

Parker's Journey to the Sun

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This is the story of Dr. Eugene Parker and the Parker Space Probe; it is part fact, part fiction, and all love.

Our story starts with Dr. Eugene Parker as a young boy in high school. He is unsure of what to do after high school is done and what kind of career to pursue. That is, until he enters his physics class, and his eyes are opened to a fascinating new world; he is now driven to be a physicist. He completes his university and begins a research position, looking at the vibrations of the magnetic field on the earth. In looking at the data, he realizes something fantastic: the vibrations that were considered to be random were actually occurring regularly, so there must be a constant force on them coming from the cosmos: solar winds. He develops a simple algorithm and presents his findings to the scientific community, but they are not well received, as no one seems to side with his findings. Five years later, data comes from NASA's Mariner II spacecraft that proves this theory, and his work is now celebrated. The scientific community wants to discover more about these solar winds and a probe is developed.

The probe is a character of its own; like a child to Dr. Parker, to go and discover the sun and get information that Dr. Parker himself will never know; much like a parent raises a child to go into the world and discover more than they ever knew.

The probe goes through various growing stages: being heat tested, learning about its mechanics and how to autocorrect itself, sending data back, working its solar panels, and speed tests. These are quite comical scenes, much like a child learning to walk, talk, etc. Dr. Parker watches over, like a proud parent as the probe goes through these various stages, cringing when the probe gets burned during the heat test and nearly blown away from the speed test. The probe looks to his dad, as he wants his approval and to know that he is doing a good job.

The probe meets the rockets that will boost him up to the sky, the Delta IV Heavy team. They are dare-devils and are ready for their kamikaze mission; one that they will not return from but are proud to be part of such an important mission. This is when the probe learns that he will not be returning back to earth either.

One evening, the probe is looking at the sky and is feeling nervous. Dr. Parker sees that he's scared and comforts him. They know that he will not return from this mission and he will not see his dad again. Dr. Parker has a heart-to-heart conversation with him, telling him that here on earth, he can be a regular robot, but up there, he can do what he was meant to do... to do something that no one else could ever do: explore the sun. His dad gives him a sol-phone (cell phone) so he can send him pictures and messages throughout his journey.

The probe gets a name, just before it gets set to leave on the rocket, it is named after his father: the Parker Space Probe, aka. Parker. He gets ready to launch, the pad backs away from the rocket and he gets

ready for launch. He rockets up to the sky in an amazing explosion! When they've gone high enough, the first two side rockets say goodbye, as they break away; then, the middle rocket leaves him as well. He continues to say goodbye to his rocket friends as he realizes he is left on his own to be brave and do what he set out to do, to go explore the sun. The rockets set him on the right path and he is ready for the first part of his mission, to find Venus.

He meets Venus, the goddess of love, which is very secretive. She keeps a jacket, hat, and sunglasses on, hiding from those wanting to take her picture. Parker plays music for her and gets her to dance with him (orbit) and they become fast friends. She trusts him and allows him to take her photo, so he can send it to his dad. Parker must continue on his journey, but he promises that he will be back soon for another dance. While dancing, they hold hands and Venus spins him around, releasing her hands and sending him flying towards the sun, continuing his journey.

When he reaches the sun, he meets many interesting characters that he has never heard of before:

Solar Flare – this character is explosive, like a firework. He has an attitude and does not want to be mixed up with their sister C-Me. They want this distinction because they might cause some temporary blackouts on earth but are not nearly as powerful and crazy as the C-Me's.

C-Me – (CME - Coronal Mass Ejections) this character is also explosive but moves slower than her brother, Solar Flare; they are shot in one direction, like a cannon. They like to be noticed and so are called C-Me's. Because they want to be noticed, they can have tantrums, disrupting the earth's magnetic field, messing with their technology, and creating the northern lights.

Switchback - this character has a dual-personality and can never tell if they want to come or go. They are very confused and need a little encouragement to go on the right path.

Finally, Solar winds - this character is the very thing that his father first discovered. They are kind, warm, and continuously sing a song to Parker as he goes along on his travels.

Parker leaves to visit Venus and tells his new friends that he will be back soon to see them all again and learn more about them. Once away from his friends, Parker sends the photos of his adventures to his dad. Dr. Parker sees the amazing adventure his son has been on and what he was able to discover. He feels incredibly proud that his son was so brave and was able to complete his life's work.

In loving memory of Dr. Eugene Parker

who was able to see the data from the Parker Space Probe before he went on his journey to the heavens.

(1927 - 2022)