

Crashlander™



MERRIN ATKINSON'S FAMILY IS ABOUT TO GET UPGRADED

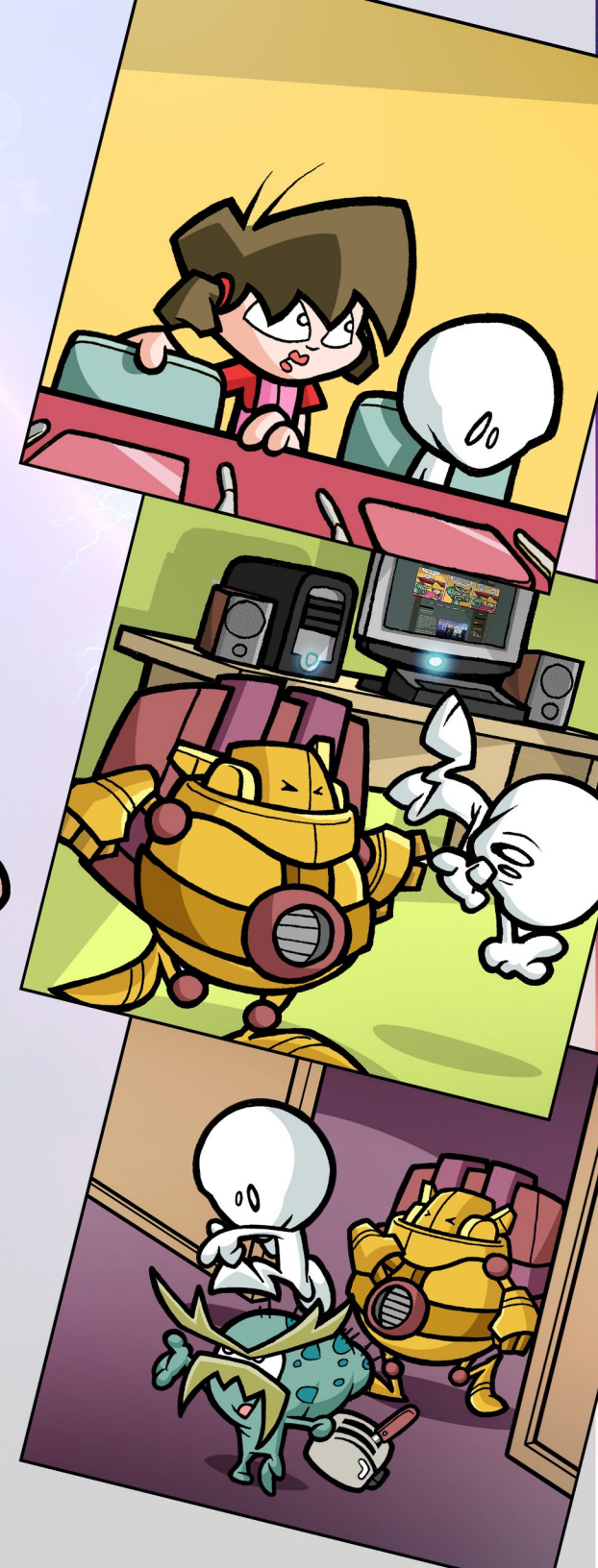
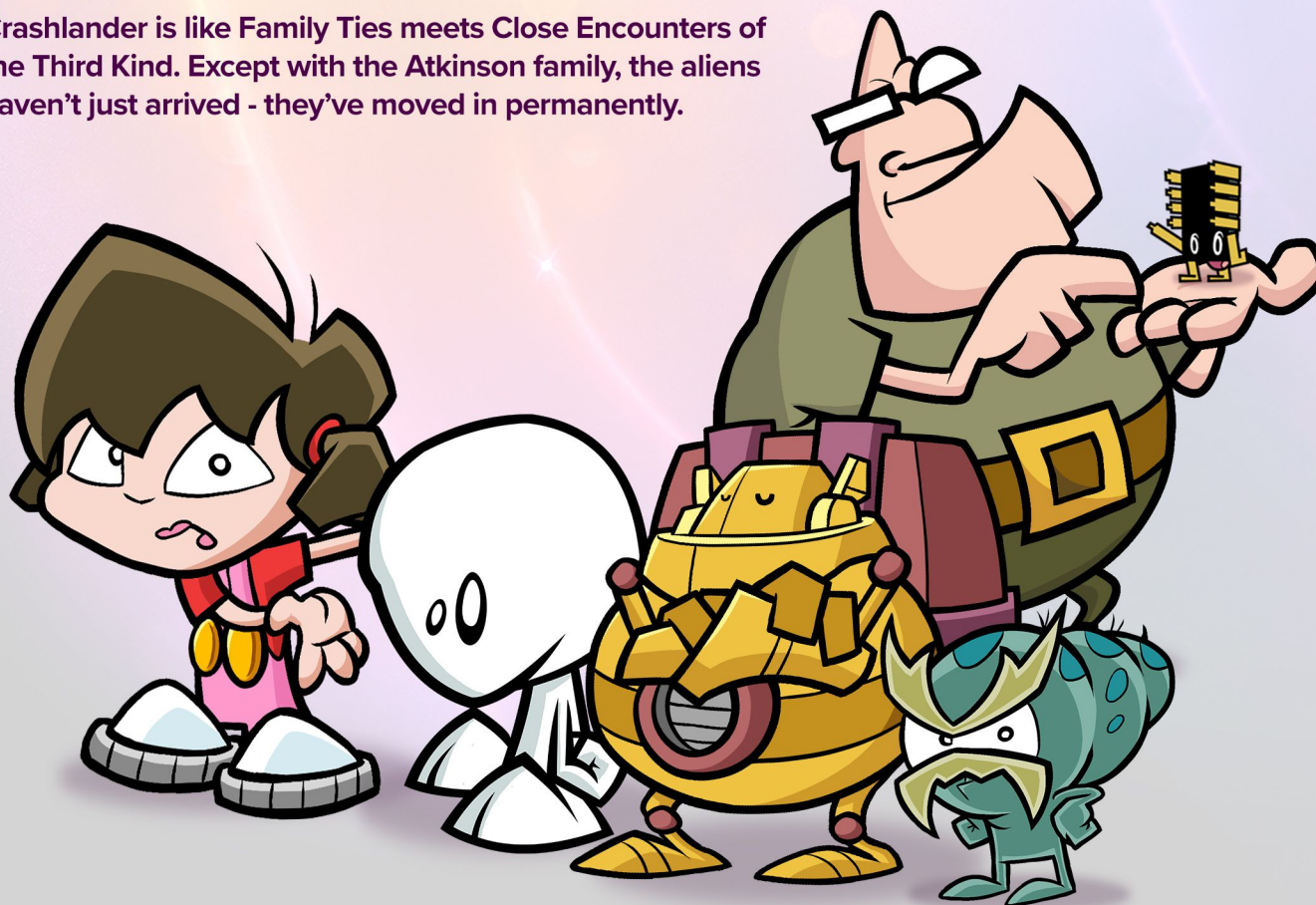
SYNOPSIS

Crashlander is the story of Merrin Atkinson, a feisty eight year old who lives with her parents, and a bunch of new family members who arrive out of nowhere. Well, not from nowhere - from light years away.

Because Merrin's Granpa is actually a retired space adventurer. He's seen things that would make a Gorkian's jaw drop, but now he's been given his most difficult task yet: to look after a set of stranded alien visitors.

There's Spork, a super nerdy alien. A robot bodyguard called Hydraulic. Dale, a rowdy space crustacean. And Mr. Gubbins, a tiny fact-finding CPU. They are stuck on Earth because of a malfunction in the Teleport Gate Network, and everyone is moving in to Merrin's house until it's fixed.

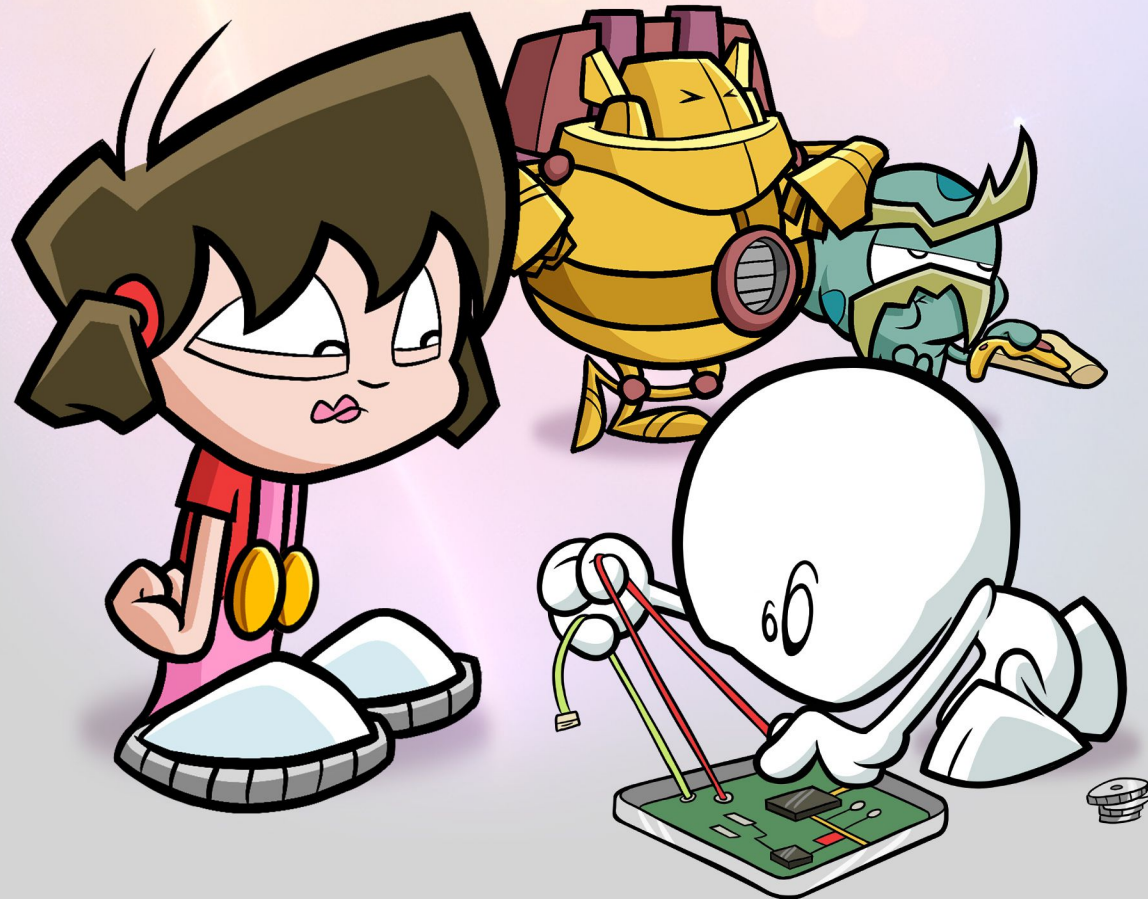
Crashlander is like Family Ties meets Close Encounters of the Third Kind. Except with the Atkinson family, the aliens haven't just arrived - they've moved in permanently.



MERRIN is an only child, so this development is a huge adjustment. Born with a sense of wonder, Merrin likes to imagine ridiculously ambitious things for herself, like discovering a new species of whale, or being the first kid to win the Jury Prize at Cannes. She's definitely not used to having a lot of people around distracting her, so she doesn't know how she'll handle this.

Suddenly, she finds Spork tearing down her iPad down for parts. There's a wait for the bathroom while Dale sheds his skin. Hydraulic has put up hard-light sensors all over the house. Heck, even Granpa is taking up too much space on the couch.

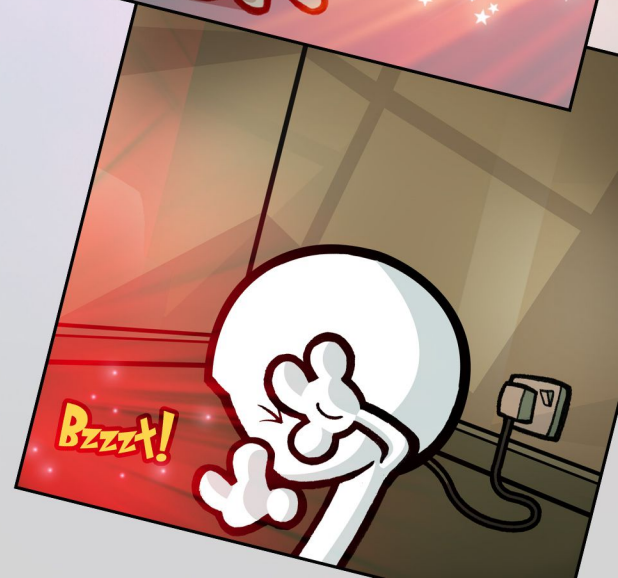
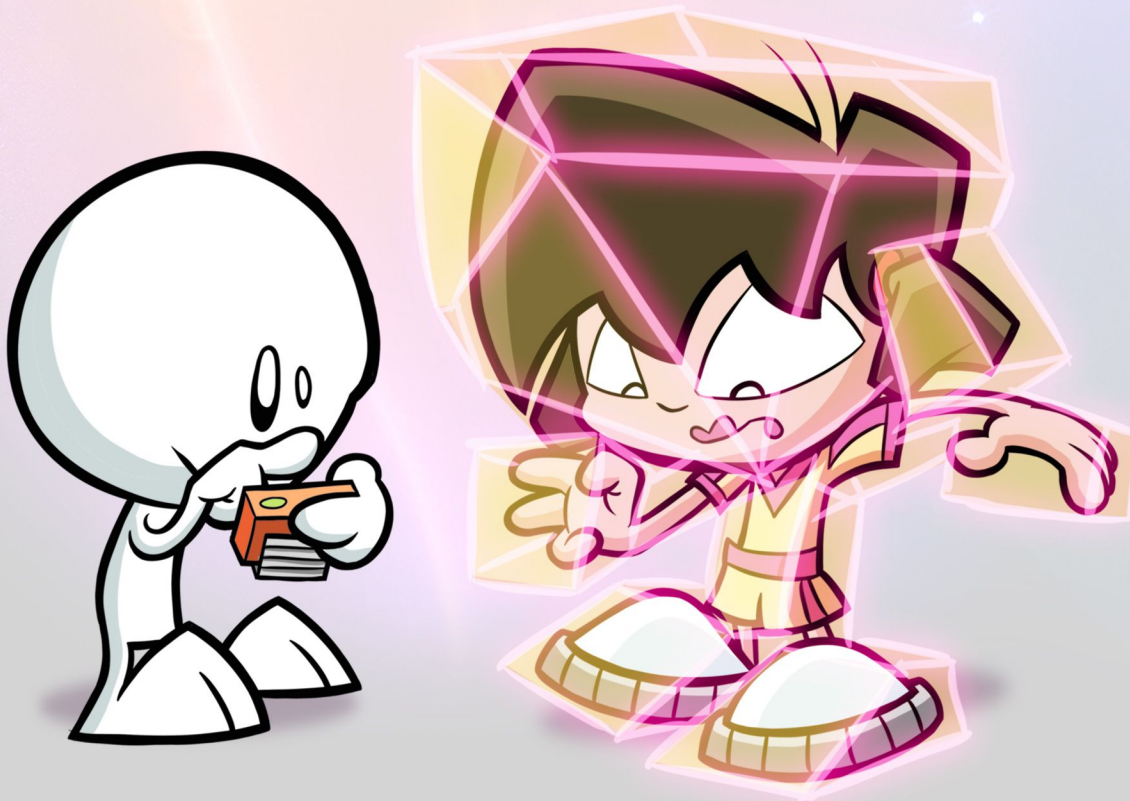
For better or worse, this is Merrin's life now. She's stuck with these guys.

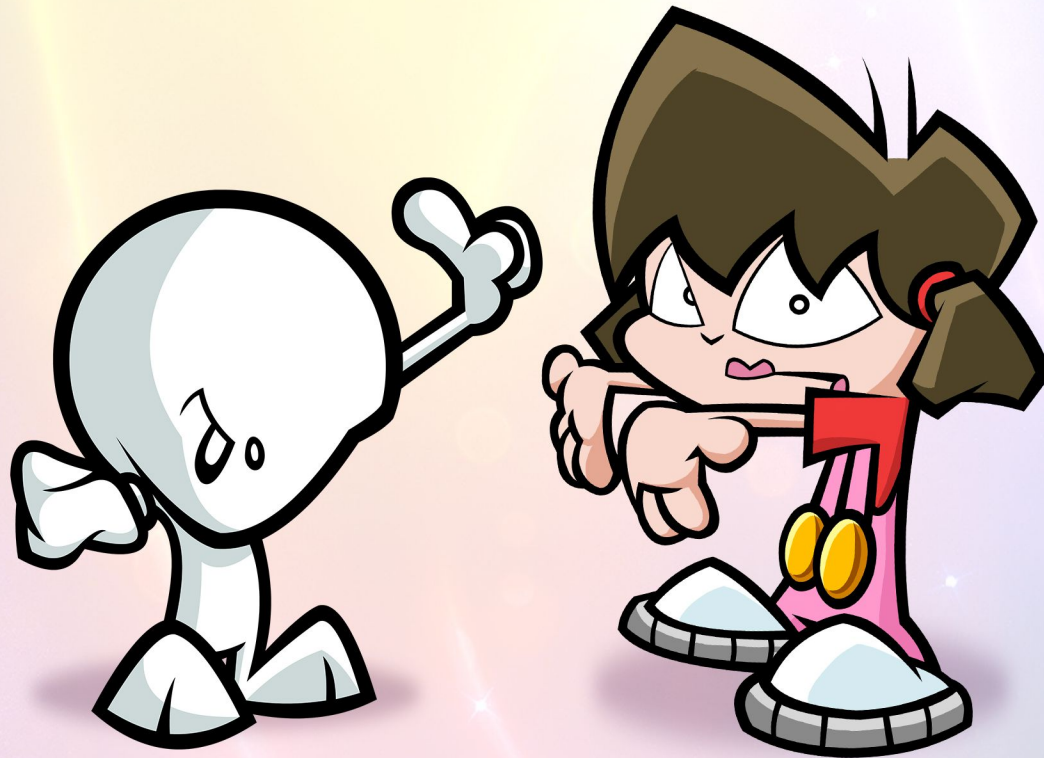


But Merrin quickly finds that she and Spork have a lot in common. They're the exact same age (although their life cycle is a little different). They both love science. And Spork is just as imaginative as she is. Even better, when Merrin has an over-the-top idea, Spork has the technology to make it happen. If she wants an energy shield for dodgeball, he can absolutely build it.

Spork is a data entry assistant on his home planet, so this is major fun in contrast. He's inspired by Merrin's unwavering belief in herself, and bringing these plans to life causes the two to bond like sub-atomic particles. Spork becomes the one thing Merrin didn't know she was missing - a best friend.

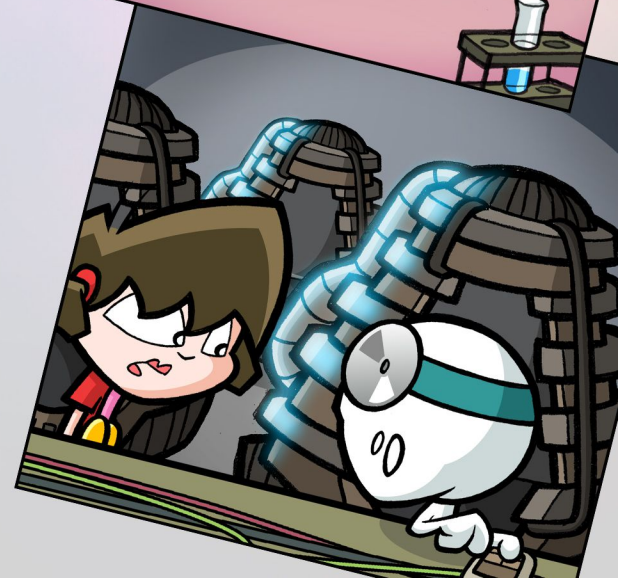
And it works both ways. Because he's a massive geek, Spork's confidence is definitely not what it could be. Merrin is determined to teach Spork how to stand up for himself and not be such a pushover. Feeling good about helping someone isn't something Merrin experiences often, and she thinks it's awesome.





SPORK is nerdy alien from Eon Nimbus, one of the nerdiest planets in the galaxy. He's endlessly curious, and is using his time on Earth to conduct all kinds of field tests and paradox theories in his makeshift lab. No one understands any of it, but it looks cool.

Spork idolizes Merrin, as she embodies all the things he lacks. He has little confidence, is awkward in public, and second guesses himself constantly. Emboldened by Merrin's influence, he is twice as brave with her around, and solving the problems Merrin creates makes Spork feel like a pretty cool guy. Spork was used a humdrum existence on his home planet, now he's excited about everything.

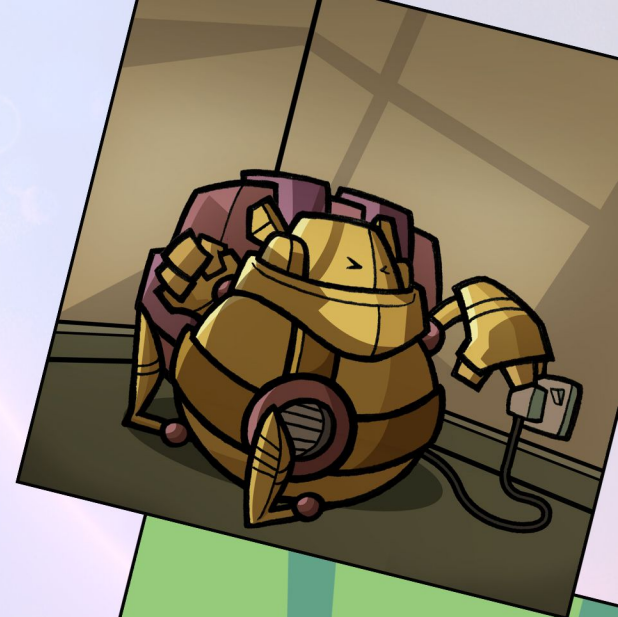


HYDRAULIC is Spork's security droid, and much less enthusiastic about all this science nonsense. He doesn't want to get dragged into Merrin and Spork's schemes unless he absolutely has to. Built like a construction digger with limbs, he's programmed to protect Spork above all else. This can put him at odds with Merrin, who wants Spork to live a little, and Dale, who just wants Spork's attention.

With no imagination (yet - Spork is working on it), he takes the sensible, safety-conscious approach to everything. He's the older brother who has to keep everyone out of trouble. He also has different robotic modes depending on the situation: Defense mode; Retrieval mode; and Do Not Disturb mode

DALE, however, is quite a handful. He's a little shellfish creature who was created during one of Spork's experiments. Being a new lifeform really bothers Dale, and boy does he let everybody know it. He wants to fit in, but goes about it in all the wrong ways. He'll blow his nose on a tablecloth, then give you a hug for no reason. If he was to throw a pizza party, he'd eat all the pizza before people show up. That's just how he is.

This lack of self control means Dale can't help but be the life of the party. He's never serious, has difficulty sticking to the rules, and is in constant trouble. He's like a toddler that acts out just to get noticed. Infuriating, but impossible to stay mad at.



GRANPA now finds himself juggling hiding aliens in the house with looking after his granddaughter, like a big masculine Nanny. Merrin thinks he's weird, and way too strict, but will eventually learn to be amazed by him. His past is filled with jaw-dropping events and characters from all across the galaxy, all of which he keeps to himself. (He doesn't say it, but he likes having Spork around to remind him of this fact.)

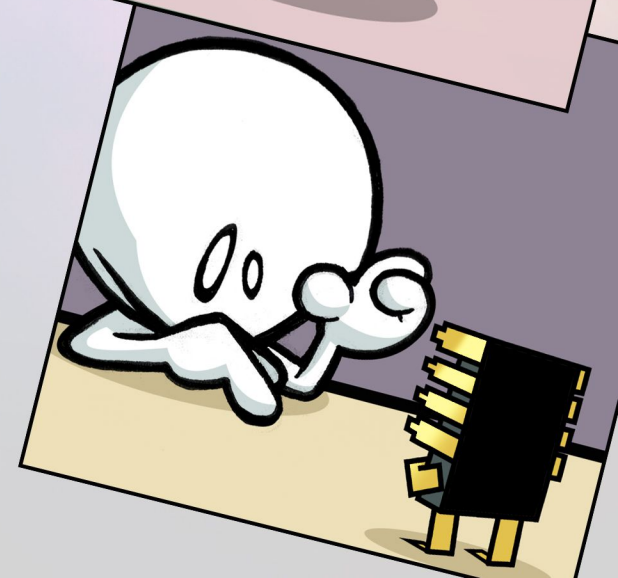
It's a long way from 'crashlanding' through teleport gates. After all his adventures, getting relegated to packing school lunches is quite a step down. Except it's just what he needs.

Merrin's energy keeps him on his toes, and he's working with Spork on upgrading an old ice-cream truck with all sorts of space-age tech. The rest of the time he's impatient, opinionated, and fails to get along with most people. Except Mr. Gubbins. They have a super close friendship from their adventuring days, and it's really very cute.



MR. GUBBINS is a sentient microchip who helps out Granpa around the house. He's always ready to serve and never lets his fears hold him back. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of the galaxy, but is now mainly used to remind Granpa where he left his glasses. He is incredibly shy and curls up into a little ball when under pressure.

You wouldn't know it, but Mr. Gubbins has been part of many fantastic journeys to other planets, right at Granpa's side. He has the holographic imagery to prove it. He's been through epic battles and wars. Now he sleeps in a little compartment inside Merrin's PC.



Merrin's parents, Lakshmi and Jeremy, are remarkably unfazed by all this. They're both engineers where the Teleport Gates are based, so they're familiar with planetary teleportation. (But even they have no idea about Granpa's exploits.)

LAKSHMI ATKINSON is a super-smart physics engineer, who met her husband while working at the Quantum Propulsion Facility. She is an ace in her field and is the breadwinner of the house. She always makes time for Merrin.

Lakshmi is of Indian descent, born in America. She likes greasy diner food and Van Halen. She was a seriously nerdy kid, but blossomed later in life when she realized that nobody else knows what they're doing either. Her job will eventually put her in great danger.



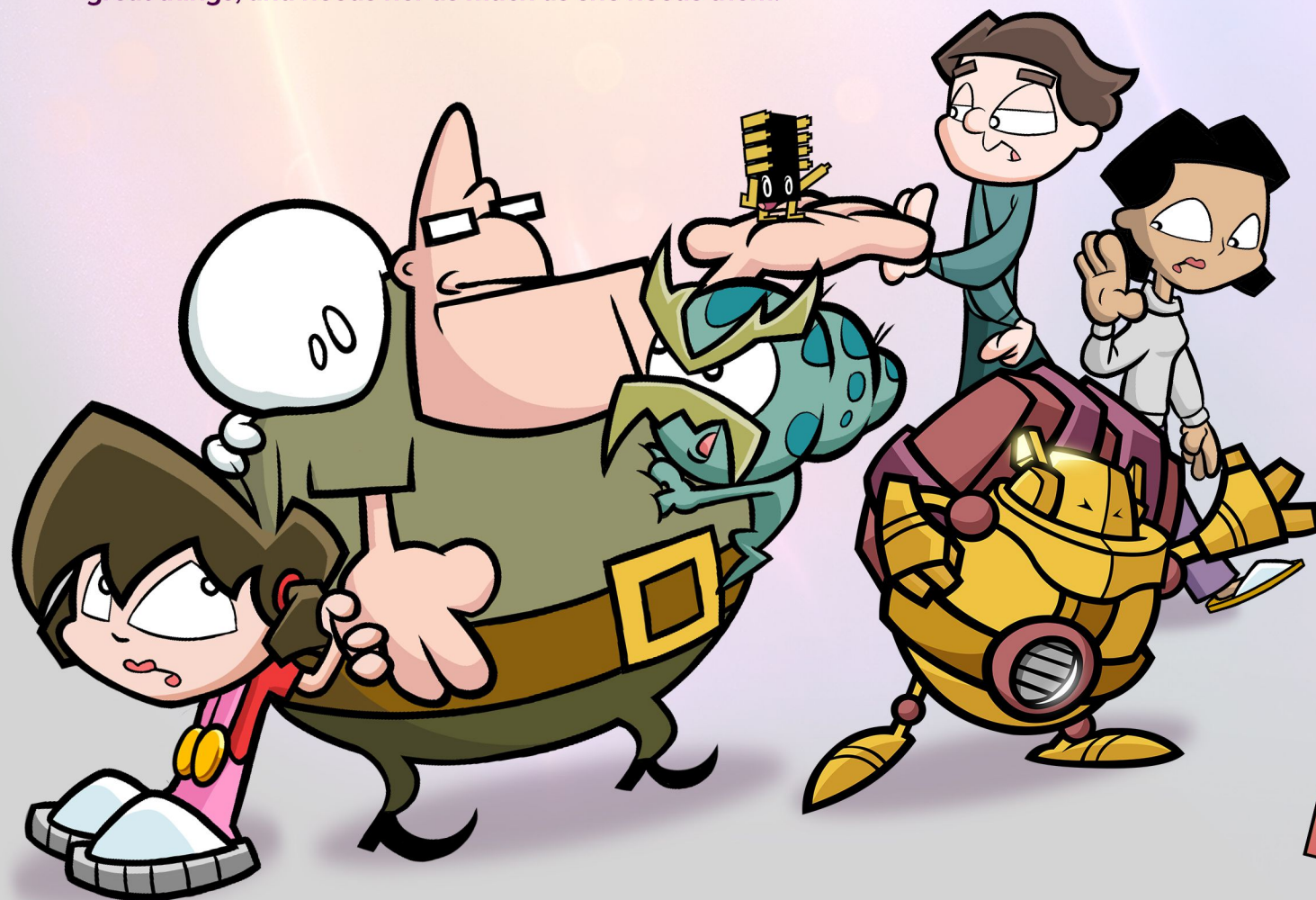
JEREMY ATKINSON is a very clever and calm dude. He also works as an engineer, specializing in magnetization. Merrin loves how her Dad can make technical things sound interesting. He has a very caring nature, and loves to make fun of himself.

He writes poetry, collects pantone color swatches for a hobby, and does pilates at home. He always carries a horseshoe magnet on his keychain, which he believes brings him good luck. It won't.

Above all, Merrin's parents want her to know they've welcomed Spork and the others into their house for as long as necessary, and to treat them as a normal part of the family. As normal as possible, anyway.

And Merrin is discovering things are way more fun with people around. She's learning to get along, listen to others, and help out.

She may have lost her "only child" status, but she's gained a robo-sibling, a shellfish baby brother, a fascinating grandfather, and an amazing best friend. Merrin is part of a very odd family, but one who shares her ambition to do great things, and needs her as much as she needs them.



EPISODES

THE DAWN OF DALE

Merrin's encouragement leads to a heavy responsibility for Spork

Merrin is frustrated that her sea monkeys are taking ages to hatch, so Spork has invented 'Evolution Juice', a beaker of which will evolve a lifeform 200 million years in a day. Granpa overhears the scheme and forbids it, but Merrin encourages Spork to add the solution behind his back.

The next day, Spork is in a panic at the breakfast table. The experiment worked. He's holding a little blue larva wrapped in swaddling, demanding to be fed. He has to feed it, burp it, and rock it back to sleep every two hours. Merrin wishes him good luck and heads off to school. Spork is left with his new responsibility.

When Merrin returns, she sees the creature has taken over Spork's life. He's exhausted. He's run out of things to feed it and it's still wailing. He hands the bundle to Merrin and finally the little blue larva settles down. It's kind of cute. Spork asks Merrin - what is he going to do?!

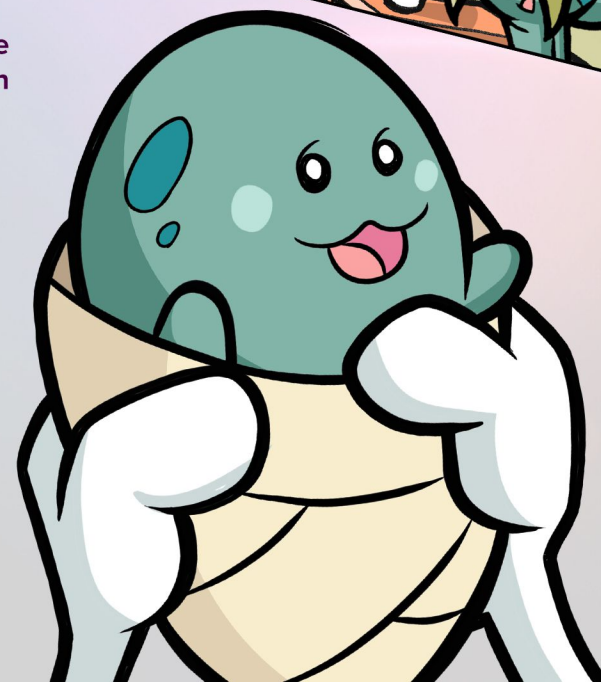
Merrin feels bad, this was her idea after all. She thinks a little more 'Evolution Juice' might help it grow faster. Once an adult, it can look after itself. Spork eventually agrees and they leave it to work overnight. In the morning, a fully grown blue crustacean introduces himself as Dale Brinehoven.

Dale asks if this is his house, and if this is his family. Spork says no, and awkwardly tries to explain the situation. Dale is heartbroken. He guesses he's not wanted after all. He packs everything he owns (one pacifier) into nap sack and sets out to leave.

Merrin and Spork can't let that happen. They rush after Dale and tell him he can live under the stairs. He agrees to this. They attempt to sneak Dale back inside, but are caught red-handed by Granpa. He's not impressed by their reckless behavior. They plead for help, just as Merrin's parents arrive home. With time running out, Granpa makes the surprise decision to cover for Merrin and Spork. He introduces her parents to Dale - another "visitor" stranded on Earth, who'll be living with them until the Teleport Gates re-open. The family give Dale a group hug. Spork and Merrin are relieved.

Dale is overjoyed, and heads upstairs immediately. "Which is my room? It needs to be west-facing. Pirate-themed would be preferable. And when is breakfast served?"

The scene freezes and Merrin closes a photo album over the image. "That was a month ago," she explains. "And believe me, my family has only gotten weirder."



EPISODES

BUN RUN

Spork panics when his careful planning goes wrong

The family is on a last minute shopping trip with Granpa, who is hunting for hot dog buns in a huge supermarket.

In the bread aisle, the gang watch in horror as the last packet of buns is picked up by another shopper. Hydraulic goes into "Retrieval Mode", deploying clamps and nets, but Spork pulls him back. Relax - he had planned ahead for this exact situation. Spork produces a handheld Replicator device. If they can get close to those buns, he'll scan them on a molecular level and make a copy.

Granpa moves alongside the shopper, making small talk about organic fruit, while Spork climbs into the other cart. He dives under the shopping and communicates over an intercom. Meanwhile, the shopper gets weirded out by Granpa's conversation, and heads to the checkout. Merrin gulps as Spork is wheeled away.

She tells Spork the situation has escalated, that he's got to get out of there! Spork is flustered. He didn't plan for this. Merrin tells him to improvise - it's now or never. She knows he can think of something. He *has* to.

The group share a look of concern as the shopping cart heads for the exit. Suddenly, there's a flash of light. When it fades out, it's apparent that every single product in the store is suddenly hot dog buns. And all the shoppers are copies of Merrin and the gang. Spork has replicated the entire store!

He clammers out of the cart and joins the others as they make their way outside. But through the entrance is another store, an exact mirror image of this one. They'll never get out.

As things descend into continual mirror images of themselves, Merrin asks Spork what to do. The others panic, as copies surround them and are moving in. Spork, frozen in terror, hears another Spork say he "always has a plan" and is jolted back into action. Of course! The Replicator emergency plan. "In case of malfunction, remove batteries." He does so, just as the group of copies descend on them.

In an instant, the store is back to normal. It's over. Spork has one final plan - throw the device in the garbage.



EPISODES

THE DISHES

Merrin and Spork find out that science isn't the quickest way to do chores

Granpa needs to work on his ice cream truck, so asks Merrin to help with the dishes while he's in the garage. She notices they're out of dishwasher tablets. Rather than do them by hand, Merrin thinks of the next best thing - get Spork to develop a liquid that uses nanobots to clean surfaces. Obviously.

They retreat to his workshop and Merrin supervises, until they disagree on how much free will to give the nanotechnology. Hydraulic warns her it could get out of hand, but Merrin is confident she knows what she's doing. Wearing goggles, Merrin tests out a drop of the liquid on a sinkful of dishes. Nothing. So she adds another generous glug. Then, they hear a rumble. The sink erupts with a white foaming Nano-blob - a bubble monster made of suds. Everybody leaps back, while the Nano-blob slithers out of the door to freedom.

The Nano-blob cleans all it touches, right down to the metal. Spork explains that its primary instinct is to get that sparkling shine on everything, and it will never stop. Well, not on Merrin's watch! She snaps on some rubber gloves. She created this mess - now it's time to clean it up.

As the Nano-blob aggressively washes the neighborhood, Spork and Merrin set a trap. A line of dirty plates runs from the street, to the front door, and straight into their dishwasher. Granpa is working under his truck, oblivious to the commotion. Merrin gets the Nano-blob's attention by waving a plate in the air. The soap monster roars into action, and chases Merrin inside the house. Hydraulic and Dale help guide the mass into the kitchen, where Merrin faces it in front of the dishwasher. She orders the beast to stand down, and the Nano-blob sinks back - for a moment.

That's enough time to give the signal. Spork throws a dirty cup in the dishwasher. The Nano-blob pounces! Merrin dives out of the way at the last second, and Spork slams the dishwasher door shut. He switches it to **HOT WASH** just as Granpa comes back in.

Granpa sees the sparkling kitchen. Merrin and Spork are soaking wet and covered in bubbles. The dishwasher is rumbling away. Merrin explains it's the only way to take care of the stubborn stuff. Science might not be easier, but it's super fun.



EPISODES

OUTDOORS

Merrin helps Spork overcome his reliance on technology

Merrin is keen to show Spork the great outdoors, and has asked Granpa to take them on her favorite hike. The trip begins with Dale complaining about how far they have to walk, even though they're not out of the parking area. Once in the open air, Spork is overwhelmed at the greenery and rolling fields. It's something he's never experienced before, and he's very uncomfortable. To him, there are things that sting, bite or irritate all around.

Spork decides to wear a VR suit and use a robotic walker to get around. He tracks their position with GPS and uses an augmented reality visor to overlay the world with warnings. Merrin gives Spork a pep talk about overcoming his reliance on technology. They are going on a hike to the top of that outcrop, with no gadgets allowed. Spork wonders how he will monitor his biometrics? Merrin tells him he has to stop looking at numbers, and just experience the moment.

They set off. Merrin proudly identifies the things around them - an ant hill, a patch of bluebells, a Monarch butterfly, a hummingbird's nest. Dale eats the butterfly when no one's watching.

Spork is extremely nervous and asks to turn back. Dale agrees, he wants to go home and watch wrestling. Merrin won't hear a word of it. Outdoors is awesome. They start to get louder as the disagreement builds, until Granpa "shushes" them to be quiet.

Up ahead, blocking their path, is a stag with a large set of antlers. The majestic creature tilts its head and scratches at the ground. The group quickly hide behind bushes and rocks - all except Spork, who's frozen in place. Merrin whispers at him to do something. Spork snaps out of it. He slowly steps forward. Spork puts his hand on the animal's forehead, and they share a moment. Then, the stag moves aside, and bounds off into a wooded area. Spork is amazed. Merrin can't believe that just happened.

They reach the top of the outcrop. It's covered in a circle of red poppies, and the view of the valley below is breathtaking. They stand there and take it all in. Spork gets it now - nature is real and it's beautiful. He thanks Merrin for showing it to him. Merrin wishes she had a digital camera.



FAQ WITH MR. GUBBINS



Important stuff to know about the mythology of the show, courtesy of Granpa's helpful assistant, Mr. Gubbins.

Who knows about these aliens?

Only the staff at the Teleport Gate Facility know about it. For them it's just part of the job.

How long has Earth been in contact with other planets?

Since 1982!

Why are the gates shut?

A technical fault that will cost billions to fix. Much like the Large Hadron Collider that needed repairs after an error.

Are Spork and the gang wanted by the Government/FBI/UFO hunters, etc?

No, there's no conspiracy or cover up. Things are just kept behind the scenes, like the making of a movie.

Do the public know they exist?

The public have no idea about this stuff. No one thinks aliens are real.

Could Spork walk around without being captured?

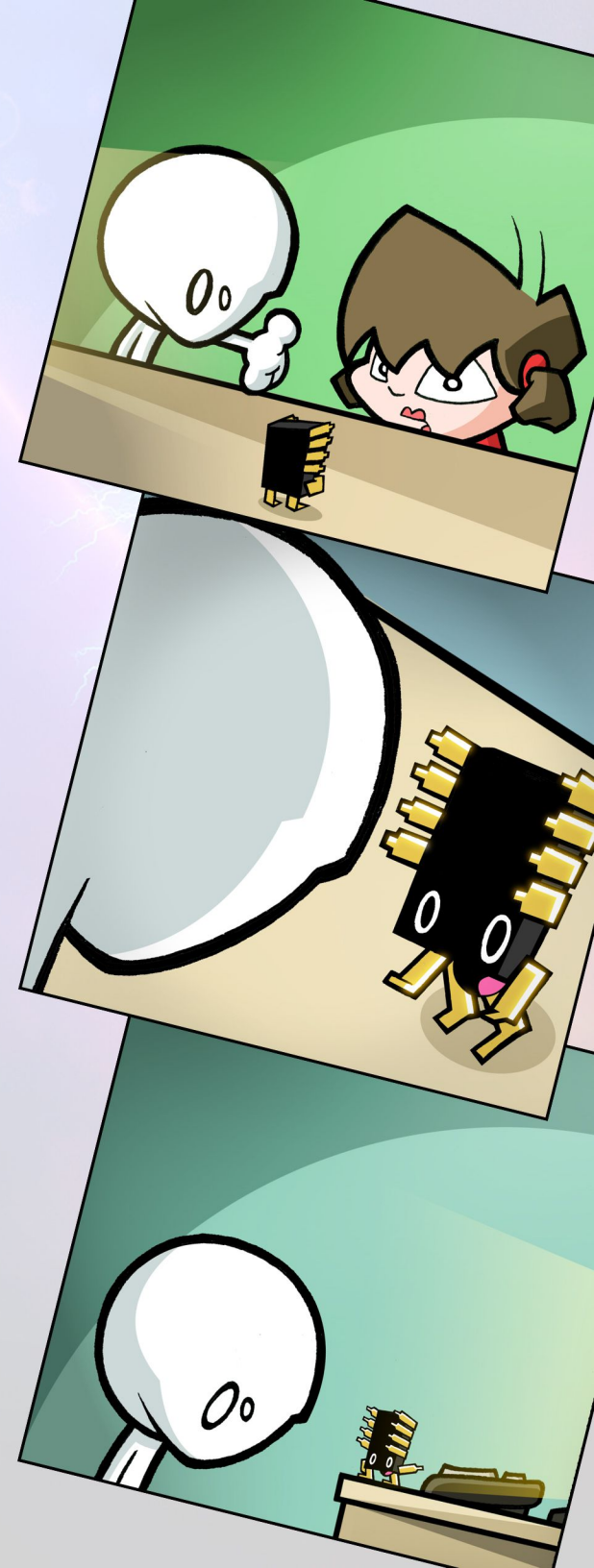
Yes, Spork and the others can go out and not be noticed. They move around as a family, and Merrin, Granpa, or Merrin's parents are the ones to interact with other people.

Could Spork and the others fly back home in a spaceship?

Yes, if they had one, which they don't. But it would take a long, long time.

Is Granpa's backstory important?

Not at first. It will become more important as time goes on.

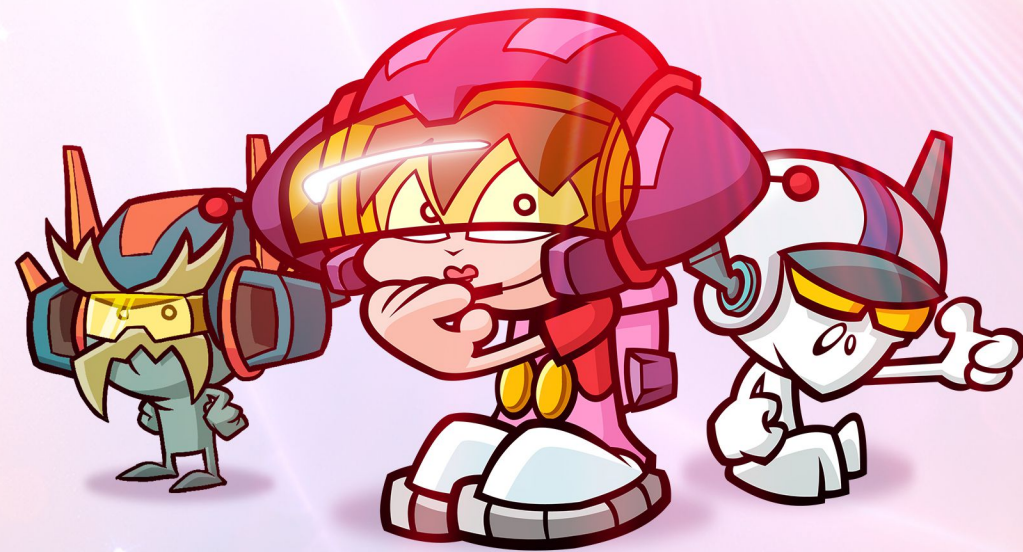


BACKSTORY

Before Granpa moved everyone into Merrin's house, he was Major Hank Atkinson, a swashbuckling space adventurer. It was his job to travel through the Teleport Gate Network to other planets and forge relationships with the leaders of other worlds. And he was the best.

With help from Mr. Gubbins, he was able to stop the Illumino Invasion, assist King Glarius in building the Solar Defense Beam, and make friends with a whole host of strange and fascinating alien cultures.

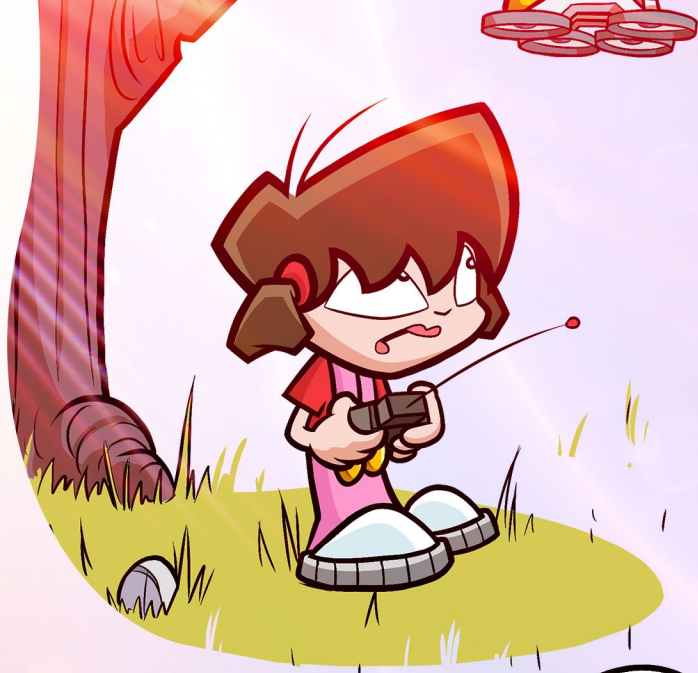
He can't tell anyone about this, of course. Especially not Merrin, who would think it's unbelievably cool. But his experience means he gets called up to help when there's an emergency, such as aliens stranded on Earth.



LOOKING AHEAD

Merrin's parents are working hard to fix the Teleport Gate Network, so that Spork and the others can return home. Unfortunately, it puts them in danger should anything go wrong. Hopefully they don't get teleported across the galaxy by accident, because that would mean Granpa would have to dust off his old equipment and try to rescue them.

And if Merrin came along, it might lead to adventures on other planets. Maybe Granpa's past and her future are somehow linked. No matter what happens, she'll always have Spork, Hydraulic and Dale by her side.



Crashlander™

THE CHILDHOOD
YOU ALWAYS
IMAGINED

