

Reflections for All Ages

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Our world is a wondrous place. There is so much to wonder at, and wonder about. Often, when we wonder about something, we yearn for a closer look.

One thing that particularly elicits wonder is this guy, especially the night sky. We look up at the stars, and wonder. Forever, people have looked at the night sky in the wonder. And so, to get a closer look at it, we invented the telescope.

This telescope is much like one used by a girl named Maria Mitchell, who lived with her family on the island of Nantucket, in Massachusetts, in the 1800s. Maria's family, especially her father, valued education. There was a lot of learning in her home. Maria wondered about so many things... Science and nature in particular. She was especially fascinated with the mystery of the night sky, And with her father she learned to use their telescope and spent many hours of many nights scanning the night sky to see all that she could see.

She looked during different times of the night and during all the seasons of the year. And as the years went by, Maria grew deeply for Milyer with the night sky.

One night, when she was a young woman, she looked into her telescope and saw something that she hadn't expected to see. It was bright, like a star, but not sharp and pointed, like a star. Instead, it was like a blurry streak, And what's more, it was in a place where she expected to see nothing. Instead, she saw something! Instantly, she suspected she knew exactly what it was. Can you guess what Maria saw?

She had found a comet! Her father confirmed it. In fact, she was the first person in the whole world to notice this comet, and so she was awarded a prize! In addition, for being the first person to see it, the comet was named for her. It was known as "Miss Mitchell's Comet."

Maria Mitchell grew up to be a well-known, and highly-respected astronomer. And it was all because she wondered, and took a closer look.

So I'm wondering what you wonder about. I am wondering what you might yearn to take a closer look at. Because when we follow our yearnings, our wonderings, that's a part of learning, and that's how we become more truly and deeply ourselves.