

# GALAXY ZACK

HELLO, NEBULON!

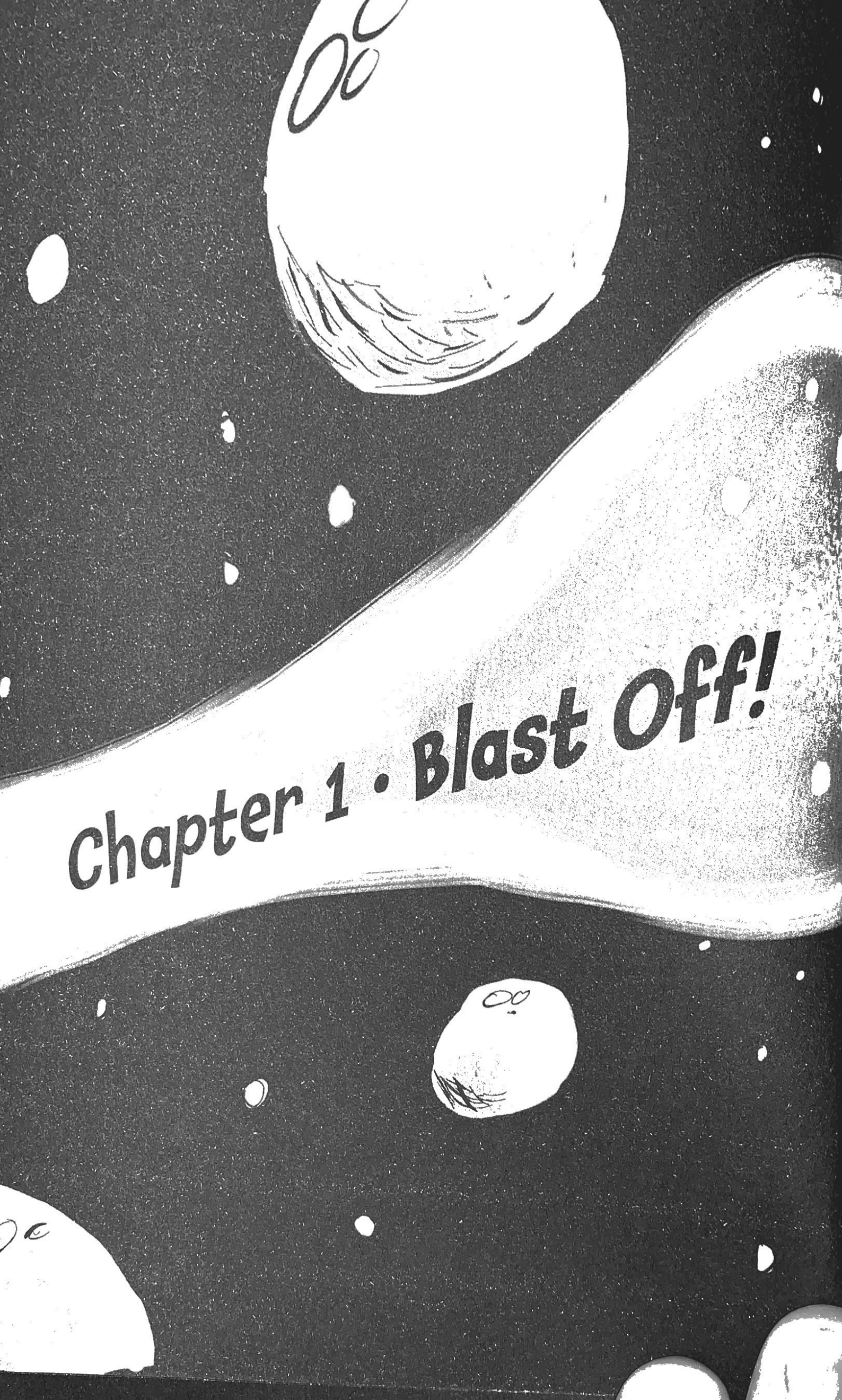


By Ray O'Ryan  
Illustrated by Colin Jack

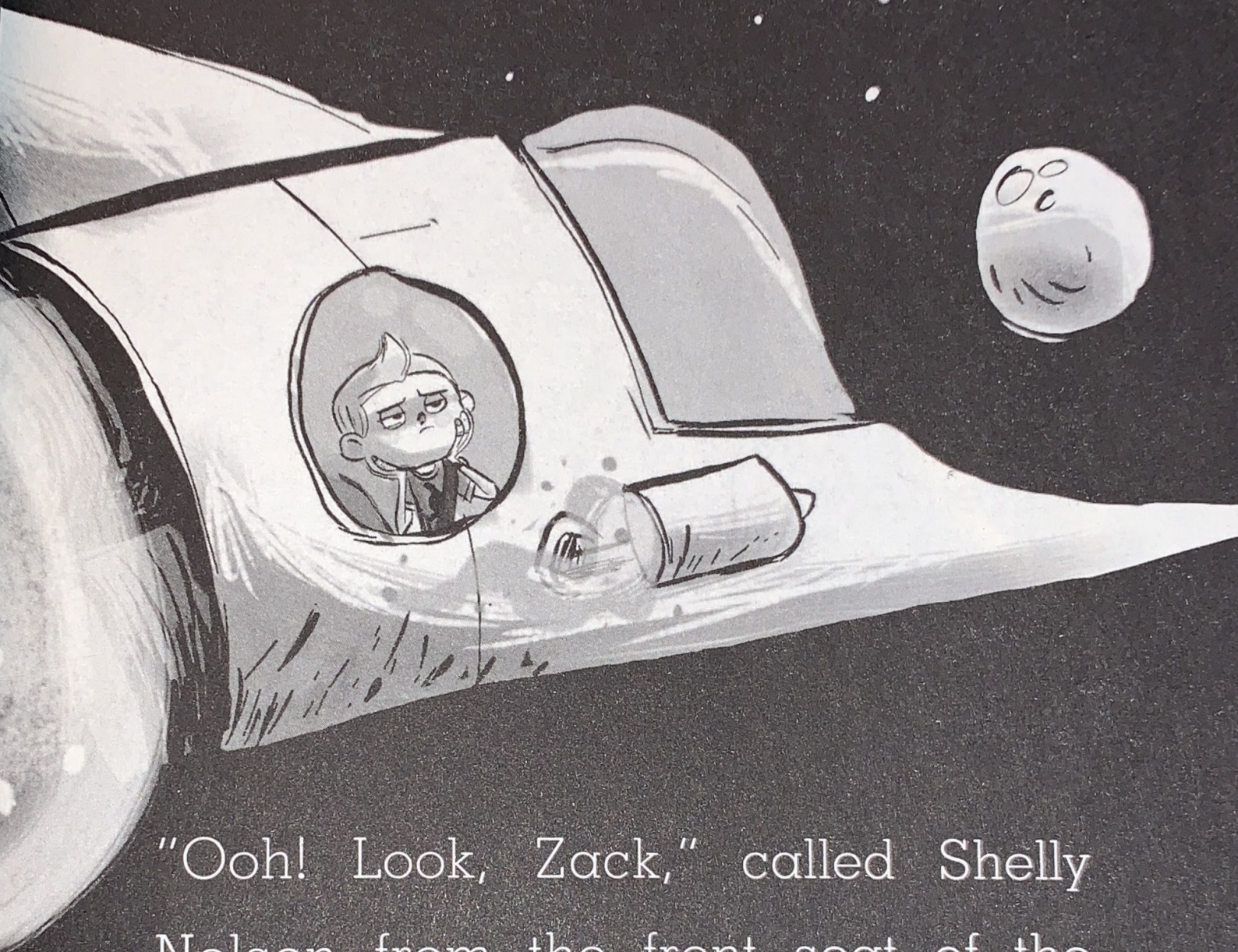


LITTLE SIMON

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# Chapter 1 • Blast Off!



"Ooh! Look, Zack," called Shelly Nelson from the front seat of the Nelson family's space cruiser. She pointed out of the large, round windshield in front of her. "It's Venus! And there's Mars!"

Sitting in the backseat of the

cruiser, eight-year-old Zack Nelson sighed. He knew his mom was just trying to cheer him up. But at the moment all he wanted to do was go home—to his real home, Earth. Not his new home on some planet called Nebulon.

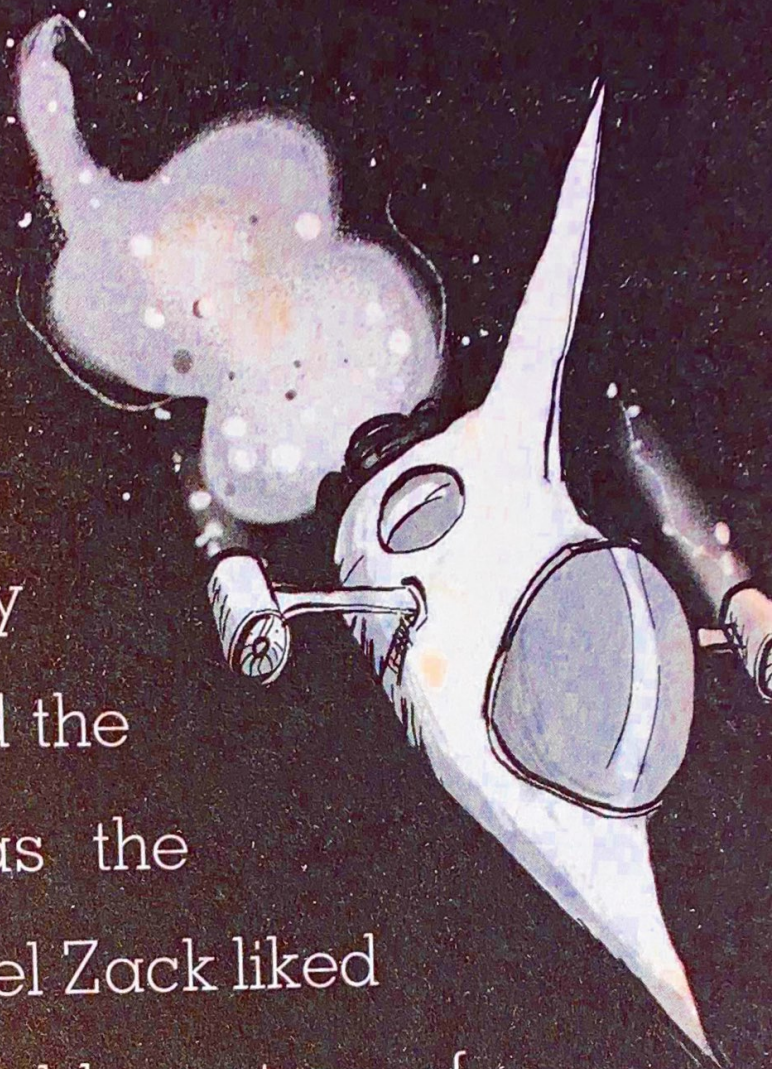
Zack punched a code into the keypad below his window. The glass in the

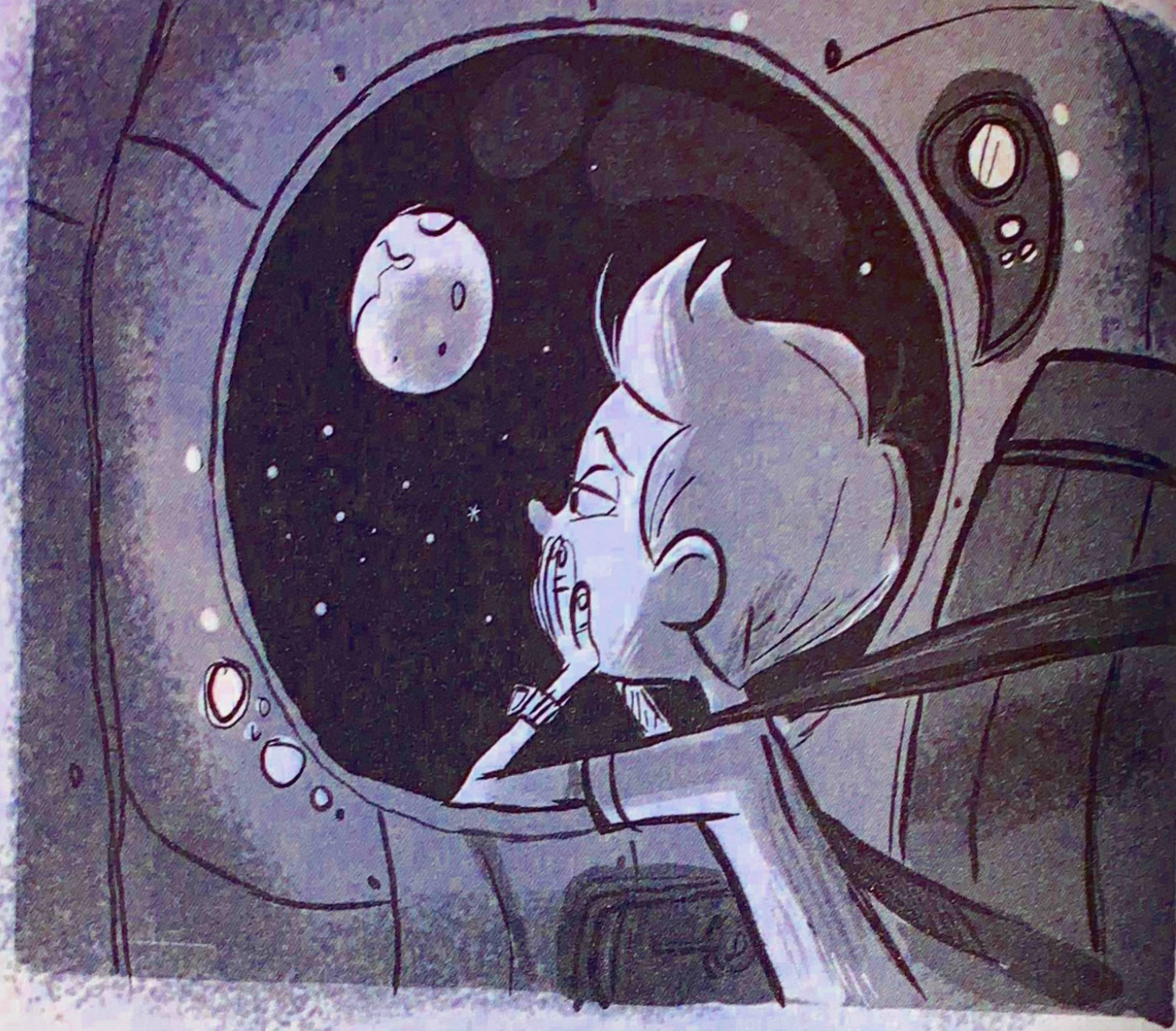


window changed  
from dark to clear.

Billions of stars  
glittered in the inky  
blackness beyond the  
window. This was the  
part of space travel Zack liked  
best. Sure, he could see tons of  
stars with his überzoom galactic  
telescope back on Earth. But being out  
among the stars and planets, seeing  
them close up, always made Zack  
happy.

Except today, February 11, 2120.  
Moving day.

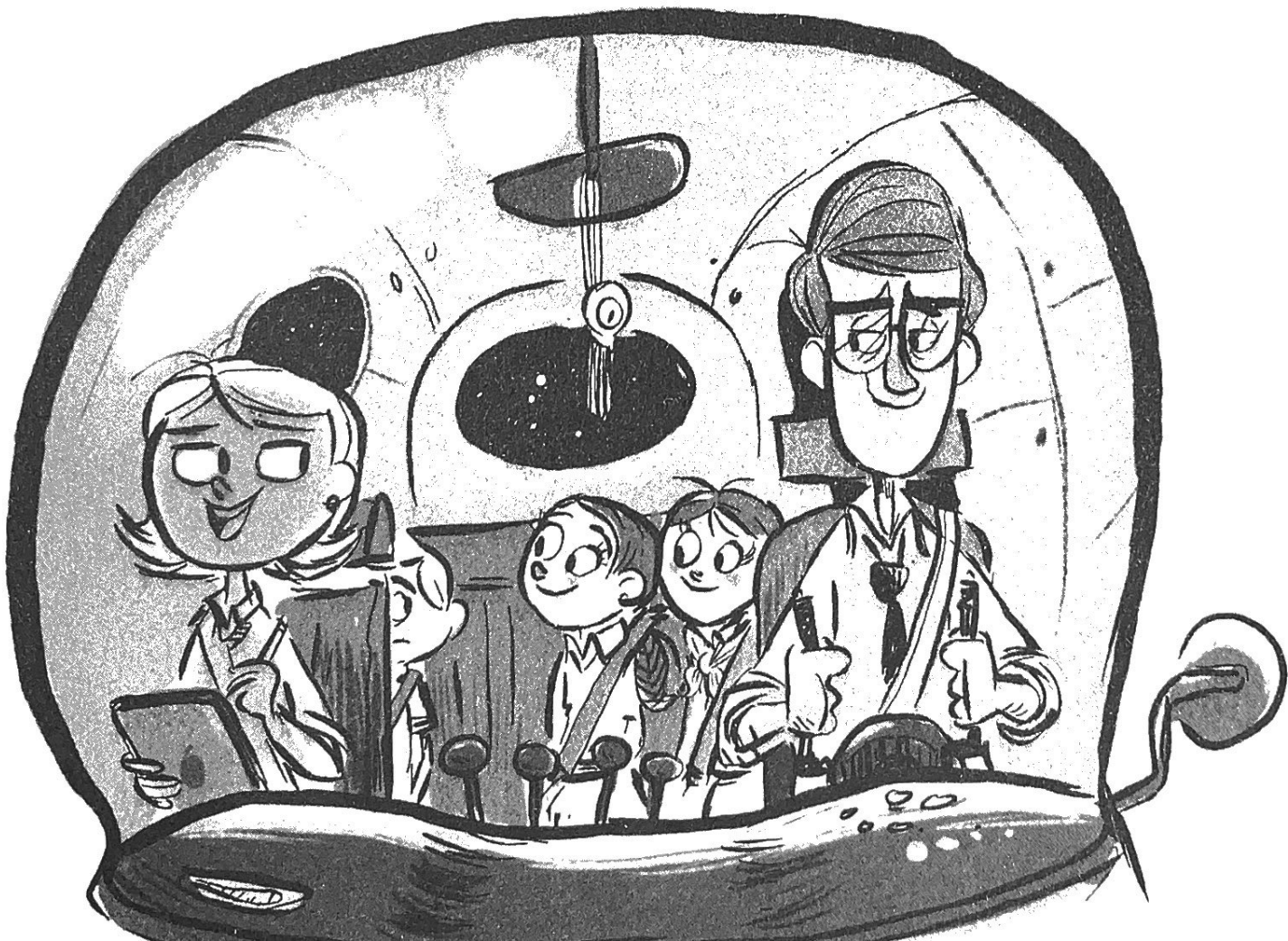




Glancing out his window, Zack looked past Venus and Mars. He had visited both planets many times. His family had often taken weekend trips to the Low Gravity Amusement Park on Venus. And they had always gone to the beaches at the Red Planet Resort on Mars for spring break.

But today all Zack could see was Earth. The tiny blue and white ball grew smaller and smaller in the window. The Nelsons' space cruiser zoomed farther away from the only home Zack had ever known.

Zack's dad, Otto, was up front in the pilot's seat, steering the cruiser.



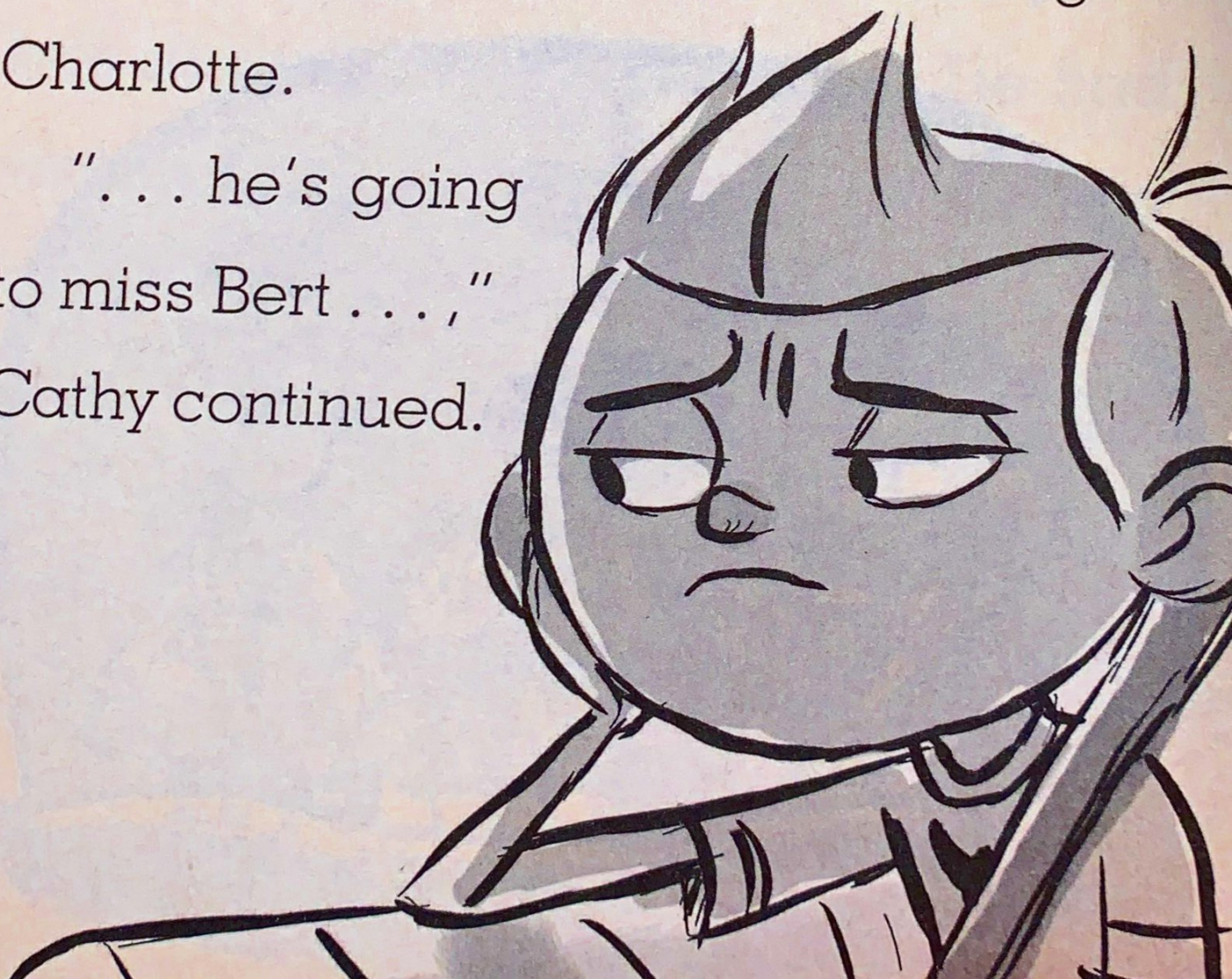
"How ya doing back there, Captain?"  
he called.

Zack smiled. He was years away from getting his pilot's license, but his dad always called him "Captain" whenever the family took a space trip.

"I guess I'm okay," mumbled Zack.

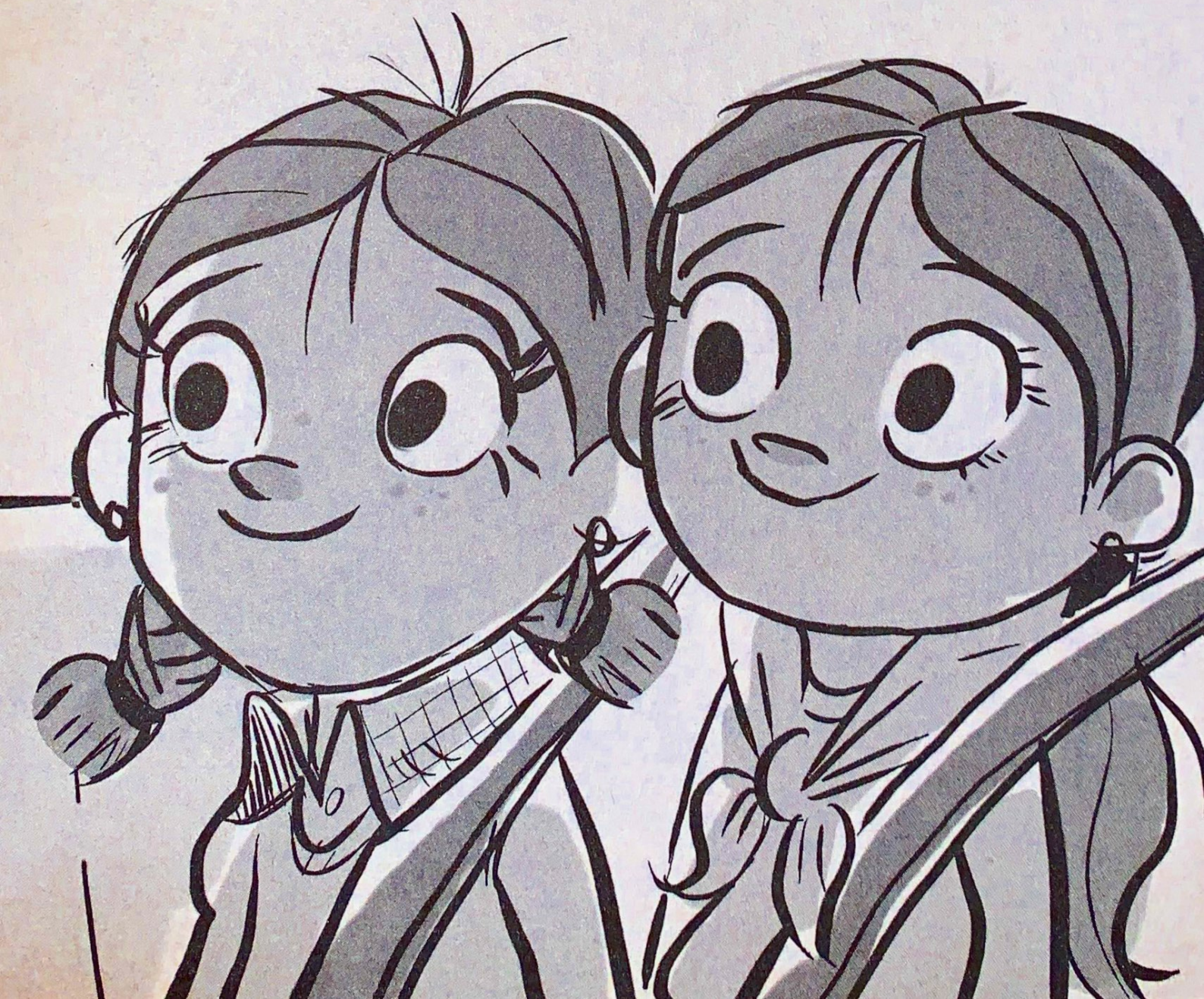
"He's just sad because . . .," began Charlotte.


". . . he's going to miss Bert . . .," Cathy continued.



"... and Luna," they said together.

Charlotte and Cathy Nelson were Zack's eleven-year-old identical twin sisters. They often spoke as if they were one person. They sat side by side in the seats next to Zack, finishing each other's sentences.





Zack's sisters had round

faces with freckles.





They both had flaming


red hair like their father.

Charlotte kept her hair in a ponytail. Cathy wore her hair

in two braided pigtails. That was

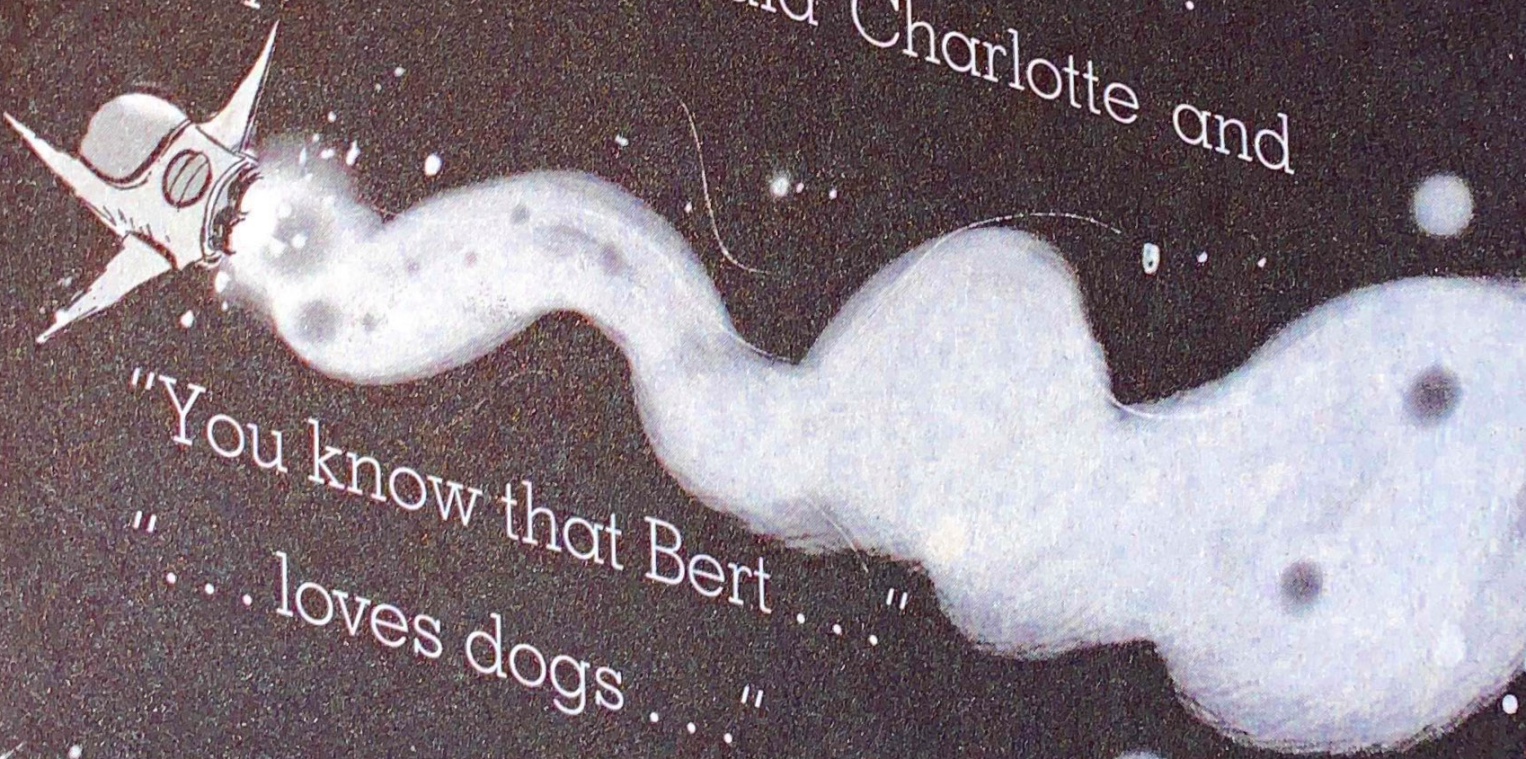
the only way most people could tell them apart.





"You'll still be able to talk to Bert, honey," Zack's mom said. Bert was Zack's best friend on Earth. "Between video chats and z-mail, it'll almost be like you never left."

"And Bert will take good care . . ."  
". . . of Luna," said Charlotte and Cathy.



"You know that Bert . . ."  
". . . loves dogs . . ."

"... especially Luna," they added.

"The girls are right, Captain," said Dad. "Luna will join us as soon as we get settled on Nebulon. Then the whole family will be together again."

Zack just shrugged and stared out the window, watching Earth grow tinier by the second.

