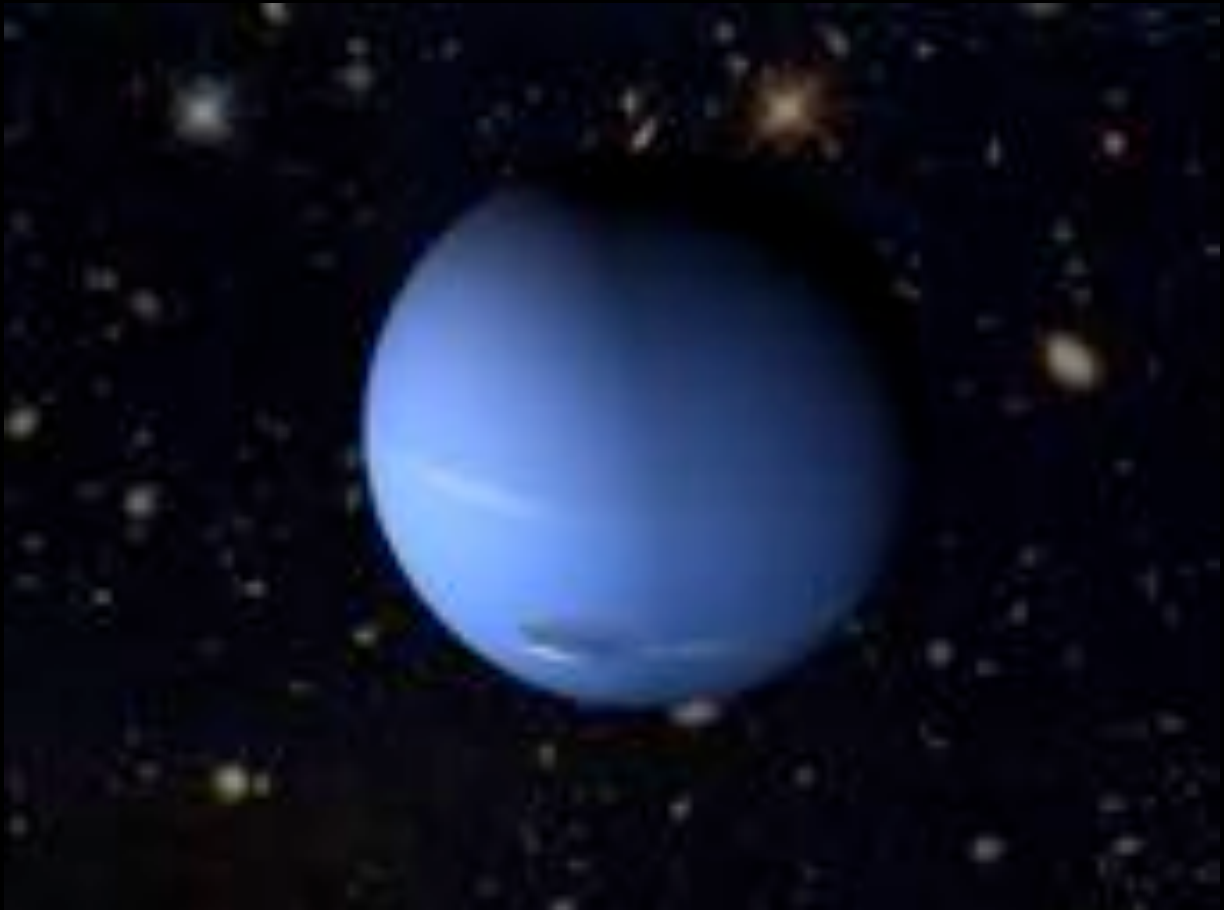


# Space

*An anthology of stories by young writers*



Edited by Dee White  
[www.deescribe.com.au](http://www.deescribe.com.au)

# Space

*This anthology is a compilation of works by talented young writers aged 6 to 14.*

*All are based on the theme of the 2014 [Writing Classes For Kids](http://writingclassesforkids.com) Space writing competition. (<http://writingclassesforkids.com>)*

*When selecting the winners to have their stories published, I tried to include a variety of different kinds of stories from boys and girls across different age groups.*

*Stories were also selected on originality of ideas.*

*They are fabulous examples of how we use our imaginations and life experiences to interpret a particular theme, how our writing is different because we are all different.*

*Congratulations to all the writers who were selected for this publication.*

*I hope readers enjoy your pieces as much as I did.*

*Happy writing:)*

*Dee*

*[Dee White Author](#)*

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# Space Stories by Writers aged 10 and under



***How I Got a Space in My Heart*** by Jocelyn Jeary - aged 6

It was a cold and windy autumn day, the leaves were tumbling off the trees, the sky looked like it was going to rain. I felt warm in my grey, fluffy woolly coat. I was walking my Labrador dog with my mum and brother, I felt happy. Benson is a smoky black colour and he is very silly and was busy trying to get the treats from my pocket! I said to him, "Stop it Benson that tickles".

Then I heard a rustling in the dried up leaves next to me, it was my cat Arthur. Arthur was my favourite cat he had grey fluffy fur, and I loved cuddling him. I turned around and whispered, "Go home." I was worried he would get lost.

Suddenly I heard a screech and spun round. A purple car had hit Arthur. He was lying still on the road. I felt sad. Then the man ran out of the car, Benson barked at him, mum ran to Arthur everyone was scared. I just stood still and held my brother's hand tightly, I looked away. I hoped Arthur wasn't really dead, but he wasn't moving. I felt so sad I began to cry, my heart really hurt.

Later mum said I would always have a little space in my heart where Arthur was.



***Alien Friends*** by Emily Brown - aged 7

One dark night a brave young girl named Kate quietly woke her brother Jack. She had an amazing surprise for him. "Come Jack," she whispered excitedly. "We're going to see the stars!"

Jack didn't understand why Kate would suddenly want to see the stars but he followed her anyway.

They had been walking for a little while when Kate stopped and pushed a rock on the wall next to them. Suddenly there was a secret passage way. They went inside. Jack was amazed! There, right in front of them, was a huge spaceship.

Kate had been building a spaceship in secret for months and now it was ready to blast off into outer space. "Where would you like to go Jack?" She asked.

"I've always wanted to go to the moon," Jack replied excitedly.

So off they zoomed into space. Soon they landed with a bump on the moon. Jack had been wondering if the moon really tasted like cheese so he bent down and tasted a mouthful. "Yuck," he spluttered. "That tastes like rock!"

"Let's explore!" Said Kate. She saw something green moving on her left. It had three eyes and six long fingers on each hand. She couldn't see any ears. It had no feet and seemed to bounce across the moon like a ball.

"It's an Alien!" Said Jack.

"Nope, it's two aliens!" Said Kate when she saw another creature next to it.

The aliens were very friendly and quickly introduced themselves. "Hi, I'm Jill and this is John, who are you?" Soon they

were chatting away like the best of friends.

John told them stories about his friend the night fairy, and he told them they could jump very high on the moon.

They just had to try it. Jack got a little excited and jumped too far. He jumped right off the moon and landed on a big space rock.

"I'll save you Jack!" Yelled Kate. She tried to start the spaceship but it wouldn't go.

Luckily Jill had an idea. "John, why don't you call the night fairy with your fairy dust?" She said. So he did.

She arrived just in time. The rock holding Jack was starting to break up. Even brave Kate was scared.

They formed a chain with the night fairy on one end and Kate on the other. Jack took his sister's hand and the night fairy pulled them back to safety.



She used her magic to fly them safely home to their beds.

"I do hope we see John and Jill again," Jack whispered to Kate before they went to sleep.



***The Black Hole Adventure*** by Emelie Kim - aged 8

There was a boy who loved space. His name was Michael Brown. Every night, he looked out his window and stared with the stars. He always shared his ideas to draw a picture of outer space with his friend, Charlotte Lennom. She lived with her parents and her brother and she had a pet cat.

One day, Mrs. Brown overheard Michael saying to Charlotte, "I really want to have a telescope on my birthday."

So, Mr. and Mrs. Brown bought Michael a telescope for his birthday.

"Thank you!" Michael exclaimed. Charlotte had bought him a

book about space. It had a lot of facts and funny pictures of comical aliens.

"Thanks!" he had responded.

The next day, Michael had a play date with Charlotte. She wanted to draw a picture of outer space with Michael. Michael got the crayons,



Illustration by Emelie Kim



and Charlotte got the paper.

“Let’s draw planets, stars, galaxies, and more!” said Charlotte. She drew the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. Michael drew Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. They also drew a red, green, and yellow planet called Opelius, Sun, and a black hole together.

Just as they completed the picture, they sunk into the picture! Charlotte shrieked as they sunk into the rocket. Michael closed his eyes. When he opened them, he found Charlotte and himself inside the rocket that he had drawn.

“Wow,” they said at the same time, admiring the planets, especially Saturn.

They were flat because they were in a picture.

But then, Charlotte shrieked, “There’s a black hole ahead!”

Michael steered the opposite way just as the black hole was about to suck them up. But when they passed Venus, there were black holes everywhere!



Illustration by Emilie Kim

“Be careful!!!” Charlotte cried, as Michael tried his best not to keep away from the black holes. Charlotte and Michael both knew their parents were going to be miserable if they were sucked up by the black hole and they never returned.

Just then, Michael and Charlotte saw Opelius. Charlotte



shouted, “Steer toward Opelius! Michael steered safely between the black holes until they sunk through Opelius, back into Michael’s room.

“Thank goodness!” Mrs. Brown said, relieved. “I searched everywhere for you two.” Michael and Charlotte stared at each other for a

moment, then they told Mrs. Brown the whole story.

“And then we sunk through Opelius and came back home.” Michael finished the story.

Mrs. Brown was silent, then she said, “Well, now you can go do something else, and I’ll get the cookies I baked.”

Michael and Charlotte smiled at each other.

***Did That Really Happen?*** by Tia Brantley - aged 9

"Get ready for bed!" my mom called.

It was a Saturday night and I was getting ready for bed. When all of a sudden, I heard people screaming! I looked outside to see what was going on, but I didn't see any people screaming and yelling. Instead, I saw Earth just floating around in the middle of space. I was so shocked! I ran to my mom and dad and they were just as shocked as I was. Just then, aliens walked in.

"Awe humans, and a cute little human," said the first alien.

"Don't get near it. It could be wild," said another alien.

"Can we keep them, can we keep them, can we keep them!" begged the smallest alien.

My parents and I just stood there in wonder. First, we're stuck floating in space. Second, aliens want to keep us like pets. "What's next," I thought to myself.

"Can we at least give them spacesuits, so they don't explode," the smallest alien pleaded.

"Okay fine," said the tallest alien.

It was final, once we had on our spacesuits. We had officially become, "Alien Pets!"

"Can I hold the small one? Can I, can I, can I?" asked the smallest alien.

"Oh great," I thought. That's when I saw the open door. I ran. I ran as fast as I could, and I made it. However, it got worse. I ran into an army of aliens.

"Kill that human!" I heard them chant. "Kill th-ep beep beep."

"What was that?"

Beep! Beep! Beep! It was my alarm clock. I relaxed. “It was just a dream. Just a dream,” I thought.

Then, as I looked out my window, I saw it—an alien! Just one alien walking down the street.

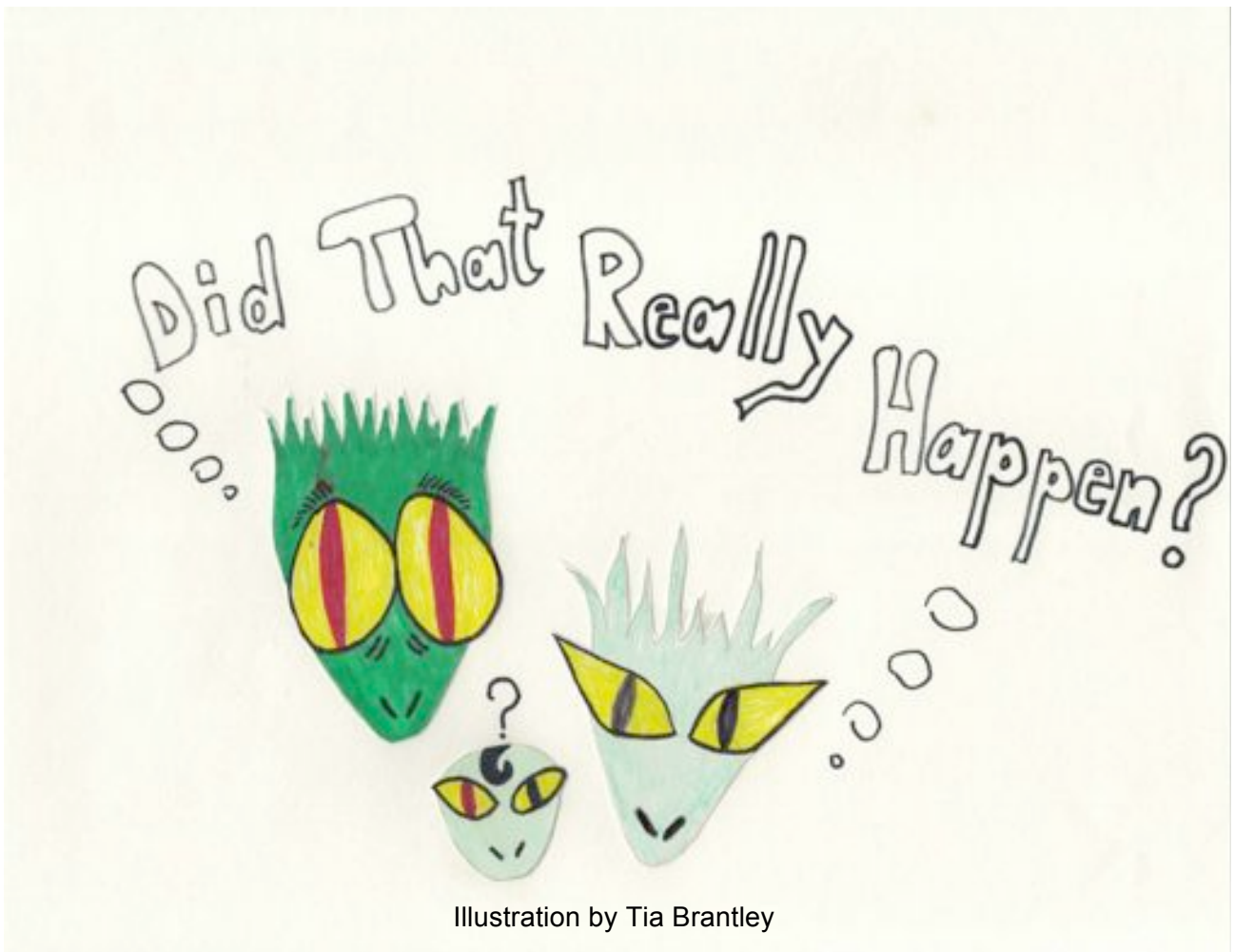


Illustration by Tia Brantley

***The Secret Room*** by Bann Irbash - aged 9

I clambered into my mother's dusty car for a tiring three-hour journey to Leeds. In I went with my twin sisters, Amelia and Emelia.

As soon as the engine started I thought about Grandpa, who we were going to visit. He was a very tedious man with a house about as interesting as cabbage soup.

Finally, although there wasn't much to look forward to, we arrived.

I dropped my backpack into any old room. Just then somebody knocked on the door.

"Who is it?" I grumbled, using the pillow on my bed to cover my ringing ears.

"It's me, Grandpa, I have something to show you."

I shook the pillow off and opened the door. My excited Grandpa whispered, "Follow me!"

We walked up five gigantic sets of stairs to where he kept his 'secret room'. He opened the long-standing door and in front of me was a huge purple machine and in front of it were three glimmering jewels: one ruby, one emerald and one sapphire.

When I say 'machine' it was more or less a rocket, outlined in gold with one vast window all across it, like a pair of glasses. I gasped in awe.

"This is my spaceship," Grandpa said.

"Say what?" I remarked.

"I am king, dear Dennis. I fly up to space, and see the Planet Zarchadon, an unknown but beautiful place. I am King Richard to the inhabitants of that wonderful planet. As you know, I am getting

too feeble to be a Grandpa, let alone a King for the aliens of Zarchadon. I need someone to take my place. You, Prince Dennis, are the future King of Zarchadon.”

“This sounds like a whole load of insane baloney, but I’m up for the challenge. How do I fly your rocket?”

“Let’s get in!”

My Grandpa’s eyes sparkled, his arms shivered in excitement and my word, his hair was flying everywhere!

He tapped the emerald and the whopping window opened up. He tapped the sapphire and a lengthy string ladder flew out. I climbed up the ladder, my eyes terrified. When I was up, my Grandpa started up the ladder, hung onto the rope and tapped the ruby to pull the ladder up.

Inside, the walls were gold, the floor and ceiling were sky-blue and there were two white chairs for us to sit on.

In front of the chairs was a big controller pad filled with random buttons. How was I going to memorise everything? Grandpa pressed an orange button and we zoomed up, up, up and a little bit more up before we were away!

Five minutes in, we landed on the Planet Zarchadon. Ecstatic Grandpa was ecstatic, and I was euphoric as I hopped off the rocket. Everywhere around us were miniature green aliens.

“Hello aliens!” I called. Suddenly, two enormous aliens wobbled to me. “Wake up!” they said.

I rubbed my eyes and when I opened them I saw Amelia and Emelia shouting at me in a very alien-like voice!



***I Need Space!*** by Srishti Bendigeri - aged 9

“Oh, I really wish I could have my room back. There is no space for eighteen people,” Jack groaned.

It was lunchtime in 11 year-old Jack Mare’s house. Everybody in Jack’s family always had something to complain about which they shared over lunch. Now, you must understand one thing. Jack has no ordinary family. He has a *huge* family. His house only had five bedrooms and there were about eighteen people in the house.

Jack had to share his room with his two elder brothers, Will and Tom. Also in Jack’s family were four aunts, four uncles, two sisters, his three baby cousins and his parents.

Usually, his uncles and aunts lived at their own house, but they were staying here for a few months because their house had been burnt down. Jack knew that his aunts were terrified of spiders and his uncles were scared of getting scolded by their wives. That exact moment, Jack got an excellent idea.

"Can I be excused from the table?" he asked his mother.

"Yes, Jack."

He raced off to his room to find his rubber toys.

“Ah, there they are,” Jack said as he saw them lying on his desk. “Wow, I’ve found Will’s crisps! Yummy!” Jack grabbed the crisps and gobbled them up as he picked up a toy.

Jack green slime on the toy, and a big grin appeared on his face. “Now for the rest.” Jack picked two more of his best rubber toys and wiped slime on them. He heard chairs scraping downstairs and loud clanging of plates. Jack brushed some dirt under his bed and set his slime-covered toys under the bed.



Will and Tom barged into the room. “Move, I need to do my homework,” Will shouted.

Tom moved aside and Jack followed. Will wanted help with his spelling, but when no one wanted to help. Will furiously went to Mary, one of the sisters. Tom settled down on his bed and nodded off to sleep as soon as his head hit the pillow.

Jack waited for a few minutes to make sure Tom was asleep. Then he tiptoed downstairs with the toys hidden behind his back.

Perfect! Aunt Lisa was talking to Aunt Lilly, Aunt Sally and Aunt Tina. Now’s my chance! Thought Jack. Jack tied a string to his toys and swung it down.

“Aaaaaaaah! Humongous s-spiders!” the aunties screamed simultaneously.

All of Jack’s uncles came running to them at once, wanting to know what had happened.

The aunts’ reply was to tell them to pack all of their luggage and leave immediately. The aunts went inside to get their babies, and Jack ran back to his room, pretending to be innocent.

Jack’s aunts and uncles left as quickly as they could, and never came back again, leaving more space for the Mare family.



Illustration by Srishti Bendigeri

**Seeds** by Matthew Yun - aged 9

The lights were off. My candle was my only companion. My footsteps echoed through the courthouse. I was trying to find a hidden crystal ball with special seeds.

In front of me was a door with a gold dull- looking key. I inserted the key into the door then click! The door creaked open to reveal a room with shelves lined with crystal balls engraved with little pictures of the most beautiful flowers I had ever seen.

Suddenly I heard footsteps sprinting towards the door. Click! The door opened. I quickly retreated to the safety of my own home.

The next day I went back to the courthouse, but the seeds were gone. I asked someone working there. They said the crystal balls had been moved to the museum and parliament gardens for further research.

I caught the next train to Museum station. There I found a giant door the size of a wall on level 3. When I knocked on the door my hand dissolved inside. I stepped into the room.

A man wearing a black suit said "What are you doing in here?" He took out a wallet like pocket and pulled out a card and pressed it against the door. It went inside and the room around me changed.

The room changed into a green house. People were hurrying in all directions. Voices could be heard from all corners of the room. On the wall there were metal shelves where the seeds were kept. Some seeds had been placed in pots with rich soil. These seemed unusual but interesting. The room changed again into an empty bright white room. A door appeared out of nowhere, I

opened the door, and it led to the stairs going up to a tall tower in the middle of the city.

A lift was behind me. As I entered it, the lift stopped and opened. The tower was behind me in the parliament gardens, and a map had been left behind on the ground, leading to the main research facility, a long building with a smaller one in the centre of it. In the small building, there were people studying the small seeds.

The seeds were growing quickly. They looked exactly like the pictures engraved on the box of seeds. Suddenly a sprouted seed grew into a large colourful sphere, other seeds did the same. The whole space around it was filled with bright colours. All the seeds started to get bigger and bigger, and began to float out.

Unusual colourful spheres were coming out and floating through the air up into the night sky. I watched as they all became planets.



***Renewal of the Bear*** by Olivia Le - aged 10

Once, before King Arthur, and far before Merlin, there were three children. One was brave, arrogant, and confident. One was shy, kind, and a natural leader. One was spiteful, smart, and had a fiery temper. When their mother was at death's door, she called her three children to her room. She was lying on her bed, ready to take her final breaths. The two girls and a boy kneeled in front of their dying mother. They were grown and working at the castle as a knight, a Chief Servant, and an advisor for the king. The mother called them to her. "My children, you have all grown into adults I am beyond proud of," she said softly. "But I'm afraid that you won't pass the test."

The son and daughters were confused. Test? "I give you one clue. Follow the star." A final tear rolled down their mother's face, and she closed her eyes one last time.

The boy, Kasten, left the next day. He wanted a head start. Lady Deroc had been an explorer. Apparently, she had hidden her treasures, and they were legend. Now Kasten would find them and he would be a legend too. He was sure of it.

The smart one, Serina, was convinced she would find the treasure. She had everything she needed: dried food, water containers, and even a harpoon. Serina felt ready.

The shy girl, Tia, did not want the treasure. She decided she would donate it to the orphanage and then share it with her siblings and aging father. She was a great cook and could earn money as a servant if she had to. She had read up on animals, so they could help Tia as well.

The siblings went on their ways. Serina navigated by

following clues of her mother's life.

As an explorer, Lady Deroc had been widely known, so Kasten threatened people for information if he needed it.

Tia made friends with the people of the villages she came across. She was always sent off with tears, information, and food.

The three later met on a hill. Serina solved an ancient puzzle, Kasten moved a boulder that blocked their path, and Tia made a beast that was guarding the treasure a pet. The beast had guarded a door. Behind it was a sky that showed the Ursa Major. Contraptions of some kind were raised on tables. They pressed the green button, and they heard a voice- it was coming from the machine, and it was their mother's.

“Children, I was not just an explorer. I was The Ursa Major. If you hear this, one of you will be, too. As the Ursa Major, you will travel through time. But you whoever is not the Ursa, will be a hunter, forever chased, forever bleeding. I'm sorry. This is the curse of the Deroc family.”



Tia, not wanting her family to suffer, became the Ursa Major. And their story still lives on, transformed, today.

Moral: Bad things happen to good people.

**Space Girl** by Tarni McCosker - aged 10

"I come in peace, No I really come in peace! My name is Zalaphia and I'm a human like you, I've just had a... different life style. Please don't kill me! Sit down, I have a story to tell you and everyone else.

My father, John Mcadalack was a criminal. He wasn't a major convict mind you! He just stole a few pennies' here and there. At the time, America had been looking for ways to get rid of all the criminals in secret and my father just happened to be one of the ones that hadn't been sold.

Richard Nixon was one very creative man. He realized that Apollo 17 was going up soon and shoved my dad and mum on it. He forgot to check them though because both of my parents were scientists, and they had thirty tiny oxygen masks that could each last a year, compact building material, and my mum had hidden long lasting food in her suit pockets.

They were nearly at the moon when Ronald Evens found them and identified them as stowaways. The crew decided that they'd give them some suits and leave them on moon. Luckily for my parents, they knew how to build a hut out of the materials they brought. They built a hut and went inside, living off the stuff they brought.

Twenty-eight years later mum had me. Sadly she died straight after. I was a peculiar child. I had adapted to space with surprising results. I can, breathe without oxygen, resist anti-gravitational force and do not need food or water to live.

That's me, a freaky child with an even freakier life. My dad educated me but I don't know how to read and write. I am very

good at geography and astronomy though.

It was like this for eighteen years, until last week. A secret Russian vessel had landed on the moon. We took our chances and snuck on, thrilled at our chance to escape.

But at the ozone layer everything went wrong. The vessel broke apart and instantly everyone except me started burning up. It turned out I was fire resistant too! But I looked over my shoulder to realize that my dad was burning up with them. He was already unconscious and possibly dead. I cried and cried until I hit the Pacific Ocean.

As soon as I hit water I saw land. Lots of land, I guessed I had landed near Australia. You know how I said I don't need oxygen to live? Well it meant I didn't have to come up for air when swimming for shore. I swam all the way to Brisbane and well I ran into some people in blue uniforms and badges. They took me right here to you and well here I am.

You believe me?  
You don't have to. I was just practising my story telling while I waited for my fellow aliens to come. Goodbye earthlings, Earth is ours!

The end.... of the world!





# Space Stories by Writers Aged 11 to 13



***Obsidian's Challenge*** by Dinah Gardner - aged 11

My paws slammed hard on the rocky road. I dashed through the streets of London to answer the battle cry of the cats, swerving through people's legs as I madly ran. Up ahead was a stately white building. I spotted an open window on the second floor. There was a massive tree nearby and one of the branches stretched close. I took a running start – back paws, front paws ready – and ran right up the tree. I padded quickly along the branch and soon was flying through the air. I sank my claws into the wooden window ledge and sprang down to the floor of the room. It was dark, though a small light seemed to be on my head. I looked up and what I saw was more beautiful than a winter sunset. Sky, stars, planets, oh, and the Milky Way! My mom told me when I was a little kit that we got our milk from the Milky Way. It made my milk seem fresh and fancy. Then my cousin told me the truth about the Milky Way, and yes, I cried a bit.

The shimmery second floor room seemed the best place to wait for now. I padded to a corner and curled up in a ball, fast asleep. I awoke when a tiny cat dove into me. I yowled very loudly. A bigger cat helped me back onto my paws and told me to run.

The smaller cat, Starstream, and I raced out of the building, not knowing exactly what to expect but knowing danger lurked. I looked back and saw the bigger cat, Obsidian, flick her fiery colored tail. Stars the size of cats' teeth came shooting out toward the dogs that had finally come out of hiding. One of them was a wicked looking German shepherd and the other was a nasty Doberman. The shepherd growled ferociously and his growl split

teeth into shards.

As we ran, Starstream explained that cats were on patrol to make sure the Milky Way flowed straight. Two moons earlier the dogs marked their territory on the center star of the Aurora Borealis. The cats wanted to protect this for the enjoyment of the world, but the dogs thought otherwise and wanted it for themselves.

We reached the end of the starry plane and Obsidian flicked her tail three times in the air. A giant tornado of stars appeared and thousands upon thousands of cats sprang out. Fiery colors, dark colors, big and small. But when we turned around there was an even greater number of dogs. We cats stood our ground while Obsidian yelled the battle cry. She and the German shepherd



butted heads and we all charged forward. This was the first of many battles to claim the Aurora Borealis.

Now the news often shows asteroids falling from the sky. If your cat or dog runs away they might be going to join the battle.

***Mr Literal*** by Angus Nolan - aged 11

‘Make some space, Ivan! Just use your legs, move for the ball!’ Coach’s face was red with despair.

I sighed. I was playing the only sport I’d ever be good at ... soccer. We were a point down and desperate for a win. This was our rivals, the Bloomtown Blues and they were undefeated this season. I was listening as hard as I could to Coach but then Mack called out to me.

‘Hey, Ivan! Chuck us that water bottle would ya?’

I nodded obediently, picked up the blue water bottle from the bench and threw it, full speed at Mack. It got him. Right between the eyes. I knew what I’d done as soon as the bottle left my hand. At school they call me Mr Literal because I take everything so literally. So ... when Mack told me to *chuck* the drink bottle that’s exactly what I did. ‘Sorry!’ I called. Mack just rolled his eyes, he knew all about my problem.

We were just about to head back onto the field. ‘Remember, Ivan. Space.’ I nodded, desperate to carry out my orders. As we ran out onto the field the crowd (as in, all our parents) were finishing off their take-away coffees and rubbing their eyes.

I made my way to my position as a defender (not the usual centre-half bench) and in my mind I kept silently repeating *space, space, space*. Without me even noticing my spiked soccer boots began to move over the grass, digging into it. The game started, and all the players were watching the ball and I was too. But my mind was distracted by the grass beneath me, and the patterns I was creating in the ground. The coach had said make space. So

that's what I did.

The ball came down the pitch, closer to me but instead of going after it, the attackers from the Bloomtown team stood around me in awe.

'Hey, is that Saturn?' one asked.

'Cool. The Solar System,' another said.

While they were looking at my 'space' our attackers grabbed the ball and pelted it toward our goal.

'Yes!' I heard Coach cry. 'That was literally awesome. Well done, Ivan!'

I had to laugh and so did Mack. It was a draw, the closest we'd come to winning all season.

All because I created ... space.



**Gone** by Lauren Deards - aged 11

I lie on the carpet of my younger sister's old bedroom. It's pink with a strong smell of the toasted ham and cheese sandwich she left lying on it. Apart from the pink wall-to-wall carpet, there is nothing in this room physically to say that my sister ever existed, but her presence is so strong that it's almost like she's still here.

I can smell the strong scent of her perfume that she insisted on wearing at the age of eight, and I can almost hear her light little voice laughing. I remember how she'd whack me in the stomach to wake me in the morning. The way she once tried to make me the best birthday breakfast ever and nearly burnt down the house. Also that she always needed a night light on to know the door was right there if she needed to make an exit.

Sometimes I actually fall over because the realisation that she won't be coming back, no matter what, is so unbearable.

Mum and Dad aren't much better. Mum stays in her room and anything she does or any noise she makes is incoherent. Dad tries to stay strong, look after Mum and me, but I know he's breaking.

I can't help reliving her last moments in my head. She was leaning over the balcony of the hotel room we were staying in for the holidays. Then she just fell, toppled over. The piercing screams as she fell echoed in my head. Mum, Dad and I rushed down to the bottom where she had landed. It happened all too fast.

There were screams, sobs and moans as little Lucia was rushed to the hospital, but I knew she couldn't be fixed. The last thing I did with her was hold her cold, limp hand and stare at her blank eyes.



And now I'm lying on the floor of her room. All her things are gone and all that's left is empty space.



***Bridging the Gap*** by Katie Frazier - aged 12

*Why is my life so messed up?* I ponder this question as I sit alone on the sun dappled school lawn during lunch hour. Mum packed my favourite lunch, but the food tastes like sawdust in my mouth.

*Why has my best friend turned on me?* The girl who once agreed with me that we were 'BFFs' sits just within my line of eyesight. Even as I watch, she laughs loudly at something her new 'cool' friend just said. She looks so happy and secure. *She doesn't know what it's like to be so rejected*, I think bitterly.

I try to focus my attention on something that will make me feel better. It's no use. The tight knots of friends that I see milling around and chatting remind me of my failure to make a single friend this year, despite being friendly to everyone I encountered. *What have I done that nobody wants to be around me?* The question buzzes through my mind like a mosquito and I wonder, *Should I just quit trying?*

Hot, salty tears well up in my eyes, burning them, and I blink rapidly. I'm terribly conscious of the looks people are giving me as they walk by. If everyone didn't think I was a lunatic before, they certainly do now, the way I'm sitting alone, crying. The thought only makes me sob harder. *Quit the blubbing!* I scold myself. *Noone wants to see you having a pity party.*

I take a few deep, shuddering breaths and feeling a little better, I allow myself to mull over my situation for a few minutes, trying to find the root of my problems.

It doesn't take long. I feel **isolated**, socially cut off from my peers. Even though I sit just a few yards away from the nearest

cluster of people, I might as well be sitting on another planet. Nobody understands me, or likes me, or cares enough about me to help me out during my time of trial. I'm a lone wolf and not because I choose to be but because nobody wants me around. Not even my former best friend.

I feel a familiar vibration against my thigh. I pull out my cell phone and am disgusted to find a text from my best friend waiting on my screen. That is, until I read it.

I feel so insecure and dorky around these popular kids. Come and sit with us. You always make me feel comfortable.

I look over at my mate. She's motioning to me and mouthing *hurry*. I can't help but grin. I thought I was the only one who felt like a dork!

As I scoop up my stuff and make my way towards my BFF, I can almost hear my Mum's voice in my head saying that every teenager in the world feels insecure, even the ones who appear confident and in control.

With quick strides, I finally bridge the space between my best friend and myself **for good**.



***To Space and Beyond*** by Izzah Khan - aged 12

'Alpha male #134 reporting off duty in minus fifteen minutes ' groaned one thirty four into the microphone at four in the morning... Or was it four in the evening? He really couldn't tell as Rocky the planet he lived on had never felt sunlight for more than fifteen thousand years.

One thirty four had often wondered why he worked for endless shifts day and night. He gazed at the portrait of his family on his workbench and smiled - as much as you can if you have no mouth - when he remembered how his wife had reacted when he told her the news.

The green glob he had for a wife had been very anxious repeatedly asking why he was working overtime. His gaze shifted to the smaller blobs. They meant everything to him and he would do anything to keep them safe, which was why he chose not tell them anything about what had been happening to him recently...

Kevin was ten and super excited for his birthday because his Uncle Harry was coming to visit. He had been counting down the minutes until Uncle Harry arrived.

When his uncle's Corolla reversed into the driveway, he jumped with excitement and ran up to greet him.

That night he snuck out of bed and tiptoed towards the living room where he had kept his spaceship... his eyes set on the large machine and he stepped inside. Suddenly the spaceship started shaking

When he opened his eyes he stepped out of the spaceship he realized he was in space...Kevin was surprisingly calm for a person in such a situation until he saw alpha # 134 staring at him a

few feet away from him.

He cautiously edged closer to Alpha and gave him a friendly smile. Alpha concluded that Kevin meant no harm and gave him a lopsided grin of his own.

Kevin suddenly realized that he had no way of going home...

He hopelessly stared at Alpha who at once understood why Kevin was depressed. He signaled Kevin to follow him towards the space station where he worked.

Kevin gawked at all the spaceships of different shapes and sizes that were being constructed. Alpha led him to the fastest spaceship, which was stored in the corner.

He gestured towards it indicating Kevin to go inside... Inside there were screens with buttons scattered like freckles.

Kevin realized that the alien was gifting this to him and grinned from ear to ear. He pressed a button and the ship started shaking again. He just had time to wave goodbye to Alpha and promise to come back soon.

Back in the space station Alpha put back the picture of his family on his workbench and sighed.., he had waited for Kevin and would wait for him as long as he had to. Just as he was about to turn off the lights... The musty ground started shaking...

***Empty Space*** by Cian McGrath - aged 13

They put her in a bag and carried her out of the house at five o'clock. There were moments of awkward silences and muttered conversations as they spoke to him. They left at fifteen minutes past six, and told him it would be okay. He saw behind their sympathetic smiles and noted their shifted glances between each other, the way they rushed each conversation, eager to leave. He saw their eyes, and knew they didn't believe a word he said. He couldn't say he cared much, but he would have respected them more for the truth.

It was seven in the evening when he sat down in the armchair that creaked violently with each movement. He sighed and poured himself a quarter glass of whiskey. He downed it, went for another, and another, until he could feel the rim of the bottle touch his lips and he tried to stop but he just couldn't. He could feel it coming back to him, those frightful days when he was forced to live without it, and the even more treacherous moments when he could see what he was doing to others. He placed the bottle on the ground, and vowed never to drink again. It was an empty promise.

It was nine o'clock at night when he looked, aghast, at his reflection in the mirror. He was a mess. His remaining hair sprang up wildly as if he had been through a period of electric shocks. Bags hung heavily under his eyes and his face was a mess of wrinkles and creases. He longed to see the face of the young man he had once been, if only just for a moment. He dismissed the thought and began thinking about her. He had blocked her from his mind for so long as he just couldn't bear it. For thinking of her meant thinking of the pain, that never ending pain that he couldn't

control. And so his thoughts of her lay dormant, because he couldn't handle that pain, not now.

He went to bed at ten past nine and when he sank into his bed, he shivered from the cold and her absence. And he dropped his head onto the pillow but couldn't sleep, and began thinking of her again. He tried to block out the pain but it still lingered, lurking, never to truly leave him. He accepted that he would never be the same, because she didn't care anymore, but he just wanted to remember her again.

He grabbed the photo on the bedside table and dried his tears with the back of his hand as he looked at her beautiful face. He felt complete seeing her again, and it was then that he realised he'd sat up, and he dropped the photo onto the bed and lay on his side. He cried at the empty space that used to be hers.



## Space by Sophie Claridge - aged 13

People always complain about needing some space of their own. I don't get it. I'd do anything, just to be surrounded by people... People that are kind, and warm, and accept me. I'm so alone right now. I've had too much space. I've had the time to read every individual nasty remark discussing me on the internet. *Ugly. Slut. Desperado.* I know I shouldn't. Mum's told me to shut down my Facebook account several times – but only when she's sober. For the remainder of the time, she tells me, or rather slurs, that she wants space.

*Ping!* It was a message. Mum hadn't returned home for two days now. I didn't know what to do, apart from reading every malicious word – each one cutting into my heart a little more. "*Hey. Heard you're supposed 'boyfriend' got you up the duff in two seconds flat. No wonder I haven't seen you at school, Slag*". I gritted my teeth, tears stinging my eyes. It wasn't true. Jake and I were in love. We just went a little too far. When I'd told him I was pregnant he just told me he needed a little space. I trust him. He'll come back soon. Then we can brace it together.

I entered the minute kitchen of our council flat and grabbed a sandwich, but as soon as I had made it realised I had no appetite at all – just like normal. I looked down at my skeletal body. My ribs concaved inwards. My legs and arms were feeble and weak. "Leave some space for desert!" My granddad would always chuckle. I felt sick at the thought of a chocolate sundae now.

*Ping!* My heart fluttered as I looked at the laptop. It was Jake. I hadn't heard from him for a couple weeks now. Maybe he'd decided that he'd had enough space.



*“We need to talk. My Mum’s offered to pay for the abortion, but if not, I don’t think this is going to work out.*

*Jake.”*

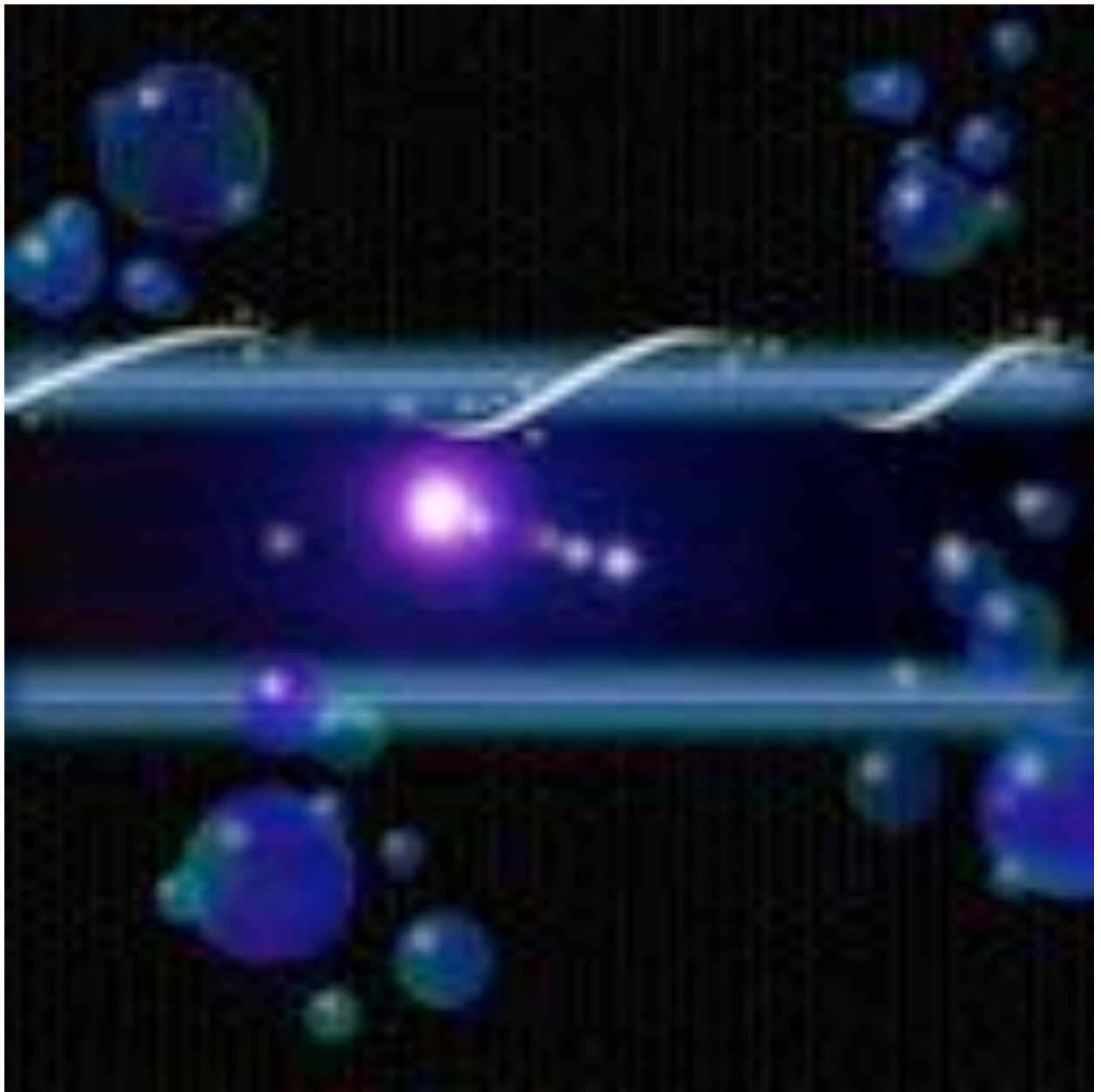
That was it. I couldn’t hold it in any longer. I burst into tears. I had lost our baby Lily a week ago.

I recalled the warm summer Jake and I had spent together, discussing what I thought was our future. I’d always planned to have a girl, Lily, and a boy, Sam. I still remember the way Jake had softly stroked my hair as he listened to me ramble on. But now it was all over. Now was the time to say goodbye. I grabbed the money that Mum always hid in the biscuit tin for fags and ran. It would be enough to get a train fare, right?

I leant against the grimy window, heading towards who knows where. I didn’t know what I was planning to do. ... *and please ensure space is made for the elderly or disabled. Enjoy your journey!* I tightened my fists and rubbed at my red eyes. That word space. I hate it. I never want to hear it again.

SPACE

# Space Stories by Writers Aged 14 to 18



***Kidnapped and unknown*** by Mary Kaunda - aged 14

The temperature made me freeze, the bars covered my knees, out went the sun, in came the keeper. My sadness edged near as I could hear his cold, hard footsteps drawing closer. My heart hammering as he drew near; I couldn't seem to stop. He got down on his knees and handed me a rusty bowl with a brown liquid I assumed was water. In a sudden panic caused by awareness of danger I leaped back towards the rear of the dusk room. He observed me with his frightful, emotionless eyes for a while, then stood and walked away. I could hear and feel his boots echo into the gloomy abyss.

Now I was surrounded by blooms of pitch black, and twinkling lights I would always mistake for stars. I would recall how the sun used to come out from hiding in the morning. But back then those were just reminiscences that I could never turn into reality. For that time what happened outside was forever unobserved, hidden behind in the obscure, shadowy slab. The wall that kept me apart from the rest.

Lonely days passed, other ones were just hidden in the days of tomorrow. My days were filled with nothing, but feelings of self-guilt, self-hatred, sorrow and heartache. Missing all the habitats and back drops that I used to see missing all the laughter and happiness that surrounded me every second.

Woken up by giant, loud footsteps, I allowed my eyes to adjust and open slightly, to peer at the owner of the footsteps. As the figure suddenly drew near it stopped right in front of me. I deliberately focussed on the muddy ground. I could feel his eyes piecing t the back of my neck. As I slowly looked up, I could see

black soiled shoes. Curious I looked up even further to find a rather large and smart man dressed in a large white suit. He also wore a distinguished tie that was filled with words I couldn't read. He looked like a well respected man; a scary one at least.

With a quick clank the big guy opened the lock, and pulled me out. He held me so tight that his nails cut through my delicate flesh. At sometime I felt a warm liquid running across my back and soundlessly drop to the ground. We walked for a while until we reached my destiny. The room was dim; no light shone on it. Sounds of terror, pain and warning came from the rear end of the room. I became scared. My knees were shaking, my teeth trembling and my lips tightening. I wanted to get out, but I knew there was no way out of there I was doomed.

The guy kept dragging me towards the sounds. As we reached the rear we stopped, he took one look at me and grinned. I knew the grin meant something bad was going to take place but I didn't take much notice of it. With a slit twitch of his hand I feel into deep sleep.



## ***The Solarium Marines*** by Sheldon Bourk

As the Solarium piracy enforcement light cruiser Relentless approached Murdock's merchant ship, Jason and Siva waited apprehensively. They wondered what would become of them in the hands of the Solariums.

Jason quickly killed the engines, leaving only a small energy source for life support and lighting. He unlocked the hatches and opened the exterior hatches on the airlocks. After a few minutes a shuttle could be heard docking. Jason noticed on the control board that the cargo hatch had also cycled. There were more Marines boarding the ship.

They heard the exterior hatch close and a few moments later, the interior one opened. They were confronted with four heavily armored Solarian Marines carrying very lethal weapons. Their leader searched Jason and Sive thoroughly before ordering, "Sit in those seats away from the controls." The voice was harsh and menacing coming through the speakers on the armored helmet.

The leader had one of his Marines strap their arms to the armrests. Sive didn't care for this kind of treatment, but before she could say anything, Jason nodded his head indicating that she cooperate for now. Sive calmed down somewhat but not before giving the marine and his leader looks that could kill.

When he was done the leader then ordered him and another marine, "You two, start searching the ship for anyone else, but be careful. These scum will kill anyone for the their pocket change."

He had the third Marine make sure the controls were off and to man the radio. Not long afterwards one of his men returned and

reported that some of the areas in the ship were locked. Jason told him the keys were in his pocket. The Marine took them and left.

Both Jason and Sive sat quietly in their seats, waiting patiently, at least Jason did. Sive couldn't help but wonder how the two of them were going to get out of this one. She kept looking at the leader.

It took quite some time before one of the Marines returned. When the Sergeant nodded his head for him he said, "The ship is secured, Sergeant Lewis. Here's a short report of what we found. First, this isn't just a merchant vessel, it has military grade engines and weapons, although they are cleverly camouflaged. Second, we found a strong room full of items that were on our list of stolen cargoes that had been pirated. Third, we found a couple of dead bodies in one locked compartment, one of which was still pretty warm, I doubt if he's been dead very long. The other one is on our list of wanted men. I'll have a complete report from the rest of the team soon."



***Doomed Flight*** by Cherry Bakura - aged 14

"I'm so sorry!" A single tear flows down my cheek as I pull my little brother closer towards me in a strangling embrace. I watch as the sun our spaceship is barreling towards grows closer and closer. Somehow our spaceship's thruster malfunctioned. We can't stop. All of the escape pods have been jettisoned and we are marooned on this doomed vessel.

My brother, whom I have been closely clutching to my side, looks up at me with wide and frightened eyes, and gets my attention by pulling on the hem of my skirt, "What's going on Lucy? Why did everyone leave?"

I somehow manage to put on a brave face for him and fight back the tears. "Don't worry Timmy... let's play a game," I manage to choke out while running my hand through his brown hair. I cherish the feel of it for I know that it will be the last time that I have the chance to do so.

"Oh! A game?" His face lights up, all of his worries instantly forgotten in the wake of my innocent little question "What shall we play?"

"Hide and go seek" I kneel down in front of him and run my hand down his cheek savoring all the touch I can get before our lives end. "Close your eyes and count to thirty. When you're done this will all be over with"

He smiles before squeezing his eyes shut "One..." As I listen to him count I hug him as tightly as I can, staring the sun right in the face. If we are to die I will not flinch. I will brave the sun for the both of us "Two...Three...Four...Five"



***The Space Between Us*** by Keearin Jackson - aged 14

It may be hard to believe this, or maybe not, but I have space between family members and me.

I'm a 14-year-old girl. My name is Keearin, but you can call me KeeKee.

People say it's because I'm a teenager, but the real reason comes from inside me.

When I was young I used to always do what I was told to do and always tell the truth, but now things have changed. I have changed.

I used to do my chores whenever anyone asked me, but around the age of nine or ten, that started slipping.

A turmoil inside me made me meaner. It started with me hitting my sister with a cup and making a bump on her head because I was jealous.

I used to be KeeKee the girl everyone could count on, but now my actions push people away.

I hate that I let them down, but I don't know how to stop, how to apologize.

I try to fix my problems, but it's so hard. I pray to God for help, to find a way to mend relationships with each family member I let down.

I plan to make things better with Mum and my grandmother because they mean so much to me. I plan to control my anger and gain their trust back.

It's my attitude, my smart mouth, and how I act that pushes people away. I am going to try to control this evil mouth of mine and rebuild with trust. This space around me will get better and I will wait till high school, which is next year if that is how long it takes.



***The Ramblings of an Abandoned Space Robot*** by Gillian Goh -  
aged 15

Space, thought Arthur, was big.

It was massive. There was so much of it, that processing how big it really was proved downright impossible. The glittering vault of stars stretched out endlessly in every direction, defying comprehension, staggeringly, mind-bogglingly, infinitely big.

It was also really, really boring.

Sad, but true, the beauty of the infinite cosmos palled after a while. Early on, it was awe-inspiring and breathtaking and everything. You could spend all the time you liked staring at it. Arthur didn't know actual scientific names- observational astronomy was not in his programming - but in the absence of official nomenclature he'd made up his own; Your basic "little-twinkly-ones", which were probably a very long way away, and accounted for most of the stars he could see. There were your "big-bright-ones", which were either a bit closer or planets, "multi-coloured-ones", and- very occasionally- your "ones-that-turn-out-to-be-bits-of-space-junk-whooshing past-while-exploding".

Hours of fun, those ones.

He'd also dabbled in constellations, with less success. Picking out shapes while ceaselessly orbiting a lunar-body was challenging. Motion sickness isn't funny when you can't stop moving and have a rest. Having motion sickness when you have no choice but to continue orbiting the moon at roughly seventeen thousand miles an hour with a slight tailspin, on the other hand, is utter hell.

He tried though. There was a roughly square-shaped

formation of stars, which he called the Battery. Then there was a sort of arch of "little-twinkly-ones" he called the Eye Optic.

Once you'd sorted all that out, everything star-related nicely pigeonholed away, there wasn't much else to do. There were only four things in Arthur's field of vision, which weren't stars or blackness, and none of them offered much relief from the monotony. The craggy lunar surface, miles below him, was one. Then there was the Earth, a white-blue sphere, laughably far off.

There'd been lots of weird stuff in files he'd seen of the earth - huge masses of water, fields of green fluffy stuff that waved around in the - what was the word? It was on the tip of his verbal-processor-- wind. In the wind. Animals too, all kinds of crazy life forms with mad names like elk and platypus and tiger and tarantula and unicorn. Arthur had no idea what a unicorn was, but he thought it sounded pretty impressive.

Then there was the sun. Files suggested that from earth, the sun wasn't that bad, but up in space without the protection of all that wispy-white stuff around the earth, it was an intense, cold-yellow glare. Arthur didn't dare to look directly at it, afraid that it'd fry his visual circuits or, worse, set something on fire. Not that things could really burn in space, but there was always the possibility, and he didn't want to chance it for the sake of a glimpse of a blazing ball of gas.

He didn't want to look at it anyway, to tell the truth. Harsh, pitiless, and unblinking; it reminded him too much of home.

***Space for a Village*** by Reena Mukherjee - aged 16

“Do you like this, Merlinia?” Thomas asked, placing a hand on my shoulder. I smiled faintly, looking out at the roaring ocean below us. Hot, gaseous planets were tossed around in waves of glittering starlight, and swift meteorites darted this way and that, finding homes amidst a coral reef of milky ways. I was still amazed that people just like us had lived here all along. Back home, even the greatest scientists spoke of hair-raising aliens...what would they think now, if they could see human families, leading their lives in space the way they did on Earth?

Next to me, Thomas’s grin widened, and I noticed that he was nodding rather dreamily. “Indeed, Merlinia. When we see something so far removed from the ordinary, we immediately imagine that it must be foreign, and belongs to beings of a very different mindset to our own. Ha! Our race is much more than we imagine it to be. Humans have been adapting to new environments for centuries.”

*Like me*, I thought. It was difficult to believe that when I had left with Sir Thomas Garamonte, the aberrant old physics teacher who had spent his days tinkering away in a school laboratory, I had been only fifteen. At eighteen, home and the life I had once led seemed so far away. Perhaps my old self would have laughed at who I had become – a young girl, with dreams and the potential to achieve them, now content to spend her life in a dusty old manor, sailing across the universe with a man who had never told her why. Not that I asked, but I am certain that he could read the question in my expressions, being the peculiarly perceptive old man he was.

“Aren’t they beautiful?” I jumped a little when Thomas’ words broke into my thoughts, but followed his gaze out to the small cottage, which was bobbing gently on the invisible currents of energy that held it suspended. In the garden, twin babies were crawling amongst the sunflowers, and their parents watched on from behind, their faces soft with affection. Beautiful. I knew then, standing on our own front porch, that it was time to ask the question directly. Somewhere, beyond the asteroids, my own parents were waiting for me.

“Thomas?”

“Yes, my child?”

“Why are we here? You have your answers about the worlds beyond ours...can’t we go home now?”

Thomas was silent for a time, and I had decided that he was not going to answer, when he lifted his hand to his knotted white beard. “You wish to go home? After all this time?”

Surprised by his answer, I blinked. “Yes...yes of course. It may have been three years, but Earth is where I – ”

“And upon your return, you wish to speak of what you have seen here – of another realm for humanity?”

“I do indeed.”

Thomas chuckled dryly, making something twist deep inside me. “Then, Merlinia,” he said, “on Earth, you may find yourself the alien.”

***Space is inside of us*** by Merima Mustafic - aged 17

Years ago I met a little girl.

She had long blond hair, pretty blue eyes, and when she smiled, I couldn't resist smiling either. One day, while the leaves were falling off the trees, she sat by me on the bank in my garden, and started telling about her nights.

Every night she would lay on the green grass, under an apple tree in her backyard, and look to the stars above her. "They were so shiny", she said looking at the ground. "I could see smiles and tears that they were making together. I could hear them whispering melodies about the universe, and see them dancing with the darkness. Some nights, the moon was so big, that I felt I could touch it."

"What about the sun?" I asked,

"I could see it too, no matter if it was day or night. Jupiter, Venus, and Mars were my best friends, and I knew that I could tell them everything, even jokes, that made them laugh sweetly. But then..." she stopped, a big tear running down her cheek.

"I woke up one morning, and I couldn't see anything. Nothing, not my mother, my father, not even the sky above me. I just couldn't believe that I won't see my stars again, and my moon." she cleaned up the tear, "He was my best friend."

The tears on her beautiful white face reminded me of the rain.

As a bird flew up from a tree, she continued. "But I said to myself that I need to be strong. Just like the space. It doesn't give up." She looked at me with a glance, and smiled so I could see her small white teeth.



“The next night, I lay on the green grass under the apple tree, and closed my eyes. While the grasshopper sang, together with the owl, a merciful wind flew above me. Then I heard a soft voice, just like the one of my mother, whispering something to me. I listened closer, and heard

“Space is not above us, you can’t see it. Space is inside of us, you can only feel it.”

