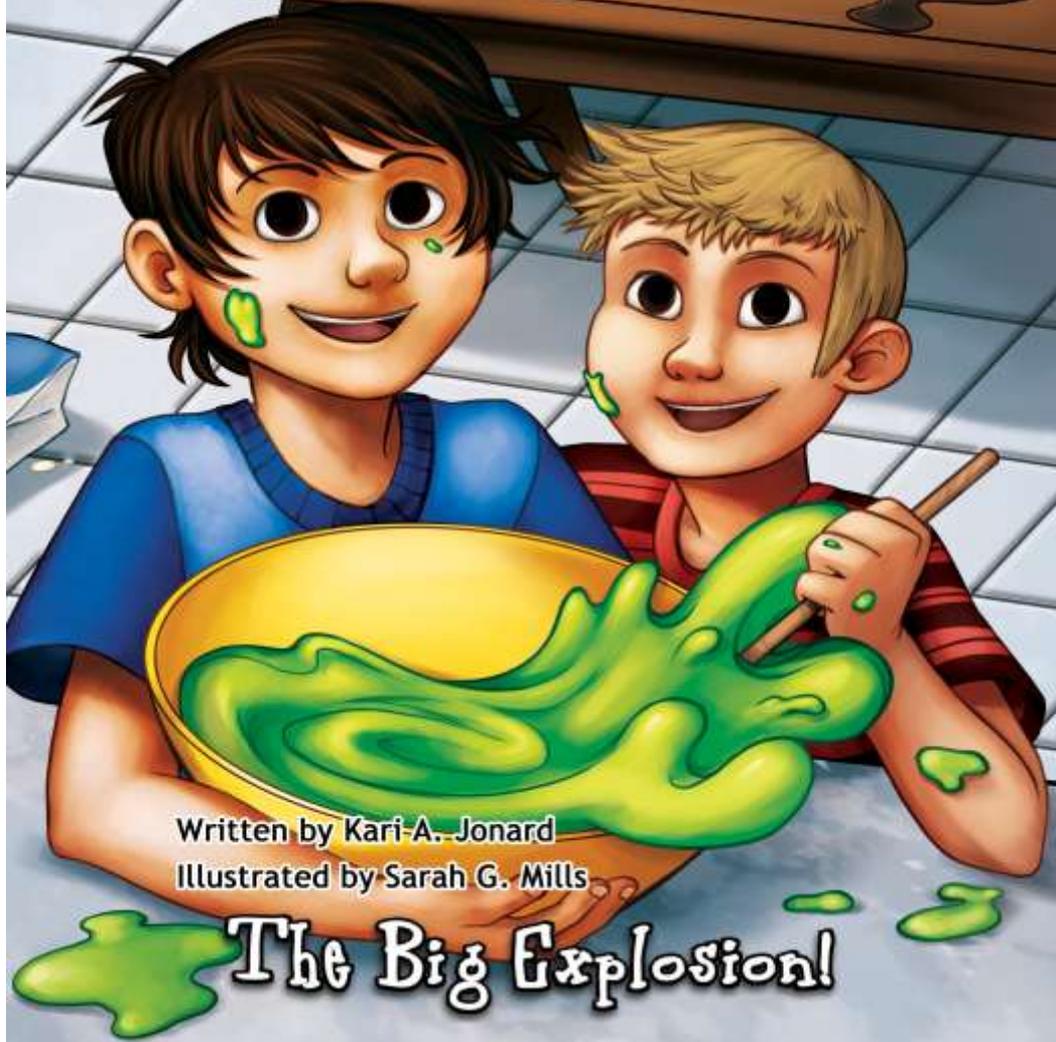


# 1

Alex & John's  
Scientific  
Adventures



Written by Kari-A. Jonard  
Illustrated by Sarah G. Mills

The Big Explosion!

**ALEX & JOHN'S  
SCIENTIFIC ADVENTURES**

**The Big Explosion!**

**By: Kari A. Jonard  
Illustrated by: Sarah G. Mills**

**Book 1**

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Character Notebooks

You Can Be A Scientist Too!



# **The Big Explosion!**



# **Chapter 1**

## **Alex and John**



It's summertime and everyone knows what that means. For many, it's a time to play at the park and ride their bikes, but for Alex and John, it's a whole different story.

Today, the sun is shining and most



kids are outside playing, but Alex and John are inside trying to decide what to do for a science experiment. The boys have been doing different types of experiments all summer long. It's their favorite thing to do because they get to use their imaginations.

Every day, the boys' mom goes to work in the morning and does not come home until five o'clock. Just like any day,

Alex, the older brother, is left in charge of the house. Alex is going into the sixth grade and has dark messy hair. He is very smart and likes to learn all about how everything works. Alex is also very curious and experiments with anything he can find around the house. This sometimes gets him into trouble, because his crazy experiments can bring some unexpected results.

Alex's younger brother John has light brown hair and loves the color red. He is going into the fourth grade when school starts again. John really looks up to Alex and wants to do everything just like his brother - especially science. John typically follows his brother's lead because he looks up to him, but when he comes up with an idea, he is ready to put the idea to the test.



It's early in the morning and the boys wake up and eat breakfast as Mom heads out the door to go to work. Breakfast today is bacon and eggs. Alex thinks about how eggs are cooked and how they almost magically change from being an oozy, gross combination of parts into a delicious solid that he can poke with a fork and devour. He thinks about all of the liquids and solids in his house and comes up with an idea.

“Let's mix chemicals today!” says Alex. “I love making concoctions!”

John eagerly agrees with Alex's idea. The boys gobble down the rest of their breakfast and get ready to start their day of experimenting.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Home Alone**

Alex and John are very excited for the fun day ahead of them, so they quickly start looking around the house for items they can use to make their concoctions. Both boys run to their bedrooms and start throwing everything on the floor, hoping that they will find something to use. Alex emerges from his room empty-handed and goes into John's room. John's room is even more of a disaster and Alex can't even see him.



Seconds later, John pops out from under his bed.

“Look what I’ve got!” he says.

John holds up a milk carton that has rotten milk in it and Alex cringes.

“That’s disgusting! It smells horrible. How long has it been there?” asks Alex.

“I don’t know,” says John. “But it will be perfect for our experiment. Let’s find a place to put all of our supplies. We can use the kitchen as our laboratory!” The boys head to the kitchen together to put the old milk on the table.

On their way to the kitchen, the doorbell rings and Alex heads towards the door. John runs to put the milk down.

“What are you doing?” asks John nervously as he runs back into the room and sees Alex heading towards the door.

“I’m answering the door,” says Alex.

“What if it’s a stranger? Mom says we aren’t allowed to talk to strangers. And, she says not to answer the door when she isn’t home!” John says in a panic.

“Don’t worry,” says Alex. “Mom



called Jake’s house before she left for work and said he can come over today.”

Alex grabs a step stool and looks through the peep hole.

“It’s Jake” says Alex.

John breathes a sigh of relief. Alex takes the step stool away from the door and opens it.

Jake is going into the fifth grade this year. He has spiky red hair and likes playing with Alex and John.

“Hey guys, what are you doing?” asks Jake as he walks through the door.

“We are getting ready to mix up some concoctions,” says Alex.

“Do you want to help?” asks John.

“Sure,” says Jake as they all head to the kitchen.

“Eww! Gross!” says Jake. “What is that awful smell? It makes me want to hurl!”

The boys laugh and lead him to the



table where John had set down the rotten milk.

“Sometimes I wonder about you two! That is disgusting!” jokes Jake.

“Let’s go find more supplies!” exclaims John.

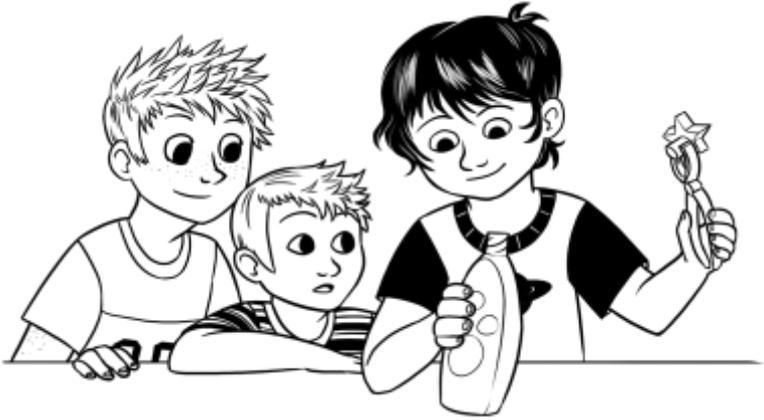
Alex and Jake run into the bathroom to grab some soap and a bottle with a strange-looking lid. The lid is shaped like a star and is stuck on the bottle.

“How are we going to open that?” asks Jake.

“Don’t worry! We can get it,” says Alex. “I have just the right tool.”

The boys follow Alex to the garage and watch him open the tool box.

“What are you doing, Alex? Mom says we aren’t allowed to touch the tool box!”



exclaims John.

“It’s okay, John. Mom gave me a few tools of my own the other day,” says Alex as he grabs some pliers and pulls the lid off of the bottle.

Success! Alex looks inside the container and sees bubble bath solution from when they were really little.

The boys head back to their laboratory to put the supplies near the milk carton. Alex and John look at each other and decide

to split up. Alex heads back to the garage with Jake while John goes to the family room.

John begins pulling up the couch cushions looking for useful materials. Then, the cushions and pillows go flying across the room, hitting the television and stereo system. Luckily, John manages not to break anything in his frantic search.

Meanwhile, Alex grabs some old paint and some leftover sand from their old sandbox. At the same time, Jake is filling his arms with supplies that they can use and makes a huge mess along the way. Alex and Jake bring the goods to the laboratory and go to check on John.

“Find anything good, John?” asks Alex.



“Not yet. Just a piece of popcorn,” says John.

Alex decides to help John with his search, and together they find more popcorn and a potato chip which they bring back to the kitchen table.

When they get there, they find that Jake has not moved since bringing the items from the garage inside.

“What are you doing?” asked Alex.

Jake doesn't say anything. He is feeling very happy about an item that he found, so he decides to turn around and show Alex and John what it is. Jake found some heavy-duty cleaner in the garage and thinks that it will be great to use in the concoctions.

“Oh no,” says Alex. “We can't use that, it's too dangerous.”

Alex and John continue searching for supplies that could be useful, while Jake puts the cleaner back where he found it. The brothers agree that the kitchen would be a great place to search, since it has a lot of awesome food supplies that they could use to make concoctions.

Alex swings open the refrigerator door



and begins to move items to the table. He gets some orange juice, ketchup, balsamic vinegar, and a can of soda. At the same time, John heads to the cupboard to get some salt, pepper, baking soda, and a bunch of spices.

When Jake returns from the garage, he helps Alex and John find supplies in the kitchen. The boys pile as much as they can on the table. By the time they are done,

there seems to be millions of supplies, ready to fall over at any minute. The boys look at their massive pile with excitement and can't wait to get started.

## **Chapter 3**

# **Concoctions**

Paying no attention to the mess that they just made around the house, the boys begin to make room for their concoctions. Alex moves a pile of supplies, which causes another pile to fall onto the floor. John opens the cupboard to grab some bowls and a mixing spoon, while Alex and Jake push the spilled supplies out of the way.

The three boys start adding ingredients to their first concoction by taking turns



stirring everything together. John adds some detergent to the first concoction while Alex mixes it really quickly with a spoon.

Within moments, it begins to bubble and fizz.

“Whoa!” the boys exclaim.

“Let’s do that again!” says John.

This time, they add more of each ingredient and when they use the spoon to mix everything, the concoction bubbles and fizzes so much that it overflows out of the bowl! It runs down the table and spills onto



the floor making a sudsy mess.

With some quick thinking, Alex grabs some bags and instructs John and Jake to put them over their feet so they won't get the mess on their shoes. Alex puts bags over his shoes too. The boys leave the spill on the floor and continue mixing concoctions.

John suddenly remembers the rotten milk he found in his room and grins mischievously as he opens it. Alex doesn't notice what John is up to and he keeps adding ingredients to the new mixture. It

starts out clear and watery then turns green.

Next, they add a white powder to the concoction, which turns it into a mucky green goo. Within no time, Alex makes a disgusted face.

“What is that smell?” asks Alex.

John just grins.

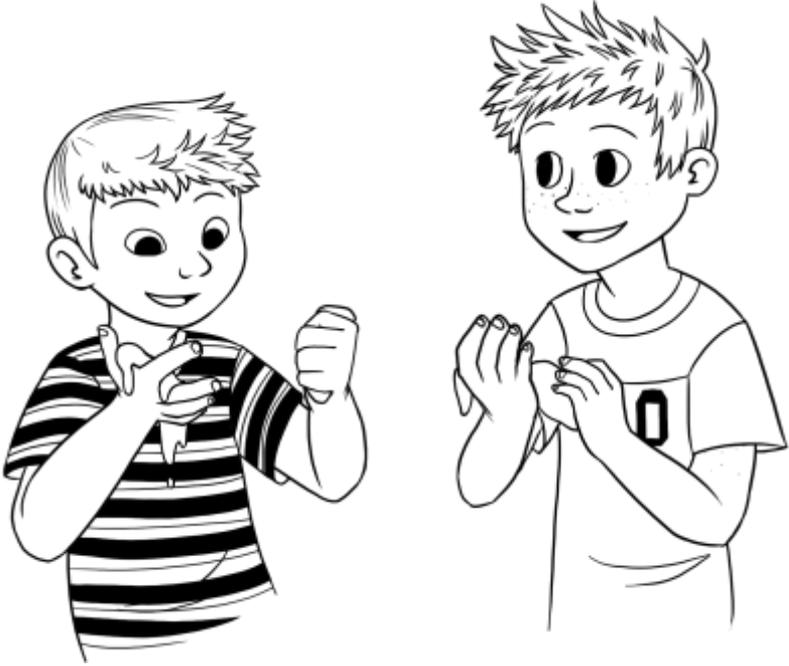
Alex suddenly realizes that the rotten milk is what he smells. Alex, John, and Jake run out of the room as fast as they can to get away from the smell.

## **Chapter 4**

# **The Big Mess**

After grabbing a breath of fresh air, the boys return to the laboratory to make more concoctions. They set the other experiments aside and grab a new bowl, then add a bit of every supply that they have into the bowl one at a time. The concoction starts out very watery, so Alex decides to add a powder. He grabs the corn starch and dumps some in, causing it to thicken.

“Whoa!” says John. “How did it do that? This is so cool!”



Excitedly, John sticks his hand into the bowl to find a strange substance.

Alex and Jake also stick their hands into the bowl of goo.

“Oh,” says Jake. “I read about this once. I think we’ve made Goobleck!”

“Cool!” yells John with enthusiasm.

“What’s Goobleck?”

“This is Goobleck!” says Jake as he squeezes the mixture.

“It isn’t solid, but it isn’t liquid either,” says John. “When I squeeze it, it’s hard, but when I let go, it runs down my hand!”

It starts to run off of the boys’ hands and onto the floor, mixing with the mess that they spilled earlier that day.

Then, the Goobleck starts to dry out, so the boys continue adding ingredients. They add a liquid and the concoction turns yellow. Next, they add another white powder which makes it dry out. The boys mix as fast as they can to see what will happen. They laugh as puffs of powder rise into the air, making it look like smoke from a genie’s lamp! The boys cough as they



breathe.

Alex fans the air with his hand to clear the powder then they take turns adding more and more liquids into the bowl. It changes color with the addition of each liquid, going from yellow, to green, to red, to brown, to black. They add a lot of flour to the bowl and the concoction turns from black to grey. They add more liquids which turn their mixture from grey to purple, then to blue!



John grabs the rotten milk and prepares to pour some in the bowl when Alex quickly snatches the milk out of John's hands and tosses it across the room. Then Alex adds some salt to the mixture, and it starts shimmering. The boys realize that they can no longer mix with a spoon because the bowl is too full and the mixture is too thick.

Alex grabs an electric mixer to help power through their monstrosity. He plugs the mixer into the wall, sticks it into the

bowl, turns on the switch, and their sparkling concoction splatters everywhere! Alex frantically searches for the off switch but can't see it because of all of the flying goo.

John runs out of the room to avoid being sprayed with goo, leaving Alex and Jake to fend for themselves.

Jake desperately tries to block the mess, but it's impossible. The mixture continues to fling across the room! The boys all laugh hysterically while trying to find a way to solve their messy dilemma.

“Turn off the mixer, Alex!” yells John from the other room.

But Alex can't see the switch. He pulls the mixer out of the bowl which makes an even bigger mess all over the kitchen!

Now, the mixture has splattered onto the counters, fridge, floor, and even the ceiling fan. Alex tries once again to find the switch on the mixer. This time he finds it, but can't seem to get it to move.

“It’s stuck!” exclaims Alex to John.

“Pull the plug!” yells John.

Jake goes to the wall and unplugs the mixer as the boys let out a huge sigh of relief and sit down for a moment.

The boys start feeling queasy. Alex and John turn to each other wide-eyed, laugh, and then run out of the room. Jake sits there for a moment before realizing what’s making his stomach grumble. He remembers the milk then darts out of the room as the smell fills the house.

“Why can we smell the milk?” asks



Alex.

“Look!” says Jake as he points to the smashed milk container on the floor. “The milk is leaking from when you threw it across the room!”

“What are we going to do?” cries John, while glancing at the clock. “Mom will be

home soon and everything is a mess!”

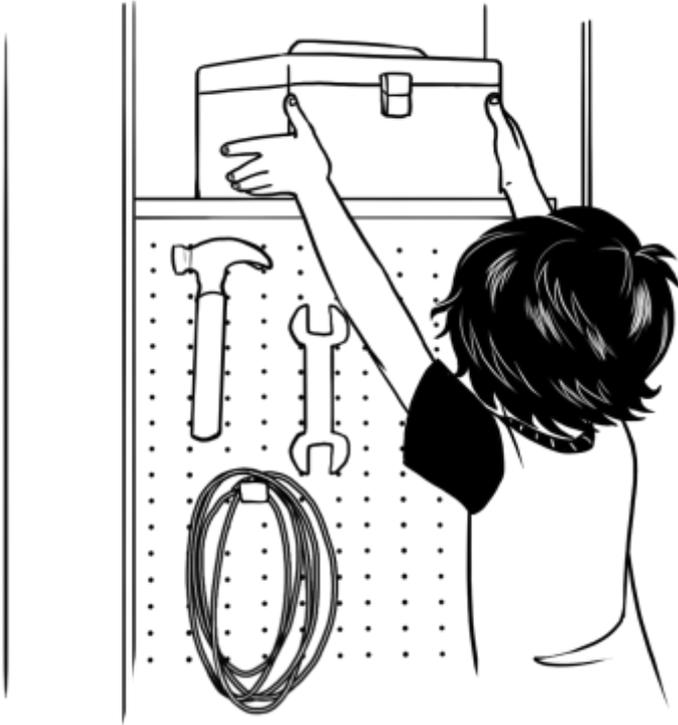
“Oh no!” says Alex, “We need to clean up now!”

## **Chapter 5**

### **Hurry!**

With only one hour until Mom gets home, Alex and John run around the house cleaning frantically. Jake takes a look at the mess, but doesn't really want to help clean it up. He hates cleaning. Instead, he just stands and watches.

Alex and John decide that it would be a good idea to stay out of the kitchen for as long as possible, because it smells worse than the other rooms. Plus, they know that



the first place their mom will see when she comes home is the garage.

Alex starts cleaning the garage, while John starts cleaning the family room. John puts the cushions and pillows back on the couch, and Alex organizes the shelf where



he found the tool box. Jake still watches while thinking of another way to get the house clean.

Alex rushes through the kitchen in a panic.

“Jake, what are you doing? You need to help us clean. You made this mess too,



you know!” says Alex.

The brothers quickly finish cleaning the garage and family room, then return to the most dreaded area of the house - the kitchen.

“Plug your nose!” says John as they begin to wipe the floor with a towel.

“We need a bucket!” exclaims Alex as he rushes back to the garage.

Alex returns to the kitchen and tells

Jake to put water in the bucket. Jake is very reluctant, but sees that Alex is serious. He grabs the bucket, still trying to think of another solution.

“Why don’t we just make something that can clean the kitchen for us?” says Jake. “This is going to take way too long!”

“That’s impossible, Jake. Just help us clean,” says Alex.

Jake decides to put his idea to the test while John continues to wipe up the floor.

Jake starts creating a clean-up concoction, which makes Alex and John more irritated, because they think he is just playing.

“Quick! Check the time!” yells Alex.

“Four-thirty,” says Jake.

“Mom will be home in thirty minutes.

We need to hurry!” screams Alex.

“Jake, you need to help clean or we aren’t going to let you make concoctions with us anymore! It’s not fair if you don’t help! Plus, we need to get everything cleaned up before Mom comes home or we’ll be in big trouble!” says John.

“Look,” says Jake. “All we need is a few more ingredients to make this concoction work. Come help me!”

Alex continues to clean the floor, but John is curious and goes to help.

“We only need one more ingredient, but I can’t figure out which one,” says Jake.

John quickly grabs some detergent and dumps it into the bowl.

“There we go!” says John. “Perfect.”

Jake mixes the concoction one last

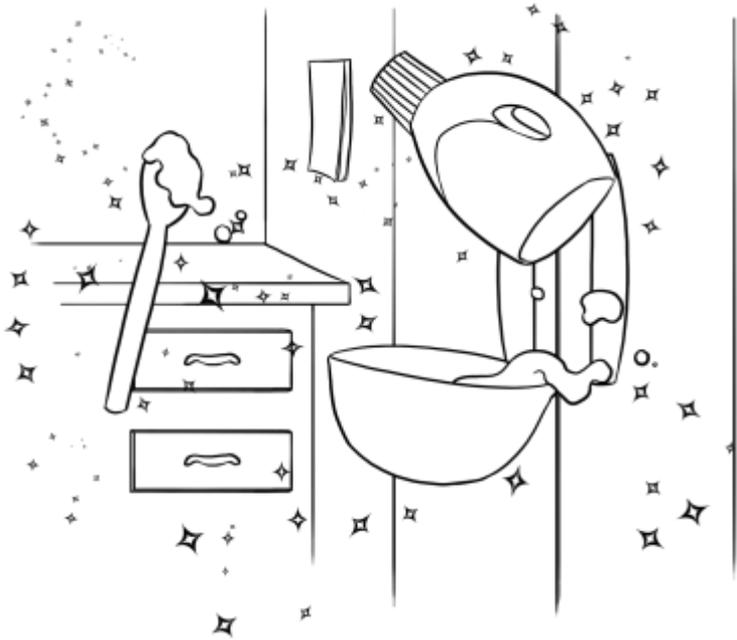


time then throws the mixture all around the kitchen.

“What are you doing?” screams Alex.  
“We need to clean up and you two are making an even bigger mess!”

“Just watch,” says John as the clean-up concoction begins to scrub the mess off of the ceiling fan, cabinets, refrigerator, floor, and everywhere else that the mixture managed to hit.

“Whoa!” Alex yells with excitement.



“That is so cool!”

With the kitchen scrubbed, the boys look at the massive pile of supplies that they used, wondering what to do with them. They decide to throw all of the empty bottles and boxes into the recycle bin and pour all of their mixtures and the rest of the rotten

milk into a sealed container. Alex sprays the kitchen with an air freshener to cover the rotten smell while Jake takes out the trash and returns to the kitchen. Next, Alex heads to his bedroom to finish cleaning.

John stays in the kitchen with Jake to come up with a clean-up concoction to organize his room.

“Ten minutes until Mom is home!” screams Alex. “Hurry!”

Alex starts to clean his room by putting everything under his bed or in his closet.

In the kitchen, John and Jake start mixing a new concoction. John adds the detergent, like last time, and then Jake adds some salt so John’s room will shimmer when it’s clean and organized. Before going



to John's room, Jake spills a little of the clean-up concoction in the kitchen to put away the supplies they just used. Like magic, every supply puts itself away.

In John's room, they pour some of the concoction on the floor and then watch as everything flies back to where it's supposed to be. John puts the leftover concoction in his closet then calls Alex to his room to show off their good work.



“Wow!” says Alex. “That’s awesome!”

Just then, they hear the garage door open.

“Quick!” says Alex. “Run to the family room!”

Alex turns on the television and tells John and Jake to sit on the couch and act like nothing happened.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Mom Comes Home**

Within seconds, the boys see Mom's car pull into the driveway.

“Just look innocent,” says Alex.

Their hearts race because if Mom discovers what they have been up to all day, they could be in big trouble. They hear Mom come inside.

“Hi boys, I'm home,” says Mom.

The boys look at each other anxiously and greet her from the family room. Mom



walks through the kitchen, puts some groceries on the table, and then walks into

the family room where the boys are sitting on the couch watching TV.

“Looks like you’ve had a very uneventful day,” says Mom.

“I guess,” Alex says with a nervous voice.

Mom walks back to the kitchen to put the groceries away and notices a fresh smell.

“Did one of you spray an air freshener in here? It smells really nice,” says Mom.

“I did,” says Alex.

“And we cleaned up the house,” John adds.

Alex gives John a thumbs-up for his clever thinking.

“You did?” asks Mom. “Well I’m impressed. Thank you!”

“You’re welcome,” says Alex, John,



and Jake.

The boys walk into the kitchen to marvel at their great cleaning job. Mom tells them how proud she is then gives her boys a hug.

While hugging Mom, John sees

something unexpected out of the corner of  
his eye.

## **Chapter 7**

# **The Big Explosion!**

John stares anxiously at the sealed container, watching the lid bulge.

*Oh, no! It's going to blow up and we are going to be in huge trouble!* he thinks.

He crosses his fingers and hopes that the container does not explode.

Alex and Jake look at John and see that he is really tense. Then, they notice that John is staring at the container. Alex quickly realizes that the pressure has built up in the container because the concoctions

have all mixed together. It looks like it will explode at any minute!

“Hey Mom, would you like to come see my room? I cleaned it too,” says Alex, hoping to avoid an explosion while Mom is in the room.

“Sure, I would love to see your room. Just give me one moment to put these groceries away,” says Mom.

Before Alex can get Mom out of the room, the pressure gets too high in the container and it explodes!

All of the extra supplies, including the rotten milk, spray out of the container and all over the kitchen.

*Not again!* thinks Alex.

Both boys realize how much trouble they must be in and Jake wonders if he will



ever be allowed to come over again.

“ALEX! JOHN!” yells Mom angrily,  
“What have you done?”

Alex and John both start talking at the same time trying to form a cover story, but Mom sees right through them.

“You two are in so much trouble!”  
exclaims Mom.



John takes a moment to think then he reassures Mom that everything can be cleaned easily. He goes to his room and grabs the leftover clean up concoction. When he comes back, he throws it all

around the kitchen.

Mom starts to get angry because she thinks that he is making a bigger mess. Then, she realizes that John's concoction really does work. She laughs with delight as she watches the concoction clean everything up.

Alex and John look at each other and smile happily. They are glad that the clean-up concoction worked and that they aren't in trouble. All three boys breathe a huge sigh of relief and start thinking of more fun science experiments that they could do later this summer.





# **Character Notebooks**

# Alex



June 7<sup>th</sup>

Today, we had a blast being scientists in our laboratory. We made tons of

concoctions! I'm very excited that Mom let Jake come over, because we have a lot of fun when he is here. Jake's clean-up idea was amazing! I'm glad he and my brother found the new way to clean up. It really saved us from getting into trouble today!

My favorite part of today was that John found some rotten milk in his bedroom that we were able to use for our experiments. It was so disgusting!

# John



*I had so much fun with Alex and Jake today! I really love being scientists!*

*I can't believe that Alex couldn't turn the mixer off. That was hilarious!*

*I really liked playing with the Goobleck. It was awesome!*

## **DISCLAIMER**

Please read this notice carefully before attempting any science experiments at home. If you do not understand this notice, please email us. [AJSA@ajscientificadventures.com](mailto:AJSA@ajscientificadventures.com)

Children should be supervised at all times while performing any science experiments. Science materials are NOT for ingestion. In the case of ingestion of hazardous materials, contact your local poison control center.

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# You Can Be A Scientist Too!

*Try this experiment!*

## Goobleck Recipe

3/4 cup Corn Starch

1/2 cup Water

1. Cover the area with newspaper (or do outside)
2. Put the corn starch in a bowl or pan.
3. Add water a little at a time to see how the powder changes.

It will be Goobleck when it can be squeezed into a hard solid, but drips off of your fingers. Be careful not to add too much water or it will just look like that stuff your parents put in gravy!

**Parental supervision advised.**

**(Non-toxic: Not intended for consumption)**



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## *About the Author*



Kari A. Jonard graduated from the University of Colorado at Denver in 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sciences and Humanities. She has returned to the University of Colorado and is currently pursuing a Masters of Business Administration.

She has ten years of experience working with elementary school-aged children in their classrooms, extra-curricular activities, and in their homes.

Kari's main goal in life is to inspire children to enjoy learning. With this in mind, she began writing children's books and hopes that they will encourage fun learning.

## *About the Illustrator*



Sarah G. Mills graduated from high school in 2011. She plans to attend the Savannah College of Art and Design for illustration and sequential art in the Fall of 2012.

Sarah has five years of experience drawing and illustrating. She has previously illustrated two other books and participated in conventions, charity art donation events, and online community art competitions.

Sarah ultimately plans to pursue a career in illustration or graphic novel development.

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## **Want to chat with Alex and John?**

### **Email them!**

[alex@ajscientificadventures.com](mailto:alex@ajscientificadventures.com)

[john@ajscientificadventures.com](mailto:john@ajscientificadventures.com)



Alex and John are at it again. These boys are always getting into things and creating their own experiments while Mom is away. But watch out! They are in for a messy surprise when Mom comes home today and there is a **BIG EXPLOSION!**

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