**Queen of the Stars – Tessa Yates**

**Pitch:** Little Tessa is in such a hurry to be the first woman on the moon, she forgets to notice the stars along the way. Will she slow down enough to remember why she launched into space in the first place?

**Word count: 750 words**

**Age:** 4-8 years.

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| **Story** | **Illustration notes** |
| A Little Girl called Tessa, is talking to the Moon,  “It would be fun to come up there, I’d *love* to visit soon.  I’d stand upon your surface and gaze to the above,  I’d dance between the sparkling stars that I have learned to love.  Up in the North is Draco, with hottest dragon’s breath.  And in the South there’s Scorpius, it’s sting is made for death.  My favourite is Orion, his belt it beams so bright,  A rollercoaster ride from there, Big Dipper’s to the right.  Centaurus is protector, so Leo crouches down.  Cassiopeia [Cass-ee-oh-pee-ah] is the Queen, she wears a stellar crown.  They’d shine and work together, to light and guide my way.  I’d love to play among the stars, I’ll come and play one day.” | 1: A very young Tessa sits alone in her bedroom staring out the window at the night’s sky, the Moon glowing brightly among the stars.  A cup of tea is steaming on the windowsill.  Her walls are lined with science and astronomy posters.  One poster quotes Galileo *“I’ve loved the Stars too fondly to be fearful of the night”*  She hugs a star-shaped pillow to her chest. |
| Not long in light years later…”I’m going to the Moon!”  I *must* be fast to get there first, so *I* can be there soon.”  A giant leap for Tessa, she waves her world goodbye,  “I’ve got *one* shot to land my ship, the pressure’s really high.” | 2a: A slightly older Astronaut Tessa (still a girl) launches in her rocket, waving back to the earth. |
| Her hands are gripping tightly, she’s really in the zone,  “I trained so hard to win my spot, I did it on my own.”  The stars behind her glisten, she cannot see them glow,  she misses how they make a shape and line up in a row.  “I’ve worked so hard to get here, I’ve never been so strong,  I’m well prepared for anything, if anything goes | 2b: Tessa looks down at her screens whilst the beautiful stars behind her shine in a big arrow shape pointing the opposite direction to her rocket (she’s going the wrong way).  A cup of tea steams on the dashboard. |
| …WRONG!”  “It’s Houston do you copy? You *must* come back to base.  You’re hurtling *beyond* the Moon, the ship is LOST IN SPACE!”  The screens are flashing wildly, the system’s all confused,  “It’s saying feet and inches when it’s metres that we’ve used.”  “I need another compass, but *not* in my machines.”  And for the first time in a while, she… | 3a: Screens flash wildly in danger colours. Tessa waves arms wildly, her face shows alarm. |
| looks up from her screens.  “I was a *pro*-Stargazer, not many moons ago,  Now where on Earth is Scorpius? And Leo? And Draco?.” | 3b: Tessa more calmly looks out to the skies in awe at the constellations.  She takes a sip from her tea. |
| “KNOCK KNOCK” upon the window, to Tessa’s great surprise,  “Is that a star outside my ship?” She can’t believe her eyes.  The Star is pointing Star-wards, then points up to the Moon.  “If I come out there will you help? I’ve *got* to get there soon.”  Her screens are fading darker, the dials all point to nought.  “It’s Houston do you copy me? It is time to press ABORT!”  She reaches to her head-set, and pulls it from her ear.  “I *will* be fast, I *will* be first, and  *I’ll* take it from here.” | 4: Vignettes of Tessa meeting Star through the window of her rocket. She looks hesitant at first as we see her making calculations and thinking hard. Then she realises there is no hope in her computers, relaxes her shoulders, and reaches for Star’s outstretched hand. |
| Star takes her hand so warmly, like when you want to play.  They float up to the midnight map, the misty Milky Way.  “I’m really in a rush, Star, I really cannot fail.”  Star’s showing her round Scorpius, “Be careful of the tail!” | 5: Tessa is rushing left and right and carelessly nearly bumps into Scorpius’ stingy tail, which is pointing towards the tiny moon in the distance. |
| “So which way is the quickest? I cannot hang about.”  They ride upon Centaurus’ back, they laugh and scream and shout.  They hop onto a dragon, they’re fighting with Orion.  They’re chased across the galaxy by starry Leo Lion. | 6a: Each constellation takes them further on their way, moving them towards the moon on the right, (which is getting bigger on each page) |
| “Which constellation’s next, Star?” But Star’s too far to hear.  Star’s sitting down to have some tea …with *Queen Cassiopeia.*  “A stop along my journey for tea-time with the Queen?” | **6b: Tessa looking at her watch, then at the Moon, then towards Star taking a seat next to the Queen constellation. Face is scrunched up whilst she grapples with the choice.** |
| “…Now *that* I’ll gladly slow down for, Star! Let’s break for Fifteen!”  Upon her throne, relaxing, she’s sipping from her brew.  It’s really nice to sit with friends and share the awesome view. | **7a: Tessa sits proudly at the long tea-party table, next to the Queen who gracefully pours her a cup of tea. The other constellations are enjoying the party all together, mad-hatter style.** |
| “Look how the stars are shining, look how they shine for me.”  *Queen says*: “Just drink it in, enjoy each sip… | **7b: A giant cosmic teapot has page 7a’s tea party pouring from the spout. Inside the teapot the queen creates a cloud of stars for Tessa to enjoy gazing up at. Tessa holds her teacup to her heart.** |
| …enjoy your cup of tea”. | **8: Giant teacup contains the swirling Milky Way. We look into it from Tessa’s point of view.** |
| And by the time she’s finished, and floated far below.  “Star, look! The Moon! I have arrived! Hey Star!”… | **9a: Tessa faces the Moon, it’s light radiates off her face. The stars behind glow brighter than ever before.** |
| **Where did you go?**  *“I’ll never rush again, Star! I’ll chill here with my brew.*  *I don’t mind if I get there first, I’d rather go with you!.”* | **9b: Tessa is surrounded by darkness, very small, in the centre of the page. Alone.** |
| “I’ve *always* been here with you, I‘m always beaming down,  I’ll always be your guiding light, the jewel in your crown.”  She hugs the star so tightly, they’re floating on cloud nine.  The hug is rather wonderful, the view is quite divine.  “Goodbye for now, and thank you, I’m having such a blast.  It seems our quick trip to the Moon has hurried by TOO fast!” | **10: Tessa hugs Star to her chest, closes her eyes and smiles. They are surrounded by an infinity figure of stars.** |
| She looks back at her footsteps, seeing all that she has done.  “Who knew that I’d get to the Moon whilst having *this* much fun?!” | 11: Tessa rides the Big Dipper rollercoaster all the way onto the Moon, waving her arms wildly in the air.  Each constellation gives her a big thumbs up and cheers her on to the finish line.  Her rollercoaster cart morphs back into her space rocket. |
| The astronauts before her, came straight into this crater.  She’d danced with stars, had cups of tea, and got there not much later.  She gazes out across her realm to not so distant Mars.  And pops a crown upon her head, the *first*Queen of the Stars. | 12: Tessa stands, hands on hips, a strong woman on the Moon. We see her from behind, looking back down at Earth, out at the stars, and into the distance to Mars.  The crown-shaped Cassiopeia constellation shines brightly above her space helmet. |