

Freddy's Alien Dream

My Alien Dream

So I'm just lying there, thinking of what Jaz and I had been talking about, drifting off to sleep. Looking lazily at the pictures of the planets on the walls, feeling the warmth of the bed underneath me. Hearing the drone from the TV in the room below.

But beneath me is not a bed, it is a seat. I'm still lying on my back, but when I try to get up, my shoulders are pinned down by two strong belts, and my feet are clamped into place in front of me. The seat is vibrating gently. The drone from the TV has turned into a deep-throated roar, somewhere far off, somewhere below us.

And I'm not alone. To my left, strapped in and smiling across at me, is my brother Wil. And to the other side, my mate Hardy, also smiling, pulling faces. Just in front of us, on two forward seats, our mate Jaz, surrounded by screens and maps, and our mission controller, a little bald head known to us only as Mr Andrews, switching switches and dialling dials on the panels in front of him.

I start to speak just as the roar from below increases in volume, building up from a low hum to a higher pitched and more persistent drone, accompanied by more shaking from the flimsy structure that we are sitting in.

'What is this, where are we going?'

But nobody hears. Wil gives me a thumbs-up and another smile, and Hardy claps me on the back of the head with his heavily gloved hand. The noise is becoming deafening now, and Mr Andrews is struggling to hold on to the controls in front of him as the craft shakes more violently. Suddenly, with a lurch, with a bang, and another, and an overwhelming feeling that the whole thing was going to come down on top of us, we evidently take to the air, shooting vertically upwards. Within seconds, or maybe less, we are through the clouds.

The craft settles down, and as the air gets thinner, the noise subsides into a duller roar behind us, and the shaking lessens to a more bearable wobbling sensation. Jaz, seated to the right of the captain, turns his head so that he can just see the three of us sitting behind him. He touches the tip of his finger to the tip of his thumb, forming an 'O' shape.

I could just make out Hardy as he yelled

'It means 'OK''

to me through the din. I nodded back dimly to him.

Although the vehicle seems to be well equipped with modern technology, two things continue to worry me. The first, is Mr Andrews, our mission controller, who has stood up out of his seat, swaying slightly, and has started pulling at some wiring high above his head, as if something is not working correctly. He pulls at one clutch of wires which come straight off in his hand. He throws them lazily to the floor.

'I wonder what those were for...' he mutters, almost to himself.

Then Jaz, who is now pulling out some large papers from the panel in front of him, ignoring the screens and controls in front of him.

'Here, come and have a look, it's quite safe...!'

Getting up gingerly from my seat, I make my way over to Jaz's seat, which has the word *Mission Navigator* printed on the back. I'm trying not to think of a mission commanded by Mr Andrews and navigated by Jaz. In fact just as this thought hits me, I look out of the tiny round window, and can just see the earth receding into the distance. I guess I'd better just trust them.

Jaz is unfolding his large maps, which cover the whole of the control panel space in front of him.

'C'mon Jaz, you're joking. These are ancient. They won't be any good!'