Bang! All the lights on the console exploded, creating sparks like a supernova.

The cockpit became silent and dark.

“What did you do?” asked Iron Man.

“I pressed that yellow button,” confessed Hogarth miserably, “the one the mayor told us not to.”

It had been a week since the mayor of Little Hangleton had sent the Iron Man and Hogarth into space on a rocket to fight the Space Beast. The Iron Man and Hogarth had successfully battled this other worldly creature and were on their way back home. Unfortunately, Hogarth has now pressed the one button the mayor had warned them not to.

“You fool! The Mayor told you not to do that. Now what are we going to do?” bawled Iron Man furiously.

“I don’t know,” sobbed Hogarth. “Nothing’s working anymore. How are we going to get home?”

“We can’t go home. Not without the fuel and definitely not now you’ve broken the engine!” Iron Man spat.

“What’s that?” interrupted Hogarth, peering out of the cockpit window. “I’ve never seen a BLUE planet before.

“What are you on about now? There are no blue planets!” replied Iron Man, exasperated.

He looked out at the small revolving sphere with just one single small moon slowly orbiting it and gasped, “Where are we? This isn’t our Solar system! You must have made us travel through time as well as space!”

The landing module bumped heavily. The little boy and his giant metal companion, quickly jumped out of the landing module onto the grassy surface of the unknown planet and looked around them. What was this place? Why was it so eye catching? Curling around thick spiraling branches were constricting vines, which braced and creaked. Dangling down from the layer of moss, vast, bold leaves flickered like church candle flames in breeze. Sweet scented pollen drifted through the archways created by the curving branches which created halos of light above and below. Behind them, the rocket quietly imploded, leaving not a trace. They were stranded! They looked at each other and shrugged, knowing any attempt at saving the vessel was futile.

Then, Iron Man noticed a large structure built upon a tree with some transparent areas and decided to take a closer look. This strange building was made from a silver birch tree, like a snake shedding its skin, the silver, crumbling bark was flaking from the trunk. The tree was so old that the overgrown roots spread for miles under the ground, like a spider’s web encompassing the earth. The Iron Man assisted Hogarth in his attempts to climb the tree and get a closer look. Hogarth wiggled his fingers through a small opening and pushed it until there was a big enough gap for his small, thin body, to fit through. It was still a tight fit, but he found that by wiggling, he could slip through more easily. Inside, they found branches and twigs that had been manipulated to form a grand staircase with a vast amount of ornately decorated rooms.

While Iron Man was busy wandering through each one, Hogarth busied himself exploring the first room. Suddenly, he noticed a portal hanging on the wall. He shivered with excitement, without a word, he stepped up onto a small green structure and slipped through the portal and back Home, leaving his friend behind. When Iron Man realised what Hogarth had done, he smashed the wall of the portal, making the small hole much larger. He leapt up and through the portal, wondering how Hogarth was going to explain to the mayor that although they had successfully defeated the space monster they had also destroyed the only rocket the small village of Little Hangleton could ever hope to afford.

When he arrived, Iron Man was astonished to witness Hogarth being congratulated by the Mayor. “What a brave young boy you are, Hogarth. You’ve made the entire village and I so proud!” So even though it was he, Iron Man, who had done all the hard work and defeated the Space Beast, it was Hogarth who was being rewarded. Iron Man could not believe it! He sulked off to the scrap-metal yard to comfort himself with a tasty pile of metal vowing never to help young Hogarth again.