

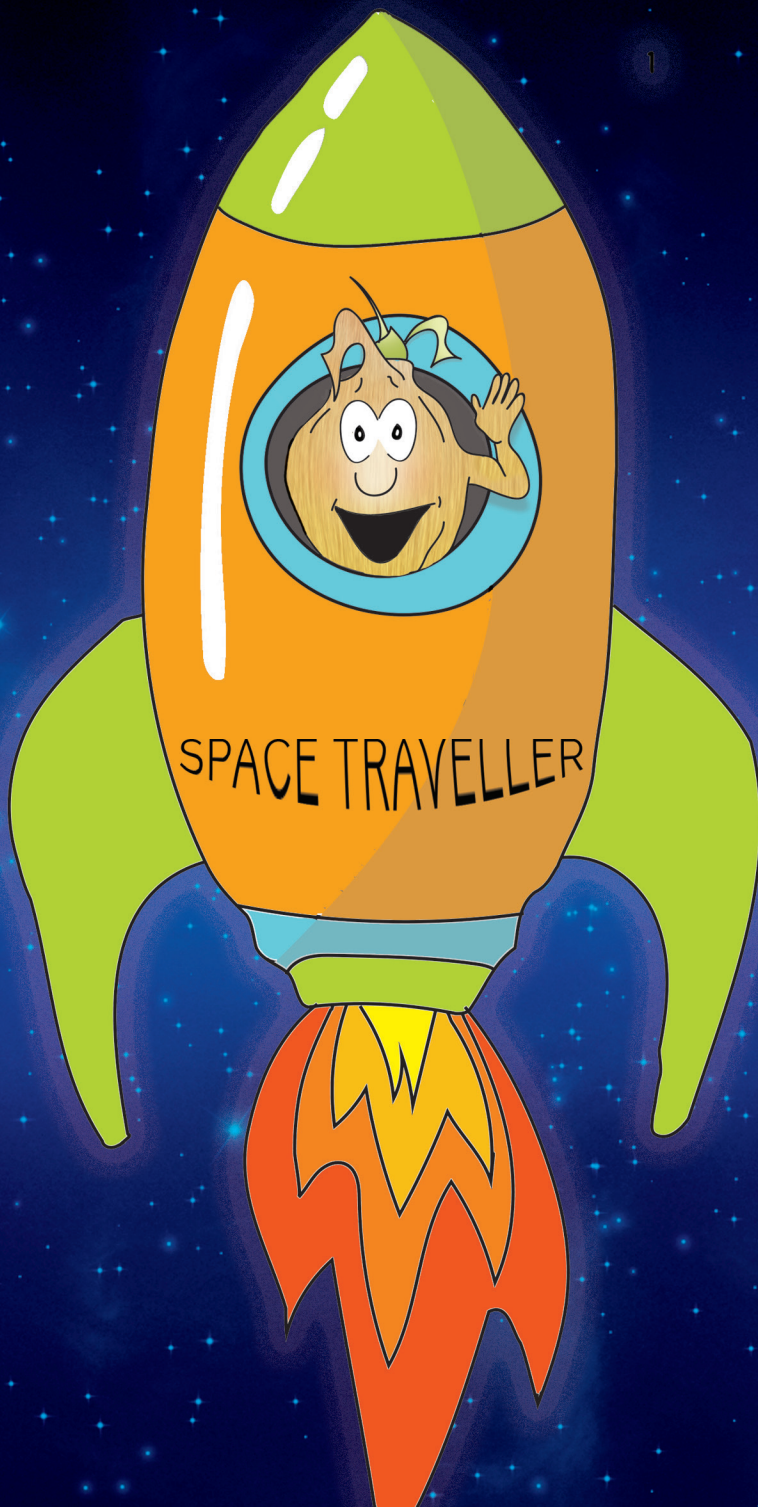


Onionhead The Space Traveler



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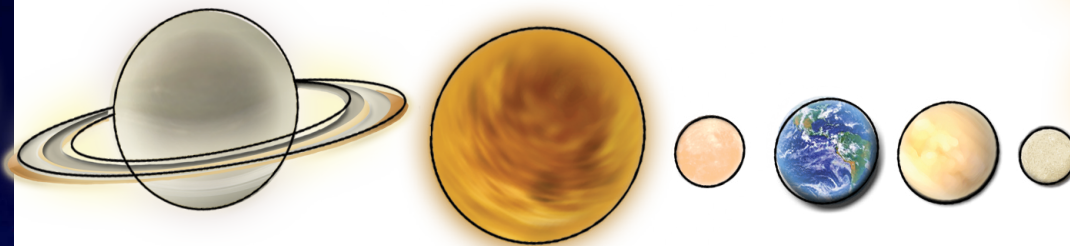
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I don't sleep well. My mind races in a million directions, like stars tumbling through space. I try to focus on sleep but it rarely works. It seems weird that I would have to concentrate on sleeping but my Mom says a creative mind is hard to unplug. My Dad says that a tired, cranky onion always tastes bitter and never lends itself to any good recipes.

So we began to look for something to remedy this. My Mom tried a bunch of things to help me, but very few of them worked. She used Chinese herbs but they made me forget my name. She gave me some tea but I felt it only made me hyper. Her last resort was a counting method she learned in yoga.

She asked me; "did you know that every day of the week is named after something in the universe?" Maybe if you concentrate on that, you will put your mind at rest and begin to sleep better, she said.



She explained that
Monday was for the Moon
Tuesday was for Mars
Wednesday was for Mercury
Thursday was for Jupiter
Friday was for Venus
Saturday was for Saturn
Sunday was for the Sun

And that is why the days of the week in French are named
after each of these.

Wow did I ever learn something new!!!!!! And tomorrow is
Monday starting with French class.

Monday
MOON



There is something about Monday mornings. It's like everyone wants time to slow down and asks for "one more minute ... one more hour ... one more day of the weekend, please!"

So, I was a little late when I walked into my French class. As I rushed to my seat, I said, "Pardon, Monsieur Abraham."

He replied, "Well, are we a little slow cooking this morning, Onionhead?"

My French teacher is great. He always jokes with me as I am the only vegetable in his class. He is my favorite teacher because he adds different things to his class so we learn more than just French.

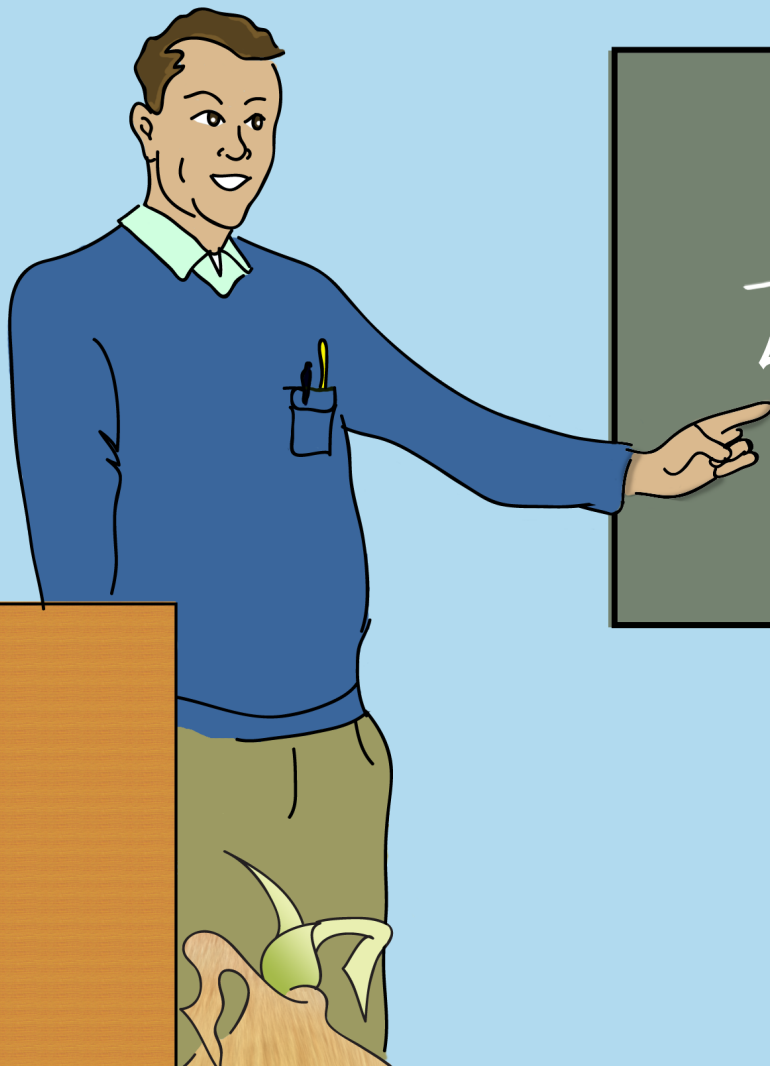
"There has always been mystery around space yet we find pieces of it in our daily life. For a very long time Earthlings have looked to the sky for answers," he said.

So shockingly coincidental that this week our class was studying the days of the week and how they are named after different places in space. So being the awesome teacher that Mr. Abraham is, we learned about space and French at the same time.

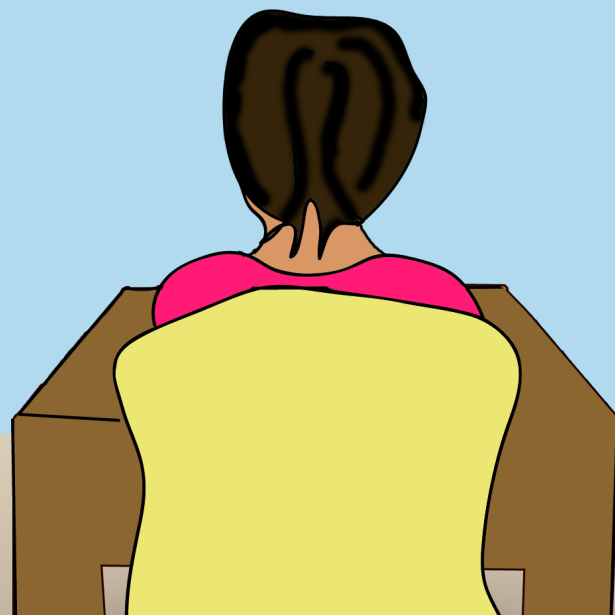
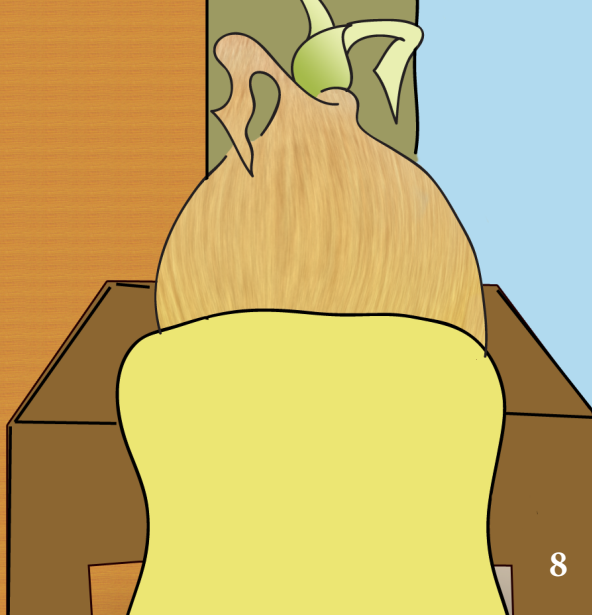
"Lundi," he said. "Please repeat 'Lundi.'"

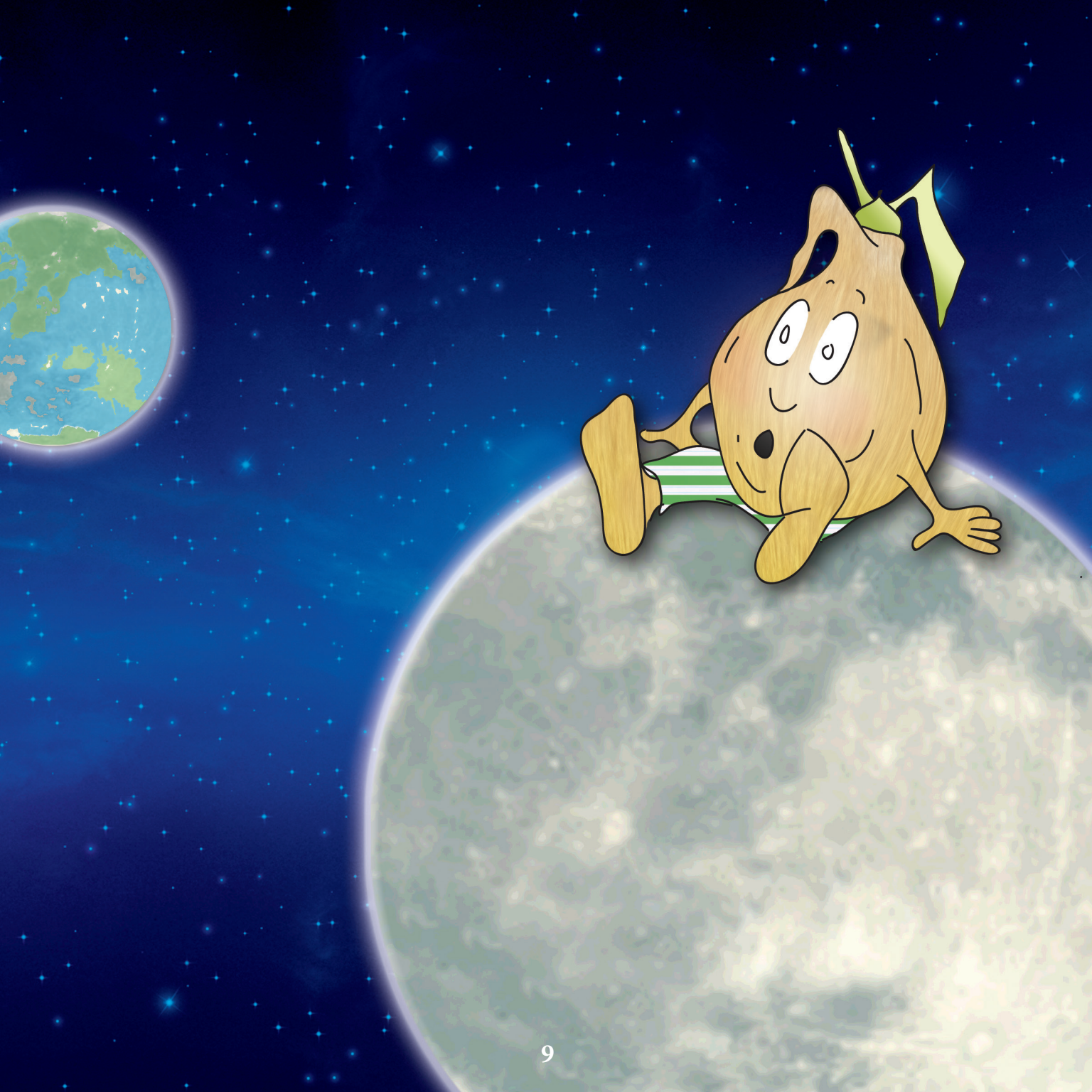
"What do we see almost every night?" "The Moon!" we all yelled.

"Right, the Moon. In French, we say: 'la lune.'"



Moon - Monday
La Lune - Lundi





“What day is it today?” Mr. Abraham asked. “Monday!” we all yelled.

“Right! Monday. Lundi. Do you see how ‘la lune’ is hidden in the word Lundi? In English, we can also see the word ‘Moon’ hidden in the word Monday. The Moon is known as the place of feelings and intuition. However, it was also named after the Latin word for month because it takes one month for it to orbit around the Earth. Very importantly, the Moon has power over the tides in the ocean.”

“Tonight when you go home, take time to think about the Moon. Boldly go to a part of the Moon where no one has gone before!”

That night, I went home and when bedtime came around, my mom reminded me that I had promised to do my sleep counting. She said not to forget that by the time I got to zero, I was supposed to have gone on a journey to sleep.

But as I got to the 3, 2, 1 of the countdown, I blasted off on a journey all right.....a journey that literally took me out of this world!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I opened my eyes, certain that the counting had not worked. But as I looked around I saw my bed was gone and the walls of my room had disappeared! I was lying on a hard cold surface. I stood up, looked around and in the distance saw the Earth. It took me a minute to realize where I was.

I was on the Moon! “Holy Cow!” I yelled.

I was on the Moon, and it was empty. I searched and searched for someone to help me but I found no one. I was alone and I was scared.

I sat on the lip of a crater and remembered something my Mom had once said. “We are never really alone. When we are alone, we must remember that we are all one. The word ‘alone’ is really the words ‘all’ and ‘one’ tied together.”

It was not easy to find that oneness when I could find nothing that felt familiar. A tear dropped from my eye. Instead of landing on the Moon’s surface, my tear was suspended in the air. Then I remembered that Mr. Abraham said that things on the Moon float because there is no gravity.

My tears floated in front of me, and I could see my own reflection in the drop. First, my one simple tear split in half. Then there were 2 reflections of me. Then 4, then 8, then 16, then 32! All of a sudden there were 33 of us and I was no longer alone. I sat back and took a deep breath.

Maybe if I wished hard enough, I could bring these reflections to life. I focused really hard. I opened my hands and my heart and closed my eyes.

And.....Poof!

One by one, my tears turned into beings of some sort, each of them different and amazing. None of them even looked like me!

I introduced myself. “I’m Onionhead and I am from Earth.”

One of them replied, “I am Master Luap and we are from within the Moon.”



“Cool!” I said. “I come from within the Earth,” thinking the connection might make it easier for us to become friends. We sat for a while talking and laughing about things we had in common. After a while the landscape around us had changed. It was beautiful and colorful instead of barren and cold.

“Uh, Master Luap, exactly how is all of this happening?” I asked pointing to the flowers and rivers and lakes that were not there a moment ago. Master Luap said that the more peace I felt, the more beautiful the world around me became. This world I was seeing, was a world I was making.

“How come I had to see my own reflection before I could see you?” “So many questions!” he answered with a smile.

“Yeah, most people say that about me.”

Master Luap laughed. “That’s okay, that’s why you are here! If you don’t ask, you can’t learn! You had to see yourself in us so that you can feel yourself in us. It is how we learn to be kind and do no harm. It is more difficult to hurt or ignore another when you see yourself in them.”

“How did you know I was here?”

“Emotions are communicated even when they are not said out loud. Have you ever met someone and just knew they were happy?”



I nodded that I had.

“It’s kind of the same thing. On the Moon, we sense things with our intuition much like whales and dolphins do on your planet.”

“We can communicate like whales do. A whale can be traveling on one end of the world and send a message to another whale traveling on the other side of the world. They use more than their ears to hear. Whales can actually feel the message and use that feeling to follow it back to the one who sent it. That is the same way we found you.”

He continued, “However, the way whales feel the message, dolphins feel the emotions. Like them, we could feel that you needed our help. Dolphins have been known to sense a person drowning and then they will go and save him or her. We wanted to find you so that you would no longer worry or have fear. We wanted you to know you were not alone.”

“Wow, you got all that from my one little tear?”

“Little?” Master Luap was amused. “Do you know how much energy is in one little tear? When your tears dropped from your eye, it represented a whole world of your emotions. Feelings are the most powerful and valuable things Earthlings have. Like the tides of your ocean, feelings are the driving force behind all that you are and all that you do.”

“I never really looked at it that way.”



“But then you, Onionhead, did something extraordinary – something few humans know how to do! You added your wisdom to your emotions. Even though you were scared, you remembered that we are all one even when we are all alone. Clever indeed, you let your feelings out and tried to let your worry go. We knew that helping you was the most important thing we could do today.”

I laid back and paused for a minute to really think about what Master Luap had said.

“We must always know that there is a piece of everyone inside of us and a piece of us inside of everyone else. This helps us remember how important it is to be kind and helpful to each other.”

I turned to ask him one more question but all I could see was space whizzing by and the faint but annoying sound of my alarm clock.

“No. I’m not ready to go back! I love it here ... you’re so kind. It feels so safe,” I yelled.

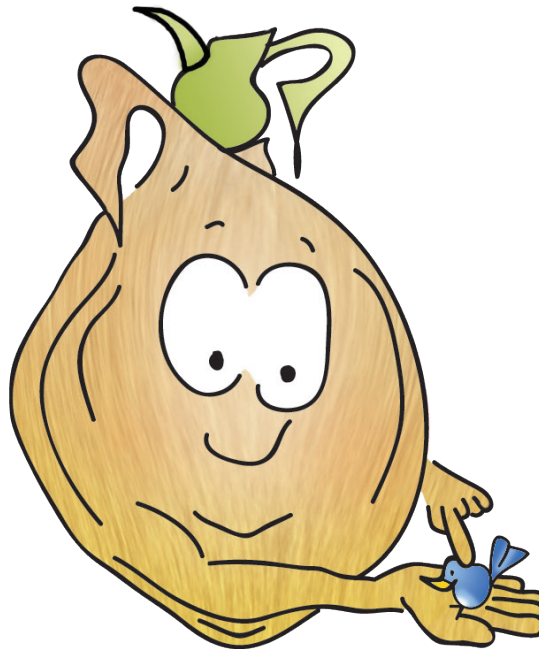
But that didn’t matter because it was time to go.

When I opened my eyes, the walls of my room had returned. I rushed to my notebook and wrote down everything that happened.

I wrote.....

Lesson from the Moon

Remember - kindness comes from knowing we are all connected. What is in me is in you and what is in you is in me. Oh, and I will learn to listen with more than my ears.



TUESDAY



I was so excited to get to class and see where else we were going. We learned the French word for Tuesday is Mardi. It was named after the planet Mars.

Mr. Abraham said, “In ancient Rome, Mars was known as the planet of war. It was a symbol for strength and might.” It made sense that if Mars was the planet of war, it would need those qualities.

“The soil on Mars is mostly red,” he continued. “The Egyptians named the planet ‘The Red One’. There are seasons just like ours. Before space travel, Mars was considered the best candidate for supporting life because it was believed to have water. When we finally explored Mars, we were expecting there to be a lot of Martians walking around but we did not see any.”

I giggled out loud. I had seen firsthand life on the Moon and it was amazing. During class, I kept daydreaming about Master Luap and it made it hard to concentrate. Mr. Abraham noticed.

“Mars to Onionhead, come in Onionhead,” Mr. Abraham said.

I turned a shade of red that closely resembled the picture of Mars on the wall. The other kids laughed and one said: “Look, he’s now a Red Onion!” Thankfully the bell rang.

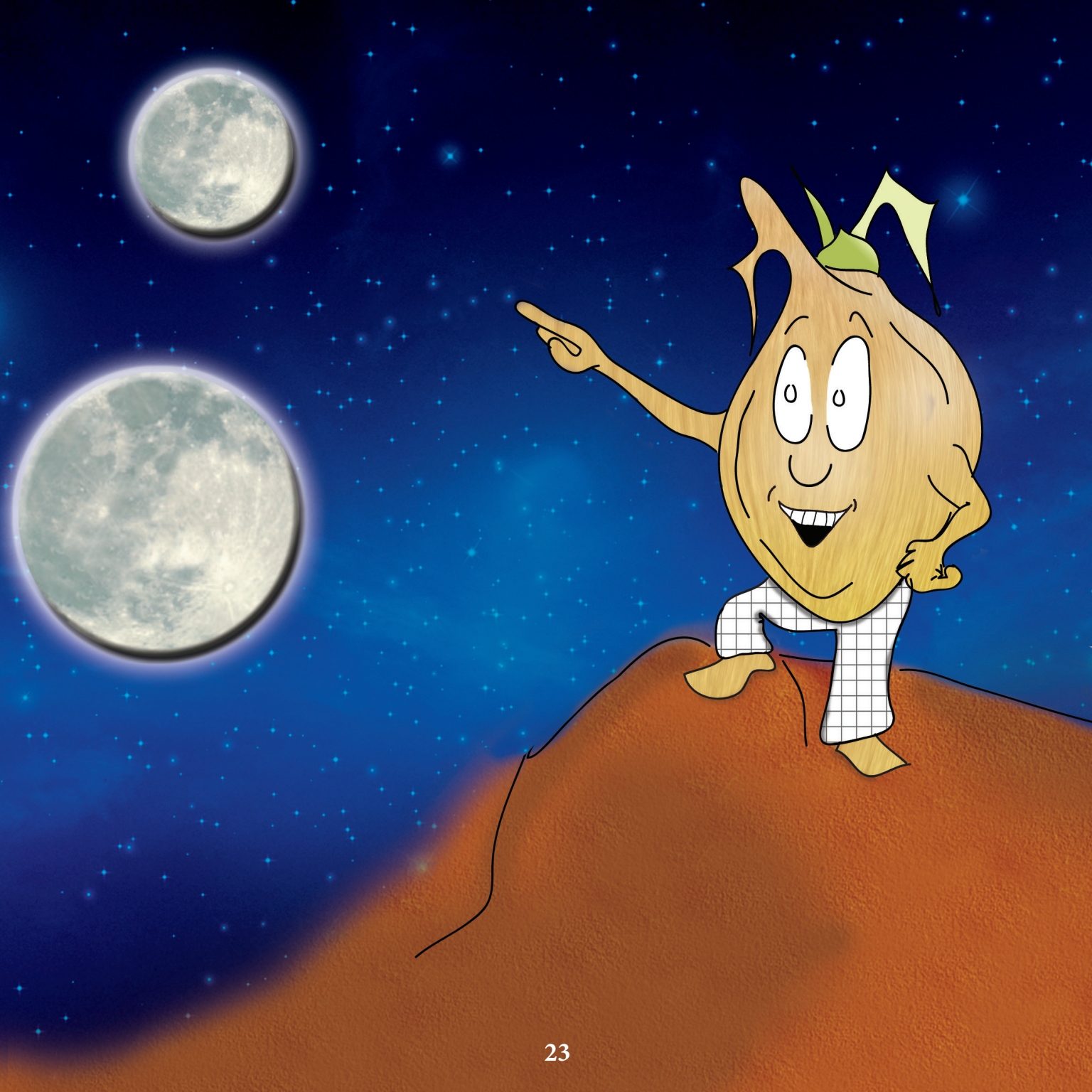


By the time school was over, I was ready for my next countdown. After dinner and homework, my Mom tucked me in and I started counting down - 26, 25, 24 ...

3, 2, 1...

blast off!

When I opened my eyes, I saw two moons in the sky and red sand beneath my feet. The landscape looked familiar and odd at the same time – kind of like being out in the middle of a red desert. I was a little nervous. Because Mr. Abraham said that Mars was red, I figured out where I was. However, he had also said that stuff about the war planet, so I kept my guard up as I started to wander around. I got to the edge of a cliff and the sight below me was a big canyon.



Then, all of a sudden, the wind blew hard against my cheek.

It blew so strongly that I lost my balance and nearly rolled down the hill.

Being an onion, I am used to life underground and the wind was blowing so much, it seemed like the best place to be.

So I got my shoots twirling, flipped myself upside down, held my breath, closed my eyes and started drilling into the red soil.



When I opened my eyes, I was underground. In front of me was a huge army of Martian warriors. They were blue and were all wearing some kind of high-tech sunglasses. After a minute of shock, I realized I was still holding my breath and turning a similar color!

I finally let out my breath and reached out my hand to the Martian that seemed in charge. Best to let them know I was friendly, I thought. The head Martian extended his blue hand toward me. Instead of shaking my hand, he took my hand and held it. I felt like he was looking into me, not at me, trying to figure out whether I was friend or foe.

“Hi, I’m Onionhead. Uhhh, how are you?” I said trying to force a smile to hide my fear.

“We are fine.” he replied. “We have much respect for you. You are afraid and yet you are brave - so brave that you made the journey under the surface alone.” He was still holding my hand.

“Uh yes, I’m a little afraid. There are many of you and only one of me. And, uhh, you are holding my hand awfully tight.”

“I am called Master Romi. You have nothing to fear.” The Martian smiled and released my hand.

“Nice to meet you,” I replied relaxing a little bit and shaking the sensation back into my fingers.



“How is it that you were able to get down here alone?” he asked.

I showed him how my shoots could be used as a drill, an antenna, or a hairstyle. I explained to him that I was seeded in the ground so it comes naturally for me to return there.

The Martian touched my shoots and laughed. He then pulled on his own head and managed to shape his head into shoots like mine!

One by one, the Martian army approached me, held my hand, touched my shoots, and readjusted the shape of their own heads. They all laughed. One of them called out and asked me to tell them about myself.

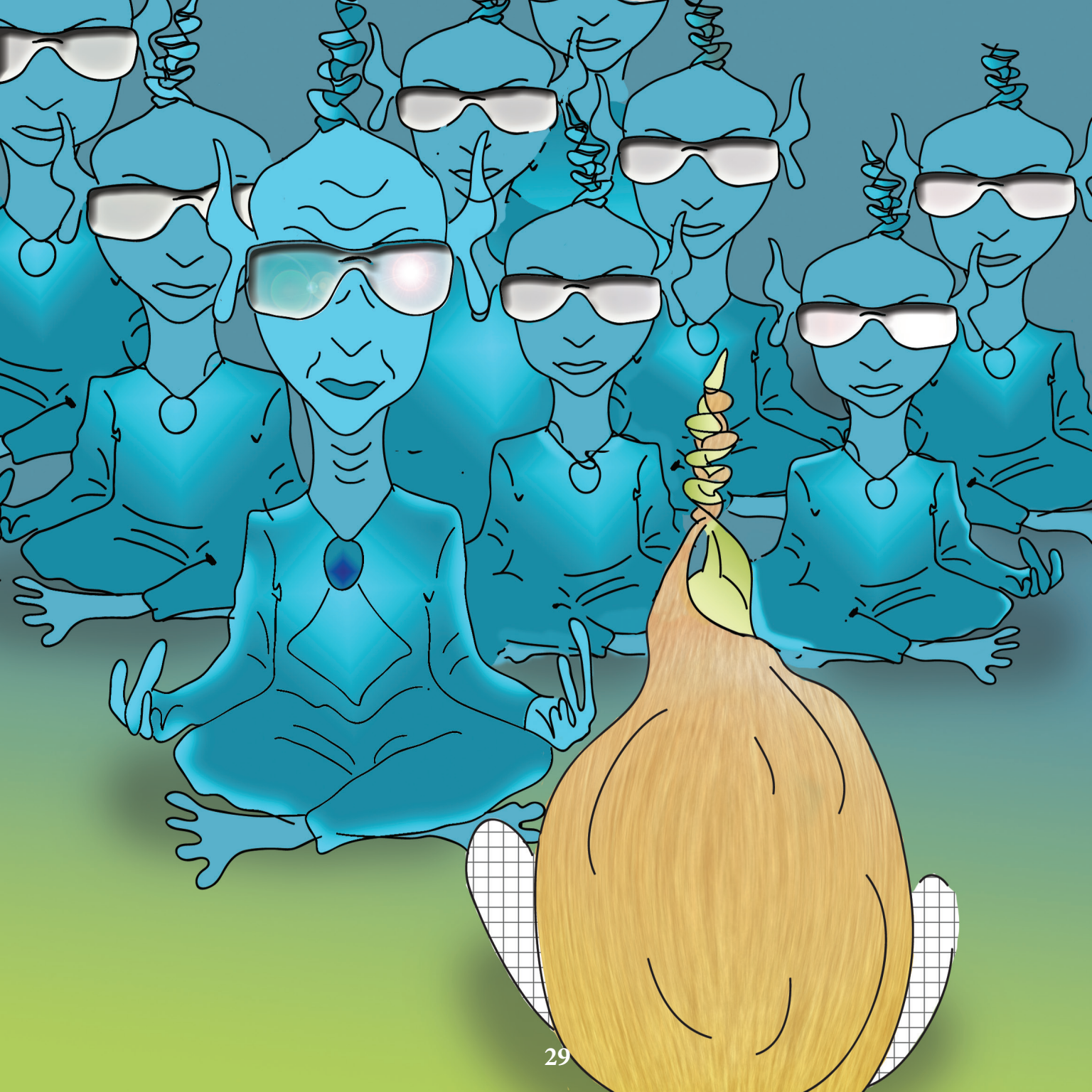
“I am 8 years old. I live in a place called Earth I go to school. I have a Mom and a Dad. I ride my bike. I like to play in the dirt.” I went on and on but the only response I got.....was confusion.

“What is this word ‘I’ you keep referring to?” one of the Martians called out.

“You know, me, myself.....I,” I said, tapping my peels. Still, no one seemed to understand.

Then the most elderly Martian approached me.

“We should sit,” he said. I, on the other hand, was a little behind in the sitting and they all laughed. I laughed too as I tumbled to the ground.



“There was a time when we lived on the surface and were separated by the ‘I’ but we believed in the ‘We’.

He went on to say, “When the tides changed, so did the weather. We had to seek shelter underground but none of us could get here on our own. We had to learn that the best solution to a problem was to join together as one. When we focused on working together, we all made it to safety.

Each of us is gifted in our own way and we made each individual gift work for ALL of us. Then a miracle happened – all wars stopped! Life became more and more respectful and cooperative, so it became less and less important to use the word ‘I’. Eventually, we simply dropped it from our language.”

“Wow!” I said thinking of all the times I only thought of myself. “Why do you all wear those glasses?” I asked The old Martian laughed and removed his glasses. His eyes were deeply compassionate and a color I could not even name - like fire and water together. He passed his glasses to me. I put them on and fell backward. I saw veins of gold connecting all the Martians to each other. It was the most miraculous thing I had ever seen. I had to catch my breath. It was like the best piece of music you could ever hear, with the best piece of chocolate cake you could ever taste, with the best fragrant flower you could ever smell, with the most amount of love you could ever feel. All of it was rolled into one.



He went on to say, “We are all a smaller part of a much bigger picture – something much higher and bigger than ourselves. We learned to always ask ourselves these three questions in order to keep peace and happiness.

1. Are my thoughts for “Me” instead of the “We”?
2. Is my work in competition with others instead of cooperation?
3. Do I use the word ‘I’ instead of “We”?

“I guess the big problem is between the ‘I’ and the ‘We’. We have a similar problem on Earth. Do you think I can teach this kind of cooperation to the people on my planet?”

But as the words finished coming out of my mouth, I felt like I was being sucked into a wet vacuum.

Darkness was replacing the amazing view the Martian sunglasses provided me.

“Wait!”

But it was too late. I opened my eyes and all I saw was something that resembled pink sandpaper. It was Picaboo’s tongue. My Mom had sent the dog into my room to wake me up for school. As I hugged Picaboo and then pushed him off of me, something fell from my bed. It was a pair of Martian glasses. I could not believe they had made the journey home with me!

WEDNESDAY



I was so excited. In French class, we learned that Wednesday is Mercredi. It is named after the planet Mercury. Ancient Greeks were the first to discover Mercury. They associated the planet with Hermes, who was a winged messenger of truth. That is why Mercury is called the planet of communication.

“Have you ever played Broken Telephone?” Mr. Abraham asked. “Everyone sits in a circle. Onionhead, you begin. Whisper a truth that Hermes would want to tell the world.”

I thought for a second. I wanted it to be something important. I got it! In the ear of the kid sitting next to me, I said, “Try not to lie.”

One by one, the kids whispered my phrase in the ear of the student next to them.

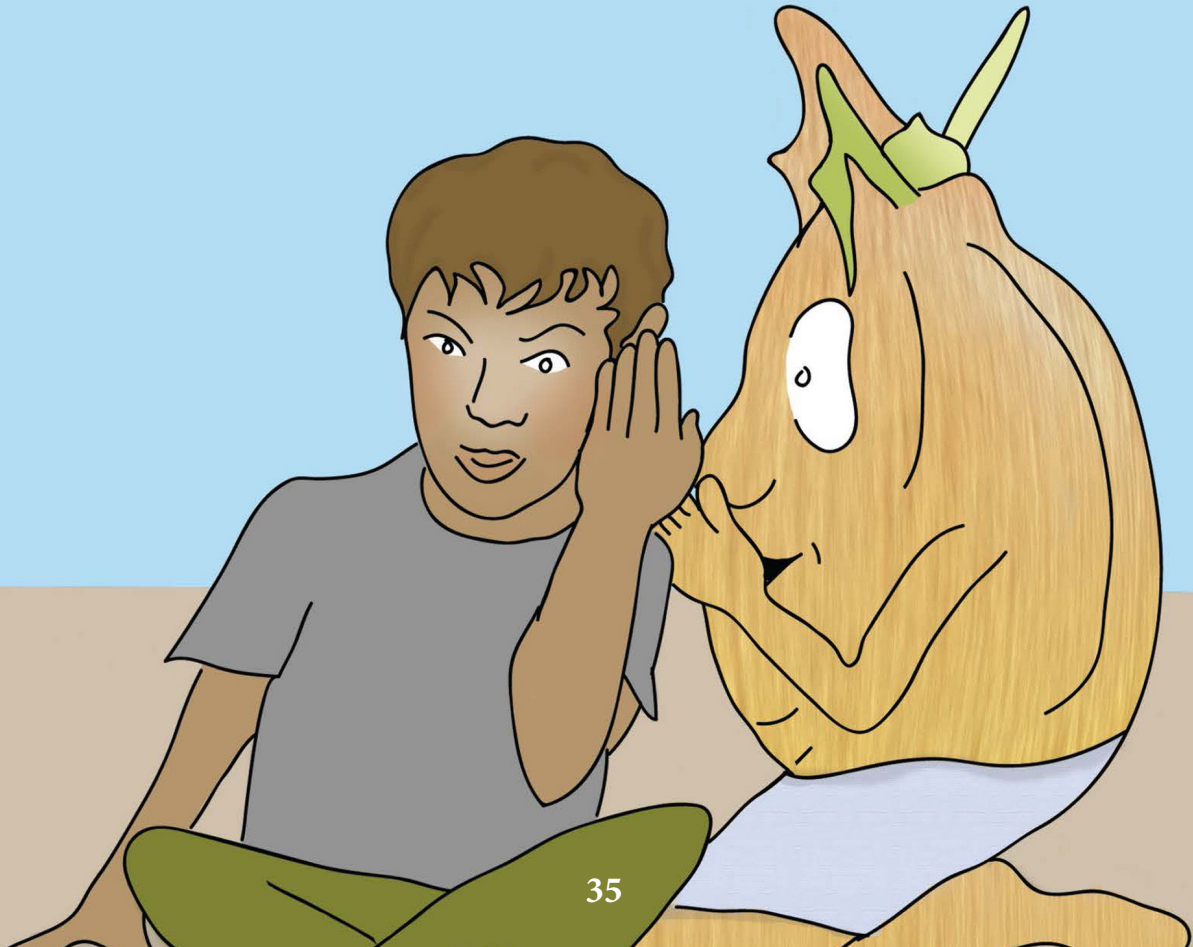
Mr. Abraham asked the last student, a girl named Della, “Now, what is the secret you heard?”

Della replied, “Fry up the rye!”

We all cracked up in laughter. “Fry up the rye?” I asked.

“What was the original sentence you started with, Onionhead?” Mr. Abraham asked.

Wednesday - Mercredi
Mercury



“It was “Try not to lie!”

“Wow! Not very good Mercurians here! People, we need to learn to communicate better than that!” Mr. Abraham laughed.

That night as I got into bed, my Mom started me on my countdown to sleep. I had a feeling I knew where I was going - that this trip would take me to Mercury. 26, 25, 24...

3, 2, 1...

blast off!



I could see something past the glare of the Sun. It was big and round, a planet for sure. This journey was different. I felt like I was flying, but flying straight for something really hot! All of a sudden I felt other wings around me and the cool breeze their flapping created. My landing was not at all graceful. A round body does not lend itself to flight. I hit the ground and rolled for a while. When I finally stopped, I had dust in my eyes. I could barely make out these green things I saw in the distance. There were four of them, they were flying towards me. They, unlike me, landed gracefully a few feet away. I wondered if they were from the winged messenger, Hermes.

When the dust finally settled, standing in front of me were four glorious Green Owls. They twisted their heads all the way around, checking their surroundings.

“What are you looking for?” I asked.

“Truth only moves in one direction. We’re always on the watch for where falsehoods fly,” one of the Owls replied.

I stood up, extended my hand, gently trying to shake one of their wings, and said, “I’m Onionhead.”

“I’m Master North. This is Master South. That’s Master East and that’s Master West.”

“Is it always so hot here?” I asked, wiping the sweat from my brow.



“You landed near Hermes’ Temple of Truth. All lies get burned up there,” Master North answered.

“What does that mean?” I asked, scratching my head. This was a strange place and I was starting to feel uneasy.

“Lies leave a dark tear in the Universe,” Master West answered spinning his head. “We’ve got to keep an eye out for them because they can be tricky and sticky. Our job is to motivate others to get on the truth and sincerity track.”

I looked at him kind of sideways, clearly not understanding what he had said.

“To really explain everything to you, we will take you on a little trip,” Master West said.

“Oh, I don’t fly very well.”

“No worries, we’ll take care of you.”

Master South and Master West strapped a harness around me. They tried to lock me in but struggled.

“You are a little round, I would say.”

Finally, I took a deep breath and the harness locked shut.

Each of the four Master Owls took one strap and, before I could ask another question, we were in flight.



As we were gaining some speed, turning to the left, I saw was something so magnificent, similar to what I saw when I wore Master Romi's glasses but on a much bigger scale. It was like a blanket woven out of pink light and it covered everything. It was the most glorious thing I had ever seen.

Master South said, "This is what truth really looks like. Each word spoken in truth makes a pure heaven for all of us."

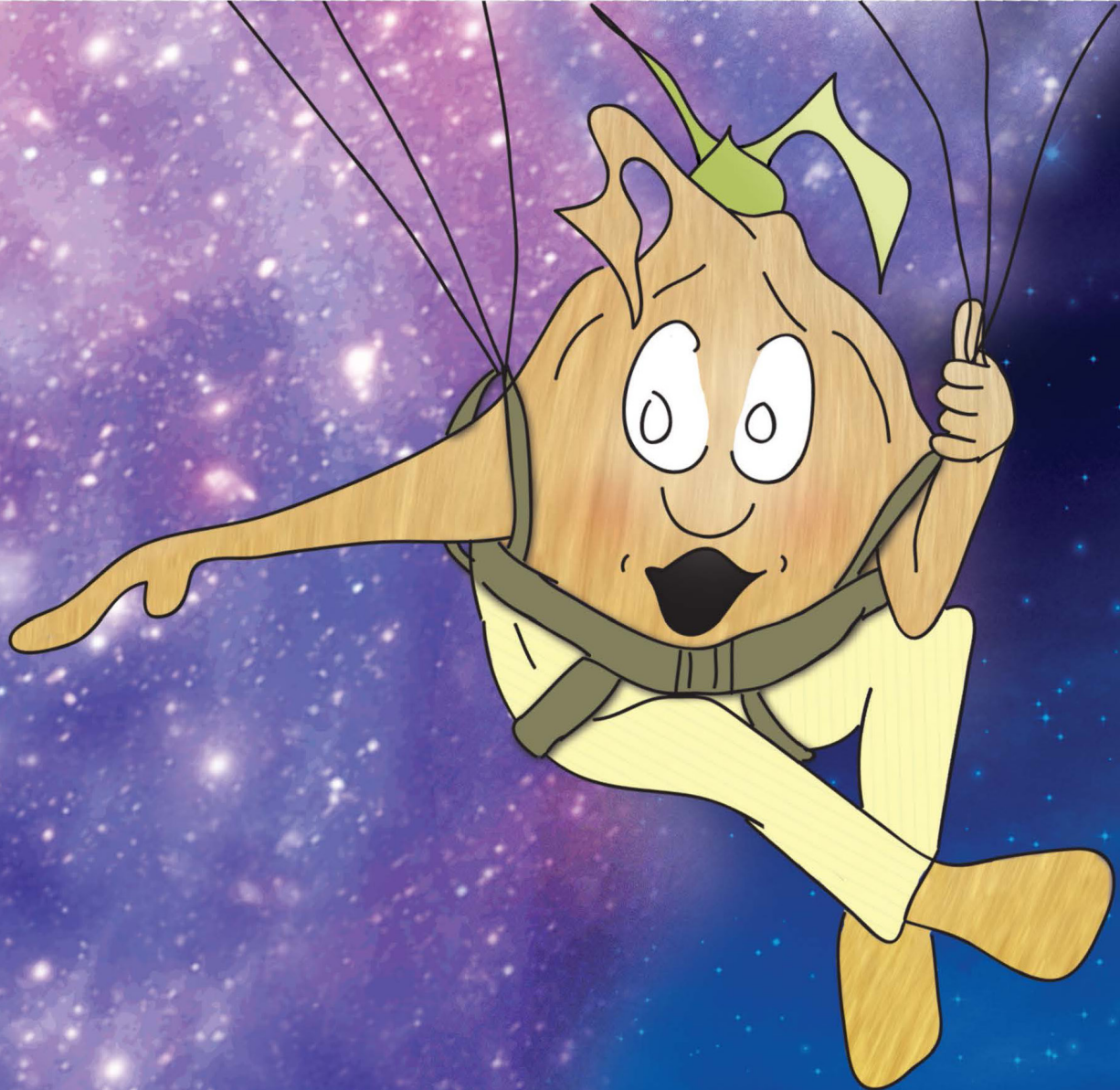
I could barely catch my breath with the splendor. My mouth was open in awe when the Master Owls banked again, this time a hard right. As soon as they turned, I started to cough.

Within seconds the scenery changed drastically and my coughing got worse.

"Truth-tellers always have a hard time breathing in the land of lies." Master South noted.

The sky looked so dark. There were only bits and pieces of light that seemed to go on and off. The temperature changed drastically. It got very cold. Now I was really afraid.

Master West said, "The Universe is made up of glorious light and this is what dishonesty does to it... it turns something pure into something really scary."



The Master Owls took us closer and all of a sudden, I realized that the lights I saw were billions of tiny fireflies. They were trying to repair the dark tears the lies had caused in the Universe. They were working so hard to sew back together the blanket of light. They were working like a well-organized army.

“Are those fireflies?” I asked.

“Kind of. They are called Raphaels. Their job is to repair the damage lying causes and to restore purity to the Universe,” Master West said.

“So this damage happens when the people of your planet lie?” I asked.

“No,” answered Master West. “This is what happens when anyone lies. We are simply the first to be affected by it because we are from the planet of truth. Usually, lies are told to get ahead, to hide something we are ashamed of, or because we are afraid. No matter where you live or what planet you are from, the effect of a lie is the same.”

“But so many people lie. Are there enough Raphaels to repair all that harm and fix the blanket of light?”

“Oh yes!” Master West said. “But they need the help of all of us. To really assist them, we must always stay committed to telling the truth, even when it is hard.”



I thought of all the times I had muddied the truth to get what I wanted. Never did I think of how my lie would affect myself, anyone else, let alone the whole Universe. I thought of how foolish my reasoning had been – the unimportant things I used to convince myself that the lie was okay. I made a vow to be committed to telling the truth, no matter what. I prayed I could keep this promise because I will never forget the purity I felt from of the blanket of light. I would never want to tear it or do it any harm.

Just then, as if the Master Owls heard my silent vow, my harness unclipped and I began to fall.

“Wait!” I yelled but the fall was more like floating.

I landed with a small thud in my bed. The clock was just turning 7:15 am and I needed to get up and get ready for school. I was so grateful for my experience because I learned something really valuable.

I grabbed my notebook and wrote...

Lesson from Mercury

Remember – love for myself or another can only come from telling the truth, even when it is difficult. I also learned that me thinking telling a lie was just a little thing....was really a much bigger matter....it affected the whole Universe.



Thursday
JUPITER



“Jeudi!” Mr. Abraham said. “Jeudi!” we replied.

“Can anyone guess what planet Jeudi is connected to?” Many of us raised our hands.

“Onionhead ... would you like to tell me what planet Jeudi is connected to?”
“Jupiter!” I answered.

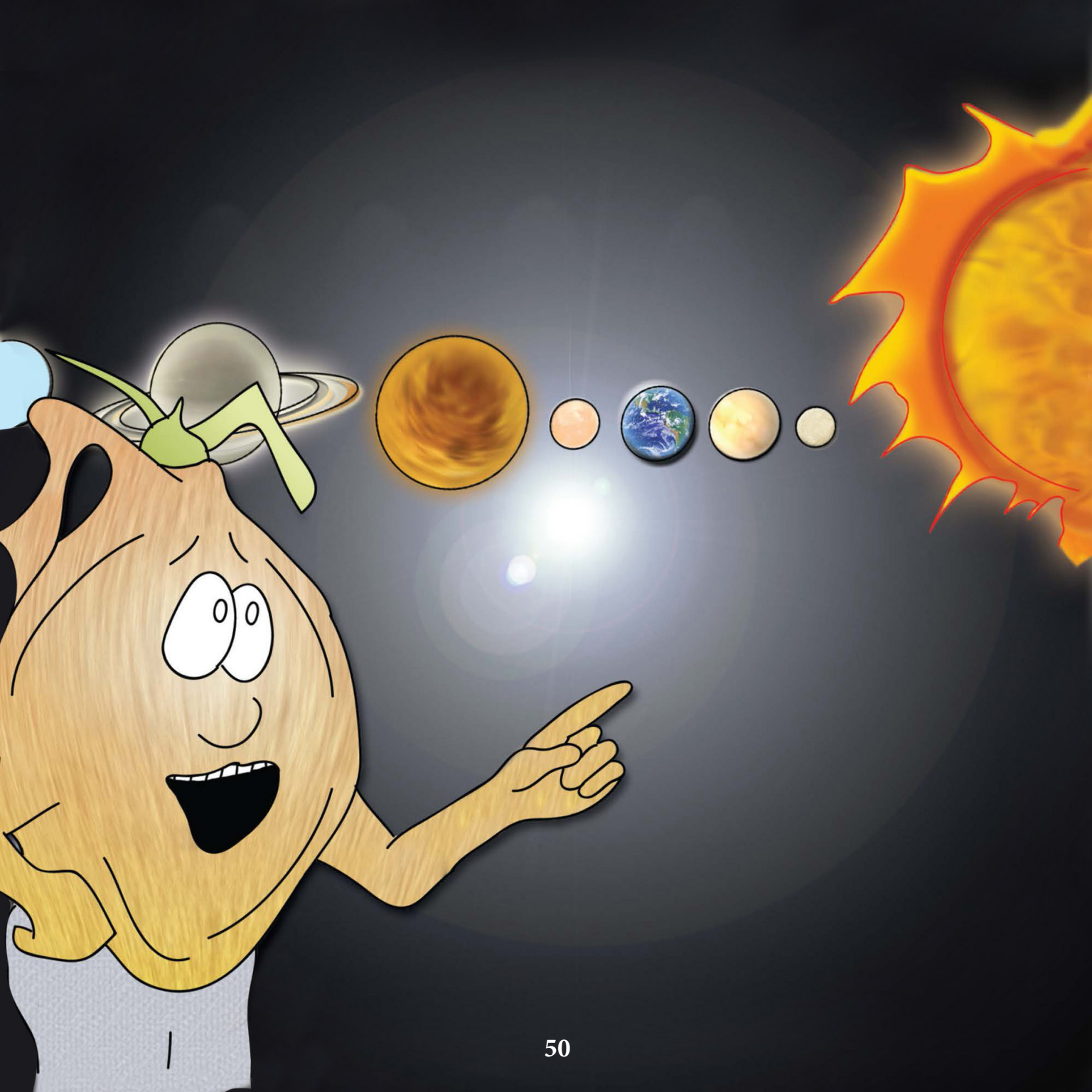
“Correct!” Mr. Abraham turned on his projector and we saw a giant map of the solar system. “Jupiter is known as the planet of happiness. It is the fifth planet from the Sun and Thursday is the fifth day of the week.”

We all took a minute to take Jupiter in. Mr. Abraham continued, “Jupiter is known as a Jovian, a planet made mostly from gas. Jovian is related to the word jovial which is why Jupiter is associated with happiness.”

Mr. Abraham turned the lights on again and asked, “How many of you think you can create your own happiness?”

No one answered.

“How many of you think you are happy?” About half of the room raised their hands.



“Let’s do an exercise.” The class moaned but he continued. “Everyone stand up. If you feel happy walk to the right side of the room, if you don’t, to the left.”

We all got up and shuffled around.

I walked over to the right side of the room. Everyone on my team gave me a high five. The other team, on the other hand, looked grey and down.

Mr. Abraham said, “Each one of you that feels happy will help those of you that don’t feel happy.”

I jumped up and down. From being on the Moon, I knew we were all connected. From being on Mars, I knew we had to work together. I knew I could put this into action by just helping someone.

“So were you born under a shining happy star, Onionhead?”

I thought about it for a minute. Yes I was, I mean, how many onions do you know that get to travel through space?

I thought again about what I had learned and said, “You make your happiness by believing and keeping your mind open.”

Then the other boy next to me took his turn and said, “The next time you feel unhappy, stop and look up at Jupiter. Imagine Jupiter is your joy planet.”

This sweet little girl, who I secretly liked, said, “If your heart is in the right place and you have faith, watch what amazing things can come your way.”

Before we knew it, all the kids who felt unhappy were screaming and shouting. Before they felt so down and now they felt so uplifted. Wow, the joy of Jupiter was already reaching us!!!

Mr. Abraham said, “OK, OK, let us not overdo this exercise.”



I could not wait for the day to be over so I could go to sleep and visit Jupiter. Wow, joy and happiness....it can't get better than that!!!

When bedtime came around, I asked my Mom to let me start my countdown on my own. I closed my eyes and asked Jupiter if she would allow me to pay her a visit. 26, 25, 24...

3, 2, 1...

blast off!





It was a bumpy ride to Jupiter but when I got there, it was amazing. I don't know how to describe looking up at the sky and seeing 63 moons that Jupiter has. The blue sky on Jupiter had colored strokes of purple, red and gold. I started to walk around expecting to run into someone. But time passed and I found no one.

Maybe Jupiter was like the Moon and I had to wish the people into being. I tried but no such luck.

Maybe it was like Mars and I had to go underground to find the people. I started to dig with my hands and my shoots, but again, no such luck.

I sat down on the cold surface. My hope started to fade. It was my heart's desire to learn something from Jupiter. I would take the wisdom and teach others. But nothing came. As the time passed, I laid down and stared up at the moons.

"Hellllllloooooooooooooooooooooo! Is there anybody out there?" I called. "Why yes, we've been here the whole time."

I jumped up and looked around but saw no one.

"Must be my wishful thinking," I thought and I sat back down.

"No, dear, it is not just your hoping. It is also because you seem to know how to live through your heart."

"I do? Yeah, actually I guess I do." My Mom always said that about me. She always said I was all heart.

“Where are you?” I asked. “Up here!” the voice replied.

I looked up in the sky and then at the moons. To my surprise, on the 4 largest moons, I could see faces. I was so surprised, I fell back down again.

“Wow, I have never talked to a moon before. I’m Onionhead, nice to meet you,” I said, perhaps a little nervous but nonetheless, reaching out to shake their hand.

The Moons giggled and said, “Oh little onion, don’t be afraid. We are the 4 H’s or as we are called on Earth, Jupiter’s moons. Though we are from the planet of happiness, it takes 4 other H’s to make that happen.”

“I am Angel Uree. I am in charge of the body and hard work.”

“I am Angel Gabee. I am in charge of the spirit and heavenly beliefs.”

“I am Angel Rafee. I am in charge of the emotions and heartfelt feelings.”

“And I am Angel Mikee. I am in charge of the mind and healthy thinking.”

“Am I really talking to Jupiter’s moons?” I know I had traveled to other planets but there was something about this that was different.

“Close your eyes for a moment and we will come down.”

I did as I was told and when I opened my eyes there were 4 angels standing in front of me.

“What do you do?” Angel Gabee asked.





“Do?” I replied. “Well, I go to school and I play soccer. I play in the dirt. I do my chores, like taking out the garbage and cleaning my room.” I went on and on and the 4 H’s simply nodded.

“No, Silly,” Angel Rafee said. “What do you do when you come from a heart and hope place?”

“Uh, I don’t know.” I scratched my head and thought about it for a while.

“If you explain a heart and hope place to me, maybe then I can tell you what I do with it,” I said, feeling a little foolish that I had no idea what she was talking about.

“We can do better than that. We can show you. Hold my hand,” Angel Gabee said. We all stood in a circle and took each other’s hand.

“Close your eyes, breathe through your heart and believe.”

“Through my heart and believe what?” I asked but she didn’t answer.

So as I tried to do as she had said, I started to feel lighter, kind of like I was floating.

“Now open your eyes,” Angel Uree said.

“Whoaaaaaaa!” I could not believe what I saw. I could not believe what I was doing. From the center of my chest a huge petal of orange light was shining out - from the 4 H’s as well.

It was a miracle, together we made a rose. We were suspended, well above Jupiter’s surface and the bright orange flower we created was miraculously lighting up the land.

Angel Gabee explained that happiness was the center petal and the other four petals were for heartfelt feelings, healthy thoughts, heavenly beliefs and hard work. All these five make up the 'Force of Hope'.

Angel Uree said, "This 'Force of Hope' will keep you from the fall. It will light the path for others as well."

"Wow. I get it. I know I try to lead with my heart. I know I try to work hard and I know I try to do the right thing. I had not given hope or belief much thought. Also, sometimes I mess up. Is that the fall?" Together, they all chimed in, "No, that is not the fall! The fall is a sense of hopelessness."

Angel Mikee told me to look to my right. She swept her hand across the sky. I saw a scene of grayness. There was a big line of people, all of whom had lost their joy. They looked so miserable and there was no light around them at all. They were in line trying to find their hope again.

"The fall comes from a loss of belief, unhealthy thoughts and a closing of the heart."

Angel Rafee said, "Stay committed to your heart and keep working for what you want, even if the trials come. Don't lose hope and never stop believing – never. This is Jupiter's code and the secret to creating one's own happiness."





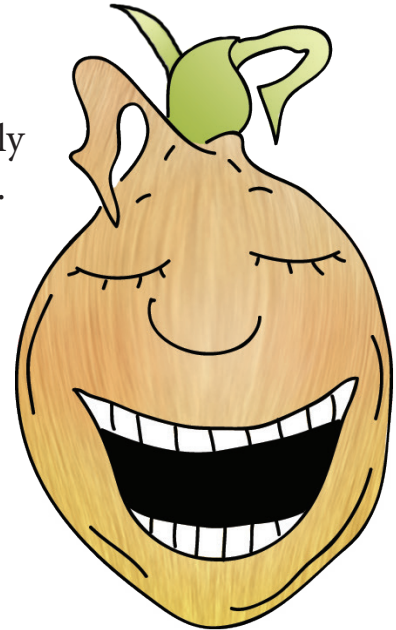
Codes and secrets! This stuff was amazing. I was so busy examining my beliefs, coming from my heart, working hard, keeping hope and trying to memorize what Angel Rafee had said, that I didn't even notice that I was leaving until I hit my bed with a thump.

As I got up, the petal faded from view but I could still feel it and my onion peels looked a little orange. I cried for all the ones I saw who were lost and sad. I was determined not to let that happen to me. Oh boy...what did they say...I better get a pen...and FAST!

I wrote...

Lesson from Jupiter

Remember - hope comes from hard work, heavenly beliefs, heartfelt feelings and healthy thinking. Whew...I am soooooooooo happyyyyyyyyyy that I remembered what they said.



FRIDAY
VENUS



“How many of you love the fact that it’s Friday?”

“Yahoo!” we all exclaimed. One student whistled, another got up and danced.

“How many of you would guess that the reason you love Friday is that it is named after Venus, the planet of love?”

“Vendredi, please repeat.” Mr. Abraham said. “Vendredi,” we replied.

“So why do we love Fridays?”

“Because tomorrow is Saturday!” one student yelled.

“Because the school week is almost over!” another student cried out.

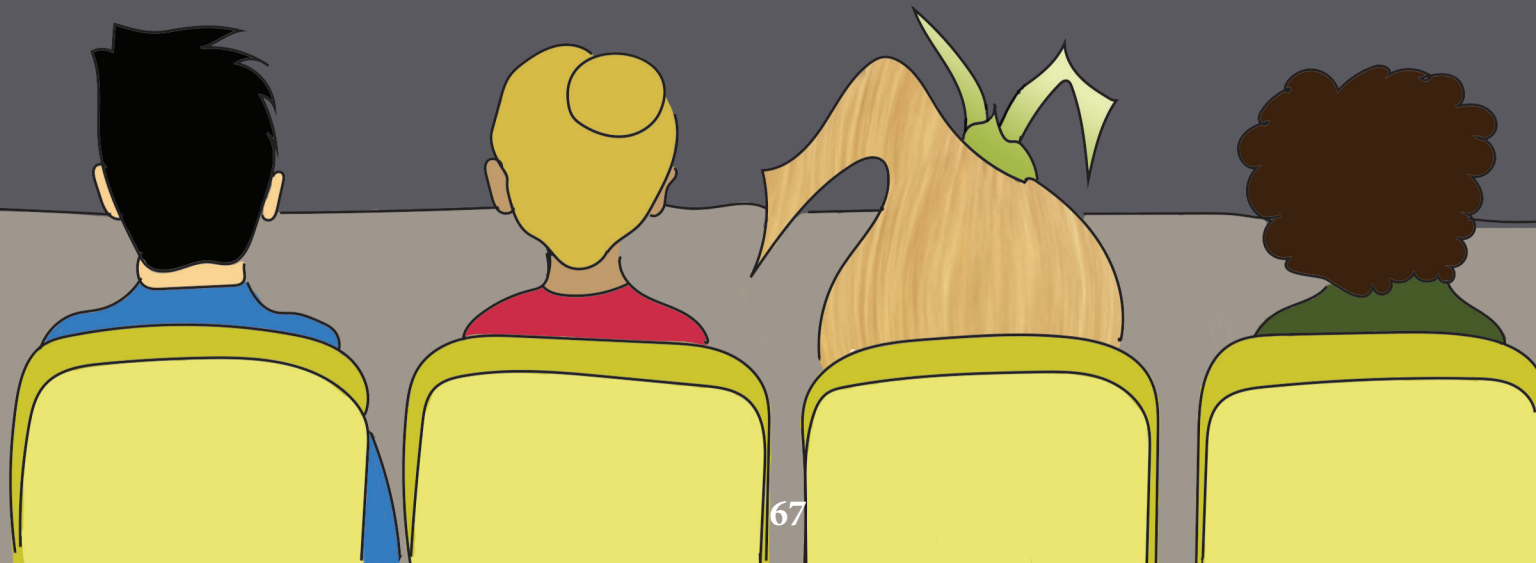
“Because tomorrow we get to sleep in!”

The comments kept coming.

Then Mr. Abraham said, “Okay, let’s re-devote ourselves to the discipline of today, instead of the daydream of tomorrow. So Friday, Vendredi, was named after Venus - a planet with an amazing history.”

Mr. Abraham shut the lights, pulled down the screen and turned on the projector.

VENUS



“There she is - Venus in all her victory. She is known as the planet of love.” The class was in awe as this milky white planet came up on the screen. “Mankind has been studying her for a long time.”

He continued, “In South America, the Mayans built their calendar in relationship to her orbit.

In Australia, the Aborigines believe that Venus was the creator of dreaming.

In Africa, the Masai believe that Venus came to Earth in the form of a boy. When the boy’s origin was discovered, he returned to Venus in a shot of light. I think so many cultures have been studying Venus because she catches our hearts.”

Mr. Abraham turned the lights back on. We were all still a little dreamy from the beautiful sight of Venus.

“Please take out a paper and pencil. Now make a list of all the things, people, and ideas that you love.”

I went straight to work. I started to write madly, with complete abandon. Because I was remembering Jupiter, I had my whole heart open. I let all my love pour out on the paper.

I paused for a moment and looked around at the room. I looked at the student sitting next to me. He had written one sentence on his page.

I would love to get out of here.

I thought, “Poor guy.”

VENUS



Mayans : calendar

Masaai - boy

Aborigines - creator
of dreams

Clearly someone needed to help him find his heart. All of a sudden, I had an idea. I pushed my paper on the floor. He bent to pick it up. He glanced over my list. There was even a moment when he smiled.

He handed the list back to me, then picked up his pen, crossed out his sentence and began to write a new list of his own.

Mr. Abraham then said we had three assignments due by Monday – the first was to translate our love list to French; the second was to research Saturn for Saturday and the Sun for Sunday; and the last was to write down and present to the class what we had learned from our study of space. We all groaned.

“I know. I know!” Mr. Abraham said. “I doubt any of you have homework on your love list!”

As soon as I got home, I did my first assignment. With it being the weekend, I wanted to be available for as much space travel as possible. After dinner, my Dad asked if I wanted to watch a movie. “No thanks, Dad. I think I am going to do a little more homework and then call it a day.”

“But it’s Friday night. You never miss a chance to watch a great science fiction movie. This one is about some giant tomato going into space. You sure you don’t want to watch with me?”

“Yup.” I laughed. No movie could be as great as going there myself. “See you in the morning. Love you.” Tomato in space, I chuckled. There would be an onion in space tonight, for sure.



I would love to get
out of here!!!!

I love my family
my dog
my garden
travelling through space
my friends
reading
watching movies
playing soccer

“Love you too. Sleep tight.” Dad said and settled back into the couch.

As soon as I got into bed, I started on my countdown. 26, 25, 24...

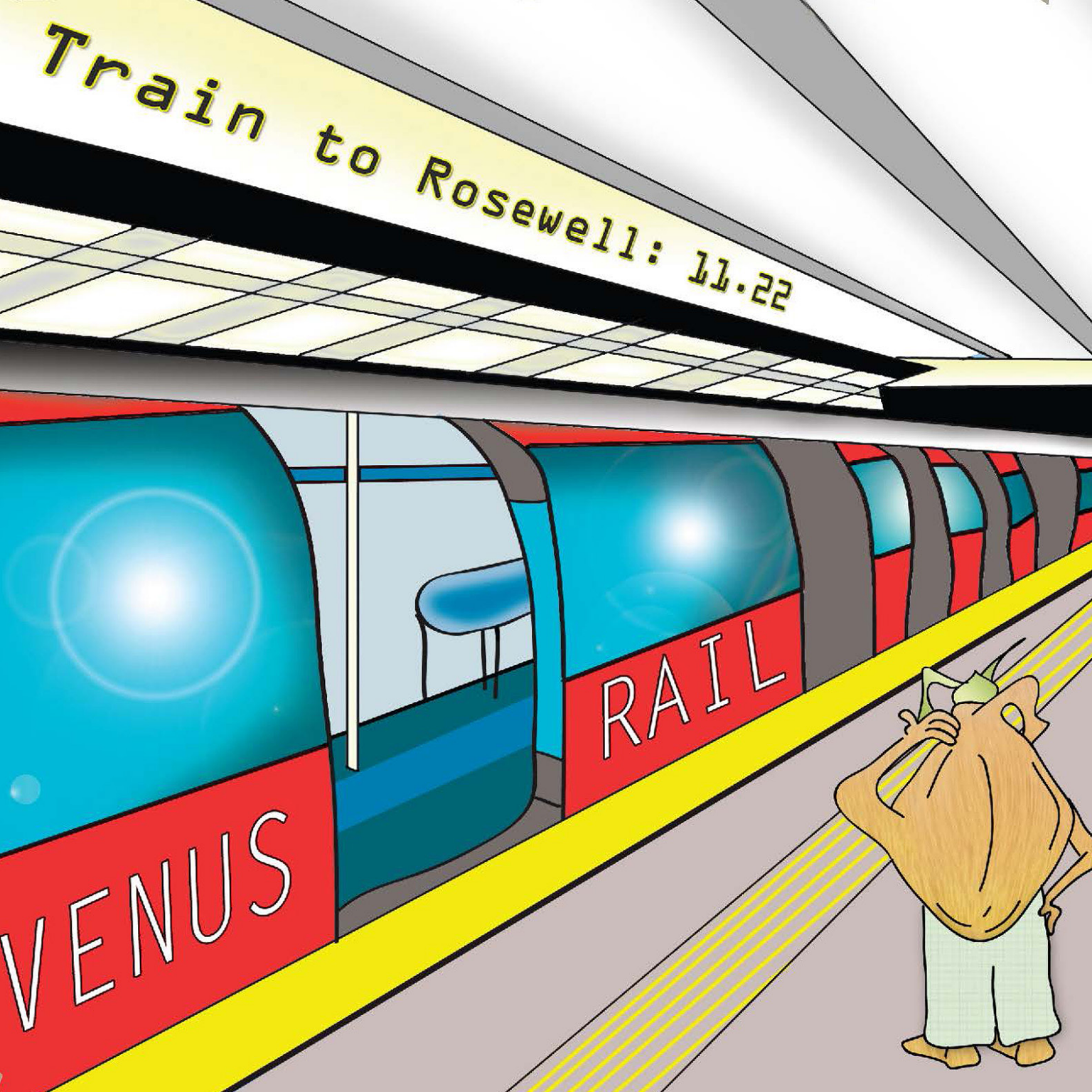
3, 2, 1...

blast off!

I was traveling through the white billowy clouds of Venus. I expected my adventure to go like the others, but when I broke through the clouds, the view was totally different. It was busy. The people of Venus were all different colors and shapes but each of them had the same very profound detail - half their heart lived outside of their chest. You could see it beating and most of them were glowing light pink.

Where I landed looked like some sort of train station. A big loud voice came over the loud speaker to confirm my location.

“The train to Rosewell will be arriving on track 51.”



Train to Rosewell: 11.22

VENUS

RAIL

I figured I'd get on the train and see where it would take me. It arrived and I climbed on board with the rest of the travelers. No one seemed to notice how different I looked. I took a seat next to a nice looking Venutian. He was busy reading a book titled: The Architecture of Love.

"Good book?" I asked as I sat down.

"Yeah, thanks." The Venutian looked up and his heart started to turn different shades of blue.

"Are you all right?" I asked, pointing to his heart.

"Ummm, well. No. Uhhh, I'm not," he said looking around at the other passengers. "Uhhh, the fact that I cannot see your heart is scaring me a little. Who are you?" he asked me, clearly worried.

"I'm Onionhead and I'm from Earth. Sorry about the heart thing but Earthlings don't wear their hearts on the outside. We keep them hidden," I answered.

"Hidden? Why would you keep your heart hidden?" he asked. "Why do you keep your heart out for everyone to see?" I replied.

"Well, mostly so that we can stay genuine and honest. It keeps us pure. The first Venutians planned it so that we'd always be devoted to truth and love." I smiled because I knew about that from Mercury.

His heart was beginning to change back to its original color. Obviously I was making him less nervous.



I wanted to know so much more about the meaning of love, but the announcer was calling the next stop, and he looked worried again. This time his heart was bleeping a deep shade of purple.

“This is my stop,” he said quickly.

“Oh, uh, okay.” I thought it was kind of strange that I would travel all the way to Venus and only learn such a small amount. But I got up to let him out of the seat.

“What’s your name?” I asked. “Master Ami ” he replied.

I extended my hand to shake his. He reached his hand out and when our hands clasped, he froze. His pupils got very big and my skin got really warm. He sat back down immediately and said he had changed his mind.

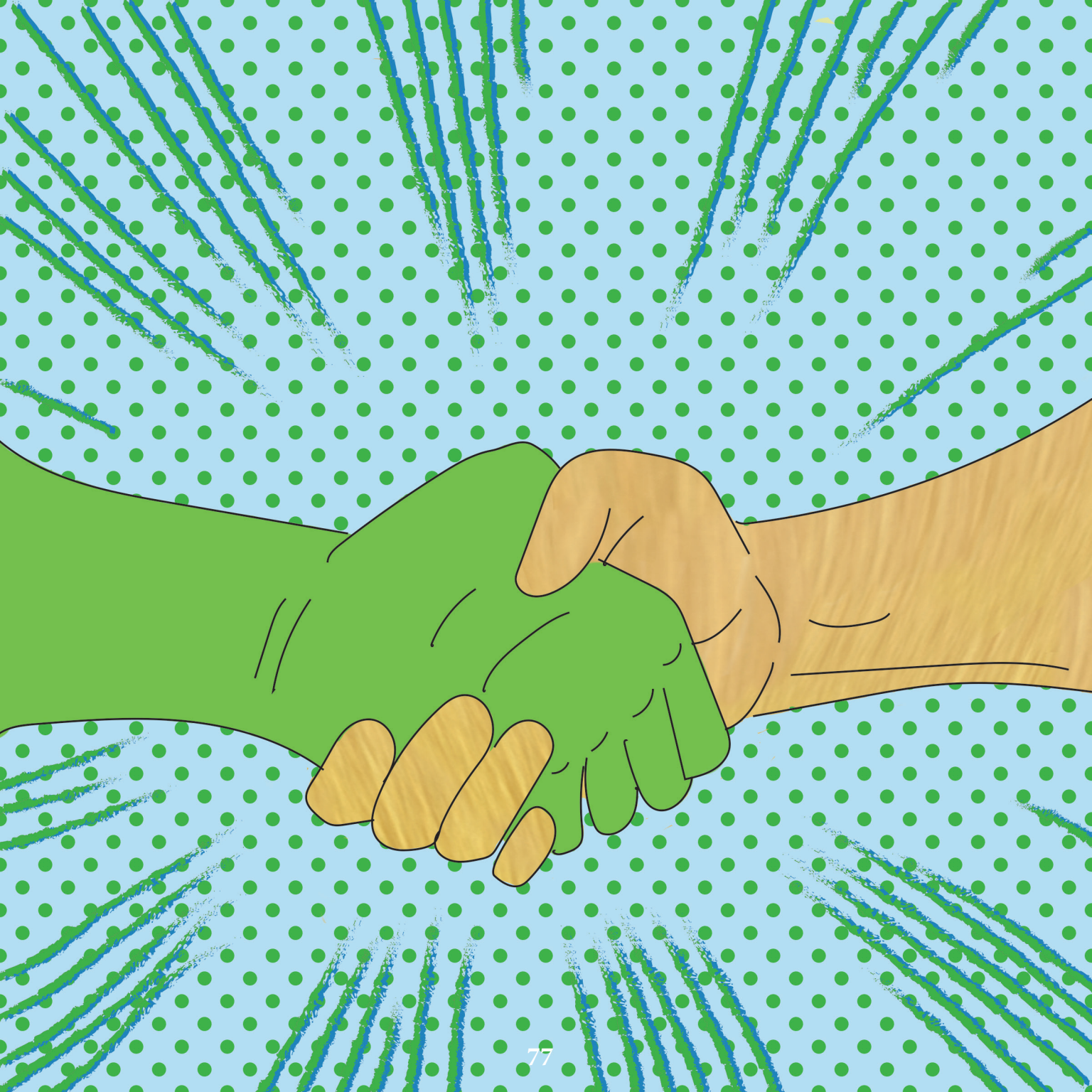
“Are you alright?” I asked. This time his heart was turning a reddish pink.

“I felt your heart when I touched your hand. That’s never happened before. You are not who I thought you were,” he said.

“What do you mean?” I questioned.

“Well, I think I can trust you. Can I trust you?” he asked.

“Of course. I haven’t traveled this far to do you any harm. I promise,” I answered as genuinely as I could. I felt terrible that our meeting had made his heart change to all those colors.



Then Master Ami got closer and lowered his voice to a whisper.

“People come from other planets to stop the loving. Foolish people, they don’t know that they cannot win that battle. Love will always create the victory. I thought you were one of them when I could not see your heart. You may not wear it on the outside but you sure feel like you do.”

“Actually my Mom always says I wear my heart on my sleeve so I guess that’s kind of the same.”

We sat together in silence for a while as the train made its way across the countryside. I peered out the window over Master Ami’s shoulder. It was amazing. There was no heaviness or pollution here. Everything felt so magnificent and clean. It made me feel like I was dreaming.

“It’s so beautiful here. I understand your need to protect it, but I have a question if you don’t mind?”

“Sure, ask away,” he said.

“Do all of you live this way?” I asked. “We do.”

“Do you think I can get the people of my planet to understand this?” Just then the announcer called for the next stop.

“Next stop Luxor. I repeat, next stop Luxor.”

SEAT

23



The train was pulling to a stop and once again Master Ami grabbed my hand. “Come with me. Because I feel a love for you and I believe you really care about others, I am going to show you something I never show anyone.”

We jumped off the train before it even stopped moving. Master Ami was moving quickly through the crowd.

“We need to hurry before others find out where I am taking you. Yet, I really feel you are such a loving...what did you say...onion? So Onionhead, can you run?”

“Run, well yeah, I can run. But I can also roll, which usually goes faster.” I answered. He laughed. “I have a better idea. Take both of my hands and hold on tight,” he said.

I took Master Ami’s hands and in just an instant, there was a blinding flash, like lightning.

“Whaaaaaattttt are weeeeeeeeeee doinggggggggggggg?” I asked as the wind blew my cheeks so hard against my face.

“Travelingggggggggggggg Venusssssssssss style!” he said with a giggle.

When we finally stopped we were far from the train station. I was a little dizzy but as soon as I got my balance back, I realized we were standing on the edge of a mountain, staring down at something that resembled a beautiful pyramid. It looked like there was some kind of fire that burned in the shape of a heart.

“Wow! That’s so cool,” I said in amazement.



“Wait, you haven’t seen anything yet,” he replied.

He grabbed my hand again and we made it down the mountainside to the entrance. We stopped at the doorway.

“Where are we going?” I asked.

“To a place where love is in its most beautiful form.” “Does such a place exist?” I asked.

“You’ll feel it for yourself. You said you wanted to help your planet so I thought I would take you to the Pyramid of Everlasting Love.”

“Wow!” I said, but really, I could not imagine such a thing.

Master Ami continued to say, “When you view someone through the eyes of love, you feel their beauty. For things to change on your planet and become like ours, you need to get 51% of the people to believe in this.”

“How do you get 51% of the votes? Do you have to run for some kind of office?” I asked.

“No, it all begins with you. It takes a lot of work. When difficult things happen, as they sometimes do, you have to commit to staying in your heart. This is the only path to victory.”

I knew that from Jupiter but I said, “Wow, that’s heavy. I mean light. I mean... that’s huge,” I said trying to grasp the idea of life with only love in it.



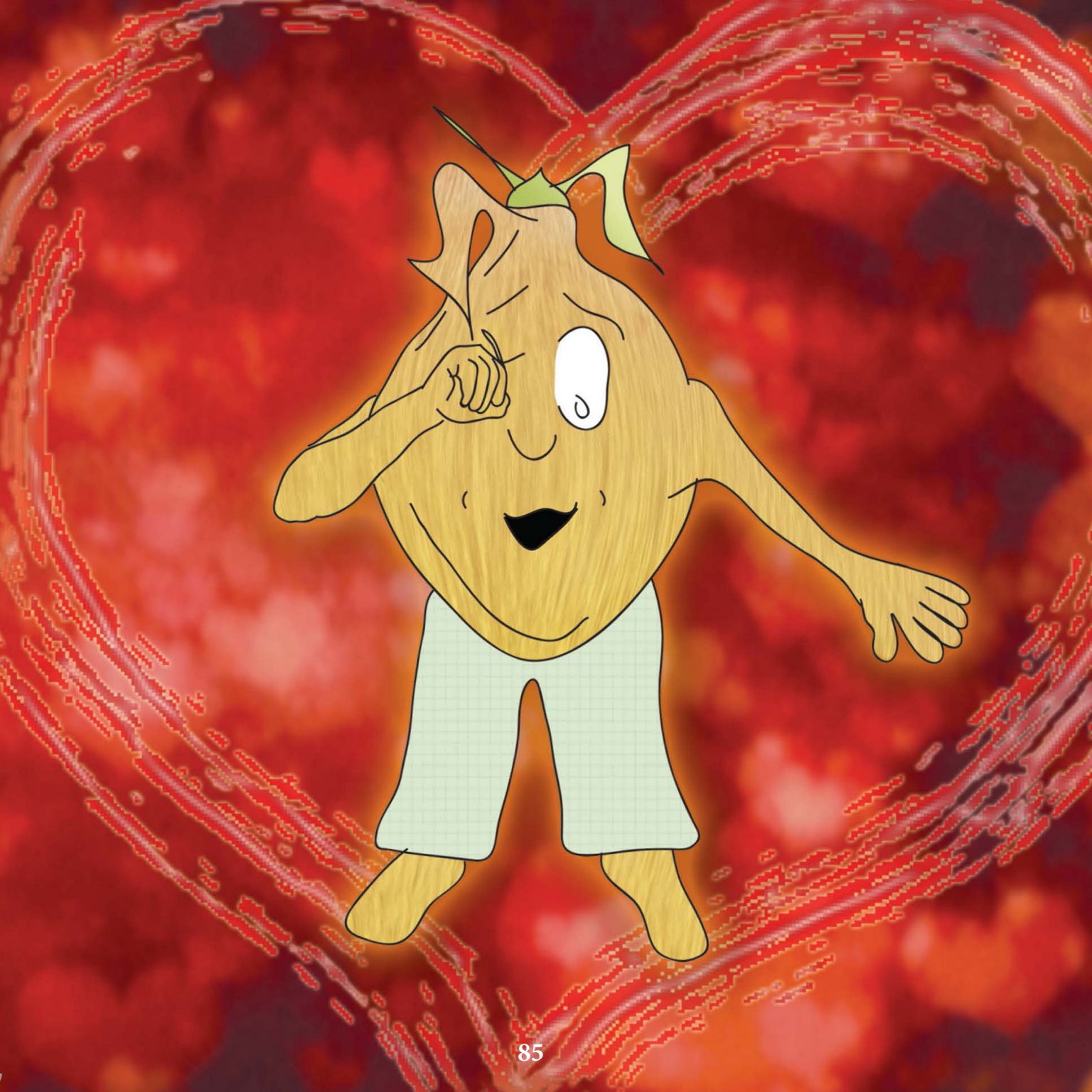
I felt like the whole world was suddenly on my heels. When Master Ami felt I was ready, he again took my hand and we entered the pyramid.

The moment my feet touched the floor of the room, everything changed. I looked up at the ceiling where I had seen the fire from outside, expecting to find the cause of it. But instead, it was then that I suddenly realized...I WAS INSIDE A HEART!

There was this feeling that I was loved, like never before and everything lovely, lovable and loving was possible. I mean, my Mom and Dad really love me...but this was different. It felt as if the whole Universe, the whole sky, the stars, the clouds, the wind and all the planets were in love. It was so perfect and so light.

I let go of Master Ami's hand to rub my eyes in case what I was seeing wasn't real. But when I did, we each became weightless. All of a sudden, I was soaring and though I could still feel him, I couldn't see Master Ami anymore. I was so upset because I knew where I was going and I was not ready to leave. I wanted to stay longer, to feel this kind of love more.

I closed my eyes for the ride home. When I opened them again, I was in my bed and Picaboo was on top of me. I hugged him and I was very aware of how heavy we both were. I said, "I love you too." His eyes twinkled and I could swear I saw him smile.



I went to grab my pencil and a white feather fell to the floor...it was a dove feather. On it was written...Venus, The Bringer of Love. Don't forget me...Love, Master Ami.

I was crying as I wrote...

Lesson from Venus

Remember – beauty comes from viewing everything from a feeling of love. We must see another's beauty not only with our eyes, we must feel it with our hearts. Now I feel great about wearing my heart on my sleeve!



Saturday
SATURN



“Samedi, please repeat.” I was alone in my room pretending to be Mr. Abraham.

I had finished researching Saturn on the computer. There was so much information. I tried to figure out what Mr. Abraham would think was important for us to know. I was getting frustrated so I figured I’d take a break, get a snack and come back to the work when my stomach was full. I went downstairs to the kitchen.

“How’s the space travel?” my Mom asked.

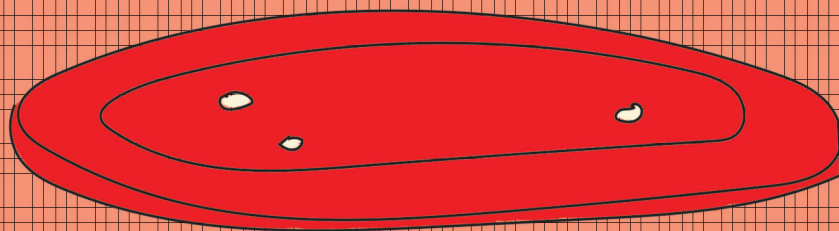
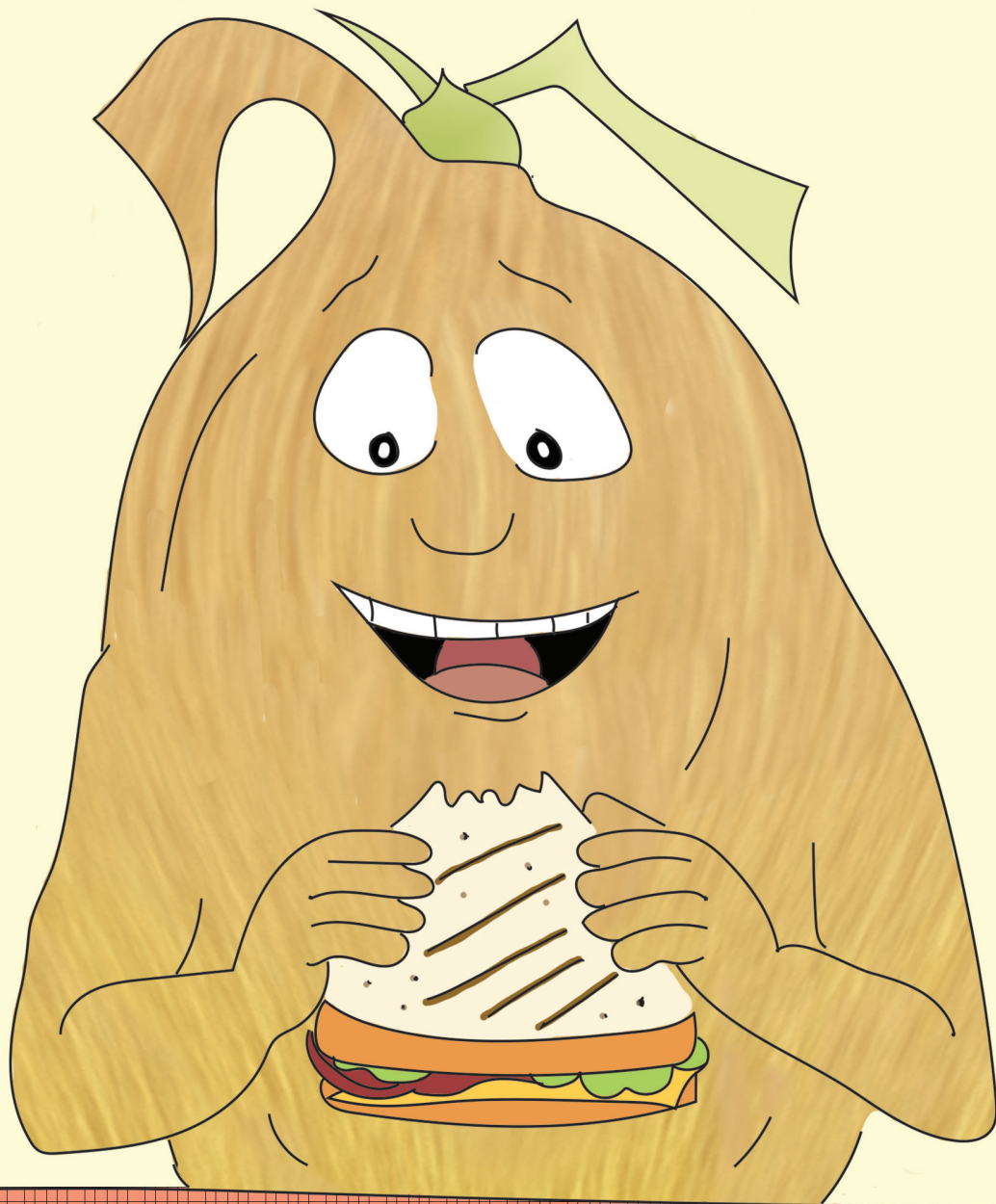
“Funny you should ask,” I replied. “I’m stuck. I looked up all this information about Saturn but I can’t figure out what my teacher would think is important and what’s not.”

“Okay, let’s organize all the pieces of information that we think might be important. Write each one down on a separate card. In the meantime, I will make you a sandwich,” she said.

“Thanks Mom, that’s a good idea,” I agreed.

I ran upstairs and started writing down the information on separate cards – everything I could remember. I even went back to the computer to find some stuff I had forgotten. About 30 minutes later, I came back downstairs ready to begin. My Mom had taken out a cake stand – one that spins - and put it in the middle of the table. I started to eat my sandwich.

“Okay, let’s see what you’ve got.”



I read her some of my cards. "Saturn is the planet of transformation."

"Great, we're going to say that this spinning cake stand is Saturn's Ring of Change. Place the card on it," she said.

"Saturn is the second largest planet in the Solar System." "The rings around Saturn are made mostly of ice," I went on.

"Okay, on the Saturn's Ring of Change it goes!" she said, tossing the card. The more we tossed, the more I could feel I was letting my frustration go.

When I had put about 14 cards on the stand, we were done. Then, my Mom covered it with a violet dish towel. She gave the cake stand a big swirl and all the information started spinning around and around.

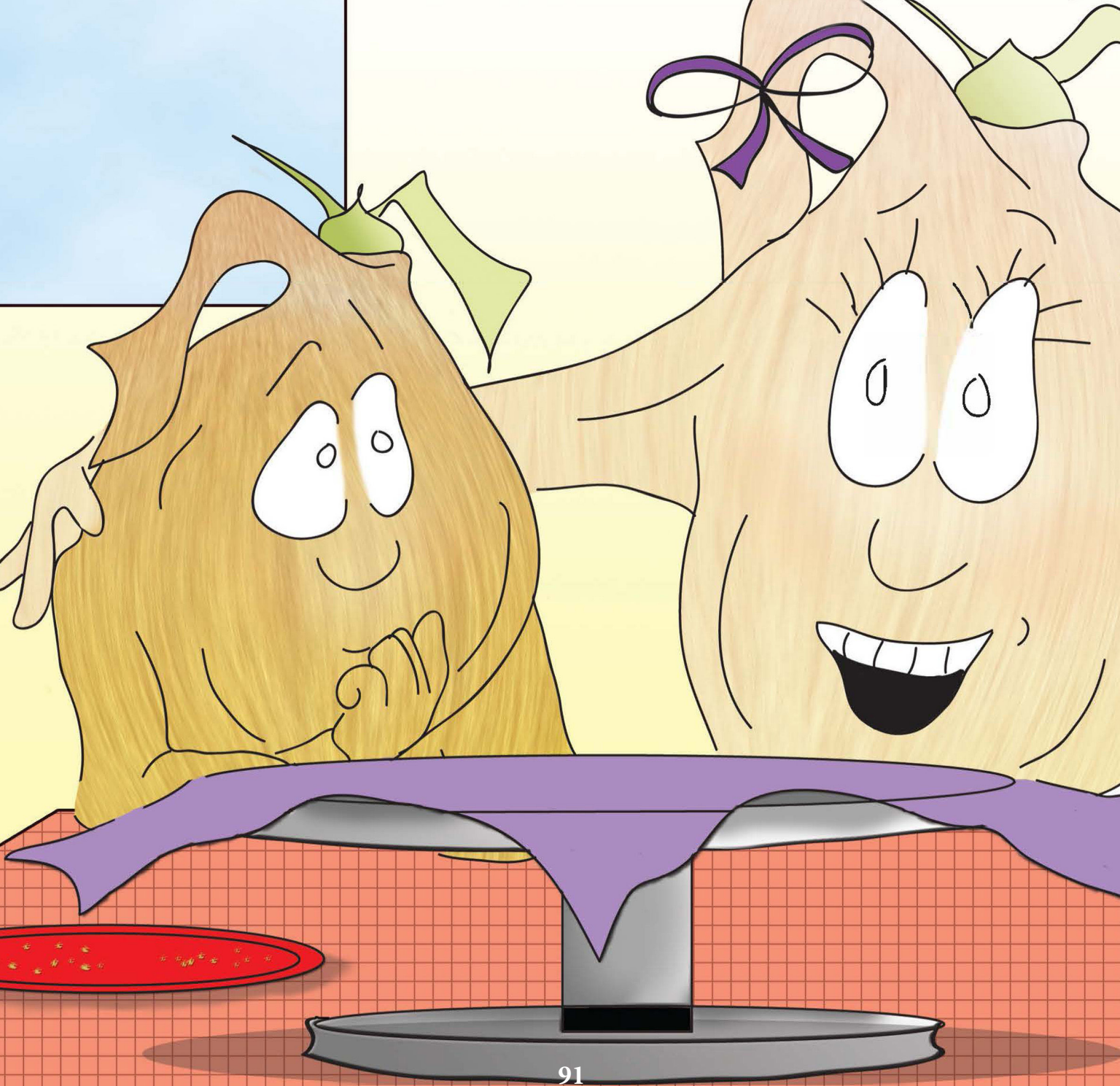
"We are trying to figure out what information is important. All the information is now spinning on Saturn's Ring of Change. When it finishes spinning, we will know what's important," she said, smiling. "But first finish your sandwich. This will give Saturn's Ring of Change a chance to do its work."

"Is this like a magic trick?" I asked. "Kind of," she replied. "You'll see."

As I was finishing my sandwich, my Mom stopped the spinning cake stand but left the towel covering the cards.

"If you were to think about it now, what is the first piece of information about Saturn you think would be important?" she asked.

"Probably that Saturn is the planet of transformation and that is why the Ring of Change is so important," I said. "Great, tell me three more."



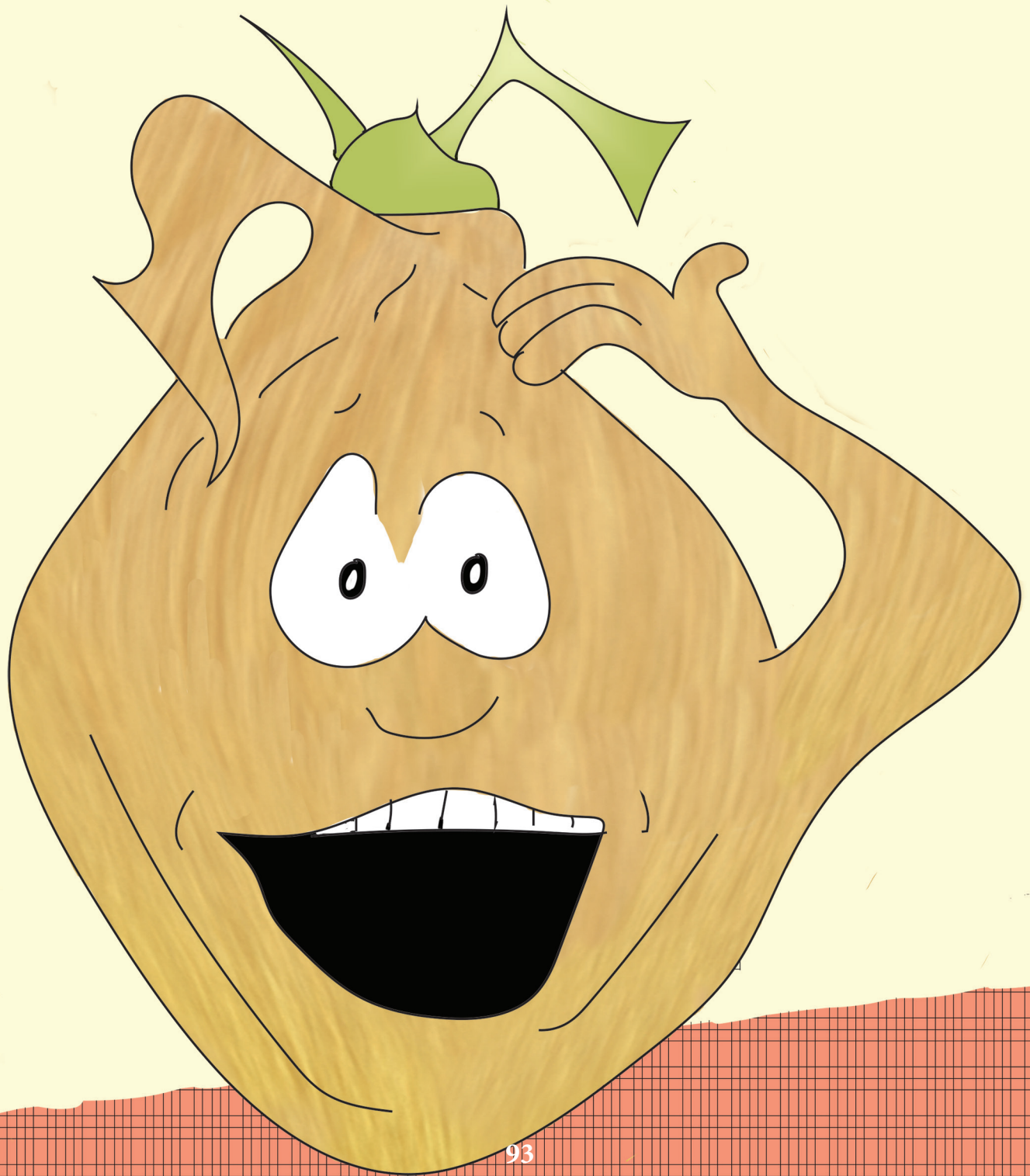
I gave her three more details that I thought were important. Then the magic happened. When she uncovered the cake tray, all the cards with the facts that I had chosen were facing up. All the rest were face down.

“Whoa!” I said in amazement. “How did you do that?” I asked. “I don’t know what you are talking about,” she replied.

She refused to tell me the secret to her trick even though I begged. That night when I went to bed, I thought about Saturn. I kept trying to figure out how it worked but nothing came to me. Instead of getting frustrated again, I turned to my countdown and asked Saturn to explain it to me. 26, 25, 24...

3, 2, 1...

blast off!





The trip to Saturn was bouncy. I landed just inside the lip of the ice ring. It was like a moving sidewalk, but a really, really fast one. It was spinning so fast, I almost fell off. Remembering that Saturn is a gas giant, I looked for anything solid and still to stand on. But I was not quick enough and I started to fall. All of a sudden a hand grabbed mine and pulled me back. It belonged to a man who was wearing a crown. It was the most interesting crown I had ever seen - there were flames coming out of the top of it!

“Thank you,” I said. “That could have been a really long fall.” I peered over the edge looking down through Saturn’s gases.

“Are you here to become a member?” the man asked.

“A member of what?” I replied. But he had no time to answer as something huge came flying across the sky.

“What on earth was that swirling thing?” I asked.



“Oh my dear, you certainly are not on Earth anymore!” he replied. “That swirling thing was a problem flying in, looking for Saturn’s Ring of Change to find a new solution.”

I was totally shocked that my Mom knew about this. Was it possible that she was a space traveler too? I finally noticed that not all of the ring was spinning. The lip was stationary and very, very small. I crawled towards it.

“Saturn’s Ring of Change? Did you say Saturn’s Ring of Change?”

The man went on: “I most certainly did. Anything that travels on The Ring of Change gets a chance to transform and fire into something new. You’re a vegetable, you should understand. It’s kind of like when you get put on the stove and turn into soup. By the way, what’s your name?” the man asked, contorting his body so that the other spinning problems would miss him.

“My name is Onionhead,” I answered, trying to understand what he had just said.

“They call me the Master T as I hold the fire of transformation.” All of a sudden he yelled, “Duck!”

I ducked just in time before this flying problem nearly took me out. It was green and oozing and it stank. Thankfully it landed on the spinning part of the Ring of Change that was a little ways from us.

“Incoming! Careful, here comes another one!” Master T yelled and I ducked before he said another word. But this problem was teetering on the edge. Master T pulled a rope out from thin air, and lassoed the problem to get it properly on the track of transformation.

“Eyyyyyyyyyyha!” he yelled, sounding more like a cowboy than a Master.

Still crouching, I asked, “Uhh, Master T, is there some place a little easier to talk? All this spinning and ducking and flying problem stuff is making me dizzy.”

“Sure, take my hand,” he replied and I crawled over to take his hand for the second time.

Within an instant, we were sitting on one of Saturn’s moons. It was close enough to see the action but far enough out of the way that we didn’t get hurt.

“Thank you.” I sighed with relief. “Give me a second; I think I need to catch my breath.”

“A talking, breathing onion - my, how the world has changed!” he laughed. “Not to worry, Onionhead,” he said patting me on the shoulder. “It is not always easy to find a safe place up here when problems are flying at you all the time.”

“Wow, Master T, you’re so accepting of the situation. By the way, if you don’t mind me asking, what’s in your crown?” I asked.

“I don’t mind at all ... I am happy that you are interested,” he chuckled.



“In my crown, I have stored the mysteries for change. I’ve been around a few times. The fire above my crown is called the transformation flame. ”

Whoa, I thought ... a flame that could transform something. When I thought about it though ... it’s like when a forest fire happens and after it’s over, all new trees are born from the ashes.

I was beginning to have a lot of respect for Master T and I wanted to help him. So I said, “The first thing you asked me was if I was here to become a member. What do you mean by that?” I asked.

“I admire your caring, Onionhead,” Master T replied. “I asked if you were here to become a member of the new transformation team.”

“A transformation team?” I asked.

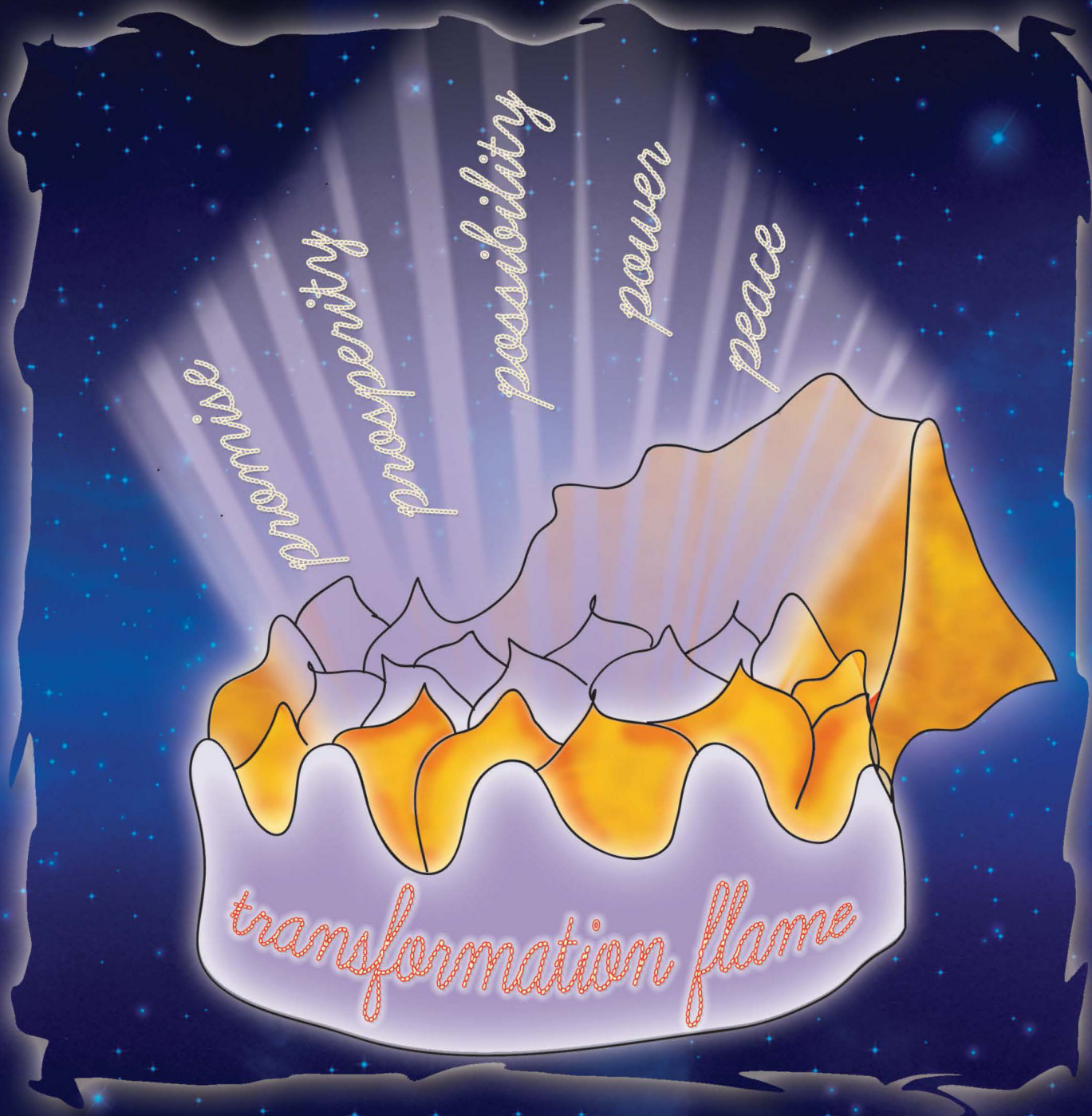
“A team that can change negative thoughts into positive ones,” he answered.

“For example, the thought that problems are too big to solve. Everyone asks for a time where there will be less pain and suffering, but so few realize that they have the power to change it.

Another example of negative thinking, why do people always think about what they DON’T have instead of what they DO have? Like the glass is either half empty or half full ... what’s with that? Why doesn’t anyone believe that the glass can be completely full.”

I understood what he was talking about but there was part of it that almost felt too big for me to grasp. A full glass, really... you could have a full glass?

“It is really just so simple. Just tell me three things about yourself you’d like to change,” he said.



“Okay, I’m a little hard-headed. I could be better at cleaning my room and sometimes I have trouble being on time,” I admitted. “This is bad because my Mom says that the worst thing you can steal from somebody is their time. Also, I am sometimes guilty of thinking more about what I don’t have, rather than being grateful for what I do have.”

“Clearly, you don’t have a problem being honest,” he laughed. “So, you already have some idea of how to change those things, right?”

I nodded in agreement. When I thought about it...I really did.

Master T continued, “I am trying to find the new transformation team who by their actions alone will spark positive change in others. They will know that when a problem comes up, it is an opportunity for growth.

I need a team who will feel positive about learning, changing and growing. Are you prepared to do that Onionhead?” he asked, “like ya know...let the transformation fire away!!!!”

“I’m a talking onion. Not everyone gets me, so being different comes naturally to me. Also, people do call me a fiery-tasting vegetable anyway. So bring it on!”

“Good, good. So then Onionhead, do you think you would want to be in my new transformation team?” he asked.

I found a hint of sadness in his question; like he had asked it so many times and found few who were willing to join him. I guess they were too afraid to change. He knew from his wisdom that it would, indeed, take a team to create a big transformation...it could not happen through just one person.

TEAM NEEDED:

Looking for a team willing
to spark positive change in the World.

Members must have a great
attitude about growth, and learning.
For more info call Master T at 888.777.5555

I had traveled almost the entire Universe to be exactly where I was. When I really thought about what he was asking, it did not seem so large. The more I thought about it, the more positive it felt.

Imagine if problems didn't overwhelm me. Imagine if I could see the possibility of a problem becoming an opportunity. If I could do that, there wouldn't be anything I couldn't do. Plus, why else would I have traveled all this way if I was not meant to join his team.

"Master T, I do believe I could be a member of your new transformation team – a valuable member. It would be my greatest pleasure to serve with you." I answered him with pride.

"Thank you, Onionhead. Thank you. I believe in you; you have shown great courage and commitment in coming here." We sat together for another moment in silence. It was a silence filled with hope that indeed a new world filled with positivity would be coming.

"Is there anything else I need to do for the team?" I asked him after a while.

"Yes," he said. "Don't forget this: one only has to change oneself in order to change the whole world."

With that, the Master T smiled, took my hand again and nudged us off the edge of Saturn's moon.

"Thank you my friend. I am forever grateful," he said as he gently let me go and all I could see was the fire above his crown.



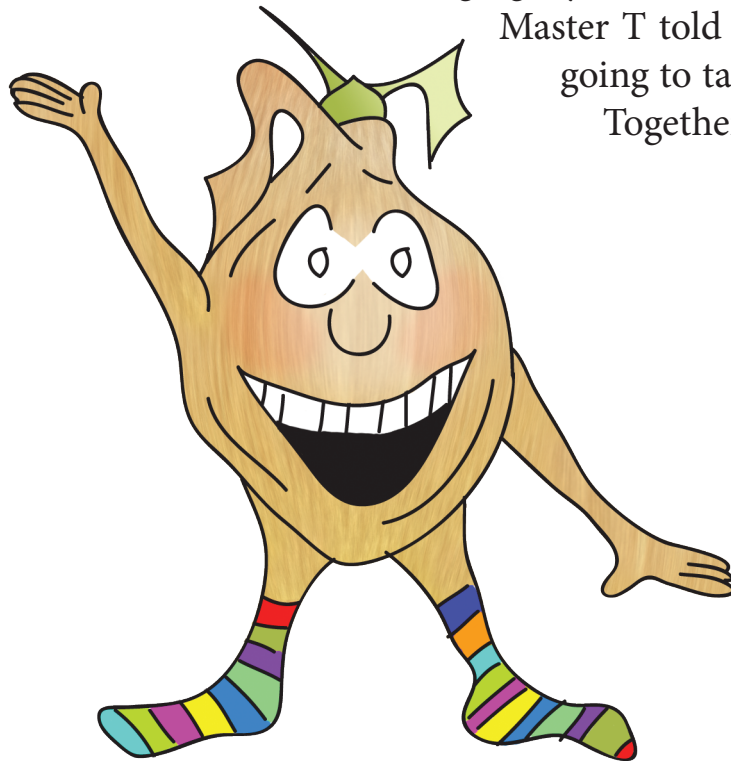
When I opened my eyes, I found the comfort of my room, the stillness of my bed and the sweet smell of vanilla French toast coming from downstairs. I got up knowing I was going to ask my Mother some serious questions about herself. For some reason, I felt like a new budding onion. I wrote...

Lesson from Saturn

Remember – positivity comes from being excited about growth and change.

Changing myself is the first step to changing the world.

Master T told me that changing the world is
going to take a team because team means
Together Each Accomplishes More.



Sunday

SUN



My Mom was excited for me to try her French toast because she had made it differently this morning. But when I walked into the kitchen, I had only one thing on my mind and French toast wasn't it.

"Do you have something to tell me?" I asked, standing in front of her with my hands on my hips. "Maybe about a trip you've taken or some far, far away place that you've been?" I was strong willed and I knew I had inherited that from her.

"I don't know what you're talking about. I haven't traveled in a while and have no plans in the immediate future," she said as she flipped the French toast.

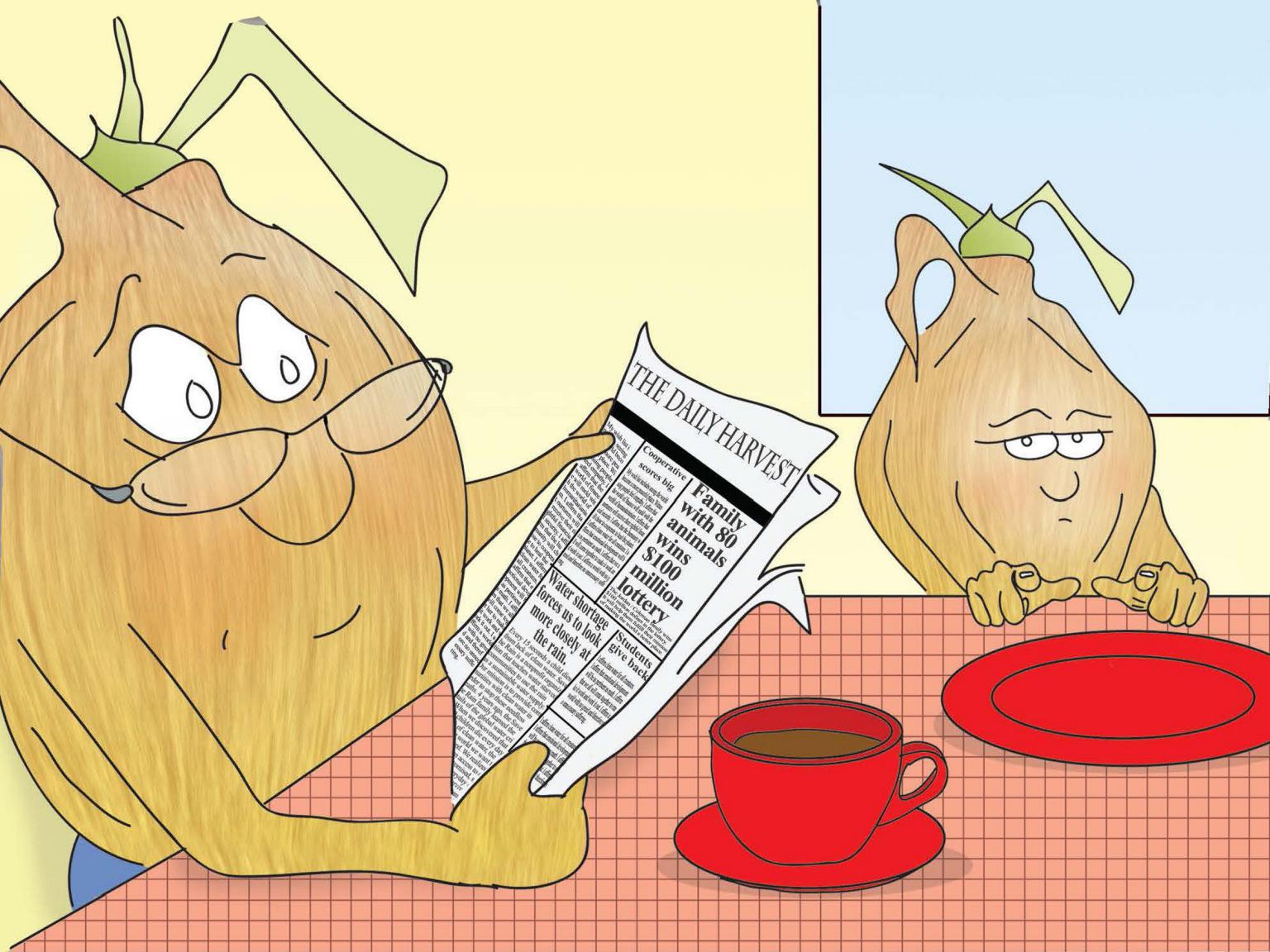
"Mom, you have nothing to tell me, not even maybe about a visit to Master T?" I asked.

"Who's Master T?" my Dad asked, looking up from the newspaper.

"Oh, no one dear, just an old friend," my Mom said but when my Dad went back to reading, she winked at me and smiled.

Ah ha! Apparently strong will was not the only thing I had inherited from her! Obviously the title Space Traveler was too! I knew she couldn't have made up that stuff about Saturn's Ring of Change. Feeling slightly victorious, I sat down to eat.

"What's up for everyone today?" my Dad asked finally setting his paper down.



“I have more homework to do. I have a presentation to do tomorrow,” I answered. “Really,” Dad asked, “About what?”

“Space and what we learn from it,” I replied between bites.

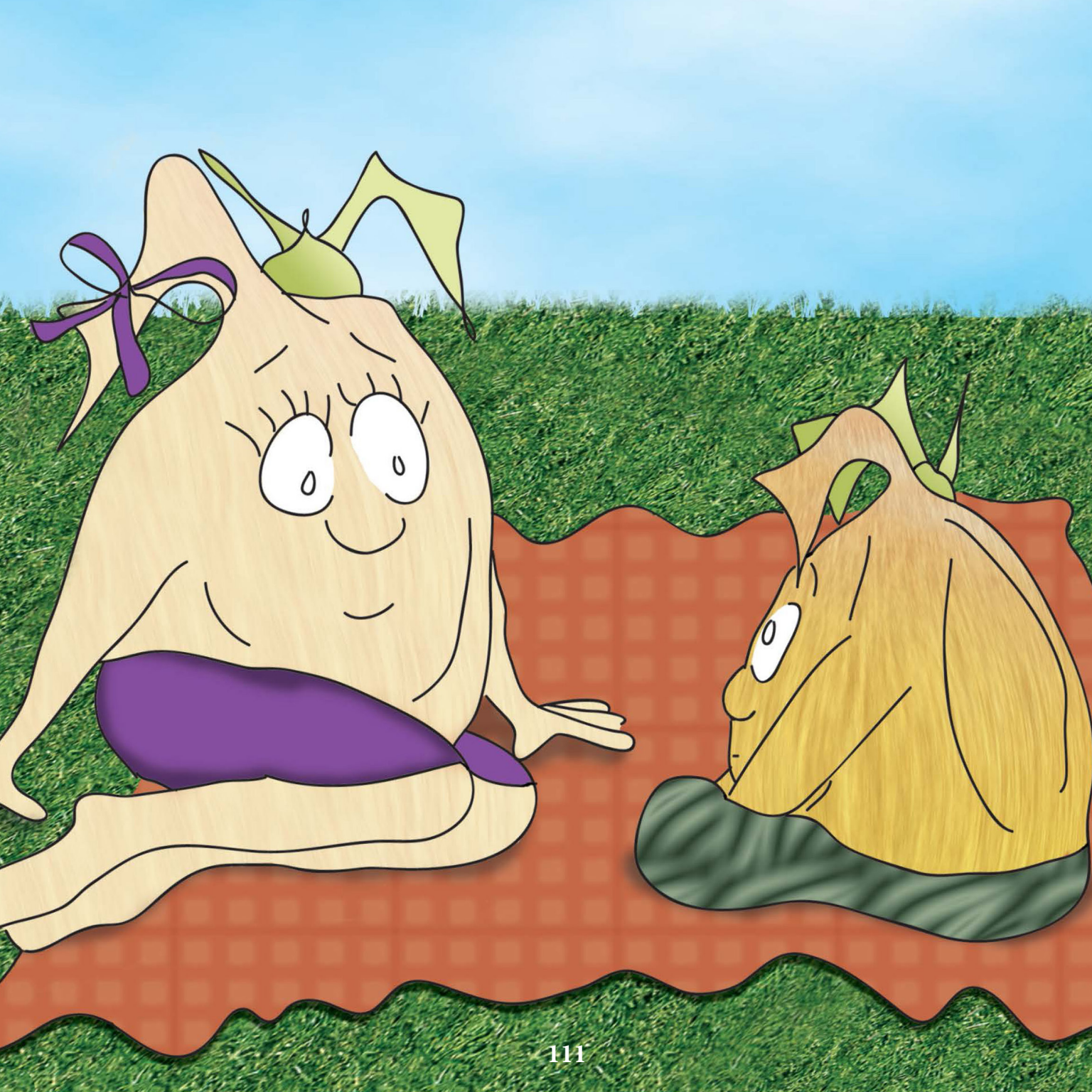
“Well, you should talk to your Mother about that. She knows tons about space. Sometimes I think she might even be an alien!” Dad joked.

I almost spit out my French toast...an alien! Could she be? She was incredibly smart and did know an awful lot about stuff no one else seemed to know about. But if she were an alien, what would that make my Grandma? More importantly, what would that make me! I looked at her more closely, trying to see some resemblance between her and the beings I had met. I thought about it a little but came back to the fact that she must be a space traveler, like me.

When we finished breakfast, my Dad went to visit my Uncle which left me and my Mom alone. Now she would have to tell me.

“Spill it.” I cornered her in the laundry room. “I know where you’ve been!”

“Do you?” she replied coyly. Looking me straight in the eye, she knew I would not give up. So finally she said, “Okay. Come on.”



She led me out to the yard where she had set a blanket down on the lawn. "Sit down here and soak up some sun," she said pointing up towards the sky. "Now I'll tell you anything you want to know."

I lay down and let the sun warm my onion peels. Finally, I asked the big question. "Are you an alien?" "No," she said. "Is Grandma?" I asked.

"No. Well, maybe," she replied. I sat straight up. "Really?" I asked. My eyes were huge. "No, just kidding!" she laughed.

"Okay, so if no one in the family is an alien, how do you know so much about space stuff?" I asked seriously.

"Well, I never said no one in the family...your father's Aunt Caila might very well be an alien. But I'm still gathering proof," she said trying to hold back her laugh.

"MOM! Seriously!" I yelled.

"Okay. Like you, I was a space traveler. It started a long time ago when I was just a little younger than you. I would sneak out at night and lay under the stars. It was the most wondrous thing I had ever seen. It was illuminating and I truly felt that there was something so much bigger than our world out there. I knew it was filled with wonder and beyond what I could imagine. So incredible was the view, that one night, it lulled me straight to sleep."

"Wow, when Grandma found out she must have been so mad!" I said, in disbelief that my Mom would ever do something like that.



“I wanted to know the world beyond ours. I could not wait one more day to feel that ‘space feeling’ again.” “What happened?” I asked.

“Well, when I fell asleep, I thought I had a dream that I had traveled to the Sun. It was warm and everything there seemed to be so vital and alive. When my parents realized I was gone, many hours had passed. They sent a search party to the garden’s surface. They were worried that something had harmed me.

When they found me, I was rushed to the vegetabologist but he couldn’t find anything wrong. My Mother said it was a miracle that I was fine. I knew being fine was not the miracle, the real miracle was where I had been. When I suspected you were a space traveler, I’ll admit I was so happy for you and maybe a little jealous too,” she said. Her voice had a longing for a time gone by.

“Jealous? Why?” I asked. “Because you have one more planet to study before your presentation tomorrow. Don’t you?”

“Yes.” I replied. “I still have to visit the Sun.” I paused for a moment and came up with a brilliant idea. “Mom, if you are a space traveler too, maybe we could go to the Sun together. That would be so cool!”

“I would love nothing more. But the Sun is a place reserved for the youth, for the future leaders. It is the planet of creativity and new gardens. I have tried to revisit the Sun but I’m no longer allowed. The Sun taught me what I needed to understand.”

“Wow.” “So instead of going with you, I’ll lie down too and wait here while you go. This way a little piece of me will go with you. Okay?”

“Okay.” So we both got comfortable and started to count down. 26, 25, 24.....

15, 14, 13... “Mom?” I sat up mid-count, my eyes wide open with a hint a fear behind them.

“Yes, dear.”

“When you go to the Sun, does it burn?”

“No, love. Would I send you anywhere that would do you harm?” “No, of course not.” I said settling back down, resuming my counting.

3, 2, 1...

blast off!



Heading towards the sun was interesting. I know my Mom had said nothing would harm me but it felt weird to hurl myself towards a giant ball of fire. And not just any fire, the biggest ball of fire in the Solar System. The very one that ensures that all things have a chance to grow.

I took one more look at my fear and let it go with a huge “charge” like scream. “Chouteton wa Chouteton!” I yelled. No clue why or what it meant but it seemed to fit.

Entering the Sun, I noticed that my outsides did not feel hot at all. It was my insides I could feel glowing and it felt wonderful.

Where I landed did not really make much sense to me. The surface was a combination of purple and yellow.

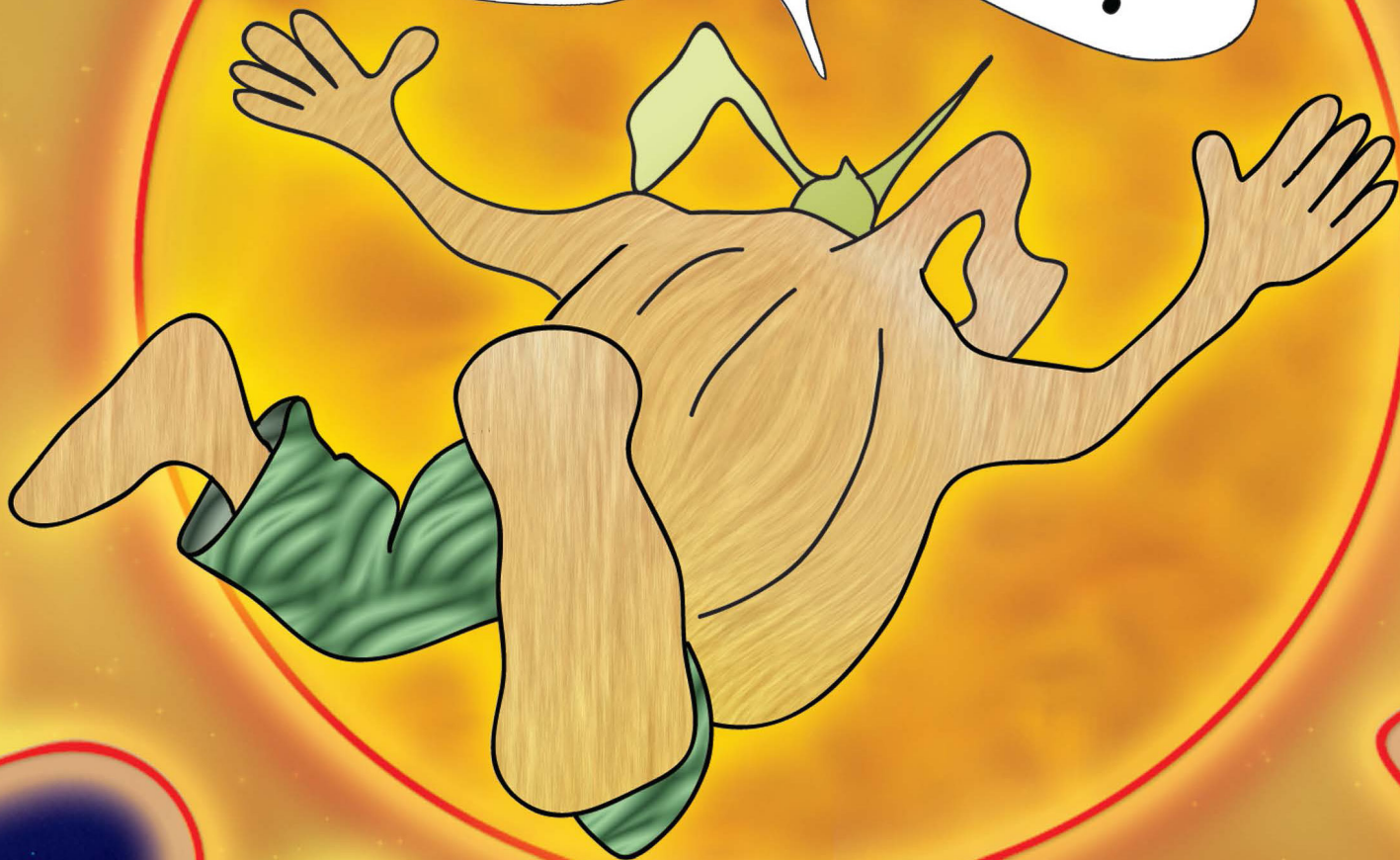
“You are in the center of the flame. We have been waiting for you,” a voice said out of nowhere.

“Where are you?” I asked. “All around you,” the voice replied.

Wow, I now understood why my Mom would want to come back here. There was this amazing feeling like I had never felt before. Nothing was separated, you could feel yourself as part of everything.

“Do you know why you are here?” the voice asked. “I’m assuming to learn,” I answered. “Yes, you are here to learn to teach,” the voice said.

**CHOUTETON
WA CHOUTETON!**



Learn to teach? I'm only 8...what could I possibly be able to teach, I thought.

"Ahh, the youth are the best teachers. They create without hesitating because they are still connected to the power of wonder," the voice said, clearly able to hear my thoughts.

"What's the power of wonder?" I asked.

"So zestful you are, much like your Mother was," the voice said.

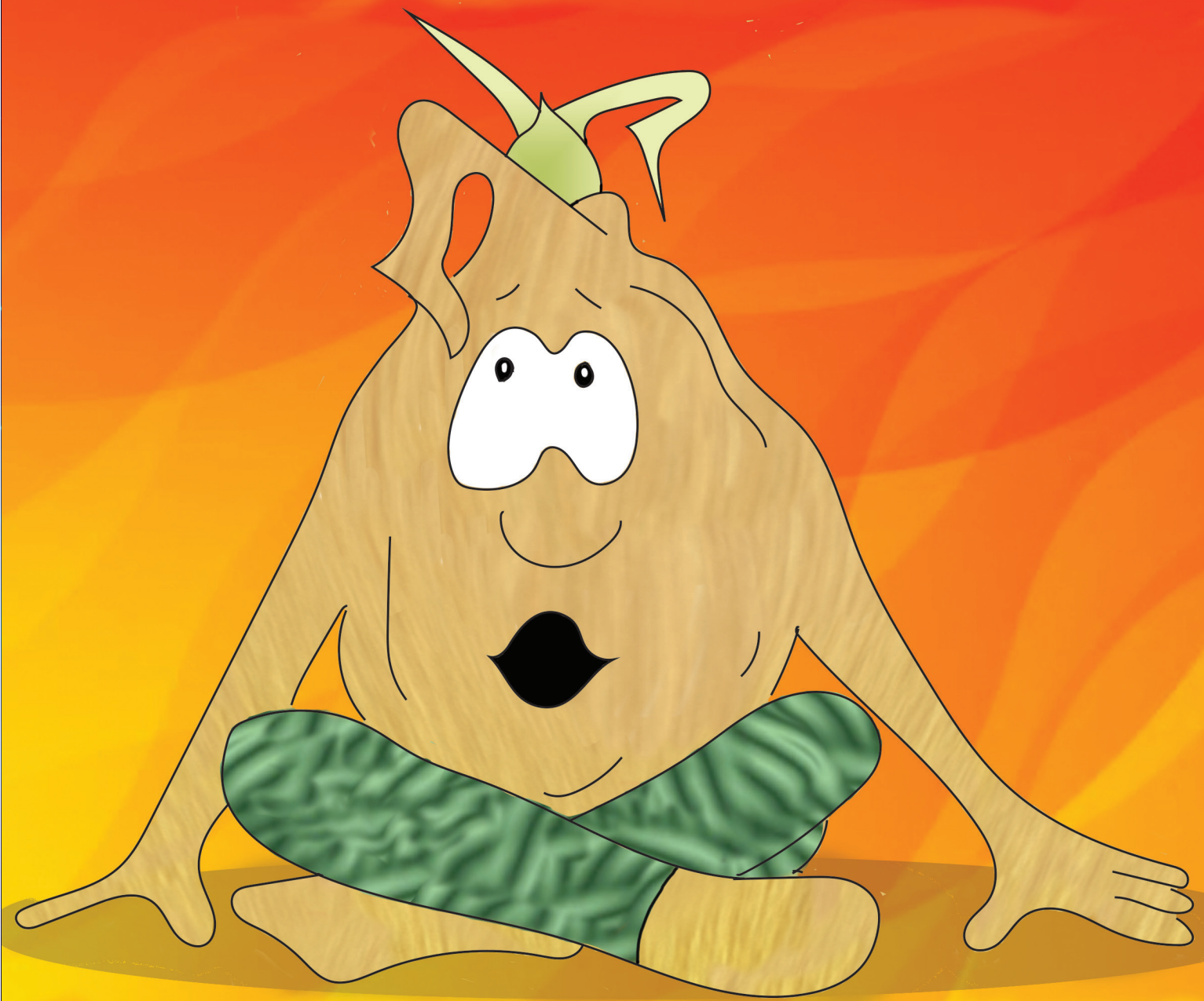
I smiled at the idea of my Mom sitting here and then I asked: "What do I call you?" "I am called Master Soleil, Sun in French."

"Hi Master Soleil, I'm Onionhead. Very nice to meet you...uhh wherever you are. So back to the power of wonder...now what is that?"

He laughed again, a deep hearty chuckle. "What I love about the youth is that curiosity allows for no time to be wasted. There are three layers to get to wonder. Once you have gone through them all, wonder-filled things get created."

"What are the three layers?" I asked, praying I would remember all of this. "Not to worry, you will," he said.

I was going to have to get used to this idea that Master Soleil could hear everything I thought and felt.



“The first layer is light. Everything begins with a spark of light - whether that be an idea, a seed, a wish, or even a relationship.”

I understood - because of my family roots, I knew how important light is for us to grow. “A garden is a very good example to follow. Gardens can be so beautiful...we need to make the world a new garden, don’t you think?” he asked.

I thought to myself...a new garden...well yeah, that would be cool! Imagine how different people would be if they approached everything like a garden. I did not have time to give my enthusiastic answer before he went on.

“The second layer is Love. Love is like the rain, water from the heavens. No garden can grow without rain, so love is the most important layer for something to blossom. Without love, there can be nothing of beauty.” I knew about that from Venus, but I did not say anything.

“The last layer is Laws. Laws are like the soil that the garden is planted in. Laws create a foundation of discipline that drives everything forward. Light and Love cannot survive without Laws. If we do not have Laws, Light can fade away and Love can be destroyed.”

Wow, this clearly was no small task. This wasn’t what color shoes should you put on? Or what should you eat for lunch? This was understanding how everything moves. This was understanding the power behind how we all could grow. This was about taking responsibility for everything we do.

Love Laws



“Onionhead, you have come here so that we might ask something important of you,” Master Soleil said. “Sure, anything,” I replied but I really was a little worried.

“Go back and tell your friends and family about the power of wonder and the layers of Light, Love and Laws.”

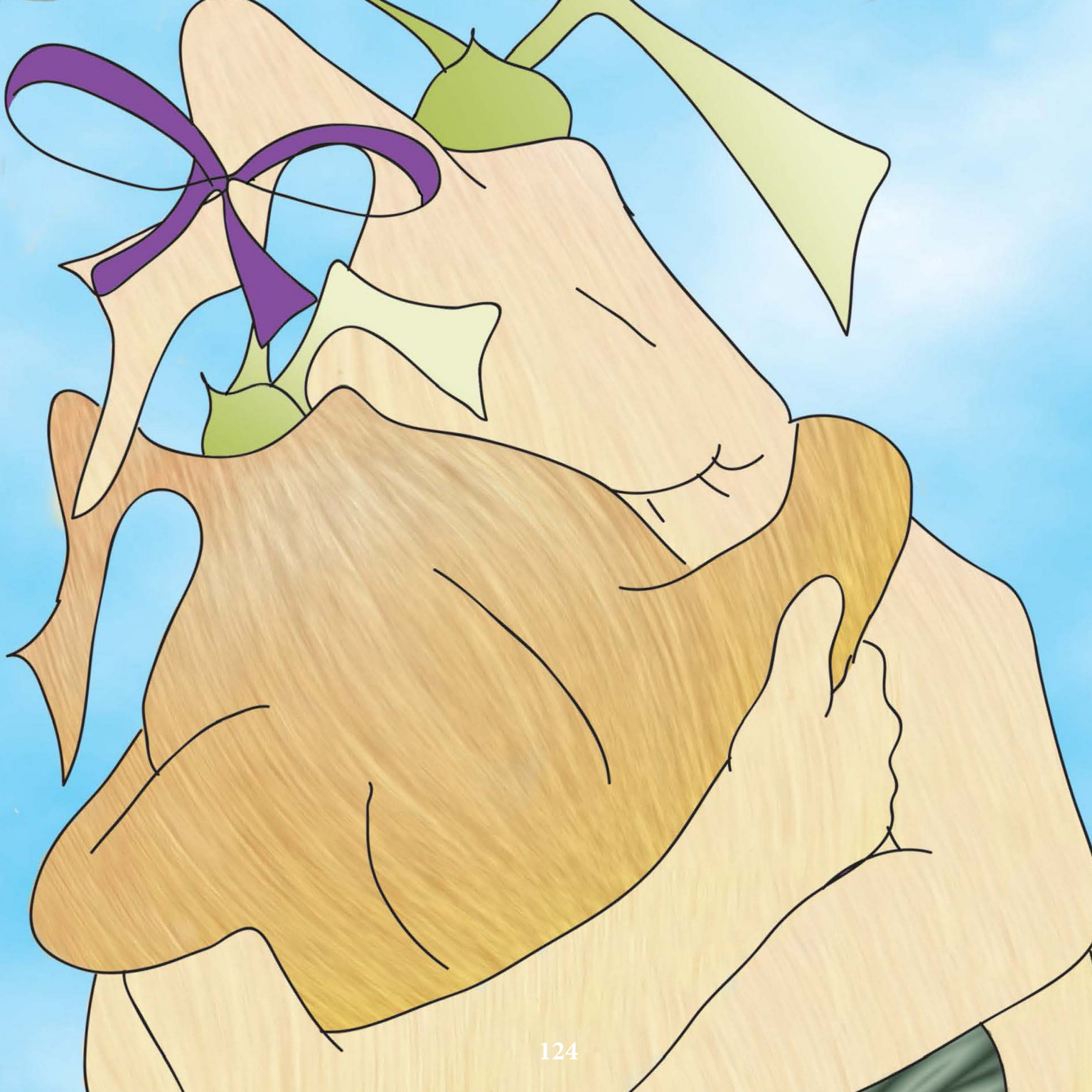
“I will. I promise.” I felt this was easy because I already knew I wanted to do that anyway.

Just as the words left my mouth, it felt like a window inside of me opened. I could feel a breeze where I once felt all this warmth. I was not ready to leave. I had so many other questions to ask before I grew up.

But when I opened my eyes, I was back with my Mom. She had a tear in her eye and so did I.

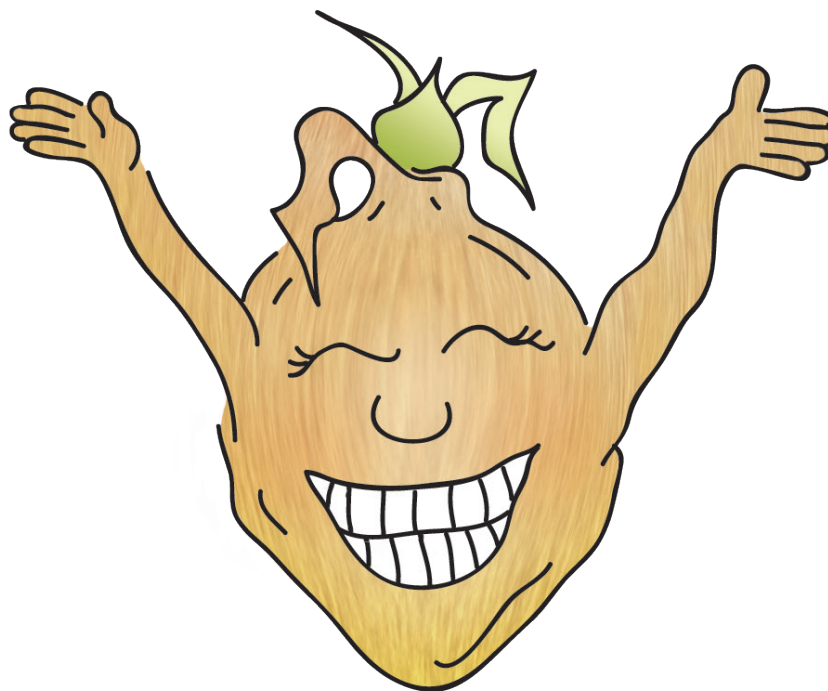
“You now have heard about the layers,” she said. “Go write your report and tell the others what you have learned.”

I hugged her tightly and ran up to my room. I wrote ...



Lesson from the Sun

Remember - wonder comes from light, love and laws. One cannot work without the other. I 'wonder' why no one thought of that before!



MONDAY:
One week
& a whole
Universe later

Mr. Abraham called me to the front of the class. “Are you ready with your report Onionhead?”

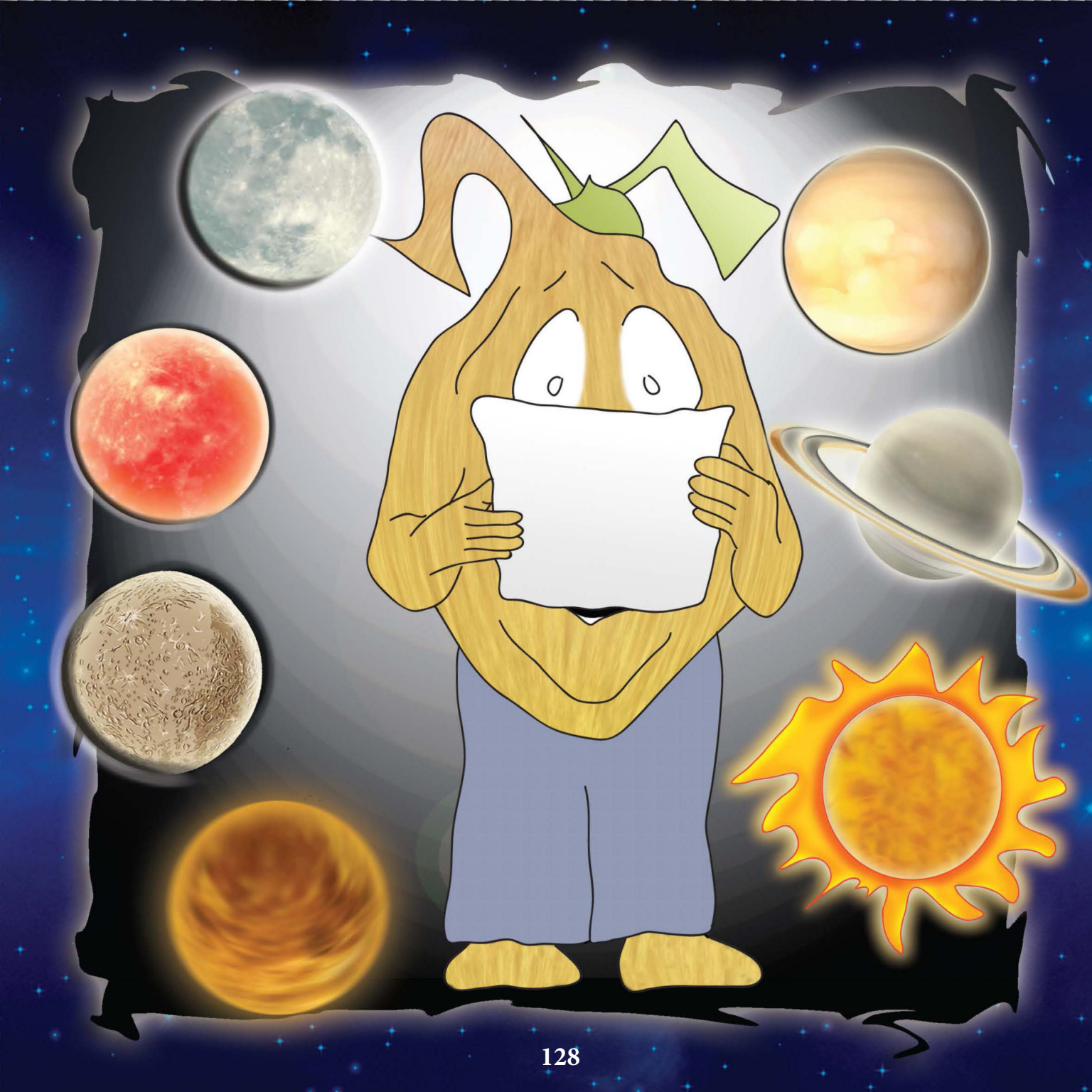
“I am,” I answered. I was nervous and praying that I would deliver the information properly. As I walked to the front of the class, I turned off the lights and turned on the projector.

“My presentation is called ‘Space’s Simple Secrets for a Better World,’ ” I said clearing my throat.

“Space is an amazing field of study. It makes us look at everything differently. Often we get wrapped up in the things that are happening in our lives. When we find ourselves stuck in something, all we really need to do is look up to get another point of view.

Imagine for a minute if all that the other planets wanted was to help us have a more loving, kinder, healthier place to grow up in. What would they tell us? What do they see when they look at the way we live? For my report, I would like to tell you what I feel the beings from other planets want us to know.” I clicked the projector to a photo of the Moon.

I went on to repeat all the Remembers and summed up each planet by saying that they each had a program that could help our world.



The Moon is called “The **Connection** Program” - to bring kindness to our world.

Mars is called “The **Unity** Program” - to bring cooperation to our world.

Mercury is called “The **Truth** Program” - to bring purity to our world.

Jupiter is called “The **Happiness** Program” - to bring hope to our world.

Venus is called “The **Love** Program” - to bring beauty to our world.

Saturn is called “The **Transformation** Program” - to bring positivity to our world.

The Sun is called “The **Garden** Program” - to bring wonder to our world.

I did not want to make it too long because I was so worried the class would not believe me. However, I guess I did a good job because everyone just stared at me...with stars in their eyes. Then, I knew I was a good student who had become a good teacher.

For my ending, I changed the slide to a picture of the Earth and said:

“This is our planet and she needs our help. What if all we needed to do was listen to Space’s simple ideas to make sure the future would be brighter and better? Is that something you would do?”

I turned off the slide projector and turned the lights back on.

“Thank you,” I said and returned to my seat. The whole class was silent. I think Mr. Abraham may have even had a tear in his eye. Just then he stood up and started to clap. One by one, everyone else started to clap too. I had done it. I had shared Space’s simple secrets and the class seemed to understand it. Will they practice it in their everyday life? I don’t know.

But the bigger question is: Will you?

