

Meet Z



It was a bright and beautiful day, perfect for playing with friends. On the sunniest side of the park, some kids were in the Clubhouse, where they played together every afternoon.

“I feel like something special is in the air today,” Alo said.

Debra nodded. Sunlight was streaming in through the windows of the Clubhouse where the two friends were playing. There was a gentle breeze floating in, too, bringing with it the promise of fall.

Suddenly,

**CRASH BANG CLATTER
CLANG SQUEAL**

CRASH

BANG



They were the loudest sounds Alo and Debra had ever heard!

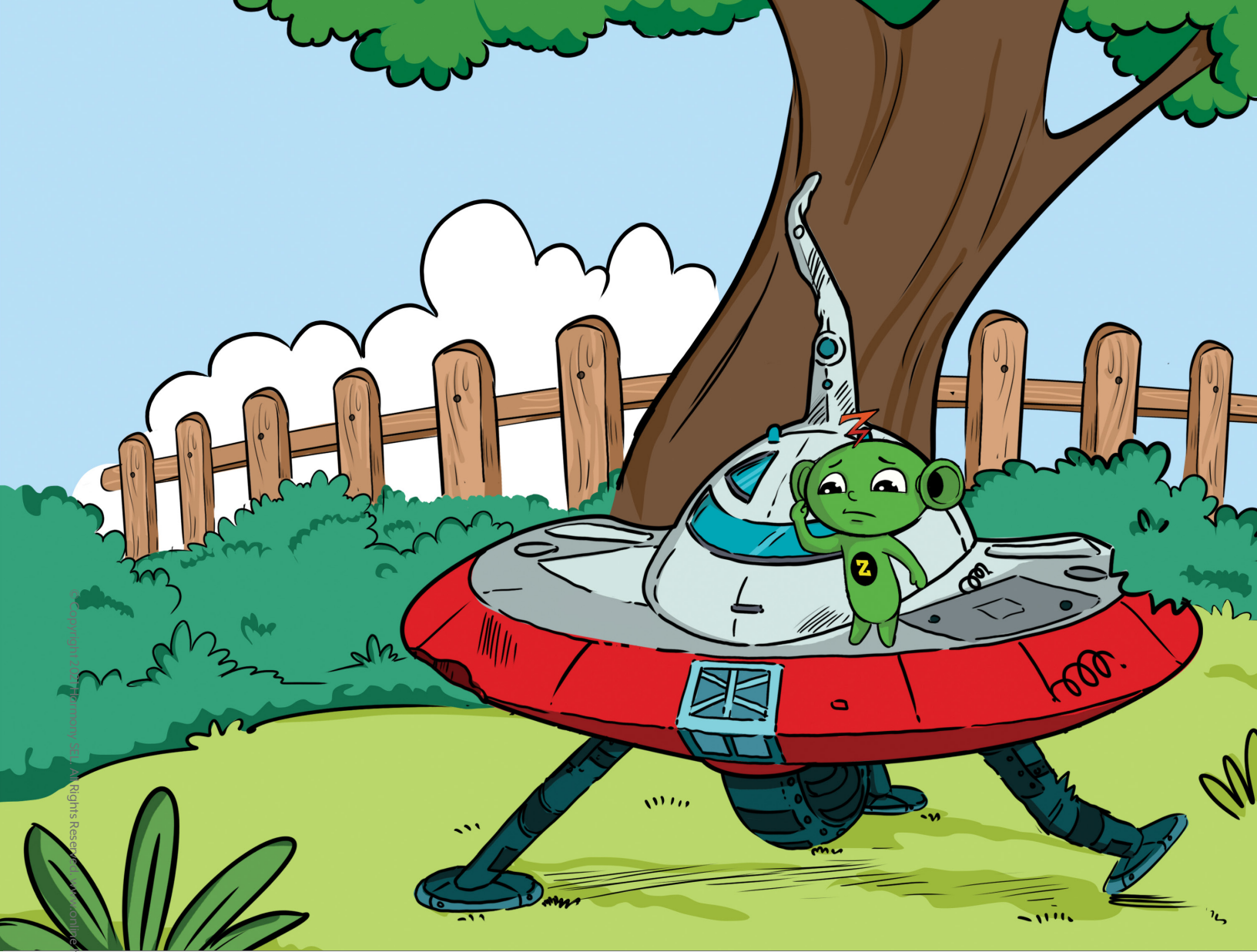
“I think there is something in the bushes,” said Alo as he looked out the window. “I’m going to go see what it is.”

“I’ll go with you,” offered his buddy Debra.

So the two friends tippy toed out of the Clubhouse and across the grass. Tip. Tap. Tip. Tap.

When the kids peeked around the bushes, they couldn’t believe their eyes. A shiny silver spaceship gleamed in the sun. It was badly crushed where it had smashed into a tree.





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“Wow,” Debra and Alo said together. They had never seen anything like this!

The children’s eyes grew wide when a small green space being hopped out of the spaceship and bounced around it, looking at the damage. The space being had ears that looked like trumpets. At the top of the space being’s head was an orange antenna shaped like a lightning bolt—or the letter Z.



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The space being noticed the children and bounced over to them.

“I am Debra and this is my buddy, Alo,” Debra said.

“Who are you?” Alo asked.

“Hello Alo and Debra. I am Zappazipplezenzoozery,” the space being said with a grin.

“Nice to meet you, Zappa Zipple. . . um. . .” Alo giggled. “It’s a neat name, but I need help to say it correctly. Can you tell us your name again?”

“Slowly this time, please,” Debra added.

“It will be easier for you to learn each part separately,” Zappazipplezenzoozery said.

“ Zappa Zipple ”

“ Zen Zoo Zery ”



Alo and Debra practiced and practiced.

Then, they shouted happily together,
“Zappazipplezenzoozery!”

“Exactly!” Zappazipplezenzoozery declared,
bouncing joyfully.

Zappazipplezenzoozery’s bouncing looked like a fun new dance. The children began bouncing, too. They couldn’t bounce exactly like their new friend, but they all had fun anyway.



After a while, Zappazipplezenzoozery, Alo, and Debra collapsed onto the grass, exhausted.



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“By the way, on my planet, they call me Z!”

Zappazipplezenzoozery said. “Would you call me Z?”

“Okay, we will, Z!” Debra said.

“Z, will you come to the Clubhouse tomorrow to meet our friends?” Alo asked.

“What is a friend?” Z asked.

“A friend is someone that you care about and like to spend time with,” explained Debra. “I have lots of fun with my friends.”



Z was very puzzled.

“Don’t worry, Z,” Alo said. “We can help you learn about friendship.”

“Great!” Z said. “And I can tell you all about my planet, too. That is, if you are interested.”

Both children said, “We are!” They couldn’t wait to spend more time with their new friend, Z.

Discussion Prompts

1. How do the children feel when they meet Z and see Z's spaceship? How would you feel?

Surprised, excited, curious; They had never seen a spaceship or a space being before. They want to learn all about Z and Z's planet; I would be so excited to meet a space being! I might be a little afraid at first.

2. Alo and Debra are excited to tell the Clubhouse friends about Z. Who else do you think they are excited to tell? Who would you tell?

Debra's and Alo's parents, grandparents, teacher. My parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, cousins, neighbors.

3. What would you tell Z about how to be a good friend?

Play nicely, share things, be kind, listen to them, help them if they have a problem.