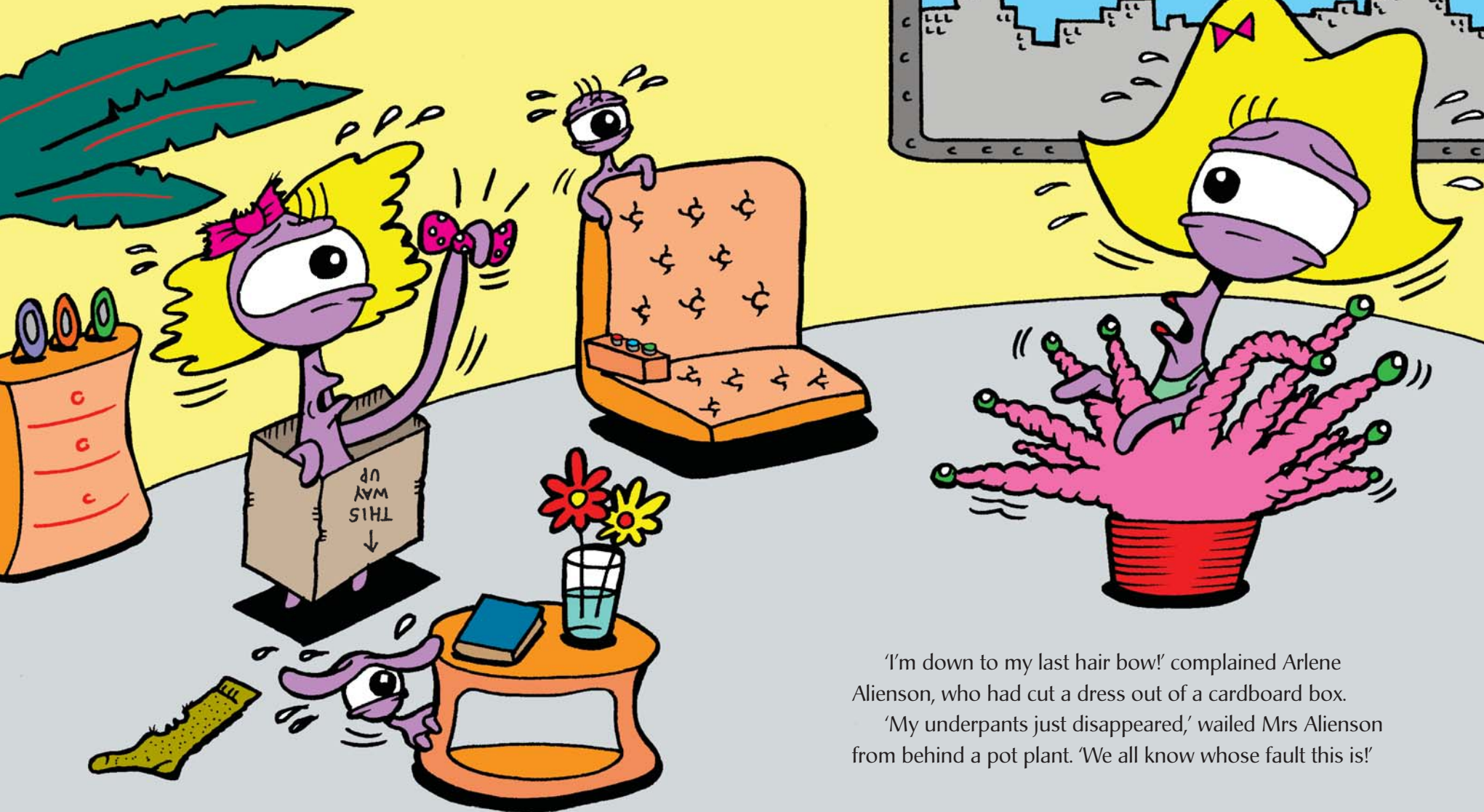


# CHAPTER 1

The Aliensons were having a really, *really* bad clothes day. But the problem had nothing to do with overly tight trousers or wrinkled shirts . . . the problem was that their clothes were vanishing!



'I'm down to my last hair bow!' complained Arlene Alienson, who had cut a dress out of a cardboard box.

'My underpants just disappeared,' wailed Mrs Alienson from behind a pot plant. 'We all know whose fault this is!'

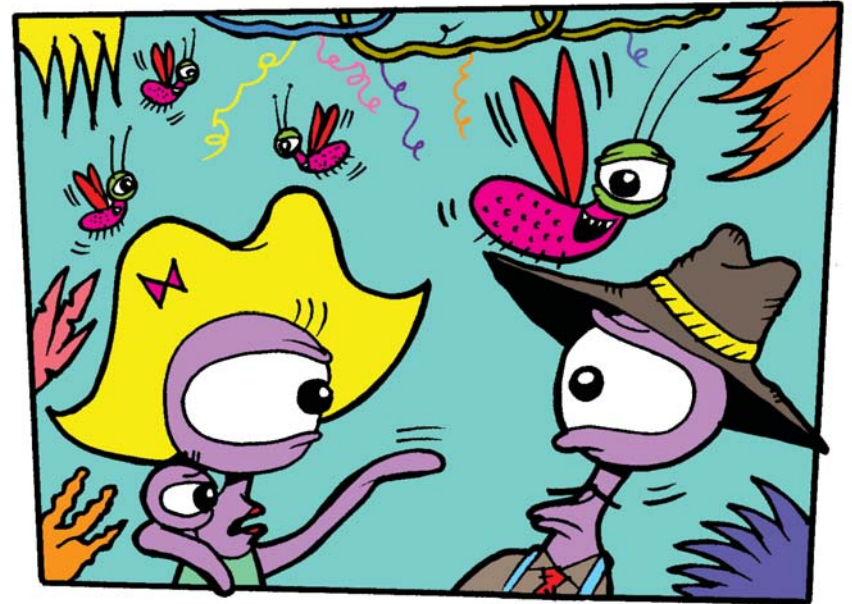
Mr Alienson's latest hobby was his new greenhouse. He spent every spare minute in there trying to grow Valvaxian fruit and vegetables. Although they tried very hard to adapt to life on Earth, Mr and Mrs Alienson found there were some things from their home planet they just couldn't do without. One of these was Valvaxian food.

Now you may think a greenhouse is a safe place, where stuff grows quietly and nothing exciting ever happens. Not true! This, remember, was a *Valvaxian* greenhouse, growing Valvaxian plants, housing Valvaxian wildlife . . .



Mrs Alienson, Arlene and Aha marched into the greenhouse.

'We've got another infestation of mothulons,' shouted Mrs Alienson. 'They're eating all our clothes!'



Mothulons are a particularly nasty type of Valvaxian creepy crawly. Like our moths they eat clothes, but unlike our moths they are five times the size and five times as hungry!

'They must have snuck in with some of the plants you ordered from Valvax-7,' said baby Aha, who, like most Valvaxian babies, was particularly advanced for his age.

'I knew I should have checked the boxes more carefully,' mumbled Mr Alienson.

Mrs Alienson shook her head. 'Well, until you find a way of getting these pests under control, I'm banning you from the greenhouse!'

That pink manure smells goooood!

'But my crops are about to bloom,' pleaded Mr Alienson. 'I just need a bit more time and we could be feasting on Nark-fruit, Zaza-beans and Gorzalian-asparagus!'

Arlene twisted her face in disgust.

'You know Arlene is allergic to Gorzalian-asparagus,' said Mrs Alienson. Arlene had once been in bed for a week after eating the stuff. In fact, Gorzalian-asparagus leaves started sprouting from her hair! Unlike their parents, the Alienson kids preferred Earth food.

'But just think, an ice-cold Nark-fruit juice,' mused Mr Alienson, 'followed by Zaza-beans on homemade Flanzle-wheat bread, then . . .' Before he could finish, a mothulon swooped out of a Nark-fruit bush and snapped at his pants!



'Get that thing away from me!' he squealed.

'But it's enormous!' said Mrs Alienson, ducking the flying beast.

'That's it, I'm getting out of here!' screamed Arlene. 'It's positively wild!'



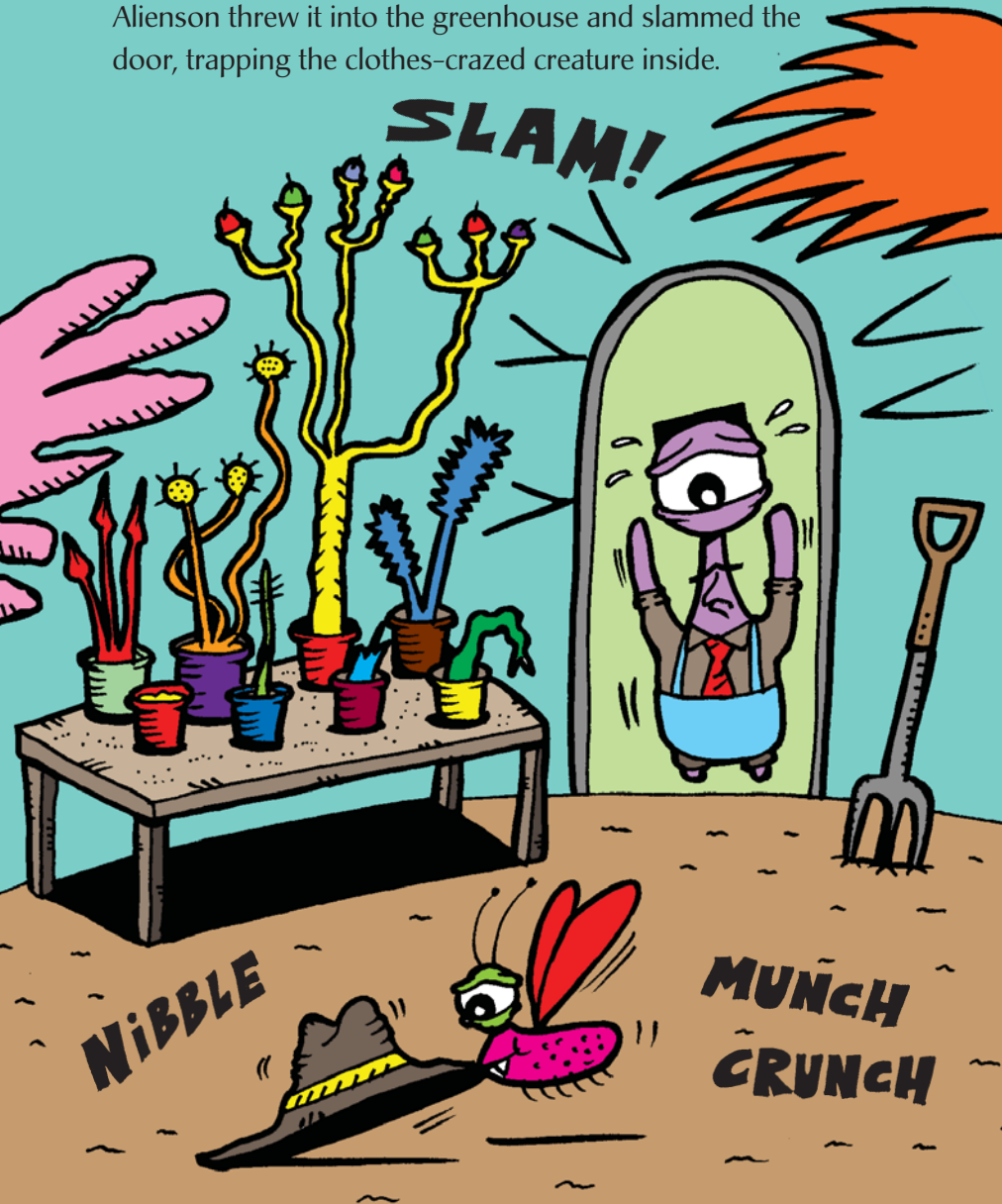
Arlene fled the greenhouse, and the rest of the Aliensons were quick to follow. Mr Alienson desperately tried to bat away the gigantic mothulon.

'It's munching my trousers!' he screeched. 'Help!'

Aha had a brainwave. 'The hat!' he shouted. 'Use the hat as bait!'

'Good thinking!' Mr Alienson offered up his gardening hat. 'Here mothy, mothy, mothy! Lovely, tasty hat!'

As the mothulon made a greedy dive for the hat, Mr Alienson threw it into the greenhouse and slammed the door, trapping the clothes-crazed creature inside.



Mr Alienson sighed with relief. 'Phew, that thing was vicious! I don't know about you lot, but I think we need a holiday!'

'Yeah!' cheered Mrs Alienson, Arlene and Aha.

'How about Las Baygas?' suggested Arlene. 'It's the capital of showbiz and Chad Cheesly's new band, Backstreet Fellas, is playing there!' Arlene was the number one fan of lead singer and general heart-throb Chad Cheesly, and his new band was her latest obsession.

'I'd like to go to a health spa,' said Mrs Alienson.



'I've got a much better idea,' said Mr Alienson. 'But we all need to be together before I tell you about it. Has anyone seen Andy?'