

Tekst 3

De volgende tekst is het begin van Climbing Olympus, een science-fictionroman van Kevin J. Anderson

RACHEL DYCEK

UNDER A SALMON SKY, the rover vehicle crawled over the rise, looking down into the cracked canyons of Mars. Without a pause, the rover descended a tortuous path into the gorge, feeling its way with a thousand sea-urchin footpads.

The site of the old disaster lay like a broken scab: fallen rock, eroded fissures, and utter silence.

Alone in the vehicle, Commissioner Rachel Dycek held a cold breath as she looked through the windowport at the debris crumbled at the bottom of the toppled cliffside. The avalanche had been enormous, wiping out all thirty-one of the *dva* workers who had been tunneling into the canyon network of Noctis Labyrinthus, the “Labyrinth of Night.”

Around Rachel, the wreckage still appeared fresh and jagged. Even after a full Earth year, the pain burned inside her. Another loss, the largest link in a long chain of disappointments, against which she had kept her face of stone. Russians were good at enduring, but inside she felt as fragile as stained glass.

The weathered rock walls of Noctis Labyrinthus formed barriers of reddish oxides, gray silicates, and black lava debris – all sliced a kilometer deep by ancient rivers. For millions of years, the entire planet had barely changed. But now, after six decades of terraforming activities had bombarded the planet with comets and seeded its atmosphere with innumerable strains of algae and free-floating plankton, Mars looked raw. The terraforming had awakened the planet like a slap in the face – and occasionally Mars lashed back, as it had with the avalanche.

The rover’s engines hummed, and the telescoping sea-urchin feet underneath made popcorn-popping sounds as the pressurized vehicle scrambled effortlessly over the rough terrain. Letting the Artificial Intelligence navigator pick its best path, Rachel brought the rover *Percival* to a halt next to a stack of granite boulders. Back at Lowell Base, operations manager Bruce Vickery had reserved *Percival* for later in the day to check his remotely placed instruments, but Rachel had traveled only a hundred kilometers. She had hours yet before she needed to worry about getting back.

Alone in this desolate spot, Rachel felt as if she were entering a haunted house. She listened to the intense, peaceful emptiness. Then she began working her way into the protective environment suit. The slick fabric was cold. The chill never went away on Mars – but it slithered up her legs, hugged her waist and shoulders, and clung to the damp sweat of her hands as she worked her fingers into the tough gloves. It took her fifteen minutes, but Rachel was accustomed to suiting up by herself; she didn’t like the interference of too many hands.

Technically, she was not supposed to be out in the rover by herself, but Rachel was still commissioner of Lowell Base – for the moment, anyway – and she could bend the rules. She had logged her intentions on the vehicle assignment terminal as “historical research”. Duration of outside activity: half a sol (which was the correct term for a Martian day, though the fifty human colonists at the base simply called them “days”). And she had set out across the sprawling wilderness by herself, leaving Lowell Base behind.

Tekst 3 De volgende tekst...

- 3p **3** Geef van elk van de volgende beweringen aan of deze wel of niet overeenkomt met de inhoud van de passage.
- 1 Rachel stuit bij toeval op de plek waar de 31 arbeiders door een steenlawine omkwamen.
 - 2 Een reeks tegenslagen heeft Rachel kwetsbaar gemaakt.
 - 3 Het aanzien van Mars is bezig te veranderen.
 - 4 Rachel heeft een spannende tocht achter de rug als zij bij de plaats van de lawine aankomt.
 - 5 Door de routine is Rachel wat slordig geworden in het nemen van beschermende maatregelen tegen de kou.
 - 6 Rachel heeft de werkelijke tijd die haar tocht zou duren tegenover haar collega's verzwegen.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door “wel” of “niet”.