Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

Eeek the Runaway Alien

Written by

Karen Inglis

Published by

Well Said Press

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

Eeek!

The runaway alien



Karen Inglis

Cover illustration by Karen Inglis and Damir Kundalić
Interior illustrations by Damir Kundalić

www.eeekthealien.com

~WS~
Well Said Press

Copyright © 2012 Karen Inglis

Published by Well Said Press 2012
83 Castelnau, London, SW13 9RT, England

All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-0-9569323-3-4

www.wellsaidpress.com

For Bob, George and Nick - better late than never!



One

It was a fairly typical Saturday morning in our house. Dad was in the garden emptying out the shed (again!). Mum had gone to the gym for her early morning workout. Rory (my four-year-old brother) was on the sofa wearing Dad's snorkel and mask watching his favourite underwater scene in 'Finding Nemo'. I was scoring goals against the kitchen wall in front of an imaginary crowd of 50,000.

That's when the doorbell rang.

'I'll get it!' I shouted. I don't know why I shouted, because I knew that neither Dad nor Rory could hear me. As I rushed down the hall to open the front door I tried to guess which of the following it would be:

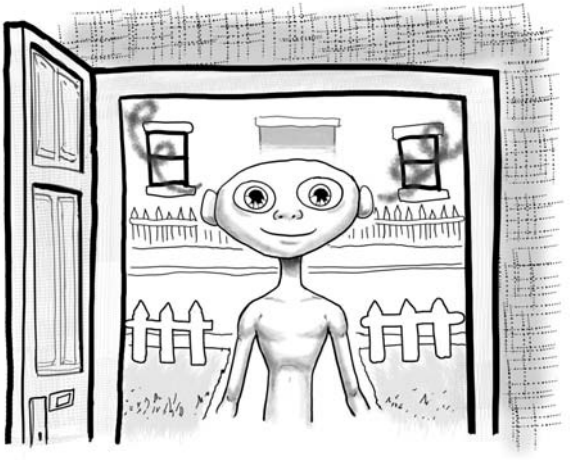
- Little Joe Williams from next door asking for his football back (yet again!)
- Someone selling tea towels

- Our postman with a parcel
- The National Lottery man to say we'd won (dream on!)

or

- Mum, hot and sweaty after the gym, having forgotten her key as usual.

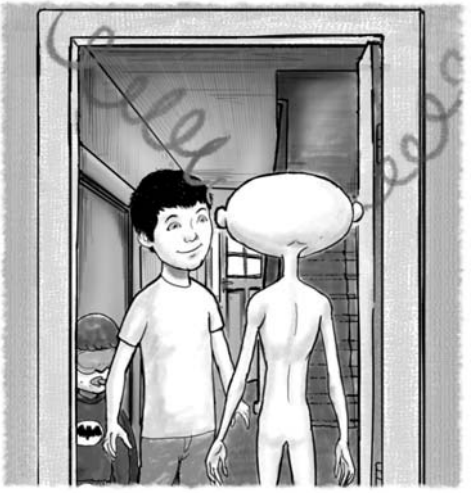
In fact it was none of these. Standing at our door that Saturday morning was, I'm not kidding you, an *alien!*



Now, most people would jump out of their skins at the sight on their doorstep of a bald-headed fluorescent green monster with pale blue smoke wafting from its tiny semicircular ears. But there was something about this alien that touched my heart. Whether it was his large slow-blinking pink-red eyes, his snub nose, his friendly smile, or simply the fact that he was exactly my height, I

cannot tell you, but for some reason I just stood there and gawped at him in wonder.

My gawping, and the alien's blinking and smiling, carried on for a good thirty seconds. It was as if I had met a long lost friend and here we were bonding again. But then I nearly jumped out of my skin as an eerie wheezing and rasping noise floated up from behind my right shoulder.



The alien suddenly stopped blinking and pulled such a terrified face as he stared beyond me I was convinced that an enemy being from the far side of Mercury must have zapped down into my house to do battle with him. I swung round in fear for my life - to find Rory, complete with snorkel and mask, staring wide-eyed through his steamed-up visor at our visitor.

The alien couldn't handle the sight of Rory. I think it was the batman outfit that finished him off. Without warning he emitted a strange high-pitched echoing sound, then turned and fled out through our gate and off down the road.

'You idiot, Rory!' I shouted. Rory wheezed through his snorkel, then shrugged his shoulders and held up both hands as if to say, 'What did I do?' Then he disappeared back to his 'Finding Nemo' DVD, whisking his cape behind him like a matador with attitude.

'Well,' I thought to myself, 'I've got two choices here. Either I close the door and pretend this never happened, *or* I race down the road to see if I can find the alien and bring him back.' No prizes for guessing which of these two options I picked.

By the time I got to the gate my fluorescent green friend had almost reached the end of our road.

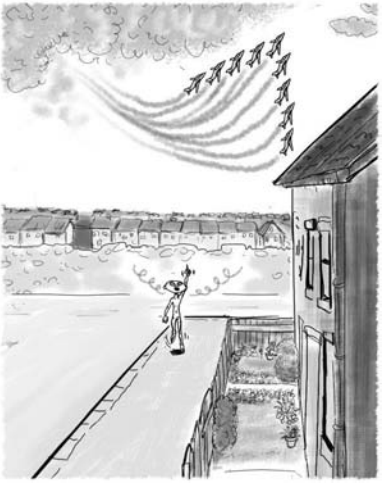
'Come back!' I called in a feeble voice, knowing he wouldn't hear me.

Just at that moment an almighty roar filled the morning sky. I looked up to see the Red Arrows streak out through the white-grey clouds, and cut a cool formation right over the top of the houses at the end of the road. Awesome! When I glanced to the end of the road again, the alien had stopped and was jumping up and down in a frenzy, pointing at the planes.

'Poor soul!' I said to myself. 'Probably thinks it's

his spaceship come to rescue him.' It would take more than a puff of blue ear-smoke to get him a ride on one of those! And they definitely wouldn't be taking him home – to the government laboratories more likely!

As their last echo faded across the sky the alien, who had calmed down, didn't, as I thought he would, shoot off around the corner. Instead he stood there gazing dreamily into the sky, as if he'd just seen Father Christmas and his reindeers, or a few stray angels.



'An alien trance!' I thought as I started walking towards him. At that moment (had he heard my thoughts?) he switched his gaze out of the sky and down the road towards me. Immediately he started waving vigorously. As I approached I could see a

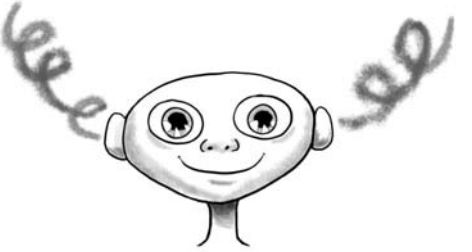
broad grin on his moon-shaped face. He seemed to have found his long-lost soul mate again.

‘That was the Red Arrows!’ I declared with a smile. The alien nodded enthusiastically. ‘Did you think they might be your spaceship?’ He took a step back a pace and frowned indignantly, as if I’d just said something really dumb. ‘So, you speak English?’ I faltered, glimpsing his flat, long-toed feet. He pulled a stiff upside-down smile, then gestured as if adjusting an invisible shower control. By this, I think he meant, ‘A little.’

‘Where do you come from?’ I asked, my eyes following his trails of blue smoke upwards.

‘Eeek!’ screeched the alien in a strange echo, pointing to the sky.

‘Of course!’ I said smiling. ‘I know all about the planets - got a poster in my room, and lots of books. D’you want to come and see? You could show me your home!’ I could barely believe my luck when the alien shrugged his shoulders and smiled shyly, as if to say, ‘Why not?’





Two

Dad was still in the shed and, judging by the thumps I could hear through the living room wall, Rory was practising diving into the ocean from the sofa. (Either that, or – another of his favourite games – playing Batman leaping from the Empire State Building to catch a baddy.) Mum was still out.

With the coast clear, and, as you might imagine, more than a little excited, I took my alien friend straight up the stairs to my bedroom.

As I opened the door my enormous map of the universe confronted us, hanging directly above my bed, on the opposite side of the room.

I realised at this point it was probably my interest in space (so often mocked by others) that had singled me out for this special visit from an extraterrestrial being. Suddenly I felt privileged. Proud beyond words. Thinking of what my friends were probably doing at this precise moment, I also

felt extremely smug.

‘Here it is!’ I cried confidently, scrambling onto my bed and diving towards the map. ‘Now, where are you from?’



No ‘Eeek’ in reply. No already familiar pant of cool breath behind me. I looked around. To my horror the alien had vanished! Only thin air hovered in my doorway.

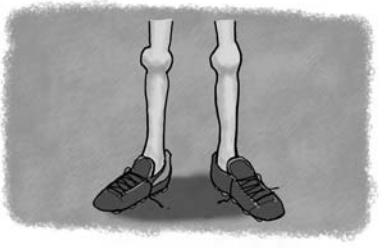
‘Friend…where are you?’ My heart beat furiously. Could I have imagined all this? Just then, to my delight, a puff of blue smoke rose from the foot of my bed, whereupon the alien stood up grinning from ear to ear - holding out my football boots!

‘How do you do that?’ I gasped, staring at the edges of his mouth. (I swear they *really were* touching his ears!) But my friend wasn’t listening. Instead he was fiddling with the laces of the boots, echoing a low hum. Still ignoring me, he sat down

on my bed and started putting my boots on. I, meanwhile, began eagerly pointing at my map of the universe quoting the names of the planets, which had moons and how many, and trying to guess which outreach my friend might have come from.



My boots seemed to fit him perfectly, though did look pretty stupid on the end of a pair of knobbly kneed, spindly fluorescent green legs!



‘Eeek’, as I decided to call him, was now wandering around my room showing more interest in my football posters than any of my space stuff. He even tossed my Stargazer telescope aside in favour of my Northbridge United scarf, which he

slung around his neck as he continued to rifle through the mess on my desk. Finally I gave up my tour of the universe and scrambled off my bed. Eeek by now was sitting on the floor thumbing through the pages of my World Cup Sticker Book.

When he reached the England team he suddenly stopped and his pale pink eyes filled with tears. Then a pear-shaped drop of water rolled down over his glowing green cheek and landed 'Splat!' right on Joe Carraber's head.

'Hey! Be careful with that!' I lunged forward. Immediately I regretted my outburst, for as I now clutched the book to my chest I could see more and more tears welling in my friend's eyes and, within moments, Eeek was rolling around on the carpet in a near puddle of water, sobbing with a strange echo.

'Look, Eeek, what is it?' I said with a sigh. This alien thing wasn't turning out to be half the fun I'd hoped. Let's face it, what self-respecting 11-year-old wants to spend their Saturday morning with a *crying* alien?

Eeek slowly gathered himself together and wiped away his remaining tears. He then gestured for the book, which I handed over - not without trepidation.

Eeek placed the book on the carpet and eagerly pointed at the sticker of Northbridge United and England striker, Steve Mitchell.

'Steve Mitchell!' I said with a smile. Eeek nodded

enthusiastically. ‘Great player!’ I added. Eeek clapped his hands. Now we were getting somewhere. ‘Hang on? You *know* about Steve Mitchell?’ I was talking to *an alien* after all!

Eeek confronted me with another of his indignant frowns.

‘Nasty ankle injury,’ I muttered vacantly. ‘I hope he’s okay for England-Brazil on Friday!’

To my horror, Eeek’s eyes immediately began glistening again. ‘Oh no, Eeek, please! No more crying!’ I now had my sanity to think of - not to mention my sodden carpet.



I was glad of my outburst, despite his tears, because Eeek suddenly pulled himself together, jumped up and started practising air kicks in front of my mirror.

‘So!’ I said. ‘You know about the World Cup and the England Football Team! What else do you know about?’

Eeek gave a knowing wink, then climbed onto the middle of my bed and crossed his spindly legs. A glazed look came over his eyes as he now pointed at his tummy and started rubbing it as he hummed in a high pitch. ‘Oh dear, you’re hungry!’ I said,

now wondering what aliens ate for lunch.

Eeek shook his head impatiently then pointed to his tummy again as if to say, 'Look!'

I stared hard at the spot where his belly button should have been, but wasn't. Next thing a rectangle began drawing itself into his translucent green skin. I gasped in horror. *'Oh my God! You're a Teletubbie, aren't you? I'm on "You've Been Framed!" aren't I?'* How would I ever live this one down!

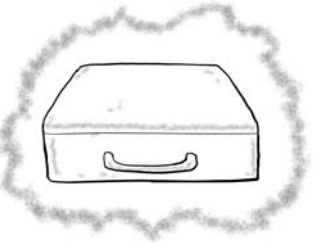
Eeek instantly raised his pale pink eyes to the ceiling, then tossed me a cool glance as if to say, 'Boy you really *are* dumb!' He then pointed impatiently at the rectangle in his tummy, which by now was opening like a sideways cat flap.

As the door into Eeek's tummy opened wider, so too did my mouth. By the time Eeek started reaching *inside* his tummy, I swear, my bottom jaw was all but on the duvet where I sat opposite him.

'What on *earth* are you doing?' I shrieked, fully expecting a blood-soaked intestine to flop out at any moment. (My mum's face on seeing a blood-soaked duvet, along with me and an alien on it, wasn't far from my mind either.)

Eeek echoed a chuckle, and carried on smiling and shaking his head knowingly as his frail green arm reached deeper and deeper inside his tummy. I was now waiting for his hand to appear out the other side of his back, like a scene from a late night horror film, but it somehow didn't.

'Eeeeeeek!' he finally squealed, as though he'd found what he'd been looking for. My friendly green alien then yanked his hand out and dropped a small purple glowing case onto my bed. It looked a bit like a little lunch box. The small door in his tummy conveniently closed itself and disappeared.





Three

For a few moments we both sat staring at the case expectantly, like there was a bomb in it or something. Then, as Eeek slowly reached forward, I jumped up to close my bedroom door. Who only knew what might come crawling, flying or beaming out of an alien's luggage!

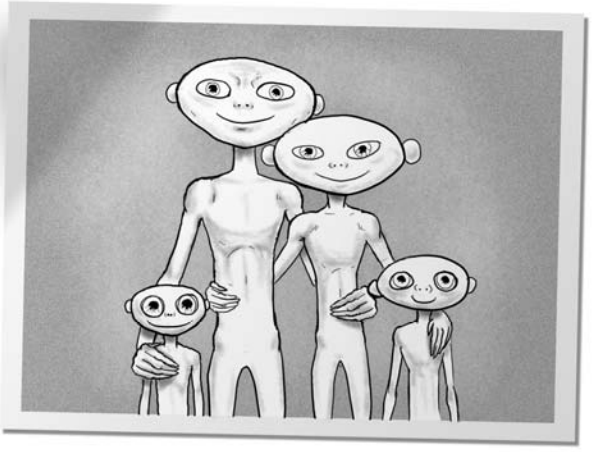
Eeek certainly moved quickly, for by the time I turned around he was already spreading out the contents of the case onto my bed. They included:

- a miniature globe of the Earth
- a photo of *me* watching television!
- a set of miniature Red Arrows planes
- an England Football Supporters' membership card
- what looked like an airline ticket
- a poster of Steve Mitchell (folded)

- a small rectangular screen - a bit like an iPad or mini TV

and

- a framed photograph of a group of aliens!



'Wow! Is that your family?' I pounced on the group photograph. Eeek nodded proudly. 'Your mum and dad?' (I couldn't tell one from the other). Eeek nodded. 'You?' Eager nod. 'Little sister?' (Now pointing at the smallest alien.) Vigorous headshake and puff of blue smoke. 'Little brother?' Ear-touching alien grin.

'Eeek…why have you come here?' I asked casually. Eeek shook his head uncooperatively.

‘Okay, so how did you get this England Supporters’ card? *And* a photo of *me?*’ Poor Eeek didn’t get a chance to answer, because suddenly it was my turn to act indignant. ‘Have you been *spying* on me?’ I asked warily. Eeek nodded enthusiastically, which only made me frown all the more. Then he picked up the little screen, which immediately began to illuminate.

Gulping down my pride I shuffled up for a closer look. Eeek’s breath was cold on my knee. As his arm brushed against me it felt cool and hard, like a snake’s. But I didn’t mind.

The screen showed an image of what looked like a bedroom or study. Eeek pointed proudly at his chest, then back at the screen where I suddenly saw him, Eeek, sitting side-view at a desk to the left, poring over a book and with a laptop to one side.

The room had a map of the world on the wall behind Eeek’s desk, an inflatable globe of the Earth hanging from the ceiling and a poster of the Red Arrows on the far wall, to the right of the door. Underneath the Red Arrows poster was a large picture of the World Cup itself. All very cool!

Eeek tapped the screen, to make sure I was concentrating. Suddenly the Eeek I could see inside the screen got up and pointed a fluorescent finger at the empty wall opposite his desk. Instantly a giant screen appeared from nowhere

and illuminated with – hey! – last Wednesday's England v Cameroon match just kicking off! The Eeek inside the television sat back down with a grin, crossed his arms and legs and started watching.



'Cool! *That's* your bedroom!' I cried in delight, my eyes still following the match. But suddenly his bedroom door opened. The silhouette of an adult alien filled the doorway and Eeek jumped up from his chair.

'That your mum?' I whispered nervously. Eeek nodded dolefully. Judging by the scowl on her face and the dense jets of blue smoke spurting from her ears Eeek's mum wasn't best pleased.

It took Eeek's alien mum precisely one piercing glance to disappear the football match from the wall. Now I was upset - we were about to miss a

goal! The image on Eeek's wall was replaced with a bare room in which an adult alien was scribbling signs on a whiteboard while green and pink smoke billowed from a test tube.

Eeek's mother frogmarched my alien friend back to his chair, threw her arms into the air, and marched out.

'Wow, Eeek, you've been bunking off your lessons!' I cried.

Eeek nodded and gave me a big grin.

Back on the little television Eeek, who now had a defiant look on his face, was standing up from his chair again. Slowly he raised one arm and pointed his glowing forefinger at the screen on the wall. The image of the alien teacher dissolved and was immediately replaced by - *my house!* Eeek thrust his finger angrily at the wall once more. This time it was me who appeared! Me, at home, *watching the same football match on telly!*

With his eye still half on the big screen, Eeek reached under his desk and yanked out the same fluorescent purple case he had with him now. He laid it on his desk amongst his papers, flipped the lid open and marched across to a small chest of drawers and began taking things out. He then picked up his family photograph and, on returning to his desk, began furiously throwing everything into the case.

I quickly realised these were the very things which now lay around us on the bed. Eeek closed

his case, then began furiously tapping a message on his laptop.

‘Eeek!’ I said with a gasp, looking up. ‘You’ve run away from home!’

Eeek took in a deep breath, delivered an ear-touching grin, then sent defiant puffs of deep blue smoke wafting into the air.

As for me, I was dumbstruck! This alien had run away to Earth - and he’d run away to be with *me!*

