

# Martians Meet the Mosquitoes



Written and illustrated by Joe Sutliff  
Developed by the  
Fairfax County Health Department

Fairfax County Health Department  
Disease Carrying Insects Program  
10777 Main Street  
Suite 325  
Fairfax, VA 22030

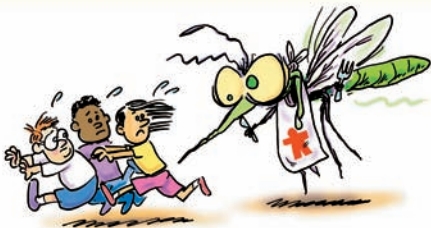
703-246-8931  
TTY 711

fightthebite@fairfaxcounty.gov  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fightthebite](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fightthebite)



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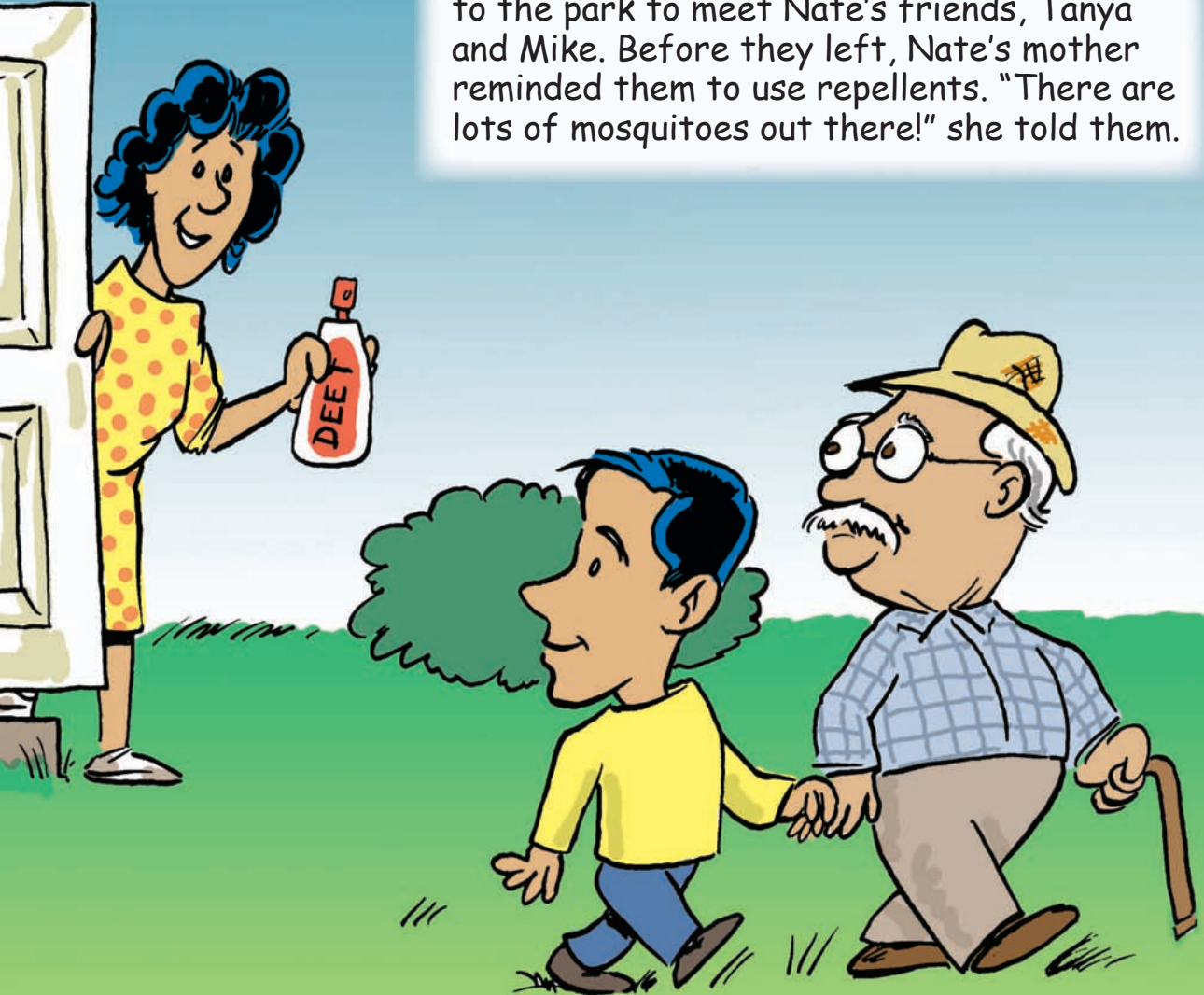


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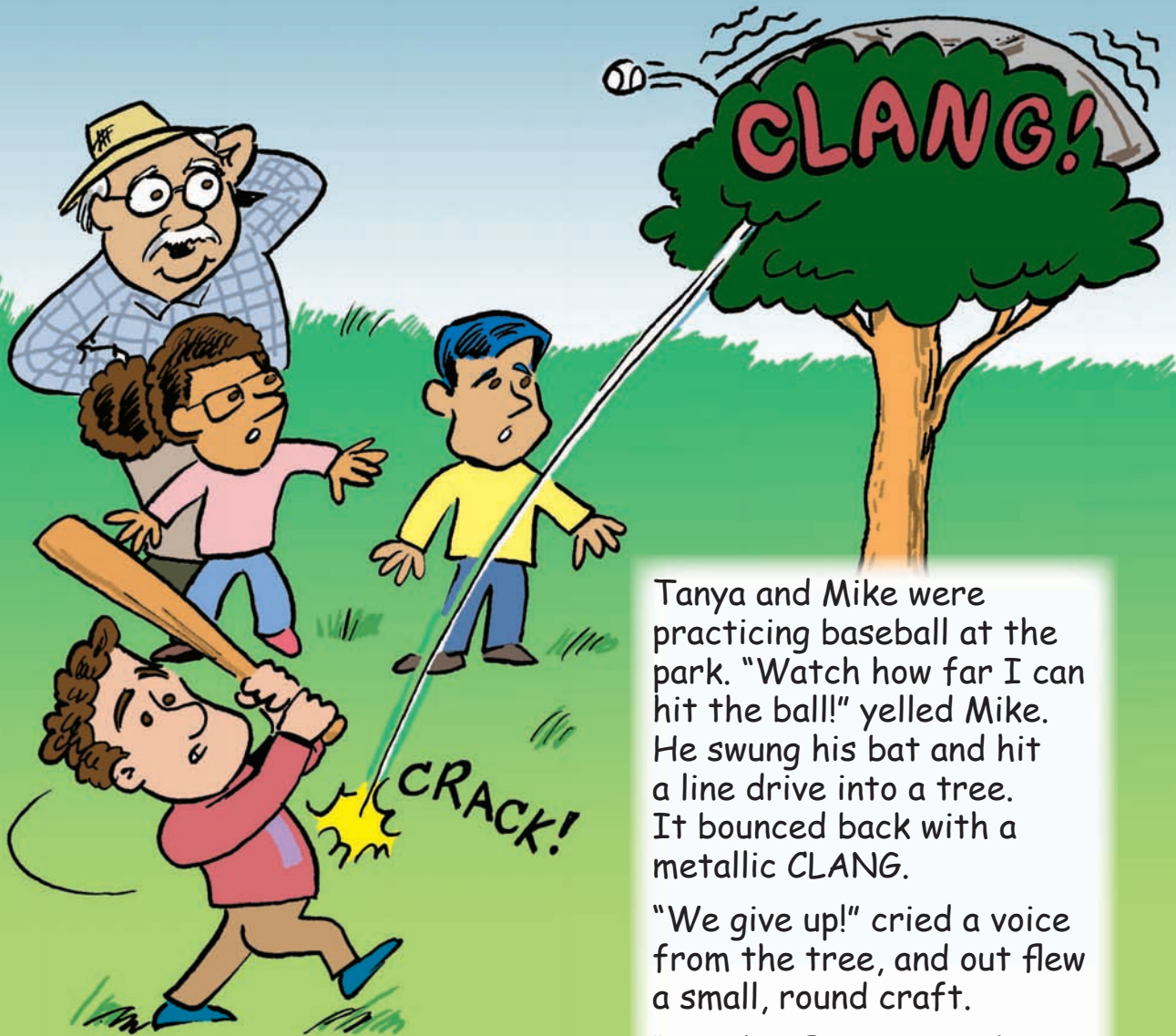
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Nate and his grandfather were on the way to the park to meet Nate's friends, Tanya and Mike. Before they left, Nate's mother reminded them to use repellents. "There are lots of mosquitoes out there!" she told them.



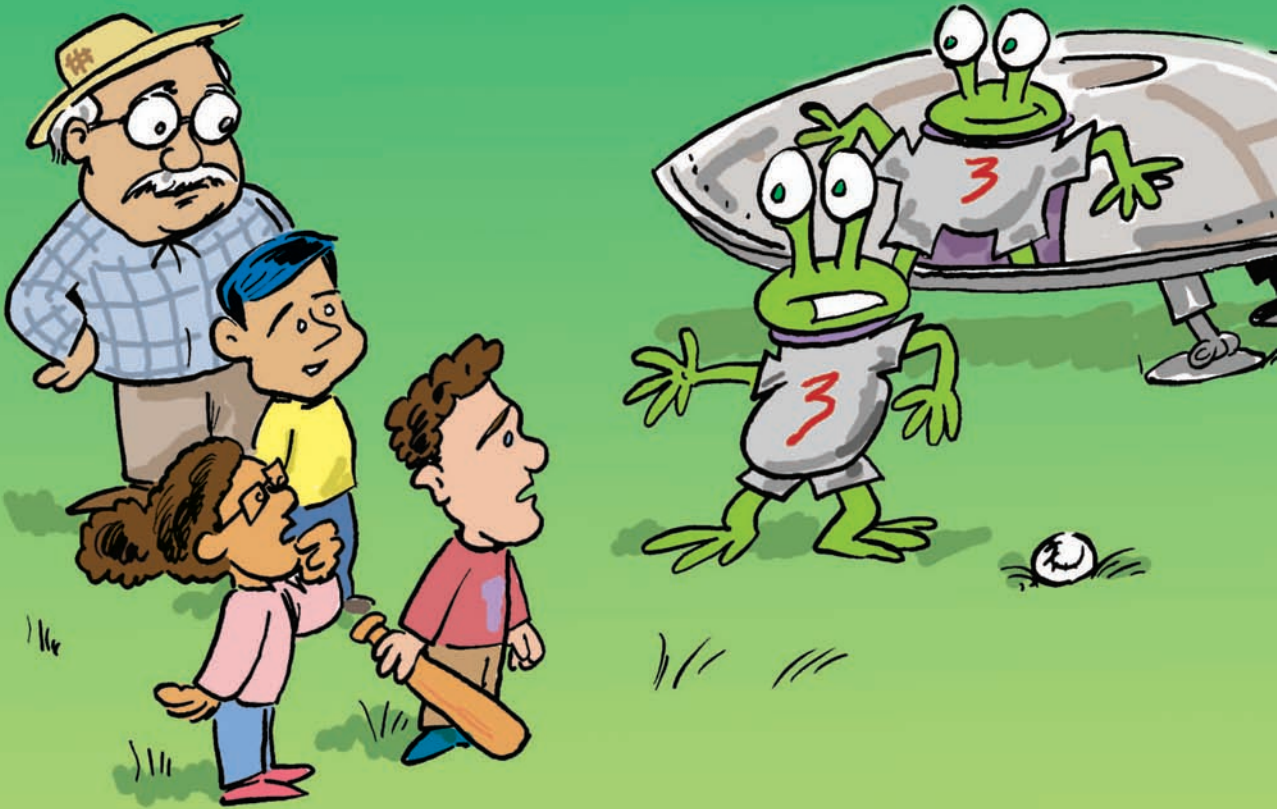




Tanya and Mike were practicing baseball at the park. "Watch how far I can hit the ball!" yelled Mike. He swung his bat and hit a line drive into a tree. It bounced back with a metallic CLANG.

"We give up!" cried a voice from the tree, and out flew a small, round craft.

"Wow! A flying saucer!" said Tanya.



"Should we call the police?" asked Mike.

Grandpa waved for them all to calm down. "Let's just see what they want," he said.

Out of the flying saucer came two creatures with their hands raised. "Please, we come in peace! We have travelled to your planet for safety!"

"On our home planet, Mars, we have a life form that bites us all the time," cried one of the spacemen.

"That's right!" said the second. "We came to your planet to get away from those little flying monsters!"

Grandpa rubbed his chin. "Little, flying creatures that bite? Why, that sounds like..."





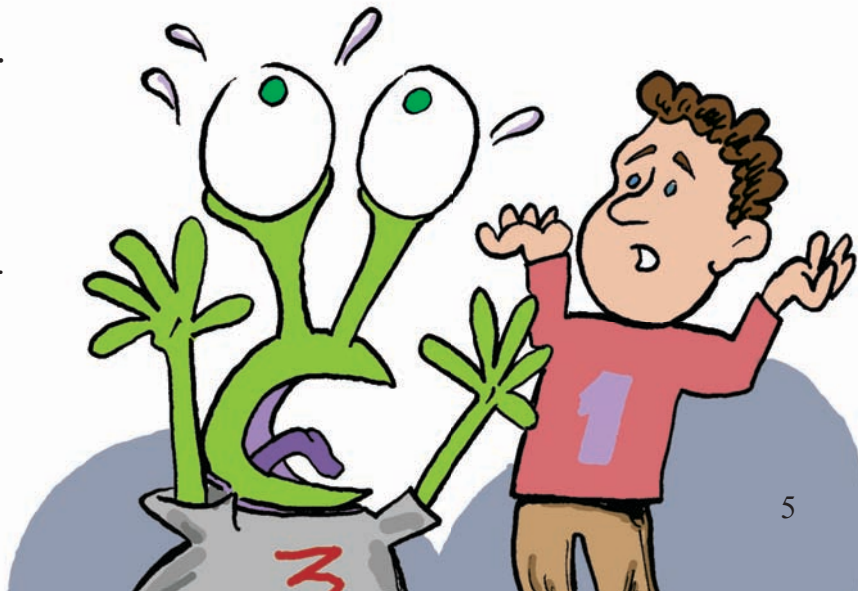
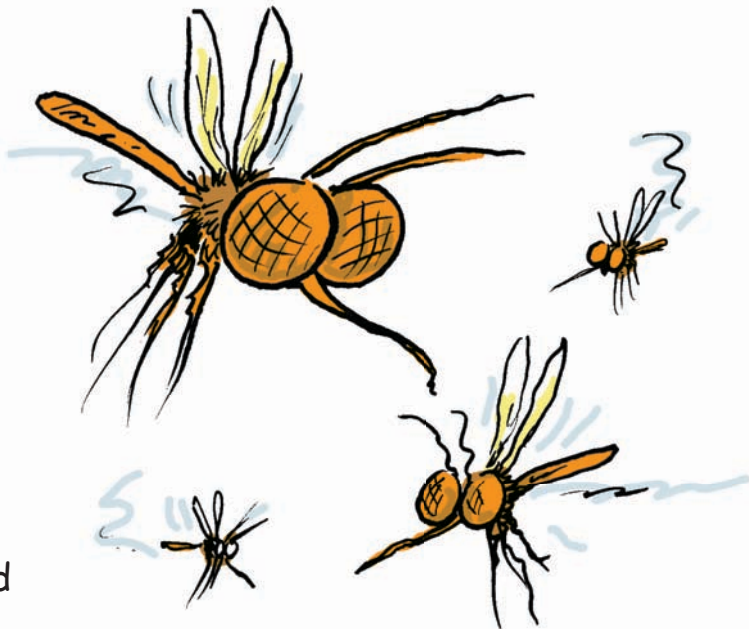
"AHHH! They're here too!" yelled the Martians, as they swatted at their arms and legs. "We're doomed!"

"Wait," said Tanya. "You left your home planet because of mosquitoes?!"

"YES!" they both cried at the same time.

"They bite like crazy!" said one. "The bites itch!" said the other. "They can spread diseases!" they both shouted.

"Mosquitoes can be bad," said Mike. "But preventing mosquito bites can be easy."



"Wait here with grandpa - we'll be right back!" said Tanya. They hurried off and soon returned with armloads of things. The boys each gave the alien visitors some of their long-sleeved shirts and pants to wear. Tanya opened a bag that contained several types of repellents.

The aliens tried on their new clothes. "Do you really think this will protect us?" they asked their new earthling friends.

"Dressing properly and using repellents will help make you invisible to mosquitoes!" Tanya exclaimed. "Ask an adult to help apply the repellent according to the instructions on the label."





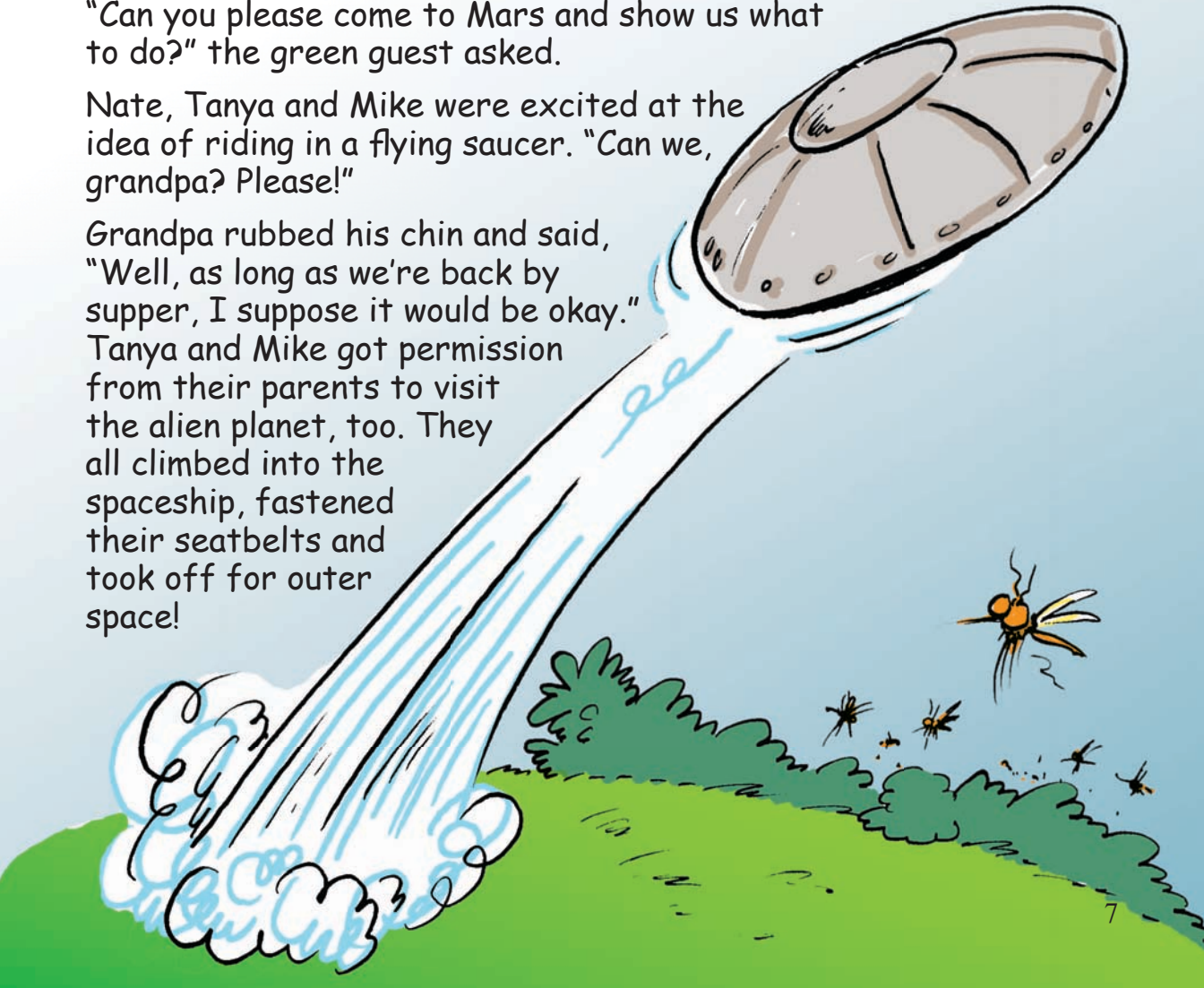
"You can also mosquito-proof your homes to help get rid of mosquitoes before they start bothering you," Grandpa added.

"Can you please come to Mars and show us what to do?" the green guest asked.

Nate, Tanya and Mike were excited at the idea of riding in a flying saucer. "Can we, grandpa? Please!"

Grandpa rubbed his chin and said, "Well, as long as we're back by supper, I suppose it would be okay."

Tanya and Mike got permission from their parents to visit the alien planet, too. They all climbed into the spaceship, fastened their seatbelts and took off for outer space!



When they arrived on Mars, their new friends gave them jet packs for a flying tour. As they flew over the neighborhoods, Grandpa and the children showed them places where water could collect, such as plastic toys, buckets or wheelbarrows. "Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water," said Grandpa. "It's important to check for standing water at least once a week and tip out the water if you can."



Grandpa also told their new friends about larvicides, which can be used to control young mosquitoes in places where water cannot be dumped out. Then Nate pointed out a bird bath in another yard.

"That's our Booga Bird Bird Bath," said the space alien, as a strange bird landed on its edge.

"Why do you call it a Booga Bird?" asked Mike. Just then the small bird let out a gigantic BOO-GA! "Never mind," said Mike. "Just remember to change the water every few days or the mosquitoes will return."





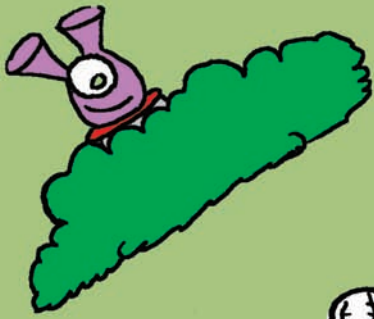
Grandpa also noticed that the houses had water on the roofs. "On Earth, we use gutters to drain the water off our houses," he said. "Thank you for showing us how to fight the bite! What can we do to show our gratitude?" they asked. "Well..." said Nate, and he whispered to them. The aliens smiled and brought them back to the ship to return them to Earth.



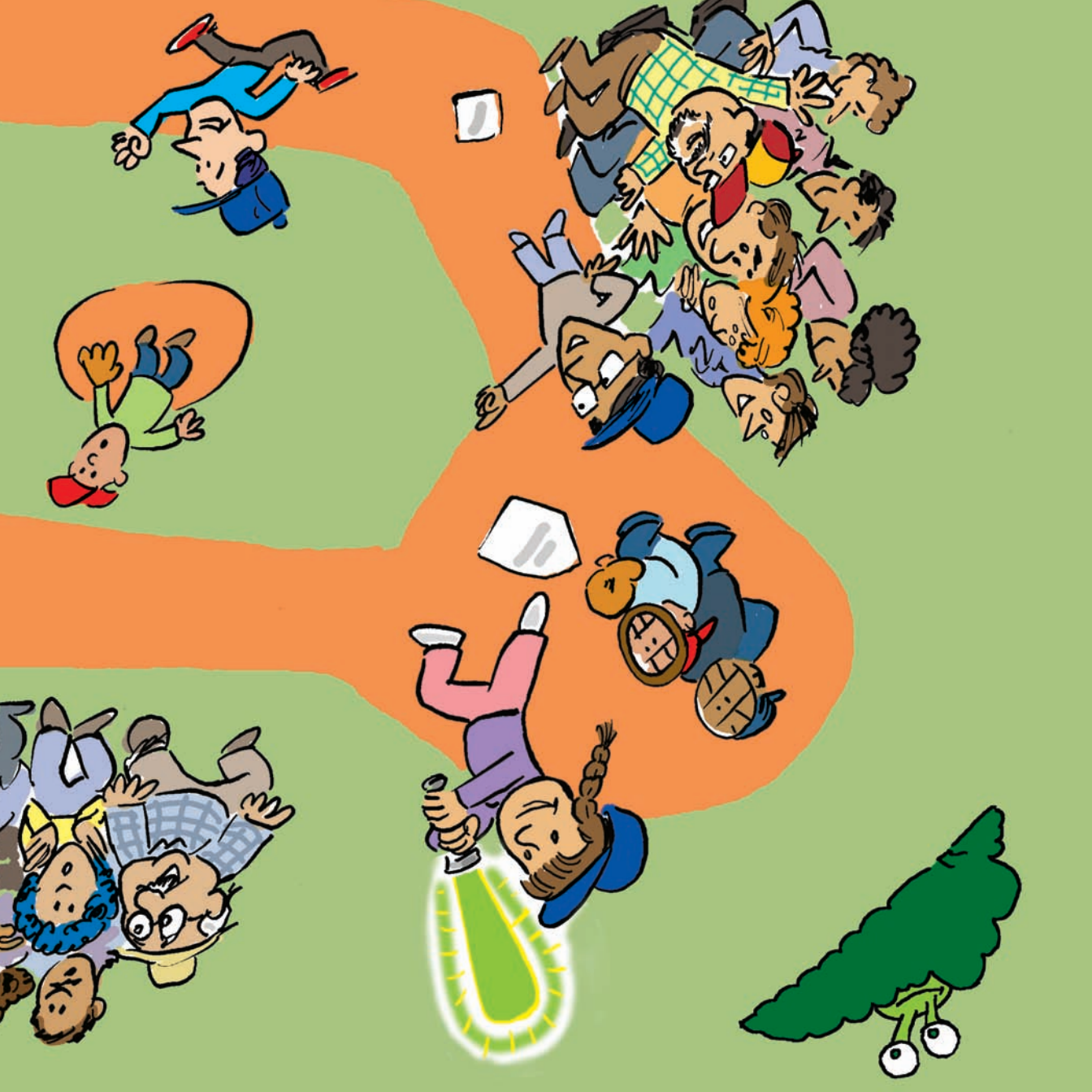


The next Saturday the three friends played baseball while grandpa and their parents watched. Suddenly the other team's batter hit a towering fly ball. "Oh, no! That's a home run for sure!" yelled Nate's dad.

"Don't be too sure!" said grandpa. Just then Nate rocketed into the air using the jet pack his extraterrestrial friends had given him. "Knowing how to fight the bite can pay off in lots of ways!"









After lunch, it was time for the big game. "Nina's up first. I hope she gets a home run!" said her father. "I have a feeling that won't be a problem today," said abuelo. Nina pushed the green button on the electro-bat that her friends had given her. "Good things can happen when you know how to fight the bite!"



"These are great ideas!" said their space alien friends. "Now we can stay on Titan! How can we ever thank you for helping us?"

"Well," said Nina, "if it's not too much trouble, could we..." she whispered into the alien's ear. "I think that can be arranged," said the alien with a smile. Abuelo looked at his watch - "It's almost lunchtime. We had better get home," he said. They returned to Earth just in time for lunch.



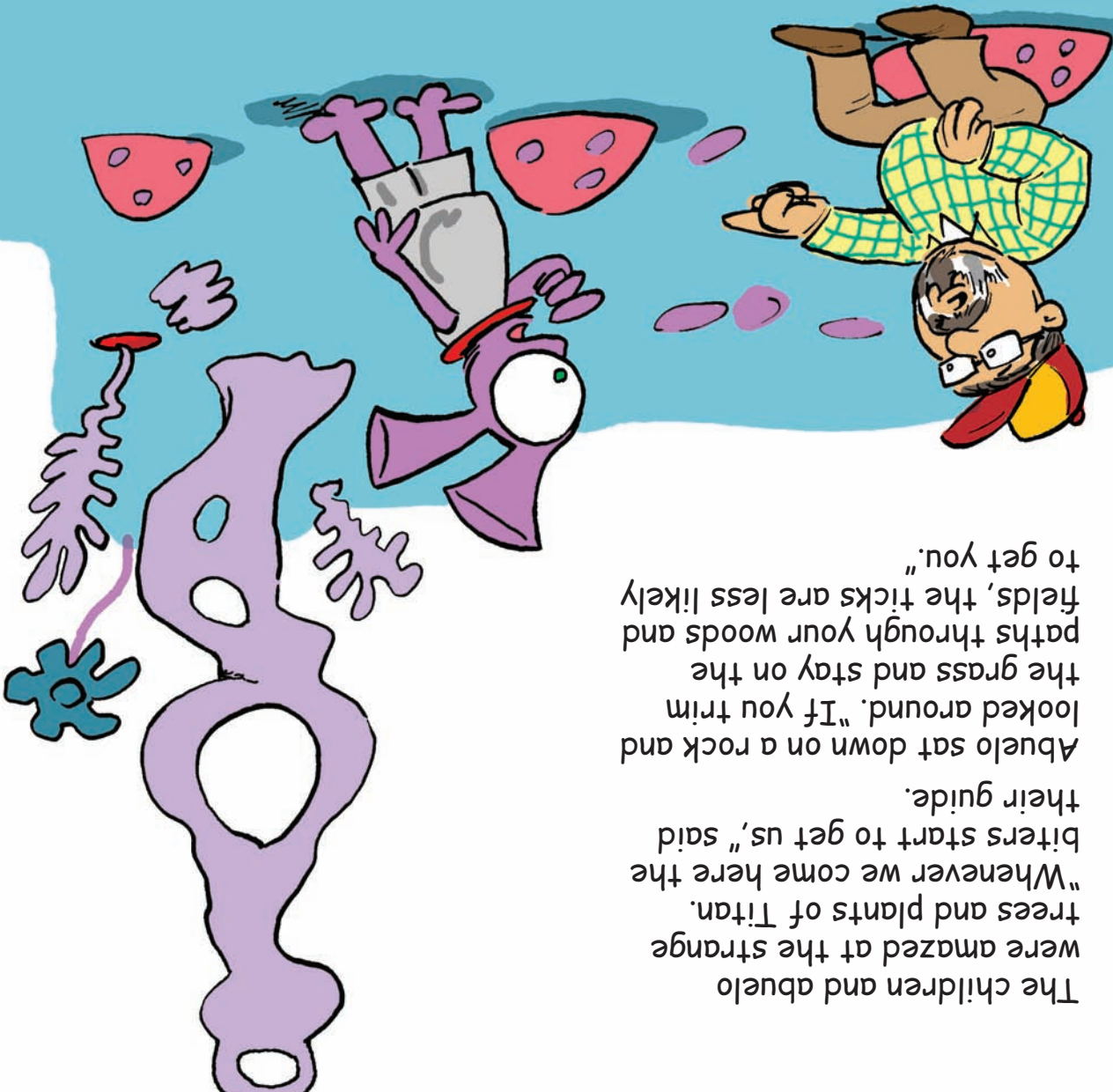
"Here's another good idea we use," said Nina. "Tuck your pant legs into your socks. This will make it easier for you to see ticks and remove them before they can bite you!"

"Always check yourself for ticks after being outside—especially if you have been in the places where you know they live," said Jimmy.

"If you see that one has already bitten you, ask your parent to help you remove it with tweezers."



The children and abuelo were amazed at the strange trees and plants of Titan. "Whenever we come here the biters start to get us," said their guide. Abuelo sat down on a rock and looked around. "If you trim the grass and stay on the paths through your woods and fields, the ticks are less likely to get you."



"We invented these to help keep the biters away - just push the green button," said the alien excitedly.

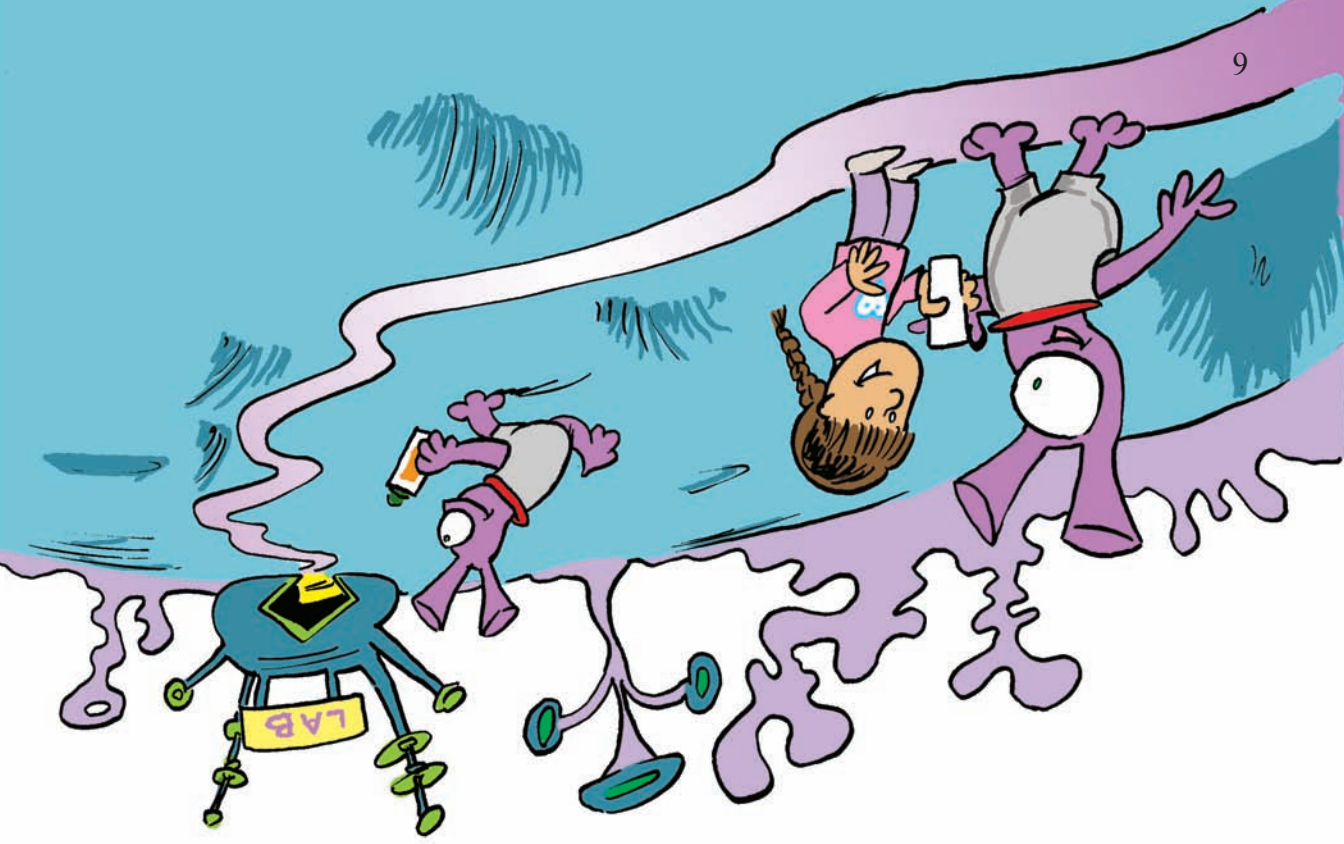
Jimmy pushed the button and a glowing club emerged from the device. "This flings the biters far, far away, but there are so many that we cannot get them all." Then the aliens smiled. "But thanks to you, we have DEFTI! Now we won't need the electro-bats!"





When they arrived on Titan, Nina pulled a bottle of DEET from her coat pocket. "Remember, you need to read the directions before using DEET and it should always be applied by an adult," she said.

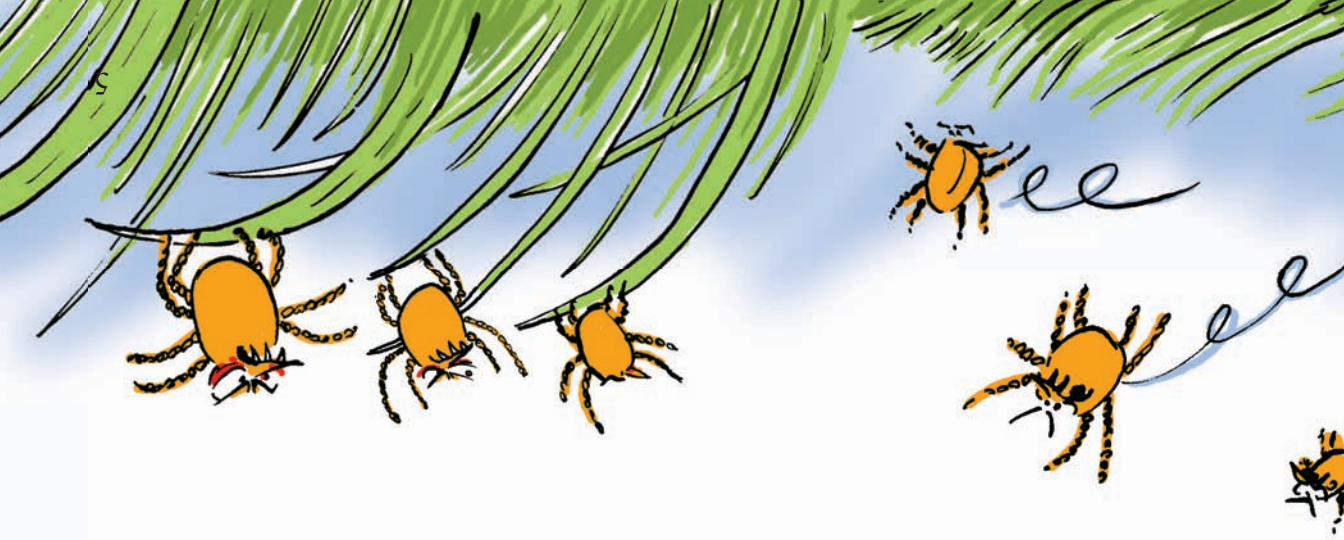
"Can you show us where the biters are?" asked Nina. The aliens looked scared, but agreed to take them. For protection, the aliens gave each of the earth kids a strange looking device. "What are these?" Nina asked.

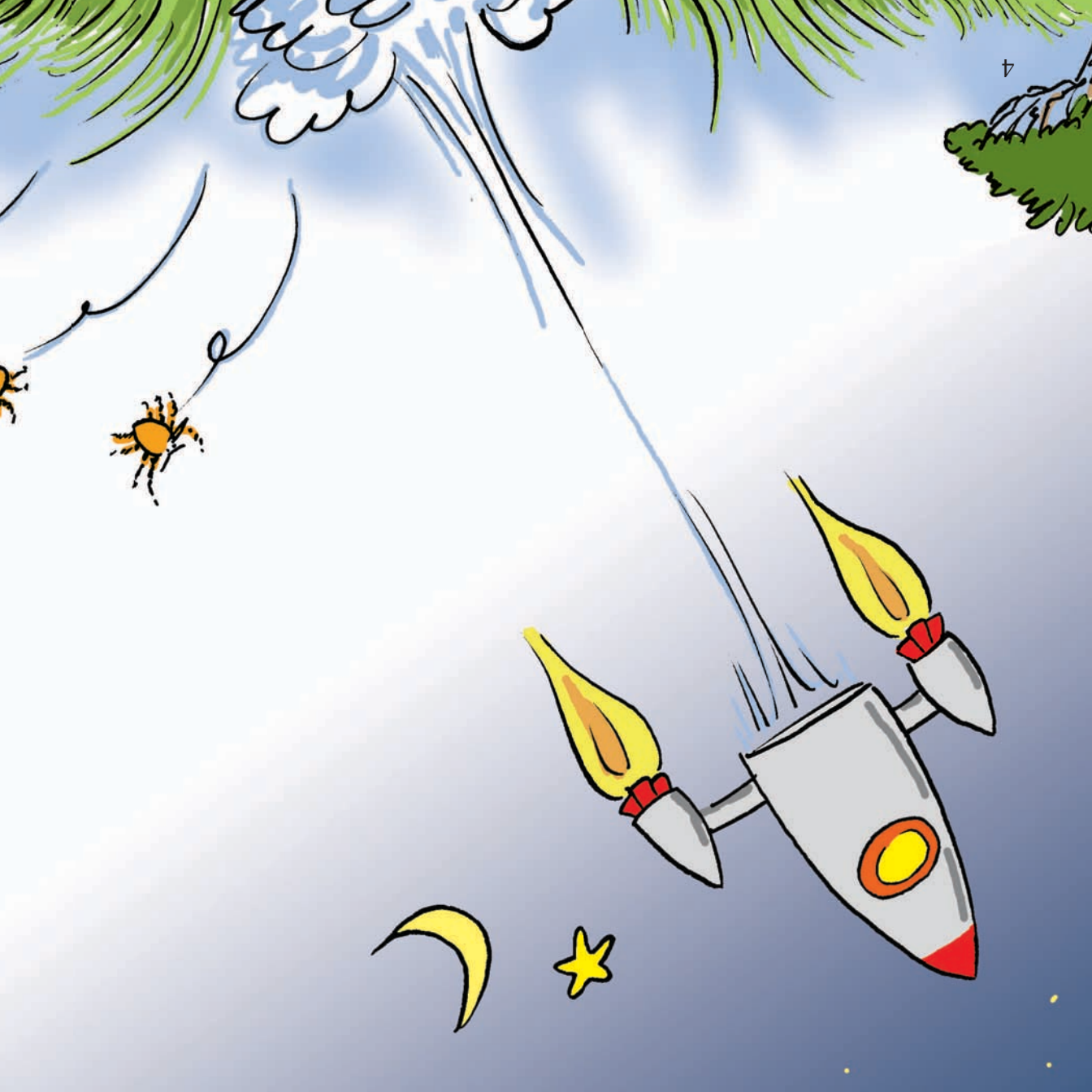


"DEET is a repellent," said abuelo. "You put it on your skin and clothing so that ticks do not want to bite you." The aliens gasped and looked at one another. Abuelo continued, "There are other things you can do to keep from getting tick bites, too."

"Oh, please help us!" said the aliens. "Show us this DEET and come teach us how to fight the terrible bite!"  
"Please, can we?" the kids pleaded. Abuelo looked at the kids and the sad extraterrestrial visitors. "All right, but ask your parents first!"

Their parents agreed that they could visit an alien moon near Saturn as long as they were back by lunchtime. With that, they boarded the spacecraft and took off in a flash!







companion.

"Is DEET a powerful ray that vaporizes them?" wondered his

these ticks?" asked one of the aliens.

"What is this DEET you speak of? Is it a giant robot that smashes

to run away? Can't you use DEET?"

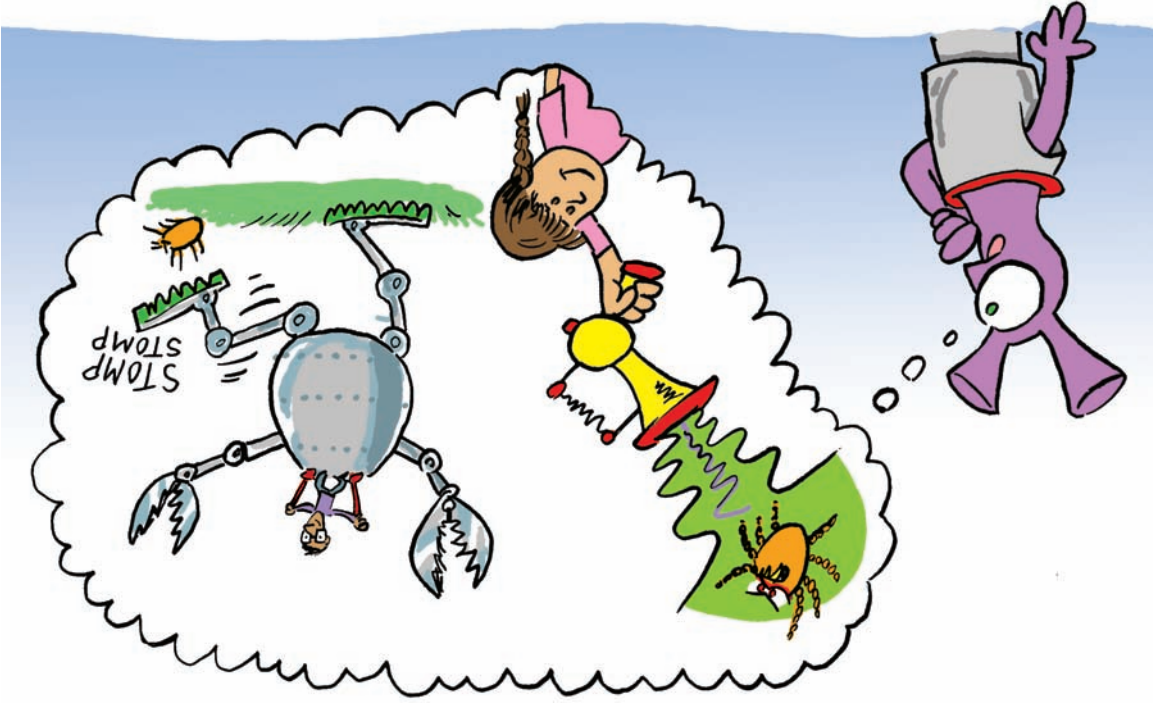
"Wow," said Ben. "They sound a lot like ticks! But why do you have

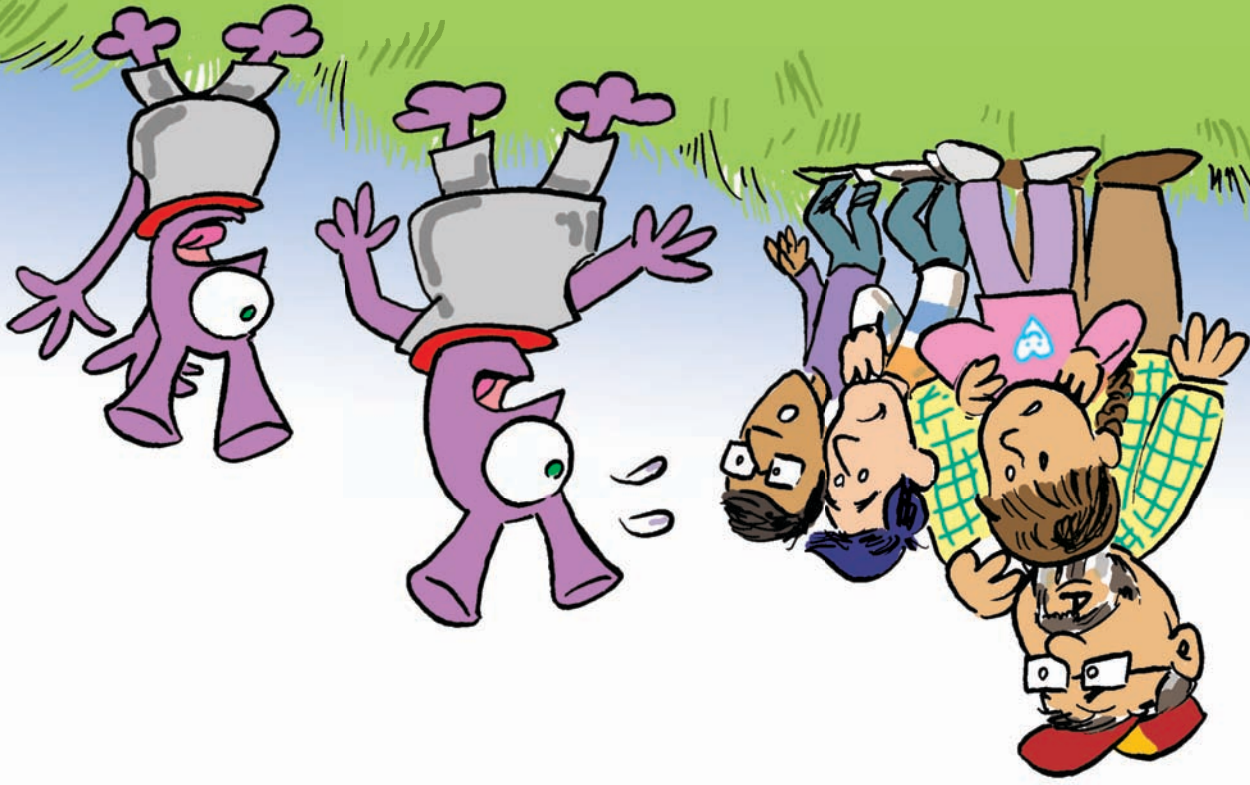
worse, they can transmit diseases!"

are walking, stay hidden and bite until they are full of blood. Even

that we call biters!" one of them said. "They grab on while you

"Our forests and fields are overrun with blood-sucking creatures





"Cool!" said Jimmy "Space aliens!"  
"We come from Titan, a moon of the planet Saturn," said a voice from the spaceship. Out came two strange-looking creatures.  
"Our planet has a terrible problem and we are looking for a new place to live."



At the park, they saw Jimmy and Ben tossing a ball. "Are you ready for our big baseball game this afternoon?" asked Jimmy. "You bet!" Nina replied. "Throw me a high one and I'll catch it!" Ben tossed the ball high in the air, but before it could come down, it bounced off a cloud with a loud DING. "Stop! We come in peace!" said a voice from the cloud, and out flew a gleaming spaceship.



Nina and her grandfather were on the way to the park to meet Nina's friends. As they walked out the door, Nina's father reminded them to make sure they were careful to prevent tick bites. "Have fun, but be careful near the tall grass and woods since ticks like to hang out in those places. Make sure you use DEET," he told them. He helped Nina apply repellent. "I'm ready. How about you, abuelo?" she asked her grandfather. Abuelo finished tucking his pants into his socks and put repellent on his arms. "I'm ready. The ticks will have trouble getting us now!"





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# Titan Takes On the Ticks!