

# THINGS I WILL MISS WHEN I GO TO MARS

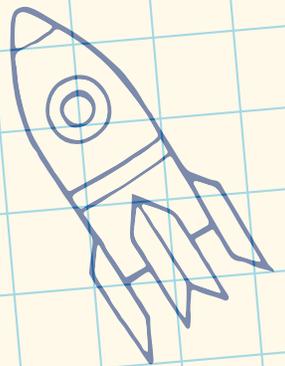
(in no particular order) \*

- ice cream
- my parrot, Buzz Aldrin (and all other birds)
- the hot smell of Earth summer
- the trees and the lakes and the night
- Dad
- the way Mom makes everything prettier than it has to be \*
- that I can close my eyes and smell home \*



# THINGS I WILL NOT MISS WHEN I GO TO MARS

- I will not miss Eleanor, same gene pool or not
- The smell of the inside of the school
- school, in general \*
- mosquitoes
- doing and saying all the wrong things \*
- missing Tig \*



# MARS NOW APPLICATION

## Welcome to MARS NOW!

At **MARS NOW**, we believe that we are your future. Exciting, right? Even if you are not chosen and end up living out your days on Earth, what we are doing now and over the next decade will change the world. We will have two worlds. It's unprecedented in human history. It's unprecedented (as far as we know!) in the history of the Universe.

By filling out this application, you are saying that you are ready to sacrifice everything to be a part of mankind's first step into the future.

We like you already.

But first! Some technicalities. Please fill out the questions on the right to the best of your ability. Think about your answers carefully. We know who we are looking for, and that person may just be you.

NAME	MISCHA LOVE
DATE OF BIRTH	OCTOBER 1, 2005
GENDER	FEMALE
CITIZENSHIP	AMERICAN
HEIGHT	5' 3" (PRESENT DAY)
BMI	18
ADDRESS	1430 LAKESHORE DRIVE LAKE OCHOA, CALIFORNIA, USA
EDUCATION	TEDDY ROOSEVELT MIDDLE SCHOOL*
NOTES	*IMPORTANT: Before mission leaves, I will have completed a degree in Plant Biology at Stanford University with a specialization in Martian agriculture, which doesn't exist yet, but it should.

## ESSAY

Now we want to know more about you and why you are the best candidate to take to Mars with us on one of our early missions. Remember, this isn't just about science. This is about life.

What makes you a survivor? (Essay form, less than 500 words.)

My name is Mischa Love and I am twelve years old. I know quite a lot about Mars, but like you said, this isn't science.

My answer to your question is a lot shorter than 500 words, because it is just this: Mars is where I belong.

Do you know how sometimes you just know a thing? My mom says that falling in love is like that, that the first time she saw Dad, she just knew. That's my answer about Mars: I just know.

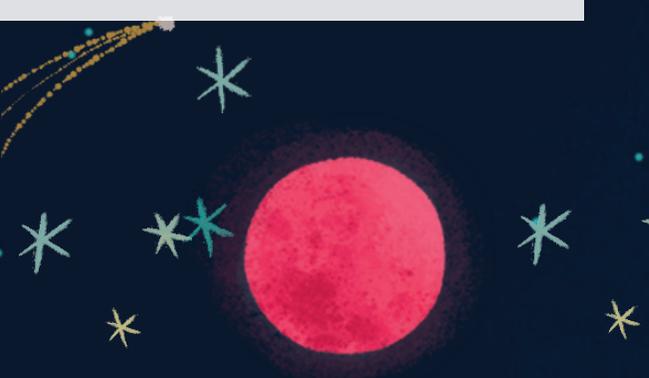
You won't regret selecting me. I'm smart and interesting and focused and I'm working on getting along better with people. I'll learn some jokes. A sense of humor is going to be important. It always is, that's what my dad always says. Maybe jokes will be the things that will help us all to survive. Not just me, because there's no "me" in "team," right? This is about all of us. Together.

What makes me a survivor? Mars is going to make me a survivor.

You'll see.

Yours sincerely,

Mischa Love



# MARS NOW



In Karen Rivers's riveting new novel, Mischa "Ish" Love's celestial-sized dreams for a future on Mars go heartbreakingly awry when her best friend moves away and an unexpected medical diagnosis threatens to rewrite her future.

Here's something you might not know: We are all made of stars. Up until last week, I just thought that was another poetic lie, like you see in the dentist's waiting room scrawled over a terrible painting of a night sky with the artsy-blurry kind of stars that make you feel like you need glasses. But according to Google, it's an actual fact: Every element on our whole planet—on all the planets—was created by imploding stars. People talk about how God created the world but really, the stars did. The stars are God. And we are stars. Think about it.

Why do we think that what we look like and what we wear matters at all, given that we're celestial? It doesn't! Who cares who you sit next to when you eat your sandwich at lunch? Why does it feel like it matters when Amber Delgado laughs at you in gym class when you fall off the uneven bars and practically break your neck on the mat? Those are all just lies that our brains trick us into thinking are important so we don't remember that even though we're made of dead stars, we're alive, and one day, we're going to die, too.

I bet they just left the word *dead* off the poster and the coffee cup because death freaks people out. But everyone dies. What's the big deal? Life is a one-way trip for everyone. Right this second, your cells are slowly falling apart and you are that much closer to being dead, to being finished with your story. Don't you want yours to be amazing?

I do.

I don't believe those stars died so that we could have boring jobs so we can afford to buy a bunch of stuff that we later throw away, overflowing the landfills so bad that we have to leave the planet, which is exactly what's happening. It's already happened. Mars is the only option. Everywhere else is just too far. You might think that we can clean up the Earth and save the day, but no one is doing it. They are all just looking at their phones and complaining about the weather and not doing anything to undo the damage that's been done! It's a travesty.

And it's also why Mars is so important.

Everyone's scared, but not me. I'm ready. I was made for this. Mischa Love (Dead star #7,320,100,901), reporting for duty. I'm not going to waste this amazing, incredible life that the stars gave me. I'm going to be brave. I'm going to be special. I'm going to do what everyone else is scared to do.

And I'm going to be first in line to do it.