

## LIFE IN THE 22nd CENTURY

'I told you not to do that, you idiot!'

'Whatever!'

'Whatever?! Thanks to you, we're now stuck up on the Moon with a bunch of past-their-sell-by-date grown-ups.'

'Chillax. We can do stuff.'

'Stuff? What stuff?'

'Well you're always goin' on about how your parents stop you from, like, doin' stuff. Now they're 200,000 miles away. So stop givin' it large!'

'Maybe. But when you told me that we were gonna get us away from those lame brains, you didn't say we'd be headed for outer space.'

'Well, you're always tellin' me you like to get spaced out!'

'Ha! Ha! Very funny.'

Luna pulled a face. Jake and she were both sixteen and he was her first boyfriend. She had hoped he would be different from the other boys. Adolescence is a time of discovery and change, but not the time to have your first date on the Moon, she reflected.

'I thought it would be cool, you know, given your name and everythin'.'

This was the final straw. Luna hated her name. Why had her parents chosen it? Knowing her mother, she had probably thought it was 'cool' back in the day, but it had been a burden for all of Luna's short life.

So she strode away from Jake, finding it difficult to replicate the 'sulky strop' that was her speciality back on Earth. The space suit was the problem. It just didn't enable the speed and exaggerated movement required by a proper 'flounce'.

As Luna looked around her, all she could see were craters, with a poorly constructed building in the distance, the *Hotel Paradise*. If this is paradise, thought Luna, I dread to imagine what Hell is like. But she loped towards the building, knowing that she would have to encounter the dreaded grown-ups who, as far as she was concerned, might as well have been an alien life force.

Entering the hotel, Luna surveyed the bar, containing a collection of helmeted has-beens. She definitely didn't want to spend time with them! So Luna turned right and started to clomp up the stairs.

She went into her room and slammed the door, reflecting that, wherever you were, there was nothing like solitude when you felt as she did. Refusing to come down for the evening meal, which was 'moon cheese and mash', Luna lay on the bed, staring at the ceiling. Just then, there was a knock on the door. Luna gave no reply, but the door opened anyway.

In walked Jake who, for the first time since they had arrived, had removed his helmet. 'If you make a baby on the moon, will it be an alien?' he said with a flirtatious smile.

Luna could not believe what she had just heard. These boys! Will they never discover what us girls really want? But Luna just shook her head with exasperation. She was discovering that sometimes it is better to say nothing, not out of acceptance, but in the hope that the problem will just disappear.