



Cover art by: Phroge

**NOVEMBER- ISSUE #12 [APOCALYPSE]**

# **ZINE CITY**

**'25**









### There Will Come Soft Rains

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,  
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,  
And wild plum trees in tremulous white,

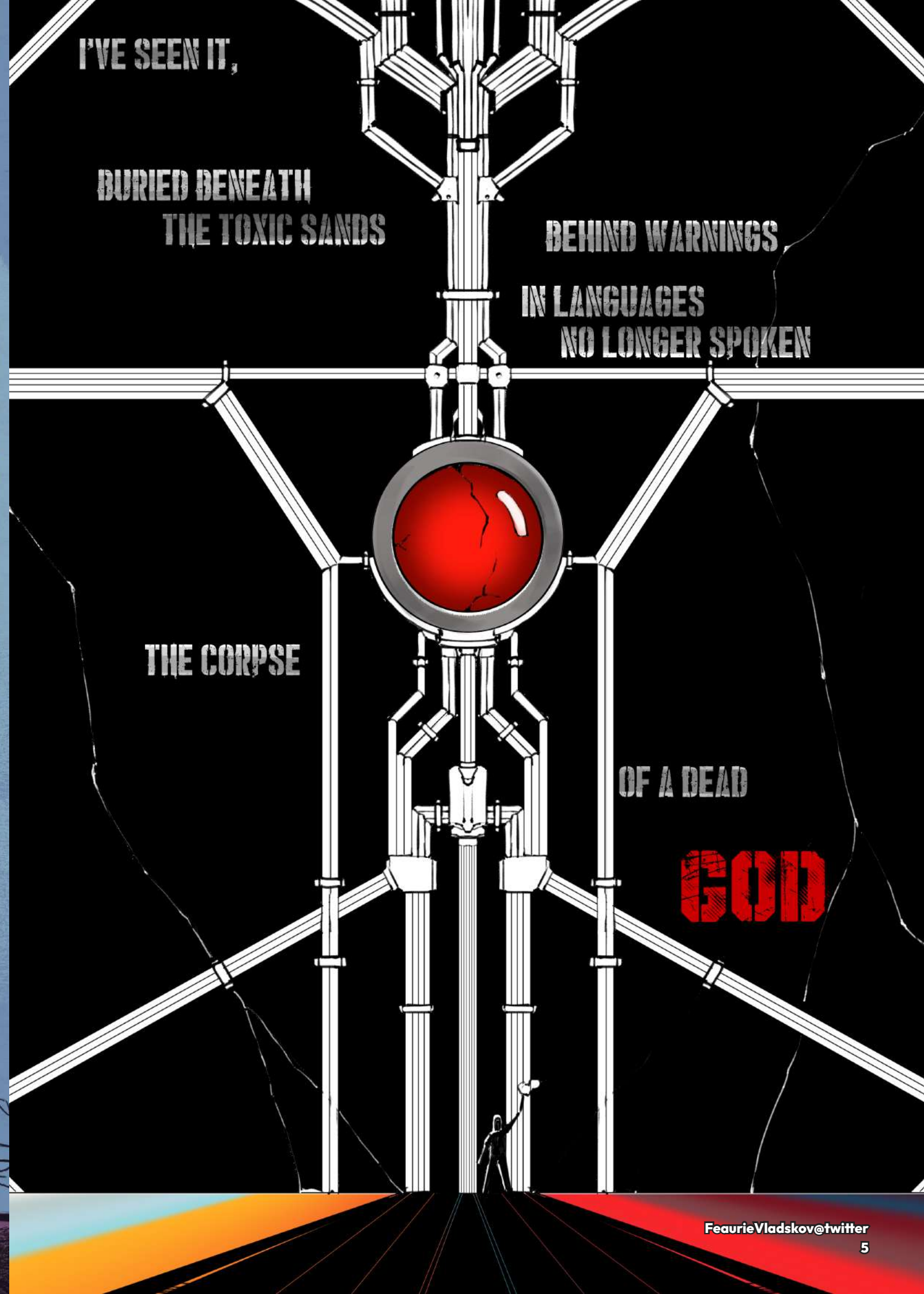
Robins will wear their feathery fire  
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one  
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree  
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,  
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

Sara Teasdale



I'VE SEEN IT,

BURIED BENEATH  
THE TOXIC SANDS

BEHIND WARNINGS  
IN LANGUAGES  
NO LONGER SPOKEN

THE CORPSE

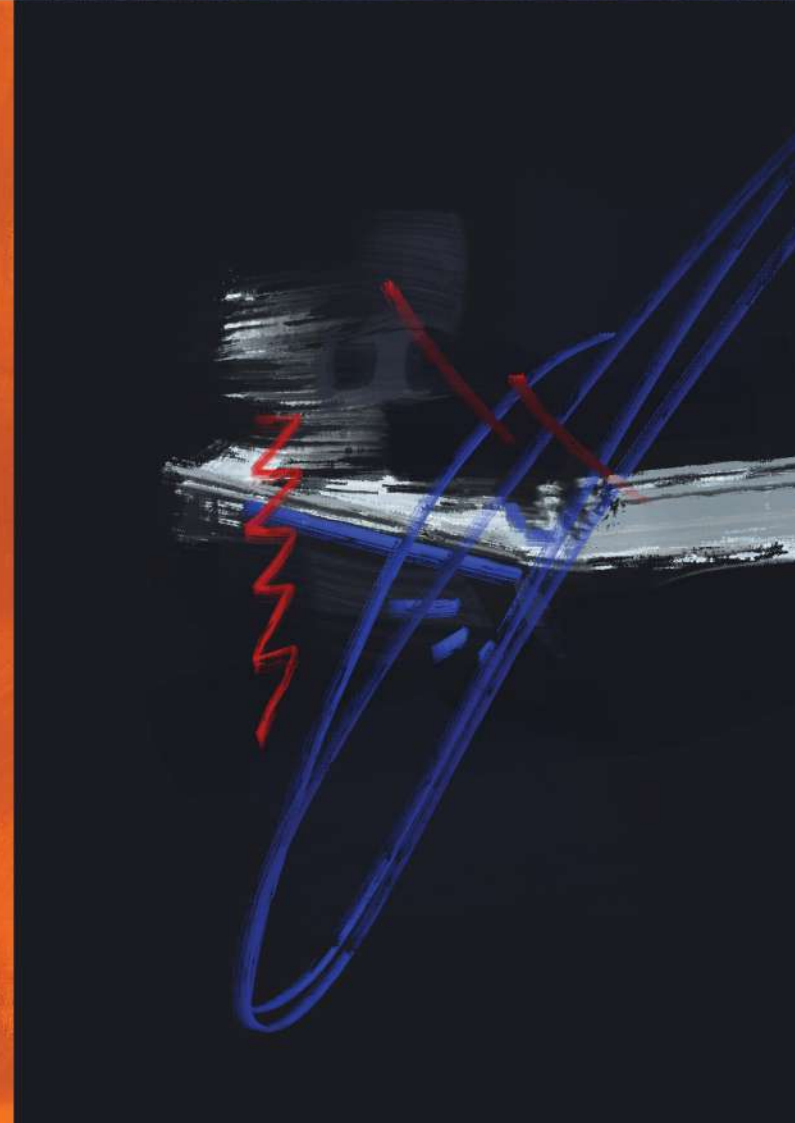
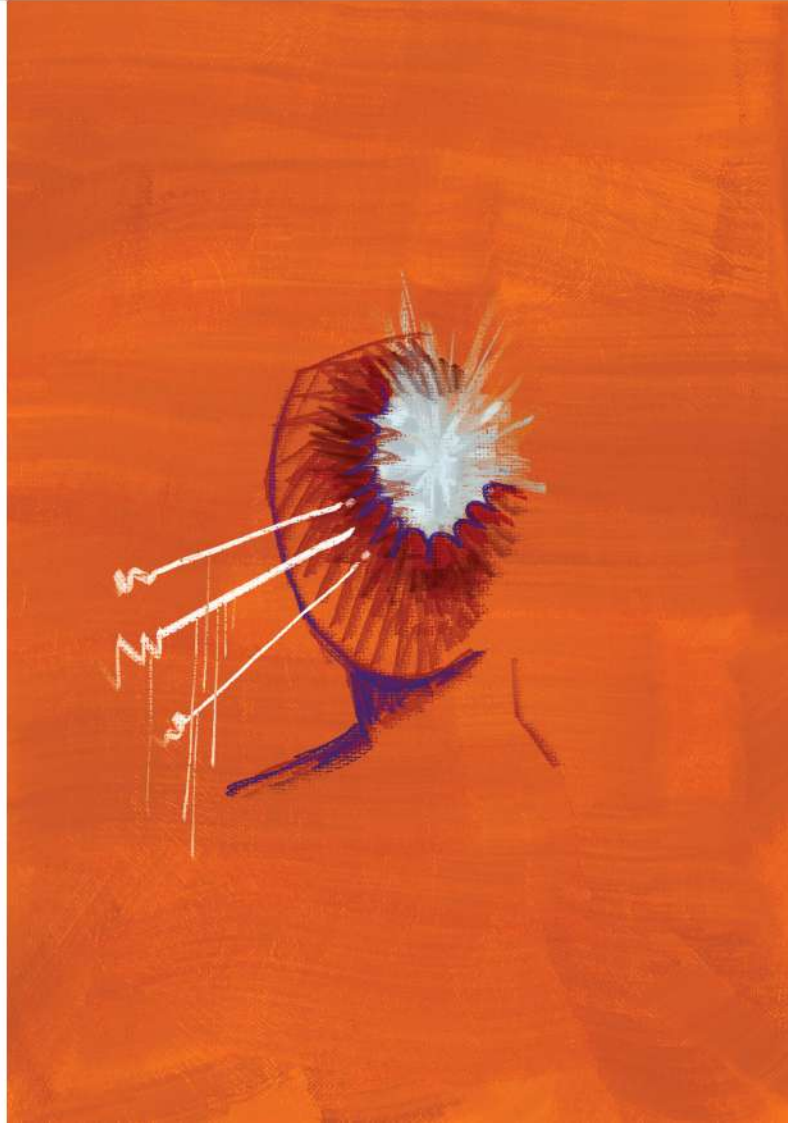
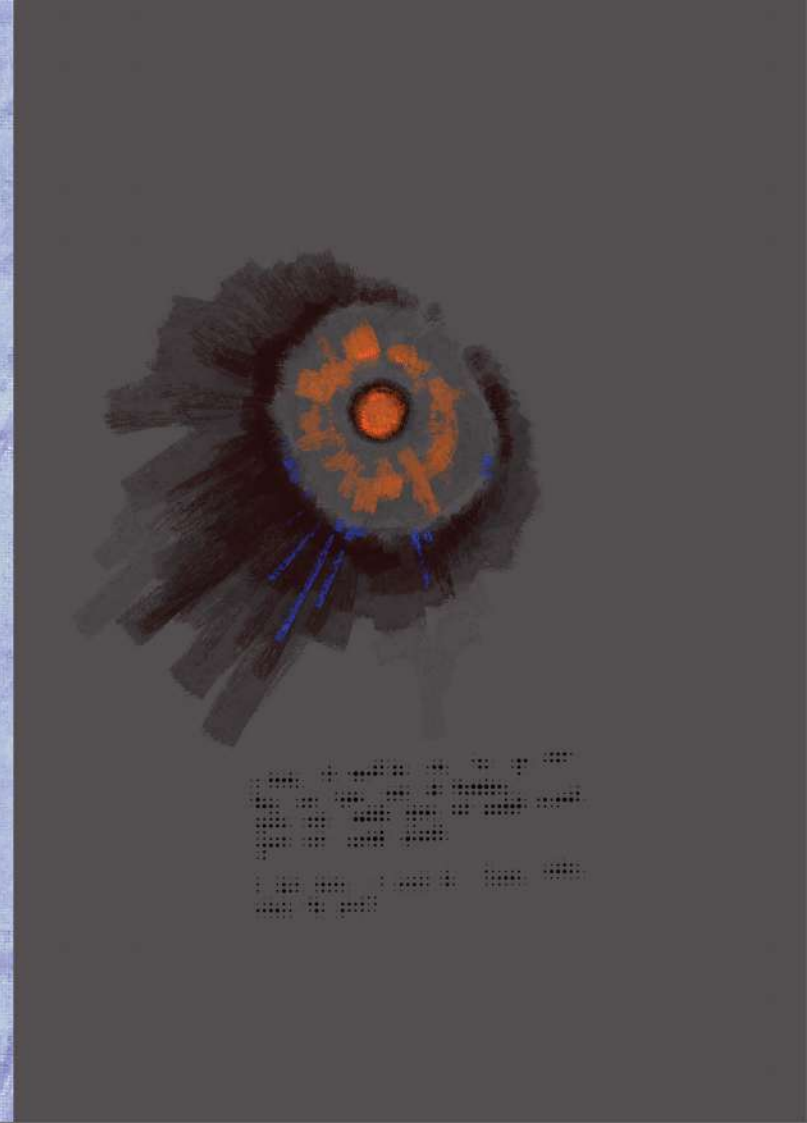
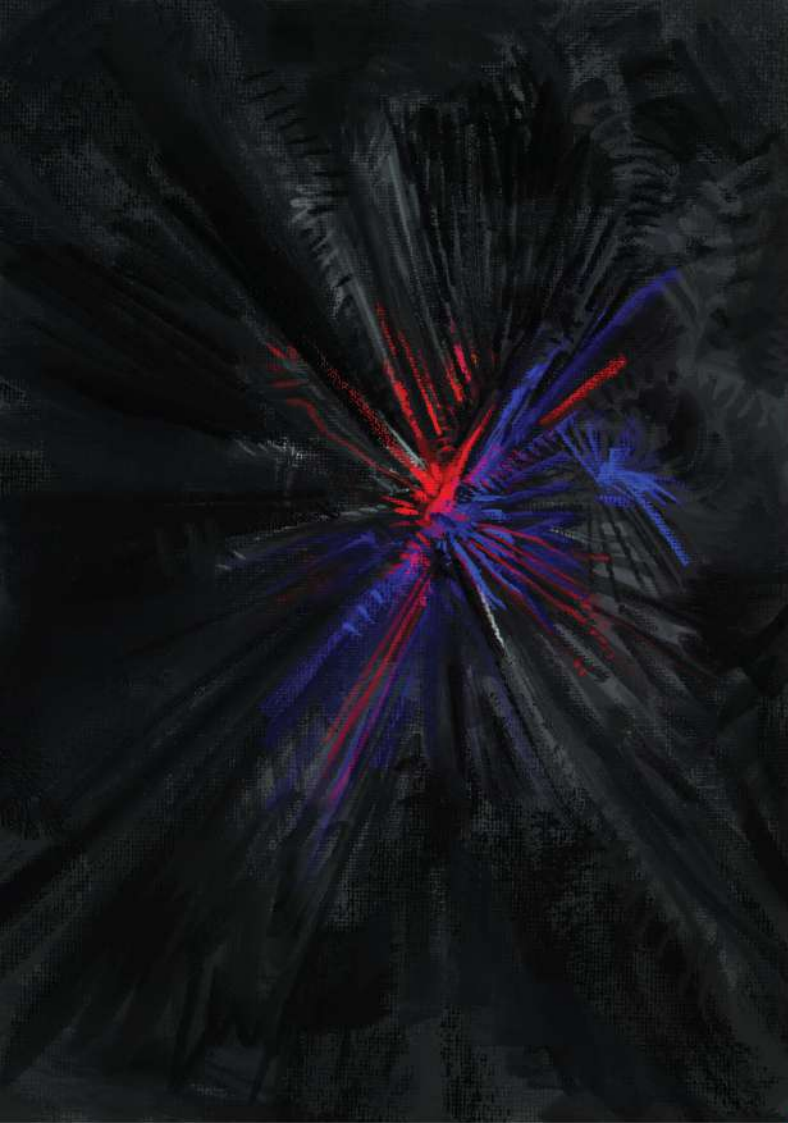
OF A DEAD

GOD



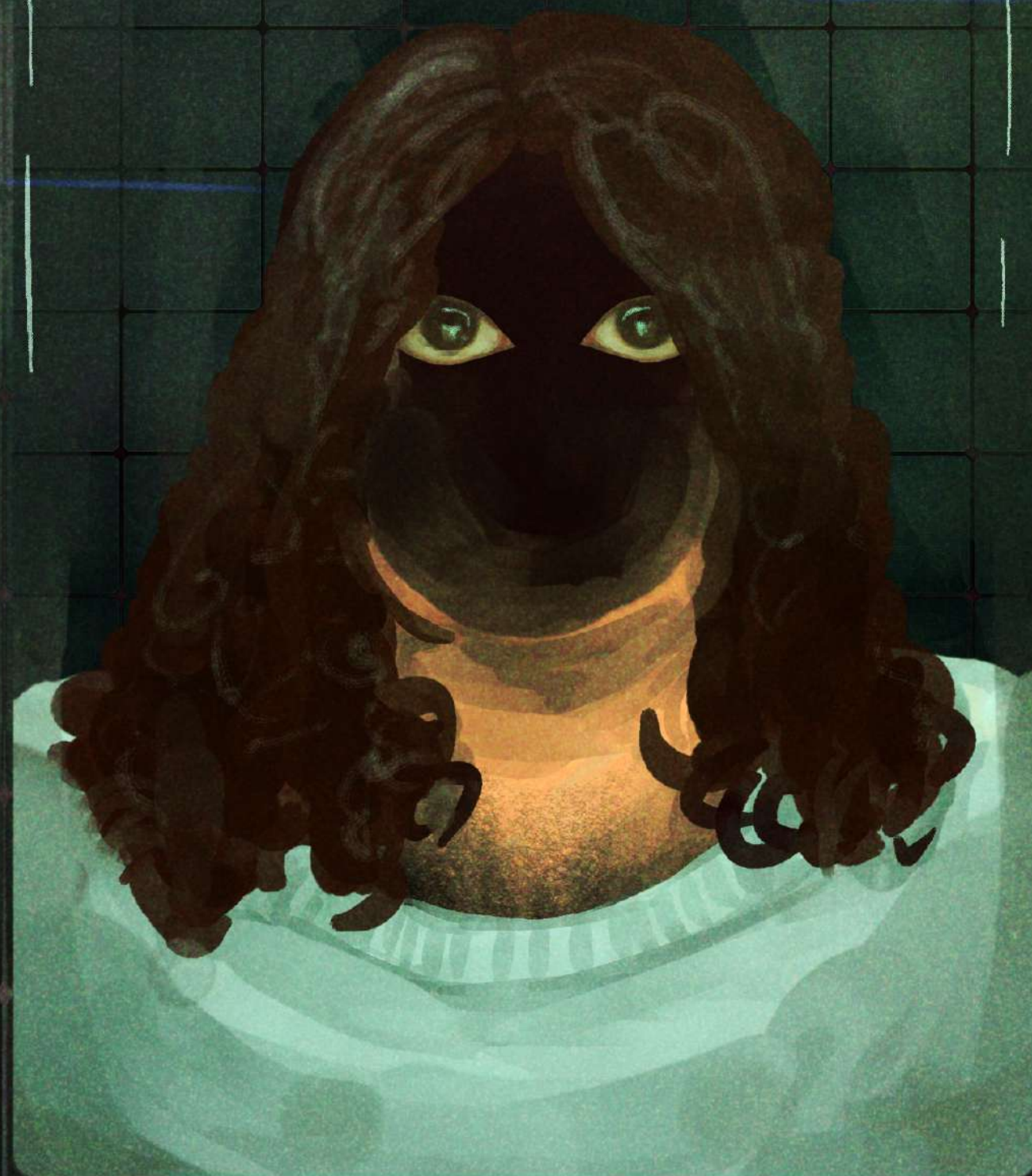








# Face Blind



## BLEEDING OUT IN THE SNOW

Romanticized





## Partisan fighter, Wars of the Ends-era

The Wars of the Ends were considered apocalyptic in scale to those who lived through it.

Ship scrap metal repurposed into crude chestplate

Most partisans wore scavenged military uniforms over their civilian clothing

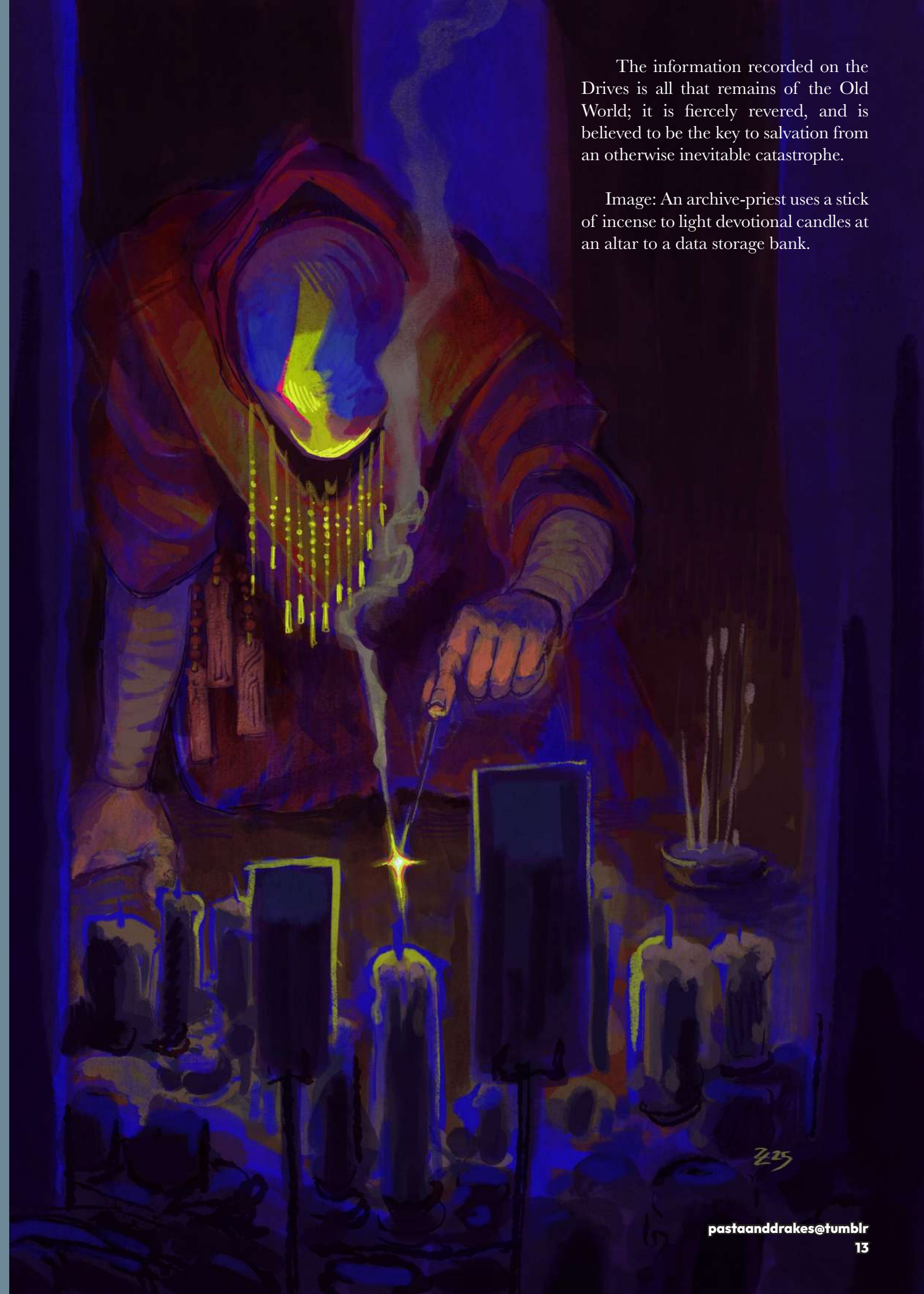
Tattoos denoting allegiance to separatist faction

Kalthoff repeating rifle



The information recorded on the Drives is all that remains of the Old World; it is fiercely revered, and is believed to be the key to salvation from an otherwise inevitable catastrophe.

Image: An archive-priest uses a stick of incense to light devotional candles at an altar to a data storage bank.





Priests file down a corridor within the monastery; one carries a small monitor as a token of his devotion to the Perpetual Record. He is higher ranked than the others - this is discernible from the animal teeth inlaid on his mask and large collection of hand carved rosary beads.

## BEHIND THE CHROME CURTAIN: A Rare Glimpse At The Archive-Priests of New Gansevoort

By DR. RHODES K. WHITHART

*Editor's Note: this article was originally published in last August's issue of the Lower Continent Theological History Journal. It has been reproduced here in its entirety, with permission from the author.*

I am not sure what to think when the priest motions me to move closer. My face reflects in distorted ripples on his featureless chrome mask. I stare into my own warped eyes as he begins to speak.

"And you wish to access the reliquary for what reason?" he asks. Despite his voice being slightly muffled by his mask, his intonation is calm and deliberate: the church's secretive operations will be nigh-impossible for me to study.

The walls of New Gansevoort are not the only thing that separate the city from the rest of the Known World. Following the Seven Years' War, the city-state has become increasingly isolated from its neighbors in the Lower Continent. On my way to the iron spire housing the archives, I felt like an intruder, invading a place where I did not belong. Even the feel of the cobblestones under my boots felt foreign to me.

I do not remember how the rest of the conversation goes. My reasoning, admittedly, is flimsy: I am a historian and writer for the Theological History Journal trying to access a sacred area from a religion I do not practice; I am an intruder by any other name. But the conversation somehow takes a turn for the better: having heard satisfactory reasoning from me, the priest relents. He gives me a terse nod that shakes the tassels hanging

off his red hood, like a parade horse rearing its head. He leads me down a dark and winding corridor lined with thick pipes and devotional icons. The walls are covered in a fresh coat of ochre paint that I can still smell faintly through the suffocating haze of incense.

Archaic safety symbols point to an "air-lock" that does not lead anywhere anymore (the door has been pried off the hinges to make way for a small altar). Attached to the wall next to it is a small box, one of its glass walls has been crudely shattered. I squint: a small sign instructs the reader to "break glass in case of emergency" - whatever emergency it refers to must have long passed. A cluster of small votive candles burns inside, casting dancing shadows upon myself and the priest as he leads me further down the seemingly endless hall.

The Holy Church of the Perpetual Record is arguably what New Gansevoort is best known for, besides its historic ties to the dragon-hunting trade. Like many other city-states of its size, New Gansevoort is built on the foundations of a crashed generation ship that once traversed the land above the sky. This fact, while merely a fun historical tidbit to the average resident of the Lower Continent, is a primary point of interest to the Journal (and by extension, myself); it is crucial to understanding the religions that

have spawned from it.

The ships' massive databanks are our only sources of information on the Old World (in contemporary parlance, Earth). Of all the data banks in the Known World, only three are not under the jurisdiction of a religious entity. I was involved in the information retrieval project of the largest known databank, located within the abandoned wreckage of the freighter *MV Alagád*. I have written more about my findings and the expedition in this past January's issue of the Journal.

Eventually, history-minded individuals formed archival guilds to ensure preservation of the databanks. These guilds, while at first academic in nature, shifted focus over the next five centuries to become religious orders. Time and spectacle wore down memory until protocols became rituals and fact became myth. Archivists were originally distinguished by an alphanumeric identification number in large electronic databases; this vestigially remains through some traditions within the Church. In giving one life to maintaining the Perpetual Record, one must give up their name (individuality comes second to maintaining the wellspring of collective human knowledge). I had nearly forgotten this until I tried to politely ask the priest his name - despite his face being completely obscured, I felt a scowl



of judgement fall on me all the same.

“A common mistake, but do not test the limits of your welcome, Dr. Whithart,” he had warned me.

It is important to understand how the hierarchy of archive-priests correlates to the concept of self. Initiates who have recently joined the Church wear a tasseled veil. As they advance in rank (provided that they do not crack under the pressure and leave), they don progressively larger veils, obscuring more of their face. This culminates in a rite of passage representing the complete rejection of one’s original identity. The fully initiated priest crafts a chrome mask that obscures the face; this is to be worn at all times in public. My impromptu (and somewhat reluctant) guide is evidently high-ranking, discernible to even a layman through his ornate mask and intricately engraved metal rosaries that catch the candlelight, shining like stars.

Rosaries are believed within the Church to hold immense spiritual power. While the precious data itself is stored in Old World drives using technology barely understood by science, its symbolic influence is given a tangible form through simple devotional items such as rosary beads, talisman planks, and assorted technological ephemera. These are believed to deepen spiritual connections to the data. A priest is involved in the creation of every single accessory on his person: between transcribing information and maintaining the databanks, he spends his downtime carving the beads and painting the talismans he wears. One of the main sources of funding for the Church is the sale of these beads; they are prized for their high level of craftsmanship and intricate patterns carved into their

surfaces. The population of New Gansevoort is nowhere near as devout as, but a general reverence and superstition regarding the old data is prevalent throughout the city, ensuring a steady stream of revenue. I have allocated a small amount of my research stipend to the purchase of rosary beads and talismans for study, which I will hopefully focus on in a future Journal article.

I am led through what seems like miles of hallways before we reach the reliquary. The ship’s labyrinthine floorplan has been left completely intact, and rooms are not placed where one would expect. We stop in front of a large set of wooden double doors; the steel walls have been cut away to accommodate its arcing silhouette. The priest walks in front of me, almost pushing me aside, and pulls open the door.

I smell the room before I see the inside. A cloud of incense rushes out of the door and I cough as I step in, myrrh and camphor overwhelming my senses. I squint, and can barely make out the outline of a seated figure in the dark room.

“Do not make eye contact with the corpse,” the priest whispers sharply. “Keep your head down!”

I have never seen a holy corpse in person before. Bodies of original residents of the generation ships were carefully preserved by priests and are now worshipped as religious icons, guardians of the data drives. They are notoriously difficult to see in person. To my knowledge, no one else in the Journal’s history has gotten this opportunity; I am exceedingly lucky.

I get a glimpse of the corpse in question before I quickly lower my

head in respect. To my shock, I see a skeleton arranged in a cross-legged sitting position. It is draped in red tasseled vestments much like an archive-priest, and a staggering amount of rosary cords hang around its bony neck. The oldest have a fine sheen of dust covering them, the reddish beads faded. Bits of gemstone and chrome cover the skull, with silver discs filling the empty eye sockets. A large golden halo hangs behind its head, glinting with reflected candlelight, dim and ethereal as the setting suns. The skeleton’s sternum and ribs have been removed to accommodate a large tube-screen nearly half a meter wide: it shows only static, the buzzing droning yet crisp. It casts an artificial white light that clashes with the warm tones of the rest of the room. I spot the wires neatly trailing out by the cushion the skeleton is seated on; they lead off the pedestal away into a dusty corner of the room.

The priest continues to whisper to me as he closes the door behind him. He produces a few sticks of incense and pushes them into my hand. “Kneel on the stool. Do not speak loudly in front of the corpse.”

I walk over to the velvet-cushioned stool and kneel, putting myself at eye level with the candles, offerings, and incense arranged around the skeleton’s feet. I see many fragments of Old World technology: smaller, lesser databanks (I recognize a few to be Universal Serial Bus drives and solid disks, which I have previously studied), batteries, and wires; the largest are encased in glass bells or plated with gold.

As per the priest’s instructions, I light my incense on a burning

candle, being careful not to put it out (“Do not extinguish the candles burning in the reliquary room,” he warns me). Finally, I carefully reach out and plant them upright in a burner. Delicate curlicues of smoke twist upward from the sticks

in mesmerizing loops and become lost in the thick darkness.

“I will lead you in reciting the Liturgy of the Record,” says the priest, head still bowed. “Do not leave the room without saying it.”

He patiently leads me through the prayer, pausing and letting me correct myself when I stumble over words. I have reproduced it in its entirety below.

*O! With the Universe as my witness,*

*bless the Old World, and what remains thereof!*

*Blessed be the Holy Drives, and blessed be the golden words*

*recorded therein, the irrefutable and constant truth, from the beginning of the Universe*

*to its destruction. I stand before you and bless you for your endless wisdom.*

*I look to you for guidance. Deliver us from the sins of our past*

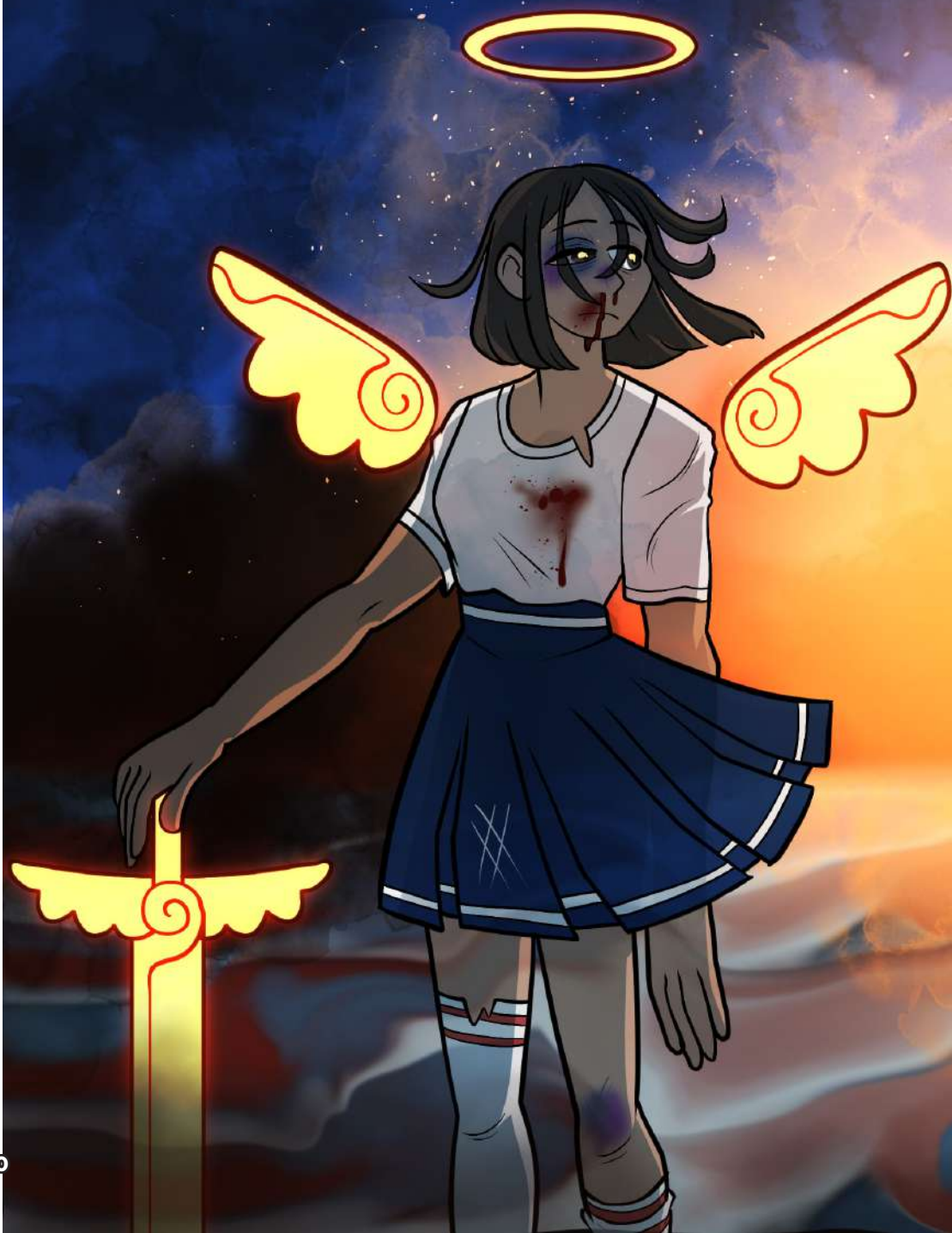
*and lead us into the shining future. Deliver us from our inevitable end. Amen.*







DO YOU STAND ALONE





# AT THE END OF IT ALL?





AROUND HIM  
HIS WORLD IS DYING  
HIS SPECIES ERASED

BUT RIGHT NOW,  
ALL HE KNOWS  
IS THAT HE IS BY HIS MAMA,  
AND HE LOVES HER,  
AND HE IS WARM

AS HE DRIFTS INTO AN  
ENDLESS SLEEP.





The sky  
misses  
you.



Be still. You  
will be whole  
Now. Forever.

All of this is  
for you. W%  
4E&9L\$O^  
\*Ve9Y0u...





You are Crestoleos the Compassionate, Bearer of Compassion and Benevolence and Faith and Forgiveness and Love.  
You will watch the sky weep for the first time alongside your sisters for one final night.

You are Menelaus the Strong, Bearer of Strength and Pride and Justice and Courage and Persistence.  
You will stand alone at the end of the world, watching as reason crumbles to dust.

You are Aesophros the Wise, Bearer of Wisdom and Truth and Honesty and Ambition and Understanding.  
You will learn to love and learn to be loved, falling into the arms of a kinder nothingness.

and the toughest part  
is that we both know

what happened to you

why you're out  
on your own

In its first 'active' role, the monster is a Predator.

It wanders menacingly or treacherously through the world, seeking to force or trick people into its power.  
It 'walketh about seeking whom it may devour', spreading fear and destruction, and casting a shadow wherever its influence is felt.

The monster's second, more 'passive' role is as Holdfast.

It sits in or near its lair, usually jealously guarding the 'treasure' or 'princess' it has won into its clutches.  
It is in this role a keeper and a hoarder, broody, suspicious, threatening destruction to all who come near.

When its guardianship is in any way challenged, the monster enters its third role as Avenger.

It lashes out viciously, stirring from its lair, bent on pursuit and revenge.



oh, what if you're lonely  
and you know i am too  
and i get the chance to say

"merry christmas,"



"i miss you"

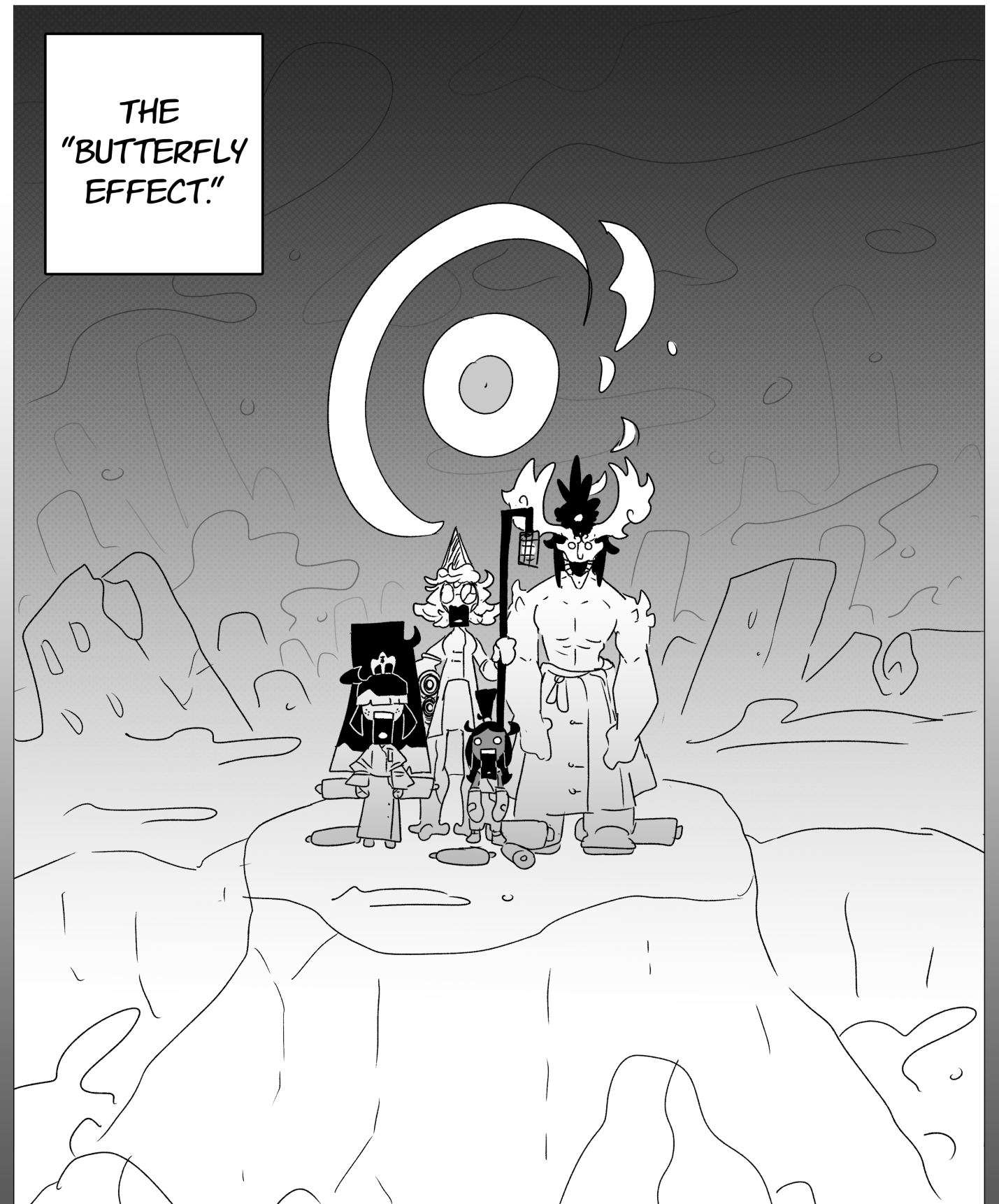




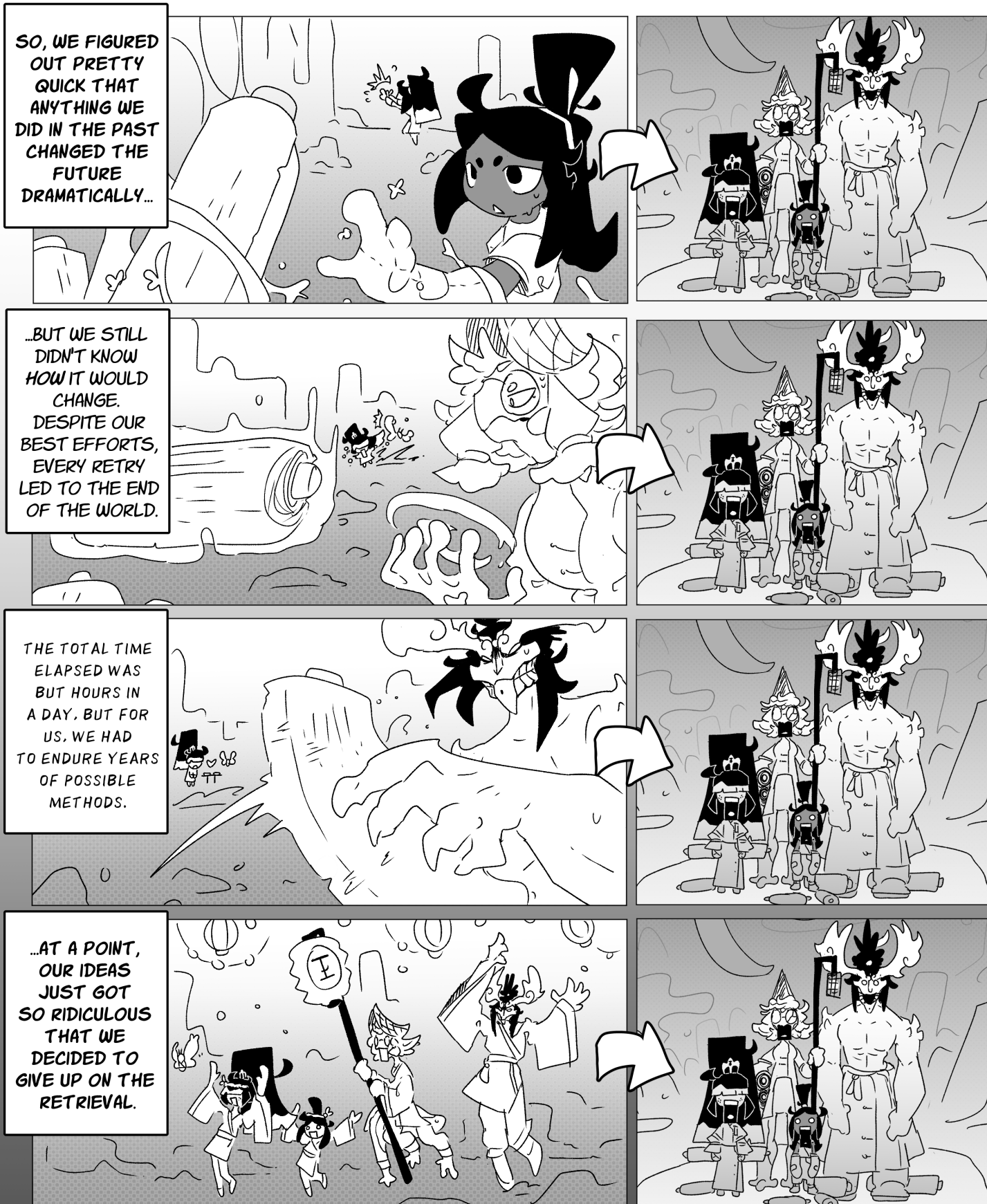
# MACHINATE MINIS: "TIME TRAVEL"



## THE "BUTTERFLY EFFECT."

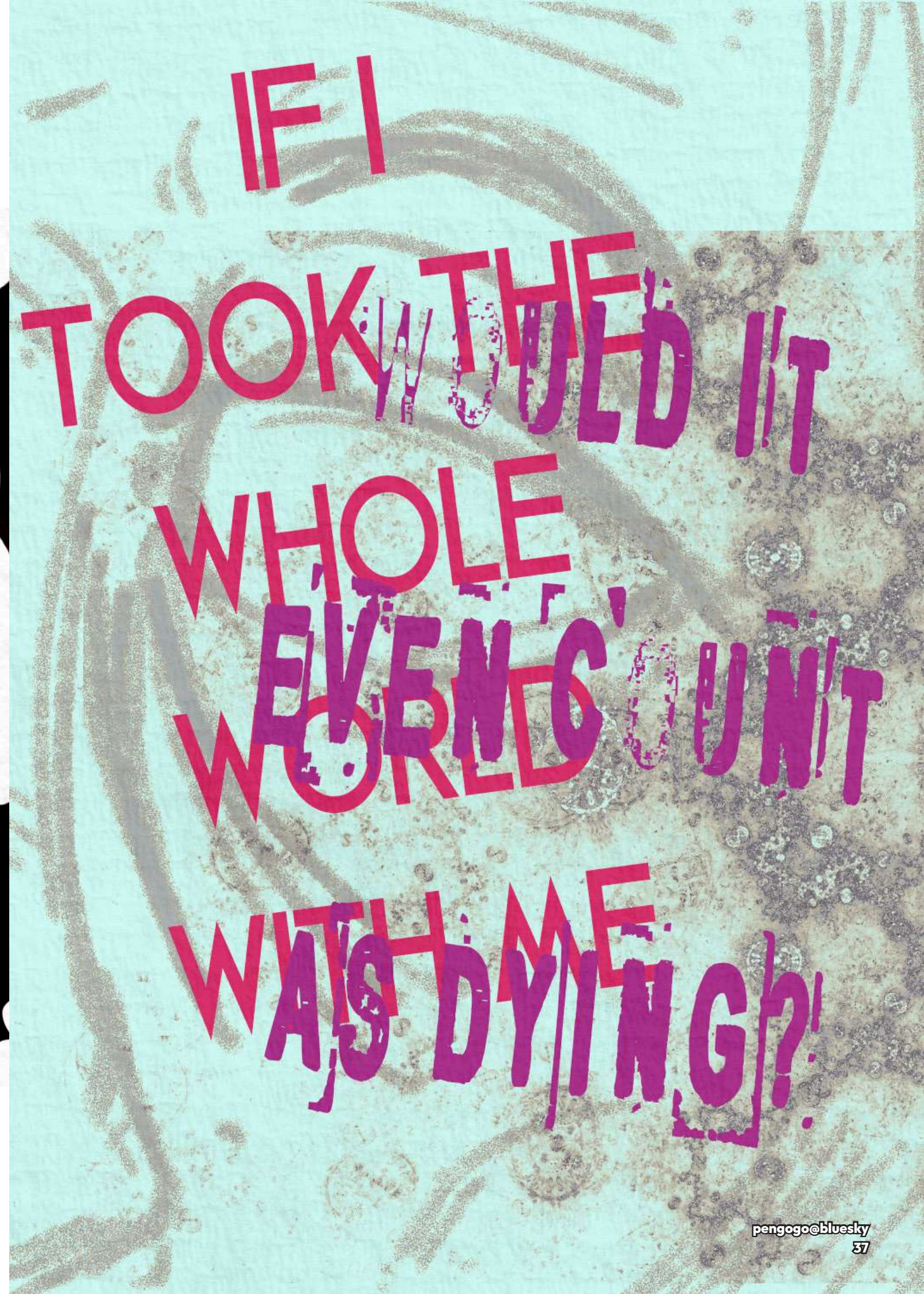




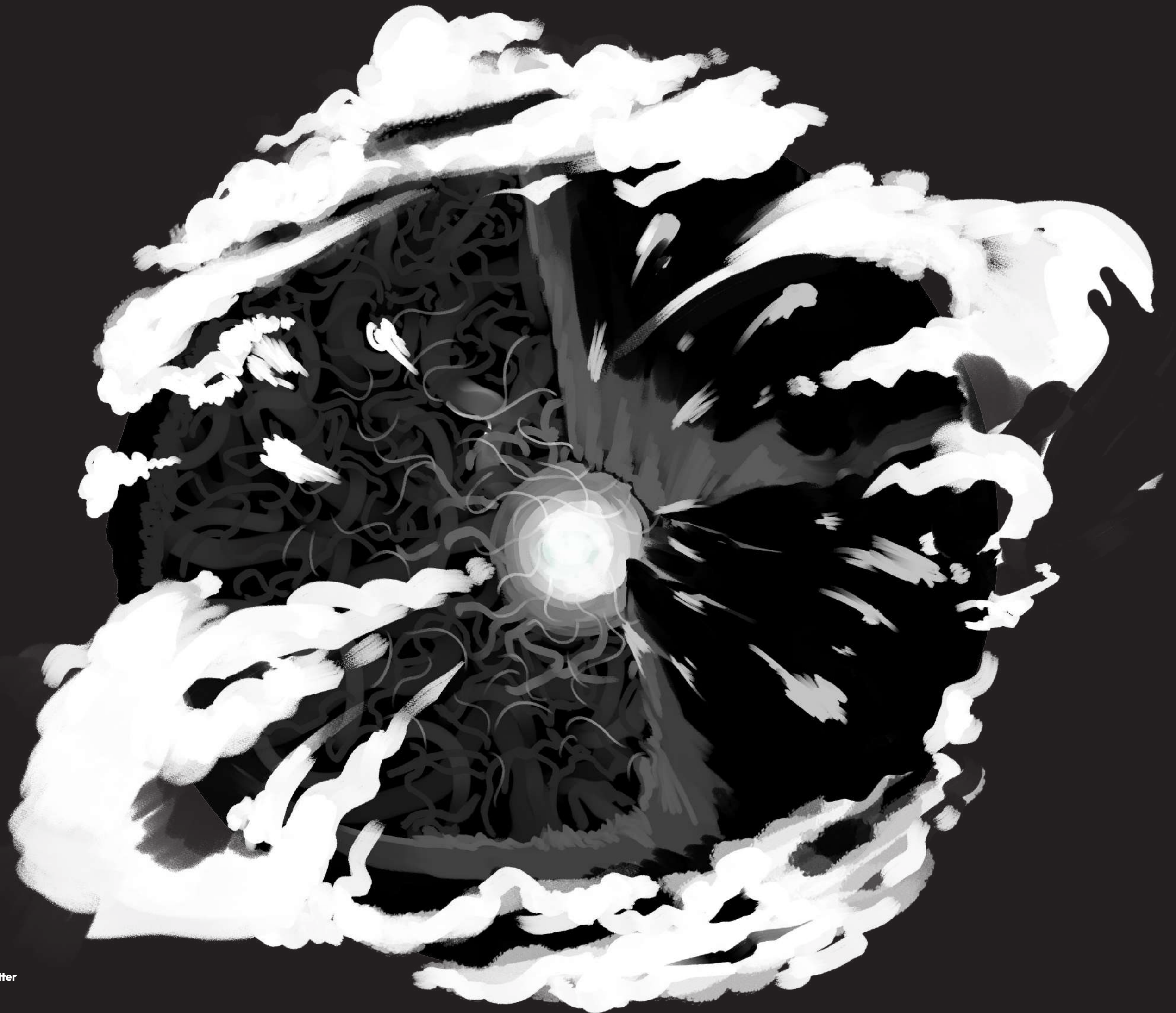


END













LETS GO IN THE  
GARDEN!

YOU'LL FIND  
SOMETHING  
WAITING!

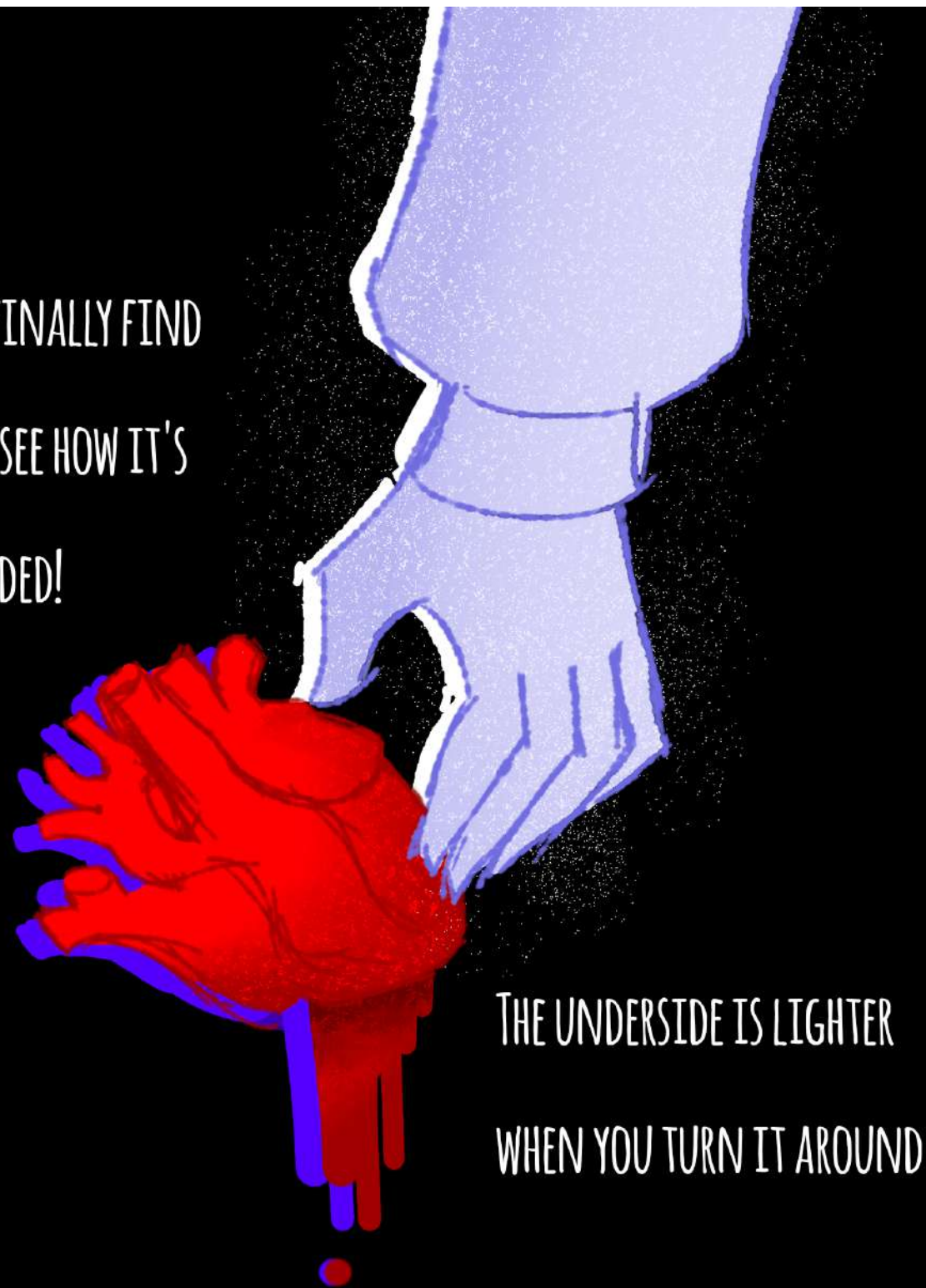
Right there where you  
left it



Lying  
upside  
down



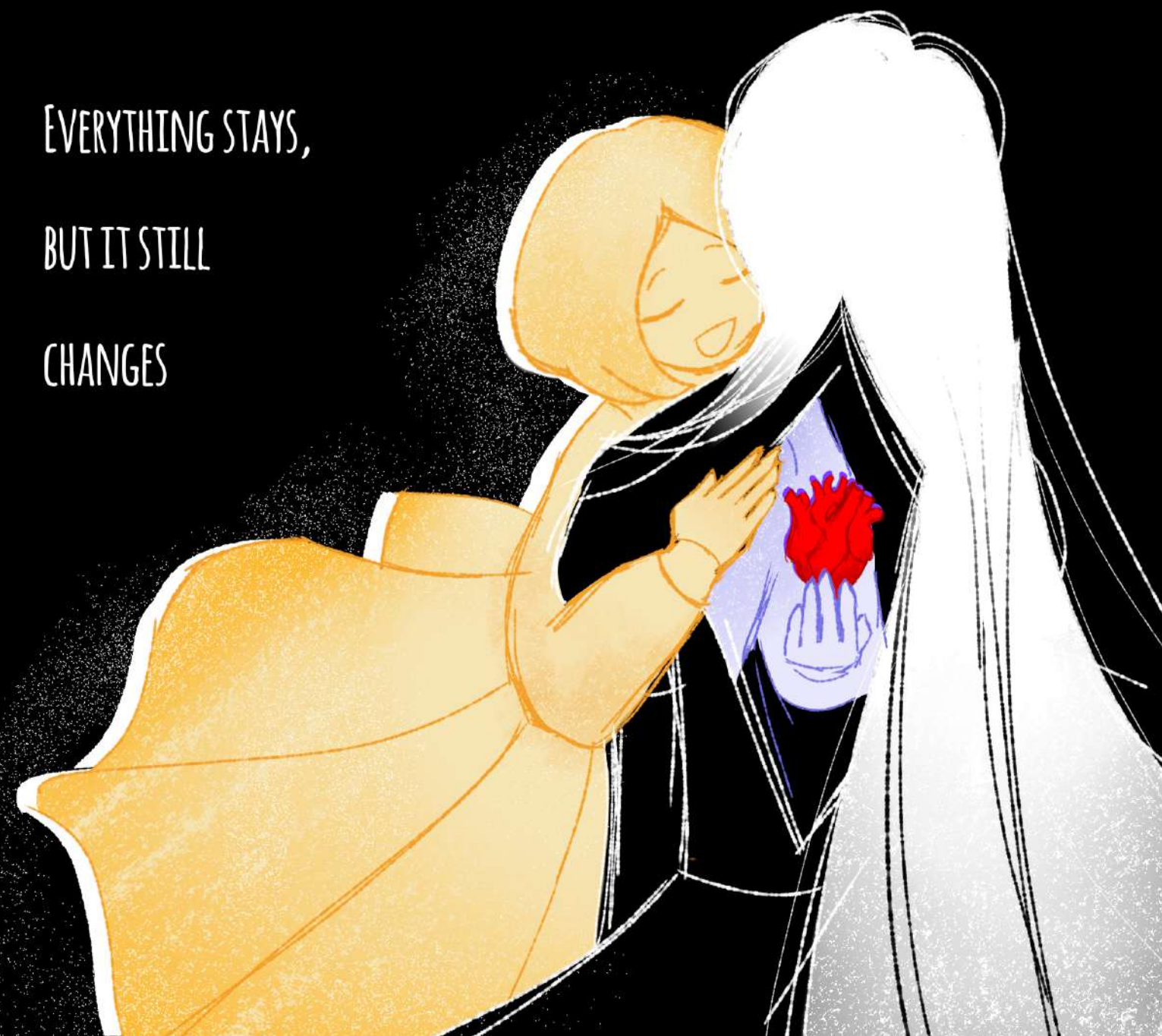
WHEN YOU FINALLY FIND  
IT, YOU'LL SEE HOW IT'S  
FADED!



THE UNDERSIDE IS LIGHTER  
WHEN YOU TURN IT AROUND

EVERYTHING STAYS RIGHT WHERE YOU LEFT IT

EVERYTHING STAYS,  
BUT IT STILL  
CHANGES

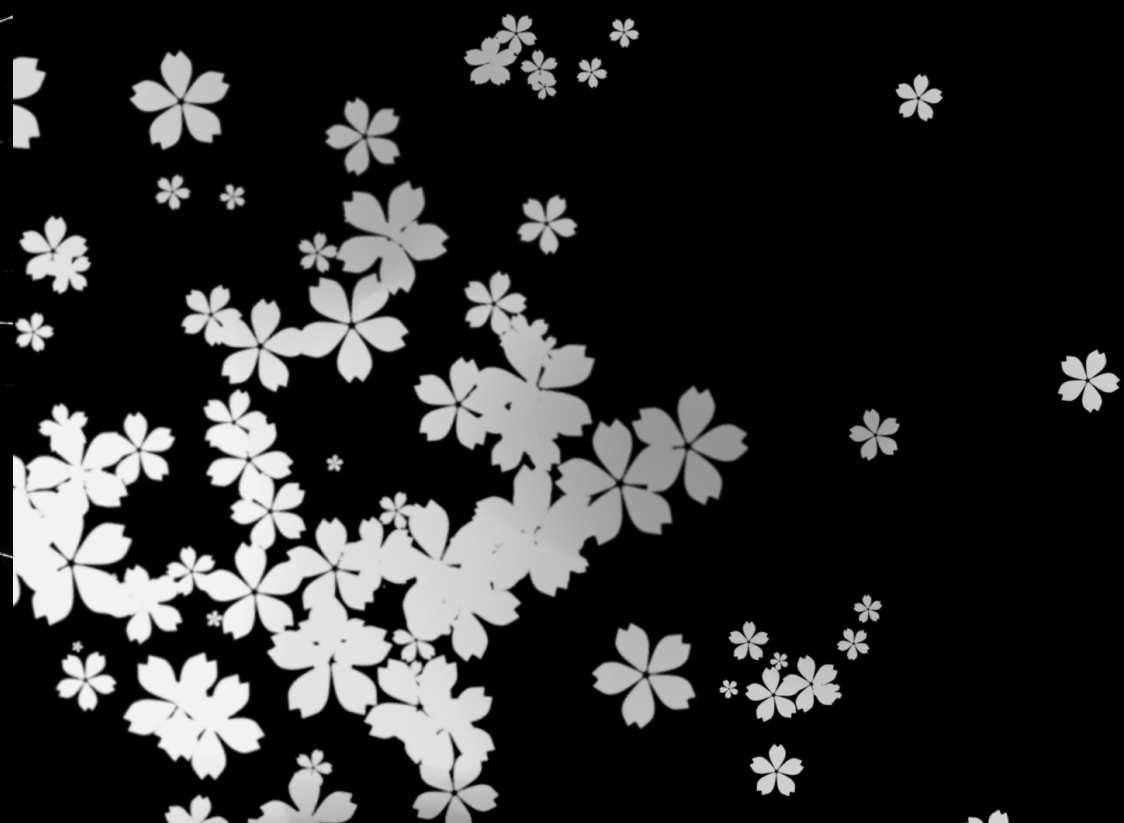






EVER SO SLIGHTLY,  
DAILY AND NIGHTLY

In little ways, when  
everything stays



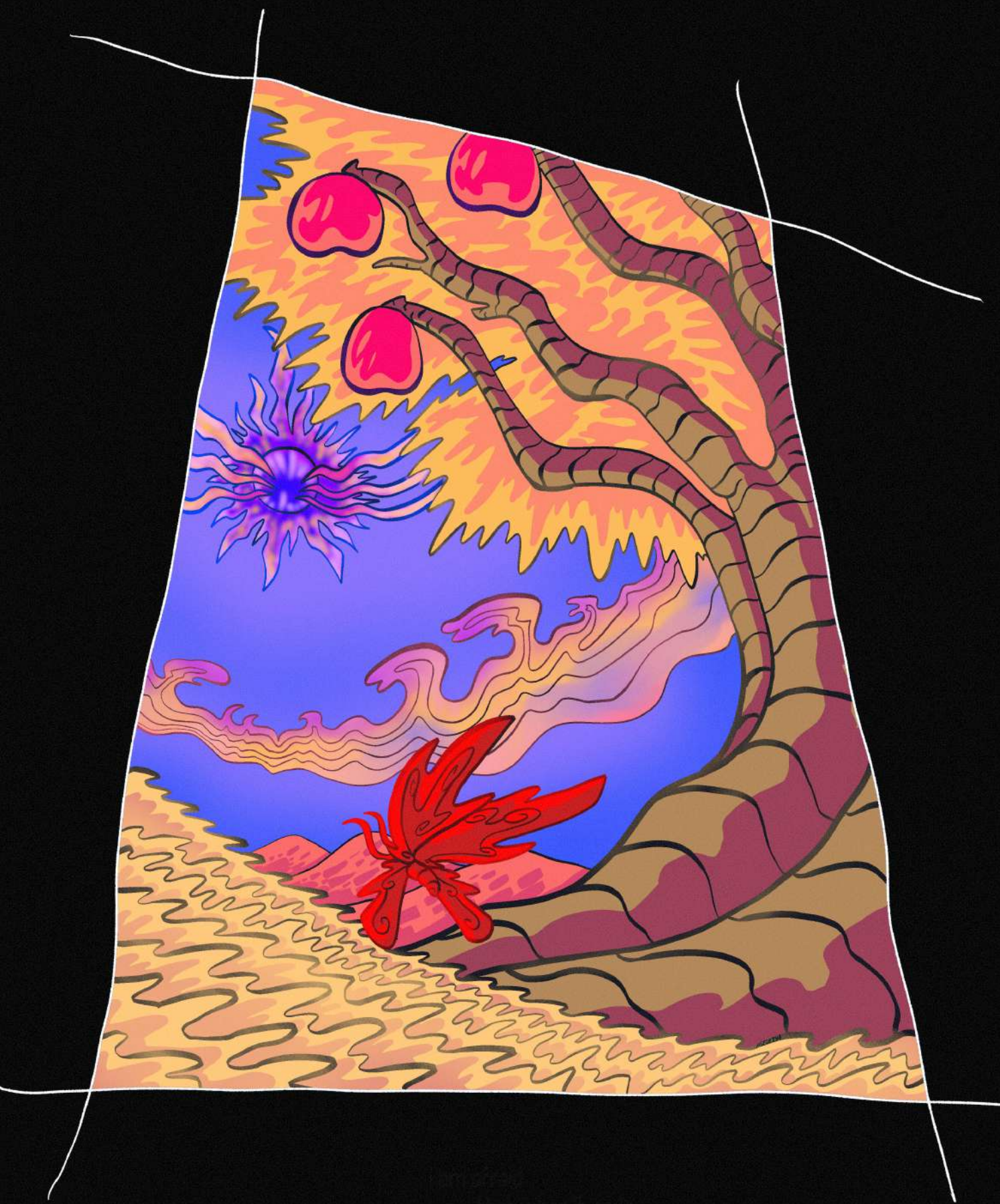




# EXILE

THIS IS NOT A PLACE  
OF HONOR

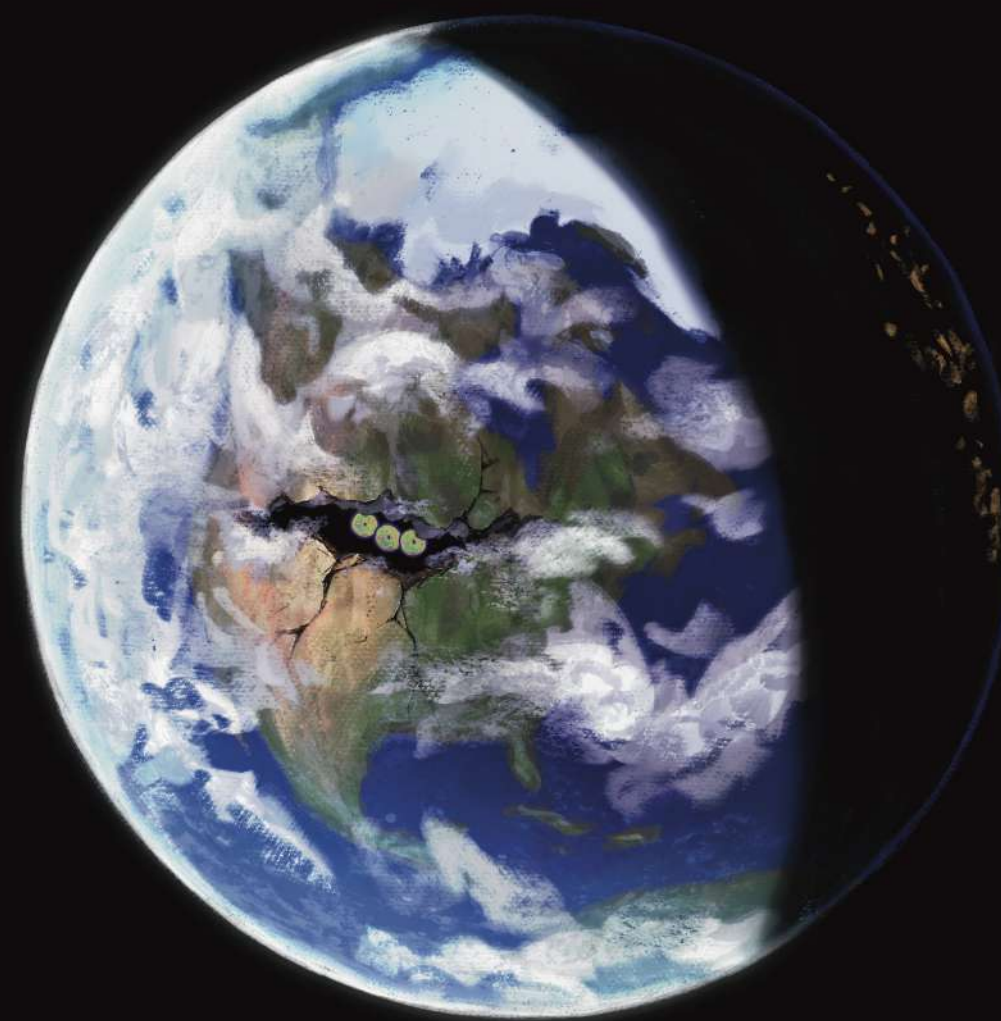








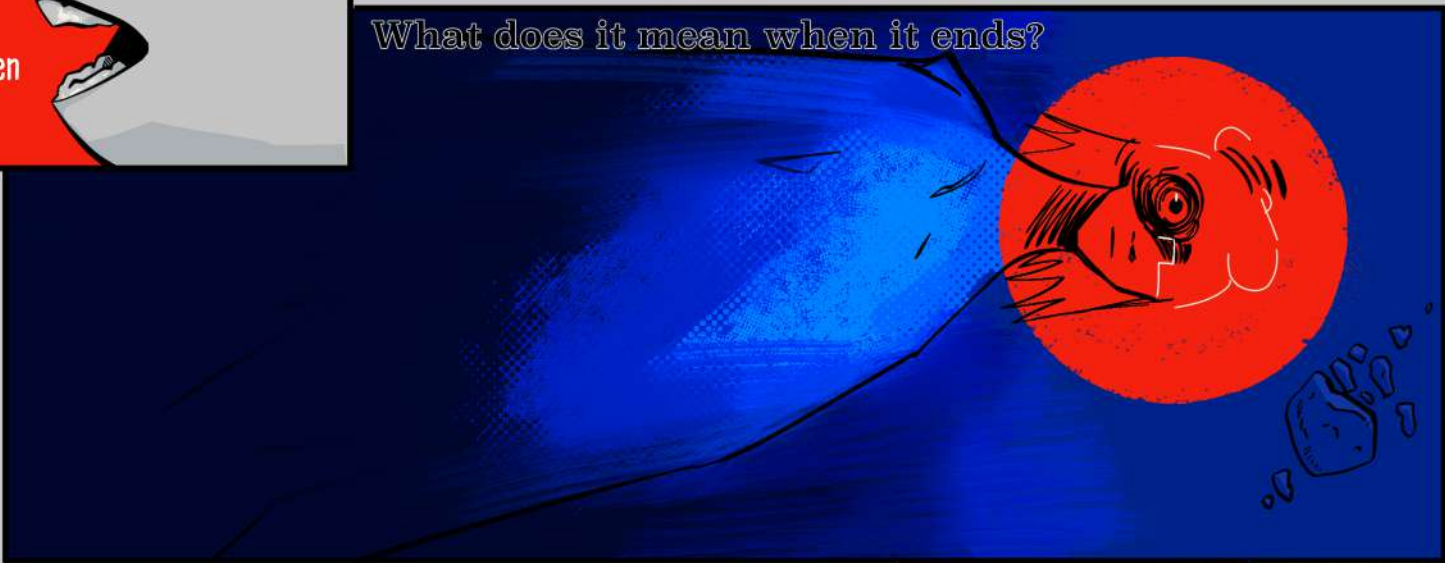
STEEL  
FIRNS







What does it mean when it ends?

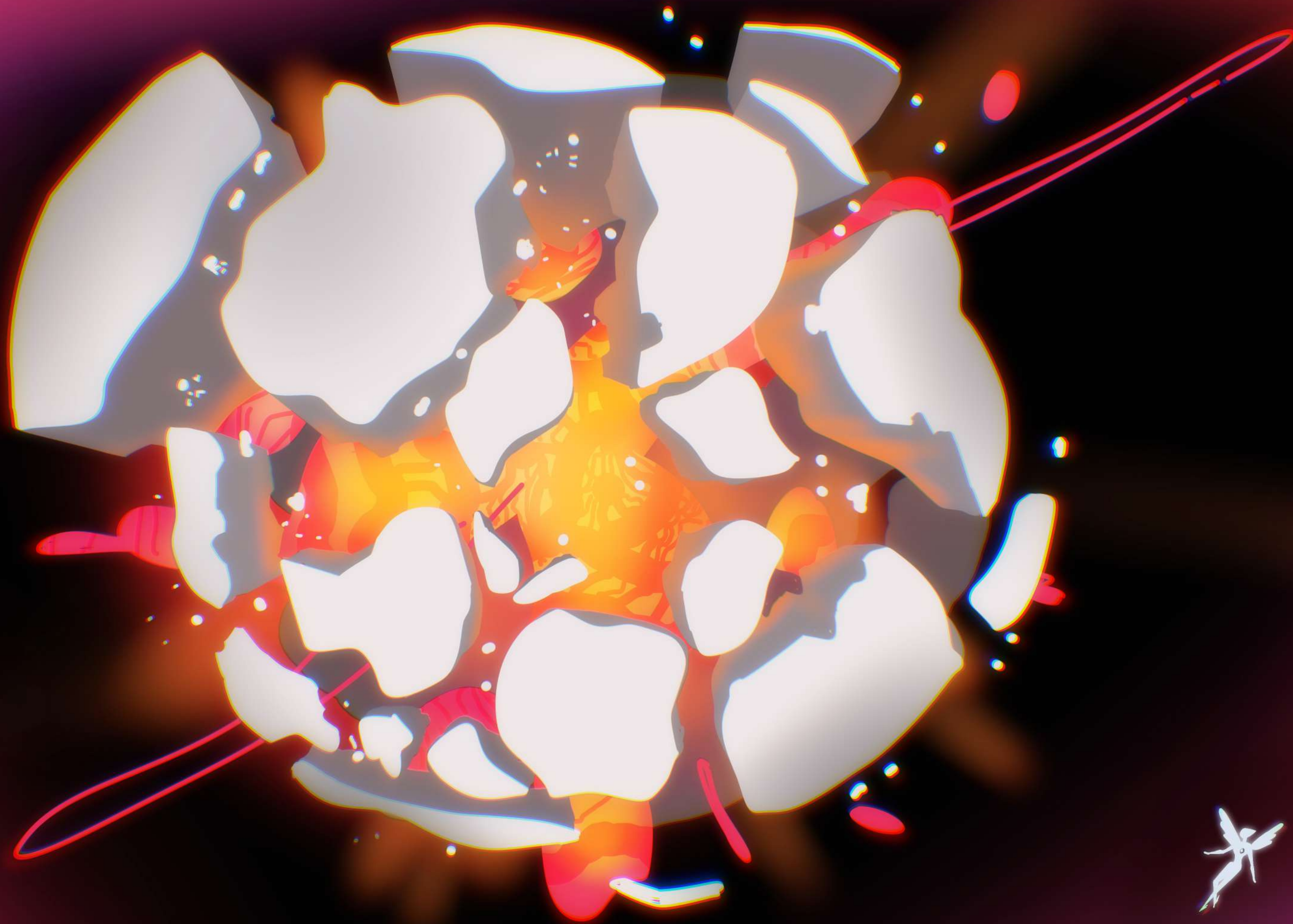




THE  
END









# CREDITS



**Phroge**  
Pg Cover, 32-35  
“and id draw MORE if it weren’t for you meddling kids!”

Twitter: CanDough1



**Don**  
Pg 04  
“my world ends when my children pass, loved”

Tumblr: f00liage  
Bluesky: fooliage



**Fugwanyi**  
Pg 25  
“Alexa play Tomorrow Is from SpongeBob the Musical”

Tumblr: Inkstainedsoul  
Instagram: fugwanyi



**APurpleClam**  
Pg 26  
“Treat the world with kindness. So it can show it in turn”

Twitter, Bluesky: APurpleClam



**Feaurie**  
Pg 05  
“Help”

Bluesky: feaurie  
Twitter: FeaurieVladskov



**Th3Cr4zyGuard1an**  
Pg 06-07  
“Shit... this doing numbers”

Twitter: Cr4zyGuard1an



**Xavi**  
Pg 27  
“I wish to escape”

Bluesky, Twitter: Popcalx



**Viladee**  
Pg 28-30  
“could really go for a pie rn lowkey”

Social: haha no



**rat**  
Pg 08-09  
“its just me and sisyphus and kate bush on this hill lately”

Twitter/Instagram: rat\_on\_string



**Mythic**  
Pg 10-11  
“wug... I live bitch”

Tumblr: mythic0210



**Rex Rissole**  
Pg 31  
“it’s the end of 2025 already? goddammit”

Socials: tximista-rissole.carrrd.co/



**Vvellerr**  
Pg 36  
“felt cute, might spontaneously combust later”

Bluesky: vell.verdigris  
Tumblr: vvellerr



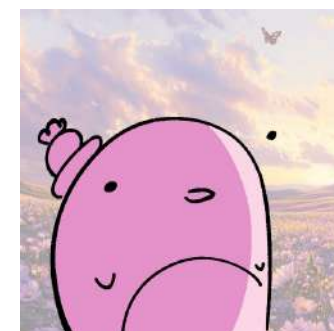
**Spaghetti**  
Pg 12-17  
“nothing ever lasts forever / we will go softly into the night”

Tumblr/Bsky: pastaandrakes



**Poolnoodle**  
Pg 18-19  
“Snow is so cool. I wish it was real”

Tumblr: otherfishmonger



**Pengogo**  
Pg 37  
“Nobody has two brains, but we all have two intestines”

Bluesky: pengogo



**Prometheus**  
Pg 38-39  
“They dont know that i love my friends...”

Twitter: The1Prometheus



**Swanpy**  
Pg 20-23  
“ ”

Instagram: \_swanpy\_art\_



**Grayocene**  
Pg 24  
“i cant beat alatreon”

Tumblr, Bluesky: grayocene



**herbyherb**  
Pg 40-45  
“I’M IN THE PHO HEEEEEEELP HEL-”

Tumblr: herbpotwo  
Bluesky: herbyherb  
Newgrounds: herbyherb



**Aegis**  
Pg 46-47  
“My wrists might be cooked”

Bluesky, Tumblr, Twitter: aegisofworms





**Chris**  
Pg 48  
"I need you to see me for what I've become"

Twitter: asedeiya



**Vitic**  
Pg 49  
"oh future people  
i'm gon na meet you  
in this stupid life"

Bluesky: ViticArts  
Itch.io: Vitic



**Ronan**  
Pg 50  
"excited for my pile of dust  
era"

Instagram: steelfirns



**Rit**  
Pg 51  
"Heyy, I managed to make  
it about space again!"

Discord: Crit\_hit



**Dream**  
Pg 52  
"If not this, then what?"

Twitter: NighttimeSpindel



**Arkeis**  
Pg 53  
" "

Discord:Arkeis  
Bluesky:Arkeis



**Capsule**  
Pg 54-57  
"damn"

Bluesky: capsulecomics

## ONE EXTRA THING:

I've been doing up some small doodles for the theme vote/ announcements of every month.  
Here they are all together!

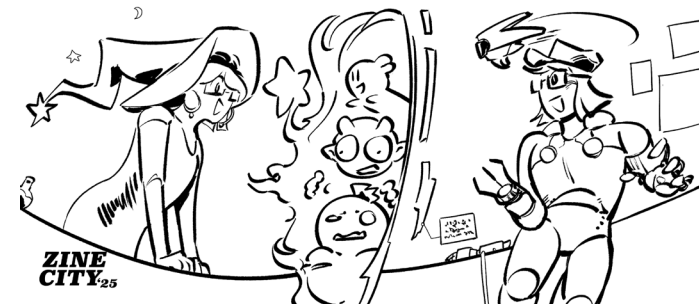
Stay silly :3  
- rat

### ISSUE #7: PRIDE



ZINE  
CITY<sub>25</sub>

### ISSUE #8 THEME VOTE FANTASY vs SCI FI



ZINE  
CITY<sub>25</sub>

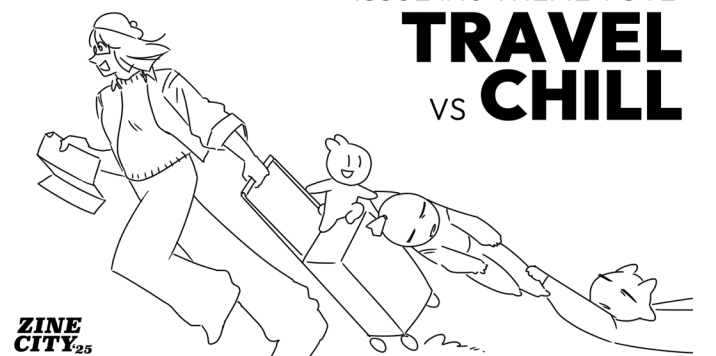
### ISSUE #9 THEME VOTE SONG vs DANCE



ZINE  
CITY<sub>25</sub>

### ISSUE #10 THEME VOTE

### TRAVEL vs CHILL



ZINE  
CITY<sub>25</sub>

### ISSUE #11 THEME VOTE

### TRICK vs TREAT



ZINE  
CITY<sub>25</sub>

### ISSUE #12:

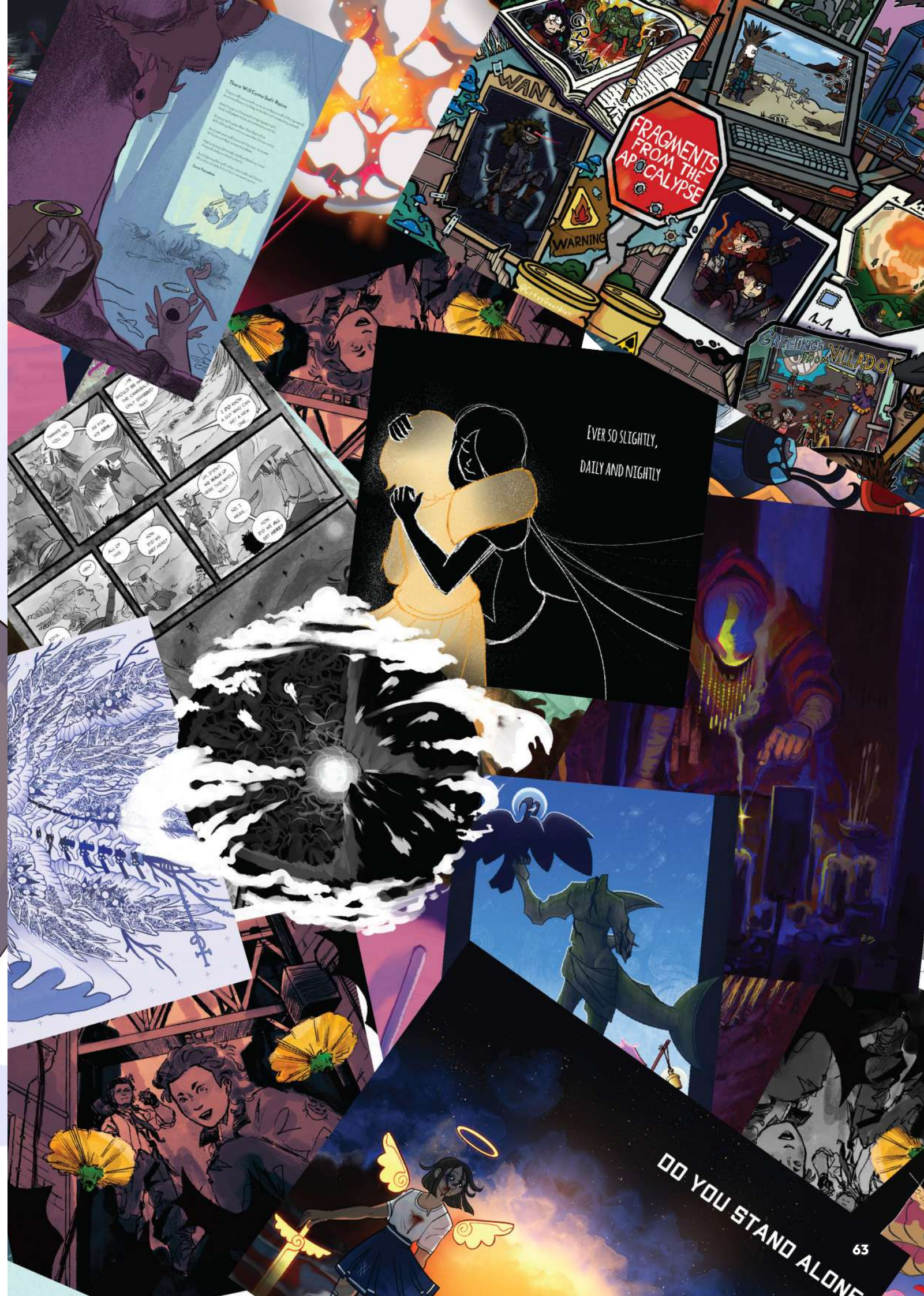
### APOCALYPSE



ZINE  
CITY<sub>25</sub>



THANK YOU FOR  
JOINING **ZiCi25**!!





# **ZINE CITY<sup>'25</sup>**

**NOVEMBER - ISSUE#12 [APOCALYPSE]**

