

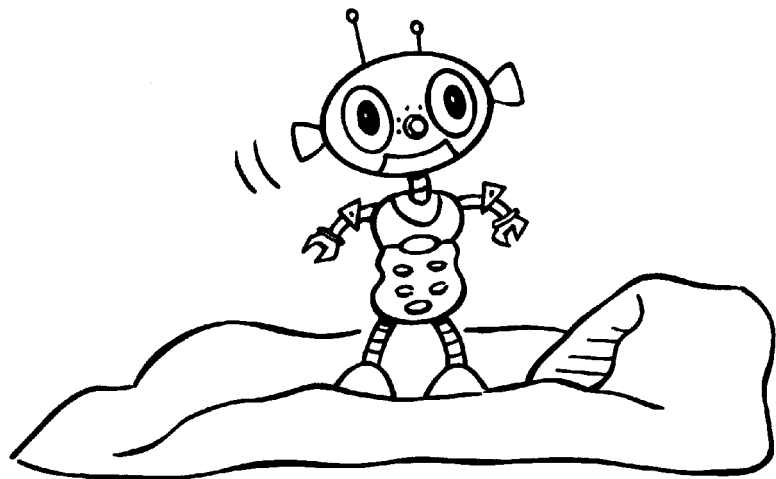


**Tommy Tales are downloadable and printable
books only available on the Internet
from the following websites:
www.learningpage.com
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**Tommy Tales feature the lovable rascal
Tommy Tomkins and his friends.**

**Supporting material is available on the
Learning Page website, including
teaching notes, worksheets, and fact files.**

**Look for the next Tommy Tales adventure—
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BOOK 31



Tommy Goes to Mars



Andy was very excited the night he rang the doorbell at Tommy's house. Mr. Tomkins had bought a new telescope. He had invited Tommy's friends to look through the big new telescope.

Tommy's mother answered the door. She smiled to see the excitement on Andy's face. "Everyone is outside in the backyard," said Mrs. Tomkins.

When Andy reached the backyard, he saw his friends lined up behind the big telescope.



"They communicate with these headsets. I found this one near their buildings," said Kro-lik. "We can hear everything they say."

"Good," said Tommy. "I have a plan that will send our fellow humans away from Mars. Your people will then be free from the diseases they have brought here."

"I hope your plan will work," said Kro-lik.

"First, can you take us closer to where the Earthlings live?" asked Tommy.

"Follow me," said the little Martian. "We will have to take a tunnel underground."



"We would like to help your people," said Tommy. "What can we do?"

"Make the Earthlings go away," said the little Martian. "Make them go, before we all die," he begged.

Tommy sat down on the floor of the cave. He was quiet. He was trying to think of a way to help the Martians.

"How do the Earthlings communicate with each other?" asked Tommy.



Lucy was peering through the eyepiece of the telescope.

"Wow! This is great," said Lucy. "I can see lots of craters."

"You are looking at the planet Mars," said Mr. Tomkins. "Notice how red it is. Look, Sam, you can tell which is Mars without the telescope. It looks like a bright red star."



"I want to see it through the telescope. Come on, let me see, Lucy," begged Sam. "It's my turn."

Lucy would have liked to spend more time looking at Mars. But she let Sam have a turn.

Mr. Tomkins continued to tell the children about the red planet.

“Mars is the fourth planet out from the Sun. Mars is smaller than Earth but larger than Earth’s moon,” said Mr. Tomkins.

“A year on Mars is 687 Earth days. A day is 24 hours and 40 minutes—almost the same as here on Earth. But I don’t want to bore you with facts and figures,” said Mr. Tomkins.

“Oh, no, Mr. Tomkins, it’s not boring,” said Kim. “Please tell us more about Mars.”



The Martian was very frightened. It was trembling with fear.

“Please don’t be afraid of us,” said Tommy.

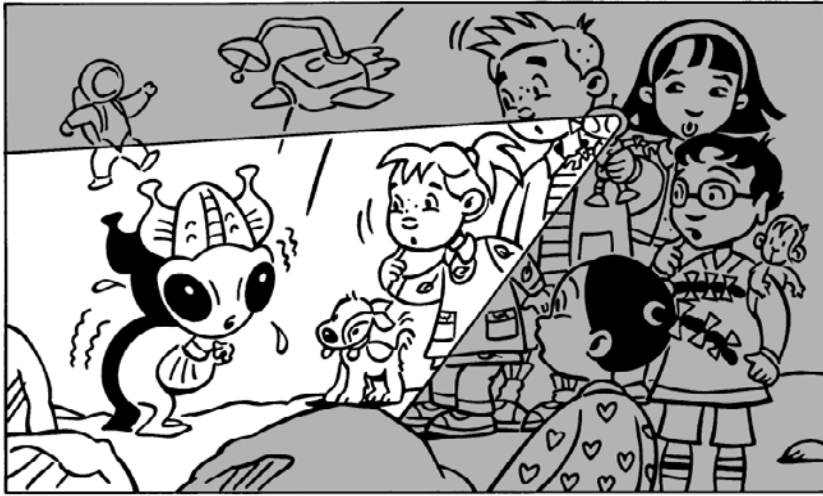
“We will not hurt you. What is your name?”



“My name is Kro-lik. You may not mean to hurt me,” he said, “but most of the people of Mars have died since the Earthlings came here. Your people have brought sickness to Mars.”

“We don’t have any diseases,” said Sam.

“We have to be very careful. There are very few of us left,” said Kro-lik.



They were all shocked to see a little person huddled in a corner. But it wasn't a human being. It had a very large head, huge eyes, and a small mouth. It didn't have a nose.

"What is it?" asked Sam.

"It's a young Martian," answered RK-5.

"I didn't think there was life on Mars," said Lucy.

They were surprised when the Martian began to speak.

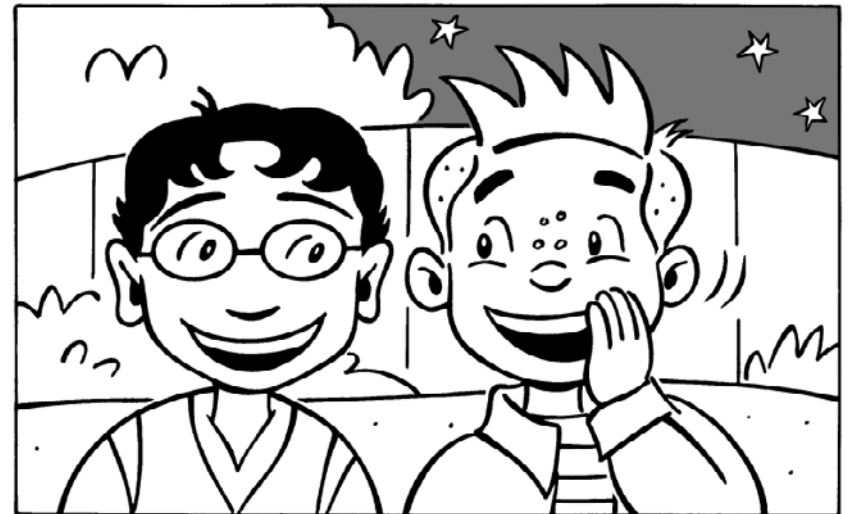
"We have been living underground for centuries," said the Martian.

"Okay. It's very cold on Mars because it's farther away from the Sun. In a Mars winter, the temperature can drop to minus 125 degrees Celsius," continued Mr. Tomkins.

"There are also very strong winds. The winds cause gigantic dust storms. Mars wouldn't be a very pleasant place to visit," said Mr. Tomkins.

Tommy looked at Andy. Andy smiled and whispered, "I think I would like to visit Mars."

Tommy replied, "I think that could be arranged."





The next day, the five friends gathered in the park. Tommy asked everyone to listen to him.

“Andy and I would like to visit Mars. What about the rest of you?” asked Tommy.

“It’s very, very cold there,” answered Kim.

“And it’s super windy on Mars,” added Lucy.

“I know,” said Tommy. “But we can ask RK-5 to take us to the Mars of the future. I’m sure that humans will find a way to live safely on Mars.”

“Maybe in a couple of hundred years time,” added Andy.

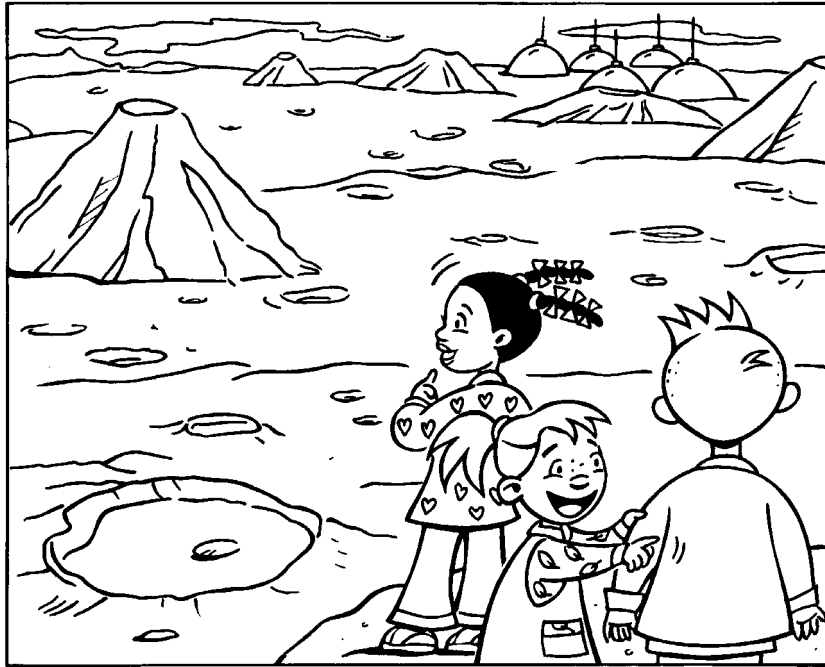
Tommy switched on RK-5’s lights, and they inspected the paintings. Most of the paintings showed astronauts in spacesuits. There were also pictures of different types of spacecrafts.

Suddenly, they heard a noise. It sounded like rocks falling at the back of the cave.

“Oh! What’s that?” said Kim.

Tommy turned RK-5’s lights toward the direction of the noise.





Once they reached the entrance to the cave, Kim pointed out what looked like buildings way off in the distance. They looked like big glass bubbles. Each had a tall antenna sticking out of its center.

“Let’s look inside the cave,” said Sam.

The friends slowly walked into the darkness of the cave.

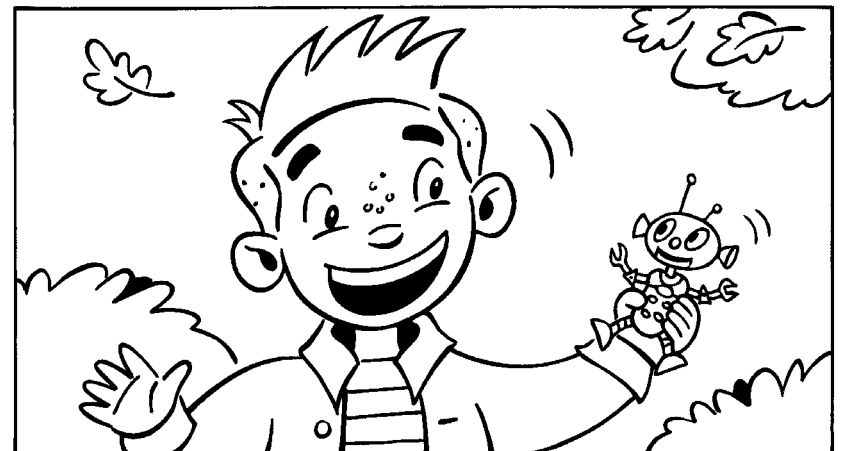
“Look!” shouted Kim. “There are paintings on the walls.”

“Let’s ask RK-5,” suggested Sam. “He may know.”

Tommy pulled his little robot friend from his jacket pocket.

“RK-5, do you know anything about Mars?” asked Tommy.

“Of course I do,” replied RK-5. “I know everything about the fourth planet from the Sun in what Earth people call the Solar System. Mars has a diameter of 6,786 kilometers. The atmosphere on Mars is composed mainly of carbon dioxide with small amounts of nitrogen and argon and . . . ”



"Stop!" said Tommy. "We want to know if humans will settle on Mars in the future."

"Oh, yes," said RK-5. "Humans will be living on Mars 250 years from now."

The friends smiled and decided that they would go to Mars. RK-5 told Tommy which numbers to press. Tommy pressed the numbers on the little robot's chest.

Within seconds, there was a flash of light and a cloud of blue smoke. Tommy and his friends were on their way to Mars.



When Tommy opened his eyes, he saw a rocky area covered with red dust.

"What about our spacesuits?" asked Sam.

"You don't need spacesuits," said RK-5. "The humans have controlled the atmosphere on Mars. It is now safe for Earth people."

Tommy spotted a cave. It was high up on the side of a hill. "Let's go up to that cave," he said. "We can have a better view of what's nearby."

They set off to climb the hill.