

Kola's Conflict

Chapter 1 – Going back to Gawler

Through a deep dark universe, a small looking rocket zooms away from Planet Earth on a journey to a distant planet. With four friends on board, all looking forward to their adventure to somewhere they all love.

"I don't want to go there!" snapped Kola.

"But Kola, Bouncer said we need to get some things from Gawler, I have the list here!" said Zee-Zee, holding the list Bouncer gave him.

"Yes but why Gawler, it's not the only town on Planet Australia, and we have cities too!" replied Kola.

"Well, most of the stuff, actually all of it, needs to be brought from the apotha... apotha.. apotha..." said Zee-Zee, struggling again with the last word.

"Apothecary!" giggled Gem, with a smile.

"That's right Ge..." said Kola.

Both Kola and Zee-Zee looked at Gem, shocked that a baby squirrel was able pronounce such a complicated word!

"Kola, look! It's Planet Australia!" said an excited Walla, as the rocket approached.

"Oh, what a shame, I forgot how to land this thing! We'll have to go back to Earth and re-read the manual!" said Kola, not wanting to land.

"Kola, your manual is here!" said Zee-Zee, passing it to him.

"Thanks buddy!" said a slightly annoyed Kola.

Reluctantly, Kola operated the controls as the rocket landed on the surface of Planet Australia at Gawler.

"Oh I remember, the apotha...cary is over there, down that street!" said Zee-Zee, pointing.

"Why that apothecary?" asked Kola.

“Wait and see!” smiled Walla, as she held Kola’s hand.

Zee-Zee gave Gem a piggyback as the four friends crossed the road safely and ventured to the apothecary shop. However, when they got there, they were surprised to see the apothecary was closed.

“Oh no, it’s closed!” frowned Walla.

“Closed down! Look at this notice.” Spotted Kola, as he read.

The shop appeared empty, with a notice on the door that Zee-Zee read.

“What does Liquidation mean? Does that mean that mean the shop flooded?” asked Zee-Zee.

“Not quite, it means it went out of business, so it’s closed down forever.” Explained Kola.

“Oh no, we won’t be able to get Bouncer’s things on his list!” said Zee-Zee.

“Or your surprise!” added Walla.

Zee-Zee tried to hush Walla, while Kola looked through the window on the door, he accidentally leaned on the handle, and the door opened, with him dropping into the empty shop.

“Ouch!” said Kola, landing face first on the floor of the shop.

“Oh it’s open, let’s look inside, maybe she’s here!” said Walla, hopping into the shop.

“Walla! Shhhhh!” said Zee-Zee walking in.

The four friends looked around the empty shop, with Gem hopping off Zee-Zees back and looking at the light some of the crystals were refracting.

“Ohhhhh pretty!” smiled Gem!

“Well, looks like Bouncer won’t be getting anything on his shopping list!” snickered Kola.

“Well, we not just here for shopping.” Said Zee-Zee passing the list to Kola.

“Let me see here...” said Kola, reading the list.

“Left-handed Pestle, a bag of candle flames, and a.... a set of Slotted Measuring Spoons?” read Kola bewildered.

“Yeh, that’s what Bouncer wanted!” said Walla.

“Bouncer tricked us!” stated Kola.

“These things are jokes, they don’t actually exist!” he added

“Well, we had to get you here to see someone... well it doesn’t matter, shall we go somewhere else?” suggested Zee-Zee.

“Sure thing!” said Kola, beginning to feel uneasy as the smell of the shop was getting to him.

“Come on Gem, lets go back to the rocket!” smiled Zee-Zee picking up his little sister.

Zee-Zee, Gem and Walla skipped out of the shop, with Kola walking behind.

As Kola was about to leave the shop, he stepped on an old flyer which advertised the store. Kola picked it up and was shocked to see a picture of an adult female koala smiling at her products.

Kola, shocked at the image, scrunched up the flyer and headed straight out to his rocket.

Back on the rocket, Kola was wondering as he was manning the controls.

“So, you might as well tell me. What was this surprise?” asked Kola.

“We can’t tell you!” said Walla.

“Yeh, but we’ll show you one day!” smiled Zee-Zee.

“Tim Tam?” interrupted Gem.

“Hehe no problem GemGem. Let’s take you into the galley, and you can have your baba too!” said Kola, as Zee-Zee passed Gem to Kola’s shoulder.

As Kola took Gem into the kitchen, Walla and Zee-Zee went to a porthole, to look at the stars and distant galaxies. Soon Walla spotted something at a distance.

“Oh Zee-Zee, what’s that?”

“I don’t know, it looks like a red rocket?” said Zee-Zee peering into the glass of the porthole.

“it’s getting closer!” noticed Walla.

“Look, it seems to have fireworks!” smiled Zee-Zee, seeing the rocket firing something.

Soon Kola came out feeding Gem her bottle.

“What up guys?” said Kola, passing Gem to her brother.

“Look it’s another rocket!” said Zee-Zee excitedly.

“Oh?” said Kola, looking through the porthole.

“Oh no!” he added before turning to his friends.

Soon, crashes were heard, and the rocket started shaking.

Walla screams, as Gem buried her head into Zee-Zee’s chest.

“We’re under attack!” shouted Kola, as he raced to his controls.

“Oh no, Kola help us!” squeaked Zee-Zee.

Zee-Zee hugged Walla as she was holding on to him, but Gem started giggling at the momentum of the rocket. Kola took the controls, trying to focus in a violently shaking rocket!

Chapter 2 – Under Attack!

“Kola, what’s going on? This is scary!” cried Zee-Zee

“Make it stop!” pleaded Walla.

“This is personal! I got this!” said a determined Koala.

“Nerf Lasers Fire!” shouted Kola, as he fired the lasers.

The lasers shot out across space and hit the other rocket.

“Bullseye!” smiled Kola.

“Kola, stop! You’re going to make it worse!” snapped Zee-Zee.

Soon the attacking rocket fired more lasers aiming straight at Kola’s.

“Oh no, brace yourselves!” said Kola.

The lasers smacked into Kola’s rocket, shaking it about on its trajectory in space.

“Kola stop this now, you’re going to hurt us, and Gem is scared!” pleaded Zee-Zee.

Kola looked towards Gem, but she was not quite scared, as she was giggling in excitement at the movement of the rocket. But he didn’t want to scare Walla or Zee-Zee.

“OK, I’ll stop, I will dive, and hopefully the other rocket won’t find me!” said Kola, as he controlled his rocket to a large gas giant planet.

“What are you doing now Kola?” asked Walla

“Hiding from the rocket, it won’t find us here!” laughed Kola.

Kola switched the engines to silent and floated behind a large moon orbiting the planet. Things were calm on the rocket, and Zee-Zee relaxed.

“Heehee, the rocket will never find me here!” giggled Kola.

Zee-Zee’s moment of calmness soon came to an end, as both he and Walla saw the rocket from a porthole behind them. Zee-Zee tried to warn Kola:

“Uh Kola, you might to look...”

“Shhhhhhh, that rocket may have hacked into my radio, if it hears a voice on this frequency, it’s got us!” interrupted Kola.

Soon the rocket fired more lasers, and what appeared to be bombs.

“Ahhhh! How did it find it me so quickly!” said a shocked Kola.

“Well, we saw it before you did!” smirked Zee-Zee.

Kola zoomed the rocket away from the planet, but the other one was right on its tail. To Kola’s horror, everyone on board noticed that Kola’s rocket was slowing down to a float.

“Kola, what’s going on? Why have we slowed?” asked Walla

“No no, this is cheating, he’s put me in a gravity field!” said Kola.

Soon the friends heard a bump on the side of the rocket near the Air Lock.

“What was that another laser?” asked Zee-Zee

“I wish, that rocket had docked on the side of mine, this is now an invasion!” explained Kola.

“You mean they’re coming aboard?” said Walla, getting frightened.

“Impossible, the airlock is secured with a 128,000,999-combination lock, no one can get in from the outside!” said Kola assuredly.

“AIR LOCK ACCESS GRANTED!” said the computer’s voice.

“Ah, this is now serious!” said Kola, now appearing to get worried.

The four friends heard footsteps coming from the air lock and making their way down to the control room.

“Kola what we going to do? What’s going to happen?” said Zee-Zee holding onto Kola.

“Well, I got this!” said Kola, holding up what looked like a pen.

“You going to write to him?” asked Walla.

“Nope, it’s my handheld nerf laser pen, he will stop and surrender!” smiled Kola.

Soon a figure in a spacesuit entered the Control room. He was about the same size as Kola. He wore a helmet and had a cyan tail with a stripe.

“Fire! Pew pew pew!” said Kola, firing his laser.

The visitor held his hand and the lasers just bounced off.

“Oh no, they had no effect on him!” said Zee-Zee

The intruder then put his gloved paws up to his helmet, and removed it, revealing himself to be a cyan skunk, with a white stripe going along the bridge of his muzzle, between his eyes, white fluffy hair on top and three dots on each of his temples.

“They’re nerf lasers, course they won’t! Honestly Kola, you’re such a sore loser when you’re beat!” smiled the skunk.

“Gussy!” smiled Kola, as he ran over to the skunk and gave him a hug.

“Gussy? You know this intruder, who fired on us?” grumbled Zee-Zee.

“Er yeh his one of my oldest friends! We were playing!” said Kola

“Playing?” Zee-Zee sneered

“With lasers?” he added.

“Nerf lasers silly!” said Kola.

“Look!” Kola added, pointing his laser pen at Zee-Zee.

“Kola, what you doing?” asked Walla concerned.

Kola then fired the laser at Zee-Zee’s stomach.

“Ow, Hey!” said Zee-Zee rubbing his tummy

“They were like sponges!” he added.

“Yep, Nerf Lasers!” smiled Kola

“Sorry Gussy, these are my friends, you remember little Walla,” said Kola

“Wow, you’ve grown! Walla” smiled Gussy.

Walla smiled and giggled as she gave Gussy a hug

“And this is Zee-Zee and his little sister Gem.” introduced Kola, tickling Gem under the chin.

“Hiya lil one!” smiled Gussy.

Gem shyly smiled, as Gus gave her a little tickle on her paws, and she giggled back, before playfully gnawing on Gussy's glove. Zee-Zee gently took Gem off Kola.

"Heehee, how old is she?" asked Gus.

"Nearly 1." Said Zee-Zee, a little sardonically.

"Gus, you made us really scared with those lasers, and Kola why didn't you tell us it was a game?" he added bitterly.

"Well, I thought you knew." Answered Kola.

"Hang on a minute, why didn't you have your 'Baby on Board' signal on?" asked Gus.

"If that was on, I wouldn't have fired!" Gussy Added

"Erm... well I forgot!" Kola said sheepishly.

"Kola, you could have prevented this?" growled Zee-Zee

"Well, I forgot I had it, but of course Gus would remember, his parents kept the signal on until he was 7!" giggled Kola.

"Heys!" said Gus, playfully hitting Kola.

After Gus and Kola shared another friendly hug, Zee-Zee was getting a bit fed up.

"Gem needs a change. Come on Walla, I need your help!" said Zee-Zee taking Gem to the family room, with Walla following.

"Is your friend ok?" asked Gus, concerned he's started off on the wrong foot.

"Yeh, I just think he's a little shaken!" smiled Kola.

Chapter 3 – Gus’s Mission

Kola took Gus to the galley and made him a drink with a plate of Tim Tams. Gus always brings Kola some Brigadeiros, a Brazilian fudge sweet which Kola rarely gets to eat. As Kola was making the drink for all his friends, Gus couldn’t help but notice the drawings around the galley.

“Hey Kola, I never realised you draw!” smiled Gus.

“Well, I don’t. They’re Zee-Zee’s drawings. He always keeps some paper and pencils on my rocket, and where we go, he likes to draw.” Smiled Kola.

“Wow, Zee-Zee’s really good!” said Gus

“Yeh, he’s a really good friend to everyone too.” Smiled Kola.

“I hope I haven’t shaken him too much!” said Gus concerned.

Gus and Walla were just finishing changing Gem, and all three came into the galley, and got their drinks.

“Hi Zee-Zee!” smiled Gus.

“Sorry for firing at the rocket and shaking you.” He added.

“It’s OK, no harm done I suppose” replied Zee-Zee, a with a little cold shrug.

Gus was a bit put back, knowing Zee-Zee was still not sure about him. But he turned to the pictures and looked at one of Zee-Zee’s pictures.

“Wow, the moons of Amazonia are so beautiful in this picture. Who’s the artist?” asked Gus.

“Eh, erm me. I drew that when we flew by a few weeks ago” said Zee-Zee.

“It’s a great picture!” smiled Gus, with a tear in his eye.

“Really, eh thank you!” Zee-Zee smiled.

“I come from Amazonia, it’s my home, and you drew it so well!” smiled Gus.

“Awww. You really like it?” Beamed Zee.

“Uh-huh! I love being remind of home” smiled Gus

Zee-Zee jumped out of his seat and gave Gus a big hug.

“Thank you!” squeaked Zee.

Kola and Walla smiled as they had their drinks.

“I did check to see if you were home at the time, but you weren’t there.” Said Kola.

“Well, I’ve been away for a while now. I’m on a mission to find my parents.” Frowned Gus.

“Your parents are missing?” enquired Walla.

“Yeh, I’ve been trying to look for them for a while now, but they could be anywhere. I was hoping to use Kola’s help.” Said Gus.

“Sorry buddy, I don’t know where they could be.” Said Kola.

“I know you don’t, but you got a DNA Protocol on your rocket navigation system.” Said Gussy.

“Oh that thing.” Said Kola, dreading.

“What’s that?” asked Zee-Zee.

“Well, you know Sat-Navs and my navigation system have a home feature. Well, my navigation can scan your DNA. It’s connected to a database, and you can find your home via that, or to a family member.” Explained Kola.

“Oh good, maybe we can use it for...” said Walla

“But it will only find it if your parents are in the database, and it hasn’t been updated since my rocket regenerated.” Interrupted Kola.

“Can we try?” asked Gus.

“I don’t know...” said Kola, worried.

“Please Kola, Gus is on his own, we all have parents!” said Zee-Zee

“Oh ok, let’s try.” Said Kola, leading his friends to the control room.

Kola directed Gus to stand in front of the scanner and switched it on. Lights shone all over Gus’s body, and the scanner picked up his bodily rhythms which were then input into the rocket’s computer. However, the result came up negative.

“Sorry buddy, your parents aren’t in the database.” Said Kola, apologetically.

"It's ok, it was a long shot." Said Gus, trying to hide his disappointment.

"Where were your parents last?" asked Zee-Zee.

"They last called on the planet Old Zealand" answered Gus.

"Old Zealand? We have a planet New Zealand near us, but I didn't know there was an old one." Said Walla.

"Well, if there's a new one, there must have been an old one!" explained Zee-Zee.

"Yes, the planet is abandoned after they discovered surfing. They have no oceans there." Said Kola.

"Well, perhaps we could go there, they might have got lost, and we could help find them!" suggested Zee-Zee.

"It's possible, as the planet is should still be habitable." Said Kola.

"Can you help me find them Kola?" asked Gus.

"I would love to, but it's been a long time since the planet had anyone living there. My computer will find it, but I don't think we should go." said Kola.

"It's ok, can go myself, if I have the co-ordinates." Said Gus

Kola went to search for Planet Old Zealand, and before long, he was able to decipher where the planet was located.

"There we are, it orbits a star called Beta-Vista, a binary system, so two suns!" said Kola

"Will it be hot?" asked Zee-Zee

"No, the planet is within the system's Goldilocks Zone, so just right for life." Replied Kola.

"Great! Thanks Kola!" smiled Gus, giving him a hug, and taking the printout of the co-ordinates.

"I'll catch you guys later!" Gus added, putting his helmet on.

"Kola!" cried Zee-Zee.

"Isn't Gus supposed to be your friend?" he added.

"He is, he has helped!" smiled Gus.

“I don’t know how dangerous it will be, I got you, Gem and Walla to look after.” Explained Kola.

“But as friends, aren’t we supposed to help each other out?” said Walla.

“Yeh, come on Kola, you have Rio and Pepsi, and Walla has Winnie and Bouncer, Gus is on his own!” said Zee-Zee.

Kola thought for a minute. He remembers how Rio took him in, and how Winnie, Walla’s mum looked after him as he was growing on Planet Australia. He knew Gus needed help to find his mummy and daddy.

“We’ll see you there buddy!” smiled Kola.

“Huh? You don’t have to come!” responded Gus.

“We do, I have tethered your rocket, where it goes, we go!” said Kola, smugly.

“Hehe, we wanna help you Gus!” said Walla.

“Well, OK, just be careful!” replied Gus.

“We will!” smiled Zee-Zee and Walla in unison.

“I was talking to Kola!” said Gus, winking through the visor of his helmet.

Walla and Pepsi giggled.

“Hysterical!” grimaced Kola, as Gus left the rocket.

As Gus detached the rocket, he blasted his way to Old Zealand. Kola’s tether beam was able to lock onto Gus’s rocket, following it to its destination.

“Why haven’t Gus’s parents spoken to Gus?” asked Zee-Zee

“I don’t know. They may have burnt out solar cells, and unable to be found by rescuers, so they got marooned.” Explained Kola.

“Like a desert island, so they must have their favourite music!” he added

“What if that happens to us?” asked Zee-Zee.

“Everywhere my rocket goes, Bouncer knows, as does the RA.” Replied Kola

“RA?” questioned Zee-Zee.

“Yeah, the Rocket Association! Like the AA for outer space!” smiled Kola.

Chapter 4 – Welcome to Old Zealand

Gus's rocket was travelling through the universe, with Kola's following behind. Soon both Gus and Kola were able to see the point of light that would become a disk and the sphere of Planet Old Zealand.

"White-stripe to Teddy K, are you receiving?" said Gus's voice on radio?

"Hehehe Teddy!" giggled Gem.

"Teddy K?" sneered Kola, before answering the radio.

"Oi! Why did you give me the code name Teddy K?" Kola responded

Kola and all on board his rocket could hear snickering on the radio.

"Why did you give me that moniker? You know my call sign!" responded Kola.

"Thought it was cute, and thought Koala was too obvious!" replied Gus on the radio.

"Anyway, preparing for approach and landing on Old Zealand" Gus added.

"Roger!" replied Kola.

"Heeheehe Teddy!" giggled Zee-Zee.

"Very funny, lets prepare for landing." Said Kola, adjusting the controls of his rocket.

Gus's red rocket was first to shift into landing gear as the rocket entered the atmosphere of the planet and slowed until it landed on the surface near a what looked like a forest or jungle.

"How are we going to find Gus's mummy and daddy on a whole planet?" asked Walla.

"Good question, maybe Gus might have a fair idea." Said Kola, as his rocket landed not far from Gus'.

"Grub-Grub!" squeaked Gem.

"Hehe, Ok Grub can come with us, but let's put this hansom collar on him!" said Kola.

Kola attached what looked like a high-tech collar on Gem's Grub before handing him over to her. Gem naturally grabbed Grub with both paws and held him tight.

What's that collar for Kola? Grubs not a dog!" Zee-Zee giggled.

"It's a special collar for Grub. If he gets lost, we will find him. Can't leave Grub behind and take home a grumpy baby squidge!" giggled Kola.

The four friends, with Gem holding onto Grub on Zee-Zee's shoulders, ventured out and saw the jungle. They were in awe of the two suns high in the sky.

"Its so quiet!" mentioned Zee-Zee.

"Yeh, there is no animal life here whatsoever, just trees and plants. So peaceful!" said Kola.

Soon a breeze occurred, and the sound of the rustling trees brought comfort to the group. Kola and Zee-Zee spotted Gus near the edge of the forest and approached him.

"What took you guys so long?" said Gus.

"Admiring the view!" replied Kola.

"So why did we land here?" he asked.

"Well, my parents last called when they were exploring this forest, and this is the only one I could find on the planet. It's just plains and a few lakes." Said Gussy.

"Plus a few abandoned cities near the lakes," said Kola.

"Well, they must have explored this forest, this looks familiar from this picture they sent to me." Replied Gus, showing Kola and his friends the photo.

Soon Gus, Kola and his friends ventured into the forest. The forest got denser and denser as they ventured further. The smells of the forest weren't too dissimilar to ones on Earth, the light shone through the trees, but it got darker the further they walked. As the foliage was getting thicker, Kola and Gus didn't realise they were separated from Zee-Zee, Gem and Walla

"Look it's a cave!" said Gus.

"Maybe my parents took shelter in there!" he thought.

“You go in, we’ll keep watch outside.” Said Kola turning to where he thinks his friends should be.

“Zee-Zee? Walla? Gem?” called out Kola.

“Where did they go?” wondered Gus.

“Look they couldn’t have got far, you wait here, and I go and see where they are.” Said Kola.

“Ok, you got your radio?” asked Gus

“Of course!” Said Kola, holding it up to show him.

Meanwhile Zee-Zee was holding Gem and walking with Walla until they realised, they were lost.

“Oh great!” said Zee-Zee.

“We’re lost!” frowned Walla.

“Yes, but don’t panic, maybe we should go back to Kola’s rocket, and they will find us there!” said Zee-Zee

“Clever Zee-Zee!” smiled Gem.

Zee-Zee and Walla were able to see their tracks as they ventured back to the lighter section of the silent forest. However, after a little way, there footprints stopped, as the ground seems to have been disturbed.

“Oh no, now what do we do?” cried Walla.

“It’s ok Walla, let’s just rest, and we can keep going to where it gets lighter.” said Zee-Zee comforting her.

“Come on Gem, let’s take a seat!” Zee-Zee said, taking Gem off his shoulders.

Gem noticed something moving in the bushes. As she looked she saw a vine move through the undergrowth. She curiously stared as it seemed to sliver away.

“Uh Uh Zee-Zee!” Gem uttered as she pointed to the bushes.

“What is it, Gem?” Zee-Zee responded, looking to where Gem is pointing.

Zee-Zee looked through the bushes but couldn’t see anything.

“That moved!” shouted Gem.

“Don’t be silly Gem, plants don’t move, unless it’s the wind.” Explained Zee-Zee.

Gem just kept staring, until Walla noticed something near the trees. She saw what appeared to be large green elliptical shaped pods that belonged to a plant were opening revealing a soft pink inside.

“Zee-Zee look!” gasped Walla tapping his shoulder.

Zee-Zee turned around and noticed the pods, realising there weren’t opened before.

“Wh, What are they?” he gulped.

Meanwhile Kola managed to see some tracks that belonged to Walla and Zee-Zee. He was relieved to see that their direction headed to what appeared to be a clearing, so was hopeful he will find them there.

Kola followed the tracks until he noticed what appeared to be a piece of paper, exposed as if he was meant for him to pick up and read. Kola, more concerned than assured, picked up the paper and read it.

“It’s a memorandum. How did this get here?” Kola thought to himself, before realising...

“Oh No!” he gasped to himself as he started to read it.

Aghast, Kola ran along the trail of footprints to frantically search for his friends.

Zee-Zee, Gem and Walla, began noticing the vines were moving around the plant’s pods.

“What is this? This can’t be good!” said a worried Zee-Zee.

“Maybe there are trying to catch flies?” suggested Walla.

“But... there are no flies here, Kola said the only life on this planet is plant life.” Replied Zee-Zee.

“But if they don’t want flies.... Oh no!” cried Walla, grabbing on to Zee-Zee.

Zee-Zee picked up Gem to protect her.

“What has Kola brought us to?” said a worried Zee-Zee.

“Stay perfectly still!” said Kola softly as he appeared behind Zee-Zee and Walla.

“What? Kola, you made us jump! What are these things?” replied Zee-Zee

“They’re Chitworts, a sentient plant form.” Kola replied.

“Sentient?” asked Walla.

“They think like you and me and unlike most plants, they know they are alive, and they have emotional feelings like you and me.” Kola further explained.

“So, they don’t want to eat us?” said Zee-Zee

“Well... they do in a way.” Answered Kola seriously.

Chapter 5 – The Chitworts

“What, you mean they *will* eat us? Kola you gotta help us!” Zee-Zee said nervously.

“They don’t want to eat you like we eat food,” said Kola.

“They want your age!” he added.

“Age? How do you mean?” said Walla.

“They get their food from photosynthesis like other plants, they get their nutrients like protein and vitamins from your age, they feed on your physical development. If you end up in one of those pods, you will become a 1-year-old.” Explained Kola.

“1 year old! You mean they will turn us into babies?” Walla shrieked.

“Kola, this is serious, get us out of here! I’ve learned so much, I don’t want to forget it all!” screeched Zee-Zee.

“You won’t, they don’t wipe your memories, just your physical age. You will still be very clever, but a very clever baby squirrel.” Explained Kola.

Meanwhile, in the cave, Gussy was exploring with his flashlight, he can almost pick up the scent of his parents, giving him the confidence they have been here.

Soon he could see something reflecting in the light, so he crawled over, as the cave’s roof was getting lower. As Gus got nearer, he could see that it was a device like a tablet. Gus knew it belonged to his parents, so was desperate to turn it on. However, there was no charge, but the clever skunk had a spare power bank, so quickly connected it.

Outside in the forest, Kola was desperately looking for a way out, but all he could see were vines, dropping down from the tree branches like curtains.

“Kola, please help us get out of here, this *is* scary now!” cried Zee-Zee.

“There are vines hanging everywhere, if they get touched, they will pick you up, and drop you in the pod, and that will be it!” explained Kola seriously.

“Kola, I don’t want to be a baby, my mummy won’t let me go out and play.” Sobbed Walla.

Soon a piece of paper dropped down from the vines. Kola picked it up, and read:

“WE ARE THE CHITWORTS. YOU WILL BE EATEN BY US, BUT DON’T BE AFRAID. YOU WILL BE RESCUED AND LIVE HAPPILY AS LITTLE KITS AND JOEYS!

KIND REGARDS,

THE CHITWORTS”

“This is how they communicate with us, through Memo, it’s like an email on paper. At least they’re polite enough.” smirked Kola.

Zee-Zee and Walla looked at Kola annoyed, but Gem was staring in awe at the movement of the vines. She dropped Grub in amazement.

In the cave, once Gus was able to turn the tablet on, he saw a video message from an adult female cyan coloured skunk he recognised.

“Mommy!” gasped Gus.

Gus played the video:

“To whoever gets this message; We are trapped on Planet Old Zealand. The planet is full of wild Chitworts!” said Gus’s mommy.

“WHAT?” said a shocked Gus.

“They have already got my husband, and we need rescuing.” Continued Gus’s Mommy.

“No NOT Daddy!” cried Gussy.

But then Gus saw a vine in the background in the video.

“Please send urgent assitanc....ahhhhhhhhhh!” screamed Gus’s mommy as she was dragged away by the vine.

“No.... mommy!” cried out Gus, as he hugged the tablet device tearfully.

Gus then heard something in the cave. He turned around and saw the same vine as in the video. He froze in terror at the sight.

Outside in the forest, it was looking hopeless until Kola had an idea.

“Zee, do you trust me?” asked Kola.

“Why ask now?” snapped Zee-Zee.

“Pass Gem to me please.” Kola requested.

Zee-Zee was concerned, as he is his duty as a good big brother to protect his baby sister. But he was not in a position to decline in this situation.

“Here you go.” Said Zee-Zee passing his little sister to Gem.

“Just keep an eye on the vines, and I will get us out of here!” said Kola in his assuring voice.

Zee-Zee just stared at the vines surrounding everyone, but in the corner of his eye, he could see Kola creeping up over to a pod.

“Kola what are you doing?” said a concerned Zee-Zee

Kola didn’t answer, but as Zee-Zee turned he saw Kola drop Gem into a pod.

“In you get GemGem!” smiled Kola as he placed her in.

Zee-Zee’s mouth was wide-open, and he was horrified as the pod closed on a giggling Gem, leaving her trapped inside.

“Stay comfy squidge!” smiled Kola as the pod sealed.

“Kola?” said Zee-Zee in disbelief.

“What have you done?” he then outburst.

Kola was only able to stare at Zee-Zee, not seemingly able to explain his actions.

**TO BE
CONTINUED....**