

The Vortex

“I’m bored,” Zach complained.

Mom said, “Well, then go clean your room.”

“Fine,” Zach sighed. He started cleaning his room, reaching faaaaaaar under the desk to dust when... PHOOMPH! The duster strangely disappeared! “What just happened?!” Zach shrieked with terror. “And where’s the duster?!” He went farther in and saw a swirling yellow circle. “A vortex!” exclaimed Zach. PHOOMPH! He got sucked in! “At least I know where the duster went,” said Zach. “But where am I going...”

He landed. The only problem was that he landed with a splash. In an ocean. He spotted an island about one mile away. It took him all the effort and strength he had to swim there. It took him for what felt like an hour. It probably was! Eventually, he made it to shore. “*Holá*, man from the sea. My name is Lucas,” said a person in front of him.

“What – Who – Where – When – How...” Zach stammered.

“Welcome to the Cocos Islands,” Lucas said.

“But I live in Massachusetts!!!!” Zach gasped, horrified.

“Uh-oh. Not again.” Lucas rolled his eyes.

“Is there some other vortex that can get me back?” questioned Zach.

“Not that I know of,” said Lucas.

“I’ll go search.” Zach searched and searched and searched and searched and after half an hour he found a second vortex, this one green. He went through it and... PHOOMPH! He landed...in the middle of miles and miles of dry grasslands.

“*Sain uu*,” someone said. (That means “hello” in Mongolian.) “My name is Altan. Where do you come from?”

“Massachusetts. I just wish I landed there.” Zach said with frustration.

“Great. Just great – another lost –”

Zach ran off. He started searching, hoping to find a third vortex. He succeeded and hoped that this was the final vortex...but it was not. It brought him to Senegal.

“*Na nga def*,” someone said. (That means “hello” in Senegalese.) “My name is Oumar. Welcome to Senegal.”

“I CAN’T TAKE IT ANYMORE!!!!” Zach screamed. He started searching...AGAIN. He found a gray vortex behind a baobab tree. He desperately hoped it was the last one. He went through it and...PHOOMPH!

He was in his room. “Zach!” Mom exclaimed.

“Mom!” Zach exclaimed.

“I missed you so much!”

“I missed you even more!”

“Where have you been? Tell me everything!”

“Ok. So, I was dusting under the desk, and then the duster disappeared, and then...”

He told her everything you just read. When he was done...

“That’s great,” smiled Zach’s mom. “Now can you finish cleaning your room?”