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For Woody 1995 – 2011

Donna Iliffe-Pollard

The Squizzle

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The Squizzle

A feathery green eyelash flickered in the
morning light

The suns were all aglow today and pulsing
out so bright,

He stumbled from his snoozing pod, his
head still half asleep
and looked at his reflection in the mirror...
Just a peep.

“My goodness Squizzle you look bad,”
he’d hardly slept a wink ,

He raked his fingers through his fluffy
cheeks of dazzling pink,

Then scratched a yellow freckle, nestled
just above his nose

That made his body judder from his head
down to his toes.

His violet eyes, fluorescent, fluttered trying
to awake

And tiny fingers tingled as he gave his
arms a shake,

He combed his tree-sap wax into his fuzzy
little frame

It stopped his coat from getting soaked
from all the Zumon rain.

His head, shaped like a question mark
with brainwaves whizzing round

Was striped just like his body, fluffy pink
and green and brown;

The busier his mind became the faster
brainwaves swirled

From morning through to evening time,
around his head they curled.

Today was so important he would need to
slow them down

So took some deep breaths, ready for his
long walk into town,

He ruffled up his hairy self and set off, out
the door

To start his new career in the Zumon
Taskforce Core.

He squinted as he stepped outside, the
sunrays beaming light

With Zumon having three suns it was
often way too bright,

He quickly grabbed his phizoggles and
wrapped them round his head,

They blocked the sunlight instantly.
“Much better now,” he said.

He walked along the granite paths, all
glistening in the heat

And through the fields of chocaleafers,
flowers you can eat.

“Good morning, Squizzle,” someone
shouted from a distant door,

He raised his hand to wave hello then
journeyed on once more.

Arriving at the headquarters he strode into
the hall

Zumayon soldiers proudly lined up
waiting to be called;

He'd hoped to be selected for the Chef's
assistant's job

A chance to show his gourmet skills and
talent with a hob.

He'd dreamt for years of running his own
café by the shore,

Imagining it often, with his sign hung on
the door,

He'd call it 'Squizzle's Sizzler' and his
food would be renowned

With rich aromas luring all his guests from
miles around.

His daydream interrupted, General Zatt
marched through the door

A powerful and booming voice that
packed a mighty roar...

Surprisingly he was in fact a tiny little
thing

With bright red hair, a crooked nose and
sporting lots of bling!

“Young soldiers here of Zumon, now’s
your time to stand up tall,

We have a mega problem that’s about to
hit us all.

Our satellites have indicated meteors on
their way,

They’re heading straight for Zumon and
will hit our homes today.

“The storms ahead are different from the
ones we’ve had before,

With meteors of gigantic scale, they’ll
damage even more.

Our estimates predict we have three weeks
to save our world,

We need to stop the meteor rocks of ice
and fire being hurled.

I need you all to scour space to find a
Meteor Blast

It's laser smashes space rock, it could save
our planet fast;

Last heard of somewhere in a solar system
far away,

Your mission is to navigate the cosmos,
don't delay."

Poor Squizzle was quite puzzled... "Find a
Meteor Blast...what's that?"

Err...should he pack his apron and his
brand new white chef's hat?

As thoughts were swirling round his head
he heard a mighty BOOM,

A meteor ripped right through the roof and
set fire to the room.

The flames rolled through the
headquarters like tidal waves of fire

And panic spread through Zumon, the
infernos raging higher,

And buildings were destroyed in just one
second of a day,

“Get to your ships,” urged General Zatt.
“Your mission’s underway!”

But Squizzle started panicking, this wasn’t
what he’d hoped,

He should be in the kitchen now and
learning all the ropes;

Instead he had to find a ship and somehow
learn to fly?

He kissed the hopes of ever being a
gourmet chef goodbye.

He caught up with the others as they
dashed out of the door

And gasped aloud with wonder at the
spectacle he saw,

For there before his very eyes all gleaming
at his feet

Were silver flying saucers all pulsating in
the heat.

He'd never seen one in the flesh, but
studied them at school,

Creations of Professor Flanko, this one
was the jewel;

The genius inventor made the ultimate in
flight

And here it was before him 'AstroFlanker',
what a sight!

This spacecraft was the fastest in the
universe to date

With platinum, titanium and silver, so
lightweight;

It soars across the galaxies, a shining disc
of light,

“Three weeks to save my planet! Boy I
need to get this right!”

He clambered quickly into one and
strapped himself inside,

Good job he was so tiny, it was only three
feet wide!

He read the flight instructions and
absorbed them one by one,

Then confidently made a start, his journey
had begun.

“Step One says pull this lever here ...that’s
easy, here we go.”

The spaceship burst alive with noise all
beeping and aglow.

“Step Two says press the yellow switch,
the one that has a light.”

And as he did the tiny door hissed, sealing
him in tight.

“Now place your palm upon the
Zumonreader, that’s Step Three.”

And instantly the cabin lit up like a
Christmas tree.

“Step Four, I need to push the throttle,
that’s the one I know,

I’m not sure just exactly what that does but
here we gooooooo.”

The little cosmic plane took flight way up
into the sky

And Squizzle held his breath so tight, the
spacecraft racing high;

The view from space was awesome he
could not believe the sights,

A blanket full of darkness with a million
twinkling lights.

His orders? Search the Milky Way, a
wondrous galaxy,

He needed to find planets where a Meteor
Blast could be;

His tummy took a little while to settle as
he flew,
Good job he chose the toast for supper, not
the vindaloo!

He kept a little journal to take back for
General Zatt,

By logging all the planets, what they're
made of, where they're at;

He whizzed around at quite a speed,
reporting where he'd been,

And in between each solar stop he'd write
of what he'd seen.

It read...

Log Entry Number 1

Earth's Solar System's made up of a star
which is the Sun

And planets that surround it, I've observed
them one by one.

I've also checked out asteroids, dwarf
planets, comets, moons,

Whilst trying to avoid those nasty big
Black Holes of doom !

Log Entry Number 2

My first stop is the Sun... it's just one big
hot ball of gas

That's full of heat and energy and shoots
out solar blasts!

They're like big flares that travel quite a
long way into space

It may well be the Earth's own star...no
way a landing place.

Log Entry Number 3

And now I'm here on Mercury, no water,
cliffs so high,

With dangerous radiation, hit with
meteors from the sky.

It's called 'The Speedy Planet' quickly
orbiting the Sun

It's four times faster than the earth, with
craters, that's no fun.

Log Entry Number 4

Today I flew to Venus, wow that place is
hot, hot, hot!

Volcanoes like you've never seen and
poisonous air it's got.

There's hurricanes and lightning storms, a
sticky atmosphere,

It's also spinning backwards so three days
feel like a year.

Log Entry Number 5

With still no luck I thought I would give
planet Mars a try,

Grand canyons, big red deserts, but its
freezing cold and dry.

It has a large volcano and some polar ice
caps too,

But it's full of iron oxide, poisonous air for
me and you.

Log Entry Number 6

So now I'm here at Jupiter, the giant of
them all,

It's thirteen hundred times as big as
Earth... that's one big ball!

With water and ammonia both swirling
round its skies

A red spot shows a raging storm that never
ever dies.

Log Entry Number 7

Onwards then to Saturn, that's the one
with sparkling rings,

They're made from chunks of ice and
rocks there's thousands of the things!

With hydrogen and helium, a nasty gassy
sky,

But lit up rather pretty like a lemon
meringue pie.

Log Entry Number 8

More flying time to Uranus and what
confusing stuff,

Its core is super-hot and yet the outside is
quite rough,

With ice and rocks and freezing winds, it's
tilting slightly too!

One season lasts two decades and the
Methane, makes it blue!

Log Entry Number 9

Whoa! Neptune is a cold dark place with
winds all supersonic!

The oceans there were boiling hot,
conditions are quite chronic.

It takes sixteen point five decades to orbit
round the sun!

This planet's two main gases, Hydrogen
and Helium.

Log Entry Number 10

This week I've searched all five of the
dwarf planets ... that's a 'No',

I tried to land on Ceres, even Eris and
Pluto

And Makemake looks just like a ball of
floating deadly ice,

Then Haumea, shaped like an egg, I flew
around it twice!

Squizzle tucked his journal safely back
beside the map

Being well on track for planet Earth he'd
need a power nap.

His brainwaves slowing to a halt, he
quickly fell asleep,

He didn't feel the tiny bump or hear the
warning beep.

He'd slipped into a dreamy world of
culinary treats