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Chap. 8 - assign. 3  
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Oh, how I long to be on those plains again. The barren rocky plains of Mars. The orange desert with a sky to match. You couldn't appreciate the beauty of the place unless you've actually lived there. It's been so long since I last was there but I know it couldn't have changed all that much.

The house I built must still be standing. I used some of the rocks as a base and the metal from my ship. I never planned on returning, so I took apart my ship to use in my house. I saved all the components, every last screw. The house stood up well to the meteor showers that passed every now and then. As a finishing touch, I built a wall of rocks around it and from a distance you would think it was just part of the desert. Rocks were never in short supply.

Up there, there was peace. No other people, no Martians. Just myself and my computer. Well, occasionally there were those large reptilian beasts that thought I might make a good meal, but instead, they were quite tasty. And it was a welcome activity to hunt one of them down on occasion.

Not many flowers or plants grew. I had brought some wildflower seedlings with me, but the Martian soil was too dry and didn't contain the proper nutrients for the terrestrial fauna. It was sad, I always like to look at pretty flowers. Maybe I should have brought a cactus.

I lived peacefully there for a few years. Once a year, I would trek around a significant part of the planet, to see if anyone else had followed in my footsteps and escaped the torture of life on Earth. But the place remained all mine. I was happy to see that no one had come, I never cared to associate with other people much.

It stayed like that, quite peaceful, for the years I was there. I never tired of the desert, I renamed all the craters, and discovered some other edible creatures. But then one morning they woke me up. I couldn't figure out how they could have gotten into my world. I always believed it was impossible, but nevertheless, they were there. They were two men, at first. I struggled. I had been happy for so long I couldn't understand why they wouldn't let me be. One was yelling at the other to "take away her VR helmet." The other was shouting at the first to get more men because I struggled too much.

Now I'm here. In this room. There aren't many people here either except for the pretty blonde lady who comes in to give me food and change my sheets. They let me keep my computer so I can write, but they keep telling me that I'm never allowed to go back.