

JACKIE AND THE GOLDEN COMET  
A Short Play

By Tyler Cramer

CHARACTERS:

JACKIE, 10, Ambitious and proactive, but often jumps to conclusions.

JILL, 10, JACKIE's fraternal twin sister. Athletic and scientific but shy. Likes to think things through.

SAM, 10, Over-eager, friendly, and has a secret crush on JACKIE. He doesn't have the best luck.

ALLISON, 9, SAM's little sister. She emulates her brother's over-eagerness and is accident-prone.

BRETT, 11, JACKIE's scientific rival, he tries, but often fails to be smarter than she is.

JIMMY, 10, Constantly making knock-knock jokes.

LILA, 10, a virtually silent girl. JILL seems to be the only one who knows how to communicate with her.

ZEEBS, a strange alien creature dressed in gold.

MOM, off-stage voice only, JACKIE and JILL's mom.

COMMANDER GREGAND, off-stage voice only, ZEEBS' mom.

NARRATOR 1 and 2

ALIENS (8 needed)

TIME:

The present.

PLACE:

Suburban neighborhood. Space. The Golden Comet.

SCENE ONE- GAZING

(It is nighttime. JACKIE is in her front-yard gazing through a telescope.)

NARRATOR 1 AND 2

Welcome.

NARRATOR 1

It is here, in Jaclyn Jane Jameson's front yard that we begin our play.

JACKIE  
(to NARRATORS)

No need to call me Jaclyn, Jackie is just fine.

NARRATOR 1

Alright, thanks Jackie.

NARRATOR 2

Jackie loves science and going on adventures. She's a bit of a hero in her neighborhood.

JACKIE

That's right! I especially love space. I'm looking through my brand new telescope right now. My mom got it for me.

NARRATOR 1

Jackie is very dedicated to this scientific passion of hers. In fact she's so dedicated that this is the third night in a row that she's been out stargazing past her bedtime.

JACKIE  
(suddenly)

SHH!

NARRATOR 1

Sorry...

NARRATOR 2

We'll leave you to it.

(JACKIE goes back to her telescope.)

JACKIE

This is a very special night. If my calculations are correct a super rare comet will be passing by Earth's orbit and can be seen in the night sky. It'll be here for the next few days, so I'll be able to get plenty of data about it. I just wish Jill were here right now. I need her to take notes. Where could she be?

(There are voices from off-stage.)

NARRATOR 2

Ah, here comes Jackie's twin sister Jill.

SAM

(off-stage)

You know, I've been thinking, are you and Jackie really twins, cause you guys don't look alike at all.

JILL

(off-stage)

Yes, Sam, I'm sure we're twins.

SAM

(off-stage)

Are you sure you're sure?

JILL

(off-stage)

Yes, Sam. We're fraternal twins.

SAM

(off-stage)

Hey! It's not nice to call names.

JILL

(off-stage)

It's not a name, it just means that we're twins but we don't look the same. Identical twins are the ones that look the same.

(SAM and JILL enter as this conversation ends.)

SAM

Oooh. Okay. Hi Jackie!

JACKIE  
(startled)

Sam! What are you doing here? You'll wake my mom.

SAM

Oh, sorry...

JILL

I brought him here.

JACKIE

Why?

JILL

I told him about your new telescope today at lunch. He made me promise to show him.

JACKIE

Jill, it's my telescope, you know that!

JILL

Yeah, but he gave me two pudding packs. Two!

JACKIE

You sold my telescope privileges for pudding?!

JILL

Yes. Sorry...

SAM

Can I look now? I don't want my folks to find out I'm gone.

JACKIE  
(reluctantly)

Yes, I suppose so. Just give me a few seconds. Jill, I need you to write some stuff down. Grab the pencil and paper over there.

(She does.)

Are you ready?

JILL

Ready.

JACKIE

Okay. And please don't use cursive, I can barely read it.

JILL

Well what was the point in learning it if I'm never going to use it?

JACKIE

Jill!

JILL

Right. Sorry. I'm ready.

JACKIE

Alright. Here it is! The comet! Goldish tint. It looks pretty big. It must be at least 800 meters across.

SAM

Woah!

JACKIE

Sam, quiet!

SAM

Sorry.

JACKIE

Huh. That's funny. This one doesn't have a tail.

JILL

Very strange. What do think it means?

JACKIE

Not sure. We might have to get a closer look. How's the rocket.

JILL

Good. But we can't do a launch now, we'll wake the whole neighborhood!

JACKIE

You're right. That's alright. Judging by its velocity, it should still be in the area for another day. We can do it tomorrow after school.

JILL

Okay.

SAM

Jackie, I don't want to be mean or anything, but you said a few seconds and it's been a minute, so can I look now, please? It sounds really cool and stuff.

JACKIE

Okay. You can take a look now. Do you know how to use a telescope?

SAM

Ah...no.

JACKIE

You just look through the eyepiece.

ALLSION

I can help with that!

(ALLSION eagerly charges on stage, ready to assist. However, she moves so quick that she accidentally tackles JACKIE, SAM, and the telescope. The telescope breaks.)

JACKIE

My telescope!

SAM

Ow! Why did you do that you big noodle!

ALLSION

I'm not a big noodle! I was just trying to help you look.

SAM

Oh yeah!? Well, you just broke her telescope!

ALLSION

I said I was helping!

SAM

You did not succeed!

JACKIE

GUYS!

MOM

JACLYN JANE JAMESON!

JACKIE

Yes mommy?

MOM

Go to bed please. Now. It is way past your bedtime. You know better than that.

JACKIE

Yes mommy.

MOM

Sweetie, is your sister out there too?

JACKIE

Uh-huh.

MOM

JILLIAN JORGEN JAMESON! Please come inside with your sister and go to bed. It's a school night for goodness sake.

JILL

Yes mommy.

MOM

Thank you.

JILL

We'll see you guys tomorrow then. Night.

(She exits.)

JACKIE

I can't believe you broke my telescope.

SAM

I didn't break it. Allison did!

JACKIE

Whatever. Just keep your sister under control. Good night.

SAM

(weakly)

Goodnight, Jackie.

(Silence. He watches as she leaves.)

ALLISON

Do you like her?

SAM

What? No way! Let's just go home before mom and dad wake up.

(The exit. Blackout.)

SCENE TWO- LIMONÁDE

(Lights up. The next day after school. JACKIE and JILL are selling lemonade on their front lawn. A sign taped on the front of their table reads:  
"Lemonade-\$1, With Ice-\$1.25.)

NARRATOR 2

As you can imagine, a girl of scientific nature such as Jackie was quite upset after what had happened the previous night. However, she was not one to be down in the dumps for long.

NARRATOR 1

You see, after a productive day of hand-raising, and answering questions about dinosaurs, the water cycle, and amazingly super long division, Jackie had an excellent idea.

JACKIE

I did indeed.

NARRATOR 2

That's right! Jackie knew that her mother was just as upset as she was about the broken telescope.

NARRATOR 1

So she decided to do a little fundraising.

JACKIE

It all started at lunch today. After making a quick observation, I could see that lemonade was a popular drink in the cafeteria. If my calculations are correct, 96% of the school is drinking lemonade on a regular basis. This is with a plus or minus 3% margin of error. The good news is that the whole student body is in love with lemonade.

NARRATOR 1

And with this lemonade stand, you hope to make enough money for a new telescope?

JACKIE  
(smiling)

You catch on quick.

NARRATOR 1

Thank you!

(Whistling or humming can be heard off-stage.)

NARRATOR 2

Jackie! It looks like a new customer is approaching. Best of luck!

JACKIE

Thanks!

(JIMMY strolls on. He spots the lemonade stand and stops in his tracks. A mischievous grin widens across his face. JACKIE's expression drops.)

Oh no...

JILL

Brace yourself.

(JIMMY strolls over to the table and leans on it.)

JIMMY  
(grinning)

Hey Jackie!

(Pained silence.)

Hey Jackie!

(More pained silence.)

Hey Jackie!

JACKIE  
(bracing herself)

Yes?

JIMMY

Knock knock.

JACKIE  
(with pained hesitation)

Who's there?

(JIMMY's grin widens even more. He is enjoying every second of this.)

JIMMY

Lemonade stand.

(JACKIE gulps.)

JACKIE

Lemonade stand who?

JIMMY

LEMONADE STAND WITH ANTS IN YOUR PANTS!!!

(He doubles over in a fit of wild laughter. This goes on for a beat or so.)

JILL

I don't get it.

JIMMY

Come on! Ants in your pants? You weren't expecting that were you? It's funny!

JILL

I guess so.

JACKIE

Are you gonna buy some lemonade or not?

JIMMY

Is there a comedian's discount?

JACKIE

No.

JIMMY

Oh. Okay.

(He thinks for a moment.)

I'll just have lemonade with no ice.

(He exchanges \$1 for a cup of lemonade. He downs it in one gulp.)

Tasty! I think I'll have another.

(He and JACKIE go through another transaction. LILA enters.)

JILL

Oh, hi Lila.

(She nods.)

Do you want some lemonade too?

(She nods.)

Ice?

(She nods and hands over \$1.25.)

One lemonade with ice.

(JACKIE hands the cup to JILL who hands it to LILA.  
She nods in appreciation.)

JIMMY

Hey Lila, wanna hear a knock knock joke?

(She vigorously shakes her head "no.")

Oh okay.

(ALLISON and SAM enter.)

ALLISON

Oooo! A lemonade stand! Can I help? I wanna help! How can I help?

(She preps to run full speed at the stand, but SAM  
grabs her hand before she is able.)

SAM

Allison, you already broke the telescope. I'm not going to let you break the lemonade stand. That would make Jackie's problems even worse.

(He looks at JACKIE with a big grin.)

ALLISON

Can I still help?

JACKIE

(defensively)

You can help by buying some lemonade.

ALLISON

Okay! I'd love to. Sam, can I have a dollar and twenty-five cents.

SAM

Okay, but Allison, you don't like ice, remember?

ALLISON

Yeah! But it's the most expensive thing on the menu! It will help them get the most money!

JACKIE

Yeah. And I'm gonna need every cent I can get to replace my telescope.

SAM

(handing over the money)

Alright I guess. You'll just have to pick out the ice cubes then. You know, I think I'll have one with no ice too.

(ALLISON glowers at him.)

ALLISON

Cheapskate.

(They go through with the transaction. BRETT enters.)

BRETT

Well, well, well, well, well, well, well. What do we have here? Lemonade? You know what that means? Someone is being a charity case.

JACKIE

What do you want, Brett?

BRETT

I just wanted to see what's up, that's all.

JILL

Just buy your lemonade and go Brett. We don't want any trouble.

BRETT

Before I buy, I want to make sure I know where my money is going.

ALLISON

Jackie needs a new telescope. I broke hers by accident last night.

BRETT

HA! You sure it wasn't already broken when you bought it?

JACKIE

YEAH! It was brand new and worked like a charm. I even made some measurements of a golden comet I saw in the sky!

BRETT

Oh! So you saw it too, huh? I must say, not bad Jackie.

JACKIE

It'll still be in the sky for the rest of the day too, that is if my calculations are correct, which they are! Jill and I were going to do an exploration launch later this afternoon too.

BRETT

What? You'll never make it out of Earth's atmosphere on that hunk of junk. I've seen it. You must be crazy.

JACKIE

I'm not, and it'll totally work.

BRETT

Even if you did make it out of the atmosphere, I bet you couldn't even land on that thing!

JACKIE

You wanna bet?!

BRETT

Yeah I wanna bet!

(Beat. The tensely stare at each other. The rest of the kids hold their breath in anticipation.)

Tell you what. I'll let you try. You get your rocket out of the atmosphere, land it on the gold comet, and I'll give you my telescope. It's completely state of the art. The only better telescopes you'll find are the ones used by NASA and the Swiss government.

JACKIE

You're on—

BRETT

I'm not finished yet. If you fail either of these tasks, I win the bet. And if—excuse me—when I win, you have to forfeit the state science fair for the next three years.

(Everyone including the NARRATORS gasps. JACKIE thinks for a moment.)

JACKIE  
(determined)

Deal.

(They shake hands.)

I have an addition to make.

BRETT

Yeah?

JACKIE

Can everyone else come along to watch you fail?

BRETT

They sure can come, but only watch you fail.

JACKIE

Ha! Deal.

(They shake hands again.)

Jill, go get the rocket.

(Blackout. Then lights up half. JILL wheels the rocket ship on and everybody straps in. There is a sound effect of an official NASA launch "3, 2, 1, Liftoff" followed by the classic roar of fire that boosts the rocket into the air. There is a dazzling light shift with many stars pinpointing around the kids and the rocket ship. They are now in space, and...)

SCENE THREE- CRUISING

NARRATOR 1

The launch was an amazing success! Jackie, Jill, and the rest of their friends were now safely floating in the dazzling vacuum of space, cruising towards the golden comet. Never before had any of them seen such brilliant wonder.

JACKIE

Well, Jill and I have. We've been to space before. It was cool. It's always cool.

NARRATOR 1

So then, everyone except for Jackie and Jill were mystified by the bounty of the universe that they now found themselves surrounded by.

JACKIE

Actually, Brett told me at lunch that he went into space one time, but I think he was lying.

NARRATOR 2

So then, the brave explorers were enraptured in the ecstasy of previously unseen sights! All expect for Jackie, Jill, and possibly Brett, who may or may not be a liar.

JACKIE

That sounds pretty good.

NARRATOR 2

Thanks! I came up with it on the spot.

JACKIE

Yeah! Keep doing what you're doing.

NARRATOR 2

Will do, brave and adventurous Jackie.

ALLISON

Wow! We're in space!

SAM

Yes, we know Allison.

ALLSION

Oh come on, Sammy boy! I thought you'd be more impressed!

SAM

I thought so too. A little cold for my tastes.

ALLSON

Oh hush and watch the stars silly.

(LILA taps JILL on the shoulder and then smashes her fist into her other hand and then shrugs. Everyone looks on baffled.)

JILL

(translating)

Oh! Lila wants to know if we'll see any asteroids.

SAM

(confused)

What?

JILL

Do you know what an asteroid is, Sam?

SAM

Um...No.

JIMMY

(laughing)

Sounds like it could be a joke!

JILL

It's no joke, Jimmy. An asteroid is just a space rock. A rock that floats in space. Okay?

SAM

Okay.

JACKIE

Specifically, an asteroid is a small rocky body orbiting the sun. Large numbers of asteroids, which range in size from nearly 1,000 kilometers across to mere dust particles, can be found in the asteroid belt, but also between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. Some have more eccentric orbits, and a few pass close to the earth or enter the atmosphere as meteors.

BRETT

Oh. You mean like that one right there?

(The kids all look. An asteroid, or rather an actor dressed as an asteroid has entered. The "hulking" space rock is hurtling towards the ship. The kids let out a collective scream. JACKIE expertly maneuvers the ship around it. Now out of harm's way, the kids let out a collective sigh of relief.)

ALLSION

Oh boy, that was close.

SAM

You're telling me.

(LILA nods in agreement.)

SAM

Hey, Jackie.

JACKIE

Yes, Sam?

SAM

Is the Earth going to be safe from that (struggles with the word) as... aste...

JACKIE

Asteroid? Yes it will be safe. That thing was big enough to cause us some problems, but once it reaches Earth it'll just burn up in the atmosphere. Like I said, it turns into a meteor.

(JIMMY's face lights up.)

JIMMY

Hey guys! Knock knock.

(There is a collective groan.)

SAM

Who's there?

JIMMY

Space T-Rex.

BRETT

Space T-Rex who?

JIMMY

RAWR! I'm a Space T-Rex! I'm a MEAT-EAT-OR!

(He laughs uncontrollably.)

Get it? MEAT-EAT-OR? 'Cause it sounds like meteor?

(He laughs again.)

I swear I come up with this stuff on the spot!

(Suddenly a golden glow fills the space. The kids are in awe.)

ALLISON

Wow. I've never seen something so pretty!

SAM

Me neither.

(LILA nods.)

JACKIE

(very officially)

Approaching comet. Commence landing sequence.

(Everyone holds their breath as JACKIE and JILL swiftly and skillfully jiggle controls, throw switches, toggle joy sticks, etc. Finally, there is sound effect of the ship touching down. Everyone except for BRETT starts clapping and cheering.)

SAM

Congratulations, Jackie! You did it!

JIMMY

Hooray! Good show. Never doubted you for a second.

ALLSION

YAAAY!!!

(LILA thoroughly nods.)

JACKIE

Why are you all clapping?

SAM

I don't know. I saw it in a movie once. The people at Houston would clap every time the astronauts did something good.

JACKIE

Okay. Makes sense.

(She turns to BRETT, ready to gloat.)

Sorry Brett. Maybe next time.

BRETT

Oh be quiet! Bet you can't walk on the surface.

JACKIE

Ha! I'm way ahead of you. Jill, get the space suits ready.

JILL

Aye-aye, capitano.

(She looks under the rocket and pulls out a box with space suits in them. They dress and then leave the ship.)

JACKIE

Jill, I have a few things I need you to write down, ready?

(Jill pulls out a pen and paper.)

JILL

Go for it.

JACKIE

Surface is stable enough to walk on.

(She runs around a little bit.)

Make that stable enough to run on.

(She taps the ground with her foot. It makes a metallic noise.)

Strange. The ground seems to make a surprising metallic noise.

(She suddenly has an epiphany.)

Oh course! The golden tint! This comet is made of gold, which is a metal!

(She paces and thinks for a moment.)

Hmmm. Now that I'm here, I'm starting to think that this isn't a comet at all...

SAM

I love watching her in action.

ALLISON

That's because you like her.

SAM

What?! No! That's crazy talk! I definitely don't like her. Well, I mean I like as a friend, of course. Obviously. But I don't like like her. Got it?

(Everyone stares at him except for JACKIE, who is in her own little world. She suddenly turns to SAM.)

JACKIE

Sorry Sam, did you say something?

(Everyone busts out laughing.)

What's so funny?

JIMMY

Oh, never mind.

(Suddenly strange voices can be heard off-stage. A hush falls over the group.)

JACKIE  
(quietly)

Did you guys hear that?

BRETT

Yeah. What could it be?

SAM

I don't know, but it sounds scary. I'm scared.

JILL

I think we all are.

(LILA nods with a slight tremble. Suddenly a group of eight aliens walks on stage. Each group stares at the other in shocked, tense silence.)

ALLISON

(suddenly screaming)

ALIENS! THEY'RE GONNA TRY TO DO WEIRD EXPERIMENTS ON US!  
RUN!!!

(The kids run away, except for JACKIE who makes a show of "putting up her dukes.")

JACKIE

Not if I have anything to say about it.

(JILL doubles back and grabs JACKIE by the arm, leading her away.)

JILL

Jackie, come on! Let's go!

(They go.)

ALIEN 1

What was that all about? I've never seen life forms like that before.

ALIEN 2

Who were they? Invaders?

ALIEN 1

Oh! Do you think so?

ALIEN 3

Nah, just a bunch of kids on an adventure of some kind.

ALIEN 1

Are you sure?

ALIEN 4

Yeah? Are you sure? I've got a bad feeling about this.

ALIEN 3

Yes, I'm sure.

ALIEN 5

Should we alert Commander Gregand?

ALIEN 3

Nah. I'm sure everything will be fine. Just make sure someone keeps an eye on Zeebs. You know how curious she gets.

ALIEN 5

Wait. Where is Zeebs?

ALIEN 6

I don't know. I haven't seen him for hours.

ALIEN 7

You mean he's lost while there are possible invaders here?

ALIEN 8

What if they find him and do weird experiments on him?

ALIEN 7

My goodness! That'd be terrible. They don't even know about his gluten allergy!

ALIEN 6

Or his dairy intolerance!

ALIEN 5

Or his aversion to orange-colored foods!

(All ALIENS except for ALIEN 3 murmur in agreement.)

ALIEN 4

I really think we should alert the Commander.

ALIEN 1

Motion to alert the Commander?

ALIEN 3

Guys, I don't know how necessary this is.

ALIEN 8

Aye!

ALIEN 2

I second the motion!

ALIEN 4

So we're agreed, then?

ALIEN 3

Guys, you're not listening!

ALIEN 2

Or wait: maybe we should find Zeebs first and then tell the Commander.

ALIEN 8

Good idea! We should definitely make sure he's safe.

ALIEN 7

Motion to vote?

ALIEN 3

Ugh. I give up.

ALIEN 6

Hold on. What are we doing wasting our time here, talking and taking votes.

ALIEN 5

You're right! He could be in trouble right now for all we know.

ALIEN 4

Trouble?!

ALL ALIENS EXCEPT FOR 3

OH NO!!!

(The other aliens start running about crazily too.)

ALIEN 3

(shouting after them)

Guys!!! I said everything would be fine.

(They ignore him.)

Oh, for crying out loud!

(ALIEN 3 runs after them. A Scooby-Doo style chase scene occurs. May or may not include modern dance or an improvised game of tag. There is a break in the chase where the stage is completely empty. ZEEBS enters. He is wearing a golden cape. He suddenly becomes entranced with the space ship.)

ZEEBS

Oh cool! A rocket ship!

(He climbs aboard and stows himself away. JACKIE and the gang run back on stage.)

JACKIE

Come on gang! Let's get out of here.

(They board the ship and begin blasting off as the lights go down. Rocket noises as the scene transitions back to JACKIE's front lawn. A little bit of turbulence upon reentry. Then lights up on...)

SCENE 4- STOWAWAY

(The kids are all sprawled in and around the rocket, evidently exhausted after their narrow escape. ALLISON slowly crawls to standing and victoriously shoots her arms into the air.)

ALLISON

That. Was. Awesome!!!

SAM

Never take me in space again.

JIMMY

Me too.

(LILA nods, dazed.)

JACKIE

I did it though. I landed on that comet-thingy or whatever it was! I beat the odds!

JILL

Well, I wouldn't know about that, our rocket ship is pretty state of th-

JACKIE

THE ODDS HAVE BEEN BEATEN! Take that Brett. I think you owe me a new telescope. Oh, and I think I will be competing in the science fair from now on. Come everyone, let's go get ice cream!

SAM, JIMMY, & ALLISON

Hooray! Ice cream!

(They run off with JACKIE. JILL and LILA hesitate for a moment.)

JILL

I'm sorry Brett. Better luck next time?

BRETT

(sourly)

Just go.

(LILA gives JILL a look and gesture that communicates: "We'd better leave him alone." They go off together. BRETT sits alone in silence.)

NARRATOR 1

Alone again.

NARRATOR 2

Unfortunately for young Brett, he had to sit alone and swallow the agony of defeat.

NARRATOR 1

A bitter pill for him to swallow. After all, he only wanted to impress people.

NARRATOR 2

He only wanted people to think that he was, and that he was a scientific adventurer too.

NARRATOR 1

But, in a moment, perhaps he didn't need to be all alone.

ZEEBS

Hello?

(BRETT starts.)

BRETT

Who said that?

(ZEEBS crawls out of his hiding place.)

ZEEBS

It was just me. My name is Zeeps. Hello.

BRETT

(cautiously)

Um. Hello. Zeeps, was it?

ZEEBS

Yes. Zeeps is my name.

(They stare at each other for a moment.)

And you are?

BRETT

Oh, um, Brett. Sorry.

ZEEBS

Brett! Good to meet you Brett!

BRETT

Hey, do mind if I ask you something?

ZEEBS

Sure. Go ahead.

BRETT

You're not going to try to do weird experiments on me, are you?

ZEEBS

(shocked)

Oh goodness, no! Where would you ever get an idea like that?

BRETT

Someone may have... Never mind. It's not important.

(They stare at each other again.)

ZEEBS

Brett, do you mind if I ask you a quick question?

BRETT

No. Go for it.

ZEEBS

Okay. Where am I?

BRETT

Oh. You're in Jackie's front yard.

ZEEBS

I meant what planet am I on?

BRETT

Oh! Earth. You're on Earth.

ZEEBS

Oh wow! Earth huh? I've never been to this side of the galaxy before! Do you like it here? It seems pretty nice.

BRETT

I like it well enough. I haven't been to many other planets though, but I imagine they're pretty cool too.

ZEEBS

Cool? Well I suppose, some of them might have freezing surface temperatures.

BRETT

Oh, no. I meant... well, "cool" is a slang word here on Earth. It means that something is especially excellent, or A-Okay, I guess. I guess a "cool" guy is someone who likes to have fun, relax, and wear sunglasses or something.

ZEEBS

And this "cool guy" is not frozen solid?

BRETT

Not at all.

ZEEBS

Oh! I think I understand. That's funny. I like you Brett. Will you be my friend?

(BRETT's sour mood seems to shift.)

BRETT

Huh? Oh, well, um, yes. Yeah! I'd love to be your friend, Zeebs.

ZEEBS

Excellent! Then we shall be the very best of friends!

BRETT

(excited)

Yes! We shall! Tell you what?

ZEEBS

What?

BRETT

Let's have a best friends secret handshake!

ZEEBS

I like that! How do we do it?

BRETT

I'll show you. Follow my lead.

(BRETT shows ZEEBS the handshake in slow-motion. They then repeat it up to speed. It is amazing and beautiful and it solidifies their friendship.)

We're gonna have so much fun together Zeebs!

ZEEBS

Agreed.

(The kids all come back on with various ice creams.)

ALLISON

Oh no! Another one! Run for it everyone!

(She turns to go and drops her ice cream.)

Oh... My ice cream.

BRETT

Wait guys! It's cool. He's with me. Everything is fine. This is Zeebs. He's my cool, new friend.

ZEEBS

Yes, indeed! I am a cool, new friend.

(He turns to BRETT.)

Did I say that correctly? Cool?

BRETT

Yes you did. Very well done Zeebs.

(LILA mimes doing a weird experiment and then shrugs.)

JILL

Yeah, she wants to know if you're gonna try to do any weird experiments on us.

ZEEBS

No! Absolutely not!

BRETT

He's telling the truth. I've already been over this with him, for crying out loud. Like I said before, he's a cool, new friend. Got it?

EVERYONE ELSE

Got it.

BRETT

Great! How about we all get acquainted.

JACKIE

I'm Jackie.

JILL

I'm Jill, I'm Jackie's sister.

SAM

Hi there! I'm Sam.

ALLISON

And I'm Allison. Sam's my brother.

JIMMY

I'm Jimmy. Knock knock.

ZEEBS

Excuse me?

JACKIE

Oh come on Jimmy, knock it off. You just met the guy.

JIMMY

(laughing)

Sorry. Maybe later.

(LILA nods and smiles warmly. There is a brief, awkward silence.)

JILL

Oh right, her name is Lila. I translate for her.

BRETT

And of course, you've already met me!

ZEEBS

Yes! And I must say that it is quite a treat to meet you all. May I ask whose rocket ship this is?

JACKIE

That would be mine.

ZEEBS

I must congratulate you. It is quite exquisite.

JACKIE

Thanks! I designed it and then Jill and I built it.

SAM

And I helped!

JILL

No you didn't.

JACKIE

Yeah, you just watched us.

SAM

(slightly embarrassed)

Well, then I was just supervising.

ALLISON

Yeah, and I helped too!

SAM

No you didn't.

ALLISON

Yes I did too!

SAM

No way, Allison. If anything, you almost broke it.

ALLISON

Oh yeah.

(She giggles when she remembers.)

BRETT

See? He's awesome! He likes rockets and he likes space. Zeebs, tell them how many planets you've been to huh? I know you've been to a lot right?

ZEEBS

Yes, very many. I believe that I have been to nearly sixteen hundred different planetary systems.

(There is widespread awe among the children. They begin to clap.)

Oh, why thank you very much!

BRETT

(gloating)

It's very impressive, isn't it? It's almost—

(He is interrupted by a loud boom. Then a loud voice echoes around the stage.)

GREGAND

Planet Earth. I am Commander Gregand, Commanding Officer of the I.G. Gold Burst 422. Recently, a number of you Earthlings have visited the surface of my spacecraft and left with something the value of which you cannot comprehend. You have taken my son Zeeks from his dear home. Return him IMMEDIATELY or else drastic action will be taken. Let me be clear: if I do not get my son back soon, the fate of your planet will be grim indeed. Act now, Earth. Act now.

(Transmission fuzz and then the voice disappears. The kids look at each other frightfully.)

JACKIE

Oh no... We have to get Zeeks back! And we have to do it now.

ZEEBS

I agree, thoroughly! My mother is a good person, believe me, but she can become very temperamental if my safety is threatened. I truly fear for the safety of your planet if I'm not returned soon.

BRETT

But you can't go! You just got here!

JACKIE

Brett! Did you hear what his mom said? Something bad is going to happen if we don't return him soon, and I really don't want to find out what that bad thing is.

BRETT

But he can't go!

ZEEBS

I'm afraid I'll have to my good friend.

JACKIE

See? Even Zeeks knows he needs to go.

BRETT

But—

JACKIE

There's no time to argue!

BRETT

So then he goes and I have no one!

JACKIE

What?

BRETT

Oh, you know what I mean.

JACKIE

No, I don't. Do any of you guys?

(The kids all shake their heads.)

BRETT

I just... I... I'll be alone.

(This hits everyone. There is a brief but poignant silence.)

SAM

Alone?

BRETT

Yes. Alone. Zeeks was the first person, first being actually, that genuinely wanted to be my friend. No strings attached, no conditions, no nothing. Just a good old-fashioned friend. Sometimes I feel like you guys don't want to be around me. That's why I can be like I am. I just want to be like Jackie sometimes I guess.

(Beat.)

JACKIE

I didn't realize Brett. I'm sorry.

JILL

We're all sorry.

SAM

Yeah, me too.

ALLISON

Me three.

JIMMY

Me four.

(LILA nods.)

JACKIE

Brett, I can promise you this: from now on we will be more attentive. We'll hang out. We'll be with you so you don't feel so alone. In fact, we could even have more adventures like this to get closer together.

BRETT

(cheering up)

Yeah. I'd like that very much. Thank you guys!

JACKIE

Anytime Brett, anytime. Now, how about we send Zeebs home?

BRETT

It'll be hard, but now I know it's the right thing to do. Sorry for resisting.

JIMMY

Water under the bridge, dude.

BRETT

Ready to go home Zeebs?

ZEEBS

Yes. I think it is time.

BRETT

Alright! Let's help you out.

(The kids help ZEEBS into the rocket and make a show of adjusting the coordinates and such. They hop out and JACKIE pulls a remote out of her pocket.)

JACKIE

We can launch the rocket remotely using this. Would you like to do the honors Brett?

BRETT

Yes. Yes I would.

(He takes a deep breath.)

Good-bye Zeebs. Have a good trip. I hope to see you again.

ZEEBS

Good-bye Brett, my dear friend. Though we've only known each other for a short time, I've really come to like you. I hope our paths may cross again.

(They share one last look and BRETT hits the launch button. Light go down as the ship blasts off. Lights come back up and the ship is gone.)

GREGAND

People of Earth, thank you. My son means very much to me and his safe return warms my heart. Again, thank you, and may your planet prosper. Perhaps we shall return someday to see how you've grown.

(BRETT looks up sadly. JACKIE approaches him and puts a hand on his shoulder.)

JACKIE

Don't worry, Brett. I'm sure he'll be back someday. Even Zeeps' mom wants to come back.

BRETT

You really think they'll come back?

JACKIE

Yeah! Totally.

BRETT

Hey, Jackie?

JACKIE

Yeah?

BRETT

I'm sorry for showboating earlier. And I'm sorry that I made you do that ridiculous bet too. Looking back on it, it wasn't very nice.

JACKIE

It's alright. Now is the time when we can start fresh!

(She pats him on the back. They smile at each other.)

ALLISON

Hey, I think they might like each other?

SAM

(suddenly)

Hey! No they don't Allison! BE QUIET!

(Everyone gasps.)

JILL

(in disbelief)

Sam, how dare you shout at your sister!

(JIMMY bursts into laughter. LILA shakes her head.)

ALLISON

I'm telling mom!

(She runs off stage.)

SAM

No wait! Come back! I didn't mean it! Sorry!

(He follows her.)

JIMMY

Oh man, I can't even think of something that funny. I wonder if there's a knock knock joke in here somewhere...

(He exits lost in thought.)

JILL

Lila, wanna get some more ice cream? I think the truck is still around the corner.

(She happily nods and skips off stage.)

Well, I guess we'll have to build a new rocket. But we can figure that out later. I've been through quite a lot today. Hey Lila, wait up!

(She runs off.)

JACKIE

It's been a long day.

BRETT

Yeah.

(Beat.)

Hey wanna go look through my telescope?

JACKIE

But it won't be dark for a few more hours.

BRETT

(sadly)

Oh, okay...

JACKIE

But I'd love too! How about I meet you in your yard around 6:30?

BRETT

That's great!

JACKIE

By the way, you don't have to give me your telescope anymore. But I'd love to come over as often as I can.

BRETT

(overjoyed)

Oh that's wonderful! I can't tell you how excited I am! I'll go get everything set up now and maybe make a few snacks! Do you like s'mores?

JACKIE

I love s'mores!

BRETT

Great! S'mores it is.

(He runs off beaming.)

NARRATOR 2

You must be tired.

JACKIE

Yes, very. But I do love adventures, there's something... something so... something about them. I can't think of the right word...

NARRATOR 1

Magical?

NARRATOR 2

Boisterous?

NARRATOR 1

Rad?

NARRATOR 2

Scientific?

JACKIE

All of the above.

NARRATOR 1

I must say it was quite the exciting adventure! Truly fantastic. But aren't you forgetting something?

JACKIE

What?

NARRATOR 2

Well, if you're going to Brett's house tonight, you need to ask your mom's permission, don't you think?

JACKIE

Oh you're right! I'll do that right away. I'm excited. Who knows, maybe we'll see something more brilliant than that golden comet-spaceship thingy.

(She runs inside her house.)

NARRATOR 1

And they did. They did see something amazing and brilliant, even more so than the comet-spaceship thingy.

NARRATOR 2

But it was not something they saw through the telescope. They saw friendship in each other.

NARRATOR 1 AND 2

And friendship very often is it's own dazzling adventure. Farewell!

(Lights fade to black. End of play.)