

PUFFIN PLANET

By Archer Xiang

Mark and Joey had been lifelong friends. After completing their training at the space academy, it was no surprise that they ended up in the space program together as shipmates. Joey loved rules. Mark, however, was adventurous. Because of this, he sometimes made a lot of mistakes. Although Joey was more disciplined, he never wanted to leave Mark behind. Besides, Mark was a lot of fun.

Nine o'clock in the evening of the fourth of January 2237 was their time for departure to Neptune. The spaceship was huge. At the front was the pilot's and co-pilot's chair. In the middle was an Astonishing Room with everything they wanted. Radios, cameras, and food were located in the rear of the ship. Energy blasted out of the turbines in the back.

The two astronauts had to be really careful of the dangers that awaited them. Monsters roamed the darkest parts of the universe. Huge asteroids flew at astonishing speeds. Unknown spaceships visited our solar system every year, yet made no contact with humans.

Nine o'clock had come and the two astronauts climbed the state-of-the-art smashed-diamond ladder of the ship. Sparkles of light flashed around them as they entered the craft. "On the count!" shouted the ground mission control commander. Through his wireless microphone, the commander's voice filled the ship. Mark pressed the button. Boom! They were off to Neptune.

At first, Joey and Mark had a great time. There were moments of fun, sometimes they would turn the autopilot on, sit on the couch in the Astonishing Room, and watch their favorite internet personalities back on Earth. Their favorite episodes were when they tried to blow up expensive cars. It took their minds off of the uncertainties of their mission.

Over time, boredom had come, too. The days felt long and never-ending. One day, something happened to change all those feelings. They were cruising along a few days after the blast off. The ship was straight and the flight smooth. Suddenly, lights flashed, the couch launched them at the TV, and images of the *No Connection* icon appeared everywhere.

A second later, Mark and Joey's heads smashed on the top of the ship. They had lost connection with the mission ground control. The two astronauts had to go to the radio room, but it was too late. The force of gravity sent them shaking throughout the ship.

Boom! Things were falling over inside the ship. "Mark, cover your head!" yelled Joey. The ship spun around. Then something unexpected happened. The two astronauts were fired into a mushy grassland of trees. The ship had crash landed! After they checked for injuries, they suited up, packed some food and left the craft.

P.S.

To read the full story, please go to

https://www.amazon.com/Inklings-Book-2024-Naomi-Kinsman/dp/1956380434/ref=sr_1_3?crid=QJSMHJOJAP07&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.8cSoUDPdiLyCq8Eq37TOZ8Z26N7xFnOKeeIGFRTvhRpYj629KV9a6jqUvV2_4hz7RmgF6DA-nPl3NtwrJoK7xg.2J9TOfc2P92n2OHAqBOGoE5_3Wdt8HC2A67aVxR-pcw&dib_tag=se&keywords=inklings+book+2024%2C+young+inklings&qid=1735599063&srefix=inklings+book+2024%2C+young+inklings%2Caps%2C161&sr=8-3