

Chapter 4

The snow was still falling. The windscreen was filling with snow. Dad was out there, trying to tramp to the next town. He would be freezing. It was getting chilly in the car as well.

The small brown man shivered. 'This is a cold planet,' he said. 'Why do you stay here?'

'It's not always cold here,' I said. 'It hardly ever snows. This is the coldest day this winter. In summer it's hot.'

But the brown man had lost interest in me. He was digging around under the seat.

I asked, 'Did you say, "This is a cold planet"?''

But the man had clambered into the back and he was scratching about in the picnic basket. There was not much left in the basket. Just an old banana skin and some bits of mandarin peel. The man got out the banana skin.

‘Do you eat this?’ he asked. It did not matter what I said. He had eaten the skin and the mandarin peel.

‘I am hungry,’ he said. ‘What have you got here? Do you eat this?’

There was a stack of sheets of Dad’s maths on the back seat. He grabbed some sheets and munched them up. ‘Yuck,’ he grumbled and spat some bits out. ‘You eat bad stuff on this planet.’