

Prologue

Leaving was harder than I thought.
I'd been working to make it happen
for so long I forgot that to go means
to leave.

But I have to go. The stars call
to my soul, pulling my mind and eyes
ever to the sky.

PRIMUS-371B

Day: 1

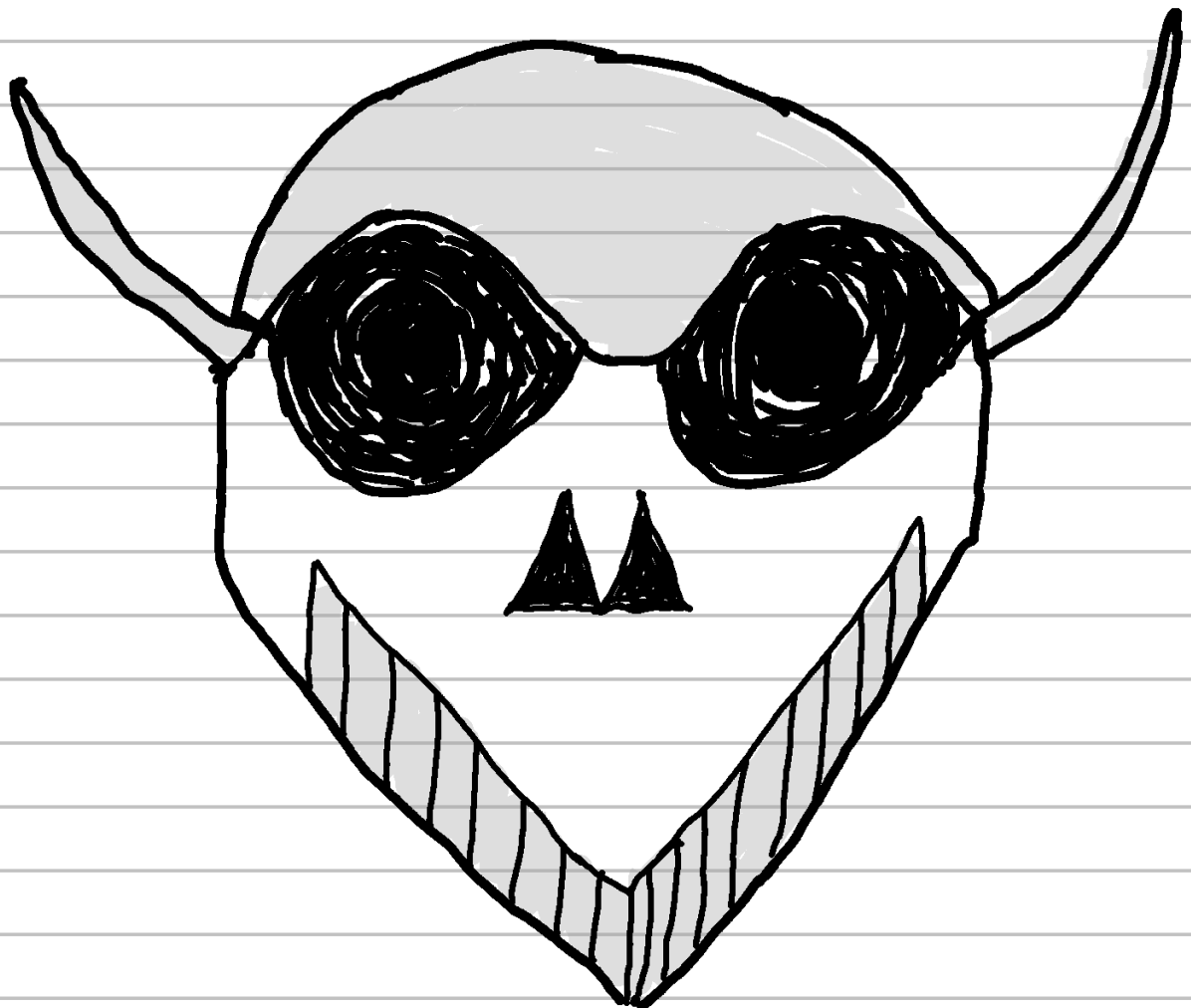
My first planet! I set my ship down on a nice flat field. I figured it was best to start with an easy landing until I get used to flying my ship.

The field is huge! the grasses are much taller than I am. I found the most amazing structure. I wasn't able to see it from space, so, it was super lucky that I found it. I was relaxing in my hammock when the wind started to blow the grass and I caught a glimpse of it. It looks like it was a small house - long abandoned and worn by time. I know it doesn't sound very exciting, but it's my first find on this journey. I spent all afternoon photographing it and I can't wait to see how the pictures turn out.

Day: 5

What a hell of a climb, but also worth it. I discovered that my ship has topo mapping tech, and I saw what I thought was a mountain. But it was even cooler! It's a glacier. It's taken me days to climb it, but the view is indescribable.

On top of that I found a fossil! There's a section of glacier that's clear, and in it were the remains of some strange creature.



Day: 10

Man, I'd never really felt cold before that storm rolled in. Thankfully I found shelter in a cave system not far from the glacier. The cave isn't very wide, but it seems to go down at slight angle forever. I must be at least a mile underground.

A small creature approached me. It didn't seem to belong here, deep in the heart of the planet. It was colorful and had legs suited to running fast, two things not seen in underground animals. I wanted to help it, but it wouldn't let me near it.



Theades-24 DS

Day: 12

I've landed on my second planet and I can already tell my landing skills are improving.

I spent most of the two flight days in my darkroom. The pictures are decent, I feel pretty satisfied with them. But also... they don't make me feel the way I thought they would. I enjoyed my time on that planet, but when I feel like something is off, I can't quite put my finger on it though. Hopefully the next batch will be better.

Day: 14

I've spent two days hiking and climbing this mountain. I found a path - perhaps a road? It runs along the cliff face ascending at a steady pace. I can't tell for sure if it was made by intelligent beings. If it was the makers are long gone now. The path came to a dead end, I either turn back or climb the cliff face.

Day: 15

Well that could have gone better. It also could have been way worse. I was in the middle of a really tough climb when I had my first direct contact with alien life. Some kind of stinging insect came from out of the rocks and viciously attacked my hands. The pain only lasted a few seconds before my hands went totally numb and I fell from the cliff. Thankfully I was only 7 or 8 feet above a ledge. The fall hurt pretty badly - I dislocated my knee.

Surprisingly the fall wasn't the scariest part. As I laid on the ground assessing my injuries the reality of my situation hit me, full force: I was alone. No help would come. No second chances if I couldn't make it on my own. I didn't start this journey with the goal of being alone - it just kind of... happened that way.

Day: 25

It took me 5 days to get back to my ship with my injury. Once I made it I took several days of rest to heal up. I need to be more careful, but I also don't want to get in my own head. You can't give fear a foothold especially since I'm alone out here.

Day: 26

Wow! What I found today almost made up for that cliff incident. I was following this beautiful river when suddenly the trees thinned out and I started to see old structures. It was the ruins of an entire town!! I'm no archeologist, but it seemed to be a level 2 developing society. The buildings were stone, but clearly cut stones made by masons. There are houses, but also shops, a market place, some kind of religious building, and what looks to be a town hall. Oh! I almost forget the best part! they had a library! The writings are on animal skin scrolls. Sadly they are all too decayed to be legible, but it was still a cool experience.

I looked through the horses and it seemed like the people were... happy. I know that I can't know that for sure, but it's like the echoes of their daily lives are imprinted upon this place - and the echoes sound happy. I don't know, maybe I'm just projecting my own home sickness on a people I've never known.



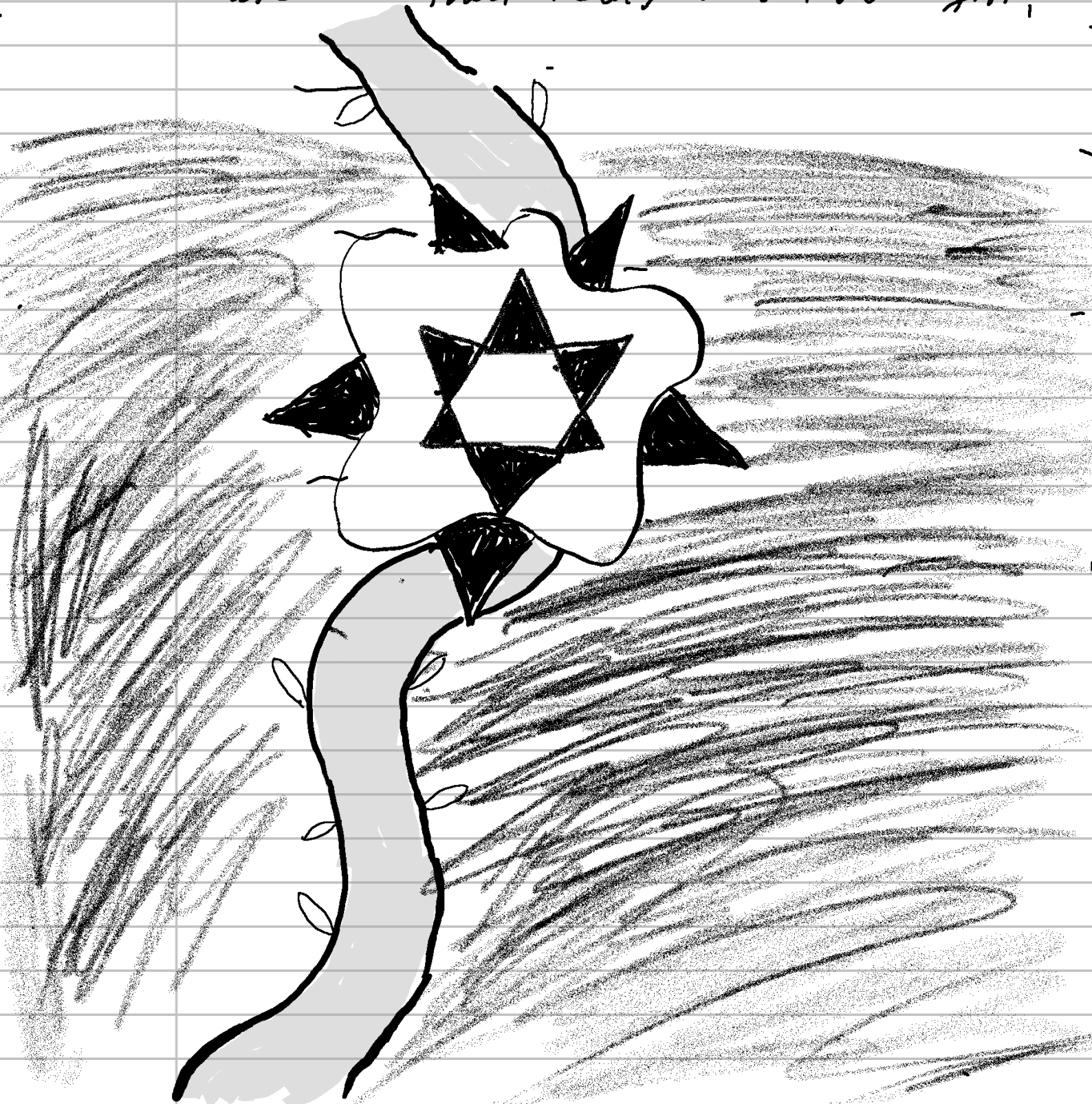
Day: 27

Today I saw a Storm. Well, that's really under selling it. I was up in a tree trying to get a good shot of that town when I saw a MASSIVE Storm system. It must have been at least a hundred miles across! I'd heard of storms like this, but I never thought I'd see one myself. I watched it for hours - I wasn't scared, just in awe. I was overwhelmed with a sense of powerlessness and strangely that brought me peace.

Day: 30

It's officially been one month since I started my journey. I've not heard any voice besides my own for 30 straight days. I'm okay though, I'll be fine. I can feel that old itch creeping up again - the sky calling to me. I decided to take one more hike before blasting off into the unknown. There was a canyon that I really wanted to explore before leaving.

Getting there was pretty tough -
but, worth it in the end. What I
found wasn't some great discovery or
magnificent wonder of the galaxy, but
it was beautiful, and in the end
that's all that really matters right?



Day: 33

For as much effort I put into saving up for this ship I'm starting to feel like I hate it. Being alone on the planets is difficult but manageable, but out here in the void of space it's unbearable. I need to land soon - I can feel depression creeping in.

Palagius 17

Day: 34

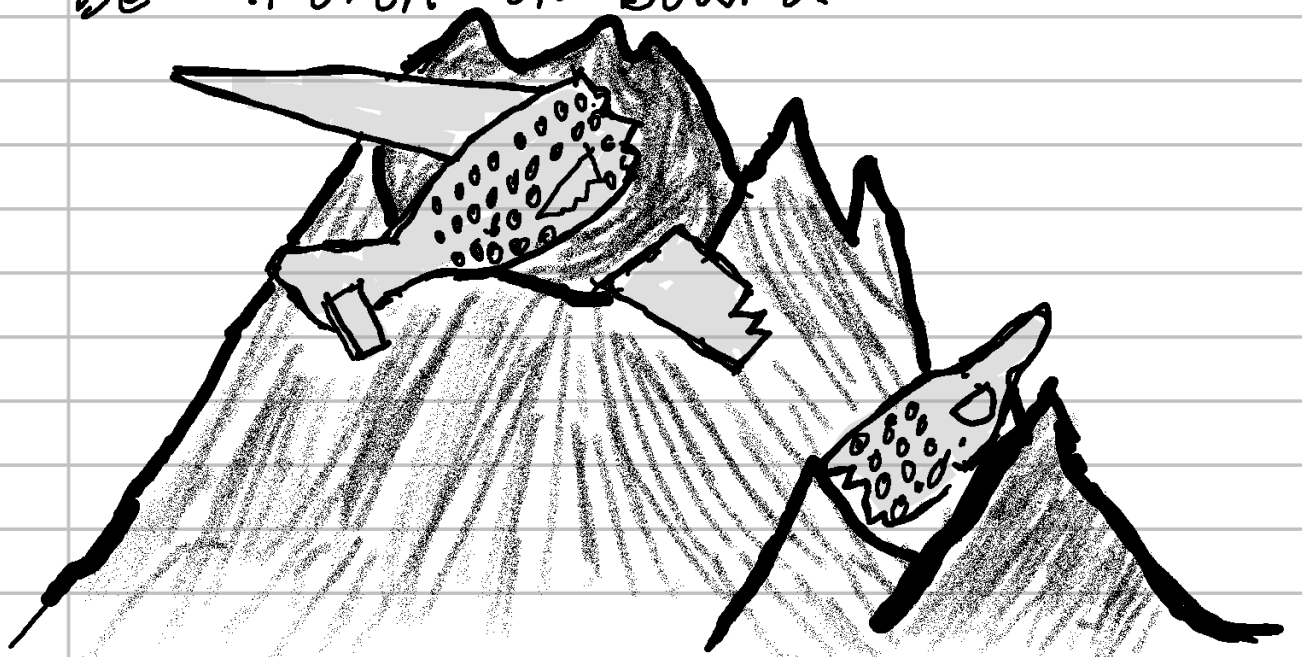
I received an unexpected emergency distress signal today. I suppose most S.O.S. signals are unexpected to be fair. It took me a few hours to find the planet it was coming from.

I felt so many emotions as I searched for the ship. I was worried about the people on the ship, scared of what I'd find, and even a bit excited to see other people.

The ship was crashed on top of a mountain on one of the nearby planets. There's no way to know for sure, but I think they were flying

Over the surface of the planet and didn't see the mountain - perhaps because of fog or rain. When I finally managed to find the wreckage my ship's scanners made it clear that there were no survivors. I could have left then, gone back to my journey through the stars, but I didn't. I landed as near the ship as I could manage and slowly approached it. It was so damn cold, honestly I'm glad no one survived the impact: Freezing to death out here would have been worse. I wish I could convince myself that I went in there in case the scanner had missed any survivors. I wish I hadn't gone in at all. But truthfully a macabre curiosity had taken over me. I'd never seen a dead body before. After today I've had my fill of it.

I didn't realize there would be children on board.



Day: 35

A storm blew in yesterday and I was unable to lift off, so I'm stuck spending the night here until the storm passes. I can't sleep. Whenever I close my eyes I see their faces. They look scared, like they knew it was coming.

Day: 36

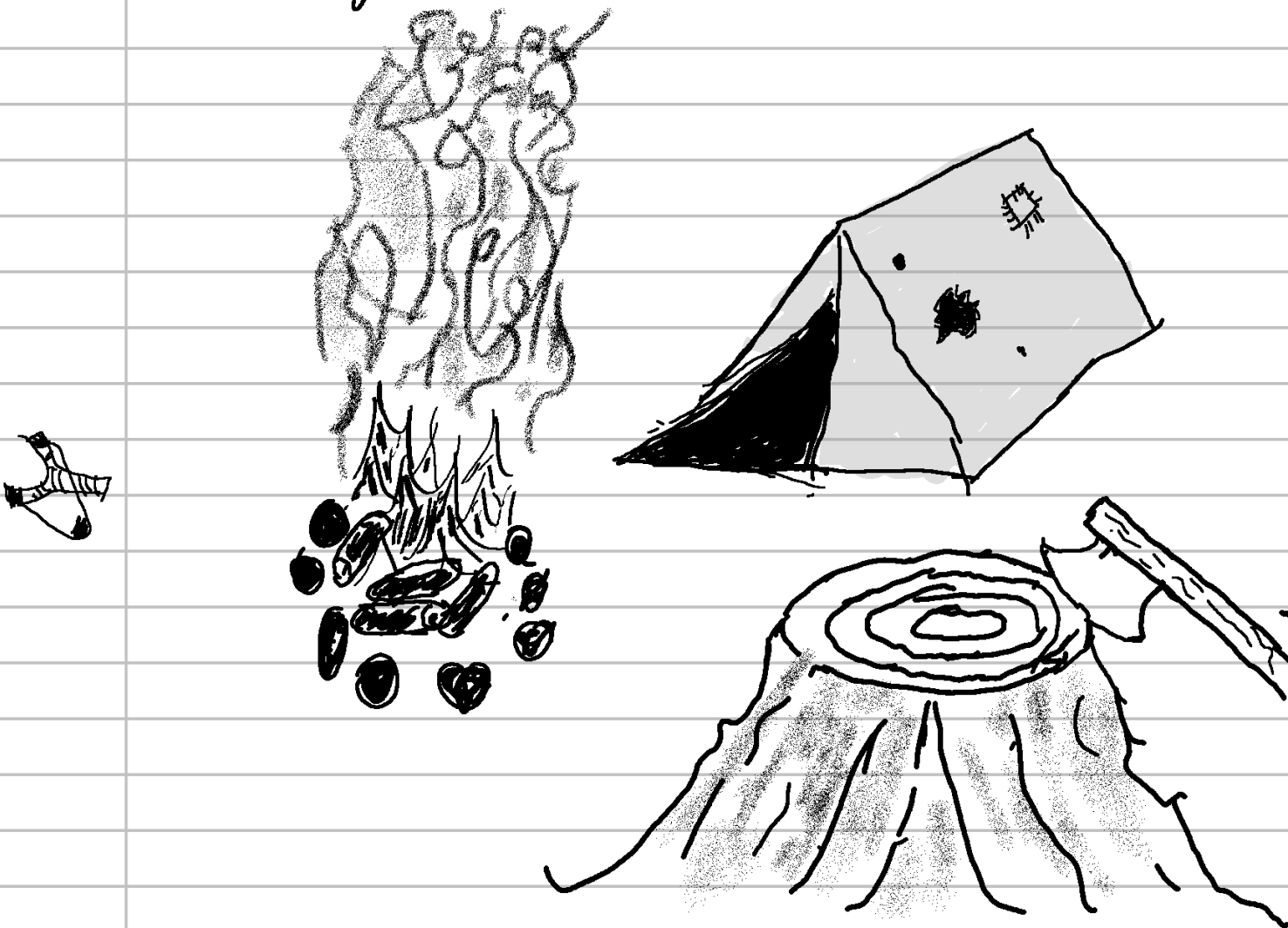
The storm finally cleared up this morning. Seeing the sun shining on the white snow felt incongruous with the reality of the wreckage. Everything was ready to go, but... I can't do it. I can't leave this planet without finding something good. I have to know that life can go on here.

Day: 46

I don't know what to say. It was so surreal. As I was flying along I saw smoke in the distance and I went to investigate. It never occurred to me that it could be people, I guess it's been so long since I've been around people that I just assume there are none.

The smoke was from a camp of survivors from that ship! There were so many of them, adults and children. I've spent the last 10 days here with them and it has healed my soul. I offered my help, tried to give them my food and communication equipment, but they wouldn't have it. They said that they never expected to live like this - in tents as hunter-gatherers - but they found happiness. I spent hours taking pictures of kids playing, adults cooking and crafting, and the elderly telling their stories.

I know I can leave now. I know that there is still good, still life in this universe.



Day: 48

Here I am, hurtling through space again. I was sad to leave the survivors, but I'll never forget the time I spent with them. Having that human contact saved me.

I still have nightmares about what I saw on the ship. I can't get their faces out of my head.

Constantinople AQ5B

Day: 49

This is one of those places that look warm even though it's super cold. I think it's the clear stars and sunshine that give that effect. Well, that and all the plant life!

I'm on top of a glacier covered in leafy green plants. I've never seen growth like this in such a frozen cold environment before. There are trees and bushes and even flowers - rooted right into the ice!! I think I'll call this an 'glacial oasis'.

Day: 55

so... empty. The infinitely bleak view from my ship's window has become unbearable to me. I feel so so empty. I don't have the energy to do anything I've been staring at a wall for days now. It's taking all that I have just to write this entry. I feel like I did when I fell from that cliff. I'm down and no help will come.

Day: ?

I'm losing chunks of time. I don't know what day it is. I found darkroom prints of the pictures that I took with the survivors. I have no memory of making these prints. I'm scared. Really scared.

Day: ?

I finally looked through those prints. I'm so scared. Really scared. The pictures are empty. just shots of an empty grass-land. I recognize the place - but there aren't any people, not even a camp. I don't know what's happening. I don't know why this is happening.

Day: ?

I just want to go home. I can't do this any more. I don't care if every one thinks I'm a failure.

Day: Where's home?

I tried. I tried to set the ship's course to take me home. But... I can't remember where home is. I can't remember my home planet's name, or even what system it's in.

It's so quiet. I can constantly hear the sound of my own heart beat. It's too much.

I woke up in the air lock today. I don't remember any thing. I checked the ship's logs, and it looks like I opened the air lock manually without a space suit. Thankfully the ship's safety override kicked in and automatically shut the door. Was I trying to kill myself?

Day: I can hear them

The quiet is gone. I can hear the victims of the crash. Are they really here? Am I really here? I hear them in another part of the ship, talking and laughing - having fun. But every time I go to them it gets quiet as soon as I enter the room. Are they mad at me? Did I do something wrong?

Day: only whispers

Secrets!

They've quite talking. No more laughter. Only hushed whispers, furtively uttered just quietly enough that I can't make out what they are saying.

I've quit trying to follow them. Now whenever I find them they all pretend to be asleep on the floor. I've tried waking them but they won't stop pretending to be asleep. I hate them for it. Can't they see how lonely I am?

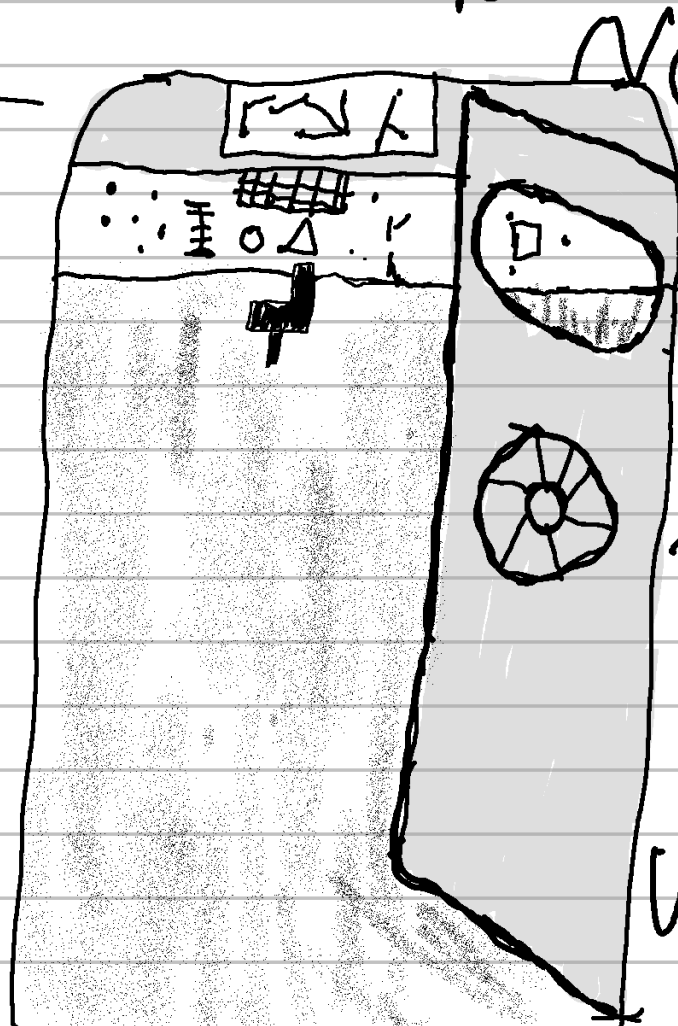
Mad
AT
ME?

But: they won't let me in

I need to land on a planet. I have to get out of this damn ship. But there's a new problem. They won't let me in to the bridge to land the ship. Every time I go to the bridge door I see them all laying dead. Their bodies are twisted and mangled, the floor is soaked with blood.

They can't fool me though - I can still hear them whispering - I can see their pale lips quietly moving. If I could just get them to move to some other part of the ship I could land and escape. I have to escape.

NO
escape



NO escape

NO
escape

TIME
TO
~~LEAVE~~
STAY
WITH
ME

Day: Not hungry

No food

The ships biosensors triggered a warning telling me that I haven't eaten in 3 day. But I know it's one of their tricks because I don't feel hungry. They are trying to mess with my head!

They
cant

They cant trick me

Trick me cant trick me - Trick me
me

plenty of food

Trick me

NO TRICKS NO ~~food~~ cant

Trick

NO me trick me cant trick me

me trick NOT Hungry

starving Trick me Trick me
Trick me Trick me
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Bastard

I don't know how they are doing IT.

I got so excited when I saw a ship outside, finally some help. I ran to the bridge -

I didn't care IF I HAD TO STEP ON THEIR Fate corpses.

But they locked the door. Even through the door I could hear their whispers. I always hear them

ALLKAT

The other ship got in close so I went to the window to signal them. I saw them through their window. They were

on that ship! I don't know how they got on it. They had no faces

Faces

O

Blank

No eyes

NO eyes

sneaky

Where Did
They Hide IT?

Day: eyes wide open

It's bad enough that they won't let me sleep, now I can't even close my eyes without seeing horrible things. How long can I live without sleep?

I can't see my Face any more
when I look in the mirror my Face
is gone - just smooth skin.

WHO TOOK MY
FACE

So much blood So much blood So much blood
MY HANDS ^{BLOOD} ARE RED

I'm the reason they're dead.
It's right there in the logs.
I didn't check my flight path
when I went to land.

HOW COULD I FORGET?

There was no distress signal

MURDERER

They never had time to send one
they swerved to miss me and
crashed straight into the mountain.

it's my fault. I killed them.
All those kids

Day: Sorry

I told them that I'm sorry. That it was my fault and I know it. That it should have been me and not them.

I didn't think my apology would matter to them. Why should it?

But they let me into the bridge. I've set a course for home and I should get there in a few days.

I don't know what will happen when I get there. How will I ever go back to how life was before? Maybe I don't deserve peace.

I no longer feel the call to explore the stars.

I hope I never do again.

END SHIPS LOGS