

NATHAN SHAFER WINTERMOOT

BOOK EIGHT: SLACK TIDES, ANOTHER TIME:
MYSTERIOUS MS. MAGPIE and SUBNIVEAN MISTRESS



ICE LEVELS LEVEL TWO
[PORTAGE LAKE + GLACIER]



"UGHELI TSASS!"



WINTERMOOT BOOK EIGHT | SLACK TIDES. ANOTHER TIME:
"MYSTERIOUS MS. MAGPIE AND THE SUBNIVEAN MISTRESS"

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY NATHAN SHAFER
STORY BY NATHAN SHAFER AND JOELLE HOWALD



MYSTERIOUS MS. MAGPIE:
OTHER NAMES: Q'AHGHTAL'AY, SHEHUTNIGA, STAKATNIIGI, MAGGIE NILAVENA
POWER ORIGINS: AVESVERSE, ONTOVERSE

A DENA'INA UNDERLANDER WOMAN, BORN IN THE FFF8E8 DIMENSION, AND HAS STAYED IN THIS DIMENSION AS A PERMANENT AMBASSADOR WITH FFF8E7. SHE CAN COMMUNICATE WITH OBJECTS. SHE IS ALSO A SHAPESHIFTER, WITH A SENSITVITY TO MAGPIE POWERS.



SUBNIVEAN MISTRESS:
OTHER NAMES: OLIVE MAGNÚSDÓTTIR, OLIVE VIDALIA (MS. VIDALIA), TUNNEL BERRY, SNOW-WIGHT, THE SUBNIVEAN WITCH, OUR LADY UNDERSNOW, SNOW ANGEL, WITTE WIEVEN
POWER ORIGINS: SUBNIVEAVERSE, CRYOVERSE, BERRYVERSE, ANTHROPOVERSE

A NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN WOMAN WITH POWERS CONNECTED TO THE SUBNIVEAN (LIFE UNDERNEATH THE SNOW). THE FULL EXTENT OF HER POWERS IS UNCERTAIN, BUT SHE CAN MANIPULATE OBJECTS (INCLUDING LIFE) WHEN UNDERNEATH SNOW/ICE. SHE BUILT THE FIRST SLACK TIDE HIDEOUT FOR MAGNETOTAIL AND NUNATAK.



KNIK QUARTERMASTER:
OTHER NAMES: AARON FERGUSON
POWER ORIGINS: ANTHROPOVERSE

AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAN WHO WAS PART OF THE ORIGINAL SOCIALISTS AND PIONEERS CONTINGENT OF FFF8E7, WITH POWERS DERIVED FROM THE ANTHROPOVERSE. HE CAN CONTROL ANYTHING HUMAN OR HUMAN-MADE.



BLOOD SNOW PIONEER:
OTHER NAMES: UNKNOWN
POWER ORIGINS: CRYOVERSE, PROTOZOAVERSE

FRENCH CANADIAN CHAOS VAMPIRE WHO CAN MANIPULATE CRYOPHILIC MICRO-ORGANISMS. HE CAN TRAVEL EASILY BETWEEN DIMENSIONS, AN ABILITY OF WHICH NO OTHER PERSON IS AWARE. HE WEARS A SPANDEX COSTUME TO DO CRIME IN.



MASTER ROOK:
OTHER NAMES: GREAT LORD ROOK, GHOSTFACE PROTECTAH
POWER ORIGINS: AVESVERSE, CYBERINGIA, WINTERKILL HELM

MASTER ROOK IS ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE THIN UBU LINE, A COHORT OF 'PATAPHYSICIANS ACROSS THE GLOBE, DEDICATED TO UBIQ GESTATION WITHIN SOCIETY. HE IS ALSO A VIGILANTE FOR HIRE THROUGH THE COUNTRY WOODS ESTABLISHMENT, WHOSE STATED GOAL IS TO PROTECT THE 'WHITE NATIONS OF THE SUMMERLAND ESTATES.'



GREEN BOREALIS:
OTHER NAMES: CHESTER CROWLEY
POWER ORIGINS: PLASMAVERSE

A GERMAN-AMERICAN MAN WHO WAS PART OF THE ORIGINAL SOCIALISTS AND PIONEERS GROUP WHO OBTAINED PLASMAVERSE POWERS IN 1887. HE FOUNDED THE ORIGINAL BOREALIS DOCK IN SUB-EARTH ORBIT AND WAS PART OF THE FIRST WINTERMOOT CAMPS. WITH THE SUBNIVEAN MISTRESS, HE STARTED THE FIRST SLACK TIDE PROTOCOLS AND HAS BEEN RETIRED SINCE 2004 AT THE BERRYWIND ABANDONS WITH OLIVE.

WINTERMOOT



2487 BRAINFREEZE, FROM THE SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM OF THE CRYOPUNK, NATHAN SHAFER, 2004. CRYONIC NEUROSUSPENSION DEVICE (A HOME-MADE DEWIER), LIQUID NITROGEN, COMPUTERS, BRAIN MONITOR, ICE CREAM MAKER, ICE CREAM, MINI-FRIDGE, RUG



WHERE THE CRYOPUNKS ROAM

SINCE WINTERMOOT IS MORE THAN JUST A COMIC BOOK, THERE ARE ASPECTS OF IT THAT ARE INTENDED TO FUNCTION OUTSIDE OF A NORMAL PUBLICATION. THE STORIES THEMSELVES ARE NON-LINEAR, FOLLOWING THE STORYTELLING TRADITIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENT IN ALASKA FOREVER. A LOT OF WINTERMOOT WILL READ LIKE A SERIES OF CONCEPTUAL ART PROPOSALS, WHICH AT THEIR CORE IS WHAT THEY ARE. I HAVE BEEN USING THE TERM 'CRYOPUNK' IN MY ARTISTIC PRACTICE FOR OVER 20 YEARS. IT BEGAN WHEN I WAS DESIGNING A SERIES OF CRYONIC SUSPENSION DEVICES TO HOUSE HUMANS IN CRYONIC SLUMBER AS THEY WERE WAITING TO BE REBIRTHED AGAIN IN THE FUTURE. THIS COINCIDED WITH THE CREATION OF TWO SISTER ART COLLECTIVES I HELPED FOUND: THE MEME-RIDER MEDIA TEAM (MRMT) AND THE MANIFEST INFINITY LIFE EXTENSION FOUNDATION (MILEF). THE TERM CRYOPUNKS WAS DERIVED FROM LITERARY PUNK, SPECIFICALLY A PLAY ON

CYBERPUNK, WHICH HAS BECOME QUITE COMMON. IN WINTERMOOT, THERE IS AN ANCIENT SIMULATION COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS 'CYBERINGIA'. IT IS A PLAY ON THE TERMS 'CYBERIA' AND 'BERINGIA'. THERE WERE TWO PIECES MADE IN 1994 WITH THE NAME CYBERIA, A VIDEOGAME FOR THE MS-DOS AND A ROMAN À CLEF BY DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF. IN WINTERMOOT, THE EVENTS OF REPOCALYPSE OCCUR IN THE YEAR 1994. BERINGIA IS THE NAME GIVEN TO THE BODY OF WATER BETWEEN ALASKA AND RUSSIA, NAMED AFTER THE EXPLORER VITUS BERING. DURING THE YOUNGER DRYAS, THIS WAS A LAND BRIDGE CONNECTING THE TWO. IN CYBERINGIA, THE CIVILIZATIONS OF THAT LAND BRIDGE ARE SIMULATED ON LOCATION. THIS IS WHERE THE CRYOPUNKS ROAM.

THE 'LUK'AE TSE' TAAS SHARED UNIVERSE GROUP IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT SUPPORTED BY THE BUNNELL STREET ARTS CENTER IN HOMER, ALASKA. IT IS ALSO FUNDED IN PART BY CREATIVE CAPITAL AND SPONSORED IN PART BY THE CIRI FOUNDATION.

CULTURAL CONSULTANTS ON THE SERIES: MELISSA SHAGINOFF, DIMI MACHERAS, RICHARD PERRY, DAVID KARABELNIKOFF, CALEB BOURGEOIS, ANGELA YATLIN GONZALEZ, AARON LEGGETT, AND LESLIE KIMIKO WARD.
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"SLACK TIDES, NUNATAK, MAGNETOTAIL, TUNANAUT, STEVEPUNK" CREATED BY NATHAN SHAFER, LESLIE KIMIKO WARD, RICHARD PERRY AND BENJAMIN SCHLEIFMAN.
"MS. MAGPIE" CREATED BY NATHAN SHAFER AND SAMUEL JOHNS.
"THE SUBNIVEAN MISTRESS" CREATED BY NATHAN SHAFER AND JOELLE HOWALD.
"ARCTIC CITY" AND "DRAPED VALLEY" CREATED BY FREI OTTO.
"SEWARD'S SUCCESS" CREATED BY TANDY INDUSTRIES.
"DENALI CITY AND DIRIGIBLES FOR DENALI" CREATED BY MIKE GRAVEL AND PAT POURCHOT.
"CYBERINGIA" IS DERIVED FROM DOUGLAS RUSKOFF'S "CYBERIA"

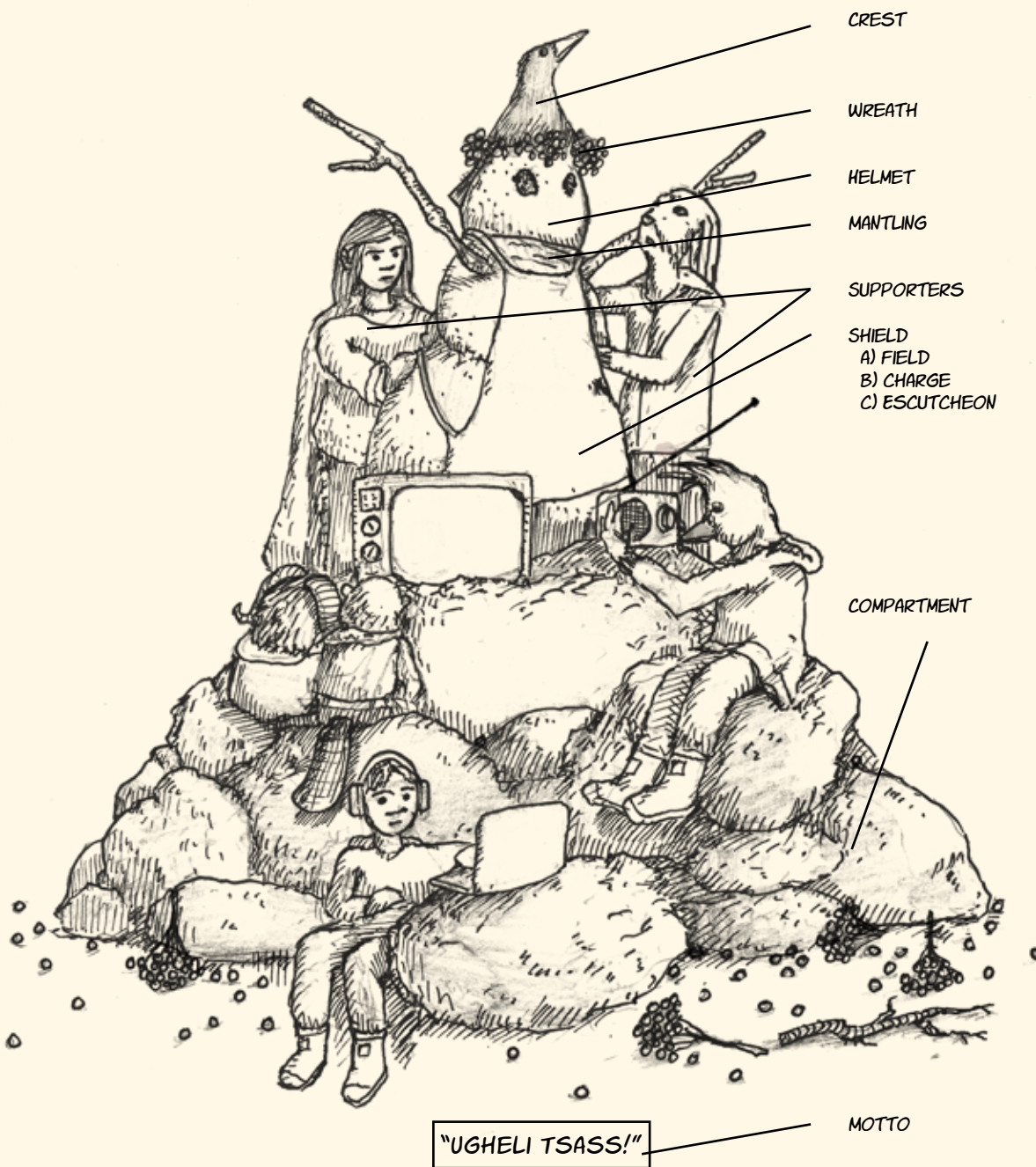
MANY THANKS TO: ANCHORAGE MUSEUM, CREATIVE CAPITAL, BUNNELL STREET ARTS CENTER, CIRI FOUNDATION, WRITER'S BLOCK BOOKSTORE, ALASKAN ROBOTICS, ALASKA CENTER FOR THE BOOK, BOSCO'S COMICS, THE ALASKA LIBRARY NETWORK, AND THE ALASKA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS.

THIS BOOK CONTAINS
SOME
AUGMENTED REALITY

LEVEL UP BY SCANNING THE
QR CODE BELOW IN EYEJACK!



BERRYWIND ABANDONS COAT OF ARMS WINTERMOOT [THE ALEPH-NULL GENERATION]



HERALDIC ELEMENTS:

CREST - RAVEN
WREATH/CROWN - ROWANBERRIES
HELMET - SNOWMAN HEAD
MANTLING - DRIFTWOOD AND A SCARF
SUPPORTERS - HUMAN AND A HALF-HUMAN

SHIELD - APRON (LOGO OPTIONAL)
A) FIELD - TELEVISION
B) CHARGE - RADIO
C) ESCUTCHEON - LAPTOP/INTERNET
COMPARTMENT - SNOW BERM (AKA A "BRONSON") WITH ROWANBERRY FALL
MOTTO - "UGHELI TSASS" (AHTNA FOR "GOOD POTATO!")

SOMEWHERE IN CYBERINGIA ...

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ALTER THE PAST TO FIX THE FUTURE.

THE WORLD ACTUALLY ENDED IN 2012 WHEN PSY'S "GANGNAM STYLE" REACHED ONE BILLION VIEWS ON YOUTUBE.

EVERYONE KIND OF KNOWS THIS INTUITIVELY, AND EVERYTHING SINCE THEN HAS BEEN A SIMULATION.

DON'T ASK ME TO EXPLAIN THAT MATH, I CAN'T.

BUT IT IS A FACT. AND I KNOW IT IS A FACT BECAUSE I AM ONE OF THE TIME TRAVELERS WHO HAS BEEN TASKED WITH SAVING THE WORLD.

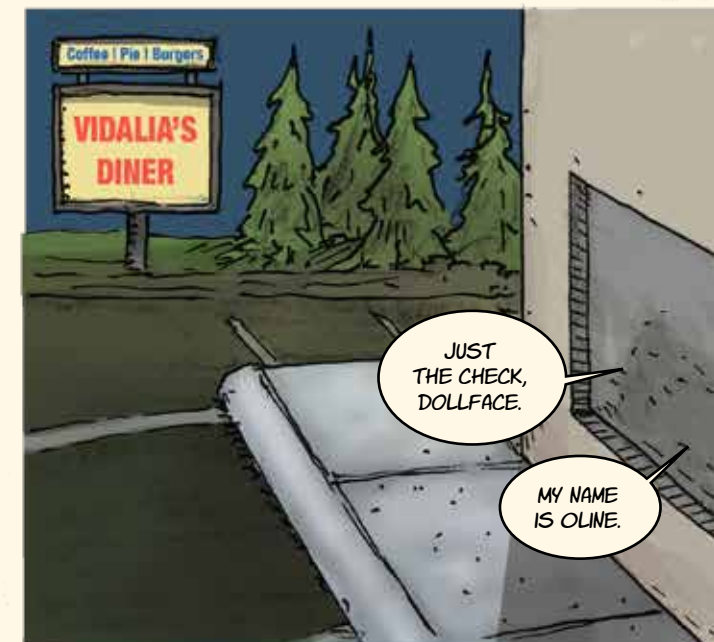
[TSICOH SDE' #999EEE]
[CAFES NEAR HILBERT HOTEL]
[SUPPLEMENTAL + ALEPH-NULL]

VANILLA EAGLE

MASTER ROOK
AKA GREAT LORD ROOK



CAN I GET YOU FELLAS ANYTHIN' ELSE?



WINTERMOOT



BIRDS AREN'T REAL



WINTERMOOT

BOOK EIGHT:
SLACK TIDES, ANOTHER TIME

MYSTERIOUS MS. MAGPIE
AND THE SUBNIVEAN MISTRESS

BEING THE FOURTH BOOK
OF THE SLACK TIDES TALES:



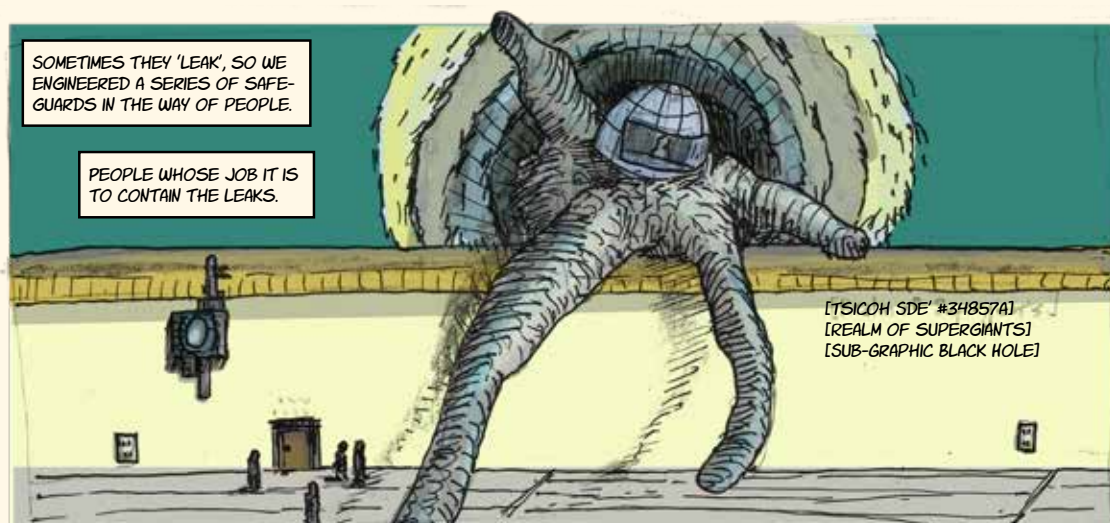
Q'AHTGHAL'AY
THE MYSTERIOUS MS. MAGPIE

OLINE VIDALIA
THE SUBNIVEAN MISTRESS

AARON FERGUSON
THE KNIK QUARTERMASTER

NATHAN SHAFER
STORY, ART, AUGMENTED REALITY





SOMETIMES THEY 'LEAK', SO WE ENGINEERED A SERIES OF SAFE-GUARDS IN THE WAY OF PEOPLE.

PEOPLE WHOSE JOB IT IS TO CONTAIN THE LEAKS.

[TSICOH SDE' #34857A]
[REALM OF SUPERGIANTS]
[SUB-GRAPHIC BLACK HOLE]



THOSE PEOPLE HAVE WHAT ONE MIGHT CALL SUPERPOWERS OR MAGIC ABILITIES.

IT IS TOO COMPLICATED AND WEIRD TO REALLY PUT A LABEL ON. WE CALL THESE PEOPLE 'PRIMES'.

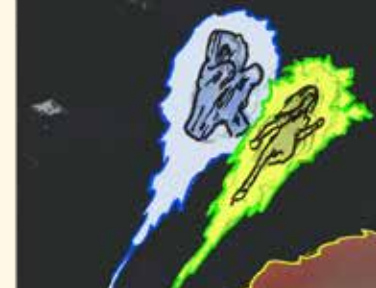
PRIMES FROM THE TSICOH SDE' BECOME IMMORTAL WHEN THEY TOUCH THE CENTER OF THE OMNIVERSE, AND GET THEIR POWERS.

THAT CENTER IS CALLED THE IBID.

THE INFINITE SAME.

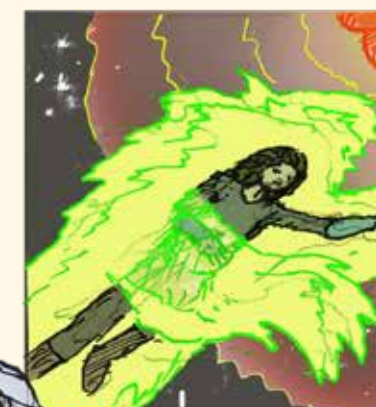
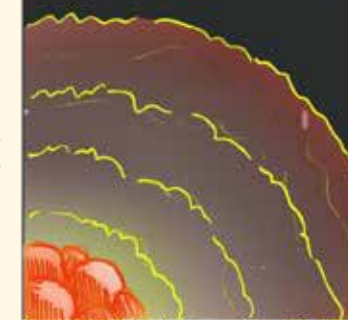


IT LOOKS LIKE A CLODBERRY.

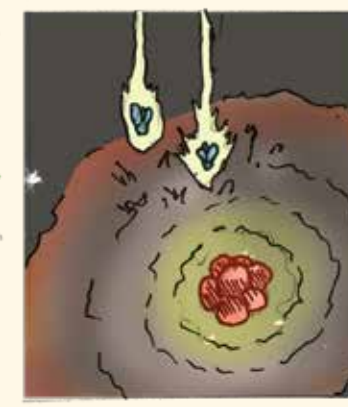


THE TSICOH SDE' HAVE ARCHIVE DESIGNATIONS BASED ON THE WORLDS THEY REFLECT, HEXIDECIMAL CODES FOR THE COLORS THAT ARE THE AVERAGE SPECTRAL COLORS OF THOSE UNIVERSES. INFINITE AVERAGES.

THIS ONE IS FFF8E7. THAT IS THE CODE FOR WHAT MANY FOLKS CALL THE COLOR 'COSMIC LATTE'.



IT IS AN OFF-WHITE BEIGE.





WHEN THE SUBNEAN MISTRESS PULLED ME FROM MY UNIVERSE, I WAS JUST MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS FIGHTING CRIME IN DENALI CITY LIKE I DO.

I COME FROM A FAMILY OF SHAPE-SHIFTERS IN A UNIVERSE THAT SOME REFER TO AS 'UNDERLAND'.

WE DON'T CALL IT THAT.



I KNOW YOU ARE THERE, OLINE!



JUST HOLD STILL MAGGIE!



IN MY HOME UNIVERSE I AM A FOLK HERO WHOM PEOPLE WRITE SONGS OR MAKE MOVIES ABOUT.

THINGS LIKE THAT.

WE NEED TO TALK!

GIMME A QUICK MINUTE.

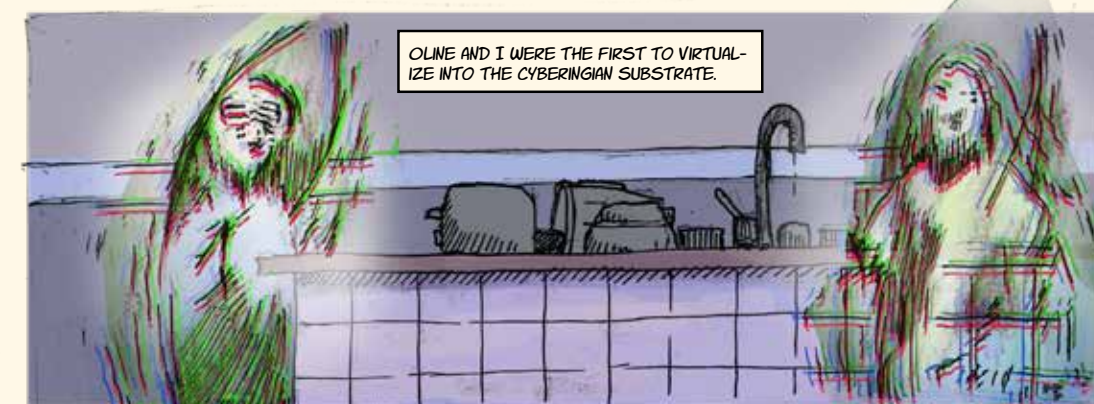
HEY! HEY! I'M SAVING THE DAY!

ONE DAY I MAY GO BACK THERE.



SO HOW IS THIS GOING TO WORK?

IT'S A LITTLE HARD TO EXPLAIN.



OLINE AND I WERE THE FIRST TO VIRTUALIZE INTO THE CYBERINGIAN SUBSTRATE.

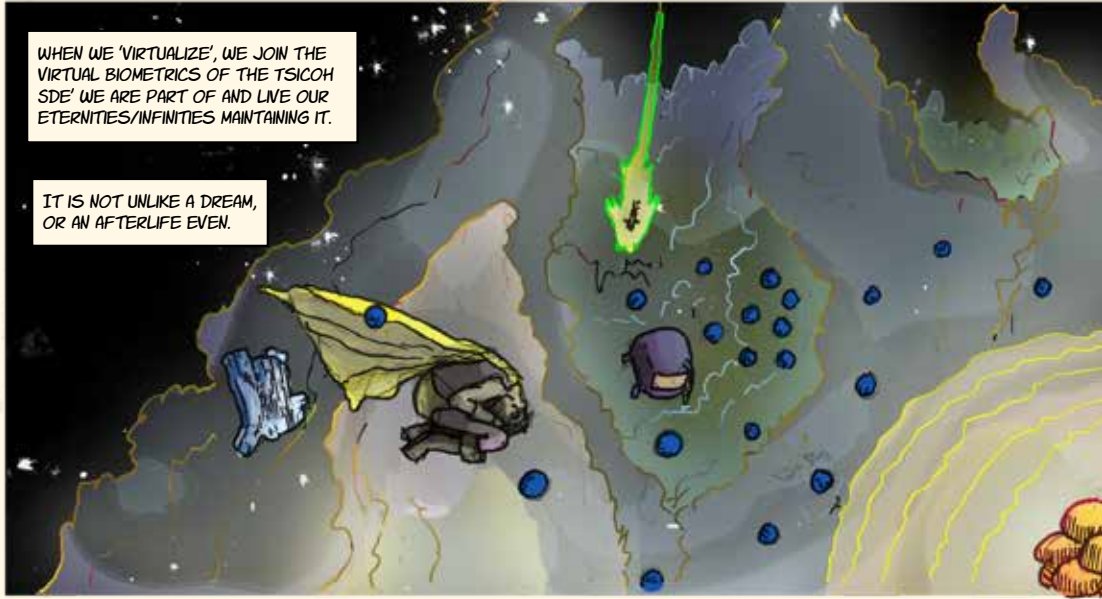


IT IS WHAT THE SLACK TIDE DUO NUNATAK AND MAGNETOTAIL DID TO RESOLVE THE CYBERDOUGH SUPERSYMMETRY.

WHICH REMINDS ME. EVENTUALLY WE HAVE TO TELL THE KIDS WHERE THEIR MOTHERS ARE.

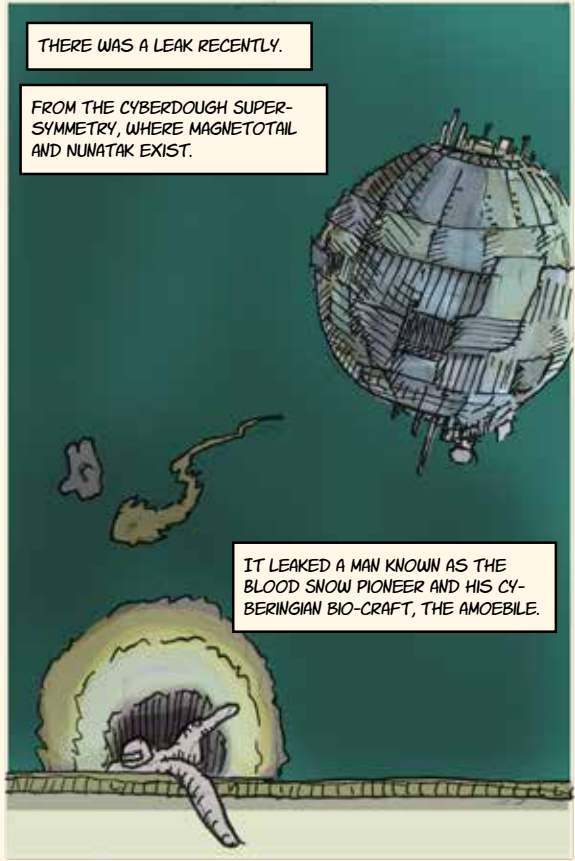


IT IS ALSO WHAT KANGUK AND FIRN INCOGNITO DID IN LAMBDA MANTLE.



WHEN WE 'VIRTUALIZE', WE JOIN THE VIRTUAL BIOMETRICS OF THE TSICOH SDE' WE ARE PART OF AND LIVE OUR ETERNITIES/INFINITIES MAINTAINING IT.

IT IS NOT UNLIKE A DREAM, OR AN AFTERLIFE EVEN.



THERE WAS A LEAK RECENTLY.

FROM THE CYBERDOUGH SUPER-SYMMETRY, WHERE MAGNETOTAIL AND NUNATAK EXIST.

IT LEAKED A MAN KNOWN AS THE BLOOD SNOW PIONEER AND HIS CY-BERINGIAN BIO-CRAFT, THE AMOEBILE.



HE IMMEDIATELY WENT BACK TO HIS OLD WAYS AND STOLE SOME QUANTUM FISH SLIME FROM AN ARCHIVE IN WHITTIER.

LET'S MAKE THIS REAL EASY. EVERYONE, JUST FREEZE AND SCREAM.

THEN PUT THAT QUANTUM FISH SLIME IN THIS HERE MUSTARD.

PREVIOUSLY IN WINTERMOOT:
[BOOK FOUR: ANTHROME AND K'CHASHGA]

I SENT A TEAM OF FAILSAFES TO CAPTURE HIM, BUT THEY GOT LOST IN THE QUANTUM CRYOSPHERE.

THE NEXT BREATH YOU TAKE, YOU ARE GOING TO TELEPORT.

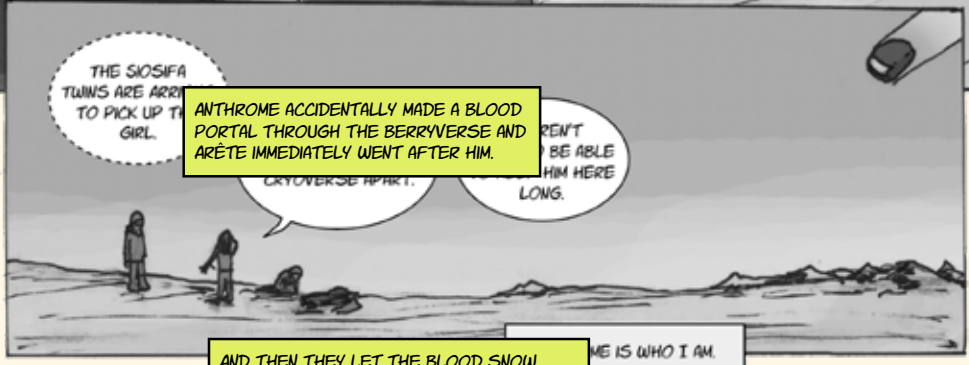


THE SIOSIFA TWINS ARE ARRIVING TO PICK UP THE GIRL.

ANTHROME ACCIDENTALLY MADE A BLOOD PORTAL THROUGH THE BERRYVERSE AND ARÈTE IMMEDIATELY WENT AFTER HIM.

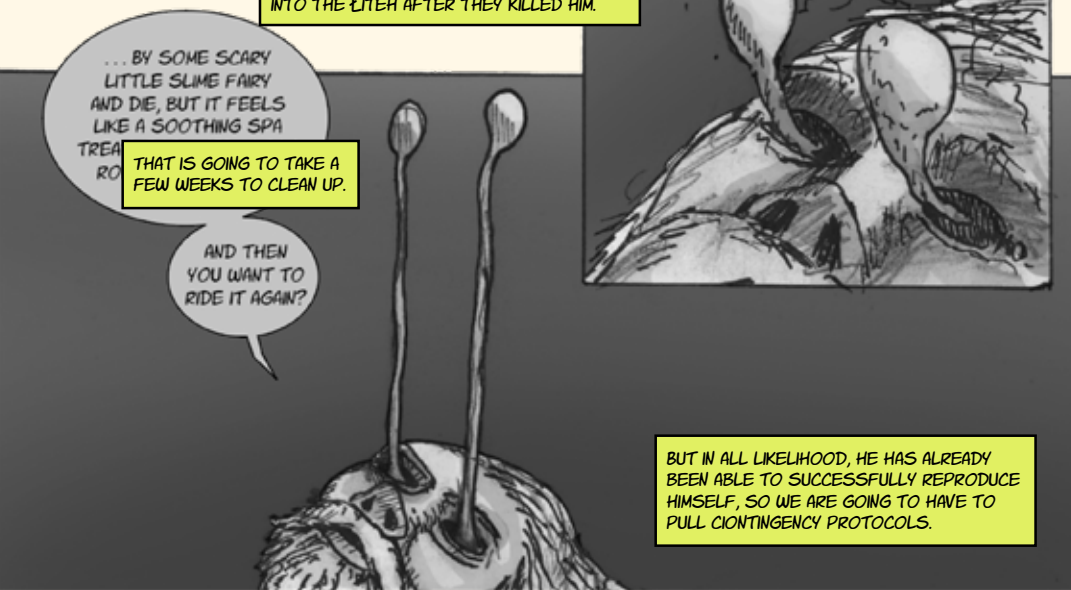
RENT BE ABLE HIM HERE LONG.

CRYOVERSE APART.



AND THEN THEY LET THE BLOOD SNOW PIONEER SEND REPRODUCTIVE SPORES INTO THE LITEH AFTER THEY KILLED HIM.

ME IS WHO I AM.

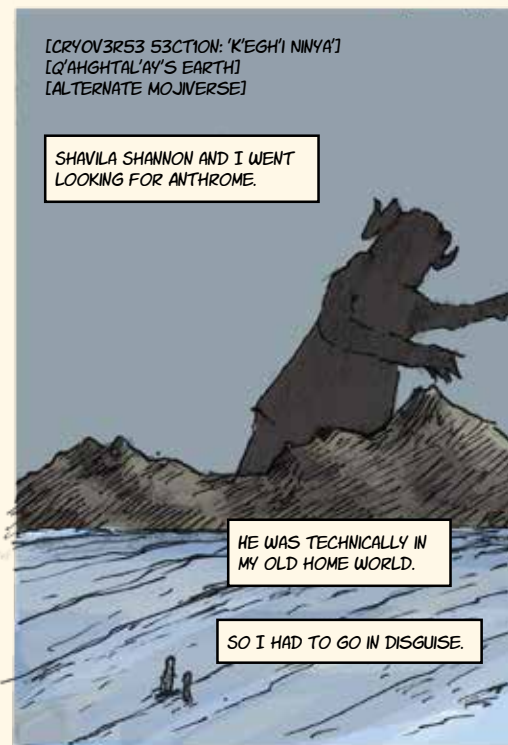
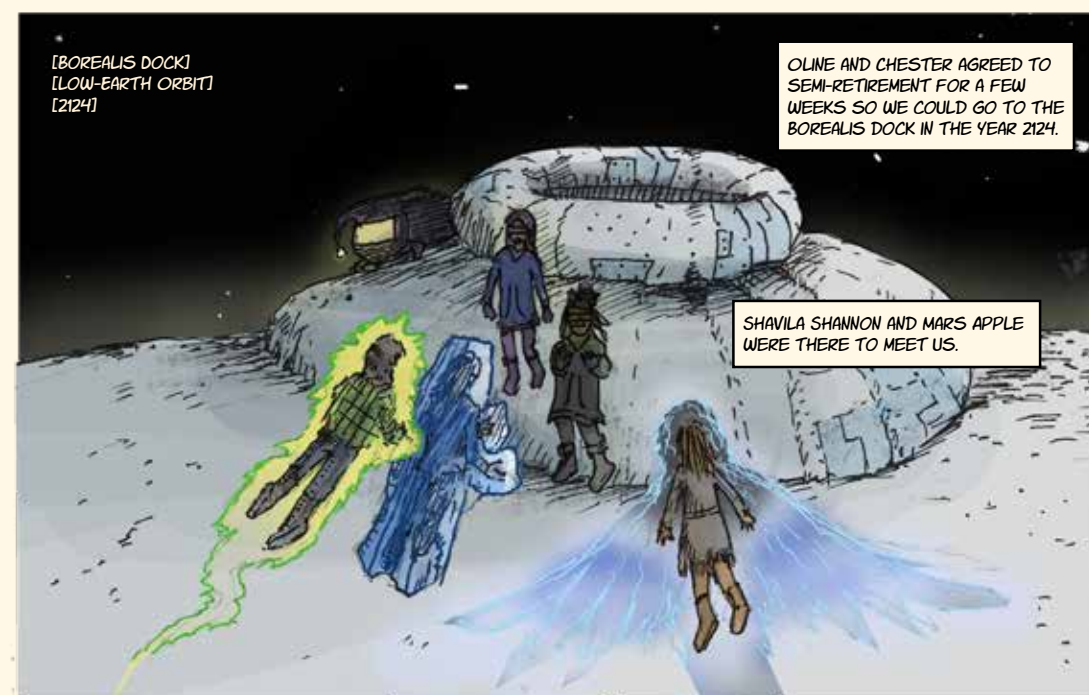


... BY SOME SCARY LITTLE SLIME FAIRY AND DIE, BUT IT FEELS LIKE A SOOTHING SPA TREATMENT.

THAT IS GOING TO TAKE A FEW WEEKS TO CLEAN UP.

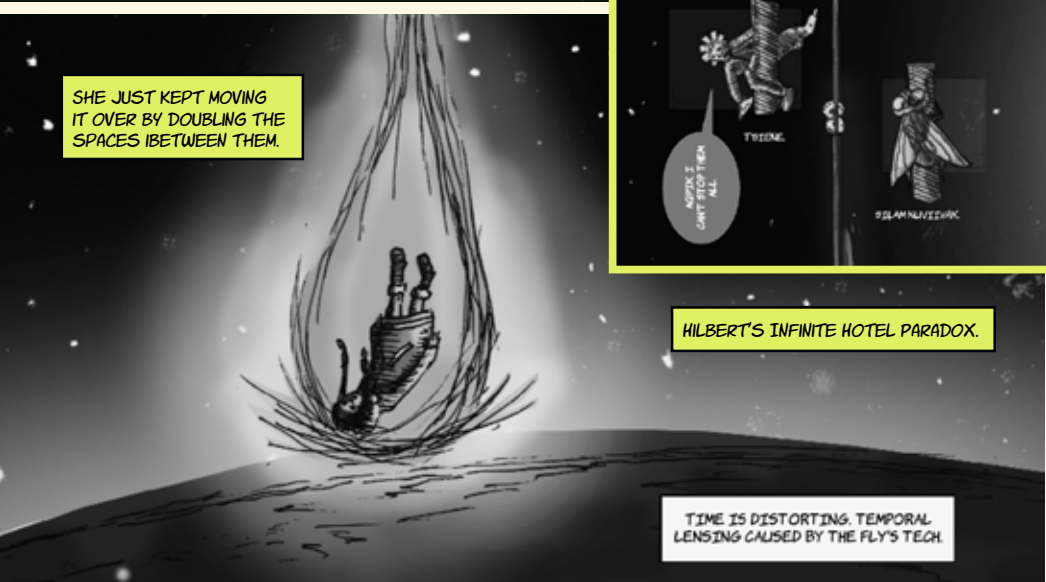
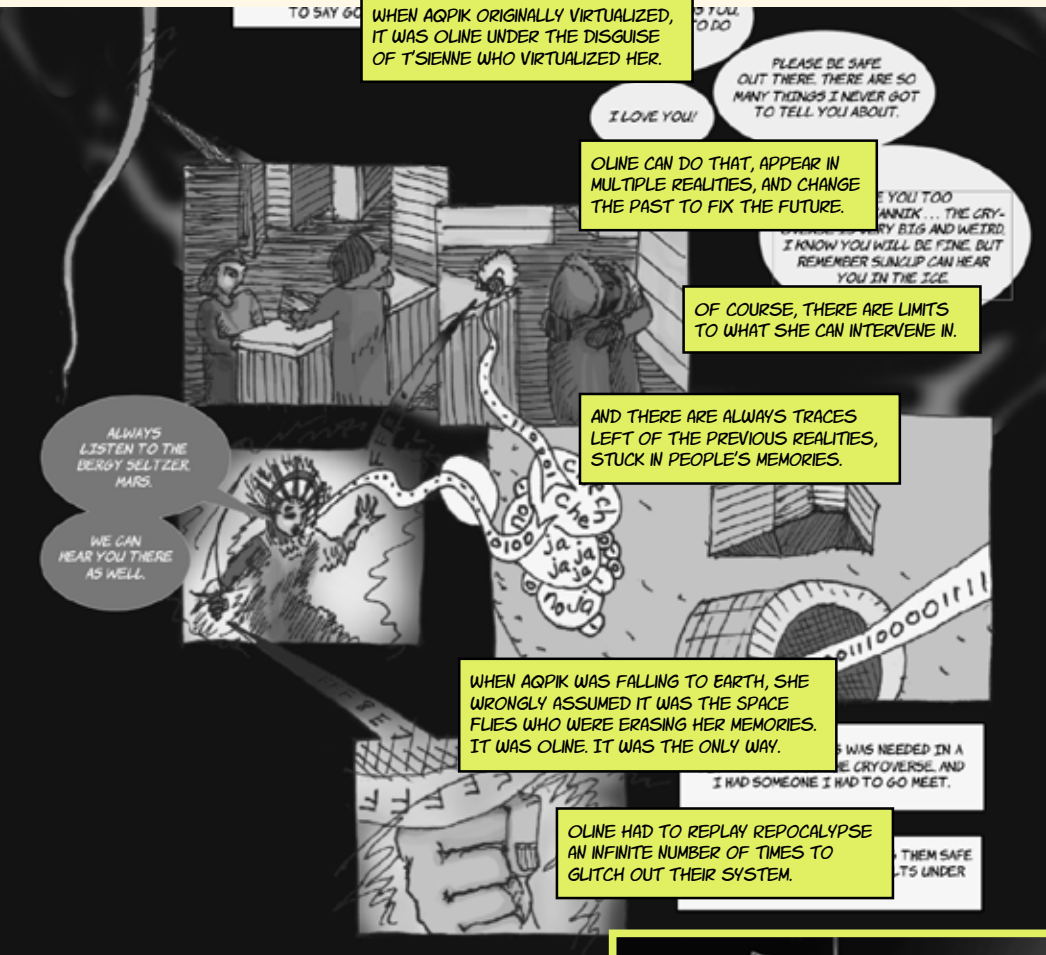
AND THEN YOU WANT TO RIDE IT AGAIN?

BUT IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, HE HAS ALREADY BEEN ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY REPRODUCE HIMSELF, SO WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO PULL CLONTINGENCY PROTOCOLS.

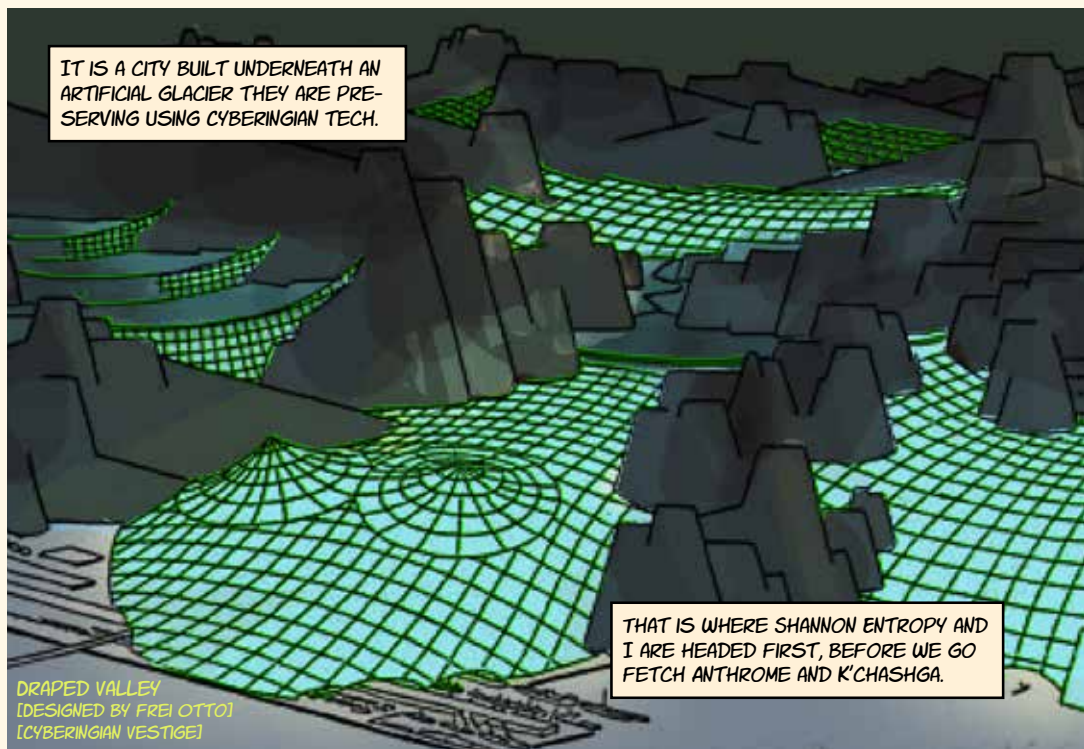
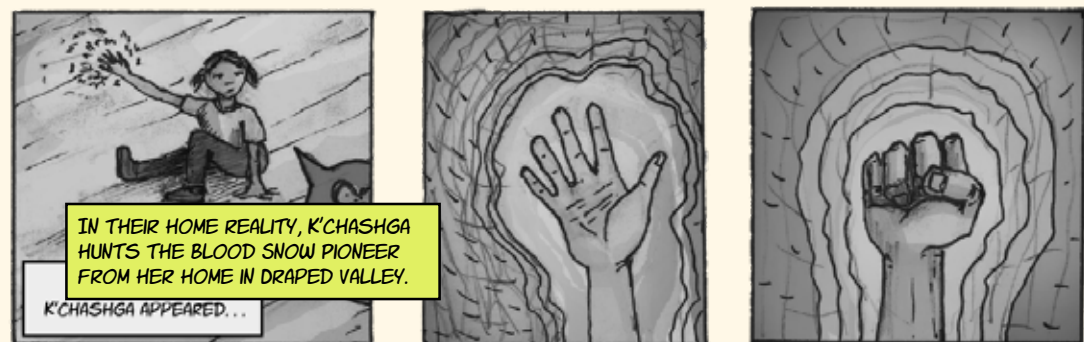
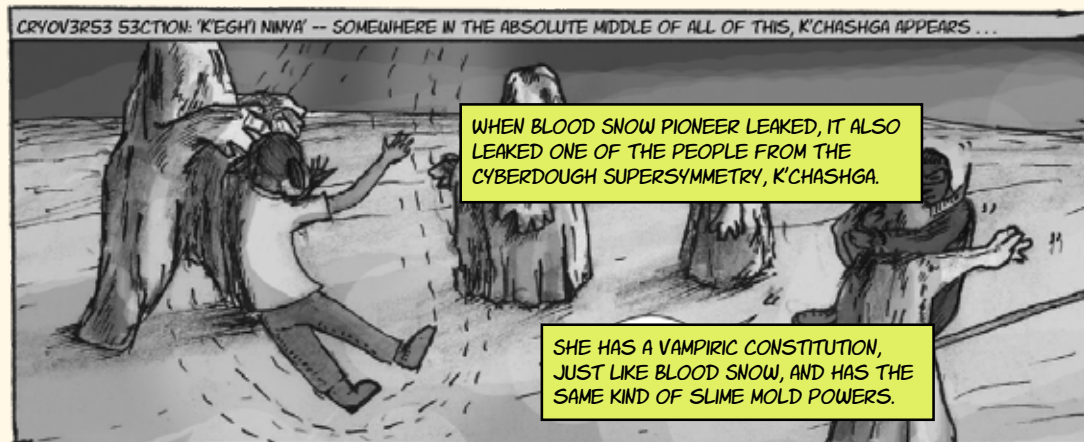


IN ONE OF AQPIK'S CONTINGENCIES, TALLIMAT: THE FIRST FAILSAFE.

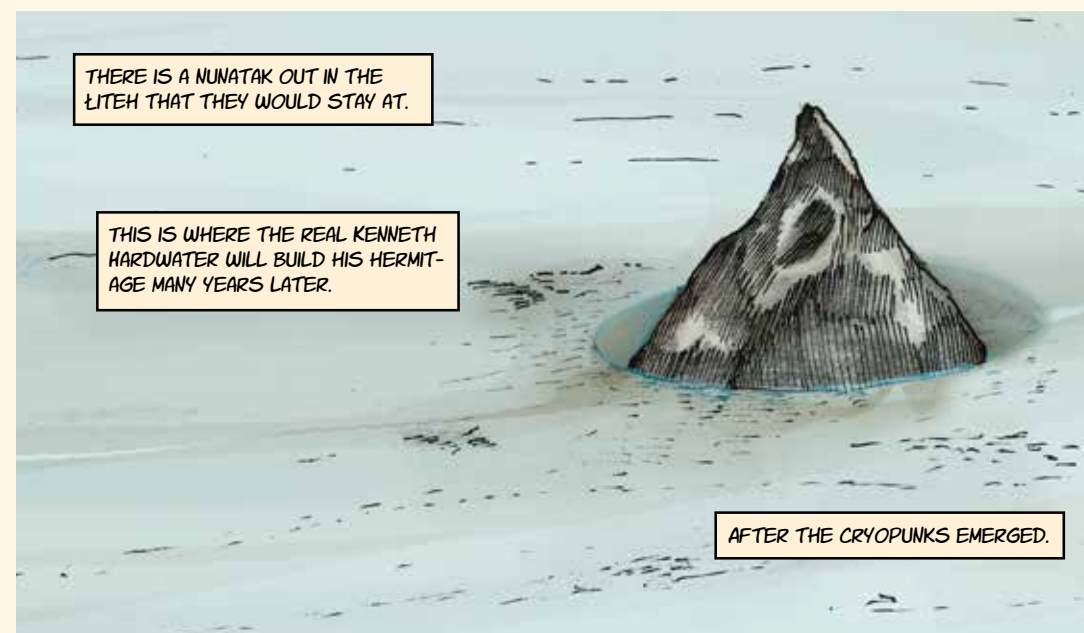
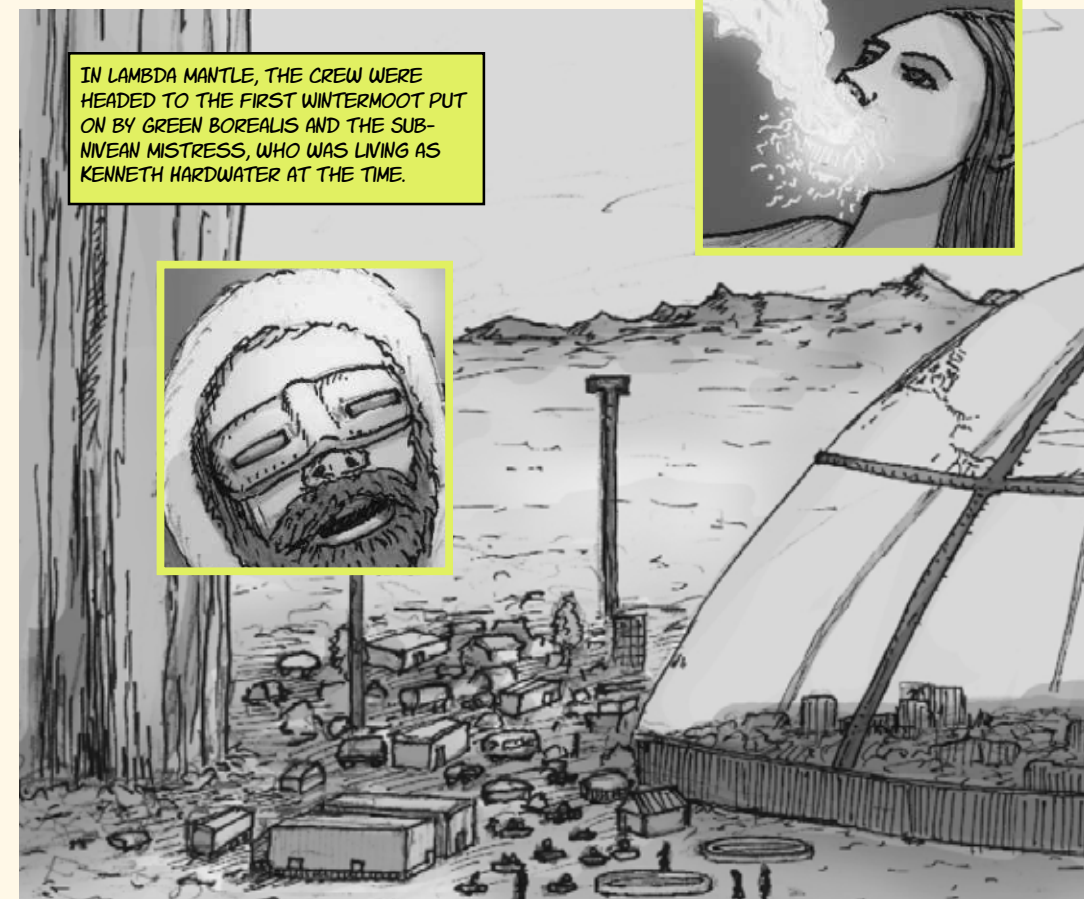
PREVIOUSLY IN WINTERMOOT:
[BOOK ONE: AQPIK AND MARS APPLE]



PREVIOUSLY IN WINTERMOOT:
[BOOK FOUR: ANTHROME AND K'CHASHGA]



PREVIOUSLY IN WINTERMOOT:
[BOOK SIX: SOCIALISTS AND PIONEERS]



THAT IS A MYSTERIOUS MS. MAGPIE AND SUBNEVEAN MISTRESS STORY.

WINTERMOOT

WHEN WE STOP AND TELL STORIES WHILE TRAVELING

SOME RAVENS AND A MAGPIE HAVE A RAP BATTLE:

THIS ONE TIME I SAW ALL FIVE OF THE ALASKAN CORVID SPECIES TOGETHER AT THIS BUS STOP IN FRONT OF THE MUSEUM. THERE WAS A WHOLE MESS OF RAVENS. AN UNKINDNESS. MAYBE LIKE TEN OF THEM. THEY WERE ALL JUST PLAYING AROUND AND MESSING WITH THE TRASH. THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, OUT OF NOWHERE, TWO STELLER'S JAYS LANDED AND JUST STARTED WATCHING THE RAVENS. THE RAVENS KEPT PLAYING -- NOT REALLY PAYING ATTENTION TO THE JAYS. THEN THIS MAGPIE SHOWED UP AND STARTED HANGING OUT WITH THE STELLER'S JAYS, WATCHING THE RAVENS. THEN, A COUPLE OF THE RAVENS STARTED STARING BACK AT THEM. THEY WEREN'T MOVING -- JUST HAVING THIS LIKE STARING CONTEST WITH EACH OTHER. THEN THIS CROW SHOWS UP AND STARTS WATCHING EVERYTHING PLAY OUT FROM BEHIND THE BUS STOP, OVER NEAR THE BIG SCULPTURE OF THE CROUCHING MAN. THAT CROW WAS HIDING. HE DIDN'T REALLY GET INVOLVED. THEN THIS CAMP ROBBER SHOWS UP. THAT'S WHEN THEY ALL START TALKING AT EACH OTHER. ALL OF THEM EXCEPT THE CROW AND THE TWO STELLER'S JAYS. THE JAYS WERE JUST STANDING STILL AND STARING AT THE RAVENS. THE CROW JUST KEPT HIDING.

THE RAVENS STARTED GOING BANANAS, SCREAMING AT EVERYONE, EACH ONE WALKING OUT IN FRONT OF THE GROUP AND VOCALIZING. LIKE A RAP BATTLE OR SOMETHING, BECAUSE EVERY TIME ONE OF THE RAVENS WOULD SPIT THEIR VERSE, THE MAGPIE WOULD RETURN IT WITH A WHOLE MESS OF SOUNDS. THE RAVENS WOULD START 'LAUGHING' OR SOMETHING AFTER EVERY TIME THE MAGPIE DID THAT. LIKE HE WAS SERIOUSLY LAYING DOWN SOME BARS, MAKING FUN OF THE LAST RAVEN WHO TOOK A TURN. THE CAMP ROBBER WAS LIKE THE 'HYPE MAN', VOCALIZING IN LITTLE SPURTS WHEN THE MAGPIE WAS GOING ON AND ON. THE STELLER'S JAYS NEXT TO THE MAGPIE WOULD JUST STAY THERE, TOTALLY STILL LIKE BODYGUARDS OR SOMETHING.

THAT HAPPENED A FEW MORE TIMES AND EVENTUALLY THE CROW WENT AWAY AND THE RAVENS STARTED TO MOVE TO THE PARK AREA TO LOOK AT THE SCULPTURES. EVENTUALLY ALL THE BIRDS LEFT EXCEPT THE MAGPIE AND THE STELLER'S JAYS. I NEVER SAW THE CAMP ROBBER LEAVE, BUT IT DID. IT WAS WILD AND HAPPENED SO FAST, BUT I WAS ABLE TO GET MY PHONE OUT AND TAKE SOME PICTURES! THEN MAGGIE SHOWS UP AND WE RIDE THE BUS TOGETHER. SHE WAS IN A GOOD MOOD THAT DAY, BUT SAID SHE DIDN'T SEE NO BIRDS AND JUST LAUGHED WHEN I SHOWED HER THE PICTURES AS PROOF.

— GROVER THORNTON, AKA ANCHORMAN, THE SOURDOUGH

WHEN I SHOWED AN UNKINDNESS OF RAVENS WHAT WAS UP:

I WAS WAITING AT THE STOP NEAR THE MUSEUM TO CATCH A BUS TO THE ALASKA NATIVE MEDICAL CENTER. I HAD A ROUTINE APPOINTMENT, NOTHING SERIOUS. WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN THIS CREW OF RAVENS FROM MY HOMEWORLD SHOWED UP AND STARTED CAUSING A RUCKUS. THEY WERE TALKING TRASH AND BEING RIDICULOUS, SO I FIGURED I WOULD SHOW THEM WHAT WAS UP. I TRANSFORMED INTO A MAGPIE AND STARTED MEETING EVERY ONE OF THESE FELLAS WITH LINES OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD.

GROVER WAS AT THE BUS STOP TOO, BUT HE WASN'T ABLE TO SEE ME AND NEVER NOTICED THAT I TRANSFORMED, HE ONLY SAW ME IN MY BIRD SHAPE. MY CREW WAS WITH ME TOO, A COUPLE OTHER SHAPESHIFTERS, AND THEY WERE READY FOR WHATEVER WAS ABOUT TO TRANSPIRE. ONE RAVEN WOULD SAY SOMETHING ABOUT BEING THE CLEVEREST RAVEN TO EVER EXIST AND THEN I WOULD LET THEM KNOW THEY SOUNDED LIKE A MOUNTAIN GOAT, SMELLED LIKE DOGDIRT AND NEEDED TO GO TAKE A BATH AND STUFF. WE WENT ON AND ON LIKE THAT FOR SEVERAL MINUTES, UNTIL I HAD DEFEATED EVERY ONE OF THEM. LYRICALLY SPEAKING OF COURSE. THEY DIDN'T EVEN HAVE A BOSS-LEVEL RAVEN IN THE GROUP! I TRASHED THEM ALL EASILY.

ANYWAYS, THAT IS WHEN THEY ALL STARTED TO LEAVE, SAYING THEY WERE REALLY ONLY THERE TO CHECK OUT THE STUFF AT THE MUSEUM AND WE WERE A TRIFLING BUNCH OF IMPOSTERS. AFTER THE LAST RAVEN WANDERED AWAY, I TOLD MY CREW WE WERE GOOD AND THEY SPLIT, THEN I WENT BACK INTO HUMAN SHAPE AND RODE THE BUS WITH GROVER. HE WAS IN A WEIRD MOOD, BUT I NEVER TOLD HIM ABOUT THE HORROR THAT HAD TRANSPIRED. I AM TALKING ABOUT THE RAVEN'S LYRICS NOW, BTW, THE HORROR WAS THE RAVENS' COLLECTIVE LACK OF SKILLS. THAT WAS A FUN DAY.

— Q'AHGTGHAL'AY, AKA THE MYSTERIOUS MS. MAGPIE



ENCEPHALIZATION QUOTIENT AND CORVIDAE

THERE ARE FIVE CORVID SPECIES FOUND IN DENA'INA ELNENA (SOUTH CENTRAL ALASKA, THE DENA'INA HOMELAND): CHULYIN, Q'AHGTGHAL'AY, UKCHENA GGAGASHLA, TAQELBI, AND CHINSHLA. THAT IS RAVENS, MAGPIES, STELLER'S JAYS, CAMP ROBBERS, AND CROWS. HUMANS AND CORVIDS HAVE BEEN HAVING INTERESTING AND CURIOUS INTERACTIONS WITH EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME, AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO FOR MILLENNIA TO COME.

CORVIDAE HAVE A HIGHER DEGREE OF ENCEPHALIZATION QUOTIENT COMPARED TO OTHER BIRDS (E.Q., THE BRAIN TO BODY RATIO) -- TRANSLATING TO HIGHER INTELLIGENCE, MORE COMPLEX SOCIAL INTERACTIONS, AND ENHANCED COGNITIVE ABILITIES. RAVENS HAVE THE HIGHEST E.Q. OF ANY OF THE OTHER CORVIDAE. IN FACT, IT IS AN E.Q. SIMILAR TO SEVERAL SPECIES OF NON-HUMAN PRIMATES AND CETACEANS. BECAUSE OF THEIR LEVEL OF INTELLIGENCE, RAVENS WILL OFTEN BE SEEN PLAYING GAMES SUCH AS HIDE AND SEEK OR FOLLOW THE LEADER AND WILL PARTICIPATE IN LEISURE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SLIDING DOWN ICEFALLS IN GROUPS, THE WAY HUMANS RECREATIONALLY SLED DOWN HILLS. WHEN ENGAGED IN TERRITORIAL DISPUTES WITH OTHER ANIMALS, RAVENS WILL ALSO GROUP TOGETHER AND FORM STRATEGIC LINES THE WAY HUMANS DO WHEN ENGAGED IN BATTLE.

RAVENS HAVE A VOCAL RANGE LARGER THAN MOST SPECIES OF PARROTS AND CAN IMITATE HUMAN SPEECH, CADENCE, PROSODY, AND ACCENTS. THEY CAN RECOGNIZE DIFFERENT HUMAN FACES AND WILL ALERT OTHER RAVENS WHEN QUESTIONABLE HUMANS ARE AROUND. ON OCCASION THEIR PLAYFUL NATURES HAVE LED TO INCIDENTS OF RAVENS TEASING HUMANS BY IMITATING THEM IN WHAT APPEARS TO BE A SARCASTIC MANNER.

THE OTHER FOUR ALASKAN CORVIDS HAVE SIMILAR SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND VOCAL ABILITIES, THOUGH IT IS LESS PRONOUNCED, AND IS GENERALLY LESS UNDERSTOOD. CROWS HAVE BEEN REPORTED USING TOOLS. STELLER'S JAYS WILL KNOCK ON WINDOWS OR DOORS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEM PEANUTS. CAMP ROBBERS (ALSO KNOWN AS GRAY JAYS, MEAT JACKS, MOOSE HAWKS, OR WHISKY JACKS) USE SYSTEMS OF SCATTER HOARDING WITH LINGUISTIC UNDERPINNINGS. REPORTS OF DOMESTICATED MAGPIES THAT CAN IMITATE HUMAN SPEECH HAVE ALSO BEEN RECORDED. BUT PLEASE, DO NOT DOMESTICATE MAGPIES.