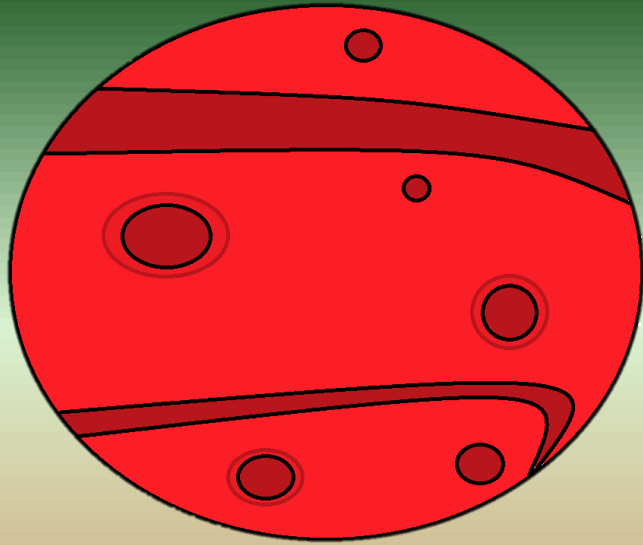
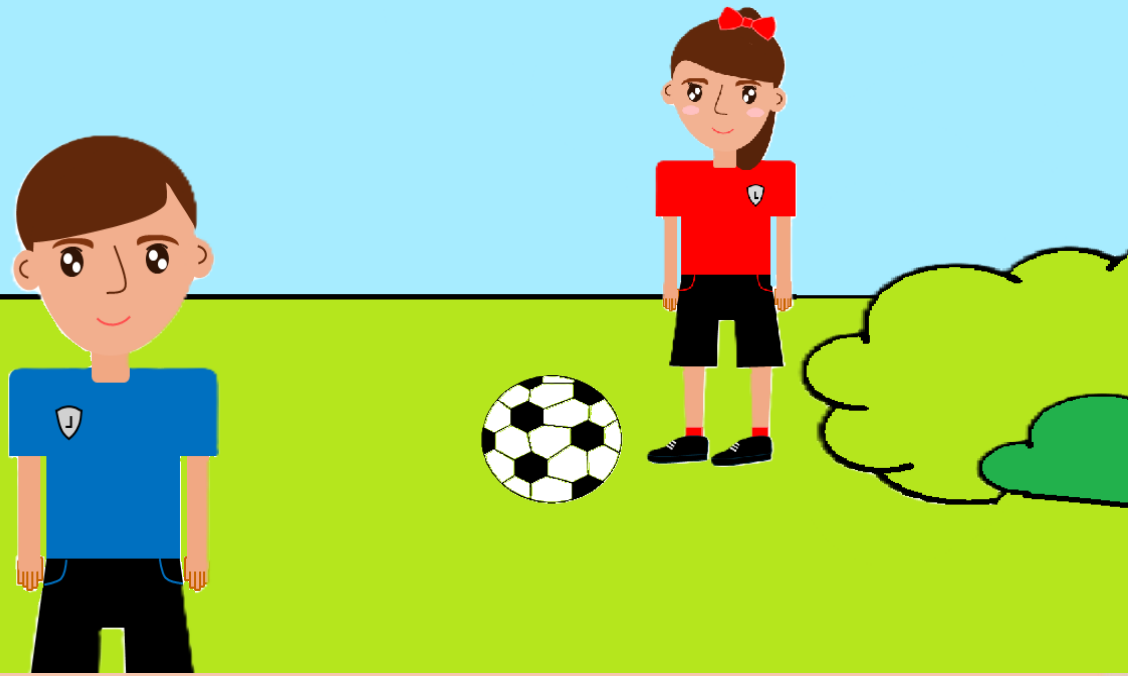




Lek and Luca meet a Martian



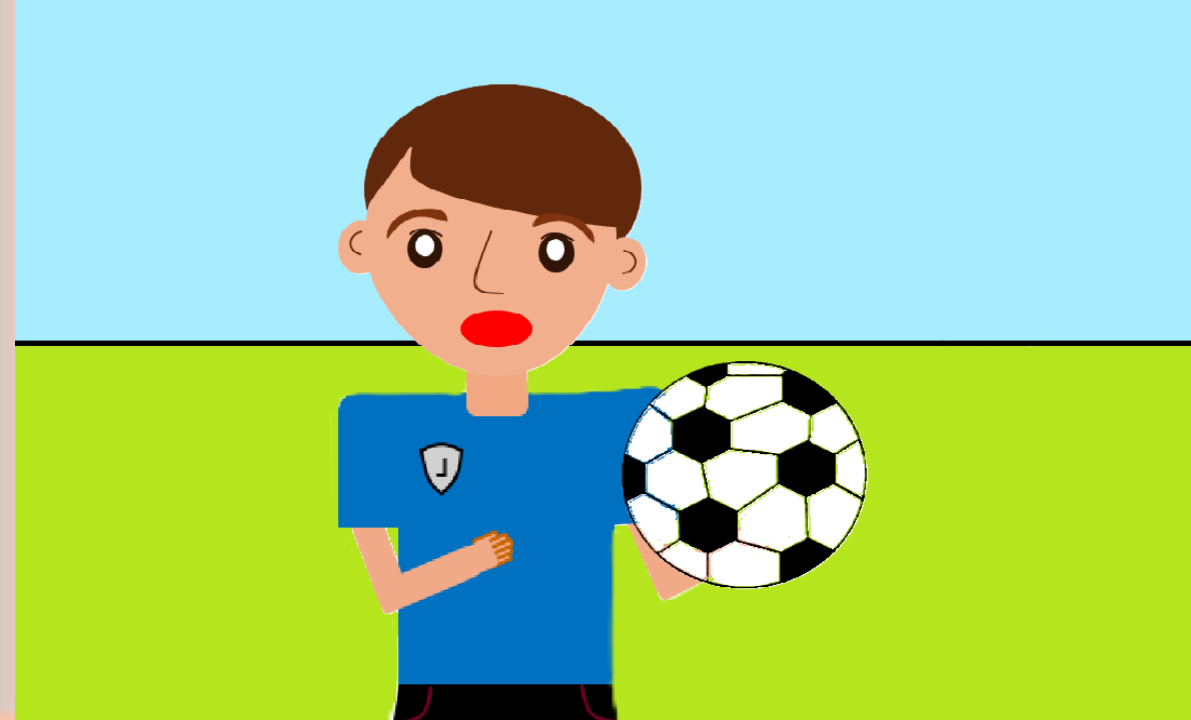
Written by Russell Holton
Illustrated by Russell & Somkamon Holton



Lek and Luca were playing in the garden with their ball. Luca kicked the ball hard and it flew straight into some bushes.

"Don't worry I'll fetch it," Luca cried.

Luca disappeared into the bush and a few seconds later he reappeared with the ball. Luca did not look well, and Lek rushed over to see what was wrong.



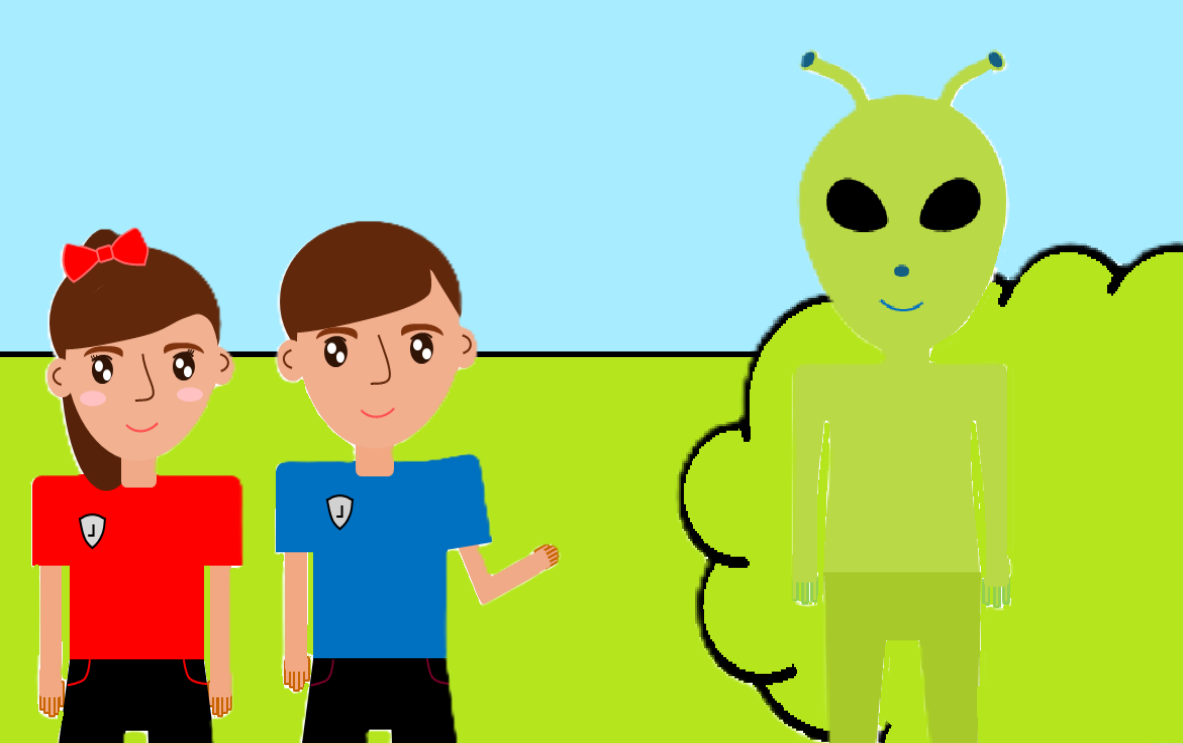


Lek peered into the bush and what she saw gave her quite a shock. She had seen many strange things in the garden, such as rainbows, and even a snow leopard, but this was something else entirely.

Hiding in the bush was an alien. Lek and Luca stared with their mouths wide open.

"I'm sorry to scare you," said the alien. "I'm green like the bush so I didn't think you'd see me."



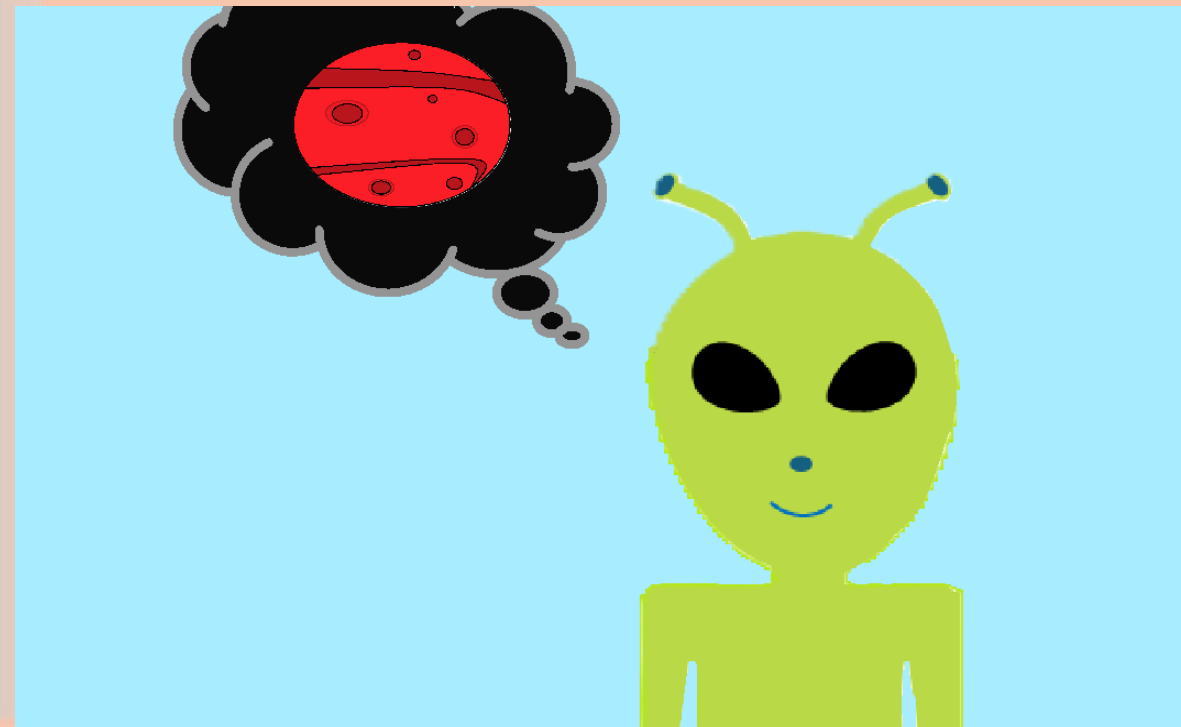


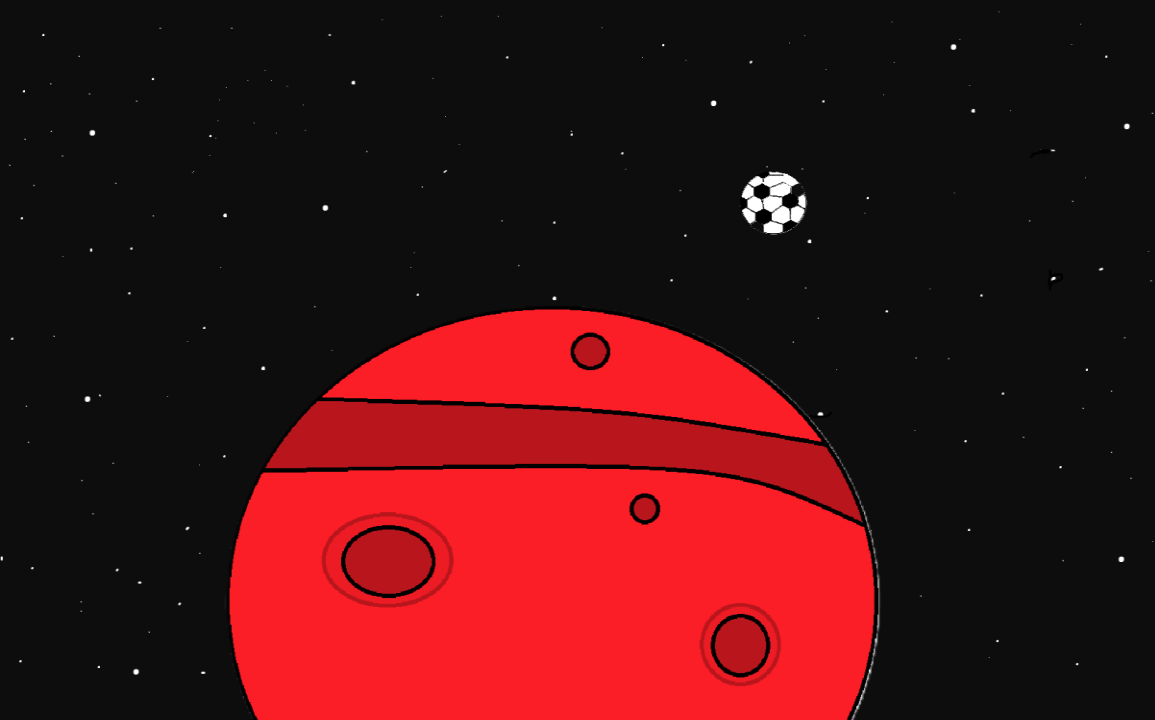
"How did you get here?" asked Lek.

"I arrived in my spaceship," said the alien. "I like to visit every now and again."

"Where are you from?" asked Luca.

"I'm from the planet Mars," the alien replied. "My planet is amazing, but Martians live underground so we don't see many green spaces or blue oceans. Earth is a lovely planet to visit because there's so much to see."

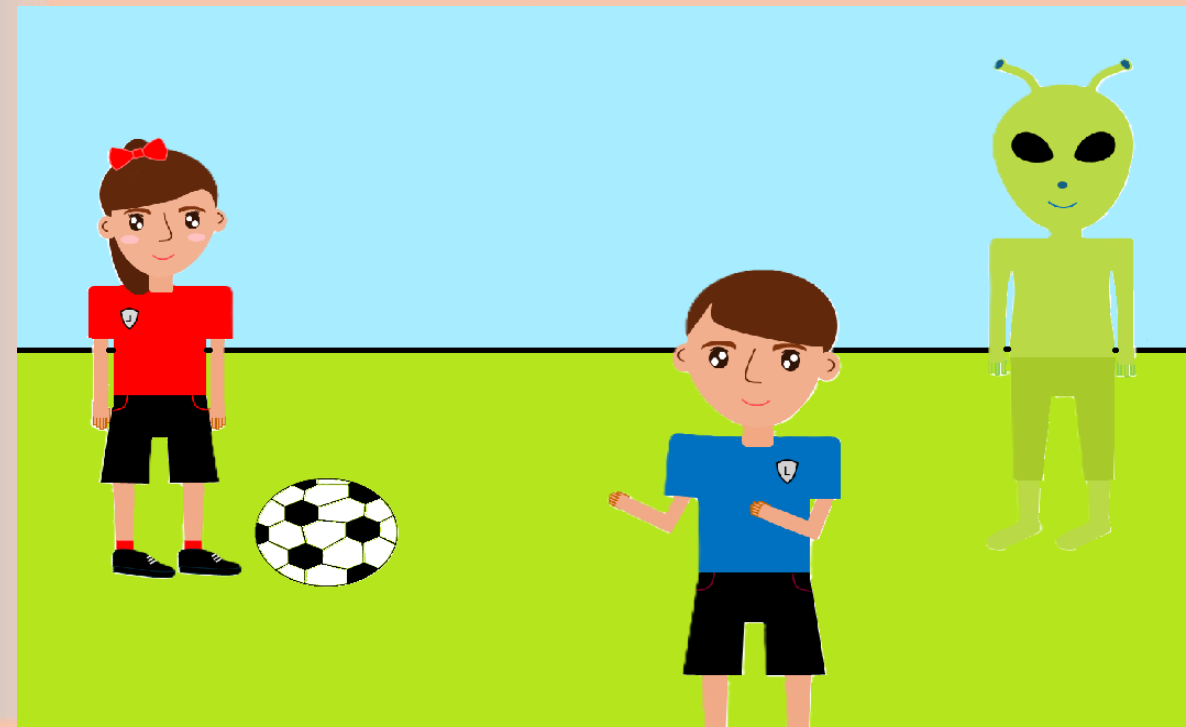


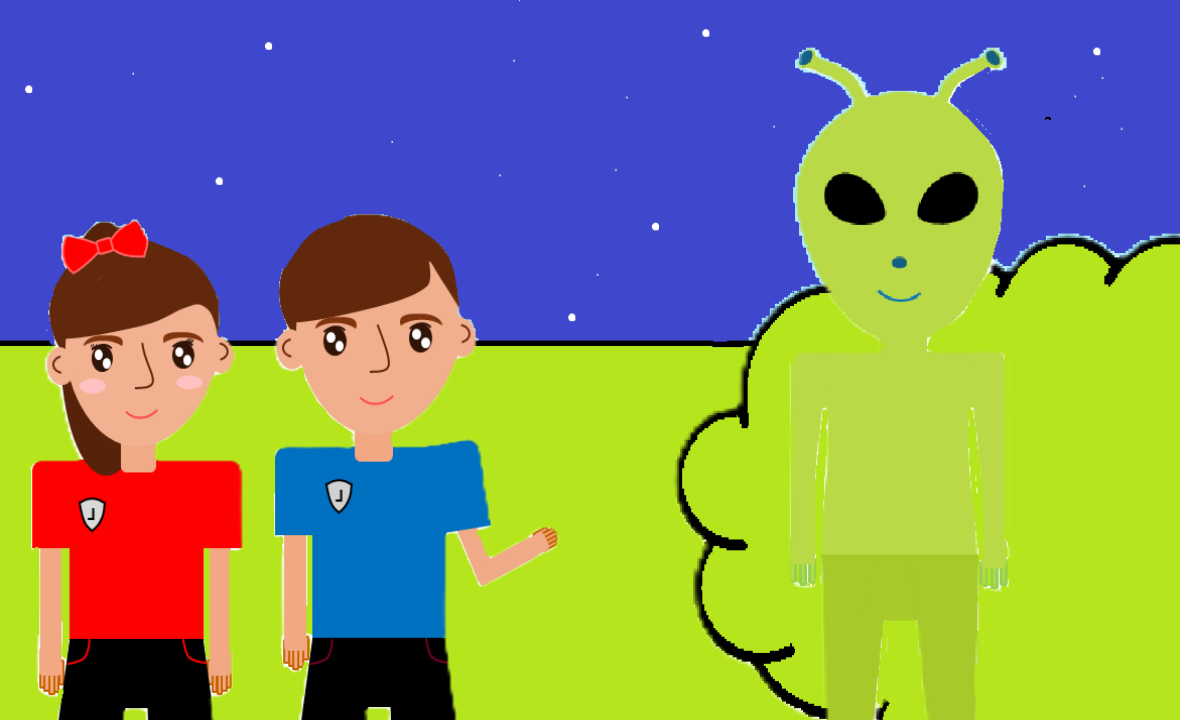


The Martian kept looking at the ball Luca was holding. "Do you want to play with the ball?" Luca asked.

"Oh yes please, the gravity on Mars is less than on Earth, so it's really difficult to play football without the ball flying too high in the sky."

Lek, Luca and the Martian played in the garden all afternoon. The Martian was actually very good at playing football.





As the sun started to go down it was time for Lek and Luca to go indoors.

"That was really fun you can come back to play any time you like," Luca said.

"Thanks, I'd like that," said the Martian backing away into the bush.

The Martian disappeared into the leaves. Luca had an idea and kicked his ball into the bush. They heard a cry of delight, and they knew their friend the Martian would be back for another game of football before too long.



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