

Rocket

by Matt Potter

"I was *Miss Bulgaria 1938*," she said, poised against the cyclone fence. "I was *born* posing for photographs."

She tucked the helmet under her arm, beaming for the cameras. Out of range, I held her make-up bag, a packet of *Delicious Doggie Dollops*, and her poodle Spritzi, limply sedated.

The rocket shone in the distance. Cape Canaveral had never looked so pretty.

Perspiration trickled down my face as cameras clicked. My sticky armpits pinched and my crotch rubbed against the silver man-made suit. Late fill-ins were not correctly sized by Kennedy Center Wardrobe.

"How do you think you'll find Space Camp?" one of the reporters asked.

"Marvellous," she said. "Outer space is wonderful for the skin."

My eyes rolled in their sockets. I had told her that fact, when she gave me the job.

"I will return to Earth looking years younger."

Spritzi nestled further into my arms and supremely comfortable, farted.

"You will not recognise me probably," she said. "I will look younger than even my daughter. And she has had five facelifts."

The rocket groaned. Heads snapped towards the launch pad. A gleaming silver dagger, larger than a Zeppelin, sheared, smashing to the ground. We rushed to the fence, fingers gripping wire as open-mouthed, another massive shard exploded on impact.

Instantly, billions had been lost.

But even she could not stand this reverence.

"Come, Sylvester," she told me. "I now can make my appointment with Marcel. Beauty waits for no one."

