
THE STORY OF
Mae Jemison
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THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

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GROWING UP

"My parents were the best scientists I knew, because they were always asking questions."



Mae loved school. She bounced at her desk happily, surrounded by crayons, books, and other wiggly children, waiting for the teacher to call on her.





"What do you want to be when you grow up?" her teacher asked the classroom of five- and six-year-olds. Mae listened closely as the other kids answered one by one.

Doctor. Teacher. Police officer. Mailman.

Mae waved her arm in the air frantically until finally, the teacher pointed at her.

"Yes, Mae, what do you want to be when you grow up?"

"I want to be a scientist!" Mae said proudly.

The teacher looked confused. It was 1961 in America, and at that time, most people did not believe that a little African American girl could grow up to be a scientist. In fact, most people would say it was impossible.

"Don't you mean a nurse?" her teacher asked, shaking her head.

"No," Mae said firmly, "I mean a scientist."





Mae's mother enrolled her in a local ballet studio. Her time studying dance started a lifelong passion. Mae seriously considered becoming a professional dancer. Dancing taught Mae grace, strengthened her body, and gave her an appreciation for hard work. Mae loved to dance, but she would soon discover something she loved even more.

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THE ROAD TO NASA

"Greatness can be captured in one word:
lifestyle. Life is God's gift to you;
style is what you make of it."





On September 12, 1992, Mae Jemison's lifelong dream finally came true, and she became the first black woman to go into space. She was a Mission Specialist for the STS-47 mission on the Space Shuttle *Endeavour*. Wanting to celebrate the arts as well as science, she took with her a poster of an African-American dancer and a special statue made in West Africa.



" I realized I would feel comfortable anywhere in the universe—because I belonged to and was a part of it, as much as any star, planet, asteroid, comet, or nebula."

Young Mae Jemison was a dreamer. While most girls were expected to become nurses or teachers, Mae just knew she would one day become an astronaut. Fascinated by science and the night sky, Mae pushed through the obstacles before her to become the first female African American astronaut. People everywhere will be inspired by this story of aspiration, determination, and grit and will discover that they can achieve anything they can conceive!

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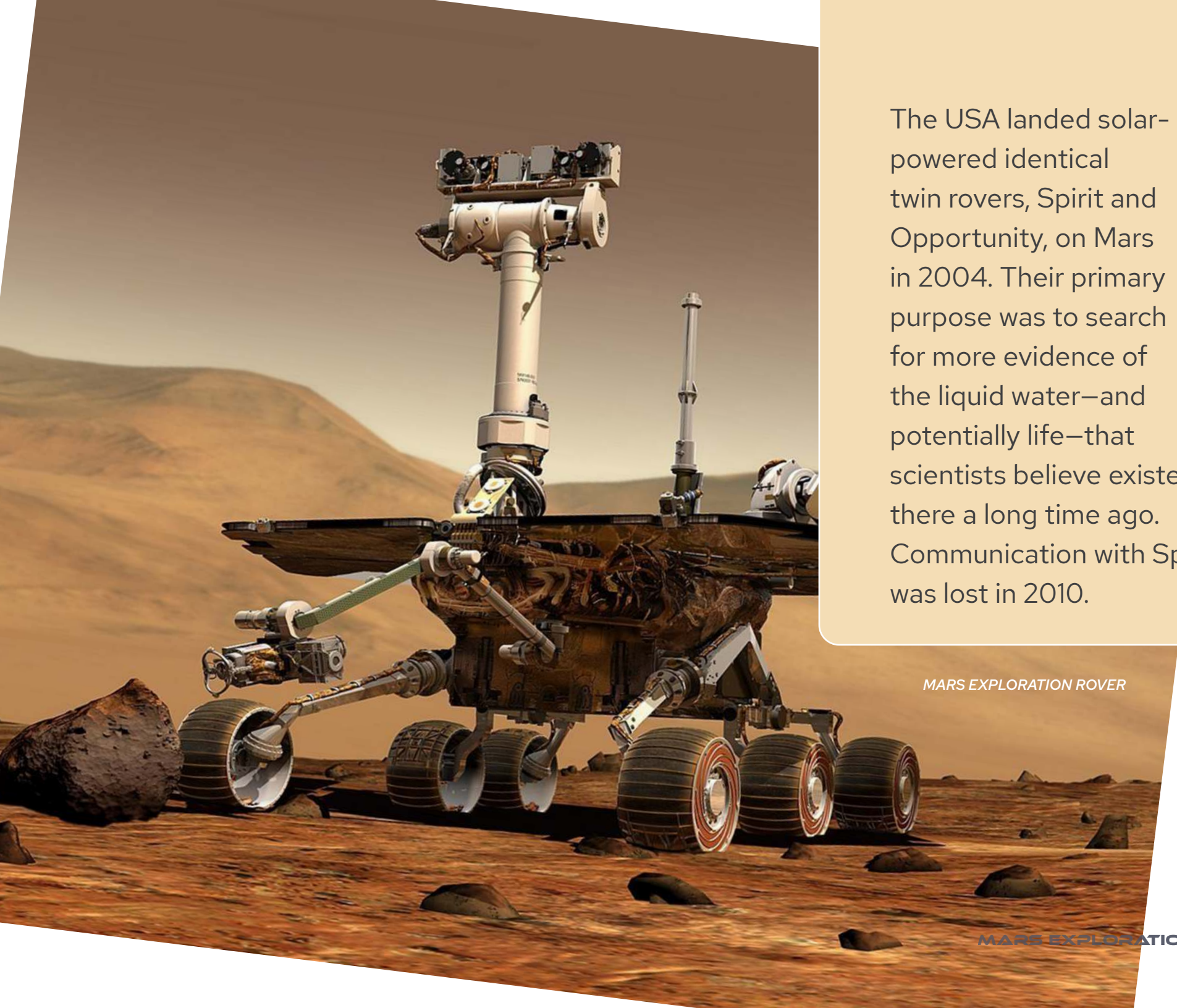


Looking up into a clear night sky, you can sometimes catch a glimpse of a red-tinted sphere among the twinkling stars. That mysterious object is the fourth planet from the sun: Mars. If you have ever wondered what it might be like up there on the appropriately nicknamed Red Planet, you are not alone.

After a month-long dust storm finally cleared, Mariner 9 was able to send back a sizable collection of high-quality photographs that taught us many new things about the dry and dusty surface of Mars. We were able to see towering volcanoes, a vast canyon stretching 4,828 km (3,000 mi), and ancient river beds through which liquid water likely once flowed.







The USA landed solar-powered identical twin rovers, Spirit and Opportunity, on Mars in 2004. Their primary purpose was to search for more evidence of the liquid water—and potentially life—that scientists believe existed there a long time ago. Communication with Spirit was lost in 2010.

MARS EXPLORATION ROVER



Would you believe that a spacecraft has been sent to Mars with the hope of gaining a better understanding of Earth's atmosphere? It's true! If you've ever been listening to the radio and heard static interference that sounded like you were hearing another station over your own music, your radio's signal may have been interrupted by electrically charged plasma layers in our ionosphere. This may also be related to the aurora borealis ("Northern Lights") which also occur in the ionosphere. Exploration of Earth's ionosphere would be extremely difficult here because it is too thin for airplane travel, yet it is too thick for a satellite to orbit without burning up.

AURORA BOREALIS

Mars exploration continues to this day, and it shows no signs of coming to an end. Many spacecraft and rovers have provided us with invaluable information that, rather than satisfying our curiosity, only fuels it all the more. For every question answered, there are always more questions being asked and more answers to be found.



Perhaps one day we will land the first brave human expedition on Mars. Until then, we will continue on our quest for more knowledge about this strange Martian world.



ORIGINAL PUBLICATION

MARS

EXPLORATION | 1960-2016

FOR

centuries mankind has been fascinated by the bright red spot in the sky that is Mars, one of our nearest spatial neighbors. The red planet was discovered in the night skies more than 4,000 years ago and since then has inspired multiple generations with dreams of space exploration and life on other planets. Discover the ongoing scientific journey to photograph and explore this mysterious planet, and perhaps someday, to land the first human being on its cratered surface.

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