



VOL I

# THE BLOBS

**CRASH LAND!**



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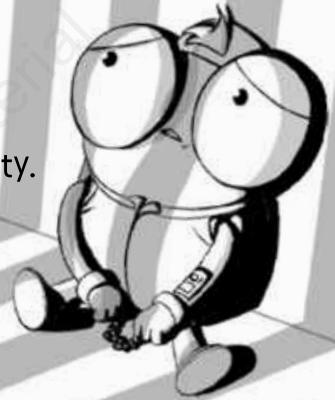
## Prologue

The prison cell was dark. Cold. Empty. The kind of place that sent shivers down your spine just standing in it.

Cadetski had never been inside a prison before, let alone as a prisoner. *How did this happen?* The question bounced around his head, but there wasn't time to think. The only thing that mattered now was getting out.

His eyes darted to the cell's thick metal door he had come through—locked tight.

"I've gotta find a way out of here," he muttered under his breath. "My friends are in danger, and



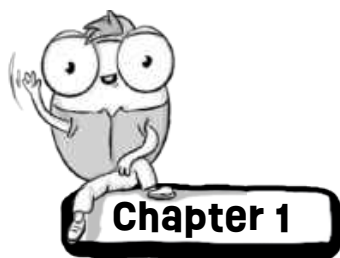
who knows what those Glitchy freaks are planning when they come back.”

THUD. THUD. THUD.

Loud stomps echoed down the hallway. Time had run out. Panic filled Cadetski’s chest as he pressed against the wall. The deep, booming voice of a guard carried through the halls. “He’s over here!”

Cadetski’s heart pounded in his ears. His eyes widened in fear. They were back!





# INCOMING

## *TWELVE HOURS EARLIER ...*

At the end of his last class, and before anyone could say, “We’ll see you next semester,” Cadetski blasted through the front doors of his school like he was being chased by a pack of wild animals. In reality, he just couldn’t wait to get to the Schmoobville hover disc park. He had just a couple more weeks to hang out there, because soon, he and every other Blob would have to evacuate the planet in what they were calling the Great Escape.

Ever since scientists had spotted a giant meteor headed straight for the Blob home world, the usually chill, peaceful Blobs had been scrambling to build

and pack escape pods to move everyone to a new planet called Splotch. Cadetski's family had gone ahead with the advance team to set up the new Blob world. He'd stayed behind to finish school—much to his disappointment.

School was not his thing, and his grades were there to prove it. Especially Blob Studies, where the class had spent a whole week reviewing what everyone already knew: Blob scientists couldn't figure out what a Blob even is. That's why, way back in the day, their ancestors had decided to call themselves "Blobs." As the story went, it was better than "beans with legs" or "weird alien eggs" and "space potatoes." Secretly, Cadetski thought if he could have been on that committee, he'd have come up with something way better than "Blobs." Oh well.

While clicking on his helmet, he paused to watch the new Blob Force enlistees from his class march off in formation to their first Blob Force Training Camp. He had always dreamed of being in the Blob Force, the protectors of Blob society. It's just that ... distractions like designing and racing hover discs seemed to keep getting in the way. If only he had

buckled down on his studies, maybe he wouldn't have been rejected when he'd tried to enlist.

Shaking his head at himself, he activated his latest hover disc creation and shot off like a rocket toward the park.

Schmoobville was a small, quaint town full of lively Blobs. Everyone seemed to know everyone. There were little shops scattered around the town square. Cadetski knew the place like the back of his hand—he'd grown up here. In the center was a fountain, which to Cadetski wasn't some scenic landmark—it was another obstacle to jump. (He was going to miss that fountain.)



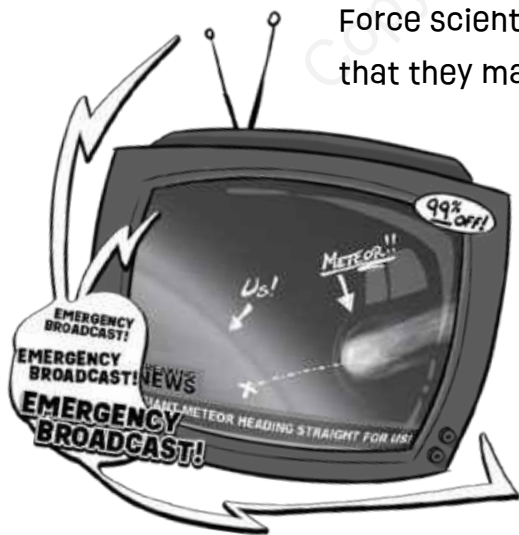
Zooming down the sidewalk at top speed, he weaved through the crowd like a pro, dodging Blobs left and right. He approached the local Blob-O-Vision store, something he'd usually fly right by without a second thought. But something made him stop—abruptly. His hover disc screeched to a halt, his eyes locking on to the massive screen in the window.

Big red letters flashed across the display: “EMERGENCY BROADCAST!”

Cadetski's heart dropped into his stomach as he glided closer. The news blobcaster's voice blared from the speakers: “We are interrupting this program with some breaking news. Our Blob

Force scientists have announced that they made a slliiiggghht miscalculation in the meteor's trajectory ....”

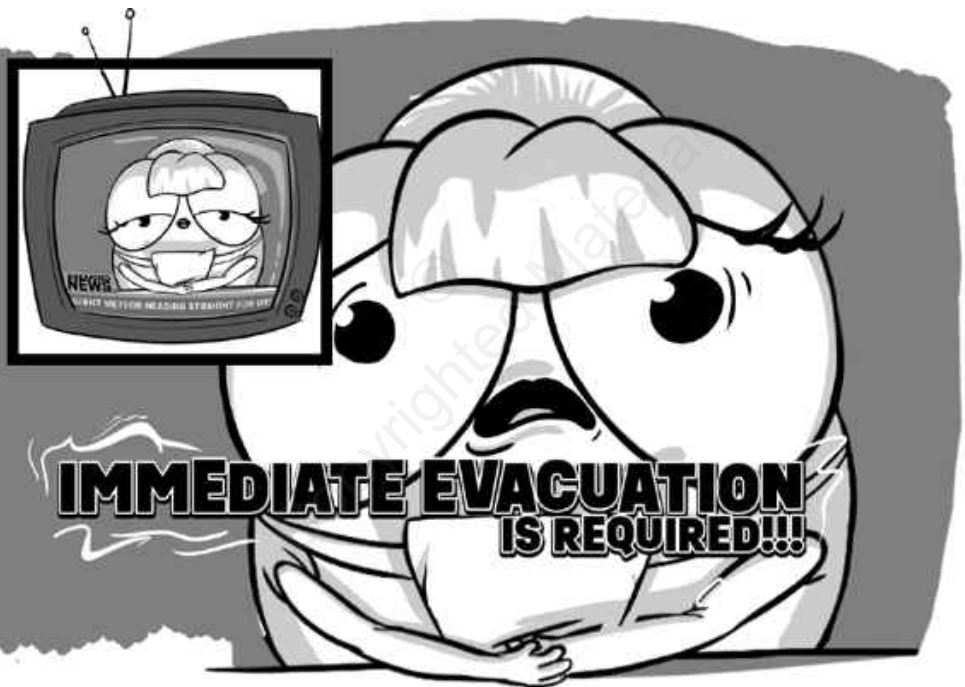
The screens flashed with graphics showing the size of



the meteor next to their planet and the distance between the two.

Not much at all.

Suddenly, the blobcaster's eyes bulged. She screamed, "IMMEDIATE EVACUATION IS REQUIRED!"

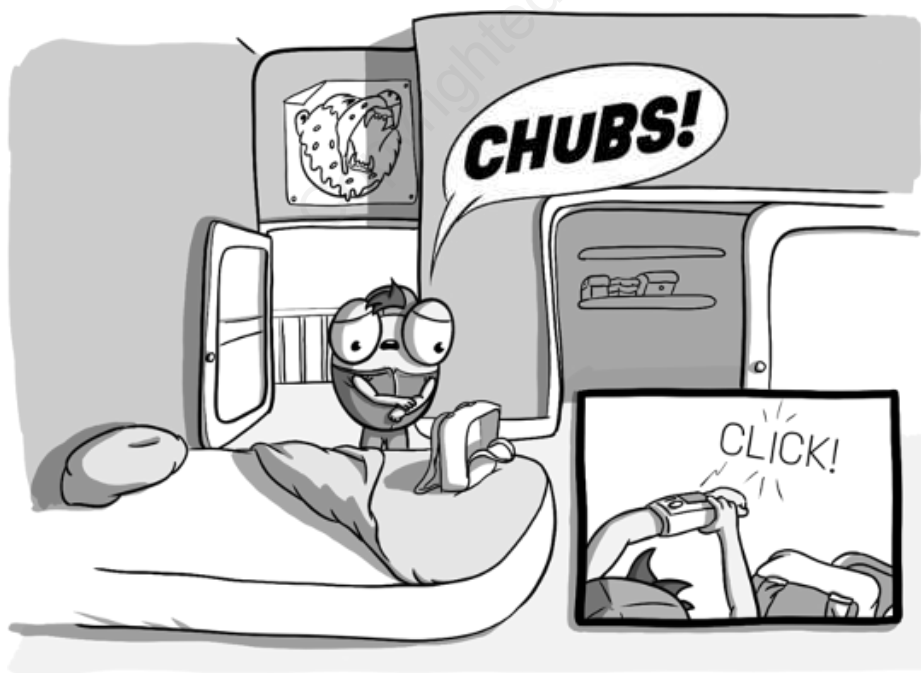


Shock flooded Cadetski.

"I thought we still had two weeks!" someone else shrieked.

As the crowd of Blobs scattered in panic and sirens began to blare across town, Cadetski moved faster than he ever had in his life. He'd just finished designing a jet engine that he was testing out on his hover disc. Until this moment, even he didn't know it could go this fast!

Hitting top speed, he jumped over fences and took every shortcut he knew. His mind raced faster than his hover disc, and he barely stopped in time to avoid crashing straight into his front door.



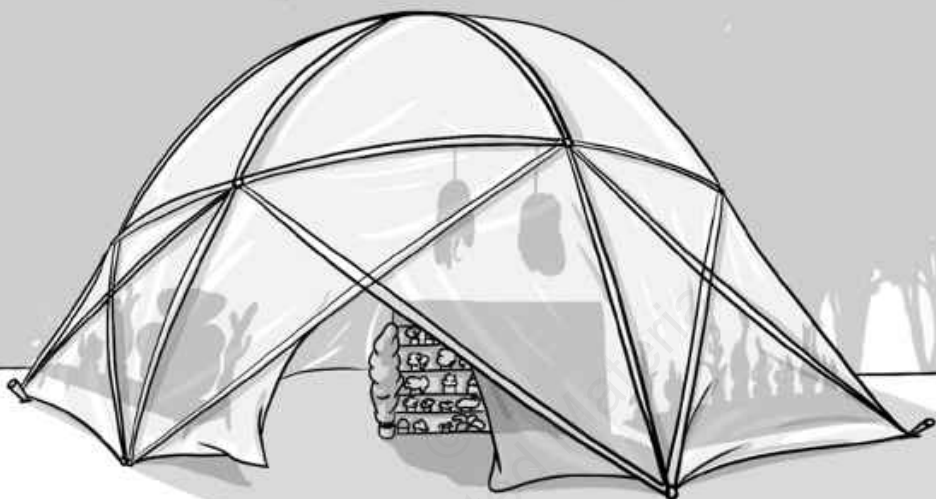
He sprinted up the stairs, thoughts spinning. Luckily, Cadetski was ridiculously organized. He had already packed for the journey to Planet Splotch. He knew where everything important was.

He stopped and eyed the rejection letter he had received from the Blob Force on his desk before stuffing it into his backpack as well. The letter reminded him of a dream that was crushed, but he had no time to ponder.

His bag was crammed so full, he could barely zip it up, but he paused, anxiously scanning every corner of his room. It felt like he was forgetting something ...

“CHUBS!” he exclaimed, grabbing his BoinkCom in a panic. Chubs had been his best friend since forever, and there was no way he was leaving without him. The comm rang as Cadetski ran out the door, his stuff in hand. One ring. Nothing. Another ring. Cadetski’s heart raced.





Chubs wandered through his greenhouse, tending to his massive collection of succulents—his favorite plants. Succulents were a popular plant in Schmoobville. They were firm with pointy edges on the leaves and easy to keep alive. Chubs was an expert on everything plants. He lived, breathed, and planted plants. He even considered plants to be part of his family since he moved out on his own a few years ago.

“There you go, lil’ guy. Just a little drink,” he whispered to his favorite suggulent, Gilbert.

Yes, Chubs named all his plants.

RING! RING! The old BoinkCom startled him, and he accidentally knocked two suggulents onto the floor. He stared down at poor Barb in dismay.

He sighed, answering the comm with a tear slipping down his cheek.

Cadetski’s frantic voice came through: “Chubs, did you see the news?!”

Chubs, confusion written all over his face, replied, “No, I don’t have a Blob-O-Vision, remember? My suggulents require constant care, and I’m fully dedicated to their needs. Distractions are the number one reason why—”

“CHUBS, LISTEN!!” Cadetski cut in. “We don’t have much time! We need to get to the Pod Transporter Zone!”

For a second, there was nothing but silence.

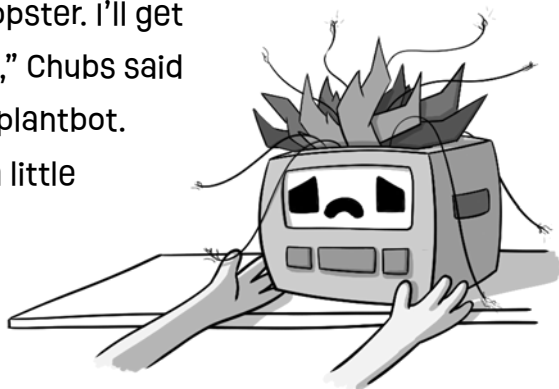


You could almost hear the clocks ticking in the background. Still holding a succulent, Chubs glanced around his greenhouse, trying to piece it all together. He glanced over at his plantbot, Lopster, and noticed the scared look on its screen.

Lopster was his most prized possession. Chubs had rescued the intelligent plant robot years ago when he stumbled upon an abandoned factory and found the forlorn plantbot about to be scooped up by greedy scrappers. He took it home and named it Lopster. The plantbot had been designed to make gardening easier—it helped Chubs know how to care for his plants. A friendship was formed, and Chubs didn't go anywhere without it.

Seeing his anxious little techno-friend gave Chubs courage. He would never leave Lopster behind.

"It's okay, Lopster. I'll get this figured out," Chubs said to the nervous plantbot. "Cadetski, I'm a little confused ..." he began.



Cadetski, out of breath and out of patience, yelled, “THE METEOR IS GOING TO DESTROY OUR PLANET IN LESS THAN THREE HOURS!!”



Face turning pale, Chubs froze. His wide eyes locked on the plantbot in his hand. He was stuck.

Cadetski knew his friend too well. “Snap out of it! Grab anything important and meet me at the Transporter Zone, ASAP!”

Chubs blinked, barely understanding. His voice shook as he replied, “Oo-okay ...” He ended the call, still paralyzed.

Then it all sank in.

With a scream, Chubs bolted out of the greenhouse with Lopster and as many plants as he could carry and ran for his life.

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