

Message from the Stars

Story by George Ivanoff
Illustrations by Alessandro D'urso



Contents

Chapter 1	Nothing Is Right	5
Chapter 2	Astronomy	8
Chapter 3	Distracted at School	15
Chapter 4	A Mysterious Package	18
Chapter 5	Messages from Space?	25
Chapter 6	Sounds from Sirius	28
Chapter 7	Aliens?	33
Chapter 8	Presentation	36
Chapter 9	Surprises	39
Chapter 10	Waiting	46

Chapter 1

Nothing Is Right



Aliens! Sirius loved thinking about the possibility of alien life, and he loved staring up at the stars through Dad's telescope. In fact, that's what he and Dad should have been doing right now.

But they weren't. They couldn't, because Dad wasn't there with Sirius. Dad was on the other side of the world.

So, Sirius was trying to talk with Dad on the computer instead. But the picture kept freezing and breaking up. The sound kept stopping and starting. It was making it very difficult to have a conversation.

"I really miss you, Sirius," said Dad. "And I know that you miss me, too."

Sirius just nodded. He was trying his best not to cry, and he was worried that if he said anything, he might not be able to stop the tears.

“Your mum tells me that you’ve been a bit upset ever since I left,” Dad continued.

Sirius shrugged.

The screen froze for a few seconds, distorting the image of his dad. When it returned to normal, his dad was halfway through a sentence.

“... to worry. You can’t let my absence stop you from doing all the things you normally do.”

Sirius didn’t respond.



“I’d really like it if you tried to carry on as usual.”

Dad paused and gave him a half-smile. “Could you do that for me?”

“Maybe,” said Sirius. He shrugged again.

Dad started to say something else, but the screen froze. After a few seconds, it went black, the connection lost.

As Sirius switched off the computer, he could feel tears beginning to well up.

Chapter 2

Astronomy

Sirius's mum found him sitting in front of the black computer screen.

"How did the video call go?" she asked.

Sirius didn't answer. He didn't even turn around.

His mum gently swivelled his chair around, and saw that he'd been crying.

"Oh, honey." She enveloped him in a hug.

"I miss him, too."

"It's not fair," said Sirius.

"I know it seems that way," his mum said, letting go of him and pulling up another chair.

"But this is your dad's dream job. And it's only for one year."

"That's ages!"

"You can talk to him every day on the computer," she said.

"It's not the same," whispered Sirius. "And the computer keeps freezing."

"Well, that's something that I can fix."

Mum smiled.

Sirius looked up, curious.

"I'm going to upgrade our internet service," said Mum. "It should make having conversations with Dad a lot easier. And it will all hopefully be in place by the time you get home from school tomorrow."



“I don’t want to go to school,” said Sirius.

“Sirius, we’ve been through this already,” said Mum. “You had a day off to go to the airport to say goodbye on Thursday, and I let you stay home on Friday as well. You’ve had the weekend to get used to things, and you’ve had the chance to speak with your dad this evening. So, tomorrow, it’s back to school. Even though Dad’s not here, we need to get back to life as usual.” She looked at him. “Okay?”

Sirius shrugged.

Mum got up to leave, but stopped at the door. She turned to Sirius. “I know it’s late already, but ...” She smiled. “If you want, you can bring your dad’s telescope outside and set it up on the back deck for half an hour.”

Sirius looked over at the telescope standing in the corner of the room. He and Dad had spent hours in the backyard using it to look up at the stars. But tonight, Sirius couldn’t bring himself to do it on his own.

