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# DING DONG STORIES

ZBIRKA  
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PRIGODE



Illustrated by  
**Bojana  
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*For Martin*

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# PIRATES

Ding dong went the doorbell.

"G'day, ma'am," a hairy pirate with a captain's hat and a gold tooth was staring at me smarmily. He wanted to know if you were home.

You were expecting him.

Gold tooth nodded in a slimy kind of way, clutching his hat in his hands. "Er... I... well... I don't know... but it's an urgent matter." He looked around, leaned close to you and whispered: "Found a map... it says hidden treasure... or something like that... couldn't read any more... the letters... too small..."

"This is a pirate captain," you explained, "I'm helping him with his reading."

"Reading?"

You nodded and whispered. "He's a very poor reader."

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You took your rain jacket and a bag of sweets, and went with him to the ship anchored on the river. On the ship there was a barrel guarded by a red-bearded pirate and a black-bearded pirate. And in the barrel...

"Psst," said the captain, looking round conspiratorially. "The map."

He carefully took it out of the barrel and waved it under your nose.

"Go on, then! Read it! Where's the treasure?"

You unfolded it and burst out laughing:

"Treasure chest of beauty! This is a map for a hair-dressing salon."

"Yuck!" spat the redbear.

"It says they also file nails and pluck out ear hairs."

"Ouch!" shuddered the blackbeard.

6 "Yer making fun o' me?" yelled the big hairy pirate captain. "If yer making fun o' me, yer better watch out!" He pulled out his pirate sword and waved it in your face.

He was furious. Out of sheer anger he began to chew dried chilis as if they were popcorn.

Out of wildness and also partly because he'd eaten too many chilis, he demanded: "Gimme all yer sweets, now! Come on, turn out yer pockets!"

"No way!" you said.

"What!?" he yelled threateningly, brandishing his sword. "I'll show yer."



"If yer don't gimme all yer sweets," roared the evil hairy captain, giving you a malicious look, "then from the terribly wicked wood, from its darrk hiding place, a horribly hairry beast will head strrraight for yer house –"

"Are your knees already trembling with fright?" asked the red-bearded pirate.

"Not a bit," you replied.

"Silence!" yelled the captain and went on: "And it will crraawwl across the foggy swamp, CLUMP CLUMP, PLOP PLOP, stop by the witch's cottage, sharpen its loooong fangs and hooowl!"

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"Woooo," howled the black-bearded pirate, "is yer hair standing on end?"

You shook your head and the captain continued: "And through the slightly open window it will drrrag itself into yer house and with its big bulging yellow eyes see the door to yer room, sneak inside, open its great shaggy jaws, show its terrible teeth and it will –"

"Wait," you interrupted him. "You forgot something!"



"What?" said the captain, confused.

"You forgot that at the same time your beast is leaving its dark hiding place, someone else is also setting off."

"Who?" asked blackbeard and redbear.

"Wait a sec," you said. "First she will straighten her white lacy blouse and put her hair in a bun on top of her head. She'll take her big black bag and then... and then she'll leave the house by the school playground."





"Don't tempt fate!" the pirate captain spat three times over his shoulder.

And you carried on without mercy: "And when your beast is crawling across the swamp, CLUMP CLUMP, PLOP PLOP, she will get on her old bike and DING DING, TING TING, will pedal along the busy road out of town."

"Stop!" yelled redbear. "My knees are trembling!"

But you didn't stop: "While the creature is sharpening its loong fangs by the witch's cottage, she will be standing by the wastepaper bin, sharpening her red pencil to a shaaarp point."

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"You're making it up!" howled blackbeard, putting his hands over his ears.

"When your beast is crawling into our house, she'll ride over hill and dale, and stop on a rise above the river."

The captain gulped. Blackbeard and redbear trembled with fright.

"When the beast with the yellow eyes is gawping at my room, her eagle eye will be looking for your ship."

"She'll never find us!" shouted the pirate captain.  
"She'll never recognise us!"

"You think not?" you smiled and waved towards the rise. "Cooley! Miss Bushell, here we are!"

"Don't tell me that it's really HER!" shouted the captain. "Don't tell me it's the maths teacher!"

He didn't wait for a reply. He squeezed into the barrel that stood on the deck.

"They say that many years ago three pupils got away from Miss Bushell: Mark Simple, Max Dolt and Mike Muddle. Right in the middle of times tables. I hear she's been looking for them ever since she retired. "

"Never heard of her," said blackbeard.

"Mark, Max, Mike," came the captain's voice from the barrel. "Hm, sound like Chinese names to me, yes, definitely Chinese."

"And that is definitely Mike Muddle," said the strict old lady, parking her bike, taking out her large black bag full of school exercises and coming on board. "I would know that red hair anywhere."

"Miss," redbear removed his headscarf.

"And is that black-haired one Max Dolt? Is he here, too?"

"Yes, Miss Bushell," admitted blackbeard.

The schoolmarm went over to the barrel: "Well, well, well Mark Simple, you always wanted to be the main one."

The pirate captain dejectedly climbed out of the barrel.

"Since you four are happily reunited," you said to Miss Bushell, "I'll go home now."

"No one leaves my class until they have mastered their times tables!" roared Miss Bushell.

Well, you quickly sorted that one out. You told her that five times three is fifteen, that seven times seven is forty-nine, nine times six is fifty four, and you were allowed home.

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You had rice pudding for dinner, brushed your teeth and wrapped yourself in a blanket. From the river could still be heard the sound of three pirates repeating their times tables.



## THE WITCH

Ding dong went the doorbell.

As soon as I opened the door a little, she pushed her warty nose through the gap. You know, that skinny witch with long nails and knotted hair.

"Hello," she croaked and asked if you were home.

When she spotted you, she burst out crying. You had a tissue ready for her.

The witch blew her nose noisily and sobbed:

"I can't find them... honestly, I've looked everywhere... neither hide nor hair... ooooh dear..."

You sighed and murmured very quietly: "Not again..." And you set off into the woods with her.

At the marsh, you found out that the witch had lost her magic wand and her book of spells.

"It was the bear," said the witch. "Only he is brave enough to rummage through other people's houses. I know that den-dweller! He sold it. He sold it to the village herbalist for a pot of honey!"

14

You arrived at the witch's wonky house, overgrown with moss and ivy. The witch served you some tea and gingerbread biscuits on a rickety table in front of the house. Before you managed even a sip of the tea, you noticed something strange in a puddle.

"Why is that toad in the puddle quacking?" you asked the witch sternly.

"I've no idea," mumbled the witch. "Toads are so dumb."

"We'll be much more comfortable in the hut!" she suddenly said as she grabbed your tea and biscuits and took them to the hut behind her house.



You followed her. That rickety chair was not comfortable at all.

"And as for the magic wand," the witch went on, "I bet it was the rabbit!"

"Why would the rabbit steal your magic wand?"

"Why? Why! I'll tell you why. He'll sell it to the town magician, so he can have rabbits jumping out of his hat at his shows. That's why!"

You bit into a ginger biscuit. It was delicious. But when you looked at the oak tree behind the hut ... you really didn't like what you saw one single bit.

"Damn it, witch! Why is a pine tree cone hopping around the oak tree?!"

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"W-W-what?" said the witch with a start. "Pine cones in this wood are difficult and lazy and cheeky and bonkers! Not to mention the animals! You beast!" She wagged her finger at the pine cone and said to you in a sweet voice: "You'd better finish your tea inside!"

She quickly took you by the arm and pulled you into her house. She picked up the teapot to pour some more tea for you.

And then...

"Enough!" shouted the teapot and flew to the table.  
"Nuff, nuff, nuff!"

The witch grabbed the teapot, hid it behind her back, moved backwards to the cupboard and hurled the teapot in.

"Even teapots aren't what they used to be!" She smiled faintly at you. "I tell you, nowadays it's impossible to get a decent teapot for a reasonable price."

The witch rubbed her hands together, scratched her head and said:

"So... eeerm... will you start with the rabbit?"

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"You know very well," you said sternly, "where the problem lies."

"N-no, I don't know," she pretended.

"You solemnly promised me last time you that you wouldn't do this ever again!"

"Promised?" The witch shuffled from foot to foot, wringing her hands. "What did I promise?"

"That you'd never turn hairy animals into feathery ones. And vice versa."

"Oh, that! And as you can see, I've kept my promise!"

"You're lying!" you said. "Who turned that duck into a toad?"

"Honestly, who'd do a thing like that? You won't believe how many lunatics have been roaming around here recently. No wonder silly things like that happen."

"That's not true!" shouted the teapot from the cupboard in a muffled voice. "You're a nasty old coot!"

"Well, now do you see?" The witch burst into tears again. "Insults, nastiness, horrible things... and poor old me..." she sobbed, bending over, "...half deaf, half frozen, barely alive!"

You banged your fist on the table so that the crockery rattled.

"Stop crying," you ordered, "and let's go and see the bear! Who knows what horrible thing you've done to him."

17

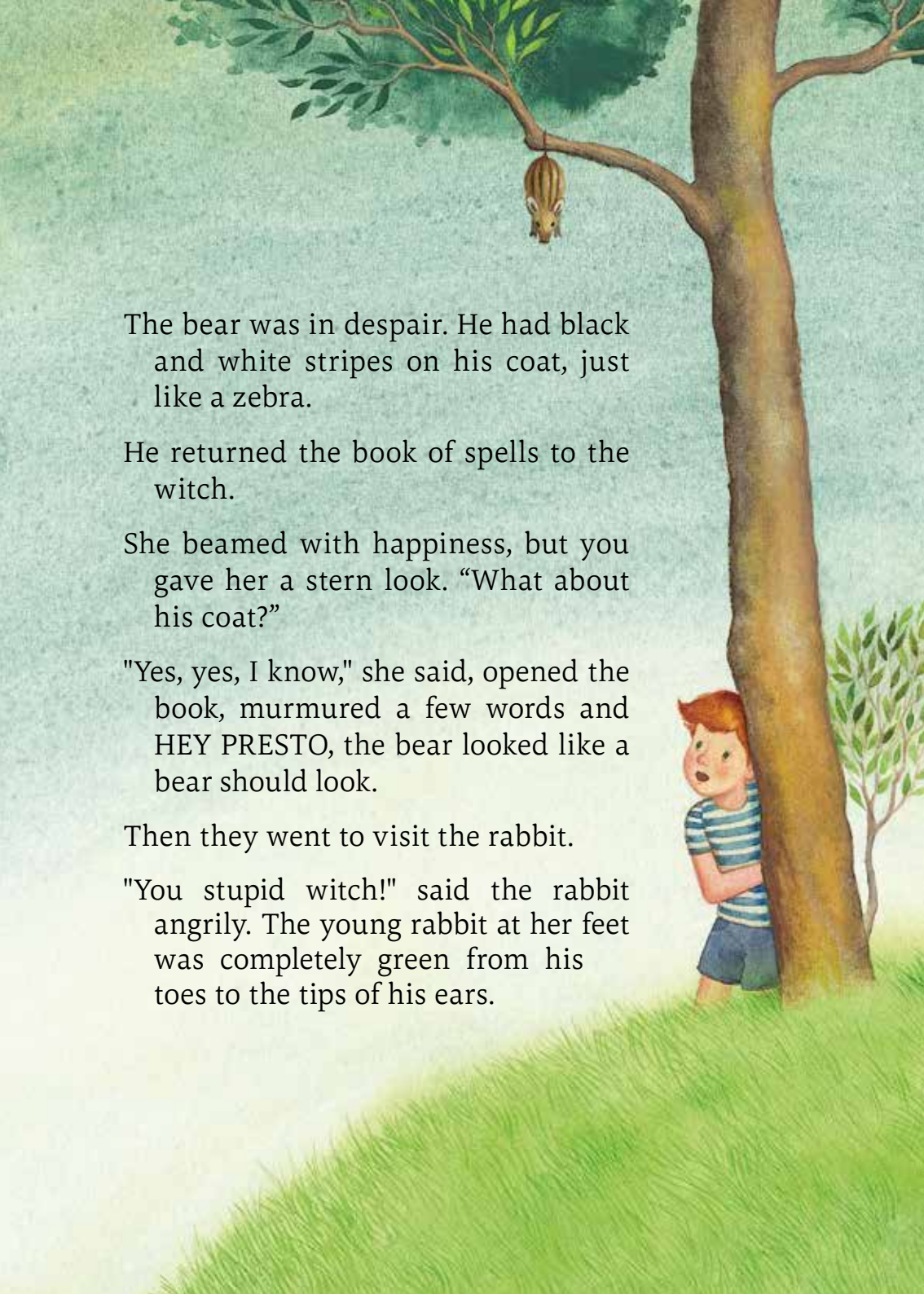
The witch straightened up immediately. She wiped her tears.

"You'll undo your spells! Do you understand?"

"Of course!" she said with a nod. "And I solemnly promise..."

But you didn't hear this because you'd already left the house.

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The bear was in despair. He had black and white stripes on his coat, just like a zebra.

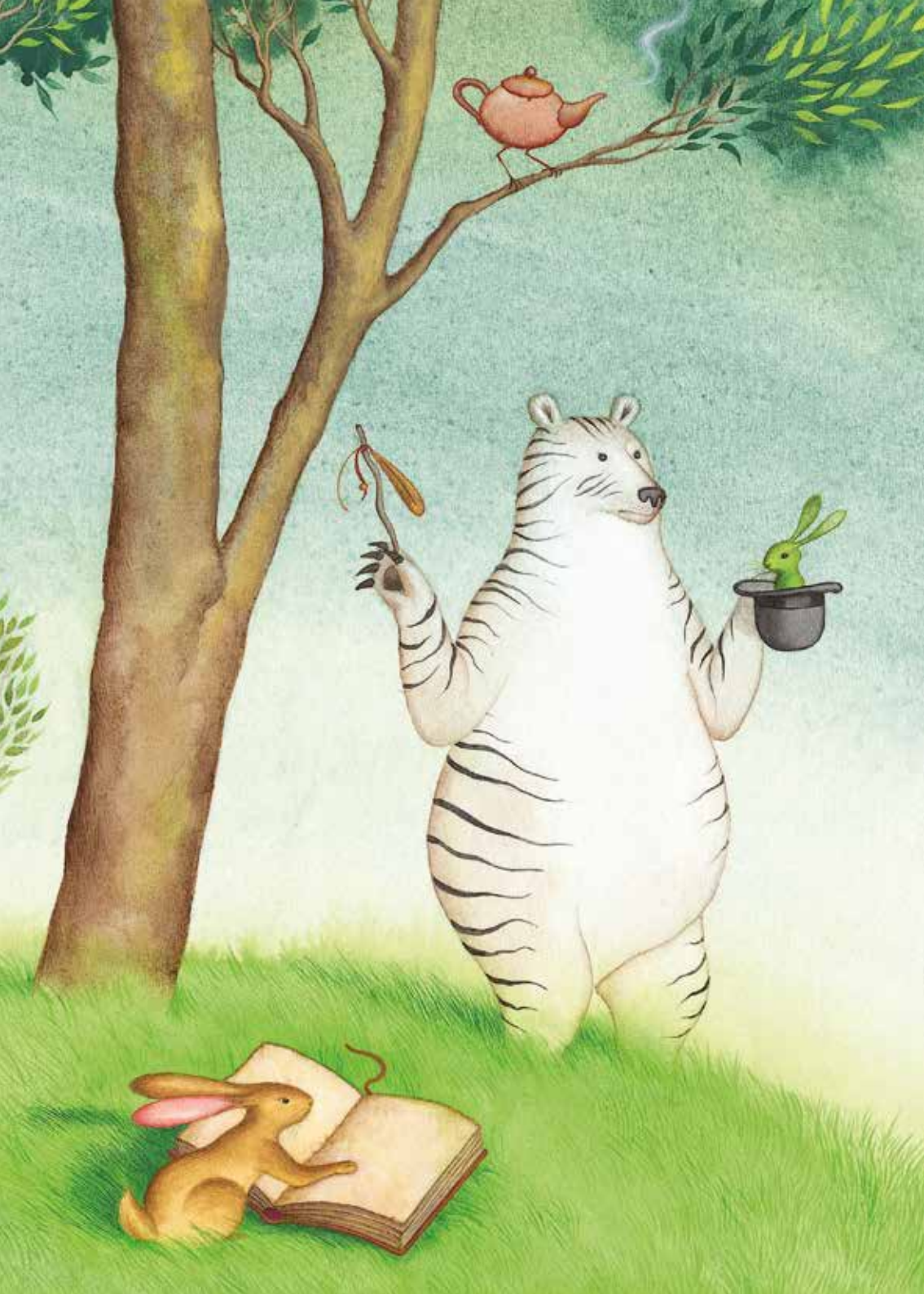
He returned the book of spells to the witch.

She beamed with happiness, but you gave her a stern look. "What about his coat?"

"Yes, yes, I know," she said, opened the book, murmured a few words and HEY PRESTO, the bear looked like a bear should look.

Then they went to visit the rabbit.

"You stupid witch!" said the rabbit angrily. The young rabbit at her feet was completely green from his toes to the tips of his ears.



Finally, the rabbit gave the magic wand to the witch, the witch waved it and the young rabbit was grey again.

Then she turned the pine cone at the top of the oak tree back into a squirrel, the toad back into a duck and let a swallow out of the cupboard.

"There goes my teapot," she groaned, sitting remorsefully in the middle of her house.

"Boring," she added. "The same story for a hundred years... winter, spring, summer, autumn... and again and again... the same thing over and over..."

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"If you want to do some magic," you said, "you could magic up something that is good."

"Yeah, sure!" she replied grumpily.

"What about some fun?" you suggested. "For everyone? And a plate of ginger biscuits for the rabbits?"

"Pathetic!" said the witch. She thought for a moment and then her eyes lit up: "Can it be the craziest fun ever?"

"Only if all the others have fun as well," you said with a nod.

"Will you stay?" she pleaded.

"No, my mum is waiting with my dinner."

You said goodbye and went home.

Before you climbed into bed, you spent a long time staring out of the window. Wild music could be heard from the woods. Something flashed in the starry sky and the stars shone in magnificent colours. Blue, red, purple and green beams of light danced above the tall trees. It was probably a really good party.



# THE ALIEN

Ding dong went the doorbell.

"Who is it?" you asked me in a whisper.

"The alien," I said quietly, moving away from the peephole.

"Again?" you said with a sigh. "He knocks over all my bricks."



"And opens all the drawers," I nodded.

"We always have to play what he wants."

"What shall we do?" I asked. "This is the third time he's come."

"Oh, let him in," you said, opening the door.

A small green being with antennae on its head, carrying a small black box burst into the hall.

It bleeped excitedly, running from room to room, opening drawers and creating a mess.

"He says he's lost his chigagy," you explained. "We should help him look for it."

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"Why don't you keep an eye on your toys?" you asked him as the two of you were leaving.

It's difficult looking for something you have never seen. And you hadn't the slightest idea what a chigagy looks like. You checked the bushes, combed the vegetable beds and the grass, and looked under all the pine trees. The alien was shaking his head and bleeping.

"Bleep-bleep-NOW-bleep-bleep-I-WILL-BLOW-UP-bleep-bleep-YOUR-PLANET-bleep-bleep." And he

began pushing the coloured buttons on his little black box.

"Why?" You gave him a surprised look.

He replied he would blow up the planet, sweep up the ashes and find his chigagy.

"Stop!" you shouted. "Then you'll also destroy all the sweets."

"Bleep-bleep," bleeped the alien, "WHAT-IS-bleep-bleep-SWEETS?"

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You took him to the shop. You had just enough money in your pocket to buy a bag of gummy green worms.

"Bleep-bleep-YUMMY-bleep-bleep-YUMMY," said the alien, smacking his lips. Even before you managed to finish your first worm, the alien had already emptied the whole packet.

As soon as the packet was empty, the alien began moving his fingers over the dangerous black box.

"Stop!" you shouted. "Shouldn't you have a look around the planet first?"

He agreed and you climbed into his flying saucer.  
You flew to the highest mountain in the world.  
You sledged. You threw snowballs at each other.  
You made a huge snow alien. When the little  
alien got tired, he pulled out his black box again.

"Hang on!" you stopped him. "Let's go to a desert  
island!"

There you swam in the warm sea, competed at  
throwing coconuts and went fishing.

After a while, the alien got bored and picked  
up his black box.

"I know," you said and found the best amu-  
sement park on Earth.

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There you bleeped and screamed with horror  
in the ghost train, and bleeped and laughed as  
you went down long slides. And bleeped and  
shrieked with excitement on the roller coaster.

The alien was enjoying himself. As you flew back,  
he produced a few sad bleeps, picked up the black  
box and once more began to press the buttons.

"No, no, no, no!" you screamed. "If your chigagy is  
more important than the sweets and the snow

and the sea and the roller coaster, there must be something else on Earth that is more important than your chigagy.”

"Bleep-bleep?" asked the alien.

"If you destroy our planet," you sad sadly, "all the mums in the world will lose their children. And what's worse, all the children will lose their mums."

The alien opened his big eyes wide and bleeped:  
"Bleep-bleep-MUM?"

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"Come," you said and directed the spaceship towards our garden.

I was just tidying up the drawers when you landed.

"Mum," you whispered, "will you be at your funniest just for a while?"

"I can try."

The alien sat on the sofa and looked around with suspicion.

"Let's play we're in a restaurant!" I suggested.

You were the waiter. The alien was the chef. You drew plates and forks and glasses. The alien drew food and drink. I sat at the table and tried the dishes that you brought on a plate you had drawn. The strangest dishes I had ever eaten.

"Here you are," I drew some money and paid for your services. Then I made some real pancakes.

The alien spread tomato paste over them and gobbled up twenty-three pancakes. After you drank some warm milk, you climbed into my lap. You looked tired, so I told you a story. It was time for you to go to bed. So, I asked the alien to come again the next day to play.

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"Bleep-bleep-I-WOULD-bleep-bleep-ALSO-LIKE-bleep-bleep-A-MUM-bleep-bleep," bleeped the alien.

"Can we find one?" you asked me.

"Hm, how am I supposed to know what alien mums look like?"

"I know," you said. And asked me to take a sheet of paper and write down the following:

"Wanted: a mum, who can make delicious pancakes and tomato paste and tell good stories. Who likes amusement parks and enjoys a laugh, but who shouts only in the ghost train or the roller coaster. Wanted, a mum who doesn't forget to bring a packet of gummy sweets from the shop. A mum who has time for make-believe games and who likes throwing snowballs and who in the winter doesn't insist on you wearing a hat."





"He can't put a hat on because of his antennae," you explained. And then whispered:

"A mum who knows that planets should not be destroyed just because you have lost a toy."

"And now put the following in big letters," you told me.

"WANTED: A MUM, WHO KNOWS HOW TO LOVE A CHILD."

We folded up the letter, put it in a nice green envelope and gave it to the alien.

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"Blee-p," said the alien in gratitude, put the black box on the table and left.

"He's forgotten about his chigagy," you said with relief.

I picked up the black box with the coloured buttons. I pressed the blue one and the green one and the red one and the yellow one...

"Don't press those!" you shouted.

Too late. Tick-tocking could be heard from the box. Smoke started coming out and then - THERE WAS A HUGE BANG!



When the smoke cleared, we noticed on the table,  
next to the box – A LARGE PACKET OF GREEN  
GUMMY SWEETS!

"Good job I haven't brushed my teeth yet," you said  
with a wink.

"But only one."

"Three?"

"Two."

You rushed into the garden and shouted at the  
dark, starry sky:

"THANKS-bleep-bleep!"

High in the sky, the familiar flying saucer  
was disappearing into space.

