

I suddenly had a thought. "If you're both out tonight, then who's looking after me and Tabby?"

Mum smiled. "Your Aunt Emmy didn't want to go to the dinner. She offered to babysit instead."

Tabby was so excited, she almost smashed Mum's mug of tea with her hockey stick.

"Aunt Em's coming over?! YES!

THIS

IS THE BEST

DAY **EVER!**"

I groaned. If you think my parents are scatterbrained, just wait until you meet Aunt Emmy!



# 2

## AUNT EMMY

Mum and Dad were racing around, getting ready for the posh dinner. They were both running late, as usual.

"Where's my wallet? Where's my tie?" cried Dad.

"Forget that!" I said. "Where's Aunt Emmy? She was supposed to be here twenty minutes ago."

### BAM!

The front door flew open, and there was Aunt Emmy, wearing her lab coat and leather boots. Her hands were stained purple and her hair was slightly burned at the ends, as usual.

"Sorry I'm late, kids!" she shouted. "Had a bit of a problem with my latest experiment."

Aunt Emmy is a scientist. Mum says she's a genius, but I've never seen her make a single invention that works properly. That's why she lives in a lighthouse laboratory outside town – so she can't damage anything.

"There's pasta in the oven," said Dad. "And remember, Emmy: NO EXPERIMENTS IN THE HOUSE."

Emmy looked insulted. "What kind of babysitter do you think I am?"

She waited until Mum and Dad had left, and then spun round.

"Pasta? BORING! Who wants pasta when you could have piping hot soup made with your very own SOUP ZAPPER?"



She whipped out her latest invention. It looked like a set of bagpipes covered in buttons and switches.

"Emmy, no experiments!" I groaned. "You heard what Dad said."

"What does *he* know?" she scoffed. "Let's give it a test drive."

She aimed the zapper at an empty bowl on the kitchen table, and fired.

**SPLURG!**



In less than a second, half the kitchen was covered in some kind of sludgy grey cement.

"That doesn't look like soup," said Tabby.

Emmy peered at the zapper. "Strange! It's not supposed to do that. Maybe if I try again ..."

"No!" I said, grabbing her arm. "Let's just go outside, and you can tell us about space again."

Emmy loved talking about space. "Great idea, Ash!"

We sat outside, eating bowls of pasta while Emmy told us the names of all the stars. (She tried to eat some of her soup, but it nearly broke her teeth.)

"That's funny," she said, searching the sky. "I can't see that light anywhere ..."

"What light?" I asked.

"I was up late last week, working on my latest invention," Emmy explained. "When I looked out of the window, I saw a strange green light hovering in the sky above Finney Island. I was sure it must be aliens!"

Tabby and I groaned. Emmy was certain that one day aliens would invade Earth.

