sanity and the crew's sanity would be sorely tested if the thief got away, and they all had to go through the rigmarole of sorting out how to get home. The job would finish early of course as a replacement spaceship would take far too long to arrive, but they would have no other choice if the spaceship was stolen.

Brian took a few moments to think and then telephoned the rest of the crew and Jasmine at the same time. Karen answered first and said, "Brian, is there any news on the digital display map?" Brian then sighed and replied, "Well, not yet, but the security man said that he was going to check the CCTV cameras."

Theft in space and on space stations was a common occurrence, and extremely frustrating for anyone involved in losing their property. Brian was used to losing things, because Brians mother was a kleptomaniac, and once Brian had lost his father after she had tried to sell him on the intergalactic internet and there was one successful bidder, then after being sold to a successful bidder from the planet Mars, he was teleported there against his wishes. Of course, it was a very difficult situation indeed, but Brians father eventually made it back to planet Earth, after fathering fifteen children with a Martian lady by accident. Brian had never seen his father so happy, than when he arrived back on planet Earth, after a long stay on the planet mars. Brian was very happy to see him too, but not his mother, who was extremely angry that he was still alive and immediately asked for a divorce on the grounds that you must be mad if you want to continue to be married to a kleptomaniac.

Brians father after he had spoken was then taken immediately to a psychiatric unit, and he luckily then managed to escape after a week of captivity, and after being force fed at least fifty slices of cake a day and enduring people dribbling down their chins and staring vacantly at him.

Still, there were more pressing matters than old thoughts, and now there was nothing that the crew could do except wait for the security man to get back to them.

Karen then took in what Brian had said about the digital display map situation, and afterwards said, "Well, now what?" Brian then thought about this and afterwards responded, "How about we search the market to see if it is



already on sale by any chance?" This seemed like a very sensible idea indeed, and Karen then responded, "Ok. We will meet you in the corridor."

Brian then left his room wearing his antigravity suit again, and then met the rest of the crew and Jasmine in the corridor. They then all headed for the elevator, and Brian pressed the button for the ground floor, and the doors opened, and they all then got in. The elevator then descended, and the crew arrived in the reception area, and they then left the hotel, and afterwards headed for the short corridor into the marketplace. The marketplace was busy and busier than before. Pickpockets were everywhere and many hands were probing for easy pickings in people's pockets, but the crew were protected. The crew then walked across the marketplace and then began to look for tech stalls, and there were quite a few. The crew and Jasmine scoured the market stalls, but they did not see a digital display map at all.

This idea to try and find the digital display map was a terrible idea probably, but any search was better than nothing. Jasmine whilst they were searching the market stalls then said, "Is this digital display map special?" Brian smiled and then said, "Yes, very special indeed. We really cannot fly the ship without it." Jasmine then quickly realised the importance of being able to fly the ship properly, and then said, "Well, I hope that we find it, because what happens if the ship cannot be flown anymore?" Salomina paused and thought about it and then responded, "Well, it will be as useful as a rock." Jasmine then nodded, and said, "True. We really had better find it."

Suddenly Brian spotted a man in the distance carrying what looked like the digital display map. Brian was pleased to see this, and Brian then turned to the crew, and said, "Look over there, that man looks like he is carrying a digital display map." Salomina, then took out a pair of binoculars from inside her pocket and looked in the man's direction. It did indeed look like the man was carrying a digital display map. Brian then said, "Run!" Brian then began running and so did the crew and Jasmine too, in case the man was seriously dedicated kleptomaniac, which of course was very possible indeed.

Kleptomaniacs seemed to be rife amongst the galaxy these days, and in space there was a kleptomaniac who had a habit of stealing peoples nostril hairs.

Kleptomaniacs still, had managed to keep the intergalactic economy going, which was not an easy thing, because selling things was a fine art, and once aliens had finally decided to start talking to human beings properly and not just wave at them from their spaceships, had decided to do some trade. Trading with space aliens was certainly a unique experience as it depended mostly upon telepathy. Telepathic sales techniques had been honed by the space aliens of many types throughout the universe and not always successfully. Bargaining was especially appreciated by space aliens, and the crew of the spaceship are we there yet did attempt to bargain with them and managed by accident to buy half eaten sandwiches.

## **Chapter 18**

"The chase."

The crew and Jasmine then fought their way through the crowds and surrounded the man and the man was a little scared and he threw his hands up in the air, and he held up a similar looking tablet to the digital display map. The crew and Jasmine stared at the man, and the man stared at them all. Brian thought the man was going to do a runner and was not prepared to take any chances. Brian then said to the man, "Where did you get that?" The man looked shifty, and Brian thought that he had dodgy eyes, and he then shook his head, and said, "Now, why should I tell you that, it is none of your business?" This was a fair point especially on this space station, where there probably were more criminals than a sanatorium. Still, the crew and Jasmine did not want the man to get away at all, and they all had him surrounded quite nicely. The man then started jumping up and down on the spot, and he then tried to clamber over Brian in his antigravity suit and get away. Brian then turned off his antigravity suit and grabbed the man, and then attempted to wrestle him to the ground. The tablet then flew out of the man's hand and landed on the floor, and the screen on it smashed into pieces. The man was extremely angry, and he was not amused at all, and he tried to punch Brian, but luckily Brian ducked, and the man's punch then rebounded off off Jasmines antigravity shield. The man swore in pain, and then tried to punch Brian again, and afterwards he said, "You owe me money you do, now give me some money or else." Brian was really not used to threats, but he had caused the situation, and upon looking at the tablet, Brian realised that it was not the digital display map after all, but something similar.

Brian then suddenly whipped out his credit card and said, "Do you take credit cards?" The man then looked angrily at Brian and then took Brians credit card from out of his hands and then ran off through the crowds with it. Brian then switched back on his antigravity shield, and Brian and the crew and Jasmine chased after the man rapidly. The man had just left the tablet on the floor with a cracked screen. The crowds were bowled out of the way by Brian and Jasmine and the rest of the crew who ran furiously, and they were gaining on the man, who kept looking behind him. The man then ran fast as he could into a shop, and it was a hair salon.

The crew and Jasmine then reached the shop too, and once inside, they saw the man holding out the credit card to a female hairdresser, the man then said, "I will have a perm please." Brian then coughed and responded, "Excuse me miss, that is my card that is." The female hairdresser then looked at the man and then at Brian, and afterwards she said to Brian, "Your card? So, he has stolen it?" The man then laughed loudly and replied, "Yes, I may have stolen it, but he smashed my computer into bits, but what else would you expect from such a stupid looking individual."

Brian was not amused by this slight upon his character at all, and he stared angrily at the man, and then tried to grab the card back, but the man moved out of the way too rapidly. The man then looked at Brian, and then said, "Look you, I will do you a deal. You pay for my perm, and we will call it quits about the tablet computer." Brian then smiled and looked at the man, and said, "Ok, now how much is the perm then?" The man then shrugged his shoulders and said, "I really do not know, now ask the

lady, she will." Brian and the rest of the crew and Jasmine turned off their antigravity generators, then Jasmine laughed at what the man had said, and then replied loudly, "A perm?" The crew also started laughing loudly, as they had not heard of anyone wearing a perm for several hundred years. The perm was one of the world's worst hairstyles ever. The woman also found a perm highly amusing and embarrassing, then after calming herself down and managed to keep a straight face, she said, "A perm is two thousand pounds." Brian was shocked by this and then immediately coughed and almost choked, before replying, "Two thousand pounds?" Two thousand pounds was a lot of money for a ridiculous haircut that no one in their right mind would ever wish to wear whatsoever." Still, after a couple of seconds thought, Brian thought that this was a fair price as it was probably the same cost as the tablet computer that he had destroyed, and it wasn't any of Brian's business if the man wanted to look like a total idiot. Brian then decided to agree to the deal, and he said, "Ok, we have a deal, now please can I have my credit card back, thank you." The man then handed the credit card back to Brian, and Brian took it thankfully. Brian then gave the woman his credit card, and said, "Anyone else want a haircut?" Jasmine smiled and then jumped up and down immediately, and said, "Yes, please!" The crew had never seen anyone so enthusiastic over a haircut before, but hopefully Jasmine would choose a much nicer haircut. The rest of the crew then decided that they could do with haircuts too as this waiting malarkey, was incredibly irritating, and they needed to cheer themselves up until they found out whether they had a spaceship left or not and whether they

would be able to retrieve the digital display map. Nothing was certain of course, but the crew and Jasmine were certain that they could get good haircuts, which after a long period of time of cutting their own hair in a disastrous fashion, was a relief. Brian then said to the female hairdresser, "We would like haircuts too please." The female hairdresser then smiled and said, "Ok great, now please, take a seat, and I will be with you shortly." The crew and Jasmine then sat down, and the man whose tablet Brian had broken was also sat down, and another hairdresser began working on the man's perm. Brian then looked over at the man and thought "What an idiot!"

The crew after an hour or so had their hair done, and Brian whilst having his haircut received a phone call from the security man. The security man then said, "I have good news and bad news. We have identified the man who stole your digital display map, and the man is one of the most violent men in the space station. Brian immediately felt depressed and then slapped his own forehead, and said, "Oh, just what we needed, especially after being attacked by a robot wielding underpants." The security man then laughed, and replied, "Well, you all survived that one, but this man is a well-known dangerous criminal, with a very long criminal record." Brian then paused for a moment and said, "A criminal record?" The security man then sighed and replied in a serious voice, "Yes, the man is known as Berthold Adisco. He once released an audio single that was so terrible that it was banned across the universe, and anyone found to be playing the record was arrested, as the sound was so terrible, that it made peoples eardrums bleed, and also several people died because of it, and Berthold Adisco was put in prison because the audio

single that he released caused huge amounts of eardrum damage. Now Berthold Adisco became even more violent in prison because he released a second audio single called, I am stuck on you, which encouraged people to superglue themselves to their loved ones to prevent marital breakup.” and the audio single was even worse than the first one because the vibrations on the audio single, were so bad, that it made people lose their false limbs which flew apart because of the vibrations. Berthold Adisco had a lot of time on his hands of course, and he started learning Karate and Jujitsu, and he managed to knock out the prison chef for several years after the prison chef had cooked Berthold Adiscos eggs improperly. Berthold Adisco was also responsible for encouraging people to drive their spaceships improperly and he also encouraged them to fly them into meteorites, meteorites that Berthold Adisco did not like the look of, namely the singing meteorites.

Brian did not like the sound of Berthold Adisco whatsoever, and he really did not want to meet him or the crew, but it was the only way to get the digital display map back. The security man then said, “Well, I hope that you manage to find him, as we are not personally allowed to chase after criminals, that requires the intergalactic police force, and you would have to talk to them about it.” Brian then paused, and said, “Thank you, I really appreciate you letting me know, now please can you send me a picture of Berthold Adisco, so we know who we are looking for?” The security man then replied, “Of course, I will send it now, but, now I must be going, so goodbye and good luck, you will need it.” The call then

disconnected, and Brian afterwards said, "Goodbye quietly." into the phone.

The rest of the crew and Jasmine then looked at Brian, and Brian then spoke to them, "The security man says that he believes that the man responsible for stealing the digital display map is Berthold Adisco, a man who has a criminal record for having a criminal record, an audio single so bad, that it got banned from the universe because it made peoples ears bleed." Jasmine looked shocked about this, and so did the rest of the crew too. This really was not what they wanted to hear at all. Jasmine then said, "So, what are we going to do about it?" Brian then paused, and replied, "Well, the security man is going to send me a picture." Brian then looked at his phone, and sure enough a picture of Berthold Adisco had arrived on his mobile phone. Berthold Adisco was a tall ugly looking man covered in facial warts, and he had a very long and straggly beard, and he was also crossed eyed, which would be quite easy to spot from a distance. The crowds in the marketplace were huge, and there were many other places to explore on the space station. Now whether Berthold Adisco was still on the space station was another matter entirely and had yet to be discovered. Brian then continued what he was saying, "Well, now that we have a picture of Berthold Adisco, we should go and attempt to find some police officers, and then talk to them about what they know." The crew and Jasmine then nodded, and Salomina said, "Good idea Brian." The crew then looked at each other, and admired each other's new haircuts which were a vast improvement, and they then got up from out of their chairs, and Brian took out his credit card and paid the female hairdresser that they first spoke to upon arrival.



Brian then said, "Thank you." to the hairdresser, and also, "Goodbye." The crew then left the hairdressers and once more turned on their antigravity generators and headed across the marketplace. It was now early evening and a beautiful evening as the space stations ceiling had a huge numbers of fairy lights upon it, and they were just being turned on, and they looked truly beautiful. The crew and Jasmine, then began to head in a direction that they had not gone in before. Brian then decided to ask someone where the police station was. The first person to ask was a woman, wearing a spacesuit. Brian turned to her and said, "Excuse me, do you happen to know where the police station is?" The woman then replied, "Yes." and she then pointed the crew and Jasmine in the right direction, and Brian replied, "Thank you." The crew and Jasmine then began walking in the direction that she had pointed them to, and after a few minutes they arrived at the police station.

The police station was brightly lit, and busy, and there were aliens in handcuffs, and human beings, and groups of police officers who were stood around talking. Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then headed towards a group of police officers. Brian then said to them, "Excuse me officers, we were told to come here after reporting our digital display map to the security officer at our hotel." One of the police officers then replied nonchalantly, "Good day to you, I am sorry to hear about this, but cannot you buy another one at the shop?" Brian shook his head, and sighed, and then continued, and added, "Well, this is not a normal digital display map at all, but it controls the navigation system of our spaceship you see." The police officer then thought about it for a few seconds and

afterwards responded, "Oh, I see, and where was it taken from?" Brian then said, "Well, it was taken from inside my room, from the bed in fact." The police officer then nodded, and continued, "Right, that was not the most sensible place to store it was it?" Brian sighed, and then continued with his train of thought, and afterwards he replied, "Well, no, but there wasn't a safe in the room." The police officer then continued and added, "Well, I am sorry to hear that you have been having such problems. This space station is notorious for crime, and there really are not enough of us police officers aboard the station, and of course we have huge numbers of crimes to deal with on a daily basis. For example in the last couple of weeks we have had to deal with a fatal shooting of man and his wife, the mass murder of hundreds of people by a horse with a laser gun, and less seriously the drink driving of camels, the theft of huge amounts of sausages, the theft of a man's false leg, the theft of a man's toupee, the theft of a woman's husband by a space alien, the act of arson upon a man's packet of marshmallows, the wielding of the wrong kind of trousers above a man's head, the riding of a horse backwards, the theft of two thousand pairs of underpants, and the intoxication of a man's dinner for no reason." This was a very busy time for the police officers thought Brian, and the mass murder by a horse with a laser gun could not have been easy to deal with at all. Still, the theft of the crew's digital display map was incredibly serious, and they and Jasmine were very concerned about the situation. The police officer seemed very sympathetic, and Brian tried to respond in kind. Brian then looked at the police officer and smiled, and said, "Thank you officer, I do sympathise, because it must be a very difficult job you

do, but if we do not get the digital display map back then it will take us quite a while to get back to the planet Earth." The police officer looked at Brian and the crew and Jasmine, and then smiled at them and said, "Well, we certainly will do our best to recover your digital display map. Now do you have any clue as to who could have taken it?" Brian then paused, and afterwards took out his mobile phone and brought up the picture of Berthold Adisco, and said, "Well, we were told by the security officer at the hotel that the man in the picture was responsible and he is called Berthold Adisco." The police officer then frowned and said, "Oh, that is not good news, because Berthold Adisco is notoriously dangerous, because he had several records banned by intergalactic law, because they made peoples eardrums bleed, and peoples false limbs vibrate and fall off and also because of his intentions to compile an album with even more nefarious and more dangerous sounds." Now, this of course was a nightmare for police officers, and Berthold Adisco, after serving several years in prison for his crimes against the human body through sound, managed to escape from a high security prison." Brian then sighed even more loudly than before and said, "Oh, he does sound very dangerous indeed, and I thought that my ex-mother-in-law was dangerous, because of her cooking." The policeman then laughed loudly, and said, "Oh, that is funny sir." The policeman then smiled for several moments, and then continued, "Now, of course, Berthold Adisco is not known for being violent, but he may try and use music against you to try and attack you, and of course, it will be a very difficult thing to catch Berthold Adisco, but still, I would. prepare yourself for the worst." Brian

then replied, "The worst?" The policemen then smiled and nodded, and added, "Yes, the worst, because you and your lovely crew could be killed by psychotic soundwaves masquerading as disco, which is worse than having ants dancing to heavy metal music in your underpants. Now, Berthold Adisco is a very dangerous individual because he was brought up on the world's worst music known to humanity and aliens, and he is best avoided in my personal opinion." Brian was not liking what he was hearing, and he and the crew were not really looking to avoid Berthold Adisco, but to hold him to account, for the theft of the digital display map which was capable of taking them home far faster than most other spaceships."

The digital display map was very precious to the crew, and they needed it back at all costs, and of course, they had their antigravity suits to protect them, but how much protection could be provided by an antigravity suit was not certain. Still, at least they knew what Berthold Adisco looked like. The policeman then said, "Well, we will keep an eye out for him of course, but as he is a dangerous individual, he is best off being tackled by the intergalactic police federations robots." Brian then smiled and liked the sound of this, and afterwards he then replied, "Oh, that sounds great. Now, can we call them to start looking for them?" The policeman then shook his head and said, "I am afraid not, the nearest ones are ten million miles away." Brian then sighed and slapped his forehead, and responded, "Oh, how frustrating, we really could do with some extra help." The policeman then agreed and said, "Yes, I know it is not very helpful at all, but be assured sir that we will be doing all that we can to help you, and we are confident that despite the difficult situation, we believe

that Berthold Adisco can be brought to justice for the theft of your digital display map." Brian felt more relieved, and he was happier than he was a few moments ago. Still capturing Berthold Adisco without having ruptured eardrums, was not going to be easy at all, but it was something that had to be attempted. Brian then stuck out his hand and the policeman stuck out his hand and they shook each other's hands, and Brian then said, "Thank you officer, your help is greatly appreciated." The police officer, then shook the rest of the crews' hands and Jasmines, and then said, "Well, I am sorry to leave you, but we must get back to our duties, as there is a notorious kleptomaniac squirrel on the loose, who has been stealing people's wallets and using their credit cards to buy acorns on the intergalactic internet without permission, which of course is scaring of the tourists in the local area!" Brian and Jasmine and the rest of the crew then waved goodbye to the police officers, and said, "Thank you officer and goodbye, we will keep an eye out for the squirrels!"

The crew and Jasmine looked at each other, and they were contemplating what the police officer had just said and did not like the sound of Berthold Adisco whatsoever. Still, what had to be done had to be done, and they had to go and find Berthold Adisco as soon as possible. Salomina sighed and said, "Right, come on let's go, we have a disco maniac on the loose who likes torturing people, and we need to get the digital display map back." The crew and Jasmine then left the space station with a sinking feeling inside them. They had never come across such a dangerous lunatic, who had caused such devastation with disco music. Still soon they would, and it probably was not going to be pleasant whatsoever.

The crew and Jasmine then left the space station, and headed back outside, and kept walking and exploring, and spotted a music shop in the distance. Brian thought that this was a good place to start. The crew and Jasmine then walked towards it and could hear pleasant music playing, much more pleasant music than what Berthold Adisco was used to inflicting on people. Berthold Adisco was a strange lunatic indeed, and a music shop was a good place to start looking for him as any. The crew and Jasmine reached the music shop and then entered it.

Inside the shop a man wearing spandex with a glitterball on his head was dancing around behind the shop counter, and he was making some fantastic moves, moves that the crew and Jasmine had never seen in their lives before. The crew and Jasmine then headed towards the shop counter, and the man looked them up and down and said, "Doo ziggedy nano man?" and the man phrased it as a question, and it was a question that none of the crew could answer. The crew and Jasmine then just stood there, and they shrugged their shoulders, and the man looked at them and they then looked at the man, and there was an awkward silence.

Brian then waited for a few seconds and then spoke, and he said, "I am sorry what?" The man then repeated the phrase, "Doo ziggedy nano man?" The crew and Jasmine still had no clue what the man was on about. The man then sighed slightly and said, "Oh, never mind. Now how can I help you all?" Salomina smiled at the man, who was wearing a rather funky outfit, and said in a whisper, "Well, we are looking for someone, someone called, Berthold Adisco." The man then took a step backwards, and then looked to the right and then to the left and shook his head

rapidly as if in a cartoon. He did not look impressed, and he sighed heavily, then said, "Now you all better leave, because anyone who mentions that name, usually brings trouble, and I can't be having trouble in my shop man, because I am a cool cat man, and I like to stay cool and well away from psychotic disco lunatics." Karen then joined in the conversation, and said, "Oh, of course sir, we understand but we were wondering have you seen him lately?" The man then shook his head, and said, "No, of course not, otherwise my ears would be bleeding." Cedric then nodded sympathetically, and afterwards replied, "Oh, well, thank you anyway, we will all be leaving now." The man then unpaused his music and began dancing again, and the crew left the shop, no nearer to finding Berthold Adisco. Finding Berthold Adisco was definitely not going to be easy, and they had to keep persevering and keep trying as the digital display was not capable of bringing itself to them.

The streets of Noula were filled with rubbish mostly, and there were many windy and narrow alleyways in which it was easy to be attacked, but the crew were wearing their antigravity suits, and they felt protected.

The city of Noula was mostly new, and there were many fascinating buildings but there was a very sharp edge to the place as the residents were barely making any money at all, and the big corporations barely paid decent wages, which of course was a reason for lots of crime. Still Berthold Adisco, probably did not realise how important the digital display map was, and what its value was immeasurable to the crew.

The crew continued to search and search the many streets and the many shopping centres of the city of Noula but

they had no luck, and they were getting tired eyes from looking at the huge numbers of people passing before their eyes. It certainly was not easy spotting people amongst the crowds, and very much like finding a needle in a haystack, but the crew continued to search for at least five hours, without any success.

The crew then continued to walk around the city and found an area with lots of bars, brand shiny new bars with neon signs, and dancing girls and levitating cocktails. The crew and Jasmine tried talking to some of the many customers, and they did not get very helpful responses at all. These responses included things such as, "Oh you have a lovely pair of trousers, would you mind if I iron them whilst blowing you kisses." and also, "If your mother was here, you would get an anti-social behaviour order for not talking to me and buying me drink." and finally, "Haven't I seen you before? Yeshh, I think you borrowed my kidney, and never gave it back, now give me back my kidney, because I need it to get even drunker than before because your face it disturbs me, and I have piles and I will sit on you if you are not careful!" These kinds of responses brought the crew no closer to finding Berthold Adisco, and Brian was beginning to despair a little, and it had been a long day, without any real sign of him.

The crew then turned off their antigravity generators and then sat outside a bar drinking, and kept an eye on the crowds, and the crew were not sure whether he would be out socialising or conjuring up some new terrible disco music with which to discombobulate the human body. Berthold Adisco, now what kind of a name was that thought Brian, and then he thought, well it is a name that only an idiot could dream up after drinking too much.



Brian had never wanted to change his name by deed poll, and there really were some very strange names out there in the world, and also on this space station probably, apart from Berthold Adisco, which made Brian laugh inside. Brian, Jasmine and the crew kept an eye on the crowds, and continued sipping their drinks, and Brian then said, "We are going to have to go about this a different way, because Berthold Adisco does not appear to be anywhere to be seen. Now how about we get some drones from the ship to help us spot Berthold Adisco. Jasmine and the rest of the crew thought that this was a really good idea, and they nodded and then smiled. Jasmine then said, "Yes, that is a very good idea indeed Brian, but I could do with a few more drinks if we are to tackle that lunatic." Cedric then nodded and paused before saying, "Yes, let us get a little bit drunk at least, because I haven't felt my legs wobble for ages, and I have really fond memories of wobbly legs, because that is how I met an ex-girlfriend. You see, I had had drunk too much and I at first tripped over a hedgehog, and then I fell into a dustbin, and afterwards I rolled along the ground in front of a garbage truck and just managed to climb out of it, before it was crushed to death, and then after that I fell into a man on a bicycle who swerved out of the way and then smashed into a shop window. The man then caught his trousers on fire on a candle, and the entire street went up in flames, and whilst staring at the flames, I bumped into the love of my life, who hit me around the head with her handbag for bumping into her. Oh, and the man survived, and he now shops at the fifty pence shop, and has to pay back everyone whose building he accidentally burnt to the

ground." Salomina then laughed, and said, "Yes, you certainly do have a funny way of meeting women Cedric."

Brian found this amusing and then laughed too, and afterwards replied, "Yes, I have developed quite a talent for meeting women in strange places, but I wish it was that easy to find Berthold Adisco, because we are going to have to wait quite a while for the next transport ship back to Earth. Still, I guess we could enjoy ourselves in the luxury hotels here if the worst comes to the worst." This was very true, and the company would have to sort out the problem, and they would get paid their final wages early.

Brian, Jasmine and the crew then continued to survey the crowds, but Berthold Adisco was still nowhere to be seen. The crew then bought a few more drinks and then finished them, and then turned back on their antigravity generators and left the bar and then headed back towards the spaceport where their spaceship awaited them. Brian then said, "Shall we call it a night for now because I am very tired, and my legs feel like they have been eaten by termites. The space station seemed to be crawling with bugs of various kinds, and Brian thought that he had been bitten more than his fair share. Still, the crew and Jasmine were nearly home.

The crew and Jasmine then entered the spaceship, that had been trained to recognise them no matter how drunken they were and then open the doors for them. It was a relief to be back in the spaceship, and the crew headed for the entertainment lounge, and they then sat down on the chairs. Brian then shouted at the drone to bring them some drinks, and the crew sat there in silence, a little deflated at not finding Berthold Adisco. Berthold

Adisco was not exactly an enigma, but he was very difficult to find, and it was very frustrating when so much depended on it, but hopefully soon, they would find him, but how difficult would it be to make Berthold Adisco see sense? Probably very difficult indeed, especially if he started playing warped and weird disco music that discombobulated your body and your intestines and frightened the life out of your trousers.

The crew continued to sit in their chairs, and they felt worn out, and after a few minutes they fell asleep. Eventually they woke up again and said goodnight to each other and then went to their own bedrooms. Brian, Cedric, Salomina, Karen and Jasmine then lay on their beds wondering what kind of craziness Berthold Adisco was up to. Probably something terrible, probably something devious, probably something Machiavellian in the music industry, that no one would like whatsoever.

Still Berthold Adisco was out there somewhere, and he sounded a very unhappy man indeed, and usually he would be a person to avoid, and the crew really could not avoid trying to find Berthold Adisco, because their safe passage back to Earth required it, and the transport ships were notoriously prone to faults and delays.

The night passed quickly, and the crew awoke, to a fake sunrise, and they lay in their beds for a while, and then contemplated the day before them. The finding of Berthold Adisco was on their minds, and it was not a pleasant thought. Brian, the rest of the crew and Jasmine, then got up, and got showered, then afterwards dried themselves and got dressed. It was going to be a very long day ahead indeed.

The crew then left their rooms after picking up their antigravity generators and attaching them to their clothes and then turning them on. The crew then headed out into the corridor. Salomina was the first there, and she said "Hello" to everyone. The crew then responded in unison, "Hello." Brian then was silent for a moment, and he said, "Right, let us get the drones." The drones would hopefully speed things right up indeed, because time was of the essence, as Berthold Adisco could leave the space station at any moment without any warning whatsoever, and Berthold Adisco could be dangerous anywhere that he chose to be. Luckily the drones would come in very useful indeed. Drones were much more useful than robots.

The drones were many, about fifty of them, and the crew would need all the help that they could get. The drones came attached with megaphones, megaphones that could shout above the heads of noisy crowds and still be heard despite the noise. Now, it was a simple plan, but a very sensible plan indeed. Brian walked to the storage area of the spaceship and then got them all out of the storage cupboards and programmed the drones to follow them. The crew then walked across the spaceport, and into the corridor and then afterwards headed for the marketplace. Brian had a remote control for the drones, and he pressed a button on them and then began to shout into the controller, "We are looking for a Mr Berthold Adisco. Has anyone seen Berthold Adisco?" No one answered, unsurprisingly, and the crowds continued on their merry ways, or unmerry ways in some places. Brian thought that many of them needed Prozac or some other mood-altering drug. The mood amongst the crowd was not as cheerful yesterday and despite the brand-new shiny space station,

no one seemed to be really happy. Still, this was not of the crews and Jasmine's concern. Brian then continued to shout into the controller, "Excuse me, has anyone seen the notorious disco discombobulating Berthold Adisco?" Still, none of the crowd responded. Brian then sent the picture of Berthold Adisco from his mobile phone to the controller, and then to the many drones. The drones then began projecting Berthold Adisco's picture above the heads of the crowd. Berthold Adisco's picture was enough to scare anyone, and upon seeing the picture of Berthold Adisco, the crowds began screaming and running away in terror, and they looked like they were fearing for their lives. Many of the crowd were unfortunately trampled and squashed, and Brian immediately felt bad about unleashing such devastation upon them, which of course was not his intention whatsoever. Still the crowd were as scared as anyone that Brian had ever seen in his lifetime, and he looked at the crew, and they were shocked by this as well. Jasmine stood there with a shocked look on her face and then said, "Oh, my Brian, the crowds are screaming, and they are running away. Berthold Adisco really must have a terrible reputation, a reputation as a bad as Genghis Khan." Brian nodded, and then said, "Yes. Berthold Adisco, is obviously a very dangerous man." Brian then paused before shouting into the controller, and said, "Please, do not panic everyone. We are just looking for Berthold Adisco. Berthold Adisco, if you are out there, come out with your hands up, you devious disco discombobulator! Yes, come out wherever you are, we want our digital display map back, and we believe that you have it, you despicable despotic disco lunatic." Berthold Adisco soon would have no way of not being

spotted as the crowds had run away so fast that there were huge empty spaces now in front of the crew and also Jasmine. Brian then paused and got his breath back, and breathed heavily, very heavily, then afterwards he continued shouting into the controller very loudly, "Berthold Adisco, we know what you look like, you demonic disco dancing discombobulator with the face of a potato." The crew and Jasmine then laughed, because this was one of Brians better put downs and he was immensely proud of it, and Brian also laughed. Still, Brians shouting had not yet brought Berthold Adisco out into the open, and Berthold Adisco remained as elusive as a potato hidden by a squirrel who was wearing spandex trousers. Brian needed to take a break from shouting, and he then handed the controller to Salomina, and Salomina then began shouting loudly, "Berthold Adisco, you are an incompetent son of a dim-witted mother, whose legs have been replaced by large carrots." and also "Berthold Adisco, your disco music is downright despicable, now come here and I will give you an earful, you donut, you dumb nut, you idiotic plonker, you malevolent lunatic, whose music makes people sick!"

The rest of the crew were laughing, and Jasmine was too. The crowds were very thin now and they were still running away and screaming and fearing the worst. Berthold Adiscos music was obviously very traumatising, and no fun whatsoever. Still, if Berthold Adisco's music was the kind of music that made people scream and run for their lives, the crew and Jasmine wanted no part of it whatsoever, because listening to it by the looks of things was enough to drive you utterly insane in the brain. Brian and the crew of course rather enjoyed their brains,

and they did not want them to explode or be subject to damage because of Berthold Adiscos terrible disco music. Salomina then handed the controller to Cedric, who then began shouting into it, and he shouted, "Berthold Adisco, you are not going to hold a disco in my spaceship, but come here anyway you little ragamuffin, we despise you, yes, we do not like you and the sound of your music at all, yes, you, you villainous disco dancing dimwit." and also, "Berthold Adisco, you are one crazy lunatic who I would like to vibrate with a pneumatic drill, until your trousers fall off in public and you embarrass yourself and need to run naked to the toilet, where we will play you your own music to you without headphones." Berthold Adisco probably was deaf, and this was quite understandable if he had listened to his own music, and this would explain why he was not answering the loud and the noisy shouting coming from the drones. Now for most people this would be annoying, but to a deaf person, it probably would not mean very much at all. Still all the crew and Jasmine could do, was hope that Berthold Adisco was not deaf after all, and that he would finally be drawn out of his lair by the noise, wherever that happened to be. Brian stood there thinking to himself and Berthold Adisco would never live this down thought Brian, if Brian and the crew could get his hands on him. This was not going to be easy of course, but still they had to give it everything that they had. Cedric then gave the controller to Karen, and she then shouted into it louder than the others, "Berthold Adisco, your music is terrible, and I would like to transplant your brain into a dustbin and then replace it with a robot, because you are the worst sort in the world, and the universe, and your music

it could destroy planets and the stars, and we the revolutionary front of stop stealing our things want you to come here right now, yes right now you crazy madman whose music drives peoples nuts. Now get here immediately or else! Yes, or else, and that means we will play your music to your mother down the telephone line, and she will stop your pocket money, you overfed bulbous potato faced maniac!" The crowds had completely dispersed and the crew and Jasmine were alone in the marketplace with their drones hovering above them. Suddenly a police drone came along and flew through the air towards them, and then shouted at the crew and Jasmine, "Now what is going on here, and what is the meaning of this shouting, and why are there no people in the marketplace at all? Yes, you down there, what have you done with all the people? Have you killed them with your shouting?" Brian then took back the controller and shouted, "No we have not killed them with our shouting."

The drone then paused and afterwards said, "Stop shouting immediately or I will have to fine you three pairs of underpants and fifty dollars!" Now this was a misunderstanding, and Brian certainly could do with his underpants, and as many as possible. Brian then shouted again, "Look we just need some help finding the notorious Berthold Adisco!" The police drone then shouted, "Berthold Adisco?" and then began to vibrate, and suddenly the police drone exploded into many many pieces, and they fell to the ground. Brian, Jasmine and the crew then looked at each other, and stared at the pieces of the drone on the floor, and Jasmine said, "That drone committed suicide!" Brian and the rest of the crew then



nodded, and afterwards Brian shouted into the controller again, "Berthold Adisco, we do not have time for this. Now, you have something of ours that we need immediately, so please come here right now or we will have to send out the rabid hamsters who carry nasty diseases, the likes of which you have never seen, diseases so nasty, they are worse than your music, and we will insert the diseases into your tiny little brain, to help save the universe from your intergalactic shenanigans." There was silence for a few moments, and then suddenly a robotic tumbleweed rolled through the marketplace playing the sound of howling wind.

Brian then scratched his forehead, because he had never seen a robotic tumbleweed before, and nor had Jasmine or the rest of the crew. It was a very weird thing, but still, there was no sign of Berthold Adisco. The crew then looked at each other and Brian said, let us go elsewhere. The crew and Jasmine then walked forwards, and the drones followed them, and the crew and the drones then headed into a large open square with fountains and crowds of people, and Brian then shouted once more into the controller, "Berthold Adisco!" The crowds in the square immediately then began screaming and they started running away in fear of their lives, like the crowds of people in the marketplace.

Brian was not really taking in the commotion around him, as he was desperate to get the digital display map back. Brian exasperatedly then shouted, "With your invisibility you are really spoiling us Berthold Adisco, now come here you coward, we only want a quiet word! Yes, get here quickly and do not be absurd! You ridiculous twerp, yes, get here soon or we will go berserk." Brian

thought that no one liked being shouted at, well no one in their right minds that is. Berthold Adisco was still a no show, and this was very disappointing indeed, and so the crew kept moving from area to area of the city, causing widespread panic and pandemonium, and of course the police drones that they came across asked them to stop shouting too, and also asked what they wanted, and when Brian shouted, "We are all looking for Berthold Adisco." The police drones vibrated violently, and they then exploded like the one before in the marketplace. No police drone it seemed could handle someone shouting the name Berthold Adisco. The words Berthold Adisco seemed to put the fear of God into people, and people were losing their minds at the words wherever they were spoken, and everywhere the crew of the spaceship and Jasmine went, and where the words were spoken people ran screaming and they tripped over things in their efforts to get away. The people aboard the space station were desperate, and the crew of the spaceship and Jasmine had never seen such extraordinary sights ever in their lives. Still, no one appeared to be hurt so far, and the crew and Jasmine felt ok about this, as they had a job to do.

The digital display had not been recovered yet and there was not much time before the crew were supposed to leaving the space station for their next delivery route. The crew continued to search for Berthold Adisco, and they searched in every dodgy looking music shop, and they searched in the alleyways, and they all came up with nothing at all whatsoever. Yes, unfortunately, there seemed to be no sign of Berthold Adisco anywhere, and the crew were becoming despondent.

The evening wore on and the crew and the drones were having no luck trying to find Berthold Adisco, but Brian and the rest of the crew and Jasmine were determined to do so. At about midnight the crew were sat drinking in another bar, and life had begun to return to normal in the space station, but still people seemed to be jittery and on edge. Brian looked around the bar, and there were numerous people with dark glasses, and they appeared to be trying to keep a low profile, which wasn't easy as Brian was looking at them. One of the people, a woman wearing dark sunglasses noticed Brian, and she turned towards him, and then said, "Hello, how can I help you?" Brian looked at her and she was a very pretty woman indeed, and Brian couldn't help admiring her beauty.

The rest of the crew and Jasmine then continued drinking their drinks, and Brian was lost in the woman's eyes for a moment, and she did not appear to mind. The woman then introduced herself, and she said, "I am Petulia, and it is a pleasure to meet you." and then she stuck out her hand and Brian shook it gently with his. Brian then smiled and said, "It is a pleasure to meet you too Petulia. Now, we are looking for someone." Petulia then replied, "Oh, now who would that be?" and then she began drinking her drink. Brian then paused, and he said, "Berthold Adisco." Petulia coughed and then she dropped her drink and afterwards jumped up in the air, and then grabbed her handbag, put it over her shoulder, and ran screaming out of the door. The people in the bar then turned to watch her leave, and afterwards they all turned to look at Brian, and then took off their sunglasses and stared at Brian.

Brian felt extremely uncomfortable and did not know where to look whatsoever. Brian then said, "Has anyone

seen Berthold Adisco?" Everyone in the bar suddenly got up and ran screaming except the barman, who stood there preparing drinks.

The barman had put on a pair of headphones and was listening to music, and he did not hear what Brian had said.

The barman then looked up and suddenly noticed the customers rapidly running out of the bar screaming, and then took off his headphones, and he looked at Brian and at Jasmine and at the rest of the crew, and wondered what was going on.

The barman then said to the crew, "What have you done? What have you said? All my customers are running away!" Suddenly there was an awkward silence, and then Brian looked around and he saw the last customer leaving the bar, and afterwards he turned back to face the barman. The barman looked angry, and he was not amused at all. Brian then said, "I only said, Berthold Adisco." The barman then said, "Excuse me sir, you can't be saying that around here, people get very upset." Brian nodded and then added, "Yes, I noticed, but why are you not upset?" The barman then thought about it for a moment and said, "Well, I have a PHD in riot management, and someone's music and singing will never affect me because I Sellotape my eardrums." Brian then laughed loudly, and said, "How very funny, but what a good idea." The barman then responded, "Yes, it is really, and so far, I have managed to avoid Berthold Adisco's music very well. Now what do you want to get hold of Berthold Adisco for?" Salomina then joined in the conversation, and said, "Well, Berthold Adisco has stolen our digital display map you see." The barman then sighed, and replied, "Oh, a computer tablet,

is that all?" Brian then nodded and said, "Yes, it may just be a computer tablet to some people, but it controls the steering of the ship." The bar man then said, "Ah, I see why that would be a problem. Hmm. Now where have you looked for him?" Jasmin then said, "Well, everywhere really, and people just ran away screaming." The bar man laughed and finally saw the funny side, and he then nodded, and responded, "Well, the people on the space station are not that educated you see, and they are a bit thick if you ask me personally." Brian and Jasmine and the rest of the crew laughed and found this amusing. Berthold Adisco was not thick though, and his name had been terrorising the people of the space station all day. Suddenly one of the drones that the crew had been using to search for Berthold Adisco, entered the bar and hovered gently towards them. The others were floating outside and were pretending to smoke cigarettes, to look cool. The drone then stopped in front of the crew and Jasmine, and the drone said, "Berthold Adisco has been spotted about a mile away wearing a plastic bag over his head." Brian then laughed loudly, and replied, "Ah hah, now there cannot be many people out there wearing a plastic bag on their heads." This was very true indeed, and not much of a disguise. Brian then said, "Well, thank you bar man, we had better go and find the notorious Berthold Adisco." The crew and Jasmine then got up off of their seats, and they waved goodbye to the bar man and then left the bar.

The drone then followed them, and the rest of the drones stopped pretending to smoke their cigarettes, and they also began to follow the crew down the street that they were on. Berthold Adisco had never been so close to them before, and the crew and Jasmine started to run towards

another large square containing multistorey buildings and an underground train station. Suddenly a large police drone flew above them and then shouted, "There is now a curfew in force, and you must be at home by 12pm, and stay indoors. Berthold Adisco must not be approached. Now do any of you have musical talents?" The crew then looked at each other and were amazed that a police drone could handle the words Berthold Adisco. The crew and Jasmine then all looked at the police drone, and Karen said, "No, we are mostly tone deaf, and none of us can play a musical instrument." This was true of course, and the crews singing was bad enough, but they did not want to get a reputation with the police drone for being the next Berthold Adisco. The police drone then let out a sigh, and said, "Phew that is a relief, now go on your way, and please report any sightings of Berthold Adisco to your nearest police station." Brian nodded, and the rest of the crew and Jasmine did too. The large police drone then flew off into the distance, and Brian and the crew and Jasmine looked around them. In the distance there was steam rising from a drain, and it provided a large visionary disturbance.

The crew then began walking towards the drone, and suddenly through the steam, there emerged Berthold Adisco, or the man who they thought was Berthold Adisco, because he had a large plastic bag on his head. The large black plastic bag had eyeholes cut out of it, and Berthold Adisco was wobbling all over the place. Brian then said to the rest of the crew and Jasmine, "Let us not run, but walk towards him, so as not to arouse his suspicions." The crew and Jasmine then nodded, and they then walked forwards slowly. Brian imagined, the music

from the film chariots of fire, and they began to get into the moment, of facing Berthold Adisco. Berthold Adisco wobbled towards them, and it was almost like a Mexican standoff. The crew and Berthold Adisco continued walking towards each other in a straight line, then after a few moments, the crew and Jasmine, and Berthold Adisco were within a few feet of each other, and the man who was probably Berthold Adisco stopped walking, and the crew and Jasmine stopped walking too, and then there was a long silence with no one saying anything at all. Suddenly a large robotic tumble weed appeared and it blew across the square playing the sound of the wind.

Brian, Cedric, Karen, Salomina and Jasmine then waved at the man who they thought was Berthold Adisco. Brian then said to the man who could be Berthold Adisco, "Halt, who goes there?!" The man who could be Berthold Adisco then said, "A man wearing a bin liner on his head. Now who wants to know?" Salomina then responded, "Well, we do, and we are the crew of a spaceship from far away who are on a delivery run, and we are looking for the man known as Berthold Adisco." The man inside the large black plastic bag paused and then said, "Well, I am not Berthold Adisco, but I am a lowly bin liner demonstrator, who is on his way to a conference." Salomina then laughed and she said with a hint of disbelief in her voice, "Oh, yeah, a bin liner demonstrator? Really?!" The man in the bin liner then nodded and said, "Yes, really, and this bin liner is the latest model, and it is number five hundred and four in our catalogue." Brian then said sarcastically, "Oh, you have a catalogue? Did you steal it by any chance?" The man in the bin liner then said, "Me? Steal it? No, we are given free catalogues, now what kind of man do you

take me for?" Karen then laughed, and said, "A man trying to disguise himself in a bin liner." The man then stood there silently for a few seconds, and afterwards then said, "Well, yes, I am wearing a bin liner." Cedric laughed, and then stepped closer to the man in the bin liner, and said, "Well, Sir, won't you take it off and introduce yourself properly?"

The man in the bin liner then said, "No, because I am a werewolf minding his own business and you should too if you know what is good for you." Jasmine then said, "Well, sir, we believe you to be Berthold Adisco and we believe that you have something of ours that was stolen by you many hours ago." The man was silent, and he shook his head multiple times. Jasmine then reached out and tried to grab the man, but he jumped out of the way, and afterwards began running away. The crew and Jasmine then chased after him, and Brian began shouting at him, "Oy, come back, we want to talk you, yes you, we do not believe that you are not Berthold Adisco! Now Mr Bin Liner are you really that ugly under that bin liner and are you afraid to talk to us you strange, strange man." Jasmine laughed and then added, "Yes, weirdo, cannot you stop and talk to us, because all we want is what belongs to us." The man who they thought was Berthold Adisco ignored them and then continued running rapidly away, but the crew and Jasmine were catching up with the man quickly. Suddenly the man tripped over a plastic bag, and he was sent reeling across the floor, and the crew and Jasmine seized their opportunity, and then turned off their antigravity generators, and they grabbed the man in the bin liner and then the crew and Jasmine sat on him. The man in the bin liner then struggled, and kicked his legs as



hard as he could, but he couldn't wriggle free, then he grunted and howled like a werewolf.

Brian, Jasmine and the crew then listened to the man howl like a werewolf for a few seconds and afterwards Brian took off the bin liner from the man's head, and revealed, Berthold Adisco! Brians eyes immediately lit up, and the rest of the crew were delighted. Brian then said, "Ah ha, Berthold Adisco, we have you now Berthold! Yes, Berthold your time is up." Berthold Adisco, then shook his head and said, "Oh no I am not Berthold Adisco, I am just a humble bin liner demonstrator. Now get off of me you brute, before I get you banned from buying bin liners throughout the entire universe." Brian laughed a pretend maniacal laugh and then replied, "Oh, no Berthold Adisco, you are not going anywhere, and you are certainly not going to a disco! Now we want our digital display map back that you stole from my hotel room bedroom." Berthold Adisco shook his head again and then said angrily, "No, I did not do such a thing at all, and no I have never stolen a digital display map ever!" Brian then took out his mobile phone and found the video that the security man from the hotel had sent to him just recently whilst they were all out looking for him. Brian then showed Berthold Adisco, the video footage of Berthold Adisco without the bin liner on his head stealing the digital display map from Brians backpack in his hotel room. Berthold Adisco then was silent, and he said nothing at all, then after about a minute, Berthold Adisco said, "I want me lawyer." Brian then paused and after a moment or two he then also said, "You do not need a lawyer Berthold Adisco, we just want our digital display map back." This was true, and Berthold Adisco was a fool to himself if he

did not give it back to them. Still, Brian was confident that they would get the digital display map back, and that they would have a victory over the most dangerous of disco discombobulators in the universe. Berthold Adisco wriggled and then tried to break free again and afterwards, said, "Ok, ok, I was only borrowing it you see! Now get off me will you and I will lead you to it." Brian thought that this sounded very unlikely indeed, and he replied, "Now, why should we believe you Berthold Adisco?" Berthold Adisco then paused and said dramatically, "Because my mother is expecting me home for tea!" Brian then looked at Berthold Adisco, and into his eyes and Brian thought that he was telling the truth. Brian then said, "Ok, Berthold I believe you, despite the fear that your name seems to bring to some people, you do not so far seem to be so bad to me."

Berthold then suddenly started crying, and he said, "Oh, it was all a misunderstanding you see, yes, my music, that awful music, yes, it was really not my doing, because the cat trod on my keyboard whilst I was out, and it programmed some nefarious sounds into my music and then rerecorded it whilst eating a kebab."

Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then looked at Berthold Adisco, and it was indeed a possibility that Berthold Adisco had had nothing to do with the terrible music that made peoples ears bleed and that made their false limbs vibrate until they fell off. Brian felt sympathy for Berthold Adisco and then he did something unexpected to him, and he put his arm around Berthold Adisco, and then cuddled him. Berthold Adisco then cuddled Brian back, and he said, "Thank you." Berthold Adisco then separated from Brian, and Brian and the crew

and Jasmine then all looked at each other, and then at Berthold. Berthold then put the bin liner back on his head and he started walking off and then said, "Now, follow me." The crew and Jasmine then followed Berthold Adisco and they then went down many side streets, and through many squares with shopping centres and entertainment areas, until they reached a housing complex. Berthold Adisco then led them up some stairs to a door that had the number thirty-six written upon it. Berthold Adisco then took out his key, and then unlocked the door and afterwards he went inside and then beckoned the crew and Jasmine to follow him, which they did. The hallway was rundown and there was wallpaper peeling off of the walls, and there was a smell of mould, and there was also the smell of cooking coming from nearby. It was a strange combination, very strange indeed.

Berthold Adisco then breathed heavily and lead the crew and Jasmine into the kitchen. Berthold Adiscos mother was stood at the kitchen stove cooking a casserole of some kind. Berthold Adiscos mother then turned around instinctively, and then she looked at Berthold and then at the crew and at Jasmine, and said to Berthold, "I wasn't expecting guests Berthold." Berthold smiled a fake smile and then looked at the crew and at Jasmine, and then replied softly, "No, nor was I, but they are old friends." Berthold Adisco did not want to upset his mother, as she was well known for flying off of the handle, and once she had set fire to a teddy bear of his in a rage when he was younger and had thrown it at the neighbour's house and had burnt it down."

Berthold Adiscos mother then motioned to the crew and to Jasmine and to Berthold to sit down, which they did.

The seats were falling apart but they were comfortable and Berthold Adiscos mother smiled, and then Berthold Adiscos mother asked, "Would you all like a drink?" Brian and the rest of the crew and Jasmine smiled politely, and they then said, "Yes please." Now what kind of drink was she going to prepare thought Brian, and instantly he wondered whether she was a mass murderer with a love of poison, but he tried his hardest to put it out of his mind, and although her son was a bit of a weirdo, they should not presume that she was a weirdo." Berthold Adisco then made them all some drinks and handed them to the crew and to Jasmine and to Berthold. This was very kind thought Jasmine, and she took a sip, whilst the rest of the crew, especially Brian watched her drinking it, and then they waited for a few seconds, and Brian because there were no unusual side effects caused to Jasmine, began to drink his drink, and then the others began to drink their drinks, as did Berthold. Berthold looked a little depressed at being caught out, but he tried to snap out of it, and then began smiling again. Berthold then said, "Mother, what kind of stew are we having this evening?" Berthold's Mother turned around and then replied, "Ostrich stew." Berthold was very happy about this, and she smiled a great big smile and then said, "Oh, fantastic mother!" in an enthusiastic voice. Brian then also smiled and said, "Oh, lovely, that sounds delicious!" and then added, "Oh, by the way, I am Brian, and this is." Brian then pointed to each of his crew members and to Jasmine and then he introduced them to her and Berthold, and he said, "This is Cedric, Salomina, Karen, and Jasmine, and it is a pleasure to meet you and Berthold." Berthold's mother then said, "And I am Tessa, and it is a pleasure to meet you too."

Berthold's mother then turned back to the cooker, and she stirred the casserole. The crew and Jasmine were left with only Berthold to talk to. Berthold then looked at the crew and Jasmine and felt a bit uncomfortable, but he had to be polite, because he had been taught to by his mother. Brian then decided to ask Berthold a question. "Berthold now what do you do for a career?" he said tongue in cheek. Berthold then rolled his eyes and said, "I am a bin liner tester, don't you remember." Berthold's mother then laughed and said, "Yes, it is actually true. He works for a company that makes bin liners and models them." Berthold then sighed loudly, and then added, "And it suits me because since the music debacle, I have not been able to go anywhere without people running away in fear, and I did try and go on a chat show and apologise to the people of the universe, but then it got worse because a robot was infected with a virus that was created to play my music without being able to stop it, and that virus quickly spread to other robots, and the robots then started blasting my music from the speakers in their bodies. Now, of course this caused even more people to scream and run away, and mass panic was caused everywhere across the universe, and unfortunately afterwards there were millions of people who were extremely unhappy with me. This of course did not do my employment prospects any good whatsoever, and I was unemployed for several years, because I found it extremely difficult to find any work at all. Still, some clever boffin came up with a way of blocking the music that I had created from being played, which improved my social life a little, but still people did not like me much whatsoever, then finally I found a job modelling bin liners. This luckily helped me remain

anonymous and also get paid at the same time, which is a blessing really. Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew felt a bit of sympathy for Berthold Adisco, and they believed he was telling the truth. Yet, this was not really the point, the point that was stuck in the crew and Jasmines minds was the fact that Berthold Adisco had stolen the digital display map. Brian was still angry about this, and he wanted to bring up the digital display map, but he thought that he had better wait until after dinner.

Berthold Adiscos mother Tessa finally finished cooking, then laid the table with knives and forks, and beautiful looking plates, and then she served the food. She then sat down, and said to the crew and Jasmine, "I hope you enjoy the stew. Now what kind of food do you usually like?" The crew then thought about it for a moment, and then Brian said, "Well, we haven't had a great deal of success lately, because we have just come from the planet Nouala, and the food was delivered on the back of tortoises." Tessa then laughed and said, "Well, I never, what a strange way of delivering food." Berthold Adisco agreed, and he nodded, and then said, "Yes, that is very strange indeed." Karen then said, "Oh, and by the way, a robot recently tried to force feed us underpants." Berthold Adisco laughed loudly, and he found this very amusing, and then he replied, "Now, what flavour were the underpants?" Brian thought about it and then added, "Unwashed." Berthold Adisco suddenly felt sick, and he coughed loudly. Tessa his mother also coughed, and she found this highly disgusting. Tessa then paused and she took a deep breath, and said, "Oh, how terrible, but what do you like to eat normally?" Karen then took a moment or two to think about it, "Well, I have tried human flesh, and I did

not like it all." Tessa then spat out her dinner, and said, "Human flesh? Are you joking?" Unfortunately, Karen was not joking, as the crew had all attempted to eat each other when they had had their brains taken over by the flesh-eating aliens from MAM.

Karen looked at Tessa who did not look amused and then she said, "Yes, we came across the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, now, have you heard of them?" Tessa then thought about it for a moment and said, "No, but they do sound terrible." Cedric nodded, and then replied, "Well, yes they invade your brain telepathically and then they command you to eat human and alien flesh, and there is very little that you can actually do about it." Berthold Adisco seemed quite interested in this, and he then smiled, and afterwards said, "Oh, that does sound crazy, very crazy indeed." Berthold Adisco then paused, and added, "Now, what did human flesh taste like?" Salomina then shook her head, and she said, "I really do not remember, I was being telepathically controlled, and I was brainwashed into doing something that I did not wish to do at all." Tessa then nodded in sympathy, and she then said, "Yes, that really does sound like a frightful time. Now, was anyone hurt at all?" Brian then quickly said "No." and whilst this conversation had been happening, Jasmine sat there looking quite disturbed about this, but she had heard of the flesh-eating aliens from MAM, and personally she preferred eating vegetables than meat. The conversation continued about various culinary delights, and about Tessa's wishes for her son to leave the space station and find a new life somewhere on a planet because there were more opportunities there.

Brian and the crew then decided not to tell Berthold Adisco and his mother about the return to Earth unless they really had to. The crew and Jasmine and Berthold and his mother finished the dinner. Tessa then got up and collected the plates and she took them over to the sink, and afterwards then went to the fridge and pulled out a gigantic apple crumble and a large container filled with cream. This was the largest apple crumble that the crew and Jasmine had ever seen, and it was a beautiful vision before their eyes. Salomina smiled and she thought to herself, now this meeting Berthold Adisco had not turned out too bad after all, and they were already salivating at the thought of eating the apple crumble, because it looked extremely delicious. Tessa then placed it on the table, and she went over to a cupboard and then got out some spoons, and some bowls, and then sat back down again. She then handed the bowls and the spoons to the crew, Jasmine, and Berthold, and then placed a bowl in front of herself and a spoon. Tessa then gave them all some apple crumble, and the crew and Jasmine and Berthold all said in unison, "Thank you." Now thank you is but a simple word, but how often things can be taken for granted in life, and the crew had suffered quite a few hardships lately, and they were extremely grateful to see this wonderful crumble in front of them. Tessa then said to them all, "Now please don't stand on ceremony or some space alien will teleport it away." This was possible, very possible indeed.

The crew and Berthold Adisco and his mother then tucked into the delicious crumble. In between mouthfuls Brian then said to Tessa, "Now what do you for a living Tessa?" Tessa then thought about it for a moment, and she



looked a bit sad, and she then said, "Well, I repossess vegetables." Jasmine immediately laughed, and then she quickly stopped laughing as she realised that Tessa was being deadly serious. Jasmine then asked Tessa a question, "Now, Tessa, why do you repossess vegetables." Tessa then smiled and said, "Well of course, there is a large problem with people paying their bills for vegetables on this space station, and the shop owners want their vegetables back.

Now it is a very strange job indeed, and quite often, I go around someone's house, and then I climb through their window in the middle of their dinner, and repossess their vegetables, which quite often involves retrieving only half a vegetable as it has been eaten." Salomina then said, "Oh, that is the strangest job that I have ever heard of! Now, do you repossess cooked vegetables too?" Tessa then smiled and said, "Yes, I do, which obviously does not make people very happy, but the price of vegetables is extortionate, and they need repossessing often." Brian then laughed loudly, and afterwards said, "Now, that is very funny Tessa, and I was wondering do you have to repossess vegetables that have been possessed by a poltergeist?" Tessa laughed and then banged the table with her hand and then continued laughing. Berthold and the rest of the crew and Jasmine laughed as well, as they all found this highly amusing indeed. Tessa then continued, "Yes, it has happened before actually, and a man called me to repossess his aubergine which had been possessed by the ghost of Genghis Khan." Brian then started crying tears of laughter, and the rest of the crew could not contain themselves at all, and they tried to contain themselves as best they could, and the crumble

flew everywhere when they started laughing again. This hilarity went on for almost twenty minutes, before they all eventually calmed down.

The crumble had been delicious, and it was the best pudding that they had for ages. Brian smiled a contented smile, and then turned to Tessa and he said, "Thank you Tessa, that was delicious." Tessa smiled, and then replied, "You are most welcome." Tessa then got up from the table and collected the bowls, and the spoons, and took them over to the sink and then switched on the radio beside it, and music began to play. The crew listened to the music for a moment and Brian looked at Berthold and Berthold looked at Brian. Brian then said to Berthold quietly, "Now can I have word with you Berthold in your bedroom." Berthold nodded, and they both got up from the table. Berthold then led Brian into his Bedroom, and Berthold closed the door quickly behind them. Brian then looked at Berthold sternly and after a moment he said to Berthold, "Now, Berthold, you just cannot go around stealing things, it just isn't on, it really isn't." Berthold then looked at Brian, and he said, "But, you just do not understand, my mother is a kleptomaniac, and she steals constantly from the shops, and now there are huge bills that need to be paid, and I am very sorry, but I only meant to borrow it." Brian then shook his head at Berthold, and he did not believe this one bit, and also stealing something to pay off Berthold's mothers supposed large bills because of her kleptomania was still not moral whatsoever.

Brian then said to Berthold, "Look Berthold, the digital display map is used to steer the ship, and it is incredibly important that we have it back." Berthold then paused for a moment, and afterwards replied in a less friendly

manner, "Oh, so it is really valuable, is it?" Brian then nodded, and said, "Yes, Berthold, it is very valuable indeed." Berthold then thought about it for a moment and said, "Right, in that case what will you pay me for giving it back to you?" Brian then shook his head at Berthold and said nothing for a few moments, and then finally said in a very loud and disgruntled and very angry voice, "Nothing Berthold, because you stole it, and Berthold it is still ours, as it is registered to us by intergalactic law." Berthold then laughed and said, "Look, I do not care about intergalactic law, I just care about my mother's large unpaid bills that have been caused by her kleptomania." Brian then slapped his own forehead, and sighed, and then looked back at Berthold, and replied, "Berthold, your mother's kleptomania may be a big problem, but we need the digital display map to get back to planet Earth!" Berthold did not care and crossed his arms, and afterwards said, "Oh, so it is really valuable." Brian then nodded, and Berthold shrugged his shoulders and afterwards said, "Well, in that case I would like a million pounds." Brian then coughed, and responded shortly afterwards, "A million pounds? We do not have a million pounds!" Which was true as the crew were relatively poor, but Jasmine may have a million pounds thought Brian, but he did not want to bring her into this, and a million pounds is a huge amount of money of course, and not something that the crew had ever possessed. Still, Berthold was seemingly determined to make a profit from the digital display map. Brian was frustrated by this, but he decided to continue, and he said, "Berthold, we will not give you any money at all. Now where is the digital display map?" Berthold then shook his head and said angrily, "I am sorry I am not

giving it to you unless you pay me a million pounds.”

Brian then laughed, and said, “A million pounds, we have never had that kind of money in our lives at all, and we probably never will whatsoever.”

Berthold was really not impressed by this attitude, and he was determined to not give it back without a fight. Brian then stared at Berthold, and afterwards looked around the room, and then began searching the room. Berthold then immediately took offense to this, and afterwards lunged at Brian who ducked out of the way rapidly. Berthold then pushed Brian over, and he headed for a cupboard, and pulled out the digital display map from between some towels, and then ran towards the window as Brian was getting up.

Berthold then quickly opened the window, and climbed out of it, and then held onto the drainpipe and shimmied down it, carrying the digital display map. Brian after getting up from the floor just managed to reach the window in time to watch Berthold Adisco running away down the street with the digital display map under his arm, and as he ran, he pulled out a bin liner and then placed it upon his head.

Berthold Adisco was very fast, and Brian sighed at the sight of Berthold Adisco getting away rapidly. Brian then looked out of the window and at the drainpipe and he thought that there was nothing else to do but follow Berthold Adisco by climbing down the drainpipe and to then chase after him. Berthold Adisco the thief was getting away and Brian was really out of shape, and also Brian had just eaten three portions of apple crumble, whilst Berthold had only had one, giving Berthold some advantage.

Brian watched Berthold getting away and he tried to run like the wind, but he barely had any wind in him despite the huge portions of apple crumble that he had just eaten. Brian whilst he ran, then imagined cinematic music in his head, and he thought of the film northwest by northwest, an old film that he really enjoyed. Berthold Adisco, then turned down an alleyway, and Brian was already out of breath, but Brian quickly turned into the alleyway too and he then continued the chase. Berthold Adisco was not going to get away with this thought Berthold, because he could not let Berthold do so, because the crew and Jasmine would not reach other for another six to twelve months if Berthold got away.

Brian gained slightly on Berthold Adisco, and as he was running, Berthold Adisco pulled out a mobile phone from inside his jacket and began to call someone on it. Suddenly a drone appeared, and it descended towards Berthold Adisco, Berthold Adisco then held onto to the digital display map with his clumsy hands and then held the digital display map up in the air. High in the air, higher than a levitating zebra.

Brian was almost on top of Berthold Adisco, and he dived at Berthold Adisco, and then pushed him to the ground, and Berthold Adiscos hands then slid across the digital display map activating some pieces of software. The digital display map then flew up into the air and a pair of hands then came out of the digital display map and grabbed it before it crashed to the ground.

The drone then flew up high into the air, and Berthold Adisco and Brian then looked up at the drone. Brian then looked at Berthold Adisco and he stared angrily at him and said, "Where is the drone going Berthold?" Berthold

shook his head and then looked at Brian and said, "I am not telling you." Brian then frowned and he then looked at Berthold for a few seconds. Brian was not sure what Berthold had in mind, and he was unsure of his intentions. Brian could really do with some help he thought, but back at Berthold's mothers place, the crew were continuing to listen to the music and to talk to each other and they did not realise that anything was wrong at all. Brian then looked at Berthold one last time and decided to run after the drone. Brian then left Berthold standing there with a smile on his face, and he continued running and pulled out his mobile phone whilst he did so. Brian then called Karen, and she answered quickly, "Hello Brian, what is happening?" Brian then replied, "Well, Berthold Adisco, took the digital display map out of a cupboard, and he then climbed out of the bedroom window and then ran away, and I was chasing him, but he called a drone to help, and the drone then picked up the digital display map and flew off with it. I am now chasing the drone down some alleyways, and I have no clue as to where it is going at all." Karen then replied, "Ok, Brian, can we help you?" Brian then responded, "Yes, I will activate the tracking device on my phone, and then you can track me down with it, but do not let Berthold Adiscos mother know that Berthold has stolen something, because Berthold Adiscos mother is apparently a kleptomaniac, and she may be involved in buying and selling stolen property and the pair of them could be involved with some dodgy people indeed." Karen then smiled and looked at Berthold Adiscos mother and then Karen said, "Ok, we will see you soon Brian." Karen then turned to Berthold Adiscos mother Tessa and said, "I am really sorry Tessa, but we all

have to be going now, but thanks for a lovely dinner and thanks for a lovely pudding. Oh, and by the way, Berthold and Brian have gone out for a walk.” Berthold Adiscos mother smiled, and she said, “Oh lovely, how delightful.” Then she added, “Well, it was a pleasure to meet you all, and I do hope to see you again.” Berthold Adiscos mother then stood there smiling and the rest of the crew and Jasmine nodded at her, and then afterwards waved goodbye. The crew and Jasmine were very glad to be leaving, with all their valuables intact, but they were appreciative of the very nice dinner. The crew and Jasmine then left the apartment and descended down the steps to the street.

Karen then took out her mobile phone, and opened up an application, and located Brian, who was about ten minutes away now. Brian like a crazy man was still running after the drone. Karen was relieved that Brian was hot on the trail of the drone, and they needed to catch up to him fast as possible, which definitely was not easy.

Karen then thought that they would not be able to, and so she looked around and then spotted a taxi.

The street had begun to return to normal and people were walking drunkenly down it. Finally, a taxi appeared, and Karen flagged it down. The crew and Jasmine then got in the taxi, and Karen said to the taxi driver, “Driver, please drive north.” and then Karen began to give the taxi driver directional instructions based on the location of Brian. The taxi then continued to search for Brian and the crew looked out of the window as they passed down the rundown streets and saw many people looking like zombies. Brian who was a few minutes way, then continued running and kept shouting at the drone to stop,

but the drone did not stop, and it was flying towards an industrial area. Brian tried to keep up with the drone, but it was very difficult, but still he managed to keep track of the drone. The crew and Jasmine in the taxi eventually caught up with Brian, and Jasmine then shouted, "There's Brian." when she spotted him. Karen smiled and then said to the taxi driver, "You see that man driver, we need to pick him up." The taxi driver then did as he was told, and he landed the flying taxi near Brian. Brian saw the taxi approaching and watched it land a few feet away, and then recognised the crew and Jasmine inside, and he then headed towards it, and he was a little out of breath and was glad to get inside it. Brian then climbed into the taxi, and Jasmine took a look at Brian and then said, "Are you ok Brian?" Brian then sighed a sigh of relief and then said, "Yes, I am ok thanks, but only just because I have been running rather a lot. Now driver keep following the drone. The driver did as he was told and the taxi flew towards the drone and the taxi rapidly was catching up to the drone, which was a relief to the crew. The drone began to take evasive manoeuvres and began descending down towards the street once more and headed towards the side of buildings and then continued down the street and headed towards a large industrial warehouse across a very large square. The drone then flew through an open doorway and headed into the warehouse. The warehouse looked a little bit rundown.

The taxi driver then landed the craft outside the warehouse and the taxi landed, and then Brian took out his credit card and hurriedly paid the taxi driver. The crew and Jasmine then hurriedly got out of the taxi and turned off their anti-gravity generators and headed into the



warehouse. The warehouse was filled with piles of metal beams, and there were cobwebs everywhere, and there was a rusty old bicycle up against a wall. The crew watched the drone fly across the warehouse and head towards a door. The door opened automatically, and the drone flew down the corridor. The door then closed immediately, and Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then ran towards the door, and Brian tried to open it. The door would not open though, and Brian tried to pull as hard as he could do, but it was no good. Brian then turned to Karen and said, "Do you have a laser gun on you?" Karen immediately said "Yes." and she pulled one out of her coat and handed it to Brian.

Brian then turned to the crew and said, "Stand back everyone." and Brian then blew the door off of its hinges, and it fell to the floor. Brian then put the laser gun away, and Brian and the crew then ran down the corridor after the drone. The drone suddenly descended and headed for a trapdoor in the floor. The trapdoor suddenly opened, and it descended down into a hole in the ground. The trapdoor then slammed shut immediately afterwards, and Brian, Jasmine and the crew then reached the trapdoor and came to a halt. They all stared at the trapdoor and wondered what to do next. The trapdoor looked solid, very solid indeed, and Brian tried to open it, but he could not. Brian then pressed a button on the laser and cut a hole in the trapdoor, and the trapdoor fell downwards into the hole, and it made a loud noise when it hit the ground, a very loud noise, that probably would attract attention.

Brian then pointed the laser gun at the hole and looked down into it. There was a set of steps leading downwards, but no one was there wondering what was going on. Brian

then climbed into the hole and afterwards began to climb down the steps, which were a little rusty. The rest of the crew and Jasmine, then climbed down the steps until they reached the floor of the corridor.

Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then began to walk down the very long corridor, and they walked for several minutes before coming to several doors, there was one on the left, and one on the right. Brian opened one, and Salomina another, but they were just storage cupboards with old rusty tins of paint inside them. The crew and Jasmine then continued further down the corridor, and eventually they came to a black door at the end of it. There was music coming from behind it, and the drone must already have gone through it.

Brian then tried to open the door, and surprisingly it opened. Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then looked into the room beyond, and it was a large bar, an illegal bar by the looks of things with some extremely nefarious looking individuals sat on bar stools and sofas. Many of the people appeared to be couples cuddling up to each other.

The people in the room looked like gangsters, and they all stopped to look and stare at the crew and Jasmine stood in the doorway. Brian then whispered, "Act nonchalant." The crew after he had said this then nodded and Brian swaggered into the room and pretended to look cool, and Jasmine and the rest of the crew followed and walked up to the bar. The bar woman looked at Brian and looked at him for several seconds and said, "Hello. Could we have five martinis shaken and not stirred please." The bar woman then said, "Well, you can try, our martini is manufactured in an Earthquake zone on the planet earth."

Brian then laughed, and said, "Great, that sounds good to us." The bar woman then began to pour the drinks, and the crew and Jasmine watched. Brian then said, "So, what is this place?" The bar woman then said dryly, "A bar, a secret bar." The woman then handed the crew and Jasmine their martinis, and added, "The first ones are free, now enjoy." Jasmine then smiled and said, "Thank you." The crew and Jasmine turned off their antigravity generators and then sat down on a sofa and relaxed into it, and surveyed the room as surreptitiously as they could do, which was not easy. The woman behind the bar appeared to be watching them, and the crew and Jasmine took a few sips from their martinis, and the crew pretended to look relaxed, but they were not relaxed with all the eyes staring at them intently. More intently than a Martian.

There was an atmosphere to this place, and the crew and Jasmine did not like it. The atmosphere was threatening, but the crew tried to remain calm. Brian looked about and looked for anyone handling any computer tablets, but none were to be seen, and nor was the drone.

Brian drank his martini, and it was clear from looking at the clientele of this secret bar that there was likely to be trouble ahead. Suddenly several large robots entered the room with laser guns and stood in each corner of the room. A door then opened at the far side of the room, and a large muscley man wearing a fedora entered, and walked to the bar followed by a group of beautiful looking women. The robots in the corner then stood to attention and saluted the man who then proceeded to order a drink for himself and for the ladies. The bar woman then pulled the drinks and handed them to the man and to the girls,

and they picked the drinks up and then walked over to an empty sofa.

Salomina thought that the man could be the owner, but whatever he was the girls were all over him, and he certainly was enjoying himself. Upon his neck the man wore a gold chain, and a hint of expensive aftershave wafted over in the crew and Jasmine's direction. Brian tried not to stare at the man, but he took a short glimpse at him, and he looked wealthy, very wealthy indeed. Brian then noticed the robots were looking at him and at the crew and Jasmine. This made the crew feel even uneasy. The crew and Jasmine then continued drinking their drinks, and Cedric then said, "Now, where is the drone I wonder?" Salomina then pointed at the door where the wealthy looking man had come through, and said, "Probably through that door." The robots then suddenly turned to look at Salomina, and she quickly put her hand back down and stopped pointing at the door. The robot then continued to stare at the crew and at Jasmine. Karen then said, "Well, this is weird, very weird." Brian then nodded and said, "Yes, it is rather, still what are we going to do about finding this drone and the digital display map?" This was a very good question indeed. Cedric then replied, "Well, we could ask that wealthy looking gentleman in the corner." Salomina nodded, and said, "Yes, that is probably the best idea."

The crew and Jasmine then got up from the sofa, then Brian said, "It is probably best that I go over and ask him alone, otherwise he may think that there is trouble." The rest of the crew and Jasmine then sat back down on the sofa, and Brian walked over to the wealthy looking

gentleman. The wealthy looking gentleman then looked up from the sofa at Brian and leaned forwards and the beautiful looking girls separated themselves from him for a moment.

The wealthy looking man then smiled, and said, "Hello, Max Fosta, how can I help you?" Brian then said, "Hello Max, I am Brian." and smiled. Brian then put out his hand and Max put out his own and shook it. Max's hand was twice as strong as most peoples and he almost crushed Brians hand to death. Max then let go of Brians hand, and Brian was very relieved indeed. Brian then said loudly, "Well Max, we are looking for something, and we were wondering could you help us?" Max then paused for a few moments and contemplated this, and said, "Do you know any funny handshakes?" Brian then thought about it for a few seconds and then said, "Yes, yours." Max Fosta then laughed loudly and found this highly amusing. He then looked at Brian in the eyes, and he then said, "No, I mean secret handshakes." Brian smiled and then tried to think if he did know any, and he stuck out two fingers with one hand to shake his hand and then pointed at his nose with the other. Max's eyes lit up and he said, "Ah, I know that one, you have two bogies one in each nostril." Brian laughed and then said "Yes, that is correct, now how do you know that one?" Max then said, "Well, I am very interested in secret handshakes." Max then shook Brians two fingers. Brian then immediately came up with another secret handshake, and made two circles with his finger, one circle on each hand. Max looked at Brian, and at Brians hand and he said, "You are short of a pair of binoculars." and then shook Brians hand again as Brian smiled. Brian then took a moment and then came up with

his third and his final one. Brian then stuck his thumb in his mouth and accidentally pointed his little finger at Max's girlfriends. Max suddenly got very angry and got up from the sofa and said, "You want to marry my girlfriends?" Max went to hit Brian, but Brian quickly turned on his anti-gravity generator and Max's fist then rebounded off of it. Brian then quickly said, "Sorry Max, I did not mean that, what I meant was, have you seen my space alien baby?" Max laughed, and Brian was relieved.

Max then sat back down on the sofa, and noticed that the rest of the crew of the spaceship were watching, and Max waved at them, and said, "Friends of yours Brian?" Brian nodded, and Max then replied, "Oh. I have never seen you before." Brian smiled and said, "Well, we are not from around here. We are space delivery drivers, and we are just here for a few days, and we have unfortunately lost something very important to us." Max's eyes lit up and he said, "Oh, really, now what is that then?" Brian then paused and said quietly, "A digital display map." Max then shook his head, and replied, "Oh, well, I do not know, but we do get things pass through here all the time if you know what I mean." Max then winked at Brian, and Brian understood immediately, he understood that this was a place for dodgy dealings and then some, as they used to say back on planet Earth. Brian then said, "Well, we had it stolen from us, and we really need it back." Max then took this in and thought about it and said, "I do not know what has arrived today, but we get some good bargains in here if you know what I mean." Brian then nodded, and Max seemed to be very dodgy indeed. Brian then said, "Well, this digital display map, is incredibly important and incredibly valuable, as it helps us pilot our

ship." Max then looked at Brian, and he could see that Brian was serious and Max then smiled a great big smile and replied, "Well Brian, what were you doing to lose it, if it was that important in the first place?" Brian then sighed and said, "It was stolen by Berthold Adisco." Max then laughed his head off and said, "Berthold Adisco? Oh, I wondered what he had been up to, how very naughty of him." Brian then continued, "Yes, it was rather, and he stole it from my bag in my hotel room, and it was captured on CCTV." Max then nodded his head and he looked at Brian with great intensity and said, "Hmm, I see, but why would you think it was here?" Brian then looked at Max and added, "Well, we saw the drone fly in here carrying the digital display map." Max then smiled and said, "Right, well in that case, the robots will take you to someone who might know." Max then stuck out his hand and Brian shook it, and Max then pointed at the robots and then at Brian, and the robots walked towards Brian, and surrounded him. The rest of the crew and Jasmine looked a little concerned, and they got up from the sofa that they were sitting on and walked over towards Brian.

Brian then said to the rest of the crew, "The robots are going to take us to someone who might know where the digital display map is." The crew were a bit concerned by this, but there was no choice at all, the robots were almost menacing, and they had no real choice by the looks of things. The crew and Jasmine then nodded, and the robots then lead them towards the door, and one of the robots opened it, and the robots and the crew and Jasmine then walked down the corridor behind them. The corridor smelled of cigar smoke, and the crew and Jasmine coughed as it was so strong.

The robots continued to lead the crew and Jasmine through an arched doorway into a large room where a man was sat behind a desk. He was wearing a Turkish fez hat, and a suit, and he smiled and revealed some gold teeth. The room was covered in jewels, and jewellery of all kinds, and filled with lots of technological devices, and there were several arcade games at the back of the room. The robots took up positions in each corner of the room, and then they stood there silently.

The man in the fez hat then smiled and introduced himself, and said, "Hello, I am Masura. How can I help you?" Brian and the crew and Jasmine looked at Masura and Brian then said, "We are looking for a digital display map, because we had it stolen by someone called Berthold Adisco." Masura laughed and then said, "Berthold Adisco, ah yes, the man accused of torturing people's eardrums. I know of him." Brian then nodded and said, "Yes, the very man." Masura then replied, "Well, we get all sorts of nefarious individuals in here and we sell lots of valuables. Now how valuable is this digital display map and why do you think it is here?" Brian paused and then said, "Well, Berthold Adisco we tracked him down to his house and he revealed that he had it, but then he climbed out of a window and got away, and afterwards we chased him here." Masura nodded his head and said, "Well, for Berthold to steal anything, it must be incredibly valuable, or he has gone soft in the head." Brian then laughed, and said, "He definitely isn't soft in the head, and the digital display map is incredibly valuable to us, because it helps us fly the ship you see." Masura's eyes then widened, and a large smile spread across his face, and he was suddenly very interested indeed. He then paused for a few seconds



to think about it, and then replied, "Hmm, it does sound very valuable indeed, more valuable than a diamond encrusted pair of underpants, but I have not seen it yet, now, if you give me some time then I will look for it, because I have a few things to do, so why don't you wait in my lounge whilst I look for it." Brian then looked at Masura and smiled and said, "Ok, thanks we will." Masura then got up and motioned to a door behind him, and said, "Go through there, and enjoy some drinks on me." The crew and Jasmine nodded and then headed for the door and opened it, and they then walked down a corridor that had red wallpaper, and upon the walls there were expensive looking futuristic pictures and portraits. The crew then reached the end of the corridor, and headed through a large archway with a curtain, and afterwards walked into a lounge. The lounge contained two large red sofas and a minibar in the middle. A drone hovered above the minibar. Many people were too lazy to make their own drinks and they often got drones to do it, and the crew did too aboard their spaceship.

The lounge was empty, and the crew sat down on the comfortable sofas. The drone then took some bottles from out of the minibar and then some glasses with some extendible hands and began pouring some drinks for the crew and Jasmine, and then handed one each to them. Music then suddenly started playing, and it was jazz, which Brian rather liked. The crew and Jasmine then drank their drinks, and relaxed and looked around at the pictures on the walls. Brian then said, "Very nice pictures." Salomina nodded and smiled and thought so too. The crew and Jasmine admired the pictures too and looked at them whilst sipping their drinks. Brian then said, "I

wonder how much they are worth and if they are stolen?" Jasmine then said, "Probably, I would not be surprised at all." Karen then sighed and added, "True. Now do you think that we will get the digital display map back?" Brian paused and then thought about it for a moment, and said, "I do hope so because it is very specific to the ship, and the company that we work for will make us wait for a whole year for a replacement digital display map if we do not." Cedric laughed, and replied, "Oh, that would be typical. We spend ages on the most boring delivery journeys and to then have to spend another year sitting around doing nothing would be a nightmare." Jasmine then laughed and said, "Well, yes, it certainly would be indeed." This of course was not what the crew and Jasmine wanted at all, and they wanted to avoid this situation at all costs, because they just wanted to get home to planet Earth. The crew then continued sipping their drinks, and suddenly the robots that they had seen previously marched into the room and over to the crew and Jasmine, and the robots then stood ominously above them.

Suddenly before the crew and Jasmine had time to activate their antigravity generators, the robots lunged at the crew and Jasmine, and they then picked them up like they were rag dolls. Jasmine screamed, and Karen and Salomina, and Brian and Cedric did too.

The robots then began to march the crew out of the room through another door into another corridor, this time the walls of the corridor were painted black, and there were yin and yang symbols all away along it.

The crew in desperation kicked and screamed at the robots, and hoped to be rescued, but no one seemed to be listening. The robots then marched the crew down the

corridor and to a metallic door at the end, which slid open silently. This was not a good sign, thought Brian and so too did the rest of the crew and Jasmine.

The crew were then marched into a large room that looked like an operating theatre. Brian recognised some pods against the wall immediately. They were brain transplant pods, and in some of them already were human beings who were asleep. There about ten empty brain transplant pods, and Brian was the only one who recognised immediately that the pods were used to transplant human brains into robots. Brian then immediately shouted, "Look brain transplant pods." Jasmine, Karen, Salomina, Cedric, and Brian then spotted them, and screamed loudly and shouted, "Help!! Help!!" Yet again there was no response. Still, no one came to their rescue, and the robots marched towards the crew and Jasmine towards the brain transport pods, and they then put the crew and Jasmine in them individually, and afterwards closed the doors. The crew and Jasmine began screaming even louder than before, and Brian suddenly remembered that he had his laser gun on him still. The robots had backed away from the pods, and they were stood there silently. Brian then took out his laser gun, and began shooting at the door, and blew the door off, and started shooting at the robots. The robots had no weapons, but they rushed towards Brian, and tried to grab him. The brain transplant machines then suddenly whirred into action, and Brian heard this, and turned around briefly to see the pods light up, which meant that brain transplants were imminent for the crew and Jasmine. Now what was going to happen to their brains after their brains had been transplanted and replaced by robots, was not certain yet,

but it was a possibility that the crew were being turned into slaves.

A look of horror then suddenly appeared upon Brian's face as he contemplated this and the thought then crossed his mind that it was a very real and a definite possibility. Brian then felt a robot grab him and Brian then immediately fired his laser gun at the robot, and the laser beam burnt through the robot and the robot then looked down at the hole itself and afterwards tried to attack Brian again. The other robots stood there watching. Brian then switched the settings on his laser gun and afterwards cut the head off of the robot and it fell to the floor, and the robot's body then crashed to the ground with a great thump. Brian then realised that he had to do something about rescuing the crew, and he rushed over to the pods. The other robots were looking down at their fallen comrade, and this gave Brian a few seconds to spare. Brian reached the pods and began to open the doors before anything could happen to the crew. Brian then managed to release Cedric and Karen, who jumped out of them immediately.

The robots then tried to grab Cedric and Karen, but Brian switched the settings on his laser gun again and began firing at the robots to keep them away, which it did for a few moments. Brian then opened up the pods with Salomina and Jasmine in and released them too. Salomina and Jasmine, and Karen and Cedric then stood behind Brian, and Brian once more switched the settings on his laser gun, and one by one he began to decapitate the robots. The robots who were remaining managed to grab Cedric and Karen momentarily, but Brian managed to chop the heads off the robots with the laser beam

without harming the crew. The robots' heads then fell to the floor and their bodies crashed to the ground. Surprisingly no one had entered the room. Maybe it was soundproof thought Brian? Brian then sighed a great sigh and put his hands on his hips and tried to recover his breath. The crew and Jasmine stood looking at Brian and Brian looked at them, and then said, "They were trying to take your brains out and replace them with robotic ones." Salomina, with a horrified look on her face, then said, "Oh, what would they have done with them?" Brian then paused for a few seconds and said dramatically, "Destroyed them and turned you into slaves." Karen did not like the sound of this, and she said, "Ah, that would have been terrible, because I know what it is like to be a slave, because my mother she made me do the washing up at three o'clock in the morning every day, so that she knew that the house was safe from werewolves." Brian and the rest of the crew then laughed, and Karen had a way with words, and she was very funny indeed, and certainly had a peculiar sense of humour. Now humour was much needed at this moment in time, and it made the crew feel a little bit better, and this was a very good thing as they had all come very close to losing their brains permanently, and also very close to being enslaved for the rest of their lives, which would have been a great tragedy.

Brian after getting his breath back then said, "I think that we had better get back to the office and see Masura." The crew and Jasmine then nodded, and they all left the room together and went back into the lounge. Brian, Jasmine, Cedric, Karen and Salomina then drank their drinks and toasted each other, and then headed through the door that led into Masura's office.

Masura then turned around in his swivel office chair, as soon as he heard them enter, and when he saw them, he had a shocked look upon his face. Masura then said, "Uh, uh, what are you doing back here so soon?" Brian then replied, "Well, we were bored of drinking, and the robots they tried to kill us, by stealing our brains." Masura, then pretended to look shocked and he said, "Oh, surely there must be some mistake." Brian then looked at Masura sternly. Masura then added, "Oh, no, that is very unlikely, because our robots are well trained you see, and they would not hurt a fly." Brian then laughed and replied, "Well, anyway, they are lying decapitated on the floor in the other room." Masura then said nothing for a few moments, and smiled and said, "Oh, great, those robots are worth millions!" Brian then laughed again, and said sarcastically, "Well, they are pretty useless now, however much they cost." Masura then got up from his chair, and looked at the crew and said, "Yes, they maybe but now you owe me lots of money!" Cedric then looked at Brian and he shouted, "Over my dead body Masura." Masura then lunged at Cedric and grabbed him and then began to wrestle him, and whilst doing so, he opened a draw in his desk, and pulled out a laser gun and fired it at Cedric. The laser beam then hit Cedric in the shoulder and Cedric flew backwards and then slammed into the wall.

Brian then quickly fired his laser gun at Masuras laser gun and destroyed it. Masura, then picked up his chair and threw it at Brian. Brian managed to duck, and the chair slammed into the wall, and crashed to the floor. Salomina raced towards Masura and poked him in the eyes with her fingers, and he grabbed her and afterwards then threw her across the room. Masura then laughed, and

said, "Oh, want to fight do we?" Brian then nodded and after a moment said, "Well, it sure looks that way, and I bet even your mother would have fought you, yes, I bet she would have fought against looking at your face too, because you are an ugly despicable man, whose only talent is wiping your own bottom probably." Masura laughed and then said, "Well, at least I wipe my bottom." Brian then raised his eyebrows, and then moved towards Masura and said, "Well, at least I do not sell stolen goods." Masura, then went silent, and said, "That sir is slanderous and defamatory, now do you have any evidence of it sir?" Brian then whipped out his mobile phone, and searched Masura's name, and found several news results that mentioned that Masura had been prosecuted for shop lifting a long time ago countless times over. Brian then showed it to Masura, who laughed, and then said, "Well, that was a very long time ago, and I am a very changed man these days, and yes, I even pay taxes you know." Brian then sneered at Masura, and said, "Well, that is a surprise, because you look like a man who robs banks." Masura laughed again, and then said, "Well, you look like a man who would sell his own grandmother on the intergalactic internet." Brian looked angry and then said nothing for a moment, and afterwards replied, "But anyway Masura, you are missing the point. Where is our digital map?" Masura looked at Brian and the rest of the crew and Jasmine for a few seconds and then rummaged through his drawers and pulled the digital map, and then said, "Is this it?" Brian then nodded and replied, "Yes, that is the very one." Masura smiled and then continued speaking and said, "Must have come in here by accident. Now how much are you going to pay me?"

Brian looked at Masura with contempt and spat upon the ground. Masura then angrily shook his head, and said, "Well, that is a funny way of doing business you strange man from a distant planet filled with weirdos."

Brian then pulled out a tissue from out of his pocket and wiped his spit up from the floor. Masura then said, "Now that is better. So, what are you going to pay me?" Brian angrily then pointed his laser gun at the ceiling and shot the ceiling, and the ceiling tiles then fell on Masura's head, and Masura fell forwards clutching his head, and then got up again and replied, "Well, if it is that valuable you will have a lot of trouble getting out of here even if I am dead." Brian believed it. Brian then looked at Masura and said, "Look Masura, I do not want to kill you" and then added sarcastically, "despite whatever those robots were up to, which of course I assume you had no knowledge of whatsoever." Masura then smiled and said with a sarcastic look on his face, "Oh, no of course not, nothing to do with me whatsoever governor!" Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then laughed loudly, then there was silence. Masura then took a moment before speaking again, and said, "Well, anyway Masura. Give us the digital display map, and you will have no trouble." Masura then laughed at this proposition, and said, "Oh, really. How about you give me some money, and you will have no trouble?" Brian then paused and then shook his head, and replied, "Look Masura, whatever was going on in that other room, you could be put in prison for that." Masura then shook his head, and said, "Naah, they are all robots with artificial intelligence who think for themselves." Brian found this highly amusing, and then said, "Oh really, and they all of sudden decided to try and remove people's brains, and



enslave people?" Masura then held up his hands and chuckled and said, "Well, yes, it looks that way." Brian then shook his head in annoyance, and afterwards Brian looked at Masura. They then spent a silent thirty seconds contemplating each other's existence, and existence is a wonderful thing, and sometimes in life you wonder why people exist because some people really are idiots, and Masura looked like a massive idiot. Still, that was not the point, the crew really needed the digital display map back. Masura then uncrossed his arms and put out his hand and said, "Well, now, how much? How much for the digital display map?" Brian then pointed his laser towards Masura, and Masura looked at the laser, and then at Brian and then Masura laughed, and said, "You do not look like a murderer." Brian then shook his head and said, "Well, I am not a murderer and I do not want to be, although I did once want to murder the next doors neighbour's cat because he kept pooing on my washing." Masura laughed, and then said, "See, I do not think you want any trouble at all do you?" Brian then contemplated this and afterwards shook his head and said, "Well, not really, I have other things to like, like deliver meaningless rubbish across the universe." Masura then nodded and said, "Right then, how much are you going to give me for the digital display map?" Brian, the crew and Jasmine, then in unison said, "Nothing, nothing at all." Masura then looked at them and waved his finger at them, and afterwards said, "Now, don't be hasty, because this is the only chance you have of getting it back and staying alive." Brian then looked at Masura calmly, and then gazed into his eyes and said, "Oh, do you want to become a murderer then Masura?" Masura then thought about it for a moment and

responded, "Well, of course not, I want to make money, lots of money." Brian nodded, and then said, "So do we, but we do not go around robbing people." Masura then laughed, and replied, "Well, that may be, but you see, I have a family to feed, and I want to make lots of money, and well your little digital display map, it seems to be giving you a bit of a headache. Can't you get home without it?" Brian then shook his head, and said, "Well, we could do, but we would have to wait a year for a replacement." Masura then took in this information, and said, "Right, well, then, how much?" Brian then looked at the crew and said, "He wants to know how much?" The crew apart from Jasmine, then started chanting, "How much how much, how much? You must be off your nut!" Masura laughed and this helped lighten the mood a little thought Brian, but he was mistaken. There was silence, and then suddenly Masura then grabbed Brians laser gun, and then pointed it at the crew and said, "Right. Hands up." Masura then searched the crew and found no other weapons, apart from one of Brians bananas inside one of his pockets. Masura then looked at the Banana, and said, "Haha got you, this is just a comedy show, look there is a camera up there." Masura then pointed at a camera in the corner, which was like any other CCTV camera. Brian did not quite believe Masura, and he said, "Look Masura, we haven't got time for this."

Masura then gave Brian back his laser gun and Brian put it away as an act of good faith. Brian then said, "Thank you." Masura then smiled once more, and laughed, a very pretend laugh indeed, and afterwards he said, "Oh, and those robots and those machines in the other room they were part of the joke you see." Brian then shook his head

and did not find it funny at all. Masura then stuck out his hand and Brian looked at it and shook it. Masura then gave the digital display map back to Brian, and Brian then looked at the digital display map, and then at Masura again, and thought now what is the catch? Afterwards there was silence and the crew and Jasmine looked at the digital display map, and then at Masura. Masura just stood there grinning like a prize idiot. Brian and Jasmine and the rest of the crew then began to leave the room, and as they did so Brian continued to point his laser gun at Masura. The crew and Brian and Jasmine, backed out of the room, and walked back to the bar, and then walked quietly back out of the warehouse, after climbing up the ladder once more, and across the rubbish strewn warehouse. Brian, Jasmine, Karen, Salomina, and Cedric then walked to the taxi which was still waiting for them and got in it. The taxi had been there for at least an hour. The driver yawned and then turned to them and said, "Well, that took a long time, didn't it?" Brian then said, "Well, we had a little trouble." The taxi driver turned around to them and nodded, and then said, "I am not surprised, it is the dodgiest bar on the space station." Brian just said, "Oh." The taxi driver then turned to face the front window and pressed a few buttons on the control panel in front of him. The taxi rose up off of the ground and flew off into the sky. Suddenly in the distance Brian then spotted flashing lights, and wondered what was going on. Suddenly towards them came flying some police cars and they all began to circle the taxi.

One of the police cars then drew alongside the taxi, and a serious looking robot police officer then rolled down the window on his vehicle, and the taxi driver rolled down

both of the front windows in the taxi, and said, "Hello, officer, how can I help you?" The robot police officer then calmly said, "Well, I believe that you have Brian in the back of your taxi." The taxi driver then looked back at Jasmine and the crew and at Brian, then said, "Now which one of you is Brian?" There was no response from any of them but only silence. Jasmine tried not to giggle then suddenly said after a moment or two, "I am Brian." The robot police officer then said, "Well then Brian, we believe that you have a digital map that has been stolen?" Jasmine said politely, "Well, yes, but it was stolen from us!" The policeman then paused and replied, "Well a Mr Masura says that you stole it from him." Jasmine shook her head and then said, "Well, I can assure you officer that we did do no such thing. A Berthold Adisco stole it from us, and we have the video footage." The police officer then paused and said "Well, anyone can make up footage these days with artificially intelligent software and they have been doing so for centuries." Jasmine smiled and then said, "Well, that is true, but the security man gave us the footage from my hotel room." The robot police officer then said, "Well, that may be, but you need to come with us to the station." Jasmine sighed, then paused and after a moment or two said, "Ok." The robot police officer, then muttered under his breath, "These humans are weird." and then flew the police vehicle off into the distance towards the police station. Jasmine sighed, then turned to the taxi driver, and said, "I probably shouldn't mention this but, how about we do a runner?" The taxi driver then looked in his rear-view mirror and shook his head and said, sorry, "I cannot do that I will lose my license."

## **Chapter 19**

“Confusion and dangerous robots.”

The crew and Jasmine arrived at the police station in the flying taxi, and the police vehicles landed too. The robotic police officers then got out of their vehicles, and Jasmine and the crew got out of the taxi. One of the robotic police officers motioned to the crew and Jasmine to enter the police station, and they did so. The police station was rundown, and there were a multitude of rough looking individuals in handcuffs in the foyer. One of the rough looking individuals had two heads, and he was shouting at one of the police officers, “Yeah, it is alright for you, you don’t have two heads, and well, my other head likes stealing things on a regular basis. Now, what am I supposed to do about that?” This was a very fair point, and Brian overheard this and said, “Get your brain transplanted into another body.” The rough looking individual then paused and replied, “Oh, really, I have never heard of that, but thanks very much, that is very useful advice indeed.” Brian then stuck his thumb up and headed towards the police station desk with Jasmine and the rest of the crew. The police station desk was manned by a female officer,

who was extremely well built and muscley.

The crew and Jasmine stood at the desk nervously as police officers went about their business all around them. One of the robotic police officers who had chaperoned Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew on the journey to the police station, then said, “A Mr Masura, has accused them of stealing a digital display map off him.” The female police officer behind the counter then said, “Right, I see, so, all of

them are accused of stealing the digital display map?" The robotic police officer then nodded, and looked bored, even for a robot, and he replied, "Yes, they all stand accused of stealing it in the last hour." The crew and Jasmine stood there silently, waiting for what was to come next, which probably would not be very pleasant at all. The female police officer behind the desk then said, "Right, so which one of you is going to take charge here for your group?" Jasmine then said, "I will." The female police officer looked at Jasmine, and then said sternly, "And you are?" Jasmine immediately felt uncomfortable, as the female police officer was staring intensely into her eyes. Jasmine then coughed a little and said, "I am Brian." The female police officer, was not amused, and she said, "Oh, so you are impersonating a Brian, are you?" Jasmine then hesitated before saying, "Um, um, well, er actually." Jasmine then pointed to Brian and added, "he is Brian." The female police officer then looked at Brian, and said, "Well Brian, so what exactly happened?" Brian then paused for a few moments and finally replied, "Well, I left the digital display map in my room, and Berthold Adisco managed to break into my room and steal it, and left without being caught. Of course, I was not aware of this theft until the security man from the hotel told me about it and said that he had video evidence of it.

I finally managed to find and confront Berthold Adisco with the evidence, and then he ran off with the digital display map and gave it to a drone which then took it to a Mr Masura. Mr Masura it seems works in a place where they remove people's brains without their permission." Brian then held up the digital display map.

The female police officer behind the counter then said, "Oh, is that so? Remove people's brains without permission? Well, I better take the digital display map until

I can verify your stories sir.” Brian then sighed and reluctantly handed over the digital display map, and then said, “Oh, and you better have my mobile phone, it has the video evidence on there.” The female police officer then took the mobile phone, and looked at the digital display map, and began pressing a few things on its screen. Brian then quickly said, “Oh, don’t do that, it controls our spaceship.” The female police officer then quickly put the digital display map down just in case he was correct, and then turned to another police officer, and said, “Right now take them to the cells until we can verify their stories.” Jasmine immediately looked shocked, and she replied nervously, “But, but...”

The female police officer then shook her head immediately and looked at Jasmine and said, “But nothing missy, this is how we do things around here.” The crew and Jasmine were then led away to a large holding cell and were almost thrown into it. The metallic door then slammed shut and locked itself. The police officer that had led them to the large cell, then walked away.

Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew then were left in the cell with numerous dangerous and weird looking individuals. Brian, Jasmine and the crew looked at each other, and then at the dangerous and weird looking individuals. The dangerous and weird looking individuals then stared at the crew and at Jasmine.

One of them, a man with a robotic eye and a wooden leg then picked his nose, and sniffed loudly, and said, “So, what are you in here for then?” The crew and Jasmine were silent and did not say anything whatsoever. The man with the robotic eye, then continued to wait for them to say something, but they did not as it was better that no one knew their business in here. The man with the robotic eye

then got bored of waiting and said, "Mass murder? Drink driving whilst wielding a cucumber violently? The theft of a camel with one leg?" The man with the robotic eye then shrugged his shoulders, and then added, "The illegal reprogramming of robots to believe that Katie Hipkins writing is a positive benefit to the universe? The illegal teleportation of someone's mother-in-law to a dinner party that they did not invite her too?" Brian laughed at the last one, and then gave in and said, "Well, we are in here because we are accused of stealing our own computer tablet, which is absolutely ridiculous."

The man with the robotic eye, looked at them for quite some time and then said, "Well, I wouldn't put it past you, because quite frankly you do look like the type who would do such a thing." Karen then looked angry and said, "Well excuse me sir, but we have never been involved in crime in all our lives." The man with the robotic eye then laughed loudly and said, "Oh, yeah, a likely story I must say, now pull the other one." Brian then softly said, "No, honestly we are all honest hard working space delivery drivers who happen to be visiting this space station because of work." The man with the robotic eye then looked at them mistrustingly and said, "Well, if that is the case, then it is very rare round here, but anyway, a word of advice, now don't stare too much at people, because people in here get a bit funny about these things if you know what I mean." Brian and the crew and Jasmine then nodded, and a man in the corner suddenly began crying and he then sunk to his knees and said, "I want my mother, because she has my large antigravity propelled rocket." Brian then did a double take, and he shook his head. Brian then said to the man, "And how is that going to help?" The man crying in the corner then replied, "To get us out of here stupid." Brian



then understood and smiled, and he added, "Oh, I see, to blow the doors off, now what a very sensible idea." The man crying in the corner then paused and said, "Yeah, it actually." The man with a robotic eye then burst into a song.

We do not want to be here,  
and of course, no one does,  
and we are only here,  
because, because,  
people believe that we are naughty,  
and they believe that,  
we have done some strange things in society, and  
of course, they have kicked up a massive fuss,  
and the reality is,  
that life is not as easy as it used to be,  
because where we live on this space station,  
there is not much work at all you see, and  
there is a great deal of mistrust, and there is a  
great deal of poverty, and a great deal of  
inequality, and because of this, we are the  
kind of people,  
who like to borrow things regularly, and  
when society is not as fair as it should be,  
well of course,  
some things go missing,  
and permanently, but it  
is not because of us, so,  
honestly, like you,  
we are as honest as can  
be, and really, we are not  
bad people at all, and

although we may borrow  
things,  
for longer than we should,  
we always mean to bring them back,  
but unfortunately, due to acts of God,  
this is impossible,  
and quite frankly I think that God is very  
odd, and despite wanting to return things,  
sadly, we cannot do so,  
and unfortunately,  
we are often misunderstood,  
so please forgive us for being cautious when we met  
you, but you do seem to be quite pleasant,  
and probably you wouldn't even borrow a robotic  
pheasant, and of course, we should not cast aspersions, and  
nor should you too, and although society is so unfair,  
and there are many people in society who have  
nothing, and a few who have a lot, what can we but do,  
but borrow a lot, and to us that seems very fair, and  
yeah, deep down, we are people who about society do  
care, and well, inequality is everywhere,  
and the case in point is,  
you see that man over there with the brown hair,  
the man with barely any clothes on,  
he only borrowed some nasturtiums to give to his  
mum, and then he was robbed by a robot with a laser  
gun, and the man gave chase, and the robot stole a  
flying car, and the man only borrowed one, as humans  
have better morals,  
and they chased each across the sky quite far,  
and eventually the man fell asleep at the wheel,  
and then crashed into a shop and destroyed it,

whilst the robot went on to do some  
burglaries, and stole some lottery tickets and  
won, yes, he won millions, and now how can  
that be fair, when you have humans who do  
care, humans without much at all,  
and some with rather a lot,  
and also, when there are robots who do not care  
whatsoever,  
and the inequality in society is such a terrible lot,  
you can see why we borrow things frequently,  
can you not?  
Because borrowing is good,  
and we are just misunderstood,  
and that is why we are all here more frequently than  
not, and of course, we would all like to be rich, and get  
rich quick, but the time we spend in here, makes it very  
difficult, and that is an impossible lot, because we have  
to borrow to speculate, and when we end up in here,  
we stagnate, and that of course it does really flipping  
frustrate, and also because of our situation, and because of  
poverty we get irate, and of course, in here, there is very  
little to do, and chefs here do not seem to know with food  
what to do, because the dinners in here are terrible and  
inedible, and they are microwaved far too hot, and time  
ticks by so slowly, and in here it seems like time has  
stopped,  
and because there are few opportunities, we will  
continue to borrow things rather a lot, because  
this is the life that we are used to, and although  
we wish it would stop, we borrow off of  
everyone, and everyone borrows off us,

and rather a lot, and there is a  
lot of fighting, and a lot of  
people who cuss, and in space,  
and far away from planet Earth, the  
quality of living is far worse,  
far worse than we would like,  
and of course, to be honest,  
we will probably always be here more often than not,  
and in times like these,  
when life has brought you to your knees,  
it is always good to be polite, and to say thank you  
and please, because this inequality in society is a  
disease, and oh, how we wish this inequality, and  
this fighting over material things would stop,  
but this is our lot,  
a life of misery and tragedy,  
and probably we will be,  
old and grey and still at the end of our lives,  
we will still regret that we have not a lot,  
but if I was you,  
I would leave here as soon as you can in your spaceship,  
because this is a life that is best forgot,  
and a life full of regret and remiss,  
and what is a life worth that is filled with that?  
Not a lot, not a lot!

The man with the robotic eye then stopped singing, and  
the crew and Jasmine, and the rest of the occupants of the  
cell, then started whistling and cheering, and they clapped  
loudly. The occupants of the other cells then joined in and  
began whistling and cheering too, and the noise of all the

cheering and whistling made for a very unusual but pleasant atmosphere.

Brian and the crew and Jasmine actually felt surprisingly relaxed, and they were actually enjoying this strange experience. The man with the robotic eye then took a bow and said, "Thanks." and he smiled a great big smile, a smile much larger than anyone that they had ever seen, and everyone in the cell smiled at this cheerful moment in a place that was a most depressing place normally. Suddenly a police officer walked up to the cell and then looked towards Brian and the police officer said, "Ok, well, now, Brian and your crew, we have verified that the information you gave us was correct and you are unfortunately now free to leave." Brian then sighed a great big sigh of relief, and he thought, "Great that really is fantastic, because now we can get back to our jobs, and finally return to the fabulous Earth." The police officer then opened the cell door slowly, and the crew and Jasmine left the cell. The police officer afterwards then closed the cell door, and lead Jasmine and the crew down a corridor and quietly back to the reception area, which was still filled with nefarious looking individuals, and police officers drinking coffee.

The crew and Jasmine stood at the reception desk, and the female officer behind the reception desk smiled a warm smile, and she was now much friendlier than before, and she said, "I am truly sorry about that, but please do be assured that we will be dealing with Mr Masura shortly and nothing like that should happen ever again on this space station. Now, here, have your digital display map back and your mobile phone." Brian then smiled and gladly took them back, and said, "Thank you." The female

officer then replied, "You are most welcome." Jasmine then waved goodbye to the female police officer, and the crew and Jasmine then walked out of the door of the police station. The taxi that they had arrived in had disappeared, and Brian hailed another one.

The new taxi arrived, and they then gladly got in it. The taxi driver after they got into the taxi said nothing to them, but he looked in the rear-view mirror at them, and then eyed them suspiciously. Brian saw this and then said, "We just had to deal with stolen property, now, we would like to head back to the marketplace and have a drink at a bar please." The taxi driver then nodded and said, "Ok." The day had been a long day, a very long day indeed, and this space station was one of many that they had been to but this one in particular was one of the roughest places that they had visited on their journeys in space. The taxi began to lift up off of the ground outside the space station and rose skywards. Brian and the crew were looking forwards to a long stiff drink at the bar. The crew sat happily in the back of the taxi, which continued flying through the sky, and headed towards the market area of the spaceport. The roof of the space station was clear and see-through, and as it flew along, the crew looked out of the windows, and then up at the roof, and they gazed once more at the beauty of the stars, and it was good to know that soon they would be back amongst them, and that they would be finishing off their delivery jobs in their spaceship, which would be a great relief.

The taxi then flew along for several minutes, and all was well, until a group of flying vehicles headed towards them, and they were armoured looking vehicles. Suddenly, the windows of the armoured flying vehicles opened and

robots with laser guns appeared, and they began shooting at the taxi. Jasmine screamed, and then the taxi driver shouted out loudly, "What have you done?" and he then began to take evasive manoeuvres and waited for a response from the crew. The taxi driver then pulled out a laser gun and began to fire at the robots. Brian then said, "We have done nothing at all except what we said." Brian took a deep breath, and then also took out his laser gun, and began firing at the armoured vehicles too. The crew and the taxi driver were seriously outnumbered, and the taxi driver began descending rapidly and they started zig zagging across the sky towards the marketplace. The robots in the flying armoured vehicles were getting closer, and they continued firing at the taxi. The front of the taxi was hit, and flames suddenly appeared, and the taxi began burning rapidly. The taxi was made of composite plastic material, and the fire was able to spread rapidly.

Luckily the taxi driver managed to land the taxi in the marketplace, and he rapidly got out, and the crew did too. The taxi driver then shouted "Run!" and then ran for his life, and then the crew and Jasmine ran in the opposite directions.

Brian, Cedric, Karen, Salomina and Jasmine then ran in the other direction, and the robots shortly afterwards landed in their flying vehicles, and they then got out of them. The robots then began to give chase to the crew and to Jasmine, and they started firing their laser guns towards them, and the crew and Jasmine weaved in and out of the market stalls, and several market stalls were hit by the robot's laser beams and caught on fire, and the stall holders began screaming.

All around there was chaos and pandemonium everywhere, and Brian and Jasmine and the rest of the crew ran in fear, and they managed to lose the robots for a few moments. Brian, Jasmine and the crew then looked about, and a sense of paranoia was creeping into their heads, and they felt uneasy, very uneasy, and yet only a few moments ago they were sat in the taxi and thinking of going home to planet Earth. Still, their lives were in danger, and they were outnumbered.

Brian and the crews' eyes darted about, and they began to look for somewhere new to run, whilst keeping an eye out for the robots. Now, who did these robots belong too? A thought then suddenly popped into Brians head, and it was, "Masura." Brians face then dropped, and he said to the others, "The robots, they must be working for Masura." Jasmine then afterwards said with a hint of fear in her voice, "Yes Brian, I think that you could be right. We should be very wary indeed!" One of the robots then appeared and spotted them and began firing its laser gun towards them. The crew and Jasmine then ran, faster than they had ever run in their lives, and then suddenly as they were running, they remembered to turn on their antigravity generators on, and were able to push people out of the way much easier. Which was a great relief! A laser beam flew just over the top of Brians shoulder, and this was not something designed to stun, but something designed to kill.

Brian then quickly responded to the near miss, by leaping through the air towards a stall with a hard roof and the rest of the crew did too, and they clambered up it and onto its roof, and then began leaping from stall to stall. The rest of the robots were then spotted nearby, and they began to fire



their laser guns at the crew and at Jasmine who all ducked and dived and leapt across the many stalls. The crew and Jasmine had by some miracle managed to put some distance between them and the robots. The crew then clambered down from a stall and headed towards a large bar and entered it.

Suddenly a huge swarm of police drones arrived, and they then began firing at the robots, and the robots fired back at them, and there was an explosion as gas cannister was hit.

The crew luckily just made it into the nearest bar, and they all walked towards the counter, and they stood at it and then grinned at the female bar woman, as if everything was normal. The crew and Jasmine then waited without saying anything, and they waited as outside police drones continued to shoot at the robots, and there were screams from the humans and the aliens in the marketplace. Brian then clutched the digital display map, and looked at the Bar woman, and Brian tried to sense if she was trustworthy, but he quickly put it out of his mind as he had not met many trustworthy people on this space station at all. The bar woman then looked at Brian and said to Brian, "Of all the space stations in the universe, you had to arrive at mine, Brian." Brian was a bit puzzled and a bit mistrusting at first, and so he said nothing. The bar woman smiled and then continued and added, "I am a subscriber to your stamp collecting video channel on the intergalactic internet Brian." Suddenly a look of realisation appeared upon Brians face, Brian did indeed have a stamp collecting channel, well two channels actually, and it wasn't very often that he got to meet a subscriber. The crew smiled, and Brian smiled as much as you could do

when being chased by psychotic robots with laser guns, and he then said, "Oh, thank you. It is a pleasure to meet you and you are?" The bar woman then looked at Brian intently, and she had lovely blue eyes, and there was a special moment between them, and she then said, "You are most welcome." Brian then smiled back and said, "Now that is an unusual name." The bar woman then laughed and said, "No, silly, I am Veronica." The bar woman then paused and added, "Oh, by the way I am one of your nighttime subscribers." and then she winked at Brian several times. The crew laughed, and then Jasmine said, "Now what does being a nighttime subscriber entail Brian?" Brian then looked slightly embarrassed, and he said, "Well, er, I display my stamps whilst naked." Jasmine then laughed and the rest of the crew did too. Yet, the danger had not gone away, and the shooting was continuing outside, and the bar woman then noticed and said, "Brian what is going on out there?" Brian then paused, and tried to play it cool and said, "Oh, I think there was some trouble with some robots. Now, please can we have some drinks." The female bar woman then said, "Of course Brian, and I will even give you a discount. Now what would you like?" Brian then looked at the rest of the crew and at Jasmine, and they all said in unison, "Anything, anything at all." The crew then turned off their antigravity generators. Suddenly there were screams from nearby, and more shooting. The bar woman tried to carry on as best as possible, as this kind of thing was not unusual by the look on her face. The bar woman then made some cocktails and put little umbrellas in them. She then handed them to Brian and said, "That is free Brian, because I am one of your biggest fans." and she winked at

him again, and then added, "Maybe we could go out on a date?" Brian smiled, and he temporarily forgot the psychotic robots outside shooting their laser guns all over the place.

Brian and the crew then looked around at the bar and it was huge, and it was attached to a disco by the looks of things, and there was a sign to a cloak room in the distance near some stairs. Brian then turned back to the bar woman, and said, "Do you have lockers?" Veronica the bar woman then said, "Yes, Brian, over there where you were looking." Veronica, then reached down under the counter and pulled out a swipe card, and handed it to Brian, and said, "Here you go Brian, it's on me for a week." Brian then smiled a huge smile, and he then leaned forwards to give her kiss, and she then leaned towards him, and they kissed each other gently, the crew looked on and the shooting outside continued unabated. Brian then quickly walked off towards the lockers as the crew sipped their drinks. Brian then swiped the swipe card on one of the lockers, and it opened, and he put the digital display map inside it, and then walked back to the crew and Jasmine who was looking a little frazzled.

Back at the bar, Jasmine was talking to Veronica and so were the crew. Jasmine then said to Veronica, "So, what is a nice girl doing in a place like this?" Veronica then replied, "Well, I have been waiting to meet celebrities such as Brian and paying my electricity bill." Salomina then laughed, and replied, "Oh, very sensible with the cost of living in this century." Cedric then turned to look back outside, and said, "Is it always like this on the space station?" Veronica then replied, "Yes, it is a very rough place sometimes, and you have to know how to handle

yourself. Now Brian is a man who can handle himself.” Brian then coughed on his drink and smiled at Veronica, and to the rest of the crew it almost looked like they were falling in love. Brians eyes were glazed over, and he definitely was interested in Veronica.

Suddenly a robot entered the bar and there was screaming. The robot headed immediately for Brian and the crew and began firing towards the bar.

Veronica ducked down behind the bar, and Brian then began to fire at the robot, and the rest of the crew then ducked under some tables.

Veronicas hand then reached up from behind the bar and she threw a couple of laser guns in their direction. Karen and Cedric then picked them up, and began to shoot at the robot, and it was hit several times in the shoulders, and it stumbled backwards and knocked over a table and sent some drinks flying. The customers who were sat at the table then ran screaming as the robot stumbled into it. The robot managed not to fall over, and began firing once more at Brian, and at the rest of the crew and at Jasmine. Brian then jumped over the bar and began shooting at the robot from behind it. Veronic, then picked up a laser gun herself and also began to fire at the robot.

The robot then picked up a table and threw it towards Brian, and it hit the bar and then smashed into smithereens. The robot then began marching towards the crew and Karen and Cedric continued shooting the robot and burnt some holes in its metal body, but it did not seem to affect it.

Suddenly the robot switched on its antigravity generator, and Karen, Cedric and Brians laser beams just bounced off of it and rebounded towards them and the laser beams were

dangerously close to hitting them. Of course, the crew should have expected this, but this was something that they had never come across with a robot before. Brian then scratched his head, and he had a sudden a flash of inspiration, which was to turn on his antigravity generator.

A big smile appeared on Brian's face, and he then shouted at the rest of the crew and said, "Turn on your antigravity generators, and we can then all join together and force him out of the bar." The rest of crew then gave Brian the thumbs up and turned on their antigravity generators, and began to walk towards the robot, who tried to fire his laser gun at the crew but his laser beams bounced off of them too. Veronica saw this and then stopped shooting.

Brian took a sip of his drink and then leapt over the bar, and also began to run towards the robot. The crew and Brian and Jasmine then began to push the robot with their antigravity generators towards the large door which they had come through. This has had quite an effect, and the group of them combined, managed to push the robot right back to the door, and the door slid quickly open, and the crew and the robot were once more outside.

The shooting outside was continuing, and Brian and the crew kept pushing the robot forwards away from the bar. Some of the stall holders saw what they were doing and then pointed them towards a balcony.

The police drones then stopped firing and there was silence. Brian wondered what was going on, and he then realised the other robots must have turned on their antigravity generators. This was not a good sign, but Brian did not want to give up the digital display map. The crew and Brian then continued pushing the robot until

they reached the balcony, and they all together managed to push it over the edge, and it fell off of the balcony, and it hit the ground below, where there was an underground shopping complex, and it bounced, and vibrated, and the vibration fried the robots' electronics, and the robot became still and did not move anymore. Brian and the crew and Jasmine, then sighed great sighs of relief. Suddenly the other robots appeared and began marching towards them with their antigravity generators on. Brian was not happy at seeing them and then said, "Uh, oh, they have all turned on their antigravity generators."

Jasmine then shouted, "Now what are we going to do?" This was a very good question indeed as they were outnumbered. Brian thought about it for a moment, and then said, "I do not know, I really do not know." Now this was a very tense moment, and Brian, Jasmine and the rest of the crew stood there with open mouths as the robots marched towards them, and as the robots marched forwards, the police drones flew down towards the robots and a strange sound was heard coming from the police drones. A buzzing sound. One of the robots looked upwards and looked for something to throw and picked up one of the stall holders and then threw him at the drone, and the stallholder sailed through the air, and smashed into the police drone and knocked it out of the sky, and the police drone fell to the floor and smashed into pieces. The other police drones then rose higher out of harm's way and continued transmitting the strange buzzing noises.

The robots then gave up looking at the sky and continued walking again towards the crew and the crew and Jasmine, managed to roll out of the way just in time, and one of the

robots then fell over the balcony and did the same as the other robot, vibrated and stopped moving. The other robots just managed to stop themselves from falling over the balcony, which was very disappointing.

The crew and Jasmine then ran back towards the bar, and the robots followed them. The crew then entered the bar, and the door slid closed behind them. Brian then shouted at Veronica, "Veronica, can you lock the door, and will it keep the robots out?" Veronica then shouted back, "Well, it should do for a while, but maybe not forever, because the doors are made of glass that is about half as strong as a diamond, and so are the windows." Brian then replied, "Great, then lock the door, Veronica." Veronica locked the doors, and the crew walked towards the bar and picked up their drinks and turned around to face the door and the window of the bar and began sipping their drinks. Veronica then made herself a drink and began sipping it. The robots then marched forwards and turned off their antigravity generators, and as they did so the police drones then began attacking them once more with their many laser guns. The robots then began firing back at the police drones, and managed to destroy one of them, and the damaged police drone then fell onto the market stalls roof and destroyed the market stall completely. The remaining robots then began running at the bar window, and tried to break it, whilst occasionally firing at the police drones, who were also continuing to fire back at the robots.

Brian and the rest of the crew then continued to sip their drinks whilst watching this situation unfold. The robots were not having much luck with breaking the windows, and this pleased the crew and Jasmine and Veronica and

the rest of the clientele of the bar, who calmly continued drinking and eating food that was still being served. It was like a scene from a movie, and Brian looked at the rest of the crew and smiled, and then he smiled at Veronica, and their eyes met once more. Brian then looked longingly into Veronicas eyes, and she leaned forwards and kissed Brian, and it was a very slow lingering kiss, and Brian felt such bliss that he had never ever felt in his life before.

The rest of the crew and Jasmine continued to watch the robots running towards the window and bouncing off of them, and they were getting more and more frustrated, and each time so far, the windows stood unbroken and barely moved at all, which was a great relief.

Suddenly on a television screen behind the bar, a news report appeared on the screen, and a woman was talking into a microphone, and a piece of text on the screen read, "Masura Bonala has been arrested."

Brian then noticed this and said," Veronica, please can you kindly turn up the volume on the television?" Veronica then found the remote control, and turned up the television as was asked.

The female reporter on the television then said, "Tonight, we have breaking news that Masura Bonala has been arrested for the buying and the selling of illegal goods, and for apparently trying to steal people's brains and then sell them on the black market." Brian was pleased, and he smiled, but the crew and Jasmine and Veronica and everyone in the bar were still in great danger if the robots could smash the window, and it probably was only a matter of time. The police drones were hovering directly above the robots and Brian presumed that they were



sending some kind of alternative electromagnetic pulse beam towards the robots but was not sure.

Suddenly the police drones created their own antigravity shields around the robots and the robots could not move anymore at all, and they were stuck in one place, mid movement, like statues.

Brian, Jasmine, Veronica, and the rest of the people in the bar then all cheered, and clapped loudly, and presumed that the worst was over and that things had come to an end. The crew and Veronica and the rest of the people in the bar then began dancing and celebrating. The celebrating continued, long into the night, and eventually the crew left the bar after Brian had retrieved the digital display map, and after Brian had got Veronicas mobile phone number and after he had promised to meet her for a romantic dinner. Now by the time the crew had left the bar, the robots had been removed by the police, but the destruction in the marketplace was still being repaired.

Brian smiled a great big smile, and then looked at the crew and said, "Well, that was a day that we will never forget." Jasmine then laughed, and said, "Yes, we certainly never will." The crew all walked through a now deserted marketplace, a little tired and weary, and began walking back to their hotel.

Suddenly, Brian felt the digital display map being snatched out of his hand, and he looked at what was snatching the digital display map, and it was a small monkey. Brian then looked at the small monkey, and so did the crew and they all smiled, and the small monkey then looked at them and turned on the digital display map and began pressing the screen with its fingers. Brian then laughed, a little nervously, and said, "Excuse me Mr

Monkey, now that isn't yours, is it?" The monkey then looked at Brian and at the rest of the crew and Jasmine, and then looked back at the digital display map, and then began pressing the screen with its fingers.

Brian moved towards the small monkey cautiously as he did not want to frighten it, but as soon as Brian got too close, the small monkey began to run off with the digital display map. Brian then realised that he still had a banana in his pocket, and he pulled it out, and waved it in the direction of the monkey, and the monkey stopped running, and started walking back towards him. Brian then held out his hand and the small monkey looked at Brian, and the small monkey then handed back the digital display map and took the banana. The small monkey then ate the banana in front of them, and the crew and Jasmine watched this cute spectacle for a while. The small monkey then finished eating the banana and it ran off.

Brian then sighed and said, "Crisis averted." and it was luckily, which was a great relief. The crew and Jasmine then all laughed, and Karen then tiredly said, "Back to the hotel then?" Cedric then replied, "Yes, let's go back to the hotel, because I need to sleep like no human in human history has ever slept before in their lives. The crew all felt the same and it was the longest day they had had for a long time and the most unusual.

The space station was a very strange place, and they were glad to be going back to the hotel.

The crew and Jasmine began walking further across the marketplace, and they looked around at the devastation caused by the robots, and it was incredible what destruction they could cause. Brian sighed at the sight of

the devastation, and said, "Incredible isn't it what technology can do in the wrong hands."

Brian then looked at the digital display map and was glad that they could finally finish their delivery jobs, and fly home to planet Earth. The delivery job that they had been doing had been filled with very unusual experiences indeed, and they had met more than enough strange people and interesting people to last a lifetime, and after a difficult day, every step towards the hotel, felt fantastic.

The crew managed to keep their eyes open, just long enough to reach the hotel. Which was a beautiful looking hotel, and much more welcoming than expected.

The crew upon arriving at it then entered the hotel, and Brian waved the digital display map at the hotel receptionist, and then they all headed for the elevator, and pressed the button and waited it for it to arrive. It was the end of their time on the space station and how happy they were all to be going to bed.

Brian then yawned and said a poem.

Oh, bed, bed, bed,  
how glad I am to be,  
headed for bed,  
for the day has been long,  
and there is little left to be said,  
and my energy has unfortunately, all left,  
and my mind is on the stars in my dreams,  
and my body is on its last legs,  
and how I long to sleep,  
because the day,

it has been most unusual,  
and my mind is a discombobulated mess,  
so, it is finally off to bed,  
and how glad I am to be going,  
because the day,  
has had far too many worries,  
and too many cares,  
and no more do I want them, and of  
time in the day, there is little left, so,  
goodbye day, and hello bed,  
because my mind is weary, and I am  
looking forwards to tomorrow, and  
new experiences, because today has  
come and gone, and I need to rest,  
rest, rest.

The rest of the crew and Jasmine clapped, and Brian  
smiled a great big cheesy smile.

Brian and the crew then got into the elevator, which was  
waiting for them, and Brian pressed the button for their  
floor, then looked at the digital display map, and opened  
the spaceships CCTV application. A picture of the ship  
appeared on the screen, and it was smashed to bits and  
laying in the spaceport smoking. Brian then suddenly  
shouted, "Oh, my god, the spaceship, the spaceship it is  
destroyed, totally destroyed!" The rest of the crew looked  
at Brian, and Jasmine could not believe what they were  
hearing. The crew all looked horrified. Jasmine took a few  
moments to herself and then said, "Now, now what?"  
The crew's future lay ahead of them, and although their  
plans were going to be delayed, the return to planet Earth  
was too.

Unsurprisingly the crew were all dismayed at the sight of the destroyed spaceship. Still, they all had each other, and the friendship that they had built up through many trials and tribulations could not be broken, and together no problem was unconquerable, and the future was theirs for the taking, and a bright future awaited them no matter the temporary setback with their spaceship.

If the future was the future, then it was unknown, and if the past was the past, it was mostly forgettable for the crew of the spaceship are we there yet. Their lives since taking up the space delivery job was pretty boring most of the time, but still they had managed to keep each other sane up until this point. Yes, this was an incredible achievement consider the very strange robots and people that they had met along their journey through the galaxy on the many paths across the universe that they had travelled. Space was a dark and boring place, with no lightbulbs, but illumination was what they needed if they were to get back home to Earth. The spaceship insurance probably would take ages to arrive. But the future was the future and the past was the past and they were still alive.

# THE END

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