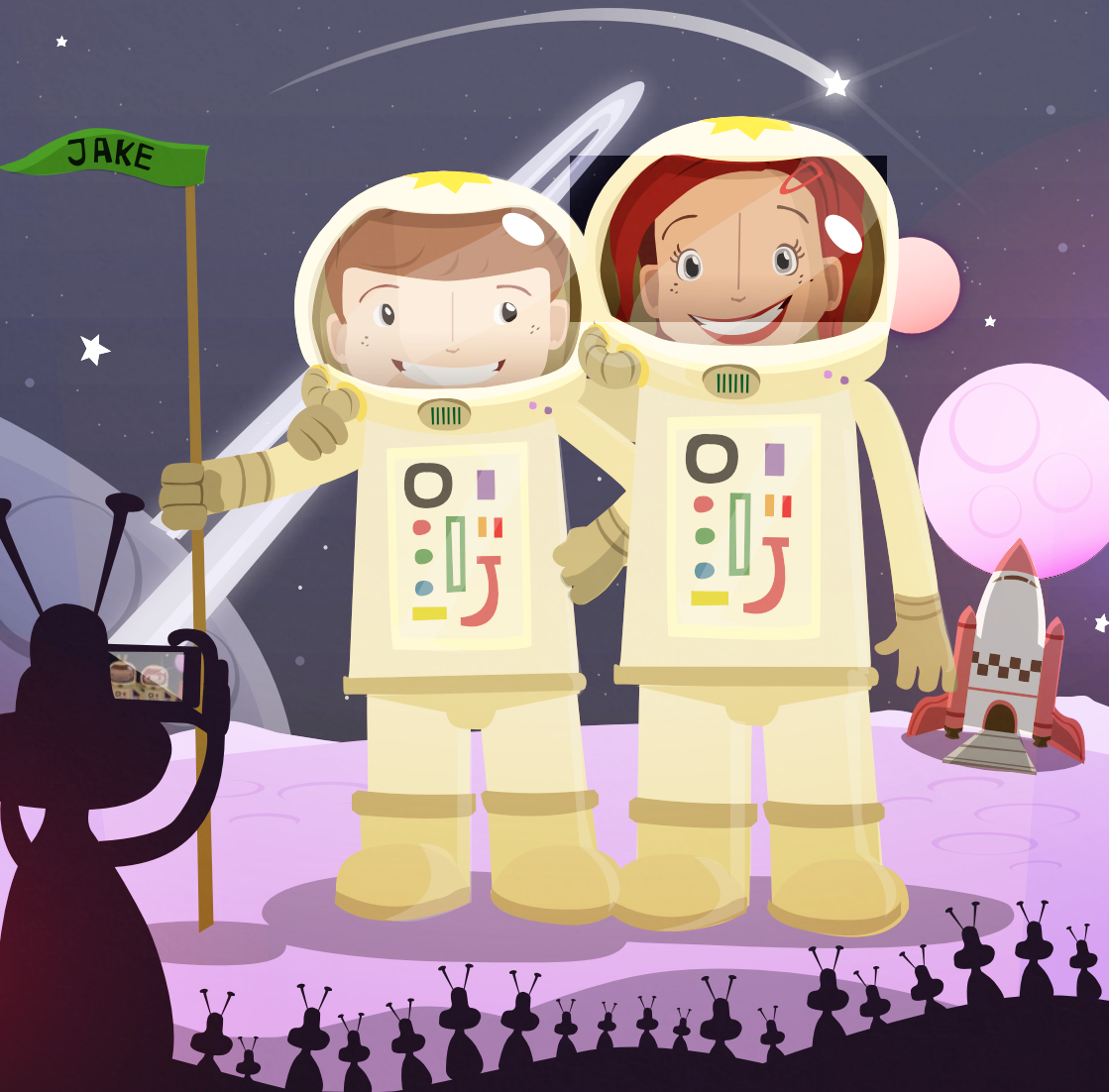


My Brother Is An Astronaut



By
Michelle Rundle

Hello! I'm Lucy, and this is my brother, Jake.

Jake! Jake! Come and say hello...

He's off again!

He's always busy, whizzing, zooming and whooshing around the house. I think he's an astronaut. He never seems to know where to land or how to be still. I think he is looking for his happy place. I call it Planet Jake.



We never know how he is going to get to Planet Jake. Sometimes he runs around very fast, sometimes he bounces on the beds, sometimes he goes head over heels on the settee.

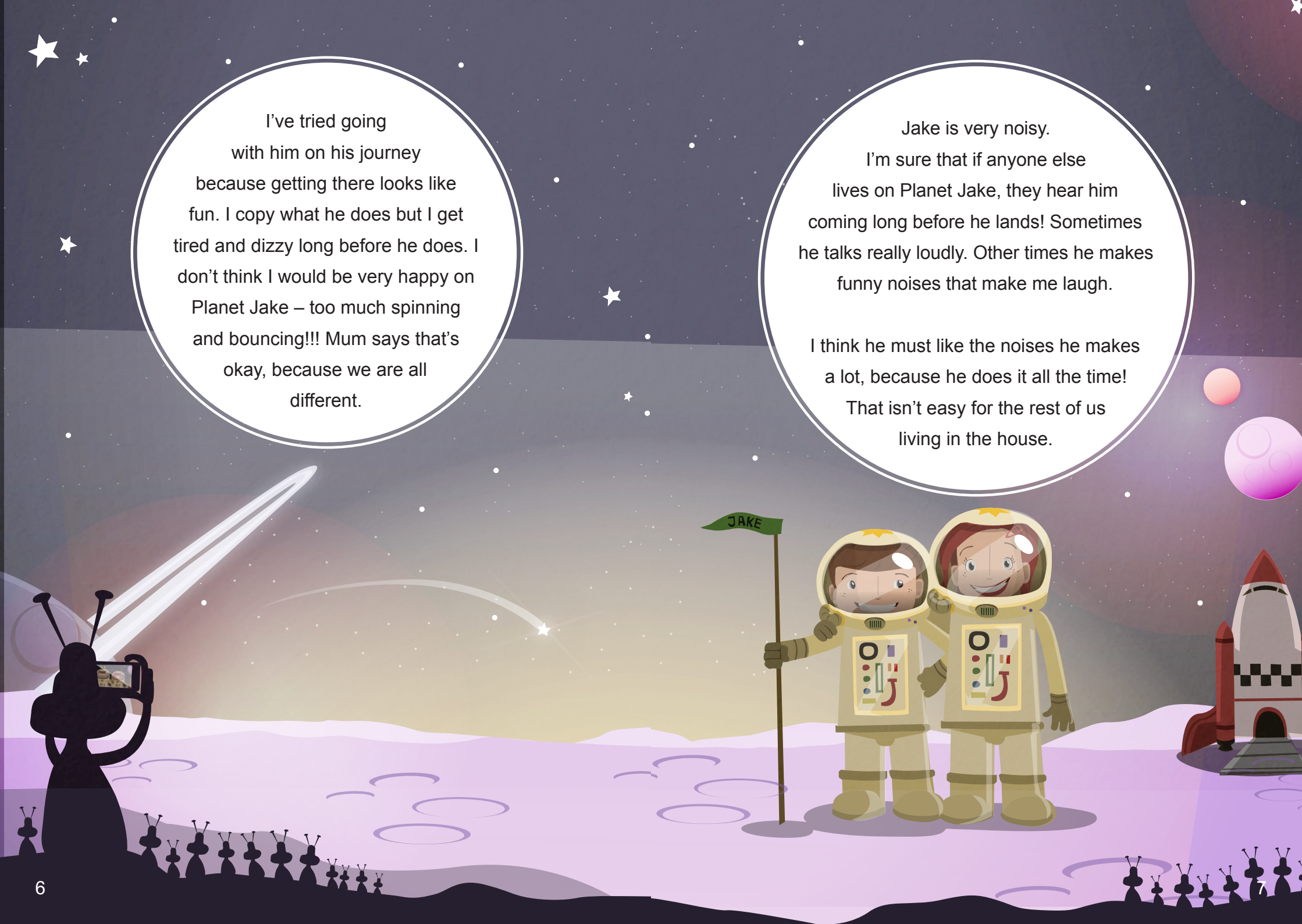


Sometimes he is so busy trying to get to Planet Jake that he doesn't see us in his way and crashes into us.

I don't like it when he does that. Mum says he doesn't do it on purpose.



He just needs to bounce and spin to keep him happy. Our home planet doesn't spin and bounce enough for him.



I've tried going
with him on his journey
because getting there looks like
fun. I copy what he does but I get
tired and dizzy long before he does. I
don't think I would be very happy on
Planet Jake – too much spinning
and bouncing!!! Mum says that's
okay, because we are all
different.

Jake is very noisy.
I'm sure that if anyone else
lives on Planet Jake, they hear him
coming long before he lands! Sometimes
he talks really loudly. Other times he makes
funny noises that make me laugh.

I think he must like the noises he makes
a lot, because he does it all the time!
That isn't easy for the rest of us
living in the house.

There are some sounds I know he doesn't like and that frighten him. He gets upset and covers his ears, or he tries to run away or hide. That is when I wonder if some of the animals on Planet Jake are just too scary for him. It's just as well he is an astronaut and can fire up his spaceship and escape!

I can't always tell what sounds are going to upset him. Sometimes it is a sudden loud sound. Other times it is a really quiet one that I haven't even heard. I wonder what else he hears that I can't.



Jake must be very good at exploring his Planet. He notices really small details. He can spend a long time looking at them and gets excited about them.

He also sees things I can't see. Mum says he is looking at the dust fairies floating in the air. I think they are friends he brought back from Planet Jake. He often laughs when he watches them so they must be funny. I wish I could see them.



If Jake weren't an astronaut, he would be a very good detective. We have trains that look the same. He can work out which one is his by smelling them. He even knows when someone else has sat in his car seat because it smells different.

It means I can't sneak up on him and surprise him either, because he knows I'm there, even if I have been really quiet!

Sometimes we get cross because he doesn't see the mess he makes, with his bouncing and whirling and being distracted and busy. I don't think he really means to make a mess. When there is too much to look at, listen to, smell and explore, he gets confused and upset. I don't like it when that happens.

When he is upset, he finds it really hard to make sense of what we say to him. Sometimes it helps to show him with pictures or actions what we want him to do, rather than telling him.



If I put my hand on Jake's shoulder when I want to talk to him, he gets squirmy. He can be a bit funny about clothes too. Jake doesn't like wearing new clothes. He says they feel scratchy. It's funny though, because he loves cuddles, especially big bear hugs.

When he is upset, the best way to help him to calm down is to give him a really big squeeze. Dad often makes a funny noise when he hugs Jake, "Warrawarrawarra".

That makes Jake giggle.



Jake doesn't like bedtime. I think it is because he has to say goodbye to Planet Jake for the day. He can't really go whizzing and whooshing when he's meant to be falling asleep!

In the dark, he can't see the friends who came back with him from Planet Jake. He isn't supposed to talk to them either. He needs to be quiet and go to sleep.



It's a good thing I know he likes big bear hugs and long cuddles. When he goes to bed, I wrap him up tightly in his covers and pack all his bed buddies around him. He likes to squish himself up against the wall. With his friends all around him, he feels snug and safe.

I like to climb into bed next to him to listen to Mum reading a story...

I'm not sure who goes to sleep first....



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