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opening extract from

# Bob and Barry's Lunar Adventures 2: A Right Royal Disaster

written by

## Simon Bartram

published by

**Templar Publishing**

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A TEMPLAR BOOK

First published in 2010 by Templar Publishing,
an imprint of The Templar Company Limited,
The Granary, North Street,
Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1DN, UK
www.templarco.co.uk

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1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

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ISBN 978-1-84877-030-0

Designed by Mike Jolley
Edited by Anne Finnis

Printed in the United Kingdom

BOB & BARRY'S LUNAR ADVENTURES



# A RIGHT ROYAL DISASTER

SIMON BARTRAM

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# IDENTITY CARD

Name: **Bob**

Occupation: **Man on the Moon**

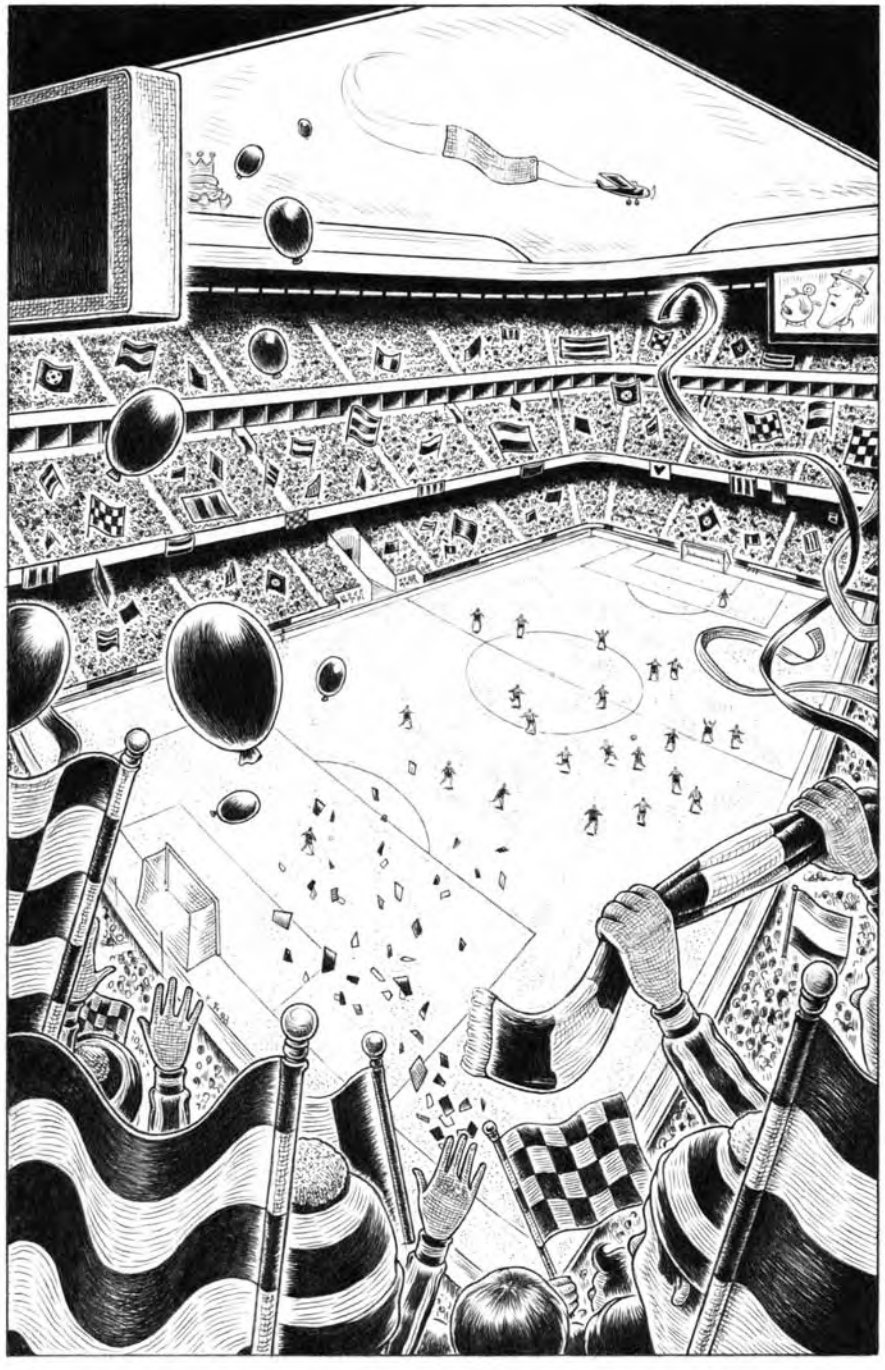
Licence to Drive: **Space rocket**

Planet of residence: **Earth**

Alien activity: **unaware**

W.A.A.

WORLDWIDE ASTRONAUT'S ASSOCIATION





# CHAPTER ONE

Of the 90,000 fans, Bob, the Man on the Moon, and his unusual six-legged dog, Barry, were the only two to notice the small black aeroplane circling above the football stadium. They were the only two that needed to see it. Trailing behind it, written on a long, flowing banner, was a short message especially for their eyes.

REPORT TO INFINITY HOUSE
IMMEDIATELY! DO NOT DAWDLE!
P.S. BRING CAKE!
P.P.S. NOT FRUIT CAKE!

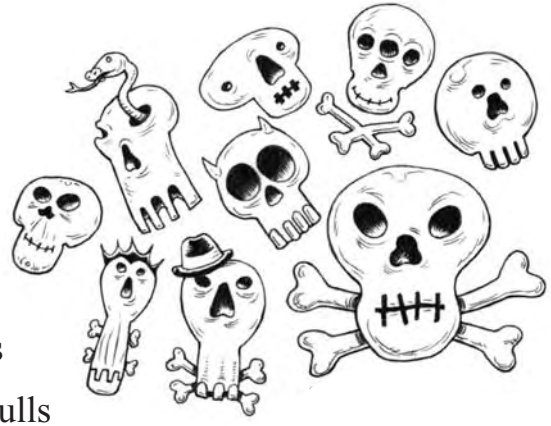
Bob and Barry's hearts sank. Infinity House was the lofty headquarters of the big, entire universe, and spacemen were rarely summoned there to hear good news.

With the Cup Final delicately poised at 3–3, and with the second half just beginning, Bob and Barry couldn't believe that they were going to have to miss the end. But miss it they did. Being Man on the Moon was a position of honour for Bob. It always had to come first.

And so, sadly, he cycled away from the magnificent match, stopping briefly at Vera Crumble's bakery. There he selected a medium-sized coconut cake before hurrying to the seventeenth floor of Infinity House and into the brown office of Tarantula Van Trumpet,

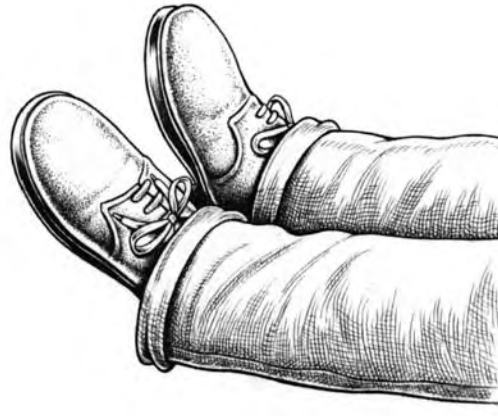






Head of the Department for Moon Affairs. Van Trumpet was busy doodling skulls on his notepad and he didn't look up as he spoke. "I'm sorry-ish to inform you," he said, gravely, "that the Moon has been especially selected to host the annual birthday party for Queen Battleaxe III. You have one month from today to organise it and may Her Highness have mercy on your poor doomed bones. Now please leave cake and close the door behind you. Good day!"

But Bob had fainted on the spot. Poor Barry had a small accident on the carpet. It was the worst possible news for a spaceman.



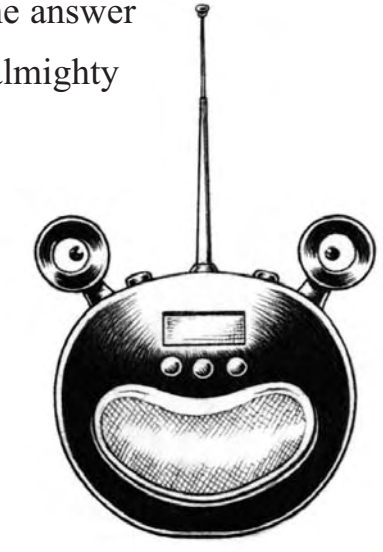
The next thing Bob was aware of was Barry's stinking bone-breath, as he urgently licked his master's nose. When Bob spied Van Trumpet he realised that this was not the nightmare he hoped it had been. It was really happening. It was all he could do to stop himself fainting a second time.

Van Trumpet was still doodling skulls. "PLEASE LEAVE CAKE AND CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND YOU!" he repeated. "Good day."

This time Bob left the coconut cake and, with Barry, managed to wobble out of Infinity House forgetting his hat. Death black clouds had drifted in over the town and, with a flash of lightning, sheets of rain began to teem down, quickly flattening Bob's quiff.



By the time they reached home, Bob and Barry were drenched. They sat quietly at the kitchen table dripping rain and tears into their tea. With his head in his hands, Bob thought about Tarantula Van Trumpet's news. Could things possibly get any worse? The answer was 'yes' as, just then, an almighty roar rocked the house.



"That'll be the Cup Final," said Bob. "It must be over!" He switched on the kitchen radio, which spat out the result. Disastrously, his team had lost on penalties.

That night Bob and Barry went to their beds before the Sun had disappeared over the horizon and, for the first time in history, Bob hadn't even bothered to rinse out his mug.

# CHAPTER TWO

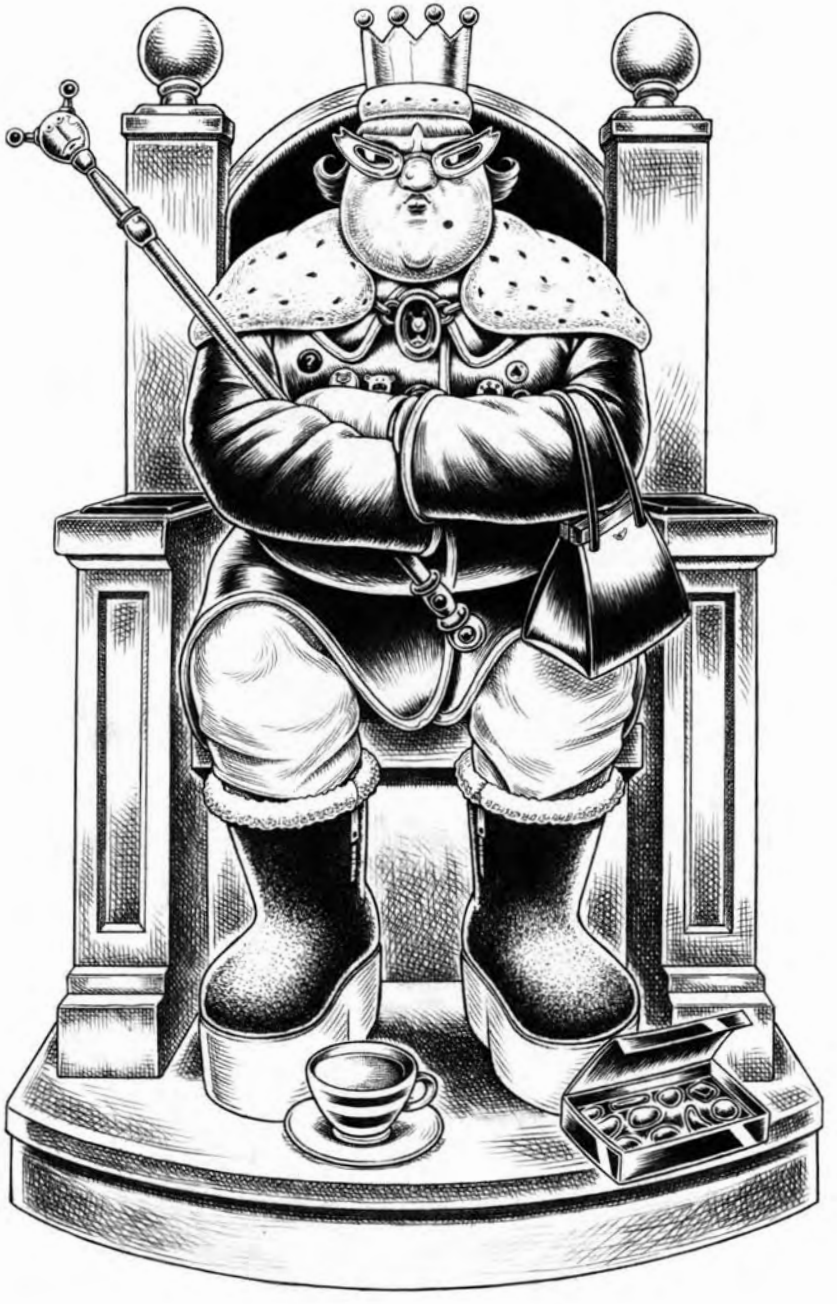


It was one of the great mysteries of the universe: why did Queen Battleaxe insist on spending her birthday in space year after year? Space irritated her. Planets got up her nose. Moons just got in her way. She became travel sick in rockets. And in her eyes every last spaceman was a nincompoop!

Even so, every year one unlucky soul was devastated to hear that his corner of the universe had been chosen to host the dreaded party. It was a terrible responsibility.

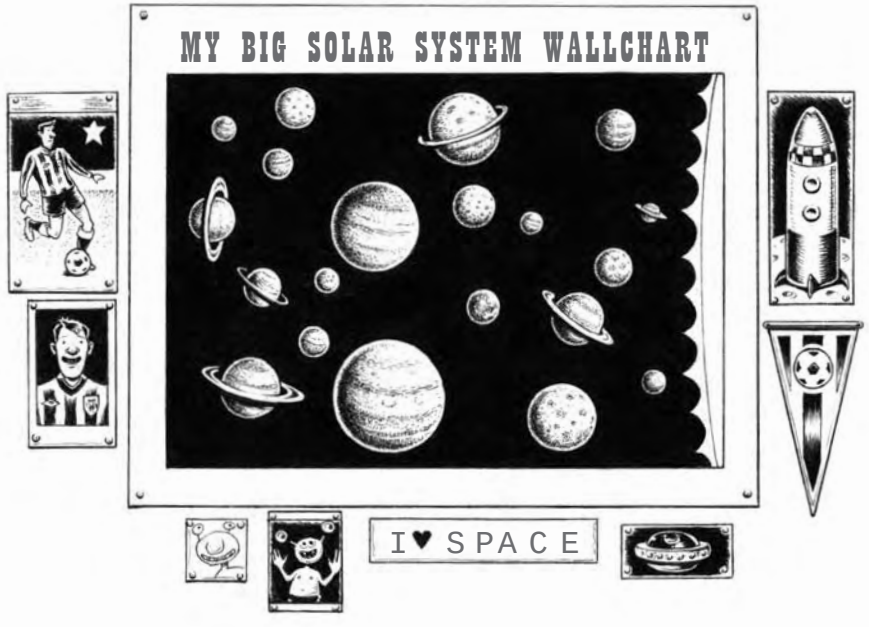
As the years passed the parties became more lavish and more spectacular, but still, the miserable Queen would utter the same crushing words:





"WE ARE NOT AMUSED! NOT ONE IDDY, BIDDY, BIT!"

If a spaceman's party failed to impress then his planet, moon or asteroid could be closed down or towed away or even blown up. When Bob was a boy there had been twelve extra planets on his solar system wall chart. The Queen had destroyed the lot.






Worse still, the unlucky spaceman in charge of the party would be stripped of his duties. Many were cast into the dark dungeons of outer-space prisons. Others were given lifelong backbreaking tasks. Bob always remembered hearing about Cedric, the man on Jupiter Moon Four. After twenty years, he still hadn't finished cleaning Mount Everest with his toothbrush.

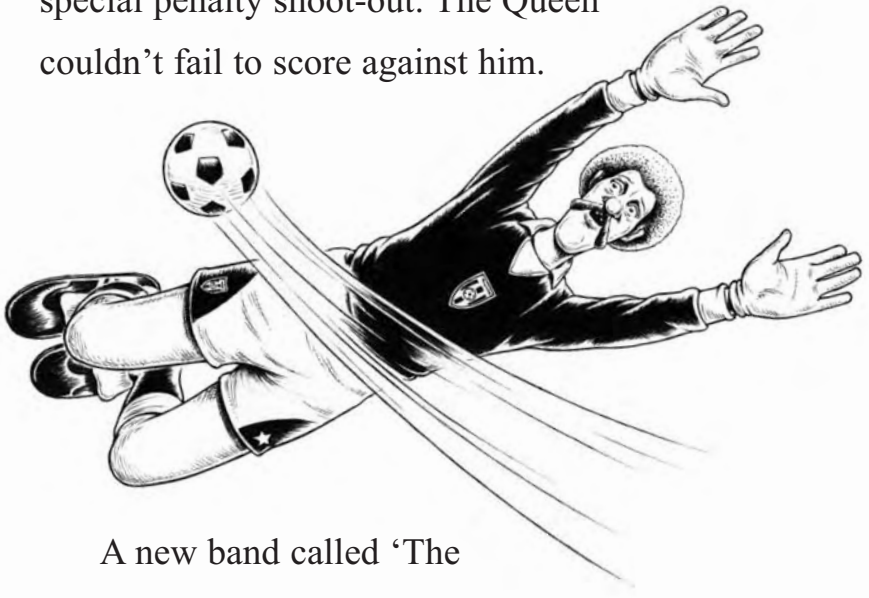
Now it was Bob's turn. He'd never actually been to a party before so would have to learn fast.

"We can only do our best!" he rallied and so, with the help of a book entitled, *Organising Birthdays for Unpleasant Monarchs*, Bob and Barry got down to work.

"We're going to need cupcakes and lots of 'em… and fizzy pop and cheesy curls and toffee apples. Oh, and for goodness' sake let's not forget the mini pork pies!"

Next the entertainment was sorted. A miniature train was borrowed from Neptune.

There would be dodgems, crazy golf, and a super-bouncy castle. The world's worst goalkeeper, Hamish McCatchem, agreed to take part in a special penalty shoot-out. The Queen couldn't fail to score against him.

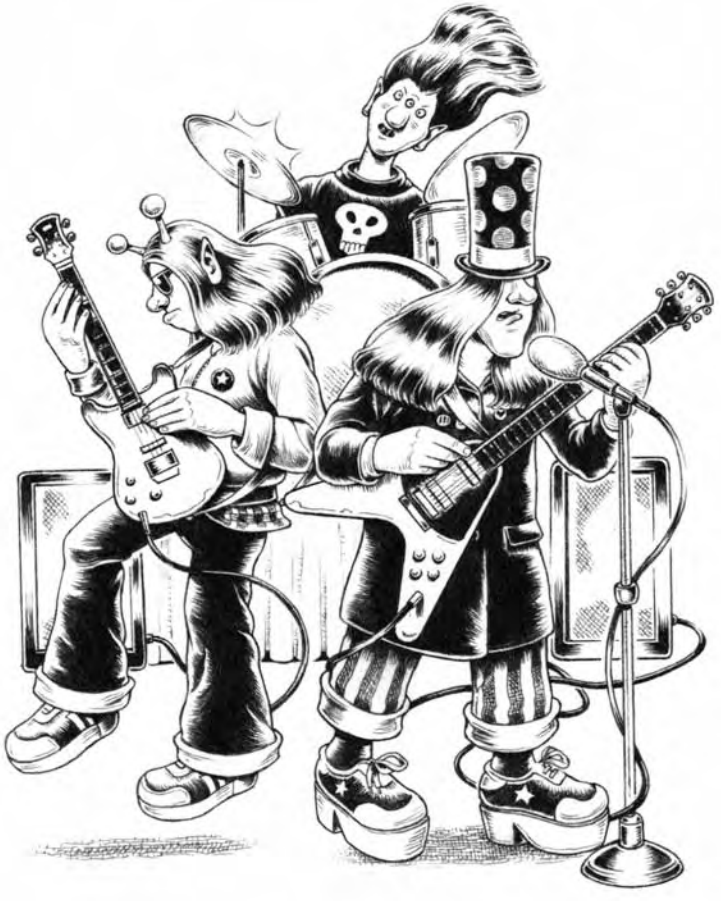


A new band called 'The Burning Angry Furious Chaps' was recommended by Titus Strongarm, the florist.

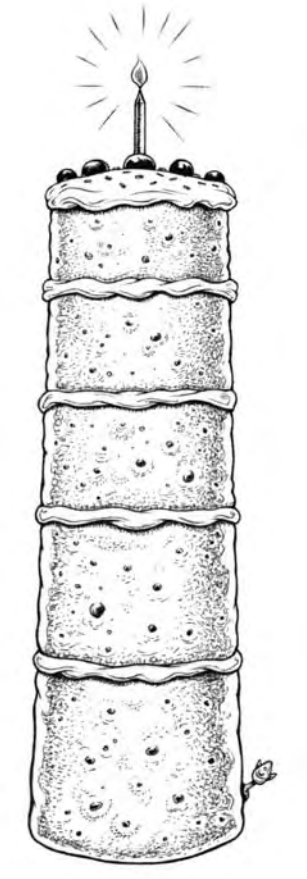
"No one dislikes Heavy Metal!" he said. "Not even the Queen!" Bob booked them at once.

As things slowly began to come together Bob's confidence grew. Eye-catching posters were designed and because Queen Battleaxe was





friendless, tickets were printed for the public to buy. At first, as most people feared her, sales were slow, but, when Bob offered a free Scotch egg with every ticket, they sold out in under an hour with long queues left disappointed.



Finally, after a trip to Vera Crumble's bakery, Bob crossed the words 'SKYSCRAPER CAKE' off his to-do list and everything was ready with a little time to spare. The Queen was going to love it!

Still though, Bob felt uneasy – as if something vital had slipped his mind. A long stroll didn't help much. As the Moon came out he and Barry found themselves staring at a billboard poster for the party. Bob studied it hard. What had he forgotten?

Just then a freakish gust of wind whooshed up Puddle Lane catching the loose bottom corner of the poster, which flapped upwards to reveal a small section of the old poster underneath. Bob couldn't



see what it was advertising but could just make out six clear words. They burned into his brain… 'A Gift Fit for a Queen!'

Suddenly Bob knew what he'd forgotten. "CRUMBS ALIVE, BARRY!" he cried. "WE HAVEN'T GOT THE QUEEN A BIRTHDAY PRESENT! OH MY WORD! SHE'LL HAVE OUR GUTS FOR GARTERS!"