

Aleksandr Makarov

**SECRETS
OF THE
RED
PLANET**

Mars Tales

Александр Макаров

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Аннотация

Quiet paths, glowing crystals, and the whisper of the wind—this is Mars as a gentle fairy tale.

Secrets of the Red Planet is crafted for family read-alouds before bed. Each chapter invites you to pause, point, and talk together about what you see and feel. Perfect for children 6–10: no frightening scenes, no pressure to be a hero—just warmth, curiosity, and small miracles waiting to be noticed.

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Secrets of the Red Planet



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Mars Tales

You are holding not just a book, but a small map of silence. Leght and I gathered these stories slowly and with great care — the way you collect warm pebbles on a shore, not all of them, only the ones that seem to settle into your palm on their own. Each tale is a place where Mars whispered something important to us. And we tried hard not to mix up the words or rush past what mattered.

You see, the greatest magic on the Red Planet doesn't hide in loud wonders. It lives in the hush of sand, in the pattern that appears only at dawn, in the quiet sound you hear if you sit perfectly still. Mars doesn't hurry you. It waits until you sit down beside it, rest your hand on a warm stone, and simply listen. And then it tells you its story.

We wrote down twenty-one such secrets. Not because there are only twenty-one — there are far more. These are simply the ones we managed to hear and hold within words. Let them become your pass into a world where silence can sing and every stone keeps someone's quiet voice.

Settle in. We are about to walk a path where even the air

remembers the footsteps of those who came before us. And let this road be yours, too.

A light breeze ran across the slope, as if inviting them to take the first step. Leght lifted his instrument slightly — the copper threads inside trembled almost imperceptibly, as though they were listening to the very breath of the planet. Ininel pressed a crystal to her chest; it wasn't glowing brightly yet, as if saving its light for something important.

The trail began quite simply — a narrow strip between the rocks, nearly invisible, as if someone had hidden it on purpose from those who rush. But if you walk slowly, if you look not ahead but down at your feet, you can see how the sand lies in fine patterns, like the traces of someone's long-ago steps. Leght leaned down, ran his hand over one of the patterns, and the instrument gave a soft click, as if saying — *yes, this is the beginning.*

Ininel sat down on a warm stone, closed her eyes, and began to listen. At first she heard only her own quiet breath and the faint rustle of the wind. Then another sound joined them — soft, as if someone were very carefully tracing a finger across the smooth surface of a stone. It suddenly seemed to her that it wasn't just the wind whispering, but the planet itself saying hello, saying — *I'm glad you came.*

The crystal in her hand glowed steadily, without flickering, as if confirming: everything here is real. Leght took out the dark plate they always carried with them and pressed it against the pattern in the sand. The lines on the plate matched the swirls, as if two halves of one map had finally found each other. The warm pebble that had fallen from a stone in their previous adventure began to glow softly around its edges, as if it were happy to be needed again.

They sat a little longer, listening to how silence wove its threads, how the wind carefully shifted grains of sand, how the instrument trembled faintly, as if learning to speak the language of the planet. Then they stood, holding their discoveries gently. It felt to them as though they hadn't simply started a journey — they had heard the first quiet voice of Mars, and now it would guide them from one secret to the next.

For on the Red Planet, a journey doesn't begin with loud words, but with a minute of silence, when you simply sit on a warm stone, close your eyes, and let the world tell you its story. And if you just did the same — if you stopped, listened, and felt something inside respond to that quiet whisper — then the path has already accepted you. You have become one of those Mars trusts with its secrets.

And so our journey begins. And so does yours.

The Stone Feather

On Mars, dawn doesn't burst into flame—it creeps across the hills with quiet care, as if afraid to startle the silence. At this hour, the planet breathes slowly and steadily, and anyone who knows how to listen can hear whole stories in that breath.

Ininel lived where three valleys met, like three roads leading to three different secrets. Her house stood on a slope, and every morning she stepped out onto the threshold, held her palms to the cool air, and waited for the sand to begin whispering. She knew that on Mars, a whisper is louder than a shout, and silence knows how to tell tales.

One day, the wind didn't bring a speck of dust or a grain of sand—it brought a stone feather. It lay at her feet, delicate, with veins that looked like starry paths. Ininel picked it up, and the feather gave a soft chime, as if a tiny note were hiding inside. She blew on it, and the ring grew deeper, as though someone in the darkness had nodded in answer.

The feather drew her forward, not with force, but with a gentle tremor she wanted to feel again and again. Ininel walked without hurrying, so as not to scare away that quiet call. The path wound

between stones that formed silent patterns, leading her to a valley where the sand lay in circles, as if someone had dropped a pebble into invisible water and was waiting to see what would happen next.

In the centre of the valley stood an old stone with a thin crack, from which light seeped out. Not hot, not blinding, but the kind of light that memory gives off. Ininel slid the feather into the crack, and the light grew brighter, revealing a thin plate inside the stone, etched with circles and spirals. It wasn't a map of roads, but a map of the planet's breath. Here, Mars inhales; here, it exhales; and here, in the quietest place, it whispers the names of those who know how to listen.

Two small figures flickered on the plate. One was tiny, with slender fingers clutching the stone feather. The other stood a little apart, holding a device that looked like a bundle of tubes connected by threads. The device clicked softly, catching the edges of light and shadow. The boy's name was Leght. He didn't shout, didn't call out, didn't rush. He simply stood and watched as the planet drew its patterns.

Ininel didn't see him with her eyes, but she felt it—as if a warm breeze had brushed her shoulder and whispered that he was there. And if she walked slowly, if she listened not with her ears but with her heart, their paths were sure to meet. Because

Mars doesn't like haste. It loves those who notice the quiet chime of a stone feather, the light in a crack of an old rock, and the patterns the wind draws in the sand.

From that day on, Ininel knew that to hear the planet, you don't need anything special. You just need to stop, hold your palms to the coolness, wait for the dawn, and let Mars tell its own tale.

Sand That Remembers Footsteps

On Mars, even silence comes in different kinds. In some valleys it rings, as if tiny bells were hanging in the air. In others it settles like heavy velvet, and words sink into it without ever reaching another pair of ears. Leght loved the places where silence rang. He believed that was where the planet whispered its most important secrets.

Leght carried with him a device he had built himself from shards of transparent stone and thin copper threads. It did not shout with numbers and dials — it simply clicked softly whenever a secret was hiding nearby. Leght called it the Listener. He was not looking for loud wonders. Small ones were enough: a shadow falling where it should not, or sand suddenly lying in neat little paths as if someone had just walked across it.

That day, the Listener clicked especially stubbornly when Leght reached the edge of an old canyon. There, the wind did not howl but hummed the same short melody over and over, and the sand below lay not in waves but in thin straight lines, like sentences in a letter. Leght crouched down, ran his finger along one of those lines — and felt something hard and smooth hiding beneath the sand.

He carefully brushed the sand aside and found a round plate of dark stone. Spirals and tiny dots were scratched into it, as if someone had tried to write down the sky. Leght held the plate up to the Listener, and it clicked faster, as though it recognized a familiar voice. Then Leght noticed a thin imprint on the edge of the plate — not just a dent, but the mark of a small palm, as if someone had held it tightly before leaving it here.

Leght immediately thought of Ininel. He had never seen her, but he knew she walked the same valleys, listened to the same wind, and searched for the same secrets. It seemed to him that their paths were like two thin tracks running side by side, not yet crossing, but destined to meet where the sand lies flat and the silence begins to sing.

The wind suddenly caught a grain of sand and spun it above the canyon, as if inviting him onward. Leght stood up, tucked the plate into the pouch at his belt, and walked along the edge, toward where the sun hung especially low and painted the rocks a warm honey color. He did not hurry. On Mars, rushing tangles your tracks, while patience helps you hear even the faintest whisper.

Along the way he found another oddity — a stone that looked unlike the rest. It lay apart from the others, as if placed there on purpose, and on its side there was a delicate pattern, like a

wing. Leght leaned in, and in that moment he thought he heard, somewhere very close, the faint clink of a stone feather. The sound was so brief it could have been the wind playing tricks, but Leght smiled. He knew it was not the wind. It was Ininel, somewhere nearby, walking her own paths, listening to her own melodies, and perhaps right now looking at the same sunset and thinking how strangely Mars is built — as if it purposely hides little clues so that two curious children might one day find each other.

From that evening on, Leght began to notice tiny signs everywhere. A footprint in the sand, an unusual stone, a swirl of wind that suddenly folded into a familiar pattern. He did not write them down in a thick notebook — he simply remembered, because he believed that when he finally met Ininel, they would not need words to understand how many of the same secrets they had each found on their own.

And so he walked, and listened, and gathered these quiet hints in his memory, and he knew: Mars does not rush. It gives as much time as is needed to learn how to hear. And when the right moment comes, it will guide them both to the place where two tracks finally become one.

The Light That Lives in the Shadow

On Mars, shadows don't just trace the shapes of things — they know how to keep secrets. Ininel had noticed this long ago. If you stood so that the sun fell from the side, the shadow of a rock would stretch longer, as if trying to reach for something important. And if you crouched down and looked not at the rock itself but at its shadow, you could make out patterns like ancient writing.

That day, Ininel was walking along a narrow path between two tall cliffs. It was always cooler here, and the shadows lay like a thick, soft carpet, almost like fabric. She didn't hurry, because she knew that on Mars, hurrying makes shadows hide, while patience makes them whisper.

Suddenly, the shadow of an overhang fell not in an even strip but in a thin spiral, as if someone had drawn it on purpose. Ininel crouched, ran her finger along the edge of the spiral — and felt a faint warmth. Not hot, but the kind of warmth a stone has when it has lain in the sun for a long time and is now giving back the light it stored. She leaned closer and saw, right in the center of the spiral, a tiny hollow, and inside it — a small, clear crystal, like a frozen drop of dew.

Ininel picked up the crystal carefully. It didn't ring like a stone feather; instead, it glowed softly from within, as if a piece of dawn were hidden inside it. The girl held it up to her eyes, and the world around her became slightly different: the shadows grew deeper, the stones grew quieter, and the air seemed to fill with a barely audible whisper. And then she understood — the crystal didn't just glow, it helped her see what usually stayed hidden.

She looked around and noticed that along the path, where the shadows fell especially evenly, the rocks hid the same little hollows. Some held crystals; others were empty, as if someone had already taken the light. Ininel walked on, holding her crystal gently, and suddenly saw a figure ahead. It was a boy with an instrument in his hands, something like a bundle of thin tubes. He stood perfectly still, watching the wind drive a thin stream of sand across the ground.

It was Leght. He didn't notice Ininel right away, because he was too focused on how the shadow of the cliff fell on the sand and seemed to draw an invisible map. But when the wind died for a moment, he heard a soft rustle and looked up. Their eyes met, and in that instant it felt as if even Mars had held its breath, as if waiting to see what would happen next.

Leght smiled — not widely, but the way you smile when

you meet someone you've been looking for a long time without knowing their name. He lifted his instrument slightly and said, almost in a whisper:

"It seems this stone knows more than it lets on."

Ininel stepped closer and held out her crystal.

"And this one can show shadows that whisper."

They stood side by side and looked at the cliff. Now that they had two wonders at once — Leght's instrument and Ininel's crystal — the world seemed to open another little door. The shadows on the rock folded into a pattern like a road leading beyond the horizon. Leght brought his instrument to the pattern, and it gave a soft click, as if confirming — yes, there is a path here.

Ininel smiled. She understood that to see a real wonder, you don't have to search for it alone. Sometimes it's enough to meet someone who also knows how to listen to silence. Together, they could make out even the faintest light hidden in the deepest shadow.

From that day on, Ininel and Leght walked across Mars together. They didn't hurry, didn't shout, didn't argue about

who had found more. They simply walked, listened, noticed the patterns on the rocks, the shadows that folded into maps, and the quiet tinkling of sand grains beneath their feet. And every time it seemed to them that the planet was whispering something important, they stopped, grew still, and tried to hear it all the way to the end.

For Mars loves those who aren't afraid of silence, who are willing to wait until a shadow tells its story and a crystal shows the light that lives inside it. And when you walk together, even the longest road becomes a little shorter, and the quietest word becomes a little easier to hear.

A Road of Stardust

On Mars, the nights are not black but deep blue, as if someone had spilled thick paint across the sky and never stirred it. On nights like these, the stars hang so low it feels as though you could reach out and pick one, put it in your pocket, and carry it around like a little lantern. Ininel loved these hours, when the silence grew so thick you could almost touch it.

That night, she did not take her usual path. She walked toward the place where the sand lay especially smooth, as if someone had pressed it flat with a careful hand. A light wind circled beside her — not troubling, but nudging, as if to say: *go on, don't be afraid.* Ininel walked, and suddenly she noticed that her steps left not ordinary footprints but thin silver trails, as if each footfall caught tiny sparks hidden in the dark.

She bent down and ran her finger along one of the trails — and it flared for an instant, like a tiny bolt of lightning, then quietly went out. Ininel smiled. It felt as though the planet itself had winked at her and said: *look closer — there is a road here, but only those who don't hurry can see it.*

The girl went on, trying to step evenly so as not to startle

the silver tracks. They led her between low stones that folded into silent gates, and beyond, to a small ledge where the wind seemed to gather into a quiet whirl, spinning in one place without scattering. On the ledge stood Leght. He held his device — the one that clicked whenever a secret hid nearby — and watched the whirl draw a circle on the sand.

Leght was not surprised to see Ininel. He felt as if he had been waiting for her here his whole life, only he had never known what she looked like. He tilted the device slightly, and it clicked softly, as if to greet her.

"There's something here," Leght said, quietly, so as not to frighten the night. "The wind isn't just spinning. It repeats the same pattern, as if it wants to show us something."

Ininel stepped closer and held out her hand. Tiny silver sparks still clung to her fingers.

"It's stardust," she said softly. "It settles on the sand when your steps are even. I think it *is* the road."

Leght smiled. He liked how simply and precisely she had said it. He held the device up to the whirl, and it clicked faster, as if delighted. Then Leght carefully lowered a thin copper thread into the very edge of the whirl. The whirl did not scatter — instead, it

seemed to catch the thread and pull it sideways, showing which way to go.

They walked side by side, unhurried. The whirl floated ahead like an invisible guide, and each turn it made left a thin silver line on the sand. The lines wove together into a pattern that looked like a map of the night sky. Ininel watched the pattern and felt something inside her grow warm and calm, as if she had finally found what she had been searching for all along — without even knowing what to call it.

The road led them to a small hollow surrounded by stones that looked like frozen waves. In the center of the hollow lay a flat stone, covered with tiny glowing dots, as if someone had scattered a handful of stars across it. Leght sat down beside it and ran his fingers over the dots — and they answered with a quiet ring, like distant laughter.

"Look," he whispered. "It's not just a stone. It's a memory of those who walked here before us and also knew how to see the road of dust."

Ininel sat beside him and took out her crystal — the one that showed shadows which whisper. She placed it next to the stone, and the crystal began to glow softly, as if recognizing an old friend. The shadows of the stones fell onto the sand and gathered

into new lines, weaving together with the silver trails. Now the pattern became whole, like a song in which every note is exactly where it should be.

Leght took a dark plate from his pouch — one he had found near the canyon — and pressed it against the stone. The lines on the plate matched the pattern on the sand, as if someone long ago had carved this map so that one day, two children might read it.

"We're not the first," Ininel said quietly. "It's just our turn to walk this road now."

Leght nodded. He didn't want to speak loudly. In moments like these, words become unnecessary, because everything that matters has already been said — by the silence, the wind, and the light hidden in the dust.

From that evening on, Ininel and Leght knew: on Mars, there are no accidental footprints. Every step leaves its own pattern, and if you walk together, listening to the whisper of the planet, you can find a road even where it seems there is nowhere to go. And the stardust will settle beneath your feet for exactly as long as it takes for the path not to be lost in the dark. Because Mars watches over those who can see not only with their eyes, but with their hearts — and who are not afraid to walk a road that can only be seen in silence, and only by those who are ready to notice it.

Sand That Sings Under the Moon

On Mars, the moon doesn't shine — it listens. It hangs in the dark-blue sky, round and calm, and its light falls across the hills in thin trails that make you want to follow them without ever taking your eyes off the sky. On nights like these, even the stones grow quieter, as if they don't want to scare the moonlight away.

Ininel and Leght sat on a low ledge, next to the very stone where tiny points glimmered like scattered stars. Ininel held her crystal in her palms — the one that could show shadows that whisper. Leght was quietly turning one of the copper threads on his device, as if tuning it to the voice of the night. They were in no hurry, because they knew that the most important things on Mars don't happen quickly. They happen when the silence grows deep enough to hear the song of the sand.

Suddenly Leght went still and lifted his head. He hadn't heard words — he'd heard a sound: light, barely there, like the soft ringing of glass beads. It came from below, from beneath the sand, as if someone were very carefully sorting through the grains one by one. Leght leaned down, pressed his ear to the ground, then looked back up at Ininel.

"Do you hear that?" he whispered — not because he was afraid, but because next to such silence, any loud voice would feel wrong. "The sand is singing."

Ininel listened too. At first she heard nothing but the wind whispering softly against the stones. But the moment she closed her eyes and held her palms up to the coolness, the sound grew clearer. It really was a song — not made of words, but of rustles, tiny rings, and short breaths of wind. The grains of sand seemed to arrange themselves into a melody you couldn't hear with your ears, but with your whole body.

Leght pulled a dark plate from his pouch — the one he'd found near the canyon — and laid it on the sand. The lines on the plate seemed to reach toward the sound, as if they recognized it. The device gave a quiet click, as if to say: yes, that's it. Leght traced his finger along one of the spirals on the plate, and at that very moment the sand beside it lifted slightly, as if answering back.

Ininel bent down and carefully ran her palm across the sand. It wasn't cold — it was warm, as if it held the heat of the day inside and was now giving it back to the night. She scooped up a handful of sand and let it slowly slip through her fingers. The grains didn't just fall; they settled into a pattern like the curls of wind. The crystal in her other hand began to glow softly, and the shadows of the stones fell across the pattern, adding new lines

to it.

"It's a map of the song," Ininel said quietly, as if surprised she understood it so simply. "Not a map of roads, but a map of sounds. If you follow these lines, you can hear how the planet sings."

Leght smiled. He liked how Ininel noticed everything. He took a thin copper thread, laid it on the sand beside the pattern, and gave it a gentle pull. The thread didn't resist — it glided along an invisible path, tracing the curl. The device clicked again, more certainly this time, as if confirming: yes, we're on the right path.

They stood and followed the pattern that appeared beneath their footsteps. The sand rustled softly, the wind hummed along, and the moon watched from above, as if it knew where they were going. The pattern led them to a small circle of stones, inside which the sand lay especially smooth, as if someone had raked it many times to leave room for one important melody.

In the center of the circle lay a small, smooth stone, like a frozen drop of light. Leght picked it up and held it to the device. It didn't click — it hummed softly, as if it recognized the sound. Ininel pressed her crystal to the little stone, and the crystal glowed brighter, while the shadows around them grew deeper, as if gathering into one long story.

And then they heard it. Not just a rustle, but a real song. It had no words, but in it you could hear everything: how the wind wanders through the canyons, how the sand settles into waves, how the stars look down and smile at their own reflections in the stones. It was the song of Mars itself — quiet and ancient — and it played only for those who knew how to listen.

Ininel closed her eyes and smiled. It felt as if the planet were singing just for them, as if it were saying: you found your way not just with your feet, but with your hearts, and now you know — on Mars, even silence knows how to sing. Leght stood beside her and listened, and it seemed to him that now he understood why he had built his device, why he had searched for patterns and traces. All of it had led to this moment, when the night, the sand, and the wind come together into one melody, and two children hear it together.

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