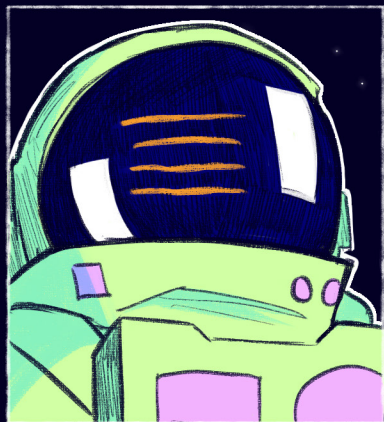
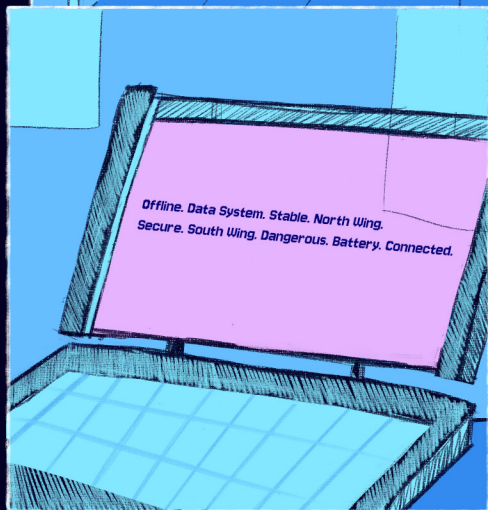
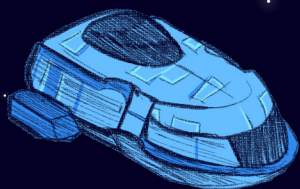


aboard the astrophet

Written & Illustrated by Madison Rey

Space

Year 2244





STATIC

Audio. Unstable. Communications.
Offline. Steering. Critical.
Navigation. Offline. Sensors.

SIGH H H H



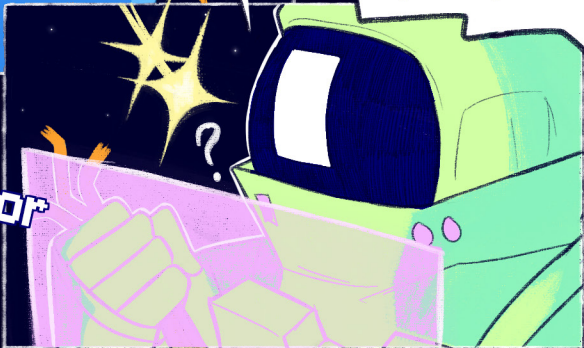
Damn wires...

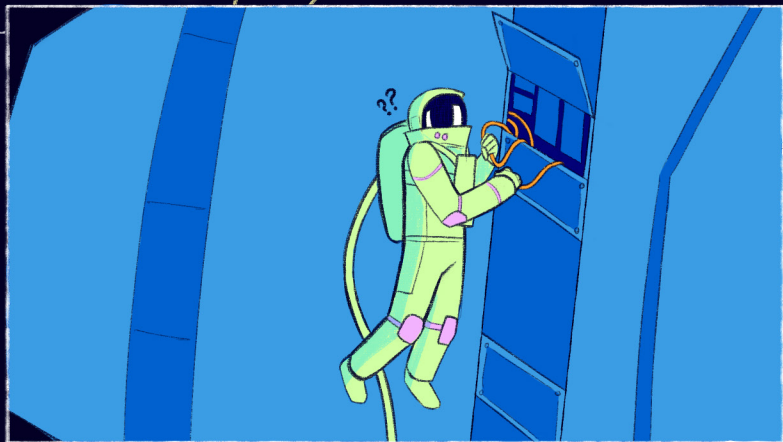
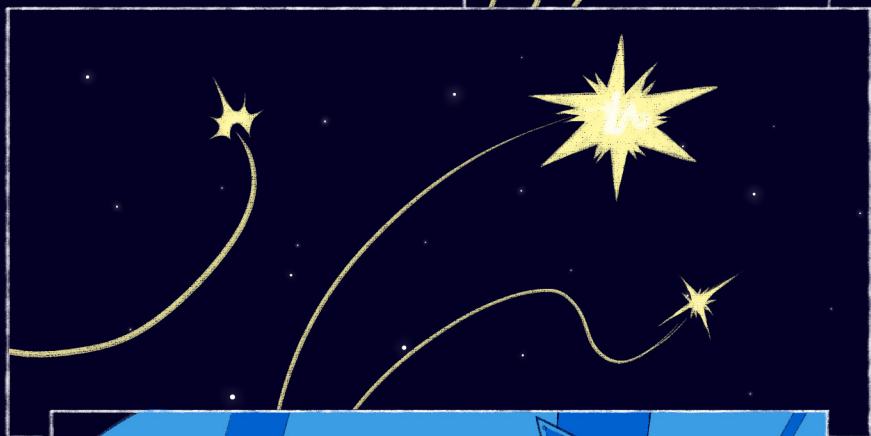
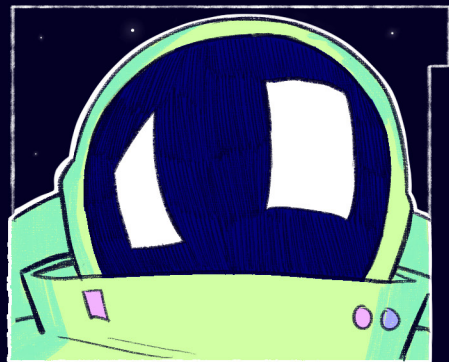


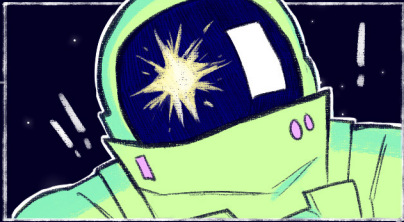
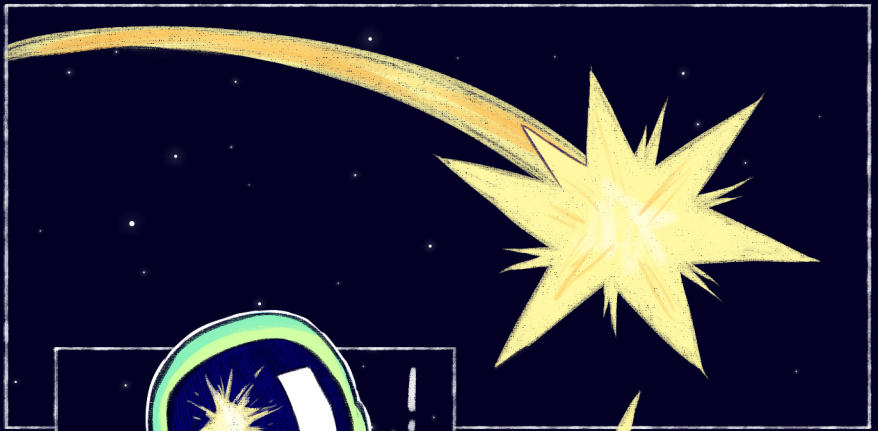
STAT

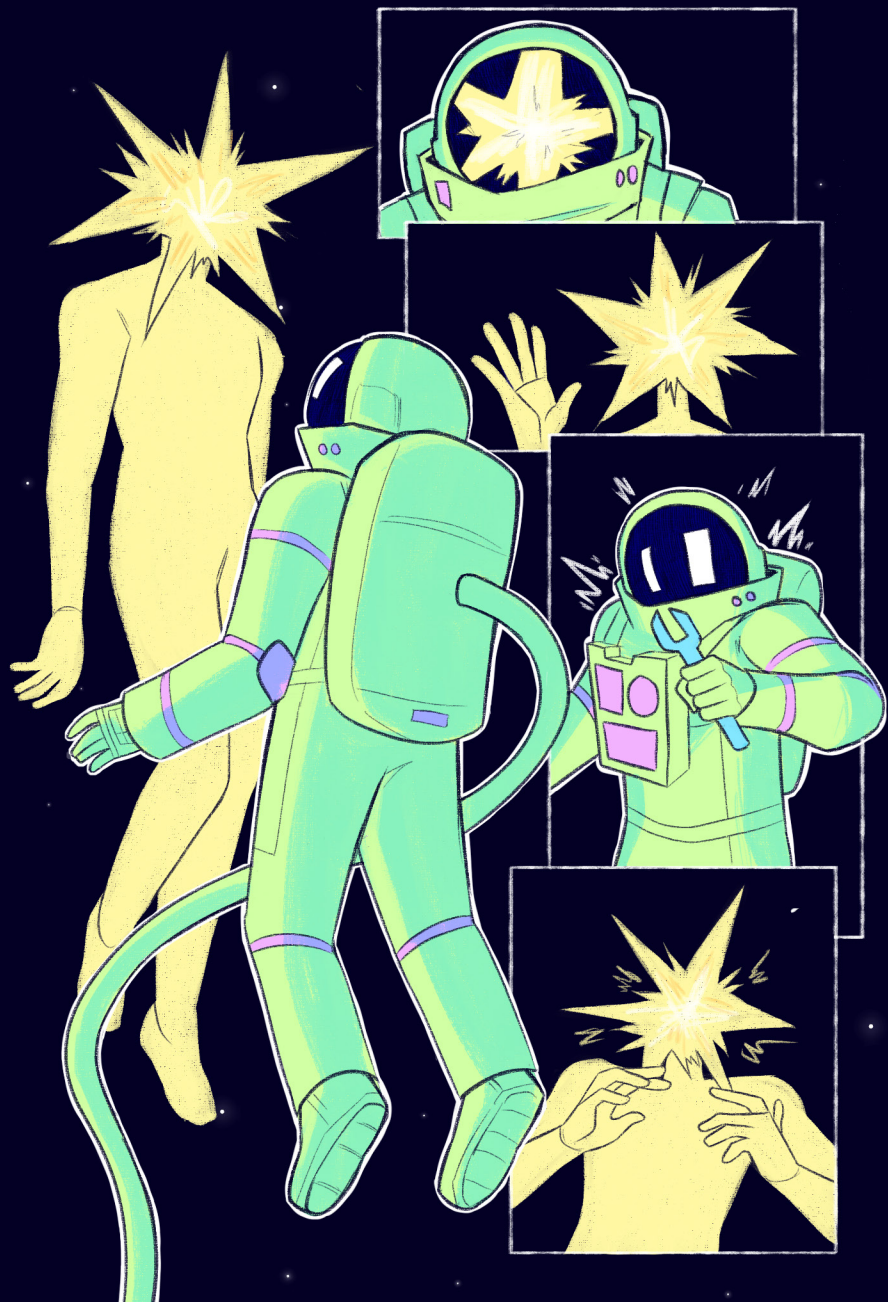
Offline. Data System. Stable. North
Wing. Secure. South Wing.
Dangerous. Battery. Connected.

Error
Error







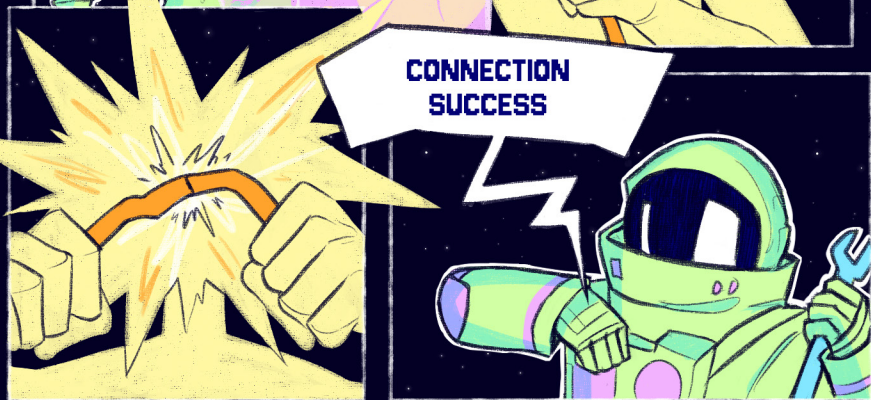


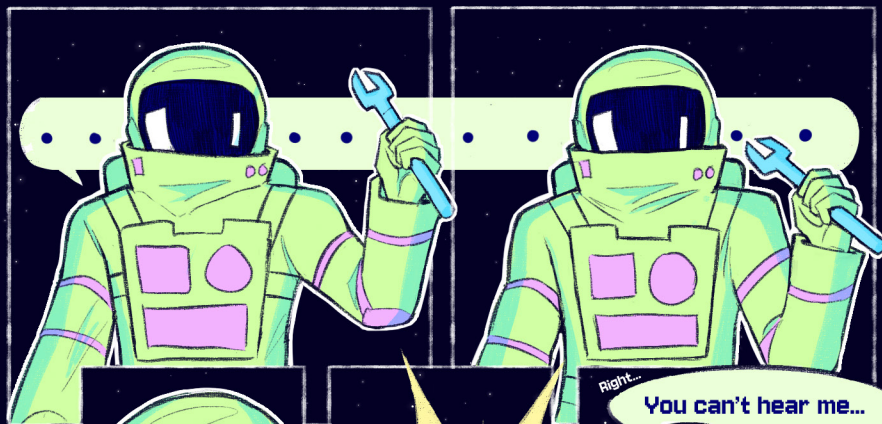
Error

Error



**CONNECTION
SUCCESS**



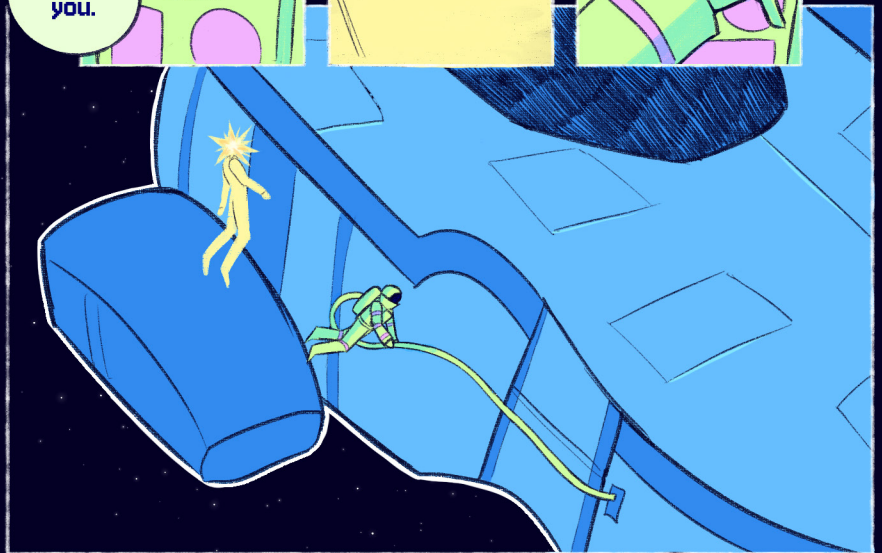


Thank
you.



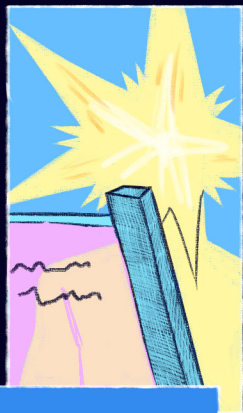
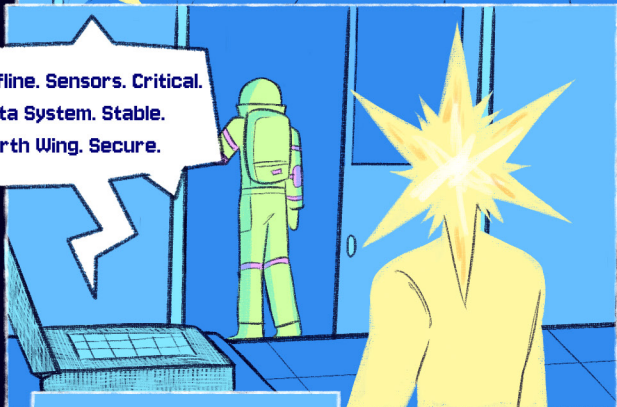
Right...

You can't hear me...

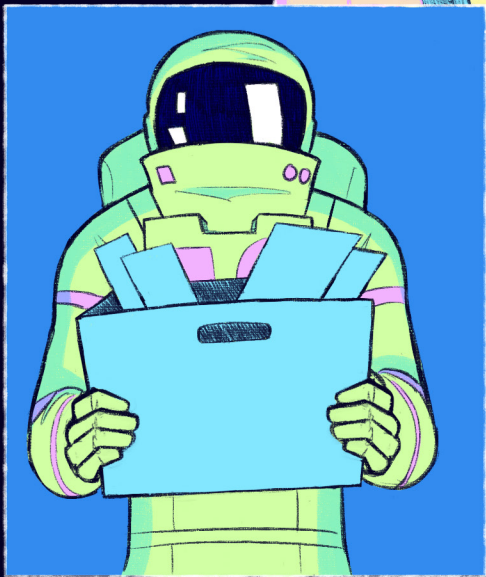




Offline. Sensors. Critical.
Data System. Stable.
North Wing. Secure.

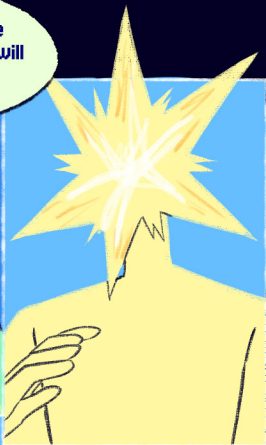
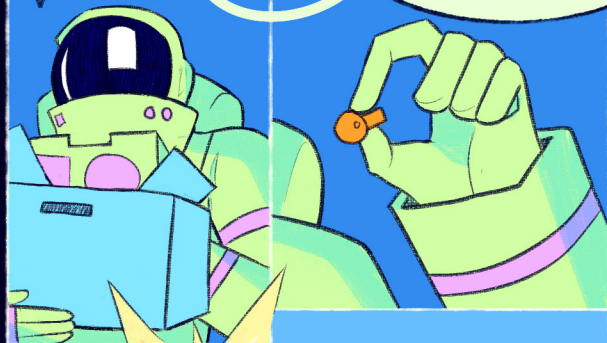


South Wing. Dangerous.
Battery. Connected.

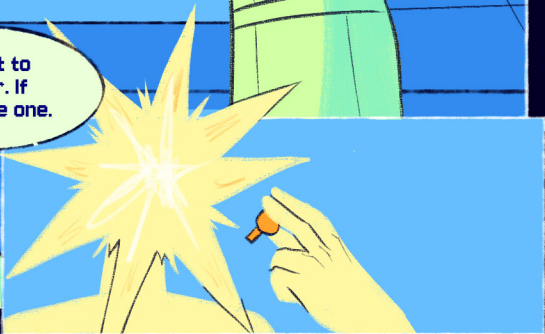
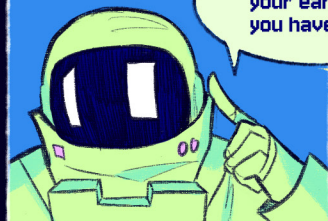


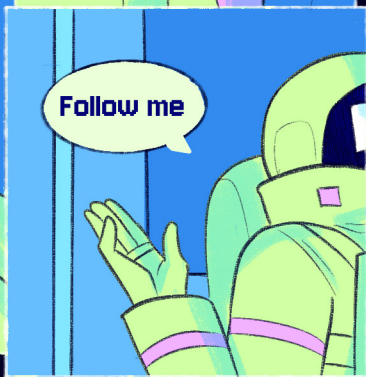
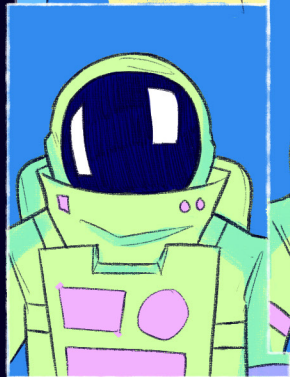
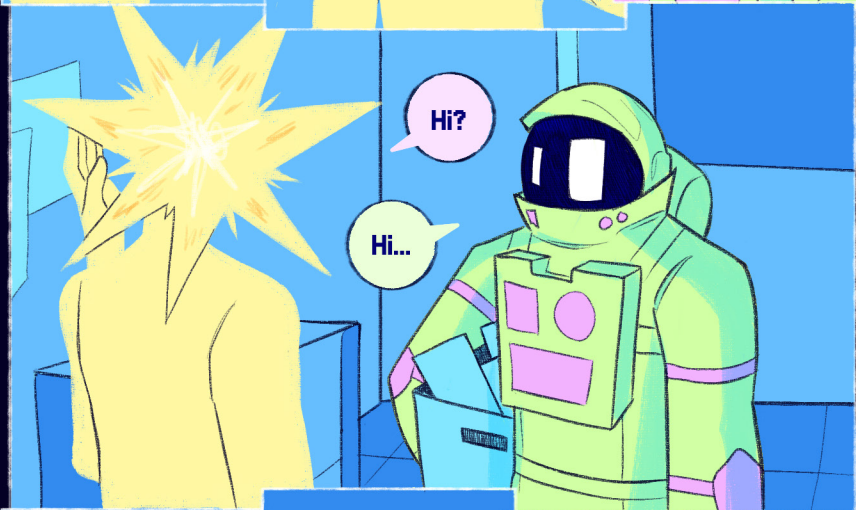
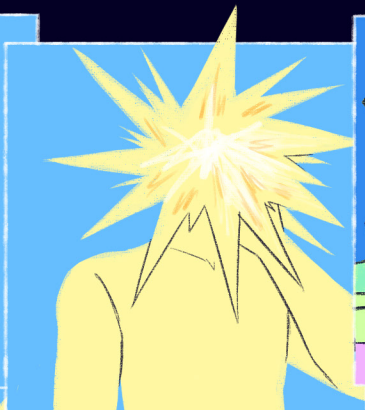
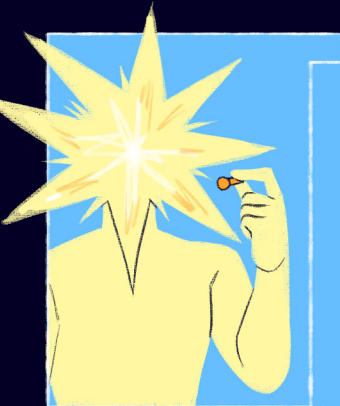
A communicator
for outside.

If you speak one of the
common languages, it will
translate everything.



Attach it to
your ear. If
you have one.







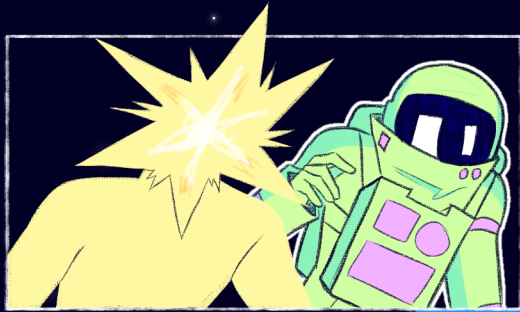
What's that do?

Click
Click
Beep

Hmm...

This goes somewhere.

Connection Success



I don't know why you're helping me... but thank you.

You're welcome

If we made ships as big and as long-lasting as yours, it would take a significant amount of power. Many of our ships can only handle 1 or 2 person trips...

I wonder... Why are we finding so many empty ships?

You know this technology more than I do. You've come in contact with humans before?

Only a few ships. They're usually empty and broken.

Expeditions gone wrong. Once a ship is gone for long enough, we assume the team is lost... dead... and don't come back for them.

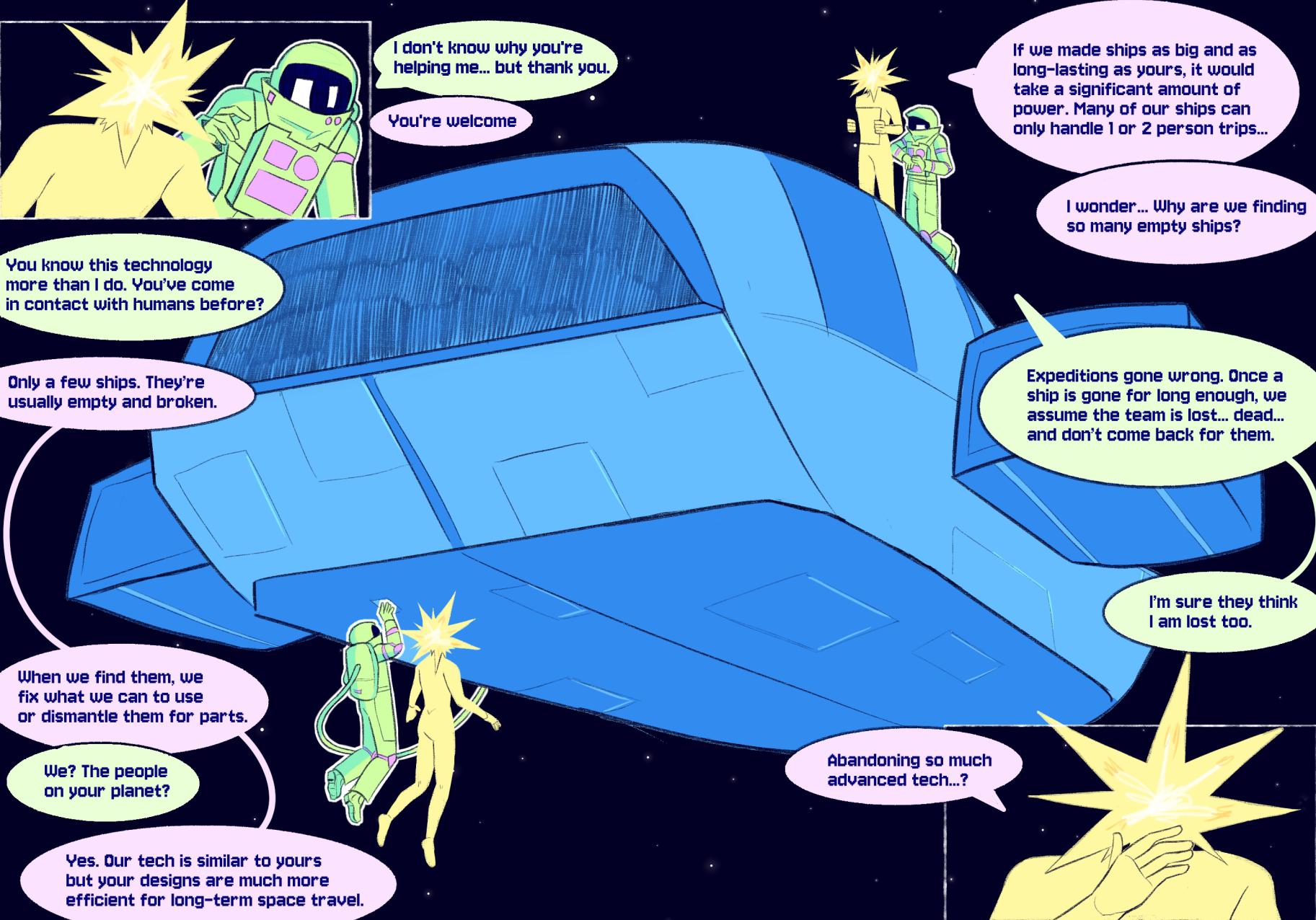
I'm sure they think I am lost too.

When we find them, we fix what we can to use or dismantle them for parts.

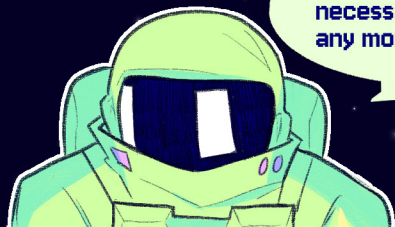
We? The people on your planet?

Yes. Our tech is similar to yours but your designs are much more efficient for long-term space travel.

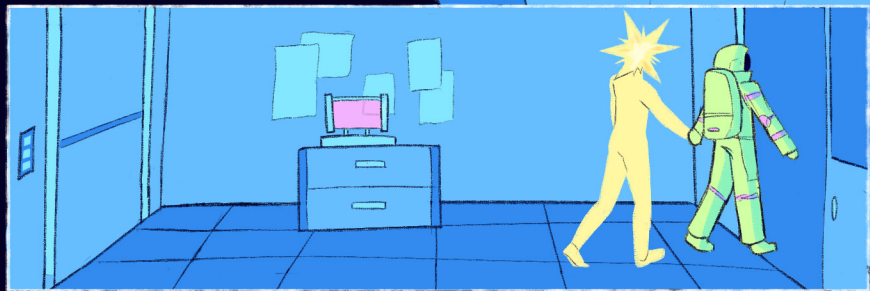
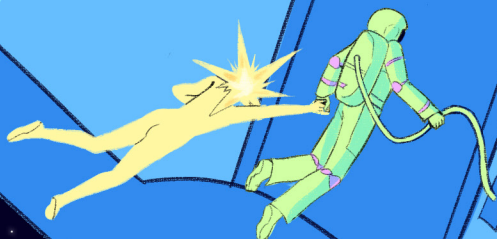
Abandoning so much advanced tech...?

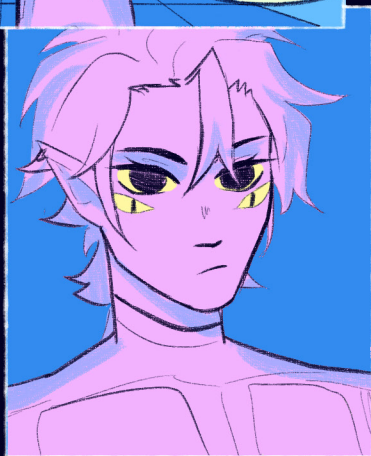



It's unfortunate, but necessary to prevent any more loss.



GRAB

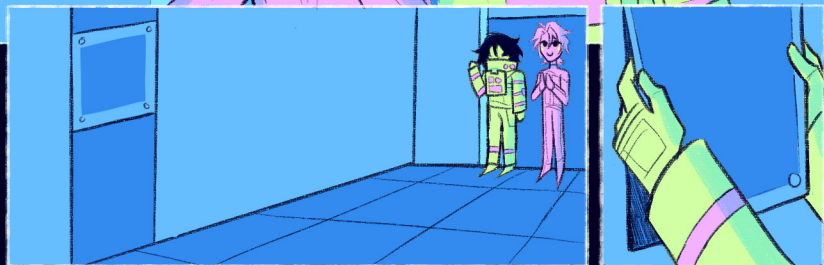




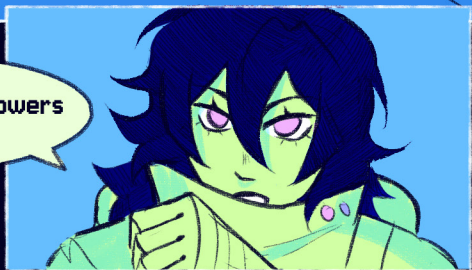


Only thing left to fix is the navigation.

Let's fix it then!



...What is that?



A battery. It's what powers every human ship.

If not maintained, their power fades. The ships your people have found most likely had the batteries damaged or the power faded.

Every ship has a battery like this? Every abandoned ship?



How can you afford to lose something like this...

We have bigger issues.



Can I touch-



You know...



with the steering stable, I can steer us to my planet. We'll be able to fix this easily, maybe improve it!

Is that necessary... ? All we need to do is connect everything... Changing direction will set me further off course.

I can't afford that.

But... Your people have abandoned so many resources, so much power

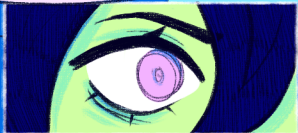
We did not abandon those ships for no reason. We made that hard decision. We can't waste time searching aimlessly.

How is saving your lost explorers a waste of time?

That is not what I mean. Our mission is what's important! Not us.

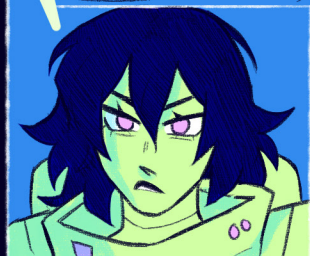
You don't realize how lucky your people are. We don't have batteries to power every ship. A single one of those batteries could make a major difference on my planet. It could save so many people.

When we get our hands on one-





...Did... did you help me just to get to the battery?



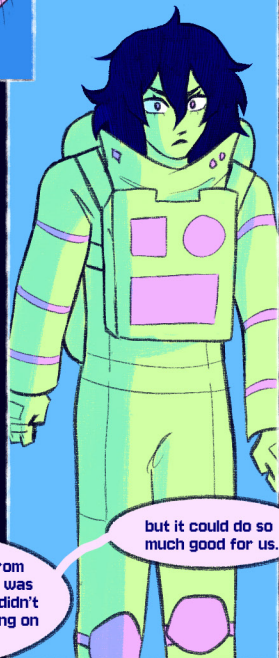
what- no! I did want to help-



I knew you were too quick to help me... You're trying to take it from me!



I never wanted to steal it from anyone- Ok; yes. The mission was to find a working battery. I didn't know anyone would be relying on it to get back home...



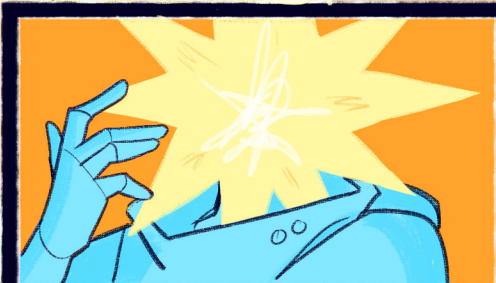
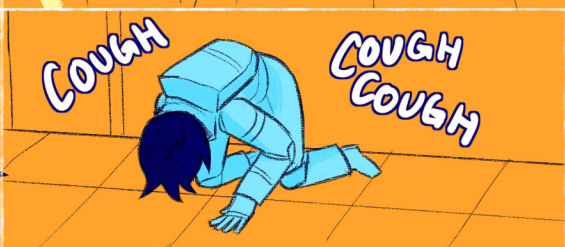
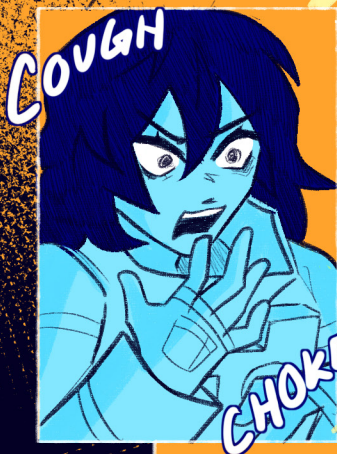
but it could do so much good for us.





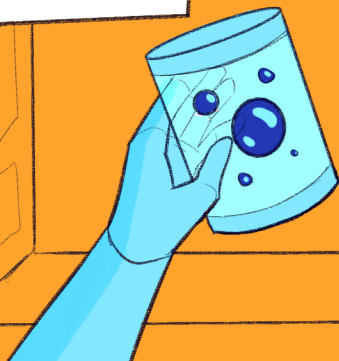
Power. Error. Battery System
Disconnected. Communications.
Offline. Steering. Offline.

Navigation. Offline. Sensors.
Offline. Data System. Offline.
Oxygen. Offline.

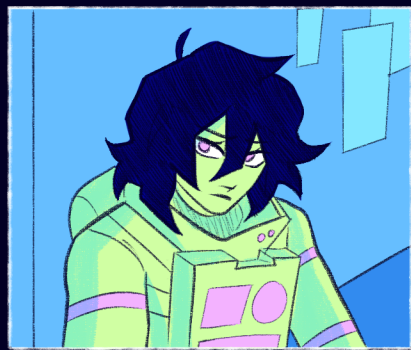
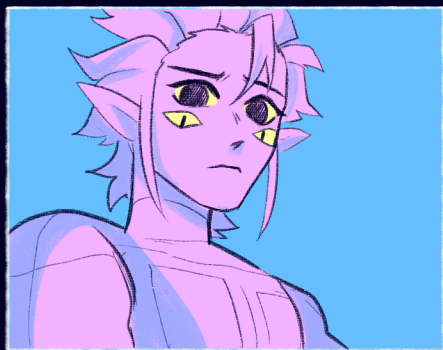




Battery System Connected.

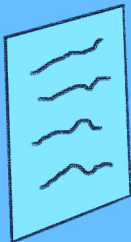


**Communications. Offline. Steering.
Stable. Navigation. Offline. Sensors.
Stable. Data System. Stable. Oxygen. Stable.**





How much time
do we have left?
How much time
do we have left?



I didn't know...
humans are
struggling too...?





Humans are running out of time.

I need to find a new planet.



We're trying to prolong our stay on our planet. We need more resources.

I can't abandon Earth.



But I can't turn my back on your planet knowing I can help.

I think I have an idea



Forging an unlikely bond, an astronaut and an alien must navigate their wavering trust and a stranded ship to survive.

For insight on the process and making of the book, visit my website: madisonrrey.com

