

WITHOUT A HOME.

'5,4,3,2,1. We have lift-off!' It was 2032 and the President had made an announcement the previous year.

'A rocket that I have built will fly to Uranus,' he told one news reporter during a 'briefing', which was later re-named as a 'blushing'. The reporter barely suppressed a smile before thanking the President for his graciousness. No-one knew whether the mistaken naming of the planet had been a very poor joke, a lie, or simply one of those mistakes that the President's audiences had become used to.

'Don't forget, there is only one star on this planet, and that's me!' the President continued, his fist punching the air.

That was a year ago. Now Eric was on board the spacecraft, which was journeying to Mars and not Uranus, accompanied by his three fellow-astronauts, Neil, Ruby and Maryam.

'Bye! Bye! Earth,' said Eric as he waved towards the darkness. All four astronauts were proud that their journey would assign them a place in history. They were to set up home on Planet Mars, where they would live, before returning to Earth as heroes and heroines.

But human nature still exists, whether the humans concerned are inhabiting Planet Earth or Planet Mars. Neil and Maryam became more than good friends, as did Eric and Ruby. The result was that the four of them agreed to change the sleeping quarters so that they were not separated into male and female, but into two bedrooms which were occupied by the romantic couples.

The pressurised and oxygenated dwellings meant that they would not have to wear spacesuits indoors. The result was almost inevitable. It was one which brought joy to both couples. The two women gave birth within a fortnight of one another. Fortunately, Ruby and Maryam, being forward-thinking women, had had the foresight to take tiny spacesuits with them.

When the time came for the crew, who had now become six, to fly back to Earth, all four adults were surprised by the emotional attachment they had made with their new home, as they waved their fond farewells.

'Bye, Bye Mars,' the four said as one, as the spacecraft, which had been named after the President himself, took off.

Four months later, the spaceship splashed down in the Pacific Ocean. As the world celebrated, a ceremony was organised in Washington.

'As President, I take great pride in welcoming home our four great astronauts. Such a mission would not have happened if you didn't have such a great president!' The crowd roared their approval. But what happened next shocked everyone. There was a loud crash as four men, all members of ICE, leapt on to the stage, before the President continued.

'I welcome back our four brave astronauts, but not their babies. These two babies must be returned to their planet. According to their birth records they were born on Mars, and, according to our constitution, Martians are not allowed to become U.S. citizens.'

The world was shocked. What would happen next?