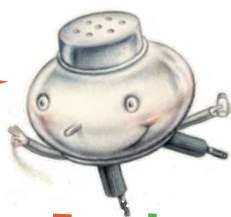


Ana Alonso

The Rock-Eating Monster

Illustrated
by Lucía Serrano

ANAYA



PINCH OF SALT
A LITTLE BIT



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© Grupo Anaya, S. A., Madrid, 2013
Juan Ignacio Luca de Tena, 15. 28027 Madrid
www.anayainfantilyjuvenil.com
www.anayapizcadesal.com
e-mail: anayainfantilyjuvenil@anaya.es

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Miguel Ángel Pacheco, Javier Serrano
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CHAPTER 1



Being a superhero isn't easy. Especially if you still live with your parents and you have to fight against the worst villains in the galaxy every day. But that is my life, and I am not complaining.

My name is Lucas and I was born on a secret spaceship. I have some special superpowers. For example I can turn my arms into any kind of tool, and I can move through the clouds on a skateboard.

My parents are very understanding about all these superhero things. They don't ask me to be a normal kid and to hide my powers; they are not like that. They like to support me

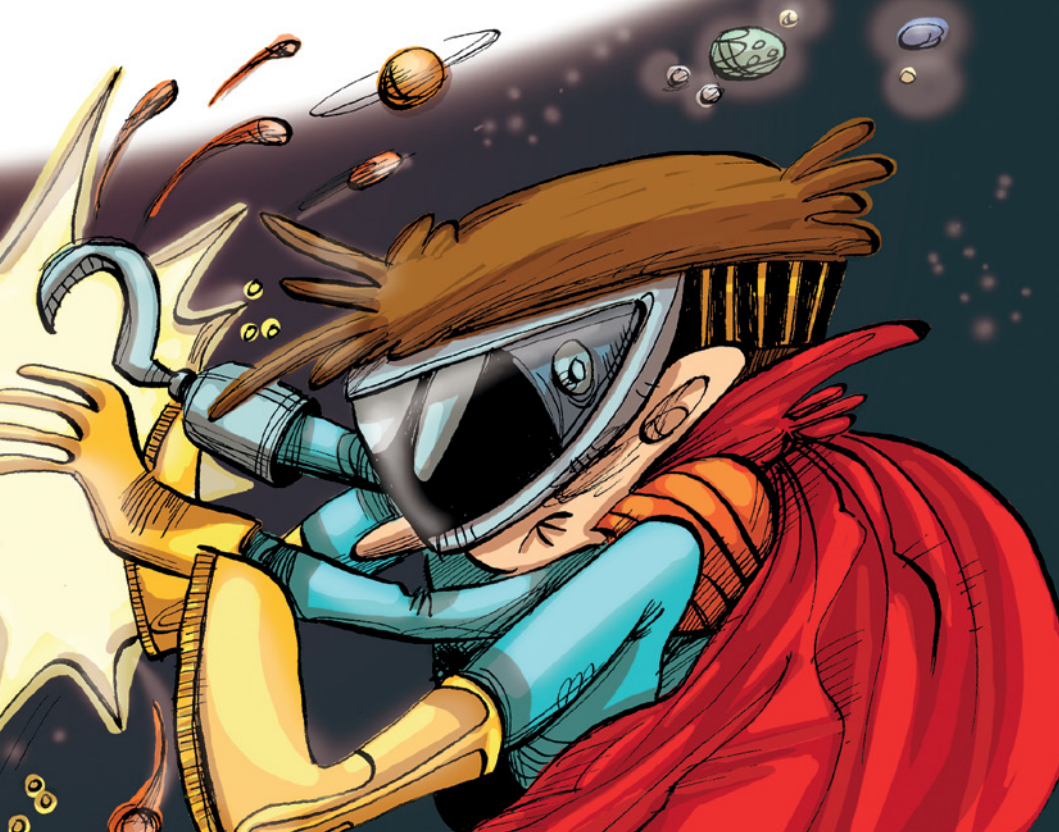
in everything I do. If I suddenly decide to play the electric guitar, they listen to my concerts, and if I start to paint, they put my pictures in frames and put them on the walls.

But sometimes they worry about me. Like now, for example. This is the most dangerous adventure in my life!





I'm fighting against my enemy Noir, an intergalactic magician. Noir is trying to steal the plans of the most powerful computer in the Universe, but, luckily, I'm here to stop him. And we start one of our fights. You can imagine it: laser beams here, laser beams there, a jet of plasma, a scratch with my superarm-hook...



And then, I make a mistake. I look into Noir's magic eyes, and he hypnotises me. That's what he was waiting for. He uses one of his spells and sends me to sleep.

When I wake up, I'm in an underground prison that looks like a hospital. I'm lying in bed with a needle in my hand. The needle is connected to a bag of green liquid.

Noir is looking at me with his horrible grey face.

'You are lucky,' he says. 'I can't kill you, the space magicians' code of honour prohibits that. And I can't keep you prisoner either..., the code prohibits that too. But there's one thing I can do: I can give my enemies a very difficult test. I hope you are ready to pass it.'



I sit up in bed, trembling.

'What are you going to do?'

Noir starts to laugh.

'This green liquid is going to change your sleep habits,' he explains. 'From now on, every time you fall asleep, you'll take some mil-



lion years to wake up. Don't worry, you have all the time in the world... We are travelling into the past, to an age so distant that not even the dinosaurs existed yet.'

'But why?' I ask in a soft voice.

'It's very simple. I want to send you very far away from me. I'll give you a magic capsule where you must sleep. And while you sleep inside the capsule, millions of years will go by on earth.'



'But that's not a test,' I protest. 'It's not a test because I can't pass it. You are breaking the law of galactic magicians!'

'That's not true,' says my enemy. 'You can free yourself, if you are clever. Before you go to sleep, I'm going to bury in front of you a bottle of the antidote you need. When you wake up, all you have to do is look for the bottle and drink the contents. That way you can break my spell and return to your time.'

'Too easy,' I say. 'Where is the trick?'

Noir smiles.

‘There is no trick at all. However, you can try to find the bottle only four times. If you don’t find it, you have to remain in the past forever.’



I don’t trust Noir’s words. I know there is something he isn’t telling me, but I don’t know what it is. Anyway I’m in his hands, so I



have to accept his conditions. I have to prepare myself for this adventure.

We are flying in a time-travelling spaceship. After some time, it touches the ground on a clearing in a forest. The doors open and Noir tells me to leave the ship. He comes after me.

As I step outside the ship I feel the warm, humid air in my face. This is a very strange forest. There are no trees, but giant plants. A dragonfly as big as a duck flies by, very close to me. I can hear the sound of a river. And the sky is completely orange.

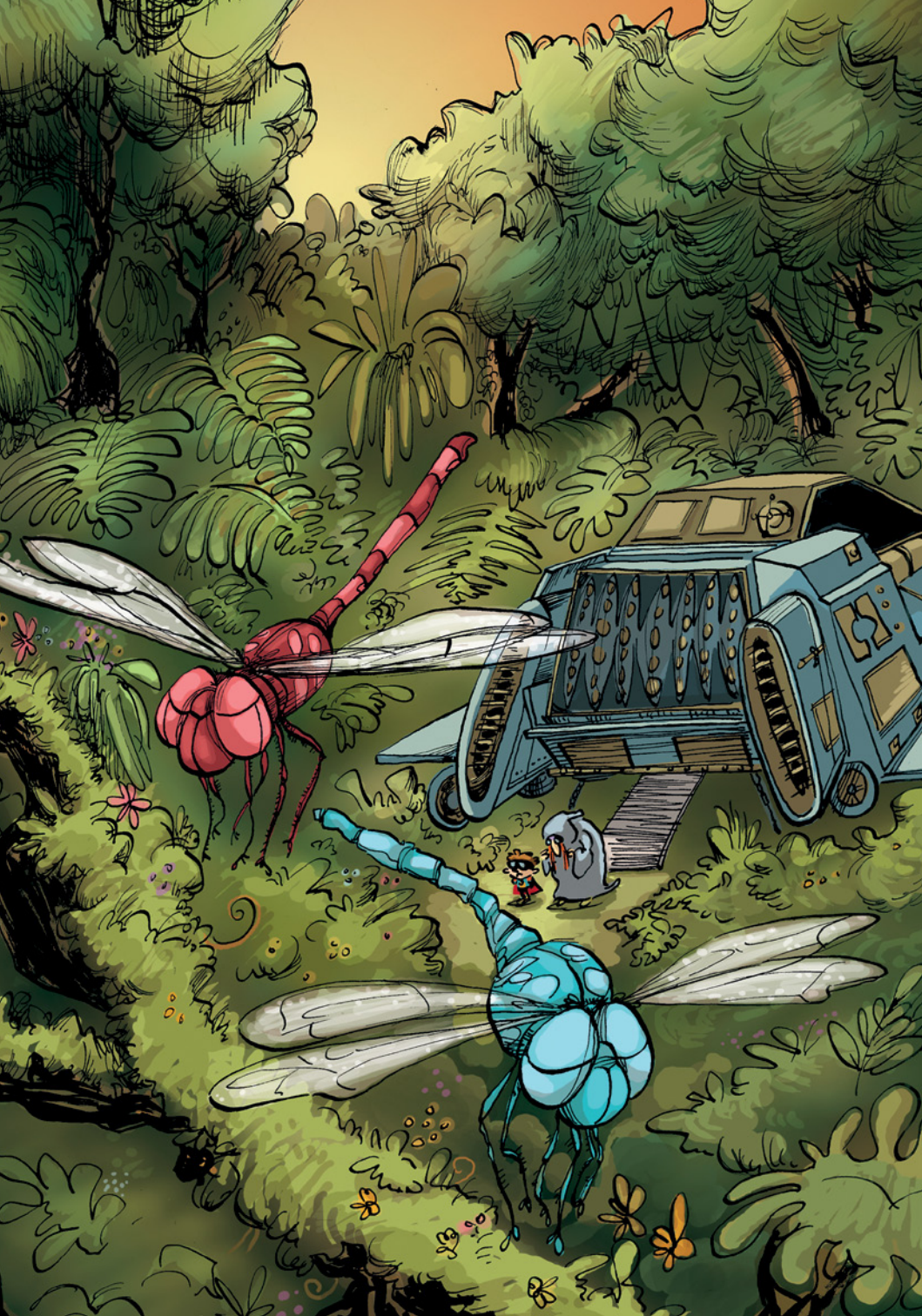


‘What is this?’ I ask.

‘The earth’s past, young man,’ says Noir.

He is taking out of the ship a prefabricated house which looks like an egg.

‘This capsule is very comfortable,’ he says. ‘It doesn’t depend on the outside for anything, and it’s very robust. There is food in the fridge and a comfortable sleeping bag. Don’t forget to close the door properly before you go to sleep.’



Noir's green solution starts to take effect. Suddenly, I feel sleepy... I cannot think clearly.

Even so, when I see Noir going to his ship, I remember something important.

'Just a minute, where's the bottle with the antidote?' I ask. 'You have to bury it in front of my eyes, remember?'



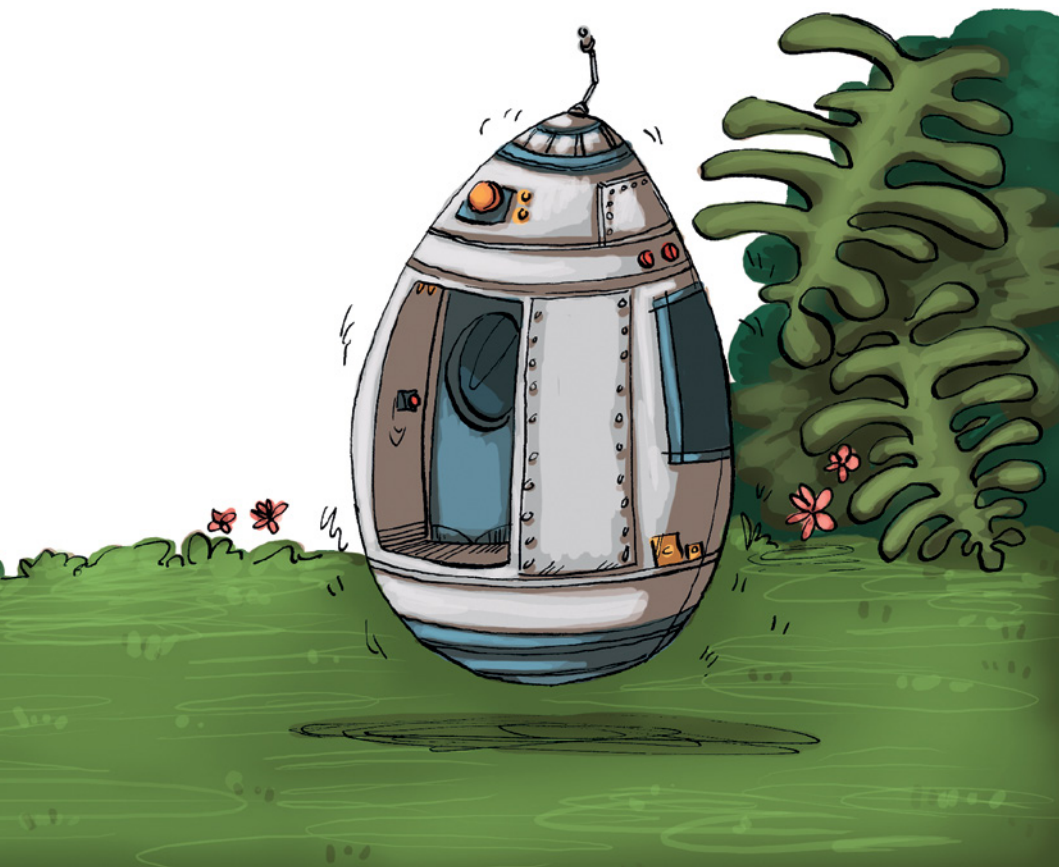


‘Ah, of course! That’s true, the antidote. I almost forgot... Let’s see, where can we bury it?’

He looks around him and points to a stone.

‘What do you think of that spot?’ he asks.

I say it’s a good place, because it is an easy place to remember. So Noir opens a hole with his magic wand and buries the bottle.



‘Well, that’s it,’ he says. ‘See you later, Lucas. Or, maybe, see you never!’

Noir gets into his spaceship and flies away into outer space.

While I watch Noir’s spaceship, I yawn. And then I yawn again. Oh, I feel really tired! I enter my capsule and get into the sleeping bag.

I’m falling asleep.

The Rock-Eating Monster

Lucas, a space superhero, falls into the grip of the intergalactic sorcerer, Noir, who makes him sleep for millions of years. When he wakes up, Lucas does not recognise the landscape. Is someone eating the rocks, or is there another explanation? Only when he finds an answer to this question our superhero is able to go home...

With «The Rock-Eating Monster» you will learn...

The processes of landscape transformation and the agents responsible (such as the sea, rivers, the wind or volcanoes) and the changes the Earth has undergone during its history.

Science



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