*...in which we learn about traveling through space*

Alex was sitting on a bed and reading a book. Just a boy in a regular apartment of a regular city. There was nothing special about the situation at all, apart from a little detail: the book he was reading was written in a magic language. Alex still couldn't understand all the words, but he was trying. Next to him there was a smartphone with an electronic dictionary—Alex used it to find meanings of new words. Suddenly, a notification popped up on the screen. Alex checked it and froze in surprise. There was a message from the user "Novakid Magic Academy" saying: "We need help!"

It seemed like one of his friends had managed to send a message to the human world. But who? Alex didn't know. It wasn't what mattered, though. The important thing was that someone out there needed his help. Knowing this, he just couldn't stay idle. However, Alex also couldn't teleport to another world without notice. Should his parents and cat Bartholomeow find him absent from his room, they would start worrying. He had to find a solution. Alex got off his bed and walked out of the room, to see his mom and dad in front of the TV.

"Mo-o-om, da-a-ad, I'm going to go to sleep, okay?"

Mother put the video on pause.

"Why so early?" She asked in surprise.

"No reason... just feeling tired... And I need to be at school early tomorrow..."

"You aren't sick, I hope?" Alarmed, Alex's mother came closer and put her hand on his forehead.

"No, it's all right. Just want to sleep."

"Very well, sweetheart, have a good night," mother said and kissed his forehead.

"Goodnight, son," his father added, yawning. In fact, he also felt like falling asleep, bored with the show. "Good for you. The earlier you go to sleep, the earlier you get up! And the earlier you get up, the more you get done," his father concluded and yawned again.

Alex retreated to his room and closed the door. The mission began successfully. In order to avoid suspicions, Alex switched the light off. Travel in space and time is quite an adventure. Three rules needed to be observed:

1.  Hold the magic language dictionary in your hands.
2.  Think of the place you want to teleport to.
3.  Say the spell out loud.

Alex went to the center of his room, took his battered Magic Language dictionary in a blue cover (the electronic one didn't suit for relocation), closed his eyes, thought of the Novakid Magic Academy, made a deep breath and said:

"Teleport me!"

When Alex opened his eyes, it seemed like the spell didn't work. It was still dark around. The magic might have failed. Alex didn't dare move, though—at least he needed to wait for his eyes to get accustomed to the darkness, so that the outlines of the room could be seen. Then Alex heard a sound a few steps away from him. It sounded like someone was rustling book pages. At first, Alex thought that Bartholomeow managed to sneak into his room and climb onto the bookshelf. The cat liked sleeping next to the books, as if he knew how to read them. But no. It was the sound of someone actually turning a book's pages. And Bartholomeow definitely didn't know how to turn pages.

As soon as Alex's eyes accommodated to the dark, he looked around. It seemed that he was inside the Academy's library reading room. Right in front of him, someone was standing on a desk, looking through a book.

"Who can it be and why was I summoned here?" Alex pondered. "Anyway, I'm supposed to do something. Maybe I have to speak to the stranger," he finally decided.

But just as he opened his mouth to say the magic greeting that bound any creature who spoke the magic language introduce themselves, someone's paws grasped both his arms and two spells sounded as one:

"Glasswall."

"Silence."

At once, a glass wall appeared between Alex and the mystical creature looking through the book, while Alex felt that the muscles on his face froze. There was also some good news. Alex recognized those holding him as Luna and Astro—he met them a year ago. At that time, each of them represented their house during the Parade of Houses at the Novakid Magic Academy.

"We are going to tell you everything now, just don't be afraid and don't scream."

Alex nodded. No matter what was going on, his friends Luna and Astro were next to him, and they could be trusted.

Astro said:

"Speak."

Alex felt that his face muscles relaxed. He could speak again.

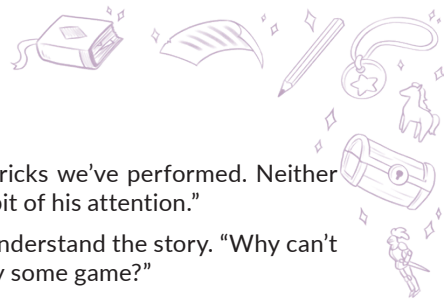"Why have you called me and what is going on here?"

Luna and Astro started speaking, interrupting each other.

"A gremlin showed up at the Academy today."

"No one knows where from and how, because ancient spells prohibit gremlins to enter the Academy."

"But he still showed up, and Professor Novus Wizword sent us to lure him to the guestroom. So that he couldn't do mischief at the Academy."

"We've been trying to distract him for quite a while now, but this gremlin doesn't pay us any attention. He just goes on looking through the book and doesn't seem to

be affected by any spells."

"That's right, he's not interested in any magic tricks we've performed. Neither the circus carrousel nor the false mirror got even a bit of his attention."

"Stop, stop," Alex interrupted. He still couldn't understand the story. "Why can't you just catch the gremlin? Why do you need to play some game?"

"Professor Novus Wizword said that gremlins are very skittish. So, the only way to catch them is to play with them."

"But he doesn't want to play our games!"

"Our magic seems to do nothing for him!"

Alex's friends constantly interrupted one another trying to tell the story.

"So that's why you called me?"

"Yes, exactly! You might be able to do something. We have already tried all cat and dog spells, now we need a human one."

"The magic language is the same for all," Alex objected.

"Yes, but the same word pronounced by different magicians can have different power!" Astro noted. Alex couldn't disagree.

Meanwhile, the gremlin kept digging into the book. He was rustling through its pages and muttering something unintelligible.

"Does he also know the magic language?" Alex asked.

"No, he can't even put two words together. Professor Novus Wizword said that gremlins can't be taught."

"Don't you think he might be reading that book now?" Alex asked.

Luna and Astro looked at the gremlin who was following the lines on the page with his finger.

"No... Hardly. He most likely smells something tasty on it," Astro assumed, shaking his head.

"Let's not be distracted by arguments," Luna interfered. "We need to lure him to the guestroom somehow."

"We could just make a trail of food from the library to the guestroom instead of using magic. The room is not that far," Astro suggested.

"Yes, but we can't guide him through the hall. He can get scared and run away any moment," Luna countered.

"What if we teleported him there?" Alex asked.

"Good idea. But for the teleportation spell to work, the gremlin needs to be right next to us. But he can get skittish and then all is lost," Astro said.

"So then we need to hide and lure him to us."

"But how can we do that?.."