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I WANT TO GO HOME!

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CHAPTER ONE

**I'M LEAVING WITHOUT A GOODBYE
AND WITHOUT MY SLIPPERS**



Nikola is lying in his bed with the quilt over his head. He is furious. As he was about to get to the next level of a video game his dad turned off his computer while his mom pointed to the bathroom. Take a shower. Clean your face. Brush your teeth. Put on your pajamas. Go to bed.

“Not fair! They could have given me five more minutes. So what if I am



going to school in the morning? Argh-hhh!” – Nikola is grinding his teeth and kicking against the mattress.

His mom and dad are always bossing him around:

“Don’t run, you’ll get sweaty!”

“Calm yourself! Can’t you see I am on the phone?”

“Hurry up! You know we are running late!”

“Don’t touch the computer, you’ll break it!”

“Be quiet! We’re watching the news!”

“Don’t jump on the couch!”

“Don’t you dare move from that chair!”

In all honesty, Nikola is not the best behaved kid himself.

Between kohlrabi and French fries he will always choose the less healthy one.



Between a chocolate and an apple he will always choose the sweeter one.



Between keeping quiet and talking, he will always choose the one that will annoy his mom.



Between “forward” and “backward”, he will always choose the one that’s more inconvenient to his dad.

Between “I will” and “I won’t”, he will always choose “I won’t”.

Between “small” and “big”, he will always choose “the biggest”.

Between “sooner” and “later”, he will always choose “right now”.

All things considered, nobody in that family is perfect, but I suppose that’s normal, right? The only problem is that Nikola never thinks about the

"My parents are terrible!
Everybody has better parents
than me! That is so unfair! It's
about time I traded them."



That's what Nikola is
mumbling to himself.

consequences and usually blames everything on somebody else.

And so, the decision is made. He is beginning the search for his new parents right away. The only thing left is figuring out where to find them. In the neighborhood? In a nearby country? In Europe? Africa? Australia? The North Pole? In the ads? On Facebook? Stop! None of the above. The only place to find parents for such a lovable and smart boy like Nikola is on another planet.

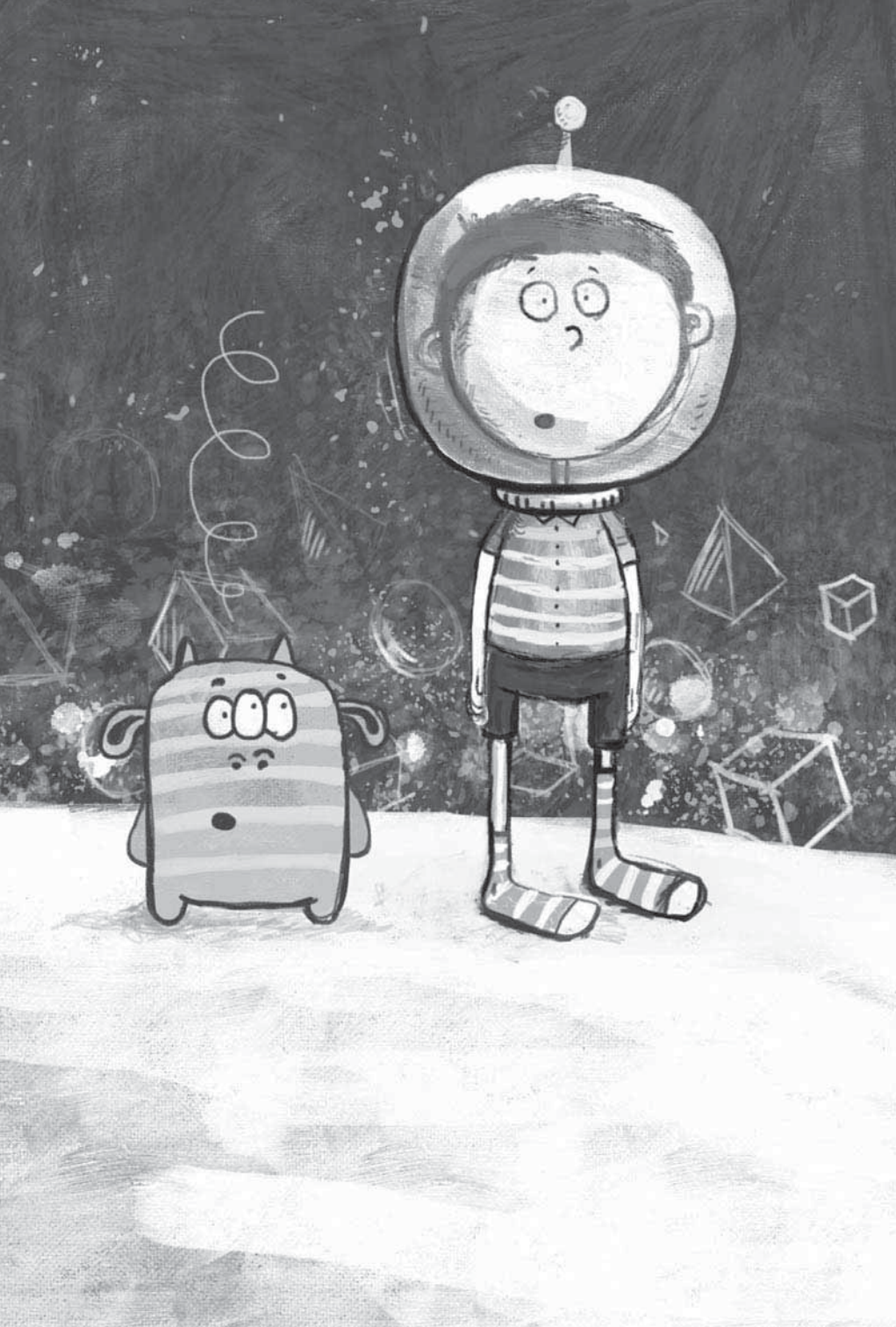


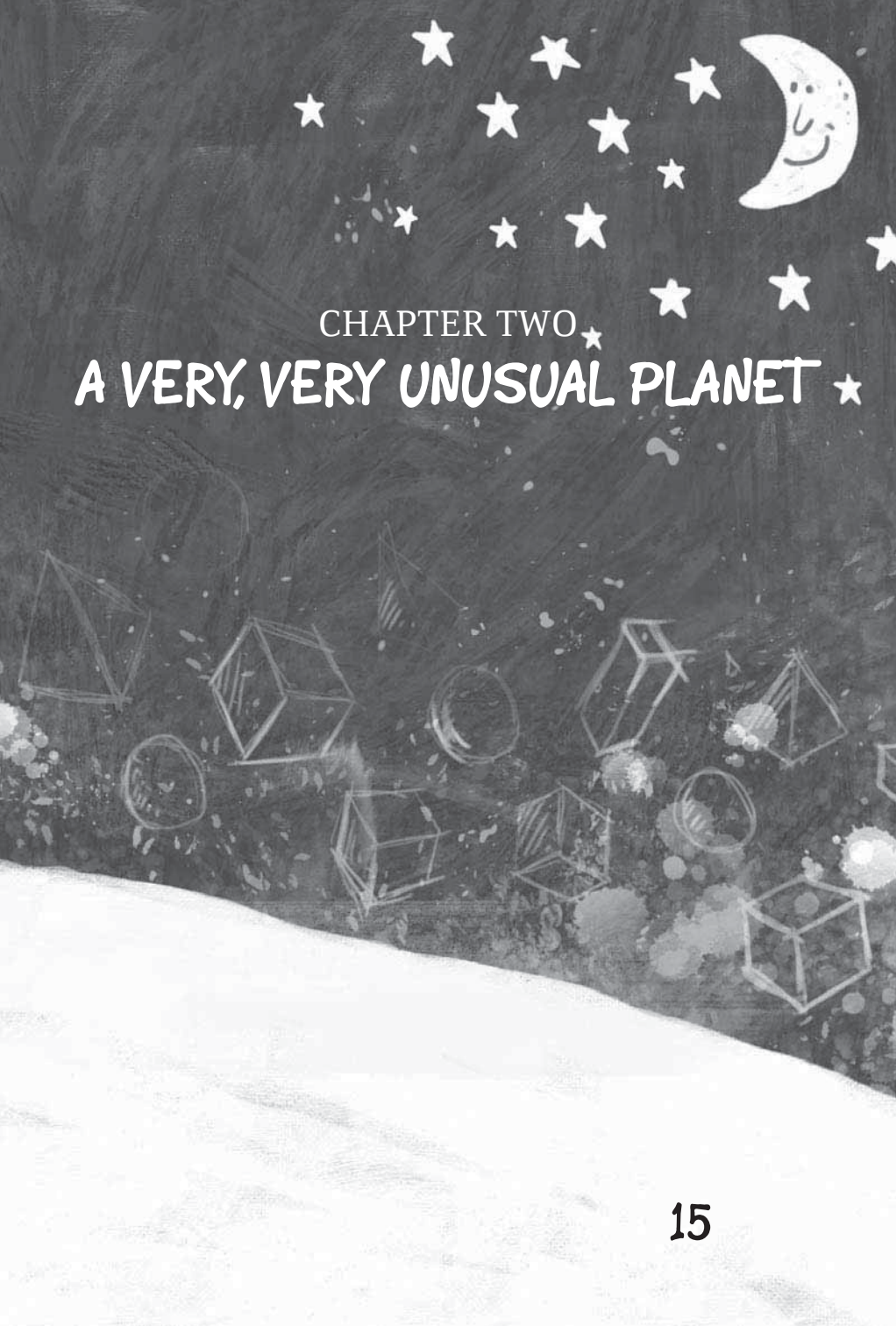


“I am starting my quest!” – Nikola is slowly getting out of bed. “Nothing is keeping me in this house anymore. I’m leaving without a goodbye and without my slippers. I’m leaving forever. I’m not taking anything with me, not one thing!”

Nikola took two steps and then changed his mind.

“Actually, I’ll take Monster with me, just in case.”





CHAPTER TWO

A VERY, VERY UNUSUAL PLANET

What a planet! Nikola was speechless. The whole view opened in front of him: mountains, seas, earth, books, pianos, windows and doors. Colorful, aromatic and melodic shapes were popping out from every hole. Everything was overlapping, connecting, intertwining, playing, ringing, singing like in a craziest cartoon.

Pedja

Joca



“Pedja and Joca are not going to believe me when I tell them”, the boy whispered.

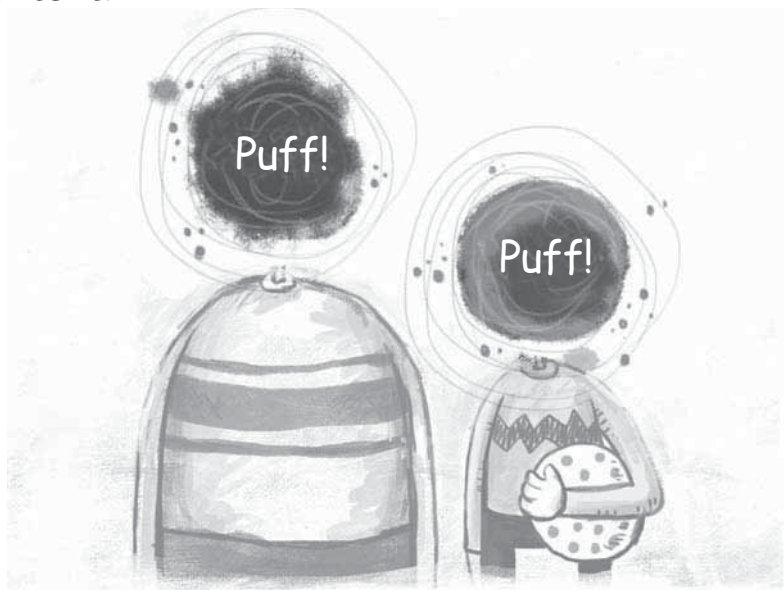
And just as he spoke out his friends' names Pedja and Joca appeared in front of him.

“What are you doing here?”, Nikola was shocked.

Pedja and Joca both shrugged, puzzled. They were also overwhelmed.

“Go on, beat it! This is my planet!”, Nikola told them off. “I want you gone by the time I say ‘puff pastry’! Got it?”

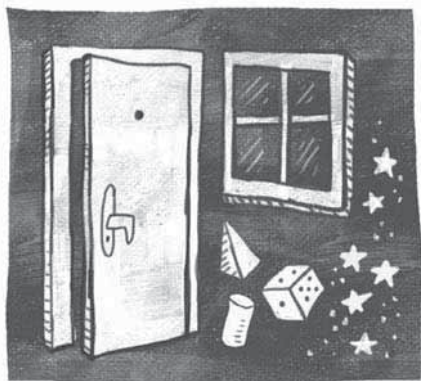
And just like that, puff, puff... - and Pedja and Joca were gone. They did not get to say a word. Nikola smiled with content.



“That’s what they get for kicking me off the football team yesterday!”

Truth be told, it was Nikola’s mistake for scoring an own goal. But that happens even to much more experienced players than himself, doesn’t it? Pedja and Joca first called him names in front of the other players and then kicked him off the field. Well, this will give them a taste of their own medicine. Nikola put Monster in his pocket and decisively straightened the wrinkles on the top part of his pajamas. Now he can enjoy the natural beauties of his own

planet in peace. Hmm, where should he begin? The mountain? The sea? The window? The door? No way! The thing that interests him the most is a





computer spread over the whole field. That's how big that computer is!

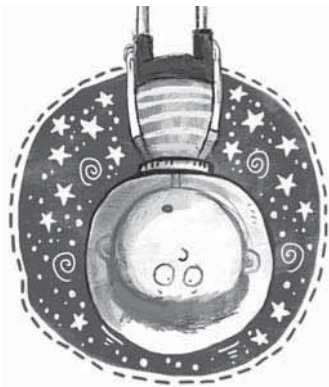
"Now I can play a video game until I am swallowed by the darkness", said Nikola and stretched his fingers over the keyboard.





And swallowed the boy
in two bites.





He played the video game until it got dark, and then the darkness opened its mouth...

Nikola was bewildered. He was floating in the dark like a jellyfish in the sea, trying to figure out what was happening to him.

“This is a very, very peculiar planet!”, he concluded.

The boy was waving his arms and legs more and more nervously. He did not like this one bit.

“I did not come all this way to match wits with the dark. I have enough of it under my quilt. I am here on a much more important business. I want to find new parents who will play with me all day long.”

Nikola spread his arms and shouted from the top of his lungs:

“Mom, dad, here I come!”

CHAPTER THREE
HMM, THIS MUST BE A MISTAKE





The darkness instantly disappeared and Nikola fell on his behind onto a trampoline. He bounced up a couple of times and then went still. Completely. He stared at a girl and a boy who were peeking behind a tree.

“Hi, Nikola! I am your new mom”, the girl smiled.

“And I am your new dad!”, the boy said and clapped his palms.



“Hmm, this must be a mistake!”, said Nikola as he was scratching his head. “You are younger than me. How can you be my parents?”

“Shoowe we can”, the girl-mom was giggling. “Everyfing is possible on youw pwanet.”

“But who is going to wake me up for school? Who is going to make my

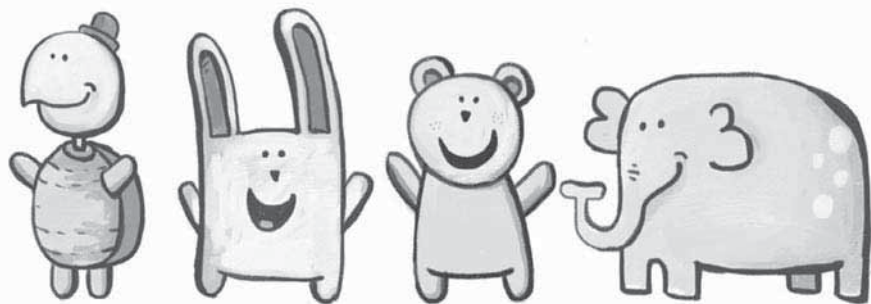


breakfast?”, Nikola was starting to panic a bit. “Who is going to drive me to the swimming practice? Do the two of you even know where the pool is?”

“There is no studying here, or swimming, and least of all sleeping”, the boy-dad explained to him.

“And what is there to do here?”, Nikola was puzzled.

“Pwaytime!”, yelled the girl-mom and waved her arms up in the air. “Come on, son, what awe you waiting fow? It’s playtime! Quick, quick, quick!”





Nikola took a step back and frowned. Sure, he resented his parents for not playing enough with him, but is a two-year-old girl going to be his mom now?



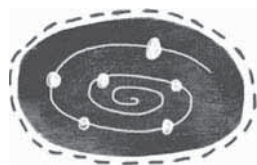
“Just so you know, I am thwee and a half”, the girl-mom corrected him.

“On this planet you must mind your thoughts, not only your mouth”, said Nikola worriedly.

“Son, enough talking! It’s playtime!”, said boy-dad decisively.

Nikola was completely confused. He did not like his new parents one bit, but he did like the invitation to play.

While Nikola was thinking about what he was going to do, restless little hands were peeking behind the tree. One was tickling his stomach, the other his foot, a third was tickling his armpit,



while the fourth tickled his neck. And what was Nikola to do except giggle.

Then his parents ran after him and a crazy race around the field began. Afterwards, they did head rolls, played hide and seek and climbed trees. You couldn't tell who was more perky – mom, dad or son. They played until



Nikola got tired. He sat on the grass and said gasping for air:

“Mom, I am sweaty, give me another pair of pajamas! I’ll get sick! Dad, make me some mint tea. On second thought, I don’t want tea, I want warm milk, or even better – hot chocolate.”

However, Nikola did not get his pajamas, nor tea, nor milk, not even hot chocolate. Girl-mom and boy-dad noticed a squirrel and merrily hopped after it. They instantly forgot about their son.

And what else was Nikola supposed to do than to take Monster by the hand and continue his own way.

He was walking slowly and thinking.

“Those kids looked suspicious to me from the first moment I saw them! I want my parents to be car-



ing, to look after me, to jiggle me, cuddle me, feed me... That's the kind of parents I need."

