The Cardboard Rocket Ship

True tales from the deepest reaches of make-believe space.

Grandparents don't last forever, but memories do.

Written and illustrated by

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For Isla & Oscar

Never stop following your dreams
and taking that leap of faith
that you can be more
than you ever imagined.

Introduction

‘The Cardboard Rocket Ship’ was originally a poem inspired by a rocket ship I built for my granddaughter from an old box. The three stories that follow are told from the perspectives of my two grandchildren, who spent hours being flown around in it, and me, their grandad, who propelled it.

The stories celebrate the magic of childhood curiosity and the special bonds shared across generations.

The Cardboard Rocket Ship

Her grandad built her a rocket ship from cardboard, glue and paints,
Thrusters from red and yellow tissue paper; he stayed up rather late.

He wrote her name next to NASA on the tail and on the wing,
A homemade astronaut's helmet secured neatly below her chin.

He packed her a banana and a bottle of warmed-up milk,
And buttoned up her space suit that he'd sewn from shiny silk.

He kissed her on the forehead and switched on the fairy lights,
She grinned with such excitement for her rocket to take flight.

Then Grandad lifted her up, high above his head,
And ran around, making whooshing noises until his cheeks were brilliant red.

He made the spaceship swerve to the left, then swerve to the right,
A truly dangerous voyage around the living room that night.

The rocket low on fuel and Grandad out of breath,
He landed the ship, lifted her out and got her ready for bed.

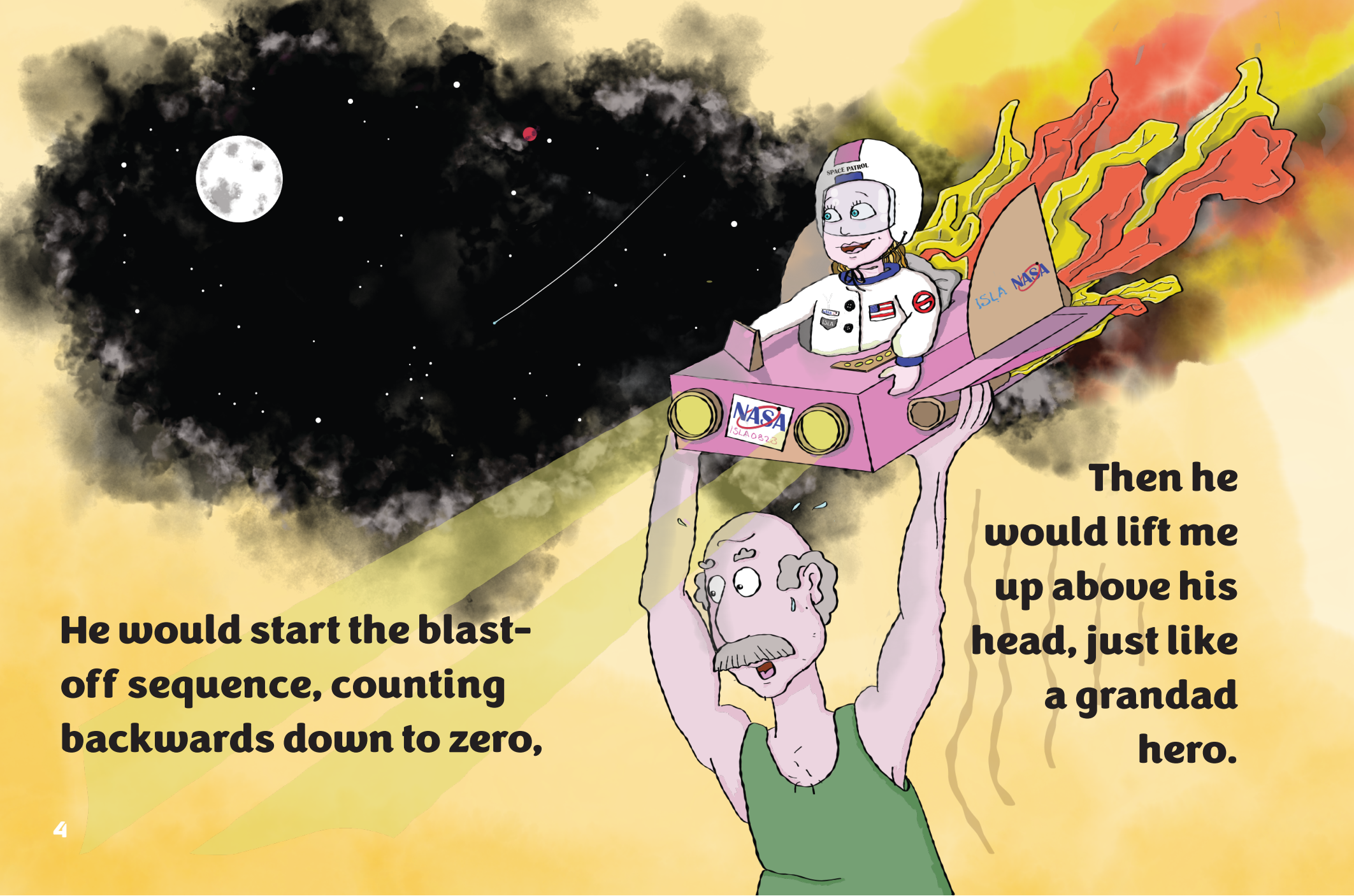
She dreamed that night of space voyages and of landing on the moon,
And wondered when Grandad would fly her again, hopefully very soon.

My grandad built me a rocket ship from cardboard, sticky tape and glue...



He said he was sending me on a distant voyage to explore the big, shiny moon.





He would start the blast-off sequence, counting backwards down to zero,

Then he would lift me up above his head, just like a grandad hero.