

Desk Island  
5-Page Pitch Script  
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Desk Island is a tale that highlights the American nightmare: working from 9 to 5. In this absurdist comedy, Dilbert and Officespace meet Castaway and Gilligan's Island. We follow our protagonist, Jordan, as he awakens on a stranded island, one with a fully functioning office in the center of it all. Once found, he is quickly approached by HR and presented with a nametag, desk, and 401k benefits plan! Jordan immediately realizes the gravity of the situation: he's stranded on an island. The first concern should be shelter followed by food and water. But the big boss has other plans. Work first, live later. Enlightened by his coworkers' input, Jordan comes to the realisation that surviving the island means surviving his job, at least until he can figure out a way to get back home. We follow this character as he jumps through arbitrary hoops to climb the corporate ladder, all the while attempting to convince his fellow strandeers that there is more to life than working. Complaints to HR run rampant as Jordan vehemently repurposes the only cappuccino machine to deliver potable water.

Over time, the series will cover three main arcs:

1. Adjusting to Office Life: we sell the audience on the concept, while quickly jumping forward in time from issue to issue, similar to the first arc of Transmetropolitan. This is where influence from Gilligan's Island for the setting and mundane office life goings-on from Dilbert come into play. We will sprinkle the occasional breadcrumbs for the next two arcs. The finale of this arc sees Jordan attempting to stage a coup against the "big boss" of the island, in hopes that his coworkers will follow and make the island a better place until they can find a way off. When nobody follows, Jordan leaves and heads to the "deserted" hills of the island to become a sheep herder.
2. The Farmers Market: It's been some time since Jordan left the island company and he has developed a small business herding sheep and selling the resultant goods to the community by attending farmers' markets on the island. Old friends pass through his shop and see his successes, including an old colleague who wants to buy the business. This arc explores themes like corporate takeover and the toll it takes to hold true to your values in a capitalist market. Jordan wants nothing to do with his old company, but when they want to buy his livelihood and won't take no for an answer, what's a sheep herder to do? Jordan also finds out in this arc that he has already tried to escape the island once, before suffering memory loss and washing up on the shore at the beginning of our story. Similar to the first arc finale, Jordan's journey ends in failure as he gives up his company. But not all is lost, as he uses the money to fund a campaign... the FIRST island campaign! And with no opposing candidates, it should be a piece of cake.
3. Election Year: Jordan's campaign starts off strong, that is until "the big boss" announces his intentions to run against Jordan. As the series builds to its ultimate finale, we explore the dark side of leaning into politics in order to win. Always one to stick to his guns, Jordan feels he must win fair, but finds it hard to stay on the straight and narrow as the big boss throws every dirty trick in the book at him. Eventually, Jordan loses the election, but learns valuable lessons along the way. From other hints sprinkled throughout the series, it all culminates with Jordan finally leaving the island. Commandeering an old abandoned pirate ship, with holes patched up by leftover campaign signs and a fully staffed crew... he sets sail to the open sea. This time, he is not alone. The final panel of the series is this ship, just on top of the horizon line with a rising sun.

## THEMES/STYLES:

This series delves deep into the questions we ask ourselves about our job. "What purpose does my job give me? How do I climb the chain? Why the hell am I at a desk 40 hours a week?" When you work a shit job, it's easy to feel trapped and isolated, but also that a better life in paradise is just around the corner. Well, on Desk Island this is literally true. And yet, everyone here still works from 9 to 5. So what gives? Some of the themes to think about are the obvious parallels between literally being trapped on an island and figuratively being trapped in a job. You want to leave, but you can't. The job has utility, it pays the bills. This is an absurdist story, so the approach is not to have a deep exploration of WHY the world exists, it simply exists. Yes, there is an island with a fully functioning office on it. How does the office function? It doesn't matter. What matters is that our cast of characters work here, and they never leave. Feel free to play with the idea of the mechanics of having an office in a tropical area.

Also, the entire bottom half of the island is actually physically made of a pile of desks. Similar to an iceberg, where only a small piece of the top is on top, only the underside is just a bunch of random desks all pile and stuck together. This may or may not be eventually addressed, but it is an absolute necessity for part of the design.

The colors should be bright and exciting, but our characters' designs and the colors of the office will be rather drab. Many of these people have given up hope of leaving the island. They are content to be alive, and have a job, but not much else inhabits their thoughts and feelings.

**Art inspiration includes Moebius, Frank Quitely, and Geof Darrow's cover work on Transmetropolitan.**

## COVER:

The first cover idea is just an awesome shot of the entire island on a sunny day. The Volcano rises in the center of it, and we can also see the entire part of the island beneath the surface of the water. This portion of the island looks like an upside down pile of desks. For reference, check out the real life model that Jamie Hewlett designed for the album art of Gorillaz' Plastic Beach. Same concept, tropical paradise on top, a bunch of shitty desks all conglomerated on bottom. Birds fly in the bright blue sky, and there are a few clouds floating by with ease.

The second cover idea is our main character on the beach, soaking wet in his white shirt and tie, waving his arms as if trying to get the attention of a plane in the sky. Spelled out in the sand are the letters S.O.S. but clearly with office supplies such as a printer, desk, filing cabinets, etc. The emotions conveyed with this piece would be the desperation and longing for freedom when trapped in an office environment, but with beautiful trees in the background.

Another fun idea could be that the covers resemble the Old Hardy Boys covers. This may be too far from the concept of the book, but I think it would look cool to have these covers resemble something so campy. For reference, check out the DVD Cover art for Venture Bros Season 5 to see how this can be accomplished. We could still use the concepts above, but in this style. I would also then use names for each issue that are equally campy, like "The Secret of the Sandbar!" or "The Sinister Safety Hazard!" or "Showdown at Lava Point!"

## **Page 1:**

### **Page One, Panel One**

Wide panel, establishing shot. A bird's eye view (angled, not straight above) of the island. From this distance it looks like a normal island. Palm trees, sandy beach, and a towering volcano in the center of the island. It's perfectly sunny, the light blue sky with a handful of clouds contrasts the deeper blue waters that surround the island.

### **Page One, Panel Two**

Another wide panel, closing in. We see the Beach, a long straight run of white sand with the morning tide gently crashing the shore. A tree line in the back is made up of palm trees and island-tropical-type foliage, bushes, and what not. It's very small, but in the center, there appears to be a man in black pants, white button up shirt, and tie, laying on the beach with the water splashing his feet. In the tree line, a small clearing hosts a woman lurking in the shadows.

### **Page One, Panel Three**

From above, the Man in the shirt and tie lays in the sand. We see him framed just below the waist up to his head. His tie is draped over his shoulder, his eyes are closed, he's soaking wet.

### **Page One, Panel Four**

Same angle as panel 3, only now the frame is blocked in the right corner by an ominous woman's shoulder, she's got hair in a ponytail, but it's hard to see, as her back is shaded in the shot.

### **Page One, Panel Five**

The reverse shot. From the man's perspective, the woman looms over the shot, completely silhouetted by the shining sun behind her.

SUSIE: Hello there! (and camera flash)

## **Page 2:**

### **Page Two, Panel One**

Jordan starts coughing up water, viewing him from the side.

1: \*cough\*

2: \*cough\*

### **Page Two, Panel Two**

The lady is in a business formal blouse and skirt. She is offering her hand out to Jordan (Jordan is not seen in the panel).

SUSIE : My name is Susie! I'll be helping you get started.

### **Page Two, Panel Three**

The two are seen holding hands as she hoists him up.

Jordan: Where am I? What happened?

### **Page Two, Panel Four**

Susie holds a device in her hand, a handheld label printer, it's got an attachment/lanyard so that it normal hangs over her shoulder.

SUSIE: What's your name?

JORDAN: Uh...Jordan.

SUSIE: Last name?

JORDAN: Shepard. WHERE AM I?

## **Page 3:**

### **Page Three, Panel One**

Jordan shades his eyes with his hand, her peers out towards the ocean, trying to get a bearing on his location. His back is turned to Susie, in the background, focused on her printer as if it were a Gameboy Color.

JORDAN: I remember being on a boat-

SUSIE: Aaand perfect!

### **Page Three, Panel Two**

Close in on Jordan, his body still facing us but his head is turned towards Susie after her exclaim. She is holding up a little card, looks like an ID.

SUSIE: I've made you a company login ID, your password is a randomly generated one, you'll have to change it, of course--

### **Page Three, Panel Three**

Jordan holds the card. His thumb and fingers are visible but the focus is just on the card. The photo is him with his eyes closed from page 1.

JORDAN: (from off) Is this some kind of joke?

### **Page Three, Panel Four**

A nice wide shot of the beach with susie centered and the clearing just in the background. Her face has a smirk on it with furrowed brows, as if she thinks Jordan's comment is ridiculous.

SUSIE: Ha! Now you'll have plenty of time to explore the island but that can wait until you've completed New Hire Orientation.

### **Page Three, Panel Five**

Over the shoulder of Jordan. Susie is right in front of the clearing, waving her hand to beckon Jordan forward.

SUSIE: Follow me and I'll introduce you to the team. I've got a folder for you detailing your 401k plan options!

### **Page 4:**

#### **Page Four, Panel One**

A side view, they walk left to right in the panel, it's clear this is a path through beautiful but dense foliage, feels like an expedition.

JORDAN: Look, I don't think I'm supposed to be here.

SUSIE: Your cubicle will be right next to Thomas'.

JORDAN: Hold up. Cubicle?

#### **Page Four, Panel Two**

View from behind, Susie steps over a log while moving some vines above her head to get through.

SUSIE: He's a bit of a talker, but if you ever need to tune him out, your desk is equipped with some noise canceling headphones.

#### **Page Four, Panel Three**

Jordan steps over the same log but this time our background is the path behind him instead of what lies ahead.

JORDAN: Cubicles. Headphones. Is there an office here? Any phone I could use? I need to get--

#### **Page Four, Panel Four**

Now in a slight clearing, we resume a side view with Jordan on the left, facing Suzie on the right.

SUSIE: Lunch will be provided at 11:30, since it's your first day, but next week you'll need to bring your own.

#### **Page Four, Panel Five**

A closeup of Jordan's face, he has given up on being polite and screams.

JORDAN: WHERE THE HELL AM I?

## **Page 5:**

### **SPLASH PAGE**

We see Jordan's back turned to us, in the bottom left corner. In front of him is Susie with an excited look on her face. Her head does not meet the middle height of the page. The big wow factor of this splash page is a bunch of cubicles plopped in the middle of this tropical area. A fully functional office, with people typing away wearing headsets, filing papers, sipping coffee, some desks adorned ironically with small potted plants. This view is almost like looking at an angle from above a labyrinth, somewhat whimsical, but the fact is... it's a maze of the mundane bordered by paradise.

SUSIE: Welcome to DESK ISLAND!