

# Stranded on Earth:

A Guide for  
Misplaced Aliens

Sample file

Words by

Jason M. Hardy

Pictures by

Tony Steele

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The following is a book of fiction. Any resemblance of the characters to Earth humans, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. Resemblance to extraterrestrials, however, is entirely purposeful, as each alien character described in the book is based on interstellar travellers the creators have spoken with, met, or at least heard some juicy gossip about.

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Come chat with us on the official Facebook page for *Stranded on Earth*.

Or follow JasonMHardy on Twitter.

Or commune with us through the use of a medium, a collection of vacuum tubes, a clockwork llama, some mango chutney, and a sombrero. Search the internet for step-by-step instructions on this process.

This book is dedicated to all those who remain lost.

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## Introduction

[Note: Upon request from the Interstellar Exploration Ministry, I've reviewed Krklxorple's guide. There's good stuff here, but K. coddles the stranded too much, and his view of the humans is far too rosy—he hasn't spent enough time on-planet. I don't want to piss him off by making changes directly to his text, so I added footnotes here and there to give a more realistic view of things. And to satisfy my own preferences.

—Xdrandgrble, Review Committee chair]

If you find yourself stranded on the planet known as Earth and are reading these words, then you have made a good decision. Reading is a deliberative act; by choosing it, you have decided not to panic and are calmly facing the situation in which you now find yourself. This is good. The only way you can survive is to stay calm.

This is not to say that calm, in and of itself, is enough. It is only a start. It is the state of mind you need to be in so that you may absorb what this guide has to teach you. Only when you have fully internalized the concepts presented here will you be able to endure the time you are going to have to spend in this primitive, violent backwater.

To help you preserve a calm state of mind, there are certain concepts to remember that will prevent you from panicking or from developing unproductive feelings of inadequacy or worthlessness.

**You are not the first alien to be stranded on Earth.** Sometimes travelers are delayed and only arrive at a wormhole after the hole has collapsed. Other times holes close or collapse prematurely, without warning. Thus, you do not need to feel that you have erred in a spectacular fashion that the cosmos never has witnessed. Rather, you have simply erred in a way hundreds before you have erred. You are not alone in your mistake.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Right. You're in the company of several other idiots. Enjoy.

**A delay in your rescue does not indicate that you are not valued.** Wormholes are tremendously complicated. Even if we generate sufficient power to tear apart the fabric of space/time, we cannot accurately anticipate where the wormhole will take us. It is an inexact science, and sometimes rescue efforts take years before they are successful. The fact that a rescue is slow in coming does not mean that you are not valued and have been forgotten.<sup>2</sup>

**Your period of exile can bring great growth, and may even be enjoyable.** It is true that while you are on Earth, you will not be able to keep up on the latest asteroid polo matches. You will have to use your legs and other, more prosaic modes of transportation instead of InstaPorting anywhere you need to go. And you might, for a variety of reasons, feel compelled to eat the unattractive life form the humans refer to as an “eggplant.”

Yet despite these hardships, your sojourn on Earth need not be entirely unpleasant.<sup>3</sup> Humans can be quite entertaining, both unintentionally and on purpose. In artistic matters, they tend to be overly mannered, though an increasing number of filmmakers and musicians seem to be slowly realizing the truth that wrestling with depths is a waste of energy that could otherwise be spent skating over surfaces. Thus, you can often find various films and programs that are similar in character and quality to many of the classic transmissions we have enjoyed over the years.<sup>4</sup>

While their creations can be diverting, they are nothing compared to the entertainment offered by their version of reality (indeed, the humans themselves have realized this, which is why many developed nations possess three active video cameras for every citizen). The primary source of entertainment is watching the Earthlings vie with each other

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<sup>2</sup> Conversely, if you're eventually rescued, don't get all bigheaded thinking you got saved because you're all that important. Most likely you just got lucky and a surprise wormhole opened up. Don't flatter yourself.

<sup>3</sup> Especially when we're talking about food, because the planet contains six billion free-range humans.

<sup>4</sup> The planet still hasn't been able to produce another Fonz, though. Not in fiction, not in reality. That sucks.

over crumbs of status or fame, never realizing how galactically insignificant their efforts are. The vanities of humans are considerable, and the possibilities of studying human instinct and behavior by manipulating these vanities and their accompanying insecurities is considerable. You may have a few years<sup>5</sup> to kill – you should take advantage of it.

No one book can address all the vagaries and circumstances of Earth life, but with this volume you will be able to survive, perhaps even thrive, and when the time comes you can return energized, refreshed, and prepared to resume your exploratory duties. Should that not be the case, and should your soujourn be difficult or even painful, remember that the Krplaxzian Brain Modification Ray Project remains fully funded and quite effective.

Sample file

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<sup>5</sup> Or people.



No, I've been to MOO, it's not exactly a party planet.

## Chapter 1: Surviving the First Few Days

When you realize that circumstances have left you stranded on Earth, the first and most important thing to remember is a bit of advice that has been passed down among space travelers for generations: Don't panic. Yes, you are far from home, and you are likely to face a variety of dangers and challenges before you return. You must remember, though, that your chance of surviving these challenges is much greater if you keep your wits about you.

One thing that can be useful in instilling a feeling of calm is a review of the assets you have at your disposal. Assuming you have packed your standard Explorer Kit properly, you should have the following items at your disposal:

- A spacecraft capable of entering and escaping planetary orbit;
- This manual;
- An X94-128 IntelliKit All-Purpose EveryTool;
- 200 meters of purple ribbon;
- 2 serving platters;
- A standard-issue transmogrifier;
- An embalmed mewbeast; and
- 3 radishes.

While you may be tempted to take the mewbeast with you for the protection it might offer, its primary task is to defend your spacecraft. Thus, you should pose it in the most threatening way possible, with its hypodermic claws fully extended, and leave it behind in your ship's control room. Pack



the other belongings in your standard-issue backpack, and then exit your craft. Engage the craft's cloaking device. That will keep it hidden from most onlookers; the mewbeast should take care of the rest.

Your first job is to determine if any humans saw your landing and are coming to investigate. Humans are a curious species (in many senses of the word), and many of them treat the rather obvious fact that they are not the only living creatures in an infinitely large universe with passion and youthful intensity. Thus, when they see anything that resembles what they think a spacecraft may look like, they tend to get rather excited.

This problem is only exacerbated by the fact that, when designing our spacecraft, our engineers were inspired by Earthly transmissions emitted many years ago. Thus, all our craft posses what humans refer to as the “classic flying saucer” shape (the very familiar broad, flat disk topped by a round bulge in the middle).<sup>6</sup> This has led to humans being extra energetic in pursuit of our craft. Our engineers have learned their lesson, though, and are designing a new craft that, from a distance, resembles Earth weather balloons. We are confident that these will generally be ignored.

When you scan the area of your landing (assuming you landed in a rural area, we will cover urban landings separately), there are certain types of humans of which you should be aware. Below we discuss some of the most common types and the approaches you should take to deal with them.

### **Humans to watch out for**

*Type:* Law-enforcement officials

*Can be distinguished by:* Sincerity, diligence, and broad-brimmed hats that, oddly enough, closely resemble our spaceships.

*Recommended approach:* Stay out of sight. Life is easiest for these people if nothing happens, and humans love what is easy. If you wish, you may sing the “Nothing to See Here”

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<sup>6</sup> Yes, our greatest engineering mistake can be laid at the feet of these humans. It's bad enough that they maligned our kind with that *All show*—did we have to follow them in their plunge to ineptitude?

song from the Gundlbrchtoqn Sublimity Institute to subtly persuade them to move on.

*Type:* Curious neighbors

*Can be distinguished by:* General air of discontent and crumminess.

*Recommended approach:* Do not be fooled. While the neighbor might pretend all they want is peace and quiet, what they really want is to yell at someone for being so loud and disruptive. Present them with a hologram of a human, allow them to yell at it to their heart's content, and then watch them stalk away, outwardly still grumpy, but inwardly triumphant with the thrill of standing up for justice—or at least for quiet.

*Type:* Men in black.

*Can be distinguished by:* The fact that they wear black. Also, they tend to wear sunglasses at night.

*Recommended approach:* In their own minds, the men in black are our greatest threat. In reality, they are far too gullible and easily distracted to present much of a problem. Generate a hologram of a large, hairy humanoid with especially large feet stomping around. Once they see that, the men in black will be too distracted to do anything about your craft.

*Type:* “Unidentified flying object” enthusiasts

*Can be distinguished by:* Latex, pointed ears worn over their real ears, and one-piece jumpsuits with a shiny triangle on the chest.

*Recommended approach:* These are your most dangerous potential adversary. They are focused, tenacious, and generally have little else going on in their lives to distract them from hunting you. Oddly enough, we have found the following to be successful: let them find you. Appear to them in your normal, fully alien form. Smile at them and wave. Say “Hey there!” in friendly tones. Generally, they will stand in their tracks, frozen, mouths agape, and remain there for quite some time, giving you plenty of time to make your escape.

## **Landing in urban areas**

While Earth has a few billion sentient inhabitants, most of the planet remains empty, or close to it, meaning your chances

of landing in a crowded area are small, particularly if you have any skill in navigation. Should you be unfortunate enough to make an emergency landing in an urban area, there is a simple strategy you can employ that will keep you relatively unnoticed.

The key to this strategy is that, in order to survive their urban areas, humans have made it necessary to act as if nothing surprises them. The thinking goes like this: If you act as if something surprises you, it is because you have not seen it before. If you have not seen it before, then you must be a helpless innocent from out of town. If you are a helpless innocent from out of town, the best you can hope for is to be ignored; the worst is that you will become a target for the thieves and miscreants that fill the darker corners of human cities.

To use this tendency in your favor, all you need to do is have a recorded voice emit from your craft's external speakers after your landing. The voice should be flat in tone and conversational in volume. All it needs to say is: "I've seen better."

Upon hearing those words, the other urban humans will understand that a competition has been engaged. The winners of the competition will be those who agree that yes, this flame-engulfed object before them is nothing compared to the many other flame-engulfed objects they have seen while in the city, and thus is not worth paying attention to. These people will subsequently ignore you and your craft. The losers of the competition will be those who acknowledge that they in fact have never seen anything like this before. They may gape and stare at you and your craft, but it will not matter. By losing the competition, they have identified themselves as either hopeless naifs or tourists, and their fate is to either be ignored, beset by muggers, or eaten by vultures.

As this competition is continuing, you will have the chance to find a safe place to store your ship, pose your mewbeast, and activate the cloaking device.

## **Finding food**

Once you have evaded initial detection and hidden your craft, your next task is to ensure you will have an adequate supply of food. In a stroke of great fortune, Earth is well-

stocked with rubber trees, and humans have perfected the vulcanizing technique that renders latex from those trees so tasty. Oddly enough, rather than serving the result with béarnaise sauce and a fine Chablis, they use it as treads for their vehicles. This is good news for us, as it means that food can be found wherever there are roads. The bad news is that this food is generally presented in filthy condition.

While this generous supply of rubber may seem like a complete boon, we offer two notes of caution: First, nothing marks you as an alien so quickly as munching on a rubber tire while it is still mounted to a vehicle.<sup>7</sup> Do not let your appetite overwhelm you; remove any runner discs you intend to eat from the vehicle to which they are attached and retire to a private place to consume it. Second, dispose of your leftovers properly. The highways of Earth are littered with the tattered rubber remainders of the meals of those of our kind who were too lazy or thoughtless to give them proper care. Regardless of your feelings toward Earth or humans, you are their guest. Mind your manners.<sup>8</sup>

Now, as time passes you want to diversify your diet beyond latex-based dishes. Fortunately, many of the food items humans use are also edible to us. We do not have the space here to cover all aspects of the human diet, but we will summarize some important points of which you should be aware.

**1. Deep frying is magic.** In your time on Earth, you will discover that there are some areas in which humans have demonstrated a strain of genius, and one of the greatest of these is the cooking technique known as deep-frying. At the heart of this technique is a deceptively simple realization: almost anything tastes better when it is covered in a layer of hot fat. The humans have taken this wonderful bit of profundity and applied it in a million ways. They have deep-fried meats, sweets, candies and baked goods. They have deep-fried pieces of several different Earth birds, or sometimes deep

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<sup>7</sup> I'd actually put "having your stomach-mouth launch out and rip the throat out of a nearby creature" at the top of this list, but whatever.

<sup>8</sup> If only because good manners put them at ease, and relaxed prey is the easiest to catch.