

## **Dumpling and the Cosmic Wind**

*Picture by Silver Sleightholme (age 10), words by Philip Reeve*

Back when everything was brand new, a giant blue space unicorn galloped among the stars. His name was Dumpling Von Twinklehorn, and he was very lonely, since he was the only giant blue space unicorn in existence (as far as he could tell). In fact, he seemed to be the only living thing of any sort. Everything was so new back then that there were only stars, shining their beams across the sky like lighthouses, and, here and there, a big, empty planet.

One day Dumpling galloped past a planet that looked particularly pretty. It had red continents and yellow oceans, and it reminded Dumpling a bit of rhubarb and custard (which was odd, because rhubarb hadn't been invented yet, and nor had custard). It definitely looked tasty, though, so he took a big bite, and then another. 'Hmm, just a bit more,' he thought to himself. 'Mustn't be greedy,' he mumbled, chomping another continent...

Before he knew it, Dumpling had eaten the whole planet, and his tummy felt awfully strange. He laid down among the stars for a snooze, but he could not get comfortable - he was too full, and the rumbling noises coming from his tum were too loud. *Brrmmmb-bbmmggmm*, they went, and also *Rmmmbgbmrmmm*. At last Dumpling stood up, lifted his tail, and did an enormous fart. *THWAAAARRRRPPP* it went. It was the loudest noise that there had ever been. The stars all blinked in shock. But Dumpling's tummy felt better at once.

And when he looked behind him, he saw that something wonderful had happened. Where there had just been empty space there was now a bobbing, twirling cloud of moons and planets. They glittered like jewels in the light of the young stars, and on lots of them Dumpling could see animals and birds and people moving about. Some of them even had unicorns! "I have farted my own universe!" said Dumpling happily, as he settled down to watch. "I shall call it, 'The Unicorniverse'.

And he never felt lonely again.