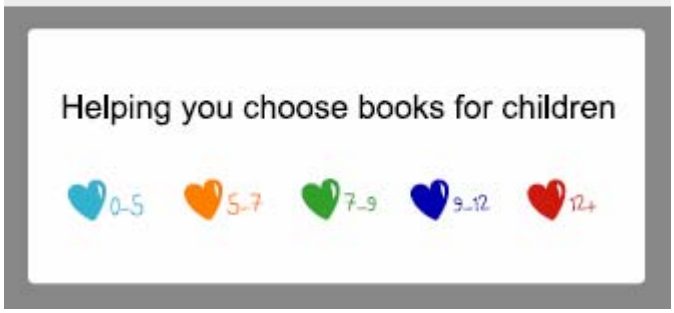
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Opening extract from

G.E.M.

Written by

Jane Clarke

Published by

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Royd hopped off the school rocket and rushed inside.



"Gark got a space pod for his birthday today," said Royd. His Green Eyed Monster opened an eye.
"Gark's a bit young to have a space pod, isn't he?" asked Mum. "He's only a week older than you."





She took a tray of home-made reddies out of the scoff pod.

"Gark's mum says he can go to Mars on his space pod whenever he likes!" Royd said. Royd's Green Eyed Monster opened three more eyes.



"Keep an eye on your G.E.M.," said Mum.
"Don't worry," said Royd, "it's under control."

"Gark's birthday party begins at half past twenty," said Mum. "You have time to play Hide-and-Bleep with Zappy before you go."

"Hooray!" squeaked Zappy. "You hide, Royd."

"Hide-and-Bleep!" Royd muttered as he squeezed behind Mum's sit pod to hide. "Gark doesn't have to play with little sisters. Gark can just go to Mars."

SPOOOSH! Royd was so jealous of Gark that his G.E.M. puffed itself up to twice its normal size.

"Bleep!" squealed Zappy. "I can see your G.E.M.! It's ever so big, Royd!"

"Don't worry," said Royd, "it's under control."