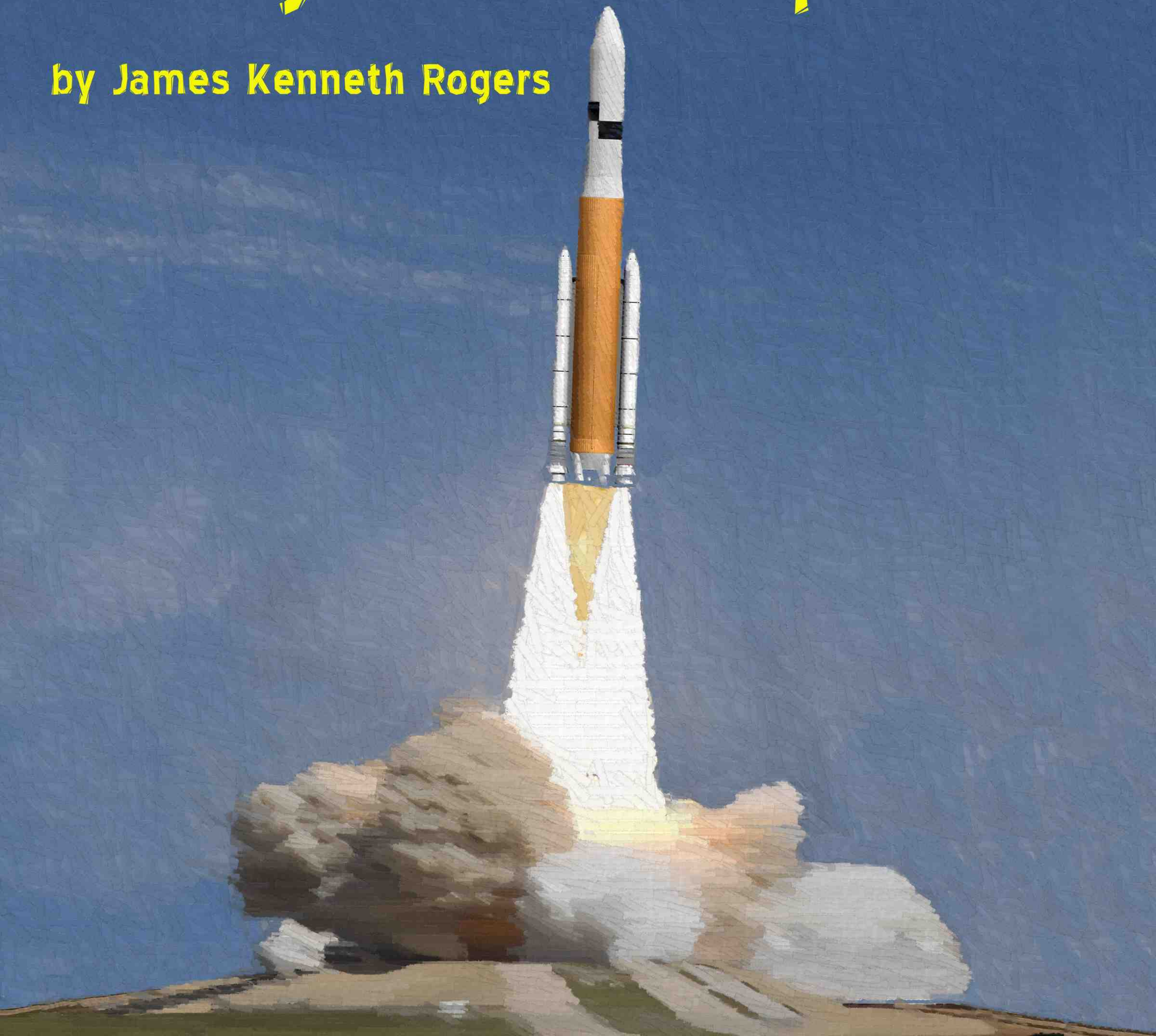


Let's go visit the planets!

by James Kenneth Rogers



Let's go visit the planets!

by
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To Alyson and to my boys, Marcus and Alexander

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The illustrations on pages 4 through 19 are based on NASA images.

You live in your home, it's true.
But you live in a much bigger place too.

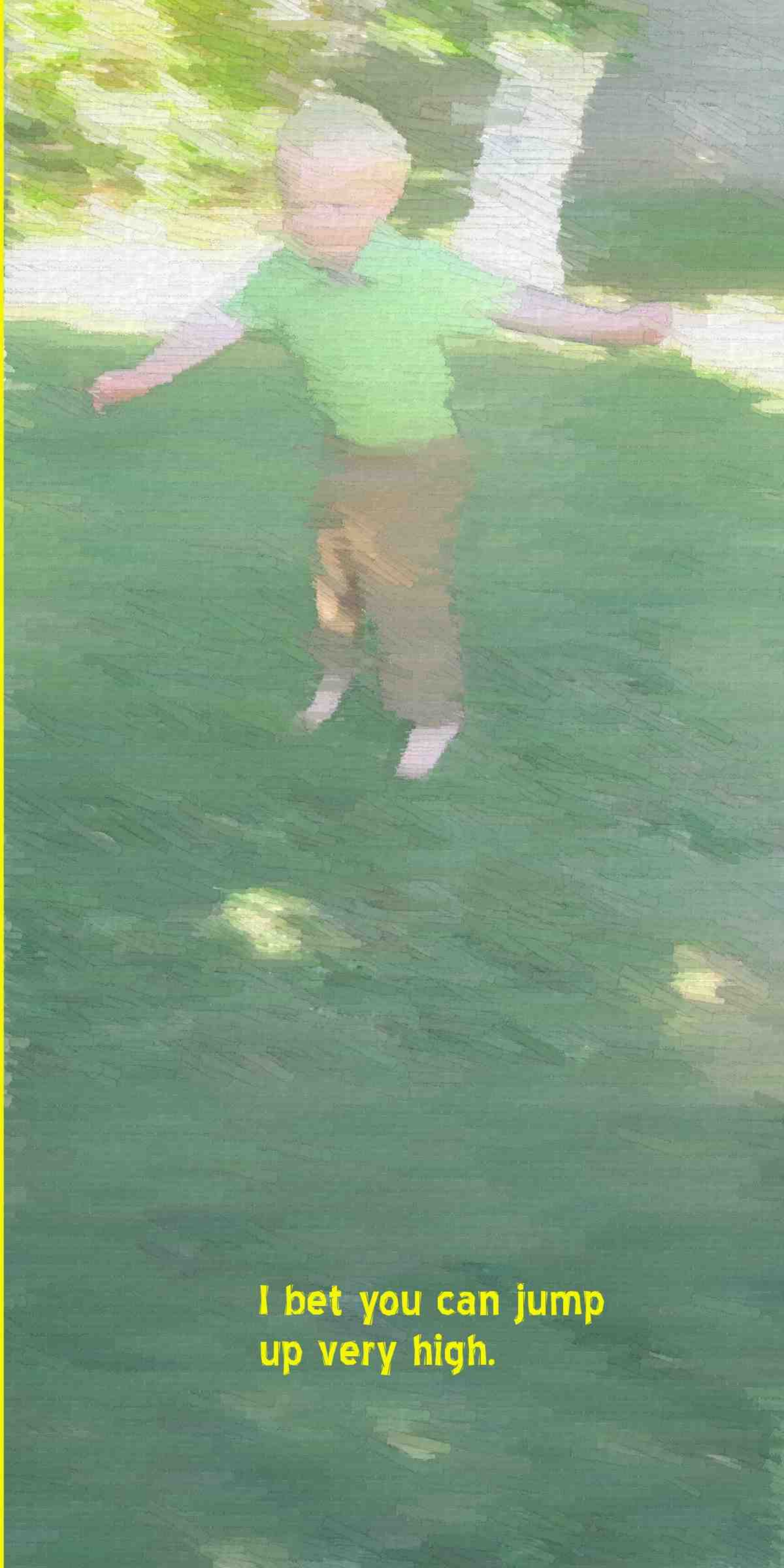


**If you walk out a little ways from your home,
you'll see a neighborhood where you can roam.**



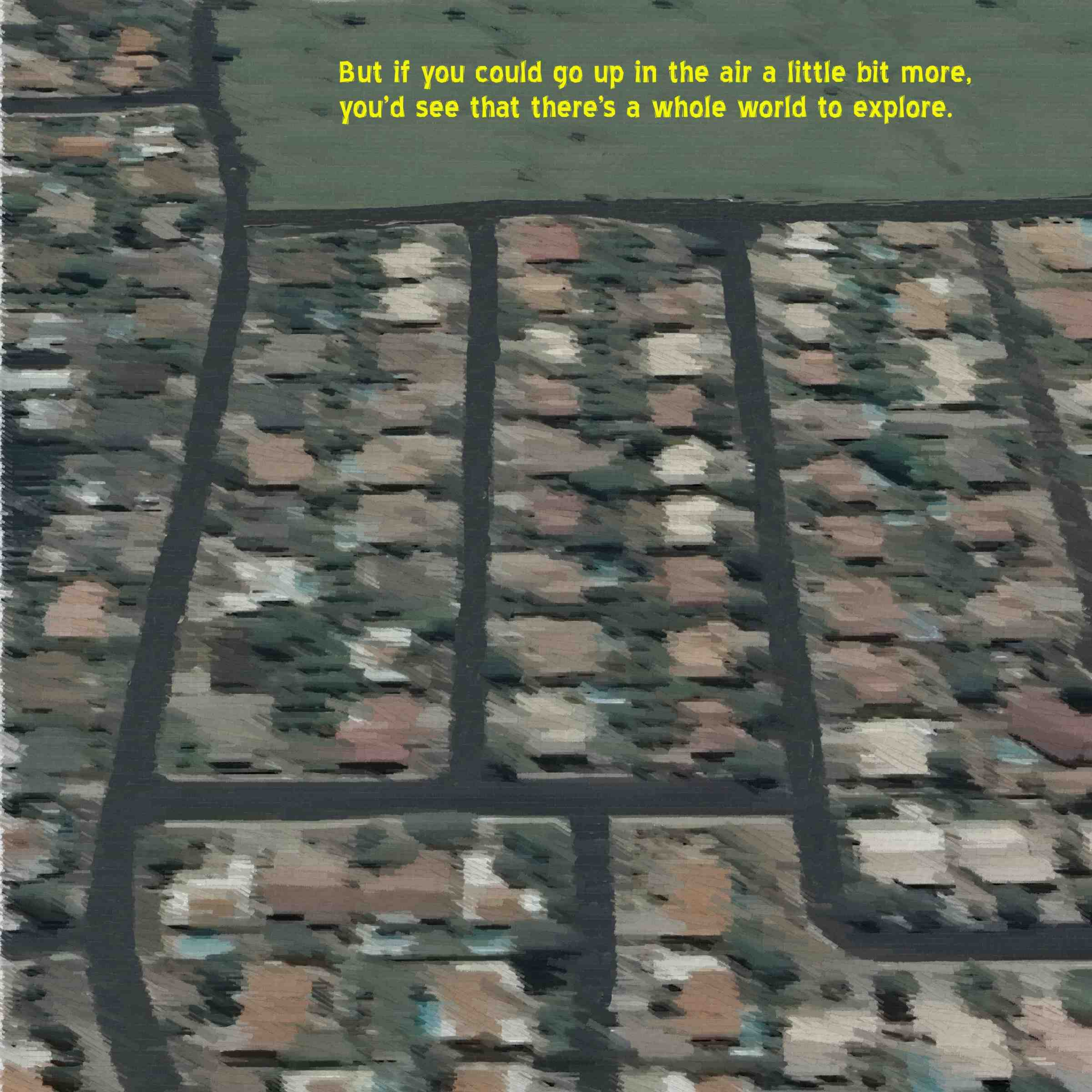


Can you jump high
up toward the sky?



I bet you can jump
up very high.

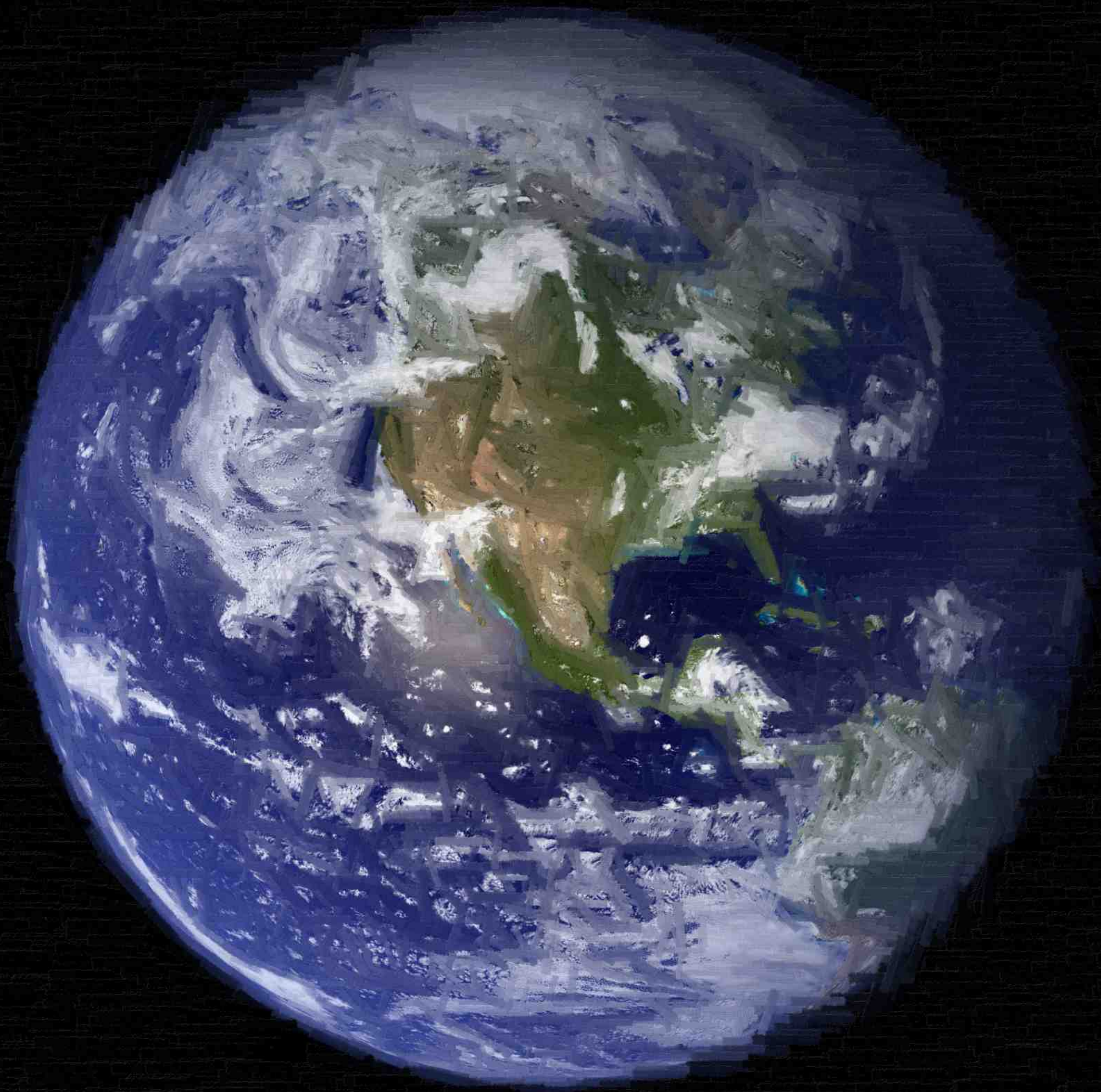
But if you could go up in the air a little bit more,
you'd see that there's a whole world to explore.



You want to go up even higher you say?
Well, you'd need to ride in a rocket
to go up that way.

Hear the countdown: 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1.
See the flames and smoke - what fun!



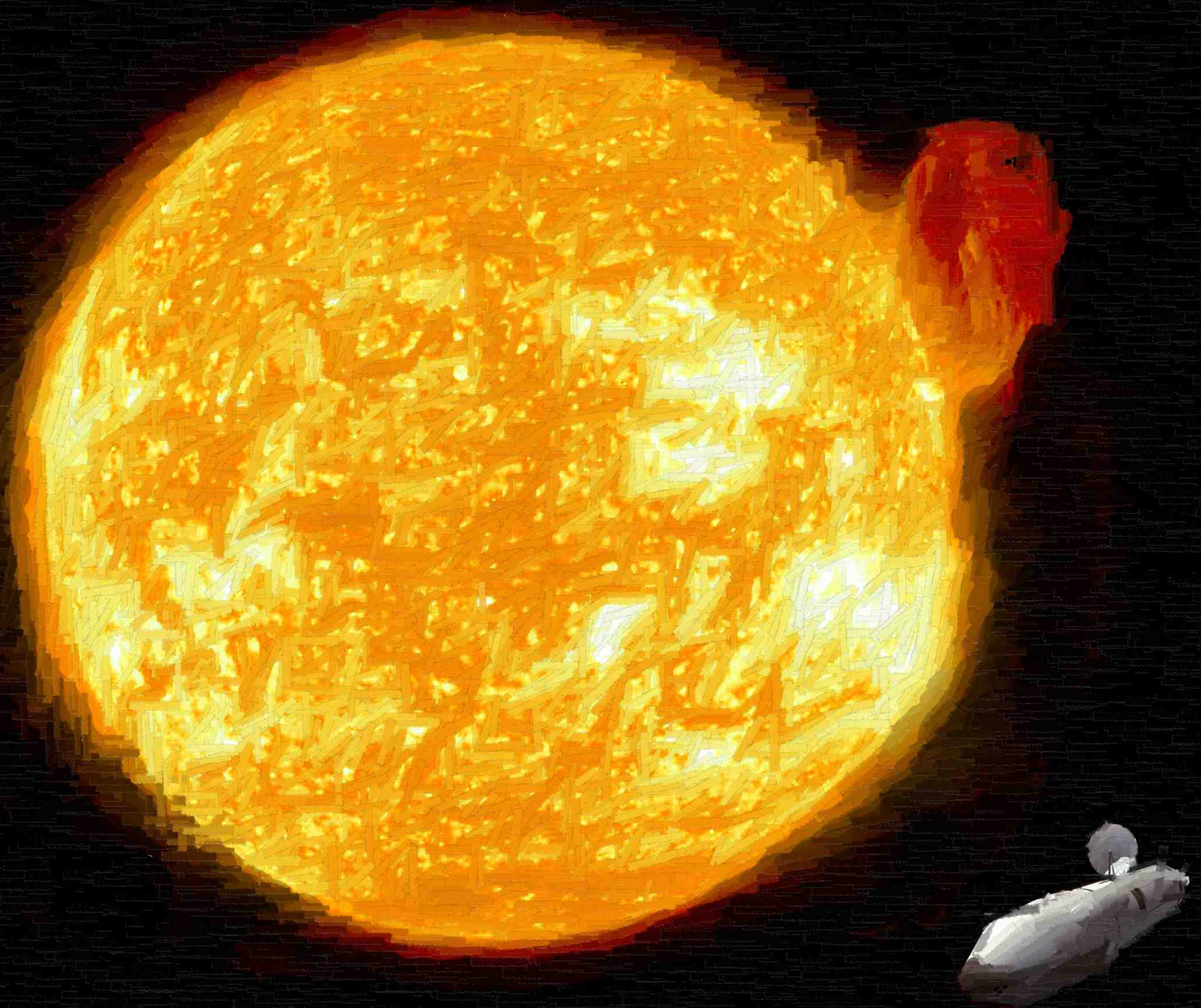


**Now you can see the Earth where you and everyone else lives too.
It's made of rock, but mostly covered in water - that's what makes it blue.
Our world is a giant ball, which means that it's round.
But it's so big you can't see it curve when you're standing on the ground.**



**Now let's take our rocket ship a little farther out.
The next thing that we'll pass is the Moon, no doubt.
The Moon is a giant ball of rock full of craters and mountain peaks.
It circles around the Earth about once every four weeks.**

**Next let's go visit the Sun, won't that be nice?
It is pretty far away, 93 million miles to be precise.
The Sun is a ball of hot gas of enormous size.
It's also quite bright, so don't stare at it with your eyes!**

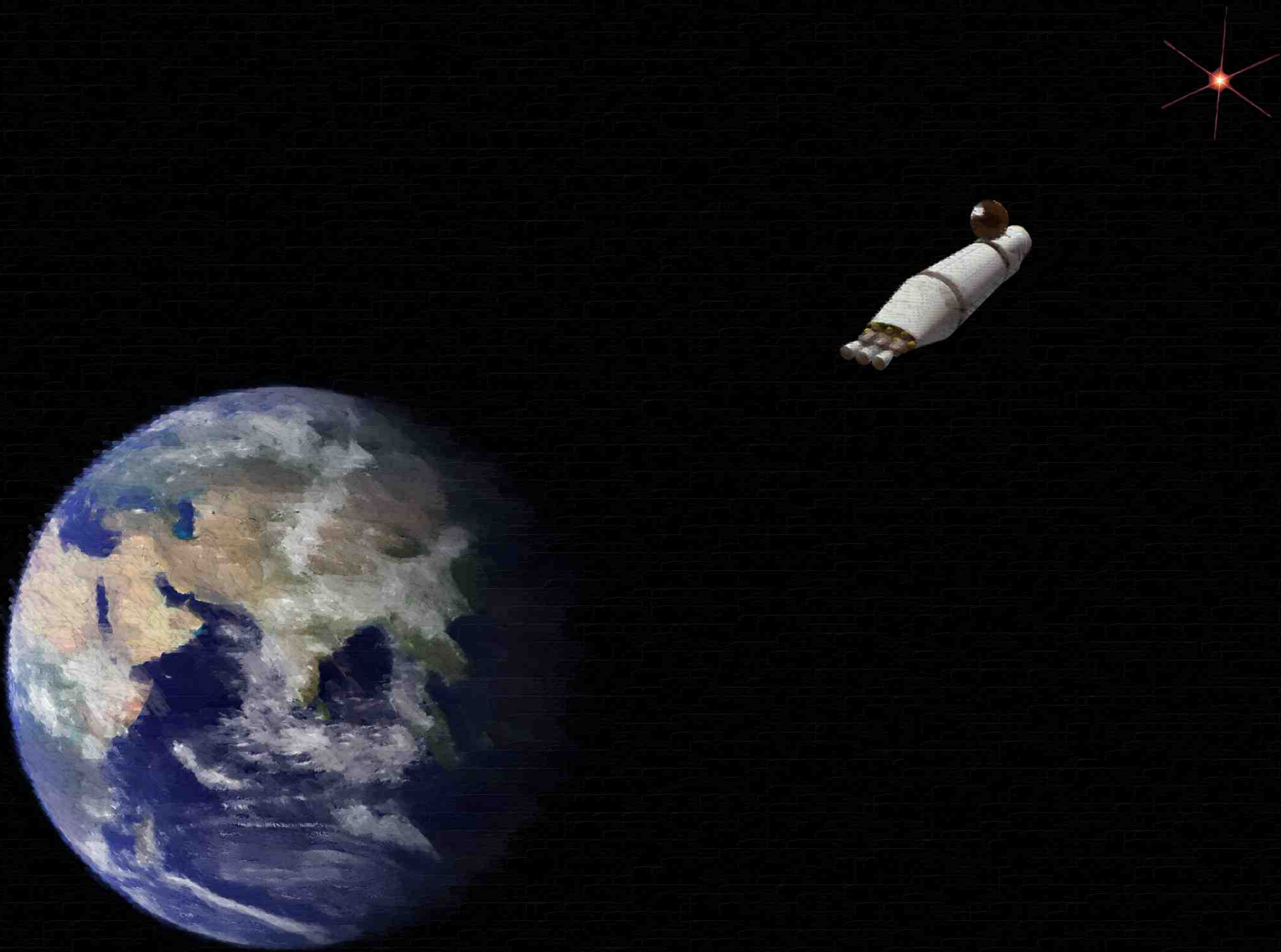


**After the Sun, all the planets we'll go see.
The first planet we'll travel to is called Mercury.
Mercury is the closest to the Sun, that's why we got here so soon.
It has lots of craters, which makes it look like the Moon.**



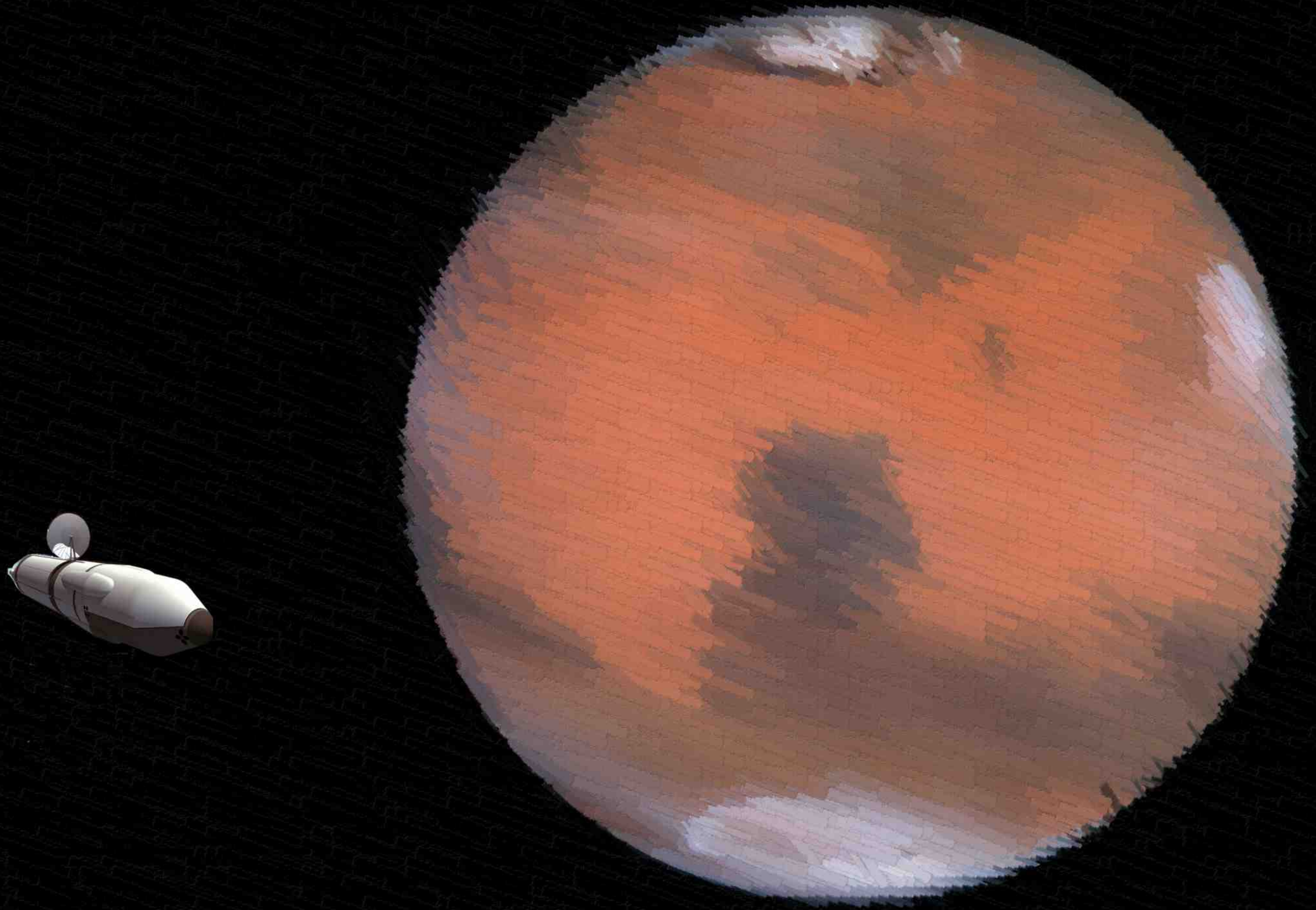


**The next planet after Mercury is called Venus.
If you already knew that, then you must be a genius.
Venus is as big as the Earth, but covered in clouds that hold in the heat.
It's hotter than an oven where you cook the food that you eat.**

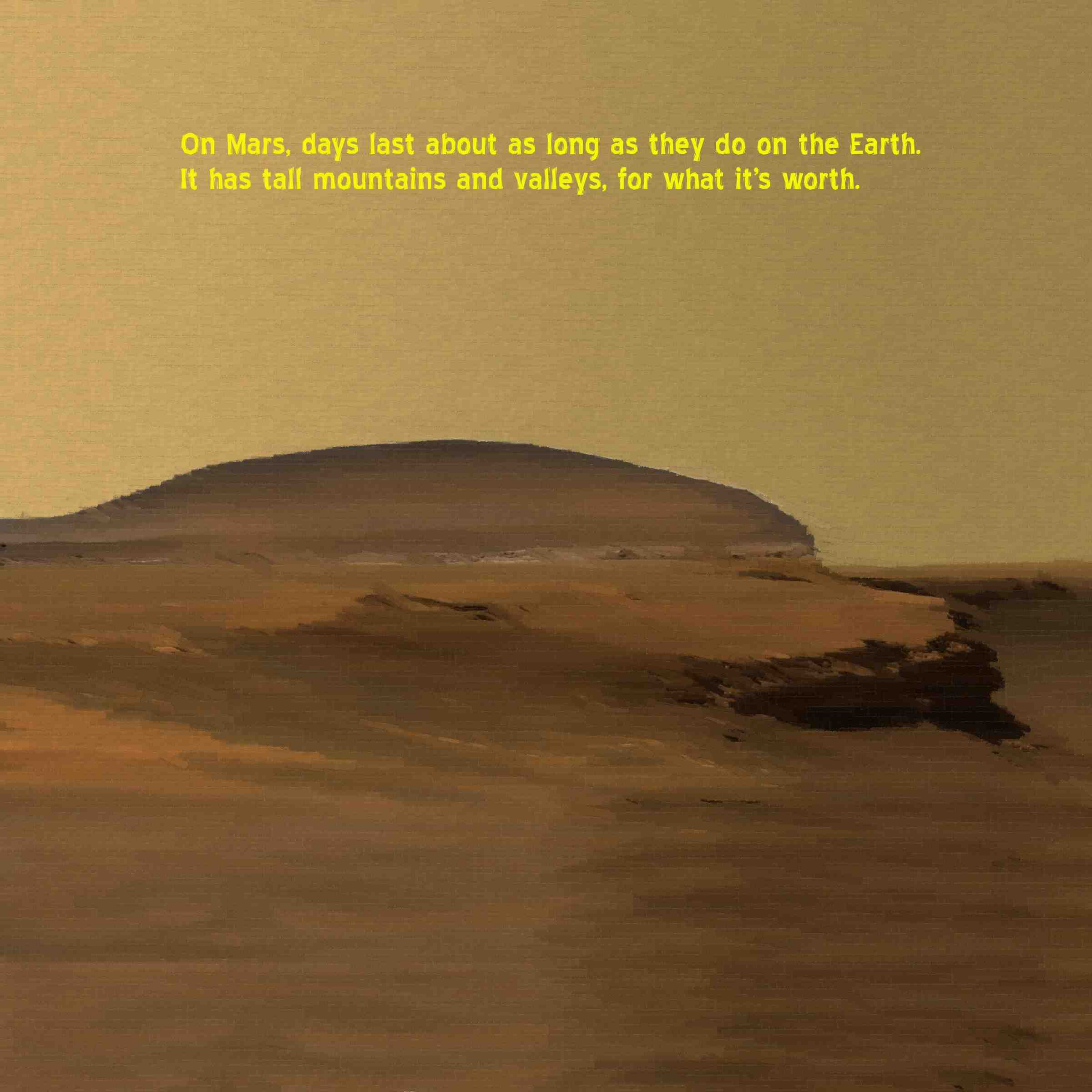


**Next we'll pass the Earth on our way to Mars.
You can tell Mars is red, even when it's still very far.**

**Now that we're closer you see that Mars is a very interesting place.
Someday people may live there, if more of us can go into space.**

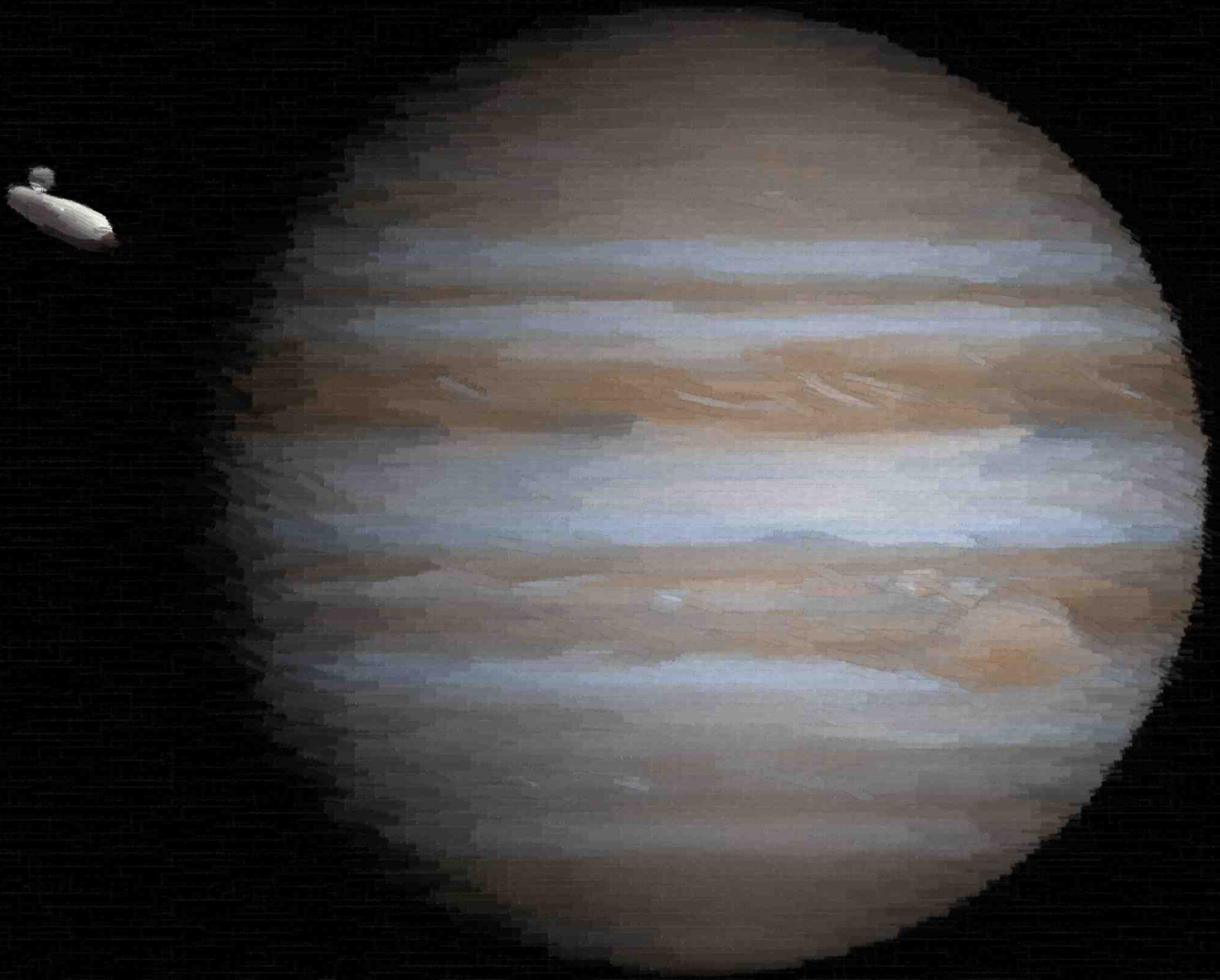


**On Mars, days last about as long as they do on the Earth.
It has tall mountains and valleys, for what it's worth.**



**There's not enough air on Mars for us to live and breathe.
But making it safe to live on is something we could probably achieve.**





**The next planet out is called Jupiter.
What a beautiful place, don't you concur?
Jupiter is the solar system's biggest planet, and it's white and red.
It's mostly made out of gas. Let's take a closer look, let's go on ahead.**

Jupiter has 62 moons.

The four biggest are named Callisto, Io, Europa, and Ganymede.

You can see all four moons from the Earth; a telescope is all you need.



**Callisto may have underground oceans,
but on the surface there's only rock and ice that is frozen.**



**Io has many volcano eruptions
which cause lots of destruction.**

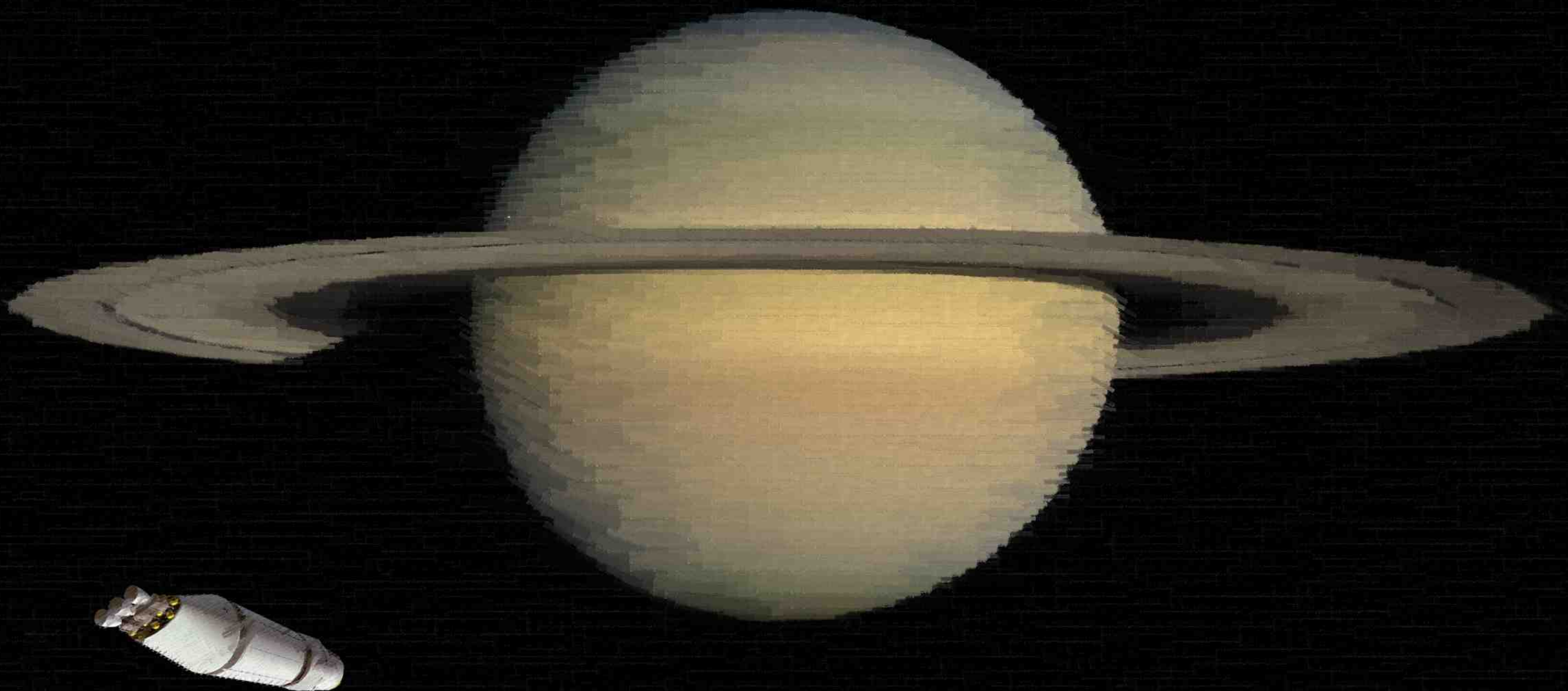


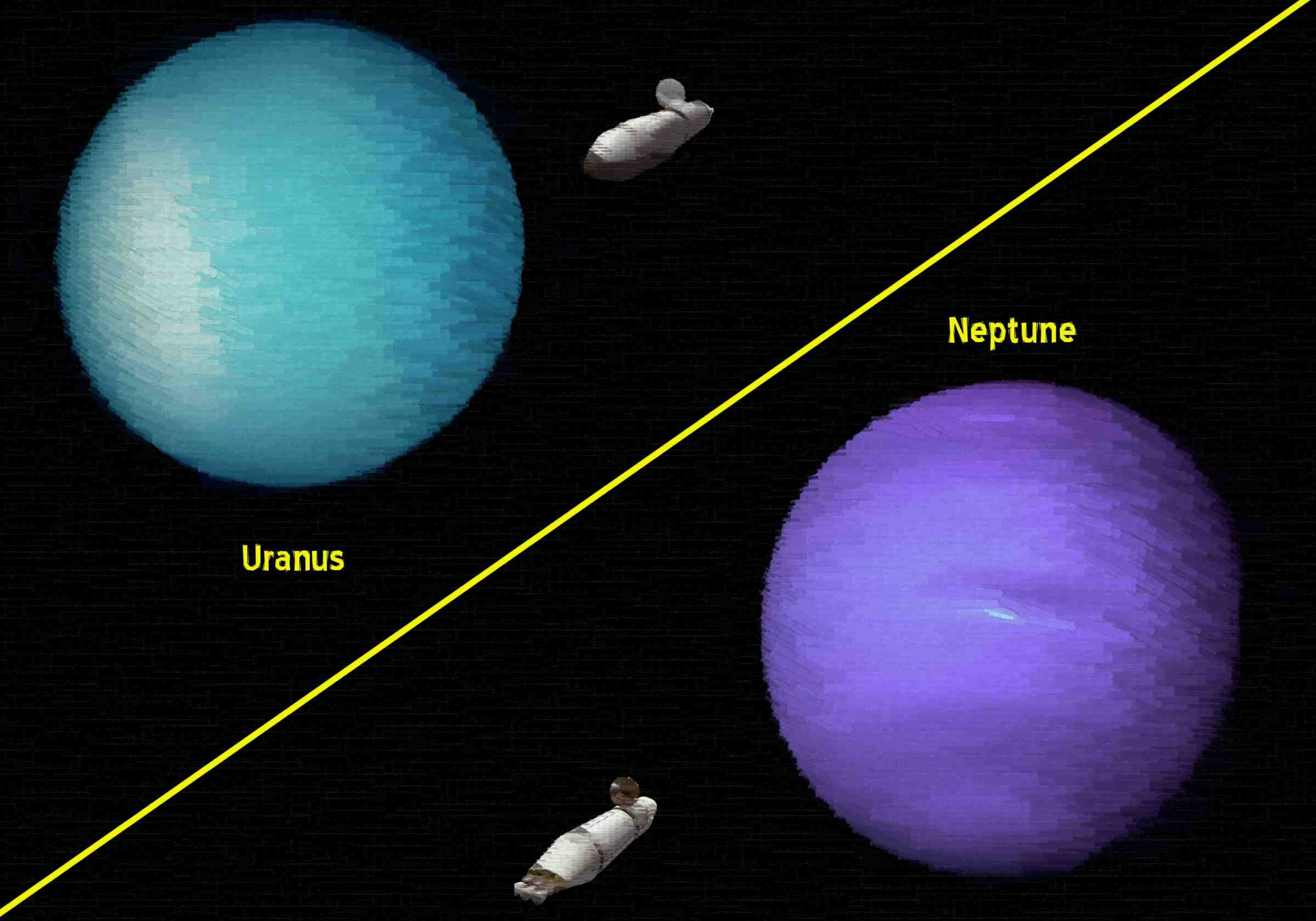
**Europa is covered in ice,
but underneath there may be an ocean with life!**



**Ganymede is the biggest of all the planets' moons,
is that something you knew?**

**Next, the planet Saturn has rings that go all the way around.
Isn't it amazing all the things that we've found?
Its rings are mostly ice and some dust. Did you know that before?
Saturn's biggest moon is named Titan, and there are 61 more.**



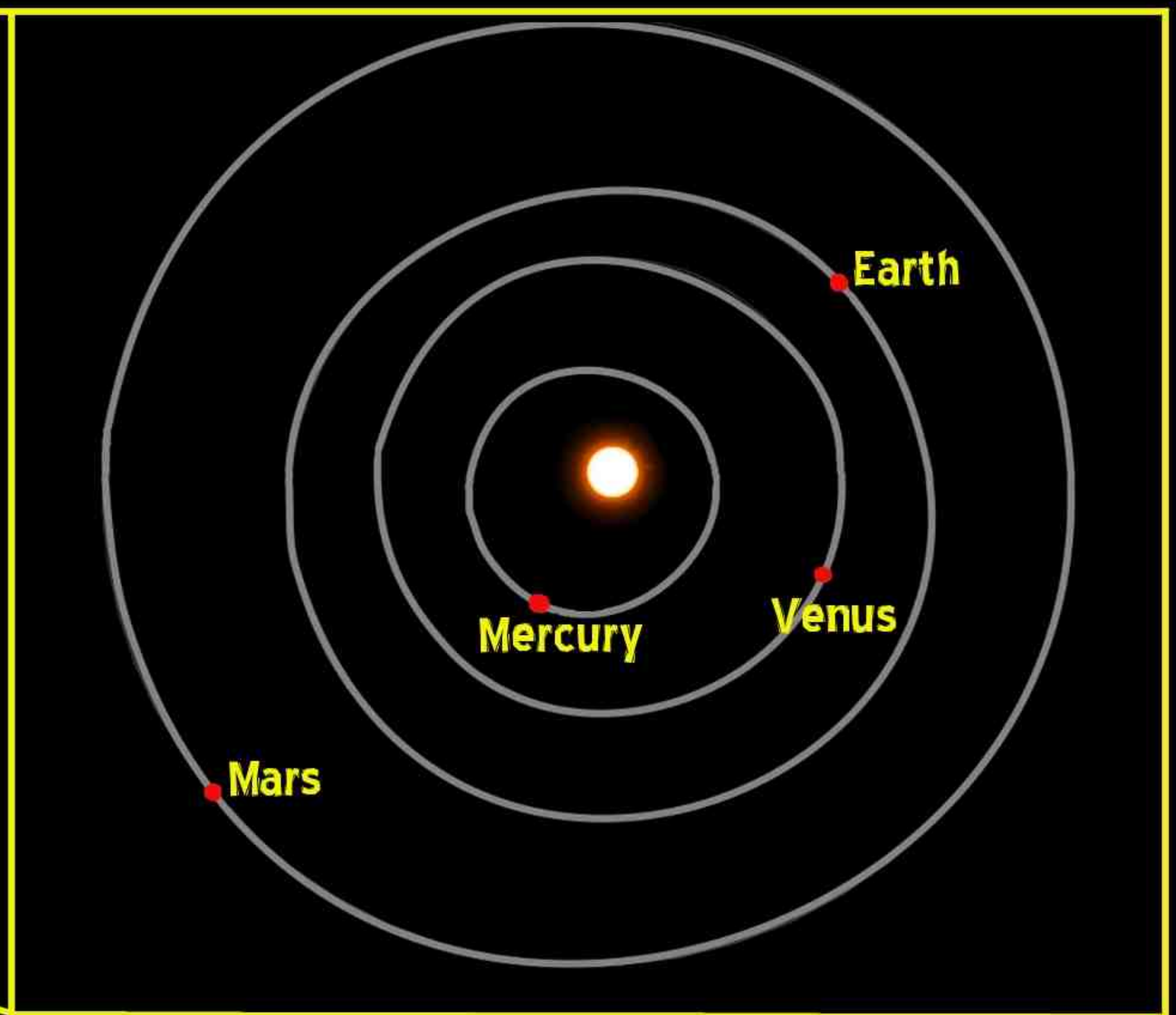
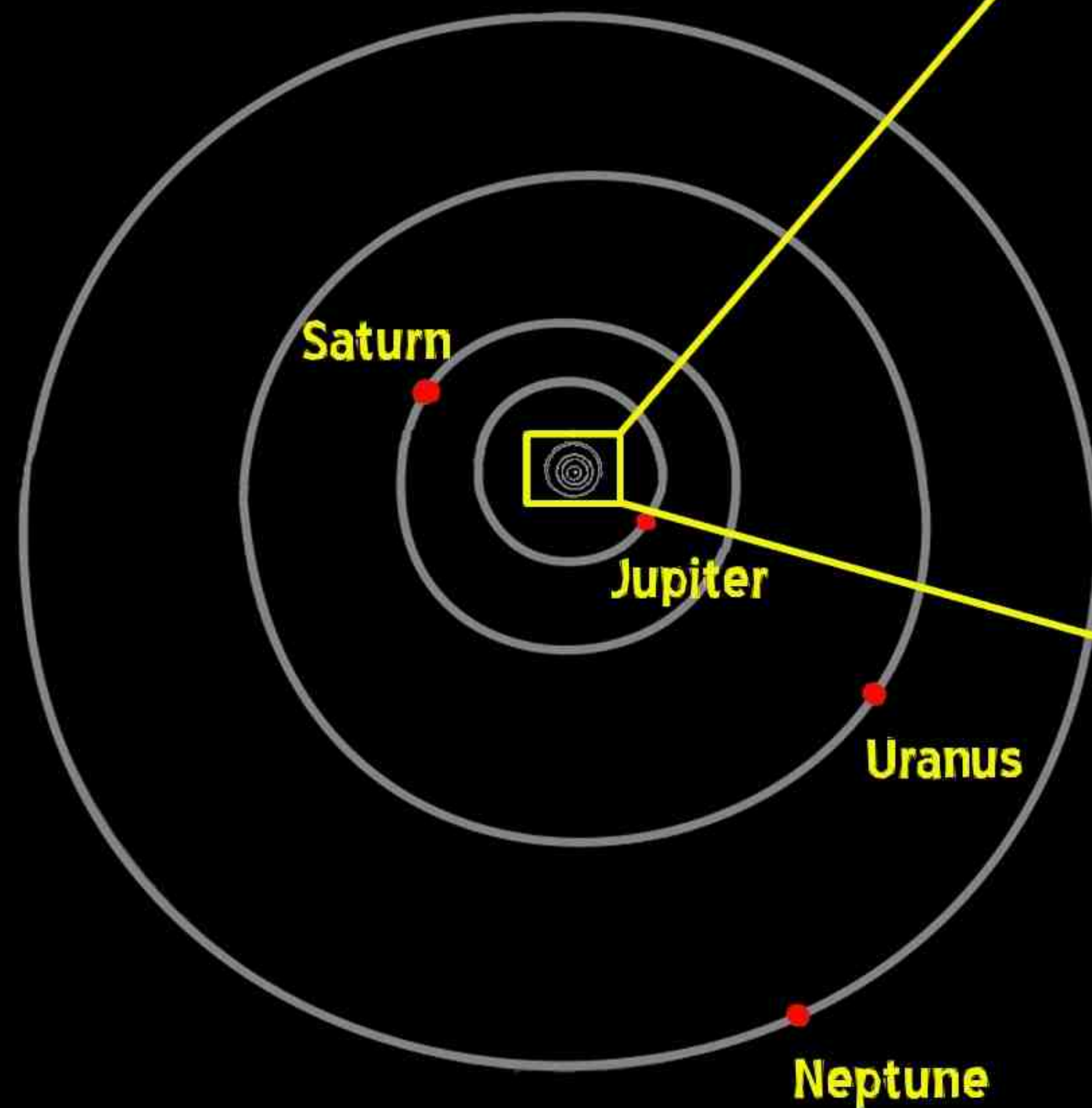


The last two planets - Uranus and Neptune - look almost the same. We're close to the end of our journey. Isn't it a shame? Neptune is almost a billion miles away from Uranus, it's clear. To travel from the Earth to Neptune or Uranus it takes many years.

The Outer Solar System

Everything is to scale.

The sun and the planets are so small that you can't even see them!

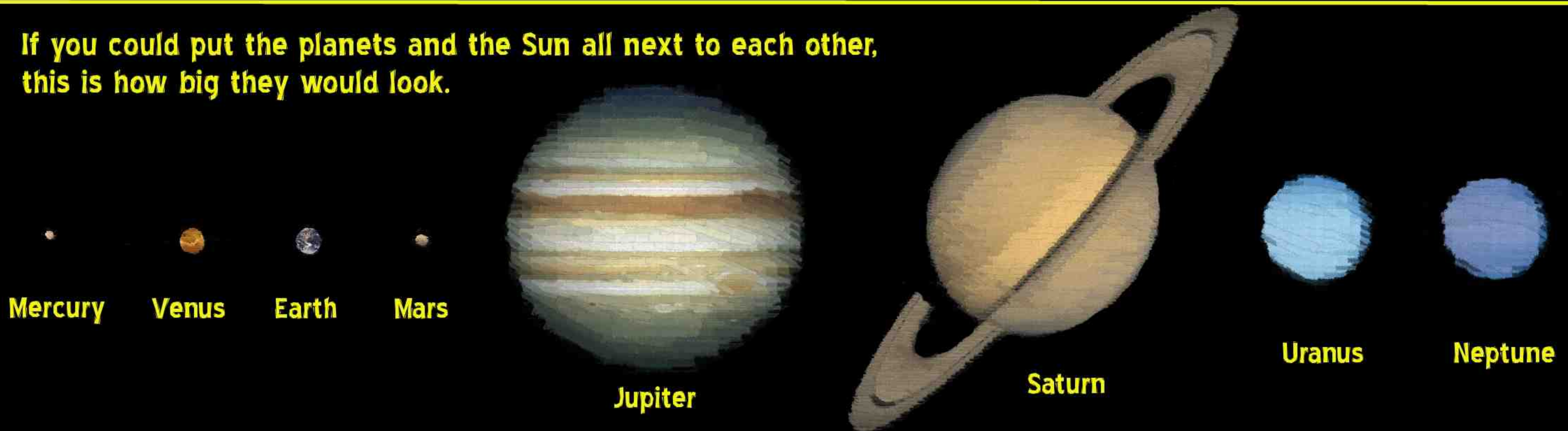


The Inner Solar System

The sun is so small that it's just a dot.

The planets are so small, you can't even see them!

If you could put the planets and the Sun all next to each other, this is how big they would look.



The Solar System is what we call the eight planets and the Sun.

The third planet is named Earth - that's where we're from.

We've traveled a great distance in our space ship.

Hopefully you've had fun and learned something on our big trip!

It's time for a space adventure!

