

# Christmas

*Originally, Tara got a new computer for Christmas and it connected to the Intergalactic Web via her satellite dish. But that does seem rather unrealistic, doesn't it?*

It was the best Christmas ever! My first Christmas by the sea and the first one with Sparky too! We had a fantastic morning opening presents with mum and dad around our tree. Sparky joined in with the excitement and had a fun time playing with the wrapping paper.

After a great Christmas lunch, I went up to my room to play my new computer game, *Jurassic Adventure*. I put the CD into the computer and was just about to start when the phone rang.

“Happy Christmas, Peter!” Tara greeted me cheerfully.

“Hi, Tara, Happy Christmas!” I replied.

“Can you come round?” she asked excitedly.

“Now?” I asked, surprised.

“Yes, please” she urged. “I really need your help. Can you come?”

“Eh, OK, then,” I replied, intrigued. Why did Tara need me in such a hurry on Christmas day?

I called to Sparky and we dashed round to Tara’s house. I rang the bell and waited, shivering in the freezing cold.

“Hi, Peter,” Tara said with a big smile as she opened the front door. “Thanks for coming.”

“That’s OK,” I said as I kicked off my shoes. “What do you need me...?”

“Come upstairs,” she interrupted, “There’s something I want to show you!”

## JURASSIC ISLAND DELETED SCENES

We rushed up to her bedroom. Tara flung open the door.

“Look!” she exclaimed, unable to contain her excitement, “I got a notebook computer for Christmas!”

She went over to the desk and picked up a large computer box. She was beaming from ear to ear as she handed me the box. I felt so pleased for her.

“It’s a good one, Tara,” I said, reading the specs on the side of the box. “High speed graphics card, lots of memory, wireless internet access and free games too.”

“I’ve never had my own computer before,” Tara said happily, “and I really, really wanted one. I can’t wait to try it! Can you help me set it up?”

Tara put the box down on the floor and opened it. We pulled out the packaging and carefully lifted out a black and silver notebook computer. Tara placed it on the desk beside her bed.

“It looks really cool!” she said, standing back to admire it.

While Tara was arranging the computer on her desk, I took the manuals, disks and leads out of the box. Sparky came over and sniffed at everything curiously.

“Not now, Sparky,” I said, gently pulling him away.

“Woof!” he barked and wagged his tail playfully.

“Sparky just loves Christmas!” I said. “I gave him a rubber bone this morning – but I think he had more fun playing with the wrapping paper!”

Tara chuckled. She stroked Sparky’s head and he nuzzled against her affectionately. Then he pounced on a piece of polystyrene packaging and chased it around the room.

I plugged the power lead into the back of the computer and switched it on. We waited excitedly for it to start up.

A message appeared on the screen. “*Your free internet games are ready to be installed. Do you wish to connect to the internet now?*”

## CHRISTMAS

“Oh, yes,” Tara said eagerly and clicked the *Yes* button.

Moments later another message appeared, “*No wireless networks found. It is not possible to connect to the internet.*”

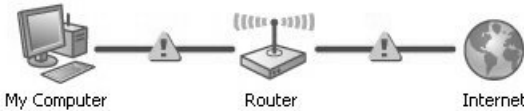
“Oh!” she said disappointedly. “Do you think there’s something wrong with the computer, Peter?”

“I’m not sure,” I replied, puzzled.

I clicked on the “*Help with connection problems*” button and read, “*Check that your wireless router is switched on.*”

“Wireless router?” Tara said puzzled. “What’s that?”

I scrolled down the page and found a picture of a rectangular box with a small aerial on top.



We read the caption, “*A wireless router connects to the internet via broadband and transmits a microwave signal to allow other computers to access the internet.*”

“Of course,” I said. “It’s that little box that plugs into the phone line – my dad’s got one in his office.”

“I’ve never seen one of those before,” Tara said. “I’ll ask my dad where ours is.”

She ran downstairs and then returned a few minutes later, looking very upset.

“We don’t have one!” she said disappointedly. “My dad says he hasn’t ordered broadband yet!”

“We can still use the computer without the internet,” I said, trying to be positive.

“I suppose so,” she sighed, “but I really wanted to try out those online games...”

Tara looked so downhearted. I tried to think of something helpful to say.

## JURASSIC ISLAND DELETED SCENES

“I know!” I said, suddenly having an idea. “I’ll go home and switch on our wireless box. It’s only next door – your computer might be able to pick up a signal from it.”

“OK, let’s try it,” she said, looking happier.

I ran home with Sparky in close pursuit and switched on the box.

“All done!” I said, panting as we returned to Tara’s room. “Try it, now.”

She clicked the “*Connect to the internet*” button again and we waited expectantly.

A message appeared, “*Davidson Network detected: signal strength weak. Unable to connect to internet.*”

Tara looked at me, very upset.

“It must be too far away,” I explained.

“Oh, I wish Professor P was here,” she sighed. “He’d know what to do.”

I agreed. He could always think of something, however crazy! I looked around the room, desperately trying to think of something and wondering what Professor P would do. Then I spotted Tara’s TV on the shelf above her bed.

“That’s it!” I exclaimed, rushing over to the TV. “The TV aerial!”

Tara looked at me blankly.

“When we first moved here we couldn’t get a proper TV picture,” I explained. “The repair man said the transmitter was too far away. So we had to buy a bigger aerial to get a better signal.”

Tara nodded. “We couldn’t get a good picture either. We had to get a satellite dish. But what’s that got to do with...?”

“We can plug the aerial from your TV into the computer,” I explained, “to give a stronger signal.”

“Do you think that will work?” Tara asked doubtfully.

I shrugged. “It can’t harm to try,” I said hopefully.

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I unplugged the aerial lead from the satellite box. As I walked across the room with the lead, Sparky pounced on it! He grabbed it in his mouth and pulled it out of my hand. He ran over to the door and wagged his tail expectantly.

“Sparky!” I said sternly. “Give it back!”

As I approached him, he darted under the bed.

“Sparky, look what I’ve got,” I said, casually taking his rubber bone out of my pocket.

He poked his head out from under the bed and stared eagerly at the bone. I dropped the bone. Sparky watched it bounce and then dived out from under the bed and caught it in his mouth.

“Dog psychology!” I laughed.

I retrieved the aerial lead from under the bed and pushed it into a socket on the side of the notebook computer.

Moments later a message appeared on the screen:

*“IGW Network detected: signal strength excellent. Connecting to internet. Please wait...”*

“You did it,” Tara cried, giving me a hug. “You’re a genius, Peter!”

“Thanks,” I said, blushing with embarrassment.

While we were waiting for the computer to connect to the network Tara’s mother came into the room.

“Happy Christmas, Peter,” she said with a smile. “I thought you both might like a drink and a piece of Christmas cake?”

“Oh, yes, please,” we replied.

“How’s the computer going?” Tara’s mother asked as she put the tray down on the desk.

“Thanks to Peter, it’s going brilliantly,” Tara said smiling.

Tara’s mother put a bowl of water on the floor for Sparky and he lapped at it eagerly. As she left the room, a new message appeared on the computer screen.

*“\*?\*? Translation engine updated*

## JURASSIC ISLAND DELETED SCENES

*Satellite link configured  
Downloading game data...*

"It's working, Tara," I said as I reached for a piece of the cake. "It's getting the games."

*"Linking to the Central Galactic Network..."*

"Galactic!" I exclaimed. "I wonder if you've got *Galaxy Conquest IV* on your computer. That's a really great game."

Suddenly a loud trumpeting sound boomed out from the computer. The screen cleared and a new message appeared. It read, "*Congratulation!! The Intergalactic Web has been successfully set up on your computer. Press enter to begin.*"

"Oh, it's not *Galaxy Conquest*," I said curiously. "I wonder what this game does."

"Let's see, shall we?" Tara said as she pressed the enter key.

*"You are almost ready to log onto the Intergalactic Web,"* the screen read, *"Please enter your details to link your computer with billions of others in the known galaxy."*

"Billion of others!" Tara chuckled as she typed her name and address into the boxes on the screen.

*Name: Tara A Royce  
Address: 129 Seaview Close  
Town: Seatown  
County: Dorset  
Country: England  
Planet: Earth*

*"Planet unknown,"* the screen responded. *"Your planet is not currently part of the Intergalactic Web."*

"That's strange," Tara said, puzzled.

"I expect all the other people playing the game pretend they're from another planet," I said. "We should have invented one too."

"Like Zargon!" Tara giggled.

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Another message appeared, “*Does your planet wish to join the Intergalactic Web?*”

Tara clicked, *Yes*.

“*You must be the President of planet Earth to authorise membership. Are you President of planet Earth?*”

Tara looked at me questioningly.

“It must be a role playing game,” I explained. “One where you choose a character, like wizard or warrior before you start playing.”

“Well, I’m certainly happy to be President of Earth,” she said eagerly.

Tara clicked the *Yes* button and another message appeared, “*Only peaceful planets can join the Intergalactic Web. Has your planet renounced all forms of violence and warfare?*”

“Definitely,” Tara nodded and clicked *Yes*.

“*Your free trial now begins. Welcome to the Intergalactic Web, Tara Royce, President of Planet Earth.*”

The screen flickered and was replaced by a bright and colourful page filled with moving banners and flashing signs.

“*G–Search – Find anything in over 100 million planets!*”

“*G–Date – Find a partner – we have thousands of different species to chose from!*”

“*G–Buy – Buy and sell anything in the know Galaxy! Doodleclams – buy one, get one hundred free! With our latest Doodleclam you’ll never need to worry about burbletops again!*”

“Burbletops!” Tara giggled. “I wonder what they are!”

“Beats me!” I laughed.

“What do you think we do now?” Tara asked.

“I’m not sure,” I replied. “We need to find the rules. There must be a help button somewhere.”

## JURASSIC ISLAND DELETED SCENES

Tara scrolled down the page. At the bottom of the screen was a box, which read,

*“For help and advice please contact the G.O.D.S. for assistance. We are available 25 hours per day.”*

“25 hours per day!” Tara chuckled. “They must work hard!”

A help box popped up. *“G.O.D.S. = Galactic Office Design Subcommittee. This office regulates the laws of physics and the creation of galaxies. If you wish to create your own galaxy you must apply for permission to the G.O.D.S. using form G101.”*

“It all looks very complicated,” Tara said, uncertain of what to do next.

“Ask for more help,” I suggested.

She typed into the box, *“How do we play the game?”*

*“What game?”* came the reply.

*“This one,”* she typed.

*“A good question,”* the computer replied. It paused briefly and then continued, *“Knowing that life is a game is the first step on the road to wisdom.”*

“Very deep!” I chuckled.

“Floppy would love this!” Tara said. “We’ll have to show it to him tomorrow at the party.”

Sparky nuzzled against me and I stroked him gently. He ran to the door and barked.

“Not now, Sparky” I said, turning back to the game.

“Woof!” he barked again and looked up at me hopefully.

I picked up his rubber bone and threw it to him. He caught it in his mouth and ran back towards us, his tail wagging expectantly. He jumped up playfully and dropped the bone on the desk in front of me.

“Careful, Sparky!” I cried, quickly picking up my glass of juice from the desk.

I threw the bone for him and turned back to the screen.

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“Woof!” Sparky barked and jumped up at me again. He pushed sharply against my arm and knocked the glass out of my hand.

“Sparky!” I cried as the glass flew through the air.

It crashed onto the computer. I watched in horror as juice sprayed all over the keyboard. The screen flickered and died.

Tara froze, staring at the computer in shock. She opened her mouth but nothing came out. Then she turned to me with tears rolling down her cheeks.

“I’m so sorry, Tara,” I cried.

“My computer, my new computer...” she choked, unable to continued.

“Sparky jumped up,” I tried to explain. “He knocked the glass...”

“Wh... what are we going to do?” Tara stammered.

“When my parents find out they’ll...”

“We don’t have to tell them,” I said, thinking quickly.

“Professor P can fix it. He’s coming to your party tomorrow. He’ll know what to do.”

“I hope so,” Tara said, wiping away her tears.

I felt terrible. I could not bear to see Tara so upset. And it was all my fault. I had broken her new computer. This was the worst Christmas ever!