

STRANDED

written by

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The panel descriptions and the number of panels on each page present a basic structure for the story. If you wish to tweak them a bit, go for it. You are the visual artist, after all. I would, however, like to preserve the flow of the individual pages, the story beats on them, and what happens before and after a page turn.

PAGE 1 - PANELS: 3

Panels in this story are separated into two types: PAST and PRESENT. Distinguish them however you want, but they should be distinct.

PANEL 1

PRESENT: We see a man, the ASTRONAUT, in a futuristic, space-like uniform on an alien planet. He is surrounded by machines, little robots on wheels, and other automated technology. His head is exposed which means the atmosphere isn't hostile, though we can see a small tube near his mouth or in his nose (like in *Dune*, if you want to make that visual comparison).

NARRATION My name is **Jonathan Sawyer**. I've been **stranded** here on planet Delta-64 for **89 days**.

PANEL 2

PAST: The ASTRONAUT is pulling himself from some debris of a crashed spaceship on the same, only now somewhat more hostile looking alien planet. He has a full spacesuit on, including a helmet. He's looking at the sky. At the stars he doesn't recognize. He is stranded.

NARRATION I am the only survivor of a colonizing vessel. Our ship got off course when we were hit by a **meteor shower**. Most of the crew got sucked into space after a **hull breach**.

The ship then crash-landed on **Delta-64**, an empty rock in an empty star system. Nobody knew the ship crashed here and since the communication systems are broken beyond repair...

PANEL 3

PRESENT: The ASTRONAUT is looking at the same sky, only now, 88 days later, he seems to be somewhat in peace with his destiny.

NARRATION **...nobody probably ever will.**

PAGE TURN

PAGE 2 - PANELS: 3

PANEL 1

PAST: The ASTRONAUT, here still in his spacesuit and with his helmet on, is trying to salvage any supplies and machinery from the crashed ship that he can.

NARRATION

First few weeks were **very hard**. I honestly didn't think I would survive.

The good news was that many of the colonizing equipment from the ship was still functioning and usable.

The bad news was that time was against me. The oxygen levels on the planet were very low and I was quickly running out of my own supply.

PANEL 2

PRESENT: The ASTRONAUT is walking through his own little village that he managed to build during his time on this planet. There are tents, big machines, generators, and even some little robots buzzing about.

NARRATION

Luckily I was able to salvage some of the **terraforming generators** that are enriching the atmosphere with oxygen. Right now I pump them into my tents and greenhouses.

I can also walk outside my settlement with just an **external oxygen tube**. No need for a helmet.

PANEL 3

PAST: The ASTRONAUT looks tired, his beard is growing a bit, and he is pale and maybe even a little emaciated. He is nevertheless hard at work building his first greenhouse.

NARRATION

I was running out of food rations within the first few weeks. But the **hydroponics technology** was almost intact and I had lots of rice and vegetable seeds.

I had other kinds, but I knew that I'd be dead before I could grow those, even with the advanced technology and **genetic mutations** speeding up the process.

And in hindsight, it really was pretty close.

PANEL 1

PRESENT: The ASTRONAUT is now walking through his fully equipped and automated greenhouse full of plants and vegetables. He even has some bags and jars of food prepped up already in reserves.

NARRATION Now I can grow fruit, vegetables, rice, potatoes, beans, and soon even corn.

 The **water filters** are almost 100% self sufficient and I was also able to pump some of the water from a nearby lake into the camp.

 Needles to say all of this also helps with further **oxygen production**.

PANEL 2

PAST: The ASTRONAUT is trying to repair a tent in a storm. He is soaking wet and visibly cold. We can also see that he has set up some fire, but it's now barely alive. There also may be other tents in the background, collapsed by the storm.

NARRATION I had to withstand harsh weather conditions, hunger, and sleep depredation, since I had so much to do each day and night.

PANEL 3

PRESENT: The ASTRONAUT looks at his little village. We see the tents, the greenhouse, the little droids focusing on their tasks.

NARRATION Not only have I survived, which I wouldn't bet on three months ago, but I managed to **thrive**. I only need to focus on maintenance of my encampment about two or three hours a day.

 Most of the systems are **automated** now. Almost completely self sufficient and powered by solar energy. If something breaks, I have a shipwreck full of spare parts.

PANEL 4

PRESENT: The ASTRONAUT sits in a chair that gives him a good view over the planes of this alien world. His own little kingdom, as bare as it is.

NARRATION When I first got here, I was fighting for **survival**. It was hard, but every single day also had a laser sharp **focus** to it. Every action I made had a **purpose**. My life depended on it.

PAGE 4 - PANELS: 4

PANEL 1

PRESENT: The ASTRONAUT is still sitting in his chair. A little robot on wheels comes by to hand him a glass of a cold light-yellow liquid with some ice in it.

NARRATION

Now I have managed to salvage enough **assist-bots** from the ship that I don't even have to cook for myself most of the time.

Hell, they can make a **pretty good lemonade** from the fresh lemons that are now growing plentifully in the greenhouse.

PANEL 2

PRESENT: The ASTRONAUT takes a sip of his lemonade while he's admiring the view.

NARRATION

Not only that, I also managed to salvage some of the systems and data from the **recreational department**. Books, games, movies. I have enough to keep me busy for another 100 years.

PANEL 3

PRESENT: SIMILAR PANEL, the ASTRONAUT is now watching the sun, as it is setting over the horizon. You can go wild with the alien sky, of course. Maybe the planet has multiple moons? A ring?

NARRATION

I can finally stop surviving and start **living**. Enjoy the fruits of my labor without stressing about keeping myself alive every single day.

I have everything I could have ever dreamed of here. I can finally start doing what I **like**, not what I **need** to do.

And yet...

PANEL 4

PRESENT: SIMILAR PANEL. There is now a slightly different expression in the ASTRONAUT's face. Sadness? Frustration? Depression? I'll leave up to you what you'd think best depicts the final punchline of this story.

NARRATION

...I have no idea what to do with my life now.

THE END