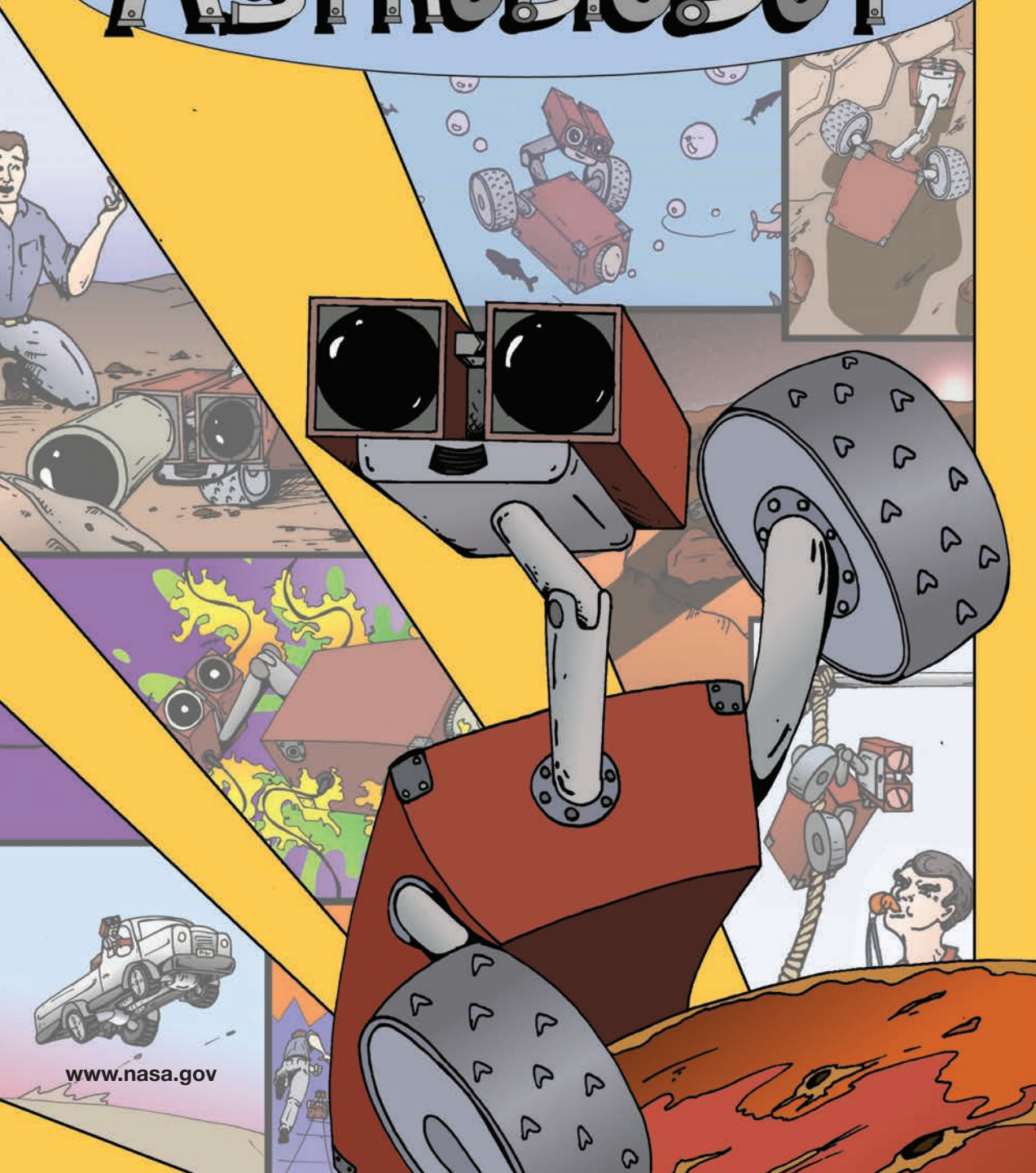




# The Amazing Adventures of

# ASTROBILOBOT



# The Amazing Adventures of AstroBioBot

The Amazing Adventures of AstroBioBot were produced in 2011  
for the Astrobiology Magazine ([www.astrobio.net](http://www.astrobio.net))  
with funding from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)  
Copyright 2011, NASA Astrobiology Magazine

## Concept & Story

Aaron Gronstal and Leslie Mullen

## Artwork

Aaron L. Gronstal

## Layout

Jenny Mottar

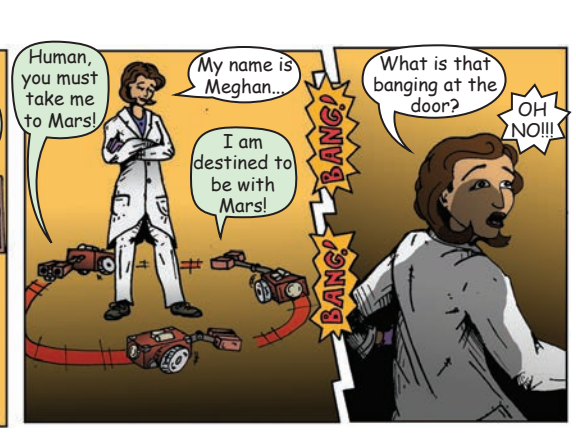
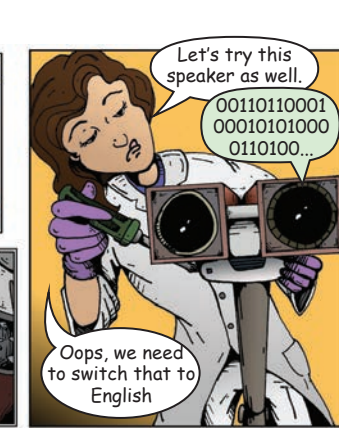
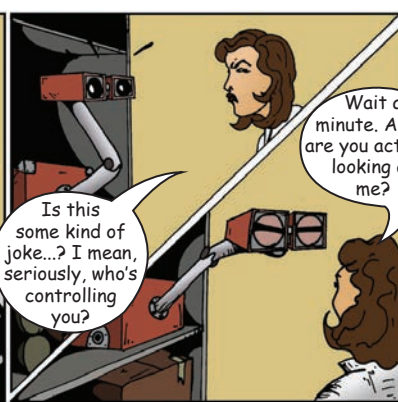
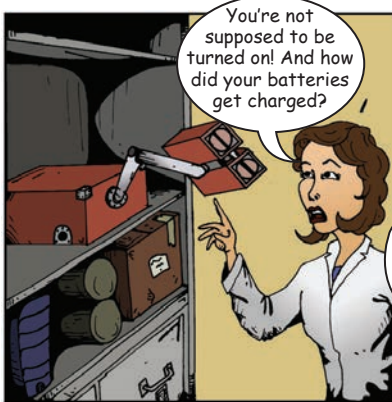
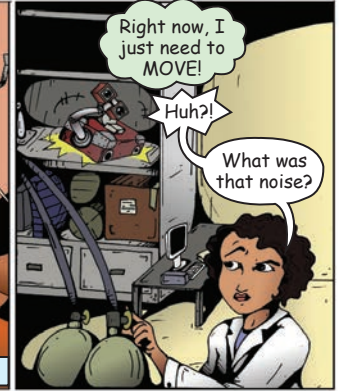
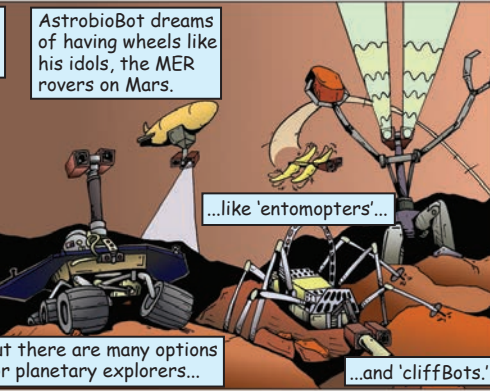
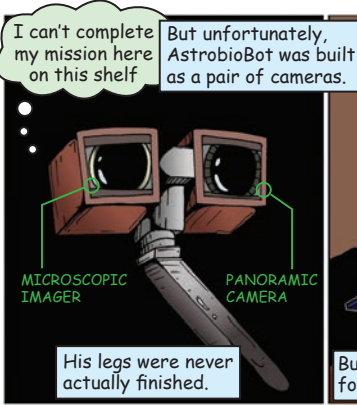
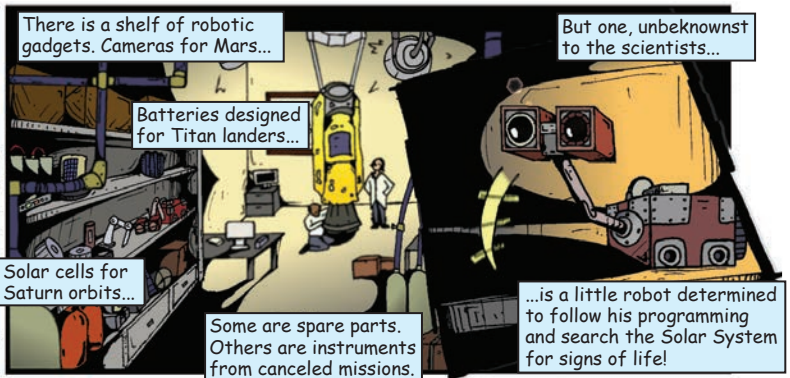
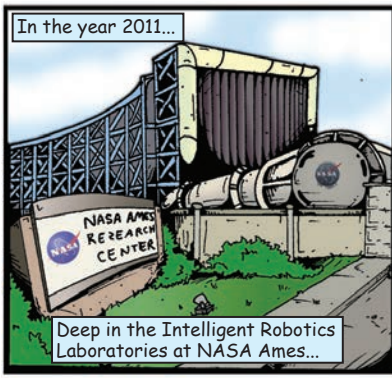
Karyn Traphagen

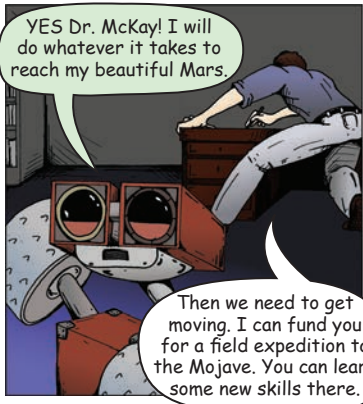
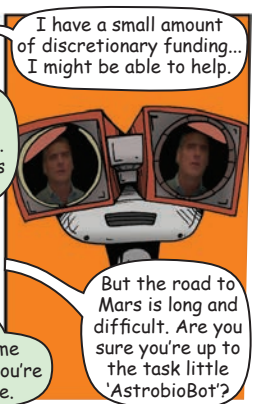
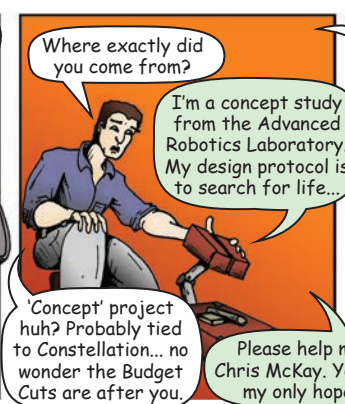
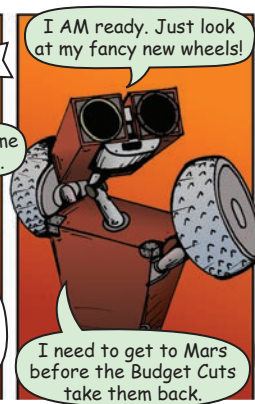
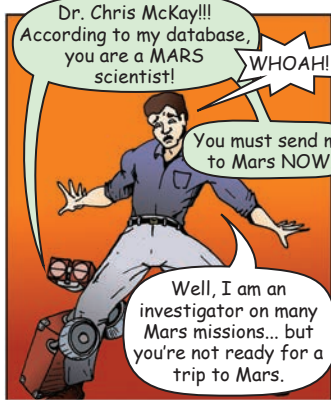
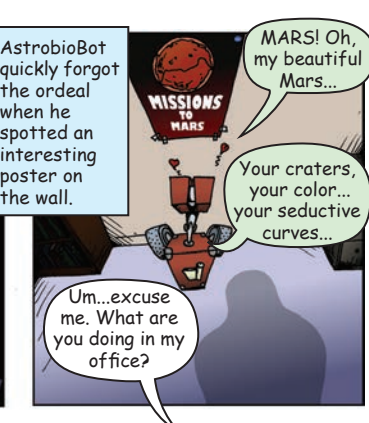
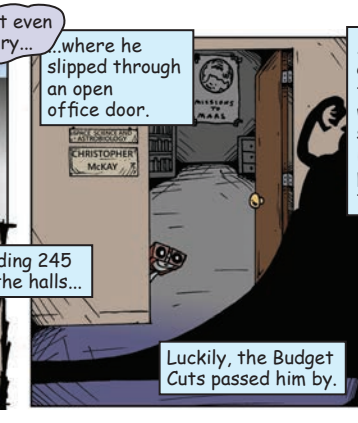
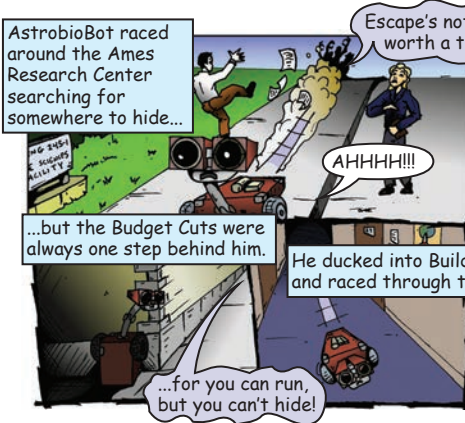
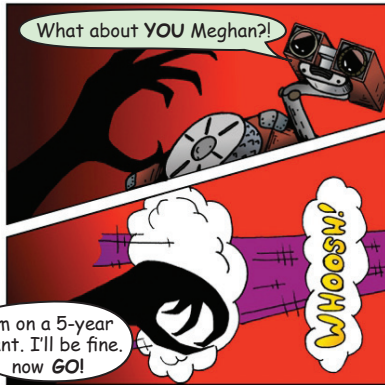
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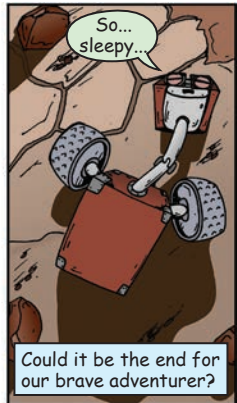
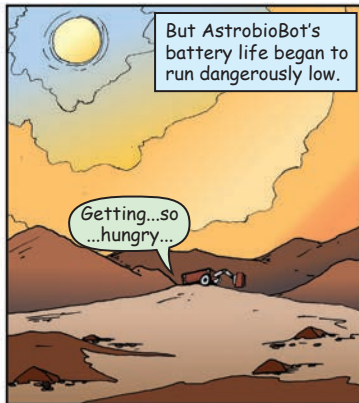
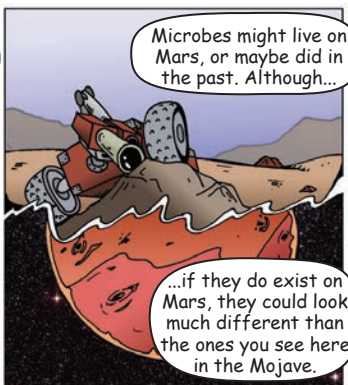
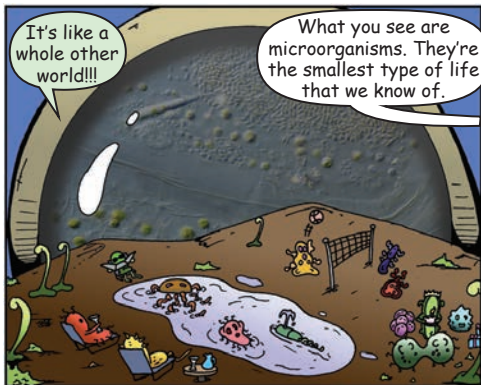
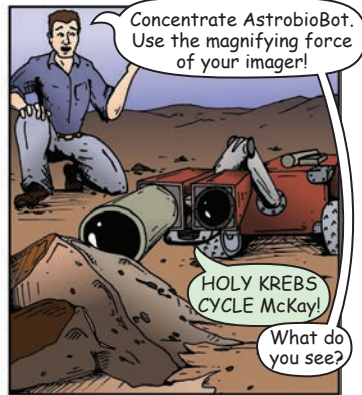
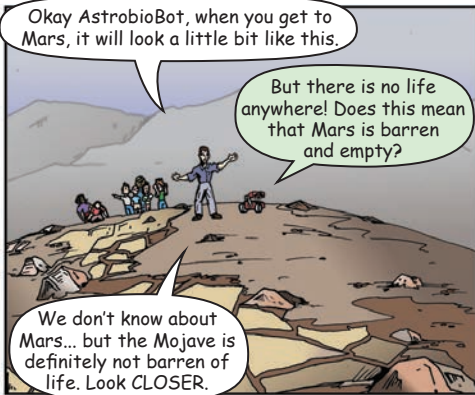
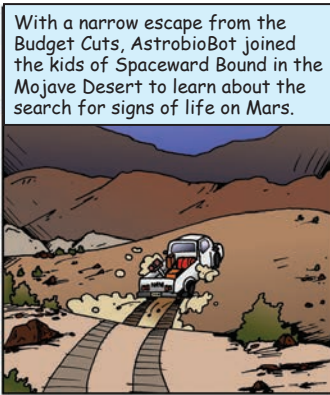
## From the Authors

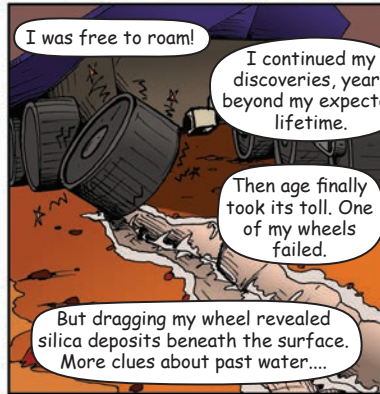
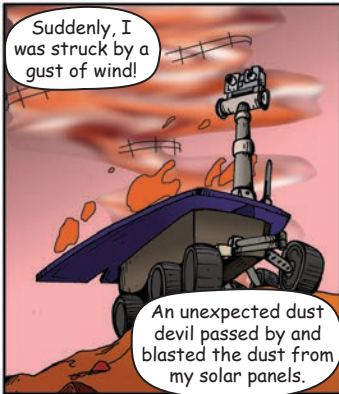
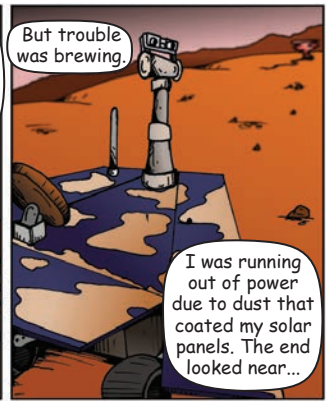
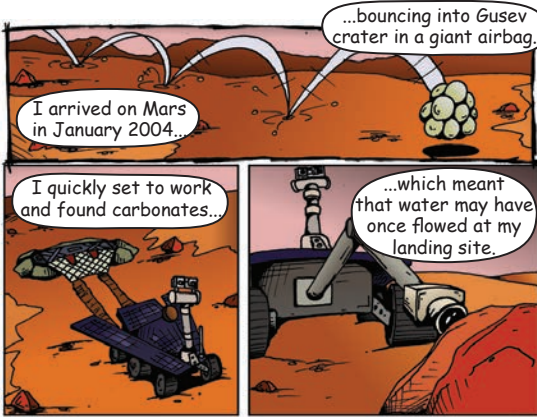
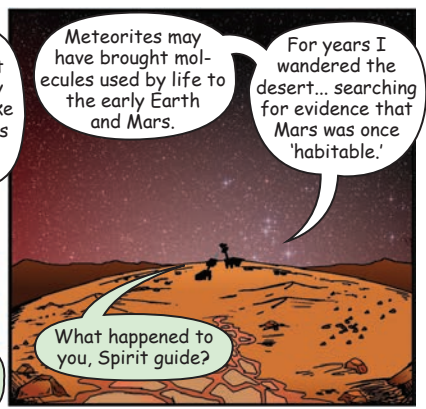
The *Amazing Adventures of AstroBioBot* was a weekly series published in 2012 on the *Astrobiology Magazine* ([www.astrobio.net](http://www.astrobio.net)). We created this series as a light-hearted way to tell the tales of planetary science and the development of a space mission. The story follows a little robotic instrument and his journey to become a full-fledged Astrobiology adventurer. While AstroBioBot himself is obviously fictitious, many of the supporting characters featured in the comic strip are real-life astrobiologists and mission specialists working in planetary science. Many of the experiments and expeditions that AstroBioBot takes part in are based on actual projects being undertaken by NASA, Universities and space agencies around the world. To learn more about the real-life science behind the story of AstroBioBot, visit the *Astrobiology Magazine* at [www.astrobio.net](http://www.astrobio.net).

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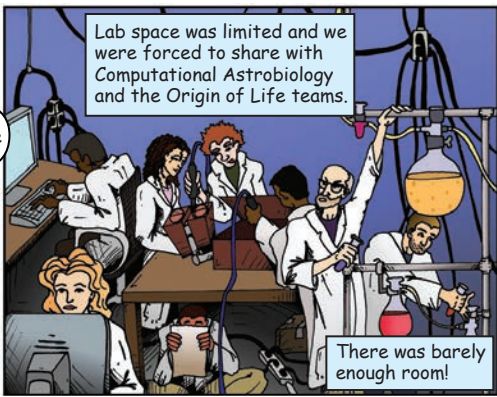
\*Doing Research at Extreme Altitudes by Motivated Students (DREAMS).



Back with AstroBioBot

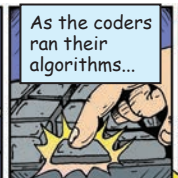
And what is your story little AstroBioBot?

It all began in the Intelligent Robotics Lab...



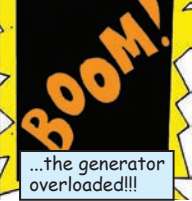
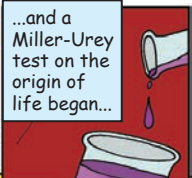
Lab space was limited and we were forced to share with Computational Astrobiology and the Origin of Life teams.

There was barely enough room!

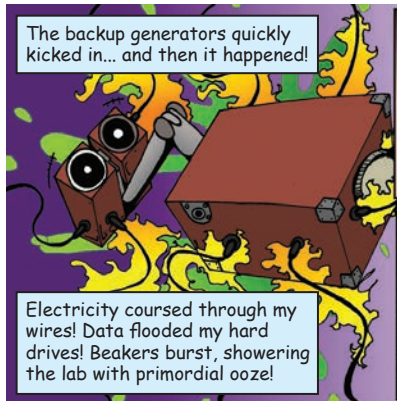


As the coders ran their algorithms...

...and my last circuit was soldered...

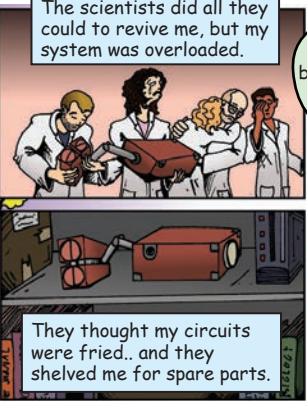


...the generator overloaded!!!



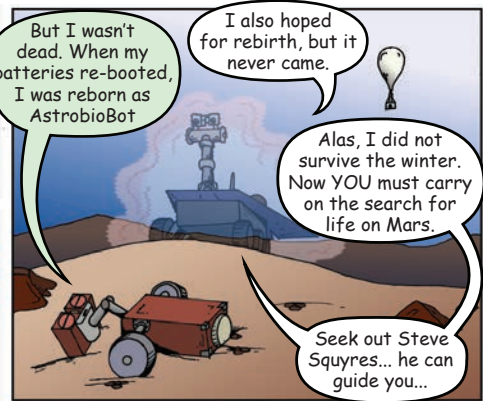
The backup generators quickly kicked in... and then it happened!

Electricity coursed through my wires! Data flooded my hard drives! Beakers burst, showering the lab with primordial ooze!



The scientists did all they could to revive me, but my system was overloaded.

They thought my circuits were fried.. and they shelved me for spare parts.



But I wasn't dead. When my batteries re-booted, I was reborn as AstroBioBot

I also hoped for rebirth, but it never came.

Alas, I did not survive the winter. Now YOU must carry on the search for life on Mars.

Seek out Steve Squires... he can guide you...



As Spirit faded away, hope came from over the horizon.

We've spotted him! Send the coordinates to the rescue team!

Luckily, the DREAMS team had a second balloon. With a camera in the air, they spotted AstroBioBot



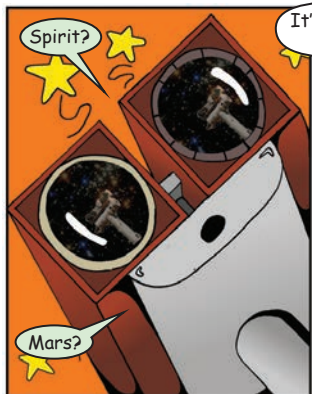
But would they be in time to save him?

His batteries are almost dead. We need to charge them!

Let's hope this works!

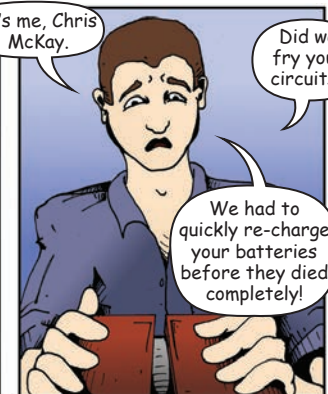


CLEAR!



Spirit?

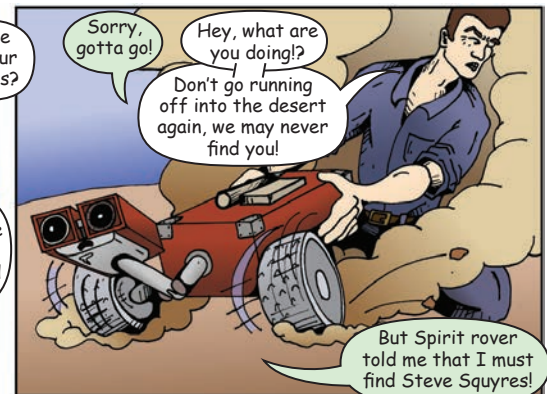
Mars?



It's me, Chris McKay.

Did we fry your circuits?

We had to quickly re-charge your batteries before they died completely!

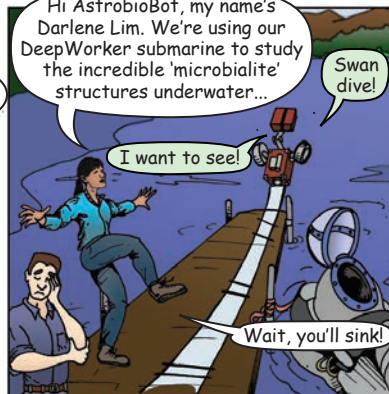
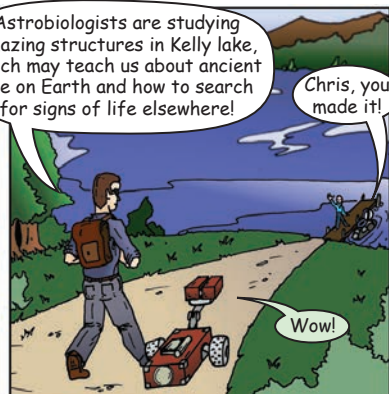
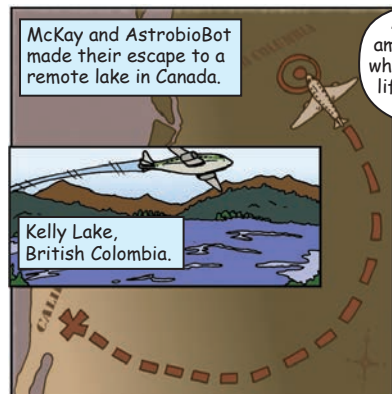
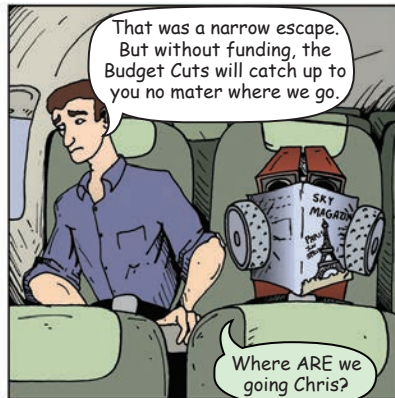
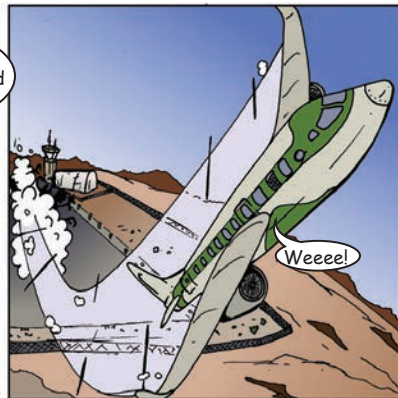
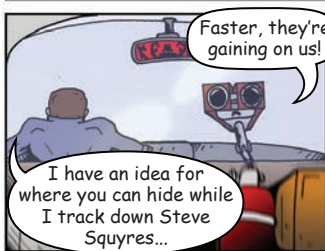
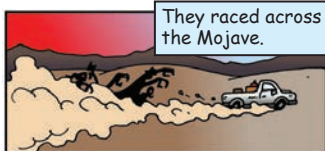
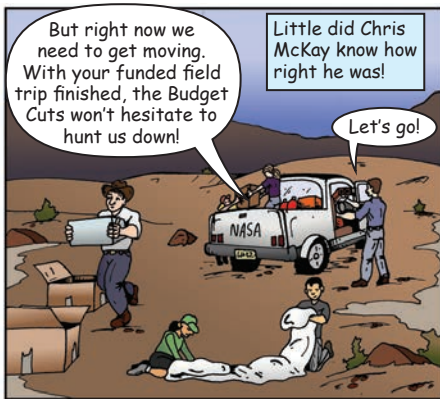


Sorry, gotta go!

Hey, what are you doing?

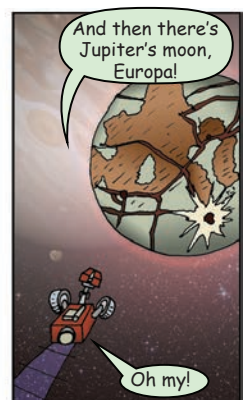
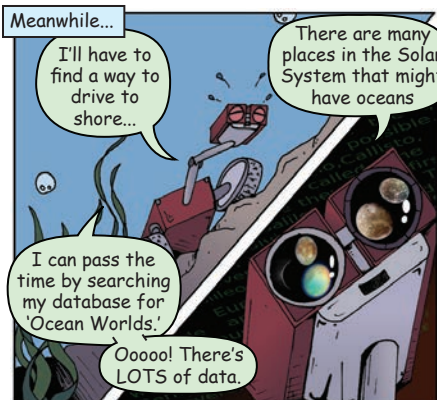
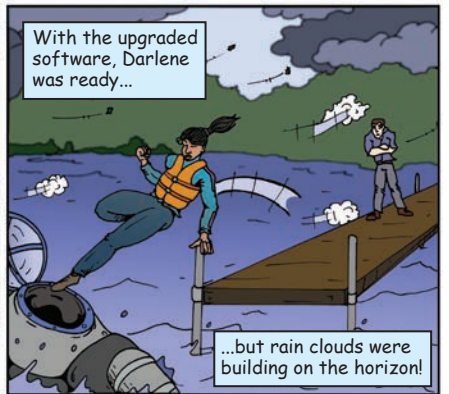
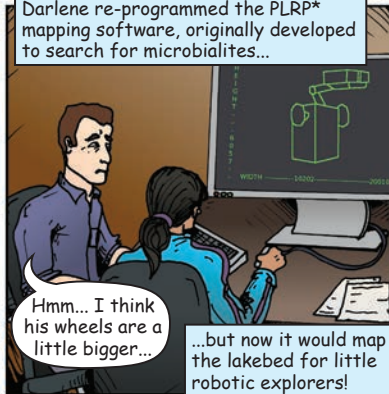
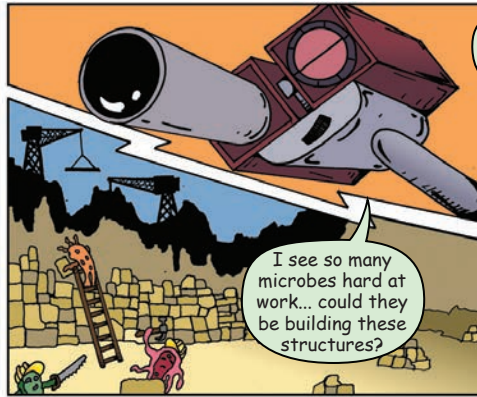
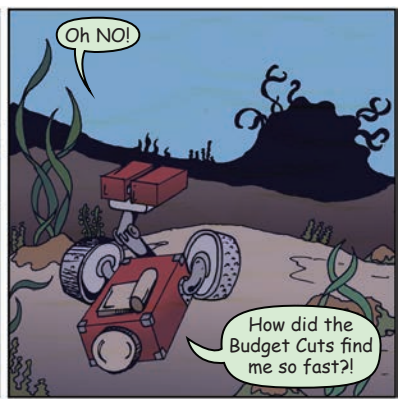
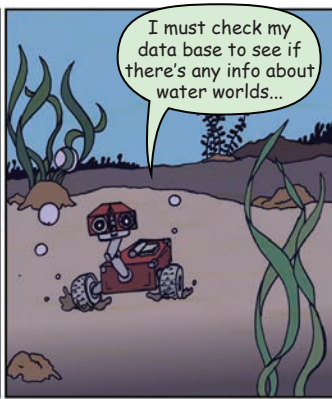
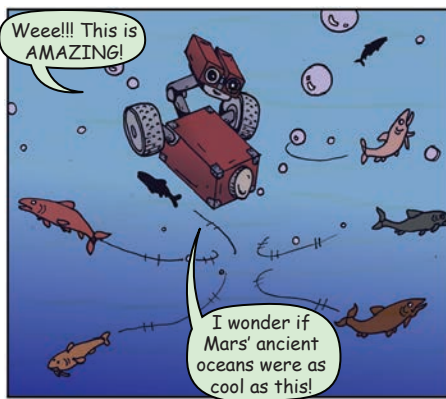
Don't go running off into the desert again, we may never find you!

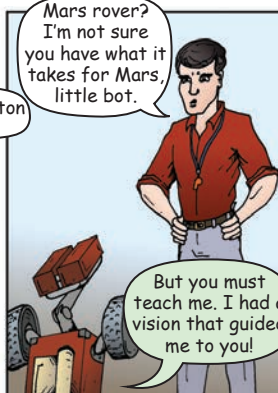
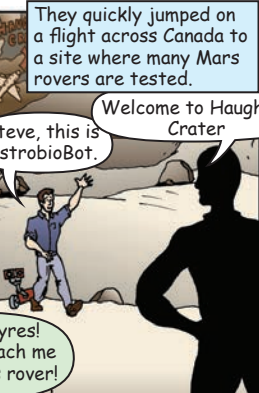
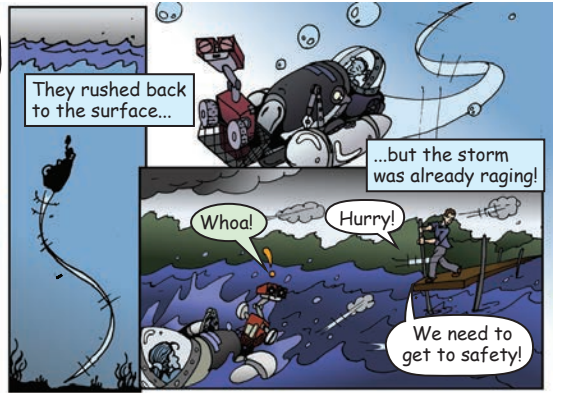
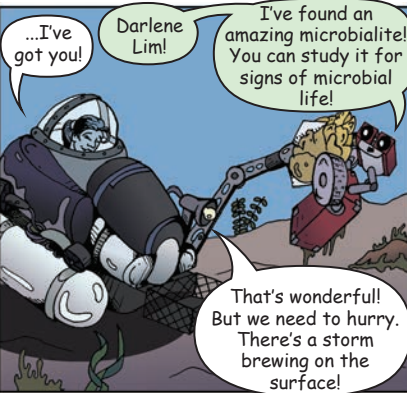
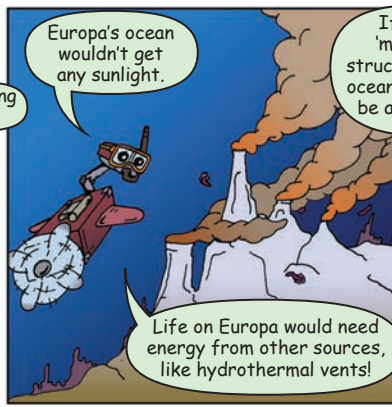
But Spirit rover told me that I must find Steve Squires!

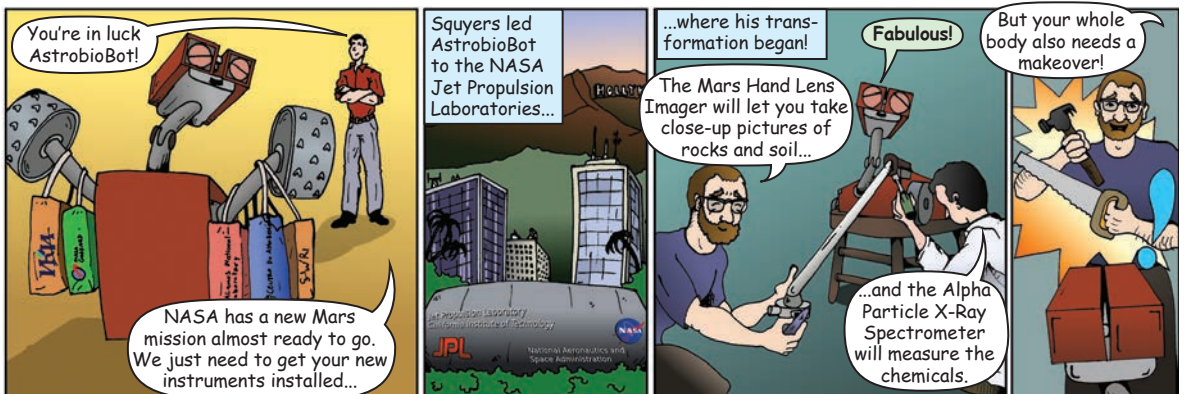
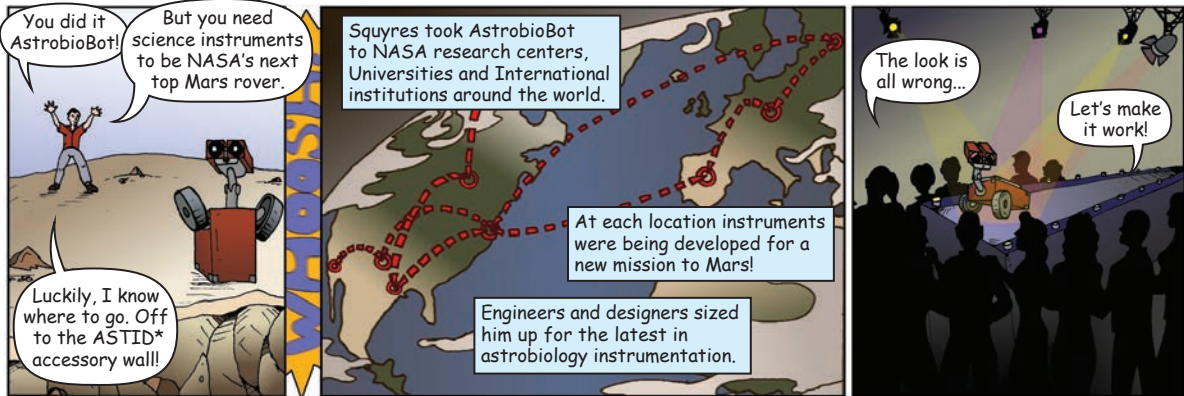
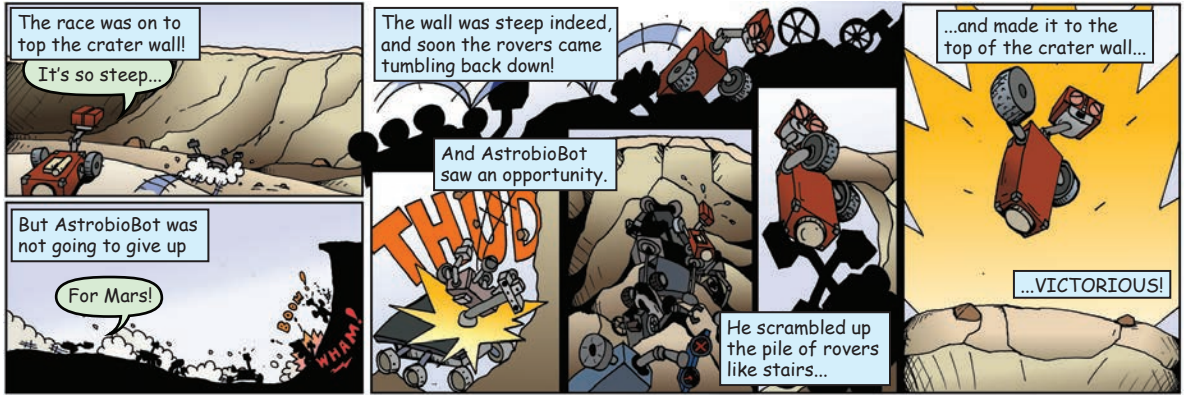
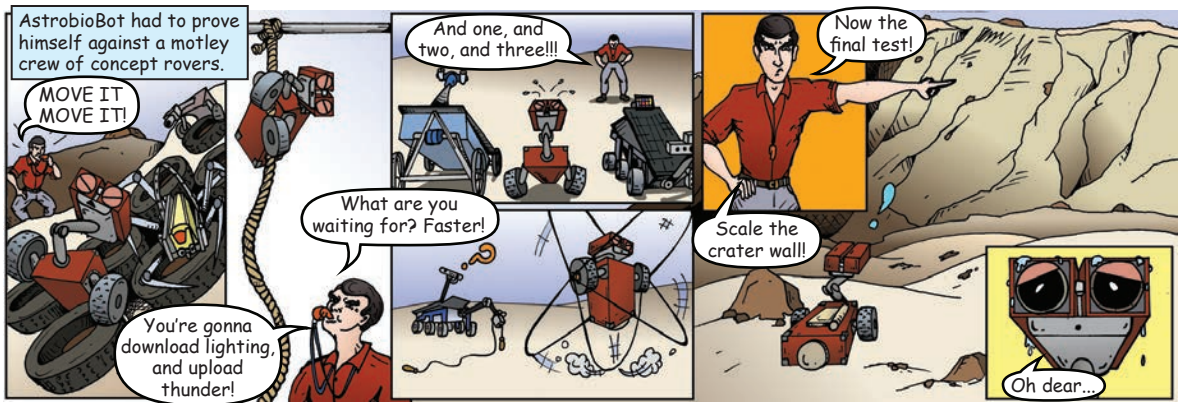


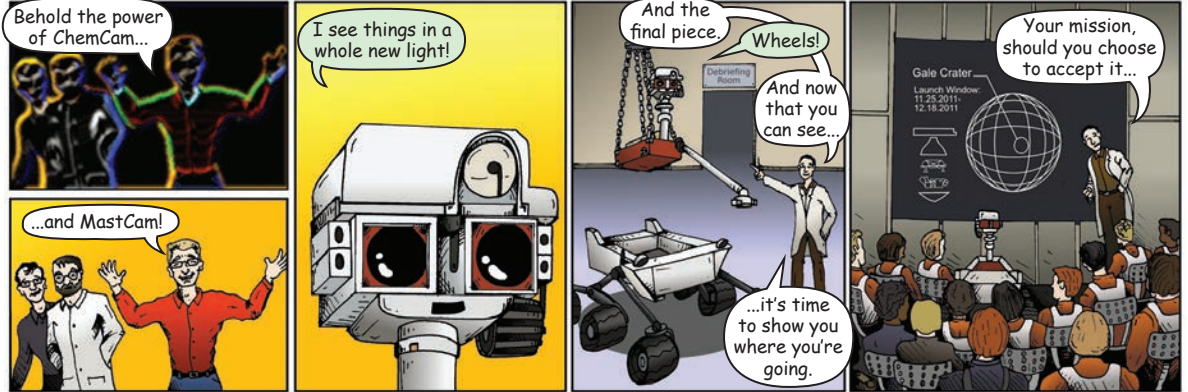
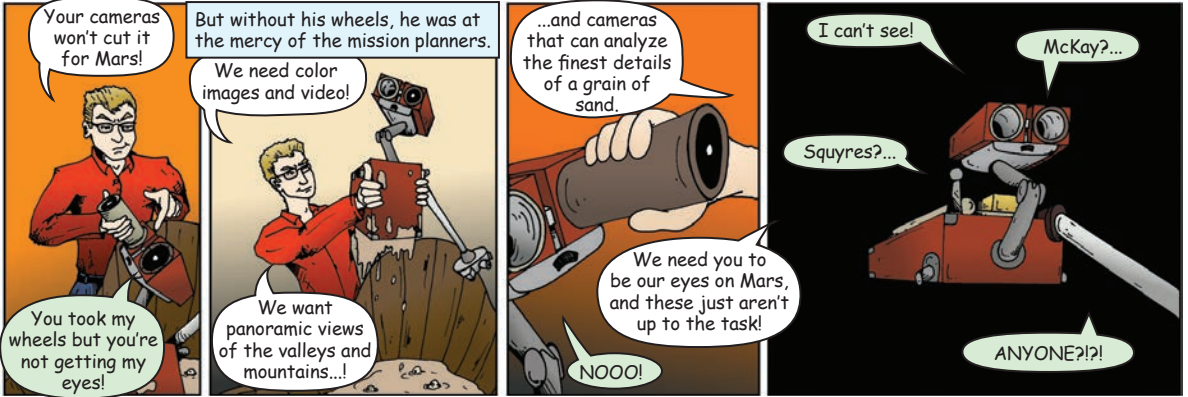
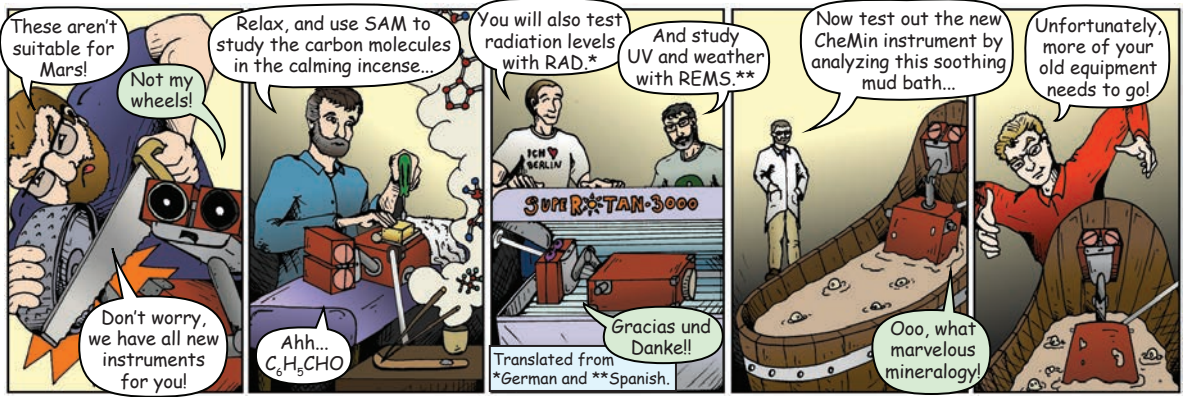
\*Luther Richardson, head of the DREAMS project

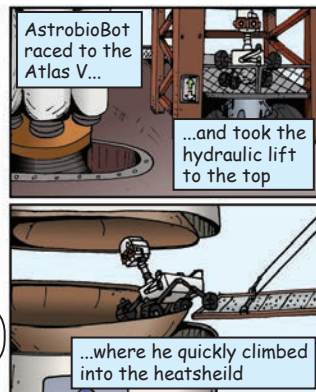
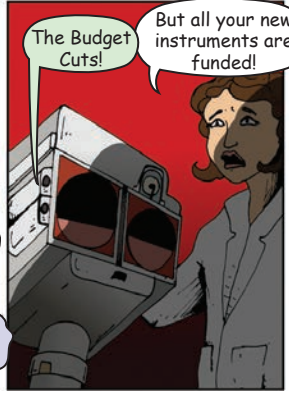
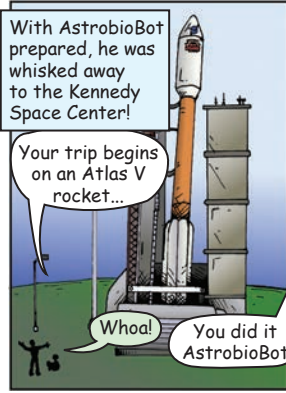
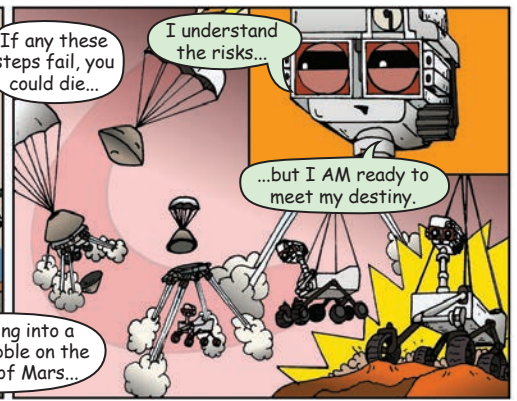


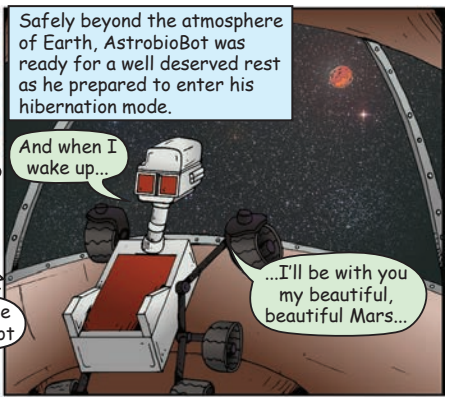
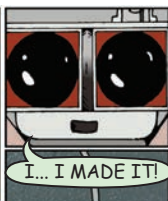
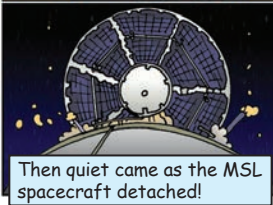
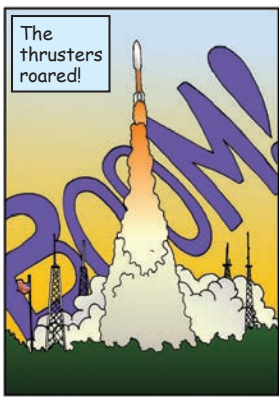




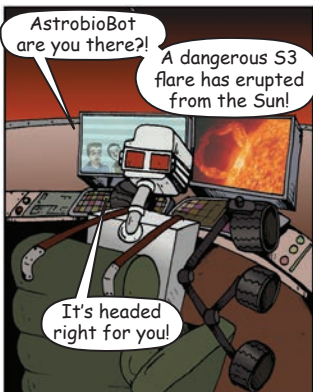
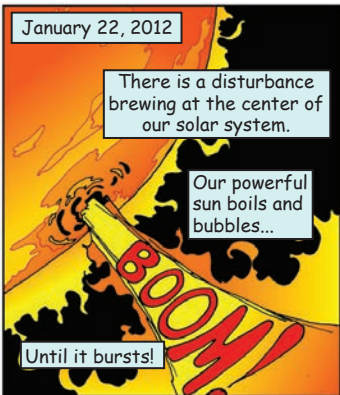


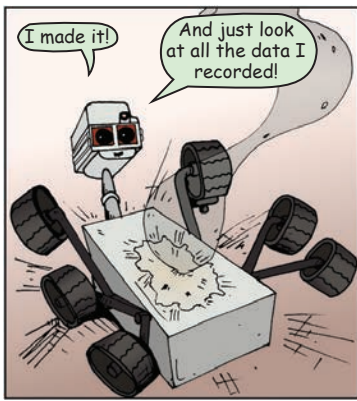






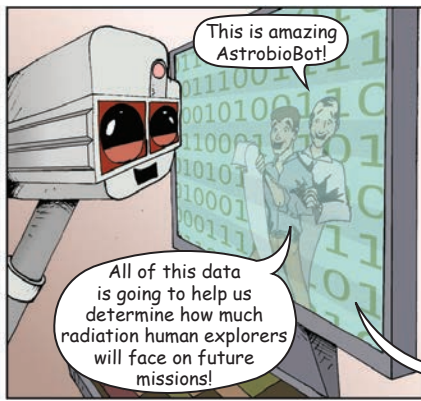
For weeks AstrobiBot drifted silently through space, traveling between the Earth and Mars...





I made it!

And just look at all the data I recorded!

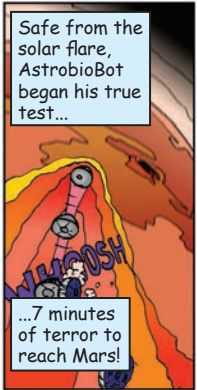


This is amazing AstroBioBot!

All of this data is going to help us determine how much radiation human explorers will face on future missions!



Good work! But now that you're awake... it's time to prepare for the most dangerous challenge you're ever going to face!



Safe from the solar flare, AstroBioBot began his true test...

...7 minutes of terror to reach Mars!

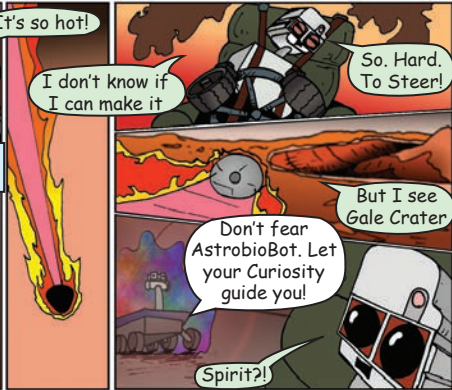


It's so hot!

I don't know if I can make it

He plowed through the atmosphere...

With only his heatshield to protect him!

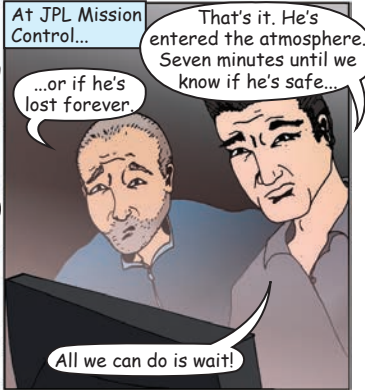


So. Hard. To Steer!

But I see Gale Crater

Don't fear AstroBioBot. Let your Curiosity guide you!

Spirit?!



At JPL Mission Control...

That's it. He's entered the atmosphere. Seven minutes until we know if he's safe...

...or if he's lost forever.

All we can do is wait!



AstroBioBot strained to keep the MSL craft on target!

Almost there!

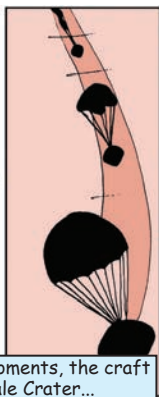
This landing is different than my own... but I will do my best to guide you!



Deploying the parachute

POP!

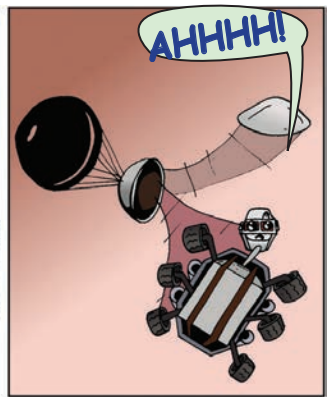
For a few quiet moments, the craft drifted toward Gale Crater...



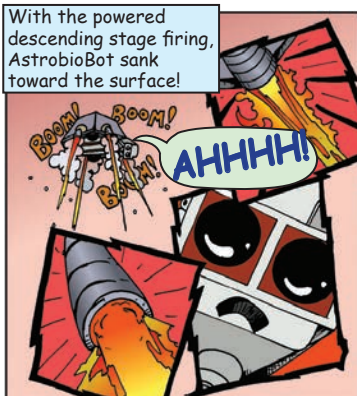
...and AstroBioBot put on his jetpack!

It's time to jump for it AstroBioBot!

Let's hope this works, Spirit!



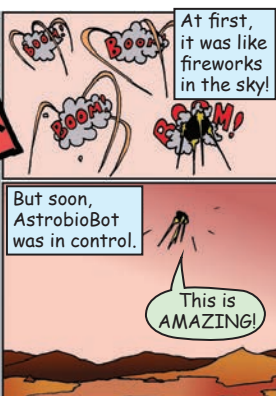
AHHHH!



With the powered descending stage firing, AstroBioBot sank toward the surface!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

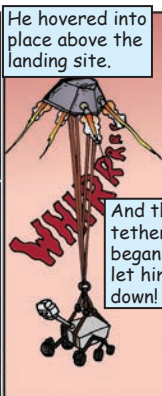
AHHHH!



At first, it was like fireworks in the sky!

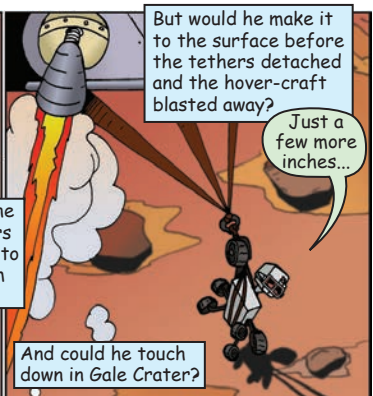
But soon, AstroBioBot was in control.

This is AMAZING!



He hovered into place above the landing site.

And the tethers began to let him down!



But would he make it to the surface before the tethers detached and the hover-craft blasted away?

Just a few more inches...

And could he touch down in Gale Crater?

