

36

**SPACE DEBRIS**

Sarah Wheeler

## SPACE DEBRIS

**Characters:**

SIMON - Older brother, 15. Pretends to know everything, but knows very little. Feels like he's being forced into being a caretaker for Kyle, and blames Kyle for it.

KYLE - Younger brother, 12. Interested in the world around him because he's too nervous about changes in his own house. Curious about the world, but often feels too small to inhabit it.

(Genders aren't set in stone. Ages aren't set in stone.)

**Setting:**

Outside KYLE and SIMON's house, sometime around 10 or 11. Later than they should be out, but their parents haven't noticed that. Modern day, but not our universe.



*SIMON and KYLE lay on the ground side by side, looking up at the stars. Every so often there is a streak across the sky. Besides that, there is the sounds of the night - Crickets, cicadas, frogs. Once in a while the sound of a car passing in the distance. Before KYLE speaks there should be a faint streak across the sky.*

KYLE

I think I saw one. Right by - Ummmm. The M. Over there.

*SIMON squints and scowls. The streak is long gone. He missed it.*

SIMON

It's called Cassiopeia. And I don't think so, I was looking right at it. You must have just imagined it.

KYLE

I saw it. Just 'cause you didn't doesn't mean I'm wrong.

SIMON

I'm just saying, you could have imagined it. You don't 'think' you see one, you KNOW you see one. Your eyes are just playing tricks on you.

KYLE

Are not!

*Another silence. Whenever silence falls, the sounds of the night should get louder, and then quiet down again as they speak. Both search the sky. Another streak.*

Oh look! I saw another one!

SIMON

If you don't stop lying I'm gonna go back inside and watch this on the news or radio or somethin'. Alf said they were going to be talking through the SDE launch anyways. WAY better than seeing it with my annoying little brother.

KYLE

The... What?

SIMON

You don't even know what the SDE launch is? Come on Kyle, what did you think we were doing? *Stargazing?*

KYLE

We're lookin' for shooting stars! I know that!

SIMON

The aren't stars, though, Kyle. They aren't even meteors. They're /spaceship parts

KYLE

/spaceship parts! I know that! But the big parts already came down, right? So why does it... Matter? And what's the - The SDE?

SIMON

(starting unsteady but building steam as he explains)

It's - You know, the Space Debris Elimination thing. Cause you know, after the ship exploded, all the - Um, debris stuff is all going around the Earth so fast that even a little paint chip could hit a space ship and like - Kapow! You know? So we can't send spaceships up anymore.

KYLE

I knew that!

*The wildlife noises grow louder again. There is perhaps a star that flashes especially brightly, but neither want to say they saw it.*

So... Is it a magnet?

SIMON

What, the spaceship? No, it was supposed to be - Like one of those space shuttles that orbit the moon or something. But it exploded.

KYLE

No, no, I mean the Space Elimination thing. The spaceship was metal, so are they sending up a big magnet? To collect the pieces?

SIMON

(reflecting)

No, I don't think so - It's some type of gas...atmosphere...thing.

KYLE

Oh.

SIMON

If you send up a magnet, how would you get it down, even?

KYLE

Oh. I dunno.

SIMON

Yeah, so that's why they don't do magnets, and do gas stuff instead. They're scientists, so they know what they're going.

KYLE

Yeah. I guess.

*Night noises grow louder. There are a few more streaks, which KYLE and SIMON point out to each other, and then nothing. The silence becomes nearly awkward before KYLE speaks up.*

KYLE

Do you believe in aliens?

SIMON

What? Why?

KYLE

I mean, I was just thinkin' - They can't get to earth now, right? If we have this... Debris field? Like a big force field?

SIMON

I mean... I guess. So what?

KYLE

So no more alien invasions. No more abductions. They can't make alien movies anymore.

*Quiet as SIMON  
contemplates this. Then  
he snorts.*

SIMON

Alien movies are fiction anyways, so they can always make them.

KYLE

But we're not afraid of them anymore.

*SIMON turns his head to  
look at KYLE. KYLE  
doesn't notice.*

I always wanted to meet an alien.

SIMON

Oh yeah? And how were you going to manage that?

KYLE

I could be abducted. Maybe be an astronaut? Or maybe someone could contact me through a secret wormhole. I dunno, I just wanted it to happen.

SIMON

Who'd want you anyways? Don't they usually go for - I dunno, the president?

KYLE

I could be the president!

*SIMON snorts and KYLE —  
crosses his arms.*

SIMON

Sure, and I could be the Pope. No, really, what do your fantasy aliens look like? Are they tiny and green, or are they — Like, Asgardians or something?

KYLE

I dunno! I dunno what aliens would or wouldn't do. I just meant, like I can NEVER know, now, if there's a force field around earth.

SIMON

You weren't gonna ever know anyways.

KYLE

Now they won't come and make any more pyramids, so there.

SIMON

You idiot, pyramids were made by the Egyptians like a billion years ago.

KYLE

Except if they weren't.

SIMON

They were.

*Night sounds grow  
louder. The cicadas are  
on a roll. The sky above  
suddenly seems closer.  
Tighter.*

KYLE

I guess we could explore the ocean now.

SIMON

Yeah, I guess we could.

KYLE



Cause you know, Mrs. Norris said we've explored more of the moon than the ocean.

SIMON

Yeah, I know. I've been to sixth grade, Kyle.

KYLE

But don't you think its weird though? That we don't get to go to the moon again? Or to space? What if - What if the world blows up and we have to leave to save the human race? Except we CAN'T leave, because of the whole force field thing?

*Beat.*

SIMON

What if you stop watching movies and just... Shut up already?!

*Wildlife sounds, this time angrier. KYLE crosses his arms and defiantly tilts his body away from SIMON. When SIMON finally speaks, it is quieter. Calmer.*

I mean. Yeah, I guess. I do think it's weird.

KYLE

(quiet)

What is?

SIMON

Your whole... Moon thing. Not being able to leave, or whatever. It's like we're trapped here.

KYLE

That's what I was saying!

SIMON

I mean, I never wanted to go into space, like to Mars or the moon or anything. It always sounded weird.

KYLE

But cool!

SIMON

Well, yeah, I guess it sounds cool too. But scary, too. Because no one knows what's out there, and spaceships can blow up and it's just... Dangerous out there.

KYLE

Yeah. I guess.

*They are distracted by a bright flash across the sky. KYLE brings his body back towards SIMON as they both point at the streak. There is another, smaller one, and then nothing. The night noises have gotten louder as they watch.*

SIMON

You know, I guess even though I never wanted to go to space, and I know things won't really changed much whether they fix it or not, it suddenly feels... Different? Knowing we're stuck on earth.

KYLE

But - They can clean it up, though, right? Like the Extermination thing? We're only STUCK stuck until they fix it.

SIMON

Space Debris Elimination. And yeah. But... I don't know, what if they can't?

KYLE

But - They have to, right? They're scientists!

SIMON

But, like, what if they can't and the universe isn't infinite anymore because we can't ever know what's out there and we'll never know what could be out there because all we can access is as far as our own atmosphere extends?

*Following the sudden rant is insect noises, a cacophony of chaos at*

*his words. First disguised by this, but then becoming more noticeable over the noise is KYLE's hyperventilating.*

KYLE

Do you - Do you really think that?

SIMON

Hey, hey, hey.

*SIMON gingerly turns towards Kyle and puts his arm around the shivering younger boy.*

Don't cry. No, it's okay, don't cry, okay?

KYLE

Are we alone forever now?

SIMON

No, of course we're not alone Kyle. I'm here, aren't we? I'm sorry I said that. I think you're right, about the scientists. They're going to figure it out. Everything is going to be fine.

*Night noises as KYLE begins to calm down. SIMON waits with his arm around KYLE, not sure how to react.*

KYLE

Do you promise? That everything is going to be fine?

SIMON

What are we, five?

KYLE

*(starting to snuffle again)*

No! I just wanted - I wanted -

SIMON

Oh, fine, whatever.

*KYLE falls silent at his words, as SIMON searches the less-than-infinite sky above them in hopes for the right words.*

Look, everything is going to be fine, okay? The world keeps spinning, the human race keeps surviving, and we're all good. Okay kid? I promise.

