

## Short Story for STEM writing contest

I was preparing to be the first kid to launch a rover into space. It was a once in a lifetime chance. My family would get the money they needed and everything would be okay. Oh I forgot to introduce myself! Hi I'm Luna! Space is my life and this competition is everything I have ever wanted to do! I have been preparing for 3 years and so far I think I have the best rover! I named it THE SPACE KID 101. I got to a school called ACE. It stands for Amazing Career Education. I am 11 years old and got in at an early age. I have been teased many times though. Since I am so young people think that I am supposed to be as smart as the other kids my age but I am not. I am smarter, not to brag, I just think that where I am now is where I needed to be a while ago. Mr. Greg, my old math teacher, had a talk with my parents. I used to go to a public school because my parents couldn't afford a private school. I had to wake up at 5:00 because my school was so far away. Mr. Greg changed that. He told my parents that I was so good at math and science that I was offered a free education at a private school in Canada. It was very far from home but it was a boarding school so I would be able to stay there. My parents agreed and I have been here for 3 years and this is my 4th. I spend the summer with my parents and younger brother but other than that I am taking advanced Science, Math, Engineering, and Technology classes. Now I need to go work on my rover in the lab

In the lab: Luna could hear the sound of metal clanging on metal, swishing liquids, the wind from the testing room, and lots of footsteps. As Luna walked in everything went suddenly quiet and still.

"Hello everybody!" said Luna.

"What do you want, baby?" said a mean 17 year old girl. Her name was Alice and all the kids in the school like her. You could say she was the most popular kid in the school. Luna ignores the comment and says

"Oh, I am just coming in to work on my rover."

"You should quit, kid. You have no chance of winning." an 8th grade boy says.

“Shut up!” say a voice from the back of the lab. It was Val a pretty 16 year old girl. Everyone is startled and looks around.

“Oh it's Val. I'll deal with you later.” Alice says addressing Val. Luna tries to get into the room but Alice blocks her.

“You don't need to come in here! Go back to the dump, where you belong!” Alice says coldly. Luna doesn't want a fight so she leaves. Luna goes back up to her room and plops down on her bed. As she plops down she hits something hard and something squishy. She pulls off the covers and a wretched smell fills the room. All of the leftover lunch food had been dumped onto her bed.

“Noooooooooooo!” She moans. She tries desperately to clean off her bed but it was no use. The sheets were stained and her room was going to smell like rotten eggs. Luna lays down on the floor instead and looks at the ceiling. She thinks about her family. She thinks about how the prize money for the competition will help her parents pay bills and how everything would be better. She sat up suddenly as a thought came to her. She didn't need to be in the lab to work on her rover. She just needed some pieces and parts and her notebook. That was the most important thing, her **notebook**, it contained everything she needed to build her rover. All the plans, math, and parts that she would need were written inside that notebook. She searched the closet, it wasn't there.

“Where could it be?!” She exclaimed! “I need that notebook!” Then a horrible thought entered her mind. Alice and her “partner”, the 8th grade boy named Josh had not been letting anyone see their rover! What if they had her notebook and were using it! If they were, they were cheating and would be disqualified but she had no proof!

“I cannot let this happen.” She said determinately. Suddenly there was a loud scraping noise and a crash from down in the lab. The sudden noise startles Luna then another horrible though comes to her head. She runs as fast as she can down a flight of stairs and into the lab. She looks around frantically but her rover is nowhere in sight. Then she remembers what Alice had said: (Recap) “Go back to the dump where you belong!” Luna runs out of the lab. On her way she grabs some boots, gloves, and a raincoat. “I will need these so that I don't get too dirty.” She thought. She put them on outside and ran to the dumpster. There she found what was

left of her rover. There were chunks of metal, wet circuits, and snapped wires. Luna grabbed all that she could carry and ran back into the lab. She put it all down on the table and looked around. Everyone was staring at her, they were whispering to each other. Suddenly Alice and Josh burst into the room. They stared smugly at Luna.

“Where’s your rover Luna?” Alice asked sarcastically.

“Ummm..... Well....I..... it is right here, or, what’s left of it.” Luna stammered.

“I guess we can count you out of the competition! Not that we thought you were a threat at all.” Alice said, looking very happy with herself for some reason.

“Yeah you were only an annoying fly to us.” Josh added. Both of them looked at each other and then started to laugh.

“I think you should quit now,” Alice says cruelly. “There is no way you can rebuild your rover in time.”

Two nights later:

Luna was up late working on her rover. She tried to remember how to build it but she couldn’t remember what the equations were, what wires went where, and what fraction of liquid she needed. Luna even forgot what shapes to cut out in metal to make the rover’s outer body shape.

“OMG!” Moaned Luna “I will never be able to finish this in time for the competition! I need my notebook. Maybe Alice is right, I should quit. I never really even had a chance did I.” Luna let those mean words sink in then something rang out in her head. It was something her mother said that summer and many times before.

“Luna, you have been gifted, don’t let people tell you otherwise. You are you. Never give up.”

Luna was suddenly filled with new ideas, better ideas! She pulled out a sheet of paper and began to draw.

The next day at the lab Alice, again, stopped Luna from entering.

“Given up yet, stupid?” She asked.

“No not yet.” Luna replied coolly.

“But.... What?.... Well you’re still not allowed in the lab.” Alice was surprised by Luna’s reply and Luna knew it.

“Oh I don’t need to be in the lab, “Luna says “I just need to get up stairs. Oh and I if you need some parts the dumpster is a great place to look.”

“I... I am never going to search in the dump! How dare you say such a thing!” Then Alice slams the door. Luna skips up the stairs, knowing that she may still have a chance at winning.

Tuesday, the Following Week:

Whizzzzzzzzzz, Swoosh, Clang Clang. All these sounds could be heard from the lab but also from Luna’s room. Every night she went downstairs, into the lab to collect the material she would need for her rover that day. She did this to avoid Alice, Josh, and all the other mean kids. She would work on her rover upstairs. She had made more than half her room a “science lab.” She worked day and night to build her rover. The bad thing was she kept falling asleep during class....

“Luna Crogret!” Wake-up this minute! My class is not nap time!” Mrs. McAll called one evening during her Science class.

“Oh! I am so sorry Mrs. McAll! I didn’t mean to fall asleep! I am just so tired.” As she said this, Luna started to drift off again.

“Well since it seems you can’t handle this go back up to your room and nap!” Mrs. McAll said fiercely.

“Yes Ma’am. I will, I am very, very sorry.” Luna got up and slowly walked out of the classroom. When she got upstairs she did not take a nap, she worked harder than ever on her rover.

Day of the competition:

“Hello Students! Today we have our Space Rover competition!!!” The announcer shouted into the microphone. It was loud, and crowded in the auditorium. There were people from all over the United States. Suddenly Luna saw someone out of the corner of her eye.

“Mom, Dad!” Luna shouted.

“Hello honey!” Luna’s dad said in a deep kind voice.

“We came to see you in the competition! How's it going so far?”

“Well we haven’t started but I think I can win!” was Luna’s reply.

“Try not to get your hopes up but we’re rooting for you!” Luna ran back to her table. It contained her rover, THE SPACE KID ROVER 2.0, and Alice’s rover. She was not sure what the name of their rover was but she did not really care.

“Are all teams ready to launch?” the announcer asked.

“YES!” Everyone shouted in unison. There were four judges, they each judged a different part of the rover, Science, Engineering, Math, and Technology. Each person/team had to make a poster board for the competition, this way the judges could learn a little more from that. All the teams or singles, in Luna’s case, brought their rovers outside and set them up on a platform with their number. Luna was number 9. She was nervous, very nervous, very VERY nervous. As Luna finished setting up her rover the announcer shouted,

“All teams will race to get their rovers to the moon first. We want a nice clean landing,” the announcer stopped to listen to one of the judges. “And skillful engineering and technology! After we launch, the judges will come around, look at your poster board and ask you some questions. Are we ready!” the announcer said this not as a question but more just excitement. “All right let’s launch on the count of three!” Everyone in the crowd cheered and joined in.

“1, 2, 3!!!” There was a loud sound as 30 different motors and engines started up. Then there was a blast and the rovers took off! Each one was very fast but Luna estimated that hers would reach the moon in about 3 hours time, hopefully before the others. As the judges walked up to my table, I felt very unsure. “What if I can’t convince them! What if they think I’m too young! What if they think I am horrible!” as all these thoughts ran through her head, one of the judges said something.

“Hello, I am Mrs. Loopwing, and you are....” she trails off then sees the name tag Luna pinned to her shirt. “Luna! What a pretty name!”

“This rover looks amazing!” said a deep gruff voice. It was another judge, his name was Mr. Humer.

“You're right John! Nothing I have seen so far looks this good!” Mrs. Addy, a bright young woman.

“How old are you?” asked the last judge. Luna hadn't noticed him before because he was so quiet.

“Ummm... I.... I am eleven.” she said quietly. All the judges looked at her in amazement.

“I am sorry but we have to move on,” said Mrs. Loopwing, looking at her watch. “But in my opinion you have a really, really good chance of winning.”

All the judges nodded their heads in agreement. As they walked away, all the doubts Luna had suddenly disappeared.

4 hours later:

“All rovers have landed!” the announcer shouts. “It is time for the judges to make their decision!” There was a moment of silence as the judges consulted their notes. One judge, Mrs. Addy walks up and hands the announcer a piece of paper.

“In third place we have..... THE SKY RULER! Tui M. and Shannon P. made this rover!” There were shouts of excitement and lots of applause. “In second place we have..... THE ALICE MOON ROVER! Made by Alice U. and Josh B.” There were more shouts and clapping. “And in first place we have..... THE SPACE KID ROVER! Luna R. made this rover.” There was a shocked silence then everyone in the crowd clapped and cheered! Luna ran up to her parents and hugged them.

“That was amazing, we are so proud of you!” both her parents said at the same time.

“I did it for you!” Luna says feeling really proud and happy! “And now everything will be okay!”

Later:

Luna hears footsteps and sees the girl named Val walking up the stairs. “Great Job!” she says kindly. Then she hands Luna something. It was her notebook! Luna was confused. “I found this in Alice’s bag.” she said. “I thought you might want it.” Luna takes the notebook then gives Val a kind smile.

“Thank you!”

## **THE END!!!**

This story is in the future, about a girl whose family needs money and a love for space. It includes each STEM activity, kindness, and staying strong.