

THE MAKING OF

Wish You Were Here

The making of an endless zoom through six photographs

Scroll in and a fjord in Lofoten gives way to a lit cottage, its kitchen window, and the postcard pinned by an old woman's lamp. On the postcard, two hands hold up a photo by a desert campfire, and the photo is the fjord you started from. Scroll back and the journey runs in reverse. Every photograph was generated on Scenario through Scenario MCP: wider scenes painted outwards, closer ones grown from the middle of the last.

THE STORY

Six photographs, each inside the last

Two people at the same dusk, a continent apart



1 · The fjord



2 · The hamlet



3 · Her house



4 · The kitchen window



5 · The postcard



6 · Wadi Rum, Jordan

The brief asked for an infinite zoom that tells a story. Photorealism ruled out a drawing coming to life, and a camera cannot pull back out of a shot seen through someone's eyes. So the story changes place only through frames that face the camera, a window, a postcard and a print, and in between the camera simply gets closer.

An old woman keeps a postcard from her grandson: his hands, by a campfire in the desert, holding a photo of her fjord. Each photograph sits inside the one before it, and the last one holds the first. One pass magnifies about 1,500 times.

1 · THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPH

One lit window, dead centre

GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst, 2048 × 2048, two takes



The take that was kept: the only lit window sits at the exact centre of the frame.

The build started from the picture that would sit in the desert print. Asked for maximum photoreal detail in a square, Scenario's model recommendation ranked GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst first.

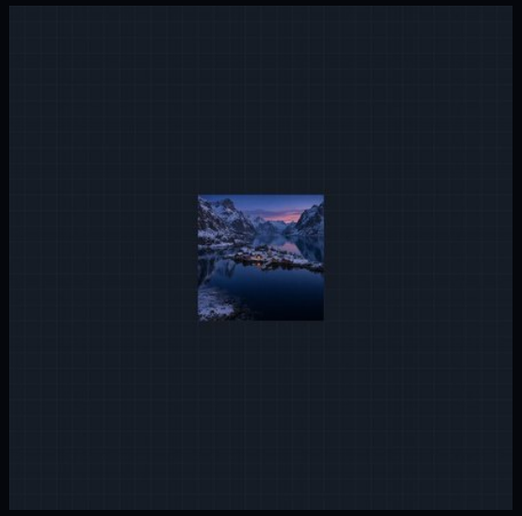
> Award-winning aerial landscape photograph of a remote Arctic fjord in northern Norway at blue hour in winter. […] Exactly in the center of the frame, on a small flat strip of shore at the water's edge, sits a tiny fishing hamlet of a dozen traditional red and ochre wooden cottages […] Only one cottage window glows warm amber; the rest of the hamlet is dark.

Of the two takes, the first put the lit cottage almost exactly at the centre.

2 · PAINTING OUTWARDS

A photograph, then the world around it

Scenario Reframe: the photo shrunk to 512 pixels in the middle of a 2K square, the rest painted around it



What the model is asked to fill: the photo at a quarter of the side, centred.



What Reframe returned: the photo became a print held by a campfire.

Scenario Reframe places a picture at an exact size on a new canvas and paints the rest from a prompt. It turned the fjord into a print held by a campfire, then the print into a postcard pinned beside an oil lamp, the postcard into a kitchen seen through a frosted window, and a hamlet into the wide fjord that opens the zoom.

> Photorealistic close-up at night in the desert. The original image is a printed photograph with a thin worn off-white border, held flat and square to the camera by a young man's two weathered, sun-tanned hands; his fingertips grip only the white border […]

3 · WHAT WENT WRONG

Outpainting leaves a square

The first version painted every step outwards and patched the joins; review sent it back



A dissolve between two outpaints: doubled cabins, ghost peaks.



A pasted window, re-toned to match: still a lighter square.



GPT Image with a keep mask redrew the print and changed its size.



Ideogram 4.5 with a keep mask: seamless, but the window moved.

Every outpainting model tried here, including those with a keep mask, re-renders the centre it is given: a different horizon, a different exposure, a different size or position. Pasting the original back shows a square; smoothing the colours leaves a lighter one; dissolving shows two backdrops at once. The first version shipped with those joins, and review rightly called them out.

4 · GROWN FROM THE MIDDLE

Every closer view is its parent's centre

Magnific Upscaler Creative, 4x, photography preset, high resemblance, low creativity



The fjord's centre quarter: 512 pixels of the 2048-pixel photograph.



Its 4x upscale with invented detail: the hamlet.

The fix turns the problem around. Instead of painting a wider scene around a picture the model will redraw, each closer view is made from the wider one: its centre quarter, enlarged four times by a creative upscaler that invents real detail but keeps the composition. The fjord's centre became the hamlet, and the hamlet's centre her cottage.

Scaled back down, each upscale differs from its source by 7 to 9 grey levels on average, all of it fine texture. The two photographs carry the same picture, so the page blends one into the other with a soft edge and no join can show.

5·FRAMES

Through the frame, not onto it

The next photograph waits behind a window, a postcard and a print



The kitchen behind the cottage's window.



The desert behind the postcard's picture.



The fjord behind the print in his hands.

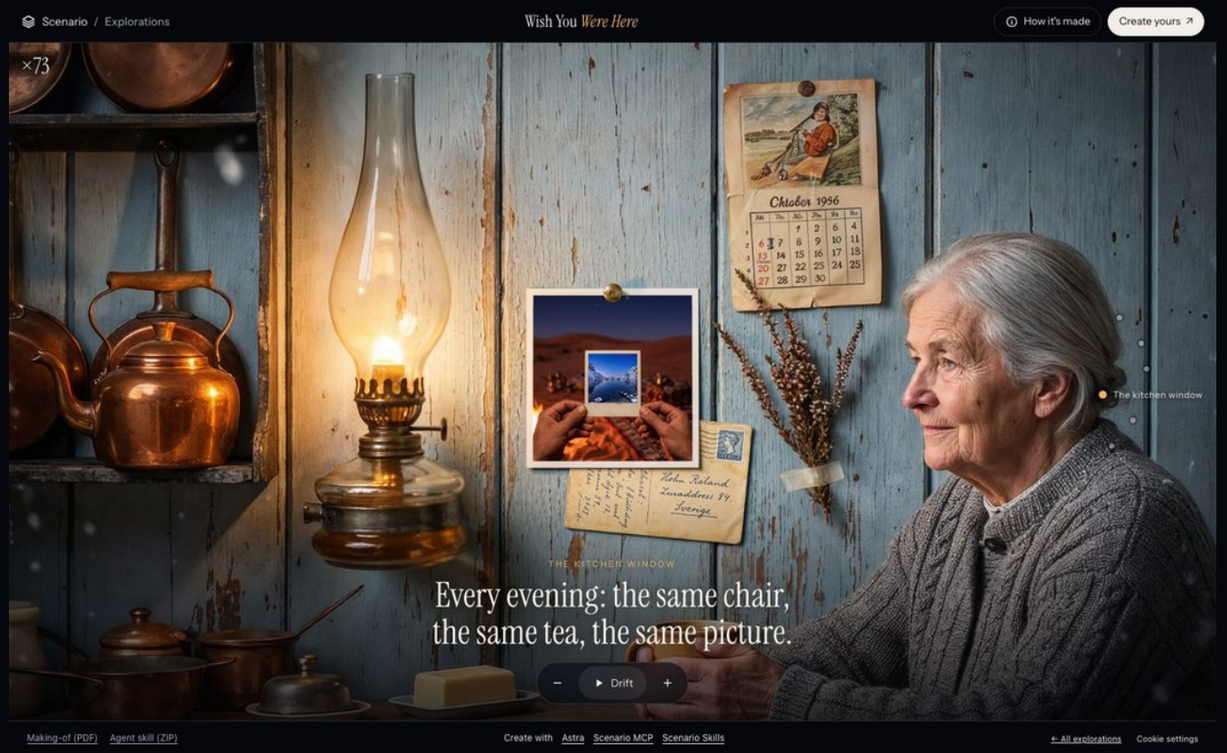
The kitchen is a square cut from the frosted-window view that Reframe painted, given a detail pass, and placed behind the cottage, a quarter larger than its window. The cottage is drawn on top with the glass cut out along the frame's own inner edge, so its real frame stays in front and only the middle of the kitchen shows through. Its reflection in the fjord was redrawn from the kitchen, mirrored and rippled like the water around it. The desert waits behind the postcard's picture the same way, and the fjord behind the print in his hands.

As the camera flies towards a window, the frame fades away around it and the photograph behind is left. That photograph is never drawn over its own contents, so nothing doubles. A frame's own edge is the join, so whatever waits behind it never needs to match what was painted there. The last frame holds the first photograph, and the zoom has no last frame.

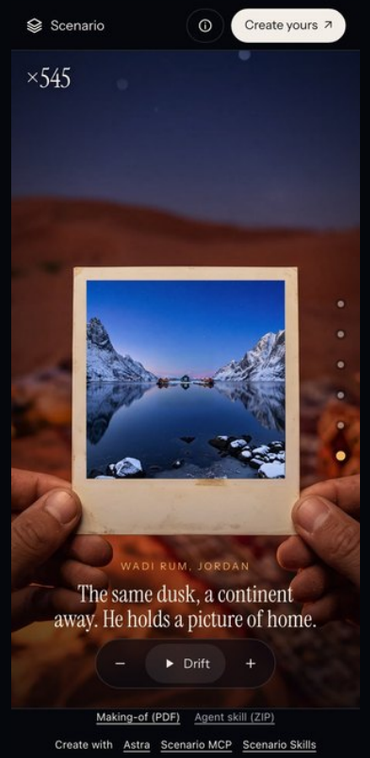
THE PAGE

Scroll in, scroll back

A canvas, six photographs and one number



Desktop: the readout counts the magnification; the dots on the right jump to a photograph.



Phone: swipe up to zoom in.

The page keeps a single depth value: its whole part is the photograph that fills the screen, its fraction how far the camera has travelled into the next. Scrolling, swiping, the arrow keys and the on-screen buttons all move it, forwards or backwards, without end.

Each frame draws only the on-screen part of each photograph, from the outermost in, with soft edges where a photograph grew from its parent and the next photograph behind each frame. The canvas is capped at about four megapixels and redraws only while the depth moves. The first screen needs one 131 KB image.

YOUR TURN

Make an endless zoom

The route, with your own story

1. Write the loop as a list of shots, deepest last. Mark each hand-over: a closer view of the same scene, or a frame seen square-on.
2. Generate the shots that carry the story at full size, painting wider scenes outwards where a frame must hold a picture you already have.
3. For every closer view, upscale the wider photograph's centre quarter four times with a creative upscaler, and check it still matches.
4. Cut each frame's opening along its own inner edge and set the deeper photograph behind it, a little larger, so the frame can fade away around it.
5. Close the loop through a frame, play the chain on a canvas driven by one depth value, and render it densely to catch any jump.

The agent skill packages this route with the scripts used for this page.

Wish You Were Here

Download the agent skill

Scenario MCP

Scenario Skills

Start on Scenario