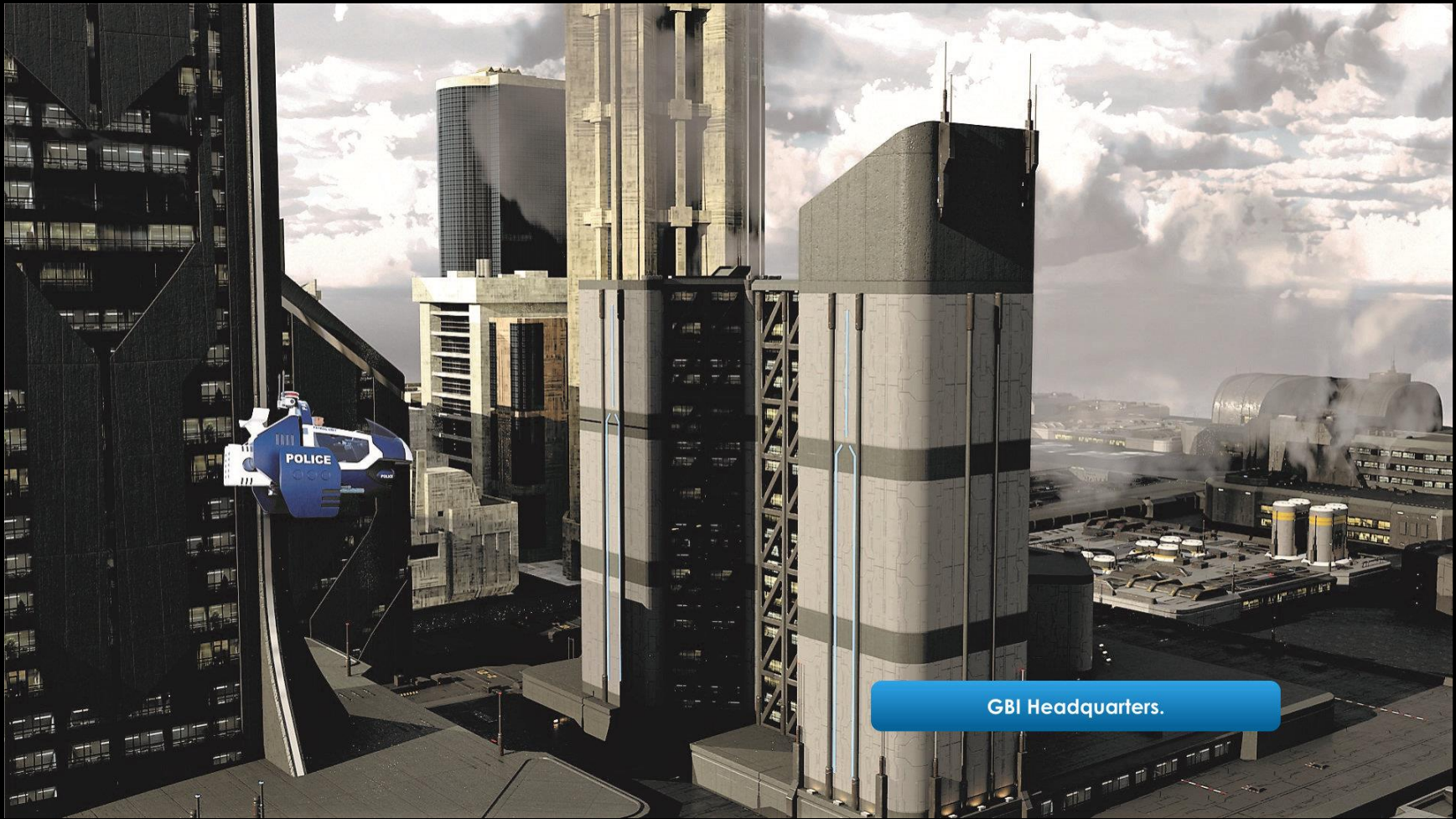




New Angeles Business District. AKA Uptown. July 15th, 2202



GBI Headquarters.





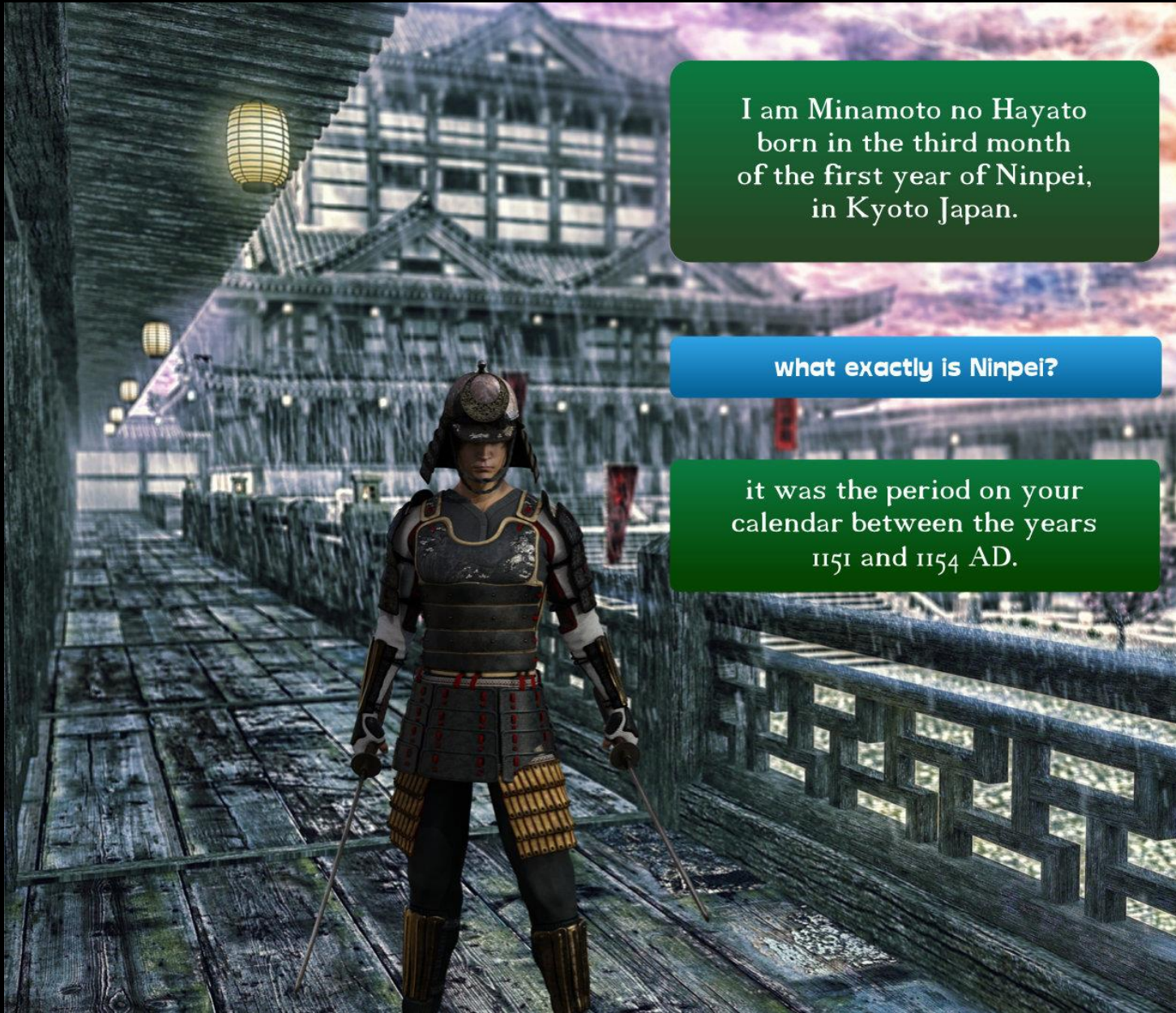
19th Floor Interview Suite



I am special agent Jensen Blayloc. To your left is special agent Bridgette Garcia.

Please tell us your name, date of birth and country of origin.





I am Minamoto no Hayato  
born in the third month  
of the first year of Ninpei,  
in Kyoto Japan.

what exactly is Ninpei?

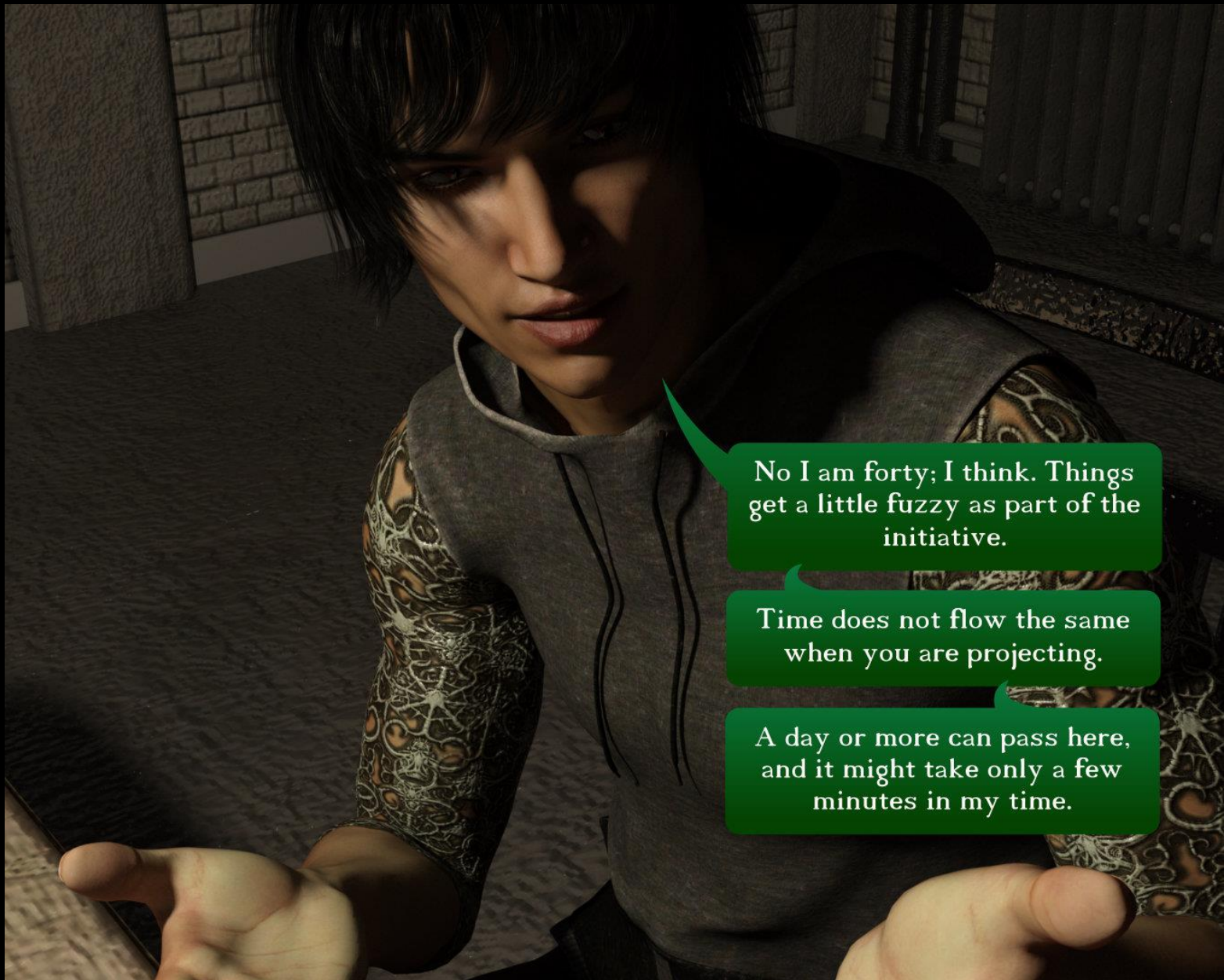
it was the period on your  
calendar between the years  
1151 and 1154 AD.





**So you are saying you are  
1051 years old?**

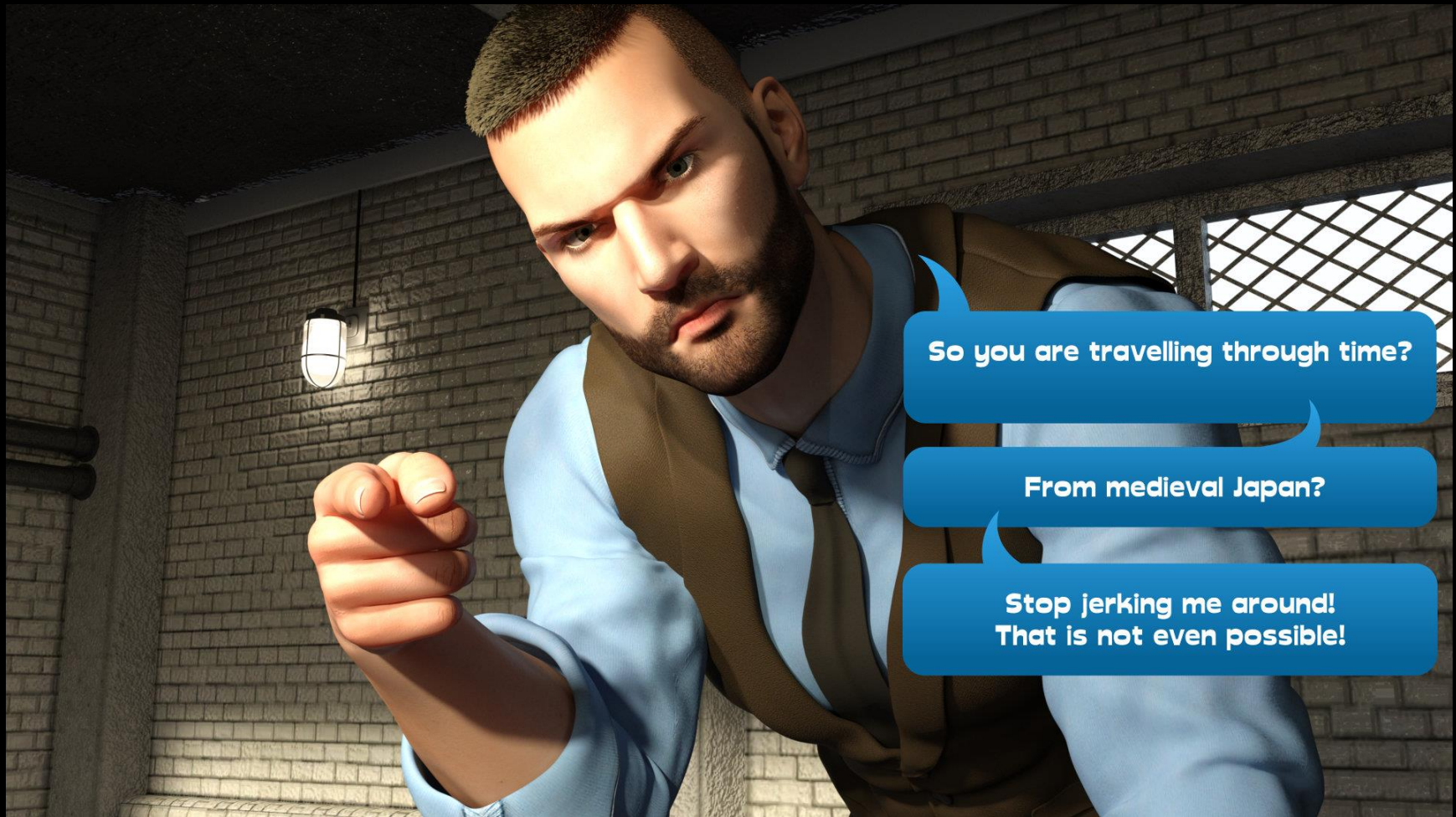




No I am forty; I think. Things get a little fuzzy as part of the initiative.

Time does not flow the same when you are projecting.

A day or more can pass here, and it might take only a few minutes in my time.

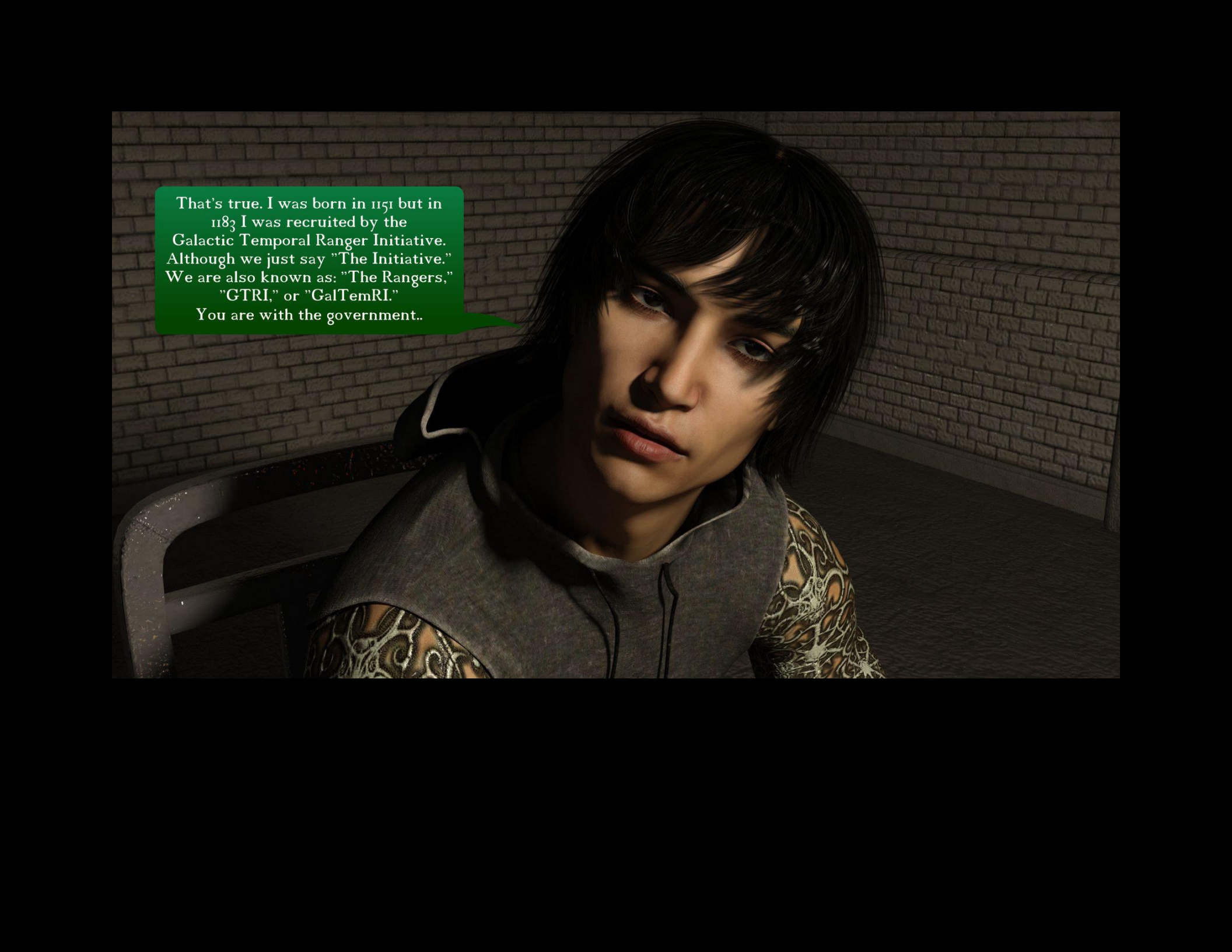


**So you are travelling through time?**

**From medieval Japan?**

**Stop jerking me around!  
That is not even possible!**



A character with dark hair and bangs, wearing a grey hoodie with intricate tattoos on the sleeves, is sitting in a chair. The background is a brick wall. A green speech bubble is overlaid on the left side of the image.

That's true. I was born in 1151 but in  
1183 I was recruited by the  
Galactic Temporal Ranger Initiative.  
Although we just say "The Initiative."  
We are also known as: "The Rangers,"  
"GTRI," or "GalTemRI."  
You are with the government..

A close-up, low-angle shot of a man with a short beard and mustache, wearing a light blue dress shirt, a brown vest, and a brown tie. He is leaning forward, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a brick wall with a window featuring a lattice pattern. A small, glowing light fixture is visible on the wall to the left.

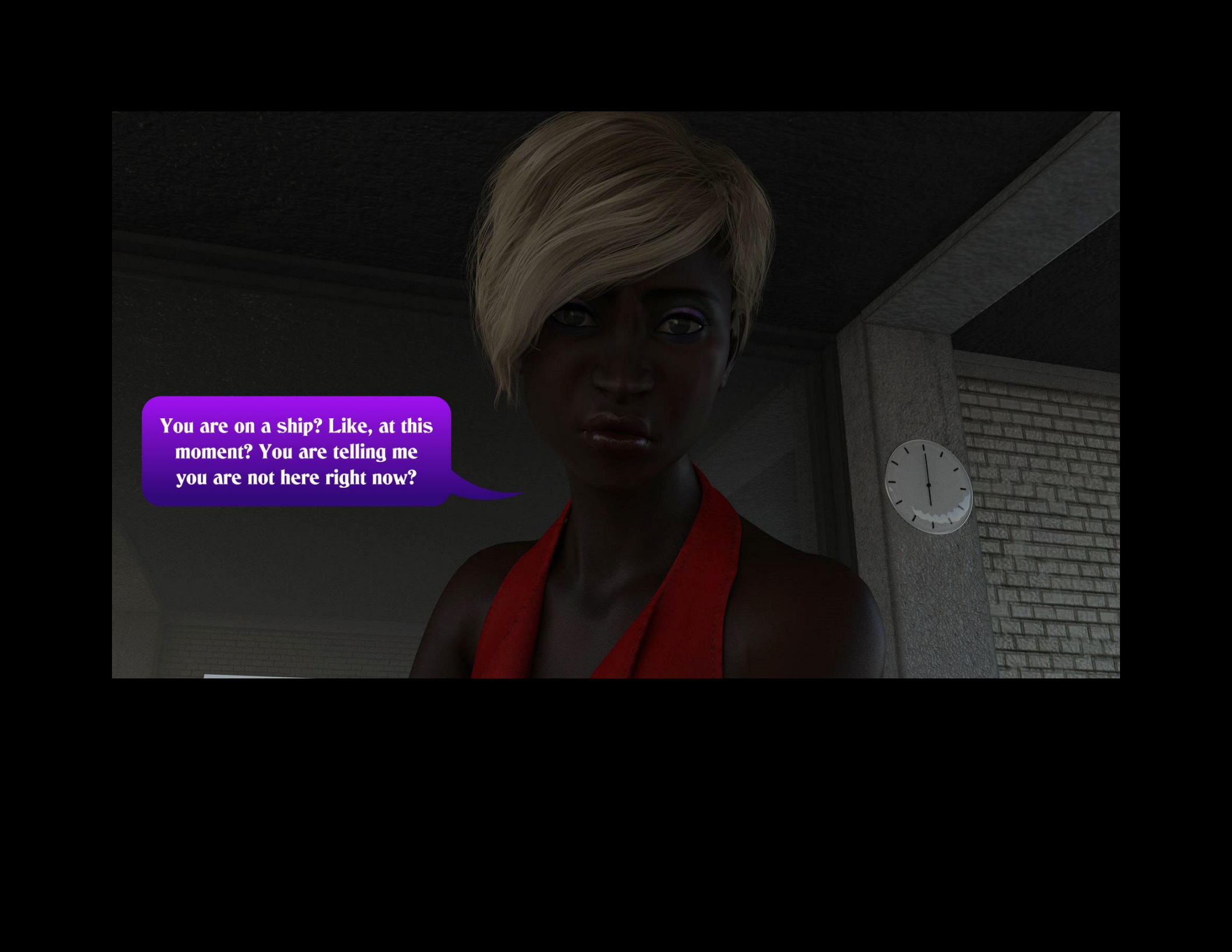
Yeah, I get it. I am sure there is a huge, expensive bureaucracy somewhere just making up stupid names. Is there a point to this story?





For me, the year is 2394. I am on a ship called the Sovngarde. It is a refit Antares class vessel.

Wait.. That name sounds familiar somehow..  
Eh.. Nevermind..



**You are on a ship? Like, at this moment? You are telling me you are not here right now?**



A man with dark hair, wearing a dark, form-fitting, futuristic suit with white and orange accents, stands in a doorway. The doorway is framed by dark, metallic-looking panels. Several vertical orange light beams pass through the doorway, illuminating the man. The background behind the doorway is bright and slightly blurred.

I AM on a ship, AND I am here.  
They call it "projecting."

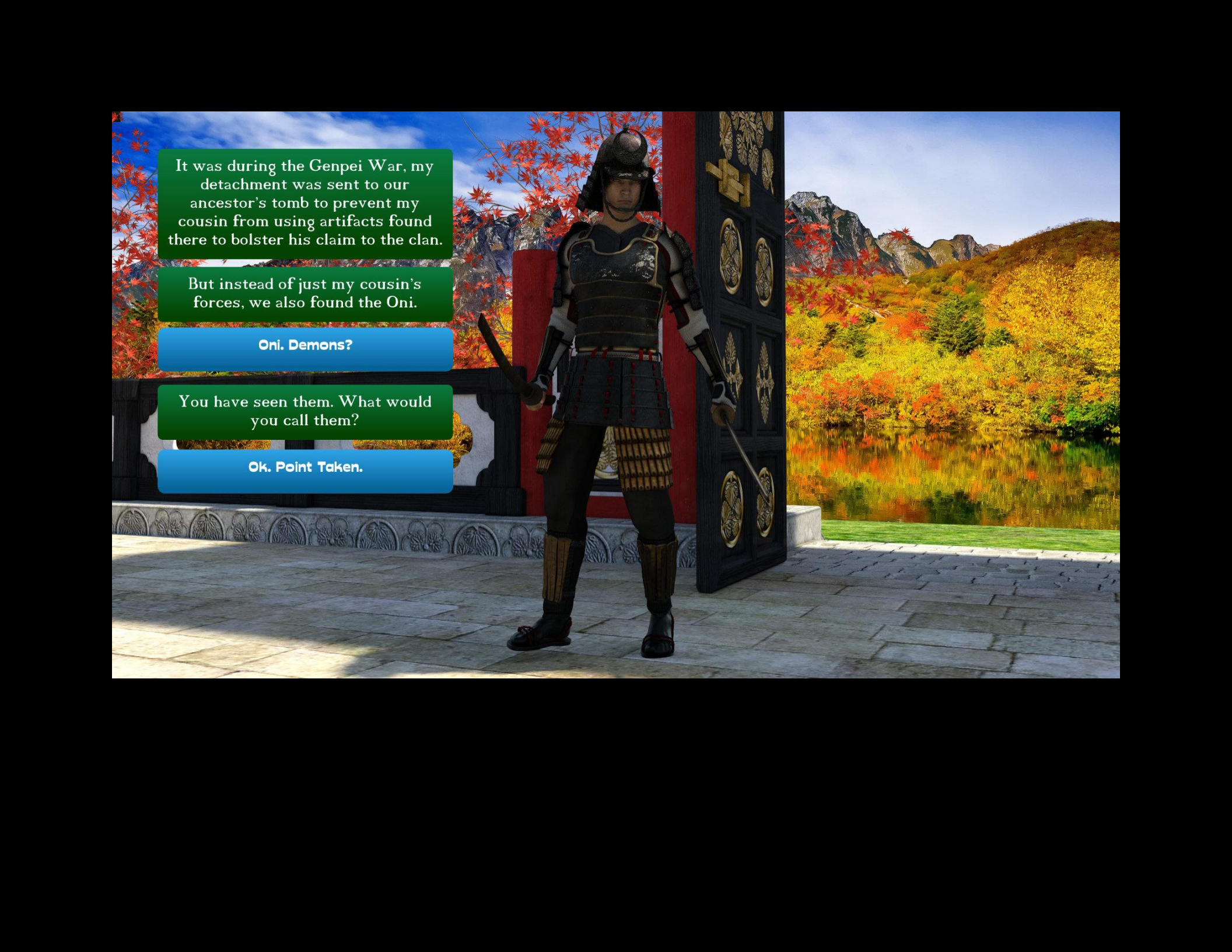
You can go forward in time, but  
going backwards is done through  
a process of quantum projection.

Look, it's complicated. I am an  
operator, not a scientist.



Ok. So How did you ge to the future in the first place?



A samurai in full armor stands in a courtyard. He is holding a katana in his right hand and a wakizashi in his left. The background features a pond, autumn foliage, and mountains.

It was during the Genpei War, my detachment was sent to our ancestor's tomb to prevent my cousin from using artifacts found there to bolster his claim to the clan.

But instead of just my cousin's forces, we also found the Oni.

**Oni. Demons?**

You have seen them. What would you call them?

**Ok. Point Taken.**



At the end of the battle, only I survived, or so I thought.

But when I climbed the stairs, I saw another Oni, and I thought I saw Tenshi.







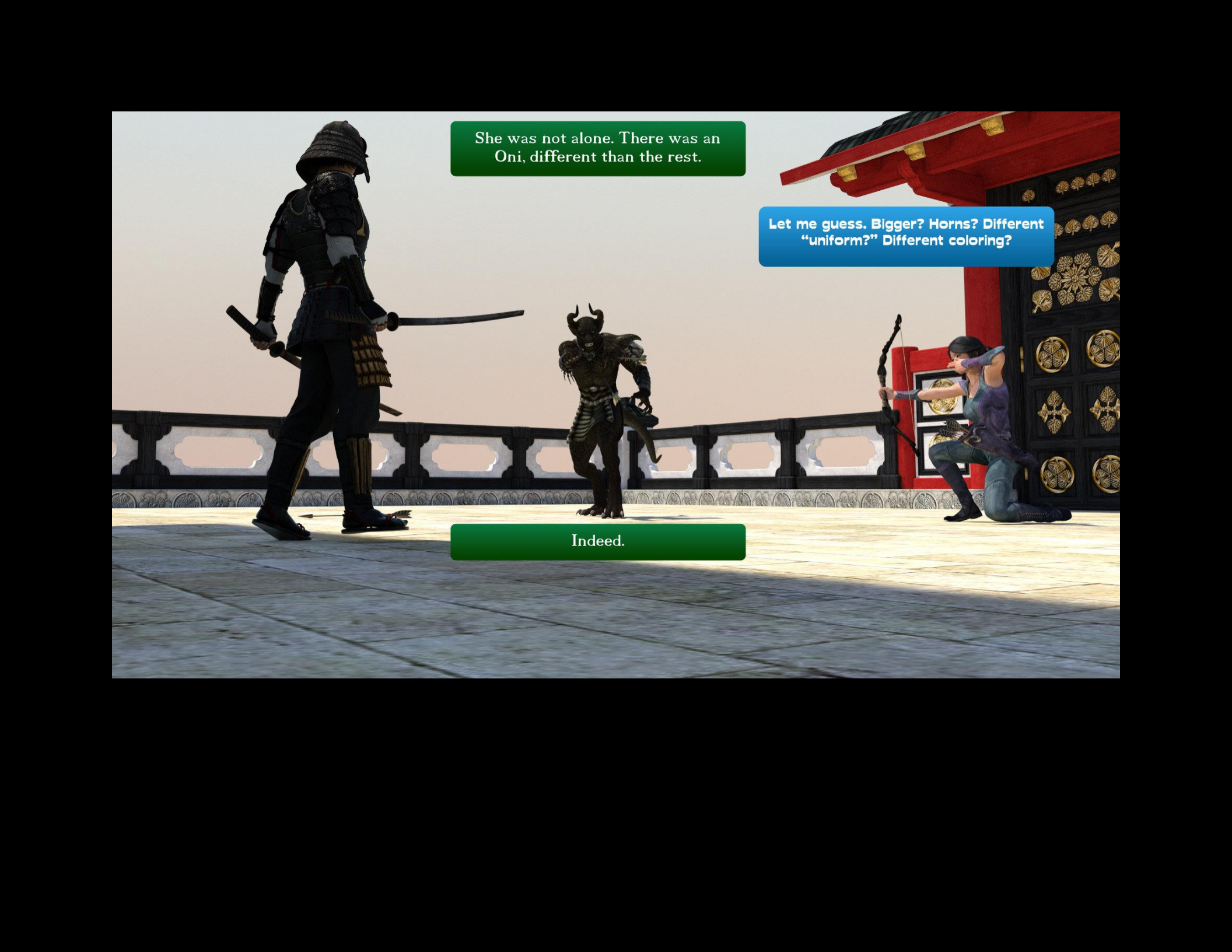
An Angel? That's what you  
are rolling with?



It was a long day, there was battle, much death, and some sake.

Either way, either she flew up there or appeared out of nowhere, but she did not belong. Helpful as she was.



A screenshot from a video game showing a scene on a rooftop. On the left, a samurai in dark armor with a curved blade stands facing a demon. The demon is dark, horned, and has a tail. On the right, a woman in a purple top and blue pants is kneeling and aiming a bow. The background features a traditional Japanese building with a red roof and a black door with gold circular patterns. The ground is a light-colored stone or concrete surface.

She was not alone. There was an Oni, different than the rest.

Let me guess. Bigger? Horns? Different "uniform?" Different coloring?

Indeed.



It was the starmetal in my grandfather's swords that made them black. I am told that is also the reason I was able to dispatch these Oni in the manner I did.

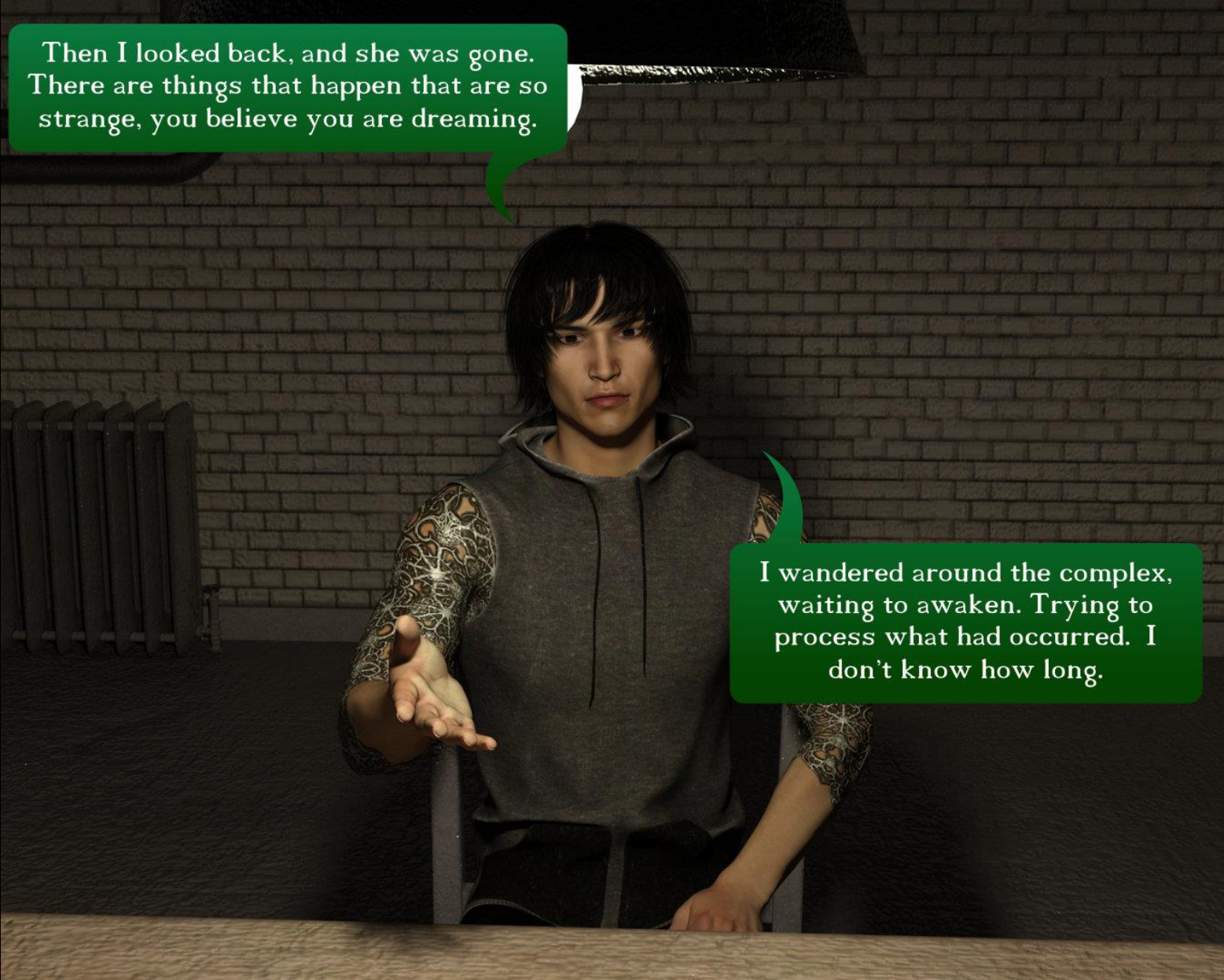




We stood silently for a few moments.  
Then, I heard something behind me  
and I turned to investigate.






A character with black hair and intricate tattoos on their arms is sitting in a chair. They are wearing a grey hoodie. The background is a brick wall with a radiator on the left. Two green speech bubbles contain text.

Then I looked back, and she was gone.  
There are things that happen that are so  
strange, you believe you are dreaming.

I wandered around the complex,  
waiting to awaken. Trying to  
process what had occurred. I  
don't know how long.





After a while, for the second time that day, a beautiful woman appeared from nowhere. Only this time, it was Martyna Piatek, the "First Ranger" herself.

Wait a second. Martyna certainly doesn't sound Japanese.

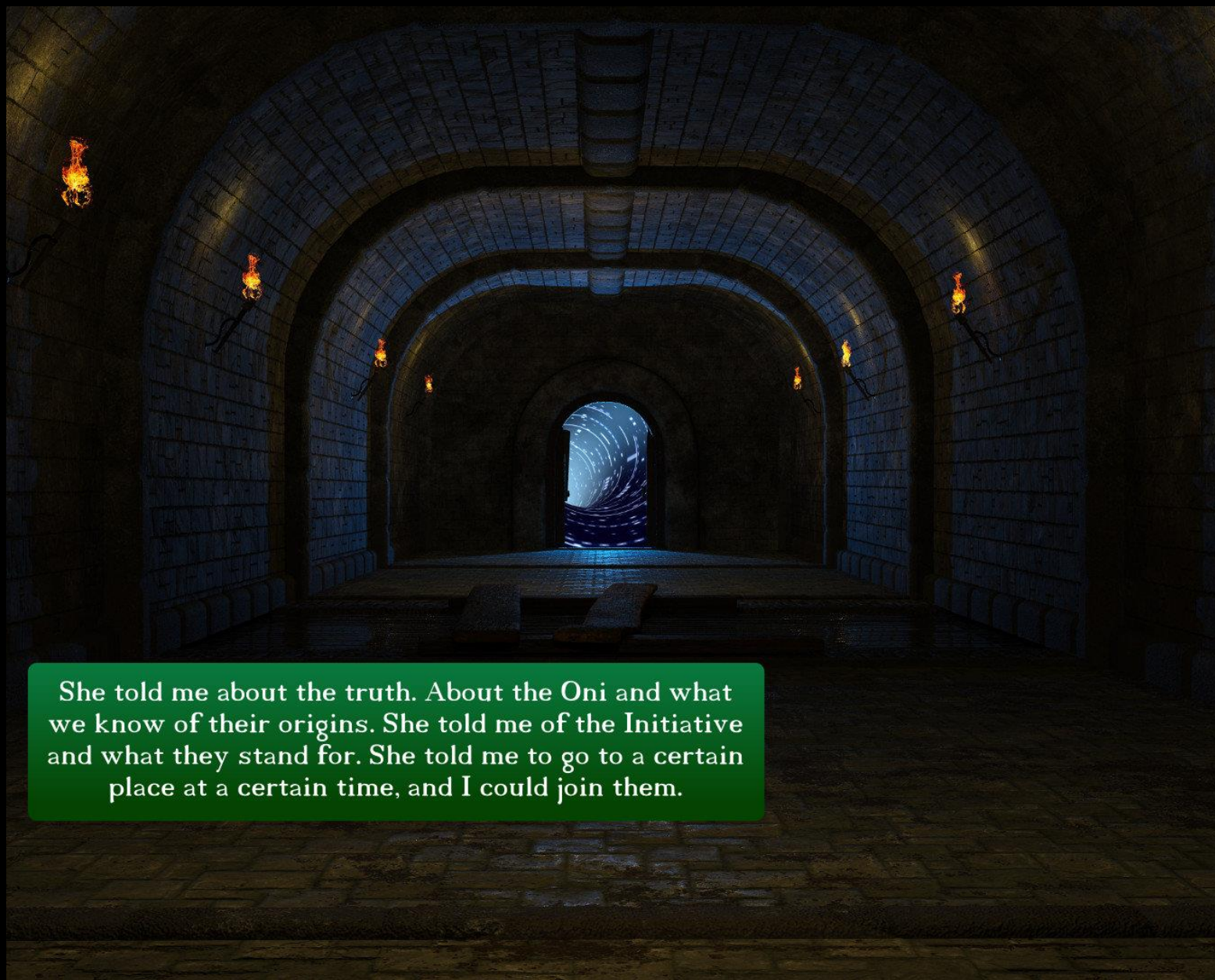


Of course it isn't. Polish I believe. You are wonder how we spoke?

Yes.

Do you think I speak English?  
No. I speak only Japanese.  
Technology translates for me.  
If you spoke German,  
"Ich würde Deutsch sprechen."





She told me about the truth. About the Oni and what we know of their origins. She told me of the Initiative and what they stand for. She told me to go to a certain place at a certain time, and I could join them.



There was nothing left for me in my own time. I could never forget what I knew, and that knowledge could not be accepted. I would be disgraced.

I felt I could do more good for my clan, and all people, if I joined the Rangers. So I took the tunnel. I chose life.



Simultaneously, it seemed like an instant and an eternity. I emerged in a strange room. A room where they create one way wormholes through time.





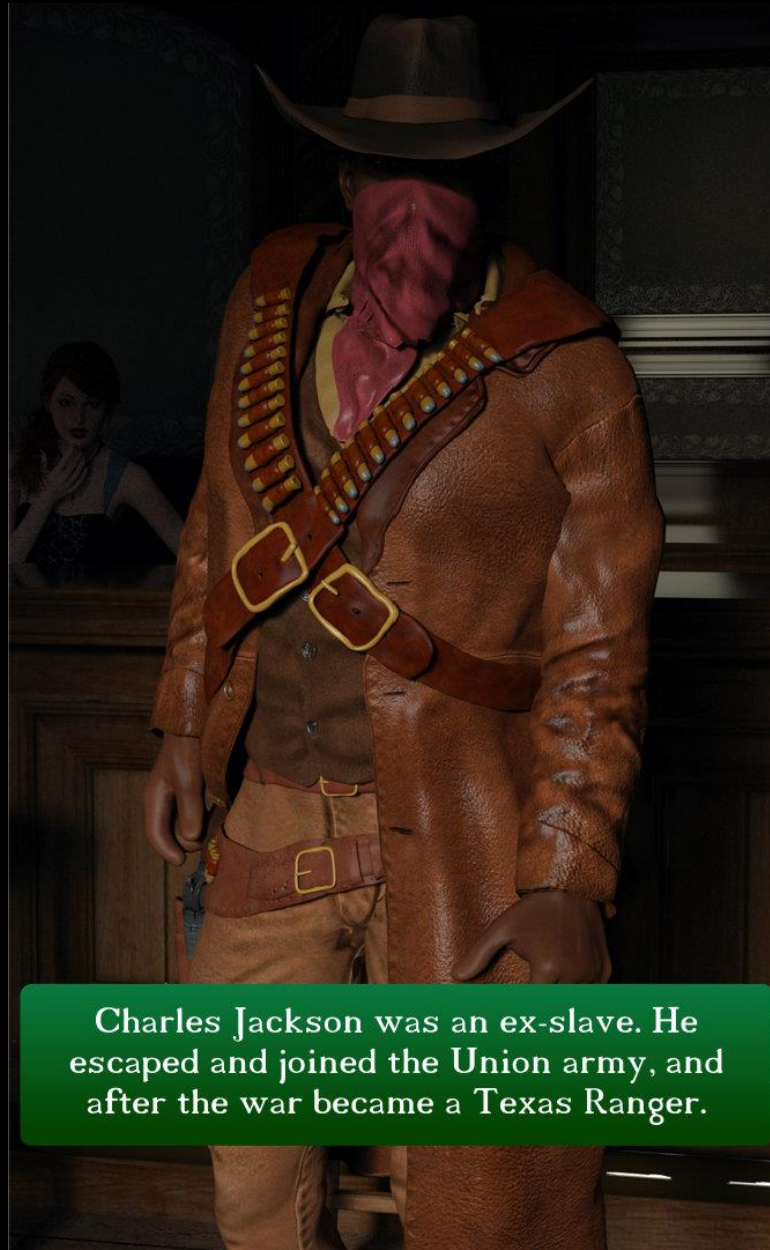


I followed the winding ramp to a door. Through that door, I met Sihü and Charles.

Charles is who taught me the ropes, and with whom I came here on this mission.

In fact, that is who I was going to meet when I was ambushed.





Charles Jackson was an ex-slave. He escaped and joined the Union army, and after the war became a Texas Ranger.

He is an expert tracker, a skill he learned from Native Americans, namely Sihu and her brother Sahale.





A woman with long black hair, wearing a black and silver Native American-style outfit, is kneeling on the ground in a desert camp. She is surrounded by several large, conical tents made of animal skins. The background shows a desert landscape with a large, flat-topped mesa under a clear sky.

CJ's wife and children were murdered. He left the Texas Rangers to track down the killers.

Sahale went missing while trying to help Charles locate those responsible.

Sihu later joined the Initiative, and is a trainer in survival and tracking.

Of course, we know now it was not "people" at all who did the deed.  
CJ tracked them out into the badlands where he learned the truth.





He found a particularly nasty Oni, near a strange stone construct.






We believe this construct was an attempt to build some sort of rift stabilization device or maybe even a portal.

Charles, being a man of action, engaged the Oni.

Hold on a second. What is a Rift? Why would these creatures try to build something like this?





A Oni character, a bipedal demon with yellow and black striped skin, horns, and a tail, stands in a stone archway. The character has a fierce expression with its mouth open, showing sharp teeth. The background consists of reddish-brown rock formations.

The truth is, we don't know that much about the Oni, or the rifts. We have information provided by some sources, and we have guesses.

**Information provided by whom?**

That isn't really important. What I am saying is our universe is not the only one. A rift is where the neighboring universes are temporarily in phase, allowing passage between them.

We believe the Oni use these rifts to travel from their universe to ours. Rifts however are very unstable and dangerous. So, we believe that they were trying to make a device to safely return to their own universe.





How does a stone construct turn into super high technology that even people from the future can't understand?

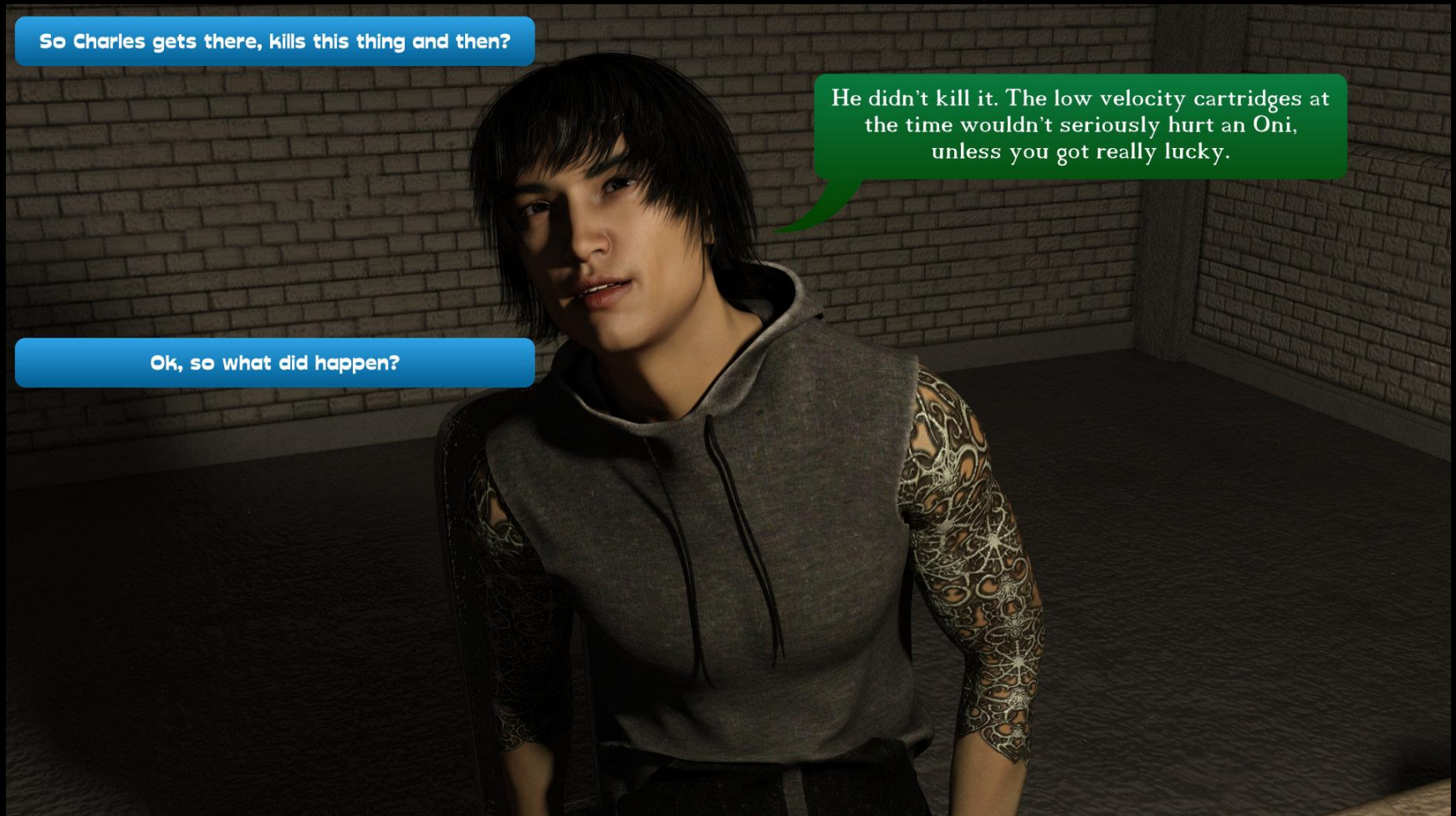
We don't know. There are particular isotopes and cellular structure to the stone used, and it was brought from a long distance away to this very specific place.



So Charles gets there, kills this thing and then?

He didn't kill it. The low velocity cartridges at the time wouldn't seriously hurt an Oni, unless you got really lucky.

Ok, so what did happen?





Martyna showed up just in time with a nano particle accelerator.

So you can carry gear back from the future?

Yes, didn't you say you were projecting?



A woman in futuristic, grey and black armor with a yellow and black device on her chest stands on the left. She is holding a futuristic rifle. To her right, a man in a brown cowboy outfit, including a hat and a long coat, stands with a red scarf and a rifle slung over his shoulder. They are in a desert environment with orange-brown rock formations and sparse green plants. Three green text boxes are overlaid on the scene.

We can't bring things back. We send teams of spies, technicians, and engineers ahead of the rangers to acquire or build equipment ahead of an operation.

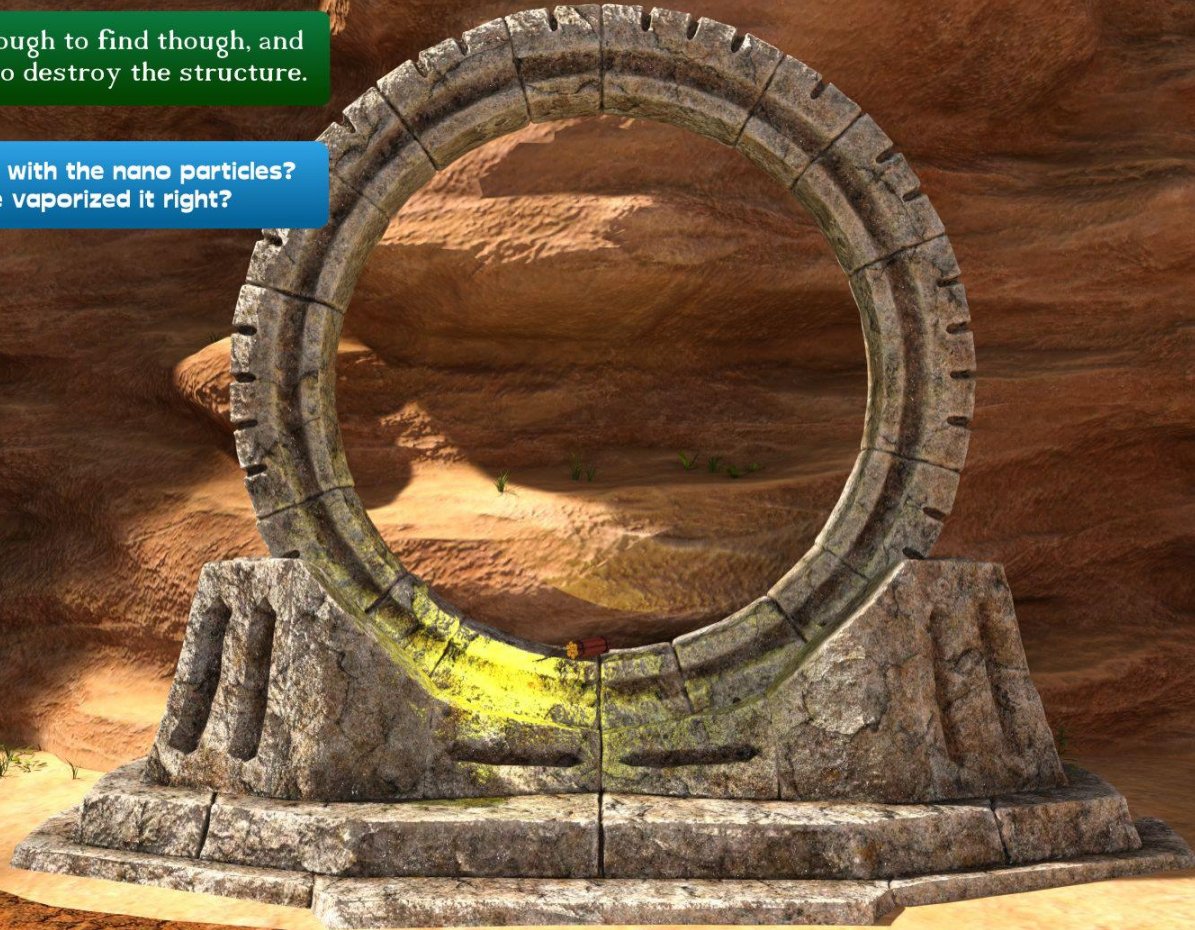
The nano particle accelerator is actually quite a crude device by today's standards, and could be created using available materials, though with difficulty.

The armor was much more difficult to produce. We can spend a long time before an OP preparing. Years in some cases. Preventing an operational portal is a priority.




Dynamite is easy enough to find though, and was all they needed to destroy the structure.

Why not just shoot it with the nano particles?  
That would have vaporized it right?







Sure. However, although we can build it, the material for the power cell is very hard to obtain. We will always use a local solution to solve a problem when we can, preserving our tech for critical use or future operations.





I'll admit, it is a very entertaining story. There are a lot of things that just don't add up.

Like, why I am telling you this.

Yes. You have shared a lot of information that must be highly sensitive. Why would your organization allow that?

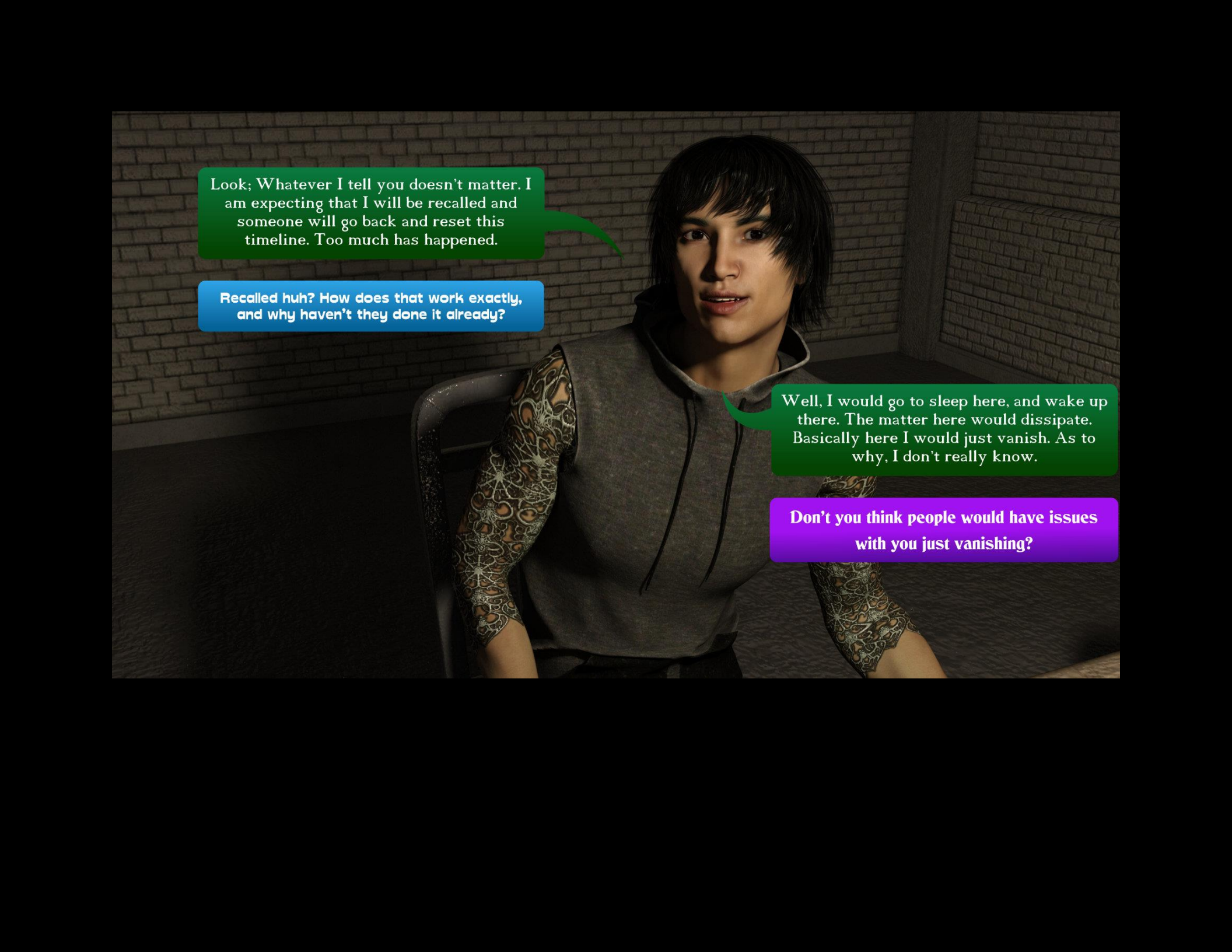
Well, technically we work for the same government.



A man with a beard, wearing a light blue shirt, a dark tie, and a brown vest, stands in a brick-walled room. He has his hands outstretched in a gesture of surprise or exasperation. The room has a brick wall, a window with a metal grate, and a wall-mounted light fixture.

See, that right there. It's BS. We both know it.

There are 10 other agencies in this same building who would not tell me what time it is without 17 forms and high level authorization.

A character with dark hair and bangs, wearing a grey hoodie and having intricate tattoos on both arms, is sitting in a chair. The background is a brick wall. Three speech bubbles are overlaid on the image.


Look; Whatever I tell you doesn't matter. I am expecting that I will be recalled and someone will go back and reset this timeline. Too much has happened.

Recalled huh? How does that work exactly, and why haven't they done it already?

Well, I would go to sleep here, and wake up there. The matter here would dissipate. Basically here I would just vanish. As to why, I don't really know.

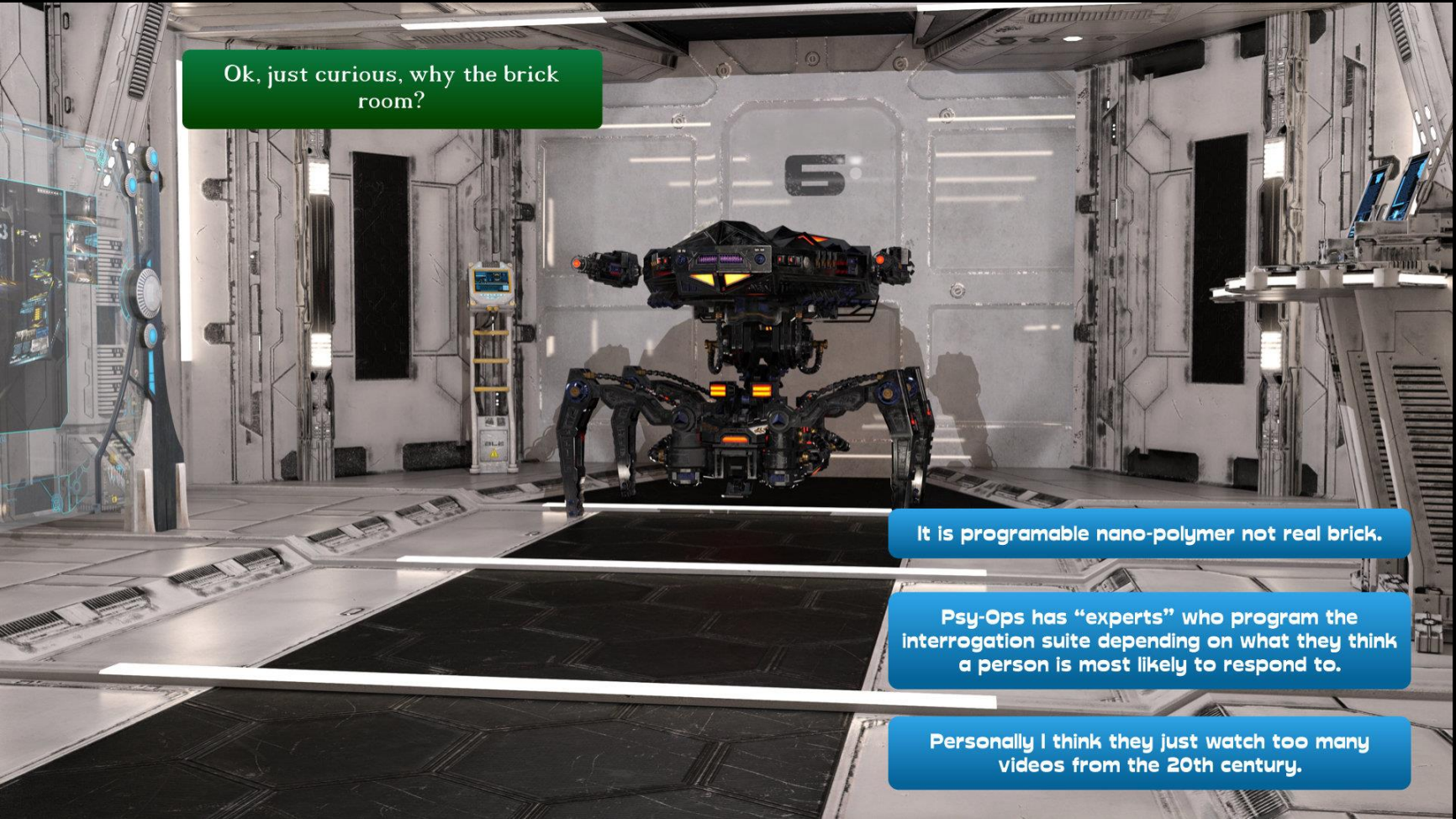
Don't you think people would have issues with you just vanishing?





Like I said, someone would go back and reset the timeline. It would have never happened. They must be planning that, there are already too many witnesses.

Yes, about that. I am not sure you know how far out of hand this has gotten. Follow me.



Ok, just curious, why the brick room?

It is programable nano-polymer not real brick.

Psy-Ops has “experts” who program the interrogation suite depending on what they think a person is most likely to respond to.

Personally I think they just watch too many videos from the 20th century.



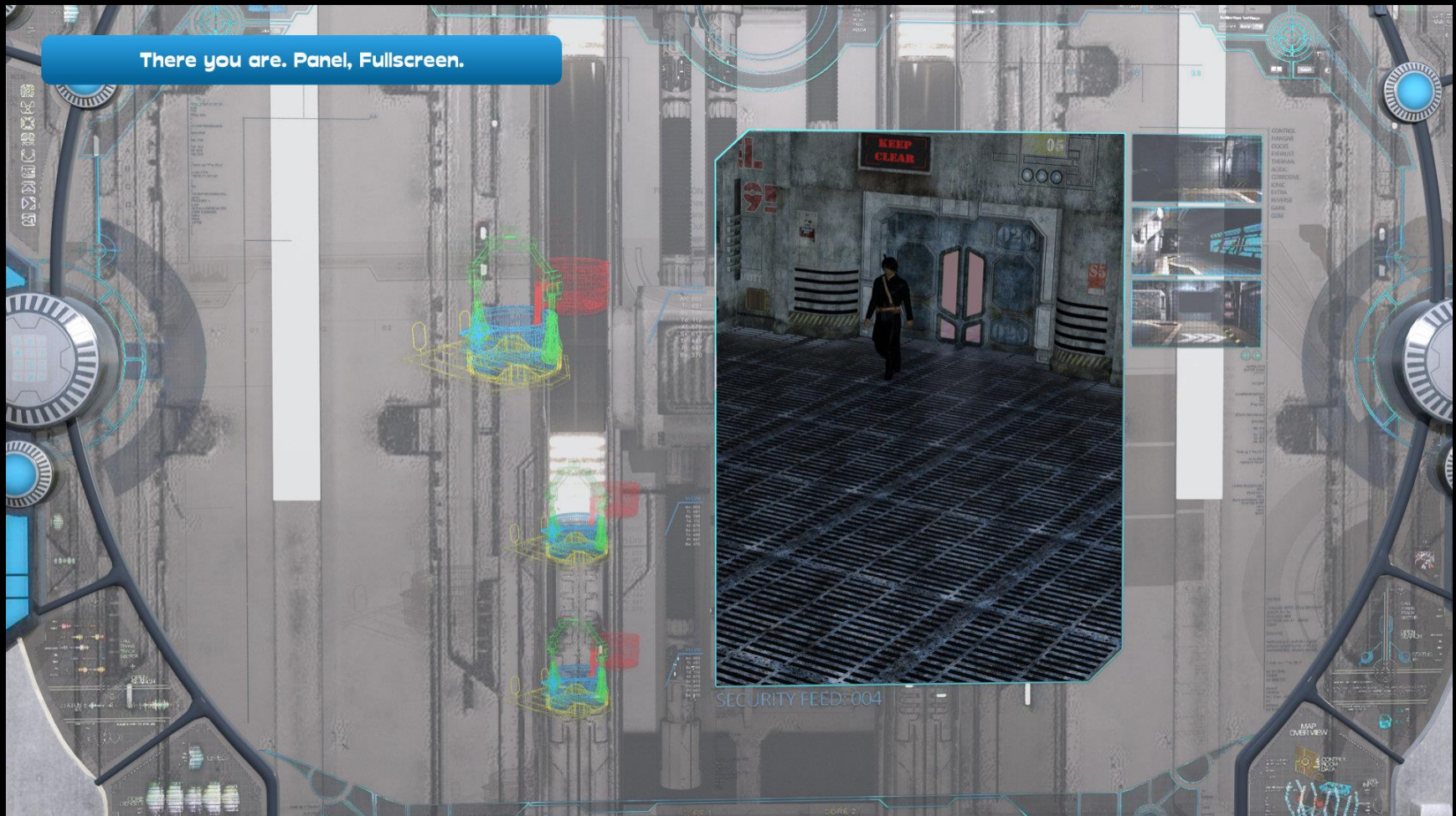


We are not the only ones who have seen the Oni, as you call them.

Panel, Activate. Display COLSEC warehouse,  
section five, camera three, timestamp Juliet  
Bravo Seven.



There you are. Panel, Fullscreen.



Am 001  
T: 001  
T: 002  
T: 003  
T: 004  
T: 005  
T: 006  
T: 007  
T: 008  
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Am 001  
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CONTROL  
FUSAGE  
DOCK  
FUSAGE  
THERMAL  
ALIC  
CONCRETE  
ORAC  
EXTRA  
RESERVE  
GANG  
COOL

MAP  
OVERVIEW

CORE 1      CORE 2



Honestly, I am not sure who is ambushing who here.

They ambushed me. I was on my way to meet CJ.







How did they know you were coming?

I wish I knew. I was hoping I would find that out during the debrief.





If you think they know, why not just ask someone?

If they have information to pass to me, they can do that via the interface. However, I am not conscious. Quantum Projection allows me to remember what I am experiencing here, but I can't give them information in real time. Even in the 24th century they still cannot read my thoughts.





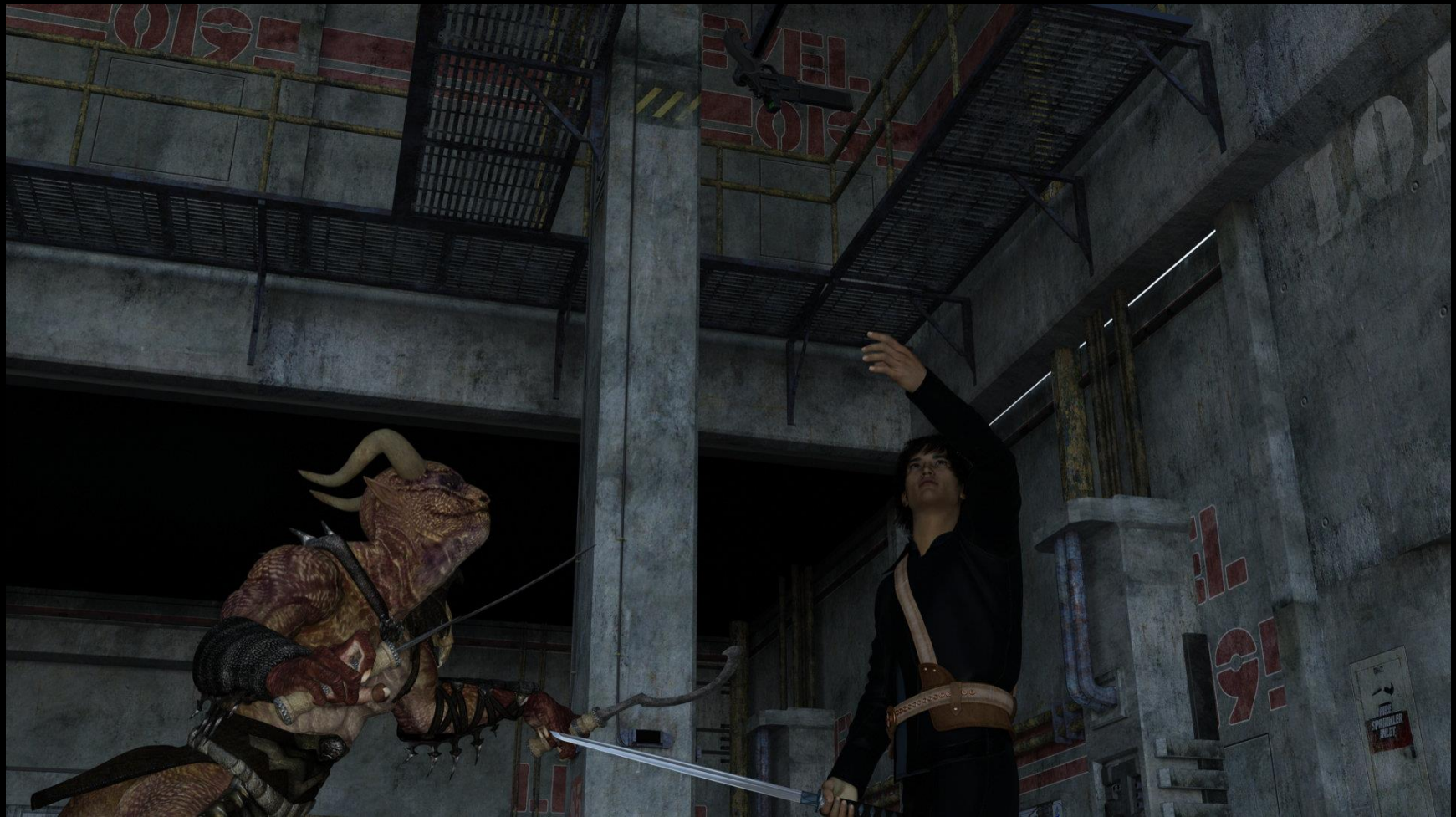
























A screenshot from the video game Halo 3 showing a loading zone. The floor is a metal grating. In the background, there are concrete pillars and a door labeled "LOADING ZONE". Several dead Covenant enemies are lying on the floor. The scene is framed by a futuristic HUD with various icons and data. A purple text box is overlaid on the top left, and a green text box is overlaid on the bottom center.

Clearly, they didn't pose much of a problem.

I have fought them many times before. They are strong and tough and somewhat cunning, but predictable. Modern weapons can easily kill them.





Ok, here we go, this is interesting.

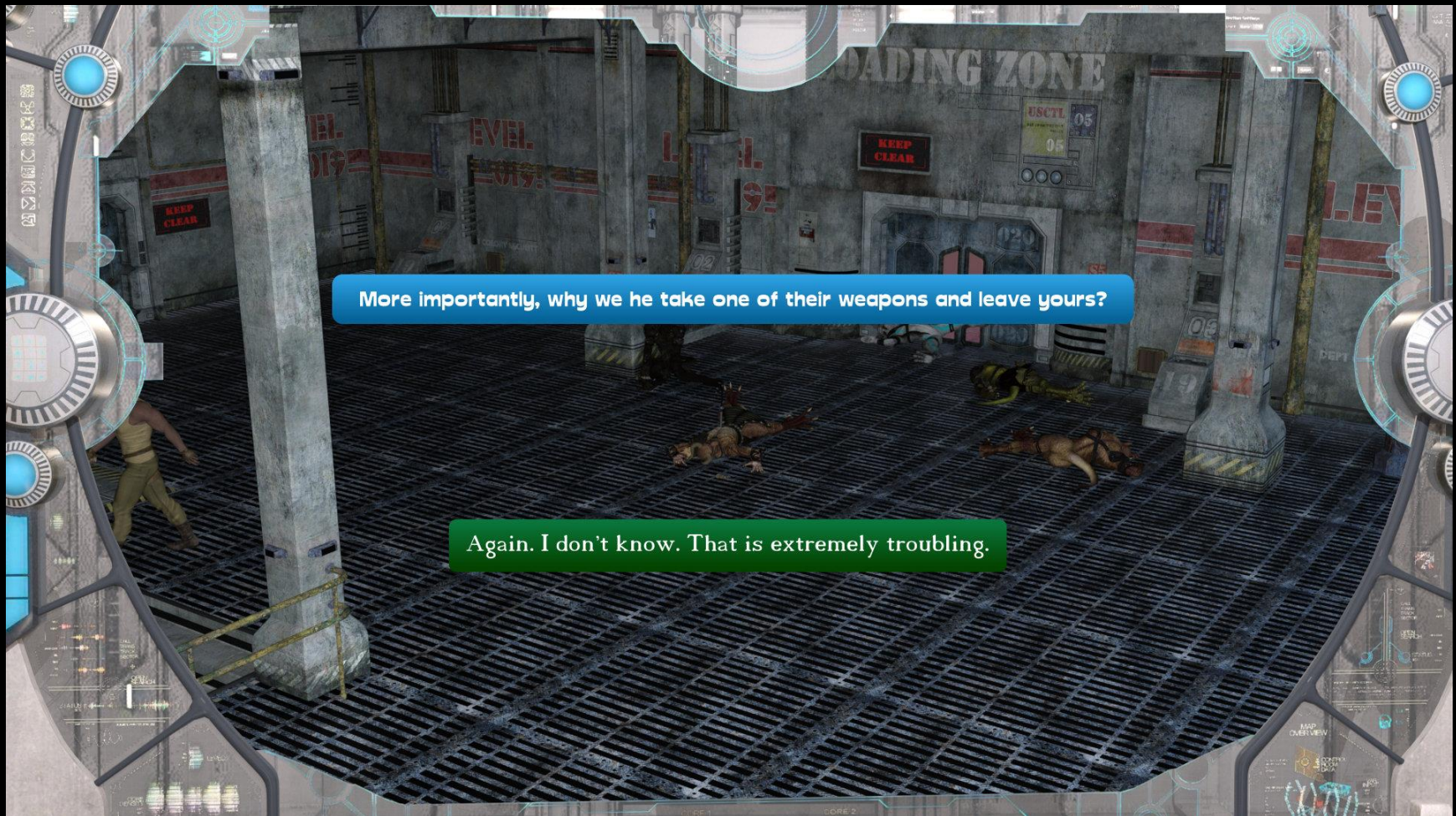




Who is this guy?

I have no idea.

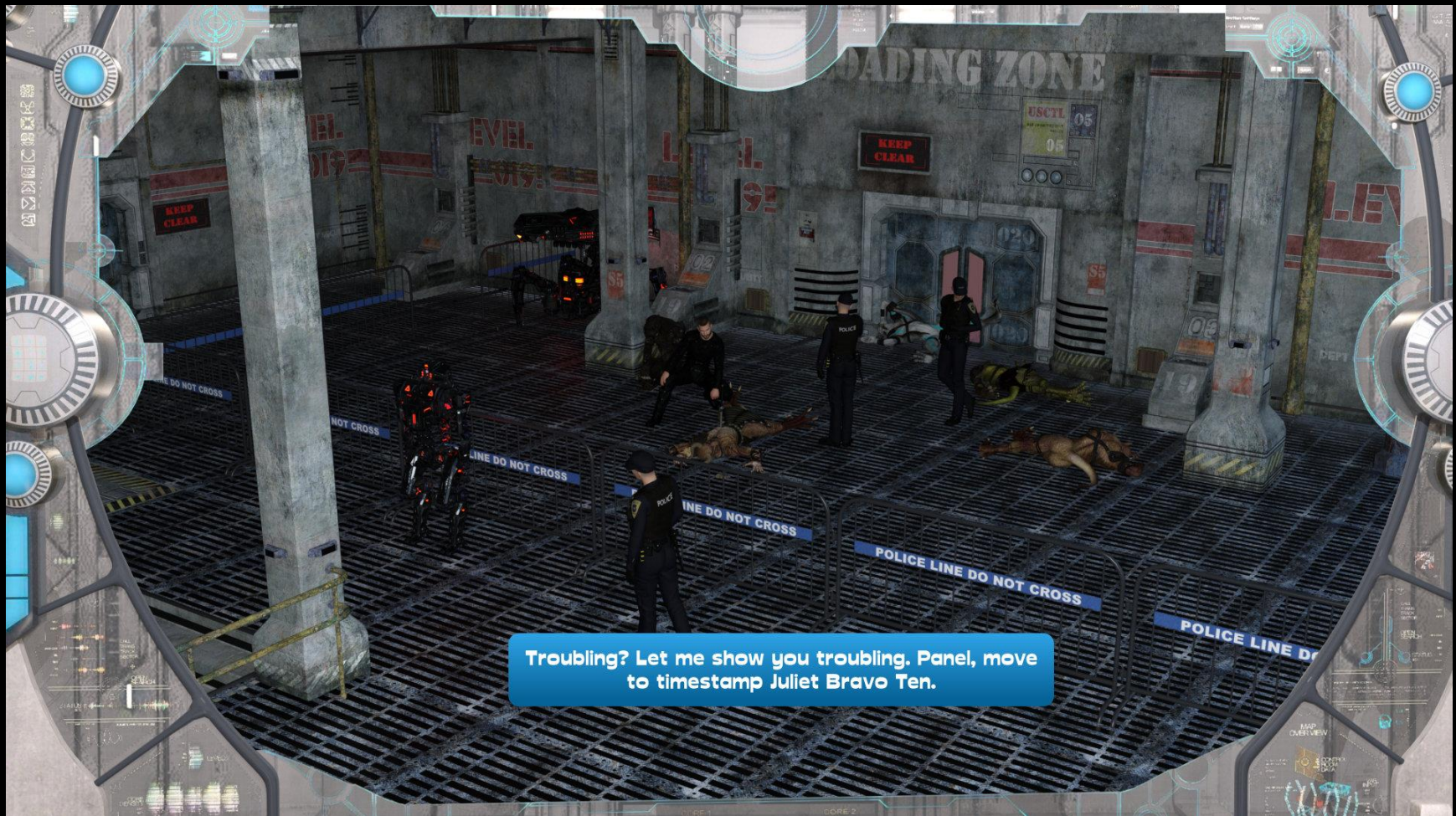




More importantly, why we he take one of their weapons and leave yours?

Again. I don't know. That is extremely troubling.





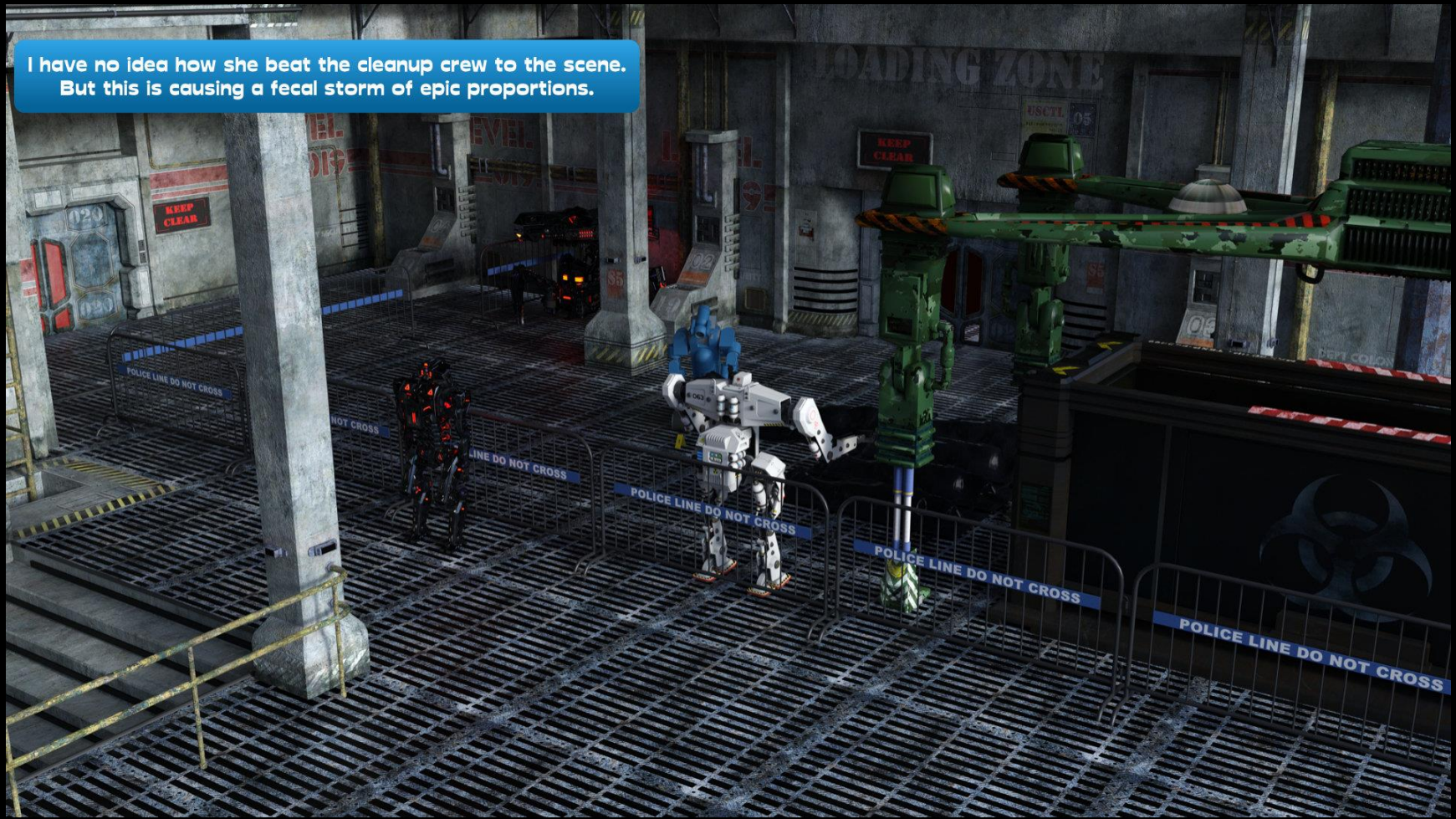




This made it on to the Six O'Clock news.



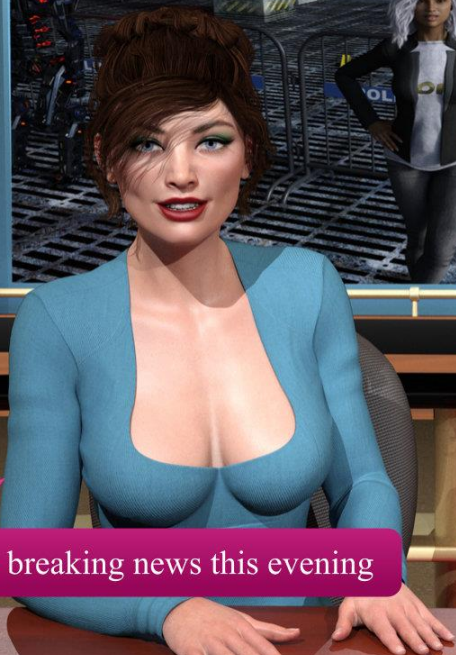
I have no idea how she beat the cleanup crew to the scene.  
But this is causing a fecal storm of epic proportions.







There is a crime scene in the Colony Security Warehouse in central New Angeles



We have breaking news this evening

Breaking News

Murder in Colony Security Warehouse? At least 5 dead. GBI: "No Comment"

Tiffany Calais on scene

itics: Mayor Gonzolas downplays rumors of devil cult occupying subways - "The old subway is mostly collapsed no large group is occu 06-15-02 6:02 PM







There are still 5 bodies on the scene being guarded by GBI robots. Tiffany Calais is on the scene with more. Tiffany?

Breaking News

Colony Security Warehouse: 5 dead. Tiffany Calais: "Strange shapes in body bags" Tiffany Calais on scene

no large group is occupying the location." "We send patrols frequently to maintain public safety." | Sports | MLB | BOS 15 LAD 0 - NYY 06-15-02 6:03 PM





Thank you Jane; As you can see here, Police have left the scene and it is now guarded by these military grade security 'bots.

Fortunately, they appear to be programmed to only protect inside the perimeter. As you can see there appear to be 5 bodies here inside body bags. Though, I would not call the shapes human.

As we know cosmetic cyber modifications have become popular in some circles. Particularly in the various subcultures.

If the shapes of these bags are any indication, these would be among the most extreme modifications to date. Rumors are circulating that the "Demon" cult said to be occupying the old subway, may be having such modifications. Although how they got here, and who killed them, remains a mystery. Michelle?

Breaking News

Colony Security Warehouse: 5 dead. Tiffany Calais: "Strange shapes in body bags"

Tiffany Calais on scene

LAD 0 - NYY 8 NYM 2 - TB 2 CHC 0 | International: Japanese officials downplay reported appearance of "Godzilla" citing the report as 06-15-02 6:03 PM







This appears to support the stories that these demon worshipers may be involved in things both violent and clandestine. No official word from authorities is available.



Thank you Tiffany. I do not know what is more alarming, the murders, or the fact that the Cultists may operating here inside the city.

While we don't have any more details, the Eyewitness 13 team will continue to follow this story. Our coverage will continue after a word from our sponsors.

Breaking News

Colony Security Warehouse: Tiffany Calais: "Hazmat team on way to scene"

Tiffany Calais on scene citing the report as "Preposterous" and noting that "There is no way Godzilla would fit in the south Tokyo subway." Still unsubstantiated 06-15-02 6:04 PM

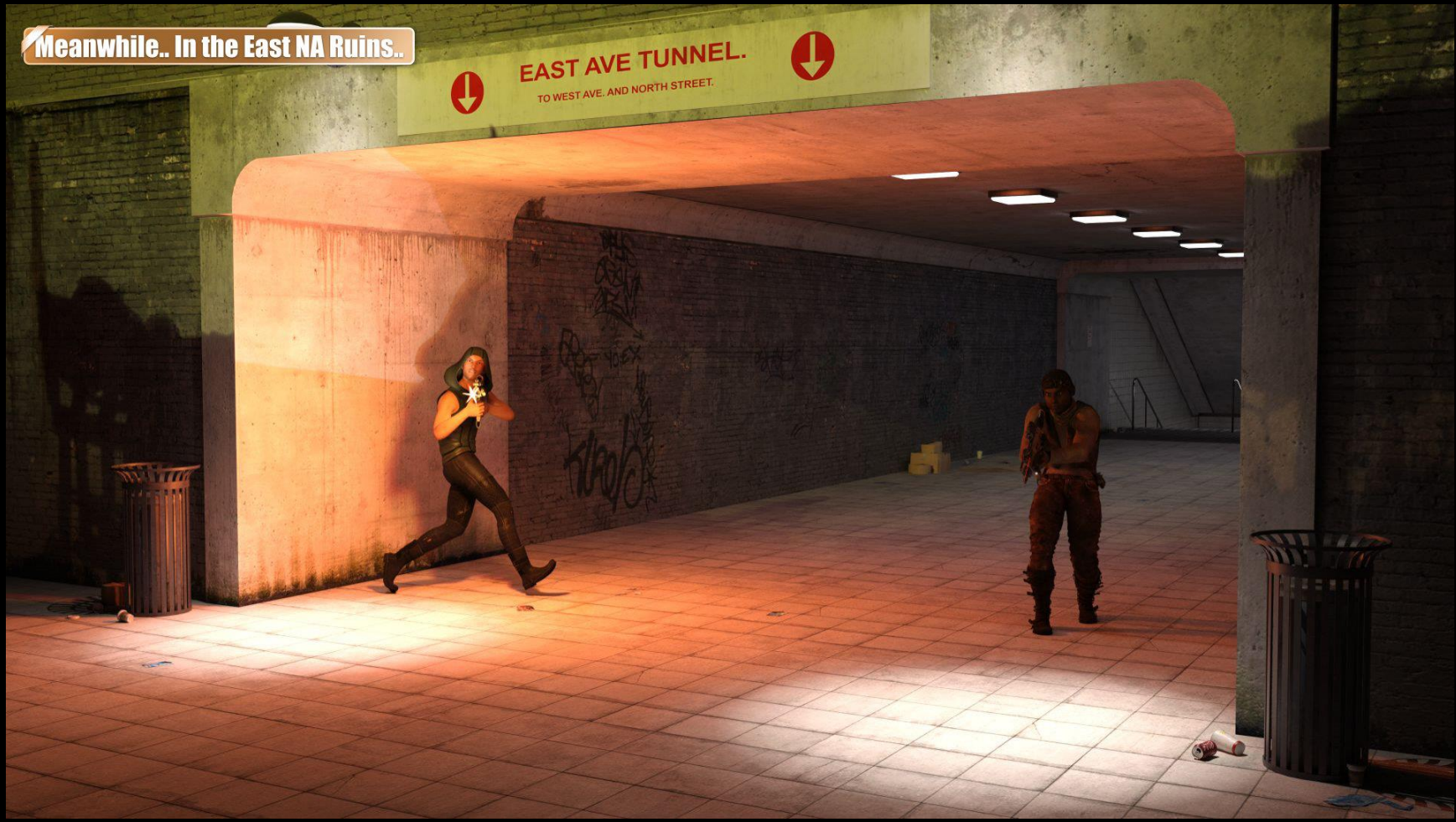




Meanwhile.. In the East NA Ruins..



EAST AVE TUNNEL.  
TO WEST AVE. AND NORTH STREET.







Gunfire. It has started.







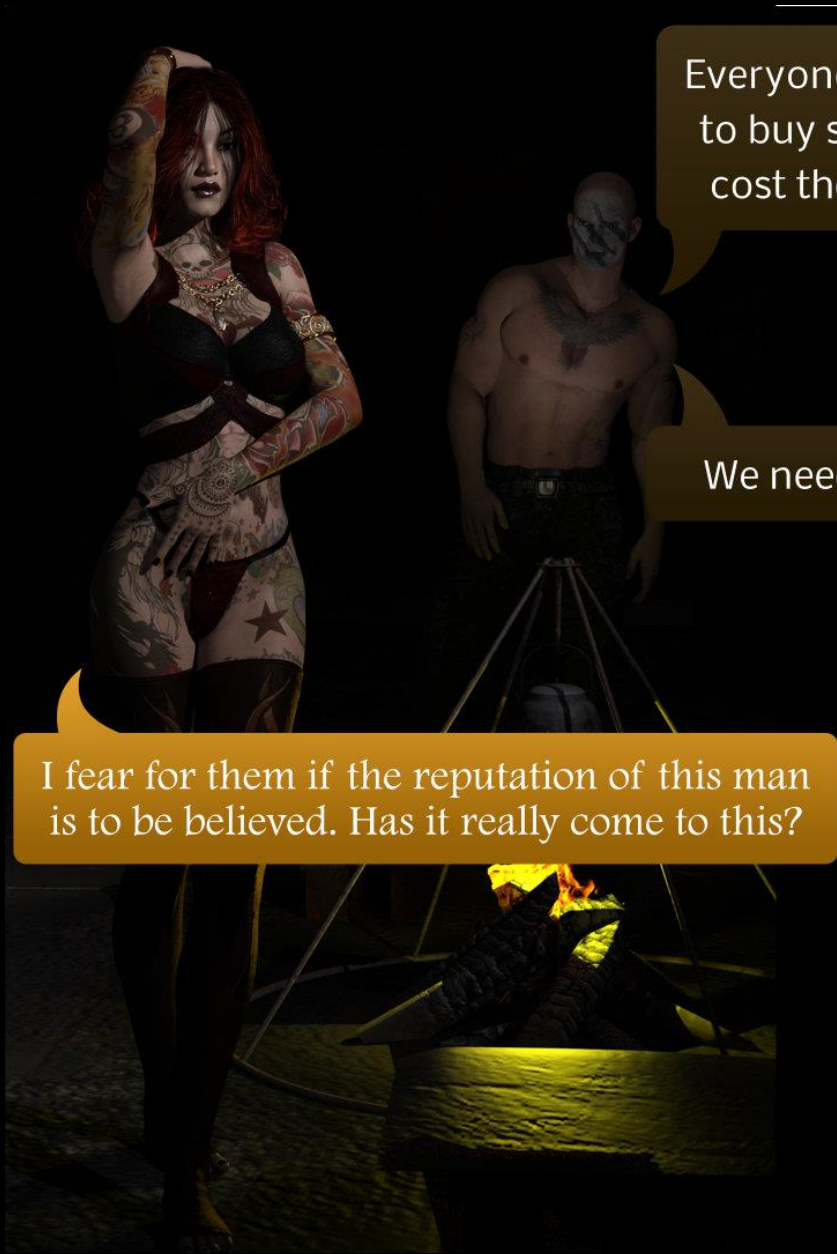


It is as he predicted. Is everyone away?







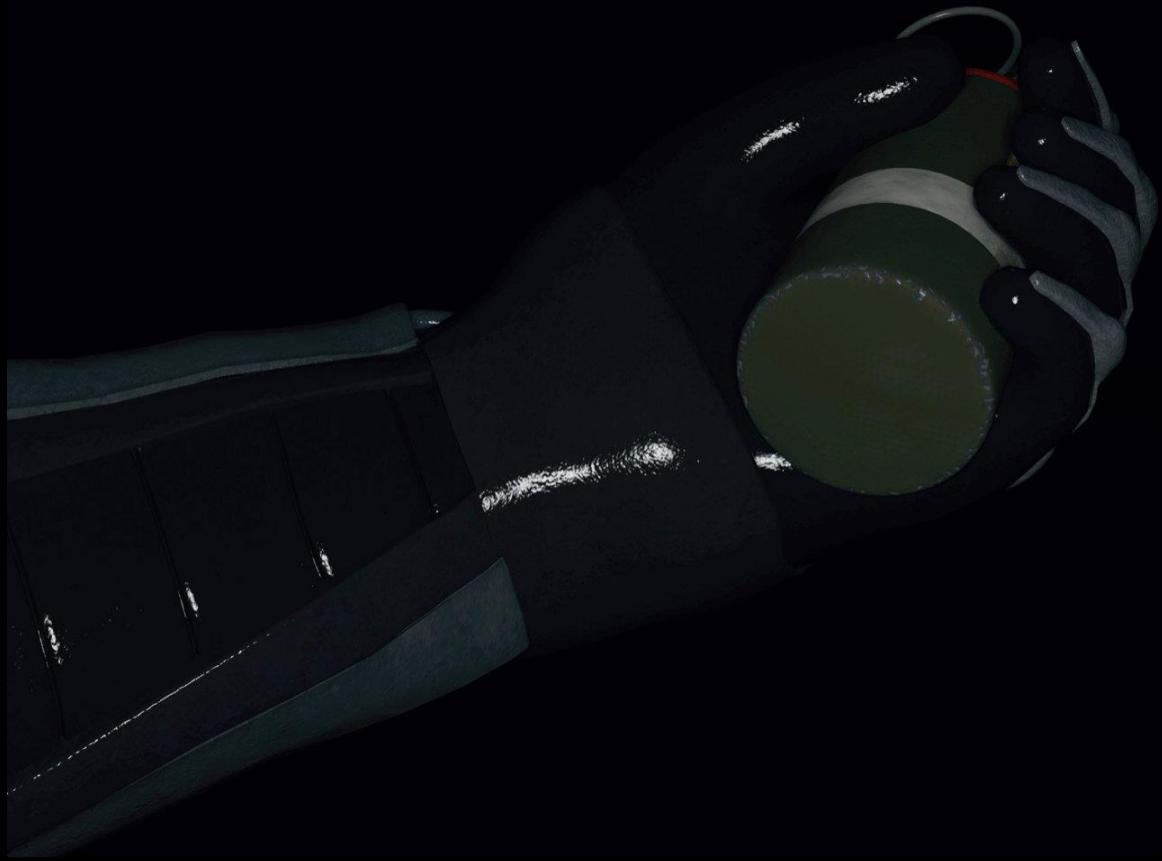


Everyone is out. Gunter and Jo-Jo are trying to buy some more time. I hope it does not cost them their lives. They are good men.

We need to go. We can discuss that later.

I fear for them if the reputation of this man is to be believed. Has it really come to this?













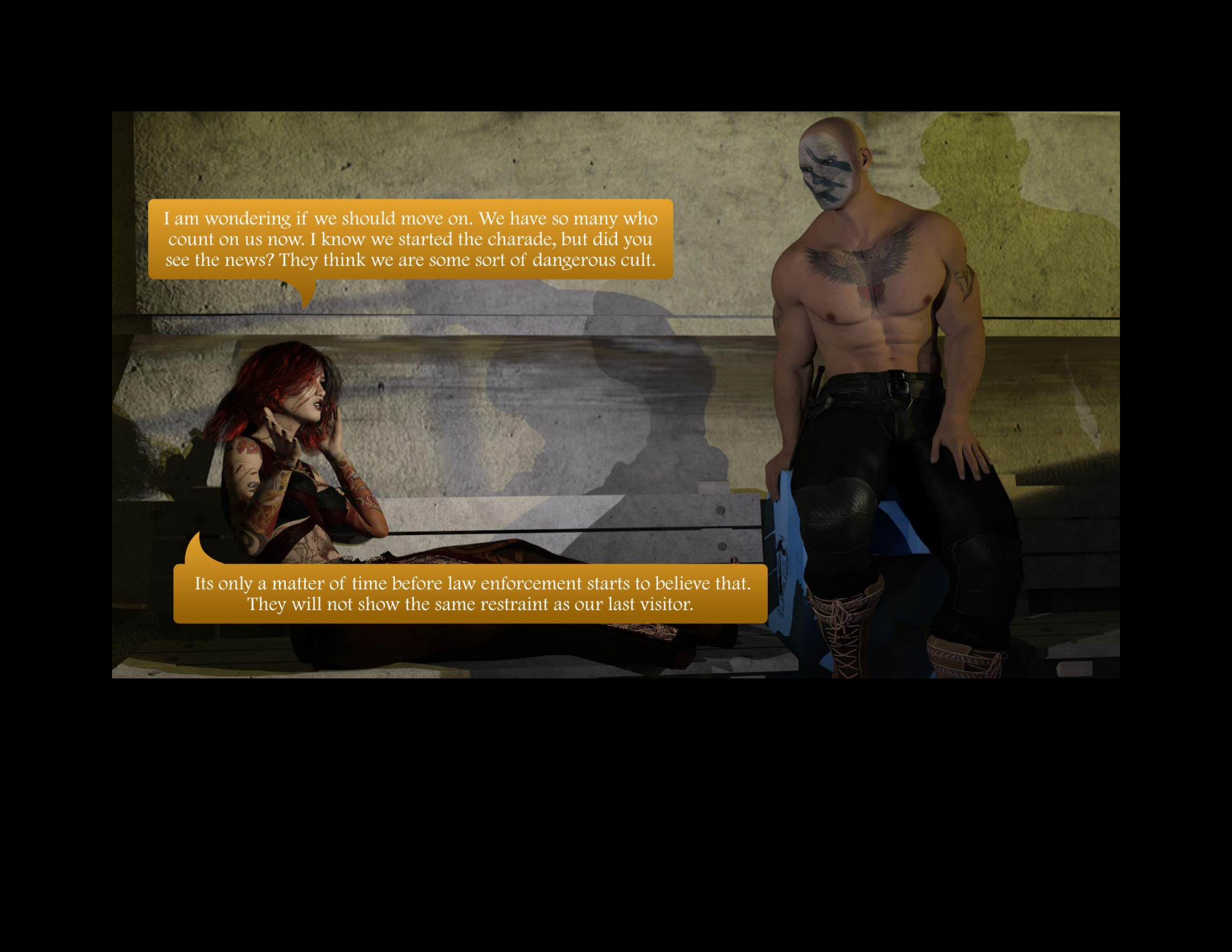




Jo and Gunter are unharmed. Thankfully, I am curious as to why the “ruthless hunter” chose mercy even though faced with deadly weapons.

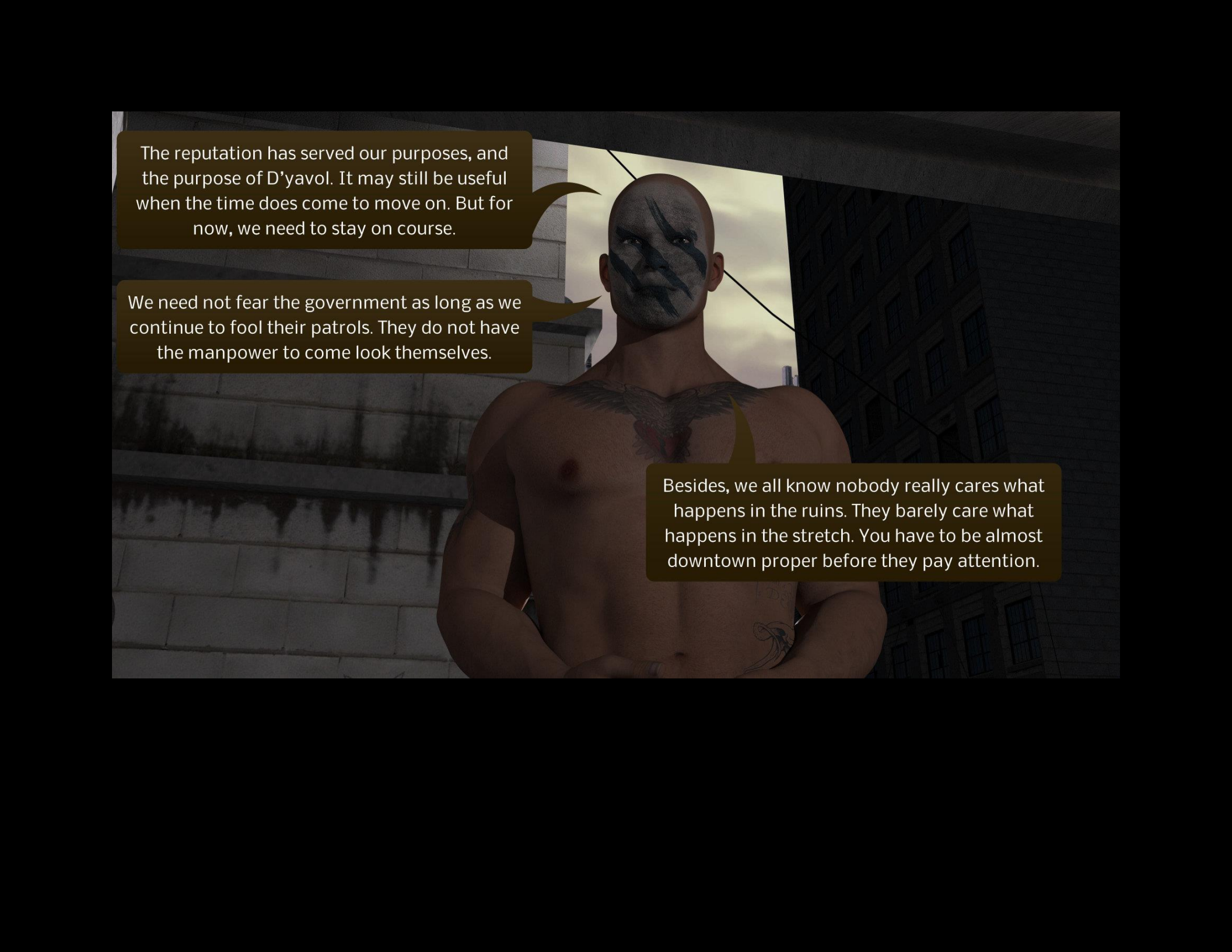
I don't think that matters. He was there, and is clearly dangerous, as D'yavol predicted. The only thing I wonder about is why he didn't go looking for our “ally.” He went straight to the scaled ones lair, and then disappeared into the north tunnels. Completely the wrong way.





I am wondering if we should move on. We have so many who count on us now. I know we started the charade, but did you see the news? They think we are some sort of dangerous cult.

Its only a matter of time before law enforcement starts to believe that. They will not show the same restraint as our last visitor.

A muscular man with a shaved head, wearing a black and white face paint design on his face, and a large tattoo of an eagle on his chest. He is standing in front of a building with a grid-like facade. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn.

The reputation has served our purposes, and the purpose of D'yavol. It may still be useful when the time does come to move on. But for now, we need to stay on course.

We need not fear the government as long as we continue to fool their patrols. They do not have the manpower to come look themselves.

Besides, we all know nobody really cares what happens in the ruins. They barely care what happens in the stretch. You have to be almost downtown proper before they pay attention.





I will have to go discuss this with our patron. He will want a report.

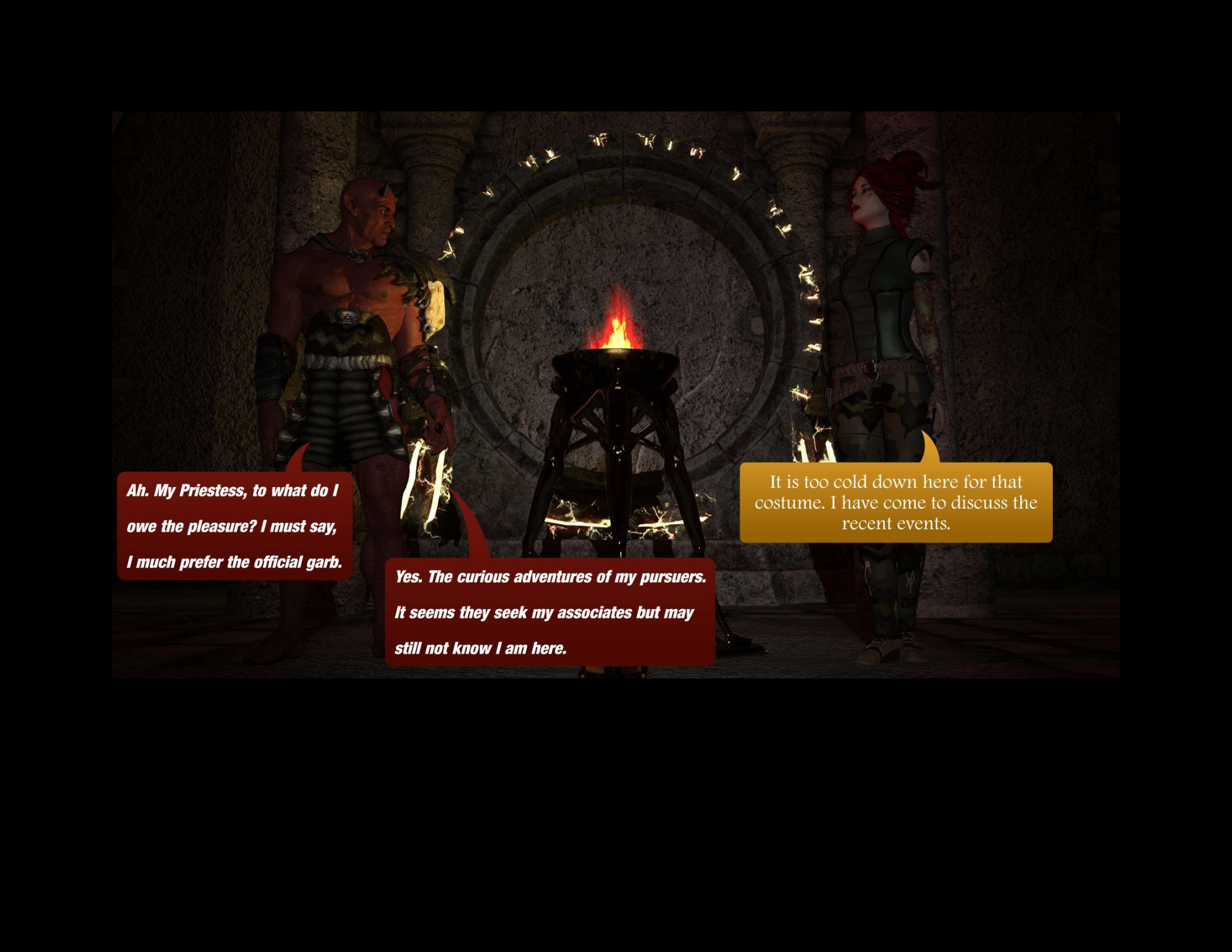
You know he hates to be called that.

We should get going though. It is dangerous to be above ground after dark.

Yes. Maybe D'yavol will have more insights.

I do not care what he likes to be called. I care only for our people and our cause. And you.

He will discard us as soon as he has what he wants. But for now, he is useful; and his information, however he gets it, is good.



*Ah. My Priestess, to what do I owe the pleasure? I must say, I much prefer the official garb.*

*Yes. The curious adventures of my pursuers. It seems they seek my associates but may still not know I am here.*

It is too cold down here for that costume. I have come to discuss the recent events.



*But we cannot underestimate them. I have been close to completion before only to have many years of work destroyed. They have many advantages.*





*Let us not forget they are the denizens of the ivory towers. Who hold all the power and wealth.*





*They decide who gets the crumbs.*

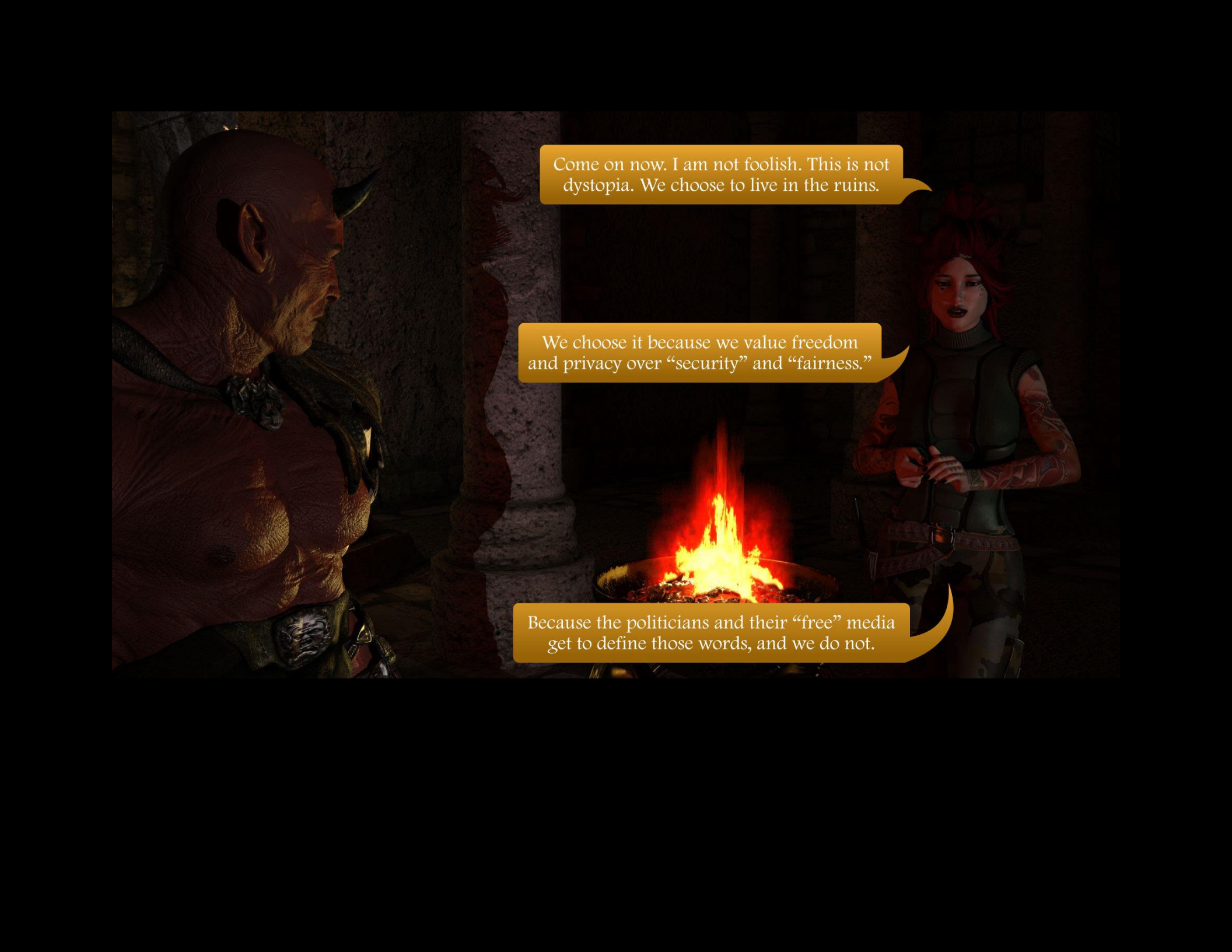




*And who gets nothing at all.*







Come on now. I am not foolish. This is not dystopia. We choose to live in the ruins.

We choose it because we value freedom and privacy over “security” and “fairness.”

Because the politicians and their “free” media get to define those words, and we do not.



*Ha ha ha.. Of Course. Nonetheless, here we are, both relying on each other to provide a chance for a better life for our respective peoples.*

*A goal toward which I have been working for years beyond your imagining.*

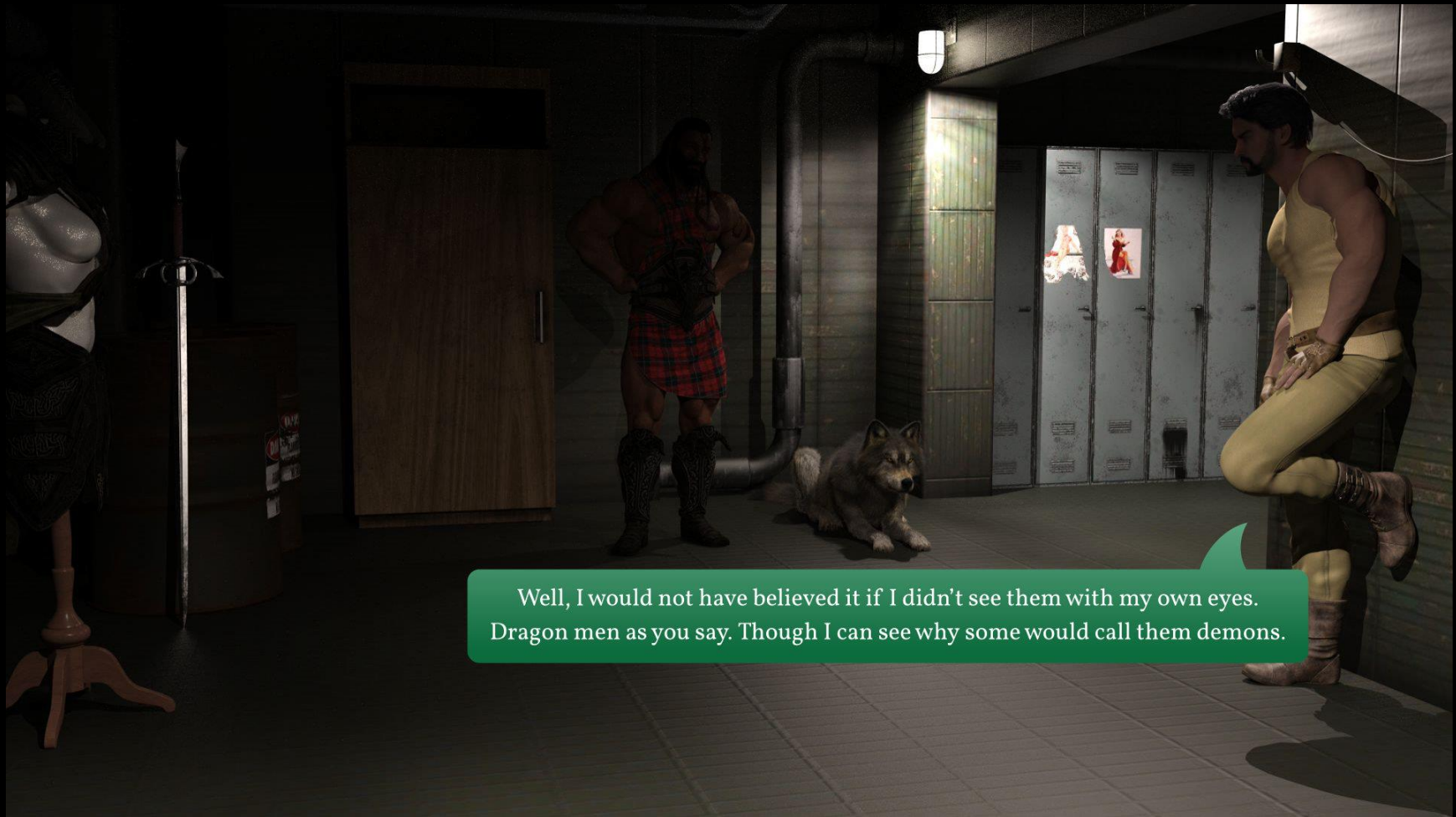




*And I will not be stopped this time. Not by the Rangers or the GBI or compassion for our adversaries. They will not show any to you, despite the apparent restraint in this one case.*

*We are very close now. We have been able to predict the actions of those forces. It is this new player that has me worried. If his reputation is to be believed we will need to be very careful indeed.*

You know we are committed to this alliance. I just wonder how much we have to fear from the government as long as we continue to stay out of their way.



Well, I would not have believed it if I didn't see them with my own eyes.  
Dragon men as you say. Though I can see why some would call them demons.





INDEED. IT IS A STRANGE TALE I HAVE  
TOLD YOU. BUT I SWEAR IT IS TRUE.

Well, I would not have believed it if I didn't see them with my own eyes.  
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INDEED. IT IS A STRANGE TALE I HAVE TOLD YOU. BUT I SWEAR IT IS TRUE.

Well, I would not have believed it if I didn't see them with my own eyes. Dragon men as you say. Though I can see why some would call them demons.

It would seem. You are definitely unlike anyone I have met. It is not so hard to believe your tale. We knew we were not the only life in the universe. It isn't that much of a stretch to believe there is more than one.





I have to ask. Who is the girl?

SHE IS CALLED RANA. SHE WAS  
LOST IN THE NORTH TUNNELS.

Lost? In the north tunnels?

PERHAPS CAPTIVE IS A BETTER TERM.  
BULLIWYFE FOUND HER WHILE HUNTING.

You let the wolf hunt alone  
in the north tunnels?



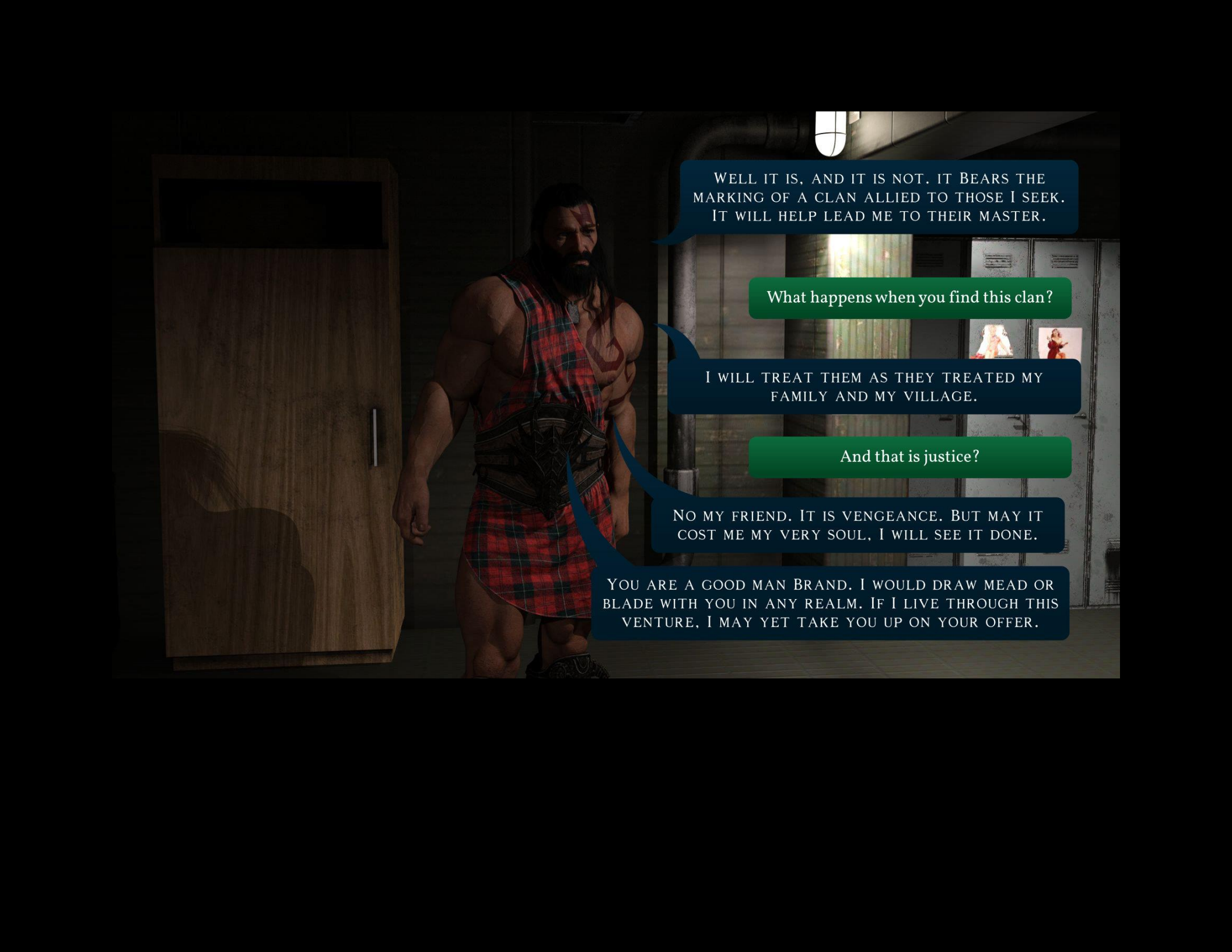
I NEVER SAID HE WAS ALONE. I CAN'T STAY HERE  
IN THIS PLACE ALL THE TIME. I NEED FRESH AIR.

Fresh air? In the north tunnels? That is the worst way to get to fresh air. Hah.  
Well, I won't waste my breath telling you to be careful. I would have liked to  
see the faces of those gang bangers when you and Bulliwyfe rolled in.

So. The weapon. Is it what you expected?

THEY WERE CERTAINLY NOT EXPECTING US, THAT IS  
FOR SURE. THEY WON'T BE BOTHERING ANYONE ELSE.





WELL IT IS, AND IT IS NOT. IT BEARS THE MARKING OF A CLAN ALLIED TO THOSE I SEEK. IT WILL HELP LEAD ME TO THEIR MASTER.

What happens when you find this clan?

I WILL TREAT THEM AS THEY TREATED MY FAMILY AND MY VILLAGE.

And that is justice?

NO MY FRIEND. IT IS VENGEANCE. BUT MAY IT COST ME MY VERY SOUL, I WILL SEE IT DONE.

YOU ARE A GOOD MAN BRAND. I WOULD DRAW MEAD OR BLADE WITH YOU IN ANY REALM. IF I LIVE THROUGH THIS VENTURE, I MAY YET TAKE YOU UP ON YOUR OFFER.

WHY HAVE YOU COME BEFORE ME? IT HAD BEST NOT BE TO TELL ME OF ANOTHER FAILURE!

