

# THE INTERGALACTIC COLLECTION OF KNOWLEDGE AND RECORDS

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**THE SKY, IF** one could call it that, was indigo that morning, broken up by swaths of glittering red, blue, and orange stars. The velvet couch was covered in heavy blankets, and beside it the only illuminated lamp in the building gave off a soft, golden glow. The library was a great rectangular building, each wall lined from floor to ceiling with books, and the ceiling was made of glass so at all hours one could see the starlight and great yellow sun passing overhead. On the couch sat two boys, each with his nose in a book, and a small black cat. Milo, the smaller of the two, with messy blond hair and sea-green eyes, looked up at the sky once more.

INDIGO  
IS VERY  
DARK  
BLUE.





“There’ve been a lot of comets recently, haven’t there, Dez?” he remarked as another zipped past them.

Desmund briefly glanced upward, then returned his gaze to his book. “Yes.”

Milo frowned and scratched the cat under its chin. His book, *The Novice’s Guide to Beekeeping*, felt heavy in his hands. He selected another—*Paranormal Occurrences and Theories*—and opened it to page 71, where he’d left off the previous day. After several minutes of reading, he grew tired of this book as well. He glanced at his pile: *The Curious Lives of Martians*, *The Care and Keeping of Native English Flora*, *Artifacts from the Lost City of Hork*, along with a large number in languages one can’t even describe using Earthling writing characters. For once, Milo just didn’t feel like reading. So he stood up, shedding his soft blanket shawl, and stretched.

“I’m going to put on some tea,” he announced. The cat looked up, while Desmond carried on with his work in silence. Without further comment, the younger boy wandered off to the kitchen in the rear of the building, where their living quarters were located.

Then came the knock upon the door.

Milo started the kettle and poked his head around the corner, watching as Dez looked up from his book, pushed his glasses up on his nose with one slender finger, and stood. Desmond began to mumble to himself as he shuffled to the grand front door, a physics book tucked under his arm. Milo watched him till he went down the stairs and disappeared, then returned to making tea. He set up a tray with a fine little pot and two matching cups, then fished in the cupboard for the tin of tea leaves, which he carefully scooped into the pot. The cat wandered



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