



# Gul in Space

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Tomorrow is my birthday, A day of special fun  
I want the stars to wish me The moon too, and  
the sun.



I wake up in the morning And look at what I see!  
A rocket waiting outside; I try and hide my glee.  
The rocket is all fired up, My bags are packed and full.  
'Whoosh!' it roars and shoots up, I'm Astronaut Madam Gul!  
My cat, she shakes and trembles, My head spins round and round.  
In just a few minutes, We are way above the ground.





Six hours later, here it is My new home in  
outer space They call it Space Station; Hello,  
you beautiful place!

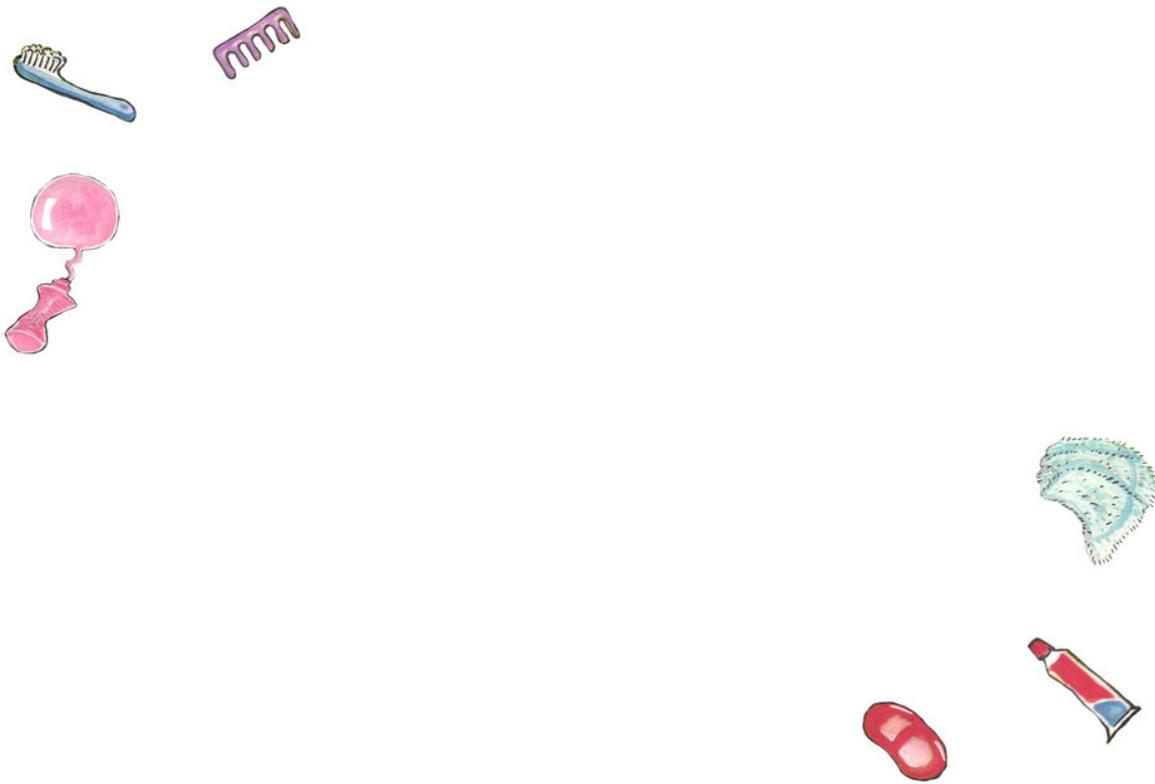


Boing! we go from step to step, I hardly feel  
my legs. Before we even know it, We turn  
down on our heads! And then begins the  
floating, To the left and to the right. Drifting  
through the air we go, And twisting to the  
side.





Oops! My bag turns upside down And out  
come two jalebis. Samosas that I packed so  
well, I think they've all gone crazy! They bump  
around and float across, The crumbs and icky  
juice. I'll stick to labelled packets, Of these  
special space foods.



My hair is all so sticky, The clothes are such  
a mess. My cat, she tries to lick me clean;  
A bath will work the best. But here's a little  
secret, There are no taps in space. I wet this  
towel just a bit And wipe it on my face. Then  
squeeze some shampoo in my hair And rub it  
through and through. A final proper wiping,  
My hair looks clean and new.





I get into my space suit For a very special day.  
Come and join me in the fun, It's space walk  
all the way! Step by step I go outside, A slow  
and dangerous crawl. It's dark and cold and  
quiet, I'm connected to the walls. The stars  
are shining clear and bright They look so big  
and near. The moon just smiles and seems to  
say 'Happy Birthday, Gul dear.'





It's time for me to head back in And get some  
cosy rest. The space walk was so tiring; That  
was scary, but the best.



This is where I need to sleep, My bed for next few days. What fun it is to squeeze right in And strap myself in place. I wake up after some time, No minute we can waste But first I go and brush my teeth And swallow all the paste!



I want to speak to Ammi, My laptop's strapped  
in place. 'Hello, who's that?' she screams from  
there, 'I'm Gul from outer space!' I tell her of  
the things I've done, Of magic that is space.  
Of how the earth looks far from here, Of this  
Station's funny ways.



I live in space for two full months, It's time to head back soon. Far away we hear some child Wish for journeys to the moon. Raise your hand if that is you And keep your bags all checked. My cat and I return tonight, It'll soon be your turn next.



Did You Know? - You need to sit inside a rocket to go into space. There are different kinds of rockets, but the most common one is the kind that Gul and her cat go in. The rocket takes them to the International Space Station (ISS), which is Gul's home in space for two months. They use a spacecraft called Soyuz to return to Earth from the ISS. - There are spacecraft that go from Earth to ISS carrying specially packed food and water, and other

things that astronauts need to live there. Gul has to be careful with the use of water inside the space station. Every drop is precious.



- Gul and the other objects inside the ISS float like balloons. Anything that is not strapped down will float because they appear to become weightless in space. This happens because the space station itself and everything inside it are falling very fast towards Earth all the time. It is this falling with speed that makes Gul feel weightless. But if they are falling, why doesn't everything not crash on to Earth? That's because our

planet is round, and as the ISS and everything inside it falls down, down, down, the Earth's surface curves away from them and they never reach the ground. - There are no taps inside the ISS because water cannot flow down in a weightless environment. So Gul has to use a special shampoo that does not need to be rinsed off, and she also swallows her toothpaste. If Gul leaves a water bag open by mistake, drops of water will start floating all over the space station and combine to form a big ball of water.



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### **Original Story**

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