



## The HUGE Adventures of Starlight and Moonshine

by Dave Hawkins

### Story Seven THE VERY BEGINNING

Lucy and her mother were in the car on their way back from the shops. "I'm really looking forward to making this special pie for Granddad's birthday," said Lucy, "but you mustn't say anything. I want it to be a surprise."

"Well," said her mother, "I don't see how you can keep it a secret. We're having the party at our house and Granddad will be there. He's bound to see us in the kitchen."

"Oh," said Lucy, "I hadn't thought of that." She went quiet as she wondered how she could keep the pie a secret. They were just pulling to a stop outside her Grandfather Joshua's house when Lucy had an idea. "Before we left them, Granddad was showing Danny some of his old comics. The two of them were so busy they didn't even say goodbye. Why don't I tell them to walk round later when they're ready? We should be able to have the pie in the oven before they arrive."

Her mother thought the idea was a good one, so Lucy ran from the car and into the house. When she had left to go shopping, the boys were in the kitchen with a cardboard box of comics, but the room was now empty. Danny's backpack was on the floor beside the box, and there was just one comic open on the table. She only glanced at it quickly, being more interested in the fancy box beside it. The large gold printed letters on the front said: "**Very First Draft of The Wonderful Adventures of Starlight and Moonshine**".

Lucy frowned and turned her attention to the actual comic. It seemed rather strange because there were only a few pictures drawn in, but none of them were coloured except for one. The words for each picture were clearly about Starlight and Moonshine, but the drawings of the two heroes were just unfinished outlines, as if the artist hadn't decided what the comic-book characters looked like or how to draw them. That was fairly simple to understand because this was obviously the very first sketches for a new comic series. So, why was it that one picture was in full colour? What was so special about it?

Lucy caught her breath as she looked down on a picture of Danny and her Granddad standing in a room. Joshua was saying: "I don't think we should have done this. We ought to Moonberry-Pie back before something really bad happens." Although they had words

underneath, the next few squares were completely blank. The first were: The two adventurers held the cookie between them and called out "Moonberry Pie!" In the next Danny was saying: "It doesn't work, Granddad! How are we going to get home?" Joshua's reply shocked Lucy as she read: "I don't know, Danny. I have a terrible feeling that we might be stuck here forever, wherever here is!" Under the last blank square, Danny was speaking again: "Don't worry, Granddad. Lucy will find this comic, and when she does, she'll know what to do."

Lucy rolled her eyes and spoke quietly: "Thanks for nothing, Danny. What if I CAN'T save you? How am I going to explain what's happened to Mum and Dad? They'll never believe it."

On her way back to the car, she did manage to come up with a story which was really quite true, telling her mother that her Granddad and Danny were so sucked into the comics that they wouldn't be coming until much later. What she failed to mention was that she had the old comic stuffed under her jumper and was desperate to take it home.

Once there, Lucy used the excuse that she wanted to change her clothes before doing the baking. She ran up the stairs and dived into Danny's room. The comic she needed was under her brother's bed - The Huge Adventures of Captain Starlight and Colonel Moonshine with Danny and Lucy. She opened it hurriedly to the last adventure they had all been on together. There was a picture of Colonel Moonshine. He was up a ladder in Lord Nuff-Nuff's house taking down Christmas decorations. "You have to help me," she said in a whisper so that her mother wouldn't hear. "Danny and Granddad are stuck in some strange story and they can't get back!" She held the draft comic so that Moonshine could see.

"Oh dear," said the Colonel. "That was drawn before we even came to be in comic-book world. It wasn't really a proper story at all, and it was never finished. Starlight!" he called out, "You'd better come here. We have a little problem."

After she had been told, Captain Starlight suggested that Lucy use her Moonberry Pie to be with them. "You see," explained the Captain, "As long as you are in comic-book world, time in your own world stands still. Nothing starts happening again until you return home. Better do it quickly before your Mum comes looking for you."

Lucy said: "I thought I might need it, so I brought my pie." Holding up the cookie in her hand, she called out: "Moonberry Pie!" and in an instant she was flying through the rainbow sky to join her friends in comic-book world.

The three of them went into the wheelhouse of Captain Starlight's ship to talk about what they could do to free Joshua and Danny from the unfinished story. "You are sure Mum and Dad won't notice I've gone?" said Lucy. "It's hard to believe they will stay like statues until I go back."

"No different to us when you close our comic," explained Starlight. "We can't come to life until you open it again. Your Mum and Dad are really just in their own comic on the other side."

Lucy said that she thought she understood; Colonel Moonshine clearly didn't and was frowning. "That's too complicated for me," he grumbled, "But true or not, it doesn't help with our problem."

“I think it might,” said Starlight, and she began to pace up and down as she was thinking. “I believe the only way is to go into the comic Joshua and Danny are trapped in and bring them home.”

“But that’s still on my bed,” said Lucy. “I didn’t think to bring it.”

“I don’t believe it would have mattered if you had,” explained the Captain. “I’m pretty sure we can only Moonberry-Pie into the unfinished comic from the spot where Joshua and Danny were when they did it.”

“Did you say WE?” puzzled Lucy. “Does that mean you’ll be coming with me?”

“Of course,” said Moonshine, becoming very excited, “We couldn’t expect you to go alone. And we know we can come into your world because we did it with Nuff-Nuff’s Christmas tree.” The Colonel began to march about and had a big smile on his rosy face. “I can see it all now, starting again from the beginning. We’ll be making history as we write the very first Huge Adventures of Starlight and Moonshine.”

“Don’t you mean the very first WONDERFUL adventures?” said the Captain.

“No, no, Starlight. If I have anything to do with it, we are about to set out on a HUGE adventure, I’m certain of it.”

“That’s if we can travel into this other comic-book, Moonshine.”

“Oh, we will, we will, I’m sure of it,” said the Colonel with a jolly laugh.

Lucy had stayed silent while the two were talking and she had a deep frown on her face as she eventually spoke: “You both seem to think we’ll be able to get to Granddad and Danny somehow; but what really worries me is will we be trapped there too?”

“If that happens,” the Captain added, “We’ll just become unfinished drawings as we were at the very start; and that, my friends will be the beginning and the end of Starlight and Moonshine...”