

Jasmine, a North Star Scout in the Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA, was fascinated by space and for as long as she could remember, she watched movies and read as many book as on the subject as she could. She and her Crew were getting together to earn a Challenge on astronomy, and Jasmine was very excited. She went Daniel's house, who was a member of her Crew. They gathered in Daniel's backyard around a telescope.



“I can’t see anything”, Daniel said with frustration.

“That’s because the lens cap is on!” Jasmine said with a laugh, removing the cap.

“Oops”, Daniel said with a laugh.

“Let’s get out our compasses”, Shannon said.

The Crew got out their compasses and could see which direction was north, south, east, and west.

“Right there”, Jasmine said, pointing. “That is Orion.”

“Why do stars have such funny names?” asked Shannon, another Crew member.

“Stars were named by the ancient Greeks who identified them in the night sky. Often patterns of stars, called constellations, were named after mythological people and events”, she said.

“That would explain why Orion and Cassiopeia are hanging out in the sky!” Daniel said with a laugh.

“Wait, I see a red star, it must be really hot!” Daniel said.

“Actually Red Dwarf stars are the smallest and coolest”, Jasmine said and they all were impressed with her knowledge. “Yellow stars like the sun are medium in size and temperature. The largest and hottest stars are Blue Giants. When stars that size fade out, it’s very spectacular; it’s called a super nova.”

“Will the sun die?” Shannon asked nervously.

“Yes, but not for about 5 billion years”, Jasmine said with a smile. Shannon took a relieved breath.

“Why do so many stars look white?” Daniel asked.

“Actually they’re not white”, Jasmine said. “They emit colors of the rainbow but appear in a powerful telescope as different colors. The colors you see are indicative of the temperature of the stars.”

“So there are no white stars?” Shannon asked.

“There are white stars!” Jasmine said. “When a Red Dwarf dies and begins to cool, it becomes a White Dwarf. After it has cooled completely it becomes a Black Dwarf, but that takes trillions of years. There are no Black Dwarf stars in the Universe to date!”

“Wow, you know everything about space!” Daniel said.

“Not everything”, Jasmine responded, “There’s a lot left to learn. For instance, there is Polaris, the North Star.”

“Wow!” they cried.

“That’s not the North Star, we’re the North Stars!” Daniel said and everyone laughed.