

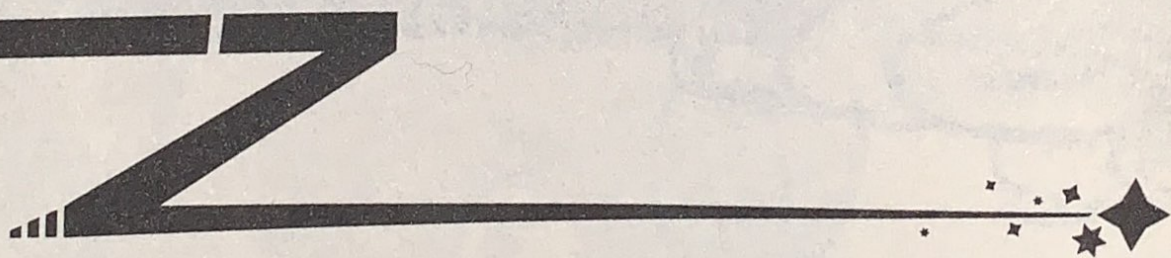
"You'll love it on Nebulon, Captain," Dad said. "Wait'll you see the gadgets they have there. They're way ahead of Earth!"

"That sounds pretty cool," Zack said. Then he grew quiet. Dad's got his great new job at Nebulonics, Zack



thought. Mom wants to start her own business. And the twins always have each other. They don't have to worry about making new friends.

Zack leaned back in his seat and closed his eyes.



"Okay, class, time for our Zerbinese language lesson," said someone with a strange, high-pitched voice.

Zack's eyes popped open. He was in a classroom on Nebulon. All his classmates looked like monsters. And slimy creatures with dripping tentacles





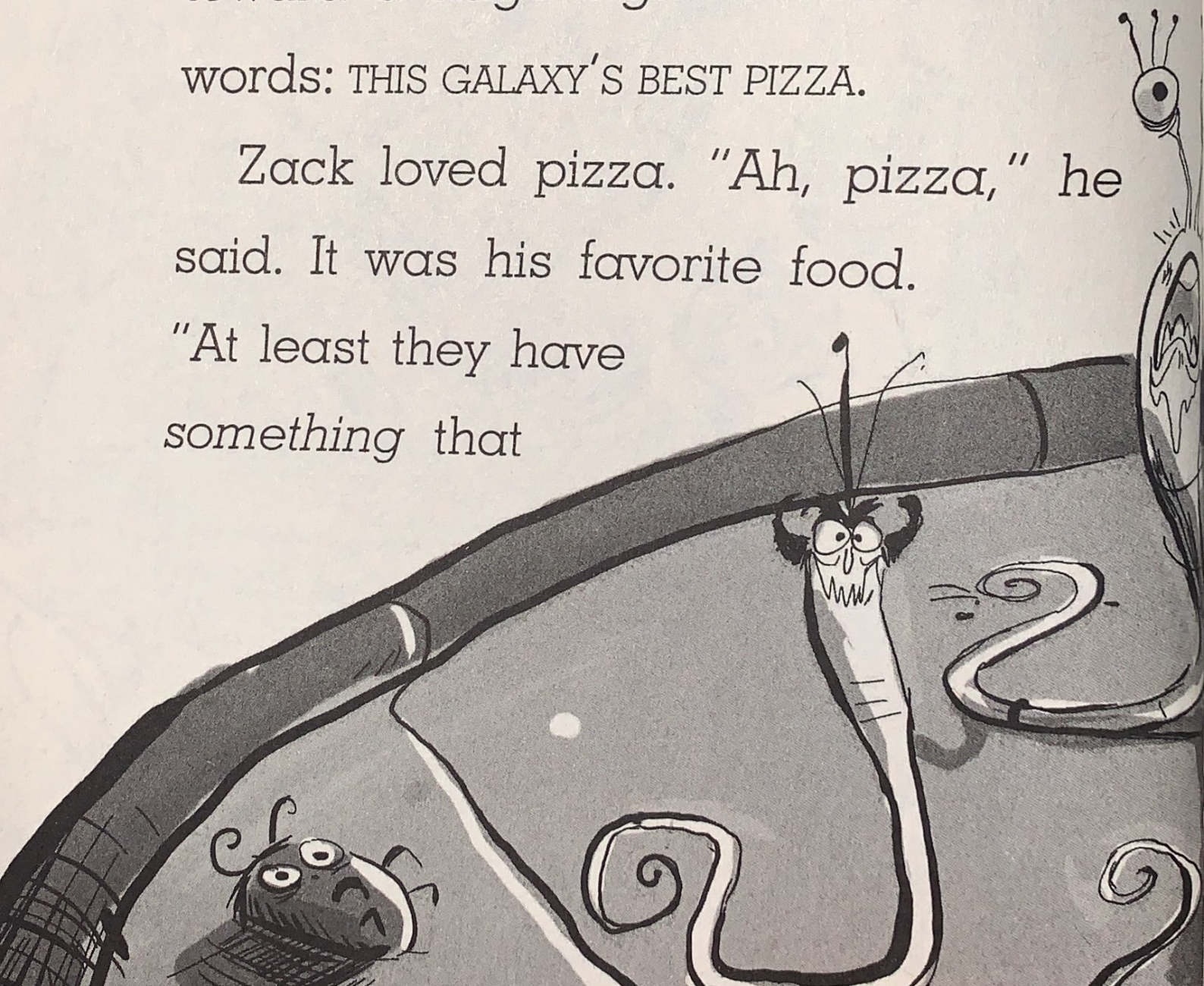


sat all around him. The teacher looked like a giant two-headed snake.

Zack dashed from the classroom and ran across the street. He hurried toward a huge sign that flashed the words: THIS GALAXY'S BEST PIZZA.

Zack loved pizza. "Ah, pizza," he said. It was his favorite food.

"At least they have something that





I know on this wacky, crazy planet!"

Zack rushed into the pizza place and ordered a whole pie. "I'll have today's special pizza, please."

Soon a steaming pizza floated down.

"YAAA!" yelled Zack. The pizza was covered with slithering worms and crawling







insects. It was topped with extra-moldy cheese.

Zack ran as fast as he could from the pizza place. He pulled out his

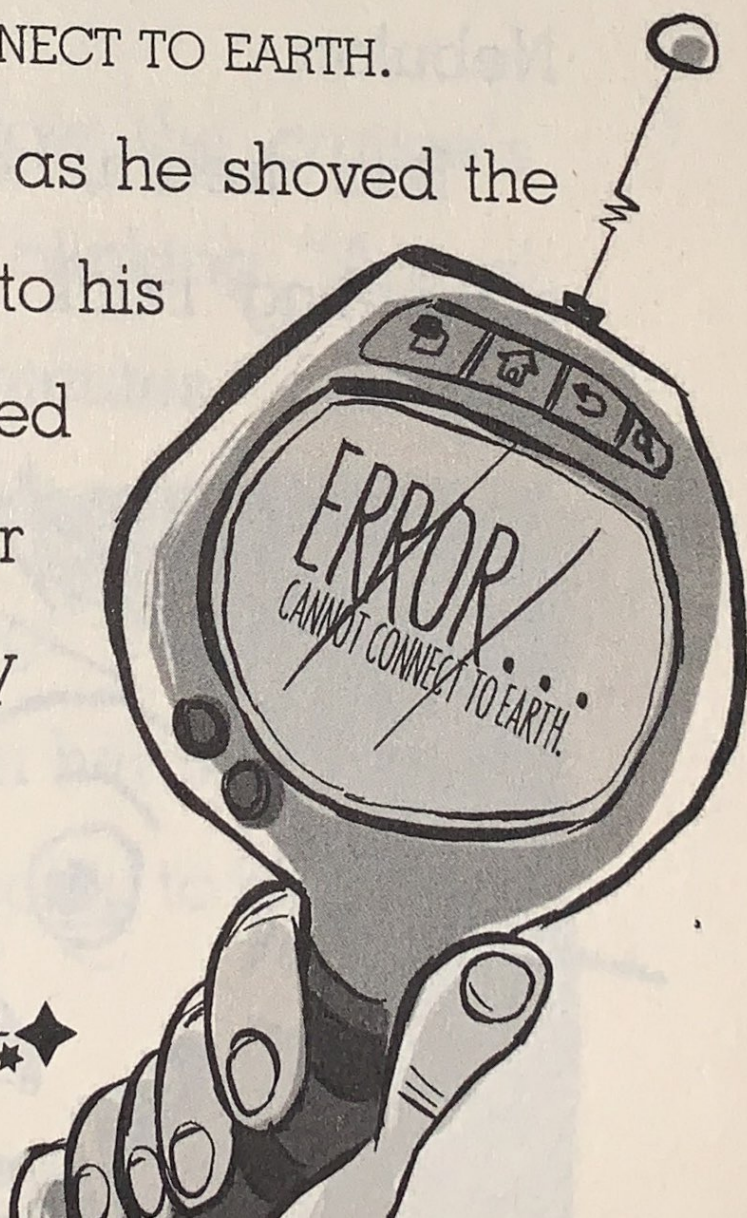


video-chat hyperphone. Then he quickly entered Bert's z-mail address.

"Gotta talk to Bert," Zack mumbled to himself. "Maybe he can help me."

The screen on the hyperphone blinked. Then a message popped up: ERROR . . . CANNOT CONNECT TO EARTH.

"No!" cried Zack as he shoved the hyperphone back into his pocket. "I'm trapped here! And I'll never see or talk to my friends again!"





Zack felt a hand on his shoulder. Then he heard a familiar voice.

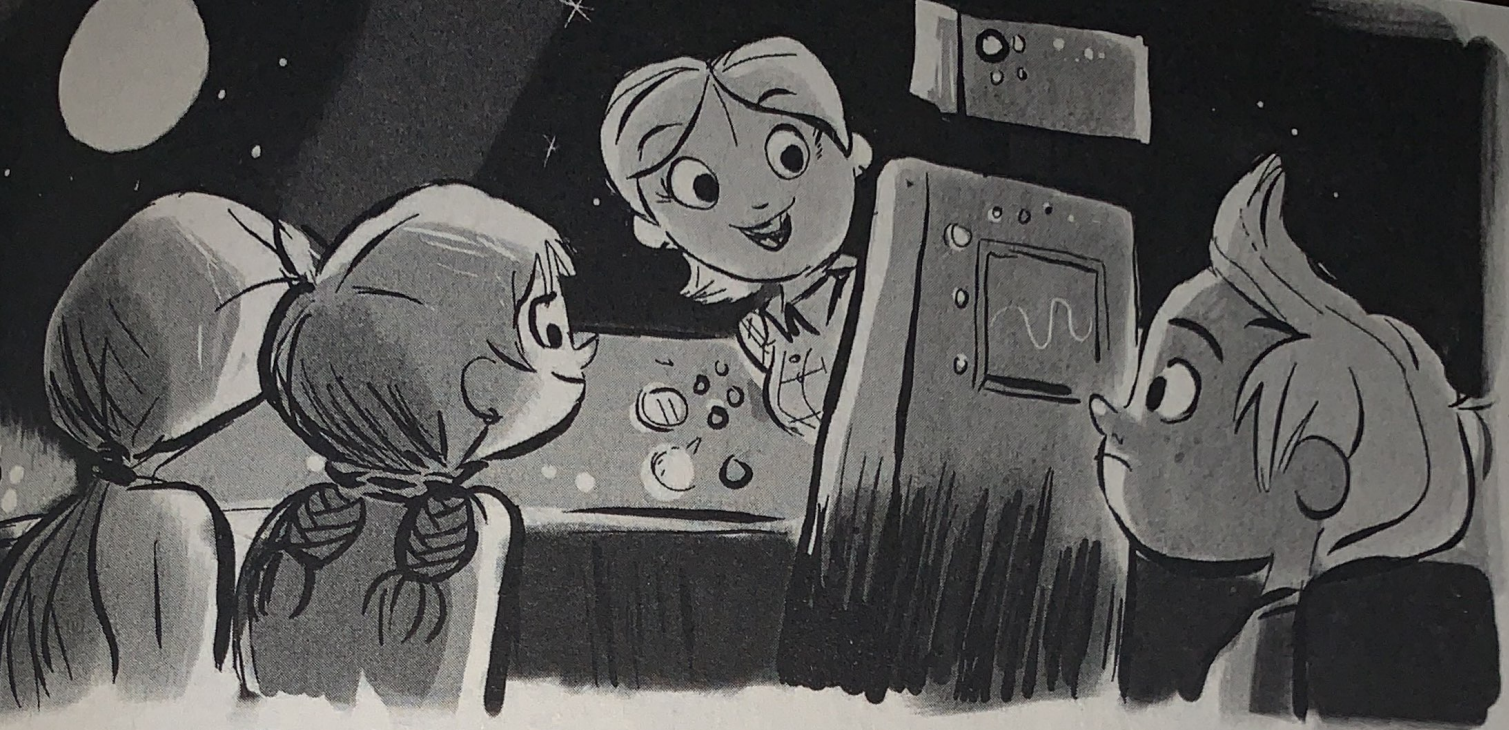
"Zack? Zack? Are you okay?"

Zack's eyes sprang open. He was looking up at his mom. They were still in the space cruiser, on their way to Nebulon.

"Bad dream, honey?" asked Mom, smoothing back Zack's thick blond hair.





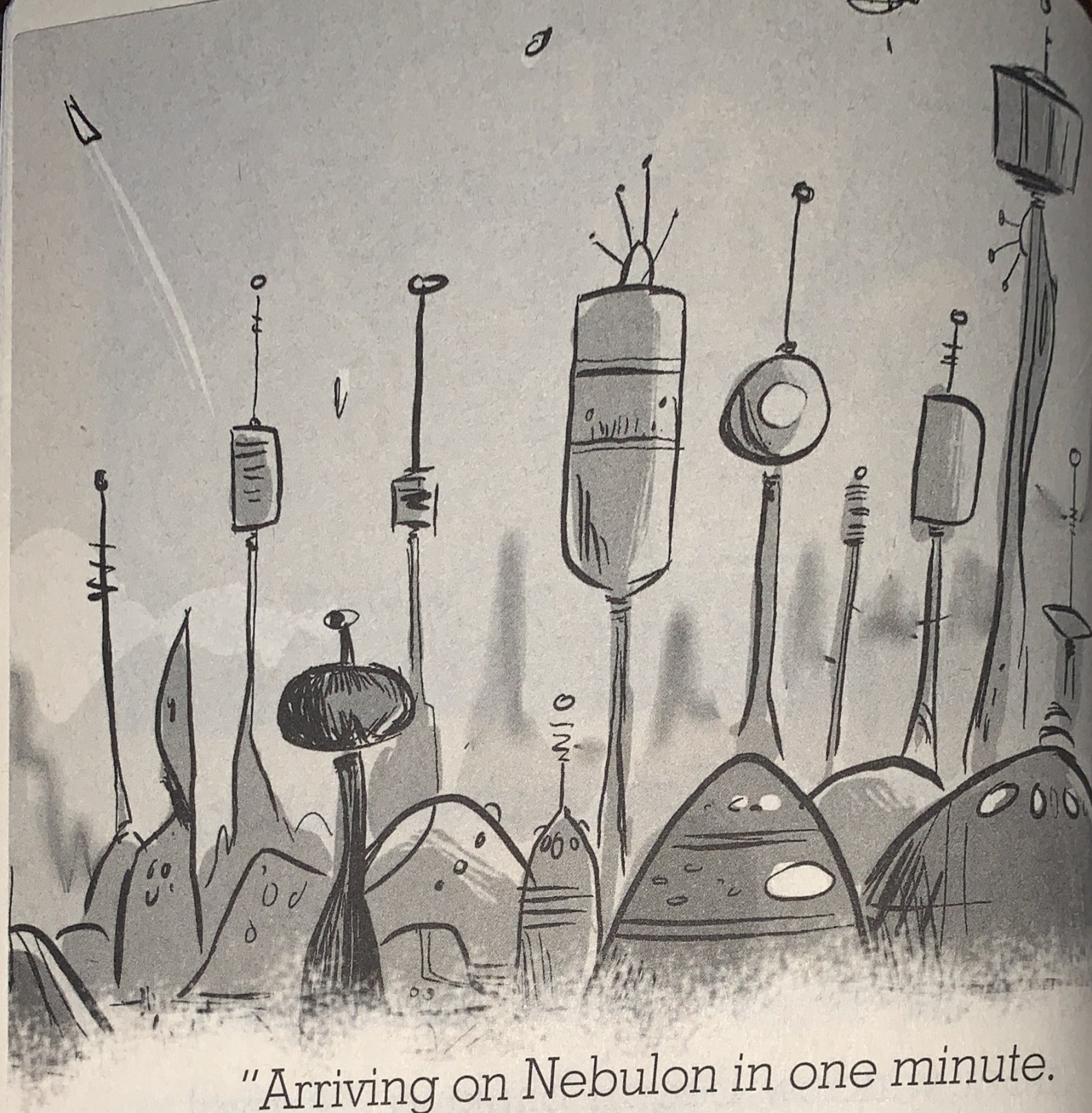


"I guess so," Zack replied, rubbing his eyes.

A green light below the cruiser's front window began blinking. "Arrival on Nebulon in five minutes," said the cruiser's talking computer.

"This is so exciting!" Mom said as she sat back down in her seat. "Don't worry, Zack. This is going to be a great adventure!"



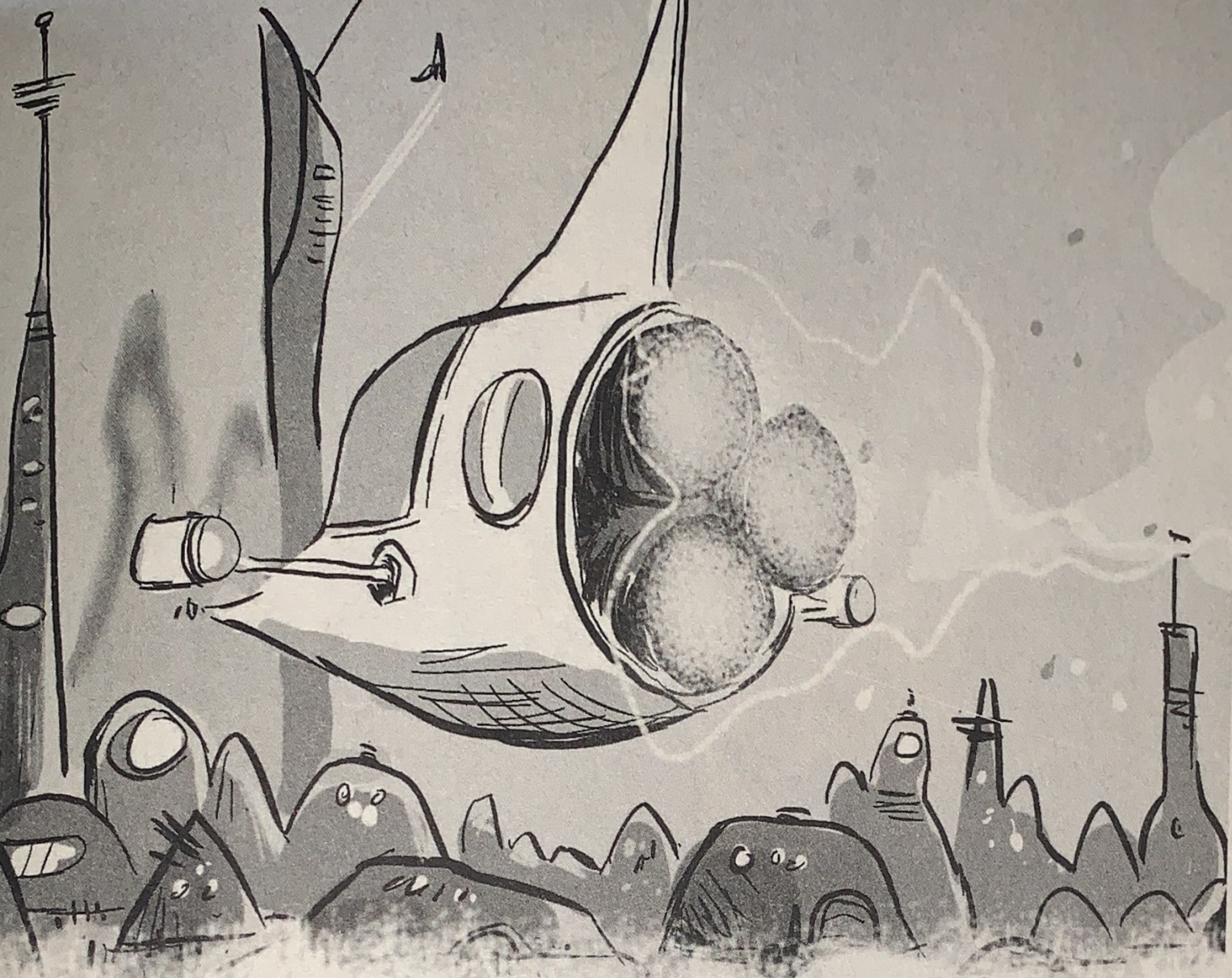


"Arriving on Nebulon in one minute. Please prepare for landing," said the cruiser's robotic voice.

"This is it, gang!" announced Dad. He was hardly able to contain his excitement.

Zack checked his safety belt. Then





he pressed his face to the window. His eyes opened wide as the planet below got closer and closer. Through thin pink clouds, Zack saw purple patches of land and large orange oceans. *Nebulon looks nothing like Earth*, he thought.