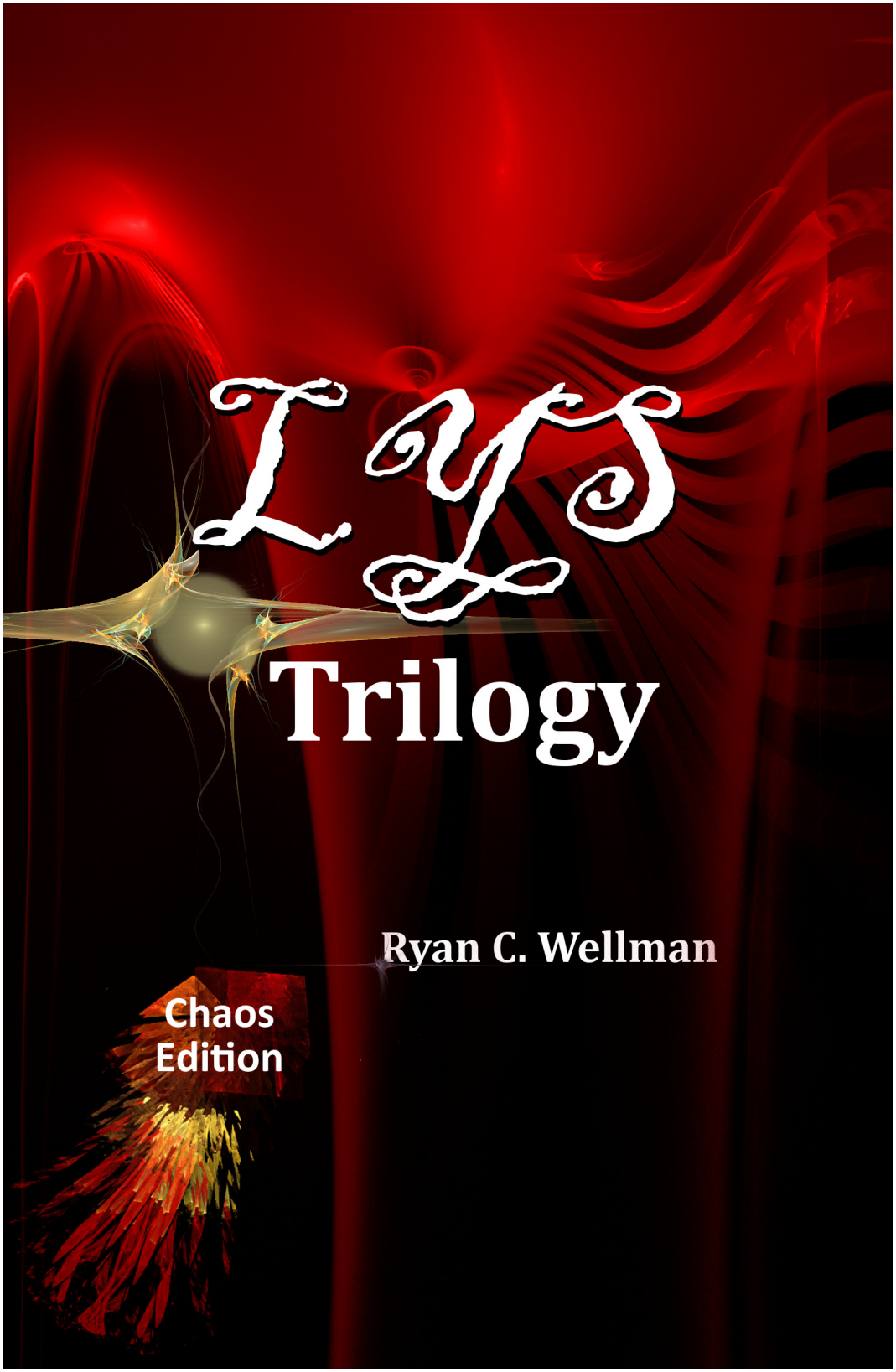
LYS
Trilogy
Ryan C. Wellman
Chaos
Edition

LYS

Chaos Edition

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Dedication

To my wonderful family and friends, especially both of my sisters, my mom and dad.

Thank you. Without your love, support and patience, I would have never made it this far.

I could not exist without any of you.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank John (Loki) McClenny, without whose help I may have never published online. I would also like to thank James (Dragon) Williams who wrote the forward to Playt, and was always there to read what I wrote. You both will be missed. I would also like to thank the numerous amounts of people who have given me advice, critique, and support throughout my writing process. I couldn't possibly name all of the people who have helped me. Thank you for your patience and guidance. Thank you, the reader, who I acknowledge has taken up my book without knowing what to expect. I hope you enjoy this as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Preface

This trilogy has taken me over a decade to write, and I continue to try to perfect it in any way I can. It can be quite confusing (especially the Chaos Edition), but it all should makes sense to you in the end. It was originally spawned from a character I created who was the strangest thing my mind could come up with. It was difficult to write, but also a lot of fun. Quite a challenge for my first story, and I couldn't be more proud of it. This is the full set of three books known as the Lys Trilogy. The first book is Playt, the second book is Ynk, and the third is Rhun. Playt has been previously released in many eBook formats and three hardback prints, but Ynk and Rhun have only been accessible to a very small group of people. Until now. I plan to continue to revise this trilogy, and I hope that in the future I can dedicate a lot more time to these projects, as they are just the backbone of a larger universe. With the stories I have in my head, I could write for the rest of my life. This eBook will eventually contain all of artwork for the entire trilogy, because I find it important to the story. While on the subject of being incomplete, I want to explain that this book has not yet been professionally edited. My mom (Lora Morris) did some fantastic editing on the earlier sections of Playt, and I have done my best to edit the rest, but I admit that it needs more work. I apologize for this, but I hope you understand that everyone has to start somewhere, and editing can be quite costly. Thanks to your purchase, I hope that we will see a day when this book is what I always dreamed it could be.

Lastly, I would like to point out, that because of these characters' natures, this trilogy is mostly just a summary of their adventures. It would have been impossible for me to explain everything they go through, because of their incredibly long lifespans. The story has a tendency to jump around, and that is part of the point I'm making. I wanted this story to symbolize life in many ways, and I hope that becomes evident as you read through. Playt takes place in present tense, while Ynk took place in past tense, and Rhun will take place in future tense. I don't know of many stories that take place in future tense, but it is certainly fun to write. Overall, I tried to have fun writing this. Thank you, and enjoy.

Table of Contents

Playt

Playt One: Baby

First Days are Hard

Catacombs of Time

Punishment

Playt Two: Kid

Scidryl

Revenge

Answers

Playt Three: Teen

The Role Model

Intentions

Disconnection

Playt Four: Fat

Guilt

Love

Destruction

Digestion

Playt Five: Red

A Clean Playt

Quantum Playt

Attack of the Playts

Red Con Fusion

A Full Playt

Red Solitaire

Playt's Planet

Tortured

Altered

Time Twins

Playt's Plates

Red Devastation

Nexus

Linking the Puzzles

Ryan's Mission

Playt Six: Warrior

Led

The Pearl

Us Playt

Life of Hat

Death of Hayt

Six in the Morning

Five at Night

Time’s Royal Family

Time Generals

The Wand

Playt Seven: Old

The Mask

The Gems

The Spirit Symbol

The Orb

SHATTERING

Ynk

Age of Creation

Blueprint

Unfolding “Reality”

The Concussion

Harmony

Powerful Observations

The Death of a King

In Search of Evil

Peaking

A Peek

Onward Into Space

Exponential

Demons

Fatal Love

Domino

Solo Mission

Age of Fear

Hiding in Darkness

Invasion

Aspimiria

Evacuation

Ina's Trek

Doctor

Intruder Alert

King of the Cosmos

Banishment

Age of Control

The Masses

The Game

The Players

Rose

The Bang Chitty

The Army

Investigations

Inter-Dimensional Travel

Hell

Raising Sporx

Age of Insanity

Rewritten Fear

Within a Paradox

Edit

Switch

Sporx of Book

Rewritten Control

Ink's Sanity

Smile

Breaking Reality

Fixing Reality

Responsibilities

Age of Decay

The Eye

Stalker

Sickness

Pronouns

Numbers

Tournament

Semi-finals

Finals

Freefall

True Awakening

Age of Reason

The Head

The Party

The Orgy

The Cuddle

The Relationship

Understanding

Forgiveness

Love

Acceptance

Precipice

Age of Death

Scars

Rhun

Lys Part One

The Reblending

Two

Mr. Skigh

The Rip

Syl

Syl's Backdoor

Schoolhouse Jail

Nosh Pit

Destruction Factory

The City

The Ceiling

Sector 3

Team Fodder

Eleven

Aging

A Message From Beyond

Sector 5

Strangers

Teleporter

Segue

Royalty

No Boys Allowed

Skyscraper

Ascension

Top

The Fall

Underdwelling

The Cat's Lair

Sector 4

Done

Power Struggle

Trees

Worms

Swords

Betrayal

Whispers

Cracks

Choices

Bloodbath

Oni's Castle

The Courtyard

Compressed Syl

Sealing The Rip

Lys Part Two

Paracosm

Welcome to Lys

Good vs Good

Sporxylvania

One Luv

Powers from Within

Vampires

Galaxies

Outter Cluster

Inner Cluster

Moons

Atmospheric Entry

Happy Birthday

Epilogue

The Book of
Playt
Written by
Ryan Wellman

Playt's Forward

From nothingness, life
A life that springs forth chaos
This world is normal
A life that goes against time
Bound to clash and suffer pain

Yet remains unchanged
A rock not shaped by the flow
Time shall be reshaped
This world undone and reborn
For Playt is just rambunctious

Playt has a big heart
It beats with such vibrancy
It feels all my pain
It gladly accepts it all
To save both our souls

It lives for the now
The past is only the past
Sins are forgiven
Grudges are truly useless

Life is a flashing instant
All time is precious
Too short but somehow enough
The world shall be changed

The end has come soon
It is time for me to go
I was never here
My words carry my spirit
A message that I must share

Randomness is good
Normalcy is overrated
Look with open eyes
Embrace that which is different
Grow and learn to care again

-Dragon Darkness (James Williams) 3/21/1986 – 10/31/2008 RIP

Birth

First Days are Hard

From nothingness, life.

White.

As the blinding effects of opening his eyes for the first time subsides, the being blinks and looks around. He looks at his hands to see that they are red. His skin seems odd to him as he touches his three tiny string bean fingers and small thumb. He looks down to the rest of his body and sees that he is red from head to toe.

The newborn baby boy is naked and alone, lying on the cold, soft ground. Above him there is a crude ceiling carved out of dirt and stone. He can hear a soft hum of some type of machinery in the distance. The vision of the baby flips as he rolls over to his stomach.

He lifts his head and looks forward only to see more of the same. Dirt and stone, just like the ceiling. Flickering candles make the tiny fragments of ceramic or bone which litter the floor sparkle. The baby observes his surroundings, unlike a normal baby. His mind seems to have already developed neural pathways and an impressive awareness of his environment and bodily functions. He puts his hands and knees to the floor and pushes, lifting his tiny red body into the air momentarily. The brand new muscles of the baby's arms rip and cause the baby to come crashing to the dirt floor once again.

It is at this moment the baby has his first notion that he was very recently somebody entirely different. Now born a new being, he ponders his existence. *I am no normal baby. Normal babies don't know words like candles or dirt. What am I? Who am I?*

Moments later the muscles have already healed and the baby is ready to try again. He lifts himself up and stabilizes. Then he takes the first step. Shaky yet sturdy, the young baby crawls over to what appears to be a wooden door. The dirt clings to his small red knees as he drags them across the cool ground. He inches closer to the door and then tries to reach out for it. Before he is able to touch it he experiences his very first...

FLICKER

Everything around the baby changes in a flash of light. The dirty stone floors and the room filled with candles are all gone, and in their place is a very dense blue jungle. The giant leaves and huge dark tree trunks fill his vision. The leaves are wet with life and seem to dance with the wind. There are squawks and grunts of animals and the sounds of insects talking to each other. The planet is full of life and it all seems to spiritually reach out to the boy. The grass runs through the baby's fingers as he slowly crawls over to a tree. In the distance, the baby can hear a piercing screech.

He sits down and looks in the direction of the noise. At first all he sees are more dancing plants, but then the leaves part and four creatures on two legs walk out from the blue foliage and toward the red baby. The baby looks up to them in wonder and curiosity. As they near him they become more cautious and take defensive stances. One of them is holding a light blue stick. It reaches down and picks the baby up in its arms. As it touches him, there is a rush of information that travels through the baby. He understands that he is on a planet called Blue Leaves. These creatures protect the jungle from intruders that travel here from a sister planet. The creature peers into the baby's eyes and screams, “PLAYT!” The baby can understand its words and knows that this is his name. Playt looks into the eyes of the jungle person and blinks. The face of the creature is covered in dark brown fur and its eyes are hidden behind, sunken into the face. The eyes resemble a horizon at sunset, a black circle in the middle with extensions on the sides that curve out to sharp points. The skin on its neck and arms is dark green, scaly and chipped. The creature doesn't seem to have muscles, his body structure resembling that of an insect. On the creature's head there is a hat of some sort. It is crude in design and appears to be made from animal hide.

The mouth of the creature opens horizontally and Playt can see a black frog-like tongue sheathed within a black maw, a slithering weapon. There are sharp yellow teeth that jut out from the sides at awkward and irregular angles. The creature breathes in deep and commences another high pitched screech. Playt reaches for his ears as the screech penetrates into his skull, causing a vibrating sensation deep in his brain. Then the creature with the stick grips the baby in one arm and, pulling back, launches Playt eight feet into the trunk of a large tree. The baby slams into the tree head first and ricochets off to the side. He makes a quiet wet bounce into the blue grass below and slides to a stop.

The baby feels no pain. He tries to maneuver into a sitting position, but before he can, the jungle creature is viciously slamming the stick into his forehead repeatedly and screeching. Playt remains

unharmed but is not happy. The stick breaks and the creature kneels down and begins to punch Playt in the face with the knuckles of its two balled up black, scaly fingers.

FLICKER

In another flash of light, everything changes again. The jungle creature is still there, but the jungle is gone. The stick lies broken on Playt's stomach. At first, the creature doesn't seem to notice he is no longer where he was and continues to attack the baby with abandon. Then, as the baby looks around, the jungle creature is compelled to allow his surroundings to seep into his awareness. What he sees makes his blood cold and his heart stop.

They are in the center of a very dark room. The only thing that is illuminated is the circular table that surrounds them. Its top is a shiny red, but the sides glow a light blue and appear to depict a panorama of sand hills on some distant planet. The two beings seem to float on an invisible floor with nothing but pitch black below and above. There are several flashes of light and Playt realizes that they are no longer alone. A huge black shadow leaps into the center where the jungle creature and Playt are, and then it disappears. The baby looks around to find that the jungle creature is gone, but the light blue broken stick remains. A slimmer shadow jumps towards Playt and he stares up at it fearlessly. It crouches down and scoops him into its arms.

The baby Playt stares into the eyes of an ancient being that appears to be on the verge of death. Its skin is as red as the baby's, but it is wrinkled and aged. Its beard is gray and white and is more than a foot in length. Its eyes are red and as Playt peers into them he sees that this man's mind has been corrupted and rotted. The being stares back at Playt and sighs, “I guess I’m going to have to raise myself, it would figure.” Playt realizes in a mix of horror and relief that this man is also Playt.

As Old Playt begins to rock him in his arms, Baby Playt uncontrollably drifts off to sleep for the first time in his life. It seems to comfort him to know that he lives long enough to be an old man, but his dreams are an ocean of confusion and shattered memories.

In the dream he can smell a dry desert floor, and as the wind blows towards him he is happy to have his friends with him. Their faces lost in the dream, he turns to them and smiles. In the distance there is a sadistic laugh that seems to grow with intensity and malice. The three turn to look and then SNAP! The dream flashes to a cave where an animal similar to a horse resides. The horse breathes deeply as it

sleeps on the floor of the cave. The boy stands in the darkness of the cave, hiding from the beast. Another horse-like creature approaches the entrance and beams of light spew from its eyes, piercing the darkness of the cave and centering on the boy. The other horse wakes up and... SNAP!

On Fahlls, the first planet to inhabit intelligent life, it was said that the sleeping mind listens to the planet itself. The mind interprets the language of the planet as best it can, but much of the translation is lost. The result is the dream.

In the real world, Old Playt is trying to flicker the baby to a planet where he can grow and learn, but Baby Playt's sleeping mind is grasping for answers and uncontrollably flickering elsewhere. The dream changes as their location changes.

One moment Playt is dreaming about a sunny, peaceful day and he gets a glimpse of what happiness and serenity might be. Then his mind is whisked away to some far off world of darkness that seems to claw at his being in repeated attempts to rid him of his existence. The baby's heart begins to race as his mind loses control of what would be considered a normal dream. The planet he's on begins switching so fast that his dreams become filled with series upon series of snapping images. Then everything stops. His dream ends where it started, in the desert with his two friends.

The baby wakes up with a pounding headache. *First pain*, the baby thinks to himself.

A voice within his mind interjects, ...*in this life*. The voice seems to be a part of him, yet separate, as if there is another conscious mind within him.

Slowly, the baby opens his eyes and stares into the face of Old Playt. “Awake, I see. Thank the powers that be. You really need to find some peace of mind or you're going to destroy yourself the next time you take a nap. You kept clawing at me and crying, and you shit on me twice.”

Baby's first smile.

SMACK!

Unlike the jungle creature's attacks, Baby Playt actually feels the pain from Old Playt's swing. The baby begins to cry and Old Playt frowns down at him, “Oh, grow up. Thousands of years lie before you. You need to find your center and stop being such a little bitch. I've clothed you and fed you, and I

need to continue my quest for the Orb. Be innovative."

The "old bastard," (as the baby dubs the man) drops him to the sands of Aspimiria and flickers away. The baby has been clothed in a white jacket made of a denim-like material. The sleeves of the jacket are wrapped around the baby, possibly to restrain it, with a knot in the back. He lies there for several silent moments, looking up to the red desert sky from his dreams. It is somehow calming and beautiful yet violent. A blaring hot blue sun burns his eyes as he looks into it, and the purple horizon diminishes slowly as the sun disappears into the darkness. Playt can hear only the wind and the sound of his own arguing thoughts.

Memories from the day run through his mind like clockwork as he tries to piece the puzzle together. He summarizes that he is just having a bad dream and this will all go away soon. The longer he waits and wishes to be woken up, the more frustrated he becomes. As the bright blue sun retreats further into the ground, his frustration breaks and his eyes begin to swell up with water. He screams into the Aspimirian night but nobody seems to hear him. Unlike the planet of Blue Leaves, Aspimiria has become a desolate land with sparse wildlife. The creatures listen to the screams of the babe in curiosity and fear. Some bravely scurry closer to the sound and others retreat.

In the midst of Playt's agony he does not notice the approach of a woman and a small girl. They walk to the baby and look down at its scrunched red face. The woman kneels close, trying to calm him. Then she picks the baby up and cradles him in her arms.

The baby's mind goes blank as he drifts into a deep dark sleep.

Catacombs of Time

A life that springs forth chaos.

Black.

As Playt is flung out of the deep well of sleep he is again forced to deal with his reality.

He feels an emotion that is very dark and heavy on his soul. As the emotion fills his blood something within him grows stronger. It breathes as it slowly begins to awaken within his subconscious. He can feel it grunt within him as the emotion completely takes over.

Meanwhile, the woman who had grabbed the baby out of the sand runs for dear life as another type of beast grunts behind her. She holds on to Playt as she runs and as he begins to struggle out of her arms she grips him tight. Beside her runs the little girl, both of them drenched in fear.

Playt has never experienced fear, and that isn't what he's feeling now either. He had experienced puzzlement, sadness, pain, and pure wonder, but for the first time he is experiencing anger. The beast within him opens its eyes and smiles. Playt flings himself out of Caprina's arms and into the face of the shadow beast behind her. The beast swallows Playt without chewing and continues running. The young princess Alessandra trips on a rock and falls to the ground as Caprina screams. Her voice is heard throughout the planes of Kriddle. Other beasts in the distance take notice of the kill and begin running in that direction.

Caprina falls over top of Alessandra to shield her from the beast.

"I must sacrifice my body and soul your highness," Caprina screams as the giant beast bites a chunk of flesh out of her back.

"Your soul can be saved," Alessandra yells as she puts her hands to Caprina's head and pulls out her soul and her remaining energy. Caprina's thoughts and memories flood Alessandra's mind as Caprina continues to get gnawed at.

Suddenly the beast hiccups.

A moment later a giant bang echoes throughout the dismal red sky and dark grey rocky surface covering the planet of Kriddle. The sound bounces back from giant black spires that surround them in every direction. A fountain of blood bursts from the back of the beast as Playt rockets out of its stomach.

FLICKER

Playt is flung into the deep reaches of space. Nothing but darkness surrounds him. As he looks around he can see some light in the distance, but it is very faint. He feels another presence. It is watching him and waiting.

It is the beast within him. As Playt's anger subsides the beast grows tired and then becomes dormant

once more. The baby begins to ponder his existence again. In the blackness surrounding him he begins seeing strange colors and shapes, but they seem to just be hallucinations. He thinks about what just happened, and the thing that's living inside of him. He does not like it. He begins worrying about the child and the woman who had helped him. Was he responsible for their deaths? Had he somehow taken them to that awful planet as he slept? Perhaps they were like him, perhaps they couldn't control where they were at any given moment.

Deep inside Playt knows that this isn't the case. It is his fault. He also knows something else, the child is important to his existence. He doesn't know how he knows this, but he knows it with every fiber of his being. Guilt ridden, he tries to flicker to where he just was, to save the little girl who he had abandoned on the dangerous alien planet. Nothing happens.

He tries several times but Playt quickly becomes worn out from the frustration and he slowly drifts into sleep again. Deep he falls down the dark well of sleep. His restless slumber continues uninterrupted for some time, but there are no dreams.

In a burst of color, he is taken from the darkness and thrown into an unknown world. The world is full of life and the planet's energy invades his dark sleep. It fills it with things he knows nothing about, people and faces that he will never know. The planet feeds him their memories, their dreams, their past loves, their fears. His sleeping mind cannot process the information fast enough and so his dreams become a mess of irrelevant madness.

All Playt can remember when waking up is the static. He shakes his head as he awakes and rolls over to the side. He is still wrapped in the white denim jacket with the arms tied in the back. As he wiggles he feels the sleeves slip under his feet and in front of him. The shirt is too large for him, and he easily escapes it.

Sitting there next to the white jacket he stares at it blankly. He looks down to see that he has male genitalia. He knows more than he should as a baby, and as such he is embarrassed to be naked when he sees clothed two legged inhabitants in the distance. Playt grabs the jacket and grips it tight. His hands become extremely hot and the denim type material of the jacket begins to lose shape and become a clump of all the raw materials. Then he holds it close to his body and the materials in it begin to reorganize themselves once more, but this time in the form of a makeshift diaper. The whole time he is doing this he has no idea what he is doing. It's as if he is on autopilot.

Once clothed Playt crawls into a hiding place and begins to observe his surroundings for the first time. He is in the middle of a city of red buildings. Some are rather short; some tower so far up that Playt becomes dizzy trying to focus his eyes on the top. As he stares up into the sky he hears some type of generator and as he shifts his view to the skies themselves he sees vehicles of some sort flying far above the city. Beyond the cars he sees a black atmosphere, and beyond that are several visible planets, stars, and moons.

There is a sudden commotion from around a corner of one of the buildings and Playt crawls across the rocky white surface of the city to investigate. What he sees chills his blood and causes his spine to shiver. For the first time Playt experiences true fear.

An abomination of nature stands before him surrounded by lifeless corpses of the inhabitants of Fahlls. The creature's blue rugged face is circular and scaly. The eyes glow with an evil red hate that Playt has never witnessed. The black irises flick around its surroundings until its glowing red pupils stop on the next victim.

The monster swings one of its appendages towards an inhabitant of the planet. The left upper appendage appears to be two long yellow legs with razor sharp blades on the two foot-like hands. As the leg-arms stretch and extend at the elbow-knees the blades on the heel-palms cut the bipedal bystander into several pieces with ease. The actual legs of the creature are covered in a brown fur and are short with hoofs. They are shaped like the legs of the Minotaur and they move quickly as the oddly designed being murders another passerby. The right appendage is blue and has the muscle structure of a body builder's arm but the hand appears to be an oblong gray box with the dull shine of plastic. This hand has no fingers.

Suddenly the monster growls as it turns to stare at the red baby. Playt releases his bowels into his newly made diaper and freezes in his tracks. He turns from the corner and tries to crawl away but is stopped by a flash. The beast is directly in front of him now, and as Playt looks up in pure horror he realizes that this monster just flickered.

The beast within Playt awakens once more. It uses Playt's eyes to stare up at the monster's mouth which appears to be dripping with blood. As the blood drips to the ground it does not puddle, but rather becomes little red worms which burrow into the ground. As the two stare at each other Playt senses a conversation going on between them that he cannot hear.

The abomination of front of him grunts and flashes away. The beast within Playt goes into hiding once more and Playt is left alone. He sits there for several moments in shock. He hears screaming from around the corner again and crawls over to see a crowd forming around the dead bodies. Sirens grow louder as the city begins to flash white and green. One of the Fahllians turns and sees Playt. It points to him and yells in an unknown language to the others. More turn and look at him as he stares around the corner.

They begin to walk towards him and he quickly turns to crawl away. He hears them begin to run and crawls even faster. The rocky surface of the city cuts at his hands and knees as he pushes his muscles as much as he can. One of the Fahllians is suddenly in front of him without warning and Playt tries to stop, but tumbles. He tumbles over his head and lands onto his back. He finds he is staring up into a black face with gigantic, aged eyes filled with fear. The man above him wears a black cloak and the white beard that surrounds his mouth falls almost to his middle.

FLICKER

Playt is suddenly in some type of unlit structure. A short moment after he appears he hears something speak a single syllable of alien confusion. Then the room becomes lit. “blilg?”

Playt looks towards the device that is generating the light and sees an alien creature. Its skin is a light blue and both of its eyes drip down its face from the middle of the forehead to the middle of the cheek. Within the sockets of the eyes are seemingly cylindrical eyeballs that quickly look around the room in random directions. Then they center on Playt. Playt stares back in confusion and curiosity. “Blerp blerf chooney plibble.” The being speaks again and walks over to Playt. The skinny arms move around awkwardly as it walks. The legs make wide waddling steps.

As the being approaches him the baby tries to squirm away and bumps into a fragile object on a nearby table. As the object hits the hard green ground it shatters into millions of pieces. The being looks at Playt with instant rage and begins to scream at him. “CHONCHY FLABRINK DECITERM!”

FLICKER

At this point his life becomes unsubstantial. He stops retaining his memory because he sees no relevance in anything. He begins to grow dumber, because he stops learning and simply becomes a thoughtless doll. This goes on for several years, many creatures not believing he's alive at all. Playt

continues to grow physically, but mentally he doesn’t advance.

Eventually, he is awakened once more when his mind recognizes a place that it has been before. He blinks his eyes and looks around. He is in the room that he had been picked up and held by the old bastard before falling asleep in his arms. Old Playt is there, looking at him from across the circular table. Old Playt walks through the seemingly solid table and into the center where the baby lay. He looks down and begins to speak loudly.

“You were just born not long ago, and already you are messing up the timeline. I don't know the details of your mistakes, but I will say that whatever you did has made the Time Generals angry. You're going to have to learn that you can't upset them; they want me to introduce you to the Abomination. I don't think he's going to be happy to see you, but I have no choice in the matter.”

Old Playt walks away and Baby Playt stares blankly in the same spot, trying to understand.

Punishment

This world is normal
A life that goes against time

The baby hears a loud roar from below the council, and he can feel a rumble all around.

A circle opens up in the floor, and no longer being able to control his body, Baby Playt is pulled into it. The rumble increases as he is brought down a long tube, which is filled with light at the top, and pitch dark blackness at the bottom. The further Baby Playt floats down this tube the louder the roar becomes and it begins to shake his entire body as it echoes up into the council. He can feel a mental arm reaching out for him, trying to drag him down there, to the darkness.

As the light diminishes, Baby Playt looks down and can see absolutely nothing. The void in fact, is so disorienting that he spins around to look up again. The feeling of vertigo changes dramatically, and the baby pukes as he tries to concentrate on the one speck of light that remains. Soon, even that small light from above is gone, then nothing.

Playt realizes everything has become completely silent. The roar of the so called Abomination has disappeared. Playt cannot see, nor hear, and suddenly, he stops moving. There is no floor that he touches, but he knows that he has stopped. He cannot feel gravity, and so he no longer knows which

way he faces.

Without any kind of warning at all, the void turns into nothing but white. A shock is sent through his body as his eyes and brain attempt to adjust to the change.

He jerks backwards, drifts for a bit, and then he hits a floor. He rests on it and tries to gain a grip on gravity again.

No such luck baby.

From a distance, and then like a bullet the Abomination is roaring in his ear. He turns to look into the face of wretchedness. The... thing in front of him is immense. Its legs grip to the floor as if it is a gigantic hand, holding onto time for dear life. Each of the five legs resembles a different finger. Its belly is distorted and twisting, making it impossible to describe in terms that a three-dimensional world would be familiar with, and it has tentacles which flip and snap in every direction. The head of the beast is armor plated, and its three eyes are attached to three thick armor plated antennae.

It stares deeply into the mind of Baby Playt. Struggling to escape, the baby is forced to submit to the Abomination's mind message. It reads like this.

"AHHH, YOUNG PLAYT. AS YOU MIGHT HAVE FIGURED OUT BY NOW, YOU FLICKER. AT RANDOM, NO LESS. THIS IS BECAUSE YOU ARE FIVE-POLAR. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED ON MANY OCCASIONS THAT NOBODY ELSE IS ALLOWED TO FLICKER. THEY ONLY ALLOW US PLAYT TO FLICKER, BECAUSE THEY CAN'T FIND A WAY TO STOP US FROM DOING IT, AND THEY SAY THAT PLAYT MUST NOT MESS WITH THE TIMELINE. WELL, US PLAYT HAVE ARGUED TO THESE TIME GENERALS, THAT PLAYT IS PART OF THE TIMELINE, AND NO MATTER WHAT PLAYT DOES, IT MUST ALSO BE PART OF THE TIMELINE, BUT THOSE DAMNED TIME GENERALS KEEP SAYING THAT THEY HAVE A DIFFERENT TIMELINE IN MIND. PLAYT, YOUR PUNISHMENT FOR TRANSPORTING A JUNGLE CREATURE FROM BLUE LEAVES TO THE COUNCIL, AND TRANSPORTING ALESSANDRA FROM ASPIMIRIA ON 6B70, TO KRIDDLE ON 8H46, WILL BE TO PICK UP LEAVES FOR THE RECREATION CENTER. THIS IS NO NORMAL RECREATION CENTER HOWEVER; THIS IS THE BLACK LEAVES PLANET. EACH OF THESE LEAVES WILL WEIGH ANYWHERE FROM FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS TO SEVEN TON. YOU MUST RAKE A FOUR

ACRE PLOT, AND MAKE SURE YOU GET EVERY LAST ONE. TIME GENERALS ARE REALLY MEAN LIKE THAT. LOOK WHAT THEY DID TO US PLAYT."

That's when the loud rumble stops, and the message along with it. As quickly as the Abomination had arrived, it is gone. Suddenly there is an atmosphere, and with the escape of the Abomination, a mighty wind forms. The wind raises the baby slightly, and launches it through the whiteness.

Baby Playt slams into a white paper-like wall, and back into the eternal darkness.

The baby soars through space in wonder as he looks around at all the planets, stars, and strange spacial phenomenon. On his voyage through the dark pool he hits a few tiny rocks while dodging giant ones. Most of them only make minor cuts, but one puts a gash on his foot. His white blood trails behind, serving as the only way he knows he's still moving. There is no air to breathe, and the extreme temperatures of space cause his skin to begin boiling. He is starving, lost and confused. All he can do now is hope for another flicker.

No luck, only darkness. The baby passes out from exhaustion, as a last resort for comfort.

There is no comfort in his dreams, only the darkness. There is no planet to get dreams from, and so his mind has nothing to think about. His dreams are a cloud of sparkles and mosaic puzzles. It is as if a movie is messing up, freezing, and skipping around. The jumble of different nothings floats and invades his thoughts. He becomes irrational.

He drifts, unconscious.

Like a burst of adrenaline, messages from a planet (that can only be Black Leaves) invade his thoughts. He sees a bright light, and feels intense pain as his frozen body hits the atmosphere at close to light speed. The ice shatters and the baby is ignited into flames. His skin starts to boil once again and then freezes back up.

He hits the planet of Black Leaves like a comet, and sends out a mighty shock wave. There is no damage to the planet's surface. There are giant black leaves, and they don't even budge. The ground around the baby doesn't crack, and the baby slams full force into a planet which has hundreds of times more gravity than he has ever experienced. Playt bleeds, bawls, and then sleeps.

This sleep is a lot more comforting. It is as if he has found a planet that acts like a pillow. He escapes for the first time in he doesn't know how long. He drifts, and is lost. For a second, his inner thoughts believe that he has finally woken up from the worst dream to ever exist.

Eventually he wakes really up, to his new reality. The world he has to live with. He tries to sleep as long as he can, but after a while it does no good. The world around him is alive and it wants him to wake up. It shakes him mentally and he jumps out of his dream state.

He is conscious now, and can feel the pain. His foot throbs, and his body is scraped all over. He examines the leaves on the planet. They are not like any he has ever seen before. They appear to be made of metal, but not just any metal, the heaviest metal in existence. He tries to lift one, but it does not budge. He decides then and there, that he does not care too much for the Council's rules, and he definitely hates the Abomination.

He vows revenge, and sleeps.

For the following year, Playt resides completely on Black Leaves while his foot slowly heals. He's alone but he finds some yellow berries growing at the roots of gigantic black trees. For about three weeks he lives completely off of these berries. At first they taste delicious, the best the baby has ever tasted, but after the first week they lose their greatness. Playt decides to explore the planet a little more.

The wind smells of nag champa and mothballs, a smell that Playt has never experienced. It is thick in the air, and he can almost see its presence. By now the baby is walking, and he has discarded his asylum jacket diaper. He finds remains of a beast that in its life would have been big enough to swallow him whole. With its remains he makes himself a set of clothes, and uses the rest as a toilet. The meat is too old to eat anyway.

Playt walks along a white covered field, which is scattered with huge black obstacles. In the distance he can suddenly hear someone talking. His excitement makes him momentarily speed up. He stumbles a couple times, but eventually he is viewing distance, and so he hides. He sees the city of Scidryl, and fear shoots up his spine. It is a huge city, and there are many people. More people than he has seen in his so far short life, all extremely odd looking creatures. Their arms are nothing but lines. Their eyes shoot around at seemingly random places, and their mouths are on their foreheads. A memory deep within suggests he's met one of these creatures before.

In an instant, something inside him switches on and he can suddenly hear all of their thoughts. They are shouting at him, conversing, and just simply jabbering away. None of it makes any sense; it is an alien language to him. Suddenly, one of the inhabitants sees him, and such confusion is felt in their thoughts.

Playt loses consciousness.

This sleep is short, and is easily forgotten. When he wakes up, he is in a hut. The hut is a bright blue on the inside, and the color hurts his eyes. He winces and then tries to open his eyes completely. He looks around a little, still very tired, and a little confused. He's in a bed, but has no recollection of how he got there.

A little girl with strange arms and a strange face, walks in and sort of looks at the baby. The eyes that peer into the baby's eyes are sporadic, and move around aimlessly. Occasionally they center onto Baby's eyes and then away.

"Who are you?" the frightened Baby Playt speaks.

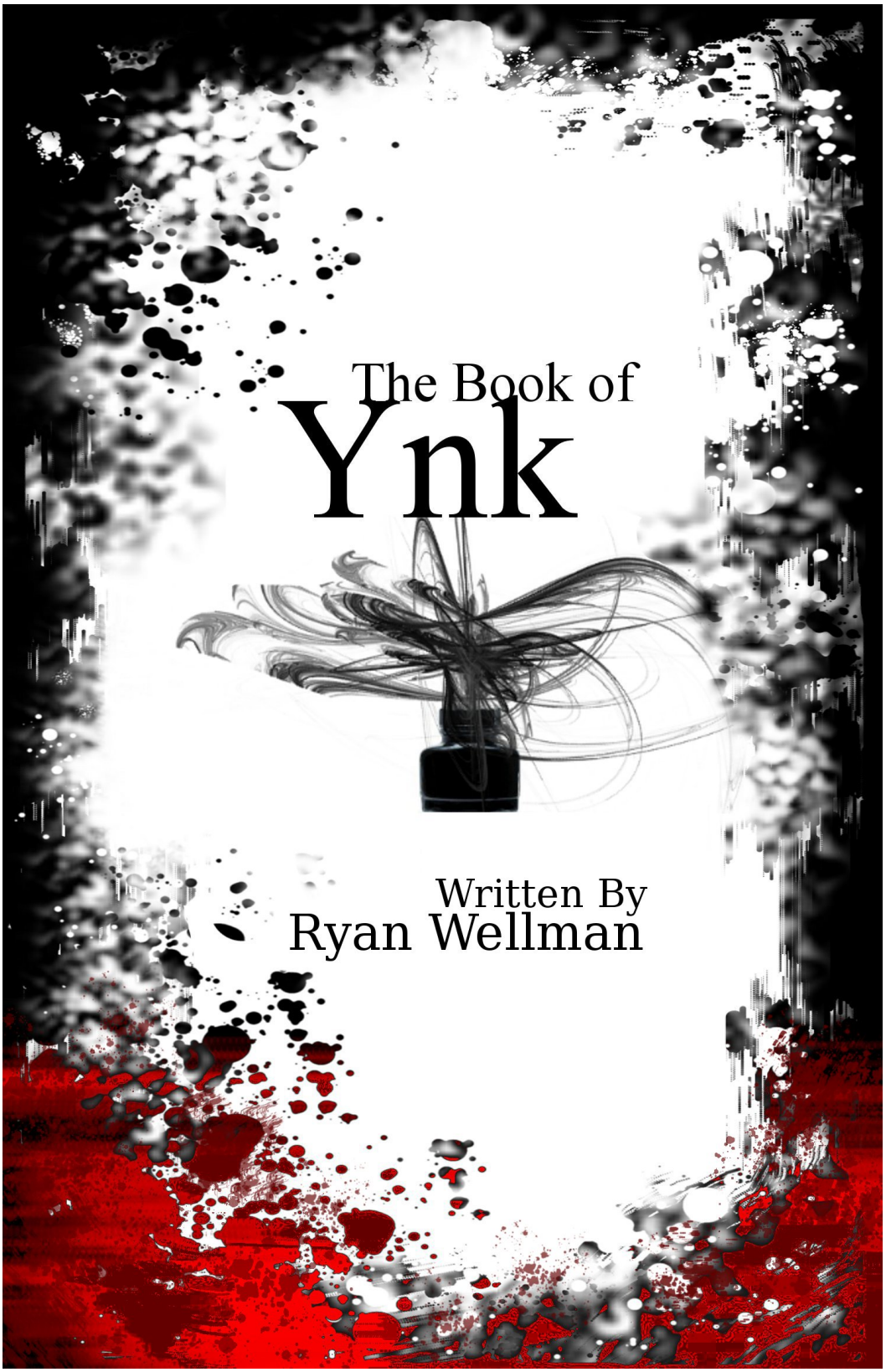
The reply from the girl is alien to him. It is somewhat high pitched, but sounds like something bubbling up from a depth. She sounds surprised about something. Possibly of Playt's entire appearance, but most likely it is the words that he spoke.

Then she smiles and bends over to kiss the baby. Playt's emotions run crazy, and he loses control of his thoughts. Something is happening but he cannot comprehend it. The girl screams, but her scream is muffled for she is still kissing the baby as if glued to him.

He has a painful and disorienting lightning bolt shoot through him. His bones crunch and twist as she screams out of her mouth and into his skull. Suddenly, Playt can hear the girl's thoughts in his mind. He can understand the entire language of Black Leaves. From the tiny creatures to the giant beasts, he has learned everything. The girl is gone when he eventually falls to the floor.

Playt looks into a mirror, and his appearance has changed. He's taller and resembles a child from Black Leaves.

Playt and the girl from Scidryl (whose name is Beth) are now fused together.


The Book of
Ynk
Written By
Ryan Wellman

Blueprint

Through much planning and laborious mathematical calculations, the energy crisis was found to be solvable using a new experimental procedure that was capable of producing a singularity within its own dimension. Such an extreme and twisted endeavor made it necessary to check the calculations vigorously using the brightest mathematicians the planet Yarlow had to offer. One mistake could mean catastrophe for not only their planet, but their entire galaxy as well. If done correctly, the singularity would be able to produce perpetual energy for more than a thousand years.

The math had determined that one singularity could not exist without a twin. Experiments showed that as soon as they had constructed the dimensional field it collapsed, before any singularity was able to form. Further testing showed that they were able to construct two dimensions at the same time, but they had to be in contact with each other constantly. Once perfected, the singularity only formed in one of the dimensions. They named this dimension Lys, and the barren empty dimension was codenamed Syl.

For several days after the creation of the twin dimensional engine there was no energy output whatsoever. The scientists were disheartened, but began observing the relationship between the two dimensions. The moment they began to observe, they noticed that the membrane between the dimensions was a two dimensional fractal image. Then something very odd happened.

Suddenly the dimension of Lys separated into two halves as if it were undergoing cell division. Each half somehow retained its own singularity. As they observed the properties of each they were exactly the same in every way. The singularity had not changed, it simply became two. Then it happened again, creating four identical sections of Lys, and four identical singularities.

Absolutely baffled, the scientist watched with growing curiosity. The dimension continued to imitate cell division for several hours, at which point it stopped suddenly. They observed the structure that Lys now held within, and all agreed that it was a replica of a highly developed brain. The brain began to pulsate like a normal brain, and the output read in rudimentary binary. Later they would translate the code and determine that the brain spoke one simple word of question. “Why?”

The brain begin to shrink drastically, and without warning the singularities within each cell exploded

violently, spewing raw energy and materials to all reaches of Lys. Most of these materials remained in Lys, but some were thrown through the fractal membrane and into Syl. The particles in Lys reacted as they would in a stable dimension, but in Syl they mixed like water and oil, creating several bubbles of stability, and causing everything else in the dimension to flicker in and out of existence. The dimension of Syl began to rip itself apart and the scientists clenched their teeth expecting the worst.

Suddenly it began to output ludicrous amount of energy and the outer membrane of both dimensions became stable. The twin dimensional engine had found its balance, and the result was a success. Never again would they need to worry about an energy source. The scientists celebrated with joyous yells of laughter and began to praise each other for such a job well done. The brain that had formed was dismissed but not forgotten. They codenamed the brain Y.N.K.(you never know), and declared mathematically that it could not have survived the explosion of raw materials. They were wrong.

Unfolding “Reality”

0

Why?

Creation. Destruction. Intertwined, forever one, yet considered opposites to an observer.

In the dimension Biz, on planet Yarlow, scientists created Lys and Syl. Little did they know this twin dimensional engine was actually a living being. It breathed, it fed on itself, and it evolved within. It was the true god of itself. The scientists sparked it to life, and once alive its instincts caused it to evolve exponentially. It made itself into a brain. Then it had an unconscious thought. *Why?* Then it began to create its thoughts. It could not see outside of itself, so it decided to look within. Like a fractal image, its thoughts reflected those of Biz. It named itself Ynk, and took on a human-like form. Its head a perfect sphere, its eyes larger than half of its face. Its mouth was small and lipless, its ears and nose were simple holes. A hairless genderless child with bleach white skin.

Having a form and a name was not enough. It needed to know how it came to be.

Ynk became a male, reflecting off of the predominately male crew who created the twin dimensional engine. He began to wave his arms in front of him, and when he did he colored the Universe black. Using his fractal instincts he began to create the cosmos on the black canvas. He spread all the colors he knew could exist and separated all materials he knew could exist. He chose a planet to call home,

and named it Fahlls. It was a gigantic planet, plenty of room to create even smaller details of what his instincts told him were real. He made a bubble of breathable air around the planet, and then created the base materials for life. Silicon lakes began to emerge from the planet as he twisted the molecules and formed the geography. The air was mostly comprised of methane, and so he created life forms that could comfortable breathe it.

The first of his life forms was a female copy of himself. He named her Yna, and used her molecules to create all other life forms. He started at the largest of creatures, and went down to the very smallest single celled organisms. The entire process of creation before consciousness took an hour to the perception of the dimension, but to Biz it was an immeasurably rapid explosion of energy.

The dimension of Lys sizzled as it cooled back down to zero kelvin.

Meanwhile, Syl was having trouble existing without a center. It began to rip itself asunder, and without it, Ynk would surely die. Ynk traveled through the fractal dimensional membrane and entered Syl. He traveled to the center and saw that there actually was a singularity, but that it was negatively charged. It symbolized the chaotic element, he grabbed it and dragged it out of Syl to the only place he knew to go, back to the center of Lys. Once there, he found the positively charged stable center, and replaced it with the chaotic one. Then he took the stable center to Syl. He put it in place and Syl's outer membrane began to stabilize. Ynk named the centers the Spirit Symbols.

The two dimensions began to spill and leak into each other, not just from the membrane but through the Spirit Symbols as well. As Ynk returned to the planet of Fahlls, the Spirit Symbol from Syl sent out a shock wave of chaotic energy through Lys, and reignited perceivable time. The shock wave echoed throughout the entire Universe and Ynk fell asleep. In the dream he was waking up as a child named Ink. All life forms on the planet of Fahlls underwent this dream, and they collectively called it consciousness.

Ina opened her eyes and looked over to Ink. “What happened?”

Ink blinked his eyes and looked back. “I'm not really sure. We'd better find mom, she'll probably know.”

The Concussion

1

As the glowing white children ran through the bright sunny day, the wine-colored grass rustled against their bare feet. They laughed as the wind pushed them back momentarily, and then allowed them to continue. Up ahead Ink could see their sandy tan house, and he pointed it out to Ina. They ran up to the front door and swung it open with glee. They could smell the treats. Their mom Edna made the most delicious orange maple leaf cookies.

“Wash your hands before you eat, you don't want to get any dirt on your teeth.” Edna was a very proper woman, and always wore a drypurple sundress. She walked off as Ina and Ink washed their hands in the sink. Their father walked in from a different door, beaming with a smile.

“Hey kids, getting all washed up? These cookies are really good, I've already helped myself to a couple. Where were you guys anyhow?”

Ink looked over to Ina who stared blankly at their father. Ink looked down to the ground. Where had they been?

“Don't want to tell me eh? You kids, just don't start any trouble. You know what happened last time.”

Ink had no idea what happened last time. Ink looked around. He saw baby pictures, hanging above the stove. The children sat at a table, while their father Dornal stood in front of the sliding glass doors. The floor was made of white tile while the walls were papered with an almost white color. On the ceiling there were long fluorescent lights, like those used in a hospital. There was nothing else in the room. Even the door that the mother had exited from was gone. Ink knew that something was not right, none of this made any sense. Why couldn't he remember anything?

Ink went into shock. He fell off of his chair and went to the ground.

The next thing he remembered was being in a hospital bed.

“He's awake! Heeey buddy. You hit your head back there, are you ok? We thought we lost you there for a second.” There was a pause as Ink opened his eyes more and they adjusted to the lighting. “Ink, can you hear me?”

“Y... yea.” Ink could hear a sigh of relief from everybody in the room. Surrounding him were Ina, Edna, Dornal, his uncle Tavin, and aunt Floretta. Tavin gave Ink a toy to play with and a card which read *Get Well Soon*.

“We should let him get some rest. He looks really tired. Don't struggle Ink, just relax.” Everybody left the room except for Dornal. His father knelt beside his bed and began whispering. “I was afraid Ink. I thought we had really lost you. You're a very special child, you have yet to unlock your full potential. It would have been too soon. I got faith in you buddy, you can get through this.” His father stood up. “I'll let you get some rest.”

After Dornal left the room, Ink fell asleep. In the dream within his dream he saw much chaos. It was everywhere. Everything was red (a color which did not yet truly exist in Lys), ceramic and shiny. Something was not right, and the chaos turned into decay, and then deep black destruction. Fear overwhelmed Ink as he tossed around in the hospital bed. When he awoke he was sweating profusely and breathing heavily.

Not sure what to think of everything he decided to dismiss it for now. His head still hurt, he needed to relax.

But does your head really hurt?

Ink looked around his room. Nobody was anywhere to be seen. His mind was playing tricks on him, he must've hit his head really hard. The memory loss was so intense, it was as if he had just came into existence.

Harmony

After a week he was still weak, but able to leave the hospital and go home. He was given medicine and a schedule for taking it. A month later, he no longer needed the medicine.

Once fully recovered Ink wanted to go outside and play. All he wanted to do was soak himself in the small white star that beamed down on Fahlls. The outside world felt more real to him than life inside the sandy tan house or life inside First Day Hospital. Out here he could see the wildlife of the planet. Wine-pigmented plants brought his yard to life as it danced in the cool wind. He tried to dance with it, whether Ina was around to laugh at him or not. The closer he looked to the wine-colored grass the more

he could see tiny insects crawling around. There were so many of them, all different shapes, sizes, colors and all moving differently. Some seemed to sit on the blades of grass as they ate their chairs, some sat on the wind itself as they moved between colorful flowers. All of it seemed to move in harmony, and that harmony was the wind.

Ink had several trees in his yard, some of which were black, some of which were an almost white in color. All of them had leaves the color of wine, and occasionally Ink would gather all of the leaves and compare them with each other. Above he could see very fluffy orange clouds, and they moved in unison with the harmony of the wind. Ink felt most at home here, because it made him feel whole. As much as Ink wanted to see the outside world when the night came, he was never allowed to. He wanted to know as much as he could about the world.

10

Through time he began going to school and began learning how to read, write, and preform simple math calculations. He excelled quickly as he was introduced into some of the advanced learning classes. His other classes became boring, and seemed less important. His grades in those classes began to fall, and thus he was no longer allowed to attend the advanced learning classes. The world in which he felt trapped did not seem to dance with the wind's harmony like all the life in his backyard.

20

Ink continued to play by the rules and advanced through the years until completion. Along the way he learned that he was very interested in math and science, and felt the need to further his understanding of the two. He knew that the fields of math and science knew certain things about the world that he was interested in knowing. He was finally able to look into the night sky and saw that there was no apparent harmony in the stars, in fact there was no apparent movement at all. Math and science seemed to speak the story of the true harmony of the night sky, and he yearned to feel that harmony within and understand it.

25

Ink began his road to becoming a scientist by taking college training at Gimimo University. Throughout school Ink never made lasting friendships and once he started going to the University he moved away from his family. Ink had a one track mind, and that track lead him to his first job offer at a company invested in exploring the Universe. It was a world before money, but not a world before work. The company was named NOETE, which stood for the National Organization for Extra Terrestrial Exploration.

Working with NOETE Ink was able to form a friendship with a group of people. Their job was analyzing the data that satellites and probes gathered and putting that data into computers for calculations and record keeping. That was where he met Jin and Blank.

Powerful Observations

The job was boring and mindless. It involved a lot of numbers and conversions. Throughout the process and even after each day he didn't really retain anything that had happened. Their knowledge of the heavens was limited, and Ink knew this. He not only wanted to understand what the dots in the sky might have been made of, but he also yearned to see them much closer.

Not long after he got the job at NOETE he was able to attain his own home and he settled in quite nicely. It was a small place, but it was his for the time being. As his curiosity of the heavens grew he secretly began bringing home some of the data he had analyzed. He had to be careful, any theft of company property could be seen as intent to betray.

He quickly became obsessed with the numbers, intent on finding some type of unity among the dots in the sky. The more he observed the more he began to see patterns and shapes in the numbers. There was a harmony, and he knew that he was close to finding it. There were pieces missing still, huge gaps that made him start to question everything he believed in. He had to know more.

After a long day of working he began his ritual to steal more data when he was stopped by a man in his division named Jin. “Hey Ink, are you alright man? You've been acting really strange ever since you started working here, you've hardly ever talked to any of us. Even Blank spoke within the first couple of weeks, but I don't think you've said one word in at least a month. Everything ok?”

“Yea, I'm alright Jin. I'm just... confused about everything I guess. I mean, what are we actually doing here, do you know? All that was told to me was that we were analyzing data of the sky above. What exactly are we looking for?”

“That's a very good question Ink. What do you think we're looking for? What are you looking for? Me personally, I'm looking for some sexy alien women to make fucked up babies with. So far I'm not having too much luck.”

Ink took a second to think. What was he looking for? He had to be honest with himself. “I'm looking for the unseen harmony.”

“Sounds pretty fruity if you ask me, but... to each his own. Let me know if on your journey to find harmony you come across any hot ass. I'll give you my number.” Jin handed Ink a card and Ink put it in his pocket. “You can't focus all of your energy on the world above, you have to live some time. Call me up if you want to see more of the planet we actually live on.”

And with that, Jin was gone. Ink sat down and looked at the card Jin had given him. Jin, Certified Space Pimp. There were several numbers on it, and the lettering was very elegant and crafted with precision. He put it back in his pocket and stood up.

The lights in the building turned out and Ink was alone. He spontaneously began looking for some type of tool to view the heavens, and that was when he found a glass-like orb in one of the cabinets. When he grabbed it the orb lit up the room slightly. He hid it in his bag along with some of the most recent data he had analyzed. Then he darted for the door before any of the security systems could kick on.

The moment he had exited the building he heard the click of the doors locking and the security cameras engaging. Once back home he pulled the orb out of his bag and again it glowed. Within the orb strange things began to happen. He could see the stars that were in the sky, but they were full of color and moved around as he moved the orb. It was as if he could see through all matter except for the stars surrounding Fahlls, and at an extreme magnification.

His addiction changed from the numbers to the Orb. It began to consume him, and he willingly allowed it to. At least for now, Jin would have to wait.

The Death of a King

Ink slept uneasy. Throughout the night he would wake up and want to look into the Orb once more, but knew that he needed sleep. It had been one of the longest days for him, and his mind was scattered and out of place. When he finally did get to sleep it was soundless and quick. The day rolled in and he opened his eyes a few minutes before his alarm was set to wake him. He turned it off and began his daily routine of preparing for work. He mixed up some cofte and took a shower. After he was clothed

and ready to head out to work he heard a knock at the door.

He opened his front door just as the mailman walked away. Ink looked down to see a package on the ground. He picked it up and brought it inside to see who it was from. It was from Ina, and in black marker across the side it read, “I hope you find what you're looking for.” Ink opened the box to find a strange hat, three blue and black furry arms pouring out from the top to points. Hanging from each arm was an odd metal symbol. Reading the tag on the inner brim he found that Ina had made it and apparently she owned a business of some sort named Odd's Nend. It made him wonder about his family for the first time in years. He hadn't really spoken to them too much throughout school, and not at all since he started working.

He looked at the time and realized he was running late. He sat the hat down and ran out the door. When he reached NOETE he saw that there were several strange vehicles in the lot. He walked inside to a cloud of mass confusion. People were running through the halls frantically and the phones were ringing off the hook. He walked through the confusion to his desk and was stopped by a man in black clothes.

“He works here, that's Ink!” Jin waved from behind the man and Ink was allowed to pass. He walked over to his desk and sat down.

He looked over to Jin. “What's happening?”

“Oh, not much man.”

“No, I mean why are people running around like maniacs, and who are all these people wearing black?”

“Oh, you didn't hear? Dude, King Aztar died, and they think it has to do with this place.”

“King Aztar?”

“Are you joking? Your parents never told you about The King of Fahlls? He's our fucking king! Well... he was. Anyway, he died, and they think it has to do with NOETE because we actually work for him and last night something very precious was stolen from the safe in the treasury room. There were no signs of the safe ever being opened, and the security cameras have shown absolutely nothing.

Everybody that knows about it is completely baffled and so far everything is pretty much being kept from the public. Imagine if the panic you see in here was worldwide. Nobody needs that right now."

Ink looked around. Everybody was indeed in panic, but now he understood why. They had lost their head, they were leaderless and scared. Hadn't Ink stolen that Orb? That couldn't have been it, he grabbed that out of a cabinet. He never even went into the treasury room, and definitely didn't kill the king, he didn't even...

"I like your hat man, where'd you get that?"

Ink looked up and realized he still had the hat on somehow. He distinctly remembered leaving it at home. He picked it off of his head and looked at it. It was epic and flowing, almost living and breathing with him. It mesmerized him in the same way that the orb had. He placed his Hat back on his head.

Several of the men in black coats crowded Ink. Jin and Blank were suddenly escorted out of the door, and Ink was led in the same direction. The three were taken to a dark room within NOETE, a room that Ink hadn't even known about.

In Search of Evil

Pain coursed through all life in the Universe when the king died. The first two victims of the pain were Aya and Dos, the daughters and equal heiresses to the king. Their mother had died when Aya was being born, and Dos had been too young to remember. King Aztar was all that they knew, and they were with him everyday since they could remember.

Before he passed his last breath he spoke of an indescribable darkness, an evil entity that was growing in power and would one day destroy all of existence. He had met with his top adviser and whispered the words of death into his ear. Adviser Jeffers shivered as the words ran down the back of his neck and circulated through his entire body before reaching his brain. "This being is beyond the limits of our world. We have observed it gaining in power through the NOETE observation team. They do not directly know what it is, but central intelligence indicates that it's the essence of anti-reality. We must find this evil and eradicate it from the sky before it consumes us all." The king coughed as the last of his words fell from his beard. Little white flakes of blood sprayed on his hand as he tried to gasp for breath. He looked at the blood and wiped it off on his robe. "Adviser Jeffers, I think it may be about the

end for me. Please see to it that my daughters seek vengeance by eradicating this darkness. Have Aya lead a team of our most intelligent Fahllians into space with all current technology released and hidden. We must put everything we have into this, for the sake of the Universe."

The king was soon asleep, and as Jeffers left his quarters he knew deep inside that King Aztar was beyond the scope of current medicines. His mind may have deteriorated, but the dying wish of a king was not to go unheeded.

The king never awoke from his slumber, and as his daughters came in to see him their faces were already soaked with tears. It would take some time before they could recover from such a horrible loss, but they had each other, and it kept them strong through the first weeks. Jeffers explained to the daughters what the king's dying wishes were, and in the midst of her crisis Dos took offense to the king giving Aya leadership of the group. It was true that she was powerful, but she was young and foolish. Dos felt as if the king had always favored the younger sister, and now she was beginning to feel as if the world didn't give a shit. That was when Dos decided that she would only look out for herself.

Aya also felt a little strange that she was given leadership. She was scared, and felt undeserving, but she pretended to be strong for herself, her sister, and the people of Fahlls. As word spread throughout the planet, the people became uneasy and full of doubt. Crime broke out and anxiety ran deep.

Without the king's guidance, NOETE changed focus and began the search for the most intelligent life on Fahlls. When Ink, Blank, and Jin were taken into interrogations, they were given several IQ tests and were asked morality questions to see if they were suited to undergo years in space. They were told however, that they were being questioned in regards to an investigation to the murder and theft.

Ink was nervous, because even though he knew he hadn't murdered anybody, he also knew that he had stolen quite a bit of what was considered NOETE's property. The Orb was never mentioned in the interrogations, and the treasury room was never mentioned either.

After they wrapped up, Ink was relieved to find that they didn't suspect him of any wrongdoings, and were in fact offering him a chance to explore the Universe more. Ink was confused, yet excited, and as him and his two coworkers left he was stopped by Jin. "Look man, we're about to leave this planet, do you realize that? You haven't even had the chance to see the nightlife, I can tell by the look in your eyes. You are completely blind to what life is all about. Let me take you out on the town. Me, you and

Blank. We'll have a boys night out."

"Sounds good actually. I'm going to visit my family in the morning, I'll get a hold of you after that."

Peaking

Ink went to sleep with the Orb that night, and woke up to find it in his bag. It was going with him apparently. As he sat up he noticed the Hat was on his head, ready for the day. He changed into comfortably baggy clothes and departed to his hometown of Bronville. It had seemed like an eternity since he had seen his parents and sister, and he sadly admitted to himself that he had nearly forgotten about them entirely.

When he reached his old sandy tan house he remembered nothing but the feeling of being stuck in a dream. It was as if none of it had actually happened, although he remembered growing up there. His father Dornal greeted him at the door. Ink walked in and went to sit down when his mother walked in wearing the same drypurple sundress as always and told him to wash his hands before he ate. Ink was somewhat agitated by her lack of character. He started to wonder why she would always wear the same thing, and it started to bother him. Deep within him he knew he wasn't wrong to see this as a dream. Something just wasn't right. His father hadn't changed either.

They talked for a little bit about his work, and Ink explained what happened to the king and that he had been asked to travel into space.

Edna began to cry. "Oh, you be careful out there Ink. I always worried about you. Even before you had that concussion." As Edna said this she suddenly began to age rapidly and her drypurple sundress became dirty and ragged before Ink's eyes.

"I know you have the ability Ink, you always were special, you just haven't ever been aware of your inner strength." Dornal also began to age, and Ink suddenly noticed that he was sick as he began coughing violently.

Ink ate dinner with them and then left to see his sister. She was working at her business, Odd's Nend, and as he walked through the door he saw that it wasn't very large, nor were there very many customers. Ina was happy to see him and gave him a big hug. She noticed that he was wearing the hat and told him to look around and see if there was anything he liked while she helped some customers.

As Ink wandered around the store he saw several knickknacks and odd devices. He could sense something reaching out to him from the corner of the store, and as he inched closer to it he noticed that not only was his hat twitching, but the orb in his bag was glowing as well. He walked over, and instantly saw the Mask. It stood out through everything, and somewhat glowed. “I want this.”

Ina finished up and walked over to him. “You want that mask? Are you sure?”

“Yea, why, what is it?”

Ina sighed deeply. “Well, it is the most ancient relic we have of the time before existence. Some say that it isn't actually from this reality at all, and most people fear it. This is the least traveled corner of my store, and you seemed to be drawn here, I saw it. This scares me. You can have that mask, but please be careful in space. I sense an evil presence.”

Ink left and contacted Jin. They all met up at a nightclub and Jin introduced Blank and Ink to three beautiful women. The one began talking to Ink, and Ink shied away at first but eventually started conversing. They talked about work, they talked about life, and they talked a little bit about what they believed. Jin started bringing drinks and Ink opened up even more. He began to relax his grip and stopped being so afraid to just be. Jin gave Ink a pill. He said, “This will help a lot dude, you really just need to relax and enjoy life sometimes.” Ink took the pill and continued talking and enjoying himself. Things became weird, and he enjoyed it. It made him laugh how life seemed to blend together and how the walls would breathe and reach for him. As the night continued Ink started to think deeper than he ever had before, and that was when the hallucinogens that Jin had handed him caused him to peak.

A Peek

Everything became hilarious. He laughed at nothing and everything. All of existence became a cosmic joke to him, and yet, certain subtleties of movement seemed out of place. He tried to shake the feeling and enjoy himself. “Jin, this is the best night I've ever lived, thank you. I've never really had this much fun.” The girl he had just met kept changing the way her face looked. It was as if she were shifting shape before his eyes, and her face would become wholesome and radiate beauty one moment and the next moment it screamed of evil. Her face began to drip off of her head and he had to blink a couple of times in order to regain control of rational observation.

Ink's eyes rolled into the back of his head and he was instantly light headed and on the verge of blacking out. He could hear Jin yelling at him to see if he was alright, and Blank mumbled something in the background. Then Ink's consciousness left his body as his ego shrank and he floated above to see that time had slowed down to a crawl. Ink's body slowly curled up on the ground as his two coworkers and the three ladies followed in a panic. Ink looked through the back of his forehead and into the astral plane of existence.

As Ink's spirit traveled further out of his body he reached a level of awareness not available to him until then, and Ynk woke up from within. Ynk looked around the Universe to see that life had began growing in distant regions. In fact it was the very same regions that NOETE had observed, but specifically the areas that Ink had observed. Some of the life radiated a sense of peace and harmony yet some of it had radiated with chaos. It became clear to Ynk that even though Ink was not aware of his ability to create things, he was doing it constantly. He had constructed his sandy tan house and he had constructed Edna and Dornal, as well as the rest of his life. He had changed his parents when he observed that they were timeless and lacked character, and he had created the Orb in need for answers. The Hat had been created by something that he had created, Ina, a dream state of Yna.

The Mask had also been created by Ink, and although to him its purpose was still unseen, Ynk knew fully well what the Mask could do. The Mask, Orb, and Hat all combined to form the Eye, and with the Eye Ink could see beyond what he had ever thought capable. The history of the Mask was shrouded, because it hadn't actually existed until Ink observed it. The King had only existed in dying form, and then death, and the Queen had never existed in any form but a skeleton. The past memories of each being on Fahlls before Ink imagined them into being was completely fabricated by their own minds. Each being he inadvertently created had free will, but they were molded by Ink's thoughts at the time of their creation. Upon further investigation, Ynk noticed that ownership had not been an original idea, nor several other concepts which now existed. It was as if education, houses, ownership, businesses, companies and several other systems all existed only because of a fractal representation. Ynk pondered where these concepts came from.

To Ink this dialogue with the Universe was abstract, and his emotions ran the gambit as his vessel tried to process the infinite energy that he was absorbing. All of his thoughts blurred together as he vibrated at the frequency of reality.

That was when the drugs began to wear off just enough for him to return to his body. He took a deep

breath as his organs rebooted and his ego rebuilt itself. He could hear a sizzle from his ear, as he arose. Everyone looked at him and asked if he was alright.

He felt as if he had just died, and in reality death would have been very similar, yet longer and more informative. All he got from it was a peek into the true nature of reality, and he began to feel more comfortable with the idea that the world was but a dream.

Ink went home that night and lay down in his bed. His mind began wandering and he started to think about the Mask. How it glowed to him like the hat and the orb. He grabbed it from his bag and observed it. It glimmered like a hologram as he moved it around in his hands.

Ink moved the Mask closer to his face and it began to vibrate slightly. In fact it vibrated at the same pace as he had when he left his body. Ink put the mask down in fear. He wasn't ready to know.

Onward Into Space

The next morning was the first day of preparation. As Ink raised from his bed he felt the world wobble. He let out a faint moan as blood rushed to his head. The alarm clock was blaring, he was running late. Faster than he could think he grabbed his clothes and some personal belongings. Ink sped off in a daze to NOETE where they were scheduled to take a transit to the launch facility. When he got there he got out of his vehicle and grabbed all his stuff. He ran over to the transit and noticed that he wasn't the last one to show up. He picked a seat in the back and put his stuff in the under-compartment.

“So you're going to wear that hat?”

Ink looked over to see Jin sitting across from him, and then he looked up to see Hat on his head. “Yea, I guess.”

“Don't get me wrong, it's a cool hat, it just doesn't seem very professional. By the way dude, what the hell happened to you last night? You got all giggly and then you got all weird.”

“Oh... yea, it was whatever you gave me dude.”

“Well, that chick wasn't impressed in the slightest, and she told me to never bring you out on the town again. Ha, I think she hates you man.”

“Heh... she doesn't even know me.” Ink sighed. Then he thought about what he just said. Who was he? What type of personality did he have?

“Don't sweat it bro. I heard there will be some princesses going to space with us. Kind of strange, don't you think? It's comforting to think that they will build the ship fit for royalty, but what kind of king sends his only daughters out into space as a dying wish? Not only that, but what type of civilization actually sends them when there isn't even a king anymore? Has everybody gone mad? I'm starting to believe that the king didn't even say anything about space, that this whole evil entity story was constructed to completely rid Fahlls of the royal bloodline.” Blank began to say something from behind Jin but was interrupted, “No dude, apparently you aren't understanding what I'm saying. I'm saying I think it's possible that we will all die on this trip and that the evil will still be down here on Fahlls. Hell, I could be wrong though. What do you think, Ink?”

“I don't know man. I hadn't thought about it like that I guess.”

“Yea, you need to think out of the box, read between the lines. This could be a suicide mission.”

“Are you saying we shouldn't go?”

“Shit, I don't care. I'm willing to meet the princesses, and if this is a death mission I'm going to make a royal baby before we all die.”

“Hah... you're crazy.”

“Maybe. I can live with that though.”

The transit driver walked in, looked back and then sat down.

Jin moved over and sat next to Ink. He whispered into his ear. “I heard that there is going to be one more that's going with us too. He's their bodyguard. I hear he has some type of strange mind powers. Whatever you do, try not to look into his eyes.”

Ink looked over to see a very serious look on Jin's face. Ink nodded. Jin sat back in his seat and they waited in silence for a short while. In the distance Ink started to hear female voices approaching and large footsteps. The bodyguard stepped on the transit bus and everything in the cabin tilted towards the doorway. As the giant man got fully on the bus the cabin leveled out. He walked towards the back and

looked at Jin, and then Ink. Ink, looked away and Jin snickered. The man sat down and Ink could see two girls get on the bus. The first was short and pretty. Her blonde hair flowed down to her shoulders and curled upwards. She looked at Ink with a solemn face and nodded. Ink nodded back and she sat down. The second girl was taller and had dark hair. She stared into Ink's eyes and then at Jin. Jin's eyes widened and his smile beamed at her. The older princess rolled her eyes and sat down. The front door of the transit closed and soon after the bus was moving towards its destination.

The majority of the bus ride was in silence, aside from the humming of the engine and the wheels against the road. Jin sat on the edge of his seat trying to catch a better glimpse of the older princess. The bodyguard, looked back and Jin quickly slid over in his seat and looked out the window. Ink watched humorously, but stayed silent. He looked back to see that Blank was also staring out the window.

Outside of the bus Ink could see the jungle of buildings fade slowly away and the wilderness of Fahlls creep in. Trees of dark gray began to accumulate around the road in front of them and Ink began seeing small wildlife skittering about. The further they traveled the more the landscapes unfolded before his eyes. It truly was amazing. He could see large mountains in the distance and streams of metallic liquid flowing alongside the bus. All of the hills began to flatten out and after about two hours of traveling the mountains and trees faded away.

Ink was startled from his discovery channel when Jin tapped him on the shoulder. Ink looked around and Jin motioned to the front of the bus. The young princess was standing on her seat and looking back at the group of three. Her eyes were intent and unwavering. “What are your names?”

Jin stood up in the middle of the transit and spoke for the group. “This quiet guy behind me is Blank.” Blank turned his head from the window to the princess, nodded and raised a hand in greeting, then looked back out the window. “He's friendlier than he looks.” Blank gave a cold stare at Jin. “This man with the weird hat that's sitting across from me is Ink.”

The princess looked over to Ink and into his eyes. “Hello,” Ink said in a quiet kind voice.

She looked back at Jin and Jin continued, “and my name is Jin. We are all experts and the perfect people to protect you two from any space aliens or monsters.”

“We do not need protection, we have Omega.” The princess pointed to the giant that had tilted the bus

and brought the stench of death. “My name is Aya, and my sister's name is Dos.”

“Dos...” Jin whispered.

Dos shifted in her seat. “Why are you talking to them? We're not here to make friends, we have a mission.”

“And me and my two associates are the right people for the job, you will not be disappointed.”

Dos stood up and looked at Ink in the eyes. “Hey Ink, tell your stupid friend to shut up!”

“Jin, shut up.”

Jin looked over to Ink in dismay and disgust. “Some associate you are.” Then he sat down in his seat and the bus was once again silent for the rest of the trip. A few more hours passed and they began seeing dome structures and satellite dishes. The final turn into the launch facility was a big relief, and as the passengers piled out of the bus they all noticed that it was midday already. They stretched their sore muscles and grabbed their luggage before being lead into the main entrance. They all signed in and were escorted to their rooms where they would be staying for the weeks before the launch. The first classes of their training began that night after they had eaten dinner fit for royalty. Jin had forgotten his anger towards Ink and whispered to him, “I could get used to this.”

The training was rushed, and the amount of information they had to absorb was overwhelming. Aya got to know Ink and Jin a little better, while Blank, Omega, and Dos just observed silently.

Exponential

The space training was over in the blink of an eye and they all put on their space suits for departure. They were lead to the shuttle by Wanda, their spacewalk trainer. She had briefed them on safety measures and the extreme conditions of space. She issued them all backpacks of supplies and strapped them into their seats. The doors closed and silence fell over the crew as they prepared mentally for launch.

Jin took this time to speak up. “If we don't survive, I just want to tell you all that I love you. Especially you, Dos.”

“You disgust me. If you make one little mistake I won't hesitate to have Omega hold you down while I personally spit in your face, right before he ejects you into space.”

“What's with all the hostility?”

“I'm just making sure you understand the severity of the mission.” Then Dos winked at Jin and Jin began smiling uncontrollably.

He looked over at Ink with a giddy face and danced in his seat for a couple of seconds. Then the launch codes blared over their communication speakers. Everyone did as they were trained and the shuttle was launched. There was a brief uneasy feeling and moments later they were off the ground and shooting through the sky at incredible speeds. Ink looked out the window and saw the layers of the atmosphere fade in and out as they passed each. Fahlls slowly faded into blackness as the heavens revealed their true lights. The shuttle shook as it exited the atmosphere and the launching gear separated. The reserve boosters kicked on and pushed them out of the orbit towards their first destination.

The planet was codenamed Gloom for its dark atmosphere and the ultraviolet sun that it orbited. It would take them at least five months before arrival. Luckily, the ship was equipped with enough rations for seven years of travel. It was a breathable planet, and thought to have life forms. How many or what type of life form had been theorized, but no consensus was formed.

Space was beautiful. Looking back Ink saw Fahlls in all its glory. It was massive, colorful, and full of life. He stared for many moments as the ship drifted slowly away from the planet. Then he looked around at his crew. Jin was staring at Dos with a glowing smile that wouldn't fade, while Dos was concentrating heavily on the controls, the numbers, and the readouts with a serious look on her face. Aya was staring around at space in wonder, while Omega sat still and stared straight ahead with an emotionless face. Blank was staring at the ceiling.

“How we lookin' sweetpea?”

Dos stopped everything she was doing and spun around in her chair. “Let's get one thing straight, Jin. I am your superior, you do not call me sweetpea. You are to refer to me as Commander.”

“Command me, Commander Dos.”

“And furthermore, any fraternization with a superior will result in imprisonment within the solitary confines of the box until the destination is reached. I would welcome one more advance if it meant not having to listen to you for another five months. So go ahead, say one more fucking word.”

Omega turned his chair to stare at Jin and Jin was silent but continued smiling at Dos. Several awkward moments later Omega and Dos faced forward again.

“Can we at least be friends though?”

“No.”

Jin's glowing smile faded as his anger set in and he stared at the floor. Then he looked over at Ink and shook his head.

Aya did not notice the argument, she was still staring at space with starry eyes. “What is that Dos?” she said as she pointed to the right of the ship.

“Analyzing... it appears to be a nebula near the center of our galaxy. The mixture of over 170 different gasses and particles mixed with lights from nearby supergiants creates the illusion of a pink and green web. They have codenamed it Mintgum's Web. It is not scheduled to be one of our destinations, although we are to observe it at different angles as we travel.”

“That's a shame. It looks so beautiful.”

“That may be so, Aya, but it's extremely dangerous. Life as we know it could not exist there.” Dos's face changed to one of puzzlement. “We should not be able to see that nebula until we had exited our solar system. That would have taken at least a month with our current technology, it's very strange that we can see it with such clarity.... I'm getting a message through the quantum entanglement communications. It's Wanda.”

A screen in the front of the cabin lit up. Their trainer's face appeared with a very confused look. “I'm reading you guys going at the unheard speed of seven light years per second. Is there anything unusual with your shuttle?”

“No Wanda, but it does seem that we are much further along than possible. I'll do some further diagnostics. It seems our speed is increasing at a rate which could not be explained by the thrusters. At

this rate we will reach our destination tomorrow, but whether or not we will be able to slow down is another question entirely. Are we still on course?”

Wanda looked at the readouts and calculations for several seconds. She looked back up at the comm screen. “You are. You have not strayed from the course by even a fraction. Keep me updated about any further developments. And keep your eyes peeled, there's definitely something strange going on.”

“Understood,” Dos said as the comm screen went black. She looked around at everyone and they all had the same look of absolute confusion. “It's been a long day, let's go to our quarters for some sleep. We will be alerted about any further disturbances or anomalies along the way.”

All agreed and they took their luggage and all their belongings to their assigned rooms. They all slept for about four hours, but none of them dreamed. When they awoke they were in orbit around Gloom. Their entire ship was lit up by the ultraviolet star.

Aya went to everybody's rooms and brought them to the bridge. “Everyone put on your protective suits, quickly, there's no time to waste.” They all did as told and then were scanned for any radiation poisoning. Luckily, none of them had been affected.

“We will be going down to the planet after some preliminary scans. We believe this planet to have several species of life, yet we know very little.”

Ink saw a momentary flash from his room as the Orb pulsed. He went to his room and pulled out the Orb. He focused it on the planet Gloom and instantly knew how much life was on the planet. He could see that they were fairly peaceful beings, but that they did not yet have the technology for space travel.

“Analysis notes that there are bipedal life forms on this planet and that they are violent in nature. Everybody be prepared when we go down there, we must do everything in our power to find and eliminate the evil.” Dos seemed convinced they had found the culprit.

Ink withheld his findings for fear of being charged with theft. They prepared the teleporter for travel and Ink decided to bring his bag with him.

Demons

Once on the planet they observed the inhabitants. They were tribal and fearful of the travelers. They pointed sharp weapons at them and chanted as they crept closer to the six Fahllians. “Dos, I do not believe these people are capable of being the evil that was said to destroy all of existence.”

“I might have to agree with you Ink, but even so... we must defend ourselves.” Dos pulled out her plasma weapon and vaporized the tribe without any further hesitation. “All of you must stay vigilant. This evil is deceiving, and is capable of tricking us and making us see things that do not exist. For all we know, we have yet to leave Fahlls.” Further analysis of the planet found no advancements in technology. Several tribes of the same type Dos had killed, but nothing more. “I suggest we go back to the ship. I will deploy a plasma bomb to the center of Gloom.”

“That would destroy the entire planet and all of the people here. I have reason to believe these are all innocent beings, a little more than two million of them.”

“And what makes you believe that Ink, am I to assume you are withholding information?”

Ink decided to show the Orb. His conscious told him that his freedom was worth risking as long as it saved two million innocent lives.

“Tell me where you got that?” Dos demanded.

“I found it.”

Dos grabbed the orb from Ink and it became black. She looked through it and saw nothing. She gave it back to Ink and it once again lit up with life. “You stole it.”

“That's none of your concern, what's important is that I have it now and I know how to use it. These people are innocent. Look into the Orb now.” Dos did so and saw exactly what Ink saw. It was an overview of the culture, the time line of the people and all the animals. It even translated their native language into intelligible words. It worked both visually and subliminally, flooding the mind with valuable information. Dos looked away.

“Very well. You can keep that Orb on one condition. You must report to me on all findings

immediately. If you continue to withhold information you will be confined to the box until further notice. That being said, is there anything else you would like to tell us?”

“No Commander, not at this time.”

“Teleporter activate.”

All six of them returned to the ship. Dos engaged the thrusters and they boosted out of orbit. Looking down at the planet Ink could see a violent explosion. He pulled out the Orb and observed as the planet collapsed in on itself, destroying all life on the planet within minutes. “Dos, you killed all of those people?”

“Yes Ink, I had reason to believe they were protecting the evil one.”

“But I saw no evidence...”

“I must remind you that your sole duty on this mission is to obey the command of your superior officers. You are not here to offer judgment calls nor tell me how to run this ship, is that understood?”

“Yes Commander.”

Aya looked over to Ink with a frown. Her face drooped as she looked over at Dos and the gray color in her face faded. Then she looked back to space. “The next destination is a planet called Kriddle. We should get there in three months of travel.”

“Very well. You are all dismissed, but be on the ready. We are entering an extremely volatile section of space. Anything could be out here.”

The crew separated. Ink, Blank, and Aya all went to the recreation room. Dos went to her room and Omega remained in the cockpit for his shift as the watchful eye. Jin's location was unknown. Ink and Aya played a game similar to billiards, while Blank relaxed comfortably and quiet in a nearby chair.

“Ink, I uh... I'm sorry for the way my sister acted. She's been acting strange ever since our father passed. I've been trying to be strong for her, but sometimes I feel as if she's losing her mind.”

Ink looked at her and knew she was sincere. Ink was still in shock and didn't know what to say. All

those people. His eyes lowered to the playing table and he stared through everything into nothing.

“Please understand. I am on your side, I will see to it that you are not punished. I know that you are pure, I have the ability to read people. The inhabitants on that planet were also innocent. Many lives were lost, and I shall shed a tear for each one.”

Ink looked up from the table into Aya's eyes. “As will I.” Nothing more was said regarding the Gloomlings for the following months. Time passed without any foreseeable problems as the crew got anxious to reach Kriddle. Jin stopped hanging out with Ink, and Blank rarely said anything at all. Dos stopped hanging out with Aya and so Aya became close friends with Ink. Omega did not speak one word.

As they got closer to Kriddle, Ink began looking through the Orb towards their destination. He showed the inhabitants to Aya and they both saw that this planet was indeed violent. The more they watched the more they saw a race on the planet that seemed to be entirely comprised of a black goo. They were amorphous and deadly, yet they seemed to be beneficial to the humanoid life on the planet. They would defend the peaceful bi-pedals from several demonic predators. “They are full of heart. They care for those people, they love them.” Aya looked at Ink as her eyes filled with starwater. “And my sister is going to murder all of them.” Aya turned away and curled up into a ball as her tears began to flow. Ink placed his hand on her back and tried to comfort her.

“Maybe we could somehow communicate with them and try to have them convince your sister they are worthy of saving.”

She sniffled. “It won't work. She will not listen, and we will not be able to send a signal they could decipher from this distance. Perhaps we could teleport one on board.”

“Do you think it will work?”

“It just might.” Aya's tears stopped and her face became serious as she began calculating. Ink did not understand the math, nor the controls, but he followed her directions and together they were able to target one of the blobs. “Are you ready?”

Ink nodded and Aya pushed a green button. Slowly the blob began to materialize in front of their eyes. It moved around and began making strange noises. “Ink, translate using your device.”

Ink pulled out the Orb and looked in. “He's scared. He's observing us and deciding whether we are enemies or not.”

The being became the shape of Ink and spoke. “WHO ARE YOU?” His voice was deep and raspy.

Ink and Aya looked at each other. Blank walked into the room and walked right back out without saying a word.

“My name is Aya, and this is Ink. We are on our way to your planet in search of an evil capable of destroying the Universe.” Several moments passed in silence as the being stared blankly.

“What does 'evil' mean?” Ink and Aya looked at each other once more just as Dos entered the room.

Fatal Love

Dos was barely clothed and not prepared for what she saw. She wore boxer shorts and a small white shirt. Her dark gray nipples contrasting against her light gray skin could be seen through the shirt and as she looked at the being she jumped. Her breasts danced in unison with her long black hair. Jin appeared from the shadows behind her wearing only his pants. He put an arm around Dos and she pushed him away gently. “Get my plasma weapon you idiot!”

Jin looked forward at the being and ran back into the shadows. The being turned to look at Dos and she jumped again. “OMEGA!”

Loud banging was heard as Omega ran into the room. Aya stood in front of the being and began crying. “Do not harm him, he is not evil. He doesn't even know the meaning of the word. Please, give him a chance to defend his planet.”

“How did he get here?!”

“Me and Ink brought him here using the teleporter. He is from Kriddle. We've watched his species and all life forms on Kriddle and we've decided that they are not our target. Please listen to him.”

“MY NAME IS SID. MY RACE IS A RACE OF GUARDIANS. WE WATCH OVER THE KRIDDIES AND PROTECT THEM FROM THE INHABITANTS OF OUR PLANET. WE MEAN YOU NO HARM.”

“Let me get this right... You and Ink went behind my back to bring one of these monsters to the ship, endangering the entire crew and our mission objective? Am I understanding this correctly?”

Aya looked to the ground. Ink interjected, “We know for a fact that they are not the evil we seek, but that they deserve to live. They have done nothing wrong.”

“Oh Ink. Who's to say I wouldn't have deemed them worthy of living? Just because I destroyed Gloom doesn't mean I will come to the same conclusion again. I am not a monster.” Dos looked at Ink and then at Aya. “Show me what the Orb sees.”

Ink held the Orb in front of Dos and she observed the life of Kriddle. She watched for several moments and looked away. “I see... and you both believe they deserve to live. Very well, I will allow him to stay on the ship under Omega's supervision. If he proves to be worthy by the time we reach Kriddle we will allow his planet to remain.” Jin returned with the plasma weapon. Dos grabbed it and handed it to Omega.

Over the next month Omega did not move his eyes from Sid for one second. When Sid slept, Omega slept, but he slept lightly. Any time that Sid shifted in his sleep Omega awoke, alert. As a result Omega became crankier than usual.

In the meantime, Aya and Sid were getting to know each other. Sid told stories of life on Kriddle and in the peaceful times how he would play with the Kriddies. He truly did love them, and he was beginning to miss them dearly. Aya's heart went out to him. She told him about her father, the king of an entire planet. She explained that even with all that power, he never let it go to his head. He was a gentle father, and he was kind and merciful. Fahlls was not the same without him, and neither was Aya.

Omega watched in disgust as they hugged each other. Ink observed but said nothing. He continued to look through the Orb, and as ordered report any findings to Dos directly. It was as if Aya was no longer the leader of the expedition. Aya didn't seem to notice, she was too entranced with Sid. His heart was bigger than any she had ever seen, she was beginning to believe she loved him.

Sid reflected her feelings. All his life he had spent in complete chaos, and only now was he able to relax and enjoy life. His vibrations became in tune to Aya's as they talked more and more in depth about their lives. Dos matched Omega's disgust. After about a month Dos had to do something. “Ink, I need to talk to Omega in private, take the plasma weapon and if Sid poses a threat, eliminate him.”

Omega handed his weapon to Ink and off they went into Dos's conference room. Ink looked through his Orb to observe their conversation. He saw that Blank and Jin were also in there, and all were seated at the table.

In the meantime Aya and Sid were essentially “holding hands” as they sat on the couch in the recreation room. They whispered to each other and Ink was uneasy, but happy for them. He had never experienced such romance, and yearned to one day. In the conference room Dos began to speak. “It has come to my attention that Aya has been compromised and I must now assume full command of this mission. Aya is a strong Fahllian, and to see her come under Sid's spell so easily tells me that he might very well be the evil entity we seek to destroy. Under her command, this mission is doomed to fail. Is there anybody in this room who would disagree?” All were silent. They seemed to understand each other. “My plan is an extreme one. We must destroy Sid before he completely consumes Aya, but we must be careful not to hurt her. Any suggestions?”

Blank shifted in his seat. Ink could see his discomfort through the Orb. Jin looked over to him briefly and then back to Dos. “I say we need to first separate them, get Sid alone and then eliminate him.” Blank looked over to Jin as a sudden rush of anger filled him. He remained silent, and looked down at the table once more.

“That sounds like a good plan, Jin. You and Omega take Sid to the cafeteria while Blank and I entertain Ink and Aya in the rec room. Omega, I am putting you in charge of carrying out the objective. Grab the extra plasma pistol from the teleporter room.”

They all nodded their heads and left the conference room. Just as planned Dos challenged Aya and Ink to a team game of pool, Blank would be her partner. Aya was hesitant, but decided it was best if she spent some time with her sister. She felt slightly guilty for not being there for her the past few days. Jin walked up to Sid. “Hey dude, let's go get some food for everyone.” Sid and Aya looked at each other and smiled and Sid then left the room with Omega and Jin.

Aya had a bad feeling in her gut as they walked off. Something about Dos didn't seem right, she could sense it. Even Blank was a bit on edge, and Ink appeared to be sweating profusely. She looked down at Ink's Orb and saw sweaty hand prints where he must have been gripping it tightly. “Maybe I should go help them get the food.” Aya pleaded.

“Nonsense, spend some time with your big sister. I haven't played you in this game the entire trip.”

Aya swallowed. “Ok, but I forewarn you, Ink and I are really good at this game.”

It only took a few minutes before loud explosions were heard from the other end of the ship. The methane they needed in order to breathe exited the ship rapidly as Omega's fist went through the outer hull. The four in the rec room ran to the cafeteria. One of the tables was charred to a crisp, proof that the plasma weapon was attempted. Omega continued swinging as Sid jumped around the cafeteria with ease, and with each swing Omega ripped a giant hole in the ship. “SID, NO!”

Aya began glowing as her hands went upwards. Everybody else then began to glow slightly as they were all dragged out of the ship and into space. They seemed to be protected from the extreme temperatures of space, and no longer needed any air to breathe. It was as if they could now breathe space. They also seemed to be able to control their motion as if they could fly. Dos flew over to Sid. She held her left arm up and pointed it at him and yelled, “I cannot allow you to live!” A field of glowing yellow energy began to build around Dos's hand. Aya flew in between them in an instant and held up her arms. A tear fell from Dos's eye. “I'm sorry Aya,” Dos said as she uncontrollably released the energy at her sister.

Domino

They all watched in horror as Aya screamed in agonizing pain. The energy enveloped her and her body began twisting and crunching as it collapsed in on itself. Her screams faded into space as her body slowly transformed into small yellow crystals. A single uncontrollable thought passed through Dos's head before it was halted by sheer shock. *What if I am the evil?* For several seconds after the transformation nobody's eyes left Aya. The yellow crystals shined intensely and then dimmed to a steady glow.

Ink saw his mask out of the corner of his eye, floating through space towards him. It began to glow. He grabbed it and put it on his face. The Mask grabbed his face and forced it to look back at the crystals. *She didn't mean to, please show her mercy.*

Mask then looked at Sid. Through the mask Ink saw an indescribable rage building from within Sid. Sid had been programmed from birth to love the Kriddies and protect them, and so it was easy for him

to love Aya. Instinctively he saw Dos on the same level as a demon from Kriddle, and he was one of the best when it came to destroying a demon. Strategically, Omega served the most threat to Sid. Mask then looked at Jin. He was in his shock, but through his shock he knew that he would be there for Dos no matter what. Mask then looked at Blank, who was completely flabbergasted with a hint of rising anger. He had also grown protective over Aya because she had reminded him of his little sister, Tarli, who he had been friends with for ninety-seven percent of the time between her birth and his departure to space.

Ink floated closer to the crystals when Sid stretched out and grabbed for them. Before either could get to them, the gems glowed brightly before imploding within. The gems were gone but space time continued to bend inward.

“No Aya... don't do it.” Dos managed to say.

Ink looked to her as the bend began to sink deeper behind space. “What is she doing, Dos!?”

“She has the ability to create wormholes. How do you think we got here so quick? Did you notice that she was also aging faster?” Ink had noticed actually, but only on a subconscious level. “She was... the strongest person I had ever met. Her and Sid have possibly lived five years in the month we were together. That is why I had to try to...”

The wormhole expanded and Sid was dragged in. Dos's heart began to race. “Where do you think it's a wormhole to?” Ink asked.

“If I know my sister, we all need to follow.” And they all did. The gems sped across the wine-colored mountains of Fahlls and Sid followed. Dos, Jin, Blank, Ink, and Omega could all fly. Aya entered the capitol city, and behind her, Sid's rage got the best of him. He began destroying houses and everything in his path. He became a bullet, passing through several bystanders and killing them instantly. The gems entered the castle which Aya and Dos had both grown up in. She blasted through walls and as Sid followed he just made the holes bigger. They entered the tomb of the King and above the King's coffin floated a single blue gem that glowed with ferocity. Sid stretched out and was able to grab onto the gem for a brief moment before the Blue Gem created a forcefield around Aya.

By that time the other five had arrived and Sid sat in the corner behind Aya in pain. Part of him glowed with a yellow fire.

Ink's mask made him look at Dos again. She knew something that she wasn't telling. Mask then moved to focus on the Blue Gem. “Dos, is that your dad?” Jin whispered into her ear. She looked back at him with tears in her face. Dos ran up to the gems and their glows shined across her face. She absorbed their light which was magnified by her tears. Sid spoke up from the corner.

“You murdered your little sister and your father?”

Dos's gaze sniped Sid in the corner. “I did not murder anybody. My dad was already dead, and Aya killed herself to save you.”

Sid boiled at that. He got up and walked slowly towards Dos. “Is that the line of bullshit you plan to tell yourself in order to sleep at night? Aya told me about Gloom. You murdered every one of th...” Sid's rant was cut short as Omega grabbed him from behind. For being such a large Fahllian, Omega was surprisingly shadowy. Dos walked up to them, “I was under orders to use that bomb to destroy Gloom. There was nothing I could have done, my mission was very specific.”

“And what exactly was your mission?”

“I'm not under enough authority to tell anybody that information.”

“Oh how convenient, your creativity for excusing complete genocide has run out. Perhaps you won't sleep tonight after all?”

“And what about you, Sid? You've murdered, I heard you telling Aya how good you were at murdering 'demons'. I also saw how easily you slaughtered my hometown.”

“Yea, I was a little pissed, Dos. If you remember correctly, YOU HAD JUST TAKEN AWAY SOMETHING I LOVED.”

Dos began to charge up the same crystallizing attack that she had used twice before. “I LOVED HER TOO!” and she had. Even if Dos had never outwardly admitted it, Aya was her lifeline, as her father had been.

Blank stepped into the few inches between Dos and Sid and Dos screamed at him to move. He put his arms up and echoed back at her. “VOW TO ME YOU WILL NEVER USE YOUR POWERS AGAIN!”

Sid struggled but had a zero percent chance of escaping Omega's grip. “You're going to kill all of us. I can't believe you would sacrifice yourself for her Omega.”

“I will not be harmed.”

“Blank, I hope you understand that I can't stop myself once this has started. If you move now I will vow to never use my powers again.” Dos struggled as she tried to hold the attack back for as long as she could. It was not easy. “HURRY, MOVE NOW!”

It was too late. Blank had either hesitated or chose to sacrifice himself. Either way, he had crystallized into a cluster of wine-colored gems, floating in mid air. They joined the blue gem and the yellow gems. Together they gave off a white glow that had flares of rainbows surrounding it. The gems got so close that they appeared to be one solid white gem. Dos fell to her knees. Then she looked behind her to the entrance of the throne room.

A woman stumbled in and breathed heavy. It was Wanda. Somehow she had been hit by Sid on his rampage through the city and she had followed everyone's path. Dos got up and ran to her as she fell to the cobble floor. Wanda was dying. Dos threw the unpromised vow away and began concentrating all of her remaining energy towards Wanda. Her hands began to glow green, and then Wanda began to glow as well. Her body became a ball of light and then it condensed itself into a green wand shape. Dos held it as her tears continued to fall. She asked herself why she did what she did and vowed to herself silently that she would never use her powers again. Sid remained silent.

Ink became the translator for the gems. They could speak to the others, but only through emotion. Ink's Orb, Mask, and Hat all helped to understand them. They made Dos the queen of Fahlls, and ordered that Sid be sent back to Kriddle. No harm was to become of him by any of their hands.

Solo Mission

28

Ink spoke to the gems. He gave them the hat and the orb and the mask, as well as the wand. Together they focused the white light into a beam which shot out the top of the gems and blasted a whole in the ceiling of the throne room. *Follow this light*, the gems told him. *It leads to the true evil.* Ink reached out his hand and touched the light. A wormhole appeared and sucked Ink in. It took him to the middle of deep space to the Spirit Symbol which had a dark glow to it. The white light spoke to him. *You must*

absorb our energy in order to destroy it.

Ink reached back into the light again and all of the pieces forged armor around Ink. The beam was gone, but Ink's armor glowed around him and clanked as he began floating towards the Spirit Symbol. He raised his fist and brought it down on the symbol. Like a rocket or a spiked volleyball, the armor slammed the Spirit Symbol to the far reaches of space. The armor fell off and mask, orb, and hat formed the eye once more and with the wand it was able to watch the path of the symbol. It crashed into planet after planet and built up a GMMO (gigantic moving massive object). Like a snowball it eventually got so big that it was able to absorb nebulae and destroy galaxies. Ink watched as it eventually reached the edge of Syl. The speed was beyond any comprehension, but slowed down to a stop before reaching the edge.

Ink stared at the edge of the Universe through the Focused Eye. He was speechless. He had never pondered the edge, and therefore was never able to expect to see it. Now that he had seen it he wasn't truly able to even understand what he had seen. Ynk of course knew.

Ink reflected his thoughts off of the edge. His thoughts were death. He had done nothing while perhaps trillions of civilizations had been destroyed. People he'd grown close to had died. He had done nothing but watch. He was weak. He was scared. How long until he was dead? Could he die? His fear began to manifest, as if it hadn't been the entire time. He observed that the Spirit Symbol was still intact. He changed the eye's focus to Kriddle. A dark creature had been born from nothing. It knew its name to be Adradiggi from birth. The demons of the planet praised him. He strengthened them and focused their power and fed their thirsts. Sid was not happy.

Ink faded from existence. He looked into his hand and felt and saw a small white pearl. He held it and remained invisible as the beam faded and the focused eye became a pile of stuff. Ink collected it all and teleported back to Fahlls. Nobody saw him that night, and for several years to follow. He left the gems, the mask, the orb, and the wand in the King's tomb but kept the hat... and of course the Pearl.

Reblending

A night of rainy gloom is said to bring about the true unfolding. Prophecies of the final moments speak of clouds darker than night which begin to collect above End's Pass Hospital in Old Relstin. The clouds seem to loom for several hours, building in mass as the minutes tick by. None of the onlookers will be scared; they will have known things were at an end for quite some time. They are decaying, their structures disintegrating. They are ready for death.

Within the hospital, a baby is being born. The mother screams bloody murder from room 230 of the maternity ward. The screech echoes through the halls. All personnel and patients of the facility close their eyes in anticipation of Rhun.

One by one, people will begin to die. First to die is his father, who has struggled through life as best he can given the decaying world around him. He is one of the last true warriors the Universe has, and has been through a lot. He has become strong mentally, yet sick and physically weak. His name is Karden, and he is determined to see his son born before he releases his grip and surrenders to the black energy of creation.

His wife, Tarin, is a strong soul. Her and her husband radiate with energy and willpower, while the world around them turns slowly to dust. They feed off of each other and make each other stronger, but in the end of days, even the strength of the soul will not be enough to prevent the reblending. When she begins crowning, Karden becomes confident that he has done all he was meant to do in this realm and releases his grip on life, surrendering himself to the pain of living. His body slowly turns to dust. Tarin's heart sinks, and with it, her blood pressure. Moments later she is confirmed dead.

The baby remains in perfect condition, but an emergency c-section must be preformed or he will surely die. Once the cut is made, the surgeon turns to dust. The receptionist dies of a heart attack moments later, and all patients in attendance will begin to die off rapidly. The doctor clears the breathing passages of the newborn and then it screams. Ninety-nine percent of the staff becomes one with the Universe. The doctor cuts the cord and wraps the baby in a blanket. He places the crying child softly into a crib and then he turns to dust. By the end of that day, the only living souls in the hospital will be a nurse and Rhun.

Nurse Magdoline understands why she remains, and she is happy to oblige. After all, it is her job, her sole purpose in life. She begins to watch over the baby. She feeds him, clothes him, and teaches him. She becomes his mother, and he is a quick learner. He is like any baby, joyous, free spirited, hungry, and sometimes cranky. He laughs a lot and eventually learns to crawl.

Magdoline thinks to take pictures at times, but knows how completely pointless that would be. Instead, she just enjoys the time she has left in this realm, enjoys being a mother. After all, she was never able to have children of her own.

Rhun's first word is "mumma", and it makes her smile every time he says it. They cuddle and they play often.

Time will blur by when Rhun begins to talk better and starts taking his first steps.

One night in the park, as Rhun sleeps in the tent, Magdoline decides that she needs to write him a letter. As the final stroke of the pen leaves the paper, nurse Magdoline becomes nothing more than stardust.

Two

"Mumma?" as Rhun wakes he looks around frantically for Magdoline. When he does not find her he begins to cry. He crawls around the inside of the tent and covers his legs and hands with the dust of Magdoline. His skin will be blacker than night, and he is the very last direct descendant to Ina. His spherical head mimics that of Lysandus and Ink, but his eyes are very distant and twisted. Seemingly random yet balanced on both sides, jagged edges and curves forming the sockets, abstract like a Picasso painting. To look within them will be to stare into a black hole of death, an endless abyss.

Rhun cries for hours, his screams echoing through the morning and into the night. No lifeforms answer his lonely cries for help. His world is dead. Once Rhun stops crying he begins listening. The only thing he hears is the malevolent wind swimming through dead trees. He listens a bit longer and still hears nothing more than his breathing. He is alone. The thought that he might be forever alone begins to surface in his mind, and then he cannot let go of the idea. It grips him like a muscle grips to a knife that has passed the flesh. He cries until he has a headache.

Rhun slams his baby hands to the ground and the tent becomes ablaze. The fire spreads quickly and

doesn't hesitate to engulf the entire tent. The wind gushes and blows the cinders throughout the inside and all over Rhun. That is when he sees the note and pen.

He instinctively throws his tiny baby body onto it, protecting it with his life and receiving blisters and burns as the embers cover his body. The note remains intact, although he isn't capable of reading it. Magdoline reads stories to him when he is growing, and he remembers enough to understand what a note is, so he keeps it safe, as well as the pen.

After the wind dies down he looks around at his world. Old Relstin is a wasteland. He wonders if it was always this way. The sky will be a dismal gray, and nothing but dried brown dirt covers the landscape. The trees are withered and broken, dry and crispy. He looks around and notices that some of the trees have caught fire. Was this all his fault? He watches the flames as they devour the dead trees with ease. The fire spreads to the dry dirt and starts to inch towards Rhun. He starts crying again, while trying to crawl away as fast as possible. He finds a large enough rock and lifts himself, then begins to walk.

He takes several steps before falling on his face. The encouragement of survival and protecting the note fuel him to not give up. He lifts himself up and begins walking with all of his will. Luckily, the fire is moving fairly slow. Rhun does not look back.

He walks for about twenty minutes, and his legs are burning. He collapses in a pile of dirt. Using his last ounce of strength he looks behind him to see that the fire is the same distance as when he starts walking. Not only that, but it stops when he does, following his every move. Rhun lays there for several minutes and notices that the fire doesn't even attempt to consume him, but everything else on the planet has become cinders.

A blinding flash invades Rhun's vision, and when it subsides there is some type of bird mutant with glasses. That is when the entire planet explodes.

Mr. Skigh

As the planet is busy exploding into several trillion pieces, Rhun will be whisked away from his homeworld to a land of gray stone. The enclosure that he's suddenly in is peaceful. Holding Rhun in his arms, the owl man with glasses makes his feathers become a dark cloak, and stands upright as his legs

grow into that of an adult Fahllian.

He sits the boy on the floor, looks down, and whispers to him. "Hello Rhun." Rhun breathes slowly and heavily as he looks up at the man with glasses. Behind his glasses are two burning red eyes, and they glow with the chaos of insanity. How does this man know him? Where is he now? What is going on? The strange man smiles and Rhun begins to cry again. The stone enclosure around him begins to crumble as the cry echoes throughout the hallways of Castle Distonia. The building begins to collapse.

Rhun is grabbed by the strange man and picked up. Rhun struggles, and slams his balled up baby fist on the strange man's chest. The man coughs up blood onto Rhun's face and whisks them both away to a planet with open yellow grassy plains.

He puts the child down in the grass and steps away. "Damn kid, you throw one hell of a punch. I can see you don't really want my help, but one day you will, and when you do call out to me. I will hear you. My name is Mr. Skigh, and when you are ready, I can help you." Then the stranger disappears.

Rhun looks around in fear, but once again he’s alone. The sky is a modest pink, lit by the red sun surrounding Littonia. Little does Rhun know, this planet used to be inhabited by a race called the Ancients. The Ancients were so in tune with the Universe that their wisdom surpassed all other life.

In the future, much like his homeworld of Old Relstin, Littonia will have become dead as decay itself. The yellow grass that covers the planet is lifeless and dull. In the distance Rhun can see ruins of some forgotten civilization. As he walks towards the ruins he sees a dusty yellow moss growing on the chipped structure. He begins thinking that if this moss is growing, and he himself was born not long before, then this world can’t really be dying. Can it? As the thoughts pass through his head he notices that some of the smaller rocks are violently exploding into nothing. The buildings crumble faster and faster into dust with each step he takes. The moss dies and becomes a part of the rock, which then crumbles into dust, becoming a part of the ground. When he finally reaches the town it has all dissolved into nothing. Rhun explores Littonia more and feels nothing but the decaying crumbling ashes of a once lively planet. Even the grass begins to die within moments, and as Rhun walks he begins making huge cracks on the unstable surface. Knowing that he really has no choice, Rhun screams, “Mizzer Skigh!” The owl man appears again and looks at Rhun in the eyes. As they stand on the surface and stare at each other, loud explosions will be heard all around them. Rhun knows that this planet is on the verge of destruction, and yet he knows that this Skigh person knows answers to all his questions. Skigh

extends a hand and stares at Rhun with an expressionless face as the planet violently merges with the Universe.

"Call me Nyt." Rhun reaches his hand out and Nyt grabs it. A split second later the next outermost layer of dimension Lys will collapse.

The Rip

The two appear at the new edge of the Lys dimension, in deep space. Neither one of them is affected by the extreme temperatures of space, nor have any need to breathe. They are each unique beings.

Rhun looks around in wonder as the stars twinkle and flicker colors in the distance. He witnesses things his baby mind cannot begin to fathom as he floats next to Nyt. They are at a place known as The Rip, Nyt has brought them there. It is formed in the Age of Creation and after that it's mostly forgotten. Several beings from Syl brave their way into Lys to wreak havoc over the ages.

Rhun is still looking at the stars when they gradually turn black as space itself and then cease to exist. Rhun turns to Nyt. "D…Dad?" Nyt frowns. "Afraid not." He looks down at the note Rhun's still holding. He tries to grab for it but then thinks against it. Then he takes off his backpack and straps it to Rhun. "You'll need this." Then Nyt grabs Rhun and throws him into The Rip.

Rhun tumbles through the dimensional chasm for what seems like days, although time soon becomes abstract and blurs past him. His screams echo through the dimensional hallway, but unlike his time on Old Relstin and Littonia, he will not be alone.

There are hundreds of beings entering Lys through The Rip. A few of them notice him and try to change their trajectory in order to intercept him. One demonic creature is eventually able to grab hold of him, but soon enough it becomes nothing more than a charred black skeleton, and then it becomes a cloud of dust which drifts away. Rhun watches this in wonder, curious as to why he seems to be the only thing not dying, aside from Nyt.

Syl's Backdoor

Rhun finally gets dumped into Syl, his gravitational pull shifting once reaching the other side, shooting him upwards and at an angle, landing him on the edge of some cliffs. As he hits the ground it

cracks beneath him, crumbling into nothing, dropping him into a pit of skeletons.

When Rhun is able to catch his composure, he looks around. The dirt below has flooded with blood and turned to mud. The skeletons surrounding him reach for each other as if they're all in the midst of an ancient battle. As he looks around, the skeletons crumble into dust and the dust is carried away by the wind.

In the distance Rhun begins seeing the black fire which all Syllians are familiar with. It creeps curiously closer to him. It appears to reach out and speak subliminally, pledging its allegiance. He isn't afraid of it, and even feels like waving, to greet it like an old friend. The friendly neighborhood wave of destruction.

Rhun noticed some type of small squirrel-like demon, black and thorny, running away from the destruction. Its tail is jagged like a bolt of lightning and its face is monkey-like. When it gets close enough to notice him it stops and stares. Then it looks around and checks the black fire. Feeling it has a safe distance from the fire, the animal makes itself small, wiggles its butt like a cat about to pounce, and in an instant it darts towards Rhun. It tries to sink its razor sharp teeth into Rhun's neck, but the teeth can't puncture his skin. It tries to claw at his eyes and face, but only ends up tickling Rhun. When Rhun laughs, the creature gets scared and hides.

Rhun tries to go after it to pet it, but it's fast and he still has trouble walking. Rhun reluctantly gives up on the creature and spots a bright light in the distance, opposite the black fire. He begins to walk towards it and hears the squirrel demon follow. He looks back but it is stealthy, remaining hidden. He names it Curious.

Together, they walk up the hill towards the light. At the top he finds that there is a very large and tall building with a searchlight attached to the side of it. Rhun finds a door in front of him and lets himself in. Three high ranking officers are dealing out their daily punishments when a guard wearing rubber gloves sees Rhun and picks him up. The guard walks over to the other children, speaks in some alien language, sets Rhun down, and then walks off. The three officers look over to Rhun and snort, smiles dripping with blood and drool. It isn't long till their filthy hands are done beating a bloodied little blond, and they are reaching for Rhun. The child fearlessly steps forward as the last one to be punished runs off.

The first officer to meet his final fate is the one with the clumpy brown hair and scabby face. His hand touches Rhun's head and then his arm is on fire. His hand becomes a charred bony stick, and then the rest of his body begins to disintegrate. The other two die in similar fashion, the sloppy green-faced one tries to punch Rhun, and the gray creepy guy tries to tackle him. The guard and the children all stare in awe as their charred skeletons crumble down to ash piles.

The guard says something to him, and then yells at the kids. They all jump in unison and begin walking in a single-file line towards the exit. Rhun stands there confused, until the guard yells at him and then points to the kids. Rhun follows the children up another hill and between two long buildings made of steel. At the end of the buildings is a tall fence which is opened, revealing a long dirt road. Up ahead Rhun can see a schoolhouse on the left. It appears to be abandoned, forgotten by all. It's very similar to a church, with a needle on the top which reaches to the skies above.

Rhun looks up to see that it isn't really a sky at all, not really. Above him is just some more stone, with some structures clinging to its angled surface. Gravity is different in Syl, seemingly random yet consistent enough to harbor life. A shattered reality, devoid of mercy and remorse.

Behind the school is fenced in and there is no playground equipment. As they are led into the front door, Rhun overhears the guard talking to the man outside. Then they both look at Rhun in amazement. Within the schoolhouse of Syl's backdoor is where Rhun will learn a universal Syllian language.

Growth

Playt

Scidryl

Bound to clash and suffer pain

Playt's life changes drastically after he fuses with Beth. The primitive clothes he had made from the deceased beast are gone, and have been replaced by baggy white pants. He wears no shirt, and Beth's family can tell that their daughter has changed, for she was once pink and is now red. She also seems to now walk like a little boy, and their suspicions cause them to call a town meeting.

The town meeting confronts "Beth" and from within Playt she speaks in her soft voice that is no longer alien to his mind.

"I like Playt, he's a fun kid. Let us be, we are one now."

The crowd roars and the meeting's cabinet tries to calm them with amplified roars. One cabinet member stands up and the crowd goes silent. It is the eldest, the wisest, Kripkoo McParch from whom the whole planet seeks answers. They hold his word above all others.

"This 'Playt' she speaks of is a demon. He has made her red; he has taken control of her body. I saw this creature when I was a child and I barely survived. To this day he has not aged more than five years. He is a lurker. A demon. He is a MONSTER!!"

The crowd roars and stands up in their seats. The sound is deafening and seems to carry for several solid moments until Kripkoo raises his hands. They sit down slowly and the rumble quiets. Off in the distance there is a shout, "Kill it!!!" the anonymous crowd member spews, and with that the crowd roars louder than before.

"NO!!!" Kripkoo McParch's voice booms over loud speakers. The crowd quiets down and he continues. "IF WE CAN HELP IT I WOULD LIKE TO NOT COMMIT MURDER ON THIS DAY. SHE IS A LITTLE GIRL; THIS MUST NOT BE OUR FIRST ANSWER. GATHER YOUR RESOURCES PEOPLE, FIND ANYTHING YOU CAN ABOUT THIS PLAYT, AND REPORT YOUR FINDINGS TO ME. UNTIL THEN..." Kripkoo looks over to Playt. "I SUPPOSE WE WILL

JUST HAVE TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS ONE."

The crowd rumbles again, but this time it is more in confusion. They are lost and unsure. The eldest steps down and calls a close to the town meeting. Everyone goes home, and Beth's parents bring home the Kid Playt. They feed him, but keep their eyes on him.

"Does Playt scare you guys?" Beth says from within.

The parents look at each other uncomfortably and then back at their new red child. "He isn't supposed to be here. You are too young to be tied down Beth. I demand now that Playt release you." Her father speaks in his uneasy tone.

"But he doesn't know how. It was my fault we are fused together, not his."

"Go to your room! I cannot believe a single word you speak when you look like that."

Many days pass in this fashion. Nobody will listen to Beth, and the entire town looks at Kid Playt with growing tension and concern.

Kripkoo thinks for many days, and in his opinion, this is dangerous. Nobody has returned any information on Playt. He cannot allow a potential demon to live in the city for much longer. He doesn't trust it. He decides finally to call a meeting of his own; however this meeting does not include the whole town. Instead, this one only includes the town's highest authority. The Mayor, the Sheriff, the top deputies, and the elders are all there.

McParch cuts to the chase. "We must kill this demon. He must not be allowed to spread his disease amongst our people. If he is allowed to run rampant, then none of us will survive."

The Mayor stands up, and for the first time somebody counters Kripkoo's views. "But, what of Beth? She is still alive, and she is but a young child. You said it yourself, what changed your mind?"

"I know what I said, but Beth has already been killed. The entire town was about to lose their minds, and I couldn't let it happen. He uses her voice to deceive us. Can you not see that?"

Mayor Zahmiv, who is a stressful man to begin with, is now sweating profusely. They are talking of murder, and in Black Leaves murder in any form is a crime. Deep in his heart he cannot believe that

Beth is dead. He's an old friend of her parents, and over the years has gotten to know Beth rather well. She is adventurous and brave, but not stupid. If she had felt any danger from Playt she would not have gotten anywhere near him. In fact she seemed to have a sixth sense, and could smell a storm from a day away.

Zahmiv sits down and looks off to the side. “You speak of murder Kripkoo.”

“I speak of the planet’s safety. One life is nothing compared to the lives of many.”

“And so we just kill this little girl, and then be happy about it? Well I’m sorry Kripkoo, but I cannot let my police force do it. It is still murder.”

“I don’t accept anybody to be happy about this. If you refuse to cooperate we will just have to go beyond your power, and do it ourselves. If you try to stop us I will simply have you killed.”

The Mayor looks McParch in the eyes and knows he isn't bluffing. Mayor Zahmiv looks around the room suddenly feeling alone and helpless. All this time he thought he had power, but he had just been a pawn. In the end, his word held no water.

After McParch’s meeting, those who attended head back home to be with their families. They all know what is going to happen, but they keep their mouths shut.

That night, shrouded figures are seen roaming the streets of Scidryl. They start spread out, but all converge at Beth’s house. The sleeping Playt has no idea of what is happening, and continues to sleep through. In the morning, he wakes up in an extremely small room with no windows. The only light pours in through thick bars. Playt and Beth have been imprisoned.

The Kid waits behind the bars until someone passes. “What’s going on?”

The guard looks at the young boy, and stops.

“So this is the voice of Playt? You sound scared. Well you should be. You have been sentenced to death.”

Beth speaks from the same lips as Playt. Her words are soft but stern. “You cannot kill him. You can only kill me.”

The stunned guard steps back and stares. “You cannot confuse me with your lies; my mind is not as weak as the others.” He gives a dangerous glare to the prisoner, and then walks away. Playt is once again alone, but not completely alone. He has Beth. He also feels the presence of two other voices. These voices are within him, and it feels to Playt as if they’ve been there the whole time.

Red: “So what now?”

Blue: “You must kill them all. They mean to harm you.”

Yellow: “The young Beth is right, they don’t have the means to kill you Red. But she is definitely in danger. You must protect her.”

Beth: “Who are these people Playt? I never noticed them before now.”

Red: “They are part of me. I cannot explain how.”

Blue: “Because you don’t know. You know nothing Red.”

Yellow: “Do not listen to Blue. He is corrupt and likes to control you.”

Blue: “Yellow is the liar. She is weak and runs away from her problems. She will only bring you down to the level of everyone else. Ignore her, and you will have unlimited powers. Nothing will be able to stop you.”

Red: “Both of you shut up. Neither of you are helping me.”

Yellow: “Just remember that you must not let this girl die. She is important.”

Beth: “I like her, but that Blue guy scares me. Are you sure these two are you?”

Red: “Not exactly, but they are part of my thoughts either way. I cannot stop their ranting and fighting. They will not go away.”

Beth: “I’m scared Red. Please don’t let them kill me. I can feel Blue’s eyes on me, he doesn’t like me.”

Blue: “Nobody likes you Beth, because they no longer trust you. They no longer care if you die, so

you might as well just give up."

Yellow: "Fight it Beth, he has no power over you, me and Red will protect you until your job is done."

Beth: "My job? What do you…?"

"Alright!" the voice startles all entities within Playt's mind. The guard is back, and opens the door. "Red demon, let's go. Your time has come."

Blue: "You can just kill him right now and get it over with."

The guard is joined by three others and they all lead Playt down a dark hallway. Playt suddenly feels déjà vu and remembers the long dark tube leading to the lair of the Abomination. He remembers what the other Playts told him and what they've done to him. This is entirely their fault, and because of them he is now being lead to his death.

The group of guards and a Playt enter a large stadium. The stadium is filled to the brim with town members. Beth takes control of Playt's eyes and surveys the crowd. She sees her parents standing there with guilt ridden faces.

The demon is escorted to the front of a stage, and police surround him. Two of them grab his arms and strap them onto the wall. Then they strap down his legs and go back to their posts.

Kripkoo's voice booms over a loudspeaker once again.

"TOWN OF SCIDRYL. I REFUSE TO REVOKE THE NO MURDER LAW, EVEN IF ONLY FOR THIS OCCASION. PLAYT IS NOT OF THIS WORLD, HE IS A DEMON, AND THEREFORE IS NOT PROTECTED BY OUR LAWS. BETH IS NO LONGER ALIVE, BUT THE REST OF US ARE STILL IN DANGER AS LONG AS THIS DEMON IS ALLOWED TO LIVE. LET US HOPE THAT TODAY, THIS ANCIENT STAGE OF EXECUTION WILL SERVE US AS IT HAS SERVED OUR ANCESTORS DURING THE TIMES OF DARKNESS. PLAYT, YOU HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF BEING A DEMON, A CURSE ON OUR CITY. YOU HAVE ALSO BEEN ACCUSED OF MURDERING A YOUNG CHILD, AND DECIEVING THE ENTIRE TOWN. HOW DO YOU PLEAD?"

“Does it matter?”

“NO NOT AT ALL. KILL HIM FREDRICK.”

And with that, a large hooded man with a sword approaches the kid. He raises his sword and swings down on Playt. The kid is not affected, but Beth screams in agony. Beth’s father stands up and objects. “Stop it now, she isn’t your enemy. Find a way to get rid of this demon without killing my daughter!”

“YOUR DAUGHTER IS ALREADY DEAD. CUT OFF THE DEMON'S HEAD FREDRICK.”

Fredrick raises the sword again and swings right through the neck of the child.

Suddenly there is a loud sound of ringing bells, and a bright but brief light.

The sword breaks in two pieces.

The crowd roars.

“CALM DOWN, WE MUST NOT GIVE UP SO EASILY. LET’S TRY SOMETHING ELSE.”

Two more guards close in on Playt as the executioner Fredrick steps away.

They attach cords to his legs and step back.

Sudden electricity is sent through Playt and pain shoots up and down his body. The pain increases and endures. Playt has no measure of the time that passes; it seems to go on forever.

His mind slips away. Everything becomes black.

When he finally wakes up he is where he started, in the middle of a field of huge black leaves.

He quickly seeks his mind for Beth and finds her mind still asleep. He thinks to look into her dreams, but decides against it. He also can feel the blue and the yellow voices in his mind. They’re asleep too and he has no intention of waking either one. Feeling as if everything is going to be ok, he closes his eyes once more and drifts away.

Revenge

Yet remains unchanged
A rock not shaped by the flow

(Playt awakes to arguing thoughts. Terror shoots through his mind when he does not hear Beth's thoughts. All he hears is Blue and Yellow trying to wake him up.)

Blue: Your friend here is going to die, Playt.

Yellow: She won't die as long as you hold Hayt off of me.

Red: You called me Playt. Does that mean that you two aren't me? What's your name then Yellow, and who are you?

Yellow: IT'S NOT IMPORTANT, GET BLUE OFF OF ME!!!

Blue: He doesn't know how, he can only listen to you.

Red: Hayt? I have some fucking questions for you.

Blue: Are you under the assumption that cussing makes you sound serious?

Red: WHO ARE YOU? TELL ME OR I WILL EXPEL YOU FROM MY MIND FOREVER!!

Blue: It's too soon for that. And you wouldn't be able to do it anyways. Your mind is weak.

(Red concentrates and pushes with his mind.)

Blue: You are too weak. But I am surprised how much your pitiful mind can...

(Red pushes much harder and Blue Hayt is thrown deep into the subconscious of Playt's mind to be asked more questions another time. For now, it is Beth that is important. He doesn't know why, but he believes every word that Yellow speaks.)

Yellow: Ok, Playt. Thank you. Beth is back, although she may sleep a little while longer.

Red: So who are you, Yellow? And why are you in my mind?

Yellow: My name is Fayt. I know it's my name the same way you know yours is Playt. Other than that, all of our memories come from your brain. This is why I knew that you could help me.

Playt: So who is Blue Hayt?

Fayt: Your guess is as good as mine.

Beth: What's happened? Why am I in so much pain?

Fayt: Relax. You are still recovering.

Beth: Why are you even here Playt? Why have you cursed me?

Playt: Don't blame me girl. I was sent here by those assholes in the Council and that damned Abomination.

Beth: So why don't you stop them. You are a demon right? You have the power to kill don't you?

Playt: I don't know. There is this one thing that lets me go anywhere I want. I can't control it though, and it stopped happening when I was sent here. Besides, you're the one that kissed me! I was just a helpless baby.

Beth: You obviously weren't helpless if you're a demon. Please release me from your hellish prison, and while you're at it, release Yellow too. You can keep the Blue voice, I don't much like him.

Playt: I don't know how. I know I have power, but I don't know how to use it.

Beth: You can at least try.

(Playt concentrates. He thinks about the council, the Abomination, and the terrible feeling that passes over him every single time he flickers. He concentrates hard, and uses his anger for what they've done, and the embarrassment that came when the little girl yelled at him)

Playt: I think I have something.

(Playt exerts a mighty force and opens his eyes to the world. One of the giant black leaves from the planet is thrown three feet. Beth claps excitedly with Playt's arms.)

Beth: Do it again! That was amazing! It would take fifty good Scidryl men to move it that far so quickly.

(Playt concentrates once more, but since he knows he can, it is quicker and stronger. The leaf flies until it smacks into a tree, which knocks down a couple more leaves. Beth goes silent.)

He continues knocking down the leaves, even though it's his duty to pick them all up. Eventually he gets bored and wants to learn how to flicker. He may be stranded here for one reason or another, but he believes that he can make it off of the planet. Most importantly, Beth believes in him.

He closes his eyes and concentrates hard. As if he has already figured out how to control it, he is whisked away from Black Leaves with Beth.

FLICKER

The planet they now stand on is full of lava. The air is not breathable and Beth begins to choke. Playt concentrates once more.

FLICKER

They are now in the middle of the sky, falling. Faster and faster they plummet.

Why do you keep bringing us to messed up places? -Beth screams from within.

Because I can't control it. I don't know where or when we are? -They fall faster.

Do you mean we are also traveling through time? -The ground approaches.

Oh yea… I think so... you didn't know that? -Even closer.

You coulda told me. -They both see inhabitants look up at them.

Oh… Sorry -Inches to impact.

FLICKER

They land on a planet that has yellow grass.

In the distance, Kid Playt can see Old Playt.

“Be quiet Beth. I have some unfinished business with this Old Bastard,” Playt whispers.

Ok.

The Kid runs silently to where he saw Old Playt. He hides behind green trees that are oddly shaped. They seem to look at him as he lurks over to where his enemy stands. The old man is deep in his own thoughts, and has no idea that the kid silently approaches.

The kid jumps at him, and…

FLICKER

Something drags them from their attack and throws them right into a void.

Playt cannot move, because technically his atoms don’t exist yet. Then there is a change, a BANG, which travels through him. He looks to his left and sees the Universe expanding. He looks to the right and sees a giant glowing ball. Its size increases as he is drawn into it. It is the beginning of time, he knows this somehow.

He is further dragged into the hot glowing ball. The closer he gets the faster he travels. He tries to flicker at the request of all three voices within him.

It doesn't work, and within moments he is traveling faster than a bullet towards the glowing ball. Everything around him gets exponentially hotter. What was once extreme heat soon becomes unbearable. Somehow, he does not go numb and instead has to bear through it.

He enters the white light and such incredible pain travels through him. He cannot think of anything but the pain, it controls all of his thoughts. He knows he is speeding ever closer to the center of the big bang, but that’s all he knows. He no longer hears the voices in his head, and finally his body goes numb. He smacks into something, quite possibly the core of the Universe. As a show of mercy, he then FLICKERs.

Now they are on a dark planet. The sky has no sun, and the only light comes from the planet itself. It is charged with electricity and sporadic streaks of lightning race across the green metal surface. Playt is

still in pain, extreme pain. For the first time since he was a baby he cries again. He screams nonstop, until finally passing out.

His dreams are filled with the other Playts. They are all taunting him, torturing him, and leering at him. Anger courses through his thoughts as they laugh and poke.

When he wakes back up he is in a bad mood. He can still feel the pain from the big bang and his skin is scorched. Looking down at his body he sees blisters and welts everywhere.

Beth wakes from inside and yells at him once more. He pushes her away like he did to Blue. He does not want to listen to her; *I have enough to deal with.* First thing on his list is to cripple each and every Playt he sees.

He FLICKERs to the council. The place is filled with darkness. He can hear the Abomination rumbling below.

He waits.

Eventually another Playt flashes in. It's the fat one. Fat Playt looks at him with unease.

The Kid sends malicious thoughts to him, coursing pain through Fat Playt. Fat Playt screams as Kid walks closer to him. He throws him against an invisible wall just like he threw the black leaves.

Fat hits the wall with a heavy force and the whole council shakes. Fat FLICKERs away but the Kid is still there. The Abomination below is getting angry and its roars pierce the Kid's eardrums. He stumbles around as the world becomes disorienting, and direction becomes an abstract measurement. He hits the floor and tries to grip the smooth surface as the Council continues to shake uncontrollably.

Beams of light appear from the ceiling as the building crumbles. Rocks slam into Kid’s face as he struggles to calm down. More and more of the ceiling falls apart and he can see white fluffy clouds above the council. He sees a flash, and then he's grabbed.

FLICKER

And he is in Blue Leaves once again. The jungle’s leaves are now bare, and there is green snow coming down from the sky. The Playt named Teen Playt is holding him, but then he puts him down.

Kid Playt grabs a tree with his mind and pulls it out of the ground.

Teen Playt looks up and sees it, and the Kid can feel déjà vu in Teen's thoughts.

Kid slams the tree right down onto Teen's head, pinning his whole body to the blue dirt. “That’s one out of the way,” Kid says with a sigh of relief. Then…

FLICKER

Back on Aspimiria, no Playts in sight.

FLICKER

Answers

Time shall be reshaped

Kid Playt seeks revenge for many years. He discovers all types of planets, from gigantic to small, boring to unrealistic. Some worlds his brain cannot interpret for the life of him and his eyes fail to decipher anything. Somewhere deep inside him he knows that these are glimpses of other dimensions. He also visits places that seem to not really exist. He is a dot in these places, and there are other dots, but they are thoughtless. Some move, but most just stay still.

He sees other Playts sometimes, and on those occasions he tortures them and then flickers away. He starts to realize that none of them will die. He is also confused when he finally comes across a Playt in a strange house that is his age. It is the only one that actually attacks him first, but he slices its stomach open with his mind energy. He learns to harness this energy, and has grown proficient. He hears Baby Playt crying on Aspimiria, and from within him, Beth comments on its innocent face. Kid approaches it, but just a few minutes before they are about to reach it, a woman and a small girl get there first. The woman picks up the baby and the three of them FLICKER away.

Memory of this is deep inside of Kid Playt’s brain, and Yellow comments on it. He decides to ignore her for now, but keeps an eye open for anything else strange.

FLICKER

He sees himself again, and begins to attack. Sudden déjà vu flushes over him so strongly that he loses

control. The other Kid Playt slashes his stomach open and then flickers away. Kid Playt is left there to bleed his white blood. It pours out of him and soaks into the floor of the strange house. Kid Playt loses consciousness.

His dreams are filled with such confusion, odd objects flying around aimlessly, and voices of concern telling him what to do and not to do, pleading to him. He understands nothing that they are saying, but still they plead. So many voices, it seems to create a cloud of misunderstanding. He sees the Playts that he has been torturing over years. They are like zombies, half corpses who walk.

Then he awakes and pukes.

Still he bleeds.

Warrior Playt FLICKERs in front of him. He crouches down and grabs the Kid.

Kid attempts to attack him in self defense but he is too weak.

"Calm down, kid. I'm not your enemy. None of us Playts are your enemy. Your true enemy is the Abomination. That's what I think, anyway... I'm not completely sure, but he seems to be the one who punishes us. We do not deserve this punishment. We must both try to join forces and kill him. But first we need to fix you." The Warrior places his gloves over the child and the Kid suddenly feels no more pain. A light shines brightly, and the Kid is no longer cut. Then they both…

FLICKER

The two Playts appear before the Abomination. It roars as it reads their malicious thoughts. The Warrior attacks and the Kid is one step behind him. Warrior Playt is thrown to the side, just before Kid Playt blacks out.

When he wakes up, the Abomination is gone, the Warrior is gone, and Kid is stranded in a place that has a bumpy black ground. Looking around, he soon realizes that he is back on Black Leaves. The bumps on the ground are the leaves, and the trees around are bare. It is autumn now, but the year is a mystery. From within, Beth speaks through Playt's lips.

"I'm home! Oh my god, I am home. I'm sick of being a part of you, Playt. You have taken me to places I did not want to go, and you have tortured me. Please release me, you know you must."

“But, I’m not sure if I can.”

“You can. If you have learned anything, you have learned that you can do just about anything you set your mind to. I’m sorry I ever met you, because you have made my life a living hell. I’m half insane now, and it’s all your fault.”

Yellow speaks from within. “She has done what she was meant to do Playt. It is ok to let go now.”

“But I like her. She has been the only one in my life I can actually trust.”

“Yellow, what was I meant to do?”

“Beth, you were meant to help Playt learn how to harness his powers. You believed in him, and you helped him learn. It is time for you to go back to your home.”

Playt sighs, and concentrates on releasing his prisoner.

A strange sensation washes over both of them, and what was one, is now two again. Playt’s eyes are normal Playt eyes again, and Beth looks into the face of her kidnapper. She has slept with him, flickered with him, cried with him, and laughed with him. She will miss him, but will never admit it.

It doesn’t matter however, because Playt can now read her mind.

“I hate goodbyes, Playt, so let’s just get this over with.” Beth bravely kisses him once again. No fusion this time however, for Playt has learned much about control. He still knows he has yet to see the full extent of his power, but he is no longer afraid to use it.

To make the pain of sorrow less, Playt flickers away. Beth wanders back to her village of Scidryl, and is shocked to see that everything has changed. She is now at least twenty years in the future, and as she talks to more of the town’s people she learns what happened after she left. Her parents have both passed away years before, and Kripkoo is still around. He is dying, but his word still holds true. The story of her execution day is a legend to them now, passed down from parent to child.

Eventually she tells the children the whole story, and it gets back to the parents. Another town meeting is held, and it is decided that she's no longer one of them. She is sentenced to death once again.

In the years that follow his departure from Beth, Kid Playt seeks out more answers to his past. He yearns to know how he has become what he is, and the sensation that he was once a different person passes through him like a broken record. He seeks out his answers in the only place he can think of. Aspimiria.

FLICKER

Playt looks around and is confused by what he sees. This does not look like the desert planet. It is dark, and blue light radiates out of the ground. There are crystals that stick out from the yellow dirt, and they seem to shine and whisper to him. The glowing crystals momentarily hypnotize him, until he hears a voice.

“Playt, is that you? My son, it is you!”

Kid Playt looks around and sees that one of the crystals has an older man trapped inside of it. He appears to have been frozen there for eternity.

“Who are you? And, if you know me, then you should be able to answer some questions about my past.”

“I am Ghester, and I have been here for many years. The last time I saw you so young you were a baby. Not Baby Playt however, your name was Lysandus at the time. You are my son.”

“Father? Have I finally found the one I seek?”

“Finding answers is not always the final step. You must live with the decisions that you have made, and you must deal with what you now have. You are in this Universe for a reason. You are meant to do great things. Many years are ahead of you, years that are shrouded in mystery. I cannot tell you anything about what is to come, only that which has already passed.”

“How did I become Playt?”

“I know not where the name comes from, but I do know that it was all part of your destiny. You were born anew once you embraced an alien entity with incredible power. The two of you fused, and created Playt. That is all I know. I’m sorry I could not be of more help.”

Yellow speaks up, and her voice comes out of Playt's mouth. "Ghester, who am I. I know you somehow, and I know that I can trust you."

"You are Alessandra, a princess of Fahlls. None of that matters anymore however; the only thing that matters is that you help Playt survive. He is a lost child, and his mind will become unstable without you. Please do not leave his body until you have to. You are his guide."

"And Blue?"

"Blue is also Lysandus, but he is very different. He was once named Evil Lysandus."

"None of this makes any sense to me father."

"Don't worry Playt, one day, all the pieces will fall into place. Until that day, keep your head high, and remember that you are all powerful, and not even time is a boundary for you."

"Yes father, I thank you for your words of wisdom. I sense that I must leave now though. Perhaps we will meet again."

"I know we will, for I just talked to you as an old man. It was not five minutes before you arrived."

"How is that possible?"

"Come on, Playt, you know that your time is random. You've met yourself before, I'm sure. At any moment, you could be at the beginning of time, and the next second you can be at the end of time. You may have learned to control where you go, but you sure haven't learned to control when you get there. It will happen eventually, but I agree with you, it is time for you to leave. Explore the Universe and never be afraid of anything."

Kid Playt FLICKERs.

Ynk

Hiding in Darkness

29

Soon after Ink's disappearance, Jin and Dos got married. Jin asked Omega to be the best man (under different circumstances he would have never asked Omega because he was afraid of him). The King's Tomb got several reinforced renovations and became heavily guarded.

Sid watched as the demons of Kriddle began to overcome the smaller cities. Thousands of Kriddies had been slaughtered in the first day. Out of desperation and rage, Sid began absorbing all water on the planet. Plantlife was the first to die off, and then the small animals. Next to die off was the Kriddies, and then his own kind, but Sid was past the point of no return. He absorbed ninety percent of all water on the planet before he was able to calm himself. He noticed that he had grown stronger with each drop absorbed.

Sid traveled to the nearest planet with water and began absorbing, completely unaware that baby Adradiggi had followed him.

Ina began to worry about her brother, but had confidence he would return some day. She kept her family strong as riots began to break out on the planet. Chaos flooded the streets as looters stole food and attacked innocent people without cause. Bartering was created to try to deal with the crime. Many people went hungry, and the majority blamed Dos. Ina was not in the majority, she had been told pretty much the whole story before Ink left on his solo mission. She trusted in Dos's leadership, but she kept it to herself. Several Fahllians had banded together and created underground anti-government groups. Just mention of her name was insult to any home.

Ina did the grocery shopping. Her parents were too old to defend themselves in the streets if anything was to happen. She was taught basic defense by her father Dornal. She was given a blade that had been passed down throughout the generations. It was said to have hidden abilities, but Dornal explained to her that nobody in his lineage had ever been able to use them. He regarded it as a myth and then passed it down to her. He had intended on giving it to Ink, but things changed.

34

Five years pass with no sign of Ink. Several people in Fahlls and across the entire Universe began

using drugs to run from their fear, becoming addicted and violent towards others. Sid devoured planet after planet on his rampage to Fahlls. Seventeen planets and counting. The Queen stayed within her castle walls, fearful of the world, and fearful of herself. She had discovered that she could use the orb while it was next to the white gem. She remembered grabbing it from Ink and looking through as the orb faded of light. She also discovered that if she placed the Mask on the other side of the Orb she could see everything. The Wand then focused it and created a spyglass. Without the hat she was unable to make the Eye, but it was enough to let her see more of the Universe than she had ever imagined, but still not far enough to spy on Sid.

The first thing she watched was the anti-government uprising within her own streets. Further out she saw anarchy and chaos on surrounding planets. It was as if hell had been unleashed throughout the entire Universe. She searched the heavens for several hours a day, looking for Ink, but it was as if he left the Universe entirely. She noticed an enormous rip in space which covered a portion of the dimension and wondered if it had always been there.

35

One day while Ina was getting groceries she was approached by the vendor. He had a calm face and regarded her with much respect. They became good friends and she found herself standing in the grocery store for hours talking to him. His name was Taran, and quite handsome if you were to ask her. All her worries faded when she saw him, but she didn't know why. One day while joking with him, a customer walked in, drunk off abble beer. “Down with the queen!” He said before rambling nonsense to himself. Ina grew uncomfortable. He guarded the door, and she suddenly wanted to leave.

Taran told the man to either barter something or get out. The man agreed and walked over to where Ina stood. She backed away from him and he gave her a cold stare. He saw the disgust in her face as she grabbed for her blade. “What'sa wrong sweetums, you don't like revolutionaries?” He laughed as he said it and danced in place.

“I just don't like scum.”

The drunk man's face blushed. His eyes narrowed and he began spitting as he spoke. “SCUM?! I'M OUT THERE FIGHTING FOR OUR COUNTRY AND YOU HAVE THE NERVE TO CALL ME SCUM?!”

Taran got between Ina and the drunk. “Sir you cannot yell in here. I'm going to have to ask you to

leave.”

“That's fine mister store man, but I'll be back, and I'm bringing my friends.” The drunk left and slammed the door behind him. Taran calmed Ina with a joke about the man's height. Ina laughed, but still felt really odd about the whole situation.

“Are you ok?”

“Yea... I'm just... a little disoriented.”

Taran grabbed his chair from behind the counter and let her sit on it. She thanked him and took a deep breath. Taran locked the door, turned off the sign and walked back to Ina. “I don't think you should be going anywhere. I have a place that you can stay hidden, in case they come back. In the morning we can both go out there. You should get some rest.”

Ina agreed and followed him to the hidden room beneath the register. It was spacious enough, and there was a decent size bed for her to sleep. It was likely where he slept every night, because she could smell him. After a decent nap she woke up and listened for movement or talking. The store was quiet. She climbed up and found Taran, napping next to the register's hidden door. She walked over to the window and only saw one person walking along the street and it wasn't the drunk. She still didn't feel right. Walking back over to Taran made her feel better and she lay down next to him. He woke up later that night with her cuddling him and didn't want to move. It made him feel better to know she was safe while he slept.

In the morning he walked her home. She dropped off the groceries and apologized to her parents. They met him and thanked him for walking her home and protecting her all night. Taran was invited to visit whenever he wanted to, and he was happy to. Ina spent the night at his store several times, both in the compartment, just in case. Soon she was pregnant. When her mom Edna found out she cried and smiled. Eventually she found out that it was to be a boy. Taran and her agreed on the name Jhester.

In the meantime Sid had gotten faster at destroying planets, and Adradiggi had discovered a new strange ability. He was able to teleport to a darker flipside of the Universe, Syl. This ability came in handy when Sid almost caught him. The young Adradiggi had grown into a kid and was now easier to see, although he was much more nimble, and that helped. By teleporting to Syl he was able to avoid all contact with Sid, but even in Syl there were dangers all around him.

49

Fahlls healed slowly. The revolutionaries disbanded as the years went on and a relatively peaceful era came to be. Dos was respected as the Queen that healed the planet, the Great Mother. Twenty years had passed, and there was still no sign of Ink. Dos initially kept her baby a secret from society. She named her Alesandre, the princess of Fahlls. Jin was always by her side, and protected her like a loving dog. She reminded both of them of Aya. Omega continued to hold vigilant watch over the entrance to the castle. They all had a bit of cabin fever, but they had each other, and they had servants to keep them company. Dos had the spyglass, and in the distance she began to see Sid's terror rampaging slowly towards her.

Invasion

6,000,000,052

Six billion years passed by in a blink. The planets and systems had drifted apart considerably and several new galaxies had formed. Ink became a lost memory, and was regarded by some as an ancient legend retold throughout the generations. Dos had passed her crown down the line of Alesandre. Some said that her spirit still guarded the castle, accompanied by the ghosts of Omega and Jin. They were all regarded as ancient mythology and had statues erected in their names. Fear still suffocated a large portion of the Universe. The planets surrounding Fahlls had begun to band together in attempts to break the barrier that the White Gem still held.

Sid finally reached Fahlls but even with all his might he was still unable to penetrate the barrier, so he left. His vow for revenge was as ancient as time itself and could not be forgotten. He knew that he would eventually be strong enough to break through the barrier. Adradiggi was now an old man, but far from death. Sid knew he was being followed, but was still unable to track him down.

Ghester was in his early-thirties at the time, and his wife Ophelia was three months pregnant. They still didn't know whether it would be a boy or a girl, but they were happy. Ghester had become respected as a great scientist and inventor. He had recently discovered a way to create doorways to other worlds. It was still in testing, but the possibilities were palpable. He had aspirations to discover if Ink really was real, as the eldest mother Ina had said. Ina had disappeared in a similar manner as Ink, and Ghester found it odd. He was not the only one, several in his family had come up with myths and legends to explain the first Fahllians in existence. They believed that Edna and Dornal had never

existed except in a guiding spirit form, and that Ina and Ink were still alive somewhere.

The king was now Tyras, and the queen was Gorna. They named their daughter Alessandra after her first documented ancestor Queen Alesandre. She was a young kid, but very intelligent. She was very well behaved, and always full of energy. She got bored a lot and often wanted to go adventuring around the castle, so Caprina was hired to watch over her. Caprina became her best friend, they would fix each other's hair and play dress up. Caprina was with her at all times, and as Alessandra grew older she got braver and wanted to leave the castle.

Royalty leaving the castle was frowned upon, so Alessandra and Caprina constructed themselves disguises. They dressed as commoners and walked among them. The princess found it exciting and new, but was slightly disturbed with how the townspeople lived. She was used to a spotless castle where all the floors shined and there was not even a small piece of trash anywhere. How these people lived was barbaric.

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Several months of exposure to the outside world and she was used to it. On one of their days out Alessandra met Ghester, who was at the market bartering for food to feed his wife. He initially thought Caprina was her mom, and so he began asking questions about the pregnancy. They both had laughed and then Caprina explained that it was her little sister. When asked what he did for a living he told them that he was an astrophysicist and that he had been named after his eldest ancestor. This piqued the princess's interest. She wanted to know more about this man and she wanted to meet his wife. Caprina was wary about bringing the child to a stranger's house, but Alessandra insisted.

When they got there, Ophelia was in bed and didn't get to meet the princess for very long. “She's due any day,” explained Ghester as they walked down the steps to the kitchen.

Alessandra looked up at him. “Do you know what you're going to name him?”

Ghester stopped and looked down at her. “How did you know it was going to be a boy?”

“I have a sense for this type of thing. I guess it's a gift of some kind, or an added level of awareness.”

Ghester stared at her with doubtful eyes, and then smiled. “His name will be Lysandus. I have confidence that he will be a great man one day.” Alessandra looked around the room.

“Do you guys need some barter credits, I can help out.”

“Nonsense. You and your big sister are clothed no better than us, we could never take anything from you. Besides, I have something that might make me a rich man. I think you'll like this.” Ghester looked at Caprina and smiled, and motioned for them to follow him. He led them to his basement where he had been experimenting on the doorways.

“What's all this?” Caprina said as her eyes flicked from one end of the room to another. It was filled with wires and door frames and some type of electrical equipment.

“This is my office. This is where I conduct experiments and where I discovered the gateways.”

Alessandra looked up at him with wide eyed curiosity. “Gateways?”

Ghester walked to the far end of the room through a path made between the wires and wood. He reached for a door which stood with no room behind it. He turned the doorknob and opened it wide for the two girls to see. “I call it Aspimiria. It is the most peaceful world I've discovered. This gateway is the most stable one I've been able to create.” Then he walked through to a lush paradise of purple trees and abundant wildlife. Alessandra followed in, and then Caprina.

It was beyond the most beautiful place either of them had ever seen or imagined. Alessandra fell in love with it. “How is this possible, where are we? Is this real?”

“This is very real. This gateway is a door to another planet, off in a distant galaxy. We are now millions of lightyears away from Fahlls. A bit scary if you think about it. That doorway is our only way home.” This did scare Caprina, but Alessandra found it exciting. She knew she couldn't stay, but she really wanted to. She thanked Ghester and then left with Caprina.

In the meantime the White Gem had awakened Dos from her ancient slumber to show her something. She still held the spyglass in hand. Through it she saw Ghester's gateway and through the gateway she saw Sid approaching Aspimiria. He was nearly strong enough to break the barrier of Fahlls. The gems told Dos that she had no choice, and together they devised a plan to stop Sid in his tracks.

Without awakening Omega or Jin, Dos's statue crumbled and she sneaked out of the ancient tomb. With her she carried the gems. Through the shadows of the night, Dos flew to Ghester's and broke in

unnoticed. She walked down the steps to the basement without making a single noise, and then she opened the door to Aspimiria. The moment she stepped through, the barrier around the planet of Fahlls disintegrated. It wasn't long before the beings on the surrounding planets took notice and slowly infiltrated their cities.

The plan was to weaken the cities and then go in full force. They figured this way their losses would be minimal. The cities took notice however, and once news traveled to Alessandra, she knew what had to be done. She told her parents that she had been sneaking out, and that she had met Ghester. At first they were shocked and wanted to punish her, but when she started talking about the gateways they understood what she was telling them. Thirteen guards escorted the princess and Caprina to Ghester's house that night.

Alessandra explained to Ghester that she was the princess and told him her plan. He agreed without hesitation, and the next several weeks Ghester and a crew that had been assigned to him began building more gateways. He explained to everyone that the best way to prevent the enemy from following through would be the detonators equipped to each door. Ghester had found three different planets where they could gather enough resources to eventually take their planet back. Those planets were Dussylia, Rhelstin, and Littonia. Amongst the chaos, Lysandus was born.

Aspimiria

The planet was beautiful. The blue sun lit up the sky and the clouds as Dos looked up to try to judge how long she had. The gems were dim, so she had a little bit of time. She knew that there was a race of people on this planet, and she was pretty sure she knew where to find them. She walked through the purple jungle, north towards a small town called Jutter.

On the opposite side of the planet, Adradiggi had also arrived ahead of schedule. He had gotten used to Sid's patterns and knew that Aspimiria was too tempting with its abundant life and water. Adradiggi had developed communications to Kriddle through his wormholes to Syl and had formed an army of demons that were ready to infiltrate at any time. His plan was to destroy Sid for what he had done to his planet. All of the demons from Kriddle wanted him dead, so it wasn't very hard to win them over. Their destination was the castle of Fornolk, where Queen Shellra was sleeping.

Sid was on the neighboring planet, resting before going to the next. He had turned it into a wasteland,

and had his sights set on Aspimiria.

Upon reaching Jutter, Dos spoke with the elders. They called their race Chibbies, and they were much shorter than Fahllians. They knew that Dos was from another world by the way she dressed and her height. Their languages were also very different, but using the wine-colored gem she was able to understand them and speak to them. She told them that Sid was on his way, and that he was going to devour their entire world unless they let her help them. They stared at the Wine Gem as it glowed so fiercely it nearly became red. They believed her story, and they agreed to an alliance with her. All she asked for was their strongest and bravest warrior.

Her plan was simple. The warrior would have to get close enough to Sid with the gems, and with their powers combined he was to force Sid into a deep comatose state. The gems would then have to remain on the planet in order for him to remain dormant. In the meantime, they needed to forge a weapon using the gems. She was introduced to the soldier which was to face Sid, Inious.

Inious was short, and even though she saw an intense fire in his eyes, Dos began to get doubts about her plan. “Is this the best you can offer?”

The Chibbies were offended, and motioned to Inious who then pulled out a sword and began swinging it around flawlessly. He was fast indeed, and as the crowd surrounding them began throwing melons at him he cut each in half with little effort. He was quick on his feet and jumped around with precision. Dos's doubt subsided, and she apologized to the elders. Inious would have to do. The sword was forged that night, and a small army was formed to assist Inious in battle.

Adradiggi wasted no time possessing every Chibbie in Fornolk, including Shellra and her entire royal family. They tried to fight it, but there was nothing they could have done. The demons were just too powerful for them, and by the end of the first day the ones that hadn't killed themselves were demonic slaves of Adradiggi. Together they marched towards the other end of the planet. His plan was also simple, gain control of the entire planet and ambush Sid.

As his army increased, so did Dos's. She led them on an intercept course, neither one of them aware of the other. Sid awoke and began his journey as well, towards the planet. He began to sense something and he thirsted for it. He knew that it had to be Dos. He sensed the gems as well, but no Omega. For a moment he was disappointed but his hunger for revenge and blind rage soon took over and he barreled

ever faster towards the planet. That was when Adradiggi also noticed Dos. She did not hide her power, it was massive and unlike anything he had felt before. She was not as powerful as Sid, but she was stronger than himself.

Dos remained unaware of Adradiggi until rumors spread about an army of demonic Chibbies. Dos could fly, but the Chibbies could not, so they used giant dragon-like animals called orthons to transport everyone to Sid's projected landing site. She noticed that Sid was approaching rapidly, and she held the gems out to Inious. He grabbed them and put them safely in a pouch that was tied to him. She glanced at his posture and his eyes. He seemed confident, but Dos still had a bad feeling about this.

The landing sight was an open field next to a small lake of water. The demons were the first to arrive, followed by Dos. Her army got taken by surprise and several of the Chibbies were not prepared. Adradiggi's army was massive, and as the battle intensified Inious began ripping through the demons with ease. Then they swarmed in on him, and Dos flew in to assist as they began clawing and biting. Adradiggi flew in to observe Dos and saw that she was a lot weaker than he had first sensed, and that Inious was the one with the power. He was relentless and viscous, and although the demons still outnumbered them, their odds of winning the battle escalated.

Adradiggi caught Dos by surprise and seeped into her mind. He unleashed demons within her and she was powerless to stop it. She struggled, but within seconds she was under his control and attacking her own army. Inious did not hesitate, decapitating Dos where she stood. Sid arrived shortly after and his rage towards Dos shifted to Inious for depriving him of his long anticipated revenge.

Sid attacked Inious and his speed was matched. Neither one appeared to be able to harm the other, and neither one had the upper hand. As they fought, the demon army devoured the remaining Chibbies and Adradiggi took control of as many as he could. The entire army of Chibbies now surrounding Inious and Sid were demons, and they began circling them. The blade was able to cut through Sid, the only pain he had ever experienced other than the loss of Aya. He attacked Inious from every angle and Inious was unable to block all of it. They traded off in this fashion several times, when Queen Shellra suddenly jumped at Inious and grabbed the pouch of gems.

His energy dropped, but with the sword in hand he was still able to defend himself. Shellra's power increased exponentially and then she split into three beings, each with its own gem and color. Under Adradiggi's control, she attacked Sid while he snuck up on Inious. Inious was faster than he had

anticipated, and his sword split Adradiggi vertically in half down the middle. Inious attempted to assist Shellra, but she was still possessed by demons and she threw him to the side where several of the dark Chibbies grabbed and held his arms and legs. The blue Shellra walked over to him and took his sword. Then she stabbed him through the heart and twisted.

Sid watched this as he fought the wine and yellow Shellras. Suddenly they both also had swords that matched their color. In a flash, the blue Shellra was back and all three stared at Sid. In unison they spoke, and their words were echoed by the rest of the demons. “THIS IS FOR WHAT YOU DID TO KRIDDLE! THIS WILL BECOME THE NEW KRIDDLE, AND YOU WILL CEASE TO EXIST.”

Sid began absorbing the water from the planet and the Shellras swung at him. The Chibbies closed in on him as more and more of the water was absorbed from the planet, but he did it as he was fighting, without missing a beat. Then he suddenly sensed something, a Fahllian. It was a descendant of Dos, Alessandra. He turned into a ball and flew towards the doorway to Fahlls south of Jutter. Along the way he continued to absorb the water, and the army of demons followed on orthons.

Alessandra was not alone, she was with Caprina, and they looked around as the purple wildlife began to slowly wither away. They started walking back to the door in confusion and fear when Sid arrived and destroyed the doorway before they could get to it. Then he mutated two sharp arms and stabbed both Alessandra and Caprina. He had finally gotten his revenge, but as he looked at Alessandra he remembered Aya and began to cry. Shellras did not hesitate, they began slicing Sid into tiny pieces until he no longer moved. Aspimiria became the new Kriddle, and Fahlls became a place of pure chaos.

Ink awoke with the death of Adradiggi, and he realized that it had been nothing more than his shadow.

Evacuation

Ghester's team began sending people through as soon as the doors were completed. Alessandra had been assigned to Rhelstin, and knew that she would never see Aspimiria again. This was her last chance to see it. It was hard to convince Caprina, she had a bad feeling about everything. Alessandra nagged her and threatened to go by herself. Caprina was not only supposed to look after her, she was her friend. She didn't want Alessandra to go alone, so both of them snuck off to Ghester's house to see it one last time. Ghester was extremely busy, and Ophelia was taking care of Lysandus. They easily snuck in through the back door and down the steps to the basement.

In the meantime, the cities were being overrun with volatile aliens from the neighboring planets. It was beginning to get to the point where nobody was safe, even in their own homes. Some Fahllians went crazy and attacked the aliens. There were groups that had formed who did not want to leave the planet and decided to stay and fight. These forces held back the invaders long enough to evacuate the others.

First were the women and children, then the men. The royal family and the rich were all scheduled to go to Rhelstin, but the king and queen were busy looking for the princess and her servant. King Tyras sent out armed search parties to look for them, while Queen Gorna stood beside Tyras, engulfed in fear for her daughter. Alessandra had always been free spirited, but that moment hadn't been a particularly great moment for her to run off on her own. The only thing that kept her sane was knowing that Caprina was with her. Tyras saw his wife and knew exactly how she felt. While addressing his men he had urged both caution and haste, as well as emphasized the importance of their mission.

One of them notified Ghester, who then put everyone on full alert. He decided to go check on his wife and newborn, his work was done for the moment. Upon returning home Ghester greeted his wife and asked if she had seen the princess. “No, not today. How are things going with the evacuation? I keep hearing shouts and loud banging noises. I'm glad you are ok.” Ghester hugged Ophelia for several moments to comfort her.

“We're doing everything we can. We have already lost many, but we have saved more. You and Lysandus must go through to Dussylia soon, I cannot bear knowing you two are alone in the midst of this chaos. Before we leave here though, I need to check something, so get everything you need ready.”

“I've been ready.”

Ghester walked down to the basement to look at the door to Aspimiria. The door was shut, and it had been turned off as well. Either the door on the other side had been detonated, or his alignment had gone askew. In either case, he didn't have time to mess with it. He grabbed a couple of supplies and then him and his family were on their way back to the evacuation facility.

As they left their home, they both knew that it was likely for them to never see it again. They could hear the chaos getting closer, and could even see riots in the distance and strange aliens crowding the streets. They made haste, but remained silent. They cloaked themselves in a black blanket and

disappeared into the night.

The invaders sprayed acid on everyone they could find, they torched the buildings and they shot darts at those who tried to run. Explosions could be heard as if it were a day of celebration, but the cries of suffering which echoed throughout the cities told another story. However, Ghester and his family were able to make it safely to the doorways.

In the midst of the chaos, Jin awoke to find an empty castle. He saw the spyglass on the ground and picked it up. He looked through to see what Fahlls had become and further out to see what had become of the Universe. Jin could not find Dos, but he did find Omega. He awoke Omega from his eternal slumber. Together they fought their way through the invaders to the doorway of Rhelstin.

They both pledged their allegiance to the King and Queen, and as Jin explained who they were, everyone around them grew silent. The King stared him in the eyes and Jin did not waver. Tyras looked to the ground and shifted, then looked back up at Jin. “Well there is no time to debate. You two pledge allegiance to us, then find my daughter.”

“Very well sir, what does she look like?”

The queen handed him a photograph of the princess. She had blonde pig-tails on a round head. Her eyes were huge for her age, and the irises shined a deep blue. Her skin-tone was a light gray, and she was rather short. Jin stared at the picture and Aya stared back at him through his memories. Written on the picture was the words “Princess Alessandra”. *That's very similar to my daughter's name, Princess Alesandre.*

Jin held out the spyglass as if everyone knew what it was. “Sir, you have my word that I will find your daughter before leaving this planet. Me and Omega will not rest until she is found.”

Omega did not need to see her picture, he was born for this type of job. The two of them walked off and the queen stared up at Tyras. “I hope they find her in time.”

“If anybody can, it's the ancient legend Jin. You recognized him right? He looked just like the statue in our garden.”

“I know... I wish you were lying, but he was an exact match. And the man he was with...”

“Omega... Listen my love, we must be off. We cannot afford to stay here any longer. Our men are over there and have already prepared our quarters. I sent everybody that I could to find her, and nobody has reported back. We have men on this side who will wait till the very last moment before detonating the doorway. There is still hope for her, you must not worry.”

The queen stared at him for several moments, processing what he was saying. She did not like it, but she did not want to stay where they were much longer. “Very well... but I do not like this Tyras. Where is she?!”

“I don't know m'lady. All I know, is that we must get to safety, and we must go now. Our people need us.” Gorna reluctantly left with her husband, and with them traveled several knights and servants.

Ghester had already sent his wife and son through to Dussylia, but he was still needed on the other side in case any of the doorways failed. Omega and Jin questioned him to see if he knew anything. He explained that he had looked for her when he went to get his family, but hadn't seen her anywhere. They then walked off and continued looking.

The invaders had reached the doorways, and were beginning to slaughter any who hadn't made it through yet. The doorway to Rhelstin had to be destroyed, followed by the one for Littonia. At the last moment, Ghester went through his doorway and detonated it on the other side. Everyone that had survived and made it through sat in silence as they mourned all the ones that hadn't.

Omega and Jin continued to walk the planet of Fahlls, fighting off the armies of invaders in search of the princess. After many years, Jin began to look to the stars with the spyglass. The princess was nowhere to be found.

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Meanwhile, on Rhelstin they found heavy metals and began constructing weapons. On Littonia they found grains and plants to make explosives. On Dussylia they found vines, and began constructing ropes, clothes, and weapons of sort. Over the years Ghester was able to set up communications and doorways between the three worlds. Together they worked to plan a retaliation, and after several decades they were successful. By this time, Ghester and Ophelia had died, and Lysandus had become a rich and important man. He married a woman named Mynna, and they named their daughter Tox.

Ina's Trek

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Ina had woken long before Ink had, and realized that everyone she used to know was now dead. There was one that was still alive however, and that was her brother. She knew he was out there somewhere, hiding from everyone, including himself. Her descendants were alive and well, but she knew that they would regard her as nothing more than an old legend, and possibly a liar. She needed to find Ink, but he was not easily found. She searched throughout Fahlls only to find no trace of him anywhere. She knew deep within that he was not on the planet anymore, and that was when she started looking to the skies.

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What she saw was dismal, but it did not stop her. On one gloomy night while looking up at the stars, she noticed strange lights that seemed to grow. There were many of them, and as she watched she began to realize that they were spaceships. The planet was about to be invaded. Ina stayed hidden as she tracked down the landing site of one of the smaller ships. It had landed in a heavily wooded area, and as she watched from behind a tree she saw three strange creatures get out. They grabbed some weapons and ran off to the city. Fortunately, they did not see her, and she was able to sneak into the ship.

As Ina looked at the controls she realized that she knew nothing about flying a skyship, let alone a spaceship. She looked throughout the cabin and found some instruction manuals, but they were in another language and could not be deciphered. She was frustrated, but determined to figure it out. She began pushing random buttons, and that was when an alarm sounded off.

Her heart began pounding violently in her chest as she scrambled across the controls to turn the alarm off. None of the white buttons were doing anything, so she smacked the wine-colored button. The alarm stopped and she took a deep breath. She tried to calm herself as she slowly peeked out of the ship to see if anyone had returned to investigate. Lucky for her, it seemed none of them had heard it. She continued looking through the controls, but decided not to push anymore until she had looked at all of them.

Several hours passed as she tested the function of each lever, button and switch. She felt confident with at least being able to get it into space, when she heard a stick break outside of the ship. Ina grabbed the blade that her father Dornal had given her. Slowly she crept towards the exit and stood

there waiting for the creature to return. She looked out and saw a bunny-like squirrel scurry about. She put the blade away and went back to the controls. She twisted the ignition and hit the ascend button.

Ina's ship shot straight up past the sky and into space. She realized that she had no fear of space, and in fact was rather excited about this little adventure she was about to go on. It reminded her of Ink's stories of when he went to space and she began to really wonder how the hell she was supposed to find him in a Universe so large. After exiting the Fahlls atmosphere she noticed several hundred ships heading towards the planet. Luckily, none of them seemed to pay any attention to her and she was able to slip out of the solar system without any trouble. The hard part was trying to figure out where to go from there. Ink had mentioned a planet named Kriddle, but hadn't really said what direction it was. Even still, she doubted he had gone to that planet since it was full of chaos.

After hours of searching, she spotted something in the middle of space. It was small, so she maneuvered the ship closer to it. As she looked at it she took several moments before realizing what it was. It was the hat that she had sent Ink. She pulled it into the ship using a robotic arm and then put the ship on autopilot as she walked back to look at it. It was still in good shape, and in fact it seemed to glow and reach out to her as if it was alive. She put it on her head and her thoughts were filled with words and visions. She knew where Ink was.

She walked back to the controls and input a destination. The ship's engines belched as it sped through the blackness of space. Ina walked through the ship in search of some food and was able to find some rations stashed away in a cabinet. She reached for one when she heard something shift in a nearby compartment. She grabbed her blade and inched over to the doorway.

In a mirror's reflection she saw the creature, and it appeared to be armed with some type of gun. She hid in the shadows as it tried to sneak around the ship and look for her. She watched as it looked at the controls and then tip toed away without touching anything. It waited in the control room, and she waited in the area with the rations. Ina had the advantage, because she knew where the creature was, but the creature believed itself to have the advantage. Neither of them moved from their positions for several hours, and the ship got closer and closer to its destination.

The creature was skinny, and its face was oddly shaped. Its eyes were small and beady, but its ears were huge. Ina made sure to be as quiet as possible, in case it had some type of super hearing. Drool poured out of the creatures mouth as it breathed quietly in the corner. Eventually it got curious, and

started looking through the ship. It moved with caution and grace, not making a single sound, but Ina was watching it the entire time. Her entire vision became blurry when the creature walked into the room she was hiding. Without hesitation she stabbed the creature in the chest with her blade and it looked at her in pure horror and shock. It spat saliva and orange blood at her as the life slowly withered from it. She wiped off her blade and went back to the rations. It had been ages since she had eaten, and the rations really hit the spot.

At this point, Ink had awoken. Adradiggi lay dead on Aspimiria, and Ink was subconsciously realizing that he had been the cause of much suffering throughout the Universe for billions of years. The guilt began to weigh heavy on his soul and he began to detest and despise himself. It was the first time he ever wished for his own demise, and yet he was still afraid to die. He hid with his pearl, going back and forth in his mind on wanting to die and wanting to live. His inner turmoil created unspeakable beasts of darkness. They were nameless and devoured all life they encountered. Some were as large as planets, while others spanned entire galaxies. They were emotionless and did not speak. They were death itself, flowing from the very root of Ink's fear.

The destination of Ina's ship was a planet dubbed Palette. It was barren, completely void of any atmosphere or life, except for one lifeform. Ink. The entire planet was comprised of only one material, chalk. The hat had told her to go there, and as she approached the planet she grew fearful. What if she didn't like what she found? Ink didn't seem to notice as the ship descended onto the planet. He did not hear the door open, and he did not hear it close.

He sensed her approaching.

Ink didn't know what approached him, but he had been alone for longer than he could remember. Nobody could find him, he was hidden from reality, and that was how he liked it. Everything was alien to his mind, and everything was a threat. He decided that the pearl had stopped working, his favorite treasure, his only friend, was now useless. It had betrayed him by not telling him that it no longer functioned, and now somebody had found him.

He threw the pearl towards the sky and cowered in fear. He began dreaming up what could possible be coming to murder him. It had teeth all over and sharp horns and blades. It was invisible to the naked eye, and moved like wind. An effortless killing machine. Ink was no match.

Ina approached. “Ink?”

Ink looked up from his bucket of fear and saw Ina. Moments later the unnamed invisible beast that he had just dreamed up was attacking her, and ripping her to shreds. She screamed as her limbs were ripped off, and Ink reached out for her. “INA!!”

And then the beast was gone. Ina was badly injured, laying in a pool of her own white blood. “Ink... I found you. I brought your hat and your blade. The blade is from dad. It's good to see you're still alive.”

Doctor

Ink picked up Ina and followed her footsteps back to the ship. Once inside, he laid her down on some soft bedding and familiarized himself with the controls as best he could. Moments later they were in space, exiting the planet of Palette. Ink had to do something, and he had to do it quickly. His sister was dying, and it was all his fault. He grabbed the hat from off of her head and set the controls in the ship to the closest planet with a medical facility capable of treating her. It was a matter of hours before they reached the planet, a place called Black Leaves. Ina was silent for most of the ride, aside from a few quiet cries of agony. Ink sat in the corner and watched as her life slowly diminished.

It was an enormous planet, with giant black trees and overgrown metallic leaves. Ink landed the vehicle and carried his sister to a nearby building. The grass was white and the skies were blue. Yellow berries were spread throughout the brush. The buildings were made of a gray wood, possibly constructed from the giant trees. Ink knocked and a strange being answered. “Can you help her? Where can I take her? Please help me!”

The being looked at him for several moments and then spoke. “Warvle. Oodle cringly tang toof narb?”

Ink stared blankly at the creature in confusion. The creature grabbed Ina from his arms and she screamed in pain. She was taken to a table in an adjacent room and Ink followed. She was strapped to the table and injected. All of her limbs had been ripped off, and she had lost a lot of blood, but it didn't appear as if any of her vital organs were damaged. Ink couldn't watch, he had to walk out of the room.

Sick to his stomach, Ink's mind was racing with guilt and self hatred. How could he have let this happen? Did the beast he imagined attack her? Was this all his fault?

Ink began to think on a deeper level about the hat, the pearl, the orb, the mask, the gems, the wand and the odd symbol he had seen in space. He felt that they were all linked, and his gut told him that they were his creations. Had he created everything?

Ynk laughed while still sleeping and Ink was offended, but didn't understand why. Had he been nothing more than a pawn? Ink held the blade up to his eye and looked at it. It was sharp. He sheathed it and put it on his belt. Ink became angry at everything, including himself. He was full of rage by the time the doctor walked into the room.

“Shlarda die cooltina pew snarm.”

“What? DID YOU SAY DIE?! WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU AND WHY CAN'T I UNDERSTAND YOU!”

Suddenly, Ink could understand. “No, she will not die. She will need quite a bit of time to recover, but she will live. I'm not sure why you can't understand me, I can understand you just fine.”

Ink looked at the doctor and a wave of relief came over him. He thanked the doctor and sat back down. How could he suddenly understand this alien creature? How was he able to fly the space ship in only a few seconds of looking at it? His thoughts realigned themselves and he realized that he must be some type of god. Six billion years had passed, and (as far as he knew) him and Ina were the only ones that were still alive.

He began having flashes, memories. First of his sister dying, then of the demons. The demons that had kept him company for six billion years were still with him. He thought that Ina had driven them away, but they were just as plentiful as before. They acted as if they missed him, and he went quickly back to despising their very being. He was awake now though, and he had a blade. He also had a hat, and he was ready to kill some demons.

Ynk laughed again in his sleep and Ink felt as if somebody had walked over his grave.

No matter... he shrugged it off as being irrelevant mind chatter.

“Doctor, how long till she's better?”

“Quite a while. She won't even be able to speak for another week. Come back later, she is safe here.

You have my word Ink.”

“How do you know my name?”

“The same way you know mine.”

Ink stopped for a moment. He did know this man. His name was Flynt McParch. He looked at the odd creature and noticed his eyes jutted around the room randomly, only focusing on Ink's face momentarily, and then dancing around the room at high speeds again. His mouth was on his forehead, and his arms were nothing more than wires. He wore a white cloak, and was middle aged.

How he knew this man was just another mystery to him, but at that moment it was irrelevant.

“I will be back.” The doctor nodded at him and Ink walked back to the ship and sat inside. His fingers ran across the sheath to his new blade. “I will no longer be your pawn, Universe.”

He turned the ship on and ascended off of Black Leaves. He input the coordinates for Palette and waited as it began moving in that direction. He sat down and ran his fingers across his blade once more. After an hour or so he began walking around the ship. He found the creature that Ina had killed and saw that it had been stabbed with the weapon he now held. She had not disposed of the body, it was as if she had blocked it out and ignored it right after committing the act. Was this also his fault? He confessed to himself that she probably never would have killed anybody if it wasn't for him disappearing the way he did.

Now he was disappearing again, but not with the pearl. He was on his way to fight demons until he could no longer draw breath. If he was a god, then they would bow before him.

He drew the blade and practice stabbed the dead body. Then he stabbed again. Tears fell from his eyes, but he felt nothing. He was no warrior, and gods did not cry. He wiped the blade clean and jettisoned the body into space. He watched as it slowly drifted away and became nothing. Ink sat in the ship for the next few hours thinking, drowning in fear and confusion.

The ship reached its destination point and landed safely on Palette. He got out of the ship and looked around. The planet was white, and Ina's blood was white, but the blood still stood out as it sat on top of the chalk without being absorbed.

Ink drew his blade and began walking the blood trail. “Come out and fight me!” he shouted into space. There was no response. “YOU ARE ALL COWARDS!” he screamed, before falling to his knees in frustration.

Then he sensed something approaching. Ink did not hide in fear this time, he was ready to fight, he was ready to kill, and he was ready to die. It was the beast that had attacked Ina, and as it trampled towards him his blade grew several feet longer and at the sharp tip another blade protruded at a thirty-four degree angle for another foot. His almost v-shaped blade sliced through the air and into the side of the beast, severing its head instantly.

The planet became consumed by a tremendous quake and a growl that echoed all around him. Thousands of demons appeared and his v-blade became two, one for each hand. He began mowing through them one by one, several of them able to scratch and claw at him before he could cease their existence. He fought for hours, but they did not stop coming. He was bloodied and breathless. On the verge of death and with no intention of stopping, the entire dimension fell asleep and Ynk awoke as somebody from Biz entered the dimension of Lys.

Intruder Alert

Ynk was startled and confused as something from the outside came in. He could only feel and see within, and hadn't truly pondered the existence of anything else. Ynk was about to learn that there was much he hadn't pondered. As the dimension's higher state of consciousness watched the being from the outside enter it, Ynk hit the pause button on his movie.

At first it was only a foot, and then it was the entire lower leg. It glowed a purplish blue, and the reality in which it moved aside to enter was as bright as a sun. The leg became full, and then it was two. The being had two legs and two arms just as Ynk had created most life in his own house. His face was rugged, hairy and covered in sweat. He was an older man, not yet grey, with wrinkles around his small eyes. He stared ahead with a sly smile as the space around him reasserted itself and became black once more. He had a full head of hair on his head, and it was as black as the space around him. He appeared to be dressed in a dark orange business suit with a black undershirt and an orange tie.

Looking around, the man's face turned to one of discomfort. “I see you froze time. This is a little too cold for my liking, do you think you could turn the heat up a bit?”

“WHO ARE YOU?” Ynk spoke.

“Me? Oh, I'll bet you would like to know that, huh? I mean, I already know who you are. I know more about yourself than you do, Ynk.” The dimension shook as Ynk became annoyed with the intruder. He put his arms up and sighed. “Alright, alright Ynk, I'll tell you my name. But first you have to show yourself to me. I don't deal well with intimidation.”

Ynk thought for a moment and then appeared before the intruder. He resembled Ink, but he was made of pure light. “Oh, there you are Ynk. As promised, my name is Rin. I am not from here, I am from a dimension you have never seen nor heard of.”

“WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE IN LYS?”

“Whoa there, what did I say about intimidation? No need to yell at me, I am here on business. You see, your little movie might be entertaining to you, but the survival of this dimension is important to people more important than you.”

“PEOPLE LIKE YOU?”

“No, not me. I could care less about any of this, the ones that care are from dimensions far higher than you can imagine. In the grand scheme of things, I am intrinsically unimportant. If you halted my mission by ending my life they would send another. I am here to speak with your avatar, Ink. My business is not with you.”

Ynk thought for many moments on what Rin had said and looked into his eyes. He was not a good man, but if what he said was accurate then Ynk had no reason to fear him. “VERY WELL.” Ynk's light faded back into the Universe and he watched as Rin traveled to Palette where Ink was trying to regain his breath. Ynk went to sleep and unpaused his movie.

Ink looked around, dripping in blood. The demons still surrounded him, but the air had changed. They all stopped in their tracks and stared at Ink in an almost dream-like state. He could sense a strange energy around him and it grew as he felt the approach of a stranger. Ink turned to look Rin in the face. The man had no fear, no hate, no emotion at all. He stared at Ink in silence as Ink tried to figure him out. “You're name is Rin. You are not from here?”

“Oh, so he already told you?”

“Who are you talking about?”

Rin looked up to the stars and laughed. “Oh, so we're keeping that a secret still? Alright then.” Ink looked around in confusion, and then gripped his blades. “This is not the time for heroics sweetheart. We could fight, and you might win, but I did not come here to fight you. I am here to help.”

Rin smiled at him and Ink made an unconvinced face. This made Rin laugh, and for a moment Ink could see a small glimpse at the true insanity within the man who stood before him. He did not know why, but he knew he could not trust this man. As if he had read his thoughts, Rin looked at him with his emotionless face once more. “Okay, let me break this down for you... I... am from a higher dimension. Not the one directly above, but across from that one. I am a traveler, not a savage animal. I am also not your friend. Everything you see around you is your creation. You created this boring planet, and you created these boring cartoon demons. You don't know the meaning of fear, your mind isn't nearly creative enough to know what true fear is. It isn't creative enough to know what true evil looks like. I can show you. You seem to be determined to destroy yourself here and now, so I can either let you keep playing with these fake cartoon monsters that you've created or I can give your life purpose.”

Ink looked around and saw that all of the demons had disappeared. The two of them were alone. Ink had been questioning whether or not he created everything, and this man was telling him he did indeed. Rin however, was not his creation. Not only could Ink tell that he was not a good person, but he also knew that he was extremely dangerous. “What kind of purpose?”

Rin smiled. “Well, your true purpose of course. To control this realm, to make it peaceful once again. You have the power to bring order to this chaotic realm. You are the true king of everything here, all others are below you. If they do not praise you, then they are against you. That is the true nature of things, and so far you have been doing a horrible job. This place is a mess, you're a mess. You were just about to rip yourself to shreds in confusion because your mind is still so very primitive. Your death would mean the death of everything else you know to be real, including your sister and her entire lineage.”

Ink looked at the ground for a moment and then back up to Rin's cold stare. “Why do you care?”

“I don't, I'm here on business. Looking at you now though, I'm a bit disappointed. Maybe you really

don't have it in you. I guess the only way to know for sure is to test you." Rin looked up to his right and snapped his fingers in the air. In the same fashion that he had entered the dimension a beast unlike any Ink could have imagined, entered. "This is a true test of yourself. If you fail, then I guess I won't bring Walter to see this place. That would be a shame though, because I think he would really like it. I told him about it, you know? The land of cartoons... anyhow, I'll let you get back to what you were doing."

Rin faded from existence as if he had the pearl, but Ink sensed that he was still there watching. The beast landed on the planet and Ink stared at it as its countless tentacles slithered around and reached out to him. If the world was a dream, then this was real. Ink froze in his tracks, unable to move, only able to stare at the beast as it quickly slithered closer to him. Paralyzed with fear, unable to even breathe. The beast was indescribably disgusting and left a trail of rancid slime as it wiggled towards Ink. One of its tentacles wrapped itself around his leg and tightened its grip. Still unable to move, more of the arms began to wrap around him until he was completely covered. Then they began to squeeze, and as Ink's bones crushed under the pressure, he screamed out in pure agony. Some of the smaller tentacles forced their way through his skin and into his veins, while some of the larger ones began probing all of his orifices.

In a flash of light, thousands upon thousands of identical Fahllians appeared and began attacking the beast with fire, weapons and whatever they had. Some clawed at it and bit it like savages. Within moments, the beast was dead, but Ink's body and mind had already been violated. He fell asleep as the Fahllians he had created carried his mangled body to the spaceship and sent him to Black Leaves. Rin smiled and disposed of the beast's body. "Welp, my work here is done."

King Of The Cosmos

When Ink eventually awoke he was in the same hospital that he had brought Ina to on Black Leaves. Ina wasn't around, and neither was the doctor. Two identical men sat in chairs beside his bed with white robes and sunglasses on. Ink sat up quick and looked at them. "Who are you?"

The doctor came in and made him lay back down. "You need more rest, I'm surprised you survived at all. How much do you remember?"

Ink thought for a moment. "Bits and pieces. I know I went to..." Ink grabbed his head as a sharp pain stabbed into his brain. The doctor came over with a light and looked into his eyes. "How is Ina doing?"

“She's doing fine, I replaced her limbs with mechanical ones, but she is still recovering. For now, just try to remember everything you can, and get as much rest as possible. I'll be back to check on you periodically, but if you need me for any reason push the silver button next to your bed.”

The pain in his head had subsided for the moment. “Who are they?” he asked the doctor.

“You don't know? They're the ones that brought you here. There were tons of them, but only two stayed. You owe your life to them.” The doctor exited the room and closed the door behind him. Ink looked over to the two men.

“Who are you?”

The two spoke in unison. We are the Space Generals. You are our king, The King of The Cosmos. We do as you command.

Ink looked at them with a perplexed frown, which shifted into an annoyed look. “Your first order of business is to leave me alone.”

Without hesitation the Space Generals stood up and walked out of the room, closing the door behind them. Ink lay back down and tried to relax. His whole body was tense and in pain. He tried to remember what happened to him, but once again he was struck with an ungodly headache. He pushed the wine-colored button, and when the doctor came in he requested something for the headache. Dr McParch handed him a small cup with some strange liquid in it and when Ink drank it he cringed. Moments later he was asleep again, drifting into a dream within the dream.

His dream was pure terror, thousands around him dying and in agonizing pain. He watched as some burned alive while screaming for him to help, but he did nothing. He couldn't do anything. He was powerless. Something was watching him, a dark and powerful beast. It whispered to him, promised the release death would bring, clawed out and held him there. Motionless. Helpless.

He awoke violently, screaming and clenching his teeth. Sweat poured down from his face as he relaxed his jaw and breathed deeply. Ink tried to calm his body down, but his heart just kept pumping heavily. Eventually he was able to relax, and that was when he heard a knock at the door.

It was Ina, “Can I come in?”

Ink took a deep breath. “Yea, come on in.” The door creaked open and as Ina walked in he could hear her robotic legs and arms making mechanical whistles and grinding noises. She sat down in the chair next to him and looked into his eyes.

“I'm glad you're ok, thank you for saving me.”

“I was the reason you almost died.”

“I know, but I was the reason you almost died, so fair's fair. We're both alive and that's what matters.”

Ink looked at her, surprised that either one of them actually were still alive. “Yea... that's what matters.” With Ina at his side, he eventually recovered and became known as The King Of The Cosmos.

Banishment

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Rin returned to Biz from which he came, but he was not greeted with open arms.

“You have completed your task, but in a very crude and inhumane manner. You are being charged with reckless endangerment of this and higher dimensions. How do you plead?”

“How do I plead? Did I not do the job I was sent to do? If I had not intervened, would any of us be standing here right now?”

“Your method was unsound and dangerous. Other means could have been used to achieve the same goal, yet you chose to violate the avatar of the Lys dimension, knowing fully well that you could have destroyed everything you were trying to accomplish.”

“You're welcome.”

“Although, as time passes Ink begins to take control of his dimension as planned, you will still be held accountable for any trauma this may cause him in the future. Your services are no longer required, and you are no longer allowed to return to this dimension of Biz, nor Lys. If you are found in either of these places you will be put to death. Do you understand?”

Rin looked at them with a smile. “All too well.”

Rhun

Schoolhouse Jail

Rhun is an instant legend in the school, but this won't be a good thing. His legendary status propels him into the category of most hated, infamous for his ferocity. This only adds to the attention he would normally draw for being the shortest at the entire school. They all still fear him, but they each have different ways of showing it. Some avoid him like the plague, others just constantly talk shit. Nobody touches him. They all know the legend.

The school isn't really a school at all, nor is it the church which it resembles. It is a jail, plain and simple, complete with a cellblock underneath in the basement. The children work in the yard during the day, are fed in the school, and some do janitorial work. The "teachers" discipline the kids mercilessly, since the officers assigned to discipline no longer exist. The school's purpose is to harden the children for battle, although Rhun essentially ends the endless war upon arriving in Syl.

So Rhun learns the language, full of guttural sounds and slurring, but the language isn't the one he needs to read Magdoline's note. Keeping the note and pen safe in his backpack, a few years pass with very few deaths. A heart attack here, missing bully there, but none of it can be blamed on him. That is until some new fool decides to push him. As his hands hit Rhun's chest the newbie turns to dust, and when Rhun hits the floor the entire school goes up in flames.

When Rhun walks out of the flames, uninjured, he sees a lone survivor, waiting for him. They look at each other for several silent moments, until the kid speaks. "I am Nyf. I swear my allegiance to you and offer myself as your personal bodyguard."

Rhun smiles and this makes Nyf uncomfortable. Curious comes out of hiding and sniffs them both, then hides again. "I accept your offer. Let's continue our journey."

Nosh Pit

It's a mix of fear and respect that motivates Nyf to join Rhun. Fear of his father brought him down the path to the schoolhouse, but Rhun's power seems to shadow even his father's. He can't stay in the school, and the wave of black fire seems to threaten to consume everything in its path. Rhun is happy to have a friend he can talk to, although Nyf doesn't know what a friend is, and Rhun's wholesome and

friendly demeanor make him uncomfortable. He is an inch taller than Rhun, dressed in rags with pale white skin and small straight eyes. Small pieces of hair pop out of his head in every direction. Curious continues to lurk.

They travel the road for several hours and find a small town with about a dozen small black buildings, six on each side of the dusty road, similar to an old western village. None of them have any interest in exploring the buildings, they are obviously abandoned.

A large crowd blocks their path. The one in front and center appears to be their leader. He is taller than the rest, yet still rather young. “You’re in Baby Killer’s territory now. I would tell you to turn around and try to run away, but it’s too late for that now. Isn’t it? I mean, you’re both way too small, and me and my crew are about to cut you up into smaller pieces.”

Nyf looks over to Rhun. “Aren’t you going to do something?”

“I thought you were my bodyguard. Besides, I’m trying to work on my anger.”

The crowd of nearly twenty gets closer as the two talk. Then they pounce.

In an instant mist of black and green blood, Curious moves like a bullet, shredding Baby Killer and his entire crew. When it’s over, Curious licks its paws and wipes blood from its face. Nyf and Rhun stare in amazement, then Nyf and Curious feast on the fallen while Rhun watches in disgust, losing any appetite he had built from walking. Rhun reflects on his life, surrounded by death and destruction. They will continue down the road, leaving the town for the blackness to devour.

Destruction Factory

They keep walking until they see a large factory ahead, producing copious amounts of red clouds from giant smokestacks. Rhun and Nyf fearlessly approach and are harshly greeted at the gate, and then ushered in as workers who have wandered off. Curious stays hidden, skipping along the roof of the factory. Rhun and Nyf are led to an assembly line for weapons production. Judging by the size of the factory and the number of workers, Nyf guesses that there are probably about a hundred different types of weapons made each day, and probably a thousand of each. Many weeks go by without Rhun taking any lives, but the calm is short lived. Rhun is horrible at making anything, and Nyf is too rebellious to listen long.

One day, Rhun sees a beautiful little girl who is almost his same height, dressed in pink. Everything is pink, from her bonnet to her umbrella and dress. She intrigues Rhun, but as he asks around he finds that everyone hates her and hates the color pink. They treat her like a dog, throwing treats at her and telling her to play dead. The only reason she's even there is because her father is the factory foreman, and her punishment for wearing pink is to be disciplined by the factory workers. As he continues to ask around he finds that none of them even know her name, they just call her excessively vulgar and insulting names.

Rhun works up the courage to talk to her. He sees his chance and takes it, "Hello! My name is Rhun."

The girl is taken aback by his polite demeanor and it kind of weirds her out, but it's a good change of pace from all the bullying. "My name is Debris."

Rhun smiles and she instinctively cringes. Smiles in Syl signify evil intent. The worst kind. He thinks to reach out to shake her hand, but fears it would only turn her into dust. She wouldn't understand the gesture anyhow. "I hate this place, and you're the only one even worth talking to here. These monsters are likely to have you killed. That is the way of things."

"Well then we should probably all leave together then. I'm done with this place anyhow."

"All? How many people do you have with you?"

"Just Nyf and Curious."

She looks at him awkwardly. "Okay, but I have my doubts we'll be able to just walk out." Rhun smiles again, only this time Debris feels excited instead of scared.

They find Nyf and begin walking out of the factory. Two guards attempt to block their exit, but Rhun walks through them, turning them both to crumbling piles of ash. Debris stops momentarily, but Nyf and Rhun keep walking without missing a beat. She looks around to see all the workers staring as the two children leave, and then Debris runs to catch up with them. Curious jumps down from his hiding spot and when they get so far away a worker runs up and yells. At that moment, more yells are heard inside the building as it collapses in on itself and explodes. He runs back inside just in time to meet his fate, and the black fire cleans up behind them as it follows.

The City

For several miles after the factory there is nothing in sight. All they see is a horizon, lit up by some mystical whitish-green light, and the gray rocky landscape which surrounds them, flat and lifeless. Above them the slanted ceiling gets closer.

Debris and Rhun get more acquainted while Nyf listens in growing annoyance. Their polite gestures and kind words make him sick to his stomach, not to mention the detestable color she seems so fond of. He cannot even look at her. After all, he is a demon of Syl, and all demons have trouble looking at pink. Rhun is from Lys, and Debris explains that she is a hybrid. Her mother is seduced by a demon after being sent to Syl, and she dies giving birth to Debris. She and Nyf share no words, although she glances at him for a brief moment.

Eventually they reach the city. It ushers them in the same as the factory, as workers who weren't at their posts. Why else would they be there? The demons hustle around as if guided by an omnipotent being towards some ultimate goal.

The three are separated into different quadrants of the gigantic city, while Curious scavenges food from the marketplace. Debris is placed in the freakshow, but she is safe there. Protected. Nyf is put to work at another factory, which displeases him. Rhun is assigned the prestigious position of guaranteeing high profile tourists have a good time and enjoy their stay of the city. There are never any complaints, never any survivors. He does this in secret, trying to hold back the black hole within his soul from absorbing everything in sight. Several years will pass and people begin to get suspicious. Those people quickly end up missing, and this adds to the legend of Rhun.

The massive buildings will blot out the horizon on the day that Rhun meets the three brothers of destruction. They block his path and verbally abuse him. They call themselves Rubble, Blast, and Dust. They threaten to detonate bombs throughout the city, killing his family and friends. Curious, Debris, and Nyf walk up behind Rhun like magic, ready to follow him into oblivion. "Go ahead and blow up the city, and then join us on our journey." The three brothers have a discussion among them and then agree. "That's all we really wanted anyhow," Rubble says. Rubble's face is blackened and sharp, with red blotches all over. His eyes are vacant. His younger brother Blast is red and has a triangular face, resembling the eldest brother Dust, whose skin is gray.

The Ceiling

As they nonchalantly walk away from the exploding city, Rhun can see that in the distance of about a mile ahead of them the plane that spans the sky intersects their path. When the seven of them reach the intersection, Rhun will be the first to step firmly onto the slanted surface, and as his center of gravity flips he gets a moment of dizzy vertigo, as if he is going to fall off into a pocket of weightless drift, forever to be lost in the empty reaches of Syl.

When he stabilizes he looks up to the others. “I suggest you jump,” he will say as they stare awkwardly. Nyf and Curious are the first to jump, but the rest are hesitant. “You must all jump, the black fire!” The three brothers jump, but Debris hesitates uncomfortably long. “JUMP DEBRIS!” is what Rhun will shout moments before the rest of the rock she’s standing on crumbles into nothing and she falls into a weightless drift. The taller brother, Rubble, reaches up and grabs her hand, pulling her down just in time for the black fire to envelope the air above.

Rhun is relieved that Debris isn’t harmed, but his worries shift quickly as Dust steps closer to the black fire. His lifelong infatuation with it has finally taken its toll, and even though everyone yells at him to stop, he is too fixated to hear them. “It only wants me.” The black fire consumes him in a flash as he touches it, and then he is no more. Rhun falls to his knees and covers the tears with his hands. Blast explains Dust’s infatuation with the black fire, the lifelong curiosity. “There was nothing any of us could have done. That was his fate.”

Rhun tries to listen, but deep inside he begins to see that all death is his fault. This thought branches off into deeper, sadder memories. Ones he has suppressed. Rhun begins daydreaming, and Debris starts to get used to snapping him back to consciousness.

As the six travelers continue, they open up more to each other and chat. The conversation is not typical, unless it takes place in Syl. “How many have you killed? What’s your favorite way to kill?”

Rhun is silent while they talk, and Debris mumbles something to herself. Then she looks at Rhun. “So… tell me about your parents. I told you about mine.”

Rhun remembers the useless note in his backpack. “I don’t have parents.”

She looks at him, shocked yet jealous. “Well, just be glad you don’t have a dad like mine.”

Dad? he thinks to himself. Did he kill his dad? Rhun shakes his head and shrugs her off.

Ahead of them they begin to see a large cemetery. There is a small house in the center, and standing in the doorway are two shadowy figures. As the group approaches, it becomes clear that it's an old man with his arm around his wife. It pleases Rhun to see such love in a dimension of so much chaos. Their demonic faces hold twisted evil scowls, yet they are nice as can be. The man introduces himself as Grave, and his wife's name is Bury. She speaks in an old crackly voice. "Have you seen my sister, Voyd?" Voyd is last seen heading in the direction Rhun and his group comes from, but none of them recall seeing anybody.

Grave ponders. "Hmmm… it's possible she went to Sector 3."

Bury gets a puzzled look on her face. "Why would she do that without saying something?"

Grave's face also turns to one of puzzlement. Rhun hopes she did go to Sector 3, whatever that is. If she happened to somehow pass Rhun, she would have been absorbed into the black fire. "We will see if we can find her," Rhun promises.

Nyf interjects. "We will?"

"Sure, why not?"

Nyf does not respond, but Grave and Bury do. "We will wait here."

Rhun knows they will not survive there.

Team Fodder

Rhun asks to speak to Grave in private, and they step inside the crypt in which the couple lives. He stares sternly into Grave's eyes. "I don't think this place will exist after we leave. The black fire follows us."

Grave sighs. "I had been watching your journey. I trust your instincts, but I need to talk to Bury about it."

They both walk out where everyone is standing around awkwardly, and Grave takes Bury back inside

to discuss something. Nyf is curious. “What’s going on?”

“Don’t worry about it.” The topic is dropped and Bury begins to fight with Grave. It is muffled but her tone is clearly angry. When they finally exit, Grave tells them that they will stay. Grave is reluctant about this decision, and has a bad feeling about it, but the choice is made.

Grave gives Rhun and his group instructions on how to get to the tunnel which leads to Sector 3. His group walks back towards the fire, close enough to feel its heat, and then they open a secret hatch that none of them noticed on the way in. As they enter the tunnel, Rhun fears for Grave and Bury, hoping for the best. Not long after Rhun’s group begins walking, the skies above Grave and Bury which are filled with black fire seem to descend upon the couple. Disregarding his wife’s decision, he picks her up and runs for the tunnel entrance. He looks back to see the fire crushing his crypt, and as soon as they jump into the tunnel, the black fire follows a foot behind. They are barely able to outrun it, but eventually they will catch up to Rhun’s party. Rhun and Debris are happy to see them.

“We almost didn't make it.”

“Let’s just hope her sister Voyd was so lucky.”

When the travelers continue, Bury will explain why she is reluctant to return to Sector 3, and why Voyd might have returned there. “You see, we are all slaves or soldiers in Sector 3. Well… unless you’re the king of Syl, you’re a slave no matter where you go. I’m sure you all know that. There is no law in Sector 3, but there are a few rules. You see, they try to make it seem like a game, but it is far from fun. At least for me and Grave. Voyd loved it, but I began to see her being consumed with power and hatred, and then one day she was defeated by her own people, left for dead in a puddle of her own humiliation. She used to talk about becoming queen… but I figured that talk had ceased long ago. Her dreams expanded beyond Sector 3 though. She envisioned invading Lys with the largest army anyone had ever seen. I should have seen her choice to return had been made when she said that my husband and I had become weak because of each other.” Bury gets a worried look on her face. “I suppose she was right.”

The group grows silent, and Rhun breaks the silence by asking a question that all but him know the answer to. “Ok, so how many sectors are there?”

Everyone stops walking except Rhun, and then he stops and looks back. Debris walks up to him.

“There are six sectors to Syl. Everybody knows that. Where are you from?”

Rhun looks at them all and thinks. “I’m not sure. I think I might be from the place Voyd was speaking of invading, from where Debris’ mom was from. I forget.”

“Lys!?” Nyf exclaims. “This whole time I’ve been following a lowly Lyssian? I… don’t believe it. I have lost all honor.” Nyf walks off in anger. Nyf ignores them for the rest of the journey through the tunnel, except for a small guff of disgust when Grave suggest Rhun be their team leader.

“Me?”

“Yes Rhun, we need a leader who is capable of handling dangerous battle. I’ve watched your journey, and I’ve seen your power. You bring nothing but raw destruction with you.”

Rhun’s eyes fill with tears. “Maybe… but what if I don’t want to be that?”

Bury tries to comfort the child. “Aw, sweetie. You have no choice. All must end, and it just so happens that the time is now and you have to be the one to do it.”

Rhun’s tears spill over and he gets weak in his knees. He puts his hands to his head and goes to the floor. “I think I killed my parents. When I was born.” Rhun doesn’t know how true this statement is, but it is dying to get out. He can no longer hold it back as he loses control of his emotions. Debris begins to walk over to him, but he screams at her. “Don’t touch me! Nobody touch me! I am more dangerous than the black fire that has already taken so many lives.”

“Rhun, this is Syl, and you are foreseeably the most powerful in the entire dimension, even at such a young age. You are special, and you must be our leader. Just look at how many have already chosen to follow you. That’s rare in Syl.” Curious jumps up and sits on Rhun’s shoulder without dying. Rhun’s eyes are done crying, and he is ready for Sector 3, or at least he hopes. “They will give us a team name when we get there. We must tell them we are warriors or they’ll split us up, but just in case anything happens I brought these ancient teleplugs. They go in your ear. I’ll keep them all on frequency 34, the least used frequency, and I will password protect it as best I can.”

“You carry those around with you?” Bury remarks.

“I always like to feel prepared. I don’t have enough for the animal.”

He looks over to Curious, who appears to have made himself comfortable on Rhun's shoulder. "He won't need it, he knows how to find me, and he knows how to hide."

They all put the teleplugs in their ears and when Rhun begins to pick up the pace they all follow in haste. An awkward silence surrounds them until they reach the end of the tunnel. The door at the end is guarded by two giant demons which look down at Rhun, then to the others, and back to Rhun who stands in the front.

"What?" One guard says.

"What are we supposed to do here?" The other says.

"That's what I was going to ask."

"Listen kid, we put your group into two categories, but since there is such a wide range of ages and sizes, and you present yourself as leader, we feel as if your team would be horrible for both categories."

Blast speaks up. "We are soldiers, and the kid is our leader."

The guards exchange another confused look and then burst out laughing. It takes some time before they look back at Rhun with tears in their eyes. "This is the best day ever. None of you will survive the night. Your team is approved for combat, and you will be known as Team Fodder." The larger guard hands Rhun a slip of paper after stamping it and laughing once more.

They enter the door and are greeted by thousands of demons either working or killing each other. There are no structures in sight, just a giant battlefield of rolling hills and flatland. The insanity in the air is infectious and intense. Explosions and gunfire fill their ears.

Eleven

Rhun is overwhelmed to say the least. Beings, beasts, and monsters run, fly, and swim through rivers of blood in every direction. Screams of both torture and passion echo through the clashing of blades, bullets, and muscle. There is an unhealthy balance of pleasure and agony, but even in his state of shock Rhun can still see a balance of sorts.

Little by little the population of Syl will take notice of Team Fodder. When a snake-man demon points

at them and screams some guttural war cry Rhun will freeze in his tracks and not be able to move. Nyf looks to him and is thoroughly disgusted. He spits on the ground and unsheathes his blade, unleashing it on the closest demon that isn't in their group.

The rest follow his lead, except Debris, who closes her eyes, covers her ears, and cries. Her deepest darkest secret is that she has never killed anyone, nor ever wants to. She cannot even stand to think about death, cannot look at it, and wishes to not hear it. The battle is so loud that she has no chance drowning it out. It soaks through her palms and travels to her brain, making her feel everyone's pain.

Rubble and Blast use guns and explosives to cut a path through the armies, while Grave and Bury use some mysterious magical energy they're able to conjure from within. Curious is untouchable, faster than lightning and ten times more vicious. All of them are ruthless killers, but so is every other demon in Sector 3. They are able to hold back the masses, thinning the crowd, but Sector 3 is huge and they barely make a dent before all are worn out.

"I should have led this group!" Nyf shouts after looking back at Rhun and Debris. The fighting brings Team Fodder about fifty yards away from the entrance to Sector 3, but Rhun and Debris are still there, cowering.

"THAT KID IS FROM LYS!!" Nyf will shout to the crowd with what little energy he has left. The advancing demons stop and look at Rhun.

"What are you doing!?" Bury whispers to Nyf.

"I'm doing what's best for Team Fodder."

A large demon towering over Nyf approaches. "LYS?!"

"He is our leader."

"The rest of you are worthless to me. The blood of a Lyssian is a delicacy. Move aside," the giant will say as the armies all stop fighting and start walking towards Rhun. Tens of thousands of demonic footsteps begin to fall faster and closer, so Debris screams.

"NO!!! Rhun! Somebody help us!!" Her voice, overflowing with fear and emotion, is what snaps Rhun out of his daze. Instead of returning to his normal whole hearted self, Rhun switches to an

insatiable black hole, absorbing everything and everyone except for Team Fodder. For miles, all demons are drawn into Rhun's being through his eyes. Team Fodder look around in astonishment and notice three strangers who are unaffected by Rhun's black hole.

When all of the demons have been absorbed, Rhun goes to his knees and collapses. As Debris looks around at the empty battlefield she goes into shock and passes out next to Rhun. The rest of Team Fodder recovers, and Bury recognizes her sister almost instantly. "Voyd!"

Voyd and the two women she walks with look over to the panting group. They slowly begin to walk towards them. "Bury. Grave. I see you were dragged from your boring ass home. By this?" Voyd dramatically points at Rhun as she continues to walk towards Bury. "A child from Lys is your leader?!"

Nyf takes a deep breath and speaks, "We just found that out. We had no idea." He takes another deep breath as an attempt to continue explaining.

"Shut the fuck up."

Rubble and Blast look at the other two women with growing interest. This gives them enough energy to stand and greet them, but the two women ignore. "These are my associates, Riot and Chaos." The two women bow while walking. "I should kill you all for bringing him here, but he actually did me a favor. I was on my way back to visit one last time, after I had gotten a bigger army together. It seems all I get is you guys."

Bury raises up. "You were returning? But why?"

"Because I heard that there was a portal to Lys past the city."

"The city is no more. Our home is gone."

Voyd looks at Bury with a confused look. "What the fuck are you talking about?"

"See for yourself." Bury points at the door behind Rhun. Voyd stops and then starts walking towards the door. She passes the collapsed children and her associates follow. The door knob is hot to the touch, and as Voyd opens it, heat rushes out. Behind the door, the tunnel is completely filled with black fire. The guards are gone.

Voyd is flabbergasted. “What the hell is this?”

Grave stands up. “The fire follows us. Well... to be more specific, it follows him, and we do too.”

Nyf grunts. “The black fire doesn't follow him, you speak as if he's some type of chosen one.”

“Did you not see what just happened?”

Nyf ignores him and walks over to Rhun, kicks dirt in his face and yells, “WAKE UP!” Rhun shakes his head and spits dirt out. Moments later, Debris wakes. “Get up!”

Voyd, Riot and Chaos walk back towards Bury and the others. Rhun stands up and slowly looks around. “What happened?” Nyf sighs and walks away.

“What's wrong with him?” Debris asks, but Rhun just shakes his head and starts to follow him. The black fire comes through the door and then covers the entire wall. Debris sees it and squeals, then she runs ahead.

Nyf looks over his shoulder. “Whatever,” he will say before he continues walking.

Rhun looks behind him and a tear falls from his eye. “I'm sorry,” is all he can say, a word meant only as in insult in Syl.

Aging

The travelers continue to walk. For miles there is nothing. No warriors, no slaves, no structures of any kind. Everyone is hungry except for Rhun. The demons feed off of the fallen, but there aren't any to be seen, and Debris eats plants, but the land is barren. They are all very grumpy and weak by the time they reach the edge of the wasteland. When they finally do, they gang up on the first demons they see and feast, while Debris forages for plants. Then they seem content.

Rhun watches them, almost happy and celebrating. For the time being, they are fulfilled. He sees purpose in their eyes and wonders what the bigger purpose might be. What his purpose is. If his only purpose is to destroy, then why does he feel such a strong connection to them all? Why does he feel a bond with Debris? He wonders to himself where they're walking and why. His mind cannot fathom an answer, so he keeps walking in hopes of finding something that makes sense to him. A purpose.

A week into Sector 3, Grave clenches his chest and grunts. He falls to his knees and Bury kneels down to see if he is ok. “He's dying,” she tells everyone.

Rhun runs over to him and asks, “Did he get hit?” He looks around, but nobody answers because nobody knows.

Nyf could care less. “I'll bet he's just old.”

“How could you be so cold?” Rhun asks.

Nyf looks around and puts his arms up like whatthefuck? Grave speaks to Rhun. “He's right. Nothing hit me, I'm just too old to fight.”

“Then just stop fighting.”

“No. It's too late for that.”

Tears fill Rhun's eyes. “This is all my fault. I bring death and destruction with me everywhere I go.”

“No!” Grave coughs. His final words will echo through Rhun's thoughts for hours, drowning out any other mental chatter. “Not every death is your fault. You... blame yourself for your parents' deaths, but it was just their time. This is my time. You will have yours, and on that day you will be ready. There is an amazing power within you. Put it to good use.” Rhun sits there in disbelief and deep sorrow as Grave whispers something to Bury and then takes his final breaths. When the last of those breaths have passed and his body becomes limp, Rhun grabs his hand and cries harder. Grave's corpse turns to ashes and is taken away by the wind. Rhun sits there, staring into the distance with tears spilling uncontrollably.

Nyf is disgusted. “I don't see what the big deal is.”

Rhun glares at Nyf with pain in his eyes, and Nyf becomes fed up with following a Lyssian child who can't control his emotions. Nyf walks off, leaving Team Fodder behind. Rhun mourns Grave for hours while the others clear the area, feast, and rest. Curious cuddles lovingly next to Rhun, trying to comfort him.

Over the next million years they all age except Rhun, who stays the same height. Even Curious grows

an inch, and the rest tower over him. They move slowly through Sector 3.

A Message from Beyond

When Bury feels the time is right, she carries out Grave's final request. She conducts a ritual to call upon her dead mother, Fayd, whom Voyd does not get along with. Voyd decides to step away once she realizes what is happening, and Riot and Chaos follow her. Their mother appears, with a white featureless face. She floats there and telepathically speaks to Rhun. “Ahhh.... I see that it is time to deliver my message. I will open up communications with Sector 1. There is someone who must speak to you.” Rhun listens intently, curious and scared.

A human apparition appears next to Fayd and looks towards Rhun. “I have been waiting a long time to speak to you. It's important that you listen to me. I have the ability to see your journey, through your eyes. I understand what you are going through, more than you may realize. You see, I also used to blame myself for the death of others. The first death I recall feeling responsible for was a man named Dragon. He was a writer like me, and even though we had never met in person, we knew each other quite well online.”

“Online?”

“Don't worry about it. My point is that he was depressed. He had been through a lot, and his writing was dark. I always gave him good feedback, and he would return the favor. I felt obligated to help him get over a deep depression as much as I could, but the depression stemmed from a broken heart, a low self-esteem, and a string of bad luck which left him disabled and unable to walk. He had been on his last ropes for a while. I felt I was able to talk him out of suicide once or twice, but I feel he resented me for it. I had always tried to give the best advice possible with my critique, and one day he wrote a happy poem. It was about moving forward, turning a new leaf. I told him it felt forced and that his other stuff was better. My arrogance. I was basically saying that I liked hearing about his pain more than him pretending to be happy, because it was truer. Little did I know, someone else had been trying to help him with his depression too, and she had recommended he try to fake happiness until he made it. Her advice was miles above any I had to offer, but after my harsh critique it seemed like he felt he was doomed to be depressed forever. He stopped talking to me, stopped coming to me for his problems, and eventually committed suicide. I was angry, then sorrowful, and then I was full of guilt. It was not the first nor the last time I had been faced with talking someone out of suicide, but it was my most

regretful. I never dealt with death very well, I was constantly afraid of it, my own death or others. It plagued me, and as a result I've said some nasty things about suicide. Since then, I've developed a broader understanding of suicide. It isn't only selfish for the person to give up and commit or attempt, but also selfish for anyone to make that person stay alive, in agony, living through daily torment. Depression is a disease. Anyone who contemplates suicide is a victim of mental trauma. Dragon told me his name only once, but he will always be Dragon Darkness to me. I dedicated my first book to him, not only out of guilt, but also out of love. I will always consider him a great friend, and a true inspiration. I'm telling you this because it was his time, and even though he left the physical realm, his spirit still guided me. The dead will always remain in our psyche, for eternity. Nobody is ever truly forgotten. One day you will be able to hear them guiding you."

"How will I know?"

"You will know. It will start with a whisper."

"Wait! Who are you?"

The human and Fayd disappear before answering his question, dissolving from existence before their very eyes. Bury dies shortly after.

Regret

Playt

Guilt

Playt has a big heart
It beats with such vibrancy

Teen Playt immediately goes to a planet named Candee. The last time he was here it was only for a matter of mere seconds, but his mind was filled with thoughts of sweets and happiness. He goes there now, to brood and hate himself. His thoughts are in the dirt. They are smothering with memories of rejection and all the pain that living has caused him.

He looks around at his new safe place, a planet made almost entirely of candy. He stares at the sweet delicious animals that live there. They crawl around and jump from place to place. Some even float along almost aimlessly. The chocolate and sugar assortments fill the world with movement and happy music.

An ice-cream cone floats past Playt's face and whispers at him to lick it. Playt becomes uncontrollably excited, his giddiness overwhelming, and he collapses onto a graham cracker walkway.

His dreams are filled with sugarplums and gumdrops. Lollipops dance around him in a circle as gummy bears sprinkle out of the sky. A cake runs up and smashes its chocolate icing all over Playt's face.

He wakes up to a mouth full of sugary delight, with no recollection of how it got there. He looks around to see the candy animals staring at him. They have stopped moving. Now they are leering at him, as if he is a murderer.

They attack, Playt eats them.

One by one, candy bars and assortments of chocolates are licked to death, chewed upon, and swallowed. Playt cannot stop himself. Soon enough, all of the candy that had surrounded him is in his belly.

The town is now deserted. Playt is full.

“Nooo!!” Playt screams, but nobody is around to hear him.

Time passes and Playt finds more candy. He becomes a vampire, and only eats them when nobody is looking. He feeds off of their sugar, and slowly he gets fatter and fatter. He grows addicted to their sugary goodness, and can no longer help himself.

He feels like a monster. He tries to stop eating them, but to no avail. They taste too good. He starts to tweak when he doesn’t have the candy.

Eventually he is able to stop, causing him to go through withdrawals, and twitches.

Those soon pass. Now Playt is fat and still very depressed. He feels guilty for eating so much candy, and the guilt builds upon his depression. He is a mass murderer and an over eater.

After quitting his habit he begins to starve himself. He wanders around and tries to avoid others. Eventually, he encounters angry atomic fireballs.

They appear to be the law. They yell in an alien language and Fat Playt hears a…

Rumble in the distance…

Another…

Silence.

From out of a gingerbread house that Playt can see in the corner of his eye, a loud noise explodes into his eardrums. He turns slowly to see what’s going on as a cloud of ginger settles. From out of the cloud a giant shadow looms.

Then it steps forward.

It is a giant gingerbread man. It narrows in on Playt and frowns. Then it is rushing towards him.

He slowly turns to walk away, but since he is fat and starved, he cannot move very quickly.

The atomic fireballs fly around and shoot themselves into Playt's mouth. The heat that they cause runs like electricity from his mouth to his blood. His whole body becomes an oven and Playt begins to sweat profusely.

They seem to force themselves down Playt's throat, choking him.

The gingerbread man is upon Playt, but has stopped to watch Playt's agony.

It laughs a giant deep laugh. Then it reaches out a huge hand and touches him on the forehead.

Playt is scared out of his mind, but cannot move. Cannot breathe.

The gingerbread giant reads his mind and then pulls its hand away.

It screams, "Eat me!" in a language which resembles that of Black Leaves.

In Playt's confusion, he spits out the fireballs onto the ground. They are covered in spit and they slam against the ground, chip and bounce up. Then they stop mid-air and fly back down Playt's throat.

Cannot breathe once again.

The gingerbread giant laughs even louder. "EAT ME!" it says and stands all the way up. The giant is more than five times taller than Playt.

Playt swallows the fireballs. A tear runs down his cheek as sweat continues to pour. The giant gingerbread quits laughing. It brings down its hand and Playt is crushed beneath it. The gingerbread laughs louder.

Then his face turns to one of dismay, and he stands up and screams.

Playt's teeth are clenched to his hand, and he flies around as the giant swings him through the air. He shakes his hand and screams more, but Playt is not letting go. Playt bites down and falls to the ground. He chews as he falls, and finally lands and bounces on the graham cracker walkway. He swallows as he rights himself and stands on his feet.

The gingerbread giant looks at his hand which is now missing two of his fingers.

A huge tear runs down his face and splashes onto the ground below. Playt is taken by the wave and gets swept off his feet, onto his back.

The giant screams a war cry and sweeps down to smack Playt. It relentlessly smacks him into the air, sending him flying into buildings and mountains, which are all made of candy.

“EAT ME!” it screams again and again, and so Playt does.

He chews on it, and devours it piece by piece. His hunger makes him lose himself, and he begins to eat in an uncontrollable frenzy. The giant ginger screams with each bite, but Playt cannot stop.

Eventually Playt is full, but the gingerbread giant is still alive.

Now only a head, it still screams at him to eat it. Playt abides by its wishes.

When it is no more than a mouth, it whispers two words. “Thank you.”

Playt swallows the last bite.

Fat Playt falls to the floor, filled to the brim with ginger bread and icing. He rolls to his side and pukes up a puddle of liquid sugar.

He falls fast asleep.

He envisions himself eating everyone he has ever met, including Playt himself. Their blood splashes everywhere with each bite. He fills with sorrow every time he sees the blood, and yet he still cannot stop from eating them.

Then he wakes up.

He must change. He feels this deep in his heart.

He will not become the monster that he was told he would. Not today, today he is going to make everything right.

FLICKER

Fat Playt appears in the council. Nobody is there, but he can hear and feel the Abomination calling to him. He descends down the corridor in which he descended when he was a baby, and approaches the Abomination.

"PLAAAYYT. IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU. I NEED YOUR HELP. THE TIMELINE IS IN TROUBLE, AND YOU MUST HELP ME SET IT RIGHT. THE TIME GENERALS HAVE BEEN ASKING ME TO DO THIS, BUT SINCE I CANNOT MOVE FROM WHERE I AM I WILL NEED SOMEONE ELSE'S HELP. ARE YOU UP TO IT?"

"Yes, I will do anything to fix what has gone wrong. I will not be remembered as a monster, but rather a hero."

"VERY WELL, YOUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS WILL BE TO RETURN A JUNGLE CREATURE, WHICH WAS ACCIDENTALLY FLICKERED TO THE COUNCIL, BACK TO BLUE LEAVES, WHICH IS ITS HOME. WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED WITH THAT, COME BACK TO ME AND I WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER MISSION."

Playt does as he is told. The Abomination tells him what time that the jungle creature appeared in the Council, and what time he disappeared from Blue Leaves. As he fixes the problem with the timeline he feels a soothing wind blow over him. Then he returns to the Abomination.

"NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS WILL BE TO BRING THE CHILDREN SUDNASYL, LEEOSCOOW, AND LLUGWYNCH BACK TO THEIR ORIGINAL PLANET, AND THEIR ORIGINAL TIME. THEY ARE ALL FROM ASPIMENTIA, BUT RED PLAYT DECIDED THEY SHOULD GO TO DUSSYLLIA, AND SO THEY HAVE MET THEIR DOPPELGANGERS. YOU MUST ALSO ERASE THEIR MEMORIES, AS WELL AS THE MEMORIES OF THE CHILDREN WHO MIRROR THEM, LYSANDUS, ORSIDIUM, AND DIRRINNI, SO THAT NONE OF THEM REMEMBER PLAYT'S MISTAKE. IF THEY WERE TO REMEMBER, IT COULD POSSIBLY DESTROY THE Universe."

"But I don't know how to erase memories."

"YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU ATTEMPT. YOU HAVE INCREDIBLE POWER WITH UNLIMITED POSSIBILLITES. USE THEM TO YOUR ADVANTAGE. WHEN YOUR TASK IS COMPLETE, RETURN HERE."

Playt flickers to Dussyllia, in the era in which the Abomination said the problem would be. He sees the children talking to each other, confused and angry. They begin to fight, and Playt spots Lysandus's hat. The memories of his own hat run through his mind.

Sorrow fills him. He cannot continue, but he wants to fix the timeline. He wants to make things right, but he cannot stop thinking of his dead hat, and his lost friends which stand before him. He watches Lysandus as he tries to protect his friends. He sees the loyalty and determination in his eyes.

He looks to the one named Sudnasyl, and can see the deceit in his eyes.

He glances back at the hat on Lysandus's head.

He tells himself that it must not get in the way of his duties. He does as he was told, and ignores the countless questions that the children ask him. He brings the ones from Aspimentia back to their home, and he erases every last bit of memory of this ever happening.

Fat Playt is tempted to take Lysandus's hat, and then erase his memory of it ever being there. He decides against it however, and instead he FLICKERs back to the Abomination's room.

Love

It feels all my pain

Playt helps the Abomination on many occasions throughout history. His sadness over his lost hat passes slightly once he makes a replica of it. He wears it everywhere he goes, and even talks to it sometimes. He barely notices that his clothes have changed once more, into a white suit with white shoes. For some reason unknown to Playt, he also now wears a pair of glasses.

He brings Alessandra back to Aspimiria and erases her memories of her servant Caprina. He fixes what needs to be fixed, and works for several years correcting mostly his own mistakes. He rests on occasion, but mostly he works, works himself to the bone. Until one day, he gets a little distracted.

"PLAYT, YOUR NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS IS TO ACCOMPANY SHELLRA, THE QUEEN OF THE CHIBBIES WHICH RESIDE IN FORNOLK. SHE LIVES ON ASPIMIRIA, IN THE YEAR OF 6B53. GO TO HER NOW, FOR SHE NEEDS YOUR HELP. THEN RETURN HERE. THERE IS STILL MORE WORK TO BE DONE."

He FLICKERs to where he’s supposed to go. He sees her, and she is crying. She's dressed in bib overalls, her hair long and bright blue. Her skin is black, and she's very short, but appears to be an adult. Then she looks up, and locks eyes with Playt.

“You’re back! I missed you Playt. Why did you have to leave me?”

Playt’s heart skips a beat as he looks into her eyes. She never looks away from him, and they stare at each other for many seconds. To Playt it is an eternal silence, and then she breaks it with a giggle.

“You look confused.” Her smile widens as she peers into his soul.

Sweat beads up on Playt’s face as he tries to say something.

Anything.

No words come out.

She runs up to him and embraces him. A nervous jolt runs through his body and he swallows hard. As she hugs him he fights the urge to fuse with her. He suddenly wants to be one with her, and has no idea who she even is.

She is Shellra. She appears to love him. That is all he needs to know.

“Why don’t we fuse again? You know, just for a little while.”

Playt is extremely turned on by her words. He grows hard and she laughs again.

“Or we could do that too.”

Fat Playt collapses out of excitement.

When he awakes she is cuddling him tight. She has her head on his shoulder, and her arm across his big belly. In his confusion, he FLICKERs.

She travels with him to the planet of Candee.

“I love when you do that.” She says, and hugs him tighter.

He suddenly wants to know everything about her. He wants to ask so much, but he still cannot say any words.

As they lay on Candee she talks to him in her sweet voice.

“I’m so glad you came back to me. I was getting really lonely. The voices in my head were no longer keeping me company, and even they were yearning for you. I wish we could lie like this forever.”

Playt wishes the same thing.

His heart sings with love for this new mysterious woman.

He realizes how dangerous this can be, but he doesn’t care. He has no choice but to love her from here on out. He wonders what she knows about him. She acts as if she has known him for a long time, as if he has earned her love and respect on more than one occasion.

He has to find out. He has to make her love a reality, and therefore he cannot stay here in this time.

Fat Playt sits up. Shellra sits up, still clinging to him.

“What is wrong?”

“Uhm, I have to go Shellra, but I’ll be back. I can promise you that.”

She smiles, but Playt can see the sadness in that smile. “I know you will be back. Please don’t take too long, ok?” She leans in and kisses him on the lips. His eyes widen and he opens his mouth. She presses her tongue into his, and they kiss for five minutes without stopping. Eventually they have to both take breaths.

“I love you,” he says, and after he says it a wave of extreme relief washes over him.

“I love you too, forever and always.”

FLICKER

Fat Playt appears back on Aspimiria, but its appearance is very different. Instead of the desert sands and the dry air there is humidity, and water. There are purple plants growing, and the world looks to be

full of life.

Fat Playt can see Adult Playt in the distance, and he is talking to Shellra. Shellra's appearance is different as well. Instead of her having long flowing blue hair she has a blonde lightning bolt shooting out of the top of her head. She looks very pissed.

She attacks Adult Playt and they wrestle each other in the grass. She puts her hands around his neck and chokes him. Then they FLICKER away. He thinks to follow, until he hears her voice.

"That was awesome, red dude!"

Shellra is behind him, and yet again she looks different. She has brown hair now, and it is up in a ponytail. She looks at Playt with a goofy face, and sticks out her tongue.

"Shellra, I'm confused. What's happening?"

"Oooo, you know my name huh? That is cool, but I must ask you how you know it. I just saw someone that looked like me, and someone that looked like you," she puts her hand to her face and whispers, "(only skinnier)," and then continues talking in a cheery voice, "and they were mad at each other. Why were they fighting?"

"I don't know I was going to ask you the same thing actually."

"Ha, you don't want to ask me anything, because I don't know how to answer. I don't even know why I'm out here instead of in my castle. I just woke up here."

Suddenly her brown ponytail sinks into her head and she cringes. Then, like magic, her lovely long blue hair grows out in an instant and she looks at Playt in confusion.

"You… you are the one that saved my life. Why did you not save the other Chibbies as well? My people… they're all gone now. All dead. Now I have nothing."

Fat Playt stares at her. "You are three different women?"

"Correct. The one you just talked to calls herself Shellra Bunny. The one you just saw attack your alternate self calls herself Shellra Blade. I am just simply Shellra. Now that I've answered your

question, please answer mine."

She stares into his soul, but not with the deep love that she had before. Instead she looks at him as if she doesn't know what to think of him.

"I don't remember saving you. Perhaps it's because I haven't yet."

"Now that makes absolutely no sense to me mister Playt."

"So, you know about the other two Shellras, but do they know about you?"

"No, they don't even know about each other. And you, how can you exist at two places at the same time?"

"That is a hard question to answer. See, I flicker through time and space. I can be anywhere at any time in existence. It makes life and everything that happens to me very confusing. Because of my predicament, everyone hates and fears me. You however… somehow love me."

"I do not even know you, how could I love you?"

"I don't know, but I don't know you either. All I know is that I've seen you love me. We've kissed. You've even offered me sex."

She looks at him in disgust. "It's not nice to make lies about people that you don't know. Do you want me to bring out Shellra Blade so she can teach you manners?"

"No… I apologize. I meant you no harm."

"Well…." She looks at him and her anger subsides, "you did save my life. You can't be all that bad. You are very different than anybody I've ever met however."

"The same goes to you. You're very mysterious. I want to show you something, take a hold of my hand."

She looks at him shyly, but abides by his wishes.

Then they both FLICKER.

Destruction

It gladly accepts it all in

Fat Playt would be considered to be about fifty earth years by now. Physically he is in his twenties however. In those fifty full years of living he has learned to control where and when he flickers. The thing he cannot control is his emotions.

Right now his emotions are overflowing with joy and confusion.

His joy brings him to a place of happiness, but his confusion brings him to a time of horror.

Fat Playt and Shellra appear on a planet named Fahlls. The place is beautiful all around. Life of many beauties surrounds the two soon to be lovers as they look around and sniff the air. The sweetness of it brings their mind to a place of euphoria, and intoxication.

They walk around and Shellra remains quiet. She does not ask about why or how they got there, and she does not ask why she feels so good.

She doesn't say anything; she just walks with Playt through the streets of Fahlls.

The buildings are tall and red. They pierce the clouds and stare down at them. The people are all different shapes and sizes, many species that have all evolved and then bred with each other. There are no small animals to be seen anywhere, for it seems, every creature that had ever existed was now competent, smart, and at the height of their evolution.

Fat Playt sees many people that look very similar to Lysandus, in all shades from deep black to bright white. Every creature keeps a cautious eye on Playt except for Shellra. Shellra just looks around at the world with growing wonder. She has never seen a world so beautiful and full of life.

Suddenly something happens to her, and her blue hair retreats into her head.

The yellow lightning bolt that she had when she was wrestling the Adult Playt shoots out and she frees herself from Playt's grip.

"Where in the fuck are we and who the fuck are you?"

“It’s me, Playt. Remember, I saved your life somehow, that’s what you just said.”

“I don’t need to listen to your bullshit, get away from me.”

Shellra pushes Playt down and runs through the crowd of people into the distance.

Then Playt hears a rumble, and sees her stop. Everyone stops.

“EVERYONE EVACUATE THE CITY, HAYT IS BACK!!!”

Hayt? Playt thinks to himself. *I know that name. He is the blue entity within my mind. How do these people know of him?*

His thoughts are cut short when a giant monster crashes through the buildings and throws rocks and rubble everywhere. A building crumbles and then starts to plummet onto the innocent. One of those innocents just happen to be Shellra.

Without hesitation, Playt destroys the building mid-fall so that it cannot kill his beloved or anyone else.

The monster, which the people called Hayt, looks over to him and smiles a wicked smile. Its face is blue and it has sharp teeth and red slanted eyes. It is the same creature he saw as a baby, although his memory is clouded because it was so long ago. He remembered that it had flickered over to him, and had spoken to the beast within him.

It had spoken to itself.

It reaches Playt and peers into his eyes once more.

It growls at him as Playt stares up at its horrid face.

From within Playt, Blue thinks. *It’s me; I finally do get free of this hellacious red prison!*

“Playt, no!”

Hayt turns to look at Shellra. Then he rushes towards her.

“Don’t even fucking think about it you blue bastard!”

Playt flies to her but is too late. Hayt smacks her, sending her flying into a building.

Suddenly there is a loud sound of ringing bells, and a bright but brief light.

Playt grabs Hayt and twists his short blue arm while kicking him over and over again. Playt brings a knee up into his stomach.

Hayt is too fast for the Fat Playt and he just tosses him to the side. Then he continues to pursue Shellra, who is now unconscious with rubble and blood on her face.

Playt flies towards her quickly. He concentrates, and uses his emotions to increase his speed. Suddenly, there is another loud sound of ringing bells and a short burst of bright light. Right before Hayt can rain terror down upon Shellra, Playt grabs her and FLICKERs.

Back on Aspimiria where she belongs. The world is once again a desert wasteland, but Playt doesn’t seem to notice. His thoughts are elsewhere.

He is busy blaming himself for her near death. It is him who must have released Hayt, and it is him who was almost too fat to save her. While she sleeps he paces around and thinks. He no longer wants her to love him. He loves her too much to endanger her any more than he already has. He decides to leave her where she is.

FLICKER

Playt goes back to Fahlls, but it now appears as if the monster has left. The people of Fahlls stare at Playt. Silence ensues as Playt tries to seek their emotions, but cannot. Suddenly, someone speaks.

“We know you’ve released Hayt. Even though you have Fahllian blood running through your veins, we will never welcome you here.” The owner of the voice looks similar to Alessandra, the princess of Fahlls. In fact, she most likely is related to her in some way, Playt knows this but doesn’t know how he does.

“I am from Fahlls?” Playt asks.

“You were once Lysandus, were you not? Lysandus, who is not born, yet stands before us as some type of godless abomination.”

Playt staggers. “You mean you know who I am? You know about me?”

“Oh yes, Playt, you are infamous. There is no stopping you. There is nothing in this Universe that will be able to stop your tyranny. And now you have released Blue Hayt, someone that is ten times worse than you. We never could have believed that was possible, but you seem to prove us wrong over and over again.”

Playt looks up to the sky, and notices many multicolored moons surrounding the planet.

Many of them are full.

Suddenly something within him changes.

He can hear Yellow Fayt speaking from within him. She is suddenly extremely happy. *Ah, I can feel it. I am changing. I’m slipping out of your body Playt. I am becoming free. You are releasing me. Thank you.*

“I am?” Playt says as he feels her presence draining out of him. As she leaves he can feel Blue getting stronger and more aware of himself. He grows as she leaves, and Playt becomes fearful.

“You are what?” the little child says as Playt continues to feel Yellow slip out of his mind and body.

And then she is finally free. She stands before the people of Fahlls and they stare up at her in wonder. She is stunningly beautiful, with yellow skin and blue hair. Her hair sticks up in every direction. She wears a tattered black dress, and appears to float there, legless.

She speaks for the first time. “Do not fear. I am the opposite of Hayt. I will aid you in any way necessary. I am a miracle worker, and when I perform a miracle you will see a flash and hear ringing bells.”

“We’ve heard that before. But how can we believe you, you came from Playt. You need to prove to us that you are our friend, or else we will never trust you.”

Yellow raises her right hand and points to the building in which Hayt had just recently destroyed. There is a brief light, and the sound of ringing bells. Then, magically, the building is fixed, and all the rubble that lies on the street is gone.

The people stare at her with amazement.

Playt looks at Fayt.

“I feel sorry for you, being alone with Hayt.”

“I am never alone. That is what I once told myself.”

That’s right Playt, because I will be here with you through everything, Hayt taunts from within. Playt shivers.

“I will watch over you, and help when I can.”

“Thank you.”

They part ways, Playt FLICKERs to Candee, and Fayt disappears.

On Candee, Playt sits down to take a rest. A gummy worm crawls over to him. He picks it up and eats it, a sour one. Playt’s face puckers slightly.

In the distance he can hear someone talking. They are speaking in an unknown language, and they seem to get closer to him. He continues to sit there out of curiosity. They reach Playt’s point of view. There are two of them, and they are wearing white uniforms, and glasses. They look to be similar to the humans of Earth.

They walk up to him and begin talking in an alien language. Playt reaches out a hand and places it on the one’s face.

A sudden rush of knowledge enters Playt’s mind.

He now knows the language in which they were speaking. They are scientists, and they're asking him if he's the one who ate the giant gingerbread man.

“Yea, that was me. I’m really sorry about that, it just kept asking me to eat it. That’s all it would say, over and over again.”

The scientist on the left looks at him and says, “The candy must be eaten. That is part of their purpose. Once they are eaten, they then get digested, and eventually are pooped out. That is how they spawn more of themselves. You however didn’t poop them out.”

“Yes I did, I poop all the time. I just don’t talk about it like you weirdos.”

The scientist on the right looks at Playt oddly. “There has been a serious shortage of candy creatures lately, and it all happened when you showed up. You have eaten countless creatures, and have refused to poop them out. You are considered a poacher, and you must be charged.”

“I pooped on different worlds. That must be why there is a shortage here. Is there anything I can do to fix my mistake?”

“You can eat more candy.”

“Candy that someone pooped?”

“Yea, that’s how it works here Playt, and if you have a problem with it then we will kill your lady friend that you brought here. She calls herself Shellra.”

Playt’s color drains from his face. He gets lightheaded. He will not let them harm her.

“I will eat the poopy candy. How much do I have to eat?”

“We’ll tell you when you’re done. Follow us to the big city.”

The two scientists turn and start to walk. They lead him down a road that appears to be made of chocolate milk powder. They pass a river that is completely made of chocolate. Trees with candy bars attached to them sway around in the wind. Already, Playt is sick of looking at candy.

They walk for many miles, and Playt mentions to them that he can fly. They just ignore him however, and keep on walking. They pass donuts rolling around in circles, and they see sprinkles littering fields of ice cream. Off in the distance, Playt can see what must be the city they were speaking of. Gum drops

hop along almost aimlessly as they get nearer and nearer to the city.

Candy corn starts to rain from the sky and the scientists run to a tree for shelter. Playt is pelted with thousands of the corns, so he too runs for the tree's protection.

Eventually, the candy corn stops falling and they enter the city gates.

Digestion

To save both our souls

Millions of candies fly around him as he walks into the city. Little candy coated chocolates hop around in groups, led by a peanut M&M. They all load onto a Twinkie bus and float off to school.

"We are finally here, the main city of Candee, Sugartopia. You may begin eating them now."

Playt looks around, and suddenly he isn't hungry.

But he remembers that his beloved Shellra is in trouble, and so he dives in.

Bubble gum floats by and Playt grabs it and chews it. Then he swallows it.

"Uh, you know you're not supposed to swallow gum right?" one of the scientists remarks.

"Well then what the hell?"

"Everything else, except the gum, alright?"

Playt shrugs his shoulders and continues. He scoops up some candy corn that had landed on the ground and devours it. He runs up to a house and eats it little by little, and then everything within it.

This catches the candy's attention, and they start to attack Playt once again. They force-feed him. Chocolate cupcakes and donuts flood his mouth, while cakes and cookies fly down his throat. Zebra cakes smash themselves up against his head and smear delicious white icing all over him.

He can't do anything about it at first, and then he attacks them with his mouth. They continue to pour into him, and he continues to devour them one by one. Peppermint circles, licorice, jellybeans, chocolate covered pretzels, marshmallows, and graham crackers fly at him relentlessly.

The endless amount of candy that floods his mouth is overwhelming. Suddenly, he remembers that he’s eating results of other people's shitting. He can no longer take it anymore, and he pukes all over himself.

The candy stops.

The puke does not. It continues to flow until his stomach is once again empty.

“You murderer! We should kill Shellra right now!”

The words from the scientist send a shockwave through his brain. He stands up and regains his composure.

Then he continues to eat.

He eats and eats.

He can’t stop now, there’s no point to it. If he has to eat shit candy for his love, then that’s what he’s going to do.

If it kills him, then so be it.

Soon he becomes a pro, and nothing can get past him. He hunts down every single last morsel and devours it completely. Then he eats every building, every skyscraper, and every candy made vehicle that he sees.

Eventually, the town is in his stomach.

“Very good. You’re half way there; let’s go to the next city.”

Playt collapses.

When he wakes up he is being dragged to the next city, this one not as large, but to him it is worse. It seems to not end, the amount of junk food that he must eat in order to save his girlfriend.

A sudden thought passes through his mind. What if she doesn’t really love him?

It doesn't matter; it's too late now. He loves her, and that's enough for him.

With the last scrap of icing that is caked into the corner of this second town of Sucrose City, he simply holds it in his mouth. He passes out with the sugar filling his mouth, and breathes through his nose.

His dreams are nightmares that cut through him and make him bleed pain. He doesn't remember anything that happens in these dreams, only that they are horribly demented. They come from the deepest darkest reaches of his mind, where Blue resides.

He wakes up with a pounding headache, the sugar still in his mouth. He swallows it and looks around. The scientists are still there, and they are waiting for him to do something.

"What now? Is there more?"

"No you ate enough, now you just have to defecate."

"Ah. I see. Give me a second."

"We have all the time in the world, we never expected you to eat the candy so fast. You could have taken your time, you know?"

"That little piece of information would have helped before I started to gorge myself."

They say nothing, they only wait.

A couple of days pass, and Playt eventually poops out everything that he had eaten. The scientists are happy and they begin to leave.

"Not so fast. Where is Shellra?"

"Oh, right. Follow us."

Playt follows them out of the town of Sucrose City and into the forest. Deep in the forest there are buildings that are hidden from the world. These buildings are not made of candy, and it brings a sudden wave of relief over Playt. He never wants to see anything sweet ever again.

Except for Shellra, she is a kind of sweet he can stomach. He sees her in the distance, and she sees him as well.

He is now fatter than ever, with rotten teeth and drool stains on his shirt.

She doesn't seem to care; she runs up to him and clings to him. She says, "Let's get out of here," and Playt and Shellra FLICKER.

Playt brings her to her home on Aspimiria. They arrive in the castle that she used to rule. They lock eyes and never look away from one another. They embrace each other and stare.

"This is your home Shellra. I will never take you away from here again. You are safe here."

"And you will stay here with me forever?"

"Yes, forever and always." After saying this, Playt remembers suddenly that he had to return to the Abomination. He decides to go tell him that Playt is done with his work on the timeline. He is going to settle down, and live forever with Shellra. Nothing will ever separate them again. "But first I have to go do something."

Her eyes fill with tears as she tries to fight her sorrow. "Very well, but do return, I cannot bear to be away from you for very long anymore."

"I promise I will be right back."

Playt FLICKERs to the Council.

He starts to walk to the entrance of the Abominations lair, when suddenly Kid Playt jumps out and surprises him.

Fat Playt suddenly knows exactly what's about to happen, and he looks at his younger self with unease.

Kid Playt sends malicious thoughts his way, and extreme pain shoots through Fat Playt's body.

"NOOOOO!!!" Fat Playt screams as Kid walks closer to him. The pain grows more intense with each step, and then suddenly he is thrown through the air. Fat Playt slams into the invisible walls of the

Council, and the whole place begins to shake uncontrollably. Fat Playt FLICKERs back to Shellra.

"Did you do what you were supposed to?"

"Uh… yea, sure. I'm not leaving again, no matter what; this Universe is too insane for me. I just want to love you forever and ever."

She smiles at him and they kiss.

Then they make passionate love that lasts several hours.

Rhun

Strangers

While Rhun is still mourning her death, Voyd walks off with Riot and Chaos. Rubble and Blast follow them. Debris and Curious mourn with Rhun, until Curious gets hungry and begins to eat Bury's corpse. Rhun can't bear to watch, so he touches Bury and she becomes dust. Curious jumps, stands tall momentarily, and then runs over to another demon. It is a small and purple cat-like demon. The two circle each other.

A female demon slightly taller than Debris walks up and yells at Rhun. “Tell your rodent to back off or we'll kill all of you.”

“Curious!” Rhun says, and the tiny demon's ears hear its name but he refuses to stop staring at the cat demon.

“Poison, you have my permission to kill them all.” Both Curious and Poison get ready, as if they are about to pounce at each other, then they get closer and sniff, and begin to play fight. Neither one claws nor bites, they simply jump around and chase each other.

“My name is Suicide,” the woman who is now looking at them says. She will be a pale white pretty demon with long red hair that's black at the tips. “What is a woman and her child doing this close to the wall of black fire? More importantly, where is the rest of Sector 3?”

“Don't worry about that, I am Rhun, and this is Debris. She is not my mother, she is about my age.”

“Aside from your height, that makes sense. No baby demons nor anything above have been born for quite some time. The end approaches.”

“I have a question,” Rhun says as Curious and Poison continue to play. “How do we get out of here?

Suicide looks at him perplexed. “Out of where? Sector 3?”

“Yea... or out of Syl in general.”

“Well if you want to get out of Syl, there are several ways... or there were anyhow. These days, the

only surefire way would be to find Oni's Castle, home of the king. In the king's possession is the living rod known as Rodney. It has the ability to allow passage to Lys."

"Well... how do we get there then?"

She looks at them. "I'm sorry to be the one to break the news to you, but you aren't going to make it. I'm surprised you made it this far. Even if you make it to the king, he'll probably kill you before helping."

"Just tell me, please."

"Just follow the ancient Syllian saying. Sector One is where dead are sure to roam. Sector Two the abominations call home. Sector Three is filled with demons and slavery. Sector Four is where the elite enforce words of royalty. Sector Five is where the king and his henchmen live. Sector Six is a place we simply don't speak of."

Rhun listens and enjoys the rhythm and rhyme. "Sector 5, the king. How do we get there? Do we need to go through Sector 4?"

Suicide looks at Debris, then back at Rhun. "You must be new to Syl. The derogatory term for the sectors is Peace Bubble. Somewhat funny and ironic if you ask me, but there are a trillion more than six, those are just the largest. The sectors are separated by billions of lightyears, and between them is impassible. They call it the Space of Chaos. In order for you three to make it to Sector 5, I have to introduce you to my master." Suicide turns around and begins walking, and after Poison begins to follow her, so do the others. "His name is Sick. He doesn't like visitors."

The black fire continues to follow them.

Teleporter

"What have you brought me, baby?"

"This is the legendary Rhun who leads the black fire."

Rhun looks at Suicide. She knew the entire time who he was. "Ahhhh... so we've finally met Rhun. I've heard so much about you. They say you're indestructible." Sick looks over at them. "And so very

short. Your eyes are disturbing, I like that. From Lys they say. Me and my people have no choice but to follow you or run ahead, but where are you going?"

Rhun looks at Sick, an old and decaying man, so skinny you can see his bones. "We wish to go to Sector 5."

Sick laughs and then has a coughing fit. "Yea, we can do that, I suppose. Right to the king, huh? The black fire will surely destroy Sector 3 when we leave, so this is a one way trip. Sectors 2 and 6 have been silent for quite some time. Have you already been to those sectors?"

"I don't think so. The first thing I can remember is falling into a pool of red near a school. Then there was a factory, and then a city."

"Ah, I see. So you've been in Sector 3 this whole time, you were just on the outskirts. Clott, Rott, prepare the Teleporter."

Two tall men wearing black suits and scabby faces walk out of the shadows towards a set of levers, buttons, and switches next to some monitors. The room is rather small, barely enough room for everyone to fit, but they do. After Clott and Rott do some things, machines pop up from under the floor and begin making buzzing noises.

"Everyone stand still. Suicide, babe, grab Dire and Burns. We're leaving this sector."

Suicide exits for less than a minute and comes back with a man and a woman. They crowd into the room, close the doors, and Sick yells, "NOW!"

Segue

The room is shrunk to a microscopic level using mysterious particles discovered in the Space of Chaos. Then the room will be launched through the Space of Chaos at astronomical speeds, protected by an impenetrable magnetic shielding. The process is extremely loud and disorienting for everyone in the room.

Rhun looks around at the man and woman whom Suicide brought in. Sick calls them Dire and Burns, but Rhun doesn't initially realize which is which. The woman's face looks to be stuck in eternal agony,

and the man's face is charred and scaly. Rhun realizes that his name is obviously Burns, and then he begins to wonder if his name was chosen due to his appearance or if he was burned to fit his name. Rhun thinks to ask, but tactfully decides against it. The room is too loud for conversation of any sort anyway.

The trip takes about thirty minutes, but it is a long thirty minutes for them as the room heats up and everyone gets dizzier, but the thing that makes everything worse is the sound. The excruciating grinding booming is drilled into their heads and even as it finally begins to quiet down they can all feel it echoing through their skulls as if it's still there.

Everything begins to vibrate violently, and then softly it slows. They are all jolted forward as the machinery grinds to a halt.

Royalty

Nyf will travel directly to the king before Rhun even has the notion. In his mind, he has outgrown Rhun, who is nothing but an insecure child pansy from Lys. Using information he researches in the city, Nyf knows of a secret and well hidden portal directly to Sector 5.

After arriving, he destroys the portal from that end, although deep down he knows that Rhun will still find a way there. Nyf feels the need to reclaim a bit of honor by warning the king.

Oni rules for thirty-two-billion years, but after Rhun shows up the old king mysteriously dies, and a new king takes his throne. This new king will be known as Dysh.

Nyf doesn't know this, he expects to see Oni. Nyf knows his way around Sector 5, because it's where he's from. His dad throws him out on several occasions as a child, left to roam the dangerous land with only a knife.

When he reaches the castle he's greeted by a man he once knew by the name of Demise. “Nyf? You shouldn't be here yet. Your father will surely want you dead for coming back before finishing your duties.”

“This has nothing to do with my father. I'm here to speak with the king, it's urgent.”

Demise smiles sadistically. “Dysh is the new king.”

Nyf looks at Demise with a face of terror and disgust. “You are a liar.”

Demise pulls his head back, looks to the skies, and lets out a full bodied, bellowing laugh. “See for yourself. I'm going to let you in just to see your face. Ha!”

Demise opens the castle gates and walks through with Nyf towards the king. The castle is gigantic and ancient, towering over any reason or necessity. Nyf grows increasingly nervous to see Dysh. As he walks through the giant throne room door he begins breathing fast and sweating profusely. He can feel more than a hundred eyes on him as he walks with his head down. Nyf kneels at the foot of the steps leading to the throne. Without looking he knows that Demise tells the truth. The set of glowing green eyes Dysh has burns as they glare at Nyf.

“Nyf?” Dysh scowls with spiteful malice.

“Father.”

“You will call me king from now on. You lost the right to call me father when you returned to me, grovelling, and drowning in humiliation.” The henchmen around Dysh laugh and he hisses at them. They grow silent.

“How did you become king? What happened to Oni?”

“Nobody cares how he died, nor will anyone care when you die a disappointment. As for how I became king, I'm simply the most powerful demon in the entire Universe. Are you really that surprised?”

“I came here seeking Oni, but now that you're king, I'll tell you. I have met a child from Lys who is stronger than any I have ever met, even you.”

Dysh is in an instant rage. “GUARDS!” The guards grab Nyf by the arms and lift him. Dysh steps down from his throne, walks to Nyf, and stares him in the eyes. “What the fuck did you just say to me you little twat?”

“You heard me, father,” Nyf says as he peers into Dysh's green headlights.

“I told you to call me king!” Dysh yells before punching his son in the face. “What a horribly fabricated story. Everyone knows that I am the strongest, and that nobody in Lys would ever step a living foot into this dimension. Do you take me for a fool? I was planning on throwing you in the dungeon and only taking you out on torture days, but you're making me want to kill you right here and now.”

“His name is Rhun. The black fire follows him. His eyes are thirsty black holes and he can kill anybody just by touching them. The school you sent me to was destroyed so I followed him. He was far more powerful than me, so I pledged my allegiance to him. That was before I knew he was from Lys.”

“AH! HAHAHHAAahahaa! This is a ridiculous story. Continue.”

“After destroying the school he destroyed the factory, and then the city.”

“And I'm supposed to believe you survived all that and made it back to Sector 5 unharmed? You!? My little pussy of a son?”

“I have my ways. Besides, Rhun is soft and has a blind trust in me.”

“Nyf, you're a fool. If something happened to the city we would have known. Demise, contact Corporal Menard, and when he responds I'm going to kill my idiot offspring myself.”

“Actually sir, we lost communications with the city not long ago.”

“And you didn't think to tell the king?”

“You always kill the messenger... sir.”

“Enough sir, you fuck.” Dysh holds up his hand and Demise writhes around in pain, and then his head explodes. Everyone laughs except Nyf as Dysh walks over to Demise and begins eating his brains. "Demise was right my son. I always kill the messenger.”

“I know, I would rather die than serve Rhun. I have lost all honor.”

“Yes, you have. I should kill you. Although!” Dysh is silent for a moment or two. “If this Rhun really does exist, and he really does trust you, then I could use you to my advantage. Maybe you're not

completely useless.” Dysh motions and the guards release Nyf.

Father and son, king and prince, hatch a plan to obliterate Rhun once and for all, neither one really trusting the other. Nyf trains, and waits. His ultimate goal is to stab Rhun in the back next time he sees him. Nothing will bring him more joy.

Although, seeing Debris' face as she slowly dies sounds quite rewarding as well.

No Boys Allowed

Rubble and Blast follow the three women, taking a path that avoids Sick and his group's encampment. Voyd keeps a watchful eye on the two brothers, but she already knows what's about to happen. Since no babies are being born, most women have no interest in sex. The men don't care about children, but they're addicted to the sensation of ecstasy. As a result, most of the male demons either have sex with each other or rape anything they can find. Voyd can see by the look in their eyes and the way they act that these two brothers are rapists. Debris is too young for them, and Bury is too old. Chaos and Riot however, they're enticing.

She leads them to a structure in the middle of nowhere. Through the doors they go, and once the doors are closed, Riot and Chaos have knives to the brothers' necks. “No boys allowed,” they say in unison right before slicing their heads off.

They dispose of the bodies and continue walking through the building, down a set of circular stone steps and into a chamber where several women are waiting for them. “Morbid, Mayhem, Murder. We are leaving this sector immediately.”

The three women she addresses step forward and salute, “Yes sir!”. One has skin of red, with dark pig tails sticking out, and eyes of deep blue which are sunken back, Murder. Mayhem has wild curly hair that pops up in every direction. Her skin is pale and her eyes spiral into madness. Morbid's skin is even whiter, and her grin spans the lower half of her face, and her eyes are crooked, black, shiny slants which point at each other. Her hair is brown, short and matted.

The women all exit the building together. Chaos shows Voyd a small object. “I found this on Rubble.”

“I found this on Blast,” Riot says.

Voyd recognizes the objects immediately, Grave's teleplugs. She grabs them both and sticks one in her pocket. Looking at the other she notices that it is tuned to frequency 34. She changes it to 187, an old one she remembers from Sector 5. She tries to contact someone as they walk, and eventually a man answers.

“Hello?” he says.

“Yes, I need passage to Sector 5.”

“Are you with Rhun?”

“No.”

“If you're looking for the king, you will need to go to Sector 4. Do not repeat this information, but King Dysh has moved his entire castle. It was actually quite amazing, I have to give him that.”

“My interest is not with the king.”

“Is that so? Well your business is no longer in Sector 5 either. The portal here was destroyed by me long ago, so good luck getting here. I suggest settling for Sector 4. Memorize these coordinates, they lead to a portal. Destroy the portal when you are finished with it.”

Skyscraper

Rhun, Debris, Curious, and their new found friends arrive in Sector 5 nearly one billion years later, although thanks to the magnetic shielding it is only thirty minutes to them. They open the doors to a world more chaotic than Sector 3, with a gigantic skyscraper breaking the horizon. Flocks of demons fly around in formation atop their dark winged horses. Armies of foot soldiers make up the majority of the landscape. There is no fighting, no war. It's as if they're just standing guard, patrolling. Waiting. Rhun and the others pile out of the room, smelling nothing but the scent of death which sticks to the air like glue.

A dark gray cloud sits atop the tall skyscraper. For the first time Rhun notices that there are no suns in Syl. Everything is lit, either by fire, or by unknown sources. He can remember being young in Lys, seeing his world lit up by Old Relstin's green star, which grows dim by the time he's born.

A stick figure walks up to them, skinnier than Sick and much taller. “Waste?”

“Sick! Oh man, is it good to see you, I wasn't sure you made it brother. Rumor has it that this dimension has been invaded by some powerful destructor. They call him Rhun.”

Sick laughs and points at Rhun. “This is him. In the flesh.”

Waste's eyes get big. “He's finally here? In Sector 5?!” Waste looks behind the teleporter room. “Then where is the black fire? They say it follows him.”

They all look and see that there is no black fire anywhere. Rott speaks. “I have a theory sir. I believe the black fire is trying to catch up, we were traveling pretty fast.”

“That sounds accurate,” Clott adds.

Sick looks at Waste. “Well there you have it.”

“I need to report back, let them know he's here.”

Sick places a hand on his shoulder, “How about you don't follow that order quite yet. You see, we need to find the king.”

“King Dysh?”

“Dysh? No, our king, Oni.”

“Oh wow, I can't believe I almost forgot about Oni. No, the new king is Dysh, Oni died a long time ago.”

“Oh, well... him I guess.” Sick coughs. That's why you wanted to come here, right Rhun? To kill the king and take his throne?”

Rhun speaks shyly. “Uhm.... no, I just want to leave Syl. You see, I have a note in my backpack that I want translated, but the language in this dimension is so strange.”

“You see. He just wants to go home. Wow, really? That must be an important note.”

“You do realize that if he goes home, we all die, right?”

Waste looks at him uneasy. “Look Waste, you owe me a favor.”

“Oh... you really want to do this? Ok, that's fine. We still need to go to Sector 4 then, that's where the king is now. The only known way is a portal in that skyscraper somewhere. I don't know how you plan on getting in though, the place is filled with elite demons and henchmen. What about this contraption you came here with, can't you use that?”

“No, it's done for. So you're telling me we're dead either way? Why don't you just follow us and we'll see if Rhun lives up to his reputation?”

“Oh, I suppose. Since I clearly have no choice.”

“That's the spirit!”

The group starts to walk towards the skyscraper. It's much further away than it originally appears to be, and soon they must all take a rest before continuing. In the distance, Burns sees two demons fighting and points them out. When they all look they see one of the demons fall, and then the other staggers towards them.

Rhun doesn't recognize the man at first, but it is Nyf. He's grown, but is definitely the one who stands before them. He looks up to see Rhun, and then he falls to the ground. They rush over to check on him.

He's still alive, but is unresponsive. They wait for several hours, and Nyf finally wakes up. “Rhun? How did you get here? Who are all these people? Is that Debris?”

“Are you ok?”

Nyf cringes and grabs his head. “Yea. Just a headache.”

“Wait a minute,” Waste will say. “Aren't you the prince?”

Everyone is shocked and Nyf looks around. “It is true that my dad is Dysh. That makes me prince, but he banished me, and left me here to die. Rhun, I want back in the team. We need to teach my arrogant father a lesson.”

“You are always welcome on my team, Nyf. I'm sorry I made you mad.”

Nyf coughs. “It's in the past.”

They continue as if nothing happened, and everyone starts to talk and get to know each other, talking about things they've seen and gone through. Nyf explains how he got to Sector 5 and how someone destroyed the other end of the portal. How he fought his way through to find out his dad was king, and how his father cast him out and fled to Sector 4, fearing Rhun. “I was waiting here forever.”

“Well, we're here now, Nyf.”

Debris doesn't talk much, but she does introduce herself. Dire only groans every now and then, and Burns explains that he is a proficient pyromaniac and Dire has been his assistant for quite some time. She groans again as if in agreement. Clott and Rott explain that they are cousins, and are extremely technologically inclined. They use a lot of big words that nobody understands and are a bit snobby about it. Suicide is extremely depressed, but eternally loyal to Sick. Waste and Sick are long separated brothers who talk to each other about family and friends, memories, and catch up on lost time.

For being a Universe of so much chaos, Rhun feels as if he's found some good people who understand love. At least to some extent. They have bonds with one another, or perhaps he's only reflecting what's within. In any case, he's grateful that Nyf is back, and happy that he doesn't have to be alone on his journey.

Ahead of them, sprawled across the bumpy rock surface of Sector 5, a fleet of soldiers approach with swords drawn. Behind them is a gigantic tiger demon man riding an animal similar to an elephant, only there is no trunk and its skin is made of metal. It flies above the army with broad creamy feathered wings. In the demon's hand is a large three bladed sword. “Shred, one of Dysh's henchmen,” Nyf tells them. “Be careful.”

His army rushes towards them, thousands of them against twelve. They are stopped momentarily when Burns pulls out a flame thrower and scorches a wall of fire around them. The fleet circles the wall of fire, when Clott and Rott quickly reveal a device that spreads the fire, igniting hundreds of them, scorching them to ash.

Curious and Poison take turns obliterating crowds of demons, while Suicide and Sick do a dance of

sorts, using martial arts to steal weapons from the demons to use against them. Dire deafens several of them, stunning them long enough for Waste to unload machine gun bullets into them. As the army is thinned slowly, but surely, Shred reassesses the situation, growls, and then flies to the tower. Possibly for reinforcements.

Rhun and Debris watch as the rest of their group lay waste to the entire army with ease.

Nyf keeps a watchful eye on everyone. “I don't trust Nyf,” Debris whispers to Rhun. He then looks over to Nyf, who immediately looks away.

“Why do you say that?” he whispers back.

“It's a gut feeling. Keep an eye on him.” Rhun senses a hatred between the two way before this, but this is the first moment he thinks it might cause issues.

“What are you two talking about?” Nyf says as he excitedly walks over to them.

“Mmmmm? Oh, we were just saying that there were a lot of demons here.” Rhun stammers.

“Yep. Sector 5.”

Rhun nods. “Sector 5.”

“Listen. Rhun... can I talk to you in PRIVATE?” The last word is directed towards Debris, and shouted. It is the first word he ever says to her. Rhun looks at her and sweat beads up on his forehead. Then he looks back at Nyf.

“Sure.”

They walk away from the group. “What is it?”

“Look Rhun, we need to get rid of her.”

“What? Why?”

“She doesn't belong with us, why is she still with you?”

“What do you mean? I like her.”

“Yea, she's great, but she hasn't killed anybody. I don't even think she intends to.”

“So?”

“Look around you. This is Syl. We're not in some fluffy pillow palace. She's holding us back, and if we don't get rid of her we're all going to die.”

Rhun looks into Nyf's eyes, beginning not to trust him. “I will protect her until the end.”

Nyf immediately becomes angry. “Alright, fine!” Nyf drops the subject and walks off.

They keep eyes on each other for the rest of the day. Debris asks Rhun what they were talking about, and Rhun tells her not to worry about it. When they rest from walking, Nyf will be heard talking to someone secretly. Rhun asks him about it and Nyf pretends he is just waking up, and must have been talking in his sleep.

Rhun continues to grow suspicious as they approach the titanic front doors of the skyscraper, and giant hawk-like demons swoop down at the group.

First they take Debris, and then one by one the rest of them are grabbed up except for Rhun and Nyf who stare up in awe.

“Was this your doing?”

“Come on Rhun, do you really think I would do something like this?”

“Where did they take them?”

“My guess is that they're at the top of the tower.”

Rhun gets in Nyf's face. “You better not be lying to me.”

“Ha! Why would I lie?”

Rhun looks at him for several moments and then looks to the front door. “I don't know.”

The two of them enter the tower doors together.

Ascension

The door slams shut behind them. The room is gigantic, spanning the entire length and width, which is easily five-hundred feet in both directions. The ceiling is about seventy-five feet above them and covered in what appears to be spikes. The room is filled with gigantic maggot-like demons, snake demons, and tall skinny armored men with four arms apiece. Above them flies a dragon-like creature with a unicorn horn and wings of a Pegasus. It is black and appears to breathe bubbles of cold rainbow water. Atop it sits a fat red demon with gigantic hands. Horns of black stick out of his head, six from the looks of him. Surrounding him is an army of bat demons who swoop around.

“Rip. Another of Dysh's henchmen, and the second of three brothers. I sure hope you still have some magic in you. Otherwise we're dead meat.”

“Magic?”

“Stop fucking around, aren't you going to save your team?”

Rhun frowns, looks at the ground, and then starts to fight the incoming horde, evaporating every one he touches. As time passes they begin to swarm in with more demons, overwhelming them.

“Rhun!” Nyf yells in desperation, and Rhun switches to kill mode, his eyes once more becoming endlessly insatiable black holes, absorbing everything in sight within minutes. Rip is pulled off his mount, and the dragon-like demon flies out of a giant window, crashing through the glass like a man on fire.

Everything else except for Nyf has no chance of survival, and when they're all gone Rhun's eyes become lifeless. Before he can fall to the floor, Nyf unsheathes his blade and shoves it into Rhun's back where the kidney resides.

Glowing, hot, white blood oozes out of the cut and covers Nyf's hand, and then it travels up his arm as he frantically tries to wipe it off. Rhun turns to him, eyes now full of light, and Nyf unwillingly absorbs the light into his soul and the glowing blood into his veins. He screams in agony as all negative or egotistical energy is cleansed from him, replacing it with the innocent and virtuous perfection of light

he had shortly before his father began abusing him.

Tears begin to pour from his eyes when Rhun speaks in an unfamiliar echoing deep voice.

“WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS? I WILL GIVE YOU ONE CHANCE TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF. IF YOUR ANSWER IS ONE I DO NOT LIKE I WILL DISPOSE OF YOU IMMEDIATELY!”

Nyf stares into Rhun's light with new eyes of his own. “I was full of jealousy for your power. You were always my true leader, but I selfishly only had my own goal in mind. I tried to be the leader, and I thought I understood the destination, but only now do I see that I was a fool. My father isn't in this sector because I told him you were coming. This is nothing more than an elaborate trap. The joke's on us though, because you cannot be killed. I can see how mortal I am next to you, and that I will inevitably meet my end serving you, not my father. King Dysh is in Sector 4 as you know, but first we must save the others. We don't have much time. Kill me or don't, but either way, you must hurry.”

The light in Rhun's eyes turns off and they go dull once more. He collapses, but Nyf catches him and then lays him down softly. He watches as the wound on his back heals up. Nyf wipes the blood clean and waits for Rhun to wake up, pondering his very existence. Why was he so angry, so full of hate, and most of all, jealous? He can't remember what it is that made him start following Rhun, but he is for the first time grateful to have met him.

Words he never heard before begin to surface in his thoughts. Words like “love” and “friends”. They are words and concepts only recognized in Lys. He suddenly knows how to pronounce them and knows their meanings. Feels them. He begins to feel extremely guilty for his entire life. He hopes Rhun will forgive him, but also feels as if he must repent, must help Rhun until the end, whether Rhun is the one to kill him or not.

When Rhun awakes, Nyf asks him if he's ok. “What happened?” Realizing that Rhun doesn't remember anything after unleashing his power, Nyf decides not to explain everything fully to him.

“We need to go up this skyscraper. Our friends are up there.”

Rhun is shocked by his words. “Friends is a Lys word. How do you know of it? Can you translate this note in my backpack?” Rhun pulls off his backpack and opens it, only to find that after all this time of

being in Syl the note is nothing more than dust. Rhun is heartbroken.

Nyf puts a comforting hand on Rhun's shoulder as his eyes swell with water. “It's going to be ok.”

“But... you don't understand. Nothing has any meaning anymore. My whole goal was to make it back to my dimension so that I could translate my mother's last words. Now I don't know.”

Nyf looks him over. “Well... one thing at a time. We need to save the others.”

This knocks Rhun out of his daze and brings him back to reality. “You're right, I'm sorry. Let's go.”

They look around the room for a little while before realizing there is no way up.

“I guess we climb.” Nyf says, and then he exits the tower through the front doors. Rhun follows and looks up where Nyf is, the side of the building. Reddish rain begins to pour down as Rhun spots Curious on a ledge above. Nyf grabs onto the side of the building where little handle designs jut out, not intended for climbing but totally viable.

Nyf soon realizes that Rhun is too small to climb, so he picks him up and puts him on his back, then climbs.

Ynk

The Masses

6,000,000,102

The age of fear bled into the age of control as Ink's fear fed his need to control Lys. All who did not obey him were punished, and it was soon established that the Space Generals would police the Universe and arrest every lawbreaker they found. Money was invented and then regulated, no longer would Fahlls use bartering. There was much resistance to the Space Generals at first, but that resistance was calmed as the years passed because the number of demonic creatures began to dwindle. The only demons left were much more twisted and horrifying than their predecessors, but much fewer in number.

Ink sat at a throne in Fahlls, much larger than the throne for the king and queen of the planet. He did little work, and was often times angry for no reason. Some of his rules made sense, while others were childish. Anyone who questioned him was imprisoned, and all of his rules were enforced on every known habitable planet. It was impossible for him to keep track of everything in the entire dimension at all times, and so most of the work was done by his generals, while he sat in lazy luxury. Ina did not like what he was becoming, but she was happy he was alive, and happy he was no longer hiding from everyone.

6,000,000,234

He was honored and loved as the King of the Cosmos for over a century before he was praised and worshiped as the immortal god of everything. Planets came up with their own religions according to the rules he had set forth, each with their own unique way of worship. Omega and Jin had reunited with Ink after what seemed like an eternity, and Jin gave Ink the spyglass. They all knew that Dos and Alessandra were dead, but none of them spoke of it. When the ancient times were mentioned they all grew silent and contemplative. Ink had changed, Jin could see it in his eyes. He was no longer curious and innocent, the years had turned him cold. They became his right hand men, called upon only for missions of the utmost importance. The Orb became his most precious friend, showing him more about the Universe than he would ever want to know. He wore the Hat at all times but the mask and the pearl both faded into obscurity. The wand remained at his side, an unused artifact. The gems still belonged to the demons.

9,921,513,635

Nearly four billion years passed and Ink noticed new galaxies being born. One of them seemed to

stand out to him, a milky cloudy spiral, and he unknowingly began to survey it as it formed from empty space. He watched its every step, only walking away from the orb momentarily to take breaks or sleep.

Within the preceding four billion years he hardly slept, and when he did he had nightmares. Each time he had a nightmare there were countless women, men, children and elderly that were raped by demons. Never before had rape occurred, but Rin changed that. Several of the victims passed along the rapist mentality like a disease, all of them infatuated with control, none of them truly having any.

The majority of planets only survived for a couple billion years, but Fahlls remained, and so did Black Leaves. The planet of Palette died off, and without water, Kriddle (along with several other planets that Sid had demolished) faded into memory as well. Aspimiria survived and thrived as New Kriddle. Space Generals patrolled the skies of New Kriddle and stopped them from spreading their evil further into the Universe. Dussylia, Littonia, and Rhelstin still remained and were doing quite well.

New interesting planets with strange life emerged from nowhere, such as Blue Leaves, which was still very young in its evolution but showed much promise. Even still, it was not as interesting as a new ball of water that seemed to form around a child yellow star in the strange cloudy galaxy he had been surveying. The center of the water ball was a hot molten iron-nickel ball with a solid center, and the water seemed to orbit it without interacting much with the core. Rocks were drawn to it, large deposits of minerals and microscopic organisms which survived off of carbon. Ink was drawn to it just as the rocks were, and it fascinated him. He sensed both importance and great unimportance in its creation. He knew it as Earth, perhaps a fractal reflection cast from a higher dimension, perhaps an original. In any case, it showed more promise than Blue Leaves had.

Most of the surviving Fahllians moved back to Fahlls after they reclaimed their planet, but a few remained on the planets and mixed with their populations. Lysandus and his father were remembered on each of the four planets, and even though neither one was immortal, statues had been erected to keep their memories alive. For some reason, Ink was intrigued by Lysandus and did as much research on him as he could. There was something about him that Ink just could not quite put his finger on, like a hidden secret. He found nothing in all of the documented materials to support his gut feeling, so in time it was forgotten.

The masses believed Ink to be God, but they also doubted he had their best interests in mind. He had only shown true concern for himself, creating several laws which protected him and his family's

bloodline from persecution, ridicule, and violence. By some he was seen as a coward, although none were open about it for fear of being punished. As populations grew, this fear faded, and some took it upon themselves to create new gods and new rules to live by. Some even chose to control their own group of people, and be their own gods in spite of Ink. These movements were often quelled, but never extinguished.

Quite often, Ina could hear Ink crying in his bedroom at night. Around everyone else he seemed to have his emotions under control, aside from anger, but when he was alone he was a wreck. She thought that perhaps he was remembering old faces, or perhaps he was having another nightmare. In any case, she was afraid for him.

On the edge of Lys, where Syl and it met, a strange energy began leaking into the dimension. Within Syl, Rin was stirring up some trouble in preparation for chaos. Eternally banned from entering Lys and Biz, but not yet finished with Ink, he made friends with Ink's unseen opposite, Oni. The blue demon Oni was born in Syl during the spark of time, when Ink was. Oni had two horns on his head and wild black hair that grew at uneven lengths. His teeth were razor sharp, meant for chewing meat and crushing bone. He was said to be indestructible, nothing in existence that could pierce his skin. Rin and him seemed to understand each other, and together they formulated a plan of action against the dimension of Lys.

Within the next few weeks there were violent storms on every planet in Ink's dimension. The people instantly began blaming Ink. Some began ritual sacrifices in order to appease him, while others gathered in mass to defile his name. None of this worked, and Ink began sending his Space Generals around the Universe to find a source of the storms. The storms continued for several months, and many lives were lost in the process. The Space Generals kept coming back empty handed, and each time Ink grew more and more concerned. He devised that if the source of the storms was not within the dimension, then it was out there somewhere, where Rin was from. He shuttered to think that Rin was still out there, watching him and toying with him. Once that thought passed through his mind he could no longer sleep at night.

All of his time became dedicated to the Orb. He stopped eating, but Ina continued to bring him his food. Each time her sadness grew, unable to do anything to help, only able to watch as the Orb consumed his life.

9,921,513,642

The years passed by, each planet still having periodic storms, and Ink remained glued to his Orb. He noticed the strange energy at the edge of Lys, and began peering into Syl. The Orb could not show him anything that made any sense from Syl, only static. That was when a circle of light appeared in front of him and Ink's attention was finally taken from the Orb. The circle's light faded and Ink could see that it was a window into another dimension. Rin stared back at him from the window and smiled. “Hey Ink, long time no see.”

The Game

Rin's grin grew vibrant when he saw Ink's fear consuming him. Rin appeared to be dressed in casual clothes on this occasion, apparently no longer visiting for business purposes. Ink's fear turned to anger as he began clenching his fists and slowly walking towards the window. “What the fuck do you want?!”

“Oooo, still angry I see.” Rin turned his head and looked to his right. “Last time we met, things didn't go so good for him.” Rin laughed, and Ink could hear an unseen deep voice laughing along with him. Rin turned back to the window and stared Ink in the eyes. “I don't blame you for being angry, but hear me out.”

“HEAR YOU OUT?! I'm under the assumption that I have no choice either way on this issue, but to call me angry is an understatement. I want to see you burn for what you've done to me. I want to be the one with the blade to your throat as the last of your blood drains from your body.”

“Such a drama queen as always Ink. As I was saying, this broadcast is being brought to you live through the dimensional rupture to inform you that you and me are about to play a little game.”

“A game? You want to play a little fucking game with me? No. Just, no.”

“A little gamble if you will. I am certain you'll fail, but also certain that you are determined to prove me wrong. I will put my life on the line, if it suits your fancy. My life is meaningless in the grand scheme of things anyhow, but this game means everything. Gather a group, hell, maybe even an army. I hope you're ready to have some fun.”

Ink looked at him through the void, unable to find the words, baring his teeth in attempts to hold back

his swelling anger. His thoughts became nothing more than raw emotion. He swung at the window with the orb in hand and accidentally sent it through. Ink tried to follow, but the window disappeared.

Ink's insane rage at that moment toppled almost all to follow. They had his precious Orb. His anger was enough to upset Ynk and the twin dimensional engine shook. The scientists from Biz saw it shake, and knew that they had to investigate.

Planets exploded, people exploded. Ink slowly cooled down. He knew within that he had to. His vision blurred and he collapsed on the floor. Ina came to him and kept him company as he slept. He twitched and moaned in his sleep. She knew that something was wrong. She placed her hands on his head and felt his fever. She tried to absorb as much of it as she could and then she let it pass through her to the castle floor.

Ink slowly recovered, and he explained to Ina everything that had happened. Everything that he could remember. She absorbed his stress and empathized to the point of pain. She hugged him and told him that everything would be ok, and that everything was ok. She offered to join his army, but he refused. If he was going to be forced to play this game, he was leaving her and his parents out of it. He suddenly had the notion that both of them were still alive and well. How could this be possible? “Ina, please go to Dornal and Edna. Bring them to the castle and protect them. That is your mission.”

“Mom and Dad? They're still alive? How am I supposed to find them?”

Ink looked at her, as if he knew that she already knew what he was about to do. “Take this hat, it will guide you.”

“Your favorite Hat? You want me to take your favorite Hat and go find Mom and Dad?”

“Well, you are all my favorite people, who better to trust with my favorite hat? Go, please. I have work to do.”

Ina hugged her brother one last time, then left with his hat on. Ink stood in front of his throne, looking towards the door. Omega and Jin. He needed their help.

Omega was at the local pub in Fahlls. He was getting drunk. Jin was on his way there when Ink found him. Ink explained to Jin about Rin, and Jin was on board. He knew that Omega needed to be a part of

something to keep his mind off of the past. When they met up with Omega, he was already plastered and wanting to fight. He swung at Jin and then apologized, crying. “You big baby. Come with us, we have work to do.”

After Omega sobered up, he was on board. They both already knew some people who they wanted to add to the army. Ink felt like he was just doing what Rin wanted him to do. It bothered him, but he did it anyhow. Omega's first choice was a man named Theryll. Theryll had known Omega for more than a few years, and had trained with him, drank with him, and had fought alongside him. Jin's first choice was a woman named Tot. She was a stabber, and Jin's good friend. After losing Dos, Jin didn't have as much drive towards women, but he did love Tot, and knew that she would make a perfect addition to their army.

In search of more soldiers, the five of them encountered a deadly storm on Fahlls. The deadliest any of them had ever seen, with purple lightning and heavy rain. The storm was sudden and intense, and the streets began to fill very quickly. Jin yelled at the top of his lungs. “Everybody to higher ground!”

The population of the city filtered into the highest building, which happened to be Ink's castle. Ina, Dornal, and Edna were already there, safe and sound. It was good to see them again and Ink hugged them both.

Ink then gave a speech to all of the villagers that had made it inside the castle. “I believe this storm is being caused by outside sources, and is unnatural in nature. We need soldiers to help us in our journey to find the culprit and bring him to justice. Anyone who does not choose to fight alongside us will be allowed refuge within these castle walls. Anyone who is willing to join us, come over to the throne.”

Out of the hundred or so villagers, only five stepped forward. They individually introduced themselves as Nappy, Pezz, Pawl, Chynthia, and Lym. Nappy liked to burn things, and he was gifted when it came to technology. Pezz was as well, but instead of burning things he would speak a mental burn into people. Pawl was a ninja, who rarely ever spoke. Chynthia and Lym were sisters, ready to fight, ready to die together. Although they were not blood related, they became sisters when they became orphans. Both were around the same age, both had lost their parents violently. They had learned while in the orphanage that the murderer was the same man.

The ten of them took council in the dining hall. They told each other their stories, and Ink told

everybody about Rin, and perhaps another. He explained the other dimension of Syl as best he could, but everyone listening looked at him as if he were insane. Then he began to wonder if maybe he really was.

Chynthia stood up. “Why should we believe you, and what makes this Rin guy worth killing?”

“I think I might be the god of this dimension... This... Rin guy is going to kill me. That affects all of us. If I die, you might all die.”

“Psh, you're God, huh? This Rin person can kill you? I say, let him. Would that not prove you are not God, and instead, just a mere mortal like the rest of us? Prove to me you are God, why do you need us?”

“Because I do not have the power to kill. Not directly.”

“Well, what can you do?”

“I can only create.” Ink holds up his hand and a gray cube appears. “I can somewhat control it, but a lot of it is subliminally created. I believe I created all of you.”

Chynthia walked within arms length of Ink, and pointed at his chest. “First of all, no. Uh, uh. You did not create me and you sure as hell didn't create my parents. If anything, you created the man that murdered my parents.”

“I believe your parents may have never existed. I think that you did not exist until I needed you to.”

“Do you realize how egotistical that sounds? SUCH ARROGANCE, UGH! The Universe does not revolve around you, pal, you just have an uncanny ability to create cubes. You probably caused this storm, maybe I should just kill you. Maybe your name isn't even Ink, maybe your name is Rin.”

Ink looked at her in frustration. “No.. I...”

The window to Syl appeared before Ink could attempt to explain himself. From the other side of the window, Rin spoke. “Don't even bother trying to explain it to her, Ink, she doesn't believe you, and she probably never will. You know, you must be careful who you choose to be in your army. I'll let you in on a little secret, you have a spy amongst you already. I'll let you figure out who it is, but I'll give you a

hint... he's closer to you than you might think."

Ink looked over to Omega and Jin. "You're lying Rin, and you're horrible at it."

"Am I? Oh, well I guess we'll just have to see. I see you have made some new friends today, I'm glad to be a part of bringing you all together. Now for your first mission."

"You are not in control of us," Lym said from the corner. "I don't know about my sister, but I take my orders from Ink." Ink and Chynthia both looked to Lym in confusion. "There's something about his energy, and something about your energy. Chynthia, if you trust me you will join me with Ink."

Chynthia relaxed and accepted. Rin had seemed like a more formidable opponent anyhow. Someone who deserved death.

"Oh! I almost forgot to mention. It's only fair." Rin looked to his right and nodded his head. Rin was soon joined by a beast, the blue demon Oni. He laughed as he looked through the window at the ten.

Then he focused on Ink. "We finally meet. Rin has told me a lot about you. This game is fun, just watch, you don't even know what we have in store. I'll go ahead and tell you that you need to grab a rose from the desert. Which desert is up to you, but since the storms won't let you leave the planet, go ahead and restrict the desert to your planet."

"What the hell is a rose?" Theryll asked.

They all looked at each other. Rin laughed. "These dimensions suck, ok, a rose is a flower, do you know what a flower is? This particular flower grows red with thorns. They don't normally grow in deserts, and apparently they don't exist in your reality. It does now though, thanks to Ink." Rin winked at Ink and the window closed. The nine others look to Ink for answers.

The Players

Tot was mysterious, quiet. She didn't know what the others thought of her, but she knew she belonged with them. None of them seemed to be a spy to her, and in her opinion that was just a ruse to turn them all against each other. She followed the words of Ink as the others did, and so far, the first problem was getting out of the castle to find a desert. "Ink, is there a roof to this castle?"

“Yea there is, Tot. What did you have in mind?”

“Make a boat big enough for ten. We need to find a desert before we can find a rose.”

“So... do you think we should do what he wants us to do?”

“What choice do we have? We can stay here, but you have reasons to not stay here, and the people who wanted to stay here have already made their decision. These ten people all want to leave.”

“Ok. Follow me. There is no roof, but there is a balcony. That should do fine. I'll do my best to make a boat.”

They filtered behind Ink to a spiral staircase leading to a balcony. Ink concentrated on the silicon water, and the storm. He put his hands out and tried to think. His mind was a storm. “Try to relax,” Lym said as she touched his shoulder. The first boat Ink made was useless.

Frustrated, Ink apologized to everyone. “Just try it again dude.” Jin said. “You're the only one that can do this, so we're just kind of watching you here. Lym's trying to be your cheerleader, but you're just not buying it. Tot... help Lym.”

As Tot's hand landed on Ink's other shoulder he was able to calm his mind enough to make an adequate boat for the ten of them. They piled in and then they were off.

The storm was viscous and the water appeared endless. Some buildings were still above water, but most were entirely submerged in the flood. The boat rocked as they left the city. “Does anyone know where there might be a desert?”

Pezz spoke up from navigations. “I'm heading to the closest one I know of, the Minarel Desert. Should take about six hours. Longer if this storm continues the way it is.” Ink thanked him and called Omega and Jin to the side.

“Do either of you think there is a spy?”

“Well... if you were to ask me, I'd say Nappy has been pretty quiet. He seems as if he's calculating something.” Jin looked over his shoulder to make sure nobody had heard him.

Omega looked around. “The one I don't trust is Pezz. He could be leading us to our deaths. We don't know these people.”

Ink looked at Pezz and Nappy. He doubted either one was a spy, but he decided to keep his eye on them anyhow. “Ok... Omega, you question Nappy, and Jin, you question Pezz. I don't want your first impressions of them to get in the way of the truth. I have some questions for Chynthia.”

Omega walked up to Nappy and stared him down. Nappy looked up in fear. “Yes?”

“I need to ask you a few questions, if you don't mind.”

“Is this about that whole spy thing? I can assure you, I am no spy. My reasons for being here are none of your concern.”

Omega lifted Nappy against the wall and showed him his teeth. “Your reasons for being here are everybody's concern. You will either tell me or I will spill your blood right now.”

“Okay fine! But you must promise me that you won't tell anyone else.”

Omega set him back on the floor of the ship. “Spill.”

“I wanted to join you guys because I actually believe that you are Omega, and that is Jin, and he is truly Ink, the first being. I am skeptical of course, but I do have some skills that might come in handy.”

“Skills like what?”

“Uhm, well, anything mathematical or logistic, or anything to deal with computers. I also like to burn things, I'm very skilled at making bombs from things around the house. Let me know if I may be of use to you, I will let you know if I have any ideas that might help. For instance, if Ink were able to somehow create an engine for this rickety boat, we could get there much quicker.”

Jin approached Pezz and tapped him on the shoulder. “Yea?”

“Hey Pezz, I have some questions for you.”

“Okay?”

“How do you know where we're headed, and where did you learn to drive a boat?”

“I served in the military, I was trained in tactical vehicles. I know very little about boats themselves, but I know a considerable amount about geography. Trust me, I know where I'm going.”

“Why should I trust you? All of our lives are in your hands right now.”

“I've already spoken to Nappy about this, we know who you guys are. I know that that is Ink, and if I'm right, our lives aren't in my hands, they're in his. I know Fahlls like the back of my hand, we are going the right way. A giant engine would get us there quicker though.”

Ink approached Chynthia. “I see you don't like me very much. Either that, or you're trying to manipulate me into believing you are the least likely spy. That would be a clever scheme if it were the case.”

“You're mad. You don't understand anything about what is going on right now, why question me? Why aren't you questioning Omega? If Lym stands behind you, then I stand behind you. She is my everything, and if you hurt her in any way, me and you will be enemies. We're not joining you to die, we're joining you to live. We are not soldiers, although we do have talents which may come in handy.”

“Ok, I'm intrigued. Tell me more.”

“Well, as you can already see, Lym can see auras. She knows who has a rotten soul and who is pure. She told me that you have much pain within you, so much that she is incapable of healing. I don't really care, I'm actually here for her. I can wield a gun, but I only use revolvers. You find one, or two, give them to me. Bullets too if you find em.” Then she winked at Ink and walked away.

Omega, Jin, and Ink reconvene. “Chynthia says she's not a soldier, but she clearly is. Other than that, I don't doubt her loyalty.”

“Pezz seems legit, sorry Omega. We'll see if he's leading us to the right place soon. He suggested an engine.”

“Nappy also suggested an engine. They must know each other, they seem to have spoken with one another. It is a good idea Ink, if you are able to make one. I can get Tot to try to help.”

“Well... we're coming up with nothing. Who else is left? Theryll, Lym, Tot, and Pawl. Tot and Lym are very low on my list of suspects, so I'll speak with Pawl first. He hasn't said very much this whole time. Jin, you check on Theryll, get to know him. Omega, speak to Lym and Tot. Try not to intimidate them too much.”

After questioning everyone, there appeared to be no spy. Ink shook it off as just another trick Rin was playing on him. The boat weathered the storm for several hours, rocking violently towards the Minarel desert. That was when Pawl pointed out another boat.

Three beautiful women were on the boat, Hellitha, Lacey, and a woman claiming to be an assassin of sorts. Her orange blade glowed constantly as her and her two friends boarded Ink's ship. They explained that they were simply trying to survive. Ink explained everything to them as a crack of thunder was heard close to the ship. “Hey Pezz, how long would you say we have left with that engine I installed?”

“Uuhh... I'd say we're almost there actually. Within the hour.”

Ink looked at the three women. “Join us if you are willing and able, but if not then we will protect you until we find a safe place. We are approaching the Minarel Desert. We are looking for a rose.”

Hellitha looked at Ink. “What's a rose?”

“It's a flower. It's not of this world. It's red, whatever that means.”

Nappy stands up and looks into Ink's face. “You created the boat, create the desert and then the rose.”

The storm stopped.

Ink looked at him and realization passed over his face. The desert appeared in the distance, and with the engines running full blast, they were there in no time.

The thirteen people piled out of Ink's boat and onto the desert's shore. The orange sun they name Rob beamed down at them and made the wine sand glow up at them. The dark violet atmosphere started to show its face as the light-orange clouds over Fahlls melted away. Pawl pointed to the right side of them in the distance. “The white sun Bor is just now coming up. This is going to be a long day. So this flower supposed to be red? How are we supposed to know what that means?”

Nappy looked at Ink. “Just make a rose dude, save us the time.”

Ink concentrated and looked around. “I... I don't know what one might look like, and I... can't seem to create anything right now. I'm sorry. I will keep trying, but we might want to start walking.”

They all agreed, except Nappy, who knew inside that walking was pointless. Ink had the power within him to make a rose, but he just didn't believe in himself or something. As they walked through the wine-colored desert, Tot heard a rustling from behind them. “Hey guys... I think we're being followed.”

Rose

The assassin woman took the lead. “I know how to track something down. I'll bet it's a Gummy Bear.”

“A Gummy Bear?”

“Yes, from my planet of Candee. It must have followed me here.” She unsheathed her orange sword and cautiously followed the footsteps in the sand. The wind started to blow, filling the air with wine sand and blocking their vision. The storm raged for hours and they found nothing.

Pawl looked to the horizon. “Perhaps we should stop our search for the invisible man and take shelter. I don't like following my orders from an assassin.”

The assassin looks at Pawl. “My name is Christina, and I'll have you know, that I'm not entirely comfortable having a ninja on the team myself.”

Ink stepped between them sensing the tension. “Is there some type of feud that I don't know about?”

They both remained silent. Then Christina looked at Pawl. “You're not a Gummy Bear, you're not on my hit list, but if you cross me or my friends you will be added to the top.”

Pezz looked at Christina, and then to Ink. “Pawl is right, we need shelter.” They all agreed and kept walking. Nappy tapped Ink on the shoulder and nodded to him. Ink concentrated and was able to create a tent large enough for the thirteen travelers. They all piled into the tent.

Chynthia shouted from behind and everyone turned to look as Lym started taking off her clothes. “What the hell, Lym!?”

Lym pouted, “Hey, don't yell at me sis, I always do this. You know that clothes are heavy burdens for me. I don't think anybody minds the nude female form do they?”

The seven males looked at each other and at the other women and then to the ground but said nothing. Jin was the only one to speak from his chair. “I've never minded, and I definitely don't mind now.” Lym noticed that he was staring at her and she smiled. She ran over to Jin and gave him a big hug. Jin grabbed her ass and pulled her closer as she giggled.

“You can keep me warm tonight, right?”

“Hun, we're in the desert. Of course I can.”

Chynthia observed, disgusted, and further disgusted when she saw how many of the men were also observing without a touch of disgust. “This is bullshit.”

Christina had walked away, and was patrolling the outside of the tent for the mysterious follower.

Tot was laughing and enjoying herself, secretly wanting to also be naked.

Omega looked deep in thought. He seemed aware of where everybody was and their emotions, but his mind was a million miles away.

Pezz and Nappy were recording Jin and Lym getting busy.

Hellitha was smoking a bong of canni and laughing at Chynthia.

Lacey was listening to some type of music and watching everyone.

Pawl was also watching everyone, but he was listening too. Pawl was above and in a corner of the tent so that he could see everything and hear the assassin as she walked the perimeter.

Theryll was training with a sword in another corner, occasionally glimpsing over to Lym's bare naked body. She was definitely beautiful.

Ink was asleep. It would seem that creating stuff drained him of energy. Chynthia decided to crash as well, she wasn't going to fight with Lym. She was too tired from the whole day. Hellitha passed out shortly after Chynthia. Tot lay down under a blanket and got naked. She was soon asleep. Theryll

eventually wore himself out and lay down as well. After Jin was done with Lym, he fell asleep and Nappy and Pezz kept Lym warm for a little while. After Pezz and Nappy passed out, Lym cuddled with Lacey, and they both fell asleep.

Omega did not sleep, nor did Pawl or Christina.

They could all sense someone watching them. Omega had his guess that it was Rin. Pawl suspected Christina, and Christina was sure it was a Gummy Bear.

Ink awoke in the middle of the night and talked to Omega for a little bit about Rin. By that time, Christina had come inside and Pawl had taken post outside of the tent. Ink looked over to make sure that Lym was still naked, and she definitely was.

“A rose... We're supposed to find something that doesn't exist in this dimension. How messed up is that?”

Omega looked over to Ink. “I don't know what to tell you man, I'm a bit baffled myself.”

Pawl walked in through the front of the tent with another person. It was a woman, dressed all in wine. She must have followed them through the desert. Pawl led her to Ink who blinked at her. He stood up and looked into her eyes. She was beautiful. Was she real?

Ink blinked again and then spoke. “Were you following us?”

The woman looked into Ink's eyes. Then she spoke with an accent. “No, I meant you no harm. I live in this desert, it is my home. I was simply curious about you and your people. Why are you here?”

“We are looking for a rose. Have you seen one?”

The woman got quiet and looked around at the sleeping people. “What do you want with a rose?”

“We were told that we could find a rose in this desert, and we were told that it is our mission. There is a lot to explain.”

“Then explain.”

So Ink explained everything he could think of. The woman took off her mask and hood and Ink saw

her delicate light green skin and bright wine hair. “I don't know who you are, and I don't know who this Rin person you work for is, but I am the only Rose in this desert.”

Then she pulled out a knife and backed away. Pawl looked at her in wonder. “Rose?”

Ink yelled at her, “Your name is Rose? You are so beautiful, why do you live in this desert?”

Rose stopped and looked at everyone. She was still ready to fight, but was willing to answer his question. “I live here because this is where I was raised. I feed off of the creatures that live in this desert, and I slay the beasts who roam here. If any of you has the intention of hurting me, you will die like the animals you are.”

“We don't mean you any harm, we just need your help.”

Rose looked down at the ground, and then back up at Ink. “Help with what?”

Ink looked over at Omega, then at the ground, and then at Rose. “I don't know. We were led here to find you, and if I never see you again I'm glad to have met you. You are beautiful.”

Rose's grip on her knife loosened and she looked at the ground and then gave a puzzled look at Ink. “Thank you, I think.”

Then Rose left. Ink's mind was racing, trying to figure out what it all meant. Omega just stared at him with no answers. Eventually, Omega and Pawl were asleep. Ink sat up alone trying to figure things out.

He walked outside and Rose was standing there looking at him with curious eyes. Ink stared at her shyly, and then walked up to her. “I have the sudden urge to kiss you.”

Rose blinked slowly as she looked beyond Ink, and then into his gaze. “Do what feels right.”

So Ink kissed Rose through her mask and hood and hugged her tightly and lovingly. She took off her hood and mask once more and returned the kiss. They lay down in the sand and touched each other. It was nice for both of them, the excitement within both began to grow.

They made love in the wine desert sand. As she slept and the white sun finally descended into the distance, Ink stared at her naked body and finally fell asleep himself.

Ink was awakened when the orange sun began to come back up, and found Lym giving naked cuddles to him and Rose. Ink was a bit uncomfortable, but liked it. When Rose woke up she was slightly jealous, but okay with it. Jin came out and yelled, “You dog!” although he was a bit jealous as well.

Everybody got dressed and since everyone was awake, they had a meeting with Rose in the tent.

The Bang Chitty

“I know of this place you call Syl. I call it the other dimension, and I have seen it. If your true goal is to go there, you must use an artifact from the ancient times, a wand. I must warn you though, it is not a safe place for any of you. I refuse to step foot there, but I will help in any way I can.”

“The Wand... Wanda. Jin... do you remember?”

“Yea... me and Omega both remember. Where is she?”

Ink looked at him with a sad look on his face. “The Wand is next to my throne. Back at the castle.”

Jin looked at him almost wanting to laugh. Then he did laugh. “Really? The thing we needed was where we started? Imagine that. I tell you, this Universe we live in is a total smartass.”

“Alright, so I guess we need to go back there then. Hopefully everybody in the castle is still alive. Thank you for everything Rose!”

“It was my pleasure Ink, but I have one more parting gift. I know some people to the north who will turn your squad into an army. Tell them you know me, and give them this note. They are not far outside the desert, you must speak with them about the other dimension and that you plan to go. They will prepare everyone.”

Ink looked at her, took the note, and smiled. “Thank you for everything Rose. I might come back and visit you some time.”

“I would like that Ink. Just make sure you come back in one piece.”

Ink smiled and watched as Rose made her departure back into her desert. Ink was hypnotized by her, and Jin was eager to see the note, so he grabbed it. He read it and handed it to Pezz, who then handed it

to Nappy. Pezz spoke, “I know where this is.”

Nappy spoke, “And I know how we can get there.”

Together they disassembled the tent and carried their stuff back to the ship. Nappy looked at Ink and explained to him what they needed. “We will use the engine for speed, but it needs to be able to travel on sand fairly efficiently.”

The portal to Syl appeared and Rin spoke. “Ah ah ah Nappy. You might want to change your parameters a bit. You might need to Chitty Chitty Bang Bang this bitch.”

“What?”

“God, nobody gets my references. At least you laughed Oni, I know you didn't understand the reference, but you know when something is funny. Like this whole Wand business. You're going to try to come kill me, Ink? Well, that wasn't part of the game, but that's okay, I'll be the final boss. Your next mission is to retrieve the wand from the castle. You might want to hurry though, because there appears to be a leak in your castle. Ooops.”

Ink looked through the window at Rin. “What did you do?”

“I didn't do anything, it's just a shitty castle. Honestly Ink, I hope you start getting better at creating stuff, because so far it seems like the only thing you're capable of is creating is a mess.”

The window disappeared and Ink grabbed Nappy on the shoulder. “He's right, you need to change the parameters. This vehicle has to be able to get all of us back to the castle in enough time to save everyone, and take them to the army. Is this possible?”

Nappy looked at him, then at the ground and seemed to calculate some things in his head. “I think we can do this. Lym, take off your clothes to inspire Ink.”

Jin smiled. “I like this Nappy dude, he's pretty cool.”

Lym stripped and Ink was inspired.

So was Nappy. Together, him and Ink constructed the Bang Chitty, which was basically the boat they

used to get there, with more capacity, speed, and durability. Ink was exhausted from creating it, so he passed out while Lym cuddled him. Pezz started driving, and they were on their way. Rose watched as they left her desert and returned to the flooded city. She mentally wished them luck and then went back to hunting her breakfast.

They were back to the castle in no time, but it had been completely submerged under the silicon water. Ink was awake again by this point, and he used his energy to change the ship into a submarine. “Take us under. Look through the windows of the highest tower.”

The ship went under, and a light shined from the front of it as they searched for the highest tower. They all looked around in wonder as the city they had known so well was now gone forever, buried deep in liquid silicon. Theryll saw his house as they passed by. He waved goodbye to it, for he knew he would make a home somewhere else one day.

They reached the highest tower, and through the windows they saw the survivors. The water was up to their ankles, and Ink could see that Ina's robotic legs had shorted out and she was being supported by Edna and Dornal.

“Plan?” Omega said as he looked at Ink.

“Uhm... we need to separate the top of the tower from the bottom so that it can float to the surface. Anybody have any ideas?”

Nappy smiled. “I have some dynamite. Never leave home without it.”

Nappy gave some dynamite to Ink. He used more of his energy and made a cannon on the Bang Chitty. He loaded the dynamite and aimed it below the room everyone was in. He crossed his fingers and hoped for the best as he fired the cannon.

The room was unharmed, but the room below it was demolished and the explosion sent the Bang Chitty away from it and shot the room of survivors straight to the surface. The sub surfaced and turned back into a boat. Pawl broke the window to the room and everyone crowded into the boat. Ink hugged his family and thanked everyone for their help. He had one last thing he knew that he needed to do, but after creating the cannon he had used up the last bit of his energy. He fell asleep in a crowded boat full of people, and they all talked to each other, some complaining, some just rambling. Ink slept for six

hours, and when he woke up, most of the people who were still awake were a bit cranky and uncomfortable.

Ink jumped into the sea and swam down to find the wand while Nappy tried to fix Ina's legs.

There were creatures in the water, strange ones that seemed to leer and gawk at Ink as he swam deeper. He entered the castle through the hole he had created, and swam down into the throne room. The wand had floated up to the ceiling, and he grabbed it.

A window appeared in the castle as he grabbed it, and Ink stared into Syl. Rin looked over to the window. “Oh, come on man, you're getting that water everywhere!” The window closed, and Ink looked at the wand. Then he continued to swim and noticed that he had no need to breathe, like when he was on Palette, or in space. He truly was an enigma, even to himself.

He got back on the boat and they were off. The trip to find the army was quick, but noisy. Everyone had something to talk about. Once they reached the shore, the ship was converted into a land vehicle. It took only a few hours to reach the village that Rose had mentioned, but it was the longest hour of many of their lives. Some of them developed claustrophobia and anxiety, and Ink was one of them.

“We've reached the city, Ink... Ink?” Jin looked around and saw Ink in a corner with his hands over his ears and his eyes closed to hide from all the voices. Jin reached out and touched him on the shoulder, making him jump and look around. “We're here. It's time.”

The Army

Ink stood up and walked out of the Bang Chitty, thankful that they had finally reached their destination. He looked around at the village. It was rather primitive, with huts and tents. Someone from the village looked at Ink and walked over to him, followed by a small group of people. The leader looked at Ink at eye level and spoke. “Who are you people?”

“My name is Ink. I come with a note.” Ink reached out and gave Rose's note to the man. He looked it over and looked at his men.

“It looks like Rose is cashing in her IOU guys.”

The men laughed and joked to each other. The man looked at Ink once more. “Our army is yours, but you must relay all mission details directly to me. My name is General Lysander. It's nice to meet you, Ink.” Lysander reached out his hand and Ink looked at it.

Lysander? Ink reached out and shook his hand. “Before I give you the details, tell me about the other dimension. Rose said you could prepare us to go there.”

Lysander sighed and looked at the ground. “Rose would have to do this to us, wouldn't she? There is no proper way to prepare for the other dimension. It is filled with chaos and black fire. The fire burns at a temperature far greater than anything natural in this dimension, and will annihilate anything it touches. The demons that you fought in the legends of Kriddle were all from the other dimension.”

“I never fought any demons on Kriddle, although I have heard of them being there.”

“What about the battle of Palette?”

“How do you know about that?”

“You were not the only one there. The legend of that day has spread far and wide in this realm in the three billion years that have passed. The story of how you saved your sister and became the King of the Cosmos. It's by far my favorite story about you.”

“So... you know who I am?”

“Oh yea, but just bits and pieces. I'm actually really glad to meet you, I never thought I would get the chance. My army is yours, and I will prepare everyone as well as I can for the other dimension. It's an unpredictable place, so being prepared isn't exactly easy. We're going to need a name for our army... Now, what did you say was the reason for us going over there?”

Ink looked at the man. He told him of Rin, and of Oni. Lysander had seen Oni before, and knew all too well who he was. Rin was someone he hadn't heard of. Ink told him everything he could think of about Rin, omitting memories he had suppressed. “And you think that Rin is going to kill you? Very well, our army shall be known from this day forth as the Guardians. We will protect you as best we can as we travel to the other dimension. Do you have the wand?”

Ink held out the wand and it remained lifeless and dull. Useless. “We have some people who will not

be part of the army. They seek refuge amongst your villagers." Ina walks out of the boat, apparently her legs had been fixed by Nappy. Behind her were her parents, and behind them was Jin and Omega.

"Very well. Tonight we shall all rest and celebrate this new alliance. In the morning we will prepare for war."

Everyone piled out of the boat, relieved to be free of the confines. The celebration was huge, with enough food to feed two armies. There was dancing, there was music, and Lym was not the only one naked. The spirits were high, and the stress was low. Even Omega was enjoying himself, and for the first time, Ink saw him smile.

Ink was introduced to two robotic humanoids that stared at him with cold dead eyes. "This is Robob, my own personally built assistant, and this is Mechanicalysandus. He was created by the daughter of my ancestor Lysandus, Tox. He has survived several billion years, and even though he requires constant maintenance, he could possibly survive for several billion more. She built him to have something to remember her father by, and to always have someone who could protect her. It has been passed down throughout the bloodline, and now belongs to me. I tried to analyze it and reproduce it, and while Robob is quite the creation, Mechanicalysandus is still far superior. I think it has to do with the metal that was used in its construction, metal that came directly from Rellujah after our people took back Fahlls."

Ink observed the two. Mechanicalysandus was most definitely ancient, but Robob seemed more user friendly and replaceable. The ancient relic was one of a kind, and could most likely never be reproduced. He was amazed at its uniqueness, it's personality, and wondered how different it was from the lifeforms created by nature.

"This is my top general, Pyrevamp. He is of the vampire race, but do not let that scare you. He is loyal, bound you could say. This is Drabula, one of my lower generals, but still worthy of mention." Lysander went on to introduce nearly fifty soldiers to Ink. He shook hands with them all and searched their eyes for the soul of a soldier. Within all of them he found hope and determination.

The celebration continued on into the night as everyone tried to meet everyone else. Some fell asleep early, tired from a long day, while others stirred restlessly until one of the suns began lighting the sky again. Ink was the last to fall asleep, unable to rest with thoughts of the past and future invading his

relaxation.

He was awakened only a few hours later by a scream of pure unrelenting horror. He jumped out of his bed and walked towards the scream where he saw a crowd of people all staring at something. Fighting his way through the crowd, he saw Lym kneeling over a body. As Ink got closer he saw white blood splattered everywhere. Theryll had been murdered.

Investigations

Everybody was questioned, even Ink. Nobody had any true motive for killing him, and Omega was the only one who knew him. Ink was the last one to fall asleep, and Lym was the first to find the body. Lym cried the entire time, in complete shock, unable to make coherent sentences. It was a tragedy that nobody was prepared for, and it led to the first seeds of dissent and distrust within the Guardians.

Nappy was the first to question the situation. “This murder is nothing more than a distraction from our mission. He would have wanted us to go on without him.”

“How can we go on if we don't know who to trust? The murderer must be among us, it is the only explanation.”

“Ink, the longer we wait, the better the chances of this happening again. We've been through this over and over all day, it's all anyone can think about. He was your responsibility, we all are. You are responsible for us being here, and it's on you to decide our fates. I'm not entirely comfortable with that thought any longer. If we do not attack today, I'm afraid I can no longer accompany you.”

“They're expecting us, if we rush in blindly, we could all be killed.”

“You're wrong, Ink. They want us to be distracted, they want us to turn on each other and wait here while we are picked off, one by one. The less people we have, the better their chances. We must not hesitate, we need to act now.”

“I'm sorry, Nappy. I've made my decision. I am responsible for all of you, and it is my duty to do what I must to investigate Theryll's death.”

“Well then I will not participate.”

Nappy handed Ink the weapons and gear that the army had issued all of them. Hellitha walked over to them and handed him hers as well. “I'm going with him. He makes more sense than you do.”

Ink looked at the gear in his hands and at Nappy and Hellitha. Then he looked around at everyone who was watching. “Is there anybody else who will not be following?”

They all remained silent and Nappy and Hellitha took their leave. Ink sat down and felt a headache coming on. He clenched his head and teeth as the pain began to shoot through his eyes to the back of his head.

The army continued to prepare everyone for Syl, while a team of investigators searched around for clues and asked questions. Pezz, Omega, Jin, Pawl, and Lysander were the five who decided to find the truth, while Ink sat in a hut, reeling in pain. *This isn't right,* Ink thought to himself. *Maybe Nappy was right, maybe we should just go.*

Ink grabbed the green wand and waited for a window to appear, but nothing happened. He was unable to concentrate enough to get it to work, and eventually dropped it in frustration.

Meanwhile, the investigators had discovered a trail of bloody footprints leading from the crime scene into the grass. That was where the trail ended. The footprint was that of a petite woman, and so the women were questioned and their feet were measured. The one who fit the prints exactly was Lym.

Lym was still hysterical from finding Theryll, and had not yet been able to say what she saw. When she was finally able to talk about it, she didn't make any sense. “It was me, but not me. It was her, she... she was me. How... no. Please. I keep seeing it. Please make it stop. Make her stop. Make her go away!”

She screamed and held her head as if it would help her thoughts, but it did no good. Jin stayed with her and kept her company. She cried until night, and twitched in her sleep. Jin stepped out of the tent for a moment to shake off the anxiety. Chynthia walked up to him. “How is she?”

Jin looked at her. “She's not doing so good. She isn't making sense, but she was able to fall asleep. It looks like she's having nightmares. She says that it was her who did it, but I can't see her hurting anybody.”

“That's what I was afraid of. Let me in there, I need to see her.”

Chynthia walked past Jin and into the tent. Jin took a deep breath and looked around. Chynthia screamed. Several people filtered into the tent to find Lym's blood everywhere. Jin stared in disbelief at her lifeless body. “No! How did this happen?”

Chynthia stared at Jin with a cold deadly gaze. “That's what I was about to ask you.”

Jin returned her gaze. “How dare you accuse me of such a thing, I loved her.”

“You loved her body, nothing more. You didn't know Lym like I did. I will not stop until I see you burn for your crimes.” Chynthia tried to tackle Jin, but was held back by Omega.

“This won't solve anything. Jin is not a murderer.”

Chynthia tensed up a few more times before relaxing. Then she began to cry. “I know that he didn't do this. Who? Who could have been so cruel?” Chynthia crawled over to Lym's lifeless corpse as tears streamed down her face. She began gasping for breath as she spoke. “My Lym, who did this to you? You were a perfect angel. Whoever did this will pay, even if I have to spend my last breath avenging you.”

Investigations continued as the tension in the air tightened. Chynthia absorbed Lym's pain and dwelt with it, harboring it like a child. Jin tried to console her, but she wanted nothing to do with him. She stopped speaking to everyone and just kept to herself while watching everything and listening. She stopped sleeping and rarely ate.

Days passed, and everybody was prepared for Syl, but no answers had been found and no more murders had been committed. The souls of the dead were believed to be uneasy, and so their bodies were not yet buried. Pawl and Christina took shifts on lookout while Omega, Jin, Pezz, and Lysander continued investigating. They were getting nowhere quick.

The few drops of sanity Chynthia had left were slowly slipping from her grip as day four of no sleep and no food began to sink in. She began imagining she was seeing Lym walk around at night, but each time she tried to speak to her or run up to her she would disappear into thin air. The final night was no different, except that both Pawl and Christina had taken the night off.

Chynthia heard something from across the camp, something fall. She ran to it as fast as she could, only to see nothing. Upon further investigation she saw footsteps in the grass nearby. Following them closely, she became quiet as a cat. Up ahead she saw two people, one laying and one sitting in the wine-colored grass. As she approached she could see that one of them was dead, and the other one was Lym.

Chynthia jumped from hiding and grabbed Lym. Lacey lay dead on the ground. “What is the meaning of this, Lym?!”

She laughed. “I am not Lym, you fool. Lym is deader than Theryll. My name is Sarah.”

“Sarah? But how is that possible. You have all the same features as Lym.”

“Ha! Yea, maybe on the outside, but I am nothing like that tramp. I was happy to make her bleed, that was the whole reason I came here. Theryll stopped me the first night, but patience proved rewarding. After I killed Lym, I just really wanted to kill the rest of you, but your nosy ass kept staying up and following me.”

“Well my nosy ass is about to slit your fucking throat.”

“Not so fast, I have some information you might find useful. I know who killed your parents... and Lym's parents. Don't you want to know?”

“I don't believe anything you say. You don't deserve to take another breath on this world.”

“Humor me, what have you got to lose?”

Chynthia held the knife to her throat for several moments, and then spoke with reluctance. “Fine, speak your final words.”

“Your parents were murdered by an organization. The ANTO organization. They held no hate for you or the other unfortunate children, but your parents were a threat.”

Unsure of why Sarah was telling her this and not really caring for its validity, Chynthia slit Sarah's throat as Lysander approached.

Inter-Dimensional Travel

Chynthia explained everything to Lysander and the others. She made little sense, but neither did two bodies of Lym, one with black blood and one with white. The one with black blood was found to be almost identical to Lym in every way, but a mirror. A scar on Lym's left side was found on Sarah's right. Chynthia suspected that this woman had come from Syl. She was told to get some sleep after some food. Chynthia was finally able to eat, but it wasn't easy. She was restless for about an hour, but knowing that Lym's death had been avenged was enough to help her find the sleep she needed.

The Guardians were all relieved, and Ink's headache was finally going away. The dead were finally buried followed by a short ceremony, and afterward they prepared for war. Tot declined the battle gear and requested she heal people instead. There were several others who chose to follow her lead and help the army as medics.

Ink gave a short speech thanking everyone for helping in his goal to defeat Rin. Omega watched the speech, slightly disgusted, knowing full well that Ink's life was never threatened, and that the Orb was the true purpose of them going to Syl. Omega looked around, growing uncomfortable with the thought that none of these people would survive. He wished Nappy and Hellitha luck on their journeys in his mind as these thoughts passed and Ink finished his speech.

Ink grabbed for the wand, held it up and concentrated on it.

Nothing happened.

The crowd waited for several moments in growing anticipation before Ink dropped his hand and looked at the lifeless wand. “I'm afraid I don't understand how to use it.” There was a sigh from several of the soldiers which echoed back. Ink handed the wand to everyone and none of them were able to use it. Frustrated and slightly irritated, Ink looked to the sky. “I guess we have to travel through space to get there.”

“What is a tool which you cannot use?”

Ink looked around to see where the voice had come from. A Fahllian as black as Lysandus walked towards him. “Excuse me?”

“What is a tool which you cannot use? What is a mind which you cannot control?”

Ink stared at the shirtless man who wore a green hat, pants, and gloves with purple shoes. Such an odd person he was, one he had never met before. “Who are you?”

“Who are any of us? If I speak in questions and riddles, does that make my name the Ryddlah?”

“No... I mean, I don't think... oh. Hello Ryddlah, my name is Ink. A tool that you cannot use?”

“Who you know as Ink could be known by another name, correct?”

“I... I don't understand.”

“What is a mind which you cannot control?”

“You already asked me that one, I haven't even answered the first one. A tool I cannot use would be the wand, correct?”

“Do you want that to be correct? Is your brain a tool which you cannot control?”

Ink looked around for some kind of answers from somebody, but they all just stared back at him in confusion. “You're saying that I cannot control my thoughts, and that's why the wand won't work for me?”

The Ryddlah clapped his gloves together once. “What is your other name?”

“My other... name?”

“Was Lym one or two? Are any of us just one?”

“Oni... Oni is my mirror in Syl. How do I know this? How do you know this?”

“Would you say that I'm better at asking questions than answering them?”

“No, I wouldn't say that at all. How do I use the wand?”

“Are you sure you want to use the wand? Are you committed to the belief that this is the correct

course of action? Can you see through the storms Oni controls?”

Ink looked around again. “Yea, we have to do this.”

“Doesn't the wand only work when you're confident in your decision?”

“I don't know, does it?”

The Ryddlah looked at Ink in the eyes and sighed. “Why do I bother?”

Ryddlah walked away as Ink yelled questions at him. When he was out of sight, Ink looked around at everyone. “Ok... let me try this again, I guess.”

Ink held up the wand and concentrated on it. He concentrated on Syl, and why they were going. In a moment of brief horror he realized their true goal had not been to protect himself and the Universe, but to regain the orb. An orb he had thought to be his only true friend and ended up being an addiction. Deep inside he realized that these people had trusted him, followed him, and he was about to sacrifice them all for a ball. He lowered the wand, but it was too late.

In a sandstorm of black dust, the world around them became engulfed in darkness. There were loud grinding noises and deep growls as the entire army as well as all of the civilians were thrown into the dimension of Syl.

Ink looked around and saw the black fire that Lysander had told him about. He saw several demons surrounding them and salivating, as if they had been waiting for them all day and were starting to get hungry. They were much darker and disgusting than the demons Ink remembered fighting on Palette. He suddenly knew what Rin had meant by “boring cartoon demons”.

“IT'S A TRAP!” Ink screamed as several of the demons tried to attack. The soldiers fought them off with their primitive weapons and slayed every last demon they saw. There were a few tragedies, but within an hour, the area was secured. They held council as they held watch. The civilians were surrounded by the soldiers while the medics did the best they could to patch up any injuries or make the less fortunate comfortable before death. It had been chaos, and there was much more to come.

The next few days could not be considered days, for Syl had no night and no day. It was always somehow the same, yet always changing. It was chaotic and beautiful, but deadly and unforgiving. Ink

tried on several occasions to use the wand to bring the civilians to safety, but it remained lifeless.

"I'm sorry for bringing you guys into this. It was never my intention," Ink said as he spoke to his family. "In fact, I wish I hadn't involved anybody in this." Ink looked at his hands and frowned.

Edna spoke up and stepped forward. "Do not concern yourself with things you have no control over. Things were meant to happen the way they've happened. None of us would have followed you if we weren't confident in your judgment."

"But that's just it... I haven't been myself lately."

Ina gave him a confused look. "You sure seem to be you, who do you think you've been?"

Ink returned her look. "I don't know. I just have a bad feeling about all this."

By this time, scouts had observed the area around them and saw an army growing in the distance. Several of them reported seeing Rin and Oni at the lead of their demon army. The knot in Ink's stomach tightened, his hands shook, and he began having trouble breathing. He sat down to collect his thoughts.

Lysander came over to him and whispered. "Ink... there is a... personal matter to which I had not previously disclosed to you. My wife was pregnant, and when we were thrown into this dimension she gave birth."

"What? Why didn't you say something?"

"It seemed like you had enough on your plate. As I said, this is a personal matter. I just have... one request of you. If me and my wife do not make it, will you please take care of our son? He... isn't very pretty to look at, but I can see in his eyes that he will be a great man one day."

Ink stood up and looked Lysander in the eyes. "There is no need to talk like that. We will make it out of this together." Ink looked around. "All of us."

Hell

The army of Fahllians lined up behind Ink as he led them towards war. Ink walked confidently with his armor clunking. There were large areas of black fire which they had to walk around. Even being

near the fire was dangerous. All of them were sweating as they approached the demons.

Ink told his people to hold back as he stepped forward with Omega and Jin. Rin and Oni walked over to meet them on the field. Rin spoke up as he approached. “I want a good clean fight. No hitting below the belt.”

Jin looked at Omega. “What's a belt?”

Omega ignored him as his eyes sized up everyone. He would be ready for anything. Sweat dripped from Ink's face as he set his sights on Rin. His cold and unforgiving gaze pierced through the field and he could see Rin smiling back at him. His head grew light as he lost equilibrium and became dizzy. He regained himself and continued walking.

The armies clashed in the center of the field and Rin's blade met Ink's. He was wielding his family's blade, the one Dornal had passed down to him.

“There is no need for us to fight, Rin! All I want is my orb and we will be on our way.”

“Oh, so you remembered what this was all about, I see. How does that make you feel about all of the lost souls? All for a ball. Has the game been fun for you so far?”

Omega listened to their conversation as he began battling Oni. Oni, the king of Syl, but Omega knew that he was the only one capable of fighting him. Oni smiled as they clashed.

Ink zoned his surroundings out and focused on Rin entirely. “I was never a willing participant in this game. I did not play, I got played.”

“Very good, so you know how it feels. You understand it now.”

“What was the purpose of all this?”

“The purpose? Well... what is the purpose of anything? I led you to believe that you were in control of this Universe, and to an extent, I was not lying. However, nobody is ever in control, not completely. Your thoughts betray you, your actions surprise you. True sanctuary is within, but for someone like you who doesn't know who he is, it may never be found. Even with total control of one's self, nobody has true control over others, nor the animals. The decision for me to come to you and 'guide' you was not

mine to make, although I do love to travel. I was also 'guided' by an avatar from a dimension above mine. He was not as kind as I have been."

"So... you're saying that you are like me? An... avatar, as you call it?"

"Yes, we are the artists of our dimensions. At the same time, we didn't create the dimensions, they were formed either by higher beings or natural phenomenon. There is always something higher, but in a way, me and you have control over their very existence."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well, I hope to show you. That's kind of the point to this whole thing. There is a lesson to be learned with all this, maybe many."

Ink's army stood strong as the last of the demons were slayed. Bodies lay everywhere in the field, and sweat dripped from Ink's face as he separated his v-blade into two blades once more. He swung at Rin's knee with one, and swung at the armed hand with the other. Rin toppled to the ground with one less hand, one less weapon, and a brand new bloody stump. Rin screamed as his bright blue blood seeped into the ground.

Then Rin began to laugh. "You fool."

"You have been humiliated and defeated, and yet you still call me a fool?"

Rin coughed up blood. "You... fail to realize reality. Look around you, Ink... tell me who really won this game."

Ink looked around to see nothing by Space Generals. The Guardians, civilians, and demons all lay dead, every single soul had been killed. Oni was almost dead, laughing in the corner. Omega's body was nowhere to be found, but Ink quickly spotted his family, Jin, Lysander, and every last person he had dragged to this dimension. The Space Generals all disappeared as Ink stood in the middle of his own personal hell.

A strong urge to turn the blade on himself and end it all was followed by a bright flash of light. Identically cloaked figures with blue trench coats appeared and took the life of Rin and Oni before Ink was able to finish them off. Ink ran over to them and screamed. "NOOOO!!!"

He drew his blades and readied himself to kill them all. “Your pathetic weapons will do no good against us, we are the Space Generals of the dimension above you, Biz.”

“You're the ones that sent Rin here to 'guide' me?”

“Rin was not our choice, and he did not come from our dimension. He came from Ros, the dimension across from us. We banished him from ever entering your dimension again, which is why he dragged you to this dimension. There is nothing more to worry about, we have dealt with the threat. Please go back to what you were doing.”

Ink looked at them, speechless, as they slowly faded from existence. His rage boiled within as his sorrow and guilt splashed together in a storm of emotion. Then he heard a baby cry.

Walking over to the cries he found the son of Lysander, laying atop a pile of bodies. Beside him was his hat, his wand, and his orb. He grabbed them all, and traveled back to Lys to raise the child.

Raising Sporx

9,921,513,643

Ink had named the child Sporx, and he was a very strange child indeed. Being born between the dimensions of Lys and Syl had changed him, made him see things like no other. It had also twisted his face and made him hideous to look at. With the aid of his Hat, Ink was able to find the Mask and he gave it to Sporx on his first birthday. The Mask appeared to need him as much as he needed the Mask, and it fused to his face, becoming a part of him.

As the child grew, Ink told him stories of his parents as well as everybody who helped him on that day. He embellished slightly to see the child's eyes grow wide with wonder, but the truth was all he needed to provide Sporx with a smile. Sporx absorbed the stories, always wanting to hear them. He was an intelligent child, and Ink guided him through life with every step.

9,921,513,687

Eventually, Sporx was a grown man, and Ink was beginning to show his age. The stress of life had given him wrinkles and a few gray hairs on his newly developed beard. As time passed, Ink continued to wonder what Rin had meant, and what the purpose of the game truly was.

13,125,341,634

His mind ran circles without answers for a few billion years, until one day, Sporx made a discovery. Sporx was searching the stars for fun when he spotted an object which seemed to pulse and glow through the eyes of his mask. His mask seemed to glow in unison with it, and he told Ink right away.

13,125,341,665

It took several decades to reach it using a space exploration vehicle, but Ink figured out what it was on the way. It was the Spirit Symbol that he had struck at the beginning of the Age of Fear. It pulsated as they approached and seemed to beckon to them, welcoming them closer with warm arms of adoration. It longed for them, and they began to long for it.

When they reached it, the light it emitted brightened and slightly blinded the two. It gave off a high pitched whistle, and Ink knew that it was trying to communicate. Sporx could understand its words.

“Ink, I know what it's saying. It says that it can help us, but that it is angry with you.”

“I can understand why you would be angry. I don't know why I did what I did to you, it was almost as if I was on autopilot. Please forgive me, I desperately need your help.”

There was a pause as the Spirit Symbol seemed to calculate his apology. Then it began whistling once more.

“It's telling me that what your heart desires is to change time.”

“Is that possible?”

“It's saying that it's very possible. It has the power to do so, but it needs somebody to fuse with it. It needs a vessel.”

“I will be the vessel if need be.”

“No, the only vessel capable of what it needs has been long dead. His name was Lysandus.”

“Lysandus!? How am I supposed to bring Lysandus here?”

“The Spirit Symbol is saying that you cannot bring Lysandus here, you can only bring the Symbol to

Lysandus. It can bring you through time, but only a vision of you. You must find Lysandus on your own.”

Ink agreed and teleported the symbol into the ship. Then they traveled back to Fahlls, and Ink began his journey to find Lysandus.

14,000,001,516

Ink had aged considerably by the time his vision was able to speak with Lysandus. Lysandus was also an old man at the time, and nearing death. Ink tried to convince him to fuse with the Spirit Symbol, but Lysandus was reluctant. Ink forced the two to merge together in an act of desperation, and from that moment on the timeline changed forever, and the Age of Insanity began with the birth of Playt.

Pandemonium

Randomness is good
Normalcy is overrated
Look with open eyes
Embrace that which is different
Grow and learn to care again

1: A Clean Playt

White.

Nothing is known.

Nothing is felt.

A new beginning.

Born anew as an adult, Playt's memory has been erased. Everything that he had once known is now gone. He knows no words, and he knows no thoughts, just instinct. The suit he wore while he was Fat Playt is gone, and has been replaced by some baggy white pants, but the fake hat he had made still remains on his head somehow.

He opens his eyes for the third time as a new conscious mind.

As a baby Lysandus, it was normal.

As a baby Playt he had more intelligence than any normal baby.

Now he opens his eyes as a fully-grown red Fahllian, with the mentality of a newborn baby.

His legs are already fully developed, and so he can walk as soon as he learns what it is to walk. His vocal cords are already fully developed, and so he can talk as soon as he learns what it is to talk.

Set language is absolutely beyond him. He looks around at a new world and can see many small animals that scamper about and squeak and slither. He believes that he is one of them. The biggest one of them is less than half Playt's size, but he believes it to be his mommy.

Playt squeaks to it and it glances up at him. It scrunches up and little hairs on its back stand. Then it quickly scampers away. Adult Playt falls to the ground and squirms towards it. It is fast, but Playt is faster, and he corners it. He touches his face to it and can instantly hear its inferior thoughts. It can only think of one word in its confusion. That word is…

Red!

"Red…" Playt speaks feebly.

That is what he will call himself. He will be known as Red, his mommy has just named him.

His "mommy" is thoroughly freaked out. When it hears his voice, the stress is too much and it dies in uncontrollable spasms. The lifeless body of a Blue Leaves grass slug is pressed against Playt's face as he caresses it and seeks nourishment from it. No nourishment can be found however, and he begins to cry. It starts out as a whimper, but grows into a full out wail.

The jungle creatures that Playt encountered as a baby crawl out and examine the crying adult. They poke it with a stick and Playt turns his head to look at them. They back away and make high pitched squealing noises. Playt's reflexes cause him to cover his ears with his hands, and he suddenly realizes his arms and hands. As he observes the jungle creatures walking around, he also notices his legs, and feet.

He stands up quickly.

It was too quickly, and the blood rushes to his head.

The unfamiliar feeling of the head-rush is blamed on the jungle creatures, which stare at him with pure fascination. He believes that they have made him feel like this when they touched him with their sticks.
He stumbles as his equilibrium settles. Then he looks at the gloves on his hands. Never before had he noticed them. He moves his fingers around, and makes a fist, then releases it. He looks back at the sticks and reaches out to grab one of them.

The jungle creatures get ready to attack, but do not move. They just stand there for a second or two, and then one of them raises its stick and swings down on Playt.

It misses, and the stick breaks on the ground. Playt observes this and is amazed by its destruction. Then, out of nowhere…

FLICKER

Teen Playt

The Role Model

It lives for the now

Kid Playt seeks Lysandus. On multiple occasions he finds him on a vine planet named Dussyllia, and on these occasions he watches him from a distance. He observes him as a child a couple of times, but mostly it is in his teenager years that Playt watches. That is the age Playt is now approaching.

On one of these occasions, he happens to look up to see an object floating above his head. He attempts to grab it to see what it is, but no matter where his head is, the object is always just floating out of reach.

Many years pass, and he has grown. The moment he realizes he's now Teen Playt the object falls from the sky and he catches it. It is a black and red hat, and it seems to have fur all over it. The fur on it is so realistic that it makes the hat look as if it's breathing.

Upon further examination Playt realizes that it really is breathing. This object is alive, and suddenly he can feel it speaking to him. Nothing that it says can be considered words however, but can better be described as emotions. It feels sorrow, happiness and anger, all in the same moment.

Playt places it on his head and his mind seems to ease. He relaxes and feels the hat moving around on his head. He knows it is changing, he can feel it stretching muscles it hasn’t in ages, as if it has been asleep.

As it mutates on his head his thoughts become relaxed. The jumble of thoughts that stress had melted into his mind was now deteriorating. It dissolves and only leaves a mind that is completely at ease. Playt is no longer an insane wreck.

He seeks a glimpse of himself and finds a metal lake on the planet of Appliancia. He has been to this planet once before, when he was a confused child.

But that's in the past now.

He looks at his features and the hat on his head. He is as red as ever, and his eyes still glow like lasers. They are round now, and simple, relaxed eyes.

He sees that his clothes resemble something he had seen Lysandus wearing once, a blue t-shirt and white baggy pants. Where he got these clothes is a mystery to him, it's as if he had subconsciously created the clothes from nothing. They appear to be made of the same material that his diaper had been made of, as if he had never truly discarded it on Black Leaves. The hat is blue, very similar to the hat he had seen Lysandus wearing one time. It is what the people of Earth would call a baseball cap. *Earth? What's Earth,* Playt thinks to himself.

The hat on his head speaks. "Earth is where Ryan is. He can see us somehow, through light-years, time and dimensions. He writes of us. He writes of both your lives, Lysandus's and Playt's. He may know everything you seek. I highly go against finding him, however, because he does not understand your language. Our languages are so different, that it may just sound like a techno song to him."

"So… you're my hat."

"Yup. We should get going."

"Yeah, let's get going… where are we going?"

"You'll see. We'll both see."

FLICKER

Crowds of people surround Teen now, talking in languages he doesn't know, and some that he does. A couple of them originate from Black Leaves, a couple he's learned through flickering everywhere. One of them strikes him though, one he knows well, but doesn't know why he knows. It is an ancient language.

"Gather around time travelers, we have come to a Time Junction. This is a bump in time, where we can look down and see the curvature of space. If you look to your left you can see Black Leaves. If you look to your right you can see Blue Leaves. That way is the twin planets of Aspimiria and Aspimentia, and behind us you will see a dinky planet named Earth and the huge mysterious cloud galaxy. We work

for the Time Generals, and we are here to aid you on your journeys. Are there any questions?”

“We need to get to the Council,” the hat named Hat says.

“Ok, does anybody that isn’t a hat, and isn’t a plate have any questions?”

Silence.

“Ok, then I’ll continue. The objective for today’s journey is to find as many of these portal beans hidden throughout time and space. They are tiny, so you can carry quite a few at a time. GO!”

The room turns red and then black. Teen finds himself stranded on the far end of nowhere, surrounded completely by the darkness of space. He reaches out and is shocked to see that he cannot even see his own arms. He tries to swim through the thick black nothing, but soon realizes that he doesn't know where he’s trying to go.

“Flicker”

FLICKER

Playt arrives in his Council. Teen realizes that he was being led here by Hat the whole time, and that Hat has just taken him away from what could have been an actually fun day.

He doesn’t really care though, no sweat off his back.

Old Playt is there and he looks at Teen.

“How are you doing, Teen Playt? You know you’re me, right? I don’t really remember being that young, is there anything you can tell me about it so I can try to remember?”

“Oh, it’s ok. Nothing good, nothing bad really.” Teen speaks in his calming cool voice.

“No, I mean, what’s your story? What all have you done in your life?”

“Oh, you know, normal things. I don’t really know. I just became a Teen Playt this chapter.”

“What?”

“You know man, I’m just hanging out. I don’t really have much to do, how about you?”

Hat speaks from above Teen’s head. “Stop pestering yourself Playt, you can see he’s just chillen. He’s my friend right now, so just leave him alone.”

Old Playt stares at the hat which has just spoken to him. His face changes to one of dismay, and suddenly the hat clings to Teen’s head.

FLICKER

The candy planet of Candee.

Old Playt follows and is right behind Teen now.

FLICKER. “Holy shit that was close,” the hat says.

“Ooo, you shouldn’t say that word I think.”

“Shut up Playt!” Hat shouts.

“Ok.” Teen says in his calm voice.

Old Playt FLICKERs in again, and then Teen FLICKERs.

“Ooo, a portal bean.” Teen reaches through the water that he now realizes he’s in, and grabs the floating bean there. Old Playt FLICKERs in and Teen FLICKERs out.

“You’re a son of a bitch, Playt; I can’t seem to outrun you.”

“I’m just standing here.”

“I told you to shut up.”

“Oh yea.”

They are now on Appliancia. The water drips off of Playt and Hat, and lands on the electric circuitry that makes up the planet. Pain shoots through both of them and Old Playt FLICKERs in. He grabs them

and then all three of them are being electrocuted.

FLICKER, FLICKER, FLICKER, FLICKER

Being on a strange, small planet, they stop flickering. Old Playt is still gripped to Teen Playt. “You can’t go anywhere without me now.”

Hat tries to flicker and nothing happens.

“Well, that’s not what was supposed to happen,” Old Playt says, “you were supposed to still be able to flicker, but I would automatically go with you.”

Old Playt tries to flicker this time, but it doesn’t work for him either.

He lets go of Teen and they both try to flicker away, but neither of them can. Realizing that they are now stranded, they look around at the world. It is a desert with a yellowish-white hot sun in the sky, and tan sand that blows around with the wind. The sky is clear of clouds and the brightest blue they have ever seen. Old Playt realizes where they are.

“Earth…”

“So this is the home of our creator huh? This planet’s textures hurt my eyes. Why do we have to be stranded here, of all places?” Hat complains from his permanent position on Teen’s head. He seems to be sucking Teen’s energy and enthusiasm, but Teen doesn’t care. Best not to bother with it.

“Our creator?” Old Playt shouts. “What are you talking about? Ghester isn’t from Earth.”

“No, not Ghester, his name is Ryan, and he writes our stories.”

“Ryan was not our creator. A writer? Are you an idiot?”

“Do you know what year this is Old Playt?” Hat asks him.

“Hmmm…. For Earthlings it would be the year 2150. Why does it matter? Ryan existed long before now.”

“Yea, you're right…. Why do we have to be stranded here?”

“Oh, it doesn’t matter.” Teen Playt says.

In unison the other two shout, "Shut up, Playt!”

Ynk

Rewritten Fear

With the birth of Playt, the color red retroactively existed throughout time, changing the wine-colored grass of Fahlls, the wine-colored gem, and all wine related objects red. Playt was a red Fahllian in appearance, but the Spirit Symbol within caused him to flash through time and space at seemingly random moments. This twisted and changed Ink's life as he remembered it. The Age of Creation remained untainted aside from the color change. The true changes to Ynk's dream started in The Age of Fear.

Ink remained in the castle as the world around him mutated. He looked over to where Sporx was and saw him dying while also fading from existence entirely. A whirl of conflicting information swirled within and beyond. There were two micros, two macros, until one of each began to fade. Ink's memory remained, but there was new information for his mind to sort out.

6,000,000,053

In the new timeline, Shellra's people had not participated in the war on Aspimiria. Playt had put all of their souls to rest after Adradiggi infected their minds. Playt's life brought him to Aspimiria repeatedly, and this began to tug on the Spirit Symbol, pulling it closer to the chaotic planet. The only Chibbie to survive her village was Shellra, who traveled with Playt and eventually became his lover and mother of his children..

As a result, the battle on Aspimiria went very differently. This time, the army of Chibbies from Fornolk and the army of Chibbies from Jutter were evenly numbered. Adradiggi still infected Dos with demons, and Inious still decapitated her. Sid arrived, angry as ever, and began to fight Inious. Inious was winning this time, and Adradiggi knew that it was time to hide.

Sid began to absorb all of the water from the planet as Alessandra and Caprina entered the gateway. This time around, they were there for much longer without noticing that they were in any danger. As the water began to drain they started seeing the plants wither and die. They knew that something was wrong, and as they turned to walk towards the door they saw a tree falling onto it. At that very moment,

Ghester was checking his basement and saw them trapped there. The gateway closed before he was able to reach them. He told the King and Queen what had happened, and vowed to do what he could to save them.

Inious was able to weaken Sid enough to use the Gems on him. As he was sealing Sid away, Adradiggi shoved Inious into the path of the crystals and Inious and Sid were fused together under the sands of Aspimiria for decades. Along with them, the souls of the remaining Chibbies were sealed within the Gems. They named themselves the Gallows. Half were still dark and filled with demons, while the other half were still pure. The pure dubbed the gems Gifts, while the dark dubbed them Curses. Their souls were able to wander around the desert planet, like ghosts with unfinished business. They watched the planet, and waited.

Ghester settled in on Dussyllia and was neighbors with a scientist of the mystic arts, Rewncold. His first order of business once moving in was to create a doorway to Aspimiria so that he may save Alessandra. After about a month he was able to pinpoint the planet again.

6,000,000,054

Failing in his life goal of killing Sid, Adradiggi examined the gems to see if there were a way to release him. He was unable to get near them, they held some type of unseen power over him. He wandered the planet for several months, waiting for an answer, and that was when he discovered Alessandra speaking with Ghester. Behind them was a gateway to Dussyllia. Caprina was not there.

After finding her, Ghester tried his best to convince Alessandra to leave Aspimiria with him to the safety of Dussyllia, but she refused. She was looking for her friend, and she would not leave the planet until she found her. She couldn't remember her name, nor anything about her, and that was because Playt had erased her memory of Caprina almost entirely. Ghester could remember Caprina very well, but chose not to say anything. He could tell by the look on her face that she had been through a lot. The sliver of what was left of Caprina's memory was enough to compel her to stay on Aspimiria and search for her. Ghester tried to bring her through, but she screamed and struggled wildly. He could not stay, his family needed him. He agreed to train her how to defend herself every day, so that she might survive her journey. As soon as he was able, he sent word to her parents that he had found her. On one of the occasions in which they met to train was when Adradiggi saw them.

Adradiggi approached the two and tried to convince them to follow him to the 'Gems of Power'. He

explained that their training would benefit greatly if they were to wield the magical gems. They could sense his darkness within and see that he was evil. They looked at each other, mentally agreeing, and refused to follow him. Adradiggi thought to kill them both, but could sense an amazing amount of energy within Alessandra. He knew that he was too weak to kill her, but Ghester would be easy prey. Frustrated, Adradiggi ran through the door and into Dussyllia.

Ghester stared at Alessandra and put his hands on her shoulders. “I have to follow him, he's in my basement.” She nodded.

Adradiggi held Lysandus and Ophelia hostage as Ghester ran up the stairs from the basement. Lysandus cried as Ophelia held him in her arms. “Do as I requested, gather the gems.”

Adradiggi stood behind Ophelia with one of his spiked appendages on her throat, and another inching closer to Lysandus. As he touched the baby's skin Adradiggi's appendage burned and sizzled. Ghester smiled. His son truly was the one who would finally rid the world of evil.

“RUN, OPHELIA!” Ghester screamed as Adradiggi stumbled backwards. She ran towards the door, but turned around just in time to see Adradiggi opening a portal to Syl and sending demons through to infect Ghester's mind. Ophelia gripped Lysandus tighter as Ghester uttered his final request in a crackling whisper. “r...ru..n..”

Ophelia ran. Her instincts led her to leave Lysandus to a safe home, one where he could grow and become an adult. Tears fell down her face as she left Lysandus on the doorstep of their neighbor, Rewncold. Then she ran some more. Ophelia did not stop until she could no longer scream, no longer walk, and no longer feel the grip of death on her shoulders. Then she slept.

Ghester's mind had been taken, manipulated and twisted by Adradiggi. He became his slave, his servant. Mindless and ruthless, Ghester found his way to the Gems of power. He grabbed the blue one and was instantly filled with outstanding energy. The King of Fahlls still resided within, and it spoke to Ghester as his mind cleared just enough to escape the mindless slavery Adradiggi had infected him with.

Adradiggi retained enough control to force him to annihilate Alessandra using the gem. The pain of watching himself murder the princess was enough to cause Ghester's mind to snap in two, and he became insane. He no longer listened to reason, no longer listened to his master, and no longer

remembered who he was.

Adradiggi knew that he had to find a new slave.

6,000,000,070

Adradiggi secured their old home as his own and it became known as the haunted abandoned building. He searched high and low, but it took sixteen years before he was able to find someone. The man's name was Mantellan, and he had been led to Adradiggi through a series of elaborate schemes which involved a book describing the powers granted by the gems. Mantellan was weak, bullied, scared, scarred, and angry.

As a child he had been outcast simply for being feeble. Even his father Gundalf was cruel to him. He had never beaten the boy, but he was never able to accept him as a son either. He was disappointed at how sensitive the little Mantellan turned out. Never once had Gundalf told him he loved him, and soon after Mantellan turned twenty-three, Gundalf and his entire organization were mysteriously annihilated. Mantellan had been stricken with grief at first, but after a few months he was left with nothing but resentment. Mantellan wanted revenge on all of the people who had treated him like scum, but as he tried to build his muscles he found that there was something wrong with him. After speaking with a doctor he learned that he had a disease which altered the way his muscles regrew after a workout. The doctor explained to him that he would never be strong. This infuriated Mantellan and he snapped, stabbing the doctor with one of his own tools. Mantellan sneaked out of the hospital unnoticed and became a shadow. It wasn't until ten years later that he would find the book. The book led him to Ghester's old house, and Adradiggi led him to the gems. When Mantellan found the Gems he felt the power course through his veins. His muscles plumped and he grew taller. That was when Ghester appeared.

Ghester's chaotic rage was matched by Mantellan's overwhelming power. Mantellan shoved the gems he had into his eye socket to increase the flow of power. Even with the blue gem, Ghester was no match. Mantellan vaporized him and the gem, and together they sank under the sand.

6,000,000,071

One year later, Lysandus found his way back into his parent's old house. By that time, Adradiggi had taken post in Aspimiria, confused as to why the gems had not released Insidious. Mantellan had taken post inside the abandoned house with his hired thugs.

After that day, Lysandus's life became a rollercoaster of chaos and tragedy. Near the end of the roller coaster, Adradiggi was eradicated, and Ink finally woke up to realize that it had only been his shadow. The Symbol had finally made it to Aspimiria and buried itself under the sand on impact. At the very end of the rollercoaster Lysandus still became Playt, but in the new timeline it wasn't Ink who made Lysandus fuse with the Spirit Symbol, it was Playt himself. This created an unbreakable and self sustaining circle of time.

Ina never got injured, and Ink never met the doctor who saved her. Rin never showed up to trigger the Age of Control in the new timeline, instead it was triggered by the need to control Playt.
Rhun

Top

The top of the tower is a spinning room without a roof. The captives are strapped to the walls as the room spins faster with each passing moment, making them all sick. In the center of the room is a demon who does not spin, operating the speed. He tells them his name is Tear, the third brother of Dysh's most feared henchmen. The fact that he doesn't spin makes everyone dizzier, and he laughs as their faces cringe in torture.

Debris remembers seeing Curious bravely escape as the hawk demons grab them all up, and how he hides in an unreachable crevice. She notices that Rhun and Nyf aren't there and hopes that Curious finds them. She blames Nyf for everything and her hatred for him frustrates her to no end. Shortly after meeting Rhun her fear and hate for everything melts away, but after all that time it finally comes back. She is happy around Rhun, secure. So much that it drowns out any negativity reality has to offer.

As Nyf climbs with Rhun on his shoulders and Curious in Rhun's backpack, the red water soaks them all and the clouds above darken. Purple lightning streaks across the sky, and moments later they hear the crack of some booming destructive force.

It isn't clear to them whether it's thunder or not, because moments later, Shred appears beside them once again riding his flying metal elephant. It swoops down towards them and Nyf moves just in time to dodge Shred's blades which mercilessly swing towards him.

Without thinking, Nyf unsheathes his weapon and throws it into the neck of Shred, killing him instantly. Shred falls off his mount and the flying metal trunkless elephant demon swoops down to grab

him.

“That was your favorite knife, your only blade.”

“I'll find another one, Rhun. That one held too many bad memories.”

“You seem different. What happened?”

“I am different. You changed me.”

The notion that he had a positive effect on someone is alien and new to Rhun. It perplexes him.

Atop the building, the tip spins faster than ever, and Debris' screams echo upwards into the dark cloud above. The red rain water slams into their faces at painful speeds.

Waste is dead by this point. He is weak for a long while before, weaker than even his own brother knows. When them and Burns are young they're at each other's throats, but after an inexplainable black fire tornado tears through Sector 3 they all kind of team up. The sibling rivalry evaporates and Burns becomes their third brother. Only the three of them survive the tornado, but they are scarred for life. Burns is affected from head to toe, while Sick and Waste are only physically scarred where it isn't visible. They both pick up some radiation poisoning from being too close to the tornado, Waste moreso than Sick. Waste releases his grip on life and his dead corpse flops around.

Dire screams louder than anything Debris has ever heard and her pain echoes through the swelling vortex above. Clott and Rott maintain composure, while Sick begins to cough up blood. Suicide sees her master in pain and realizes how much she needs him. She cannot stand to see him in pain, and his agony fills her eyes with water.

Hearing Dire's screams, Nyf climbs faster towards the top.

Teen Playt

Intentions

The past is only the past

The electricity seems to have taken away the ability to flicker from both of them, but they seem to have all other powers that they had discovered through time. They both have the ability to fly. Teen

Playt and Hat head east. Old Playt, forgetting his questions for now decides to go west to figure out what is going on.

Teen comes to civilization soon enough, the world is considerably small compared to Black Leaves. The cities are filled with large buildings that seem to all be connected by walkways. There are no people walking, everybody has floating vehicles which take them from place to place. They dock their flying vehicles into buildings, and then get out.

Teen senses that their sun has become contaminating to their skin, it has become poison to them, and they are now forced to only look at it through special glass.

Teen gets close and concentrates, attempting to read their thoughts and learn more about the situation.

He learns that Earth has just been through a war. While concentrating on fighting each other, they had forgotten about their planet. The planet began to reject them, until they finally decided to unite in order to fix the world. Slowly they had rebuilt it, and now it has been fifty years. The old passed on their knowledge to the young and Teen suspects that the young will carry out their wishes for many centuries. He also senses that the near extinction of their species has brought them all closer together, and judging from Teen's observation of the current planet status they have a long way to go.

Teen Playt floats up and sees an entrance. He attempts to fly towards it, until suddenly he is FLICKERed.

He is still on Earth. It was a time flicker, and not a space one (disregarding the movement of planets over time). He is now in the early stages of Earth’s development. He discovers that the humans have not even existed yet, but instead a more primitive form which they call the monkey.

He wonders what his own species looks like in its most primitive form. Then an even more important question arises, what species is he exactly? He suspects that since he had seen Lysandus mostly on Dussyllia that he was probably from there.

Remembering how the time flicker had felt and realizing that it was somewhat different than a space flicker, he tries to do it again.

FLICKER

The planet around him is just a comet now, almost nothing. Its atmosphere is entirely gone and its sun has just recently imploded, creating a black hole. He is slowly getting sucked into it, so Teen attempts a space flicker.

FLICKER

Teen Playt appears in the Council, but the council is crumbling. Its ceiling has fallen down, and the bricks lay scattered on the floor. He spots Kid Playt struggling on the ground.

From within, the almost forgotten voice of Yellow speaks to Playt. “You must save him, and you must hurry. He is you, and if he dies here then you will not exist.”

This time it’s Blue’s turn to speak. “I hate to say it, but she has a point. I don’t want to not exist, and if you don’t get your ass in gear, then our timeline will be destroyed.”

“I don’t know guys, he seems to have things under control, best not to mess with it,” the Teen says with his calm voice of uncaring.

“PLAYT, LISTEN TO THEM!!” the hat screams at him.

“Uhm, ok, if you say so, Hat.”

Teen flies over, grabs Kid and they FLICKER.

On Blue Leaves now, Teen Playt sits the Kid down. He is about to ask him if he is all right, when suddenly Kid picks up a large tree with his mind. Teen looks up just in time to remember this. The tree slams down full force onto Teen’s head, pinning him to the ground.

When Playt gains consciousness he pushes the tree off of him. He is bruised from head to toe, and he looks around and thinks to himself. For the first time in several years he wonders to himself about his life once again.

So much chaos is within him. So much uncontrollable madness dwells deep in his mind. It doesn’t really bother him too much, but he knows that it’s who he is. As a Teen he isn’t nearly as insane as the other Playts, but that’s because of his hat. Or at least, he thinks.

He also thinks about the past. How many years has it really been? So much stuff has happened, but he can barely remember any of it. Almost all of his memories are starting to fade away.

Bits and pieces he remembers, and then he suddenly remembers he had a friend at one time. Beth. She loved Playt, but eventually she learned to hate him. She wanted nothing to do with him in the end.

"You're thinking of the one named Beth aren't you?" the hat says to Playt.

"Yes… she was my friend; I want to know how she's doing."

"They killed her Playt. Now she's just dust in the wind."

"What are you talking about?"

"Well you didn't stick around to see, but they put her to death, because they all believed she had been tainted by a demon, you. They hated her, because she accompanied you."

Playt's heart sinks. Even though he is a calm cool relaxed Teen, he feels a big stone of guilt weighing down on him now. He has to change her fate; he has to save Beth.

He FLICKERs to Black Leaves, and looks around. He is in the wrong time, and pinpointing the right time will be hard. Nonetheless, he continues to try. He uses the time flicker many times, and eventually he finds her. He sees her on the same stage that he remembers waiting on to be executed, and flies over to her,

"Playt, is that you?" Beth says in a soft voice.

"Yes it's me, Beth; I'm here to save you."

"THE DEMON HAS RETURNED TO SEEK REVENGE ON US!" a crowd member shrieks, and with that the entire town is in frenzy.

"I don't want you to save me Playt, I just want to die. I don't belong anywhere anymore."

"You belong with me, you were my friend Beth."

"That was before I realized that you were a demon Playt. Now just let me die, I no longer want to talk

to you.”

“BURN HER!!!” the crowd shouts as they ready the torches.

Playt stares at her, and realizes that her words are true. If he were to help her now he would just be torturing her. He reluctantly decides to just let her fade.

FLICKER

Now on the lava planet Rellujah, Playt decides to settle down. He wants to calm down again and regain his relaxed Teen lifestyle. He becomes friends with a couple of people and together they start a sitcom. This goes on for a couple of years, and during this time Playt's hands and feet fall into liquid lava, creating hardened black rock shoes and gloves when dried. He is unharmed.

Hat gets bored with the sitcom and takes control of the situation. He has a different plan.

“We need to go to your Council. I have unfinished business there.”

“What do you want to do at the Council?” Playt asks.

“Just fucking do it, or I’ll make you do it.”

“Ok then, I guess it won’t hurt to go there.”

FLICKER

Once in the Council, Hat takes control of Playt’s body. Teen doesn’t care really, because Hat is his friend now, his only true friend other than Yellow.

Yellow: “I don’t like Hat, Playt. He isn’t your true friend and I think he’s got something up his sleeve.”

Red: “Oh, it’s alright. He isn’t going to hurt me, he is helping me. He makes me feel relaxed, and that is a good feeling.”

Yellow: “That may be true, Playt, but you can’t be calm all the time. There is a difference between being carefree and being careless. You are being careless, and if you don’t stop, we will all perish.”

Red: “But we don’t perish, and you know that, because we are always seeing glimpses of future Playts.”

Realizing he is right, Yellow decides to let it go.

Playt’s body is searching the Council, high and low. He is looking for papers, Playt knows this.

“Where are the secrets to Playt?”

“Well, if I knew that, you would have known by now. You can read my mind, can’t you?”

“Don’t fucking patronize me, Playt. I’m serious, I need your secrets and I need them now!”

“What do you need my secrets for?”

A short pause, and then Hat says, “Never mind that now, it’s not important. Just leave me here for a little while, and come back to get me. I’ll be waiting here, so you better come back. “

“Ooo, look, it’s a portal bean. That makes six.”

“What the fuck is your obsession with these god damned portal beans?”

Teen Playt removes the hat from his head and sets him in the corner. “I like them,” Teen says. “They are the only thing fun that I’ve seen anywhere. Leave me alone.”

As soon as the hat is off of his head and on the ground, extreme pain shoots through Playt. All that stress that had been begging to escape finally is. He struggles on the ground and cringes as he tries to slowly deal with it. Eventually, the pain subsides somewhat, and he is able to regain his composure. He looks at the hat, and says, “I will definitely be back.”

FLICKER

Rhun

The Fall

Poison eventually slips out of her straps and attacks Tear in the middle of the machine, obliterating him in a matter of moments. Nyf, Rhun and Curious finally reach the top and stop it from spinning.

Waste's body slides down into a lifeless pile and Dire is too tired to usher even a crackling groan. Burns, Clott, and Rott all pass out from exhaustion, while Suicide checks on Sick, who continues to cough blood.

"Thanks for the last hurrah." At that moment he breathes his last breaths and looks at Suicide's eyes which are overflowing with tears.

His body goes stiff and she begins to cry the word "No," over and over again in the saddest voice Rhun has ever heard. Debris is relieved to see Rhun, but collapses from exhaustion soon after.

Rhun looks up to see that the vortex created from the spinning top is continuing to spiral down towards them. He recognizes the cloud, it is the black fire which follows him. "We need to get out of here."

Just as he says these words the dragon Rip was riding ascends beside them without a rider. Then it speaks in a soft, yet urgent feminine voice. "No time for introductions, we need to get out of here. Climb aboard."

Without hesitation, Nyf grabs everybody one by one and puts them on the dragon's back. Poison rides atop Suicide as she carries Sick's corpse. "I'm staying here," she screams at Rhun. "GO!"

Rhun stares at her eyes and knows that she is serious, and ready to die. He isn't ready however, so he tells Nyf to grab her and Burns as well. She drops Sick when Nyf picks her up and then she starts screaming and kicking as he drags her to the dragon. Poison jumps down and follows, still dizzy and staggering. Curious jumps down and helps her. Rhun is the last atop the dragon, sitting on her head. "Where are we going?"

"Hello, Rhun. My name is Ms. Raincorn, and we're going down."

"Straight down?"

"Through the building!"

Ynk

Within a Paradox

But my friends and family died...

No, they didn't, they're fine.

No, it was my fault...

But it never happened.

All the demons... and Rin.

Never happened.

Jin, Omega, Lysander, ...

Lysander never existed because Tox never existed. I'm not sure what happened to Omega, but Jin moved to Calcutta.

Lym, Hellitha, Tot, Theryll, Chynthia, Lacey, Christina, Pawl...

They barely existed in the first place. They will only continue to exist in the new paradigm if you cling to their memories.

Pezz, Nappy...

Although they still exist in the new paradigm, they never knew you, only each other.

Rose? Does she exist?

Nothing more than a flower. A crystal in the desert. She knows not who you are.

And what of Sporx?

Sporx is another story.

Rhun

Underdwelling

Ms. Raincorn blasts through the center of the building, one floor at a time. The descent is massive and seemingly endless. Everyone sleeps except Rhun, Nyf, and Suicide who still struggles. Eventually she wears herself out, submitting to her exhaustion and allowing Nyf to get some much needed rest.

Rhun cannot sleep. Behind them he sees the tip of the black fire vortex following them, swallowing up all of Sector 5. All except for the underdwelling which they land in.

Ms. Raincorn explains that the underdwelling is a secret cave system believed to have a hidden portal to Sector 4. Rhun realizes that he was never lost and has been on the same path the entire time.

As everyone sleeps and Ms. Raincorn gets comfortable on the tunnel floor, Rhun wanders ahead. The room they land in has a high ceiling, but eventually the tunnel gets very narrow and impossible for Ms. Raincorn to travel through. Then he hears something in the darkness ahead. It starts as a low grumble like an engine idling, but then it grows to an enormous roar.

Rhun suddenly realizes he's wandered too far away from the group, and out of fear of the black fire taking his friends, Rhun returns to them. He notices that the black fire actually seems to protect his friends, as if they are a part of him. Relieved, he sits down and relaxes, listening to the growling in the distance with growing concern.

Curious awakes and his ears perk up every time he hears the growling, and he looks at Rhun questioningly to see if he hears it too. Then he looks ahead again, sniffs, and then does his own version of a growl, higher pitched and quieter, but just as viscous.

A few moments later, Nyf is awake and is also listening. Nyf looks at Rhun.

“What is that?”

“I don't know, but I don't like the sound of it.” They both share a look of agreement, and Curious walks into the darkness. Rhun tries to call him back, but Curious runs. Then they both follow.

2: Quantum Playt

Red appears in Playt's council. Fat Playt is there, and he looks at him questioningly.

"Al, why am I here. This is definitely not Earth, and I am definitely not an Earthling this leap."

Red observes the language, but is incapable of understanding any of it.

He sees someone who is trying to be invisible with a little electronic device in his hand. Red watches what is going on, but has no way of even beginning to comprehend it.

"Ziggy says that you are now in the body of an alien named Playt and that you are meant to stop the death of… Sam I don't believe this."

"What is it, Al? Tell me quickly, this red creature is looking at me strange."

"You're supposed to prevent my death. Somehow, my body is thrown into the vastness of space for no apparent reason, and you are in this alien body… to save my life. This can't be right; I think I would have remembered this."

"Not if this alien knows how to erase memories you wouldn't."

All Playt hears as he listens to this conversation is beeps and strange squeaky noises. He is easily bored with it, but decides to play along nonetheless. "Beep, boop, crinkly tooom, ssqueak squeak." He says.

Sam (in the body of Fat Playt) stares at Red. "It appears as if he's trying to communicate. Why can't we understand him? I'm the same species as him, right?"

"Ziggy says he's making fun of us Sam."

"How the hell does Ziggy know!?" Sam snaps at Al.

Red pushes his head closer to Fat Playt's. Sam begins to sweat as Red's face gets within inches of his own.

Playt sticks out his tongue and licks Fat Playt's face. Now Red can suddenly understand the entire language of Earth's English, and he can talk to them.

"That was disgusting." Fat Playt says.

"I am Red!"

"Uh, hi, Red. I think you're supposed to help me save an Earthling named Al."

"Earthling? Are you trying to say I'm not an Earthling?"

"Uh… yea, sure you are… Is he still making fun of us, Al?"

"No… he's being completely serious." Suddenly Red can hear music swelling, and it seems to be coming from everywhere, yet nowhere. Then, everything starts to fade. Everything turns to black, and the music fades away too. Red can suddenly see something written in the Earth letters, and it appears to say "insert commercial break here". Then, different music fades in, and Red can slowly see again. "He's being completely serious," the invisible Al repeats.

"What was that?"

Sam looks at him questioningly from within Fat Playt's body. "What was what?"

Suddenly, Red FLICKERs.

On Earth now, and Fat Playt is gone. Red looks around and once again wonders what the hell is happening. He sees the person that Fat Playt was calling Al, but he's clothed differently and is no longer invisible. Red decides to walk up and talk to him.

"Wow, you aren't invisible anymore."

"AAAHHHH, HOLY SHIT, IT'S AN ALIEN!!!!"

"WHERE!?"

"You!! You're an alien!"

“No, I’m Red.”

“Yea… you’re red. What in the hell?” Al looks at Red and wonders about his own sanity. His right eyebrow ascends in confusion, and Red reaches out his hand.

“Let’s shake on it.”

“Shake on what?” Al starts to freak out as he stares at this strange red character with his black gloves and oddly shaped hat. Regardless, he reaches out his hand to touch the glove.

“NOO!” Fat Playt screams as he FLICKERs on the scene just in time to stop the accidental flicker of Al into deep space.

Red FLICKERs.

Ynk

Edit

Torn in two almost entirely. The foundation holds true, but the top half is split down the middle. One half of the top holds all the original information, all the memories. The second holds a new truth, very different from the original. Without the first, the second could not exist, and could not be explained. However, as the second half becomes the truth, the first begins to fade into obscurity. In the end, the original timeline only exists in the memory of one man. This man is Ink, and the overlapping memories of both drive him mad with confusion. His thoughts argue for truth, but the truth is in front of him. The new truth. Playt exists.

Ink's mind and memory are ripped to shreds. His soul is stirred like a stew in a blender. His body is destroyed and reborn. In the confusion he finds himself above the dimension looking down. He is in an area that will later be known as the Time Junction, a bump in time created by a paradox. In the end, it will be an incurable paradox. The only solution found is to cover it, and then maintain it. It is the largest of several smaller paradoxes which now exist in time. For the first time, Ink has a long conversation with his higher self. The higher self of all who reside in Lys, Ynk. It is the closest thing he gets to therapy before his mind tumbles into a dark insanity. At the end of the conversation, a Time Commander appears.

The Time Commander is from Biz, and her name is Koda. She explains that the dimension and all dimensions above are in danger of collapsing unless he does something about it. His creation, Playt, is unintentionally creating a variety of different time anomalies. Branches, loops (ouroboros), contradictions, spikes, paradoxes, ramps, timeholes, whiteholes, and unbreakable circles, such as Playt himself.

"Since there is nobody else to blame but you, you have been appointed to the task of fixing things." She gives him a list of anomalies to start fixing, but gives no explanation of how to fix them. She says that since it is his dimension, it is his duty to find the solution. Before she leaves, Koda hands him a whistle, and says that if he ever needs help or is in an emergency situation to blow the whistle, "and if a Commander is available they will come to aid you." As soon as she leaves, Ink blows the whistle. He stands in the Time Junction for quite a while, but nothing happens.

Red

3: Attack of the Playts

Red is in deep space.

He doesn't wonder why he's here; he only figures it's normal. He does not question what is happening to him in any way whatsoever.

Suddenly he FLICKERs back to where Sam (in the body of Fat Playt) is, where Al is, and where invisible Al is. They all stare at him as he flashes back into existence before them. Fat Playt (Sam) tries to explain to Al (visible) what is going on, and of course Al is completely lost. Almost as lost as Red is, but Red doesn't care what is happening, he only thinks it's normal. Al however, is completely freaking out.

Red can sense the tension in Al, and so he reaches out his hand to try to calm him down. Instead, an incredibly sensual feeling travels through Red. Something within him explodes, sending an invisible shockwave out. The shockwave booms loudly and expands for miles, disappearing into the distance. Red's mind fills with memories that he did not live. His brain now holds more than three complete episodes of Quantum Leap that Sam and Al no longer remember. Along with that he holds information about Al's life before he was helping Sam.

Al's face is blank, and invisible Al is gone. Fat Playt looks at Red with confusion.

“What the hell is going on? You’re me, you’re Playt. I just saw you fighting Shellra not too long ago. What am I doing here? I don’t remember flickering.”

“It’s ok man, calm down. You’re not making any sense.”

Red reaches out his hand and touches Fat Playt. The shockwave is sent out again, and both Playts FLICKER.

Fat Playt is sent to Candee with no recollection of ever talking to Red.

Red Playt is sent to Playt’s Council, along with some of Fat Playt’s memories.

All of the Playts are there in the Council.

An Old Playt, a Baby Playt, a Teen Playt, a Kid Playt, the Fat Playt, and a Warrior Playt. All of them, including Red, are concentrated on the baby in the middle, who is accompanied by a jungle creature of Blue Leaves.

The baby must grow in order for them to exist; they all know this. After Fat Playt grabs the jungle creature and flickers, Baby Playt is grabbed by Old Playt and flickered.

Kid Playt shakes his head and looks around. He smiles as he sees all of the Playts surrounding him, and then tries to attack Red.

Red grabs him and tries to calm him down. Instead he fills Kid with that shockwave, and Kid forgets anything ever happened. Kid falls to the ground, and Teen stares at Red.

“What did you just do to him? You monster! I hope I never turn out to be like you.”

“Calm down, it’s ok.” Red reaches out and grabs Teen, accidentally sending the shockwave through him too. Teen falls down right beside Kid.

Now Red has memories. Memories of his life, but he doesn’t know they are his. He still does not quite understand, nor does he care. Red has memories of Fat Playt, Teen Playt, Kid Playt, Sam, and Al. In addition with his own few memories, he has a lot of duplicates. His brain fills quickly with this useless information.

Still in the Council, Warrior walks up to him and taps him on the shoulder.

As Red starts to turn around, Warrior slams him in the face with a balled up fist.

Red is instantly unconscious, but his body is still standing. Red staggers as his eyes slowly shut, and he starts to fall to the ground. He slams down on top of the two other sleeping Playts.

As he sleeps, something deep within him wakes up, something dangerous and blue.

Something evil.

When he awakes, Warrior is carrying him. He struggles to get away, but Warrior Playt's grip is too strong and Red is unable to get anywhere. He is frustrated now, and accidentally loses control of his emotions.

Then it turns ugly.

Red's entire body explodes. Little red particles fly everywhere and cover the entire Council. Warrior is covered with Red's red goo, and it drips off of him as he stares unbelieving at everything around him.

The goo starts to move, and reshape itself. It morphs and twists in odd ways, and eventually, one part of the red goo transforms back into Red. Then another does the same, and another.

Soon enough, every particle that was once Red is now a new Red.

Over a million Red Playts, everywhere. Some of them flicker away, and some stay. Some of them look at each other and laugh. Thousands of laughing Red Playts, and then more flicker away. Eventually, they all FLICKER and Warrior Playt is left there to ponder what the hell just happened.
Rhun

The Cat's Lair

They follow Curious for several minutes into pitch black and out the other side. Rhun keeps checking behind him to make sure the black fire is keeping its distance from his friends, but he can't see anything. It's a relief to finally see light, and they both run faster towards it as they hear Curious

fighting something.

They reach the entrance of a large cavern where a gigantic cat-like creature swipes around frantically. The cat is enormous, larger than any creature either of them has ever seen, and larger than most buildings. As it flails around it busts rocks from the walls, and then they finally see Curious. He jumps around like a maniac, attacking vital areas but only inflicting minor scratches.

Rhun looks over at Nyf and sees his fear. “Can't we do something?”

“Go ahead. I don't have a knife anymore.”

Rhun concentrates and tries to unleash his power on the beast, but instead he gets a sharp pain in his head. “I know this isn't the best time, but I think I lost my powers.”

“You've got to be shitting me.”

At that moment, Curious jumps high and aims for the cat's eyes. At the moment of Curious' descent the cat opens its mouth and devours Curious in one fast bite. Rhun's heart sinks in his chest.

“Damn,” Nyf says, and then the cat looks at them and growls. Both of them are instantly petrified with fear as the cat lines its body up to pounce. An instant later the cat is rushing towards them at a ludicrous speed. Rocks fly as the paws and claws sink in and then out.

Very suddenly, and a moment before reaching them, the cat hiccups and then makes a face of extreme pain. It stops and begins writhing around, crashing into the ceiling and walls, clawing at its own stomach. Orange blood gushes out of the giant claw marks, and the cat twitches its last breaths out and becomes motionless.

Several moments later, Curious claws out from the wounds and gasps for breath after coughing up orange blood. Still in shock, Rhun and Nyf stare motionless as Curious collapses from exhaustion.

Eventually they are both able to breathe normally and their adrenaline drains. Rhun darts over to Curious, who snores loudly, and picks him up.

They walk back to the others to see most of them are awake already, possibly from all the noise. Suicide wakes in tears, tormented by nightmares of Sick dying repeatedly. Debris tries her best to

comfort her, and even though Suicide opens up to her, she is still inconsolable. “He was my everything. There is no more use for me here.”

“What about Poison? She needs you.”

Poison looks up at the sound of her name. “I hate that little bitch. Fuck her! She can die for all I care. I'm done. Let me die, I demand it. This is too painful.”

Debris thinks of how it must feel, and how she would feel if Rhun didn't make it. She looks over to Rhun with a tear in her eye and hugs Suicide tight.

Ms. Raincorn whispers to Rhun. “Come here little one.” Rhun walks over to her. “We need to keep going, but in my current form I can't fit through that tunnel.”

“In your current form?”

“As I said, but if you take this small egg with you, I can transfer my soul into it.”

Ms. Raincorn opens her mouth and a small egg rolls to the tip of her tongue. Rhun picks it up and examines it. A small lifeless egg-shaped rock. Then a bright blue light shines from Ms. Raincorn's eyes and the egg glows with the same color. Then both go dark at the same time, the dragon lays there lifeless, and the egg becomes a shiny blue color. Rhun places it in his backpack and gathers everyone together.

Ynk

Switch

The Universe was definitely different from above. The patterns, shapes and colors which emerged were stunning. Ink watched it all as it slowly danced below. He saw entire galaxies as single solid objects, and galaxy clusters as abstract paintings. The Universe had no favorite colors it would seem, but black tended to dominate Ynk's canvas. The Time Junction appeared to revolve around the Universe, but not in any set pattern. As Ink watched he began to get the feeling that he might not exist, and that none of the things he witnessed had ever been real. He flashed back to his out of body experience and his mind began to disconnect once more. This is when Sporx appeared before him.

Sporx now existed not only between dimensions, but between timelines, and between life and death.

4: Red Con Fusion

In the grand scheme of things this would not have been a huge problem, as long as it had only lasted a day or a week. However, this went on for one-hundred seventy-six years (Playt time). More than a million Red Playts, some tiny, some giant, some mentally retarded, some sort of intelligent, all of them flickering to every reach of space for over a century.

Most of them stole memories.

Some of them just talked nonsense. They drove people insane. They were relentless. Nobody was safe from them, and even though they never killed a single soul, what they made people put up with was worse torture than any of them deserved. One of these Playts decided to write diaries of his life while another one decided to make techno songs. They were interesting to say the least.

These Playts visited every planet in the Universe, including Black Leaves, Blue Leaves, Earth, Saturn, Candee, Appliancia, Aspimiria, Aspimentia, Dussyllia, Fahlls, Kriddle, and Rellujah to name a few. They also expanded beyond time, and flooded everything with their combination of stupidity and awesome power.

The Time Generals were extremely pissed.

However, they couldn't do anything about it, because they realized that this was part of the timeline of Playt, and that it would eventually work itself out. Besides, it would have been way too much work for them to stop it. They would just wait for the right moment, and then punish Playt for making time itself bleed.

Red visited everyone, every living soul, from the beginning of time to the end. Most of them never remembered it however, because their memories were stolen. The Reds were attracted to people with high alcohol content in their blood, and that's why people would "blackout" if they drank too much. Red Playts accidentally stole entire lives worth of memories, and the people of Earth called it amnesia.

He was everywhere. He intertwined with everyone's life, and he became as common as the color he was named after.

One of these Red Playts actually became a red plate, and was accidentally fused with a small child by the name of Lysandus. This didn't last long however, and he was lucky it didn't. If it had become permanent, the Universe would have been destroyed instantly.

Another Playt encountered Evil Lysandus and Insidious fighting each other and exploded all over them, sending them flickering to random locations.

But, all insanity must come to an end.

And that is where the Time Junction comes into play. Since the Time Junction was above time, all but a couple hundred of the Red Playts flickered there one day. Some had existed for much longer than centuries, and some had only been around for a few days. However, since Playt's time is random, none of that really matters.

FLICKER, FLICKER, FLICKER

"Playt, Playt, Playt, Playt, Playt, Playt, Playt." They all are saying it, for that is the word of the day. The moment each one has flickered into the Time Junction they have known that they were Playt. Before that, only a few of them knew.

A million Reds stare at each other, each with different memories. They all begin to fight each other in an insane free for all battle. One by one, the Playts begin to fuse to each other, and the Playts that fuse the most become the strongest and the smartest. This goes on for hours, and there is much destruction.

Eventually however, there is only one Playt left.

With the couple of hundred Red Playts that did not fight each other in the Time Junction, the Time Generals decided to make into tiny beans. They called these beans Playt beans, but after millions of years the name was lost, and they became known as portal beans.

The once again singular Red Playt (full of useless memories) FLICKERs to Aspimiria. Shellra confronts him, but he has no idea who she even is. He has one memory of her, but it is only a fragment, and it is of Shellra Bunny. The one who stands before him now is Shellra Blade, the one with the yellow lightning bolt sticking out of her head.

"YOU!" she screams, and then dives at him. She puts her hands around his neck and strangles him.

Then they both FLICKER. They are now on Kriddle, a planet of darkness and evil. She does not seem to notice; her only intention is to destroy Playt.

He does not fight back, because she is not hurting him.

Just fucking kill her, a voice from within him shouts. He fights it, for he knows deep inside that it is wrong. It would be too easy, and completely pointless to fight her. He searches his mind for a solution, but he cannot come up with one. In his frustration, he and Shellra accidentally fuse together.

Ynk

Sporx of Book

Ba Eg Ch

After Ink appears before him, Sporx realizes where he is. He has been alive for sixty-eight Blue Leaves years, so he understands what created the Time Junction. He understands the paradox created by not only Playt, but by Syl's Oni Hat as well. He explains it to Ink, and Ink has flashbacks of Sporx. He had been very different before. He was strange now, twisted. A cloud of confusion surrounded him, but he was the only one who wasn't affected by it. For the people around him reality would switch between living in the moment and watching life from the future, just like a story that switches between tenses as if they mean nothing. As if time were... irrelevant.

Sporx seemed to understand pretty much everything. He explains to Ink that if the Orb is used within the Time Junction, it allows Ink to see through time, and see any location in existence. Sporx says that he should rotate Sporkson, the home of the Nexus Anomaly Paradox. This is the location that the Syl Hat entered Lys, and it is also Sporx's new home planet.

Rhun

Sector 4

Suicide grows silent as time passes, and they journey through the lair of the enormous cat. Bones of various animals and demons litter the rocky surface below them. Suicide stops crying, stops listening, and then she stops walking. The only ones who notice are Rhun, Nyf, and Debris. Rhun stops. Ahead he can see a glowing door, the portal to Sector 4. Behind them the black fire has devoured their path along with Ms. Raincorn's body and the gigantic cat.

Suicide takes a step backwards, and Rhun's heart skips a beat. As he says, “No!” he knows it's already too late. Suicide runs towards the fire and dives in, evaporating instantly.

Rhun is traumatized, and starts to have a nervous breakdown. He fills with a mix of anger and deep foreboding sadness. “I... can't even cry anymore. Will this never get better? All of you are going to die, and it's all my fault. Why? What is the meaning of all this?!” Debris tries to comfort him but he shrugs her off and walks away. “I suggest you all go. Leave me here, live your lives, because I will only bring more death.”

“But you didn't kill her. She killed herself. You tried to save her, but all she wanted was death,” Nyf assures him. Debris looks at Nyf, surprised by his new outlook on life, realizing he speaks what she thinks.

Rhun is able to find tears after Nyf's words. “Please go. All of you. I need to be alone.” Rhun hands the sleeping Curious to Nyf. “Please take care of him. He deserves a good life.”

The others continue without asking questions, but Nyf and Debris stay a few moments longer in hopes of convincing him to go. “We're here if you need to talk about anything,” Debris says.

“That's the problem,” Rhun spits. “I need to be alone.”

Debris tears up. She just got him back and he already wants her gone. They reluctantly follow the others into the portal. Rhun wallows in his own self pity, reflecting on the faces of all those who died for several hours.

The black fire does not keep its distance, approaching slowly without him even noticing. It will push him, sliding his small teary eyed body across the rocky ground, slowly towards the portal. He stands up and backs away from it, and it just pushes him further, not harming him, but he is annoyed. “STOP IT! LEAVE ME ALONE!” As if in response to his anger, the black fire shoves him through the portal and devours what little is left of Sector 5.

He lands on his knees with his head down, surrounded by knights in black metal armor. They place handcuffs on him and lead him past a lake of green fire. One knight picks him up and carries him to a giant eagle, which then lifts into the air and carries Rhun to a dark dungeon.

5: A Full Playt

Five people now exist as one.

Red, Blue, Shellra, Blade, and Bunny.

On a planet that is mysterious, dark, and evil, Kriddle.

At first, Red enjoys the company; it is a relief from being alone with the scary blue demon within his mind. Shellra asks a bunch of questions that Red has no answers for. Blade somewhat gains a partnership with Blue, and together they try to manipulate Red into doing wrongful things. Bunny just sits and talks to herself. She still has no clue that anything is going on, yet she enjoys herself like always.

Blade can see Blue and she can see Red, but she is completely oblivious to her other selves.

Blade: As soon as I get out of this fucking prison I'm going to skin this Playt alive.

Blue: Not if I do it first you little bitch.

Shellra: Your name is Playt, right? Why did you destroy my village? They did nothing to you, and yet you destroyed all of them except for me. Why is that? I want answers!

Red: I'm Red. Does that scare you? I know a lot of people are scared of me.

Bunny: Is that a turtle? I like turtles.

Silence…

Shellra: I really can't stand her.

The questioning, the fighting, and the pointless comments about nothing continue for hours on end. None of them are satisfied, and none of them have answers. The ones that want to kill cannot, and the ones that ask the questions are asking the wrong people.

On the outside, Playt's body is twisted and malformed. He is a dark red now, with arms that are wretched to look at, and legs that are stumps of horrid flesh covered bones.

As the thoughts within his mind argue (and the internal conversations rage on) the body of Playt roams around Kriddle, aimlessly. The body acts like a mindless drone, stumbling along without paying any attention to anything around it. The body's instincts kick in, and it needs food.

The body of Playt starts to feign for any kind of nourishment. After it gets nourishment, it plans to get some well-deserved rest.

Shellra: Where the hell are we going? Why haven't you answered any of my questions yet?

Red: I'm hungry. Is anyone else hungry?

Blue: I want raw flesh.

Red: I wasn't really talking to you.

Shellra: I could use a burger.

Red: I don't even know what that is, but I guess you're hungry. I'll just eat for five.

Blade: Five?

As he walks around he sees no food, but suddenly he smells something. Something delicious. He goes towards the smell and the closer he gets, the more he salivates.

He comes upon a huge banquet hall that is black and old. It gives off an eerie feeling just looking at it, and the smell of rotting meat is in the air as well. Death surrounds the place, but Playt cannot help himself. He needs food.

He enters the hall, and sees many demons and hooded warriors at a large table. They are all gorging themselves, and do not even turn to notice him. The twisted decaying monsters grunt and moan. They eat relentlessly on some mysterious food that has flies covering it. Playt's new body fits right in, and they see him as just another Kriddlan.

Playt grabs himself a seat and he is served by a tall dark figure in a cloak. Playt begins to eat, and

does not stop until his food is gone. Then he gets another dish full, and eats that quicker than the first.

When everyone is full, their attention is turned to the head of the table. Seated there in a throne is a large red beast. It glows with an evil aura, and is surrounded by beautiful half naked women who touch him and each other like whores.

“OUR FINEST HOUR IS UPON US. SOON WE WILL INFECT THE SOULS OF THE CHIBBIES ON ASPIMIRIA AND WE WILL CONQUER THAT WORLD BY BRINGING DOWN THE STRONGEST FIRST. THEY WILL BECOME OUR SLAVES, AND WILL BE ABLE TO JOIN US IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SID. EVERYONE PREPARE, FOR THIS WILL BE ONE HELL OF A SHOW.”

The demons roar as his last words fade away. They all stand up and begin to shout and yell in happy demonic chants.

“WAIT! THERE IS A SOUL AMONG US WHO IS UNPURE.” The red demon beast points to Playt and all the demons turn to look at him.

FLICKER

Teen

Disconnection

Sins are forgiven
Grudges are truly useless

Without his hat to dull his stress, Teen Playt becomes an insane wreck once more. The knowledge that he’s found helps him to deal with everything, but it still isn't easy. He starts to see himself as a being unlike any other, because that’s exactly what he is. His age is now nearing thirty years, even though he is physically only about nineteen. Mentally, he is a fifty-year-old psychotic, with episodes of grandeur. His only purpose now is to seek any kind of comfort.

Unfortunately, this will pass. Rationality is a harmful word to Playt, it makes him hate everyone that has it, and it makes him hate himself for not having it.

His brain feels as if it moves beneath his skull, trying to crawl out, trying to escape its prison.

But Playt holds on. He knows he must.

For the sake of the Universe? No. For the sake of time itself.

He discovers that the only thing that helps at all is to find the portal beans.

Even this is torture.

They are similar to Playt. They can be anywhere, at any time. The possibilities are infinitely endless. For Playt, it is the same as finding out about his past. It isn't easy in the slightest.

The more he flickers around time and space, the more he realizes that space is mostly empty. At places where he believes there should be a planet, there is nothing but empty space. Time seems to be elusive to him. Even though he is now more aware of time, for him it is nonlinear. To him, time is not only jagged, but also completely unpredictable. In his thirty years of wandering and aimless flickering, his brain has just become more and more confused.

Why does he have to be the one? Why is he stuck with such responsibility?

He has done nothing wrong, nothing to justify all this torment.

One day, while staggering through his life he stumbles upon a woman on Dussyllia who recognizes him instantly.

"Playt, is that you? My young baby, Lysandus? You have changed so much."

"How do you know me? Are you my mother?"

"Yes, I am. My name is Ophelia. I've never seen you as Playt, but I knew it would happen to you eventually. It was your destiny."

"But why, why do I have to have such a fucked up destiny as this one? I don't want it; I would rather die than flicker one more time. Why did you let this happen to me if you knew about it?"

"I didn't let it happen, it had already happened. In the circle of time you were destined to be a god. I could no more prevent it, than I could keep you for myself to raise you when you were young. It was not only Ghester's idea to give you to Rewncold, but it was the way of the Time Generals as well."

“Time Generals. So they’re the ones in charge of my destiny? They’ve forced me to live a life of solitude and confusion. They must pay; they have no idea what I am being put through.”

“Regardless of what you believe Playt, you are still very sane. You may not understand anything that happens to you, but your grip on reality is more impressive than any I’ve seen. Murdering the Time Generals will only make matters worse. They are here in this Universe for a reason, just the same as you and me. My destiny is not as glorious as yours, and I am deeply regretful that I cannot be a part of your life, but this is the way it has to be. Please try to relax, for everyone’s sake, but mostly for your own. You may not care for the destiny of others, but they all intertwine with your destiny in some way. Remember that. I must go now, I’m sorry. I’ve probably talked to you for too long already, but every moment was worth it.”

“But… I can’t let you go.”

“You must.” As her words fade away, her body does as well. She becomes transparent, and then she is completely gone.

Playt drops to the ground, and sulks.

As Teen Playt sulks on the planet of Dussyllia, two figures approach. Playt can sense them instantly. The moment they see him, they begin to walk over to him, and he readies himself for anything.

When they are almost upon him he stands up and turns to look into the future faces of Orsidium and Dirrinni. He has never seen them so aged, and so fit. They are dressed in warrior attire, and look ready for battle. Playt smiles for the first time in forever.

“Orsidium. Dirrinni. You are Lysandus’s friends. I have seen you before, when I was a child. I never let myself be seen, but now you have seen me. You finally see what has happened to your friend Lysandus. I have so many questions for you two.”

The two look at each other and then back at Playt. Their faces are in complete confusion. Playt’s smile fades as he looks into their eyes. The three of them stand, lost in a cloud for many moments, a seemingly endless amount of time. Then Orsidium breaks the silence.

“You are Playt, a version of Playt that we’ve never encountered. You seem normal. You are obviously

insane however, because you are definitely not our friend, Lysandus. Lysandus is dead."

Playt stares at him as if he has just been scolded for doing nothing wrong.

"You know my name? How do you know of Playt?"

This time it is Dirrinni's turn to speak. "Because, Playt, you have terrorized us. You have unleashed the Minions, which nobody can control. You have brought Hayt upon this planet, as well as Aspimiria. Nowhere is safe anymore because of you, and we are the two that try to protect the people that are still alive."

"Still alive? So Playt has murdered!?"

"Well… ", Dirrinni says, "No not directly I guess. All deaths that Playt has caused, he has not done with his bare hands. What am I saying? You! You are Playt!"

"That does not sound like me. The only one I have ever tried to kill was Playt himself. Can you tell me everything you know about Lysandus?"

"Why do you keep talking about him? He has been gone for years. You are not him, and you'll never be him no matter what you say, because he died in the catacombs under Ghester's tomb." Regardless of Orsidium's calm face, Playt can taste bitterness in his voice.

"I was told that that's who I was at one time. Please tell me what he was like, for the sake of time itself."

Dirrinni and Orsidium look at each other again in wonder.

"Lysandus was our best friend. He was an adventurer, he was brave, and he was fast. What he showed the world was a scared man, but what he held on the inside was a hero. You are definitely not him. He would never betray us in the ways that you have, and he would never put so many people through so much torture." Dirrinni's voice is cold and uncaring of Playt's emotions.

Playt's eyes fill with water as he tries to deal with the words that his former friends have just spoken. He can no longer look at them in the face, and so he turns his head in shame.

“Let’s go, Dirrinni; I don’t believe he will harm us for some reason.”

As they walk away, Playt sits back down and thinks.

The stress becomes too much, and he begins to fully cry.

He is completely alone.

FLICKER

Playt is now in his Council. His emotions have led him here. His only true friend is here.

Like a crack head needs crack, Playt needs his hat. Hat could dull his pain. Hat could make him happy again. He finds him sitting in the same corner as he had put him, not two days before. Those two days have seemed like an eternity to him.

He stretches out his hands and touches Hat. Instantly he feels the pain subside. His mind is cleared and his tension melts away.

Hat wakes up, surprised.

“No, not yet Playt. I don’t need you to take me with you yet. My job is not finished. I am still observing Playt and his secrets. I’ve been here for at least twenty years, and still I have not figured out everything. Go away; go collect more of those fucking portal beans that you’re so interested in.”

With his hand still caressing his hat, he says, “You are my friend, aren’t you?”

“Oh yea man, of course. You’ve helped me in more ways than you know, but I don’t need you right now. Go away. Now!”

“Ok.” Playt says in his calm voice. “I will be back then.”

Playt removes his hand from Hat and he feels the pain shoot through him once again. He feels somewhat better than before however, because now he knows he has a friend, and he now has something to do.

FLICKER

Teen Playt flickers around randomly through space and time, collecting the portal beans. Very slowly he collects them, and he feels better with each one. He begins to accumulate a feeling of accomplishment as his collection grows.

Years pass, and Playt grows. He starts to eat a little more, and starts to grow some meat on his bones. He sees much destruction and pain everywhere, but he has no intention of interfering with any of it.

It is none of Playt's concern.

He holds a low profile, and hides from everyone around him. He becomes a shadow of time.

He collects so many of the portal beans that he runs out of room in his pockets. He fills his gloves and his shoes with them, but eventually, he can no longer move.

He FLICKERs to the Time Junction, the place in which the Time Generals told him about the contest. He looks around and can see the reaches of space. He can see almost every planet, and almost every time. He is amazed at what he sees, so amazed, that he doesn't notice the old man that walks up to him.

"What do you want?" he says in a cynical voice.

"I'm Playt, and I'm here to cash in my portal beans. What do I win?"

The old man looks at him and chuckles. "That contest was nearly two millennia ago. We've already given out the prize. That was before my time, when my ancestors were Time Generals."

"So what do I do with these?"

"Heh, do whatever you feel like, you can eat them if you want to, but they aren't very filling. In fact they're completely useless, and always were. They were just used for that contest, and never again since then."

"So you can give me nothing?"

The old man smiles and pats Playt on the back.

"Good job."

Playt frowns at him and then FLICKERs away.

Having completed his mission without any reward, he no longer wants anything to do with the portal beans. He tosses them away on a planet that he does not know the name of. He scatters them throughout this planet, which seems to be made of sapphire. Somehow the sapphire of this planet has strange plant life growing out of it. The plants are a crystal blue color, and are reflective like silver. They seem to sway around and speak to him from unknown mouths and in an alien language.

For several minutes they mesmerize him.

He finds little comfort in what he feels from them. They are leering at him. He is an outsider and they want him to leave, so he does.

FLICKER

Back to Playt's Council, to find Hat. Hat isn't there. It must be the wrong time. He must have already picked him up in the past. He FLICKERs again, and again, until he finally sees Hat.

Old Playt is there, and is standing over top of the hat.

Fear shoots through Teen's mind and body. He runs up to check on the hat, but realizes that it is dead.

Old Playt looks at him.

"You… you killed my only friend. How could you? You're me. Aren't you? How could you have done something so horrible to my only friend? Orsidium and Dirrinni were right. I am a monster. You! You are the true monster."

"It is not my fault, Teenager Playt. The Time Generals made me do it. They told me that if I didn't kill him that he would bring much destruction throughout time, and that he could do away with all existence. I had no choice. Please understand that this is the way it has to be."

"But… this isn't fair. I have nothing now. I have nothing at all. Everything that I once was is lost. How am I supposed to go on like this?"

"I'm not really sure," Old Playt says with a frown. "But I hope that you can find some way to forgive

me, to forgive yourself for everything that has happened, and is about to happen. Only you can make things right. You still have a long road ahead of you. This isn't even the middle of your life. You are only about thirty-four years into your life. And as I said to you as a baby, there are thousands of years ahead of you. Most of those years are shrouded in confusion."

"Please, tell me what to do."

"I cannot. If I told you everything, then there would be serious repercussions. Your timeline is already set in stone. You cannot change what has already happened in the circle of time."

"But my time is no circle. You should know that."

"I know it may seem that way, because the flickering is confusing, but the truth is, your time is a circle just like everyone else's, maybe more so. No matter what happens, it is supposed to happen. That is the way of time. It is the order of things."

"You're a little narrow minded aren't you?"

"Only because I know the truth. And you will too, eventually."

Teen Playt looks at him for several seconds, wanting to believe everything he says. "Fine, whatever."

"I'm sorry."

"Just leave me alone, Old Playt. I just want to be alone."

"You are never alone." Old Playt says, and Teen looks at him with a scornful eye.

Teenager Playt FLICKERs.

Red

6: Red Solitaire

The five personalities travel to Aspimiria by way of the magical flickering.

Shellra thinks to herself, while her other two personalities continue to carry out their normal thoughts. Shellra understands why Playt destroyed the Chibbies now, even if he himself has no clue. She

suddenly wonders why he saved her though. Why was her life spared?

Playt looks around at Aspimiria. The world is full of purple life, not at all the desert wasteland that it usually appears to be. This is before the world was sucked dry by Sid. She feels at home, and wants to escape Playt.

She pushes herself out and takes Bunny and Blade with her.

Blue Hayt watches them leave with growing jealousy. He tries to escape as well, but Red holds him in.

Shellra now stands before Red Playt, both in physical form once again. They stare at each other and both have more understanding than ever before.

“Well, I guess this is goodbye forever, Playt, I kind of hope not to see you again.”

“Well, ok then. It was nice meeting you.”

“Wish I could say the same. Goodbye.”

“Bye.”

They both turn to leave when Shellra stops. “Wait, one last question, if you will please answer me.”

“Ok. What is it?”

“Why did you save my life?”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about. When did I save your life?”

“Whatever. Goodbye, Red.”

FLICKER

Playt appears on Fahlls at nighttime. The night air is full of life, with festive music and thousands of people roaming the streets. The smell of carnival food is thick in the air and the dancing of couples and laughs of small children soothe Playt.

Playt remains completely unnoticed.

There is a sudden sound of ringing bells and a small flash.

Yellow Fayt now stands before Red Playt. She looks at him with a frown.

“It is time, the day we have both feared. This is when it happens.”

“Who are you?”

“Ah, you don’t remember, do you? I was once inside your mind just the same as Blue Hayt is inside your mind right now.”

“You… know about Blue, and me?”

“Yes. Like I said, I was once a part of you, Playt, before, when you were Fat Playt.”

“Why don’t I remember any of it?”

“The answer to that you will find in time, I’m sure. I don’t have that answer, however; I just know that you need my help.”

“Why is everyone celebrating?”

“Tonight is a very rare occasion. This marks the day when all the thirty-four moons of Fahlls are visible, and full. The last time this happened was almost seven-billion years ago, when this planet was born.”

“Moons?” Playt looks up to the sky, and as he does, Yellow Fayt fades away to nothingness. He sees the moons, and instantly feels an incredible pain race up his spine. It spreads out from his spine and travels down every nerve ending. The pain is so incredible that he cannot help himself from screaming. The scream can be heard for hundreds of miles, and it echoes in the distance.

The festivities stop as the people start to gawk and stare at him in disbelief. From within his mind, Blue laughs a deep and wicked laugh. At the sound of it, Playt tenses up, for he now knows what is happening.

Blue is escaping.

Hayt claws his way out and Playt cannot do anything to stop him any longer. It is time, as Fayt had said. As he crawls out, the pain he causes Playt is too immense and Red falls deep into unconsciousness.

Playt's mind is now pure.

Ynk

Rewritten Control

Ink found his Orb within his castle and stood atop the Time Junction. He began to focus on Sporkson, willing the Orb to show him the series of events which created the paradox. Then he looked to the future to see the entire Universe begin to collapse. He quickly rotated back before it could happen.

He pondered to himself for quite some time, seeking any type of answer to the problem. He thought to try blowing the whistle again, but as the thought passed his mind, Old Playt appeared below him. Ink hid his orb quickly and then approached Playt. He stared into the eyes of insanity as Playt looked up. They glowed with a color of red he had only seen in his dreams. "Who are you?"

"I am Ink. Your existence is plaguing my soul. You're destroying this entire Universe, and you need to fix it immediately."

"Ink, huh? Why should I listen to you, or do anything you say?"

"I am your god. All who reside in this dimension exist only because I allow them to exist."

"Ha! Okay, if you say so, buddy. You're more wacked out than I am. Prove it to me and I may consider helping you, but so far I'm not very impressed."

Ink hesitated for several moments. He instinctively knew that Playt would want the Orb as soon as he saw it, everyone did. The Orb was Ink's, he would protect it with his life. Nobody could have it but him. Reluctantly, he decided this was one of those emergency situations, and he revealed it to Playt. "Gaze upon my Orb and see what you have done to us all." Ink rotated Sporkson to the moment of the paradox.

Old Playt gazed upon the Orb with wonder filling his eyes. “What is this? Is that me? Who is that? What are they doing? What's going on? What just happened?” Old Playt looked up at Ink and then back down at the Orb. “I don't remember any of that. What is this trickery? Give me that thingy!”

Ink hid the orb once more and Old Playt tried to grab for it, but was too slow.

“How dare you mess with the mind of an old man like this.”

“I'm not messing with you, Playt, I need you to fix this. Immediately!”

“You... you know my name? You know of Playt? That... Orb. I'm sure it probably knows of Playt too.” Old Playt looked at Ink like a drug addict. “I'll make you a deal. I will fix things if you give me that Orb of yours.”

“You cannot have my Orb.”

Playt's eyes narrowed and he got closer to Ink. “Give me that fucking thingy, now!”

Ink turned to run away, but Playt grabbed his shoulder and there was a huge flash. No longer were they in the Time Junction, now they were in the middle of a field of yellow grass. It was Littonia. Playt barely noticed the change in scenery, he was used to it. He grabbed for the Orb and then screamed in pain as he touched it.

A gigantic cloaked figure approached the two and Ink held onto the Orb for dear life. The giant swung a solid fist into the face of Old Playt, knocking him out cold. The unconscious Playt fell to the grass and made a soft fwup sound. Ink looked up at the cloaked figure in wonder. He knew who it was before he even asked. “Omega?”

Omega removed his hood to reveal his face, scarred and beaten. His hair had turned gray and as he stood straight up, Ink could see that he'd grown much taller and wider. “I no longer go by that name, Ink. These days I am just known as another Ancient. I came to this planet when Fahlls fell, and I've been here ever since. I've seen civilizations rise and fall here, and yet I cannot die. Why do you think that is?”

“I don't know. “ There was a long pause.

“That's something to think about.” Omega turned to walk away.

“Wait! If you're willing to help an old friend, I really could use a man like you.”

Without turning to face him, Omega spoke. “If you're asking me to follow you, I never will again. You have that Orb in your hands. You will do anything for that thing, I've seen it. I cannot trust you.”

Ink was in shock for several moments. “You... remember?”

Omega turned around with a loathing look. “I remember everything. You led us all into a trap, all for that stupid ball.”

“I was manipulated...”

“And in turn we were all manipulated by you. Oni showed me the truth.”

Ink looked down to the yellow grass and frowned. He knelt down and stared off into the distance. Grabbing a piece of the grass he spoke, hoping Omega would listen. “Oni showed me a few things too. None of them were the truth. I created Playt to try to change things, to make things right. It was the only way I found. The only possible road to take.” He looked back up to Omega, “and now, Playt might destroy the Universe.”

Omega looked down and then sat beside him. “What I am is a Guardian, no matter how ancient I get. I may no longer feel the need to follow you to peril, but I will protect this land in any way I know how. If the Universe is in danger, I have no choice but to try to save it. What would you have me do?”

Ink stared at Omega and for the first time he really wanted to give him a hug. Then he started planning. “Well...” Old Playt rustled around on the ground. Ink stood up quickly and pointed at him. “That's our first problem. He cannot have my Orb!”

Omega looked at Ink and sighed. “I thought you had changed... I'll deal with Playt. I can make him... forget things.” He walked over to Playt and knocked him out again. Then he looked at Ink. “One day you will give that Orb to me, and I will give it to Playt.”

“Why would I do that?”

“I'm not sure, I just know it to be true. We have the same Orb that's in your hand. It's in that building over there. Along with it you gave us several other items, and instructions on how to deal with Playt.”

“I'm confused. How can there be two of the same orb?”

“Can't you feel that time is nonsense? It has been nonsense ever since you created Playt, but now you're traveling with him, watching him. This is not your time, this is near the end of existence.”

“No, I don't have much time. How do I get back to my time?”

“What is your time?”

Ink suddenly realized what Omega meant. “I don't know. I just know that I need to stop the Nexus Anomaly Paradox.”

Omega looked at him for several moments. “The only thing you can do for that is to find a being that is powerful enough to grip time itself. This being must be able to withstand a lot of pain.” Omega thinks for a moment. “The only being that comes to mind would be Playt. He's the cause of the problem, let him be the solution as well.”

Ink thought back to his discussion with Koda. “Very well. How do I get to the Time Junction?”

“Who's the cause of the problem?”

“Well... Playt brought me here...”

“Then let him be the solution. You're not thinking straight, Ink. How do you expect to save the Universe if your head isn't on properly? Do you have an answer to my original question? Do you even remember my original question?”

Ink took a moment. “Why do I think you cannot die?”

“Think about it Ink. Have you ever stopped to ponder? If you are the immortal god of everything as I seem to remember you saying, then why have I not died either? There is of course no real answer, but I have a theory. I think I'm a part of you. I'm the undying protective side of you. Jin, he was your sense of humor, and your sexual drive. Dos, she was your desire to search for evil. Once you found your evil,

she died, and you no longer felt the desire to search for it. Aya was your innocence."

Ink stared at him without saying a word. He thought it over in his head. "Well, then what does it mean that you no longer trust me?"

"That's simple. It means you don't trust yourself." With the last of his words, Omega turned and walked away.

Ink watched as he went, pondering existence once more. His eyes swelled with water as he shook his head. He felt like crying, but knew that it was not the time for that. That was when he heard a *psssst* from the direction of the unconscious Playt. Ink walked over to the sound. "Hello?"

"Ink, it's me, Hat. Playt has changed my form into a cloak."

"Hat? You can talk?"

"I've always been able to talk my friend, just not always as straightforward as this. Listen, there isn't much time. Grab hold of Playt's shoulder, I can get you back to your time, and back to your junction."

Ink hesitated, and then did as the hat requested. In a flash, he was back in the Time Junction. Old Playt was still unconscious at his feet, so he quickly ran back to the other side of the hill bump with his Orb. He waited for a while before Old Playt finally woke up and looked around. It was only moments after that in which he disappeared again. Ink came out of hiding. He decided he would no longer deal with Playt directly.

Instead of manifesting Space Generals, Ink manifested Time Generals. They became the police of time, with Ink as their leader. Their biggest threat was Playt, but Playt's existence had created more threats. His children, his minions and his blue and yellow manifestations. The Time Generals made a deal with Playt, and through that deal, Playt created the Abomination. The Abomination held time and space above the paradox intact. It was enough to save the Universe and all above from ceasing to exist.

A few side effects to this solution became evident to Ink almost immediately. For one, he could no longer control the rotation of Sporkson with the Orb. Not only that, but Playt had created millions of additional paradoxes throughout time.

The first problem under this new paradigm that Ink had to deal with was the fact that the Spirit

Symbol was no longer available, and the Orb had lost its ability to travel through time. With the help of Sporx, the Time Generals solved this problem by discovering a planet full of beans with the essence of Playt within them. The planet was named Chrystalline because of the wildlife that grew there. The life was comprised of precious crystals such as diamonds and rubies. Most of them were flowers or plants, but they were unlike plantlife of other planets because they were able to uproot themselves and walk. They did not like visitors, and were able to make that clear through telepathic thought.

As the Time Generals began to collect the beans, a crystal rose ran up and demanded a reward for collecting so many. She threatened to have her friends beat them up, and at first, that was exactly what happened. Several of the Time Generals perished that day, but it barely bothered Ink. They were thoughtless, and not very social. Ink was bored to death around them, it was the same as being alone. He did not care if they died or not, they were meaningless to him. Nothing more than muscle. Eventually, Ink telepathically agreed from the Time Junction through using the Orb and a Time General. A ball of light was created and given to the rose. The ball was able to make music, change color, strobe, and Ruby Rose became the most popular plant on the planet. The portal beans were collected and brought back to the Time Junction with Ink.

Using the beans, the Time Generals tracked down all of the anomalies they could. They contacted the Abomination, who recruited Fat Playt. Old Playt and Warrior Playt joined in reluctantly, as well as Fayt. Red Playt had been the one to create most of the new anomalies, and so he was the one punished most severely.

Meanwhile, Ink sat in the Time Junction, following Playt's every step through time, until his mind and soul fought for sanity. It was like being linked to thousands of virtual reality machines, controlling them all, remembering them all, stretched through time and space. Eventually, Ink decided to retire.
Rhun

Power Struggle

Curious wakes to a dimly lit room. Nyf holds him in his lap and Debris sits next to them. She looks down at the furry demon and smiles. Curious looks around the room for Rhun, but he isn't there.

Poison tries to play with Curious, but he isn't in the mood. She's persistent, so he snaps at her. Poison claws deep into his neck and runs off, offended by his lack of compassion. Debris notices he's losing a

lot of blood and tries to put pressure on it. Eventually the bleeding stops, but Curious doesn't look so good. He seems to be depressed, but also shows signs of getting sick.

Dire and Burns keep each other company, even though neither of them ever seem very happy. Clott and Rott sit silently, emotionless faces, calculating their chance of survival.

Immediately after entering Sector 4 they are all searched and questioned. Since Nyf is their spy, he is questioned the most. He tells them what they want to hear, which is almost the truth. “Rip, Shred, and Tear fought valiantly, but Rhun was too much for them. I stabbed Rhun in the back and drained him of his power. Last time I saw him, he was in Sector 5, dying.”

“And what about the others, why didn't you kill them?”

Nyf thinks quickly. “I figured you would want to question or torture them, since they are of no threat.”

The knight questioning him speaks through a telecommuter. Nyf knows it's Dysh.

“Your father wants to know why you stopped reporting and stopped listening to orders.”

“My teleplug was destroyed in Sector 5.” A bold faced lie. Nyf holds the fully functional teleplug in his pocket, placing it there after absorbing the light.

Debris is questioned next, asked similar questions. She cries when asked about Rhun, leading them to believe he died. Dire is of no help to them, but when they question Burns they find that Rhun is still alive, or was when he ordered them all to go through the portal. The same is found out from questioning Clott and Rott. The knights report back to Dysh and he orders them to execute all but Nyf.

By this time, Nyf has decided to listen in on their conversation with his teleplug. One knight sees him using it and walks over to him. Nyf steals a plasma blade off of him and slashes his throat through his armor. The knights report hearing something odd, and then communications go silent.

Dysh orders more of his men to the portal, twice as many as before. As they walk out of his throne room, a man in a dark gray cloak walks in. “Who the hell are you?”

The man is followed by a dozen soldiers in gray metal samurai clothes. He does not stop when

questioned, but he does answer. “My name is Lort, and you're sitting in my chair.”

“YOU'RE CHAIR!?” Dysh growls. “Who the fuck do you think you are?”

The man stops and smiles. “I am Oni's son. I am your king.”

Dysh is furious. “KILL THEM ALL!”

Rhun sits in his cell, unable to sleep or think straight. Periodically, prison guards will come to his cell to beat him with metal sticks, but he's powerless to stop them. He tries to grab one guard and it does nothing but surprise the man, and then he whacks Rhun in the head and nearly knocks him out. Rhun decides to play dead, since he feels dead inside already. He hopes that his friends are ok.

Meanwhile, Voyd and her army of women spy on Lort entering Oni's castle. Riot approaches Voyd. “Dysh has sent a large number of knights towards the old abandoned town of Maybeth.”

Voyd thinks. “You and Chaos follow them, but do not be seen and don't attack. Observe and report. Me and the girls will keep an eye on this situation.”

Red

7: Playt’s Planet

Playt wakes up to an empty and quiet Fahllian day.

An orange sun beams down on him as he slowly sits up to observe the destruction that Hayt has left behind. Hayt has had a field day with the people. Bodies litter the streets, and paper blows around with the wind. The smell of decay and death is so pungent that it is suffocating. Nobody can be seen anywhere.

Playt wanders around, looking at the devastation that he missed while asleep. He wonders why he is still alive, and easily determines that Yellow must have saved him. From the look of things she was not able to save everyone. In the distance, Playt can hear sirens blaring, but other than that there is nothing but silence. The wind whistles through the buildings and makes a soft hum in Playt’s ears. He searches for Blue Hayt but cannot find him anywhere. He looks high and low, through buildings that are now completely torn apart, and through piles of rubble which have puddles of blood gushing out of them. He doesn’t find one living person.

Now free of the tormenting blue voice in his head, Playt wants to make things right once more. He wants to fix things that he has messed up in the past.

Playt hears the sound of ringing bells.

Out of nowhere, Playt is struck with extremely vivid memories. One of them is a memory of a desert planet in which he and his friends had adventures as a teenager. He envisions many of the people from a past life, and he remembers actually being there not too long ago as Red Playt. The planet's name is hard to grasp however. He believes it is Aspim…. Something.

He FLICKERs to where he thinks it should be, but nothing is there. He looks around and only sees the deep dark space surrounding him. He knows it was here; it had to have been. Playt's mind is lost and confused. Why would he be drawn to a place where no planet existed? *Something just isn't right.* He thinks to himself, *maybe it was my fault. Maybe since I released Hayt upon the Universe, the planet was never formed. I must make things better, and I must make the order of things right again.*

In Playt's confusion over time and movement of planets, he builds himself a planet that must have been here at one time. It must have been here before Hayt was released. From within his gloves, particles fly out to the reaches of space, clumping together and forming the core of the planet. Playt continues until the planet is complete.

Aspimentia… something like that. And then he makes the people that were on it.

Playt grabs his stomach and stretches off a piece of it and then holds it in his hand. He enters the planet, which is actually somewhat different from what he remembers, and throws the piece of himself to the ground. Then he does it again and again, until all of the people that were supposed to be there are.

The globs of Playt that he tore off start to form new beings, little babies. They don't look quite like his memory had made them look, but they are close enough. Then he makes one last person to look over the babies, and names him Rello Tello, simply because he thinks it's a cool name.

He watches as Rello Tello forms. As this is happening, Playt quickly makes a house for them to live in out of stuff that's on the planet already. Once formed, Rello Tello gathers the babies and takes them into the house. After they are all in the house, Playt figures out that they need something to eat in order to

grow strong, so he makes strange wildlife and creatures that only Playt's insane imagination can come up with.

A job well done, he thinks to himself.

Then he FLICKERs away and explores the Universe for a couple of years before returning. He checks on them when they are children, and notices that they are developing well, but they look a lot different than he remembers. Then he suddenly remembers that three of them weren't actually from this planet at all, they were from a planet named Dussyllia. He grabs them and FLICKERs them there, in an attempt to fix his mistake.

Once satisfied with a nice days work, he FLICKERs away.

Ynk

Ink's Sanity

14,000,340,517

The true Age of Insanity began as Ink's mind sought peace. He could not sleep while his spirit was spread throughout time and space. He wondered to himself how long it had been. It got to the point where he began forgetting anything before Playt. It was a miserable existence and he was fed up. He had deteriorated through the last shreds of rational thought, and at the ledge his screams echoed back from insanity's void.

He was able to gather as many of the Red Playts as possible in the Time Junction by having the generals send them all to a specific point and time. It was that day. As he watched from hiding, Ink could see the brutal battle. It was indescribable, pieces of red flying everywhere. White blood began coating the floor of the Time Junction. In the end, there was only one Playt remaining. In a flash, he was gone as well. While the Time Generals were cleaning up the mess, Ink subconsciously came up with a plan to cure his madness.

But he needed help.

A dark piece of Ink escaped into a Time General who looked exactly like himself, while the other Time Generals continued to police time using the rest of Ink. He began to focus on darker forces within the Orb. He realized soon enough that he would need the Wand as well, so that he could focus on Syl.

As he searched Syl, he had a hard time finding Oni. He did however, come across a hat that was similar to his own.

It was Oni's Hat. It either found him, or he found it, but they were on the same wavelength when they spoke. Both wanted to end everything, once and for all. Ink told him everything he knew about Playt, and Hat told him everything he knew about Dysh.

They conspired together for several days. The first part of their plan was to come up with a way to get Hat into Lys. Hat figured his best bet was to convince Dysh to find the Rod. The second step was for them to meet up in Lys to combine their thoughts completely. In the meantime, Ink was supposed to contact a higher dimension. To find Rin. Hat would be collecting information on his way into Lys.

"You'll have to deal with Lys Hat. Kill him if necessary. He is my polar opposite, and will ruin any plans we make."

Communications between the two dimensions cut out and Ink's darkness blew the whistle.

This time, a Time Commander did appear, but it was not Koda, nor was it Rin. "What can I help you with Ink? And please make it quick, I don't have all day."

"I need to speak with Rin."

"Rin... I don't know the name, nor should you know any name other than Koda. I think you may be mistaken, perhaps this Rin person is somebody from your dimension. Or maybe they're from Sy..."

"Rin is from Ros. He is the avatar for that dimension."

The Time Commander looked at him strangely. "How... do you know that?"

"There is no time to explain it all, I must speak with him."

"I'll do what I can, but this is a highly irregular request. We have to go to council and talk it over. If he appears, then he appears, but I wouldn't get your hopes up."

Ink looked at him, annoyed. "Fine. That's all I want, you can go."

The Time Commander looked at him in disgust and disappeared.

8: Tortured

For his crimes against time and space, the Time Generals seek out Playt. Since his location is unpredictable it is hard for them to find him at all. In order to figure out his punishment they consult a woman named Fayt, and she comes up with a plan that will put him in his place. They don't know if they can trust her, until she tells them that she can find him for them.

They are very pleased.

Red Playt travels all around and learns more with each passing day. Most of the information he learns is completely irrelevant, but he learns what rationality is. He somewhat fears it, since it is his opposite. He also learns of insanity, but learns that most of the people that think they're really insane are just stupid.

The Universe is filled with idiots.

He tries to meet new people, and tell them about his life, but they are just confused. He doesn't really understand it himself, and so it becomes pointless for him to try to explain. He doesn't hold friends very long, since he cannot control his flickering anymore.

Years pass however, and he starts to get the hang of it again. Just as he did when he was a child, he finds that he can control the flickering somewhat, but cannot judge where he goes or when he gets there.

Eventually, Fayt finds him, but it isn't easy for even her. With much stealth, she grabs him and takes him to the lair of the Abomination.

He looks around, puzzled, and sets his eyes on the gigantic beast which dwells there. He tries to run, but it is useless, he's stuck in place. Then the beast speaks.

"RED, THE TIME GENERALS HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU. IT SEEMS YOU HAVE SOME UNPAID DEBTS TO THEM, AND THEY HAVE DECIDED YOUR PUNISHMENT. I WILL WATCH OVER YOU AND SEE TO IT THAT YOU SERVE YOUR TERM IN FULL."

“But what have I done?”

“THE LIST GOES ON. FOR ONE, YOU HAVE CREATED A PLANET THAT WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE, AND BROUGHT ALIENS THAT YOU CREATED TO A PLACE THEY DID NOT BELONG. YOU ALSO HAVE SPREAD YOUR NONSENSE AND INSANITY THROUGHOUT TIME, NOT TO MENTION YOU’VE STOLEN MEMORIES OF INNOCENT PEOPLE. ALSO YOU RELEASED AN EVIL THAT HAS TERRORIZED HALF OF THE GALAXIES IN THE Universe. ALSO, YOU’VE….”

“Ok ok, I get it. What is my punishment then?”

“YOU WILL SPEND FIVE HUNDRED YEARS IN PURGATORY, LISTENING TO NOTHING BUT TECHNO MUSIC.”

“What the hell is that?”

“TRUST ME, YOU’LL SEE.”

Playt feels invisible hands grab him and take him through the white nothingness of the Abomination’s lair to a place that is completely empty. Nothing is around him but the pure white walls and a silent void.

Then the music comes on.

The music is kind of cool at first, but after the first hour it is annoying. He tries to escape, but of course it is pointless. By the end of the day it is drilled into his head.

After the first week he wants to kill himself, and after a month of it he cannot think of anything but the music. His thought patterns change to rhythmic beats and he can no longer think in words. He tries to, but it doesn't take long before the music is pounded into his head even more.

He stays for several years and starts to forget about everything else. All his mind can think of is the damned music, and he eventually surrenders to it. He can no longer fight it; it would just frustrate him even more. When he sleeps, his dreams are just music and whiteness. It is like being awake, and so his mind cannot escape. His memory is scraped away like skin on fast moving blacktop. He forgets all words and memories of life he ever had.

He is forgotten by the Time Generals, and he is forgotten by the Abomination.

He stays locked up, being tortured by the music, for almost a thousand years.

Rhun

Trees

Nyf gathers everyone together and they hide in an abandoned building. Hours later is when Curious finally wakes up from his nap, and moments after Poison runs off they see Rhun being carried to eagle-demons, and then they are gone. Nyf cautiously follows, noticing a few more knights still by the portal. They all go the other way, trying to stay as hidden as possible.

Ahead is a bridge over a lake of green fire. “I'm not going that way,” says Burns. “You can't make me.”

Nyf looks at his burnt face. “Take this teleplug with you. You still have yours, right Debris?”

“Uh... yea, but I have no idea how to use it.”

Debris hands Nyf her teleplug and he hands it to Burns.

“I'm going with him,” says Rott, and Clott agrees. Dire, however, wants to go with Nyf and Debris. Burns is annoyed by her decision, but reluctantly agrees.

Debris carries Curious, now a weak and shriveled shell of his former self. She notices that his cut is infected, and it swells with oozy puss. She fears for his life, but knows there's nothing she can do. Several days pass as they reach the bridge and cross it, and in the distance they see a forest full of trees whose branches and leaves are orange. Nyf contacts Burns to tell him. “Orange Forest, huh? We're in a red desert, and there are giant worms here. We killed one already, but it wasn't easy. I think mayb...” the transmission cuts off.

They travel for several more days, mostly in silence. When they reach the Orange Forest, Curious is dead. Debris cries and buries him. Nyf finds himself upset as well, and Dire is never anything but sad.

When they finally enter the Orange Forest they immediately feel like they're being watched. A cold chill runs down Nyf's spine. He can sense angry energies closing in, invisibly surrounding them. They

crowd the three, unseen, filling them all with unease and nausea.

Dire screams in terror and the spirits disperse, but she alerts the attention of more dangerous beings. All around them they hear the crackling of sticks breaking, and a moment later Debris screams and points as a bloody floating zombie demon hovers towards them. More appear on the other side, so they all begin running.

Ynk

Smile (Because everything will be OK)

When a hammer hits a nail, it does two things. It both hammers, and it nails. The nail does nothing but sit there and absorb the force. In this same fashion, the hammer does nothing. In this same fashion, the person holding the hammer does nothing. In this same fashion, the person writing this book is doing nothing. Ryan Wellman did not exist until Sporx created him. He wrote a book about a man capable of writing a book about Playt as well as Ink. Not much of it made sense, and it was a short story, but Ink was not happy. Ink had asked him to find a book about himself. As Ryan came into existence, Ink suddenly gained a memory of Syl Hat talking about Ryan. Hat had hated him, and as Ink read the book he began to loath Ryan as well.

In “The Book of Ryan” it was never really clear whether the author thought the true Ryan existed in Lys, or if the one in Lys was just a fractal reflection from a higher dimension. As Ryan wrote, any interaction between Hat or Playt and Ryan were strange moments in his life, or moments that could have been written off as Ryan expressing his freedom for creativity. He also wrote about things that hadn't happened to him yet, and if they were to happen it would be proof to him and all of his readers that they all lived in Lys.

Ink read the entire book, appalled that Ryan had summed up Playt's life and Ink's life in such a short time. There was no real information about the books, just that he had written the first one in ten years and the second in only a few years. How did he translate it? Were there other forces at work?

Of course there were other forces at work, there always were. Ink edits the book to make a large portion of Ryan's life very shitty.

A pen is an interesting thing. Its ink is permanent to paper, and many have said that the pen is mightier than the sword. It can be used for both stabbing someone in the neck, as well as filling out the

paperwork to save that same person's life. It can be used to control the masses, yet has an infinite capacity for inspiring those same people.

Yet in the grand scheme of things, words are meaningless. We are nothing more than animals who squawk at each other and squiggle lines or look at small colored lights. We also like pushing buttons, buttons are fun. Being (or feeling) in control is the funnest for us.

Ink was unable to make Ryan kill himself or end his life before he was done writing the books. Instead, Ink decided to try to make the world hate Ryan, but every time he wrote a negative the book changed in another location to add enough positivity to balance out his personality. Ink tried to destroy the book, but it was invulnerable to him. The people surrounding Ryan loved him too much for him to ever truly reach rock bottom. He could see lives that were better than his own, but he saw more who were worse off. This did not stop him from bitching, but it was enough to stop him from bitching out. He was bitched at for bitching sometimes, and this helped him grow. The adversity which Ink added throughout his life motivated his writing style and quality of storytelling.

In a wave of frustration, Ink threw the book to the side. Sporx walked up to him slowly and placed a hand on his back. “I understand your pain. I tried to change my name in the book to Sebastian over a hundred times and it wouldn't let me.”

Ink looked over to him and uncontrollably began laughing. This triggered Ink's darkness to fall back to sleep and become one with Ink again, and caused Lyt to awake. Lyt was the last remaining sliver of understanding and morality left within Ink.

Lyt knew everything that Ink's darkness knew as soon as it fell asleep, and he intended to do something about it. After waking, he sent his consciousness into a Time General much like Ink's darkness had done. Using his portal bean, Lyt tracked down Lys Hat and told him everything.

Together, him and Hat tracked down the Pearl, and using the Pearl, Lyt sneaked by the unsuspecting Ink and grabbed the Wand. He wanted to grab the Orb as well, but Ink was still too fixated on it. He would have to come back.

He gave Hat to Lysandus's parents to give to Lysandus, and told them that he had been chosen to rid the world of evil. Then he gave the Pearl and Wanda to the Ancients on Littonia.

When Lyt returned to the Time Junction for the Orb he was confronted by Rin.

“You called?”

“Rin... you must go. I didn't mean to call for you, please leave.”

Rin looked at Lyt and then laughed. “What the hell? Who are you anyhow, and how do you know my name?”

As Rin's words fell upon Lyt, he heard something running up behind him. He turned around just in time to see Ink's darkness had woken back up. Lyt was knocked unconscious. He awoke several hours later in a pool on Blue Leaves.

Red

9: Altered

Queen Shellra awakes to chaos. Her entire village is acting strange. Riots are breaking out and anarchy has taken control. Nobody in her advisory is acting their usual selves. Some of them are just drones, and some of them seem to be looking at her with wicked eyes. She looks tentatively at all of them, trying to figure out what is going on.

The day before, everything was normal, nothing awry. She had her usual banquet and the town meeting the previous day. Everything was going smoothly as the city prepared for the festival that was approaching.

But today, everything was different.

Today, her whole life would change.

As she walks outside to gather answers, a red figure appears out of nowhere and stares at her.

Playt had been abandoned and forgotten in the lair of the Abomination. The only thing that set him free was the destruction of the Council. As it crumbled, he awoke from the deepest sleep ever. All of his memories had been replaced by music. He got reacquainted with his arms and legs, just in time for him to be smacked on the head by flying rubble, and knocked unconscious.

Now, he is standing before Shellra, Queen of the Chibbies, and she looks distraught. Her village is going insane, and Playt can relate to them. They rip and throw and break the city into nothing but a castle. The village starts to burn as Shellra stares into the red stranger's eyes.

“I have never seen you here before. You must be the reason the village is in anarchy. What have you done?”

Playt opens his mouth to say something, but all that comes out is techno. The songs blurt out of his mouth and fill the air with whiny displeasure. Shellra cups her ears to avoid going def.

The music that pours out of his mouth increases in volume. Glass breaks and more buildings explode. The people start to scream in agonizing pain as Playt broadcasts his emotions and terror through the power of music.

Then all of the Chibbie heads explode, except for Shellra’s, sending blood and brains flying everywhere.

When Playt finally closes his mouth, the music stops and Shellra looks at Playt with livid eyes of pure hate. She has lost all of her family, all of her people, and beginning to lose her mind.

“YOOOU!!” she scowls.

FLICKER

Playt appears on Earth in the year 2004. He is in a tiny house in which one named Ryan Wellman resides.

Playt is hungry.

He looks in the refrigerator and sees cheesecake. He goes to ask if he can have some, but once again, all that comes out of his mouth is techno.

Ryan cannot see him, nor can he really hear him. Playt’s attempted words fill Ryan's head with the techno, and he looks around in panic. He can’t see anything, but knows that someone is trying to speak with him. He even knows it’s Playt, for he’s written about him already. He goes to his computer and starts to type out what he hears, but none of it makes sense to him. He hears layers of speak, but can't

seem to catch it all. The words sound similar to real words, but none of them are.

This continues for fifteen minutes, and Ryan begins to beg for Playt to leave.

FLICKER

A couple more years pass, and Playt learns how to harness the techno for use as resurrection, learning how to bring people back from the dead. He also learns many of the languages that he once knew, but not all of them.

Lysandus is in Aspimiria, and he is calling for Playt.

Playt FLICKERs inside of Lysandus. Lysandus opens his mouth and a beam of light shoots out, while techno starts to blare all around. The light coming out of Lysandus's mouth gets thicker, and then it leaves his mouth altogether. It clumps together in a pile, and after a snap, Playt is visible and the techno stops.

Playt talks with him a little bit and then brings Lysandus's best friends, Orsidium and Dirrinni, back to life. As well as giving them life he steals some of their memories out of habit.

FLICKER

Ynk

Breaking Reality

While Lyt was separated from Ink, his darkness took over. At the height of Ink's arrogance he decided to bring the two Spirit Symbols together by pitting Playt against Dysh. He knew that the result would be the total annihilation of his dimension, and it was probable that it would destroy the dimensions above as well.

"You're crazy, Ink."

"I'm crazy? You're the one that made me this way."

"I've never met you. You must have changed more than you thought when you created Playt. I would have never done whatever I did to you, not in this life. I don't know anything about the Rin you first

met, but I do know that I am not him."

Ink looked at Rin, and once again felt like killing him. This time for different reasons. Rin could see it on his face and it intimidated him. "Well, I guess I could watch. If it's all going to end with or without me, I'd like some front row seats."

Ink's demeanor changed again as he smiled at Rin.

Rin watched from a distance as Ink's Time Generals were slaughtered by Playt and his family. In the end, Ink was spared, but it wasn't actually Ink. As a safety precaution Ink used the Time General that looked like him to speak.

Sure enough, Ink talked Playt into going to Syl. The moment he arrived, small fissures spread throughout time. In time, the fissures became cracks, and pieces of time began to crumble away and cease to exist. It was the beginning of a much larger storm to come.

Rhun

Worms

Burns isn't happy about Dire's decision to leave his side, but he senses he can't keep her happy long before. He barely knows Clott and Rott because they barely speak, but he somewhat knows how to talk to them from paying attention to Sick.

Nobody really understands them, they speak to each other in code, much like their twin fathers before them. The fathers teach them everything there is to know about technology and then they are sent out into the world. Sector 3, where Sick finds them and takes them in, using their knowledge of technology to his advantage.

Nyf reports to Burns on several occasions, but dire never wants to talk to him. Days pass and they begin to see the gray dusty ground become a blood red color, and ahead in the distance they see sand dunes, glowing red.

Before they even reach the first dune, a gigantic worm without a face attacks them. It squirms around in a frantic, creepy fashion and as they try to run away they realize they have no choice but to fight it. "ATTACK!!" Burns screams as it rushes them from behind. He jumps over it as it passes and lands on

its back, running with an emptying canteen of powerful liquor, and when he jumps off to safety, Clott and Rott light the beast on fire. It lashes around in pain and squeals as its insides melt and pop.

They catch their breath in time to receive a communication from Nyf, talking about an Orange Forest. Clott removes Burns' teleplug mid-sentence. Burns looks at him, puzzled. Clott points. His conversation and their battle with the worm has alerted the attention of other worms. Three of them scream and rush towards the three as they dart towards the dunes in search of shelter. Surprisingly they're able to escape, and find themselves in the middle of the Blood Desert, with nothing but red sand for miles in every direction. The teleplug is broken.

Playt

10: Time Twins

Playt appears in front of Shellra. She is lying in a large luxurious bed, and she appears to be comfortable. She smiles when she sees Playt, and sits up.

“Hello, love! How have you been lately? I know you’ve been busy, because you are such an important and busy person. I hope you haven’t forgotten about me yet. Your children are growing up fast.”

“Children?”

“Yes of course, Playt, don’t you remember making love to me? Well they’ve been little rascals, and they both remind me a lot of you. They have strange powers that are completely inexplainable.”

Playt is dumbstruck by her news. He is a father, somehow. He doesn’t even remember making love to her, how can this be possible? “What are their names?”

“Our boy is Nyt Skigh. I named him that because he loves the night. In fact, right now I have no idea where he even is. Dae Brayk is our daughter, and she keeps me good company during the day. She loves the sun and is great with nature and animals. I know for a fact that they grow up to be healthy adults, for I’ve seen it. Their futures have each visited me on separate occasions.”

“Wait, are you saying that they have the ability to flicker?”

“Oh yes, and they know how to control it as well. Ever since they were young they’ve been very in touch with their powers. Nyt was born at night, and I thought that he was an only child, but when I

woke up the next morning I started to have more contractions, and that's when Dae was born. For the longest time they didn't even know about each other, because one of them hides in the day, and the other one hides at night."

"Can I see them?"

"Yes, of course. It's reaching that time of day where it is exactly halfway between day and night. That is when they are both here to eat dinner with me. They will be so excited to see you! It's been a while since you last visited. You were older then, and didn't want to play with them. You just wanted to talk and teach. That's all well and good, but I think they mostly just want someone to play with. They seem to be getting bored a lot lately, and even though they have endless possibilities in their life, the Time Generals kind of control what they can and can't do."

Dae walks into the room and looks at Playt. "Daddy? Is it you? You look so different, where have you been?"

"I've… been busy I suppose. It's nice to finally meet you."

"Oh, so this is the first time for you?" Dae runs up and gives Playt a giant hug. Her hair is up in pigtails and she has a pink dress on. To him, she doesn't look anything like himself, but then he looks into her eyes and sees the red insanity that lies there. He hugs her tightly.

A large bird flies into the room and lands on a perch. Playt looks at it for several seconds and sees that its body is comprised of a fire-like material. It is wearing glasses and it looks at Playt for a second. Behind the glasses he sees glowing red eyes, and knows that it must be Nyt. He jumps down and transforms his body into a normal person. "Dad!" he screams and runs up to Playt.

The three of them hug for a very long time, and Shellra watches from her bed with a smile. A tear runs down her cheek as her emotions get the best of her. "Let's eat." She says.

Nyt quickly sets the table as Dae helps her mom cook. The food steams out of the pots and the smells fill Playt's nose with incredibly delicious aromas. The food is served fast and hot, and Playt watches as his twins work. Their powers are evident, and he can see that they are possibly more powerful than Playt himself. He's not surprised. In fact, it fills him with such a pride that he never knew he would experience.

After they eat, Dae kisses her mom and dad goodnight. Nyt gives his sister a hug and then wishes her sweet dreams. She fades away into the darkness after that.

Shellra and Red lie down together in the bed and begin to caress each other and cuddle. They can hear Nyt in the other room playing some sort of game, and they leave him be. As they both know, he will turn out to be a good man.

For a couple of weeks, Red stays with his family. He and Shellra make love on several occasions, and they both grow very close once again. During the day, Playt learns from his daughter, and during the night, he learns from his son. They play a lot with each other and Playt loves it. He learns how to completely control his flickering, with help from his children.

Him and his kids adventure through time and space for a couple of years, until one day he tells them that they must go home to their mother, and keep her company. He promises to return.

Now that he can control his flickering, he has all the time in the world.

Ynk

Fixing Reality

Meanwhile, Lyt awoke to find that his portal bean had been taken from him. He searched the Blue Leaves for several centuries until he eventually found another one. He traveled to the point in time where he was knocked unconscious by Ink's darkness. He waited until Ink brought all the Time Generals to the junction, and then Lyt stealthily grabbed the Orb. Sporx saw him and began to follow.

Lyt used his bean and traveled to Littonia. Before he was able to speak to the Ancients and give them the Orb, Sporx confronted him. “Wait! Before you make a huge mistake, please listen. You need to use that Orb to finish what Ink started. There are still random Red Playts out there causing havoc. You must turn them into Playt Beans. If you don't, it will almost be as if you've done nothing.”

Lyt looked down to the portal bean in his hand. *Playt Bean?* He asked himself how he could be holding one if he hadn't even created them yet. Then he looked back to Sporx and somehow understood. Lyt grabbed the Orb and concentrated his energy on the task at hand. It took several years before he was able to track down all of the renegade Playts, but once it was done he felt a part of the Universe heal itself.

For the years that followed, him and Sporx found themselves trapped in a life of no meaning as the Minions continued to create paradoxes, breaking the surface tension of reality and shaking the water of existence. After dealing with the Minions as best he could, he gave the Orb to the Ancients and was happy to finally be rid of it.

As Lyt was walking away from the Ancients, he was surprised by the woman Fayt. She explained that she was a part of Playt, and that she wanted to help. There was one vital problem left to deal with, and that was Syl Hat. She explained that there were two points in time in which Hat had control over powerful paradoxes.

Lyt used the bean to travel to Dussyllia, where Syl Hat was on the verge of murdering Lys Hat. As Lyt arrived, Lys Hat made a sigh of relief and hopped over to him. Lyt grabbed the hat and used the bean once more to escape. He traveled with Hat to Black Leaves, where Hat told him how to rid the Universe of Syl Hat entirely. “He's hiding in Playt's Council. He's looking for ways to destroy time.”

“I just saw him, why couldn't I have killed him then?”

“It wasn't the right time, and you were not meant to kill him. You must send Playt, only he is capable of destroying it. That is just how it was written.”

Fayt appeared before them. “Hello, Lyt. I see you know your next step, but there is one more thing I need from you. This hat must make it to Syl to meet up with Playt. Please don't ask questions, that is all I can tell you. Trust in yourself and all will be fine.”

Lyt looked at her for a moment and then nodded. “Very well. Thank you Fayt.”

Fayt disappeared. Lyt made Old Playt kill Syl Hat, and then he sent Lys Hat to Syl.

Before death, the body takes a final breath, a final attempt.

Lyt returned to Ink's mind at the moment right after time began to crumble. A full mind once more, he pleaded to Playt and apologized.

Rhun

Swords

Dysh glares at Lort for hours as their men fight each other. Neither one is winning. “We can end this right here and now, just give up your seat.”

“Never!” Dysh laughs out as he pushes a button, opening two huge doors behind his throne. From each door a giant black panther exits and licks its teeth, drool dripping in long thin strands to the floor. Then they each growl, one louder, but the other with an angrier grumble.

Everyone stops fighting and looks at the panthers. “I figured you would try to make this harder. I could easily storm your city with a hundred times as many soldiers as you have living here. I don't care that much, honestly, your kingdom is puny to me. An ant under my shoe. I came for one thing.”

“Oh yea? And what's that?”

Lort laughs. “As if you don't already know. You probably cuddle next to it all night. It was my father's, the Red Orb. It is rightfully mine, and I intend to take it.”

“Fuuuck yoouuuu.” Dysh says in a long drawn out fashion.

“Very well, I stand down, but this will not be the last you hear of me.” Dysh laughs and signals his panthers to attack. “I knew you'd do this.” Lort signals his men and they finish off Dysh's soldiers. The first panther attacks and Lort runs under it, slicing open its stomach with one swing of his sword. Blood and organs fall out into a puddle on the floor as it staggers and dies. His men take care of the other one, and as they're killing it Lort says, “Take care,” and begins walking out.

Dysh gets a communication. “Lort!” Lort stops and turns. “I have Rhun.”

Truly perplexed, Lort takes a step towards Dysh. “Why would you tell me that?”

“Because we both know what he's capable of. This is the last sector in all of Syl. If you leave now and never come back, I won't unleash Rhun's power on you.”

“You're bluffing. Even you cannot control that kind of power.”

“Well, if what they say about Rhun's power is true, it won't be long before I'm dead, and then you will have your red orb.”

Lort looks at him. “Fine, whatever. I will give you some time to die, but if you take too long, I'll be back to take your head and the Orb. Then you can unleash this legendary Rhun I keep hearing about, who you allegedly have prisoner.”

Lort exits and so do his men. Dysh calls in more guards and then looks to the Orb.

Playt

11: Playt’s Plates

After that, Playt has fun flickering from place to place. He does it for his own enjoyment, just to see the flash and a new place. He never gets bored with it. Old Playt tracks him down and tells him to stop, but Playt doesn’t want to stop. He’s having too much fun to stop.

With a snap, Old Playt takes his flickering powers and Red stops flickering altogether. Where they stop is the whiteness of the Abomination’s lair. “Playt, you need these plates, they will aid you in your next mission. You must help me, and then I will give you back your powers.” Old Playt extends his hand with the plates and Playt reaches for them. “These plates are magical. They are almost endless, but they do run out if used improperly. Just don’t miss and you won’t have any problems.”

Suddenly, Blue Hayt flies into the lair and breaks the dish.

“Crap, it’s begun.”

Blue Hayt raises his arm and little tiny people and objects fly out of it. Objects that he recognizes too and people he’s met. Then Blue Hayt runs off.

“Playt, it is imperative that you take these plates now. Hayt has just released timeclones, and it is up to you to destroy them. I know it may look bleak, but I already know you can do this, for I was once you and I did it.”

“Bleak? What the hell does that mean?”

“Ok, whatever dude. I will be the one controlling your flickering; all you have to do is throw these

plates at everyone you see. You may accidentally hit someone that isn't a timeclone, but that's ok, it will not kill them. These plates are specially designed to destroy timeclones created by Hayt."

Old Playt flickers away, and Red is whisked off to Candee. He starts to throw his plates at everything he sees. As he hits the timeclones, they fade away and disappear to nothing. Then he is flickered to somewhere else and there are even more timeclones. They keep coming no matter where he goes.

He cannot escape, and as he throws the plates he hears that techno music running through his head still. The more he flickers, the faster everything gets. Eventually he runs out of plates, but Old Playt just starts him over again until he has destroyed each and every clone.

Exhausted by the constant throwing, he sits down and rests while still he aimlessly flickers from point to point. Then Old Playt steps in.

"Red, if you aren't going to do this, then I'll just have to get other people to control you."

With another snap, Playt's arms become numb and uncontrollable. He starts to throw the plates over and over again at the targets, but Playt is no longer the one doing it. In fact, Red falls asleep on more than one occasion, but his arms continue to throw, and his body continues to flicker.

Eventually, Playt must fight a giant dishwasher on Appliancia, a Taxi Dragon on Aspimiria, a giant horse head in the middle of space, and so many other huge monsters that he never knew existed. As the lords of each planet battle him, he sweats out his own blood, and in his exhaustion he stumbles around aimlessly and waits for rest.

But there is no rest for Playt.

After he has destroyed what he believes to be everyone, Blue Hayt comes in and attacks him. Playt is thrown back and falls down. From his sitting position he tries to throw plate upon plate at the blue demon, but none of them seem to do any damage to him. However, Hayt eventually leaves for no apparent reason, and Playt is stuck there to try to figure out what just happened.

"Thank you, you have completed my request." Old Playt says as he flickers into view.

"I see, you hide while I do all the dirty work. Great friend you are."

“Hey man, I’ve already done this before. I’ve already heard this whole conversation once. But anyways, I will give you back your flickering, but you must do another chore for me. You need to go to Earth, and you have no choice in the matter.”

“But…”

FLICKER

Rhun

Betrayal

Over One-Hundred-Million years pass and everyone begins to feel the true size of Sector 4 as Nyf, Debris, and Dire have to constantly fight their way through the Orange Forest, while Burns, Clott, and Rott do their best to avoid the worms, while barely surviving.

Rhun gives up, hoping death will come swiftly, and begins to relate with Suicide on a whole new level. He wishes to join her, not out of love or guilt, but out of true understanding of what she must have felt.

Lort and Dysh keep their distance from each other and Dysh nearly forgets the day they met. If it isn't for his panthers being dead, but the Red Orb has a way of helping him to forget the bad things. Dysh runs experiments on Rhun to see if he's able to extract the source of his power, but wants to keep him alive. Dysh truly considers himself a collector of interesting things.

Such as his only true friend, the Red Orb. It speaks to him a seductive hum, tells him everything he wants to hear, and more. It distracts him from Lort and keeps his attention on Rhun. The Orb sees promise in Rhun, more than any other living being ever can.

The Orange Forest seems endless and full of evil floating zombies. Nyf and Dire fight them when they must, and Nyf tells Debris to watch the fighting so that she might learn to defend herself. She learns quite a bit over the years, and eventually fights alongside the other two. Nyf gets frustrated one day while they're lost in the woods and Debris can see he's upset.

“What's wrong?”

He looks at her, and then Dire. “Everything. I've been here before, but the entire landscape has

changed.”

“What do you mean?”

“Oni's Castle used to be right here, and this forest was a lot smaller. My father must have done this.”

“Dysh? He can move an entire castle? Why would he go through the trouble?”

“Because he doesn't trust me. He's moved it once before. His powers are strange. He can shrink things, and make them grow to his desired size. That's just a portion of his power. He used to have the ability to stop time they say, but I've never seen him do so. His greatest threat to us is his ability to manipulate people. I fear for Rhun. You can only imagine what they must be doing to him. We need to find him.”

Debris looks at the ground and is silent for many moments. “You're different now. What happened to you in Sector 5?”

Nyf closes his eyes and sighs, “I was hoping I would never have to relive that. Even Rhun doesn't know. You have to understand that I was a different person then.”

“What did you do?”

Nyf opens his eyes and they're filled with tears. “I ordered them to take you all to the top of the tower to be tortured. Then, when Rhun was at his weakest, I stabbed him in the back.”

“You did what?!”

“It barely phased him, but it changed my life forever. The blood was glowing white, and I absorbed it. I was wiped clean of all impurities, and became more like him.”

“I've heard enough, I can't believe I'm following you.” Debris stands up and begins to walk away, but Dire starts crying too loud. More zombies than they've ever seen at one time float towards them, soaked in blood.

“RUN!” Nyf shouts before Debris passes out from shock. He grabs her and runs, but Dire is too slow. Nyf can hear them chewing on her screaming body as he runs, hoping none of them get curious enough

to follow him.

He reaches the edge of the Orange Forest and rests, seeing the area of Sector 4 known as Scorchland by most. The ground is filled with burning embers and the trees are burnt to a crisp. He lays Debris down in a soft safe area of the ground and once again feels like he's being watched. The spirits approach and fill him with an eerie feeling. They do not attack, they simply watch them and reach out.

Debris wakes up and looks around. The spirits touch her on the face and send chills down her spine. She remembers what Nyf told her and she hates him, but is grateful he saved her life. “Dire?!”

He shakes his head with a deep frown.

“What are these things?”

“They're spirits from Sector One. It seems they must've came here when their sector was destroyed.” He looks over at her. “Look, Debris, I'm sorry about everyth...”

“Let's go.” She interrupts. “Find Rhun, and I'll think about forgiving you.” She pauses. “Maybe.” The two of them wander into Scorchland.

Deep in the Blood Desert, everything is red, even above. Burns, Clott, and Rott can see each other, but barely, and can't speak out of fear of being heard. All around them they constantly hear the worms rustling around and growling. At night (which rarely happens) the worms sleep, allowing them some well needed rest. The days stretch into years, and all of them start showing signs of oncoming hysteria, but mostly Burns. In time it only gets worse, to the point that he's speaking jibberish, talking about a building which is never there. Then he starts talking to himself, and eventually yelling.

“Burns! Knock it off, they'll hear you,” Rott hisses. By this point it's already too late, and they've been heard. Not by the worms, but by the tribe of sand demons close by. They rush the three men, and when Burns sees them he runs away as fast as he can. Clott is frozen in his tracks and Rott can't get him to move. Without seeing another choice, Rott fights them off to the best of his ability. In the middle of the fight he sees Clott go down and he yells a warcry, obliterating the entire tribe with more hate than he's ever held.

When it's over with, he spits on one of their corpses, disgusted with Burns. He wonders where he

must've gone, but decides not to follow. He takes what he can from his cousin's bags and then buries him. He feels wrong burying Clott in the sand, but sees no other choice. He pisses on the corpses of the sand demons and leaves.

When night finally comes he works on the broken teleplug in order to contact Nyf and let him know what happened. He starts to lose his mind after a few weeks and realizes he's talking to dead people, hallucinating entire conversations and dreaming while awake. When he first sees Oni's Castle he isn't sure what it is. A cold gust of wind hits him, waking him up enough to allow him to realize he's on a large dune overlooking the desert. The castle is quite far, and in the other direction he can see one of the Green Fire Lakes. He wonders how big the lake must be, or how many there are. Finally, he's able to get the teleplug working, but there's static and he has to wait a few hours before hearing a reply. Nyf sounds a bit distraught when he talks to him.

“Clott. It's good to hear from you, how are the others?”

“No sire, this is Rott. The others didn't make it.”

There is a brief silence on the other end, “I'm sorry to hear that. Dire didn't make it either.”

“Good! Now I don't have to tell her how much of an asshole Burns is. I'm guessing she already knew that though.”

Nyf is silent once more. “I hate to do this to you, but there's someone here who wants to talk to you.”

Rott is confused as the teleplug crackles. “Who?”

A familiar woman's voice invades his ear. “I trusted you!” As her words travel from his ears to his brain, his spine tingles.

“Oh, shit. Voyd?”

“Yes, you backstabbing son of a cunt, it's your old friend. I'm coming for you.”

The teleplug cuts out and Rott drops it to the sand. He sees no other option, so he runs back towards the worms, more afraid of Voyd than any number of giant worms or sand demons.

To say that Voyd is angry when left for dead in Sector 3 would be putting it mildly. At one time she is the leader of a powerful army of demon soldiers, with her most trusted and loyal at her side, Rott and Chaos. Before she knows it, some of the men organize together to overthrow her, speaking of her gender, saying that no woman is capable of leading men to victory. The leader of the men is known as Wart, a woman hating pig demon. Clott is convinced by his words and tries to get Rott to join them.

Rott refuses at first, but when Chaos is captured, raped, and tortured, he does nothing. When Voyd is attacked and left for dead in a pool of her own blood, he only watches. Instead of helping her, he walks away.

Years later, Voyd tracks down Wart, but Rott isn't with him. She saves Chaos from slavery and torture, killing every man at the camp in the process. Together, her and Chaos find Riot, Chaos' sister. After taking over that camp as well, Voyd finds three more women willing to join her. Mayhem, Murder, and Morbid. Voyd decides then to check on her own sister.

Bury is adamantly against invading Lys, so Voyd visits her alone, hiding her true agenda. She tells her that she's given up the dream of conquering, and makes sure that Grave is treating her right. She stays for several years, just waiting for him to make one mistake. Eventually, she gets bored of babysitting and goes back to her true goal.

She finds Chaos and Riot in the battlegrounds of Sector 3 and the three of them look everywhere for capable women to join their cause. There are none, until Rhun comes into the battleground with Team Fodder. After Bury dies, Voyd reunites with her team and travels to Sector 4. Upon arriving she sees that everything has changed.

Being born in Sector 4, Voyd gets used to the landscape. Her mother, Fayd, is a hard woman, an elite demon working for Oni. The girls are raised around elites, and Voyd looks up to them, inspired by their power and strength. She wishes to be stronger than all of them one day, and to lead them all into Lys.

Voyd and her team sneak around for over a billion years, avoiding being spotted, recruiting more than five-hundred woman to join her. They watch the men kill each other and show each other their guns and the length of their swords, while she learns everything there is to learn about strength and weaknesses. Voyd learns how to hate them all, but only kills the men that are least important to both satisfy her rage and keep their profiles low.

Setting up a hideout in Scorchland, Voyd finally feels as if it's time to overthrow Oni's Castle. Before she can give the order, a small purple cat finds her camp and Voyd instinctively sends crews to scan the area. They find a man and woman wandering Scorchland, Nyf and Debris.

Voyd doesn't recognize them, but they recognize her. After an hour of interrogating them she recognizes Debris, but the last time she saw Nyf he was a lot shorter. She gets them to talk about who they were with, and finds out they know Rott. “Debris, you can live if you join us, but Nyf must die.” She holds a sword to his neck, but he's tied up, unable to do anything.

“WAIT!” he shouts. “I saw how you reacted when I mentioned Clott and Rott. If you let us go, I will help you find them.”

“Please don't kill him, Voyd. He isn't your enemy.”

Listening first to her pleas, Voyd then looks into Nyf's eyes. She cuts the rope which binds his hands and he touches his teleplug. “Clott.”

Voyd gets excited as he talks to the other end. “It's Rott, he's alone in the Blood Desert.” He hands her the teleplug. “His life for ours.” She grabs it and releases them.

Debris and Nyf make a hasty retreat as Voyd shouts, “I trusted you!”

They run as fast as they can as far as possible before becoming tired. Grateful to be alive, they laugh and take a deep breath of relief. Debris hugs Nyf, places a kiss on his cheek and then feels embarrassed. Nyf realizes he loves her, a feeling he has never experienced and at one time would have avoided at all costs. Nyf hugs her back.

They cuddle together till sleep finds them, and then continue their journey when both are awake. Giant cracks block their way, known to those of Sector 4 as the Daunting Cracks. Feeling lost and not seeing any other choice, they follow the cracks, hoping to find their way to Oni's Castle, and hoping Rhun is still alive.

Playt

12: Red Devastation

Earth. The year is 2018.

As soon as Playt appears, crowds of idiots flock to him. They stare at him and ask him questions, which he cannot answer about life, heaven, hell, and death. The crowd grows, as more people want to see what the other Earthlings are looking at. Playt looks around in a panic. What is he supposed to do?

He tries to flicker away, but it is no use. Nothing will work; he cannot escape. He tries to push through the crowd, but they just smother him and attack him more with their idiotic curiosity. He starts to suffocate, being surrounded by such a large group of people. All of them are getting in his face to see if he will answer them about the future.

Eventually, he bursts. People fly in many directions and bounce on the concrete as he flies up into the sky. None of them are fatally wounded, but it appears that a couple of them have broken bones. Playt doesn't care; he just wants to leave this dreadful planet. He steals the memories of all the idiots, and when he does his head starts to hurt. How could these people still be alive after living so long with useless thoughts in their minds?

As Playt flies around the planet, a jet pulls up beside him and announces that he is in their airspace. Playt doesn't know what this means, so he thanks the metal object and continues to fly. The object chases him down, and will not leave him alone. It starts to fire on him and more jets zoom in to the action. Four of them are on his tail now, all of them shooting bullets and missiles at him.

Playt destroys every one of them. He is completely annoyed and pissed off by now, and he doesn't even want to deal with it. The pilots eject out. As the metal birds start to fall from the sky, more appear, bigger ones. These ones are more cautious, and they just follow him.

He flies down and lands at a random spot on the planet. Surrounding him are tanks, and they begin to fire on him. His red body is thrown around like a rag doll.

However, Playt is not harmed. He stands up and looks around. Anger fills him, and just like the flip of a switch, the weather on Earth goes insane. Tornadoes appear everywhere. The sky instantly fills with dark clouds that loom over the humans. Hail flies out of the sky and pelts everyone walking outside. Long dormant volcanoes erupt and flood the cities and villages which surround them with melting lava. The Earth shakes as the tectonic plates slam into each other and separate, only to slam back together.

Through all this destruction, Playt walks unharmed. He continues to walk until he sees a figure slowly approach him. Then instantly, the destruction stops and the Earth is normal once more. Miraculously,

nobody is killed.

Ryan Wellman stands before Playt. Ryan can actually see him this time. He has aged, and appears to be a little wiser than previously.

“Playt. I knew you were coming.”

“How do you know me?”

“Because I’ve written of you. My name is Ryan, and I know your story from front to back, except for some little details.”

Playt looks at him questioningly. He puts his gloves on his face and tries to read his mind, but something is blocking him from doing so. Maybe he has no thoughts; maybe Ryan is just that stupid. This Earthling could tell the truth or lie, and Playt wouldn't be able to tell the difference.

“I’m going with you Playt; it’s time to head to Sporkson, to bring Lysandus back to life.”

“How do you know?”

“Trust me, I know. Let’s get going before it's too late. You were destined to do this, and would have done it whether I was here or not. The reason I am here is so that this event doesn’t cause the entire Universe to be destroyed.”

“How about I just don’t do it? That way neither of us has to worry about it.”

“Not doing it will be just as catastrophic as doing it wrong.”

FLICKER

Ynk

Responsibilities

Time shattered into an uncountable number of shards. Lys, Syl, Ros, Biz, and all above fell like a demolished building. A moment before reality was eradicated from the uppermost dimension, time stopped, and then reset.

In a flash, Ink and Rin were in a place called Time Court. They were surrounded by the avatars of the upper dimensions.

Rin pleaded his innocence. “None of this was my idea. I tried to stop him and wasn't able. He was too powerful for me.” Rin continued on about how he was the victim.

Ink looked over to him in disgust. Then he looked up at the judges. “It's true, Rin is a pansy.”

Rin looked over to Ink with a mix of thankfulness and hatred.

In the end it was decided that Rin would be ticketed for not having enough of a backbone, and Ink was offered a job. They told him that if he took the job, Lys would cease to exist. They didn't care, they had already gotten plenty of energy off of it. Upper dimensions were flourishing from the twin dimensional engine. His job would be to create enough paper towels and toilet paper for the Multiverse's biggest mall, located in the Throl dimension.

When Ink declined the generous offer, they explained that he would be sent back to Lys, which was now considered a sinking ship. Ink was ok with that.

Upon returning to Lys, Ink traveled to a planet named New Falls. While Ink hadn't been paying attention, the planet of Fahlls became uninhabitable. The population moved to a new planet that was comprised of the necessary materials to support them.

He suddenly acquired new memories of people talking about someone named Rhun. He was confused by them at first, but they eventually filtered into his memory as truth. Rhun did not exist yet, but he was to be the last Fahllian, the only one that could kill Ink. Ink pondered on how true that was, and how he knew of Rhun. Through time, this became irrelevant. Rhun only existed in the timeline once Ink decided to stay in Lys.

Without even realizing it, seven billion years had passed him by. Without the need to control Playt, or Lys, Ink settled into a deep depression. He no longer needed answers, there were no more questions. This troubled him instead of making his life easier. He became a loner once more, locked in a box atop a mountain. He forgot about his family, forgot about his friends. He hated himself. He hated the decisions he had made in his past. The Age of Decay began.

13: Nexus

They appear on Sporkson. Ryan looks around at the cartoon-like world. Everything is so smooth looking, and shaded perfectly. There are silverware people and dishes everywhere. Playt wonders to himself if he created this world as well.

A door appears and Orsidium and Dirrinni walk out of it. One of Orsidium's horns is damaged, and together they carry Lysandus's dead corpse. Neither of them can see nor hear Ryan, but they both stare at Playt as if he is their savior.

"This is where it happens, Playt." Ryan says. "This is the point in time that is very thin. It is the Nexus point."

"Playt, please help us. We mean you no disrespect by appearing in your home world, but we really need you to bring back our friend. He is very dear to us."

"This is not my home. I got here right when you did. And I'm not too sure if I can bring him back to life, but I've already brought you two back to life once."

"What? Are you insane? Neither of us has ever died before." Dirrinni says with tears in his eyes.

"Set him down." Playt says, and they do as he commands.

Lysandus's lifeless body lays on the floor with a hole in his chest and dried blood caking his face and torso. Playt sticks his gloves through the hole and all of them can instantly hear the techno music.

Playt reaches into his spirit, and sees it falling into the darkness. Lysandus's soul is sinking into the underworld when Playt grabs his hand. He pulls him out of the pit he was tumbling towards, and as he does this Lysandus' body heals. The hole that was in his chest melts away and Playt brings his spirit back to the surface.

Then he looks at Orsidium, who stares unbelieving back. "That horn is annoying looking, and so I'll fix that as well." With a snap, Orsidium's horns are fully restored to normal.

Playt accidentally steals everyone's memories, except for Ryan's since Ryan is somehow protected by Playt's magic. Playt sends Lysandus and his friends back through the doorway, but the doorway remains open, as if waiting for someone.

After the deed is done, and Lysandus is among the living once more, Playt looks around. He feels the thinness in the air that Ryan mentioned. It feels as if reality may snap at any moment. The thin feeling does not go away, and in fact it gets worse.

"Why is this happening Ryan, I don't quite understand."

"It is because you resurrected yourself, you were once Lysandus. If you hadn't, then you would not have existed to become Playt at all. This causes a paradox. I'm extremely surprised you've managed to not cause paradoxes on several other occasions, since you are now a couple thousand years old."

"How is that possible? Nobody can live that long, it's absurd. I was Lysandus?"

"Oh, that's right; you lost your memory again. How many times have you forgotten? Wait. You wouldn't remember. Now, keep your eyes peeled. We must guard this area so that no beings can tear through the paradox and find their way into this reality."

Just as he says it, he knows that it is too late.

They both have to cover their ears as they hear the astronomical ripping of reality's border. They look up to see a mighty hole, which sucks in the air and seems to howl like a giant wolf in pain. From out of the rift, a shadowy object flies.

"PLAYT, YOU MUST CLOSE THAT RIFT BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE IS ABLE TO COME THROUGH!" Ryan yells to try to make himself heard over the howl of the rift.

Playt flies up to try. It isn't easy, but eventually he's able to close the rift entirely. As he looks at the crack in reality, his mind feels a little strange and disoriented.

While the rift was still open, Playt got a good look at what was inside, and he didn't like what he saw at all. It was another Playt, one that looked so similar to him, yet so different. That Playt was green, and looked to be demonic and evil at heart, and it didn't have a hat on its head. It was trying to hold the rift open, while Playt was trying to close it.

In the meantime, Ryan had chased down the object that had flown out of the rift, and was holding it still. It was Hat.

Playt watched as the crack in reality mended itself, and then disappeared completely. The thinness in the air seemed to fade away slightly, but it was still easily detected.

Rhun

Whispers

Almost two-hundred-million more years pass by in a flash, and Rhun forgets who he is. What he is. Nobody refers to him as Rhun, only boy or kid. That's when he's lucky enough to get a visitor. Dysh has lost interest in him, and is only interested in the fact that he hasn't died yet, despite not being fed. This is when Rhun will hear the first whisper.

“Rhun?!” It is a female voice, an unfamiliar one. His cell is completely dark and the voice comes from within, but he looks around anyway.

He's able to say, “H...hello?” For several moments there is no reply and he begins to believe it was just his imagination.

“Rhun? Can you hear me?”

“Who is that? Where are you?”

“You called me Mumma. My name is Magdoline. I wrote you a note.”

“You... are my mom?”

The whisper laughs. “No, sweet child, but I did raise you for a time. It's good to speak with you.”

“How did you get here?”

A guard scares Rhun by knocking loudly on his cell door. “Pipe down in there, boy!”

“There is no need to speak aloud, I can hear your thoughts. I am within you, and I can see that you have a twisted soul. I am not physically there for you, because I have been dead for quite a long time.”

“I... did I kill you?” Rhun thinks towards her voice.

“No, Rhun. If anything, you gave me the time of my life before it was over. You were my light, my love. You still are. I hope you can forgive me for leaving you, but it was my time.”

Rhun cries for the first time in forever. “I couldn't read your note, and now it's gone.”

“That's ok, Rhun, do not stress over a piece of paper with ink on it. I remember what I wrote, would you like to hear it?”

“More than anything else in my life, I must hear it!”

“Dear baby Rhun, I love you. I wish I could be with you forever, but for now, I must leave. Please have a magical journey, that is what I wish for you. Get out, meet some new friends. Enjoy life, because we only get one. You are special, so much more than you may ever realize. Hold no hate in your heart for anyone or anything, and instead hold me and my words there. As long as I am there, we will never part. I don't know what the future has in store for you, but I can assure you, you are a good person. No matter where you find yourself in life, realize that you are on the side of love. I love you forever, Mumma Magdoline. Something like that.”

Rhun's tears flow like double waterfalls. “I...I'm so sorry.”

“Why? Can't you see? I got my wish. I am with you, forever.”

Playt

14: Linking the Puzzles

Ryan holds Hat still as Playt flies down to see what’s going on.

Hat barely struggles, but he tries to manipulate his way out of the situation.

“You have no need for me, I’m not from here. I’ll just slow you down from your mission, won’t I, Ryan?”

“Playt, don’t listen to him, my mission is not as important as if this hat were allowed to roam freely through this reality’s time. It could mean the end of everything. He was sent here to destroy the

Universe by causing paradoxes, so that his dimension is able to invade this one. We mustn't let that happen."

"You have a mission, Ryan? A different one from what we've already done so far?"

"Forget about it, Playt, it's neither the time nor the place to worry about that."

"Thirty-Four," the hat teases. Ryan's face turns blank, and then Hat jumps out of his hands.

Playt runs after it, but the hat is too fast and it slips through the doorway. Then the doorway closes shut and disappears. Playt looks around in frustration. He looks to Ryan, who's holding his head down and staring at the ground.

Playt walks up to him. "How did that hat know who you were?"

"It's a long story."

Playt picks up Ryan by his shirt and stares him in the eyes. "Tell me!"

"There's no need to start a fight. I will tell you. Put me down." Playt does as he is told. "The truth is… I don't know. I made a hat once, and it ran away. To think he might be the same hat is absurd, but that's the only explanation I can think of."

"Where do you think it went just now?"

"It went to cause a paradox in Lysandus's life. Now stay with me, because this is confusing. Orsidium and Lysandus made a bet. Lysandus put his hat on the line. Lysandus lost the bet, and thus he lost his hat. Somehow, Lysandus still had a hat however, and that was when he was fighting Evil Lysandus. Then, after Lysandus and Evil fused together to create Psychosandus…"

"Psychosandus? I've never heard of this being, who is it?"

"Forget it; he is no concern of yours. He's someone that Lysandus must deal with. Anyway, as Psychosandus, he goes to ask Orsidium for his hat back. The hat that he had while fighting Evil is lost in time somewhere. That is the paradox. It doesn't make any sense I know, but if you think about it, you will understand."

“So, Lysandus’s hat, and the hat that just came through the rift... are the same hat?”

“No. In fact they are opposites of each other. Lysandus’s hat is meant for finding peace, and that hat is meant for finding chaos. The living hats aren’t the only things in these realities that are linked like this. There are other puzzle pieces which are actual living beings that serve as the soul of our reality. The Spirit Symbol, the Pearl, the Gems, the Mask, the Wand, and the Orb. All seven of them are special in their own way. There are seven in this reality, and there are seven in that reality. The only two that I know of that have crossed between realities are the Hat and the Spirit Symbol.”

“So the Hats are for making chaos, and what do the other ones do?”

“The Hat isn’t for making chaos. It represents the search. The Hat from this realm searches for peace, while the Hat from that realm searches for disorder. The Spirit Symbol represents time, the Pearl represents matter, the Gems represent power, the Mask represents sight, the Wand represents action, and the Orb represents thought.”

“So, the Spirit Symbol from that realm has entered this one as well?”

“Yes. It entered this dimension when the one from here went to that one. They exchanged places, and that happened at the beginning of time, the same time of the big bang.”

“So let me get this straight... This is the dimension of peace supposedly, and that is the dimension of chaos? If that were so, how come there is so much chaos here?”

“Because of the Spirit Symbol. You see, the spirit of time from that other dimension bleeds onto our Universe. That is why chaos runs rampant in our dimension.”

“If I destroyed this Chaotic Spirit Symbol, what would happen?”

“Its power would be released in many forms, and would no longer be one singularity. It would become many objects or creatures, each one of them would be a different aspect of chaotic time.”

“This is confusing.”

Rhun

Cracks

As Dysh stares into the Red Orb, it cracks and then goes dim. He shakes it in disbelief and looks at the cracks, hoping he's simply losing his mind.

“NO!” Dysh throws his cup full of wine. “It can't be!”

The last bit of information he gathers from his orb is incomplete, yet useful. He receives a communication saying that Rhun is talking to someone, and this reinforces what the orb had to say. Dysh goes to the prison and opens up the door after seeing that the guard is dead.

Rhun sits there, awake and energized. Dysh raises his hand and focuses his energy on Rhun, shrinking him to a near microscopic level. Then he slams the door and returns to his throne.

Moments later he's already starting to have withdrawals from the orb, and his nerves spark with the electricity of anxiety. He suddenly remembers Lort and begins to worry even more. Reports of black fire surrounding Sector 4 come in from everywhere. It moves slowly, but everyone fears it more than ever. Dysh finally catches a break when he receives another communication that his son has been seen walking the Daunting Cracks with a woman in pink.

“Nyf. I knew you were out there.”

Playt

15: Ryan’s Mission

“This isn’t what I was brought here to talk to you about. I was brought here to teach you.”

“Teach me what?”

“Martial arts. I was supposed to teach you how to get in touch with your mind and your body, to become at ease with your spirit.”

“How will you teach me that?”

“It will take many years, thirty-four to be exact.”

“That is the same number that Hat said to you right before he jumped away. That number means something to you, doesn’t it?”

“That’s how old I am right now. It used to mean a lot more, but now it’s just a number, like any other number.”

“Then why were you shocked when Hat said it?”

“Because it was something he shouldn’t have known about. It was a surprise to me. It was also a number that appeared at a crossroads in my life. It became either the stories I write, or a love that would not have lasted, and would have most likely sent me into depression. Unknowingly, I chose the right path.”

“Do you think if you chose the other path, that I would not exist?”

“You would not exist to me, but who’s to say I created you? I am not an all-powerful god, and there is no possible way I could ever create one. I was just an interpreter, a window. I'm not even sure I had a choice in the matter, to be honest.”

“If you know everything about my life, then how did I become the way I am? I want to know how I became Playt. I was once Lysandus, and now Playt. I need to know the answer.”

“I wasn’t sent to tell you, but once you find out you will realize it doesn’t make any difference. You are still the one you are, and nothing will ever change that.”

“Whatever, let’s get on with it then. Teach me what you came to teach me, and then leave.”

Ryan's first lesson is meditation. Playt fidgets and is easily bored. He cannot seem to calm his thoughts, and so Ryan decides to up the pace a bit.

The first time Playt spars, he gets frustrated. He is much stronger, and much faster than Ryan, but since Ryan’s mind is more at ease and he has studied many more techniques he can be where he needs to be when he needs to be there. Playt cannot concentrate, and instead goes into a rage, instantly killing Ryan.

Then he brings him back to life and apologizes. Ryan takes the rest of the day off.

This goes on for years, and Playt believes he has learned everything there is to learn. Ryan teaches him of philosophy, he teaches him of psychology, and he teaches him of self-control. He teaches him to always push himself, and he teaches him that there is always room for improvement.

Playt's abilities skyrocket. He becomes stronger with each passing day, and Ryan tells him to lift the heaviest objects he can, over and over again, until his muscles feel pain. Playt does this, and hates it at first. Eventually he welcomes the feeling. He grows strong, and tall. He tosses the fake hat that Fat Playt had made, and it is not missed.

They eat right, and they eat well. The more Playt grows, the more he eats.

Playt has learned everything that Ryan has to offer him. Playt's mind becomes calm and collected the same as that of Teen Playt; only it is a natural calm and not one falsified by a magic talking hat.

As Playt's mind becomes more at ease and his muscles grow he notices his powers are heightened as well, and he learns that he has countless abilities. He can literally do anything he wants.

Thirty-four years have now passed and it is time for Ryan to go back to Earth. Playt gives him a gift for helping out, and Ryan is sent home with powers he cannot comprehend. He is now twice his original age, but he appears to not have aged. Playt's gift has given him back his youth, but has allowed him to keep all of his memories.

Transgressions

Ynk

The Eye

21,004,395,011

Societies across the Universe began to wither like a smoldering firepit. The new age of technology brought poverty, war, and within the people was anxiety and depression. The galaxies began to both drift apart as well as collapse within. Technology became magic, used for good or bad. OEC was the largest in Lys, the Outside Electronics Company. The factory was located on Black Leaves, but the malls were on New Falls. Ink felt like he might be coming down with something serious, and laughed at the notion.

Nonetheless, he could not shake the feeling as he started coughing and sneezing uncontrollably. He'd never been sick before, not like this. He began seeing more people around him sick and decided to himself that it was a pandemic.

As he was walking for food one day, he counted twelve people that were coughing. That was the day he saw the three men on horpses. They were dressed in all black and could only be separated by the shape of their silhouettes. One was tall, one was short, and the other one was the other one. The horpses made low moaning sounds of agony as they tapped their six hooves apiece down the street.

Ink didn't like the look of the three, and could sense a black cloud following them. One looked in his direction and Ink hid before he was spotted. He asked the old man next to him who they were, and the man told him they were hired gunmen who called themselves Onyx Men. They had been hired by OEC, but why was unsure. “Rumors said it was for shoplifters, but most people believe that's a lame excuse. If you ask me, this is all about The Eye.”

“The Eye?” Ink looked at the old man, gray, wrinkled and feeble. The man looked into his eyes with wonder.

“You must be out of the loop,” he said as he laughed. “Let me tell you a story.”

As the old man rambled on, Ink listened with growing curiosity. Mostly because his story began with

the words, “There's a man named Inc from planet Jedziah who's written a program that will solve all of life's problems.” Ink wondered what problems the old man was talking about, but moreso he wondered what a program was. Even more curious was the name Inc. “He collaborated with a group calling themselves Cosmo Creations. This group created the hardware necessary to run his software. They showcased the working prototype to only one corporation before they were funded and sponsored 100%. Soon after appeared another man with a similar product. The original made by Inc is known as The Eye, and the mysterious newcomer's product is called New Vision. Everybody became rich, and now almost everyone has one or the other. The Eye became the hottest seller at the mall here on New Falls, and this caught the attention of the OEC.”

The man described The Eye as being about the size of a tall can. The top part could disconnect and had a foldable headband making it so it could be used as either a pair of true surround sound headphones or speakers. There was a safety precaution so that the speakers were never too loud for a person's ears when they were being worn. The section underneath the speakers was a small circular container which held special eye contacts they named Face Screens. The section underneath that was another compartment, only bigger, and was filled with a full set of interactive gloves and socks. The section underneath the accessories was a holographic projector which was slightly larger than the contacts container, and could be used instead of the contacts. The projector was great for parties, movie nights, or gamer gatherings. The bottom section was the actual system and it connected to the speakers, the contacts, the controllers and the projector wirelessly. The contacts even had the ability to transmit data about their location, giving The Eye enough information to know when people turned their head, where they were looking, or if their eyes were closed. The gloves and socks transmitted data about subtle movements, making it so that people could run or jump in a virtual environment without actually using much movement at all. Tossing around virtual mountains was possible without even lifting an arm. The hands also had microphones on the thumbs, and there was a helmet that people could buy which picked up brainwaves. Experts of the system were able to program games and or visual experiences. The data was all saved on small marbles which were inserted in the system's side where there was a symbol of an eye. The marble would replace the blank gray iris that was there and as the system powered up the marble would glow different colors and spin around in streams of air. It was held in from flying off by a clear plastic shield and more streams of air. The entire system was powered by the user's biorhythms.

“That's not all, you can talk to people across the Universe with it, play games with them, watch

movies with them, or just hike a virtual mountain. I'm surprised you haven't heard of them, they're amazing. Anything you ever wanted to do, anywhere you ever wanted to go. If you want to be a superhero, this is for you."

Ink looked at him, trying to imagine The Eye and its possibilities. "But... what does this have to do with the Onyx Men?"

The old man looked at him in the eyes. "Look, I don't know anything, son. It was just something I heard... They said that there was a hacker somewhere here on New Falls. Keep this to yourself, you really don't want to be involved."

"What's a hacker?"

"Who are you? A hacker can jump into your game or program. Basically, they can destroy your world, infect your Eye and make it absolutely useless. This hacker is said to have stolen quite a considerable amount of information as well as money. That's where the hired gunmen over there come in. I think they're looking for the hacker."

Ink looked at him and thought to tell the old man who he was. Instead he thanked the man and walked the opposite direction of where the horpses had gone.

Stalker

i. Her

On his way home he started to feel as if he was being followed. He kept checking, and even though he never saw anyone, he could not shake the feeling. He reached the base of his mountain when he heard a woman talking to someone and laughing. He could smell her in the air, and it was beautiful. He walked a not-so-straight route so that he might catch a glance of her. She was outside in summer clothes, showing off her legs and shoulders. She smiled and waved at him as he passed and he gulped. Then he waved and attempted a smile, staring the entire time. She was beyond beautiful, and Ink didn't know how to handle his hormones as she began laughing. His brow filled with sweat, his whole head began burning, and his stomach began to twist. His heart jumped up and down and he was filled with an unbalanced mixture of arousal and fear. He turned his head and kept walking. She seemed busy.

ii. Box

Atop his mountain once more, he sat in the box which was his home. It was a boring box, but it was his place of solitude. A place to think. He thought about the girl. Her. He could see her house from his. He thought about the Onyx Men and The Eye. He got bored pretty quick and started to think about the past, which only gave him anxiety and headaches. He was restless and suffering from cabin fever.

He decided to buy The Eye.

On the cold walk home, he was hoping to catch a glimpse of her, but she was nowhere to be seen. In his box he set up The Eye. From his window he saw her in her window. She was changing her clothes. He watched for a little bit and then got embarrassed.

Ink put on the accessories to The Eye as well as the programmer's helmet. He put the contacts in his eyes and unfolded the headphones to put them on. Ink switched the power to the system on and it initialized.

Before long he was in a program he created, and she was there. Alone together, they talked and laughed. They connected. He told her all about himself and his life, then she told him everything about herself. He started to forget it wasn't real.

iii. Virtually Alone

Days passed. Ink lived and slept within The Eye. Him and Lisa were in love. They hung out at the park, hiked mountains, tossed sand at the beach, and swam together. He wished it would never end.

One day he asked her to marry him. She said it was moving fast, but her answer was yes. His program sped up to past the wedding when Ink found out he would be a father. Years passed within The Eye, his child grew and started school.

Nearly a month passed in the real world. Ink had no need for nourishment and could have potentially lived within The Eye forever, but one day Lisa's arm fell off. Ink freaked out and went into shock. Her head disappeared and he snapped. Ink began to move his actual muscles. Their family home crumbled around him and collapsed into nothing.

He turned The Eye off and took the contacts out. Ink took all of the accessories off and walked to his kitchen for food. Disoriented, he looked out his window to see her talking on the phone in barely any

clothes. Ink went to sleep in the real world, determined to talk to her and ask her name in the morning.

He barely slept, and woke up in the middle of the night to eat some more. Her window was covered. He wasn't able to sleep again until morning.

iv. Same

The next couple of days passed in a similar fashion, only his Eye would no longer turn on. Bored once again and lost in his thoughts, he decided to return the broken machine for a new one. He used it as an excuse to leave the house.

She wasn't there, so he went back to the New Falls Mall. They didn't want to replace it at first, but he argued until they caved.

She still wasn't there so he set up The Eye again. Three days later, he began to forget her face, but it didn't matter too much anymore. He was in love. On the fourth day, his Eye was hacked again, and his dream crumbled to rubble once more. Angry and frustrated, Ink threw The Eye and demolished it. He set his alarm for the morning and vowed to talk to her the next day. He slept in and lost his nerve. Looking out his window, Ink could see her leaving and when she was gone, he went back to sleep. Eventually, he was able to work up the courage to approach her.

“Hello neighbor. My name is Nichole, it's very nice to meet you.”

“Nice to meet you, my name is Ink. I live up there.” He pointed. “I just wanted to say hi.” He smiled and stared at her. There was an awkward silence that made him lightheaded.

“Hello.”

Ink stood there, thinking of what to say. “Uhm.” He shook his head and looked at the ground. “I just wanted...” his voice cracked and dipped to inaudibility. He coughed. “I just wanted to say that I think you're beautiful and I want to hang out.” He looked back up at her, suddenly swimming in sweat and breathing heavily.

“Thank you, and I would like to get to know you, but I'm not looking for any kind of serious relationship right now.” Her face scrunched up into an apologetic look. Ink's heart felt as if it had been stepped on as the disappointment of her hesitation sank in. She hadn't even said no, and yet Ink felt as if he had been rejected. It was humiliating. He tried to play it off, waved goodbye and walked home.

He didn't have any outlet so he decided to lay down for a nap.

Tears poured in streams as he started feeling sorry for himself. Ink's nose began running and he was suddenly feeling sick again. His head was pounding.

Sickness

i. Third Eye

When he was feeling well enough, Ink left to buy another Eye. When he got home and opened it up, he noticed that it looked slightly different. He hooked into it, turned it on and began using it like the other ones. This time his fake wife Lisa was nowhere to be found, although the world around him was incredibly realistic and crisp. He tried to recreate her, but was unable.

In fact he had little to no control over the programmer's helmet at all. Instead he was immersed in a beautiful world with bright green plantlife everywhere and a giant waterfall roaring in front of him. There were people there, and none of them were wearing any clothes. It was both unattractive and intriguing. The water was clear and the air was perfect. It was at that moment that he realized the air around him was just the air in his box. It was easy for him to get lost in The Eye as he was approached by an old naked man. “Are you the hacker?”

Ink jumped and then looked at him in confusion. “No... I thought maybe you were.”

“Ha! No, I'm not the hacker, I'm just a fragment of my owner's consciousness. It broke off into this machine when he was hacked. His machine glitched, sending an electrical pulse to his brain through the headphones and basically burning me into the system forever. Since you're here and not the hacker I'm guessing his system was refurbished at the factory and sold back to you without being tested with a programmer's helmet. I'm not really sure.”

“So, tell me all you know about this hacker.”

ii. Maggots

The Eye filled with maggots. The people, the waterfall, the trees, the grass. Ink began to feel them on his skin, crawling and squirming about. He removed his headphones and contacts to find black maggots all over him. He jumped, throwing the speakers and contacts to the side. He brushed the maggots off of him and ran outside, his skin desperately trying to escape him.

He regained his composure long enough to see Nichole looking at him. He sneezed. Ink looked to the ground and the maggots were gone. He sneezed again. Looking over to see her again he noticed that her head was turned. Ink went back inside and all the maggots were gone. He began coughing and feeling sicker than ever before.

Several days passed and he decided to go to the hospital. The doctor did tests and came to the conclusion that there was nothing physically wrong with him, but gave him some medicine to fight the cold symptoms.

His head was throbbing, he felt hot and cold, but he was sweating. He could barely walk straight, and after he got home and took his medication he was out cold. In his dreams were black maggots devouring everything. He woke up mid-night and puked in the toilet.

iii. Three Doctors

Ink stumbled out of his house in a hallucinogenic feverish haze. He tumbled down the mountain and collapsed at the bottom. He was discovered the next morning by a neighbor other than Nichole and was rushed to the hospital. Three doctors examined him. Dr. Ink, Dr. Pepyr, and Dr. Eam, and they collectively devised that he had the first case any of them had ever heard or seen where the inflicted manifested symptoms, nightmares, and black maggots. They were baffled, completely ignorant to Ink's tendency to manifest his thoughts into reality.

They decided that something had infected him and they put him into quarantine to prevent further spread of whatever it was.

When he was once again conscious, they explained his condition. They asked him what the last thing he remembered was and he told them about The Eye.

A scandal exploded and The Eye was recalled. Ink was assigned a lawyer and asked if he wanted to press charges. He agreed to their terms and pressed charges against Cosmo Creations but added that he also wanted to press charges against the hacker.

They explained that they still hadn't found him, but the investigations would continue until he was found. Meanwhile, Ink's condition fluctuated.

Pronouns

i.I
21,005,243,562

A mile of paperwork and nearly a million years later, Ink started to feel good enough to finally leave the hospital. He had profited off the lawsuit and now owned half of Cosmo Creations. His lawyer Mr. Rion had fought for him and had won more than Ink had asked for, except that the hacker had still not been found. The Onyx Men continued to patrol on their horpses, and as Ink passed them on his way home he realized that even though they were technically on his side they still scared the hell out of him. He was about to reach the top of the hill where he began seeing Nichole's house when he once again felt like he was being followed.

He turned around, but there was nobody there. He heard a voice say that his name was Nik. “You spoke to my father in the market a long while ago, Nik Sr. He is the one who told you about The Eye, the hacker, and the Onyx Men. I know of a new underground device that surpasses The Eye is so many ways. It goes on the ear and transmits brainwaves back and forth to the user. It can be carried around in your pocket and is activated by thought. The name of this device is simply I. I can be concealed by wearing a hood. It's capable of hacking The Eye, and if you find one, I know where to find the hacker. Or at least where to start. If you're interested, I'll put some information in your mailbox.”

Ink hesitated, but was too intrigued to turn down the offer. “I'll see what I can do, thank you.”
ii.Me

Inc here. I'm sending this notice to the four of you on a secure and private line. Please respond only on this line, and do not share any of this information with another. I haven't talked to any of you in quite a long time, I hope everything's been good. As you may know, I was the brain behind The Eye, and even though I had a totally erroneous lawsuit filed against me and lost, I still ended up on my feet.

About that, did any of you catch that the “sick” man suing me was named Ink, and the doctor who diagnosed him was named Dr. Ink? I personally believe it's a conspiracy, and I don't believe that those are their real names. This may go all the way up the ladder of power, I'm unsure. They said my software had “infected his brain”. This is after he had already seen a different doctor had determined that it was all in his head. I think this whole thing is preposterous, software cannot infect your brain.

Anyhow, this isn't why I'm sending this notice. I'm sending it to you because I have been “let go”

from Cosmo Creations and yet I still need help making hardware for my latest software, Me. I understand that none of you are in the position to help directly, but we've known each other for quite a while and I feel comfortable sharing this information with you. You all have connections to powerful people, and I would really appreciate any help.

Oh yea, I met a girl. I still don't know her name, but I did get her number. See, this is the type of stuff people could share with their friends across the Universe using Me. Pictures, videos, games, movies, dreams, anything. We will allow sharing of it all. This is a zillion dollar idea, and anybody that helps me will be rewarded handsomely. I know that I can trust each and every one of you not to sell me out, and that's a good thing. I don't want to relive the New Vision fiasco.

iii.Mine

With his newly found resources (money), Ink found an underground market that sold I. They looked at him suspiciously, then looked around before looking back into his eyes. Then they reached under the counter and charged him an outrageous amount of money for a card deck sized box. Ink put it in his pocket and left.

He was vigilant the entire walk home, and very careful. Paranoid that he had just purchased something extremely valuable, and extremely illegal. Somebody was going to take it, everyone wanted one. It was his Orb all over again. He played with the box in his pocket as he hiked a jog home. He saw Nichole outside and she waved. He smiled and waved back, confident and oblivious that he was no longer showing any symptoms of being sick.

Inside his box, he opened the new toy and read the instructions. I was very simple to use. Ink attached it to his ear and turned it on by thinking of the signal phrase “snow duck”. The phrase had been randomly picked from a large list of possible verbal commands, and he had the option to customize it to whatever he wanted it to be, and even protect it to only respond to his voice. He acquainted himself with the system a little before pausing and reaching into his pocket for the piece of paper that Nik had left in his mailbox. That was when he heard a knock at the door. He hid I and hesitantly opened the door.

“Hi, my name's Jeff, I'm here to lower your bills. Are you interested in saving money?”

There was a long awkward silence as Ink looked Jeff up and down. Jeff kept glancing inside as he continued talking, and Ink's heart dropped. He rushed him off and locked all doors and windows, then

he waited twenty minutes before using I again.

iv. You

Inc, I'm sending you this under the same privacy protocol as your last notice. You're going to want to keep this between us, this is your good friend Hatt. I think I've found what you're looking for.

It's a quite popular company called Bahl, and they make orb shaped computers. They were extremely interested in your idea, but wanted to see if we could make some slight adjustments.

First would be the name of the software, Me sounds egotistical and slightly selfish. They don't want a product called Me Bahl. They suggested we call it You. You Bahl is a name they can live with, they believe it lets the customers know that the company is dedicated to servicing them. I will put you in contact with Pearl, she can walk you through the next steps and discuss profits.

On a side note, how the hell do you do it? You come up with a zillion dollar idea, and then casually get a beautiful woman's number without even knowing her name? Tell me your secrets and I'll wave the finder's fee for Bahl. Oh, also, I'm not sure who all you put on that last transmission, but rumor has it that the whole New Visions thing was caused by Harrison leaking information to competitors. You didn't hear it from me though.

Get a hold of me if you need anything else or want to hang out.

Numbers

i.34

Ink tuned to the 34th frequency as instructed. He was able to listen and research the case that the Onyx Men had been building. He decided to research the men themselves first. Their names were K (the big one), Y (the skinny one), and N (the other one). Not much was in the file, as if their information was top secret. However, through their notes he saw the number 683.4 noted several times. Ink instinctively tuned his I to that station.

After a quick loading room with magazines and coloring books, Ink found himself watching the hacker hack through secure networks like butter. Within the options on the 683.4 frequency he could access the log and see everything the hacker had ever done. The hacker had just recently toppled the law enforcement network, tapped into OEC logs, and was on its way to frequency 34. The trail behind

the hacker was a field of destruction. Ink followed it back to where his Eyes were hacked. He copied his programs of Lisa to his I as quickly as he could, careful not to linger. Then he followed the trail even further back, through a forest of dead data, menus, proxies, all the way to the home of the hacker.

He was being followed, watched, and so he quickly gathered as much information as possible before turning off I and hiding it in an undisclosed location.

ii.1

Ink never used his I again. He knew of a brand new system that was far superior in every way. He snapped I in two and discarded it only moments before remembering that Lisa had been on there. He decided he would just make a new Lisa when he got the new system, 1.

1 was a pill whose outer casing dissolved during digestion. Once in the stomach, it attached itself to the most convenient location and planted itself, causing a slight pain. Then the stomach healed around the device and it became a part of the person.

It was also telepathic in the same way that I was, but not as easy to hack into. The bad thing was that it was traceable, although for safety reasons it had a telepathic setting to release the chip into the digestive system. This safety feature could be deactivated or activated by law enforcement and doctors.

Ink knew exactly where to get one too, and also knew how to find the hacker and meet him face to face. It took him several weeks to find 1, and when he did it was more costly than he had anticipated. Nearly eleven times the price of I.

Ink hesitated before swallowing it. 1 initiated and Ink set it all up as he walked to find the Onyx Men at the market.

iii.70

Ink had discovered a competition for I. The Onyx Men knew that the hacker would be there. Once Ink found them he followed from a distance. He watched them while also listening with 1. Multitasking even further he began to watch what the hacker was doing. They were on their way to the competition as well. None of them had 1, and understandably. Ink was no longer rich because of it. He had a little left, but the majority of his fortune was gone.

As he watched, Ink discovered that seventy people had been selected to join the competition. One of those names was believed to be the hacker, and three of them were the Onyx Men. Nobody knew the

hacker's name, and as Ink looked at the list he plotted to steal the identity of the person with the name least likely to be the hacker's name. He settled on the name Dorp Furlorpin.

He did his research, hacked Dorp's I and made it useless. Without it he wouldn't be able to find the competition. As Ink continued to the tournament, he began thinking of Lisa again. She appeared beside him and he jumped. Then he realized that it must have been 1 letting him see his buried thoughts.

Everyone reached a large building. Ink kept his distance from the Onyx Men while also blending in.

Tournament

To fit in, Ink made a replica of I to put behind his ear. At the door he gave the fake name and he was approved. However, they stopped Lisa. It was at that moment that Ink realized that she wasn't just on his 1, he had manifested her subconsciously. “She's with me, not a competitor, just a part of the audience.” They gave him a funny look and charged him extra.

They were slowly lead down a long hallway. As they all filed down the hall, Ink looked ahead to see a red robot verifying identifications. When it was his turn, the robot spoke to Ink. “Model PL8 reporting, please provide valid identification.” Ink manifested valid Ids and they entered.

The room was empty and gigantic. The only things in the room were the people, tiny projectors, hidden speakers, and the only door was the one they walked through. There were no windows to the outside world and the walls and ceiling were black. As he walked in, his 1 activated a menu to emulate I's integration room sequence.

Once initiated, Ink noticed that they were already inside the game. Around them was an unimaginably ginormous city, completely busy and booming with activity. They were led to the foot of a great tower with no foreseeable roof.

The seventy competitors all walked into the loading bay's elevator, while the audience members were given I viewers and lead to the viewing area, which was right next to the entrance. Seats popped up out of the floor for all of the audience to comfortably enjoy the show. Ink looked around at the people in the loading elevator, trying to figure out which one could be the hacker. All were fairly quiet as they virtually escalated. Not many knew each other, and the ones that did were whispering. The Onyx Men were silent and foreboding as always. Ink was approached and tapped on the shoulder.

“Hello there. You look like good competition. My name is Inc, and you are?”

Ink fumbled through his thoughts to remember his alias. “D... Dorp.” Inc smiled and shook his hand, then decided to hang out with Ink and chat until the elevator had reached its virtual destination.

The elevator doors opened to a dense forest of light gray plants. Inc introduced Ink to his little sister, Chyna. She glared at Ink with a cold stare of death and shook his hand. “Nice to see you again, Dorp.” Inc was surprised that they knew each other, and so was Ink.

Suddenly, an image of a man with glasses appeared in front of them and welcomed them to the Silver Leaves Forest. Then they were separated into groups of five. Ink was grouped up with K (the big Onyx Man), a skinny guy named Byc, and two middle aged overweight women who already seemed to know each other.

“I think this team will win!” shouted Byc in excitement.

K looked at him and grunted. “This isn't a team. Don't get too comfortable.”

The first round was an obstacle race through the densest part of Silver Leaves Forest. Aside from all the scattered plantlife, the first obstacle was a giant tree next to a cliff. They needed to climb.

Ink accessed his menus to find that he couldn't create any kind of jet pack, wings, or anything that would make it easier except for blades that came out of his hands and feet. He stabbed the tree and began to climb. The others copied. On the way up there were huge bugs that began crawling all over them and nipping at them.

Byc was getting closer to K than K was comfortable with, and ended up getting pushed off of the tree halfway up, counting as an instant disqualification. The two women were further up and on to the next course before Ink or K had reached the top. They got up there at the same time and K coldly stared into his eyes. Ink felt his stomach and teeth clench in anticipation of a fight, but K ran ahead instead. Ink sped up to try to catch them.

That was when he saw the two ladies fall off of the next course, a bridge over rapid flowing green water. K hesitated, or was looking through his menu long enough for Ink to catch up. He looked through his menu as he ran to see a new gravity setting become unlocked. As he approached the bridge

he jumped and switched the gravity to zero, sending him flying. K looked up in time to see Ink soaring over him to the other side. Shortly after, K was hopping the bridge with ease.

They reached the third and final course together, but Ink had gotten there slightly faster so he unlocked a powerup. As he read the description in his menus he also continued running to the next track. It was an ice powerup, and lucky for him, the next course was a giant lake of purple water. Without hesitation, Ink activated the powerup and slid across the lake as far as its effects lasted. Then he landed in the water and had to swim the rest of the way. Unfortunately for him, Ink wasn't a very good swimmer, and K was beginning to catch up to him using a flippers item.

They reached the finish line at the same exact moment, and it was considered a tie. Of the fourteen groups that had competed, two other groups also had ties, leaving seventeen finalists. Inc and his little sister had both made it, as well as all three Onyx Men. Ink looked around at the rest, positive that the hacker must have also made it that far. Still unsure of who it could be, but he had a few ideas. The one was wearing a hood and would not show his eyes. Another had acne, but looked at everyone with shifty and flicking eyes. The other competitor that Ink began to suspect was N, the medium sized Onyx Man. Something was off about him.

Semi-finals

There was some time to breathe before the semi-finals, and it gave everybody some time to learn their competition, get some refreshments and relax for a moment. Ink was pulled aside and taken to a dark corner by Inc's little sister, Chyna. She hissed a whisper into his ear. “Who the hell are you?”

Ink looked around and tried to back away. She pulled his clothes and looked at him eye to eye. “I know you're not Dorp, who...” she paused. “Wait, I know you! You were...” she flickered her eyes, calculating, putting pieces together. “Ink. You're the sick man who sued my brother. But you're also... Lisa.”

Ink stared at her, dumbfounded. He had found the hacker, or rather, she had found him. “You... are the hacker?”

She tightened her grip on his shirt, “Keep your fucking voice down. There are people looking for me.”

Ink looked at her, still in shock. “Yea, I was one of them.”

She looked at him. “Ok dude, I need to show you something. This has gone too far.” She explained to him how to access the audience feed. He saw Lisa on one side, and saw Nichole sitting on the other end.

“Why is Nichole here?”

“That's simple Ink, she's here to watch Inc compete.”

Ink felt his heart shatter in two, and watched as Lisa faded from existence. Chyna saw it happen. “What are you?”

“Don't worry about it. Let's finish this.”

Ink turned to walk away, but was stopped by Inc. “What were you and my sister discussing?”

“It was nothing, don't worry about it.” Inc looked at him suspiciously with anger in his face.

“Alright man, I hope you're ready.” He walked away with his temper a boil. Was Ink ready?

The semi-finals consisted of a wide and long road of dead grass and plants. At the end was a great mountain, overflowing with lava. In the middle was a gigantic maze with hidden traps. Their goal was not only to reach the top of the mountain, but to kill as many zombies as possible and collect their bird tokens. Ink had been picking up powerups, and had used one called “custom weapon” to recreate his ancient blades from the Age of Fear. With them, he ran through zombies, collecting more powerups and plenty of tokens. He even manifested a dog named Fryzbie to help him collect all the bird tokens.

Fryzbie was fast, viscous, powerful, and he was able to collect the tokens quicker than anybody. The judges and programmers searched for the code for the dog but were unable to find it at first, until Ink subconsciously manifested the code. The rarity for Fryzbie was the highest they had ever seen.

Chyna watched in disgust as Ink and Fryzbie laid waste to the course. Y, N, and K watched suspiciously. Inc watched in amazement. Chyna saw the fake I fall off of Ink in the heat of battle and was suddenly jealous to know he had 1. She could never afford it, and Inc had forbade it.

Inc had been too preoccupied to notice Harrison at first, and when he finally saw him, he was furious. He began collecting his tokens and as they all reached the maze, Inc shoved Harrison into a crowd of zombies. Harrison and several others didn't make it to the maze before being disqualified.

Inc caught up to Ink and tried to be his friend again. “I don't know what it is about you Dorp, but I like you.” Ink was filling with jealousy over Inc and Nichole, and he really just wanted Inc to lose. He gained his trust and just as quickly betrayed him, leading him into a dead end full of zombies. Chyna watched, no longer killing or collecting. She was impressed by Ink, but she hated him all the same. She decided to disqualify herself by stepping on a trap. She then demanded to be taken to the viewing area. Byc was there, and together they watched as Ink continued through the maze with ease.

K wasn't fast enough, and was eventually overrun by zombies. Y tried to help him and was disqualified as well. N was the only Onyx Man left, and he was in a close second to Ink. Behind him was a man with blue skin and behind him were two others that had made it through the maze. The five of them began to climb the mountain. Ink used his blades to scale it, and Fryzbie found his own path.

The two behind the blue guy didn't make it up the mountain, they had been surprised by cave zombies and fell to their disqualifications. Only three made it to the top. Ink, N, and the blue man. They stared at each other in silence. Then they looked to the lava within the mountain. It splashed around and sizzled. An image of a face appeared and spoke. “N, Dorp, Bodlah. You have all made it to the finals. It will be a three person freeforall. You have each been given different random powerups and much of your inventory has been filled with useful items. Congratulations for making it this far. Good luck.” As soon as Ink had gotten back to the refreshments area, Chyna walked up and whispered into his ear.

“Your fake I fell off.” Ink looked up in horror, reaching for his ear. He manifested another I and Chyna laughed and bawked. “What are you?” She repeated.

Inc interrupted them. “Hitting on my sister are you, Ink? You know you led me to my disqualification, right? That's ok, it was a stupid competition anyhow. I still think The Eye was far superior. Anyway, good luck, Dorp.”

Ink tried to get to know his competition. N remained silent, regardless of his questions. Bodlah opened up and explained how his father, Smiird, was a proud and widely loved man. “He died while I was still young, but I'd like to think he is watching me from beyond the gates, smiling.”

Finals

All those that had already lost were allowed to watch with the audience as Ink, N and Bodlah stepped into a circular ring of fire beside the mountain. They were equally spaced out on the circumference of the circle, standing at points of an equilateral triangle. In their corners were boxes where they had to stand. When all were in place, the circle raised out of the ground and lifted past the mountain towards the clouds. Fryzbie had been deactivated and placed back into Ink's Inventory. Numbers appeared before each of them, counting down to zero. Then the word, “Fight,” appeared and faded away.

The circle was large enough for them to have to run at each other. Instead, they all just looked through their inventories and powerups even though they had already memorized everything. They all stood there and waited for the others to move. It seemed like the thing to do.

A small readout explained that it was round one and there were less than five minutes left. N advanced first, cocky and smiling, but looking at neither in the eyes. Bodlah and Ink watched in anticipation. N laughed and then looked at each individually. They could both see in his eyes that there was something wrong with him mentally.

In an instant, he went to one knee and smacked the ground with his hand. A shockwave of blue light shot out from the spot he smacked, sending Ink and Bodlah off the side of the ring's pedestal.

Y spied on Chyna and Byc as they watched the competition. Ink had used an umbrella type thing to glide back to the ring, while Bodlah used a cape. Bodlah attacked while N was recovering from his attack, using a harpoon which stabbed through his right leg and made him vibrate. Bodlah drew him close and punched him with a swordfist. N then saw his health bar pop up, showing that he lost 10% from the attack. N was not happy.

Meanwhile, Ink was coming up with a plan and waiting for the right moment to act. He walked a fine line between being patient and hesitating. N was furious and screamed, unleashing a wall of fire towards Bodlah. The fire burned him for a total of 15%, and then N fired a gun at him. The virtual bullet landed between Bodlah's eyes, taking another 40% from his health total.

As Bodlah tried to recover and think, Ink made his move. Clearly the aggressor was N, so he became Ink's target. He pulled out a bazooka and aimed at N. Ink fired the rocket and N barely had enough time

to dodge it, but was able to take zero damage. N's focus shifted as he raised his hands, stood tall, and began to levitate. A giant orb of plasma began to grow above his head.

Before N's attack was fully charged, Ink pulled out a laser gun. He aimed at N's head and fired. Unfortunately for him it went right past N's head, but luckily the item had two more bullets. Without hesitation he fired them both and each one hit its mark, together taking 30% from his health.

N was as pissed as ever, and was about to release his attack when Bodlah vanished from the ring and reappeared only a moment later behind N with a glowing hot sword in his hands. N's life total was then zero and he slowly faded from the ring.

Bodlah and Ink stood silent and motionless for several moments. They checked their inventories and powerups. Then Bodlah began to laugh. Chyna had hacked into both of their inventories, although Ink's 1 wasn't as easy to get into. She could see the chess game unfolding, every possibility, every path. In every scenario, Ink was sure to lose. Bodlah explained to Ink that he had helped develop the competition and he had programmed himself the upper hand.

Bodlah activated an unknown powerup and began to transform his physical appearance, twisting and crunching his bones as he began to tower over Ink. “You can now call me by my last name, Inq. This is my true form.”

His new appearance reminded Ink of Oni, but only subliminally. They battled, and Ink had to use almost all of his items and powerups, but could only barely chip away at Inq's health. Inq threw a couple of powerful attacks at Ink that he was unable to avoid. His health dropped from full to 25% in a matter of only a few seconds. Inq's health was still at 34%. After a quick melee combo of four hits, Ink was down to only 5%.

As a last ditch effort Ink brought back Fryzbie and his blades. Together they unleashed a fury that Inq hadn't prepared for, chipping his health down to 17%. Inq used his last powerup, an explosion of yellow light energy. It engulfed Fryzbie, disintegrating it instantly. Ink took enough damage to bring him to zero.

The virtual world flickered off momentarily, and when it came back on Ink's life was at 2% and he had one powerup that wasn't there before. Ink activated it without even reading its description. His muscles plumped out and thick metal armor appeared around him. He attacked Inq and was finally able

to do some real damage to him. Inq struggled as he took 8% with each punch, bringing him down to 1%. Inq retaliated but did no damage at all.

At the last moment, they were both only at 1%, and before Inq had any time to react, he had lost. The virtual world faded and Ink looked over to the audience to see Chyna being arrested.

Freefall

i. Exposed

Ink ran over to where Chyna was, and his fake I fell off again as he ran. K was placing handcuffs over her wrists. “It was me, I'm the hacker! Not her!”

The Onyx Men looked at Ink, just as shocked as Chyna was. N walked over to Ink. “We have been building a case against her, and have a mountain of evidence proving her involvement in the loss of zillions of dollars, which can be used to put her to death for her crimes. You might want to think twice about taking the blame this time.”

Ink felt like being reckless. “I was framing her the whole time.”

N gave him a confused look. “If you went through all that work to frame her, why would you confess right when we finally caught her?”

Ink thought for a moment, damning N's use of logic. “Because I got to know her and decided that I cannot go through with it. She is a good person, and doesn't deserve death.” Chyna stared at him. Through her I she sent him a private message.

It read simply, “why?” and underneath that it said, “delete.” Ink replied and then deleted.

“Why did you help me win the Tournament?” She deleted his message without replying.

Inc watched with Nichole. “Damn, I really thought Dorp seemed like a good guy.”

“His name isn't Dorp. That's my neighbor, Ink.” Inc looked at her, dumbfounded.

“Ink?”

As Ink was being taken away, Inq found Ink's fake I.

Ink was taken to court after a few weeks in a cell, and since he had confessed his charges were lessened, and instead of being put to death he was to be forced to work and pay back the zillions that Chyna had destroyed.

ii. Ms. Myremak

Ink's 1 was detected and removed before his imprisonment. He wrote a letter to Chyna in his head and when he was able to, he wrote it all down and sent it. It explained things, and he also confessed his love to her. As the days passed he grew more and more eager to hear back from her, but the people around him were breathing down his neck and watching his every move.

The overseer for his group within the prison was Ms. Myremak, a ruthless manhater that always dressed in black. Down the back of her coat were large silver buttons lined up against her spine. She codenamed her guards the Elephants, and they were all rather large men, overweight and angry looking. She showed no compassion to anybody, not even her most loyal Elephant. Their name alone suggested that she saw them as nothing more than animals. She was a dictator, and Ink became one of her hundreds of slaves. He was beat, whipped, tortured, and forced to do the menial work that nobody in the Universe would ever want to do.

24,020,042,643

He stayed imprisoned for billions of years, paying off his debt. When he was released he was finally given Chyna's reply to his letter. It was dated only one year after he had sent his.

iii. Reply

Chyna's letter was fairly short and to the point. “Thank you for the kind words, but I'm sorry to say that I don't feel the same about you. I barely know you. I admire your hacking abilities, and I am very grateful that you took the blame for me. Beyond that, I have no feelings for you.

“The reason I helped you win the tournament is the same reason I entered it, and the same reason I've dedicated my life to hacking. I can't stand people like Inq, who portray themselves as being in control and having power over others. The system must fall, even if I have to do it myself. I was willing to take the blame when caught, but it didn't seem like the right time. More needed to be done.

“By the way, Inc and Nichole had a kid. I don't know if you care. Inc's really mad at you still. He said he hates you, and even filed a restraining order against you. It applies to his entire family, so I guess this is goodbye forever. I can't say I'll miss you, because I can't trust you, but I do feel kind of bad.

Anyhow, I am just replying because I felt obligated. Hope you someday see the light. Chyna.” Ink crumbled the letter and threw it to the ground. Giant tears fell from his aging eyes and he cried like a baby for hours, sitting right out front of the prison.

iv. Black Explosion

As he cried and wheezed and sniffed and wailed, Ink didn't notice that his tears had turned black. The sickness was back and in full bloom, and it began to leak out of his pores. Giant black snakes began to squirm out of his mouth and ears. Tiny but long black worms crawled and wriggled out of his pores and black maggots tumbled out of his eyes.

In his pain he screamed louder than he ever had. The blackness exploded out of him and began to envelope the entire planet of New Falls. Ink collapsed out of pain and yet the blackness continued to spread throughout Lys and leak into Syl. It became all life and all became only it.

All was one, and it knew pain. Then it knew loneliness.

28,010,245,864

The depression of being truly alone lingered for several billion years. It tortured itself and writhed in agony, continuously. In time, it only got worse for there was no solace.

A whisper awoke Ink. “It isn't real.” Ink blinked and shook his head. One of his contacts fell out and he realized that he had never left his house after first using The Eye. His house was full of cobwebs and bugs, and his ceiling had become rotten from rain and had been feasted upon by termites.

He walked outside to see a desert wasteland full of wind and sand. He had been inside for seven billion years.

True Awakening

Ink reveled in his regret, oblivious that he was the only living soul on the entire planet of New Falls. He wandered for years, alone and still very depressed. It seemed as if the Universe had moved on. With nothing to stimulate his brain, it jumped and scuttled about. He began to feel very suicidal, and that was when he heard a voice. The voice came from within, and it was a somewhat familiar voice. It permeated his every thought.

“There is no reason to worry. All will work out, this is not the end. There are still people who love

you.”

“Where?”

“If you think about it you will see that you already know the answer to that. They are on Fahlls.”

“It's inhabitable again? Who are you?”

“You know the answer to that as well. I am Ynk. We have spoken, but it was quite some time ago. You have walked through insanity and decay since then. Here we are, on the other side of the tunnel. I am your higher self, I am the light. I only intended to grab your attention, because there is someone better suited to speak to you. Someone that you have long forgotten.” Ink racked his brain to try to figure out who it could be.

“It is me Ink, Yna. We have never directly spoken, but I have always been here with you, watching, helping when I could.”

“I don't believe you. Women don't love me.”

“You are only seeing what you choose to see. I'm not saying you chose unhappiness, but in a way you chose your ego, and that is what keeps you from experiencing true love. In your mind, I have been nothing more than a shadow, but I have always been here, waiting for you to need me. I am within you, a part of you that has been mistreated. You have been suffering due to an unhealthy unbalance of male and female energies. The only reason that women will not accept you is because you're not accepting yourself for who you are. You have an infinite capacity for greatness. You must realize your true nature, forgive your ego and the ego of others for any imperfection or flaw. Only then can you move on. You have been asleep for longer than you realize, but it is time for you to wake up.”

“But... I have so many regrets.”

“Your regrets are meaningless. If you cannot move on from a mistake then you have learned nothing, and there can be no progress.”

“But... I'm essentially alone, what could be the point of progress? I'm doing nothing more than having a long drawn out conversation with myself.”

“That's all any of us are doing. We are all alone, but we're alone together. Your love for Lisa felt real, right?”

“Yes, but it wasn't real.”

“Yes... it was. If it felt like love then it definitely was. Whether or not the love was fake is irrelevant, because you experienced a bond with her. We are all one, and that is why attraction exists. None of us like to feel alone, but it is a reflection of the macrocosm, and it is embedded into all of us at birth. Did you not try to seek out the hacker to find Lisa again? Did you not manifest her into your reality?”

“But it wasn't reality, it was nothing more than an elaborate dream.”

“You think this is real? Lys? You are nothing more than the protagonist of our dream. Ynk and I are one, yet separate, the same as you and Ina.”

“Ina... is she ok?”

“Everybody you've ever known is fine, as long as you allow them to be. Worry not if anything you experience is real or not. If it's real to you then it's real enough.”

Ink grew silent as he thought. Eventually, he was able to find the words he was looking for. “Thank you, Yna, and thank you, Ynk. I think I'm going to be ok.” The voices in his head had silenced. He created a spaceship from nothing and was on his way back to his home planet of Fahlls.

He missed everybody, and he was eager to start a new adventure. The Age of Reason began with the nicest possible evening Fahlls had ever experienced. Ink landed and found his bed. He had a long day ahead of him.

Playt
All time is precious
Too short but somehow enough
The world shall be changed

1: Led

After sending Ryan back to his time and planet, Playt observes his transformation. Huge red muscles make him feel invincible. Warrior finds himself wondering what his true purpose is. With all his power, and all his knowledge, he must have some sort of purpose in life. He searches his mind for answers.

Meditating as he does this, on the planet of Sporkson, he remembers everything that his mind will allow, everything from escaping from the torture room of techno, to destroying the Chibbies and then meeting his children. He remembers throwing the plates, and confronting Hayt.

Mostly he remembers training with Ryan; because that was the most he had ever learned about himself.

It was not just a test of physical skills. In fact, most of it tested his mind. Most of it calmed his insane thoughts, which were so random and spread out that he could not make sense of anything.

Then he remembers Hat. He suddenly remembers that whole first day that he had met Ryan, and how when he had resurrected Lysandus it had allowed Hat to escape from some void. He remembers seeing another Playt-like figure on the other side of that void. After Hat had escaped from their grasps, Ryan had told him of the other six puzzles.

The Spirit Symbol, which represents time. The Pearl, which represents matter. The Gems, which represents power. The Mask, which represents sight. The Wand, which represents action. The Orb, which represents thought.

Hat represents the search. The hat he met that day was from another world, a parallel dimension that he had not even ventured into, one he has no intention of traveling.

As this all passes through is mind, some sort of understanding envelopes him. Not complete understanding, but it is enough to open up a vision in his mind.

He sees the tangibility of time. He envisions it as a corn field. As he looks into the field, the crops

stick up in rows. At most angles that he looks through the field, the crops will look random and unmanaged. However, when he moves his eyes from side to side he can pinpoint the rows. He can see through the crops to the pathways separating the corn.

These are Playt's flicker lines. They are how he travels from place to place. How far he travels down these rows determine what time he ends up there.

He closes his eyes and just watches as the flicker lines become more clear and defined.

He senses something coming towards him, some sort of purpose.

Old Playt appears before him in an instant.

"Ah. You have just begun your Warrior's quest. I know this, for I remember myself saying these very words. Even before that, I knew just by looking at your face. I also knew because I know the exact location in time and space that we are at this very moment. I also read your mind.

"I know more than I should know." Old speaks as he circles and hunches over Warrior. "I know too much. Be careful while searching for answers, you may find more than you're looking for. Oh wait, what am I saying? YOU WILL FIND MORE THAN YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!!"

Warrior remains silent, only observing the actions of Old Playt. He sounds as if he is starting to lose his mind.

"Warrior, you seek knowledge of your life. Well... you will find those answers soon enough."

In an instant, Old Playt's demeanor changes as he flickers in and out of existence. He stops walking in circles, and stands up straight, staring Warrior in the eyes.

“You have thrown the plates for me. You have done your deed, and you have found your true path. You are about to embark upon that path, and on the way you will find Hat. You will find him and so much more. He is only one piece of the puzzle. You will discover all of the pieces in time. And why shouldn't you? Your name is Playt, after all. Playt. What a strange yet extremely simple name, for someone so extremely complicated. I will allow you to flicker now; you are free to go wherever you want.” A tear trickles down Old Playt's face.

“And by wherever you want, I of course mean, to where you need to go. Where you are led.”

2: The Pearl

Old Playt flickers away, and Warrior observes the flicker lines. Now that he has his abilities back, he can travel whenever he wishes.

Regardless of what Old Playt told him, he cannot help but need answers to his life. Through the flicker lines he spots a shining, a strong pull of energy. A planet he's been to before, but does not remember. He is there in an instant.

It’s Littonia, a planet of yellow grass and green twisted trees. He is in one of the many fields. He looks around and sees Old Playt staring directly at him. He is about one-hundred meters away, and yet he can see him smiling.

Warrior spots Kid Playt FLICKER in to the right of Old.

Kid jumps at him and then disappears from existence.

He can tell it was not a flicker. It was as if Kid Playt was grabbed out of time and flung somewhere else.

Then Old Playt FLICKERs away.

Warrior hears a rustling in the field and turns to look. He can see an odd creature slowly walking towards him. He is greenish brown, and appears to be very old. He has dark gray hair flowing out from under a dark red cap, and his long bent face is hunched over his rather large body.

As the creature gets closer, it gets taller and makes large wet stomps into the field.

Warrior stares up into its ancient face.

“Hello Playt,” the ancient creature speaks in a low rumble. “I have something for you. Something you didn't know you even needed.”

“Who are you?” Playt says as he stares up at the giant.

“I am one of the Ancients of Littonia. This planet is a source of much spiritual energy. It is a key planet to the existence of this entire Universe. If this world were to be destroyed before its time, everything would be destroyed along with it.”

“Interesting, I can sense this planet. I could sense this planet's energy from across galaxies and the wide abyss of space, like I was being pulled here. I suppose you knew I was coming.”

“Of course. My race is one of many prophets. We can see all. We know your path before you know it. You have been through many hardships, but your journey is nearly complete. You will need the Pearl to continue. This Pearl will allow you to become completely invisible. Nothing will be able to see you, nothing except the Orb.”

“The Orb, the one of knowledge? I seek it. I know this now, for it holds knowledge. I must know everything about my life. I must know why I exist, and what has happened to me.”

“You are not ready for the Orb. For now, Playt, you must take this Pearl, and you must venture forth into the unknown Universe once again. You must collect the other four puzzle pieces, and bring them back to me. Only then will I give you the Orb you seek.” The ancient holds out an old cracked and bleeding hand to Playt. The hand is huge and almost twice the size of Playt's head. In the center of the palm he holds the Pearl. “Take it. You will be grateful for it on your journey.”

Playt reaches out and grabs the Pearl. He is filled with an odd sensation that he has never experienced. A type of high runs through his blood like a powerful illegal drug. The feeling is addictive.

Playt bows. “Thank you greatly. I will return the favor, and bring you the lost puzzle pieces. You have my word.”

“I know I do. It has been foreseen. You must leave now. You cannot stay on this planet very much longer. Your very presence is a bad omen.”

“I apologize. Goodbye and thank you once again.”

FLICKER

3: Us Playt

Warrior appears in Playt's Council. All other Playts appear at the same instant. This is the only time they are ever gathered together in the Council as one, and yet Playt will see it repeated several times in his life, and in death.

They are all concentrated on the Baby. The baby must grow in order for them to exist; they all know this. Hunched over it is a jungle creature from the planet of Blue Leaves.

Fat Playt takes the jungle creature to its home planet. Old grabs Baby and FLICKERs away.

Then the only Playts remaining are Red, Teen, Kid, and himself.

Kid shakes his head and attempts to attack Red. Red knocks him unconscious and steals his memories.

Why are they fighting each other?!

Teen protests and Red renders him unconscious too, stealing his memories in the process.

That cannot be me. I remember looking like that, but this did not happen. This Playt is an impostor.

Warrior taps Red on the shoulder, and as he turns around to look, Warrior slams him in the jaw and knocks him unconscious.

As the Teen and the Kid sleep, they FLICKER to random places and times in the Universe.

Warrior picks up Red Playt and begins to carry him away from the council.

This impostor should not be here. He does not belong in the council.

Before Warrior can flicker away, Red wakes up and explodes into little red molecules. The molecules then reform into a million or more little Playts and FLICKER away separately. Warrior looks around in complete confusion.

He flickered. He must have been Playt. But why were they fighting each other? And why don't I

remember any of this.

Warrior Playt sits down and searches his memory. He tries to remember anything about this moment, anything at all.

Nothing.

Will I remember any of this tomorrow?

As he sits in utter confusion and annoyance, he realizes that the first thing he ever remembers is waking up in the room of techno. Before that there is nothing but the music. He suddenly realizes where that room of techno was. It was in the Abomination's Lair.

As he thinks about it, the music fills his head once again.

No. Not that. There is something else I should do instead.

There! The flicker lines. There is something later on at this same point in the Universe. I must go there. It is important.

As Warrior concentrates on that place in the Universe, he tries to visualize that moment before he flickers there.

He visualizes two Kid Playts fighting at that location in time.

Warrior Playt pulls out the Pearl and concentrates on it. He feels deep within him that this is what he must do. Warrior Playt fades from existence. All that remains is his consciousness, his body is entirely gone.

Warrior Playt does not exist.

He FLICKERs.

Playt's spirit travels through time, but remains within the council. He travels forward, to a time after the explosion of Red. When he gets there, one of the Kid Playts is already gone. The other one is bleeding out white blood on the ground.

Warrior can sense the presence of two Pearls.

The one he is holding and another one. The other one is surrounded by an aura that is similar to Hat's presence. However, without the Orb he does not know where it could be. He looks around for a second, and gives up. Then he looks back down at Kid Playt.

He is unconscious, but not dead. The kid wakes up and pukes, and Warrior becomes visible again. To Kid Playt it appears as if he has just flickered into the council, but he has been there the whole time.

Warrior crouches down and grabs him. Kid struggles and tries to attack, but he is too weak.

“Calm down, kid. I’m not your enemy. None of us Playts are your enemy. Your true enemy is the Abomination. That’s what I think, anyway. I’m not completely sure, but he seems to be the one who punishes us. We do not deserve this punishment. We must both try to join forces and kill him. But first we need to fix you.” The Warrior places his gloves over the child and the Kid suddenly feels no more pain. A light shines brightly, and the Kid is no longer cut. Then they both…

FLICKER

They do not travel far in space, but travel almost a thousand years in the future, accidentally.

They appear before the Abomination. Sensing their malicious thoughts, it roars. Warrior attacks him and Kid is one step behind. The Abomination smacks Warrior to the side, sending him flying into the white nothingness of the council. He quickly regains his footing and sees that the Abomination has grabbed Kid Playt and is squeezing him tight. The huge monster pulls him towards his mouth and begins to bite down on him. Kid Playt is once again unconscious.

Warrior darts toward the Abomination.

I wasn't expecting this much of a fight.

Playt grabs the kid and pulls him away from the monster's grip.

With the child in his arms, he flies away until he thinks that he is a safe enough distance.

This is no place for a child.

Placing his hands on Kid Playt, Warrior sends out some of his energy and heals him once again. While his hands are still on the child, he can feel more entities within Playt's mind.

Three thought patterns other than Kid Playt's.

He can also still sense two Pearls, and now he definitely can sense Hat's Presence. He suddenly knows that Hat has obtained the Pearl somehow, and is hiding. Hat followed them through time, which meant that he was somehow attached to this Kid Playt.

The Abomination growls and gets closer to the Playts.

I don't have time to deal with Hat. I will find him later. For now, one of these entities within Kid's mind is yearning to go somewhere. She wants to go home.

Warrior Playt sends Kid Playt to a planet named Black Leaves.

Then he stands up and turns to face the Abomination.

The gigantic monster swings its vine-like arms, whipping the air and snapping the fragment of space slightly. It inches closer to him and Warrior waits for its approach.

Playt closes his eyes. He concentrates on the memories of training. Memories of every little trick and move that he had learned, and how he has an arsenal of nifty tricks up his sleeves.

His mind goes completely blank.

He opens his eyes and explodes with a fury of speed.

In an instant, he is upon the beast and delivering thousands of blows every second. Small dents appear on the Abomination's outer shell, but regardless of the beast's screams, it does not seem to be getting damaged. He is only angering it.

It swings at him and Warrior dips to the side, just barely avoiding its strange whip-like arms. Then he continues to pummel it. The Abomination roars in complete anger and the Warrior is thrown back fifty feet.

Quickly regaining his footing, Playt attempts to dart towards it again, only this time the Abomination

is ready. Warrior swings and misses. Every time that he swings his arms hit nothing but air. The Abomination is always just out of reach, defying all logic. The beast is nearly five times the size of the Warrior, and yet it is able to move just fast enough so that Playt cannot harm him.

Then it rushes forwards, and completely runs over Playt with its massive finger-like legs.

Warrior Playt lays there and stares up into the whiteness of the beast’s lair.

The Abomination roars.

Warrior gets up and tries again.

The same thing happens over and over again. Once the Abomination has learned his attack pattern it dominates.

It's time to try something else apparently.

With a burst of energy, Warrior Playt releases a huge explosion of fire like an atomic bomb. The explosion shakes the entire Council and fills it with red hot flames which are hotter than many of the stars in the Universe. The sound of it rumbles in Playt's eardrums and he goes deaf for several minutes. The air infects his nose with a lemon burning venom stink, and smoke explodes out of the aftermath.

Five minutes later , the air is clear, and the Abomination is unharmed.

That was the first time I've ever done that so powerfully, and it did absolutely nothing to him. What other options do I have?

In frustration, his mind scatters for answers and he remembers the powerful Pearl. He pulls it out and transforms himself into nothingness.

The Abomination looks around in confusion.

“WHERE DID YOU GO, US PLAYT? HAVE MY EYES DECIEVED ME? HAVE YOU RAN AWAY FROM ME? I THOUGHT YOU WANTED ME DEAD. YOU REALIZE YOU CANNOT STOP YOUR FATE. EVEN IF YOU WERE TO DESTROY ME, I WILL STILL BE IN OTHER POINTS OF TIME. I HAVE EXISTED FOR OVER A THOUSAND YEARS, AND IN THOSE

YEARS I HAVE HATED EVERY SECOND OF MY EXISTENCE. I AWAIT MY DEATH; HOWEVER, I WILL NOT GO WITHOUT A FIGHT.”

As the Abomination gives his speech, Warrior Playt circles him and looks for a weak spot. Some sort of answer to his problem.

Red Playt FLICKERs in.

He begins to throw plates at the Abomination, and for the moment, the beast is distracted.

Plates shatter as they collide with the huge monster’s metal armor. The Abomination roars in anger once again and creeps towards Red.

Red FLICKERs out of the lair and just as he leaves, Warrior finds what he is looking for, a small hole on the monsters back just big enough to fit a fist through.

Warrior jumps onto his back and pushes his fingers through. Then he pushes his fingers from his other hand through, and pulls the hole open more and more, stretching the opening.

The Abomination screams in agony as true and unexpected pain shoots through his entire body.

Once the hole is big enough, Warrior flies through it like a bullet in an instant, and comes out through one of the Abomination's three eye socket.

Covered in white blood, Playt lands on the ground and the beast behind him squeals like fingernails on a chalkboard, and stumbles around in pain. Blood shoots out of its eye and back, and the whip-like arms flap around in horror. This seemingly endless fit stops slightly when one of the Abomination's good eyes see a blood covered shadow in the shape of a warrior.

“SOMEHOW, I KNEW YOU WERE STILL HERE. I COULD SENSE YOUR PRESENCE. AND NOW THAT YOU HAVE DEFEATED ME YOU WILL SEE MY TRUE SECRET. AND YOU WILL KNOW THAT I WAS NEVER YOUR ENEMY.”

The Abomination continues his spastic fit and stumbles towards Warrior.

Slowly, its body shrinks and mutates. It bubbles in some places and then shrinks again. Soon it is

nothing but a meaningless pile of skin and organs on the ground.

Seconds later, the pile reforms and a white light shines brightly. The light is so bright that Warrior has to look away momentarily.

When he looks back, he sees Red Playt laying there, unconscious, where the Abomination was.

Then Red FLICKERs away.

The Lair begins to shake uncontrollably.

Above, in the Council, Playt can sense the presence of Kid and Fat. Kid has just slammed Fat into one of the black walls of the Council. After Fat FLICKERs, Warrior can sense Teen Playt FLICKER in to the chaos. As the Council crumbles, the sky above opens up. Rubble falls and crashes to the floor. Teen grabs Kid and they both FLICKER away.

Warrior remains and the Council around him crumbles to nothing. Once it is completely gone, he looks around and sees nothing but clouds. No ground, no water, only clouds.

I was once the Abomination.

How?

FLICKER

4: Life of Hat

Hat is born when the other puzzles are, in the Age of Creation.

Hat is able to see into the other dimension through visions, but he's unable able to go there. He observes it from a distance. He observes parts of Ryan's life, and parts of Playt's life. He hates everything about them.

Why do they search for answers? Why do they live, without killing, or without hate? Why do they strive to learn and to understand?

Dysh has no urge to search for answers to his life like Playt has.

Dysh knows exactly what he is the second he's born. A destroyer.

His life story, however opposite, is very similar to Playt's. He was once someone else, who fused with an alien entity and was born as a new being.

The alien entity Playt had fused with was from Dysh's dimension, and the alien entity Dysh fused with was from Playt's dimension.

They are entangled mirrors of each other.

Dysh's skin is green, and he has neon green eyes that are very thin.

Other than that, they look almost identical, but their thoughts are very opposite. Playt has a good heart, but makes many mistakes. Dysh has an evil heart, and has slaughtered many in his dimension. His is a dimension of pure chaos, but there are bubbles of peace, and whoever lives there has power. Anyone outside of that bubble is in a state of pure and constant hell. Complete chaos, and no rationality. Objects fly through the air at near light speed, and other objects will flicker randomly at over a hundred times per second.

But in the peace bubbles, it resembles Playt's dimension. Except it's darker. Darker all around, and evil. There is no such thing as trust in this dimension. No such thing as loyalty or morals. Alliances are formed through individuals who are like-minded and share the same goals, but even these alliances rarely last long. In Dysh's dimension, even the peace bubbles are chaotic. Dysh is king of these peace bubbles. Or at least, that's how he sees it. The true king is Oni.

Nothing can harm Dysh.

He destroys anyone that does not bend to his whim, and murders even his closest allies for fun.

Dysh even has control over time, with the ability to change its speed at will. The alien entity that Dysh had fused with when he was born was an entity which could control time. It was a peaceful being, a protector of the Universe, just not his Universe.

Dysh was fused with a Spirit Symbol from Playt's dimension. He considers himself a god. Nothing ever gets in his way, until Playt shows up.

Playt appears out of nowhere and attacks him. Then he disappears and leaves Dysh to bleed his black blood. Dysh recovers and focuses on the memories of that day. He somehow knows that this red monster is from the same dimension as the Spirit Symbol within him.

Dysh does not find Hat, Hat finds him. Hat explains to him that they must destroy the wall between their Universes. The resulting explosion would, unleash pure chaos into Playt's dimension. Nothing will be able to stop Dysh after that.

After much planning, Dysh and Hat find a Rod to create a chasm that will breech the two dimensions.

Hat escapes into Playt's dimension, and discovers Ryan and Playt. Then he escapes into Lysandus' world and time. He waits there, on Aspimiria. That night, Lysandus comes back and looks around. It is very dark, and Lysandus cannot see very well. He sees a hat, and he picks it up, thinking it's his.

Orsidium has his real hat.

Reading Lysandus's mind, Hat morphs and becomes an almost exact replica of Lysandus' true lucky hat. Lysandus goes home to Dussyllia and sleeps. Hat has nightmares, and learns to hate Lysandus even more than either Playt or Ryan. However, Lysandus is not powerful enough to complete his mission of destroying this Universe, and neither is Ryan, for that matter.

Playt is his true target.

So Hat stays out of sight, pretending he's just a normal hat.

Orsidium sees it one day on Lysandus's head, but says nothing. It gives him an eerie feeling just looking at it, and so he keeps it to himself. He knows Lysandus' real hat is tucked away at his house. He has no clue where this hat came from.

Lysandus battles Evil Lysandus on Aspimiria. After a long and terrifying fight, Evil is the apparent victor. Lysandus has been completely disintegrated. Hat falls to the sand, and so does Evil. Evil's horns retreat into his head, and his eyes become normal.

Evil looks just like Lysandus.

Perhaps Lysandus actually won. Wait, I don't care, this has nothing to do with my mission. How am I

supposed to find Playt?

Hat's about to move, when Orsidium walks up and kicks the unconscious Evil Lysandus. Hat remains still, hoping to not get noticed. Dirrinni yells at him from the distance and then Orsidium sulks back to where he had been watching the battle. *I sense Playt... but where?*

Just as this thought passes through his mind, Warrior Playt appears out of nowhere. Along with him, there is a giant beast that appears, Blue Hayt. Reading Hayt's thoughts, Hat finds he likes Hayt. He sees him as someone he can relate to.

Reading Playt's thoughts, he learns that he has the Pearl.

The Warrior pulls out the Pearl to become invisible. Hat jumps up and snatches it out of Playt's hand.

Hat! The Warrior Playt thinks.

How does he know me? Is this the same Playt that encountered me when I went through the dimensional rift? He is not the Playt I want to follow. He is too dangerous, and already knows of me. I must find a different Playt.

Hat uses the Pearl to disappear, and then observes the fight between Playt and Blue.

The fight FLICKERs away. He can still sense Playt however, and eventually he sees Old Playt in the distance, talking to Orsidium and Dirrinni.

That isn't the Playt I need to follow either. He gives me an eerie feeling.

Hat sits there and waits.

On Aspimiria.

He wanders the desert for many years, until one day he sees Old Playt appear in the distance.

Old Playt is carrying Baby Playt, and then he drops him to the sand and disappears. Hat speeds up; knowing deep inside that Baby Playt must be his true target, the one who will aid in the destruction of the Universe.

When he's halfway to the Baby, Kid appears beside him. Hat stops and reads his mind.

He feels the presence of Hayt within Kid Playt's thoughts.

Holding the Pearl, Hat jumps and hovers above Kid Playt's head.

He stays there, and travels with Kid, observing everything he can, and slowly starts to devise a plan.

Kid attacks all of the other Playts, and Hat starts to like the Kid. Kid is confronted once by Warrior Playt, and the Warrior can sense Hat, and the Pearl. Hat can sense another Pearl, and Hat becomes slightly confused, but does not give it two thoughts. Kid is attacked by the Abomination, and Warrior sends them to Black Leaves.

Kid observes Lysandus on one occasion, when Hat is asleep. The Pearl is dropped on Dussyllia.

Later, Kid becomes a Teenager, and Hat drops to his head. Realizing that he is now visible and having no recollection of dropping the Pearl, he morphs to become inconspicuous. He becomes a blue baseball cap, mimicking Lysandus's old hat, because he knows that other Playts know of his existence. They know of his threat to the Universe.

He sucks memories from Teen, and this calms Teen's mind. Teen Playt becomes Hat's slave. Hat accidentally speaks to Old Playt in order to get him to leave, which causes Old Playt to follow him. Hat is able to escape using Teen's flickering and dumb luck. Hat then makes Teen bring him to Playt's Council, and leave him there to find out anything he can. If there are any answers on how to destroy reality, Hat has a hunch it is within the walls of Playt's Council.

5: Death of Hayt

Blue Hayt is born when Playt is, within. Hayt is Evil Lysandus, only far worse. He murders the moment he's free.

He's born into the crowded streets of Fahlls, when Red Playt has seen the rare thirty-four moons all out at once. Red passes out from pain, and is unable to save any of the innocent Fahllian lives that are put to rest that day. Playt is hidden from Hayt by Yellow Fayt, keeping him safe and out of harm's way.

Blue kills everyone he sees. Then he discovers the wonderful ability to FLICKER. He cannot travel

through time like Playt is able to; he can only travel through space.

He slaughters millions throughout the Universe. Hayt goes to Aspimiria, Appliancia, Kriddle, Rellujah, Littonia, Aspimentia, Sporkson, Earth, Black Leaves, Blue Leaves, and Dussyllia to name a few.

He can't seem to find Playt anywhere. Blue knows he's still alive.

He feels Playt coming for him.

He feels Warrior Playt sensing him through time and dimensions.

Even before Warrior has destroyed the Abomination, he senses his next target.

Blue.

Warrior FLICKERs into the field of dead bodies and leers at Hayt. How many has he killed? He was busy wasting his time on fighting a being that never killed anyone to his knowledge, himself.

As soon as he sets his eyes on Hayt, he devises little plans without knowing the beast’s powers.

Playt darts towards him and tries to attack. Blue dodges to the side.

He's fast. All I saw was a blur.

It seems that every movement that Hayt makes is a blur, no matter how small. He disappears and Playt senses him right behind him breathing down his neck. Warrior Playt turns around and looks into the eyes of a true devil. This monster is not only an evil heartless son of a bitch, he's also powerful.

But is he as powerful as me? Playt thinks.

Yes I am. I am more powerful than you will ever become, Hayt sends to Playt's thoughts.

“How can you communicate with me through thoughts?”

I was once a part of you Playt, do you not remember?

“N... No. That doesn't make any sense.”

Well it's true Playt.

Playt looks up to the sky. “No... I really don't think it is true.”

Trust me.

“Why should I trust a murderer?”

Fine, don't trust me. I will still kill you.

Playt unleashes a fury of punches on the beast, and Blue jumps backwards to discontinue the pain. “Interesting. Perhaps you're better than I thought.” Blue says in a smug voice.

The next time Playt tries to attack him, Blue blocks everything, much like the Abomination. Thinking about that fight, Playt remembers his Pearl. He pulls it out, and Blue FLICKERs.

He flickered? Maybe he was telling the truth. Playt senses him immediately and follows.

He was in the same time, just a different part of the Universe, Aspimiria.

Playt swings a couple of times, and makes direct contact before Blue starts to cover up once again. Playt pulls out the Pearl. A shadowy object leaps towards it and in the middle of its jump path, Playt realizes who it is. *Hat!*

Hat turns invisible and Blue attacks Playt. Their fists collide, and then they both FLICKER.

They are on Fahlls. Playt's aim is off, but he has the location almost exact. Hayt is below him in the city. “EVERYONE EVACUATE THE CITY, HAYT IS BACK!!!” Hayt smashes buildings and picks up a victim.

Warrior begins to fly down to stop the monster.

Yellow Fayt appears.

She stops Warrior. “No. Do not mess this part of the timeline up.”

“What?” Playt says, and looks down.

Hayt crashes through the buildings and throws rocks and rubble everywhere. A building crumbles and then starts to plummet onto many of the innocent. One of those innocents just happens to be Shellra. The building is destroyed mid fall. Nobody is harmed.

Warrior observes the ground and sees Fat Playt staring down the blue beast.

Hayt walks over to Fat Playt, and Shellra says, “Playt, no.”

Hayt turns and rushes towards her.

Fat Playt follows, but is not fast enough.

“I'll handle this,” Yellow says.

Shellra is thrown into a wall. Fayt raises her hands and suddenly there is a loud sound of ringing bells, and a bright but brief light. “She'll be alright now.”

Fat and Hayt fight for a little bit, and then Hayt flies back towards Shellra. Fat grabs her this time, and they both FLICKER away.

“NOW PLAYT!”

Warrior flies down with quickness and slams into Hayt before his rage causes him to kill again. Hayt is pinned against the wall.

“There are too many people here. Let us fight elsewhere.”

Before Hayt can recover, Playt puts his glove on Hayt and they both FLICKER.

Playt can feel another flicker with them. Fayt has followed.

They appear on Rellujah, a planet full of lava and extreme heat. The sky is red and full of dark ominous clouds. The air around them is full of the sound of rushing lava and crumbling rock. There is a sizzle from the extreme heat beaming down on the three supernatural beings. The smell of sulfur and salt fill their noses as they stare each other down.

Seconds pass, minutes.

Hayt examines Playt's mind, while Playt observes his. They know each other's thoughts.

As they stand there, motionless, a burst of lava flies high into the air and begins to rain all over them, pelting them with thousand degree melted foaming iron.

All three remain still, motionless. The rain clears and all three are drenched in the metal. Slowly the metal dries, creating eternal statues of the three in time.

In an instant, Playt's statue is broken and his fist is through the metal statue of Hayt.

Hayt is gone, FLICKERed away.

You're too damned slow.

With one movement, Playt turns around and slams Hayt in the stomach.

His punch does not affect Hayt, and he just laughs at him. Hayt then explodes and a huge shockwave is created. Playt's sent flying into a volcano. He slams through the rock and splashes into the lava. He gets up and darts towards Hayt. As he flies through the air. the lava hardens into rock and falls off of him in little droplets.

Hayt disappears and reappears over and over again.

He's using the flicker, but he's not traveling through time. How did I miss that?

Suddenly, Hayt hits him in the face and they both FLICKER.

All three of them are on Black Leaves once again for one final encounter.

One of them will not be leaving if Playt has his way, two if Hayt has his way.

Playt tries several techniques. He attempts to freeze and shatter the monster, but its defenses are impenetrable. He tries to grab him and take him to the ground, but Hayt is not willing to go down. He tries every technique he can remember from when he trained.

Nothing does any good.

Think, Playt, think. There has to be something else.

“It isn't always about strength. Look at me and you. You are far stronger than me, but my mind is at ease. I am relaxed, and when I relax I can somewhat predict your movements. It's strategy.”

Strategy. That's what Ryan said.

Hearing the Warrior's thoughts, Blue spouts out, “Ryan? What a pussy. He doesn't know shit; you can never defeat me Playt.”

Playt's mind goes blank.

He thinks of nothing, and in turn, he can hear Blue's thoughts more clearly. Probing, asking, seeking through Playt's brain, he can feel the mental fingers of thought clawing at his subconscious. Playt rejects Hayt and stares at him.

No. Something's not right. He's rejecting me. Why can't I read his thoughts anymore? What happened? What is he thinking?

Playt swings his right arm at Blue and Hayt jumps in surprise, but still gets out of the way just in time to meet a kick to the face.

Down Blue goes, to his knees.

He stands up and stares at Playt in the eye. “You fucking bastard! You will pay for that!”

Playt goes to grab Hayt, but Hayt FLICKERs away, and appears behind him.

Over and over, Hayt counters with a FLICKER.

But he's not traveling through time. Playt thinks, *Traveling through time? Yes! That's the answer.*

Playt FLICKERs.

Hayt looks around, and Playt appears in the same spot that he was just in.

“You can't even do it, you're too worn out. You didn't even go anywhere.”

Playt smiles. Another Warrior Playt appears beside the other.

Two Warrior Playts stare Hayt in the face and smile.

They both FLICKER.

Four Warrior Playts appear and stare at Hayt and then FLICKER. FLICKER.

Sixteen Playts. One Hayt.

Hayt FLICKERs into deep space and all sixteen Playts follow him.

They unleash a barrage on Blue and he flies around like a rag doll.

Playt brings them back to Black Leaves and slams him into the ground.

Hayt tries to run but there is always at least one Warrior Playt there to stop him. There is no escape for Blue. He is frantic and freaked out, emotionally beaten. Blue falls to the ground and bends over in surrender. The sixteen Warriors become one with a single FLICKER. Hayt stares up from his groveling spot and weeps.

“I have been beaten. You are far superior to me.”

“Playt?” it is a voice of a small girl. “Playt is that you?”

Playt turns to look at a very odd looking little pink girl. “How do you know my name?”

“It's Beth.” Fayt says from her hiding spot.

Hayt turns to look, and an instant later he is darting towards her. Playt stops him dead in his tracks and punches into the beast's gut. The Warrior's glove goes completely through the stomach of Blue and comes out of his back. Slushy greenish-yellow gloop splashes out.

Hayt falls to the side, defeated. Playt feels his aura leave his body, and knows he is dead once and for all.

6: Six in the Morning

“Beth?”

“You don't remember me, Playt? I was fused to you. You... you ruined my life.”

“I'm sorry. I think I sensed your presence within Kid Playt not too long ago. I do not remember anything from that age. I don't know... is there anything I can do to earn your forgiveness?”

“Nothing you ever do will forgive your actions. I have no life here on Black Leaves anymore. Nobody knows who I am, and my parents are dead. I'm just a child, and already, I am homeless. Not only that, but I'm lost in time. The children tell stories of my life, and how I turned into a demon. You just left me here.”

“This is no way for a child to live. I can take you to your real time.”

“Why? So the whole town can kill me in front of my parents?”

Playt looks at her with a frown and sits down. Even while seated, he is almost three feet taller than the little girl.

Where in this Universe is safe for a child to grow up? I don't remember my childhood, so I don't really know. This Universe is filled with life, and the majority I've seen was not safe for a child.

But there was one place. And there were children there. My children.

Playt feels as if this is his only option. This child deserves to be raised right, and as far as he could tell on his last visit, Shellra was a good mom. He starts to remember their faces and happiness, the children, who love him. He doesn't know his family. They are strangers to him. It seems like an eternity since he saw them last. He doesn't know this girl in front of him either.

He was a stranger to himself.

Playt decides to take Beth to Shellra, and live with them for a while. He yearns to better know this child, his own children, and his lovely wife.

FLICKER

Fayt follows like a shadow to Aspimiria.

They appear in the castle in which Shellra used to be the Queen. Blue sunlight beams in from outside of the castle walls. The light hits Playt's face and he squints slightly, then relaxes his eyes.

Beth looks up at the Warrior and tries to compare it to the Baby she met, and the Kid she left.

He's much cuter.

Reading Beth's thoughts, Playt feels embarrassed.

Shellra walks into the room and screams.

“PLAYT! You scared the hell out of me. When did you get here?” Shellra's eyes look over to Beth, and then to Fayt. Her blue hair goes into her head and a yellow lightning bolt of hair emerges. Blade's personality bursts to Shellra's surface, “And who the hell are these women?”

“Calm down honey, this is Fayt, and this is Beth. Beth will be staying with us, because I owe her that much. I have ruined her life, and she deserves to be raised by a loving family. I don't know what Fayt plans on doing, I don't even know her.”

“Ooh. So you think you can just come back whenever you feel like it, and bring women with you? And you expect me to help raise some child I don't even know? Do you have any idea how long you were gone?!”

“I...”

“Nearly two hundred years! You took the kids and left me here all by myself. Do you know how it feels to be alone? The kids came back, but they were gone for so long that I entirely lost my fucking mind. I tried killing myself, but because of you, I couldn't. You're fucking very existence has given me eternal life. Fuck this little bitch, there's no way I'm going to raise her. And to hell with you for thinking I would, Playt!”

“Shellra, I'm sorry. I've been foolish in the past, but I plan on staying with you and making things

right between us. I want to stay here with you and the kids for the rest of my life, but I know that it isn't possible. I will stay until you are old and gray. I will be with you until death, Shellra."

"I cannot die! I already told you that! Since you've fused with me, I haven't been able to die."

At hearing this come out of Shellra's mouth, Beth decides to speak up. "Does that mean that I can't die either? You fused to me as well, Playt."

"I don't remember, but that would explain your thoughts within Kid and his appearance"

"YOU FUSED WITH HER TOO?! And you don't even remember! What kind of a father are you? You bring women you don't know home, then this little bitch opens her mouth and I find out that you fused with her?"

"Excuse me? What did you call me?"

"You fucking heard me you little fucking bitch. Stop talking, this is between me and Playt."

"This lady is quite impolite, Playt. Perhaps it is because she is so short."

"I'm taller than you are."

"Yea, but I'm not ancient like you."

"Oh, that's it, you're asking for it."

Shellra jumps onto Beth and begins to choke her.

Beth flails around like a seizure victim, but can't escape the grip around her neck. Shellra squeezes hard and Beth can no longer breathe. Beth's face turns from pink to purple, and Fayt speaks up.

"Playt, aren't you going to help her?"

"I'm afraid," Playt says.

Suddenly Beth stops moving, her eyes wide and motionless. "You... you killed her, mom."

Dae Brayk walks into the room, Playt's daughter.

She is grown. Shellra is as tall as her waist, and Dae has become a fully mature woman.

Dae looks over to Playt.

“Dad? When did you get here? And who are these chicks?”

“Uh. Dae, is that you? You're a lot taller than when I last saw you.”

“She definitely didn't get that from your wife,” Beth says as she sits up.

“I thought you were dead,” Shellra says as she begins to choke her again.

“MOM! STOP!” Dae shouts.

Shellra's grip relaxes. Beth sits up and coughs. “What is it with people wanting to kill me ever since I met you, Playt? Maybe I should just let them.”

Fayt speaks up. She has been sitting there observing everyone's actions with interest. “Shellra would have killed you if you were still a normal mortal. It appears that Playt has changed you as well.”

Beth looks up at Fayt, and begins to stare into her eyes. “You. Your voice is familiar. Are you Yellow? You were with me while I was inside of Playt's mind.”

“So you've fused with her too, Playt, is that what she's saying?! That's it, this marriage is over!”

“Mom! Stop. Playt is here, and we are supposed to cherish that. You have been waiting for him for quite a while.”

Suddenly Shellra turns and looks at Dae in the eyes. Dae's eyes are not only urgent, but sincere as well. Shellra Blade's yellow lightning spike hair retreats into her head, and the long flowing blue hair emerges. “You're right honey.” Shellra gets off of Beth and Beth slowly stands up. “I'm sorry little girl. Sometimes I have trouble controlling my emotions. If it wasn't for the twins, I would lose myself completely. Friends of my husband, please follow me into the banquet hall. We don't get company very often, so excuse me if the food takes a little while to fix.”

“I will help you mom.”

Shellra and Dae walk into the other room and Beth, Playt, and Fayt follow. The brick walls are arranged perfectly, and the old castle looks very well maintained. Playt wonders how old it actually is. They walk through a few hallways, and observe the many paintings on the walls of kings and queens from centuries passed. They finally emerge into a gigantic room full of candles and draperies. Three huge chandeliers hang from the ceiling, and they appear to be made of glass. Their footsteps echo in the great hall. There is a table in the middle of the room, built to seat at least a hundred.

Fayt and Beth sit down at the large table. They begin to talk to each other as Dae and Shellra wander off into the kitchen. Playt follows behind them in curiosity.

This is my family.

The two women enter the kitchen, and Playt stands in the doorway, spying on them as they work. Shellra is fast. She grabs some meat and begins to sauté it with a strange array of spices and sauces. Then she gives that to Dae and Dae FLICKERs. Afterward, Shellra grabs a knife and begins to cut up some vegetables. She throws them into a pot along with some water and a variety of seasoning and other meats. She pours some sort of sauce into it and then fills a pitcher up with water.

Shellra goes into a different room which is very cold and brings out some sort of blue lemon-like fruit. She squeezes out all of the juices using a metal device, and removes all pulp and seeds using some sort of filter cup. She then pours that into the pitcher of water and stirs it with a big spoon.

The water turns a sky blue and she grabs five elegant gold cups. She fills each and then stirs her pot of stew once again.

As she works, Playt senses something behind him. It is Dae.

“Were you spying on us father?”

“Uh, yea I was just...”

“I've missed you. I understand that you are a very important man, but I was wondering if you might be able to stay a little while longer this time.”

“Uhm, yes. Of course I will.”

“Dinner's done.” Shellra yells as the oven dings from the kitchen. She pulls out the meat that she had handed Dae, not two minutes ago, and it is fully cooked. The flavor of it fills Playt's nose with a glorious sensation he has never known.

The five sit down and have the best meal any of them will ever eat.

“Do you guys like this meat? My son, Nyt, got it for us when he was adventuring through Kriddle and heard of a delicacy that they eat on special occasions, the Shadow Beast.”

“What is in this blue juice?” Beth asks.

“Why, that is from a fruit on Blue Leaves. Dae grabbed that when she was traveling throughout the Universe observing the plant life and I'm glad she did. This is by far the best juice I've ever tasted.”

Everyone at the table can agree that the meat and the juice are probably the best in the entire Universe. The stew was no exception. There were bread rolls too, and they steamed on the table. Playt picked one up and took a bite. The bread melted in his mouth, and he could taste a sweet butter flavor to it. His taste buds were in heaven.

Never in his life has he eaten so much, nor tasted things so delicious. He would sometimes go years without eating. He doesn't really need food, he is nearly immortal. This one dinner makes up for all those times he went with an empty stomach. This one meal makes his problems in life meaningless. He looks around and realizes that these are his true friends and family.

Playt is truly happy.

I wish every day of my life were like this.

Yet deep inside of him, he knows that this will never be true. He had things he needed to do. But he would keep his promise, and stay as long as possible.

Shellra's blue hair retreats into her head and the brown ponytail emerges.

Shellra Bunny begins to joke around and be goofy, and everyone at the table laughs uncontrollably.

Their laughs echo through the great banquet hall as the five full bellies settle.

7: Five at Night

The daylight passes, and Dae hugs her mom and dad and wishes them a good night. A tall man walks into the room. He's wearing a dark cloak and has some glasses covering his insane red eyes. It's Nyt. Playt can tell by his eyes that he's much wiser than the Nyt he remembers. So much taller too, and his voice has deepened considerably.

Nyt gives his sister a hug as she disappears into the night for some well deserved rest.

“Hey, pops. When did you get in? And who are these two?”

Blade emerges in an instant. “These women are Playt's little hooker friends, they've come to kill us all.”

“Buuuuuuunnnny! Bunny, bunny, bunny!” Nyt sings.

Shellra Blade looks to Nyt, and Nyt stares at Blade with silly joking eyes.

Bunny emerges a second later. “Oh! Nyt! Good afterday, grasshoppah.”

“Good afterday, ninja spy mom.”

“Ooooh, we can play ninja spy? Playt, play ninja spy with us!”

“What's ninja spy?” Playt asks with an odd look.

Bunny stares up at his face in wonder and excitement. “You've never played ninja spy?” Her mouth gapes open as she stares in pure amazement and surprise. Then she goes over to the corner and weeps lightly. “Please tell your father what ninja spy is.”

“Uhm, is she ok?” Beth asks as Shellra cries in the corner.

“Yea, she's just goofy. She's not really sad at all, she just does that. In ninja spy, I disappear into the night and you guys have to find me. Bunny always finds me, she's really good.”

“I've won every time!” she says as she jumps out of the corner, beaming a smile.

“Yes, unfortunately.” Nyt says returning her smile.

The day around them has become darker, but is still slightly lit by a purple horizon. Nyt looks around at the other four, “Who all wants to play?”

“I'll play,” Beth says.

“PLAYT, PLAY WITH US!” Bunny screams at the Warrior.

“Ok.” Playt says, enjoying every second. “I'm in.”

Nyt looks over to Fayt. “This means that you have to play, mysterious woman.”

Fayt looks at Nyt with curious eyes. “Ok. I will play too.”

Nyt disappears completely from existence.

It's as if he has the Pearl... but I don't sense it. Playt can sense Nyt however, and he knows where he is.

While Nyt is invisible, Playt senses him do a space FLICKER. He is on top of the castle. The only one that knows this is Playt.

Playt observes as Bunny runs for one of the walls, and then leaps out of the window.

Fayt follows behind like a fast shadow, and Beth looks up at Playt. Then she follows the other two women.

Playt watches out the window as the three girls disappear into a small forest. He can sense them jumping around. None of them move like normal people, they are fast, and defy gravity. Shellra is the fastest, and the stealthiest. Fayt is a close second. Beth is last, yet still quite amazing at her age.

Playt has affected them all, simply by existing.

Why am I so important?

Playt FLICKERs to the top of the castle.

He can sense Nyt jump slightly, yet he still cannot see him.

“I figured you knew where I was. You are my father, after all. You know, it's been a long time. I've missed the games we used to play and the sparring we used to do. After you left, I yearned for it so much that I somewhat trained Shellra. It's strange how things work out. Shellra is an awesome mom. She is loving and raised me great. Blade is fun to fight. I train with her all of the time. Bunny, she's just fun to play with. There's never a dull moment with her. I've seen how training Blade has affected Bunny's playing. She's gotten stronger and faster. It's getting to the point where I don't have to let her win; she'll actually find me without me giving her hints.”

Meanwhile, Shellra continues to travel deeper into the forest, as she slowly leads Beth and Fayt away from her husband and son. Blade remains dormant. She now knows of Bunny, and Bunny knows and highly fears her inner sister.

Shellra Blade emerges to the surface.

She stops, and Beth and Fayt catch up to her within a few seconds. As they reach her, they notice that her hair has changed once again and they realize that they have made a serious mistake following her. They stop and begin to run in the opposite direction.

Shellra is upon them, instantly. She punches Fayt in the face and knocks her unconscious. Then she goes to Beth, and as Beth screams, Playt and Nyt appear.

“I found you!” Bunny says as she emerges to Shellra's surface.”I told you that I always win.”

Nyt looks at Bunny in disappointment. “Yea, mom. You got me.”

Playt wakes Fayt up, and they play a couple more times. Playt always knows where Nyt is so he pretends to play along and keeps a wary eye on Shellra.

They play on into the night and it gets really dark. Fayt wins once, and Beth wins once. Shellra gets furious, but the young child is too excited to notice. She laughs and Playt watches as he sees the little girl in a completely new light. For the first time since he's known her, Beth appears to be happy.

Fayt knows that she did not really win. She cannot sense Nyt, yet she knows that he is much more powerful than her. She begins to feel close to the young man, and admires the person he has become.

When they are all done and tired, Nyt makes a fire in the middle of the desert, and they all five sit around and talk. Shellra's blue hair emerges and she begins to make dinner for Nyt. They tell stories, and Nyt and Shellra reminisce for a little bit. Beth talks about her parents a little and begins to cry, but stays strong. She has grown quite a bit more mature since meeting Playt, but from the stories she tells all four listeners, she had a strong heart since birth.

Fayt begins to tell stories of the Time Generals, and Playt listens closely. She tells about how much she has conversed with them, and Playt is surprised at how highly she speaks of them.

Then she mentions a council she had with them about Playt and her idea on how to punish him.

“You! You are to blame for the techno music!?”

“Yes Playt, calm down, think about it.”

“You have no idea how much of a block on my memory that has given me!”

“Please do not be mad at me, Playt. If I hadn't done so, things would be very different right now. You would have never met Shellra. Beth would have died, unhappy and insane at seven years of age. This way, she will be raised by a good family, and die happy.”

Playt looks her in the eyes for many moments. He knows by reading her aura that she is a good soul. One of the purest. “I'm not mad. I was at first, only because my life up until now has been hell. But you just gave me a lot of answers. What else can you tell me of the Time Generals? Did they make me into the Abomination?”

Shellra speaks up. Her hair remains blue however. “You. You are responsible for killing all of my people?” She stares blankly at Fayt. She runs up to her and stares up into her eyes as the firelight gives everyone an orange glow.

Then she hugs her. “Thank you!”

“You're... not mad at me either?”

“NO! Because it is the reason I love Playt. My entire civilization was already dead. They were destined to live an eternity as slaves for Kriddle's evil enjoyment. I was next. Without that annoying techno music, I believe this entire planet would be destroyed by now. My twins would have never been born.” Shellra looks over to Nyt and then runs up to him. She stares up at his adult face and gives him a hug. Then she goes over to Playt and gives him a huge hug and stares him into the eyes. Warrior Playt kneels down and she stands on his lap and looks deeper into his eyes. “I love you Playt.” Then she gives him a kiss and jumps down. She slowly walks over to Beth and Beth backs up slightly. “Beth.”

“Uh... yes?”

“I'm sorry. I do not hate you, regardless of my actions. You can stay here for as long as you want or can. I will treat you as a part of my family until the day you die, and we will bury you as we would family.”

“I can't really die, can I? If I did though, I would want it to be on Black Leaves. For now, I will gladly stay with you. I have been so alone since Playt left me at home. I knew nobody, I was in different times. I did not belong. Somehow, I feel like I belong here.”

“Fayt?” Shellra says. “You can definitely stay here. I can see that you and my son somewhat like one another. Both of your mindsets are in key to each other. I can see it clearly. Eternal life was not the only gift Playt has granted me.”

Fayt slightly blushes, but holds composure. “I would be glad to stay Shellra. But I cannot forever. I have some things I must do, but I will return here often.”

Shellra smiles and looks around at everyone. “I think I've had my excitement for today. You will all be here tomorrow, and so I will have the best rest ever. Goodnight, my friends. Good night, Nyt.”

Nyt laughs, never tired of the same joke. He wonders if she has a saying for his sister. “Goodnight, mom.”

Shellra turns to walk away and Beth adjusts. Shellra stops and turns around. “Young child. How long has it been since you've slept in a bed?”

She thinks for a second. “When I was first fused to Playt, four years ago.”

“Would you like to sleep in my bed tonight?”

Beth looks up at the woman that is about her height, but much older and wiser. Her eyes begin to water and she looks away quickly. Tears fly out of her eyes as she tries to hide her cry.

“YES! I.... would.....love..... nothing more!” Her last words come out in a bawling fit. She can no longer contain herself. Her day has been full, and productive. She is tired. She goes down on her knees and cups her face with her hands and cries louder.

Shellra walks up to her and puts a hand on her shoulder. “It's OK, Beth. It's going to be OK. I know you are strong, but sometimes it is not good to bottle up your emotions for so long.”

“Sometimes there is no other choice”, Beth cries, and then she is bawling again.

Shellra rubs her back as she slowly stops crying. Beth calms down and Shellra asks if she wants to sleep with her again. Beth looks into her eyes and pictures her mom. A huge tear runs down her cheek but she smiles. “Yes.”

Shellra and Beth walk back to the castle and they talk about Beth's mom and dad on the way there.

Within fifteen minutes, both are fast asleep.

8: Time's Royal Family

After Playt and Nyt know that Shellra is asleep, they begin to discuss Playt's life. Playt tells them everything he can remember since awakening in the crumbling council.

Nyt starts to discuss his first memories of his father, Old Playt. He remembers wanting to play with Playt, but all Playt had wanted to do was talk. Old Playt had a lot of talking to do that day. Nyt doesn't remember much of it.

He speaks of the stories that Shellra told him while he was growing. “She told me that you killed her entire family and all of her people. She had only wanted your death after that, and then she had attacked you on a couple of occasions. She told me about how you had saved her, not only from the scientists on Candee, but from the monster Hayt as well as the demons of Kriddle.” Nyt went on to explain how he first learned of his powers, and how he had not known it wasn't normal. He learned

through time however, that he was much stronger than his mother. He also told of when Red had visited.

Playt remembered this last part. The rest of Nyt's story was like learning about a stranger's life.

Then Fayt spoke of how she had awakened when Playt had. She could sense the evil entity wake up as well. She spoke of how Blue and she had fought within Baby Playt's mind without him knowing, and she went on to explain Beth's story. “The night is late. I have much more to speak of, but this is not the time. I must get some rest.”

“Goodnight, Fayt. I will see you tomorrow night. Goodnight father, it was good to see you again. I really hope you stay a while.”

“I might stay up with you tonight son. Do some training?”

“Not tonight. I can see that you have had a long day. You've fought the Abomination and Hayt. Not only that, but you've gotten many answers to your life today.”

“I have no measure for days, but I definitely am tired. Of course you are right. I don't know when the last time I slept was.”

“We will train tomorrow. Besides, I've grown very accustomed to being alone with the nightlife of the Universe. Goodnight, Playt.”

“Goodnight, Nyt.” Playt says and then smiles.

Nyt laughs and bids them both farewell as he FLICKERs away.

Fayt disappears into the night and Playt puts out the fire. He FLICKERs to Shellra's room, and can see her and Beth sound asleep.

Playt smiles and pulls the blanket over both of them.

Then he lays down on the floor and sleeps like a baby.

Playt stays in Aspimiria. There is little reason to leave. He starts to forget about his missions, because they become irrelevant. The important thing is his family.

A hundred years pass and memory of a previous life buries itself in Playt's subconscious. Within those years, Beth grows tall, and soon enough is as tall as Dae. She stops aging after she reaches her maximum height. Dae and Beth become sisters and grow very close. During the day, they are always at each other's side. At night, Beth mostly sleeps, but occasionally she stays up and talks with Nyt, Fayt, Playt, and Shellra.

Playt and Shellra make long passionate love almost every night.

On some occasions, Fayt leaves. Nyt begins to grow curious, and when she returns he asks if he may go with her one time. She shyly agrees and they disappear for many years. When they eventually come back, they have become lovers. “Wha?” Shellra questions.

“We're married mom,” Nyt says in confusion. “I thought you said that you could tell we liked each other.”

“When I was talking about liking each other, I wasn't talking about marriage! She's taking my son away from me?!”

Blade emerges, “And I thought that she was Playt's hussy.”

Shellra emerges to counter. “Calm down Blade. I don't want you getting reckless.”

“Fuck this,” Shellra Blade says as she burst to Shellra's surface with intense heat.

Shellra hits the ground and screams in pain as Blade starts to rip herself out of the Queen.

The black skin on Shellra's back rips down the spine, and slowly, the physical form of Blade emerges, covered in pink goo.

Blade looks at the others and smiles out insanity, then she darts away.

Nyt and Playt go for Shellra and try to heal her when suddenly another form emerges from Queen Shellra.

Bunny hops out and climbs up a tree in fear.

Before Playt and Nyt can heal Shellra, the skin on her back starts to reform and the hole closes.

The whole time, Shellra screams in agony.

Five minutes later she stops screaming, and notices Nyt and Playt hugging her, and Fayt looking her in the eyes.

“Are you OK?” they are all asking.

“What...” -cough- “ happened?”

“Blade and Bunny escaped from within you.”

“How? They were just aspects of my mind. They weren't actual entities like Blue and Yellow were.”

“This is all my fault, Shellra.”

Everyone turns to Playt in confusion as he stares at the ground.

“What are you talking about, Playt?” Fayt asks.

“All of this is just like my life. I don't remember Blue escaping from me, but I know that he did. Fayt, you escaped me too. Shellra, I must have passed on that ability to you when we fused. It must have given Blade the ability to escape.”

“Regardless Playt, I'm free of her. I'm glad that she escaped.”

“You aren't free of her, she's free of you. She still wanders throughout this abandoned village. I can sense her,” Playt says with concern. Deep down he believes that if Blade ever dies, it will mean Shellra's death as well as Bunny's.

“Where did Bunny go?”

Nyt walks over to the tree that she climbed, and calls out for her. She jumps down and Nyt catches her in his arms. “She's right here.”

Everybody looks at Bunny, confused, and Bunny stares at Shellra. Then she smiles. “Mommy!”

Bunny hugs Shellra and says, “Mommy, mommy, mommy, mommy!”

Shellra smiles. Deep down she has great pride in Bunny. Even though it is herself, she still feels motherly towards her. She remembers the days of raising Dae, and how much fun they had together. Then she remembers watching Beth grow up. She reminisces on how much she loved being a mother. The thing she didn't like was having them grow up, and become taller than her.

With Bunny, she didn't have to worry about that.

She had an eternal daughter now, that she could enjoy for the rest of her life.

Reading her thoughts, Playt thinks quickly. “Shellra. Beth.” They both look his way. “If I was able to do it, would you want to be able to die?”

Shellra looks at him with a smile, and then looks down at Bunny. “Not right yet, Playt, but eventually. I want to be able to age from here on out. That is how I want to die.”

“I just want to stay this age for a while,” Beth says.

Playt walks over to Shellra and looks down at her. He places his gloves onto her shoulders and removes every trace of Playt's being that is within her. His head fills with flashes and memories of Red Playt. Then he goes to Bunny and tries to remove it from her as well. *She doesn't have any of my being within her. I hope Blade doesn't either.*

Within the next couple of years, they all grow very close, and become a well knit family. Playt trains with his daughter, his son, and Fayt. They begin to devise a plan to have conference with the Time Generals.

Life is a flashing instant

They live as normal a life as super beings can. Every day is an adventure, but nothing in comparison to Playt's journey thus far.

Shellra does in fact begin to age.

As she reaches the end of her path, she grows silent. Even Bunny no longer plays as she nears her end. She is still goofy, and very playful, but she is slow. She no longer likes ninja spy. They are both ready for death when it finally finds them. Nyt buries them at night, and in the morning, Dae makes flowers grow on both graves. Time passes, and Beth decides that she is ready for death as well.

“Bring me back to Black Leaves, Playt. Make me look like a little kid, and remove your curse of eternal life. I want to die with honor, at the hands of my own people.”

Warrior Playt FLICKERs to Black Leaves seconds after Kid Playt and Beth leave to get revenge on the other Playts.

Beth looks around. “This is my original time.” She runs to where the village is, but stays a safe distance. She sees her parents, and they are walking with their heads down in shame. “I cannot die in this time. Take me to the time that you killed Hayt. I don't want to add to my shame by torturing my parents a second time. They think they've seen me die once already. I don't want them to see it again.”

“Very well.”

FLICKER

Playt puts his hands on Beth's shoulders and removes all of Playt's presence within her. He gains some of Kid Playt's memories. Then the Warrior changes her age as if he has always known how. Slowly, her age reverses as Playt adjusts her time clock with his mind. The young child, Beth, whom Baby Playt had met lifetimes ago, stares up into Warrior Playt's face. “OK. I'm ready.”

Beth walks into town and Playt waits outside in respect. In the next hour, he senses the tensions of the townspeople grow. She has told the children who she is, and they have spread the word to their parents. He can sense all of their thoughts. They are thinking of Playt, out of fear.

Fat Playt FLICKERs in. Beth looks up in confusion as the townspeople tie her to a chair in the middle of the stage. “Why are you here, Playt? That is you, isn't it?”

“Beth? I don't know why I'm here. I felt drawn here. I'm sorry that I let you die. I'm sorry that I ruined your life. I never meant you any harm.”

Red Playt FLICKERs in. The townspeople look up and scream and scatter like bugs. They run to their houses and lock the doors. The streets are empty. “What happened? Why is everyone scared?”

Kid Playt FLICKERs in with the sleeping mind of Beth within him. He looks at Red and Fat Playt and attempts to attack them.

Warrior intervenes. He FLICKERs to the chaos which is building in the town of Scidryl, and stops Kid from attacking. Old Playt FLICKERs in carrying Baby Playt. “I didn't mean to go here. It was like I was pulled here. Is something about to happen?”

Every Playt is there, except for Teen.

“PLAYTS!”

All of them look over to Beth.

“JUST LET ME DIE!”

“Why are they being drawn here?” Warrior asks.

“I don't k-”

Suddenly, it dawns on Playt. The town is all thinking of Playt. Their combined fear of the “red demon” has drawn all Playts to this very point in time. The fear they used to have for Playt was only slight, but when Beth showed up after twenty years of missing, the town started to get a little more fearful of the demon. The scariest thing is how little she has aged in those twenty years.

Now, Playt is floating above them. Over four-hundred Scidryl residents are scared to death. Playt suddenly senses that all of them have highly concentrated spirit energy. The combination of everyone's fear is the only explanation for the drawing of the Playts.

He looks to Old Playt.

“Do you know how to erase these people's memories of us, Playt?”

“That would mean erasing all logs and story books that they've made. Technically, it has been over twenty years since the day of her first execution. Within those twenty years, they've created much fuss. Kripkoo has told many stories about us, Playt. He is quite elaborate, and completely full of shit.”

“I just want to know if you can erase their memories of me completely.”

“You do it, I don't want to.”

Old Playt tries to FLICKER but can't. The baby in his arms kicks a little bit and then settles.

“See, I'm too weak to FLICKER right now.”

“We all are, it's because the amount of people that have nothing but Playt on their mind!”

“Fine, but you have to help me. Don't just sit there and pretend like you aren't also Playt. You can do this shit too, ya know.”

“Of course.”

Together, Old and Warrior begin to erase all documentation on the entire planet that mentions Playt. They then erase any memory within the lifeforms they can find. The majority of these are in the town of Scidryl, but the story has grown within twenty years to a nearly planetary legend. Scidryl is now infamous for being the town that sacrificed one of their own to be rid of a demon.

Fat Playt sees what they are doing and begins to help. Kid tries on various occasions to kill the other Playts, but it is all in vain. After realizing this he just sits there and refuses to help in the cause. He doesn't know how to steal memories anyways, and is too stubborn to try. Red Playt eventually joins in, however.

Together, the four Playts erase everyone's memories. Part of Kripkoo's memory of Playt is aged and cannot be removed. “Hopefully, that won't be a problem.”

Then they send mental messages to the townspeople to come outside for the execution.

Kid flies with superhuman childlike speed and fury to Old Playt. He grabs Baby Playt and throws him down towards one of the buildings like a rocket, in an attempt to ruin the entire plan. His intention is to kill at least one Playt. Warrior catches Baby without him waking up, and FLICKERs right in front of Kid's face. Warrior steals Kid's memory of his second visit to Black Leaves entirely, and sends him in a FLICKER to Playt's Council.

Fat Playt tries to FLICKER, but cannot.

He looks to Warrior. “Could you erase my memory and FLICKER me to Candee really quick, I need to go there.”

Warrior does so, but deep inside he wonders why he was not able to FLICKER on his own.

Red tries, but he can't either.

“Hey, Old Playt. Why can't he leave on his own?”

“I don't know. The town doesn't even know who you are anymore. I was just listening to them talk to Beth, and she's trying to convince them to kill her. They have no idea why.” Warrior looks down to see that the entire town is once again standing in front of the stage looking at Beth.

The crowd is oblivious to the three Playts floating above them until Beth tells them to look up. Fear shoots through them, but it is not enough to hold the Playts there.

Red looks to Warrior Playt. “Do the same thingy you did to the other ones, it's boring here.”

Warrior does so, and sends Red to Aspimiria.

In the end, all records and memories of Playt's very existence on Black Leaves is within Warrior, all except what Old Playt had gathered and Beth's memories.

Old looks to the Warrior. “Give me back the baby, and then send us on our way.”

Warrior gives him the baby, removes Old Playt's memories, and sends them to Candee.

Warrior attempts to FLICKER and fails.

Then he realizes part of the reason that he can't leave. Beth's thoughts.

She stares up at Playt with tears in her eyes. Playt floats down there and the crowd backs up. He looks her in the eyes and she smiles. “Dad. I can't stop thinking of how much I love you. Will you do me a giant favor? I know that this is how I should die, but something is stopping me. All of the great memories we've had together. Some were bad, but the majority weren't. The favor that I ask of you is to take away my memory of that life. The good one. Store it in your brain and never forget it. This way I will be able to let you fade.”

He looks at her and tears rise to his surface, but do not spill. “Yes, my daughter.”

Playt removes all memory she has of him except for the bad times, the times with Kid. He stores the happy moments within him and cherishes them as he watches her get ready for her execution. Then he turns around and scares the entire town of Scidryl by roaring like a monster.

Playt FLICKERs away, to Aspimiria.

Five seconds later, Teen Playt FLICKERs into Scidryl with Hat on his head. Teen approaches Beth, and Beth screams at him to let her die. Teen lets her fade, and then she is alone with her people.

Ready for death, she tries to convince them all that Playt was a demon and that they should execute her.

“That was Playt?” Kripkoo McParch says. “Playt was actually here?”

“Yes, you don't remember? It just happened!”

“And you told him to leave us? He listened to you? You've saved your people from a demon, Beth. Why would we kill you? You are our savior.”

Kripkoo orders them to untie her and as they get her off the stage, she begs for them to kill her.

She is praised and treated like a queen.

She begins to like the attention.

She decides to live it through, and dies a happy old woman. She is remembered as a proud leader of her people.

Queen Beth.

9: Time Generals

Warrior stands on Aspimiria. Nyt and Fayt stand before him.

Just as Warrior had sensed Blue Hayt before their fateful battle, all three of them sense the Time Generals. They feel drawn to the Time Junction, as Playt had been drawn to the Pearl so many years ago. They know they have purpose there.

“It's time. We've planned for this. We've trained for this. It's time to give the Time Generals a visit.”

“Do you think we will have to fight them?” Nyt asks.

“We should be ready for anything, I guess,” Fayt says.

Then all three of them FLICKER to the Time Junction. This is where Fayt held council with the Time Generals. This is also the place where Teen Playt's “contest” of portal beans began and ended. At one time not far off from this moment, a million Red Playts joined together as one in a gruesome gauntlet.

The Time Junction.

They can see the curvature of space below them.

The three of them stand on the bump in time, and observe the Universe.

All three of them have seen almost all of it, but none of that had compared to seeing it all at once.

For Playt, it is new. Warrior has no memories of Teen Playt, or Red's fusion fight.

Nyt has never seen it at all.

They are both dumbstruck.

Fayt, however has been here on several occasions.

We are the Time Generals, booms over invisible loud speakers. We talk with underlines. You may think with italics, and the Abomination might speak in capitals, but we talk with underlines! And we don't even need quotes when we talk. And if anyone wants to edit this, they will fall before the Time Generals!!!

“They're annoying,” Fayt says matter-o-factly.

“Ya,” Nyt agrees, returning the tone.

Ahhhh, Playt, Nyt, and Fayt. Our creations and mishaps. Welcome, this is the Lys dimension. We are the rulers of this dimension. We rule over this and Syl, this dimensions mirror. We are at the bottom of

the dimensional food chain. Ros and Biz are above us, and there are over seven more pairs above them. You have only seen Lys, and yet you believe that you've seen it all. We don't have access to any of them at this time, except for Syl, but you don't want to go there anyway. None of you would survive.

"You are wrong about one thing." Playt says. "I have seen another dimension. There was one just like me there. It was where Hat crawled out."

That very moment caused a bubble in time. When the rift opened, some of that Universe crawled out. Not just Hat, but the very atmosphere. The time that leaked out left a permanent bubble in that moment in time and space. This Time Junction is directly above that moment in time. It is the bump that was caused by the bubble. The other side of that rift was the dimension Syl.

"Who was the figure on the other side of the rift, the green Playt?"

Dysh. Your very opposite. He is a threat to this Universe and all Universes. He will aspire to be more wretched than Hat could ever be. If not stopped, he will destroy Lys and Syl, and then travel to the next dimension. We don't even know what awaits him there, because we can't go there, but Dysh can.

"We have to stop Dysh." Playt says.

Do you intend to kill this being?

"If it comes down to it, one of us will die."

NO! WRONG ANSWER!

In an instant, the three are surrounded by a packed room full of tall black figures with white robes and sunglasses. They look exactly like Lysandus. They are Ghester without a beard. They are Ink, the legendary first tangible being in existence. No evolution, the original Fahllian.

However these Fahllians are all identical.

They all attack at once.

Fayt summons energy within and creates a visible yellow bubble barrier. The generals slam into it and are rejected easily. That doesn't stop them however, and they instead jump on top of the bubble and

crowd it. Within half a minute they completely cover the barrier. Looking around, all three can see a bubble of white robes, sunglasses and black Fahllian faces staring at them and glaring.

"We do not want to fight, but if you give us no choice, then we are ready and willing to destroy every last one of you. We are going to stop Dysh from destroying the dimensions. How can you be so weak that you can just sit back and let it happen?"

We will show you just how weak we can be. The Yellow Fayt Barrier is broken. The Time Generals burst through the bubble and relentlessly attack the time traveling trio. Playt FLICKERs followed by the other two. They are now in the empty void of space directly above the Time Junction.

Some of the Time Generals that were holding on to them slip off into the empty void and drift.

Some continue to cling.

In unison, all three super beings explode with energy, sending all attached Time Generals adrift.

The black darkness of space surrounding them slowly brightens and a white sheet of energy encloses them in a bubble.

We have powers too. We also have more purpose than you know. We keep the timeline intact. It is our job. You must not continue on the path that you have chosen. Neither Playt nor Dysh will die before we say.

"And who are you to say when and how I reach the clearing at the end of my path?" Playt says with anger.

We are the Time Generals. We are your Gods!

"We control our own destiny." Fayt says. "Every living being has control of their decisions; our choices are not up to you."

How generous of you to add your thoughts on fate, Fayt. We enjoy hearing ignorance from our creations; it makes us feel so much more superior. Not that we could feel any more superior, we are after all the beginning and the end of this dimension. We know where each of your fates lead, and we must say none of you will be happy with the outcome. Not to say your lives aren't interesting, not at all.

You three are our greatest entertainment.

With this last part, Nyt becomes slightly irate. “We are not here for your entertainment.”

The hell you aren't. Listen to your names. Fayt. Nyt. Playt? We gave you names. Your names are symbolic to your individual lives. Yellow. You are the only one that has slight control of her fate. Nyt, you can only exist in the shadow of a star. Nighttime. Playt, a plate is symbolic to your lifeline. It is circular and full of ridges and curves. It's covered with a shiny gloss that envelopes a ceramic core. Between the two is an insane red mixture of poisonous, thicker-than-blood, dried, liquid, acrylic paint.

“That made absolutely no sense,” Playt says with deep frustration.

We know, hehe. That's why we said it. It's so fun to mess with you. You are our play toy.

“Fuck you!” Playt says as he explodes with a type of anger he has never realized. His adrenaline pumps for the first time since his training, and his mind goes completely blank.

The world around them changes from the white bubble back to the Time Junction. Once again, they are surrounded by the Universe. The Time Generals are still there, glaring at the three.

What happens next is an emotional explosion of rage, as Playt begins to slaughter the Time Generals. The supposed “gods” have no time to attempt to fight back as they are pummeled into pieces by the Warrior. Nyt and Fayt stare in amazement as the slaughter begins, and once the Time Generals attack them as well, the two join in.

The “gods” are no match for any of them.

They seem plentiful and violent, and the three agree through mental messages that there is no need for this many violent Fahllians in the Universe. Right, left, kick, flash, FLICKER, explosion! In only mere seconds, a thousand Time Generals lay dead before the trio, and yet they continue to appear.

As the last few survivors are slowly being taken out, they stop looking identical. They start to have their own look and individual personality to them. One of them begins to fight back with a little more resistance. So do the rest of the survivors. They are still easy to take out, until the numbers grow fewer. It's as if each time one of them dies it makes the rest of them stronger. The last four Time Generals are almost equal to Nyt and Fayt in power.

Four against three, two team up on Playt and each of the two others pick a target.

The fight is endless.

Five hours pass. Nyt slowly starts to fade from existence.

“I'm out of time, pops. I can't help with this battle anymore,” and Nyt is gone.

Four against two. By far they are stronger than Playt. Fayt has little fight left in her. Playt is exhausted. As for the Time Generals, they act as if the fight has just begun. They haven't even broken a sweat. Playt breathes heavy but keeps his composure. Fayt begins to lose consciousness, and Playt has to protect her.

Fayt falls to the floor.

Four against one.

With his last bit of energy, Playt unleashes a fury of perfectly timed techniques that he pulls from his neural pathways. Then he explodes with energy and sends out a shock-wave. The four remaining generals slide back slightly, but do not lose footing.

Playt collapses and the Time Generals attack full force.

Playt and Fayt's sleeping bodies are pummeled.

At the brink of death for both of them, Dae Brayk appears.

“You bastards didn't let me say good morning to my brother!” She does not care about the view like Nyt had when he first arrived. Her only concern is eliminating these evil bastards that have hurt her family. Dae is not tired. She has just woken up, so she has plenty of energy.

Brayk raises her arms, and from out of the ground, vines grow underneath the Time Generals. They tangle and reach around their legs, completely immobilizing all four. With her arms still high in the air, Dae brings them down and focuses her energy on Playt and Fayt.

By the time the generals are able to break free of the tangling vines, Playt and Fayt are standing up and fully refreshed.

The battle continues, only this time, none of them are tired.

Mental messages between the three. All three concentrate their energy on one Time General.

He is completely obliterated.

The other three Time Generals step back as they watch their fourth turn to ashes and crumble.

Their faces change slightly, and become even more different and defined from one another. The skin color of the tall Fahllian in the back changes to a light gray.

They attempt to do the same thing to another subordinate, but they are already exhausted of their energy.

Another Warrior Playt FLICKERs in, fully rested. “This is a technique that I used against Hayt. Only this time will be different,” the Warrior says.

Another Yellow Fayt FLICKERs in, fully rested. “Yes because last time Playt was fighting Hayt without rest, he just flickered a lot,” she continues for him.

Another Dae Brayk FLICKERs in, fully rested. “And this time,” she raises her arms, “there are six fully rested against two tired.” Then she lowers her arms and concentrates her energy on Playt, Fayt, and her past self.

The three get up with wicked smiles as they glare into the last three Time Generals' eyes.

Playt, Playt, Fayt, Fayt, Dae and Dae repeat the process used to eliminate the previous general and disintegrate yet another. The two remaining Time Generals' faces change once more. The gray one's skin grows even lighter. *He's their leader*, the six think in unison.

With ease, the penultimate Time General is disintegrated.

One left, the leader. He is now completely white. They begin to circle around him and he drops to his knees and puts his arms in the air. “Wait!”

They stop. One of the Playts looks at the white Fahllian in the middle.

The Time General stares up at them.

“Please. Listen to me closely. You must not kill me, I am important.”

“Who are you?” one Playt asks.

“I am Ink, the first physical being in existence. Within this Universe anyway. I created the Time Generals.” He looks up into their eyes. “If you kill me, then the Universe will be destroyed.”

“I don't think that's true,” one Dae says.

He looks over to her and gets a shocked and frightened look on his face. “OK, the truth is, you can't kill me, you can only hurt me. If you hurt me, then I won't help you.”

“Are you actually caving in to our mission?” one Fayt says, as she looks at him suspiciously.

“I have no choice, but know this; Playt is the only one that can travel to Syl.”

Playt looks at him with frustration. “If you were planning on helping us all along, what was the purpose of this whole facade?”

“I have my reasons. For one, I wanted to get rid of the Time Generals. I can create them, but I can't kill them. I was surprised at how little I had to motivate you to kill them. You’re more powerful than I had originally anticipated, this is good.”

“You're sick.”

Ink looks into Playt's eyes. “No, I'm tired. The Time Generals take a lot out of me; their very existence plagues my mind with stress. I need all the concentration I can gather.”

“Why's that?”

“It is my fate to fight Rhun. He is the one who will kill me. Not you.”

“Rhun?”

“The legendary last Fahllian. I have yet to meet him myself, which is why I'm still alive. Nyt knows

him.”

The three extras of Fayt, Dae and Playt walk over to a huddle and then individually FLICKER to different locations in space/time.

The original three adventurers walk up to Ink. Playt sits down and looks him in the eye.

“Since you wanted us to kill the Time Generals anyway, let us rest here so that we may return to the past and help ourselves out.”

“And then I presume you want to go to Syl.”

Warrior Playt nods.

The three rest in the Time Junction as Ink waits.

Playt travels to Kriddle for some meat, Blue Leaves for some fruits and then Candee for dessert.

They eat well and Playt and Fayt fall asleep. Dae sits up and talks to Ink for a little while. She does not care for what he says, and can tell that he is truly a sadistic being. She stays up, not only because she cannot sleep during the day, but also to keep watch.

None of them trust much of what Ink says.

As the little amount of daylight for Dae remains, Playt and Fayt awaken, refreshed. The three rise up and FLICKER back to the past to help themselves fight.

Seconds later, Warrior Playt is back to greet Ink.

Alone.

10: The Wand

Entering Syl

Ink explains how to enter Syl and Playt begins to fly directly up from the Time Junction.

He keeps going, and leaves the atmosphere that surrounds the Junction. He looks down to it and sees

that it's shaped like a lemon. It seems to spin as well, like a small galaxy.

Direction becomes irrelevant as he escapes the pull of gravity and becomes weightless. He looks around and can see the entire Universe slowly diminishing from his vision.

After four hours of traveling up, Playt begins to see bright blue rectangular pathways ahead of him.

As he nears them he can sense beings inside of the hallways. He doesn't recognize any of them. They are from the edge of Lys, and from the edges of other bordering dimensions as well. He's at the Crossroads to Syl.

Looking within the crossroads, he can see that the beings are the same transparent blue as the hallways themselves. Some are huge and some are microscopic, but within Playt's view, they are innumerable.

He inches closer to them until the hallways are all he sees.

As he enters into the crossroads, he becomes a transparent blue, but keeps his shape.

Some of the beings glance at him as he stands there amazed, but most of them just keep moving about their business. Warrior Playt can read the minds of the lesser beings, but can easily pinpoint the beings which are beyond his scope.

Surrounding him is the smell of cold metal. The voices and noises from millions of different lifeforms, all talking at once, fill his ears. Playt looks around frantically in confusion.

How am I supposed to find Syl in all of this mess?

Suddenly, a transparent blue miniature helicopter with an eyeball floats down to Playt's range of vision. It stares at him for several seconds and then inches closer to his face.

Playt cringes slightly, and then he feels it probing his mind. Within seconds it's able to communicate with ease. “You are looking to enter Syl? Why would a being like you want to enter such a dangerous and uninhabitable dimension? Usually lifeforms want to leave Syl for Lys. Never the other way around. Are you perhaps a Time General? I see that you have the Fahllian blood within you, but you are red and I have never seen nor heard of a red Time General.”

“My name is Playt, and I wish to enter Syl in order to stop Dysh from destroying my dimension.”

Suddenly, all of the beings turn to stare Playt in the face. *Uh Oh!*

The blue transparent hallways and every being within them suddenly turn red.

“Did I say something wrong?”

One of the larger beings raises a limb of some type and swings it down with incredible speed towards Playt.

Blackness. Deep pain, flung through the air, unable to move.

Ripped in half and thrown to the ground, stomped on mercilessly.

Head ripped off and then eaten, the rest of him, pummeled to pieces.

Playt crumbs are spread across the reaches of Syl. The crumbs are much more plentiful and smaller than the portal beans had been.

A Friend Amongst Chaos

Playt's head has been digested and drained of nutrients. It's then tossed into the empty void of Syl to “drift” for nearly an eternity.

For this eternity, Playt is considered dead. Old Playt had told Baby that he would live for thousands of years, but Playt's entire body's time of existence is exponentially higher.

An uncountable googaplex of years pass for the molecules that make up Playt's body as they FLICKER through the space of chaos. Within a few billion years, the dead head of Warrior Playt drifts through the chaotic dimension of Syl.

Time is mostly irrelevant in Syl, and so is matter. Molecules do not group together, nor move in paths. Instead they are similar to Playt. They FLICKER at random throughout time and space. Regardless of how random and unpredictable, matter and time do work similar to Lys in some locations, the peace bubbles.

Playt's head acts as a type of peace bubble, protecting its time and keeping its molecules intact.

Because of this it is drawn to the nearest peace bubble. It enters unnoticed, and rolls around as a useless artifact from the void. Within the peace bubble is confusion. It's not like a planet, and gravity seems to change depending on his position. His head floats beside other objects or beings, but never receives a second glance.

His head is being drawn somewhere, to someone.

When it finds its target, the target has been waiting for the head. It's Hat.

It bounces onto Playt's lifeless, digested, rotted head and slowly feeds life into it. Slowly but surely, Playt regains consciousness. The moment he realizes he's just a head, he can sense where the rest of his body's molecules are. Moments later they FLICKER to his head, and reshape Warrior Playt.

I'm in Syl. Oh my god that hurt like hell!

“Hello Playt”, Hat speaks to Playt's mind.

Who are you?

“My name is Hat, but not the Hat you know. In fact, I am from your dimension of Lys.”

How did you get to Syl?

“I had help from the wand.”

The wand? I need the wand, and the hat, and the spirit symbol, and the pearl, and the orb, and the gems, and the mask. I remember now, how easily I had forgotten. The Orb. That is my true goal. I need that to remember my life. To see the answers.

“Well you've found me. Your next step is the Wand. To find her, you must find Dysh.”

The Wand is a woman?

“Yea, man, but why should that matter? Go find Dysh. That's all you should be concerned about.”

Playt tries to sense where Dysh is. His mind wanders aimlessly in the unknown dimension. He suddenly realizes how much he knows his Universe. He knows where planets are and when they are

there in Lys. Never had he realized he knew these things, as if it were instinct.

As he stands in Syl, however, he suddenly knows everything about Lys, and absolutely nothing about this place. He concentrates on his flicker lines, but cannot see them as he could before.

Playt bravely attempts to flicker, but cannot.

Dysh

Playt wanders, lost, as Lys Hat guides him.

The Hat represents the search.

Lys is a dimension of peace.

Lys Hat represents the search for peace.

These thoughts pass through Playt's head as he wanders around one of the many peace bubbles of Syl. Dysh is easily found.

They near his dark green castle. The building seems as if it has existed since the beginning of Syllian “civilization”. Its sides are chipped and the rock surrounding the windows has worn away to rounded corners. The closer they get, the more they hear screams and torment.

Playt can feel the dark energy within the castle. It somewhat blinds his own energy as he walks into the cloud of death surrounding Dysh's castle.

Pain begins to course through his veins as he gets closer to the entrance. The pressure increases and he has to mentally prepare himself for every step.

Once he's inside, the pain is pounding at every pressure point. He's able to ignore it for the moment. He does not have to look very hard to find the god of the peace bubbles, for he can sense nothing else except Dysh.

Within three rooms of the beast, Playt can no longer sense Hat on his head. He has to reach up to see for sure. Still there. Still in pain.

Entering his lair, he sees Dysh in the distance surrounded by hundreds of giant bodyguards and

servants. Playt is surrounded quickly as he tries to hold his composure.

Dysh screams in agony from his throne. “Who are you, and what is the sensation you are giving me?! Is this what they call pain!?”

Playt is stabbed in the stomach by one of the guards, leaking his white blood onto the castle floor.

Dysh screams in pain as he is invisibly dealt the same wound on the opposite side of his body, as he spills his black blood onto the throne. Playt deals with the pain but goes down to his knees all the same.

“Do not hurt him! Get him the hell away from me! If you don't get him as far away from this castle as you can within five setunim, every single one of you is the next to die!”

There is no hesitation, Playt is carried and not harmed. The loss of blood causes him to collapse, but his hat remains secured firmly on his head. Playt is thrown into an empty void of Dysh's peace bubble. Within this empty void, gravity is irrational at best, and Playt drifts at random throughout the void. Hat does all he can to keep Playt from tumbling into the void completely, and barely gets to soft ground.

In time, Playt heals.

Dysh sees Playt's appearance as an attack, and he is not happy. In all of his life he has never experienced pain, and he does not like it.

He is approached by Syl Hat, who has been searching for him. Together they search for the Syl Rod. Along the way is nothing but a massacre. Dysh opens up a void, and sends Syl Hat through a dimensional rift, to Sporkson.

Playt is eventually fully healed, and goes to find Dysh once again.

“Will the same thing happen again, Hat? Will we cause each other pain the entire time we're near each other?”

“There is one way around that”, the hat replies. “That would be the Syl Pearl. With it, you will be able to become any life form you wish, and have none of your powers or abilities. While you hold this Black Pearl, the only thing about you that will still be Playt will be the thoughts inside your mind. I believe that it is the Spirit Symbol within you, and the Spirit Symbol within Dysh that is causing the

disruptions. The Syl Pearl will hide your Syl Spirit Symbol.”

“Wait, I have the Syl Spirit Symbol within me?”

Wanda

Lys Hat guides Playt to the Syl Pearl. They find it with ease, and then they pursue Dysh. Playt transforms into the only guard he remembers, the one who stabbed him.

Playt and Hat walk to Dysh's throne, and Dysh is completely oblivious of their intent.

They find the rod and grab it. It's a dark red wooden staff that seems to glow as he touches it. A dimensional rift opens up, alerting Dysh's attention. He stands up and attacks the bodyguard (Playt).

Dropping the Pearl, Playt morphs back into himself and Dysh looks at him with pure surprise as both of them are filled with incredibly infinite pain.

Then an explosion causes Playt to be thrown through the open rift and back to Lys. On his way through the void, the Syl Rod stops an inch away from the portal and will not go through. It's as if some force is stopping it from entering Lys.

Playt is puked out into the empty void of space in Lys.

Home sweet home, he thinks with much relief. Playt has liked absolutely nothing about Syl.

“Let's go find the wand of this dimension. I feel very close to the answers now.”

“That's because you are, we both are. I must admit that I'm quite curious myself to see your life thus far. Reading your mind, I feel nothing but confusion.”

With Playt's ability to flicker, Hat's ability to search, and Playt's neural pathways they are easily able to find the Lys Wand. She is on the planet of Littonia, the same place that Playt had gotten the Pearl.

“While I'm here, I want to speak to the Ancients.”

FLICKER

Playt appears before a council of the Ancients of Littonia.

“Have you collected all of the puzzles yet, Playt?”

“I have the Spirit Symbol, and the Hat. Do you think I could get another Pearl?”

The entire council of Ancients laughs and Playt's heart sinks. He looks around in confusion and shame. “You lost it? We can't just get you another one. You have to find it. Without it and the rest, you do not deserve the Orb.”

“Very well.” Playt says, regaining his composure. “I will have no problem finding them with Hat. I will return.”

“We know you will, Playt. We know.”

FLICKER

The wand is sitting in the middle of a field. Nothing surrounds it; it's completely in the open. It's a dark green wand, while the one in Syl had been dark red. “I am Wanda. You are Playt. I sense the gathering of three Puzzles. I will soon be reunited with them all.”

Playt grabs it, and it begins to glow. Suddenly, Playt begins to age rapidly. His muscles deteriorate at an alarming rate, and he begins to shrink. His skin begins to wrinkle and he falls to the ground. Wanda's spirit seeps into Playt as he starts to fuse with her.

After all is said and done, Warrior Playt has become Old Playt in a matter of mere seconds. Hat begins to change as well. He becomes a black cloak and drapes himself over Old Playt. Playt's eyes are the same insanely bright red, but they are smaller and sunken.

A dimensional rift opens up and Dysh crawls out.

A Warrior Dysh stares down a very Old Playt in the fields of Littonia.

Rhun

Choices

Nyf and Debris wander Scorchland only to see that it's completely deserted and void of vegetation. When they are found by Poison, they're both starving. Poison steps on the charred ground carefully, also looking for food.

Nyf barely hears it, but when he does, he attacks, scaring Poison enough for her to run off. Then they will be found by Morbid, one of Voyd's women. She escorts them to Voyd's hideout, an underground base hidden from view. Poison sits on Voyd's lap, eating something. She hisses at them when she sees them walk in.

“It looks like she doesn't like you two very much.”

“We don't really like that bitch either,” Nyf says.

Voyd laughs. “So, you've met. Tell me, what is this curious little creature's name?”

“Poison. She killed our friend.”

“I'm beginning to like this little furball. Answer me something else. What are you doing with this poor girl in the middle of Scorchland? Is she your little rapedoll?”

“Excuse me?!”

“You don't understand, Voyd, it isn't like that,” Debris pleads.

Voyd looks at her. “Oh, I remember you. Debris. He can't hurt you anymore, you're safe here. There's no need to protect your rapist.” Voyd cuts Nyf's face as the women tie him up.

“I am not a rapist, we're looking for Rhun.”

“Oh, I see! So she's Rhun's little rapedoll, and you're his faithful slave.”

“What is your problem?”

Voyd presses the sword to his throat. “I ask the questions, you little prick, but since you're curious, my problem is with all men. I don't like your stench, and I don't trust you.”

“Nyf,” is heard over his teleplug along with a lot of static. He ignores it as she speaks, “I only ever truly placed my trust in one man, and he backstabbed me.”

Debris thinks about what Nyf told her in the forest. “None of us would ever do that.”

“None of you?” Voyd's curiousity grows. “Who all follows Rhun with you?”

Debris grows quiet. Nyf names off everyone and notices Voyd's eyes widen and her breathing become rapid when he mentions Clott and Rott. Seeing no other choice, he gives her the teleplug, and they are both released.

After encountering the Daunting Cracks, they follow them for two-hundred-million years, feeding off of the plant-life as they go. Nyf struggles with switching his diet to plants, but he's willing to. Him and Debris get very close as they travel alone, and bond together as a couple would, but not in a sexual way. They have a mutual love between them, a wordless understanding.

Debris first notices Lort's Stronghold, a massive building on the other side of the cracks. “There! Is that Oni's Castle?”

Nyf looks with a frown. “No, it isn't nearly that massive. Unless he upgraded.”

They keep walking and notice a black fire on the other side of Lort's Stronghold,beginning to devour the structure and everything within.

“Rhun's alive! I know it! Maybe he's over there.”

“Let's go over to this ledge to get a better view of the situation,” Nyf says as he points. “I think I saw some movement.”

They climb to the vantage point and it overlooks the massive cracks. There is a huge army coming their way. “This doesn't look good. Let's keep moving.” Looking in the other direction, Nyf sees Oni's Castle. “There. That small castle is where Rhun must be. I feel it.”

They walk towards the castle, leaving the Daunting Cracks behind them. Twenty minutes later, they see a flock of giant crows flying towards them from the castle. One swoops down and lands next to them. Sitting atop it is Dysh.

“Son, I expected more out of you.”

“Where is Rhun?”

Dysh laughs, “Oh, that little guy? I almost forgot about him. Both of you get on, I'll take you to him.”

Not trusting him, but also knowing there is no other choice, Nyf and Debris climb atop the crow. It lifts off and soars towards the wrong direction. Nyf gets ready to draw his weapon.

“I thought you said you were taking us to Rhun.”

“Oh, I'll take you, but first I must show you something.”

The crow flies for hours and everything becomes dark. Ahead of them they begin to see giant glowing white mountains floating in the air. “Do you remember that red orb son?”

Nyf shivers. When he's too young to comprehend much about life he remembers touching it, seeing things that will end up haunting his whole childhood. Looking at his face, Dysh knows he remembers. “Well, it told me some interesting things. For instance, Rhun hears whispers from beyond the grave. Pretty interesting.”

“He never told me that.”

“No, no, this is something new. Another thing the orb told me, he hears the voices because he absorbs their souls. Did you know that? Everybody that dies, enters Rhun's consciousness. So weird.”

Nyf and Debris are speechless as the crow lands on a floating rock. Below them is nothing, a black void.

“Third thing, and most important.” Dysh grabs Debris by the neck and holds her over the edge of the rock as she squeaks out a muffled scream. Nyf puts his blade to Dysh's neck. “If anything is swallowed by the Black Void, their soul is completely destroyed.”

“Don't even fucking think about it, let her go.”

“You kill me and she falls into the void, forever lost. These crows will not listen to you, they only listen to me.” Knowing he speaks the truth, Nyf takes the blade away from his father's throat. Within the schoolhouse of Sector 3 they learn about the Black Voids throughout Syl. No soul can survive it.

“What do you want?”

“Swear your allegiance. Then I will let her go.”

Nyf will never be loyal to Dysh, but for Debris' sake, he submits. “I swear my allegiance. Now let her go.”

Dysh drops her into the void and Nyf almost faints. His heart skips a beat, and without knowing what else to do, he throws his blade into Debris' neck as she falls, and a moment later her entire body is consumed by the void.

Tears pour from his eyes instantly and he pukes. Dysh laughs. “That was fun, we should hang out more often.”

Nyf's sorrow twists into hatred as he jumps at Dysh and tries to strangle him or throw him into the void. “HA!” Dysh says as he throws Nyf to the side. “You're fucking weak.” Dysh grabs him and carries him to the crow, and father rides home to his castle with his son.

Bloodbath

Voyd and her army track down Rott easily enough, only to find him riding one of the giant worms. His left arm is missing.

When he returns to face the worms, he initially just wants to sneak past them to find shelter beyond, but the cave he finds is not empty. Deep within the dark tunnels he hears a soft coo. He tracks the sound to a dimly lit cavern with a giant bug, larger than the cat below Sector 5. It is their queen, abandoned because she doesn't produce eggs any longer. She is lodged into the cavern's walls, unable to move because of her size. She looks at Rott with sorrow filled eyes. She gives him a look of mercy, the same his mom gives him when she dies. Rott walks up and touches her head in hopes of comforting

her.

In an instant, she grabs his arm and bits it off viciously. Blood squirts from Rott's stub, and he covers it with pressure using his other hand. The queen begins to choke on his arm, and Rott spits out pain and laughter.

“That's what you fucking get!”

When the queen stops wiggling and twitching, she emits a blue cloud of her pheromones, covering him from head to doe. It soaks into his skin and the pungent smell combined with bloodloss make him vomit.

Several months are spent recovering, lucky to still be alive. When he feels strong enough to walk again, he gradually makes it out of the cave. He knows that he's dead either way, whether it be starvation, the worms, or Voyd's own hands. He lays in the sand and laughs hysterically. He hears worms pushing sand aside and he does nothing but shout, “Go ahead, you assholes!”

One of the giant worms looks at him from above, its spit dripping onto his face. Then it sniffs him. The worm looks around and makes a very odd noise, and is then joined by three more worms. One of them runs away and brings Rott food, while the others sniff him. As he eats his food he realizes that they are all sleeping soundly beside him. Surprised, Rott stands up and looks at them. He touches the one and feels it vibrating a purr towards him. He spends some time training them, building a mental bond with each one, learning their habits, mannerisms and behavior. He gathers them all, trains the largest to let him ride it. Then he searches the sands for the demons who killed Clott. When he finds their encampment they stand still, unsure of whether or not to run.

Rott speaks, “I came to you with a message. A warning. Fight alongside me, or die right here and now!” They look around and the leader comes out to speak.

“We join nobody, and we aren't afraid of worms. If we were to join you though, who would we be fighting?”

“Women. An army of them, each and every one as ruthless as the last.” The sand demons agree to his terms, eager to see women again. Eager to fight again. When Voyd and her army arrive, they are greeted by the entire Blood Desert. The armies clash and the sand flies as the blood spills from

countless wounds.

On the other side of Syl, even more blood will be spilled as Lort's army advances on Oni's Castle. Lort knows he's waited too long when the black fire appears and then begins to swallow his stronghold. He senses Dysh has made his move while Lort twittles his thumbs, so he mounts a full offensive, sending his entire army and his people to battle.

Giant crows carrying elites cut them in half before reaching the Daunting Cracks. One by one his soldiers are picked off with ease. “ARCHERS! GUNSLINGERS! FIRE!”

The crows dodge for as long as they can, while killing off even more of Lort's men, but eventually the birds are dead and the elites take as many soldiers with them as they can before becoming consumed by the swarm. Behind them, Lort sees the black fire getting closer, devouring all of his stronghold and some of his soldiers. They advance up the Daunting Cracks towards Oni's Castle.

The battle in the desert comes to a dramatic close as Voyd rips Rott off of his worm and kills it, but not before it eats Riot. The sand demons run away, and the worms gather together. Voyd cuts off Rott's other arm and holds it up to the worms. They smell it and then lay down like obedient lap dogs. She straps his arm to her back and walks back to Rott as he slowly bleeds to death. He is bawling.

“That was surprisingly brave of you, Rott.”

He coughs. “I think we both know that isn't true. I'm a coward, and always have been. I got lucky to survive this long, lucky to have gotten this far.”

Voyd huffs. “At least you're able to admit it.” She takes out her knife and cuts his tongue off. “We've heard enough from you now. It's time for torture.”

Choas stops the bleeding so that he doesn't die too quickly. Then she begins making small cuts all over him for a few hours, and he moans with every slice. All of the women take turns torturing him until he finally dies about a week later. Then they notice the black fire coming towards them in the distance. Some of the sand demons come back to pledge their allegiance, but they are all slaughtered. Voyd and her army move to Oni's Castle, riding the surviving worms.

Lort breaches the gates after several more casualties from tower and wall guards. Once Voyd's worms

crash through the other side of Oni's fortress, the entire population of Syl resides within the castle walls. All sides suffer heavy casualties.

Oni's Castle

Nyf watches as the bloodiest war he ever witnesses erupts. He doesn't care to fight any of them, the only person he wishes to die is his father. That is until he sees a small purple cat by the name of Poison sneaking off to find shelter from the battle. Nyf follows her and stabs her with a fork. He stabs as many times as he can until he's sure she's dead forever. “If I could have thrown you into the Black Void, I would have.”

That's when Nyf notices a trail of dead bugs. He follows it to a small room with junk and clutter everywhere. He sees Rhun's backpack and opens it. He finds the egg and the pen. He hears a small squeak and pulls out the pen. He hears another as he looks at the tip of the pen and sees an almost unseeably small Rhun.

“nyf..” He screams, but Nyf can barely hear him.

“Rhun?”

“be quiet!”

“Oh,” Nyf whispers. “Sorry. Why are you so small?”

“dysh did this to me. fix me.”

“I don't know how. I'm sorry.”

“you must! demise tells me you had powers when you were a baby, but they have been suppressed.”

“Powers” Nyf looks around. “Demise? So it is true, you absorb the souls of the dead. Who from our group is in there?” Nyf asks, hoping to hear him say Debris.

“it's hard to tell. so many voices.”

Nyf hears something and puts the pen into the backpack before walking to a safe area. He pulls out

the pen and looks, but Rhun is gone. “Where'd you go?” Nyf whispers.

“down here!” Rhun screams at the top of his lungs, and Nyf almost doesn't hear him. He's climbing down from Nyf's pants. When he reaches the floor he shouts up. “make me bigger!”

Nyf doubtfully puts his hands up and concentrates as he's seen his father doing so many times before. Nothing happens.

“i believe in you!” Nyf closes his eyes and tries again. “that's it!”

Rhun yells as he slowly grows and his voice gets louder and lower. In the middle of the process, someone walks in and reports to Dysh. Nyf stops when Rhun is about a fourth of his original size. They are led to the throne room to speak with Dysh. Nyf carries the backpack, hoping nobody notices. Dysh laughs when he sees them both. “It seems you found the little guy. I'll admit, I kind of forgot about him. It's funny, I remember him being a lot smaller last time. You wouldn't be trying to defy me, would you, son?”

“With my very last breath, I will defy you.”

“That's funny. You can drop the act, Nyf, I don't need you to spy on Rhun and report back anymore.” Nyf is silent, and Rhun looks up at his sorrowful face. “There's no need to act like you're his faithful soldier, because we got him.”

“Enough of your lies, Dysh,” Rhun shouts. His eyes turn black and Dysh stares into them, his attention completely and uncontrollably absorbed by the blackhole eyes, as much as the Red Orb had done so many times before. Through the orb he had seen Rhun's eyes before this, but in person it is another story.

“Ask him yourself, Rhun! Or ask him what happened to Debris! I will be the first to admit, you can't trust me, but he's been lying to you this entire time! He is a more maniacal manipulator than I could ever be!”

The wind in the throne room sucks small objects into Rhun's eyes as he looks up at Nyf. Nyf can't look him in the face. “I did what I had to do.”

Just then, Burns storms in. “Rhun! Nyf killed Debris! I watched him do it, at the Floating Mountains!

You can't trust him, he's working with Dysh!”

Nyf looks back at Burns with a disappointed grimace. “I did what I had to do,” is all Nyf is able to say.

“I DON'T BELIEVE IT!” Rhun shouts in a booming voice. Nyf goes to his knees.

“It's true. I had to kill Debris. You will understand.”

Rhun loses control of his emotions and absorbs Nyf into his soul. Instantly, he understands and his eyes turn back to normal. “He did what he had to do.” Rhun sits on his knees, covers his face and cries.

“Touching. Who are you again?”

“My name is Burns, I follow Rhun.”

“Kill him. I have no use for him. He ruined the surprise.”

An elite stabs Burns through the back and his bloody corpse is dropped to the throne room floor. Rhun looks over to the backpack, which is now too big for him, and grabs it right when Dysh raises his hand to make Rhun microscopic again. The backpack shrinks with him, but since it's too big he takes everything out, rips a small pouch off, and puts everything in it, strapping the egg and the pen to his arm. Rhun looks over to see Dysh towering over him, taller than the skyscraper in Sector 5. Dysh stomps around, shaking the floor and making Rhun fall. Then Dysh laughs loudly and sits back down.

The Courtyard

Lort's army clashes with Voyd's after both eliminate most of Dysh's forces. Voyd draws Lort's attention as she swings her long black sword through countless soldiers. Voyd's women are initially outnumbered, ten to one, but as Lort watches he sees just how ruthless these women are.

Chaos is able to summon a blue energy from within. which cuts through armor like plasma, and she rains hail down upon large groups. Mayhem is able to summon seismic energy from within, creating big gaping cracks under many soldiers at a time, causing them to all fall through to some unknown fate. Murder slashes with two medium sized swords of razor sharp metal, creating clouds of blood before his people are able to react. Morbid carries her axe and revolver, hacking away through crowds. The

worms thin the crowd as well, but all except one are killed. The rest of Voyd's army shrinks drastically, but the survivors remain unphased, and Lort's men are overwhelmed.

The only option Lort sees is to take out Voyd, their leader. He is successful, stabbing her through the neck while she's distracted, but the result is not ideal for him. Murder slides behind him and hacks his legs off at the knees. His head is blasted off by Chaos' blue energy, and as his torso falls, Morbid hacks him with her axe until she's satisfied.

The final worm stands tall, but has lost too much blood. As it dies it falls through the giant metal swing doors to the throne room. Dysh looks up, amazed, as the women storm in, followed by the men. Dysh holds up his hands and shrinks everyone to the size of Rhun, including the giant worm. His throne room floor is cracked and bloody.

“Great. I'm not cleaning this up.”

Dysh takes a nap as the population of Syl wanders his throne room floor, looking for shelter to recuperate from battle. The war continues as more of the men and women kill each other off slowly, and three-hundred-million years later, Dysh sees the black fire eating the walls away, so he moves everyone to his model town.

Compressed Syl

The town is modeled off of what Dysh sees in the red orb while it still glows, the street in which the LysSyl TDE building resides. In the dimension above, Biz, a homeless man seeks shelter in the abandoned LysSyl TDE building. His large round eyes stare when he finds the twin-dimensional engine. Only one of the dimensions is visible to him, Lys. Syl has become so small that he would need a magnifying glass and to know exactly where to look in order to see it. Lys, on the other hand, is filled with so much stuff that it looks like it might burst through at any moment, and to the homeless man in rags named Mortal, Lys is beautiful.

Within the speck of Syl, Dysh watches over the model town as the war can be considered over because all but a handful of Lort's and Dysh's men are dead. Rhun has been placed in an outdoor cage, used in Biz to torture thieves. The sisters, Mayhem, Morbid, and Murder have found a house to use for shelter, but move if they are ever discovered, using tactics Voyd taught them. Chaos has become a lone

wolf, helping women when she can, but forming no alliances. She watches Dysh from hiding, clueless of how to face him.

Rhun sits behind the bars of his cage, searching his mind for the voice of Debris. It's crowded, and she's nowhere to be found.

Meanwhile, Mortal is standing too close and accidentally gets sucked into Syl by unknowingly touching it. The trip knocks him unconscious and Dysh doesn't know where he comes from, but shrinks him anyway, placing him in a house in his model town.

The deadly sisters stay in the house across from Mortal, and as their paranoia and stress grow, so does the tension between them. Morbid begins to talk about their long dead brother, and Mayhem does not want to hear it. “He would know what to do.”

“He's not here,” Murder says.

“Both of you, shut the fuck up about him!” Mayhem's eyes grow wide with anger as she snaps.

“I just miss him, don't you?” Morbid asks her.

Mayhem screams, and the house shakes along with the rest of the model town table. This awakes Mortal, and he has no clue he's no longer in Biz. The model is fairly accurate, aside from some minor changes. As he walks out of the house, the town seems different. Younger. The house across from him shakes again. “Someone needs to turn their music down.” Mortal keeps walking down the street, glancing at LysSyl TDE building and remembering what happened, but deciding it was all a dream.

He stops at the cage with Rhun in it and kneels down to look at him. “Huh, imagine that. This town is lively today, they've caught a thief!” Rhun says something alien to him. Even though Mortal has never seen a thief in the cage before, he knows what to do.

He spits on Rhun's face and keeps walking. Rhun doesn't understand a word he says, but after asking for help and then being spit on, he decides the homeless man isn't going to help him.

Mayhem storms off, and when Morbid tries to comfort her, she screams and smacks her away. “Leave me alone, you fucking cunt. I hate both of you!” Morbid walks away, feeling defeated.

She walks over to Murder. “I told you not to bother her. Wolf died a long time ago, and if she can't deal with it by now, she'll never be able to.”

Morbid looks up from tears. “He would know what to do. Right?”

“Of course. He always knew what to do.”

The house shakes more violently than ever and Mayhem materializes through the wall. “I TOLD YOU BOTH TO SHUT THE FUCK UP!”

Static electricity sparks from her hair as she floats towards them and the house crumbles to pieces around them. Murder is able to make it out, but Morbid doesn't. Mayhem floats ever closer to Murder as she begins to run away.

Chaos overhears Dysh mumbling about how disappointing Rhun has been and she decides it's time to release Rhun from his cell. He thanks her and she bows. “Kill him,” is all she says before sneaking back into hiding.

The black fire has eaten all but a foot around the table and Dysh, much too close for his comfort.

“So that's how you want to play, huh? I guess now is as good a time as any to unleash my secret weapon.” Dysh shrinks himself into the town. He confronts Rhun once and for all, pulls out a syringe of glowing white blood, and injects it into his neck.

Sealing the Rip

Dysh's eyes always glow a sharp green, but after injecting the white blood they begin to glow with a whiter tint. “What have I done?” Dysh says as he looks around. “I'm... a monster. Nyf... Debris...”

Rhun looks at him, confused. Nyf explains from within, and Rhun looks at his own hands. “What am I?” Nobody has any answers, within or beyond.

Chaos appears in a flash and slices off Dysh's head with one swipe of a plasma attack. “Why did you... well, nevermind actually. I guess death means nothing.”

Chaos looks at him with a perplexed look and then looks ahead of him. Murder runs out and is

covered in blood. “RUUUN!!” She screams, but Chaos steps forward instead, pushing Rhun to the side. She gathers her energy and throws everything she has at Mayhem, as Mayhem throws a strong bolt of lighting and a giant house at Chaos. Both of them die instantly.

Murder looks over to Rhun, who stares blankly ahead. “What the fuck? Who are you? Who is that?” She points as Mortal walks up to them. He says something they don't understand, sees the dead bodies, screams, and runs. He doesn't get far, the black fire is swallowing the town quickly. He tries to outrun it, but it devours him. Rhun and Murder exchange a look. Rhun shrugs. “Uhm...” is all Murder can say before the fire consumes them both and the Rip is sealed forever.

Wisdom

Rhun
Lys

Paracosm

Rhun is knocked unconscious when the Rip is sealed, and he's launched into Lys. As he drifts through space, he dreams. In his dreams, everyone is there. He meets his parents for the first time, his real parents. He wants to apologize for everything, but they are smiling so big that he knows he has no reason to apologize. They hug him tight with pride.

Magdoline kisses his cheek, and he runs through a field to where Nyf stands. The day is more beautiful than the prettiest place on Earth times ten. The colors are so vibrant, and everyone's able to be happy for the first time.

With the help of Nyf and the others, he's able to find Debris, and they pull her up from the dark reaches below a tree. Rhun hugs her tightly and they hold each other for many moments. “It was horrible down there, but it's getting better. Everyone from Syl is being purified by you. It's beautiful.”

“I'm so happy to see you made it to me.”

“Sorry it took so long.” They release the hug and stare at each other, both of them eternally happy. They are all free, grateful, and joyous.

Their souls are able to relax for once, except Rhun, who is shaken awake by a balding man with orange spots all over his round face. His mouth is on his forehead. Rhun looks around to see he's on a spaceship, but doesn't know what one is until some distant voices within from Old Relstin tell him.

Welcome to Lys

The balding man points a gun at Rhun. The man says something alien to him, and deep within, Rhun tries to translate.

Rhun sits up, then stands, walks over to the window, feeling unthreatened as the bald man continues

to shout at him. Rhun turns to him. “Is this Lys?” Rhun asks in the Universal Syllian language of no name.

The man lowers his gun while raising his eyebrow. Rhun looks back at the window. *How boring*, he thinks, as there are almost no lights in the space beyond the ship. Rhun lays back down and returns to his paracosm, until being knocked awake by Nyt. Rhun doesn't recognize him at first, younger somehow, but his words are easier for Rhun's mind to translate.

“Get the fuck up!” is what Nyt will say to him in a Fahllian language, one well known in Old Relstin. The souls from there translate for him and allow him to speak.

“Is this Lys?”

“I thought you said he couldn't speak our language.”

Rhust looks at Rhun. “I thought... I must have been speaking Blackleavian, I apologize. It's a McParch thing.”

Nyt stares at Rhun without fear or hate, but intense curiosity. “This is Lys. We're here to stop you rom destroying the Universe.”

Rhun laughs at the thought of it. “Good luck,” he says as he raises his hands in surrender. Rhust readies his weapon and Nyt tells him to stand down.

“I sense no ill intent from him. It's strange.”

Rhun lowers his arms. “So... where are we going?”

Rhust raises his gun again. “We have to kill him. I understand your ability Nyt, but you don't understand what this creature is capable of. What's at stake. He's obviously trying to fool you.”

“Nyt? I remember you. You threw me into the Rip. You look different.”

“I did?” Rhun and Nyt stare at each other in confusion as Rhust powers up his gun.

Nyt looks over. “I don't think you can kill him.”

Rhust fires anyhow, blasting a giant hole in the side of the spaceship, sending Rhun and all of the oxygen out of the ship in moments. Nyt and Rhust are then sucked out of the ship to orbit the aged dying volcanic planet of Rellujah.

Their lineage protects them from extreme conditions and the need to eat or breathe constantly, although not all Fahllians are so lucky. Nyt's powers come from his father, and only Nyt knows where Rhun gets his power. He looks at the small black skinned Rhun as he carries him down to the rocky surface. Rhun cannot fly like Nyt, or at least he doesn't appear to be able to.

Nyt sets him down on the once violent lava filled environment. Now a cool ball of rock, Rellujah no longer has any life, vibrancy, or heat. Rhun looks around and wanders as Nyt follows him. Then he looks up to see Nyt staring at him as if he wants to say something. “What?”

“You said I've spoken to you? Threw you into The Rip?”

“Yea, you don't remember? It was a while ago, but it really changed my life.”

Nyt puts a hand on Rhun's shoulder. “I never forget something like that. If what you say is true, then I haven't done it yet. I'm what they call a time traveller. I must travel to the past in the future.”

“I don't understand any of those words. Time? Future? Past?”

Nyt looks at him, thinking of why he might throw this child-like Fahllian into The Rip, while souls within Rhun explain the words as best they can. “Ok, I kind of understand I guess. Still confusing, and hard to believe.”

“That's how everybody is at first. Nobody understands or believes me, but it is the truth. My truth.”

“Well... I guess I believe you. My truth is a bit hard to understand too, even for me.”

“And what is your truth?”

Rhun removes Nyt's hand from his shoulder. “I am a destroyer. The destroyer. I've already absorbed all of Syl and I'm guessing that Lys will be next.”

Nyt's eyes narrow. “Well then, I have no choice but to stop you.”

Rhun smiles. “I don't think you can, but you're welcome to try.”

Nyt blinks. Maybe there isn't anything he can do, but he knows he has to try. Nyt disappears in a flash of light, leaving Rhun alone to wander the dead planet. He sees nothing but rocks, nobody but him. Rhun falls asleep and returns to his paracosm. It is his happy place, where all his friends live. He yearns to stay there forever, but Rhust McParch's ship will finally crash on Rellujah's surface, creating a planetary explosion that will rocket Rhun into space.

Good vs Good

Blud's story, like many worthy of telling, is one of chaos. He's originally born to Lysandus and Tawl, in the Age of Control. At a young age he exhibits the ability to shapeshift, which leads to his accidental death at the hands of his school principal.

After Lysandus successfully resurrects his soul from the beyond, he finds himself on a planet he's never been, Aspimiria. He can no longer change his shape, and Lysandus is missing, believed to be dead. He is compelled by a mysterious force within him to resurrect anybody who dies around him, using his newfound ability to heal.

He is a minion of Playt, but he isn't alone. The other minions are chaotic and uncontrollable, but he knows that he must help guide them.

The voices within warn him about the end of time. Forging an alliance with Nyt and Lyt, together they seek help from a higher dimension. Lyt's whistle calls Koda from Biz, who lends a hand in sealing the minions into a lower dimension known as Pandora. Blud alone looks over this dimension, watching the chaos within. Blud is pulled into Pandora when the chaos evolves into an indescribably unstable energy. Moments later, the minidimension of Pandora explodes and releases a dark spirit, the combined souls of all seven minions.

The dark spirit travels for billions of years, eventually inhabiting the body of baby Rhun before he's born. Nyt searches through time for Pandora's destruction and follows the spirit as best he can.

Unaware of his former life, Blud is reborn in the Age of Reason. Lysandus is still his father, but he now has a sister named Tox. He lives long enough to see everyone around him die, and is powerless to do anything about it.

In the middle of the Age of Death, Blud dedicates his life to the Guardians, and his power of resurrection is once more unlocked, by Ink himself. Ink thinks Blud will be best on the front lines, so he sends him away with an army of zombies to Aspimiria. Blud finds that him and his army aren't alone on the planet of Aspimiria. A very old soul has found a way to survive the extinction of everything else on the planet, Shellra Blade. She effectively kills off most of his army over the years, until Rhun falls to the planet from space.

Blud tries to heal as many of the zombies as he can, but she can kill them faster than he can bring them back. When Rhun lands, he cracks the planet in half. Blud knows who it is, and without an army, he knows he has no chance. Shellra knows nothing about what's going on, and rushes through the cracked ground as the dust settles. When she finds him, he's asleep in his paracosm. She swings her sword on his neck, but the blade does nothing.

He wakes up and says, “Hey!”

Blud takes this opportunity to heal as many of his zombie soldiers as possible. “Why does my sword not cut you?” Rhun shrugs. He can see her soul within, cracked and broken.

“You are in pain. I will make it better.” Rhun places a hand on her shoulder and she dies instantly. Hundreds of soulless zombies attack Rhun from every direction. He tries to absorb one, but it causes him immense physical pain when he does.

Blud confronts Rhun from atop a cracked hill. “RHUN! I'M HERE TO PUT A STOP TO YOU!”

“I've heard that before.”

The zombies crowd Rhun, so instead of absorbing them, he begins to turn them to dust. Meanwhile, Blud puts his hands on Shellra and heals her, puling her already broken soul out of Rhun. Rhun screams in pain, and so does her soul. “What did you just do?” He feels her soul crack in more places as it's dragged out of him. Shellra screams in agony as her body comes back to life. “Her soul can't handle that, you're going to destroy her.”

Rhun looks at his soul, twisted and misshapen. “I'm not the destroyer, you are! I am the hero of this story!” Blud heals the dust and pulls another soul from Rhun to give it life. It happens to be his father's soul, Karden, and it forms cracks in it instantly. Rhun reabsorbs his soul as well as Shellra's. Blud tries

to heal Shellra again, but her soul shatters.

“What have you done?” Her body opens its eyes and stands up.

“She's fine. I saved her.”

“You saved her body, her soul is lost, forever.”

Blud looks at her and touches her shoulder. He senses no soul. “You're lying, it must be in you. I can feel all the souls within you without even getting near. Too many to count. You are a monster.”

“Can you also sense that they're happy in there?” Blud ignores his question and pulls out more and more souls from Rhun, ripping pieces off and cracking others. When Rhun recovers, Blud pulls out another. He sends the souls into zombies and they all look at Blud questioningly.

“Attack him, why are you looking at me?”

“Who are you?” the one asks. “Why have you done this?”

Blud looks around at them as they crowd him. “You are no hero,” Rhun says when he's finally able to stand. “You are nothing but a nuisance!” Rhun's eyes turn black and pain fills him as he absorbs all of the zombies, their dust, all souls taken from him, and Blud. After that, he absorbs the planet of Aspimiria, and then goes to sleep.

Within his paracosm, he repairs the damaged souls, but the soul of Shellra Blade is lost forever. Blud is reunited with his family.

Sporxylvania

Rhun wakes up on Sporkson, unsure of how he gets there or how long he's been there. He will be surrounded by lifeforms of strange unnatural shapes, dancing and singing. He watches them with a smile, and tries to talk to them, but he's ignored.

It doesn't bother him, it feels good to see happiness in a dying dimension. He won't want to kill them, but doesn't think he'll mind them in his paracosm. He watches them for nearly an hour before feeling like he might fall asleep. An odd man walks up to him and speaks.

“Welcome to Sporxylvania. I am Sporx.” His face will be twisted and malformed, and he wears a white robe. “I assume you're here to kill me.”

“Well... you can always follow me for a bit.”

“No, I cannot. As soon as you leave this planet, I will be dead.”

“How can that be?”

“Because I am the planet. I'm a planet sometimes.”

Rhun only then realizes that all of the strange inhabitants also share the soul of Sporx. He begins to wonder if he's still in Lys, as the space above turns from black to light pink. The stars turn blue, but Sporx and his planet don't change color. They all share a metal shiny peach similar in shade to several humans on Earth. “You seem like a nice guy, so I can stay here and rest before leaving. Give you some time? If it's any comfort to you, you will enter my paracosm and it is very pleasant there. A lot of nice people.”

“No.” Rhun looks at him, perplexed. “You cannot rest here, and I will not be going to your paracosm.”

“I'm not sure you have a choice.”

“You're right, I don't, but neither do you.”

“I don't understand.”

“I have broken the sixth wall.” Rhun will look around.

“There are no buildings, we're outside. What are you talking about?”

Sporx breathes out of his nose as if to laugh. “I'm not sure you'll understand, but here goes. This is all a story. Me and you are characters, and the book is about you. Follow me?” Rhun doesn't. “Funny thing is, I wrote a story about the man who wrote me into yours. He seems okay. Ryan, you seem okay to me. I wish you no ill will.” I know, Sporx. It's just all so confusing. “Welcome to my life. Rhun, when I die, my soul will become a part of the author Ryan Wellman.” It will? “It will be okay, trust me. I will help

you finish the Lys Trilogy.” I admit that I do need help. A miracle possibly. Will I still be me? “Of course, Ryan, but you will also be me.” Rhun overhears only half of the conversation and is thinking that Sporx is insane. “You do?”

Rhun looks at him, confused. “How do you know all this?”

“It was the final gift from the mask, before Playt took it from me.”

“Playt?”

“Yes, you know his son, Nyt. He is the first book to be written, then of Ynk, and now you, Rhun. The Lys Trilogy. Ryan, do any of your readers understand this? Any of it?” I hope so. I can't ask them though, that's too campy. It's bad enough I'm talking to you now, can we just get back to the story?

Rhun thinks for a moment. “Ynk? Playt? Are they on my path to come?”

“Playt's dead. His soul still lingers somewhere, but god knows where. Ynk awaits you at the end. His avatar of a similar spelling is your biggest threat.” Sporx falls to the ground, showing he was levitating, exposing his small legs as the robe blows upward. “Listen, I gotta go.”

Sporx dies a moment later, and Sporkson explodes.

One Luv

Rhun awakes from a lovely dream to see a dense forest of blue. The trees are ancient, so tall and dense, the sky cannot be seen. A sun must still exist however, because the world around him is lit. It is the most plantlife he will ever witness.

Blue Leaves. A mysterious blue figure watches from the bushes.

Rhun looks around in wonder. The mysterious figure moves faster than the wind, and quieter. It does not move its focus from Rhun, but changes position several times to avoid being seen, as well as to get a better angle.

Rhun's oblivious, and doesn't sense any soul in the area. That is until the figure steps on a stick and breaks it. Before Rhun is able to fully turn his head in that direction, they are gone.

The blue person is a man named One, native of Blue Leaves. He will be the last born on the planet, and the last to survive the mass extinction.

One runs to the other side of the small planet at nearly the speed of light. A woman awaits him there, her skin black and her eyes so close and perfectly shaped to create a heart. One of her eyes is pink, the other is purple. She smiles big when she sees him. “One! Where have you been?”

“Luv,” he calls her, “someone else is here. I have a bad feeling about this, can we leave this planet?”

“Leave?” Luv looks at him, perplexed, but still holds her smile. “I think you're overreacting, we just haven't had company in so long.”

“NO!” One shakes his head. “I think this is Rhun, the destructor everyone is talking about.”

Luv laughs. “So?”

“What do you mean, so? He's going to kill the both of us. We need to find a way to leave.”

“If he is Rhun, then there is no escaping. The end is here, we've known that for quite some time. Now is as good a time as ever to accept our fates. I say we greet him with open arms.”

“Are you insane? I don't understand you.”

“Nor I you. Birth and creation are things of the past. This is the end of time, and you can't deny that. We are alone on this planet.”

“But we are alone together.”

“And we've had long and fulfilling lives. We've done all there is to do, it is our time. If you find a way to leave, I will not follow. I intend to smile at Rhun.”

One listens and finally accepts his fate. He knows she is right, and can't argue her logic. “I understand, Luv. I will take you to him, I was just happy. Now I'm scared. I don't want to lose you.”

“Happiness was never ours to keep. Do not be scared. Everything is as it should be.”

One smiles at her beautiful face, and then grabs her up and speeds towards Rhun. In an instant, they

stand before the short man and he jumps. Luv smiles as she looks into his eyes. “Rhun. It is a pleasure to meet you, we've all heard so much about you.”

Rhun blinks. “You have?”

Luv laughs, and One realizes that he's no longer scared of this man. “We have. You are a good soul, I can tell. Your eyes are so full of innocence, it's quite ironic. You are here for us, and we accept our fate.” Luv extends her hand.

“Now wait a minute,” One says before a brief awkward pause and then he too extends his hand.

Rhun smiles and grabs their hands, absorbing both into his growing utopia of a paracosm.

Powers from Within

Luv's soul instantly purifies even the darkest demon within the paracosm. Most souls take some time to reach his conscious mind, aside from Nyf and Dysh, who had both absorbed his blood, but One's speed allows him to track down Rhun's avatar within. As Rhun wanders the empty quiet jungle of Blue Leaves, One tells him to move faster.

“Why?”

“Huh? Uh... why not?”

Rhun has no answer for One. In fact, he has the urge to run. He picks up his speed and runs through the jungle, faster than he has ever known he could. “Faster,” One demands. “You can go faster.” Rhun pushes and finds that his speed is ludicrous. He dodges trees left and right, until One tells him to run through them. “You'll go faster if you just travel straight and forget about every other movement. These trees are nothing to you.”

Rhun does as suggests, decimating the first and flinching, but running through the rest unphased. “You can go even faster.” Rhun reaches the speed of sound and creates a sonic boom. “MORE!” One screams from within and Rhun's speed increases exponentially to nearly light speed. “Now Jump!”

Rhun jumps off of the planet, and the moment he exits the atmosphere, Blue Leaves explodes. The shockwave propels him past the lightspeed barrier for a brief moment, which rips a wormhole through

space and empties him at such a distance as to almost reach Black Leaves.

His trajectory is perfect, and when he lands on the planet he creates a crater that is nearly half of the surface wide. Dust fills the entire atmosphere, blotting out the sun and making it impossible to breathe or see. He runs around the much bigger planet (but not at full speed), until reaching the edge of his crater. Then he slows down, and wind from his run blows some of the dust away, revealing the sun enough to light up a city full of tall buildings which span the horizon.

He hears moaning and shuffling, but at first can't see what's there. No souls can be fealt nearby, although there is a twinkle that he can see in a distant building. The sun shines brighter through, and Rhun sees an ocean of zombies surrounding him. He knows if he absorbs their soulless bodies it causes him pain, so he slowly pushes through the crowd towards the twinkle, turning zombies to dust on the way. Then he runs through them and reaches the twinkle rather quickly, taking paths around the buildings. By this point, he's exhausted, but is able to push through the front doors of a gigantic hospital where, he can sense two living souls. He collapses a foot into the front door and wakes up in a hospital bed.

A woman with an orange emotionless round face looks into his eyes as he opens them, her black pigtails dangling down from buns. She shines light into his eyes and checks his hands and feet. Then she walks away without saying a word. Rhun sits up and sees the woman walk over to another bed. In the bed is an old woman, frail and wrinkled by time, with a paper white skin. A breathing apparatus is attached to her mouth and wires are stuck to her fingers.

The orange woman walks into another room, and Rhun decides to walk over to the old woman. She opens her eyes to reveal large, round, pink eyes with black pupils. The pink in her eyes seems faded, but Rhun imagines they were vibrant in her youth. They look at Rhun in confusion. “Who are you?” cracks her voice as she examines him.

“My name is Rhun, it's nice to meet you. What is your name?”

She coughs for a moment and then lets out a sigh. “My name is Ina. Rhun, you say? I wondered if I'd survive to meet you.” Ina coughs once more, only this time little droplets of white blood spray into her breathing hose.

“You've heard of me too?”

“Who hasn't? This is the end of time, even my brother fears you, Ink.”

“Ink is your brother? You don't seem to fear me.”

“No, I don't. I've accepted my fate long ago, when I first got sick. Even before that, I remember a strong feeling as if I had already died once before. In a long forgotten timeline.”

Rhun doesn't understand the concept, but listens anyway. The orange faced woman walks in and speaks in a language that Rhust from within can translate for him. “Up and about, I see. Please step away from the other patient, she isn't well.”

Ina coughs. “It's ok, All. We're just talking.”

All looks at Rhun. “I'm guessing you're Rhun. You've already absorbed Luv, I can sense her soul within you.”

“Yes I did. I'm not surprised you can sense her, she's quite powerful.”

“I can sense them all, just as you knew where we were. When I am absorbed you will be more in tune with them all. Their entire collection of knowledge, memories, and abilities will be at the forefront of your mind at a moment's notice, without them having to tell you.”

“Abilities? You mean like One's speed?”

“Yes, precisely, and your ability to sense souls, from the spirit of Playt.”

“Playt is within?”

“Yes, his soul was picked up on Rellujah.”

Rhun searches his soul for Playt and finds him, but the soul is weak and silent. A very old soul indeed. “How do you know all this?”

“I know all. Well... I know a lot. Even I can't know everything.”

It's at this moment they all hear a pounding at the doors of the hospital room. All touches buttons on the wall and a monitor appears with images of zombies crowding the entrance to the hospital.

“You must absorb them,” Ina says to Rhun.

“They have no souls, it hurts to absorb them.”

“Then you must absorb us and then defeat them.”

“I'm not sure I can fight all of them. I just feel so exhausted. Like sleeping. Can't I just take a nap?”

All looks at him with her expressionless face, and then at Ina. “If you absorb me and her, we will help you fight.”

“How?”

“Trust me. It will all become clear.”

Rhun touches them and absorbs their souls, instantly hearing their voices in his head.

Ynk

The Head

i. Reunions

Jin woke Ink in the middle of the night. “Where the fuck have you been? Go back to sleep.” Ink laughed as Jin immediately walked away. He was pretty tired, but also excited for the next day. He almost got up, but fell asleep smiling instead.

His dream was of a big fluffy yellow monster with giant cute eyes. It roared in a high pitched voice as it ran at him, and then Ink noticed that it was a kitten sized ball of cuteness. It vibrated and hummed as it attacked him with its softer than silk fur. He laughed himself awake, the dream had been far too silly for him.

The fur that had been touching him was Fryzbie's. The dog jumped up when he saw that Ink was awake. He stared into his eyes and began waving his tail in happiness and anticipation to play. Ink laughed at him, hugged and petted him, and then they both walked towards the enticing smell coming from the kitchen.

In the kitchen were three robots preparing a breakfast. He recognized all three, instantly. Robob, Mechanicalysandus, and PL8. He walked past them and into the dining room. Seated at the head of the table was a tall and aging man with a crown on his head. He was surrounded by over twenty men. Ink knew every one of them.

They all greeted Ink with a smile and joyous remembrance. “Ink? I thought you looked familiar when I saw you in my bed. You are the one the statues were made to remember. I had no idea I would ever have the pleasure of meeting you. I am Aztar, King of Fahlls. You have been gone for quite some time.”

“Ages,” Jin added.

“Aztar... I'm sorry for sleeping in your bed, I had no idea.”

“It is quite alright. Any citizen is free to sleep where they want, even if it happens to be my bed. Besides, there are plenty of other beds in this castle that are fit for a king. From the stories, you are still a king in my mind. I think we all could agree to that.” The table toasted to Ink.

Ink didn't know what to say. He was embarrassed, but felt very grateful. The robots brought in the food and they all began to feast. The smiles and laughs were passed around, but Ink could sense a deep sadness within them all. His suspicions were brought to life when he noticed Lyt sitting across from him with tears slowly pouring out his eyes. “Lyt? Is everything ok?”

Blank coughed.

There was a moment of silence, broken by Jin. “I think what Blank was trying to say is, we have a serious situation on our hands. We desperately need your help, Ink.”

ii. Dichotomy

Dornal stood up and began to try to explain. “Son, your mom and sister have disappeared. In fact, all of the women on the entire planet have mysteriously vanished. This is day three, without any explanation. We have no clues, no leads, but we have organized ourselves by skill and have come up with the most effective team we could. Me and your uncle Tavin lead a group of scouts comprised of Lyt, Nyt, Byc, and Y. Your friends Jin, Omega, and Blank lead another group specialized in technology and intel. It is comprised of Pezz, Nappy, Inc, Bodlah, and Nic. The council overseeing both of these groups is Theryll, Lysander, N, Pawl, K, Nic Sr., and Dr. Flynt McParch. We are doing everything we can, but we could use all the help we can get.”

Ink looked at everyone in turn, and then looked at Aztar. “How can I help?” With his words, the men felt hope. The next couple of days was spent gathering more information, listening to rumors, and theorizing. They searched the entire planet, and then expanded on to the solar system, then the galaxy. All of the cosmos had been affected by whatever had happened.

In their search they heard rumors of a young boy named Uno who claimed to be able to communicate with his twin sister telepathically. Pawl tracked him down and found him on planet Gloom. After explaining the situation to Uno, he was willing to help in any way possible. Pawl brought him back to the castle on Fahlls.

Lysander greeted Uno and immediately began asking questions. “What do you know?”

Uno looked around at everyone. “I know that all of the women still exist. They are right here, right now, we just can't see them. I seem to be the only one capable of communicating with any of them, and it's because me and my sister have always had a psychic connection to each other. Beyond that, I really

don't know anything.”

The men told Uno to tell his sister to travel to the castle on Fahlls and communicate a message to them.

Uni didn't exactly have the resources to travel to Fahlls, but she lucked out by stumbling upon Tox, daughter of Lysandus. Tox built her and Uni a vessel and they were speeding through space in no time. When they walked through the doors, they saw a lovely old woman sitting in a throne at the far end of a giant hall. “Hello weary travelers. I am Queen Kortha. We welcome you, and will aid you in any way you wish. However, I have a feeling you are here to help us. As you may know, the men are missing. We have pulled our best women together to try to find answers. We have been meditating, looking for answers within ourselves. We invest our time in spirituality, creativity, art and music. We must rely on our intuition in this time of need. I have actually been waiting for you, Uni.”

She looked up at her in amazement. “How did you know my name?”

“I met you once already, in a dream I had not long ago. Please, make yourself at home. A feast is being prepared as we speak. We will talk more when our bellies are full and our minds have been emptied.”

Uni told Uno what was going on and he told the king. The men attempted to write notes, or move objects around in hopes that they could communicate in some way, but it was futile. Uni and Tox sat at a large table surrounded by nearly twenty other women. Robots came in and served a glorious buffet of food, fit for royalty. When Uni told Uno, he began to get hungry, “I hate to ask kind sirs, but is there any way I could get a bite to eat? My sister Uni is being fed by robots and her food is making me feel famished.”

Tavin looked over to him. “Why is she telling you about the food?”

“It isn't her fault, when she is really happy or indulging in delicious treats, I can taste it. I can smell it, and I am now very jealous.”

“WAIT, THAT'S IT!” Theryll shouted. They all turned to look at him. “The robots! They're neither male nor female, therefore they exist in both worlds. Look at Uno, he's not just hungry. He is physically and mentally exhausted. After we eat, we need to find a better way to communicate with the women,

and I think the robots are the perfect solution to that problem."

After a grand feast, Uno teamed up with Nappy and Uni teamed up with Tox. Together, Nappy and Tox modified Robob to communicate so that Uni and Uno could rest. PL8 was reprogrammed by Inc and Bodlah to broadcast holograms and sound.

There was a quick reunion, and Ink saw his sister and mom for the first time in ages. When they couldn't hug each other, the realization of their predicament hit them even harder.

It was through a combination of outward and inward thought that stumbled upon an article in the Universal News. The article was written by an Amy G. Dala, and she explained how after a terrible earthquake on the planet Cerebrum had broken a device known as the Corpus Callosum, the men and the women experienced a separation.

Ink constructed another spaceship to Nappy's specifications, and Ina constructed one according to Tox's specifications. Everyone available piled in, and in fourteen days they had reached their destination.

iii. Cerebrum

The planet was white from space, but once they entered the atmosphere they realized that it had been clouds, and that the actual color of the air was red. The planet below them was a grayish brown, and as they got closer to the ground they noticed giant valleys and waterless streams. As they all walked onto the surface it squished beneath their feet. Ink noticed millions of wrinkles all over the ground as they searched for any kind of life.

Across the horizon, both the men and the women reported seeing a figure approaching. It was Psyche.

Psyche explained that they had landed atop the Neocortex. "I will be your guide, welcome to my home."

Ina spoke. "Psyche, thank you for your hospitality. We come to your planet in search of answers, namely in the form of a reporter named Amy G Dala. Do you know of her?"

Psyche thought for a moment. "The name does sound familiar, but before I'm allowed to release any of that type of information I must take you all to the Frontal Lobe. It is from there that any and all decisions are made." Psyche led them down a hill and into a secret entrance. Under the ground there

seemed to be thousands of people, all moving about and working hard.

“So this is where everyone is hiding.” Dr. McParch noted.

“It isn't that they are hiding, this is where they are all stationed. I am different from all of them because I am free to go wherever I want. Please, follow me to the conference room.” They all followed in single file line behind Psyche. Psyche led them to a room with a giant table in the middle, and nearly a hundred chairs surrounding it. “Please sit wherever you wish, and the council will be with you shortly.”

They did as told, and soon enough, seven people walked through the door. They all paced around the table and touched the men and women on their heads, as if they were playing duck duck goose. Then they all gathered near the entrance and spoke in unison. “We have received information from the Parietal Lobe that Amy was last seen on the moon, Cerebellum. You have been approved passage. We will provide the transportation. Please be safe travelers, and thank you for visiting planet Cerebrum.”

iv. Cerebellum

They were teleported from the Cerebral Cortex directly to the moon. Psyche had been told that Amy was last seen hanging out at a tree named the Arbor Vitae, and explained to them that it was next to the famous Pon's Pond.

With Psyche guiding them, they found it fairly easily. Everyone looked around but saw nobody in sight. The tree was gigantic. Ink looked up to see a figure sitting in the tree. “Amy?”

“Who's asking?”

Ina looked up. “I also see her.”

Amy jumped down from the tree. “Her? I'll have you know that I am neither and both sexes. Why do you think you can all see me? Why do you think you can all see Psyche? We technically have no gender.”

Lyt looked up at Amy. “We've come to investigate the separation of the sexes. We found your article about it. It has effected the entire Universe, and we have come to correct it.”

“I cannot help you, not entirely, but I can put you on the right path. There is another like me and

Psyche, located in the Epithalamus. They are conjoined twins named Ajna and Pineal. I'll help Psyche guide you there, but I won't be joining you in the Epithalamus. My home awaits my return."

v. Epithalamus

Upon returning to the planet, Amy led them underground, showed them where to go, and then went the other way. They walked past a giant sphere and came to a room. In the corner were the twins, Ajna and Pineal.

The travelers were welcomed with a soothing greeting. "Our home is your home. We know why you are here, Ink and Ina. We can help your predicament, if you help us first. You see, we have been over calcified and are unable to correct the fissure formed in the Corpus Callosum. We require skate fish liver oil for Pineal and psilocybin mushrooms for Ajna. Only one of you needs to retrieve these items, and that person knows who they are. They already know where to find these items."

Nyt walked forward and bowed. "In an instant," he said before vanishing.

The others looked at each other and waited patiently. Nyt returned in a matter of moments. He gave them what they had asked for. Ajna ate, Pineal drank. Then they waited thirty minutes before the room lit up with a bright white light.

It blinded everyone and the entire room began to vibrate. In Ink's thoughts ran a single line of understanding. "It's all in your head." A calming sensation spread from his center to his extremities. When the light subsided, the men and women all stood together within the castle of Fahlls in silence. It was a happy occasion, one worthy of a celebration.

The Party

Hugs were shared generously. Ink was reunited with not only his sister and mom, but his aunt Floretta as well. Chyna and Nichole showed up and greeted him as old friends. They had forgiven him, understood him, respected him. Lisa even appeared, and she was a real person, with a personality and a soul.

Ink felt a strange anxiety as the night continued and the party unfolded. Then Dos showed up and actually walked up to Sid and hugged him. She cried as she apologized sincerely. Then Aya showed up and Ink brightened. In fact, she brightened the entire party with her presence. He had missed her dearly,

and had already accepted that he would never see her again. She had grown.

Rose showed up and gave Ink a kiss. Tot and Lym walked over to Ink, followed by Chynthia. They all shared a giant hug. The reunions continued as Lacey, Hellitha, Christina, and Uni all took turns thanking Ink. Then Dae and Fayt greeted him with more smiles and hugs. Kortha was after them, Queen of Fahlls. She kissed his cheek and then Tox introduced herself.

There was nothing to worry about, but Ink still worried, and began to feel disconnected. Like it was a movie he was watching. That was when he met Chyll. Chyll was the most relaxed person in the Universe, not saying much, just enjoying the atmosphere, the people, listening to the conversations and smiling constantly. Ink hung out with him, tried to imitate him. He was an inspiration, and as they got to know each other, Chyll began to teach Ink some things that he discovered about life.

Ink absorbed his balanced energy. His anxiety melted away like microwaved butter. At that moment, he smiled the most relaxed smile of his entire life. It did not fade, and the party continued on throughout the night and echoed into the rest of Lys.

Lyt walked through the castle like a champion, and Lisa was so incredibly attracted to him that she took him to a private room to make out.

The Orgy

It didn't start out as an orgy, but emotions were already high when the drinks began to empty. A few people kissing here and there, then it turned to heavy petting. Jin and Dos reignited their spark, and Lym watched with growing curiosity.

The King sat atop his throne and the Queen sat atop her king. Inc was holding hands with Nichole as they made out. Aya and Sid were slowdancing.

Rose came over and started to massage Ink's neck. He was nervous again, perhaps she was the answer to all of his problems. “You are way too tense.”

Chyll laughed from across the room as he watched. The children like Uni and Uno were taken away by the older people like Flynt McParch and Nic Sr. to a place away from the orgy before it became too obscene.

Once again, Lym was the first to get naked. She put on some soft and soothing music which could be heard throughout the entire castle. Then she danced seductively for everyone. She knew exactly what she was doing, and even though some were too shy to watch, most watched with growing intrigue.

Ink grew hard and Rose began giving him a lap dance. She slowly undressed in the most sexy of ways and Ink began to sweat and release the smell of fear.

Several others decided it was naked time as well and stripped. So far there had been no sex, only foreplay, but when the song was over Lym walked over to Dos and whispered into her ear. Together they stripped Jin down to only his socks and began orally pleasing him. Jin's smile had never been so big. Even Omega got a piece of the pie as Chynthia came up to him in her panties, stared into his eyes, and then sat on his lap, face to face. Blank was dirty dancing with Lacey when they suddenly broke out into a make out session.

Chyna cuddled up to Bodlah, forgiving all of her hatred of him and realizing her attraction. Tot and N began fucking in the middle of the room. Y and K held each other's hands and lightly kissed each other on the lips. Dos and Lym began to eat each other out as Jin watched. Tox and Nic Jr. watched everyone and laughed to each other, both incredibly turned on but still shy. Nyt serenaded Fayt while Hellitha and Nappy made love in the corner. Christina and Pezz hooked up and made love next to Hellitha and Nappy, and after about twenty minutes they switched partners in the midst of their ecstasy.

Edna and Dornal were still together, as were Tavin and Floretta, but Ina had found a new man named Mark whom she loved dearly. Wanda had been there, watching for quite some time, and she spoke to Dae about it all, asking if she was enjoying herself, softly seducing her out of her clothes. That was when Dae realized she was attracted to older women. They undressed and fingered each other.

Byc watched the lesbians and the gays and realized that he liked it all. He had no need to undress or touch himself, and orgasmed in no time. Then he felt dirty and wandered off. Theryll and Pawl were bummed and not gay for each other so they went to a local bar and picked up some chicks to bring back to the orgy. They were young and full of energy and beauty.

After a certain point, everybody blended together and shared their bodies and love for each other. Ink was jealous to see Rose making out with other men, but he tried his best to understand. In the end, everybody had been satisfied. The majority of people fell asleep afterward, and many found rooms with

beds.

Ink laid awake, alone. Rose had passed out next to Chyll.

The Cuddle

Regardless of the people around him, Ink felt extremely alone. He laid there for nearly an hour as he tried to unwind his mind enough to sleep. Eventually, he heard somebody moving around, but the lights were dim so he couldn't see who. A womanly figure approached him and spoke in a whisper. “Hey... Ink... you schtill avake?”

Her voice was unfamiliar and odd, but he was curious. “Yea... I'm still awake. I rarely sleep.”

“Oh, goot. Do you mint if I kuddle vis you?”

“No, not at all.”

She laid down next to him and snuggled. He put his arm around her and she rested her head on his chest. My name is Ylsa. I kame here vis Seryll.”

“Oh, ok. Well it's very nice to meet you, Did you have a good time?”

“I sink eferyone hat a goot time. I'fe nefer been to a party like zat before. I'm really glat I got to meet you finally. I'fe heart so much. I'm actually frients vis Ina, your sister.”

“Oh, so she told you about me?”

“A little, but most of vat I'fe heart vas from zee schtories people tell. You are a legent.” Ink pondered it. He was a legend. “Ant I feel safe arount you.”

Ink was suddenly in love with her, but began to wonder why he fell in love with every pretty girl he ever met. Deep within, he wondered if it really was love, or if he was just desperately needing someone to attach to. This theory wasn't enough for him to even consider rejecting her, he was enjoying the cuddle.

They embraced each other all night and into the morning. Ink finally fell asleep, and was elated to see

her staring into his eyes when he woke the next morning. It was the beginning of his first real relationship, at the age of 28,010,245,870.

The Relationship

They got a place to live together, planned their future, and loved each other often. They overlooked each other's faults and enjoyed each other's company. They cooperated with each other to do housework, cleaning, yard work, or to solve any other issue. They would never get jealous of each other because neither ever looked at another. It wasn't long before they had a child.

It was to be the first of three children, two boys and a girl. They were great kids, although the oldest boy was a bit rambunctious. The middle child was the girl, and she was quiet, but a great listener. The youngest looked up to his big brother and sister, because he was new and they had been there longer. They were also a lot easier to relate to than his parents. At the same time he felt the need to stand out and make a good impression, because he wanted them to be proud of him. His name was Loll, his sister was named Lull, and the oldest brother's name was Trol. They had their disagreements, but overall they loved each other very much. They were a handful when they were all fighting or getting along.

Through trials and tribulations, the whole family stood beside each other, but Ink and Ylsa were often times frustrated and stressed over the burden of raising the kids. After a while, they stopped attempting to go out and have fun, and that led to cabin fever for both of them. They began taking their frustrations out on each other, fighting and arguing over stupid things. After so many fights and apologies, they both began to just bottle up their feelings and hold silent grudges.

It got so bad that Ink began looking at other women. He resisted as much as he could, to not hurt Ylsa's feelings by letting her see his growing disinterest in her. They stopped talking to each other, stopped looking at each other.

28,011,223,995

Ylsa was the one to break the ageless silence. It had been over nine-hundred-fifty-thousand years, and their kids had already grown and moved out. She said she wanted to break up with him.

Understanding

Ink was heartbroken. He could not stop crying, why couldn't she love him? He begged for her back.

“Ink, you hafe not been happy for a vile, neizer of us hafe. I do lofe you, ant zat is exaktly vhy I must leafe you. Vee are mizerable togezer, zee magik is gone. I vant us boz to be happy again, so vee must break up.”

Ink's ego refused to give up without a fight, but the more he fought and struggled to win back her affection, the more she was pushed away from him. He schemed up ways in his head on how to get her back, essentially trying to manipulate her and the situation. This made her dislike him even more, to the point where she was angry and had had enough. She told him she never wanted to speak with him again, and that was the end.

Ink sulked into a mopey haze of existence He racked his brain, trying to understand, but his ego would not let him. It wasn't until years of brooding later that he had a dream of another woman.

He woke up feeling ok with everything, a nice change of pace. He was even feeling adventurous, ready to tackle the world. He walked outside into a time his people called “the summer of '95”.

He knew that Chyll and Rose had moved into their own house down the street from him, so he decided on a whim to stop by and see what was going on. Chyll welcomed him with open arms and offered him a seat and a refreshing beverage. Then he asked if he wanted to smoke.

“Smoke?”

“Uh, yea man, this is some good shit, it's like... the best canni I've had in a while.”

“What's canni?”

“It's medication, it's recreation, it's a plant. I grow it from the ground in my back yard if you ever want to get some.”

“What does it do?”

“Well... the different kinds do different things. This kind is supposed to relax you, it's called Meld.”

“That sounds amazing.”

“Ok, good. Hellitha is on her way over with some cookies.”

“Oh, no thanks. Just some Meld is fine for me.”

“Let's just say, you may change your tune.”

Chyll brought out a small clump of green and sparkly something and put it into a device made entirely out of glass. Then he grabbed a lighter and engulfed the canni and breathed in all of the smoke. He coughed as he handed it to Ink.

Ink hesitantly lit it and hit it. The smoke was dense and pungent, and it made him cough up a lung. When his head was clear again, he handed the pipe to Chyll. Ink stared off into the distance, suddenly curious about the cookies. What kind were they? What would they taste like? He dazed out, started remembering the good times from his past and seeing with more clarity than he could remember. It was like watching a movie. Chyll had already hit the pipe again and was handing it back, but had been holding it there for about five seconds before realizing that Ink was in la-la land.

“Hey!” Ink shook his head and looked over.

“Wow...” He grabbed the pipe again and hit it. Then he leaned back and relaxed.

Hellitha showed up with the cookies and Ink and Chyll chowed down while Hellitha smoked. Purple mint and chocolate butter. Then Ink looked around.

“Where's Rose?”

“She's out of town.”

Ink felt paranoid suddenly. “Does she know you hang out with her?”

Chyll chuckled. “Why would she care? They're friends. We understand each other enough to allow ourselves freedom. She can hang out with anyone she wants, and so can I.”

“And what's wrong with me?” Hellitha asked angrily.

“No, nothing. You're just a girl, and he's a guy. You know...”

“No, I don't know. Are you insinuating sex? First off, I'm with Nappy, and second of all, do you only see women as sexual objects?”

“Well no, I just... Does Nappy care?”

“He's confident in himself enough to not have to worry about what I choose to do. He knows I'm here though, he just doesn't smoke.”

“Oh... I'm sorry, it's none of my business.”

“Relax man, take another hit,” Chyll said as he handed him the pipe.

“I think I'm good man, but thank you.”

“Aw, come on man, just one more.” Ink caved and hit it once more. He was in space again, floating through the cosmos. “Hey, what are your plans for the day?”

“I'm free.”

“I like the sound of that.” Ink did too. “I'm about to head over to Cannibowl's. You want to come?”

“Is he cool?”

“Cooler than a culpepper.” The three of them took the train, stoned as hell.

Forgiveness

In the weeks that passed, Ink hung out with Chyll, Hellitha, and Cannibowl. On some nights they would go out and meet new people, and other nights they would stay at home, but they almost always hung out together. Ink met a lot of new and interesting people, but more importantly he learned how to relax, be himself, and socialize. It was a time of learning, exploring, and personal growth. He learned how to not only forget that Ylsa left him, but also how to forgive her. He began to understand and accept himself and everyone else. He was ready to move on.

He gradually was able to become friends with women he was attracted to without falling in love. He taught himself the difference between love and being in love. It was a rocky road, as it is for anybody, but what was important was that he was asking himself the right questions for a change. He began to truly appreciate what he had and who he was. He began spending more time with his kids, and through his oldest son, Trol, was how he met Sebastian.

Sebastian looked just like Sporx, only he wasn't insane and confusing. He was just a normal college kid, son of Lysander. His best friend was named Blud and looked identical to one of Playt's Minions with the same name. He was also a normal kid, and his dad was Lysandus. They had bonded over the similarity of their fathers and had common interests as well. Ink got along with them just fine, and they began to trust him.

They told him that they had found a magical stone which could summon a spiritual shaman who could aid them in any personal journey. Ink asked if he could possibly use it in his least desperate sounding voice. They looked at each other and then back to Ink.

Blud spoke, “Sure, you seem cool. But first, we need you to do something for us.”

“What is it?”

“We need some canni. Do you know where we could get some?”

Ink laughed. “No problem.”

So Ink got what they needed and traded with them. He brought the stone to a private room and summoned the shaman.

When he appeared, Ink was in shock. It was Playt, standing there with Hat on his head. “What is it that you would ask of me stranger?”

“Stranger? But... I thought that... but you're...”

“What is it?”

“You're Playt!”

“Nah.” Playt looked at him concerned.

Hat spoke. “Just play along guys.”

Ink coughed. “I guess what I'm searching for is balance still, and a way to find true happiness.”

“What? That's a tall order kid.”

“Just do it, Playt,” Hat ordered from atop his head.

“Ok, fine.” Playt placed a hand on Ink's forehead. “Hmmm... Well I can't tell you the answers, but I know who can. I will bring him here.” there was a flash and Playt was gone. Less than five seconds later, he returned with a man.

“Ink? Playt? What's this all about?” He looked around the room. “No, wait... I remember this part. What were the words?” He thought in silence for several moments.

“Who are you?” Ink asked.

The man looked up. “My name is Ryan, I wrote books about both of you.” He looked at them. “I forgive you both for everything you put me through.” Ink and Playt looked at each other in confusion. “I cannot blame either of you, not entirely, but for a while I did. You see, I passed up opportunities. I avoided relationships and careers, because all I wanted was to write. As a result, I developed anxiety and social distance. I struggled financially and had several health issues. I just... can't blame you guys. It isn't fair to anybody. It was the path I was born to walk.”

Ink pondered it. “I forgive you too. I've blamed you for my existence in the past, but I now feel as if you had to write what you had to. Nobody else could have. This helps me, thank you. Playt, I forgive you as well. You can't help who you are.”

“I don't even know what's going on right now, you are both strangers to me,” Playt said.

Hat spoke, “Don't mind him, this is only a fragment of Playt.”

Moments later, all of them were gone, and Ink was once more thinking about life.

Love

28,011,223,997

It was through a chance encounter that Ink met Loona. He was at a party with his friends when he was asked to go to the store for more drinks. As he stepped into the crisp night air, the snow crunched beneath his feet. His breath came out in clouds that were lit up by the artificial luminous glow of the city.

He was feeling good, energetic. He was happy, and a little buzzed. He heard people in the distance laughing and talking extremely loud. As he got closer, he noticed that it was two girls and a guy. The guy was kissing one of the girls, while the other girl was stumbling around and moaning. The two who were kissing walked off and the stumbling girl slipped on the wet ground and fell to the pavement.

Ink ran over to see if she was ok. It was dark, so he couldn't see much, but she was still breathing. Ink carried her back to the party, found her a room, sent a request for a doctor, and sent someone else out for the drinks. Ink kept an eye on her, checking in periodically to see if she had woken up yet. It wasn't until morning when she began to move around, and Ink had prepared her breakfast.

She opened her eyes and panic set in. This was no place she had ever been. Ink explained what happened. “Where's my boyfriend?”

“Uh... I don't think he was there. Just a younger couple. I wasn't sure if they knew you or not because they walked away.”

“Why do you say they were a couple?”

“Because they were kissing.” The woman began to cry. “Why, who were they?”

She gathered her emotions. “They were nobody. I mean... it was my boyfriend and my best friend, but I guess neither of them are either of those anymore.” Ink looked to the side and felt really bad for her. She didn't seem to notice. “Hey! Take me somewhere fun!”

Ink thought quickly. “How's your head?”

“Fuck that, I'm fine, and I want to go have some fun to brighten my day.”

“Hmmmmm..... ok. Follow me.”

Ink reached out for her hand and she grabbed it. He lifted her out of the bed and she struggled for balance. His mind was racing with ideas on where to take her. He settled on Mintgum's Web. They got in the spaceship and were there in no time. It wasn't actually called Mintgum's Web anymore, and in fact it wasn't actually the same nebula either, but it was almost identical.

She was amazed. “I thought you were going to take me to a bowl tossing or something.” She looked

at him in the eyes. “Who are you?”

“My name is Ink.”

“Hello, Ink. I'm Loona. It's very nice to meet you.”

“It's nice to meet you too, Loona.”

Ink reached out his hand to shake hers and she spontaneously put her face to his and began to kiss. She pulled away after several moments of being locked to him. “We are past hand-holding.”

He began to notice how indescribably beautiful she was. He put his hands on her hips and pulled her close as she wrapped her arms around his neck. Pulling his face towards hers they locked lips again. They smelled each other's breath as they eventually pulled away, still fresh with the taste of mouth on their tongues. Then they were kissing again, twirling through a range of sedating emotions, dragging each other to the sleeping quarters of the ship. Their hearts were beating like a love song, in synchronous rhythm with one another. They whispered and hummed as they undressed each other and shared a blanket. It soon became too hot for a blanket and it was thrown in a sweaty storm of passion. He slid in and out as he kissed her neck. She trembled beneath him, enjoying every moment, every tingle from every nerve. He licked her ear and then her lips and she began to rock her hips into his, taking more and more of him.

They made love for hours, only taking breaks to regain their energy and to eat or drink. All worries, thoughts, and memories became trivial. Their souls vibrated together and both of them knew it without sharing a single word. They stared into each other's eyes for quite some time afterward, soaking in one another's beauty. They were both intoxicated with pheromones and drunk off each other. In the end, they were both exhausted and dehydrated. They slept in each other's embrace, temporarily worry free and mindless.

They awoke later, happy and hungry. The spaceship brought them back to their home planet and then they walked through the cold night air to a restaurant that was always open. Nobody was there, not even workers. The entire process was automated and free. Technology had rid the Universe of money long ago. While they were eating they began to talk about “them”. The conversation was started by Loona with the words, “So... what are we?”

“Huh?” Ink looked around.

“Me and you. Are we dating? Is this a one time thing?”

Ink began to actually ponder and remembered Ylsa for the first time in forever. His hesitation made her nervous. He felt as if he were finally beginning to understand everything. “I know that I like you, and I like being around you, but I don't want the past to repeat itself. Not with you. My ex, we were together for quite some time. We... got tired of each other. I think it was because we tied each other down and suppressed our attraction to others.”

“So you're already saying that you want to see other people?”

“No. I'm saying that I want to spend as much time with you as possible, without us learning how to hate each other. In essence, I want us to both be free, but I can say that from this moment till the end of time, I will always love you. Your ex-boyfriend was an idiot.”

She laughed, blushed, and her eyes filled with water. She reached out for his hand and then held it. Then she stared into his eyes through starwater. “I love you too.”

They finished eating and went to watch a movie. It was, of course, a love story. Neither one of them felt very well, but neither wanted it to stop.

Acceptance

28,011,224,007

Everything was a dream of flowers and sunshine for both of them, until Loona became attracted to Jin. She kept it to herself because she still didn't quite understand, but in the meantime she grew more comfortable around him, and even flirty.

Ink began to see it and felt jealous. Then he began to wonder why he felt jealous. She seemed happy around Jin and he wanted her to be happy, to love who she wanted, and to be free. He decided to talk to her about it.

The next time they were alone, he worked up the courage. “So...” She looked at him. “Uhm... are you attracted to Jin?”

“NO!” She pleaded, offended, but mostly embarrassed.

“It's ok. I can see it.”

“You don't understand, I love you.”

“I love you too, and that's why I want you to be free and honest with not only me, but yourself as well.”

Loona looked at him and was silent for several moments. “I do like him.”

Ink was uncontrollably jealous again. “Dammit!”

“WHAT?!”

“I just... I'm jealous but I don't want to be. I'm happy for the both of you.”

She looked at him, utterly confused. “Let's just not talk about this, I'm with you and I'm staying with you.”

“We need to communicate, but if you're uncomfortable then we can just drop it.”

“Please.”

From that point on, she suppressed her feelings for Jin, but after a while it was futile. One night while Ink was out with Chyll and Hellitha, Jin and Loona got drunk and made out, which lead to sex. It was a night of uncontrollable passion, but the morning was full of an unchangeable regret for the both of them. They both kept it secret and let it fester. Over time, it grew into a secret love affair, and eventually, Jin pleaded for her to tell Ink. She had to, however when the time came she couldn't find the words. She loved him too much to hurt him.

28,011,224,008

In the meantime, Ink was becoming attracted to a cute petite woman who was friends with Hellitha. Ink wanted to act on it but held back. There had never really been an opportunity. Ink had wanted them both to have freedom, and Loona was exploring that idea. Loona had wanted commitment, and Ink was exploring that idea. They had both loved each other so much that they were willing to change and be open minded.

Eventually, Loona could no longer lie about it. She told him the truth, her face covered in a waterfall of guilt.

Initially, he was mad, and that didn't help matters much.

When the initial shock wore off, he was ok. He still loved her and still wanted her in his life. After he calmed down, he hugged her tightly and kissed her forehead. “It will be ok. It is ok. I told you that I wanted you to be free. As long as I don't lose you from my life, I will remain the happiest man in existence.”

She took a deep breath and moaned. “But I lied to you for so long. I cheated on you with your best friend, just like my ex-boyfriend, Chance, did to me.”

“I'm sorry that you felt the need to keep it secret and suppress it. It must have been painful. This means I'm going to have to have a secret affair too.”

She looked at him with confusion in her tears as her anger avalanched over top of her guilt. Then the anger sank and she was filled with jealousy and remorse. He hugged her again and all of her tension released as relief washed over her. Her heart began to dance in her chest and she cried on his shoulder. “It's ok.”

She stared at him and pressed her body against his as she hugged him. “I know. I'm so glad I met you, Ink. I love you so much. Of course you can have a secret affair. Maybe I can even meet her sometime. I'm into things you wouldn't believe.”

28,011,224,125

Ink hadn't known until that moment how much he actually loved and needed her. Loona, the light of his life. He knew that nothing could ever come between them again. Through the years they would drift apart from time to time, but always kept in touch, always stayed friends, and could never possible stop loving each other.

Ink finally worked up the courage to have his secret affair. It was satisfying, liberating, and hot. He told Loona almost immediately, and by this time they had grown strong enough to deal with it. “Can I meet her yet?”

Ink was nervous, but eagerly excited about a threesome. They were both insanely beautiful. His

second girlfriend's name was Star, and she was easily seduced into the relationship.

Ink and Jin had a few egotistical words when Ink first found out, but by this point, he had forgiven him and they were good friends again, as if nothing had happened. Jin would come over and visit with Lym sometimes, and other times he would bring Dos, or even both. Who he left with was random, and sometimes two or more girls would leave to play together or hang out with boyfriends. Luckily for everyone involved, there were no longer any diseases that were untreatable.

Chyll would bring the gang over as well, and Ink was free to go wherever, do whatever, whenever.

Precipice

31,638,446,825

Ink, Fahlls, and the Universe beyond was filled with true happiness and freedom for billions of years. It was the pinnacle, the zenith of peace. Ink wanted it to last forever, and in his mind, each moment was stretched into an eternity. He began to age, and his sexual drive began to slow down considerably. He felt so young not long before. His knees began to ache in the mornings and his back cracked as he stretched.

His favorite doctor had passed away, Flynt McParch. Not long after that was King Aztar. His queen was quoted as saying, “This isn't how it was supposed to happen. I can feel in my heart that he should have outlived me. I cannot guarantee I will stay here much longer, I pass the throne down to my oldest daughter, Dos.” It was reported that she took poison the next night.

Aya and Sid were stricken with deep mourning. As more and more people around them continued to pass, their sadness became incurably unbearable, and that was a recipe for double suicide.

32,000,059,324

Everyone around Ink began to either get sick or die. He was devastated by each death and tried to work through it and accept it, but it was never easy. Every time he thought that he was going to be ok, another close friend or relative died. Then there was a short period where there was no death, and he had time to deal with everything in his head. He began to accept that everyone died eventually, and he knew that his death was always in the cards, even from the beginning. He knew that Rhun would be coming for him. This was the hardest part of his story for him to accept.

That was when Rhun was born, and in the same instant, Ink's heart stopped.

No more people, plants, or animals were born after that moment, as the Age of Death began.

1.The Mask

The Twist in Time

Behind the towering green Dysh, Old Playt can see a translucent flowing trail leading from him to the portal of Syl. It seems to cling to him like an aura of stink.

Neither one of them are in very much pain on this particular confrontation, possibly because of a dramatic change in both of their energies. The wind blows as they face each other in dead silence for many moments. Playt observes the portal itself.

Wanda speaks from within. *Rodney*.

The cloak that Lys Hat has become reaches out for Dysh.

Dysh twitches.

“Yoooouuu!!!” he growls.

Old Playt holds his ground as Dysh approaches slowly.

Cloak/Hat surrounds Dysh as he gets within arm's reach. “You caused me pain, Playt! Nobody has ever.... EVER caused me pain. I must repay the favor!” Warrior Dysh's insane green eyes glow with intense hate as he stares down Old Playt.

The wind blows again as the tension between the two peaks.

“I do not wish to fight you; I only wish to stop you from destroying the Universe.”

“Well, that's too bad, because you started something you just couldn't finish.”

Playt FLICKERs.

Instead of this flicker being just a short brief light, it differs. The flicker fades, but a light-beam still pours through a pinhole of reality. Old Playt arrives in Appliancia a few years later.

The light then starts to brighten as Dysh claws his way through the flicker line to when and where

Playt is. He crawls through the flicker hole and onto Appliancia. Old Playt stands there, shocked, as Dysh glares at him with an evil smile. Playt's cloak no longer reaches for Dysh.

Behind Dysh, Playt can still see a trail leading to where he had come from, only this time it goes to where the flicker had been. Playt notices that the light from the flicker is still somewhat there.

FLICKER FLICKER FLICKER

Playt arrives in Paris of 1806 and takes a deep sigh as his flicker slowly fades away.

Lost him.

Then, like a hacker that has been found by the government, Playt looks behind him in pure horror as Dysh opens back up the flicker and crawls out.

Once again, The Wand speaks from within Playt. *With my power, you can now teleport to his dimension. Perhaps if we destroy Rodney it will send Dysh back through his path of flickers. He should not be here, Playt. Something is wrong with time. I can feel it bending.*

Just as the words pass from the wand to Playt's thoughts, he can feel it. A very odd feeling indeed, it's as if everything is losing its normally restrained proportions as shapes and measurements stretch and twist into other shapes, reality slipping into abtraction.

He can also feel the speed of time change. It is usually fairly consistent, with a hyperbolic bend, causing the beginning of time's speed to be incredible, and the end of time to be incredibly slow. Now, however, time's speed seems to fluctuate like a wave.

Wanda is right, something is definitely wrong with time.

DIMENSIONAL FLICKER

Sacrificed

As Playt arrives in Syl, he's unsure where he is. For one whole second, he's forgotten who he is entirely. Then he feels the first crack in time.

Cloak speaks. *I will guide you to the Syl Rod.*

FLICKER

Rodney floats in the middle of the air directly in front of Playt. He can see it giving off a beam of light that points directly towards a circular portal. Through the portal, Playt can clearly see the path of flickers that Dysh has followed to track Playt. At the end of that path he can see Dysh himself.

Dysh's claws are gripping something invisible in the middle of the air. They tighten, and Playt can feel more cracks in time form. Playt looks behind him and can see Dysh's claws attempting to tear through the dimensions.

Destroy the rod!

Playt walks up to the rod, and the closer he gets, the more time seems to warp. He attacks Rodney with all of his might, and as he does so, he knows it is not the answer. He strikes the rod and instantly feels part of time completely crumble off and disappear. More cracks in time's structure.

Playt thinks to himself. No ideas come to him at first, and he searches frantically for any type of answer.

Ink appears. “Playt, I'm sorry for tricking you into doing this. I know it was wrong, but I just wanted it all to be over.”

Ghester appears. “Playt! You have to think of something. This is not how the Universe should end. Fix things!”

Rhun appears, “Please, do not destroy the Universe. I have lived my whole life wanting to build and create, yet all I can do is destroy.”

Sporx appears, “Do this for all of the Fahllians in your bloodline, and do this for the Universe. You must fix things, for the sake of existence!”

Lysandus appears, “I can't believe this is what's become of me.”

Nyt appears, “Do this for Shellra.”

“I have a plan.”

DIMENSIONAL FLICKER

Playt is now back in Lys, but as he arrives, he feels the Universe shatter in many places.

All I need is one more flicker.

FLICKER

Playt arrives in Dussyllia, on the second birthday of Lysandus.

When he arrives, the Universe begins to crumble into nothing, like an obsolete building being demolished.

As the entire Universe is slowly collapsing, Old Playt slams his strongest blow into baby Lysandus's face. Lysandus's head is instantly a cloud of particles as Playt's punch flies through it with ease.

Playt has murdered Lysandus.

The Universe of Lys stops, and then ceases to exist. Syl is destroyed soon after. The two dimensions above Lys and Syl (Ros and Biz), begin to crumble slowly.

And then time resets.

Without Lysandus alive, Playt never exists to show up in Syl. Without Playt ever meeting Dysh, Dysh doesn't want to attack Playt. Without Dysh's attack, there is never any twist or cracks in time. Without Playt alive, Lysandus is never killed.

Playt exists once more.

Universal Re-Boot

The dimensions further up on the food chain feel the pain of fear as Playt nearly destroys everything. Then he's praised for saving it.

This world undone and reborn
For Playt is just rambunctious

To make sure no such thing will ever happen again, a council is held between the original beings from each dimension. Ink is there, along with the other seventeen dimensional avatars.

It is decided that due to Syl's instability and Lys's impressive stability, the two dimensions have to each embody their spirits into physical objects, and send them into their neighboring dimension. The Spirit Symbol for Syl is meant to be in Lys. Because of the instability of the Syl Spirit Symbol, they can do very little to control its fate. Lysandus will always become Playt. Scenarios where Lysandus and his bloodline are never born are not possible. Every attempt to rid Lysandus or his ancestors from any timeline is a complete failure. The Spirit Symbol clings to Lysandus, for it knows he is the secret to unlocking its true potential.

So the council decides that Playt can never actually meet Dysh. If they are to meet, then the cycle will continue on into eternity. The Universe will lose its natural loop, and eventually it will shrink into nothing.

Time catches up to where the change occurs and then resumes at normal speed.

Playt tries to sense where Dysh is. His mind wanders aimlessly in the unknown dimension. He suddenly realizes how much he knows his Universe. He knows where planets are and when they are there in Lys. Never has he realized he knew these things, as if it were instinct.

As he stands in Syl however, he suddenly knows everything about Lys, and absolutely nothing about this place. He concentrates on his flicker lines, but cannot see them as he could before.

Playt bravely attempts to flicker, but cannot.

Four Time Generals from the Universe of Syl approach Warrior Playt and surround him.

“What's the meaning of this? I must find Dysh and destroy him.”

“No... no you must not. To meet Dysh would mean the end of existence.”

Warrior Playt looks at him with confusion and anger, “But Dysh is trying to destroy the Universe, and I cannot let him do that.”

“Ink lied to you. Ink was actually the one that was trying to destroy everything. He has been punished for his crimes. Please, go back to where you came.”

“Something's not right; you're on Dysh's side. You want me to leave so that no harm is done to Dysh.

Well I'm not going to just sit around and let this happen."

More Time Generals from other dimensions appear and Playt gets ready to fight them. These generals have more power than he has ever dealt with, and Playt is easily subdued.

His memory is changed to believe that he had confronted Dysh, and then he is sent back to Lys to believe that he has done the right thing and has no more business in Syl.

The new timeline has been created, and Warrior Playt retrieves the Lys Wand, Wanda.

A Warrior becomes Old once again, and begins his path to retrieve the next puzzle of creation, The Mask. "Only two people have been known to be the bearer of The Mask", Playt's cloak says. "Those two people are Dirrinni and Sporx. I suggest seeking out Dirrinni, because Sporx is too odd."

"That name sounds oddly familiar, but I can't figure out exactly why," Playt says. "What do you mean by, he's odd?"

"Trust me, Playt. Find Dirrinni, avoid Sporx."

Sporx

Old Playt FLICKERs to Dussyllia because that is where Hat says Dirrinni will be.

His surroundings become ten times more realistic, as if he's been living in a false reality his entire life but has now stumbled upon the waking world.

Through his old eyes, Playt can see the moving living vines of the planet reaching out to him and growing. There is a fog that seeps out of the vines which is accompanied by the smell of Earth's autumn.

"Where have you brought us, Playt?" the shroud named Hat questions.

"Duss..." but before Playt can finish the one worded response, he suddenly realizes that he is not where he thought he was. "I honestly don't know."

The living appendages he saw reaching for him are not vines, they are fingers. Grey fingers reaching from dusty old dead hands, the skin is cracked and scattered with dried blackened blood. The smell is not of Earth's autumn, it is of decay. The fog is the physical form of the smell itself.

“We're on Dussyllia,” a screechy voice from behind them says. “It always looks like this. Who and waht are you? How did you get hree?”

Playt tnurs anruod to see a frigue wtih a hat and a lgare wthie rboe on. The eeys of the bneig are mroe insnae and irtartiaonl tahn the ones of Beth, and tehy seem to be the smae spahe as ecah ohetr, but look nnthiog akile. The ctrreaue wares wthie migicaan gevlos and smees to hvae a pstael ylloew sikn coolr. “I'm Playt. And... you are?”

“I'm Sporx, it's ncie to meet you, Playt.” Sporx edxtnes a hnad and Playt rehcaes out to skhae it. As Playt's hnad gets wthiin incehs of the strnager's hand it semes to lose feelgnis and go lmip. His wrsit no legnor hodls up his figners, and soon his arm dorps from lcak of cotnorl.

The calok nemad Hat spkaes telelthpailcy to Playt. *This is the rseoan I warend you abuot Sporx. He is stargne. You have yet to see or untsardned him colpmeelty. Please recsoidenr your ptah.*

Playt thinks for a biref secnod, I'm *not relaly seracd of this tihng. It is odd, yes, but so am I.*

Ok, I wnraed you.

“I'm hear to ask four The Mask.”

“My msak? My msak is special, you cna't have it. It's what kepes me avile. You can hvae my robe tuohgh, here.”

Sporx removes his white robe and reveals that his legs are the size of his forearms. His body floats in mid air, giving the impression of height. His arms are twice the size of his legs and he resembles a type of monkey.

“But, I don't want your robe, I want your mask. Isn't there some sort of deal we can make?”

“I told you, I will die if I give you my mask. No deal will be made.”

The hat on top of Sporx's head speaks. “Hey there Hat of the future. Sup?”

“Huh,” the cloak named Hat says. “If I'm the Hat from the future, why don't I remember being on Sporx's head, and how did you recognize me?”

“What you must understand, is that when Sporx is involved, nothing makes sense.”

Playt thinks to himself... *this is weird; maybe I should just go talk to Dirrinni instead.*

However, he stays there to endure the weirdness.

“Take the robe, that's all we can give you. Think about it, Playt, are answers worth killing an innocent being? He is a part of your Fahllian bloodline; he is not some monster that is trying to prevent you from knowing truths. He's just trying to survive.”

Playt immediately feels guilty for asking the stranger to give up his dearest possession so that he can understand himself more. “Hey... I'm sorry. I accept this robe with much honor, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I don't know what I was thinking.”

“Hmm... I've never flickered before, this will be interesting.”

Sporx FLICKERs.

Old Playt stands on Kriddle with The Mask in hand.

2. The Gems

The Regaining

The dark gray skies of Kriddle establish that it's nearing dusk. Through the black pillar forest, Old Playt can hear rustling and heavy breathing of animals on the hunt for smaller prey. He sits down momentarily to rest.

How long has it been since he had a moment of rest? Has it been days since he slept last, or years?

Time is irrelevant to his life.

Yet time seems as if it is starting to take its toll on the wrinkled red Playt. His head is light, and he realizes what he needs at this point is to sleep. He doesn't even have the energy to flicker, and so his place of rest is one of Kriddle's many pillar forests.

His mind is the clearest it has been in ages. Sporx has eliminated all questions about his own life and left nothing but exhaustion. He lays down his head on the rough dark red dirt of the planet and closes

his eyes. He can feel the wind running across his wrinkles and can hear the muffled stomps and grunts of beasts in the forest. Squeals ring out from the distance as Playt drifts off further into unconsciousness. The last thing he notices is the smell of death before he slips completely into a state of pure darkness.

The duration of the pitch black thoughtless void cannot be measured, but he eventually reaches the realm of dreams. He is in Kriddle's dreamworld, and he can see himself as a young teenager in a dignified cave made of wood and brick (house) standing in front of a device made of metal which creates water when enabled (sink). There are others in the same vicinity (room) and they are talking to him. Their voices are muffled and distant even though they seem to be targeting their attention on him. The Teenage Playt is wearing a hat and when Old Playt's dream centers on the hat, chaos ensues. The voices that are directing their muffles towards Teen Playt grow louder, but are still incomprehensible. The walls of the house begin to crumble and disintegrate. The roof falls down and knocks Teen unconscious, and eventually the whole place collapses.

Old Playt awakes to find that his left leg has been torn off, masticated and digested by a nearby shadow beast. With more effort than he has needed on any other occasion, he pulls his being from the beast's belly and regenerates his leg. The beast is shredded from the inside out.

Oddly enough, Playt is hungry, so he eats the fallen shadow beast.

Playt picks up The Mask, which he had dropped while asleep, and instantly feels something within him change. He begins to fuse with The Mask. It absorbs itself into his skin, yet there is no change in his physical appearance.

“Hey Hat, does this Mask give me any abilities I did not previously have?”

Yes, in fact it does, Playt. Because of the Spirit Symbol within you, you now have the ability to control time in more ways than ever before. The Mask represents sight, and it has given you the ability to see time better than you ever could before. The lines are much clearer and defined, and you are now able to see bits and pieces of your past.

“Bits and pieces aren't good enough for me. I need to know everything about my life. I have to understand why I exist and how I was created.”

Once you find the Pearl again, and collect the Gems, you will have your answers. The Orb holds all the answers you ever wanted. It sees what nothing else can.

“Direct me to the Gems then. With your help, this should be no problem.”

Unfortunately, Playt, I cannot sense the Gems, or the Pearl. A good place to start your search however, would be Ghester. He was the last person I knew to have possession of the Blue Gem. There are three in all. Blue, Red and Yellow. After them, all we need is the Pearl.

“Where does Ghester reside?”

In the caves below Aspimiria, above the catacombs. I will guide you.

“Very well.” Playt FLICKERs.

Controlling Time

Old Playt appears in the dark blue caves below the surface of Aspimiria. The air is dry, yet it smells of chlorine. There are dozens blue crystals sticking out of the pale yellow sand. They seem to mysteriously reach out and whisper to him. The ceiling above is made of black rock, and it's difficult for Playt to make out its texture.

The crystals seem to whisper to Playt in an ancient Fahllian language. They repeat his name endlessly, in constant wonder of his presence. *Playt... Playt.*

“I'm looking for Ghester,” Old Playt states.

“Hmm...” says a voice in the distant dark. “So I see what has finally become of my son. I was with you in the earliest stages of your existence, and here you are once again. Beginning and end. I've waited for so long to speak with you, my son.”

“Ahh, so you are the father of Lysandus, I presume? Well I assure you, I am far from Lysandus. I am simply here seeking the Gems.”

“I know who you are. Do not treat me with such disrespect. I am your father, no matter how old you get, and no matter what you go through.”

“Well, it's a little late to be a role model. There's no need to raise me, I'm fully grown and close to

death.”

“You are, of course, right. I had no choice. I had to let you walk your destined path. I needed to make a sacrifice. I would have been honored to have you in my life, Lysandus, but instead, I am left with nothing but pure pride at what you've become.”

“My name is Playt. All I want is the Gems.”

“You always were stubborn and disrespectful, weren't you? Just like your father. Very well. The Gems are on the surface. They are currently being fought for. Evil Lysandus is in possession of all but two, Mantellan has those. Do not get involved in the fight, because you might fuck up the timeline.”

“Well then how the hell am I supposed to get them?”

“You have control over time right? Figure something out.”

“You're a whole lot of help.”

“I'm dead. I'm nothing but a spirit. You asked me for help and I told you what I knew. You're starting to get cranky in your old age.”

Playt stops himself from continuing the argument. Instead, he simply takes a deep breath and kneels down before the spirit of Ghester. “Thank you, father.”

“No need to thank me. I'm grateful to see you once again. I believe in you, my son. Go... find the answers you seek.”

“Very well.” Old Playt stands up and FLICKERs to the surface. He can see two figures in the distance, fighting each other. The closer he gets, the more he tries to hide his presence. He can feel the Gems. He can sense their power. He sees a being that appears to be a Chibbie, jump into the air and raise his sword. His target is the Gems themselves.

NO! Playt's mind screams as he raises his hand.

Suddenly, the wind stops blowing, yet everything around Playt feels freezing cold. Tiny molecules of sand stop mid flight, and the battle that Playt was watching pauses. Insidious' blade is inches from the

gems. Old Playt runs over to the frozen action and looks at the actors in the play. Evil Lysandus has already grabbed the Blue Gem and is on his way into the sky with it. Insidious' face is intent on destroying the gems, and has the look of pure hate on his face. Lysandus is watching from a distance, trying to get to the gems with all of his speed.

Old Playt looks at the scene with growing wonder. *Did I just freeze time?*

Yes, you did, Playt, Cloak says, matching Playt's tone of amazement. *It seems that the combined power of the Spirit Symbol and the Mask allows you to freeze time.*

The more Old Playt observes the scene, he notices that it is not completely frozen.

The Deal

The movement is slowed to that of a snail's pace, and the reason that it has grown so cold to Playt is because the molecules around him are moving exponentially slower than his own. His extremities begin to lose feeling.

He has to work quickly.

Playt goes to the Gems and as he reaches out to them, Insidious' blade begins to touch them and they start to crack. Playt grabs the cracked gems and fuses to them. A blinding bright light pours from the gems as they dissolve into Old Playt's skin.

Even after they are completely within him, there is nothing but white light surrounding Playt. It's almost as if he were back in the lair of the Abomination. As he looks around,,,,,,,,,,,,, he can barely see where Evil is. He goes to grab for the Blue Gem, but he is stopped by a voice.

No. Playt, you are forbidden to grab that one. The results would be catastrophic. Playt cannot see the figure because of the light, but he knows by the voice.

“A Time General? Why should I listen to you? Wait... didn't we destroy all of you?”

Much like you, Playt, us Time Generals transcend time. What you did was necessary. This, however, is not. You must not interfere with the path of that Gem. We will help you obtain it, but first you must help us. A fair trade don't you think? We help you obtain your precious Orb, and you help us with the timeline.

Playt looks in the direction of the Time General's voice. Then he looks at the Blue Gem that is within his reach. Then he looks back to the Time General.

Very well, Playt. Let me show you what happens when you disobey time. The Time General extends his arm and touches the back of Old Playt's neck.

Visions of Dysh shoot through Playt's brain. The Time General show him what truly happened and how things could have been different if time had not been altered.

“But... that's not what I remember. I... I destroyed Dysh. I saw him die with my own eyes.”

Those were false memories. You needed to believe that, so that such things would not happen. We must do what we must do to keep the timeline intact. Now, you must help us.

Something deep within Playt realizes that this general isn't lying. He can read the truth in his emotions. “Very well. What do you ask of me? I will do your bidding, if you help me in my path to obtaining the Orb.”

First thing's first. Although we are able to prevent the destruction of time, there is still some unfinished business. Syl Hat has been unaffected by the timeline change, and thus, he will still wander into this dimension and a Time Nexus will still be created. As you know, that Nexus is what created the bump in time known as the Time Junction. You must keep this bending of time and space under control. We need a being capable of gripping time and holding it in place. This being must be able to withstand much pain, and it must also be able to control time to some extent. That is your first duty. We will contact you when your duties are complete, and we will reward your labor with the Blue Gem.

The bright light from the cracked Gems begins to fade, and Playt knows that he has to be leaving. He glances again to where the Time General had been talking, and can see the figure as it begins to dissolve into thin air.

Old Playt flies straight up and looks down as time begins to speed back up to normal and the air around him begins to get warmer once more. The battle continues and none of the three warriors seem to notice Playt's presence. FLICKER.

Already knowing what he has to do, Playt appears in Shellra's Chibbie castle. He sees Fat Playt and

Shellra sleeping quietly on the bed. He grabs Fat Playt and FLICKERs into the middle of space. There is a solar system close, but it's far enough away for Old Playt to do his task.

“What are you doing?!” Fat Playt says, half asleep still.

“The only thing I can do. I must make a sacrifice for the sake of Time.”

3. The Spirit Symbol

Creation

As Fat struggles against him, Old Playt slowly transforms Fat into the being necessary to hold the timeline together. Fat Playt's legs begin to melt as he screams out in extreme agony. Some say that nobody can hear one scream in space.

Old Playt hears him. He hears him loud and clear.

He can sense his emotions and he can feel his pain. Fat Playt's legs are reduced to putty and then reformed into a hand capable of gripping the fabric of space and time. Old Playt is done, but the side effects of this mutation are not. The rest of Fat Playt's body begins to twist and fade in color. His skin becomes a pale pink and begins wrinkling within seconds. His face twists and mutates into that of a beast, and his eyes melt off of his face and start to drip into the blackness of space. His teeth grow twisted and sharp, and tentacles grow from his sides.

In the end, the Abomination is born.

Then it begins to die. In Fat Playt's slightly weakened state, he is unable to survive for very long in deep space.

Old Playt begins to build his council. The speed in which he builds Playt's Council causes a slight atmosphere to build, which causes clouds to form. He builds the lair in which the Abomination is to stay, and pours some of the power from the gems into the beast to make him stronger and more able to deal with his task at hand. He equips the Abomination with metal plated armor, knowing that it is necessary. Then he builds a large circular red table above the lair and closes it off from the cloud that seems to grow larger and thicker as a result of his labor.

When he's finished, he looks at it from the outside with pride. He's pooped.

Old Playt sits inside of his Council for a few minutes to recuperate. He thinks of Shellra and how he had just snatched Fat Playt from what was most likely the happiest moment in his life.

The pain of guilt sinks deep as he tries to rest and convince himself that it is all for the best.

Teen Playt FLICKERs into the Council. Remembering his dream of the Teen, Old Playt looks over to him with growing curiosity.

“How are you doing, Teen Playt? You know you’re me, right? I don’t really remember being that young, is there anything you can tell me about it so I can try to remember?”

“Oh, it’s ok. Nothing good, nothing bad really.” Teen speaks in his calming cool voice.

“No, I mean, what’s your story. What all have you done in your life?”

“Oh, you know, normal things. I don’t really know. I just became a Teen Playt this chapter.”

“What?”

“You know man, I’m just hanging out. I don’t really have much to do, how about you?”

Hat speaks from above Teen’s head. “Stop pestering yourself, Playt, you can see he’s just chillen. He’s my friend right now, so just leave him alone.”

Old Playt stares at the hat. His face changes to one of dismay, and suddenly the hat clings to Teen’s head.

FLICKER

Old Playt follows his FLICKER to world after world, until both Playts are electrocuted on Appliancia, and then stranded on Earth. After trying to escape, Old Playt gives up and looks over at the Syl Hat. He plots ways to destroy it from existence entirely, but a voice speaks up in his mind to leave it alive for now. That voice belongs to a Time General.

Not wanting to be in the presence of Syl Hat, Old Playt goes in the opposite direction that Teen travels. As he heads west on the planet of Earth, he soon feels the presence of a familiar entity. The closer he gets to it, the more he realizes that it's his old instructor.

Ryan Wellman is still alive.

Raising and Razing

As Playt approaches Ryan's aura, he can sense hundreds of others surrounding him. The closer Playt gets the more he realizes that they are praising him and treating him like a god. Ryan looks up and sees Playt.

“PLAAAAAAYT!!! COME DOWN HERE, NOOOOOOW!!!” Ryan screams from below.

Playt flies down and lands in front of him. “Why are you in this time zone? Humans of your time only live to be about 100 years, more or less. The year is 2150.”

“Exactly. I should be dead. I'm 166 fucking years old. But somehow, I'm still alive. I wonder whose fault that is. Hmm... let me think. Oh ya, it must be that asshole, Playt's fault. Hmm, where is he when you need him? Probably off doing some dumbass flickering. Playt, where the hell have you been!?”

“I've been around the Universe, trying to find the answers to my past.”

“Well, while you've been frolicking around, I've been stuck here, begging for death.”

“I'm sorry, man. I wish you weren't so angry with me.”

“Dude, fix this shit immediately. All I was supposed to do was help you learn martial arts; I wasn't supposed to live forever. Go back to the year 2018 and kill me. For god's sakes, just fucking kill me. End my torture.”

“But why can't I just kill you now? Why should I go back in time?”

“Because I never wanted to be praised as a god by anybody, let alone treated as a freak by others. I never wanted to be worshiped like this. I wanted to be a normal human being, and somehow, people think that if you live forever, you're a god, or a demon, or something. They don't listen to me though, they just blame me for anything bad that happens. I hate immortality. Please remove me from this purgatory.”

“Very well.”

And so Playt travels back in time to the Earth year of 2018, and murders Ryan Wellman.

Then he's drawn to his Council. FLICKER.

A Time General is there.

Playt. Your next duty is to...

“My next duty? You never gave me my Blue Gem. I've made a sacrifice to my own timeline to help your timeline, and then I get nothing in return?”

Do you have any other choice?

Old Playt looks down to the ground in frustration. “No, I guess I don't. What do I have to do now?”

You must send Baby Playt to the Abomination to receive his punishment for messing up the timeline.

“What did he do wrong?”

He has violated the timeline by flickering beings that should have never been flickered. Only Playt should be allowed to flicker, and he has violated this twice. There is a list of other crimes he has committed, and all that information has been discussed with the Abomination you helped us create. Send him to the Abomination, now, that is all we ask of you.

“Very well. Be gone with you.”

The Time General fades into nothingness and Baby Playt FLICKERs to the floor in the center of the table. Old Playt walks through the table to the center where the baby lay. He looks down and speaks. “You were just born not long ago, and already you are messing up the timeline. I don't know the details of your mistakes, but I will say that whatever you did has made the Time Generals angry. You're going to have to learn that you can't upset them; they want me to introduce you to the Abomination. I don't think he's going to be happy to see you, but I have no choice in the matter.” As Old Playt walks away, a circular hole opens in the floor and the Baby descends to the lair below.

All ages of Playt FLICKER into the Council at the same moment, including a newborn Playt in the same place the other just was. They are all concentrated on the baby who is in the middle, with a jungle creature from Blue Leaves hovering above him.

Fat Playt grabs the jungle creature and FLICKERs away. Playt gets up and looks at the baby in the middle. Old picks up his younger self and they stare at each other. “I guess I’m going to have to raise myself, it would figure.” Baby falls asleep in his arms. Then Old FLICKERs to Aspimiria to feed it. As he feeds it the milk of a desert cactus, the baby claws his eyes and tries attacking in its sleep. Then it shits on him and FLICKERs, sending both of them to before the beginning of time. Absolute zero.

Retracing

Absolute zero makes it impossible for Old Playt to think, but the Spirit Symbol within takes over and FLICKERs both of them to the caves of Kriddle. The Baby shits on Old Playt again, and Old Playt washes off in a nearby creek. He forms a type of straight jacket out of nearby plants and clothes the baby to prevent more defecation and clawing. Then the baby FLICKERs again to Candee and the frustrated Old Playt FLICKERs them both to Aspimiria to get rid of the cursed child. The child's eyes open.

“Awake, I see. Thank the powers that be. You really need to find some peace of mind or you're going to destroy yourself the next time you take a nap. You kept clawing at me and crying, and you shit on me twice.” The baby smiles.

SMACK!

The baby begins to cry and Old Playt frowns down at him, “Oh, grow up. Thousands of years lie before you. You need to find your center and stop being such a little bitch. I've clothed you and fed you, and I need to continue my quest for the Orb. Be innovative.”

Old Playt drops the baby and looks around at Aspimiria. His guilt drives him to visit Shellra, and make sure she's ok. FLICKER.

Playt apologizes for his long absence, and she welcomes him with open, lonely arms. The twins are kids, and he visits with them and tells them all about life and what he has learned so far. The kids are hyper, and want to jump around and play with their powers, but Old Playt is starting to realize that he isn't as young as he once was. His movements are slower than ever, and it's hard for him to keep up with his kids. He teaches them about time and life, and they listen intently, but are easily distracted.

Playt visits for some time, but he knows he cannot stay. There is still a lot of unfinished business in his life. To prove this, one day a Time General appears and tells him how to collect the Blue Gem.

Without hesitation, Old Playt FLICKERs to the point in time and space that they specified.

Black Leaves.

Evil Lysandus and Insidious are fighting and Evil drops the Blue Gem. Old Playt quickly flies down, grabs it, and then FLICKERs away.

Eagerly ready for his next mission, he travels to the Time Junction to speak with the Time Generals, as he fuses with the new Gem. Instead of making him stronger and more energetic, it seems to weaken him greatly and he begins to hear the voices of the Gallows in his mind. He hears both the light Gallows and their dark brethren. The war that begins to wage inside his mind is incredible and intense. He also begins to hear the voice of Ghester within him. Ghester's voice is much more soothing and helps him relax a little.

A Time General appears in the Junction and gives him his next task.

Your creation, Blue Hayt, has stumbled upon the Sands of Time. As a result, he has released thousands of Time Clones throughout the Universe, and you must stop him. We've made these magical plates as joke on your life, which is of course a string of pointless events.

“Fuck you!” Old Playt says, grabs the plates, and FLICKERs.

4. The Orb

Unseen Past

Old Playt tracks down Red, with his cloak named Hat as his guide, and follows Red through flicker after flicker, trying to get his attention. Eventually, he's fed up and telepathically takes control of Red's flickering. They stop in the Abomination's Lair. Blue Hayt attacks and Red is given the plates.

After Red is done with his duties, Old Playt hears the voice of the Time General in his mind once more. It tells him to send Red to Earth. Old sends him to Earth, and after some time, he's told to send him to Sporkson. Still in the Abomination's Lair, Old Playt holds Red on Sporkson for thirty-four years as he grows into Warrior Playt. After his training is complete, Old Playt FLICKERs Ryan back to Earth, and then appears before the newly formed Warrior Playt. Warrior is already staring at him, as if he knows he's coming.

“You have thrown the plates for me. You have done your deed, and you have found your true path. You are about to embark upon that path, and on the way you will find Hat. You will find him and so much more. He is only one piece of the puzzle. You will discover all of the pieces in time. And why shouldn't you? Your name is Playt, after all. Playt. What a strange yet extremely simple name, for someone so extremely complicated. I will allow you to flicker now; you are free to go wherever you want.” A tear trickles down Old Playt's face.

“And by wherever you want, I of course mean, to where you need to go. Where you are led.”

Frustrated and disgusted with himself, Old Playt FLICKERs to the Time Junction.

“Are you happy yet?! What else do I need to do to get the rest of the puzzles?!”

Calm down, Playt, you're doing great. The end is approaching. Travel to Dussyllia. We will be your guide. Once there, you will need to talk to Lysandus and collect the two remaining Gems from him. They are both yellow.

FLICKER

Old Playt appears before Lysandus, who is followed by his friends, Dirrinni and Orsidium. They appear to both be zombified by some sort of magic. “I need the last two Gems.”

“No! I need these to put this world back to the way it was.” Old Playt looks around at Dussyllia, and it is indeed in shambles. Lava covers the planet and there are giant birds that fly around, engulfed in flames. Behind Lysandus, Playt can see an open door which appears to lead to Aspimiria.

Lying to his former self, Playt thinks quickly. “I can help you, but first you need to give me those two Gems. It's the only way. I will return to fix everything. I promise.”

Lysandus gives him a crooked eye, and thinks for a second. “Wait, you're Playt aren't you? How did you get so old?”

“Don't ask questions; just give me the damned Gems!” Playt flies towards Lysandus and grabs both of the Gems from his hands like a greedy crack addict, fuses to them and FLICKERs to the Time Junction to meet the generals. “Am I finished yet? All I need is the Pearl, correct? Where is it?!”

One more task before the Pearl.

“Oh, god dammit, I hate you guys. I wish I could go back and kill every last one of you all over again.”

Shut up, you old bastard. You need to go to Playt's Council and destroy the Hat from Syl. It is time he is put to rest. Then we will tell you where to get the Pearl.

“Fine,” FLICKER. Playt's Council. Old sees Hat asleep on the ground. He walks over to him, kneels down and touches him. A shock of energy courses through Playt as he does, and Hat wakes up, full of life.

“NO, I'M NOT DONE YET! YOU CAN'T!”

Old Playt ZAPPS Hat into smithereens as Teen Playt watches in horror.

Promises

Old tries to explain himself, but Teen is not convinced. Teen FLICKERs away.

You are never alone. These are the words that he and Teen Playt part on.

What a joke. Why do I continue to lie to myself? More times than not, I am alone.

Voices yell from within his mind to tell him otherwise. The war of the Gallows grows louder and more intense with each passing hour. He cannot tell who is winning, but he does know that the battle is tearing him apart from the inside.

Pushing the voices aside, he's able to think for a second. What he wants most, is to be true to his word. FLICKER.

Playt appears in Aspimiria, just a few moments after an epochal transanimation. The battle between Evil Lysandus and Lysandus, and from the look of things, Evil had won. Orsidium runs up to the creature that's lying in the sand and kicks it with his spiked boots. Dirrinni yells from the top of a hill. “Stop it Orsidium, it's still him! That's still our friend, Lysandus. I know that his soul still remains.” Orsidium looks down to see Evil's horns retreat into his head. A tear falls from Orsidium's eye. Then he walks back to Dirrinni, sulking.

Out of nowhere, Warrior Playt and Blue Hayt FLICKER into the field and they are fighting each other.

“Playt?” Dirrinni says. “Hey Orsidium, is that Playt? It looks like he beefed up.”

As they watch the fight between Warrior and Blue, they see Lysandus's hat jump up and grab something out of Warrior Playt's hand. The Pearl.

Syl Hat disappears, and then the battle FLICKERs away.

Old Playt looks to where Hat would be and can sense him, but knows that he can't see him without the Orb.

This close to the Pearl, Old Playt begins to salivate.

Playt approaches his two former friends. “Lysandus is still in there. I know this, for I...”

“PLAYT!” Orsidium yells. “It's you... again! This is your fault isn't it?! Lysandus was right, you did get old fast... But if you're the real Playt, then who was that? And where the hell have you been? Dussyllia is still in a state of total hell, and this place is nothing but purgatory. It's been five years! When the fuck were you going to fix things!?”

“I'm sorry...” says Old Playt, who then looks down to the sands of Aspimiria.

“You're sorry? What the fuck do you mean, you're sorry?”

“I mean, I lied... I had no intention of helping. I just wanted the Gems. I... I'm sorry.”

“No, fuck that. You fix this shit now, or I'm going to fucking kill you.”

Dirrinni speaks, “Something tells me we can't kill him. Let's just leave him.”

“Wait...” Playt says in a desperate attempt to right his wrongs. “I... I have to hold true to my word. I will try to fix Dussyllia.”

“And bring back all those who perished because of Evil and Mantellan?”

“I will try.”

Playt FLICKERs to Dussyllia and begins to mend the world back into its former self. He uses up every ounce of his energy, but before he collapses in pure exhaustion, he's able to resurrect a tenth of the population. Then he passes out.

When he wakes up, Orsidium and Dirrinni are standing over him in wonder.

“Thank you for all your help Playt, but there are still many lost souls.”

“Ugh... I don't have it in me to bring anybody else back to life. I am all spent. I'm sorry. I will try to return and finish the job, but I cannot promise such a thing.”

“We'll be waiting. You better return,” Orsidium speaks disrespectfully.

“I will try to... and you're welcome.”

“Yea, whatever.”

Old Playt FLICKERs to the Time Junction to collect his Pearl, as promised.

Final Deal

Old Playt is surrounded by the Time Generals, and Ink is in the middle of them, smiling ear to ear at Playt.

Why, hello there. I know what you've come for.

“Yea... I want the Pearl,” Playt says in a rusted, beat down voice. He can smell his death approaching, but knows that he cannot give up while there are still questions unanswered.

Well, first let's go to Milliway's. We would like to celebrate with you in completing all your tasks.

“What's Milliway's?”

It's The Restaurant at the End of the Universe. We will lead the way.

“I'm not hungry. I just want to finish this.” Playt says in a gruff voice.

Nonsense, if you want us to tell you where the Pearl is, you will join us.

So Old Playt and the Time Generals appear in Milliway's and sit down in “celebration”.

“Ok, now where is it?”

We have yet to eat. Playt looks down and everybody orders their food. There are one-hundred Time Generals in all, and they each take their sweet time and are very picky about how they want their food prepared.

“And for you sir?”

“I'm not hungry; I just want to get this over with.” Nonsense, you...“Ya'll aren't listening...” must enjoy your... “I'm not hungry, I just want...” last meal with us, “to get this finished and go get the Pearl, so I can go get the Orb and figure out the answers to the questions of what is going on in my life.” Playt rambles on into nonsense as the Time Generals speak over top of him.

Playt, they have such good food here. I suggest the Ameglian Major Cow.

“I'm not hungry, I'm just tired and I want to know why you won't listen to me, I'm not that old, I know what I'm saying, just give me what I want and be gone with you.”

Do you need a nap? You sound a little cranky old fella. We're sorry to have kept you up; we were just trying to help.

“I don't need a fucking nap, quit fucking with me and just give me the answers.”

Playt senses something interesting behind him and looks. There is a woman wearing a satin gown and a silk turban, and staring into a crystal ball. “Hey, is that the Orb?”

No, Playt. She is the Happy Medium; she lives in a cavern on a planet in Orion's Belt. Her crystal ball will not suffice for your precious Orb.

The food arrives, and is steaming hot.

“Watch yourself, these plates are hot,” says the alien lady carrying the food.

Ink laughs. “Ha, she said plate.”

“Ok. Well, spit it out already. Where do I find the Pearl?”

Eat your food, and you will find out.

“No, just tell me, I'm getting really sick of this.” The exhaustion is heard in his voice as he is constantly on the verge of tears.

Play along. Eat.

So Playt unwillingly eats, and at the bottom of his plate is The Pearl. He hadn't even sensed it there. He instantly fuses with it.

“Thank you, I'll be leaving now.”

One last thing.

“Yea?”

Keep that Orb far away from us. We don't want anything to do with it.

Playt FLICKERs to Littonia. He approaches the Ancients with all six puzzle pieces, and offers them up for the Orb.

“The Orb is yours. We do not need those, but you need them to wield the Orb.”

Death

Ynk

Scars

Ink vowed to not go down without a fight. While his heart was stopped, he was technically dead. He had an out of body experience, a dream-like prediction of things to come. In the dream there were black fires and screams of pure and infinite agony. A shadowy silhouette taunted him towards certain doom. Ink's spine filled with chills which crawled out to his extremities. His fear forced his heart to beat once more. The doctor was amazed, but was soon busy on keeping Ink stable.

When he finally regained consciousness, Loona was at his side. “It was horrible. It was Syl, all over again. We must fight.”

The people around him continued to quickly die off. Ink began to create mindless clones, because in the Age of Death, he could no longer create anything with a soul. He was increasingly wrinkled and feeble with each passing day, and although he had lived longer than any, he felt angry to know that his death approached. He had just figured out all his answers, and had not only learned how to accept himself and the world, but also love everything.

He felt no love for Rhun, however, only intense fear and hate. Ink was dying, slowly but surely. He tried any medicine or miracle cure he could find, but it was futile. Loona stayed by his side until the end. It was the only place she felt she ever truly belonged. Omega stood at his other side, still dedicated to protection. Jin and Blank had passed away in a spaceship accident, and Ink had brought them back as zombies. Lyt also passed on, as well as more than half of the people he once knew. His parents. His aunt and uncle. Ina was slowly dying in a health facility. Ylsa, Chyll, Rose, Chyna, Inc, and Dos all passed away, one by one. Loll and Lull died at comparatively young ages, but Trol still lived.

The causes of the death were seemingly random, but Ink knew fully well who was to blame. This was all Rhun's fault. Ink began to create anything he could, to slow down the inevitable end when Rhun finally made it to him. His galaxy became overcrowded with planets full of zombies. Ink developed severe anxiety, and this only complicated his growing list of health issues.

33,636,544,136

After more than a billion years into the Age of Death, vampires began to appear on the planets, attacking the zombies and setting fire to everything in sight. Throughout this time, Nyt helped Ink by doing reconnaissance, spying on Rhun and then reporting back.

33,999,768,423

Nyt began to feel as if Ink was losing his mind there near the end. He began talking to himself, as Rhun. The voice he used for Rhun was disturbing, and nearly sounded like Adradiggi.

34,000,000,000

On the final day, Rhun entered Fahlls' atmosphere.

Playt

SHATTERING

The end has come soon
It is time for me to go
I was never here
My words carry my spirit
A message that I must share

Playt is led into a dark room where the Orb is being held. He feels its aura the closer he gets, and all of the puzzles within him begin to heat his body from the inside. He sees the Orb floating on a chair, and as he reaches for it, his blood begins to boil and his entire body burns.

Playt touches the Orb, and as he does, every creature in the Universe at that moment in time gets a vision of Playt and knows his name. The jungle creatures on Blue Leaves know him as Playt, and when they later see him as a baby, they in fact name him such.

He picks it up and it begins to melt into his skin as he starts to see visions of his life as a baby. He begins to smile as the pain courses through his body and he slowly but surely sees every step of his life, up until his inevitable death.

He has received his answers and is very pleased that his journey is finally at an end.

Then something he hadn't expected happens. He begins to see things that he did not ask to see. Lives of others that are unrelated to him shoot through his mind like a bullet and begin to fill his brain with an infinite amount of useless knowledge.

Playt goes down to his knees as the pain courses through his veins and forces him to lose control of his legs. His emotions run the gambit, and his thoughts are uncontrollably filled with every thought imaginable. His arms crack and begin to bleed white liquid blood as he scrunches up into the fetal position and begins to cry and laugh at the same time. His muscles pulse with uncontrollable spasms and he screams as he sees everything from the beginning of time to the end of time.

Cracks appear on his face and legs, and with each passing second he continues to weaken and die.

With all of his remaining effort, he stands up.

Once again he is unable to control his powers and that includes his flickering.

FLICKER

Old Playt appears before Warrior Playt.

"Ah. You have just begun your Warrior's quest. I know this, for I remember myself saying these very words. Even before that, I knew just by looking at your face. I also knew because I know the exact location in time and space that we are at this very moment. I also read your mind.

"I know more than I should know." Old speaks as he circles and hunches over Warrior. "I know too much. Be careful while searching for answers, you may find more than you're looking for. Oh wait, what am I saying? YOU WILL FIND MORE THAN YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!!"

Warrior remains silent, staring at Old Playt as one would stare at a psycho.

“Warrior, you seek knowledge of your life. Well... you will find those answers soon enough."

FLICKER

“Kid Playt is a bastard. You should send him to the moment of the big bang. Maybe that will knock some sense into him.”

Playt, we told you not to come near us with that damned Orb.

“I don't care.”

FLICKER

“Lysandus... I see that you have become quite the warrior. I expect you want to revive all of those lost souls still.”

“Yes Playt. Tell me...”

FLICKER

Old Playt stands in the middle of the fields of Littonia. In the distance he can see Warrior Playt and he

smiles to him. Kid Playt is beside Old Playt on a hill and begins to attack, but is thrown into the Big Bang by the Time Generals.

FLICKER

“...what I must do.”

“Lysandus, you must venture into Ghester's Tomb. There you will find...”

FLICKER

“...and that's how I decapitated all the zombies.”

“Playt, I was just asking if you had a license to drive. I won't let you drive my spaceship if you don't have a lic...”

FLICKER

“...the Spirit Symbol.”

FLICKER

“Alessandra. I'm sending you and Caprina into the future where you will find me as a baby, crying in ...”

FLICKER

Alessandra and Caprina are in the desert of Aspimiria and Playt approaches them. At first, they are scared, but more than anything, they are starving in the desert world and haven't seen food in days.

FLICKER

Lysandus dodges the trap with ease and Old Playt claps from the ceiling which he is now standing.

“You're doing very good Lysandus, just keep going.”

FLICKER

Old Playt is now in the dream of young Lysandus.

“You will live two lives. This is the Beginning and End”

FLICKER

“Playt do you have a license?”

FLICKER

“You've made it! Reach for the Spirit Symbol, it is your only hope to regain order in this world.”

FLICKER

“Oh hi. My name's Playt, can I drive the spaceship? I'll show you how to get to Fahlls.”

Old Playt's left hand crumbles to bits of rubble and falls off.

FLICKER

“...the sand. I need you to pick me up and comfort me so that my young self can get some well needed rest.”

Old Playt's right arm cracks up and breaks off, becoming nothing but ceramic fragments as it hits the sand.

Alessandra and Caprina look at each other, questioningly.

FLICKER

“Hey, can I borrow your toaster?”

“That's a spaceship.”

FLICKER

Now in Playt's Council, there are four other Old Playts and they are all utilizing The Pearl's invisibility. They talk with each other for some time, then FLICKER to the next moment, to answer

their own questions, and then FLICKER again to retort on the comments just made.

FLICKER

As Lysandus reaches for the Spirit Symbol, Playt tries to scream NO in an attempt to end his insane existence once and for all.

He reaches out with his handless left arm and...

FLICKER

Playt is now touching Caprina's shoulder with his nub, who is holding Alessandra's hand. They both jump at the sight of Playt, whose skin is now gray and broken, like cheap cement.

FLICKER

The three appear in the future of Aspimiria and Playt's left arm falls completely off as his knees begin to crack.

FLICKER

As Lysandus reaches for the Spirit Symbol, Playt's eyes cease to work and he falls down to the wooden floors of the catacombs and shatters into several thousand tiny ceramic pieces.

Lysandus looks over to see this horrific death of Playt as his hand wanders closer to the Spirit Symbol. It grips a hold of him, and begins to fuse with him.

Lysandus's pain is infinite as his body is twisted and his skin begins to discolor. His muscles shrink and his bones begin to squeeze and crunch as he is transformed into Baby Playt.

White.

As the blinding effects of opening his eyes for the first time subsides, the being blinks and looks around. He looks at his hands to see that they are red. His skin seems odd to him as he touches his three tiny string bean fingers and small thumb.

Rhun

Vampires

Much like Luv is a catalyst which instantly purifies all the souls within Rhun, All is the one who unlocks Rhun's knowledge of everything there is to know. Using Ina's ability to manifest things into reality, Rhun creates Debris, who isn't too happy to see him. “What's wrong?”

“This hurts. I don't like being here, put me back.” Rhun reabsorbs her and then manifests the strongest souls within him. Dysh, Rip, Mayhem, Chaos, Voyd, Tear, Shred, Nyf, Lort, Oni, One, Demise, and all of the mightiest demons within Rhun to appear and greet zombies as they crash through the doors to the hospital room.

Mowing through the ocean of dust, the army of Syl appear as vampires, eyes glowing red and teeth sharp as razors. The zombies are absolutely no match for them, and Rhun rests in the hospital bed. By the time the dust has dissipated enough to see clearly, the zombies have all been slain and the vampires are walking back to Rhun. He absorbs them and everyone rests within the paracosm, exchanging information, memories, and together they plan.

Galaxies

All explains Lys, and several of the galaxies that reside there. “Your homeworld of Old Relstin was in the Ej galaxy, along with Littonia, Distonia, and the Rip. Rellujah and Aspimiria were in the galaxy named Aur. There are an uncountable number of galaxies, but I'll focus on ones important to your quest. Sporkson, that was Dappa, and here on Black Leaves, we're in the Rys galaxy. There are several notable planets in this galaxy; Plysis, Talak, Klurnox, and the phenomenon known as Ultranova. The path ahead holds the galaxies of Craton and Synster, which have merged together at this point in time. You see, everything used to be much further apart, but then it started to contract. Lys is much more condensed, and the path in which you've already traveled is gone. Ink has filled this small amount of space with meaningless garbage and empty planets of nothing but mindless zombies. The zombies are on every planet from here on in. If you feel pain from absorbing just one, that makes things more difficult. It means we need to manually rid the zombies from all of the planets. Since there's really no sense of urgency, you can save your energy and make strategic attacks.”

Rhun is awokened by Nyt, who looks down at him with a worried look. His eyes are big, with red diamond shaped pupils which pierce through wire-rimmed glasses. “Wake up! Please!”

Rhun sits up and looks into his insane eyes to see an apologetic face. “Mr. Skigh. I wondered where you went.”

“We need to hurry, this is no time to be sleeping.”

“What's the rush?”

“This dimension is reaching critical mass. If we don't act immediately, Lys will implode and, then explode, which is what we don't want.”

“We? I thought you worked for Ink. How do you know we don't want it to explode? It's all ending anyway, right?”

Nyt's intensity drops and he sits down next to Rhun. “I can no longer work for Ink. He's completely lost his mind. I tried to explain the situation to him, but he isn't listening. He just keeps creating more, and it's making everything worse. I've spoken to a Time Commander from the dimension above, Biz. I believe his name was Reth.”

From within, Mortal speaks to Rhun, “Reth is my cousin.”

“Reth told me that an explosion of Lys could potentially destroy the entire Multiverse, and all souls would be lost forever. The only solution is to act now, and for Lys to naturally devour itself. Those words changed how I saw you, and I see that the real threat right now is Ink. I've seen a future where all is lost, and I can't have it be a reality. Rhun, you are the hero of this story. Ink must be stopped at all costs, and I will do anything I can to help you.”

“So, that's why you threw me into the Rip.”

“I don't understand, why would I do that?”

“So that I could absorb all of Syl. Only then could I possibly have a chance in this dimension. Go, throw me into the Rip. You will find me on Old Relstin, moments before its destruction.”

Nyt looks at him, confused, but stands. “And you?”

“I will do what I must.”

Nyt vanishes, and Rhun stands up. He removes the egg of Ms. Raincorn from his pouch. It shakes and then cracks. A small dragon slowly crawls her way out of the egg and looks lovingly up at Rhun's eyes. Then she climbs to his shoulder and makes herself comfortable.

Rhun uses power within to fly off of Black Leaves and on to the next planet. While in space, he sees the merged galaxies of Craton and Synster, the brightest objects in the sky, and even from such a distance, it's huge. The time it takes to bridge the gap between planets is short, compared to ever before. Talak is the closest, and Rhun uses One's speed to reach it quicker. The tiny Ms. Raincorn grips Rhun's shoulder, but is unaffected by the extreme temperatures of space nor the lack of breathable air. It takes several Hundred-Million years to finish the Rys galaxy, and then he travels to Synster and Craton.

In that time, he begins to wonder what's after death for him. No answers within. Ms. Raincorn grows and assists Rhun in clearing each planet of zombies before vaporizing everything.

Outer Cluster

Ink is nearly Thirty-Four-Billion years old by the time Rhun reaches the Outer Cluster.

This region of space is on the outer rim of the combined galaxies, and is comprised mostly of the planets from the Synster galaxy. Many of the stars which are still active have merged by this point, and the majority of planets have crashed into one another to form larger, misshapen planets, as well as innumerable rocks and space debris scattered throughout the heavens. All of what remains seems to revolve around Fahlls, as if it's the center of the Universe. At this point, that would be a fair assessment to make, but long before this the planet of Fahlls has a very complicated orbit dependent upon the multiple stars, moons, and planets in the system. Kriddle is one of the few planets to not have reached another and crash into it.

Ms. Raincorn travels to Kriddle with Rhun on her back. She has regrown to be even bigger than she was in Syl, some mysterious side effect of being reborn in Lys. Rhun has taught her language and raised her, up until she remembers everything about her past. She follows him to the surface, but doesn't land for fear of the planet spontaneously crumbling.

Kriddle will only have a drop of water on it, and the only living things are both ghostly translucent entities which float on invisible legs. One is a female named Breath, and the other is her twin brother, Death. They have no true physical form, except for the light they emit. Death's light is more of a deep shadow. The siblings don't get along very much, but they love each other.

They sense Rhun entering their atmosphere and fly to him. The planet shakes as his feet touch firmly on the cracked gray surface. Dust will drift up and cloud Rhun's vision momentarily, and then Death and Breath are arguing about him.

“We kill him,” Breath says.

“What? This is literally the first person you've ever wanted to kill, and the first one I've wanted to live. Why are you always so difficult?”

“He's killing everybody!”

“Sure makes my job easier. You're always telling me that I need to retire. Besides, look how short he is, he must be a child.”

Rhun watches as they argue, silently. “You both seem very old,” Rhun says.

Breath scowls at Rhun with hate in her eyes. “Excuse me!?”

“He's right, sis, we are. Almost as old as Ynk.”

Moments later, and before she can respond, Kriddle collides with Gloom and becomes dust. As Kriddle is vaporized, they're all blinded by the dust. Gravity shifts to Gloom, but they're each able to resist its pull enough to not plummet to the surface. As Rhun descends, he will hear a woman coughing below. He still can't see anything, but he can feel the wind as Ms. Raincorn flaps her wings. After the dust settles enough to see, Rhun looks up into the face of a beautiful white Fahllian who wears pink eye makeup. Her black pony tail drapes over her small shoulders. She blinks as she coughs again, and then waves the air away from her face. Then she looks down to see Rhun, and a large dragon behind him. She screams and jumps back. She holds a surprised stance for many moments, her hands covering her face and one leg in the air. Then she relaxes. “Rhun?”

“Yes.”

“My name is Loona. I knew you were coming. We all know. You're short.”

“You're pretty.”

She blushes. “And they call you a monster.”

“I kind of am, ha!”

Loona looks at him oddly. “Yes.” Her eyes turn to the ground. “I came to see you, against the wishes of my husband.”

“Husband? What's that?”

“Ink.”

Voices from within explain. “Oh. So, you aren't scared of me?”

“No, I'm terrified. I think everyone close to Ink is. He has us scared of death. I've always known it was inevitable, and never expected to live as long as I have, but... it's a scary thought. Have you thought of what happens after you die?”

“I don't know. I am curious if I can die.”

“Of course you can. Everything that lives, dies. When you have swallowed this entire Universe, what do you think will happen?”

“I hope I will be able to live with all the souls within me. My friends. My family.”

Loona isn't expecting this answer. “That's sweet.” She thinks. “How do you know that you aren't just imagining the voices within?”

“Imagining?”

“It means it isn't real. A hallucination. Often times when we lose people close to use, we imagine they are still with us.”

“But they are real. I don't know how I know, but I do.”

“Fine.” She says after a moment of silence. “I'm going with you. I have to see him one last time before whatever happens, happens.”

Rhun is relieved to have a non-dragon accompany him for the first time in forever, aside from his vampires and the entities who keep following him. Loona climbs aboard Ms. Raincorn and they lift into the dusty atmosphere. Breath and Death follow everyone, silently observing Rhun and judging him.

As the atmosphere clears up more, they see another large planet approaching Gloom. Most of the stars are gone, but the ones that remain will have merged together as one. It lights up the entire Universe, giving birth to the longest and very last day. The planets Gloom and Rhelstin collide with each other, and once again, the atmosphere is flooded with debris, only this time, neither planet is destroyed. The center of gravity shifts back and forth until finding an equilibrium.

Ms. Raincorn pukes up some type of purple muck, and Loona soothes her as best she can. As they all travel closer to an unknown mountain range on Rhelstin (likely a new one), Loona and Ms. Raincorn become close friends.

Inner Cluster

Ink sits on his throne, staring through a window and into the yard. He can see the cemetery from where he sits. Most of his friends are there. The rest have left him, against his wishes. It's almost his birthday, and even his family has left. Abandoned. True enough, Ink will have had more birthdays than any in the dimension, but the occasion is still quite important to him. A landmark indeed, Thirty-Four-Billionth birthday. Still Thirty-Four days away. Alone.

Did he ask for this? He's the creator, did he create Rhun? Did he create insubordinate loved ones? It doesn't matter. All is gone. All is lost. His best friend. His wife. Even his son. Fuck them.

Ink envisions Rhun standing before him. Ink laughs. “You've fallen right into my trap, you fool!” Ink stands up and trips over his cane. He looks back to where Rhun was, but he's gone. “Lucky you,” Ink says before sitting back down on his throne. Then he stares out the window again. All alone. Everyone either died or left. Fuck them.

Meanwhile, his wife will be riding a dragon from another dimension. “So, where are you from, Ms. Raincorn?”

“I am from Syl. My mother worked for King Oni.”

“Syl!? You're the first being I've ever met from Syl!” Loona stares at her. “So, if your last name is Raincorn, what is your first name?”

Ms. Rainorn pauses a moment, using the turbulence of the winds on the new Gloomstin as an excuse to think of an answer. She settles on the truth. “Fart. My father named me.”

Loona laughs disbelievingly, and then she thinks. Father from Syl. Makes sense.

“But I prefer if everyone just call me Ms. Raincorn.”

Loona looks her in the face, feeling bad for laughing. “Makes sense.”

Rhun lands on the new double planet and everyone follows. “What are you doing?” Loona asks.

“I'm taking a break.”

Loona looks at him, shocked, after climbing off her new dragon friend. “What? You're almost there, just get it over with.”

Rhun looks at her, exhausted. “Even I need to sleep. The end of time can wait.”

Rhun promptly lays down on a soft patch of dirt. While Rhun sleeps, several days pass. On the first two days, they wait and discuss. Loona and Ms. Raincorn get to know each other quite well, and when get tired they begin talking to Death and Breath, who before that had been arguing very civilly and calm.

Nobody sleeps that well except Rhun during this time. Rhun is out cold. Loona wakes up, and this wakes up Ms. Raincorn. Breath and Death never sleep. On the third day is when Trol arrives. “TROL!”

“Mom?”

“What are you doing here?”

“I'm here to kill Rhun and save you.”

“Well, he's asleep.”

Trol looks down at him and shrugs. “So?”

“Wait until he wakes up so that he can tell you what he told me.”

Trol laughs. “I'm sure he told you exactly what you wanted to hear. Well, I don't want to hear lies.”

For the next four days, Trol and Loona argue, while Breath and Death float silently behind them and Rhun continues to slumber. Ms. Raincorn tries to backup what Loona says, but eventually, Trol is fed up and stabs Ms. Raincorn in the head, claiming that any being from Syl must die.

Loona grabs Rhun and darts towards the crevice between the planets. Troll is faster, so Breath and Death both decide to help her. After an eternity, they finally agree and act together, finding themselves morally aligned with Rhun. Together, they lift Rhun and Loona off the planet cluster and to the next body of mass, one of the remaining seven moons of Fahlls.

Moments later, Gloomstin becomes dust. Loona thinks to herself. She thinks that Trol must have survived, but feels sorrow in case he didn't make it. Then she remembers Rhun's words and somehow knows she will see him again. One way or another.

The next ten days, Rhun still does not wake up. Trol finds them and threatens to kill his mom if she doesn't stop protecting Rhun. This is when Breath and Death take control of Rhun's sleeping body.

Moons

Loona watches as her son stares at her with his psychotic grin, and then Rhun lifts out of her arms and faces towards Trol. Breath and Death attack, and Trol vanishes. “Gone,” they say, but Loona corrects them.

“He was never here. That was a hologram.”

Moments later, Death and Breath use Rhun's hands to grab Loona and travel to the next moon. They remain on the second moon for several more days, and then move on to the third. Trol attacks Rhun once more, and as Rhun continues to sleep, Breath and Death fight back.

Omega appears out of nowhere and jumps between Trol and Rhun. “OMEGA!” Loona shouts. “This is unnecessary. We need to go back to Fahlls and talk to Ink. This is all a big misunderstanding.”

“I don't think you understand, Loona. Rhun won't be going to Fahlls.”

“Look around you, Omega! Nothing is left. Even if you were able to kill Rhun, what then? What kind of existence would it be with an endless day and no Universe?”

“We could rebuild. Don't you think he's done enough damage? This has gone too far.”

Omega swings for Rhun, but Death and Breath are able to keep enough distance between them. Trol grabs Loona and laughs as they teleport off the third moon. Rhun's body fights against Omega across the third moon, through space, and then to the fourth moon. They fight for days, neither tired nor hurt.

The last cluster of suns brightens in the distance briefly and then turns black forever. The final night lasts for the final six days, everyone basically blinded by the lack of light.

Meanwhile, Trol has grown fed up with Loona's lies and puts her out of his misery, his sanity gone long before. Omega sees him covered in blood, and then sees Loona's body behind Trol. “What have you done?!”

“She was mad. Nothing she said made any sense. Now that we no longer have any distractions, let's kill Rhun.”

“She was like a mother to you. You're sick.” Omega looks around. “She was right. This is the end. I'm sorry Trol, but you've lost your fucking mind. And my respect.” Omega grabs Trol quickly and breaks his neck. Then he looks at Rhun. Breath. Death. “Rhun is asleep still. I will wait till he wakes up.”

Death and Breath release Rhun's body to the surface of the fifth moon and after a few moments they disappear. Essentially, they die and become absorbed by Rhun, but they never are technically alive in the first place.

With only four days left in existence, as the final night continues, Rhun finally wakes up. Him and Omega float above Fahlls, all seven moons gone. “Who are you? Where are we? Where is everyone else?”

“They're all dead. I am Omega. This is the last planet, Fahlls. After me, only Ink remains.”

“You don't seem scared.”

“I am not. I just hope I'm doing the right thing. Looking around, I don't see another choice.”

“You will be comfortable within. Everyone else is already there.”

Omega stares at him for a couple moments, and then he touches Rhun's forehead, allowing himself to be absorbed into Rhun's being. Rhun's body twists and mutates as he grows tall, taller than Ink. His muscles expand and his eyes become a mixed abstract painting of black white and red, twisted and flowing.

Atmospheric Entry

Entering Fahlls' atmosphere will take four days. On the final day, Rhun will make it through an extreme amount of clutter surrounding the planet, which is placed there by Ink to slow him down. The planet glows bright blue, lit up by some microscopic luminous lifeform.

A circle around him turns dark as Rhun lands on the planet, and as he begins to walk, the circle of darkness grows. As his excitement reaches a pinnacle, he darts into a run. A wave of darkness quickly spreads across the planet as he rushes towards the final castle standing.

Outside of the castle is a mighty army of zombies. Rhun recognizes all of them. He releases all of their souls and makes vampires. Every zombie fights its counterpart as body goes to war with soul. Soul wins with ease, and the Rhun reabsorbs the vampires and enters the castle of Fahlls.

The last of the luminous lifeforms die, and all that exist in the Universe are two Fahllians and a very dark castle.

The first and the last. Ink lifts his arms and ignites every candle in the castle. Rhun begins to walk towards his final confrontation.

Happy Birthday

As Rhun walks, every candle that is extinguished behind him will be a wish from Ink to live forever.

The walls and ceiling crumble around them as Rhun enters the throne room. Time seems to slow as the ceiling falls. “Rhun, you're finally here. Once again. You've fallen right into my trap!”

Rhun looks him in the eyes with a mix of love and finality. He feels no fear, but can sense Ink's. After absorbing Omega, Rhun is finally taller than someone other than Curious, even though Ink is hunched over as he walks over to Rhun.

Ink begins to manifest small rocks and throw them at Rhun, but they absorb into him on contact. Ink decides to step up his game and throw the biggest piece of stone he can manifest at Rhun, but Rhun only stares back as it disappears into his chest. Ink shoots fire from his fingertips and engulfs the room. He manifests giant razor sharp spikes, sharp edges, blunt objects, extreme elements, explosions, lasers, anything he can think of. His mind snaps, and he begins to throw any material or substance he can think of, even things such as water, and sunlight, which creates a rainbow that Rhun smiles at as it's absorbed. Ink is frantically searching for a weakness, some secret combination of particles that will destroy Rhun, even marshmallows. Nothing seems to do anything to him, and as Rhun walks forward, the Universe shrinks to a small sphere surrounding the two.

Ink steps back and looks behind him. “I'm cornered!”

“It's ok, Ink. Everyone you know and love is within me.”

He ate everyone! Everyone I love. “You monster!”

Loona and Ina speak through Rhun's mouth in unison. “It isn't what you think. Within is a paradise. We are free of suffering now.”

“NO!” Ink screams.

Omega and Jin speak from within in unison. “There is no other choice. This is how it ends. Surrender to fate.”

Ink shakes his head. “I CANNOT!”

Wind begins to cyclone around them. A red man who almost looks like Ink appears, only he is much younger. His eyes glow with a red laser light. “PLAYT?” Ink yells.

From within Rhun, a voice speaks to him. “It's me.”

It is the voice of Old Playt's spirit. This confuses Rhun, and scares him, knowing that it shouldn't be possible. “Playt, you have to stop Rhun!” Ink orders.

Playt looks at both of them, and then starts laughing. Then he looks around at the Universe and shrieks, while jumping towards Ink. A wave of energy travels from Playt to Ink, and Playt looks around, cringing as he absorbs several painful memories of Ink's subconscious. He begins to have a panic attack, as Ink smiles sincerely at the edge of the Universe.

Playt attempts to grab Rhun for comfort, but as he touches his arm, Playt shatters into several pieces and crumbles to the ground. Ink goes to his knees. “Ok, I accept my fate. I don't know why I fought for so long. I have lived a full life. The only one I could have ever asked for. Regardless of whether or not the words you say are true, I surrender.”

Rhun smiles. “Trust me. It will be ok.” Rhun touches Ink's forehead and absorbs him into his being. One candle is surprisingly still lit, even after the cyclone of wind has slowed down and disappeared. Rhun picks it up and blows it out. Nyt appears before him, confused. Both of them can see without any light source. “Why am I here? What's going on?”

“I wanted to talk to you, Nyt. You are truly the last to be absorbed. In my gut, I feel that there is a dimension above. A voice within me, who calls himself Mortal, knows of this place. After Lys is gone, that will be where we will be going.”

“Are you sure? Maybe this is the end.”

“I know. Trust me. This is merely the beginning. I have a favor to ask of you.”

“A favor? What could I possibly offer you?”

Rhun smiles. “I want to live within. The utopia. The heaven. I am done being the destructor. I want to live. It is my only wish. You must take over for me, and continue along the path. You seem to have a better grip on the way things should be. What is your answer?”

Nyt stares at Rhun with his laser red eyes. Playt's son, Nyt. The destroyer? Nyt is nearly speechless. “This is a huge decision, but somehow, I know it's right.”

Rhun smiles. “It is the only way.” He touches Nyt's hand and is absorbed into Nyt's being, along with the entire collection of Lys' and Syl's souls, memories, and history. The sphere surrounding them shrinks and then collapses.

In the dimension of Biz above, the dimension of Lys disappears entirely, but not before spitting out a new being. It is not Nyt, not Rhun, nor Ink. This being names itself Lys, and it is neither male nor female. It is the combination of Ynk's and Yna's true essences. It's eyes are oddly shaped, but it resembles a Fahllian. Within its huge eyes are red and blue sections, capable of seeing every spectrum and frequency possible to exist. Nyt's personality is in the forefront of the new being, and within is everyone and everything to ever exist, living in eternal bliss and happiness. Ink finally celebrates his birthday with his family and friends.

Lys' skin is black like Rhun's. As it stands up, the LysSyl facility crumbles to dust.

Epilogue

Lys continues where Rhun left off, with more understanding and acceptance of fate than Rhun had for most of his life. Lys will meet many lifeforms on its way through Biz, then Ros, and on up the entire dimensional chain.

Lys cannot judge any of them, and sees nobody as either bad nor good. It takes forever, because Lys is in no hurry. It lets time work itself out as it should, but eventually it will reach the final dimension above all the others.

Il-Haven. A dimension with the life expectancy of about two weeks. When Lys meets the final avatar (the first of all), he will explain, “My name is Gawd, and I have been expecting you, Lys. Il-Haven has always been fated for destruction, so I had to use all my power to create the lower dimensions. They each had their own time fields, allowing me to live for nearly an eternity. I am grateful for everything that I have learned and experienced, and I am grateful that you have arrived. I am ready.”

Gawd is old. Exhausted. His feeble tanned skin is riddled with wrinkles. He seems as if he's already dead. Lys reaches out a hand and Gawd shakes it. The entire Multiverse contracts into an infinitesimal point of infinite energy.

All becomes one, and time becomes irrelevant. Emotions, thoughts, memories, questions, yearnings,

and everything instantly fuse together into something that can only be explained through abstraction. An eternity exists in a moment, and then it explodes into a new paradigm. Everything that once was will become something new and unpredictable. No words that will ever exist in the paradigm before will get close to describing what will happen in the paradigm to come.

It becomes something no being before could have ever comprehended. How many times it has happened before and how many times it will happen can never be known. Some may try to contemplate this answer their entire lives, but that is a painfully pointless way to live. Round up to infinity

The End

About the Author

Ryan Wellman has been observing aliens from other planets and documenting his findings since he was seventeen. Born into poverty, his life led him in circles as he struggled to find balance between what he needed to do and what he loved to do. Playt gained Ryan's attention as the oddest and most confusing being to ever exist in his imagination. Choosing to finally release his second publication after a few years of tinkering, Ryan knows that his path is still up in the air. The important thing is that the Lys Trilogy has finally been released to the public. One thing is for certain, this book was no easy task to write. There is more happening than what is written on these pages, but for the sake of understandability, only the things the author found important were included. Several readers will not notice certain integral plot holes, as they will be too confused or enthralled to see them. Have fun finding them. Celebrate life, do what thou wilt. Thank you for taking the time to read this book. Previews of upcoming books by Ryan Wellman can be found on the following pages.

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Previews

Epochal Transanimation (Lysandus)

1. Edge

As they arise, Lysandus can tell that they have been put into a comatose state, but they move and follow him like mindless zombies. Deep within, he hopes they don't stay like this for long.

Old Playt appears before the three broken teenagers. “I need the last two Gems.”

“No! I need these to put this world back to the way it was.”

Old Playt looks around at Dussyllia, and it is indeed in shambles. Lava covers the planet and there are giant birds that fly around, engulfed in flames.

Old Playt hesitates. “I can help you, but first you need to give me those two Gems. It's the only way. I will return to fix everything. I promise.”

Lysandus gives him a crooked eye, and thinks for a second. “Wait, you're Playt aren't you? How did you get so old?”

“Don't ask questions; just give me the damned Gems!” Playt flies towards Lysandus and grabs both of the Gems from his hands like a greedy crack addict and disappears into thin air.

Distraught and hopeless, Lysandus wanders the ruins of Dussyllia with his mindless friends trailing.

With each day that passes, Lysandus hopes for a miracle to happen, and for everything to be back the way it was before they discovered Aspimiria.

No such miracle happens.

But, things slowly begin to improve with time. There are survivors on Dussyllia. They have found refuge in rare parts of the planet that are unaffected, The Havens. Until Lysandus is able to have Playt bring back those perished and fix the planet, he vows to be patient and protect the few survivors he can.

Slowly, Dirrinni and Orsidium regain themselves. Soon thereafter, they surpass their previous boundaries with incredible speed. Living in a world that is a ghost of itself and knowing that they are partly responsible gives them new purpose.

They become heroes. Dirrinni's father Rewncold has survived the apocalyptic power, and Rewncold trains them as best as he can. The three young students learn quickly. Even for Orsidium, it is no time for games and jokes.

The world is dead. The small group of four is the only thing preventing total extinction.

Five years pass.

The young boys quickly become men, and are constantly the apple of some woman's eye. Eventually, more join in the fight to survive, and that is when Evil Lysandus returns.

2. One

Demons and new beings spawn from the nearly destructed Dussyllia, and Evil Lysandus goes unnoticed at first. Then there are rumors that Lysandus is a murderer at heart. Eye witness reports state that the hero has lost the fight to internal demons and has betrayed their infinite trust by murdering an entire family in the most gruesome of ways.

“Never had I seen so much blood. Those poor children...”

A mob soon forms, and Lysandus is the target.

Evil watches from afar. He floats above the mob; his grin drips strings of fresh blood onto those below.

Rewncold is the first to feel the presence of Evil, and soon to follow is Lysandus.

His evil clone begins to send him images of his joyous rampage through the house of the Lillians.

Lysandus stands strong at the doorway to Aspimiria, with his three partners at his side, and calls out to Evil.

Evil comes, and Lysandus looks into the face of death once more. His features have changed, and he has gotten bigger and older, much older than Lysandus. Playt has something to do with that. Lysandus

notices that he no longer has the Blue Gem. He also notices that he cannot feel the presence of Insidious. Lysandus asks no questions. Instead he simply walks into Aspimiria and the others follow.

The fight is an intense war of four to one. However, the four warriors soon realize that their combined might does not match up to Evil. Rewncold does the only thing he can.

He sacrifices himself.

Anger fills the three young men and Evil smiles with glee.

Dirrinni begins to step towards Evil, but Lysandus stops him. “This is my fight.”

“He wasn't even your father Lysandus. This is personal.”

As if scolded, yet intent, Lysandus turns to his friend and says simply, “This is not about whose father he killed. This is about me.”

Lysandus and Evil battle. Lysandus uses Alessandra's strength from within him, and Evil uses Adradiggi's soul. Lysandus is heavily outmatched, but refuses to give up. Orsidium and Dirrinni attempt to help, but he screams at them in a voice they have never heard before.

Lysandus and Evil grab each other by the face simultaneously and begin to infect each other's minds. Orsidium gasps in a deep breath as Lysandus's body begins to slowly shrivel into a skeleton. Then it falls to the ground as a gray dust. Lysandus has died, once again.

Evil begins to walk slowly towards the remaining two warriors when he blinks and cringes. Slowly, his horns begin to retreat into his head and his evil presence fades.

He falls to the ground and begins to cry as he slowly loses his muscles and becomes a weak mortal.

Then it's all over and he is silent and motionless. For many moments, Dirrinni and Orsidium believe both their friend and his evil clone to be dead. Then they realize that whatever has formed in the sands below them is still alive.

3. Echo

Orsidium runs up to the creature that's lying in the sand and kicks it with his spiked boots.

Dirrinni yells from the top of a hill. “Stop it Orsidium, it's still him! That's still our friend, Lysandus. I know that his soul still remains.” Orsidium looks down to see Evil's horns retreat into his head. A tear falls from Orsidium's eye. Then he walks back to Dirrinni, sulking.

Out of nowhere, Warrior Playt and Blue Hayt appear in the Aspimirian field and an intense battle ensues.

“Playt?” Dirrinni says. “Hey Orsidium, is that Playt? It looks like he beefed up.”

As they watch the fight between Warrior and Blue, they see Lysandus's hat jump up and grab something out of Warrior Playt's hand. The Pearl. Then his hat fades from existence and Hayt and Playt magically disappear.

Old Playt approaches Orsidium and Dirrinni from behind. “Lysandus is still in there. I know this, for I...”

“PLAYT!” Orsidium yells. “It's you... again! This is your fault isn't it?! Lysandus was right, you did get old fast... But if you're the real Playt, then who was that? And where the hell have you been? Dussyllia is still in a state of total hell, and this place is nothing but Purgatory. It's been 5 years! When the fuck were you going to fix things!?”

“I'm sorry...” says Old Playt, who then looks down to the sands of Aspimiria.

“You're sorry? What the fuck do you mean, you're sorry?”

“I mean I lied... I had no intention of helping. I just wanted the Gems. I... I'm sorry.”

“No, fuck that. You fix this shit now, or I'm going to fucking kill you.”

Dirrinni speaks, “Something tells me we can't kill him. Let's just leave him.”

“Wait...” Playt says in a desperate attempt to right his wrongs. “I... I have to hold true to my word. I will try to fix Dussyllia.”

“And bring back all those who perished because of Evil and Mantellan?”

“I will try.”

Playt appears in Dussyllia and begins to mend the world back into its former self. He uses up every ounce of his energy, but before he collapses in pure exhaustion, he's able to resurrect a tenth of the population. Then he passes out.

When he wakes up, Orsidium and Dirrinni are standing over him in wonder.

“Thank you for all your help Playt, but there are still many lost souls.”

“Ugh... I don't have it in me to bring anybody else back to life. I am all spent. I'm sorry. I will try to return and finish the job, but I cannot promise such a thing.”

“We'll be waiting. You better return,” Orsidium speaks disrespectfully.

“I will try to... and you're welcome.”

“Yea, whatever.”

The elderly Playt disappears once more and the two return to Lysandus's body. They carry him into the new Dussyllia, where they have a fighting chance once again. Lysandus starts to recover slightly, but his friends notice odd things about him. He's not as nice as he once was. He has completely forgotten about the fight and several other things as well.

At night, Lysandus grows horns and his eyes fill with fire.

Psychosandus has been born.

His rampage continues, but in a much weaker form. His friends know that something is wrong with him, but they don't know the extent of it until the night they see his transformation for the first time.

4. Within

When Evil awakes each night, Lysandus awakes within his new shell. He is attacked relentlessly by the demons within Evil, and Lysandus is constantly moving in order to survive. Along his path he finds some lost souls that have been tainted. Using the powers that Alessandra had granted him long ago he's able to fix their sanities, and they help him along in his quest.

Eventually, he's strong enough to actually fight the demons instead of running. As he fights some of the weaker ones he can feel his might increase and the walls around him shake as Evil Lysandus's body

loses power.

Lysandus stumbles upon a crippled version of himself. It's the internal memory core that was created when the clone was. However, it had been surrounded by hell and was ripped to shreds in the process. Lysandus approaches it and releases its pain, and at that same moment, the night form of Psychosandus falls to the ground in the middle of a murder.

Within Lysandus, an evil presence begins to grow. Not only has Lysandus infected Evil's mind, but Evil has somehow infected Lysandus's as well.

Psychosandus immediately knows of the internal invader, and his frustration causes him to lose momentum and motivation. That's when Orsidium and Dirrinni grab him and sedate him. They lock him up and keep him away from society. They feed him, but only during the day. They explain to the rational one what is going on, and the insane one they interrogate.

Psychosandus awakes Adradiggi and sends him to dispose of the intruder.

Adradiggi confronts Lysandus, but is not physically powerful enough to deal with him. Instead, he opens a purgatorial void of endless torture and sends Lysandus in.

Psychosandus begins to regain consciousness during the day, and to the dismay of Orsidium and Dirrinni, Lysandus's presence has completely disappeared. They slowly devise a last resort plan to eliminate the threat.

Within the void, time is skewed. For Lysandus, every minute is a year. The void he's in is designed for the sole purpose of eternal torture. It is Hell's solitary confinement. His muscles are torn and reconstructed every day. Lysandus still refuses to give up, and his everlasting heart urges him to keep fighting, no matter how much pain he endures. Because of this, Lysandus grows exponentially stronger and his tolerance for pain becomes incredible.

Two days have passed for Orsidium and Dirrinni, but for Lysandus 2880 years have passed. Within the void he doesn't age, however, after being in the void for so long he begins to forget who he is and what he's fighting for. He forgets all about the world and the beings within it. His friends become shadows of memories and his only desire is the fight against the void and to survive its torment. Eventually, he begins to match the might of the void. The pain delivered no longer rips his muscles, and

instead feed energy to him.

That's when the void begins to weaken, and also when Adradiggi begins to flip out. His grip over the void is ripped to shreds, yet still he hangs on with a few strings of energy.

And then his grip is released.

Lysandus is spewed back into the body of Evil Lysandus and his appearance is shocking to the shadow demon. Within the two days the void was able to hold him, he has become a powerful warrior with muscles bigger than his head.

Adradiggi lay dead tired and strewn of energy. Lysandus walks up to him, slowly remembering everything. The dark shadow Adradiggi isn't one to give up. With his remaining energy, he launches himself on Lysandus, and perishes.

5. Transgression

Lysandus quickly disposes of every demon he finds. He no longer needs to run, unless it's to chase down a fleeing demon. He can hear Orsidium and Dirrinni talking on the outside.

“We just need to do it. He was a friend to both of us, but that's over now. He's gone, and we have to deal with this the way we know how. His time to be hero has passed, now it's our turn.”

”I understand. There is no other way. On three.”

Dirrinni picks up a large sharp and jagged rock and places it on Psychosandus's chest. Orsidium picks up another rock and raises it high.

“One”

No guys! I'm still in here, wait!

“Two”

Oh god, please don't let it end like this!

“Three”

Orsidium slams the rock into the other and drives it deep into the chest of Psychosandus. A tear falls from Orsidium's eye.

Suddenly, the rock starts to come back out and falls to the ground. A black bubble begins to appear from the wound and grows, stretching the skin. Lysandus slowly crawls out of the motionless Psychosandus.

His friends stare at him in fear and disbelief, and then run. Lysandus says nothing, and does not follow. Instead, he steps outside to see a much livelier world than when he had left. Somehow, the population had almost completely been recovered.

Orsidium and Dirrinni keep their distance, and Lysandus allows them to. He begins to fight the demons with ease and within less than a week, the demons stop attacking three large cities.

His old friends grow more and more confident that their friend has actually returned.

Orsidium eventually gathers up enough courage to confront him.

“Yes, I am Lysandus. I understand why you two are afraid of me and it's with good reason. I am dangerous.” Orsidium laughs.

“But you are still our friend, Lysandus. You always will be, even if you have gotten gigantic and super.”

“My power is not the thing to be afraid of. It is the evil thoughts growing within me now.”

With that, Orsidium is terrified once more. His friend is the purest person he has ever known. Never had he spoken of evil in such a way.

Psychosandus is presumed dead, yet that is not the case. He escapes from society and finds comfort with the field of other demons. He continues killing innocent people, but this time it's shorter lived than ever.

Lysandus appears and destroys him before he can harm another.

He's seen as a hero once again, and in fact, The Hero. Orsidium and Dirrinni have not been forgotten,

but they have become obsolete. The demons stop attacking as much, and there is a time of peace in Dussyllia.

Lysandus stumbles upon a pink and blue woman named Tawl saving a woman and her children from a lesser demon. *She has such bravery and ferocity. So foolish.*

Soon thereafter they are married.

Within three years, a child is born. The child is named Blud because of birth inflicted red cracks on his black skin.

Lysandus lives with his son and watches him grow up before his eyes. At two, the child has already learned how to control his Jenbar ability, and Blud's Jenbar ability happens to be shape shifting.

Lysandus has his hands full.

He raises Blud until he's five years old. Unfortunately, that is the extent.

Minions (Fragments)

Resurrection

As Old Playt's dying body shattered into crumbs, Lysandus became Baby Playt.

For the moments that Baby Playt remained in the castle under Ghester's tomb, there was no noise except for the questioning peeps of a curious babe.

After the baby flickered there were more moments of silence.

And then the entire Aspimirian planet began to shake.

The atmosphere began running the gambit of colors and the light faded in and out. The wind of the planet was vicious and at times the atmosphere dipped to below the ground level causing instant death to any unlucky fool.

Volcanoes began emerging from random dried gullies and dark blue magma began to cover the desert.

Eruptions of bright azure liquid lava the color of the sun violently spouted out of the sands.

This went on for many days and as the planet cooled and calmed. Something dangerous began to dig its way out from below the sands.

A surviving squiggle from the planet of Aspimiria was walking along the sands when it felt something move beneath. It stopped and waited for the rumble to happen again. The ground beneath it shifted and the squiggle darted for safety.

A hand with only two fingers and a thumb emerged from beneath. Sand rolled off of it as it rose up from the depths. Then the head emerged. The tightly closed eyes were the size of tennis balls and the nose and mouth were similar to an Earth monkey. Its skin was a very pale yellow with a greenish overtone, and instead of hair on the back of its head it had over a hundred tentacles which moved slightly and dripped of sand. The tentacles were about a half inch thick, and once the creature was completely out of the sand it was roughly three foot five. The tentacles were not only on the back of its head, but all across the back of the arms and legs as well.

Somewhere else on the opposite end of the planet, another being emerged from slightly cooled molten rock. It moaned as it crawled through the thick scorching liquid, but eventually it was able to pull itself up onto some solid rocks nearby. The hideous monster's skin was made up of dark blue rock and had flakes, bumps and anomalies all over. The ground rumbled as it moved and its body crunched the rocks underneath its giant feet. It grunted as it sat down.

Suddenly, the yellowish green monkey with the tentacle hair sensed the other and began running to where it was. The speed broke the sound barrier, and a gigantic sand cloud formed behind its path. Before yellow-green could reach dark-blue, a tall dark-red pillar shot up out of the ground and unfolded two limbs and two legs. It grabbed up the monkey minion and began squeezing the life out of him. The pillar laughed in a deep foreboding tone.

A very small cloaked figure approached silently and without warning. Its face was hidden by a round Chinese type of hat. It looked up and said simply, “Why don't you pick on someone your own size?” The infuriated pillar beast melted down and shifted its form into a red three-headed Cerberus hell hound. In the left face it still held the speedy monkey minion. The right face opened its mouth and reached for the small cloaked figure.

With speed and intelligence as his weapons, the child-like warrior jumped and landed on the top of its head. Then he ran up the back of its neck and began stomping the part of its spine where the three heads met. The beast growled in pain and released its prey. The yellowish green minion continued its run to the magma beast that had emerged. The wounds from the bite of the Cerberus stung as the windy sand flew into the cuts at mach speed. With only a few miles left between him and the rocks, a gigantic white dragon swooped down and grabbed him up and began grinding him into putty. The dragon became invisible and laughed in a childish female voice. “Tag! You're it!”

The yellow minion cried from her mouth and begged for mercy.

She shrugged her shoulders and dropped him out into the sand.

With only an ounce of energy left, the monkey man that so badly wanted to see the molten man limped slowly towards the rocks ahead.

In the distance, the rock man sensed danger and he screamed out in a furious roar. Then he started slowly towards the monkey. His mouth began to salivate as he hungered for battle. His speed began to

pick up and the earth below his feet shook.

As they neared each other, the yellow minion named Merle began to pick up speed and adrenaline began to flow through him. With only a few yards between them, another white figure flashed into existence next to the rock man and began to float straight towards him. Merle let out a dry cracked cry of, “no...” and began to lose momentum. The white figure resembled Adradiggi, and yet its face was young and innocent. It gripped onto the blue magma man and they both disappeared.

Merle dropped to his knees and started to cry as his pain began to overwhelm him once more. The adrenaline drained from his body and the blood went with it. Merle slowly withered and died alone in the sands of Aspimiria.

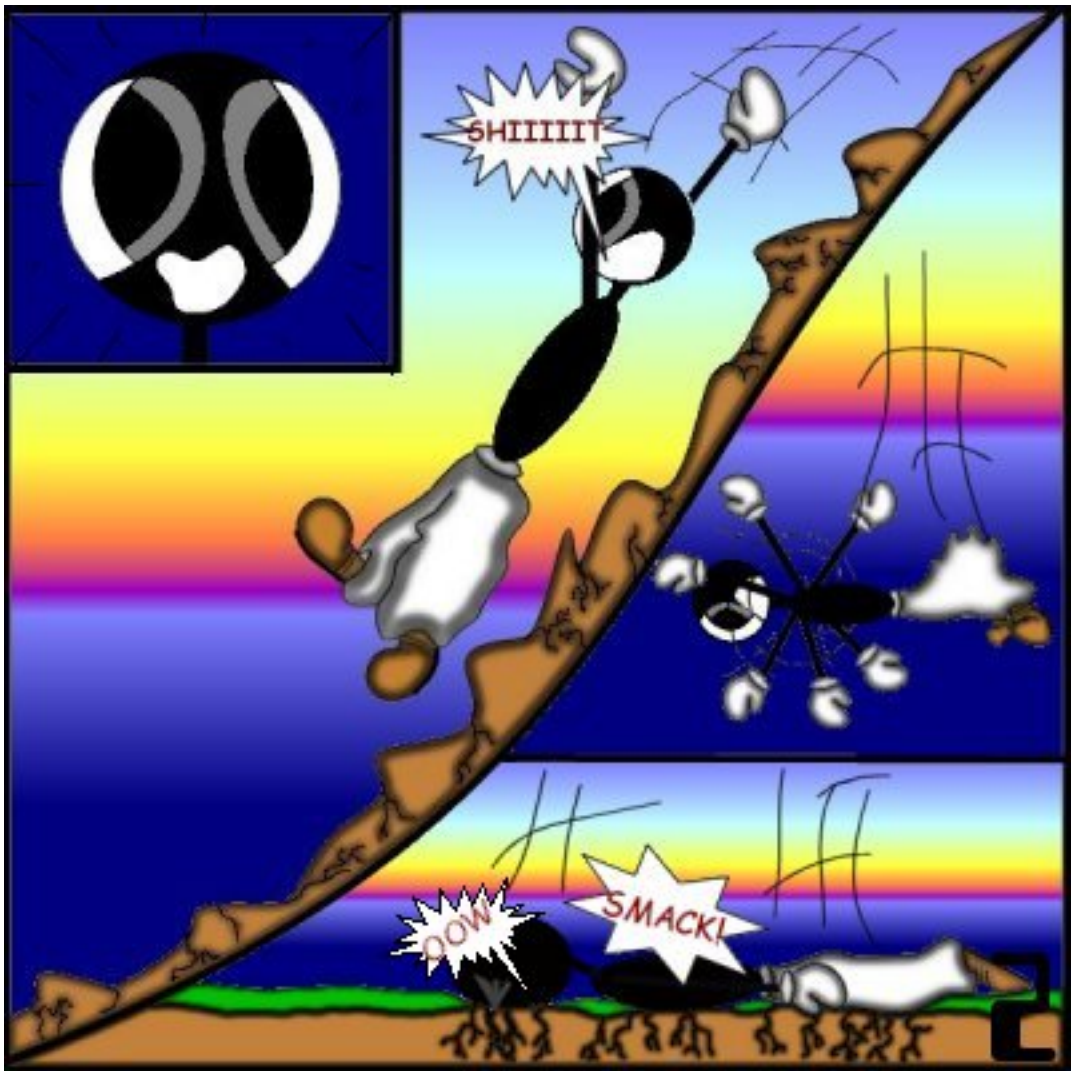
Another being crawled out from the depths of Ghester's tomb. As the blue sun hit the top of its head it slightly burned the sensitive red cracks. Blud was reborn, but he had changed. He knew he had a new purpose, but knew nothing of how this chaos had been unleashed.

Slowly but surely, he walked to Merle's corpse.

Blud placed his hands on the lifeless body and focused his energy.

Merle slowly regained consciousness.

Bonus: Baggy Brigade


SHIIIIIT
OOW
SMACK!

Lysandus
Huh?
Come Here Lysandus!

Who.....
Are.....
You???
Just
Come
Here
NO!
Fuck You!
NOW!
Thud !!

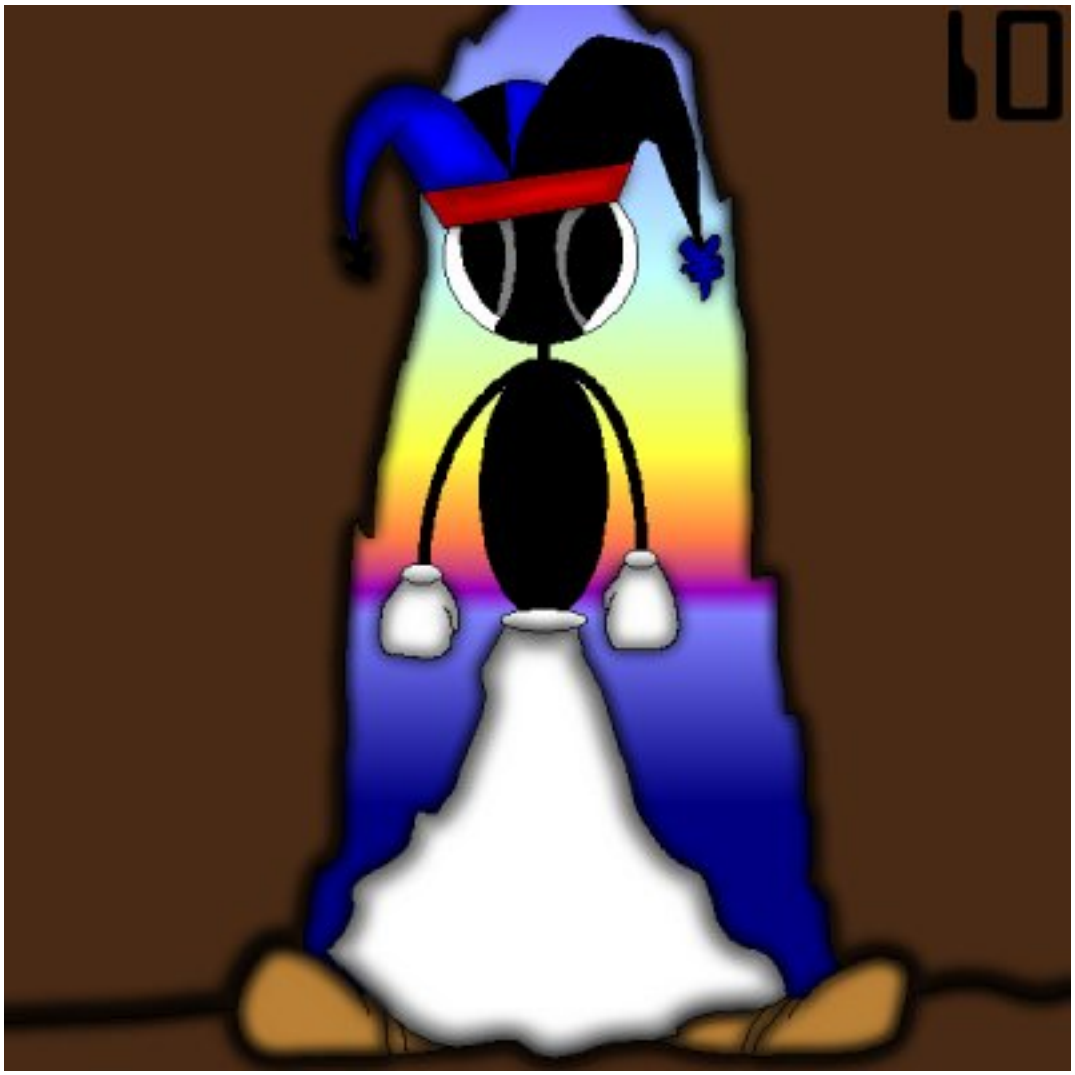
5

It's Me!
HeHeHe, I know!!!!
So Why are you Still choking me?
'Cause you scared the hell out of me!
Someone's Testy
It's because Evil's Following me

Evil? I thought we got rid of him.
Yeah, me too
Do you still have my lucky hat? I haven't been too lucky lately.
In fact, I just fell off of my favorite cliff. That's usually a good place to get away from it all.
Hehehe, actually, I knew that was your favorite cliff so I loosened the rocks and waited here. I didn't wait long.

Smack!
Fucker!!
Why did you do that?
I could've died!
But you didn't, now did you? Stop bitchin man
That's not the fucking point Orsidium. The point is that I could have.

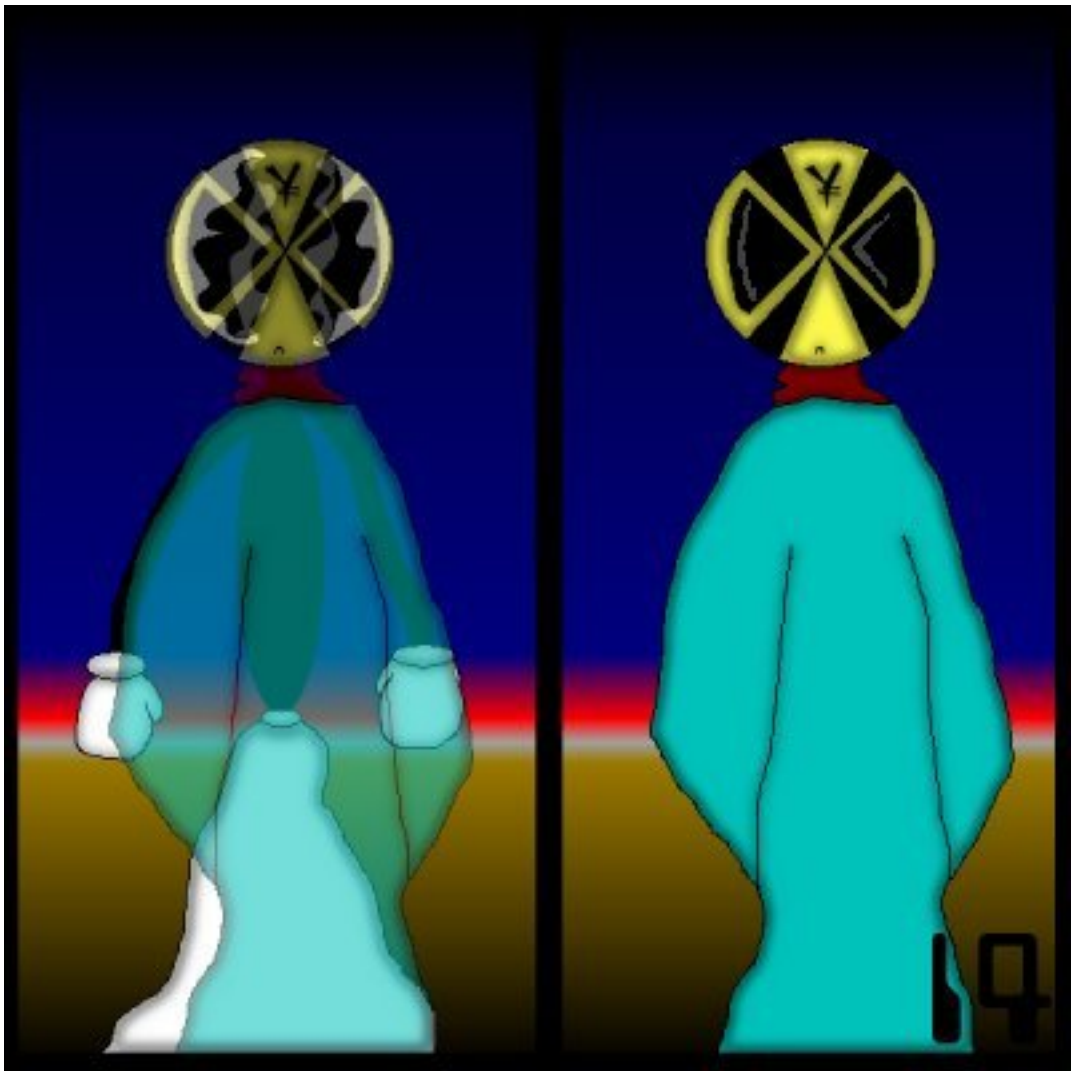
I did you a favor.
WHAT FAVOR!
I brought your hat back to you.
It didn't bring me much luck anyways
It doesn't even fucking fit you. You were born with spikes on your head!
Yeah, that too.


10

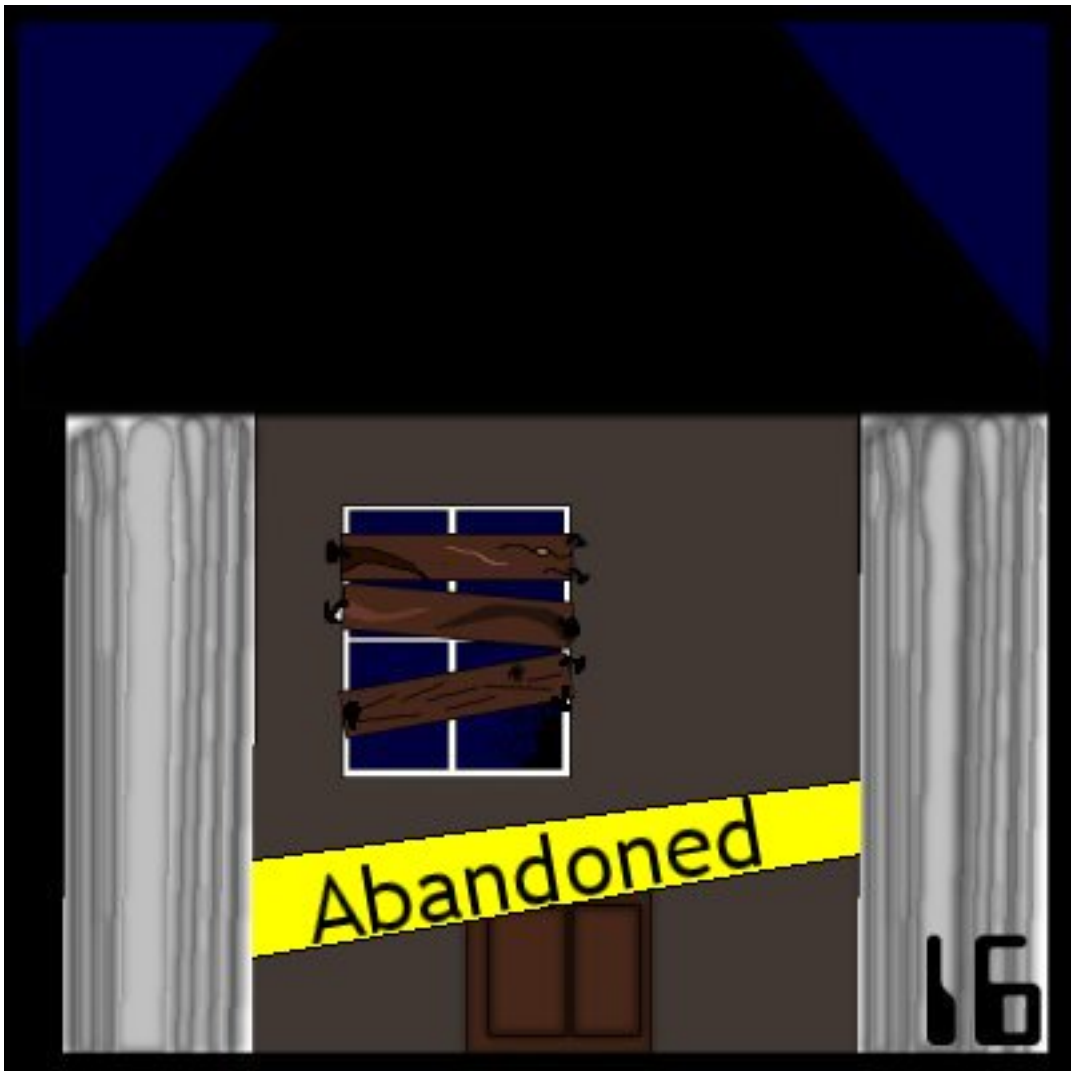
Why did I give it to you in the first place?
That was the bet, don't you remember?
2 YEARS AGO
Damn I'm Bored.
ME TOO.

SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
Let;s break into that abandoned house.
That sounds even more boring.
i THINK THAT PLACE iS HAUNTED.
You're just scared Lysandus. Admit it!!
HAH!

I bet you'll die in there
BET WHAT!?
How about your nifty little lucky hat?
And if I win I get your soooooul!
Stop That Dirinnn! It Freaks Me Out!!
EEEEHHH,
FINE!



But he does have a good idea don't you think Orsidium?
Whatever.
Sucker.


Abandoned
16

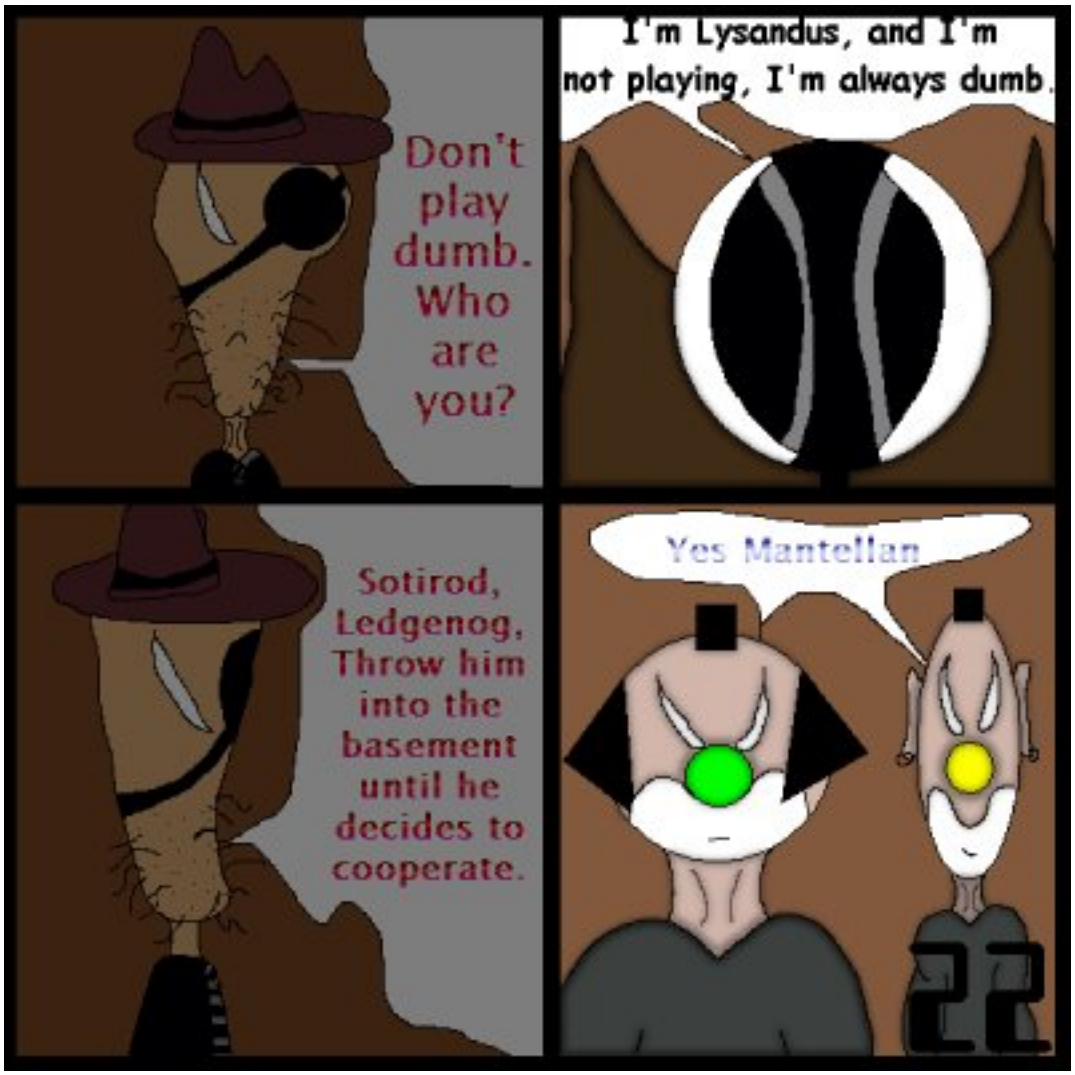
Hold on to it for now,
Dirrinni you watch him.
This isn't scary,
this isn't scary.
oned
Hold This.
KAY

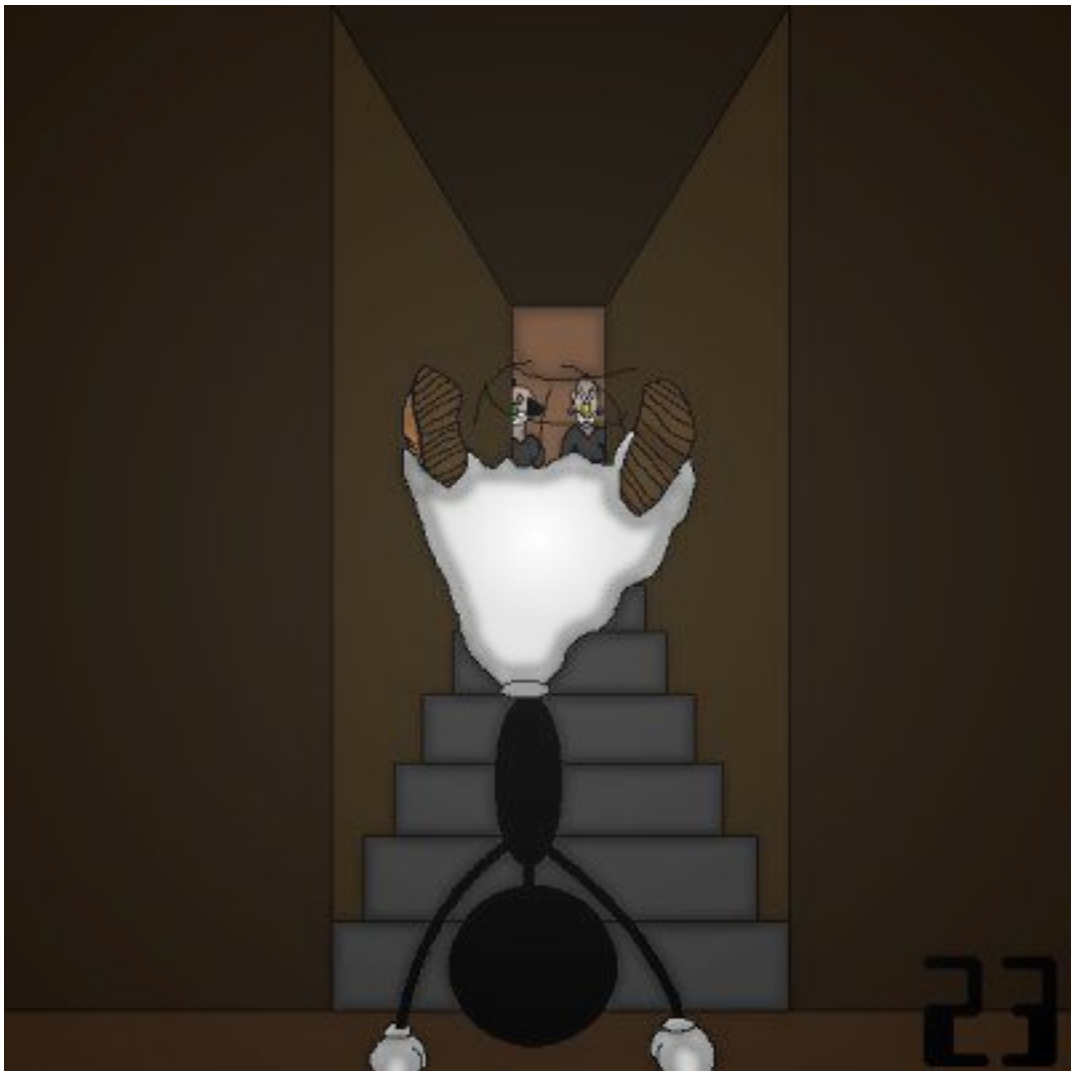
MEANWHILE, INSIDE
Did you get the money?
Yes Sir
hello?
COUNTED IT ALL MYSELF SIR, TWENTY GRAND
It better be there
Did you hear something?

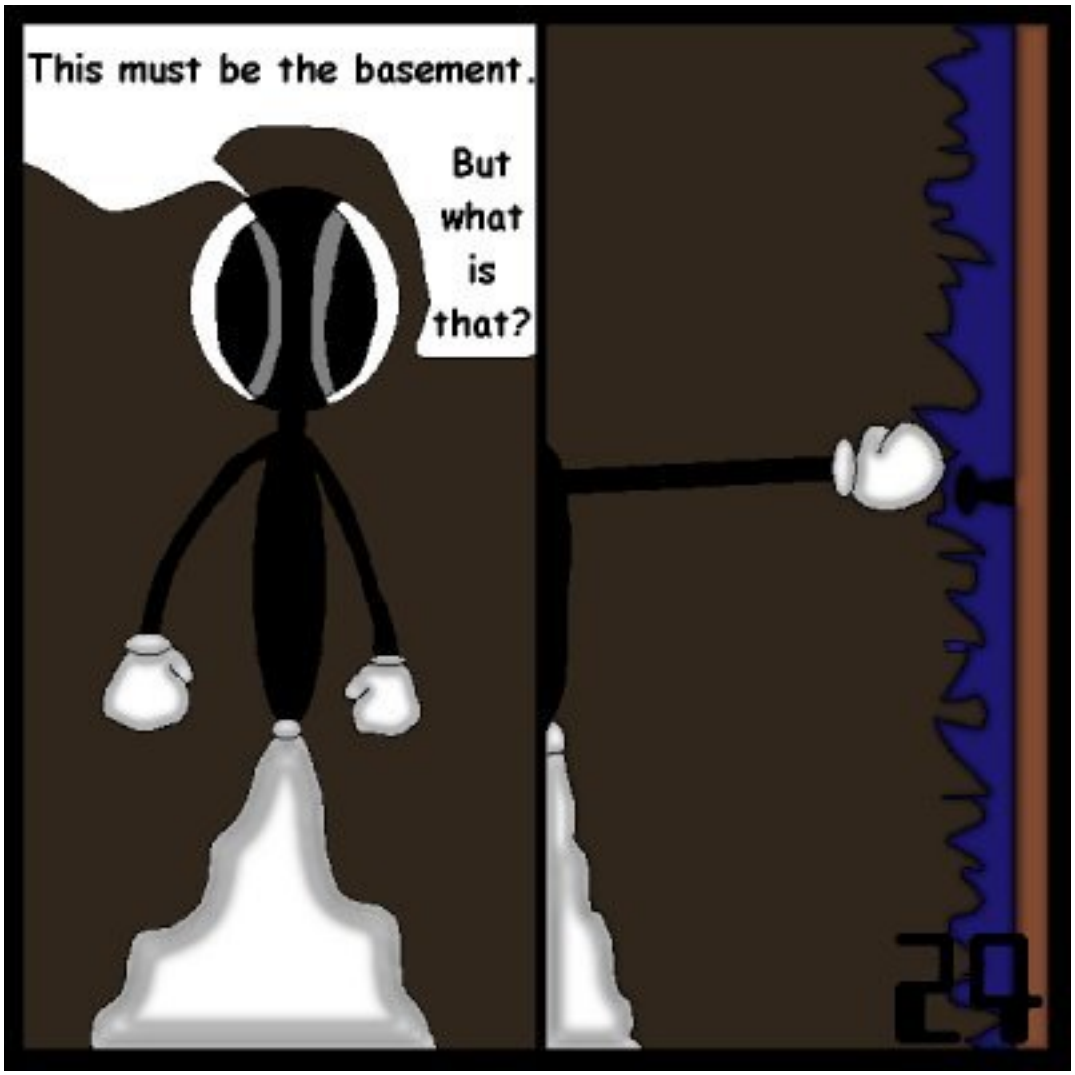
shiiit!
ARE YOU OK IN THERE LYSANDUS?
SMACK!
He's fine, he's just fucking around.

20
?

Where am I?
Tell us all you know.
That won't take very long
Start Talking
BLAP
It was a bet with Orsidium. If I don't come out then he wins.
So what did you lose?
ORSIDIUM?


Don't play dumb. Who are you?
I'm Lysandus, and I'm not playing, I'm always dumb.
Sotirod, Ledgenog, Throw him into the basement until he decides to cooperate.
Yes Mantellan
22


23

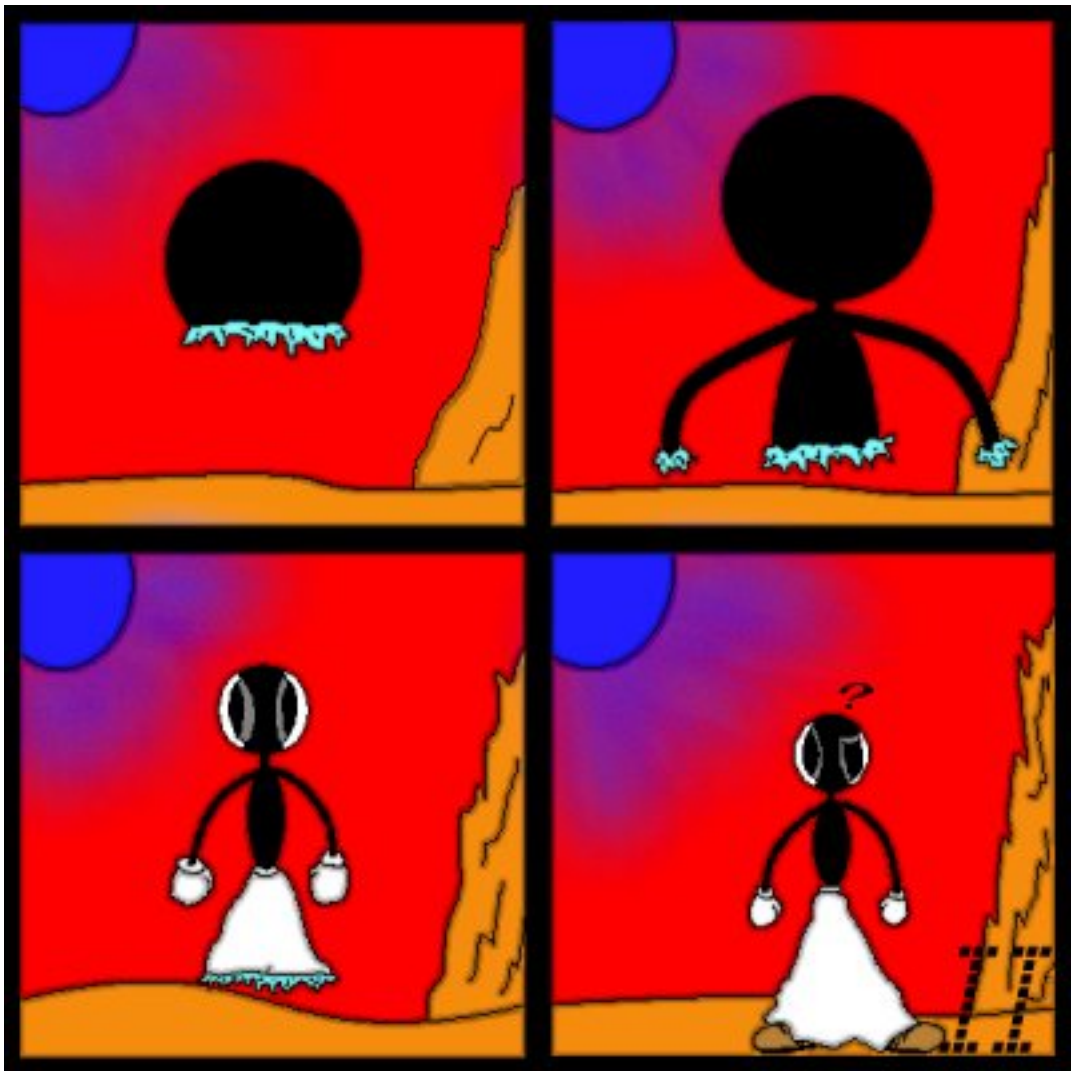

This must be the basement.
But what is that?

25
What the fuck?
HuH?!
Play with us Lysandus
AAA
AAA
HHH
HHHH
!!!!!!!!
How did you know my name?
We are the Gallows, we know everything.

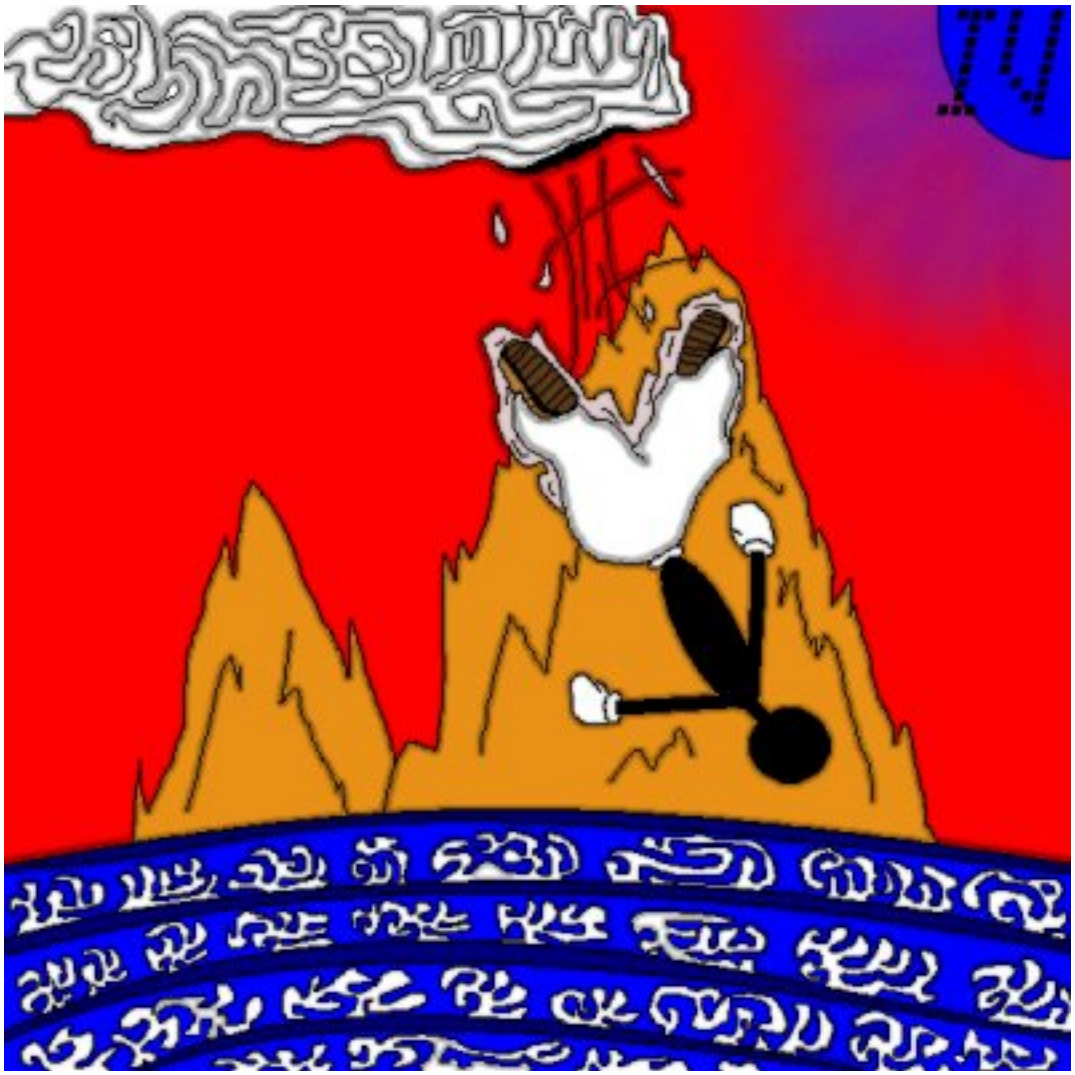
Oh....
So you probably know the way out of here.
Of course we do, but first you must follow us.
Hm.
SLAM!
26

To be continued.....
27

I'm leaving.
Just wait man.
AAAAHHH!!!
Meanwhile
I'm going in, what about you?
Why is he screaming?
I'm going to the arcade.
CHECK ON HIM!!!
The Baggy Brigade Episode II



Grancky Coo?!
What the fuck?
AAAHHHH!!!!!



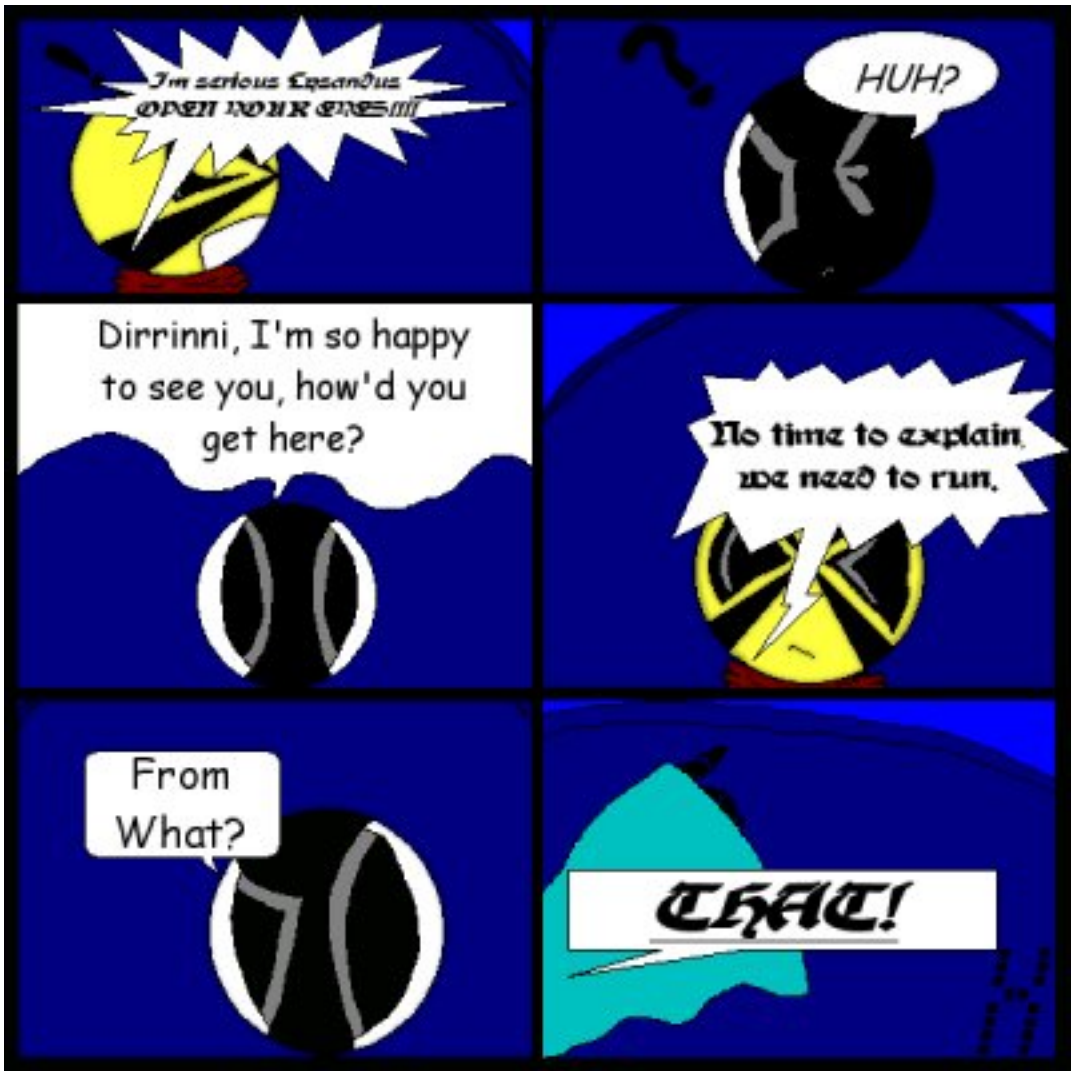
What a strange dream.
I guess I'm still dreaming.
NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO WAKE UP!!!!

GGRRAAUUHH!!
I must not be dreaming.
'Cause I just shit myself.
FUUUUCK!!!!

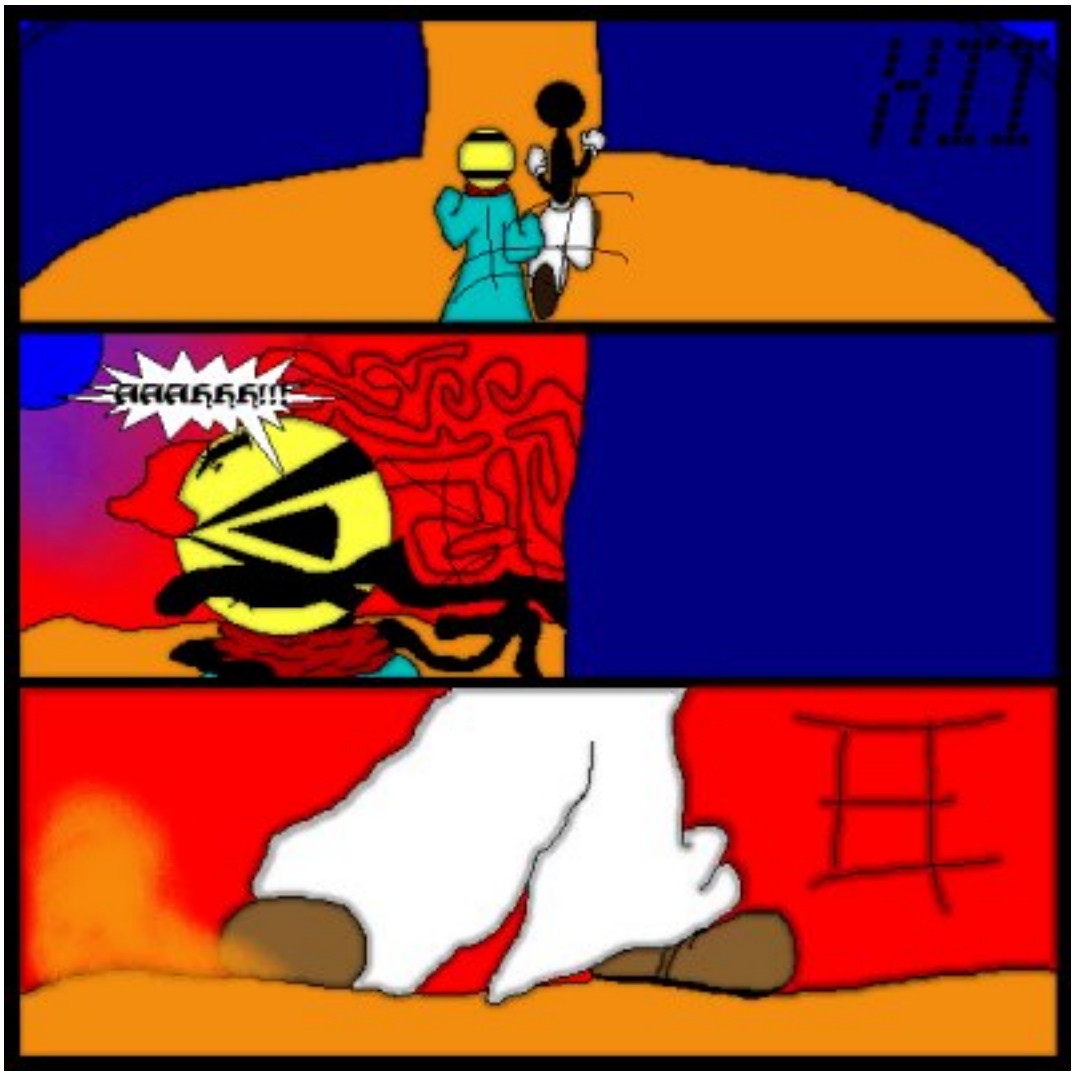
WAKE UP LYSANDUS!!!!
V.I.T.

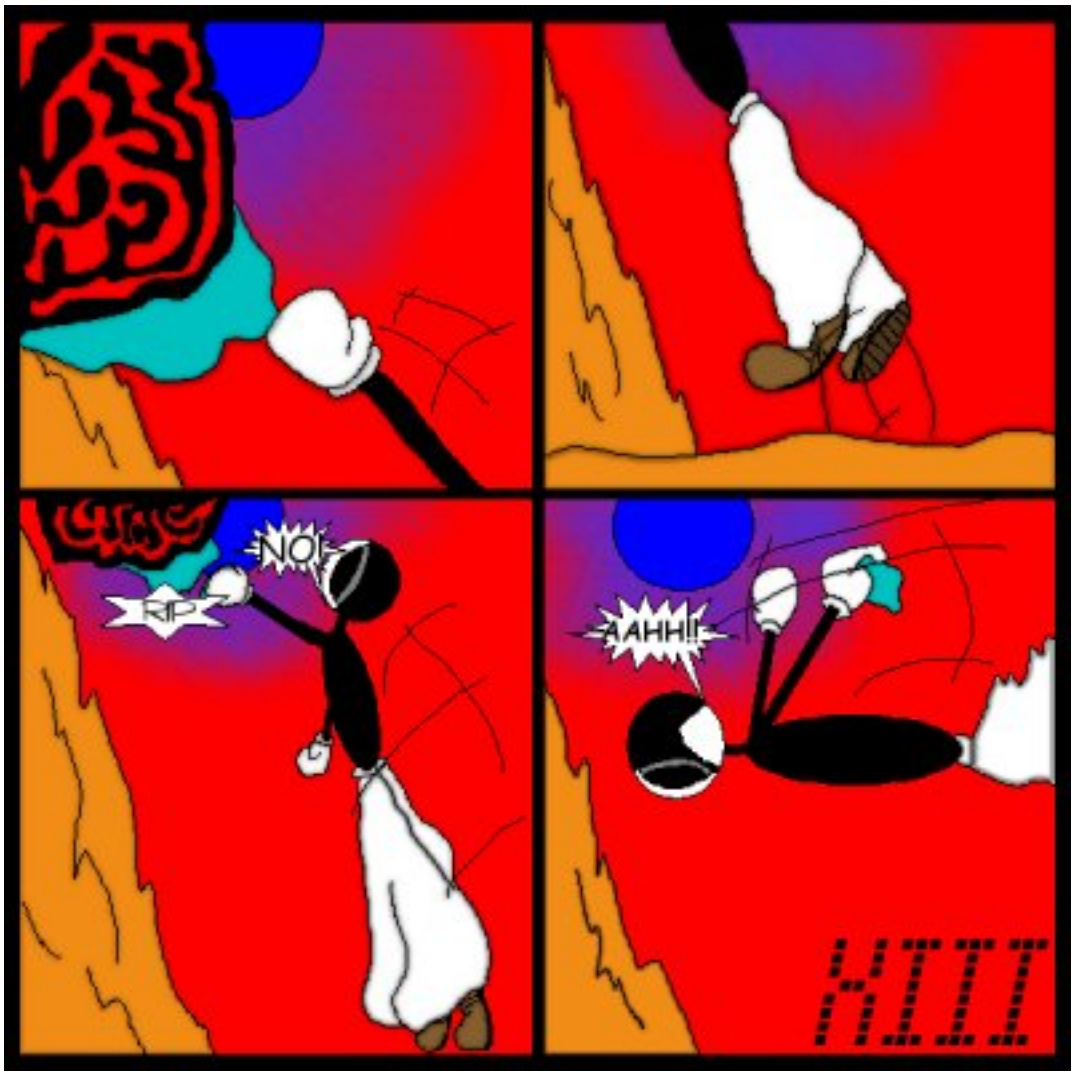
SMACK
YUTT

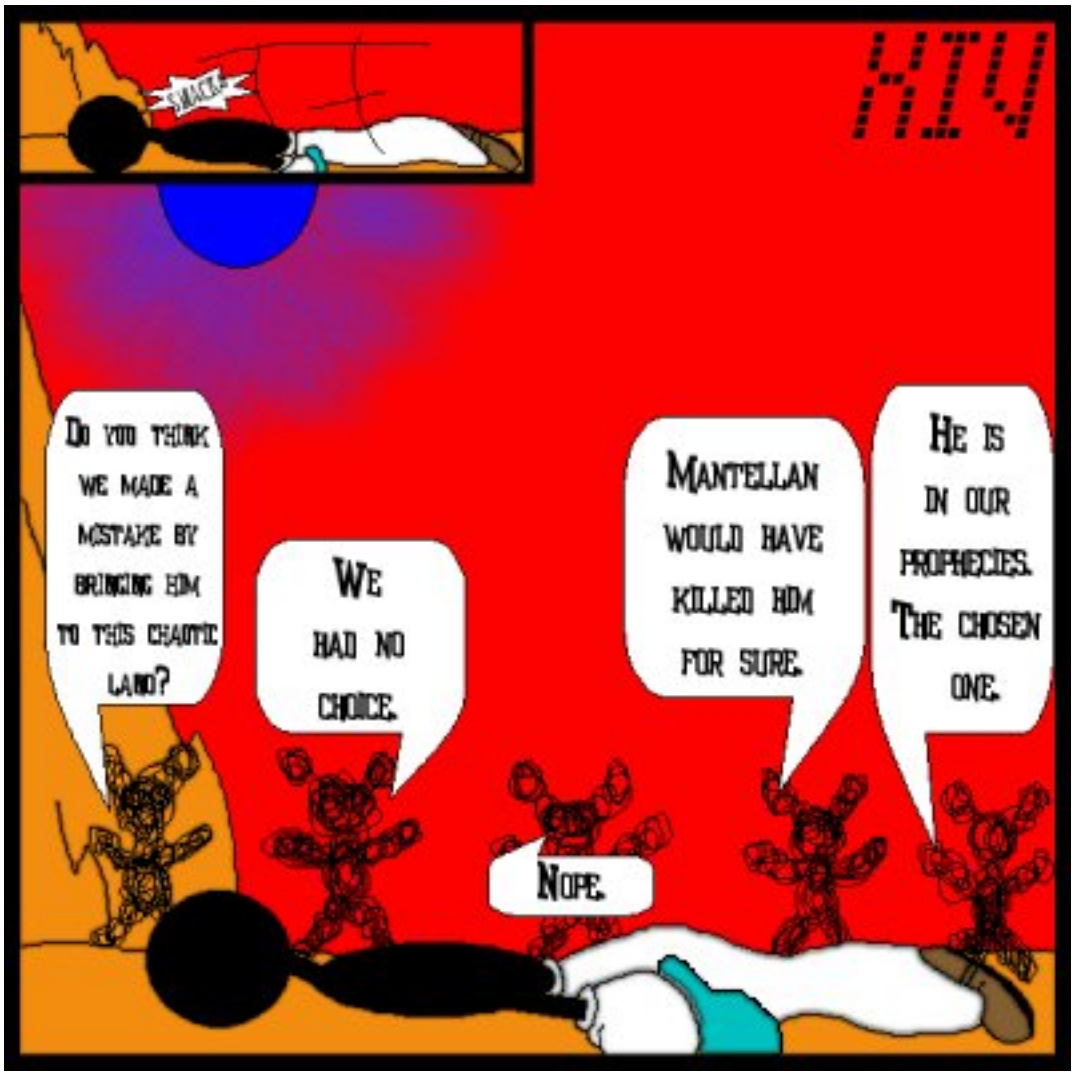
Wake up, we need to leave now!
I'm trying to.
ZAPP!
IH

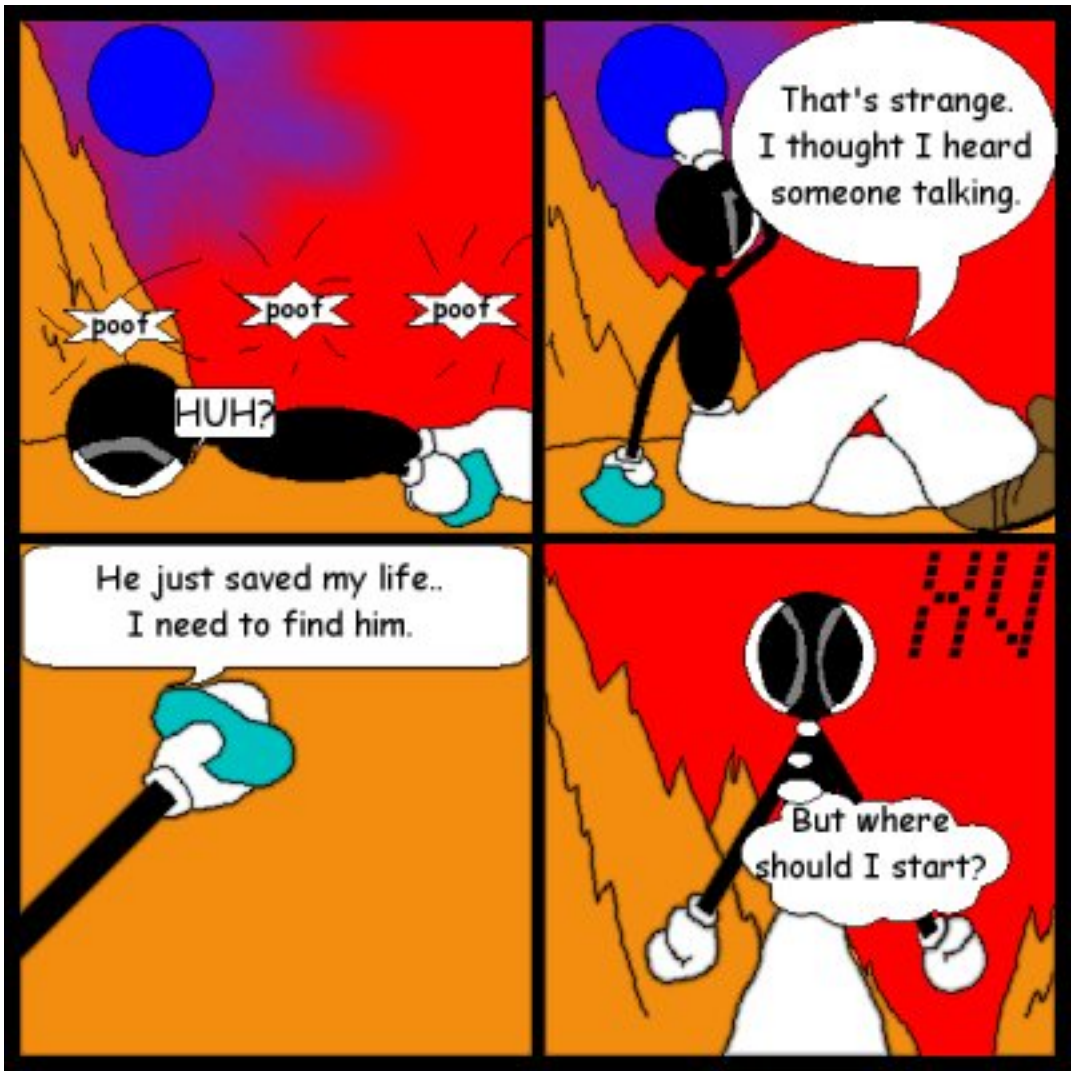

I'm serious Lycanthus
OPEN YOUR EYES!!!
HUH?
Dirrinni, I'm so happy to see you, how'd you get here?
No time to explain, we need to run.
From What?
THAT!

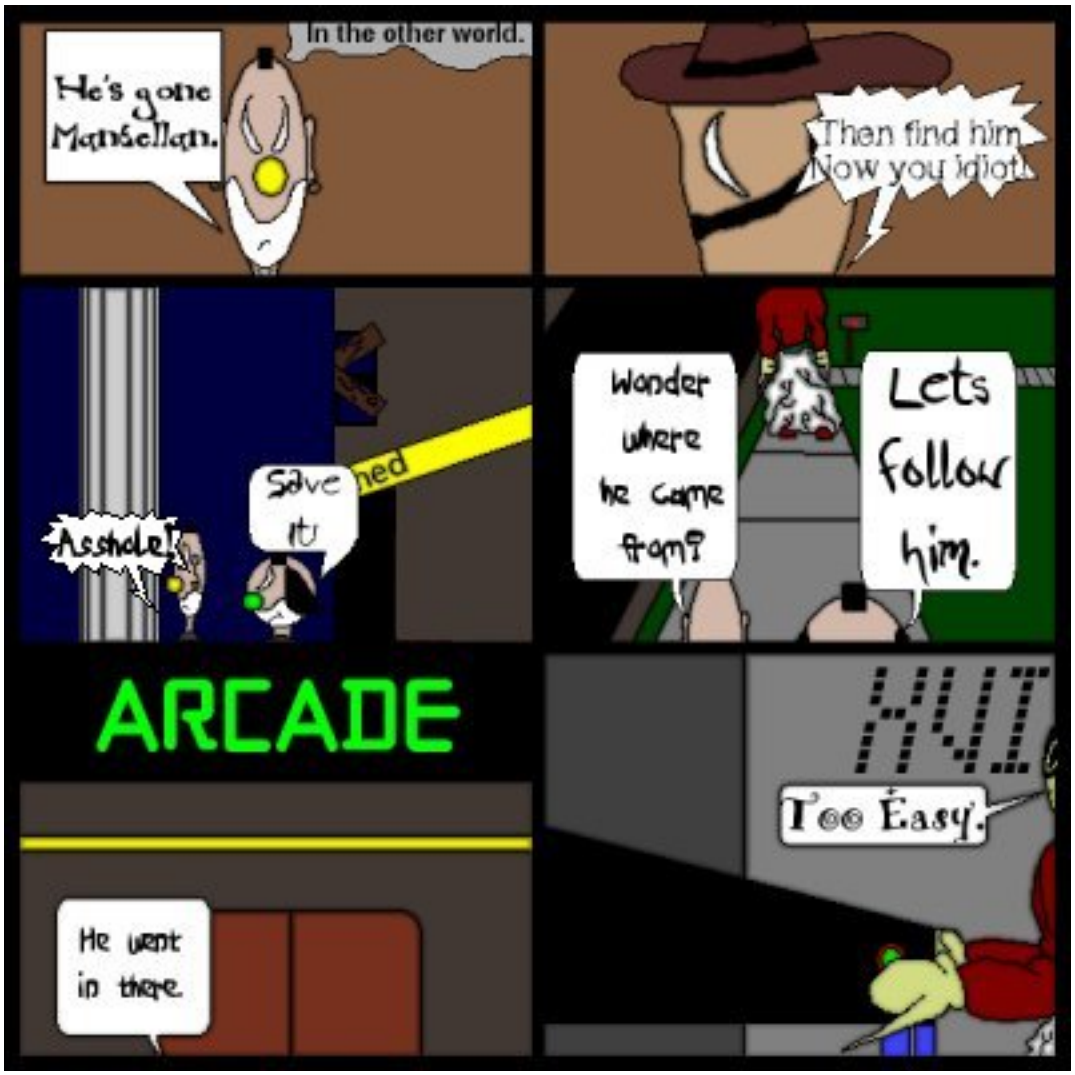
Blingla Porg Nap
Kriply Snork!!!
SHiiiT!!!!


HIT
AAAHHH!!!


NO!
RIP
AAHH!!
H.I.T.T


SMACK!
HTV
Do you think we made a mistake by bringing him to this chaotic land?
We had no choice.
Nope.
Mantellan would have killed him for sure.
He is in our prophecies. The chosen one.


poof
poof
poof
HUH?
That's strange.
I thought I heard
someone talking.
He just saved my life..
I need to find him.
But where
should I start?

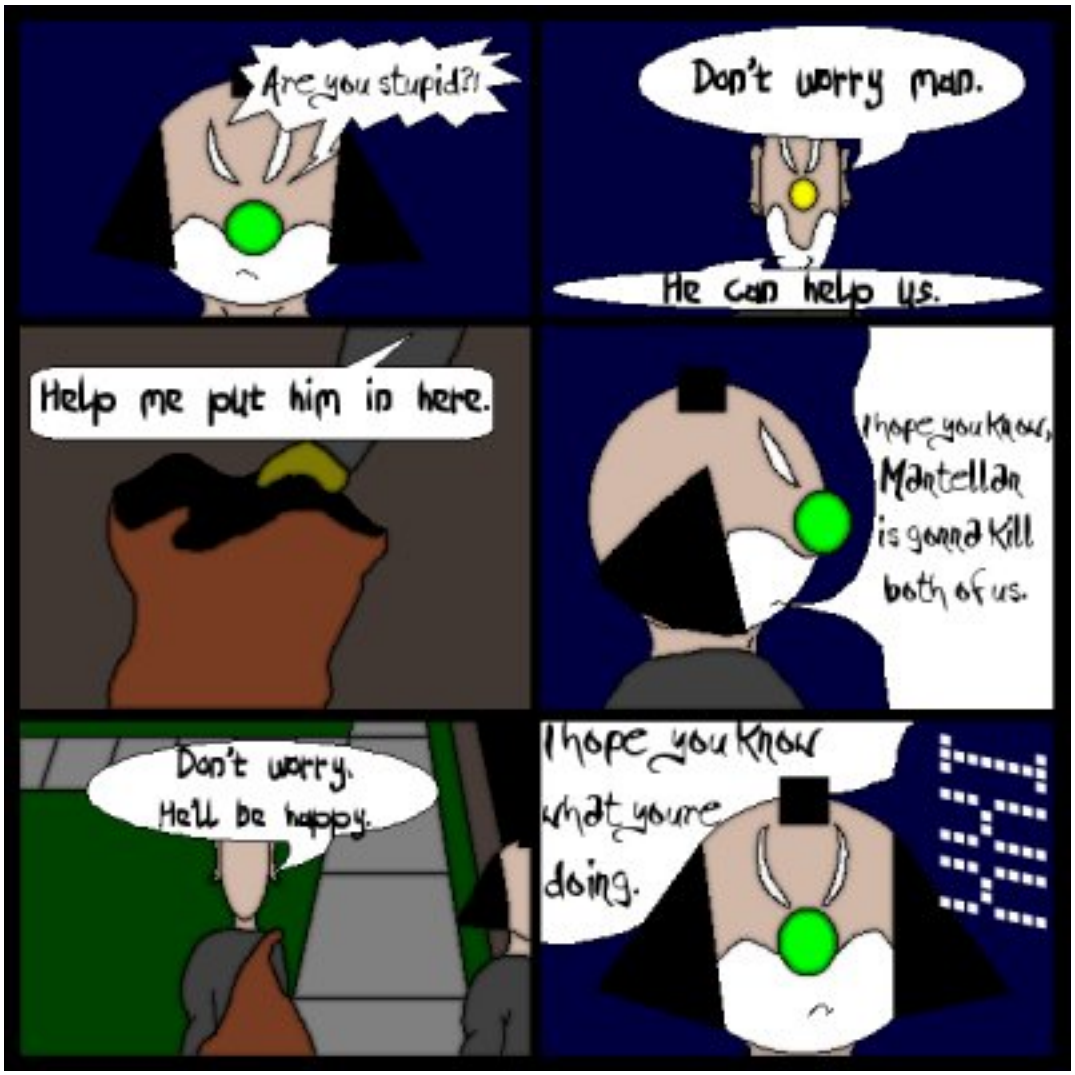

In the other world.
He's gone Mansellan.
Then find him Now you idiot!
Asshole!
Solve it
ned
Wonder where he came from?
Lets follow him.
ARCADE
He went in there
HA!
Too Easy.

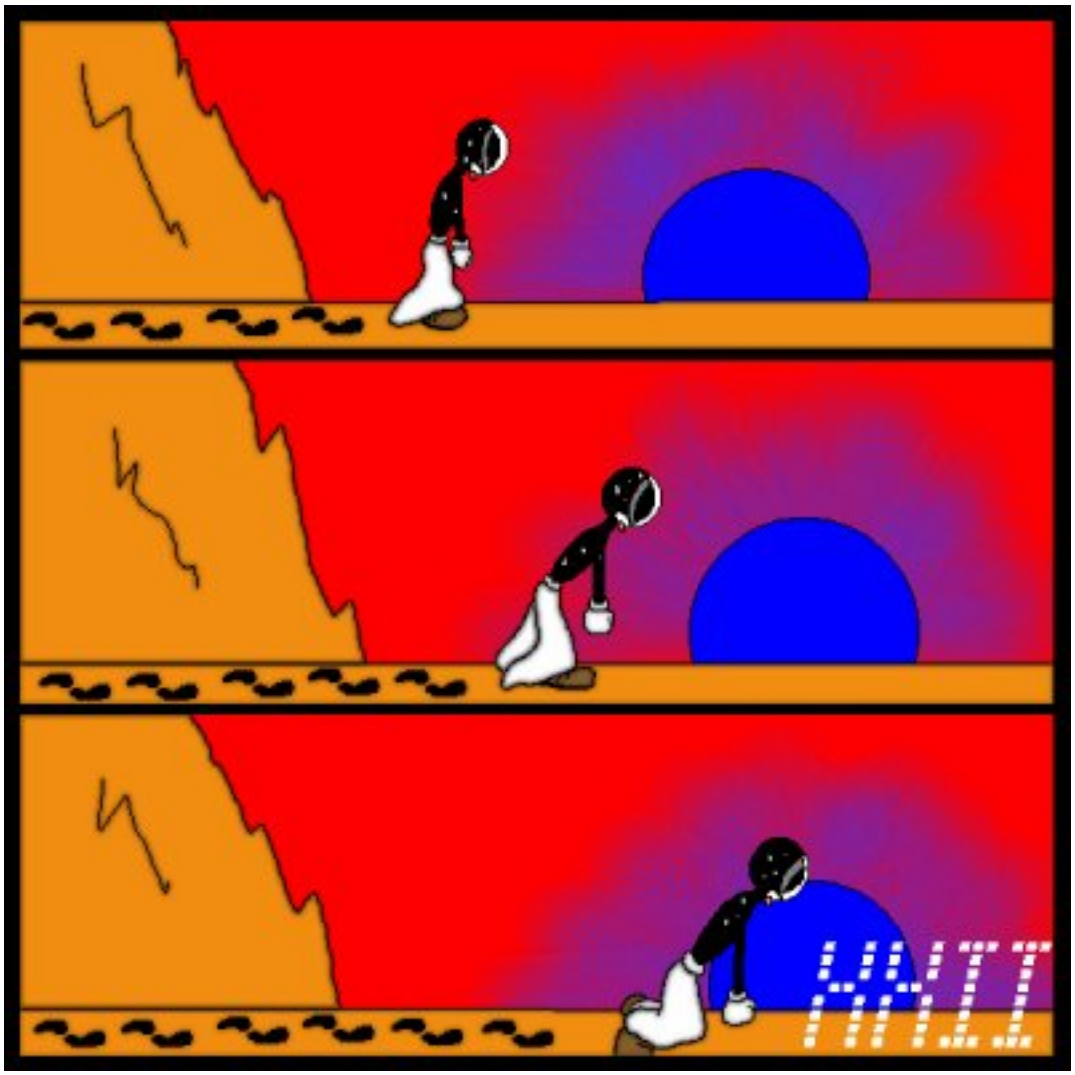
Excuse me
Don't touch me
Do you know Alysandus?
Someone's gonna piss me off.
My brother asked a question.
Hey, I warned you.

You made me lose.
Take it outside boys.

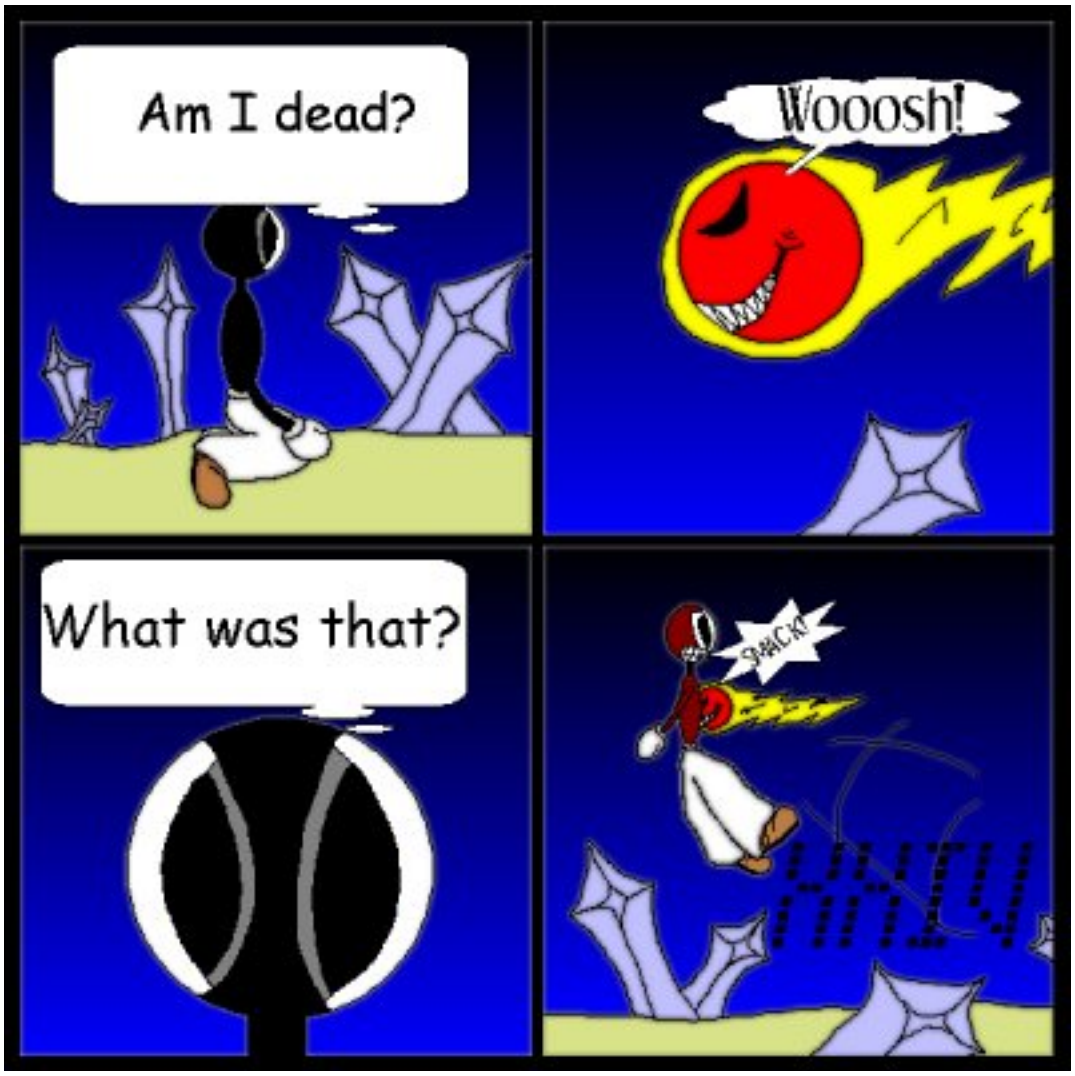
You know I'm about to kill both of you right?
There's no need for a fight. We just want to ask you a question.
Ask away.
Do you know Lysandus?
Fuck Lysandus, Fight me.
STOP IT LEDGENOG!!!
KTH

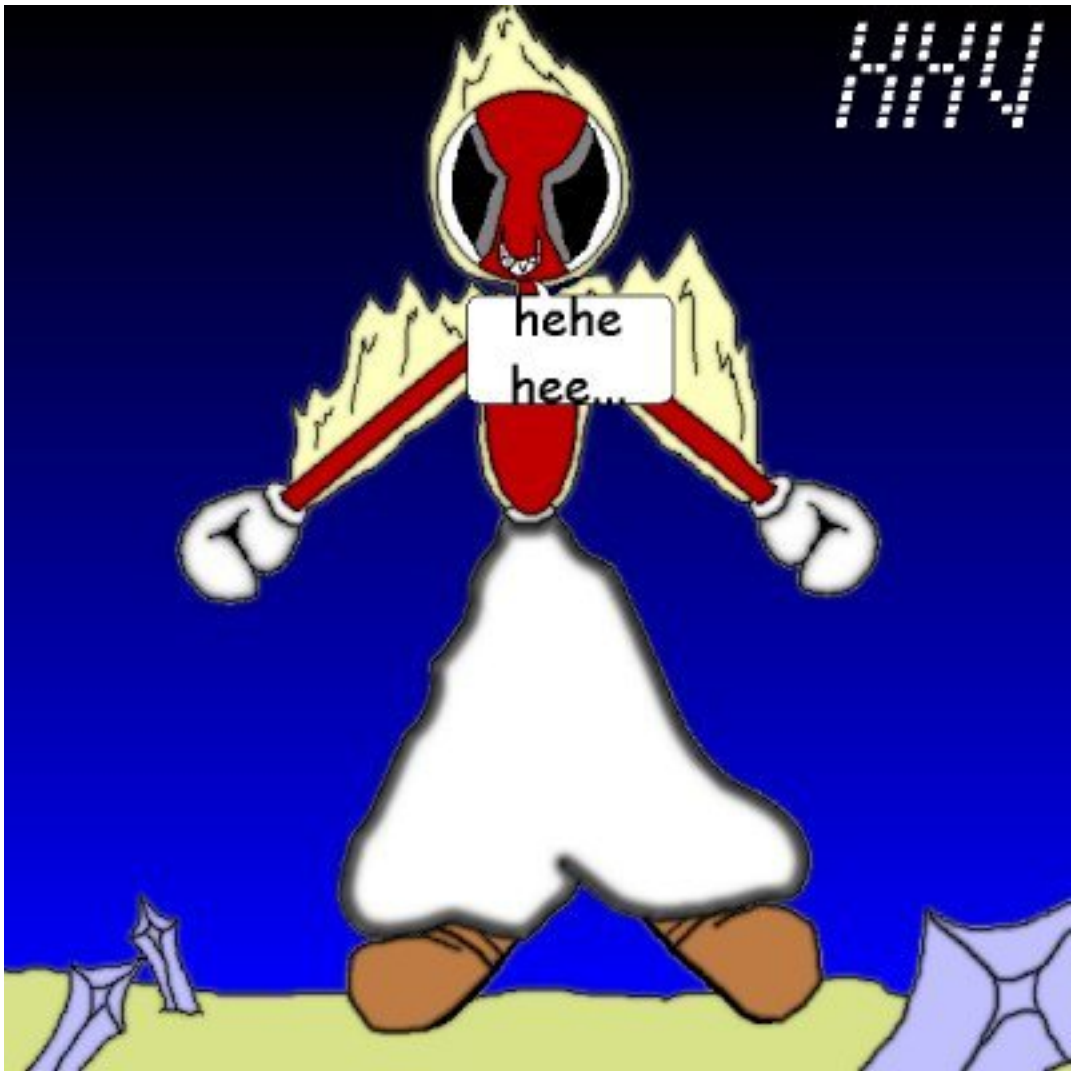
SMACK!!!

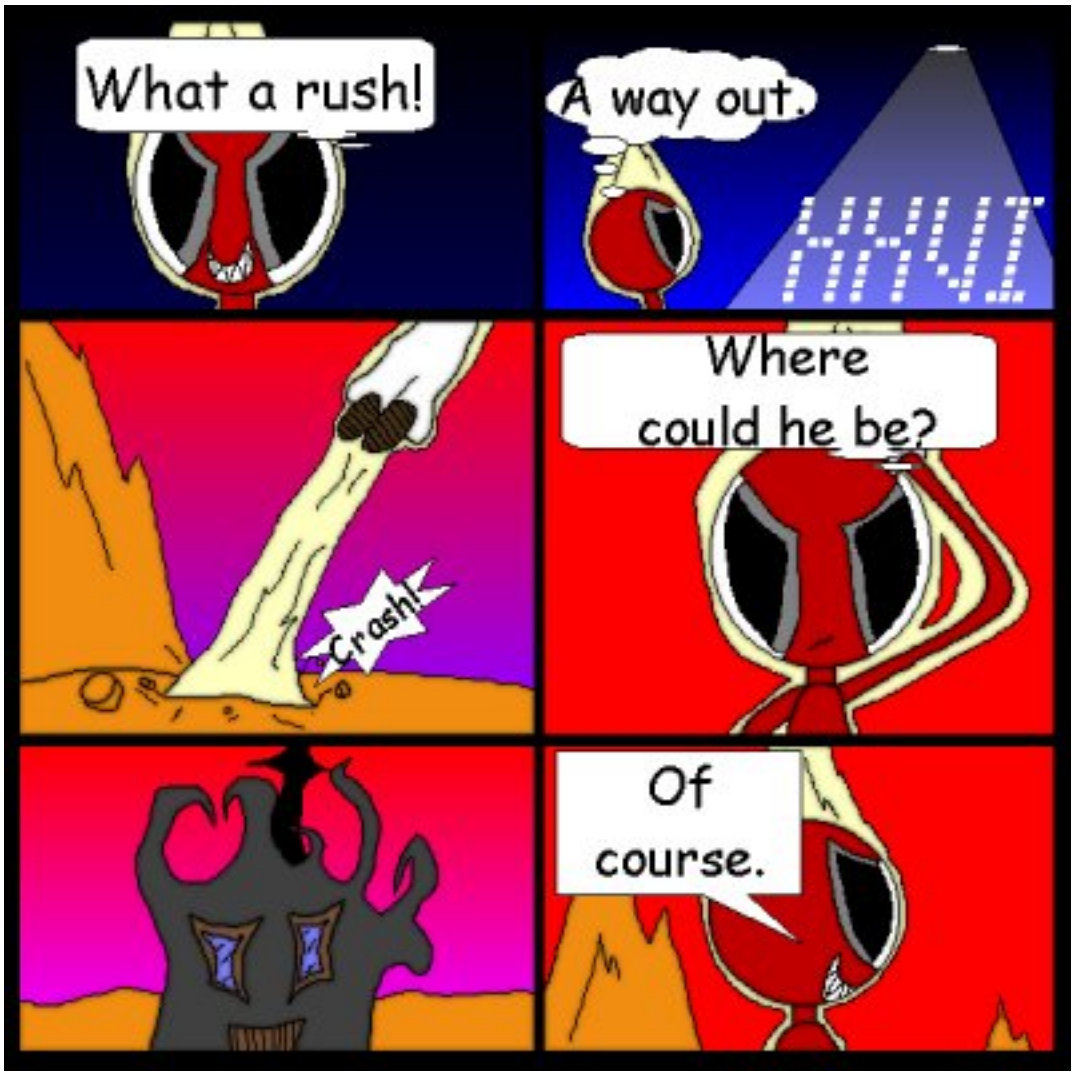

Are you stupid?!
Don't worry man.
He can help us.
Help me put him in here.
I hope you know, Mantellar is gonna kill both of us.
Don't worry. He'll be happy.
I hope you know what you're doing.


WAIT

Am I sinking?
I guess I'm dead,
I have no strength left.
HAITI


Am I dead?
Wooosh!
What was that?
SMACK!
HA!


HAHA
hehe
hee...

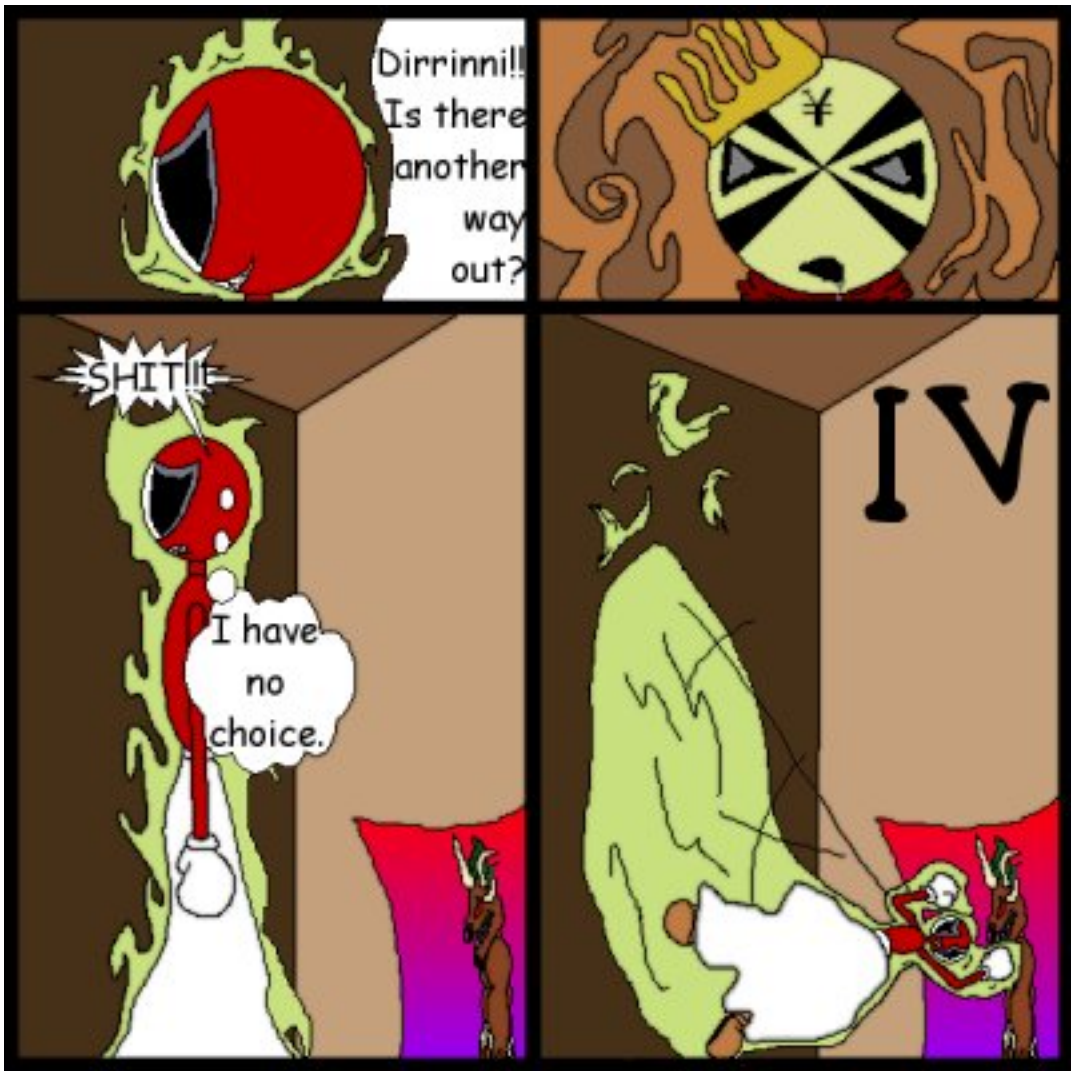

What a rush!
A way out.
EXIT
Crash!
Where could he be?
Of course.

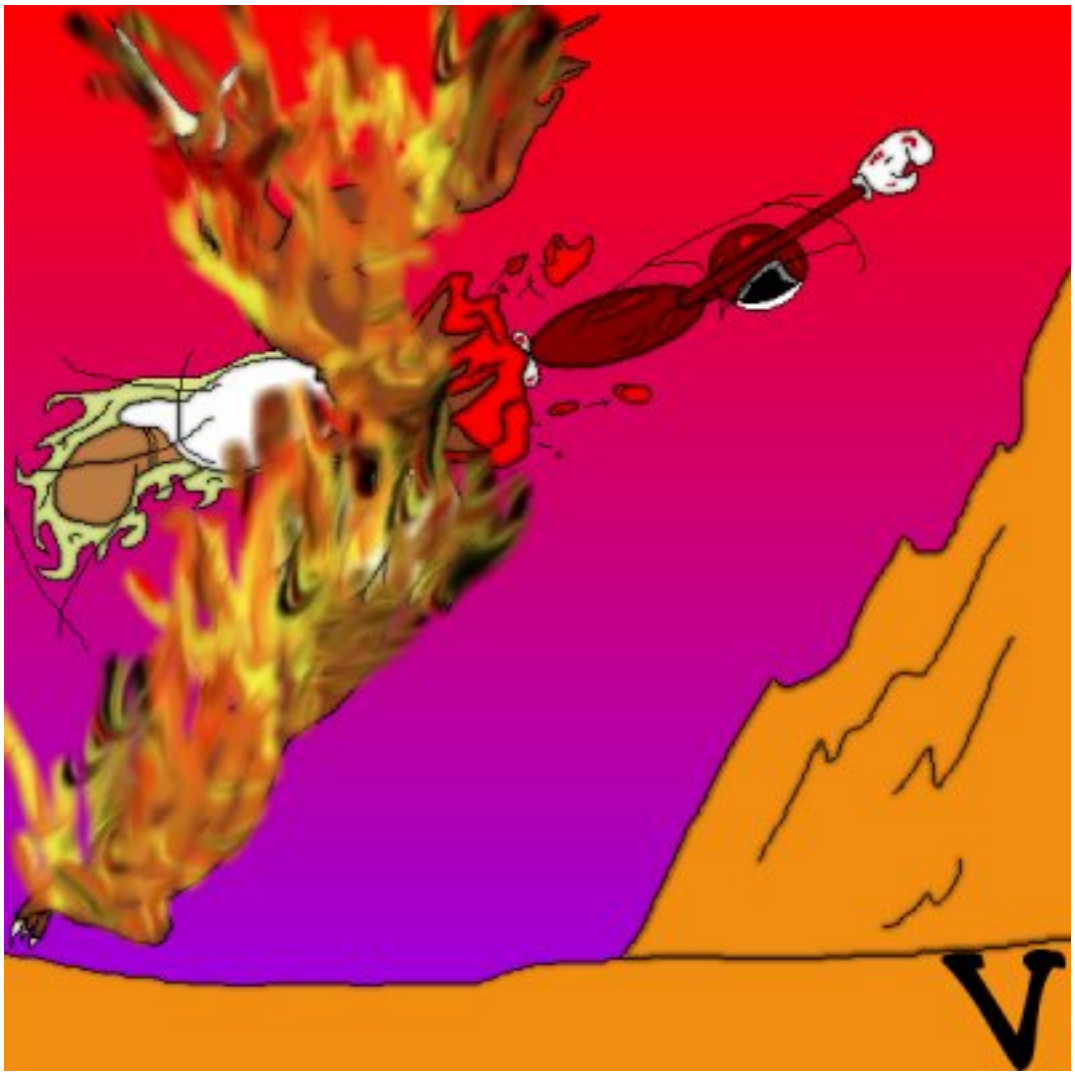
Here I come Dirrinni!!
AAUII
To be continued....

BAGGY BRIGADE: EPISODE 3

Lysandus?
II

WHERE WERE YOU. AND WHY ARE YOU RED NOW?
I don't know, but if feals fucking great.
So..., are you a king now?
YEA. I THINK IT'S BECAUSE I RESTRAINED THE BEAST.
Well you sure fucked up then didn't you.
?
Roaar!!!!
III


Dirrinni!! Is there another way out?
SHIT!!
I have no choice.
IV


V

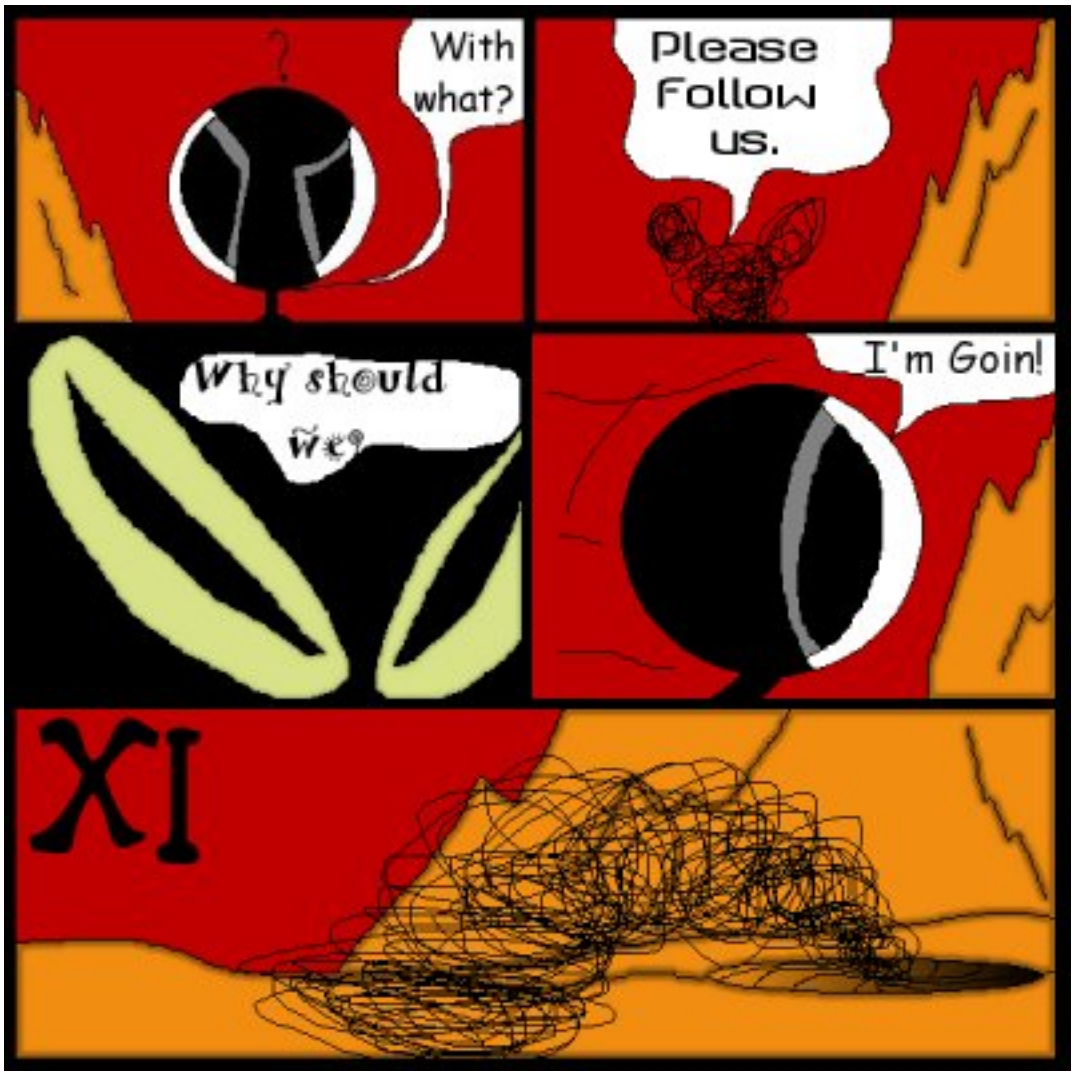
VI
SMACK!
YOU SURE FUC.....
SHUTTUP!!!!

YOU ARE USELESS.
THROW HIM DOWN THERE WITH THE OTHER TWO.
Two?!
HEHE... YOU KNOW WHAT I MEANT.
VII
?

?
VIII
SNAT RINK!!!!!!
What the hell is going on here?

Wh..h..wh... who are you?
YOU'RE STUPID LYSANDUS.
Hehe, tell me about it.
Orsidium? How'd you get here?
Then
IX

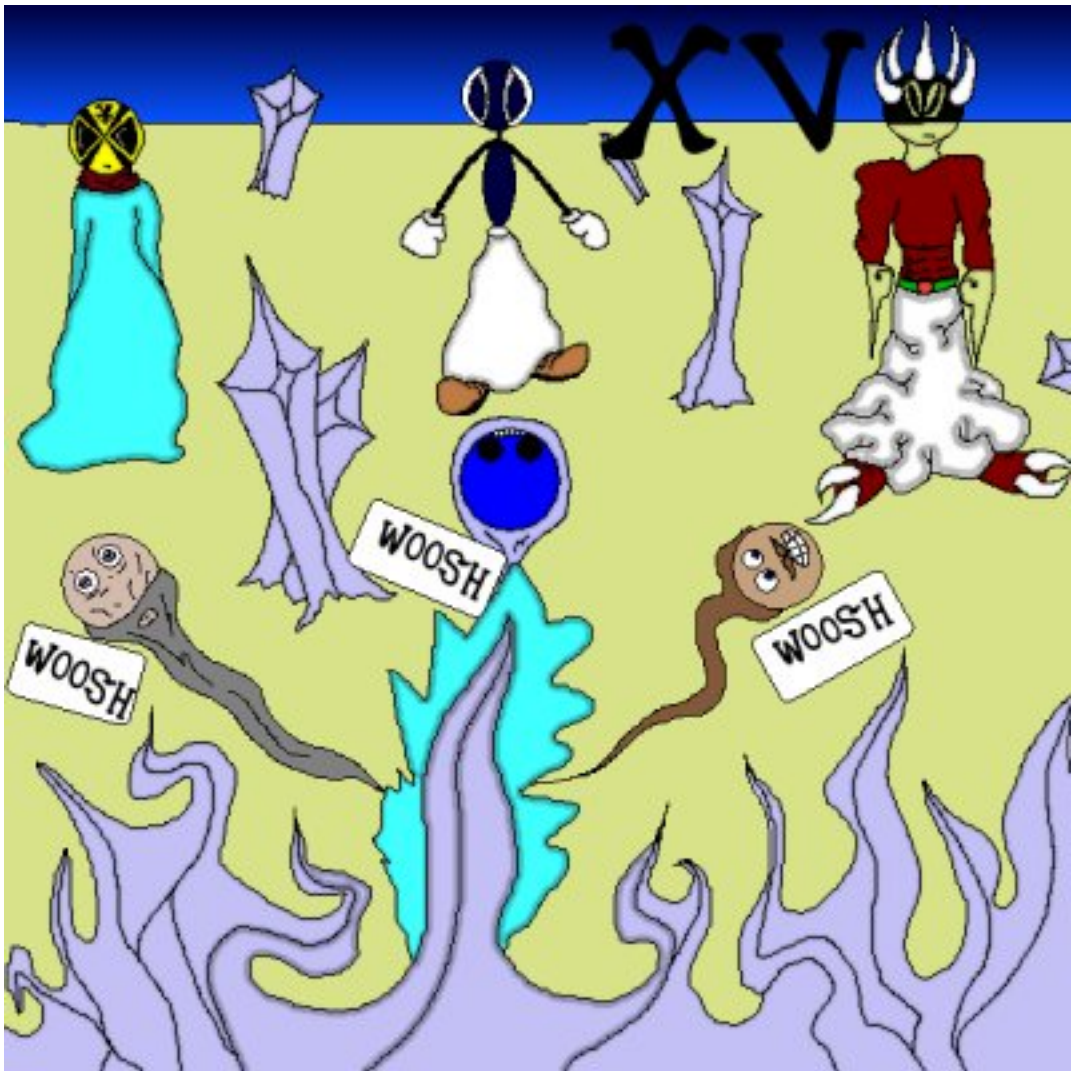
Welcome to Aspimiria travellors. We are the Gallows for those of you who don't know. We brought you here because we need your help.
X


With what?
Please Follow us.
Why should We?
I'm Goin!
XI

XII
Trust us
LYSANDUS?
What are you doing?
Follow!

Fuck that, We're stayin here.
DiReINNi!!!
Fuck
XIII

SMACK
What is this place?
This is where I got my powers.
This is Ghester's Tomb.
XIV

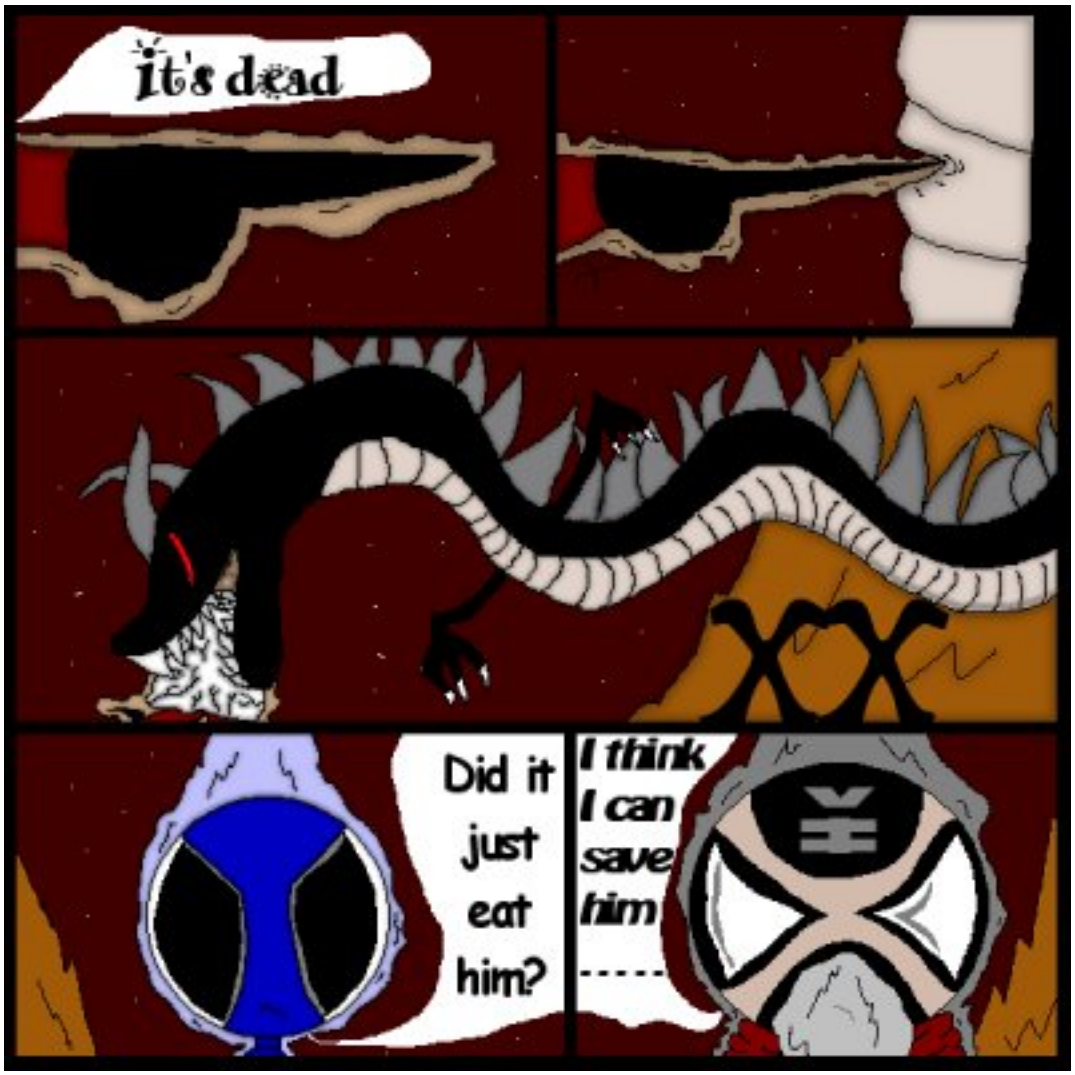

XV
WOOSH
WOOSH
WOOSH

XVI

This XVII
is
Awesome.

XVIII
SLAM
Why is it dark suddenly?
Good Question
Somethings coming

What is it?
Powerful
Let's kill it
Be Careful!
XIX

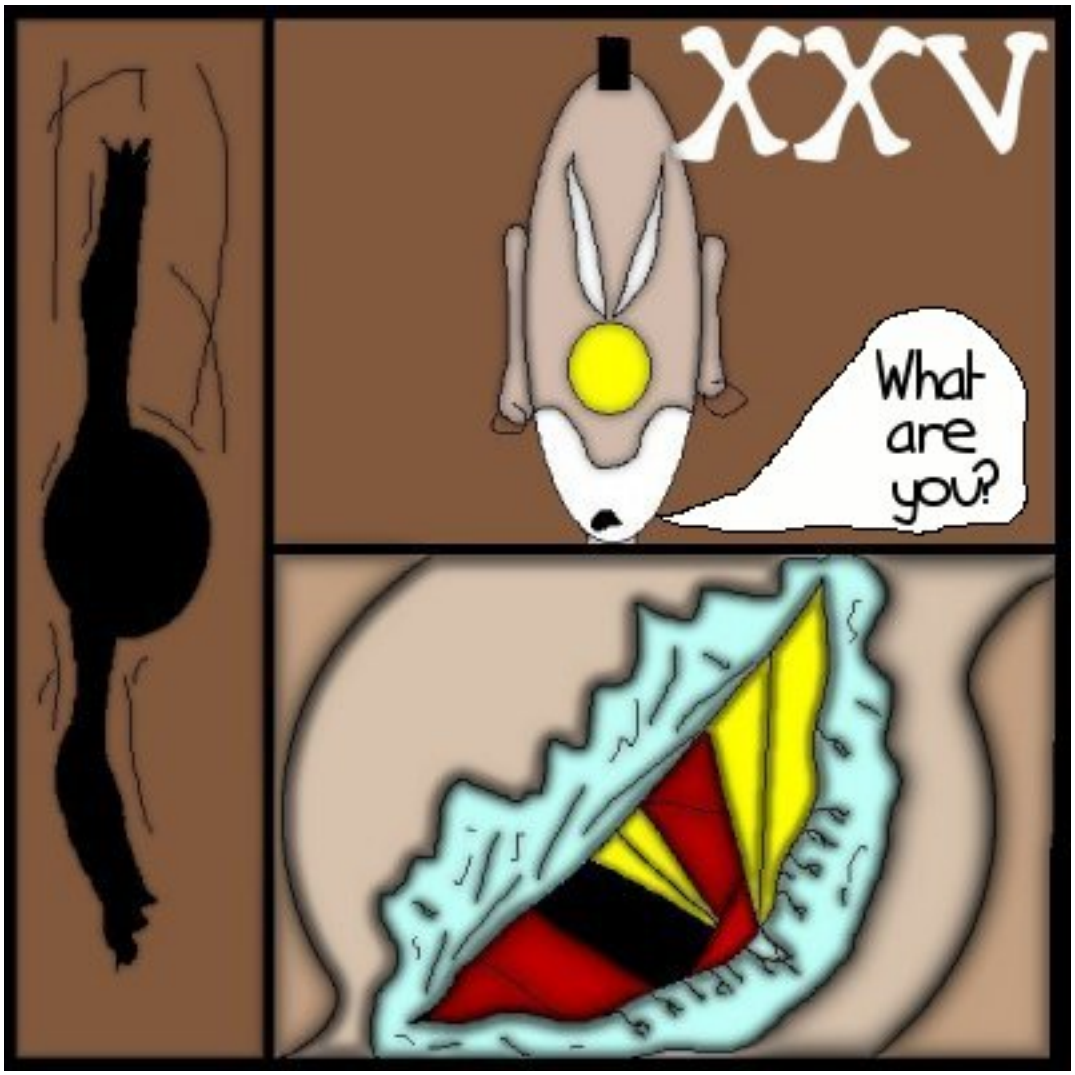

it's dead
Did it just eat him?
I think I can save him

XXI

BURP
Fuck
all that!
I'm Out
XXII

Back in Dussyllia
Not Good.....!
XXIII
He's
not down
there Mantellan
Is that so?
It wasn't
in there
Mantellan
THE MONEY"S
GONE ???!!!!

Why are you smiling?
your plans are ruined!
BECAUSE I KNEW YOU WERE BAD NEWS FROM THE BEGINNING.
NOOOO!!!!
BASTARD!!!!
THWAP!!!!
XXIV


XXV
What are you?

XXVI
THE LAST THING YOU'LL EVER SEE.

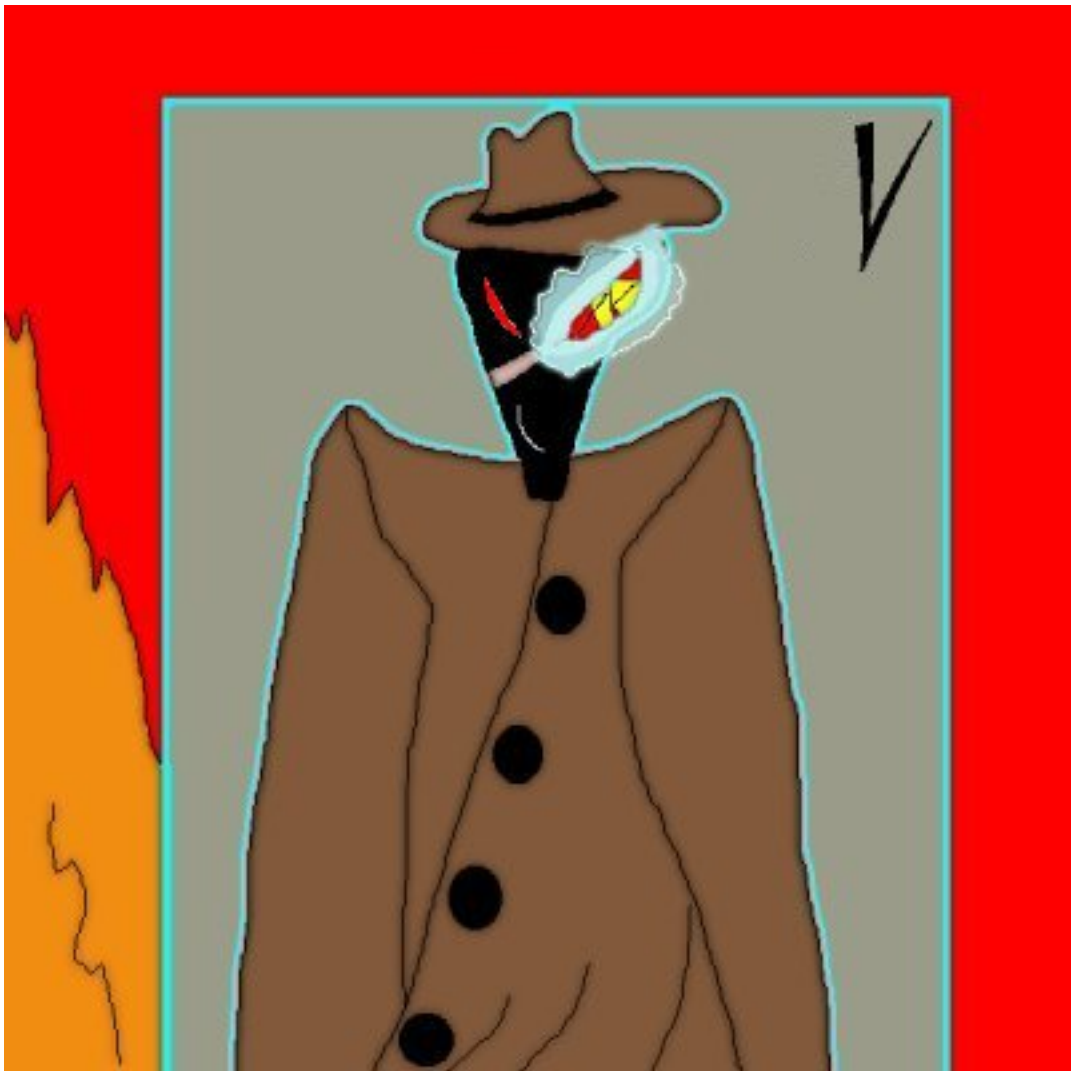
Useless!
It's time. All gems will soon be mine.
Our brothers are aiding the boys.
hahahaha
So what?
but what about the prophecies?
They're fake
XXVII

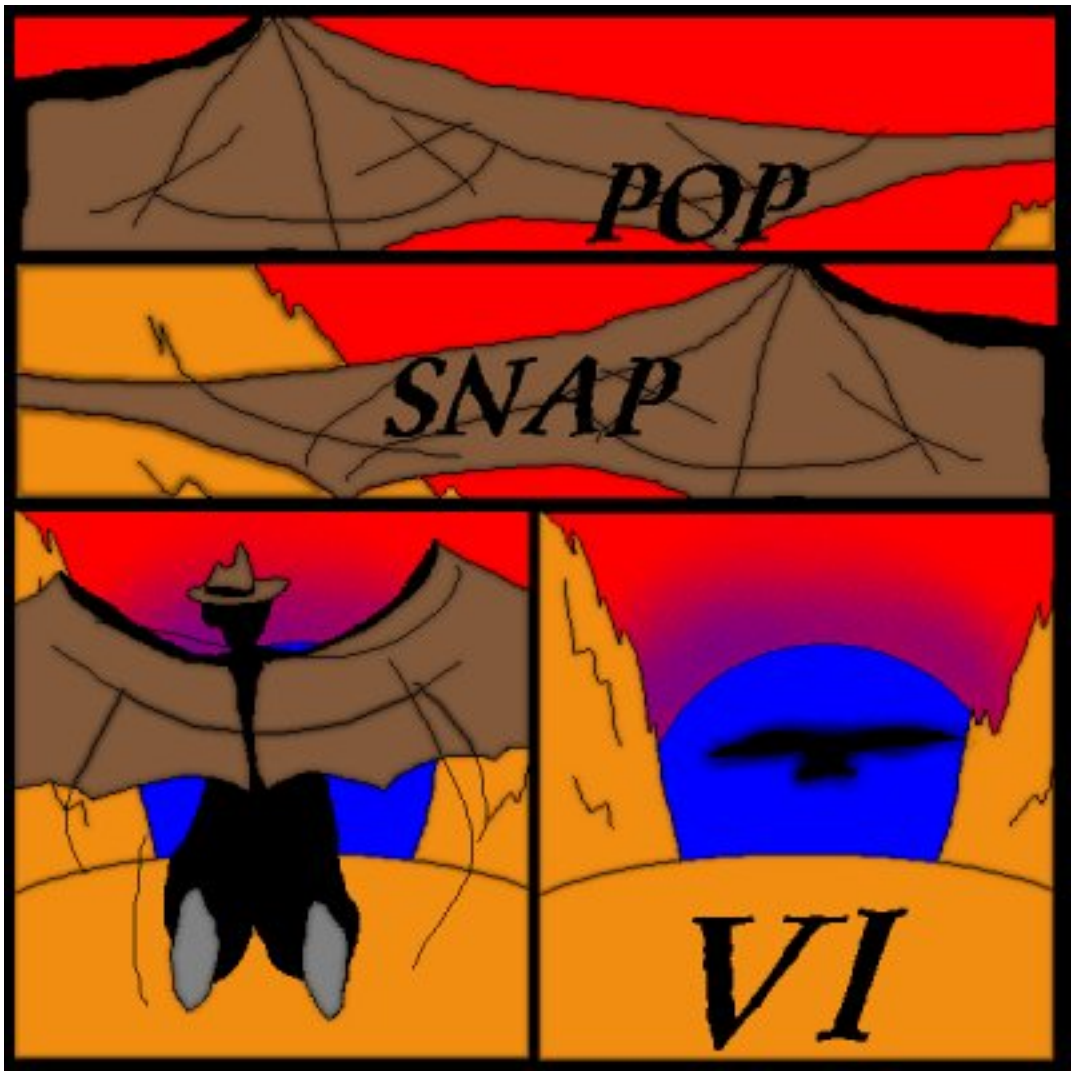
XXVIII
Those little shits can't stop me.
TO BE CONTINUED....

EPISODE 4
AWAKEN
GARMANI
BROTHERS

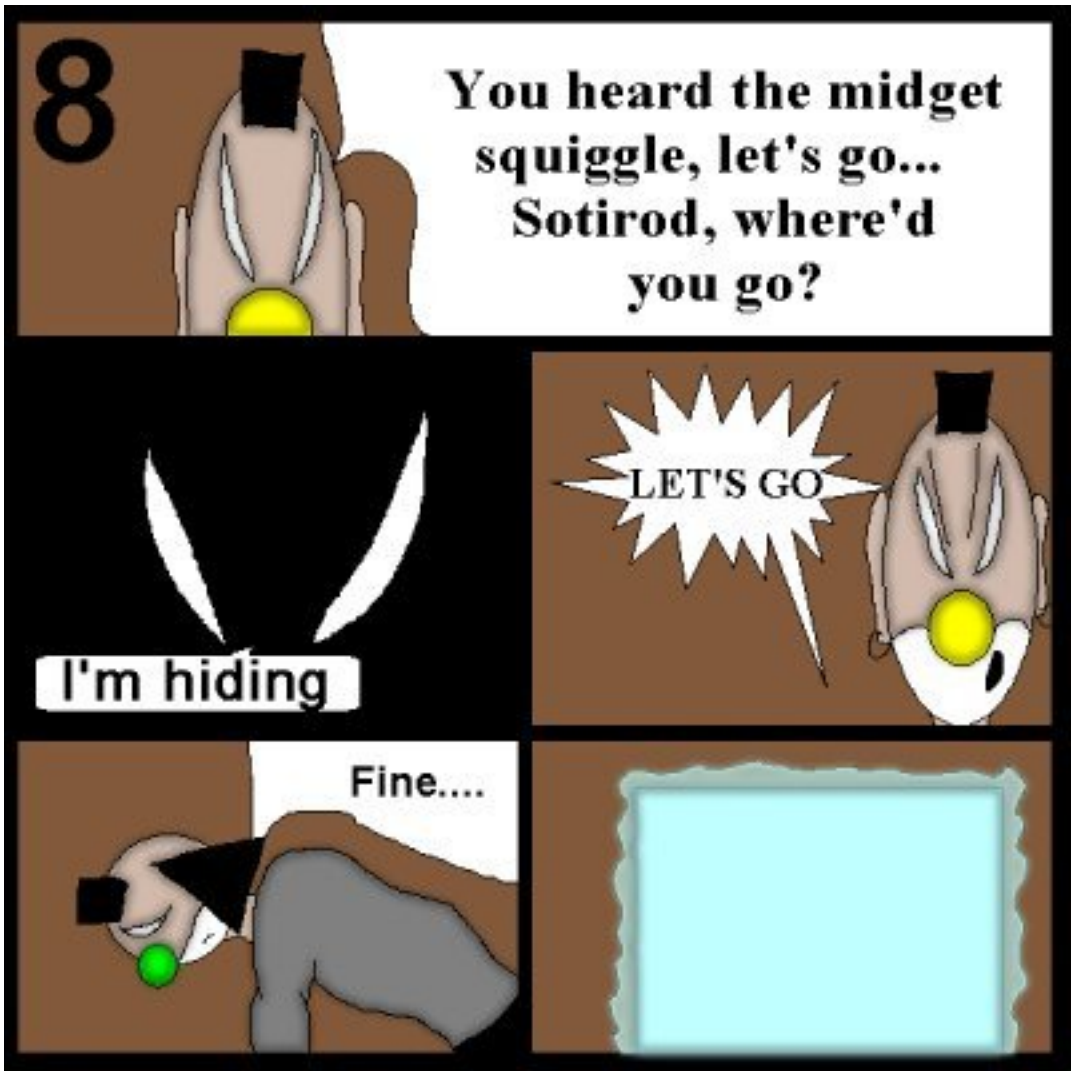
Uhg..... uh..
wh.....
what?
Do you
hear that?
HA
HAHAHA
HAHAHA
hahaha
hahaha
hahaha
Is that Mantellan?
ii
yes

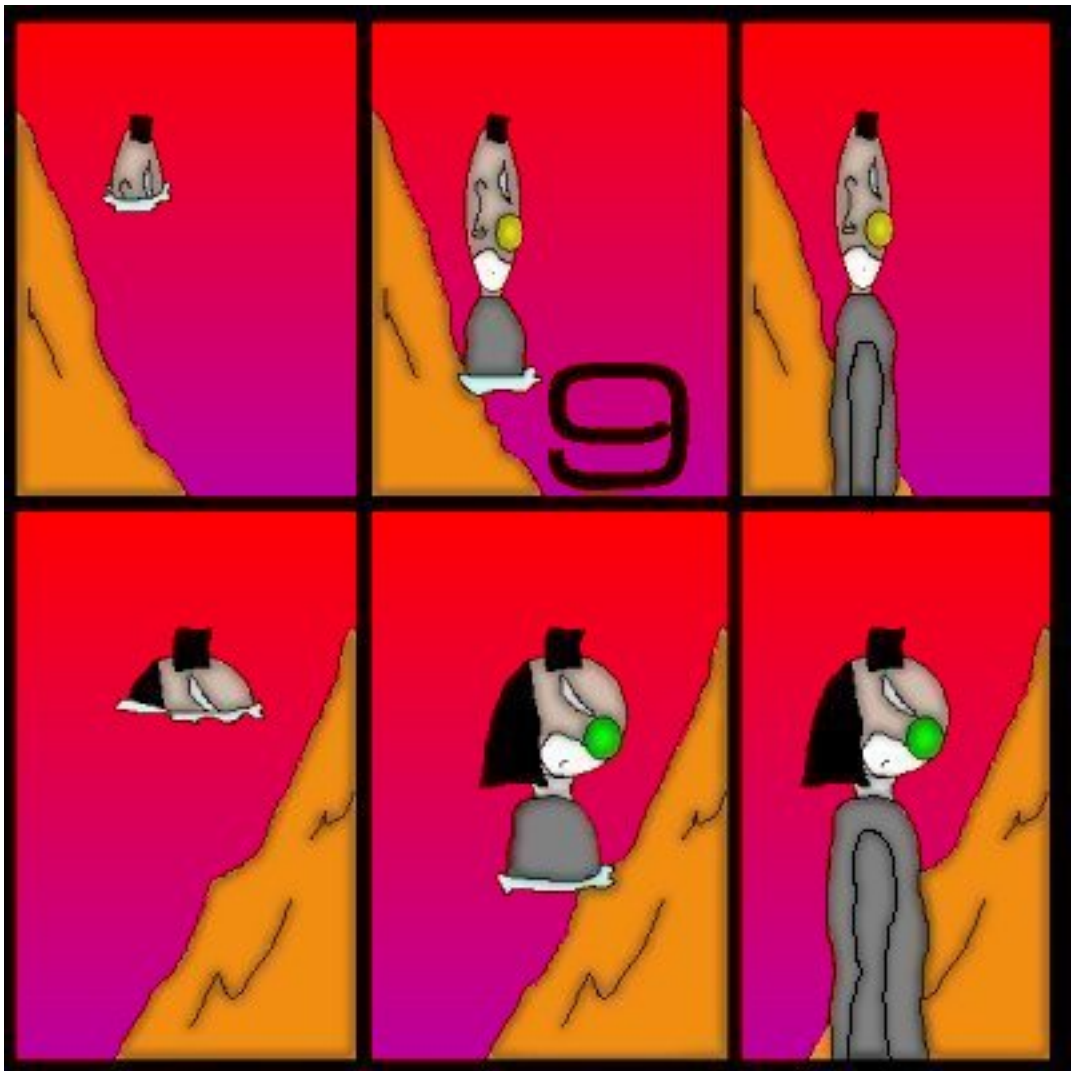
3
POOF
Now I know I've lost my mind.
HAHAHA
Dude you gotta see this.
No, I gotta take a little nap.

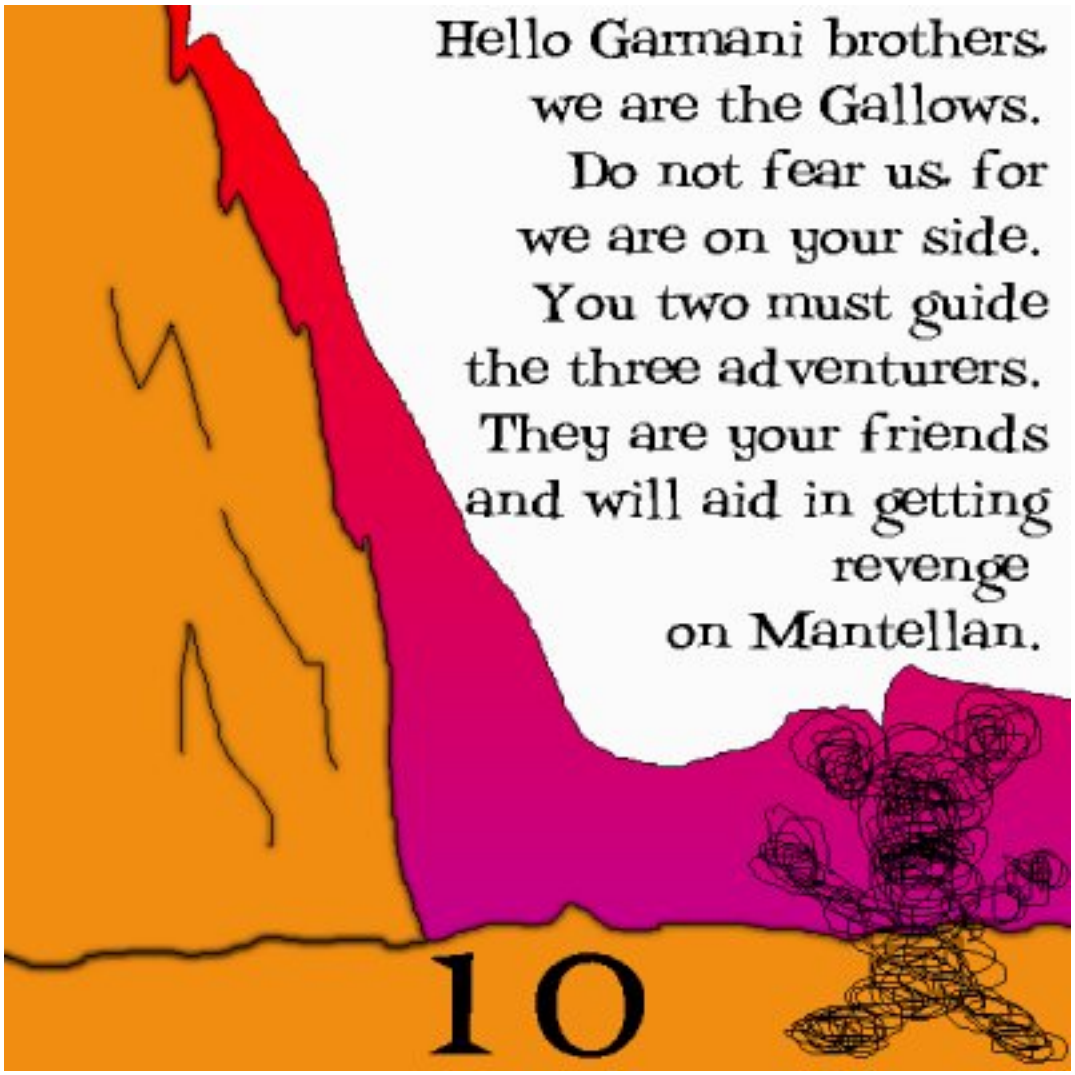

V

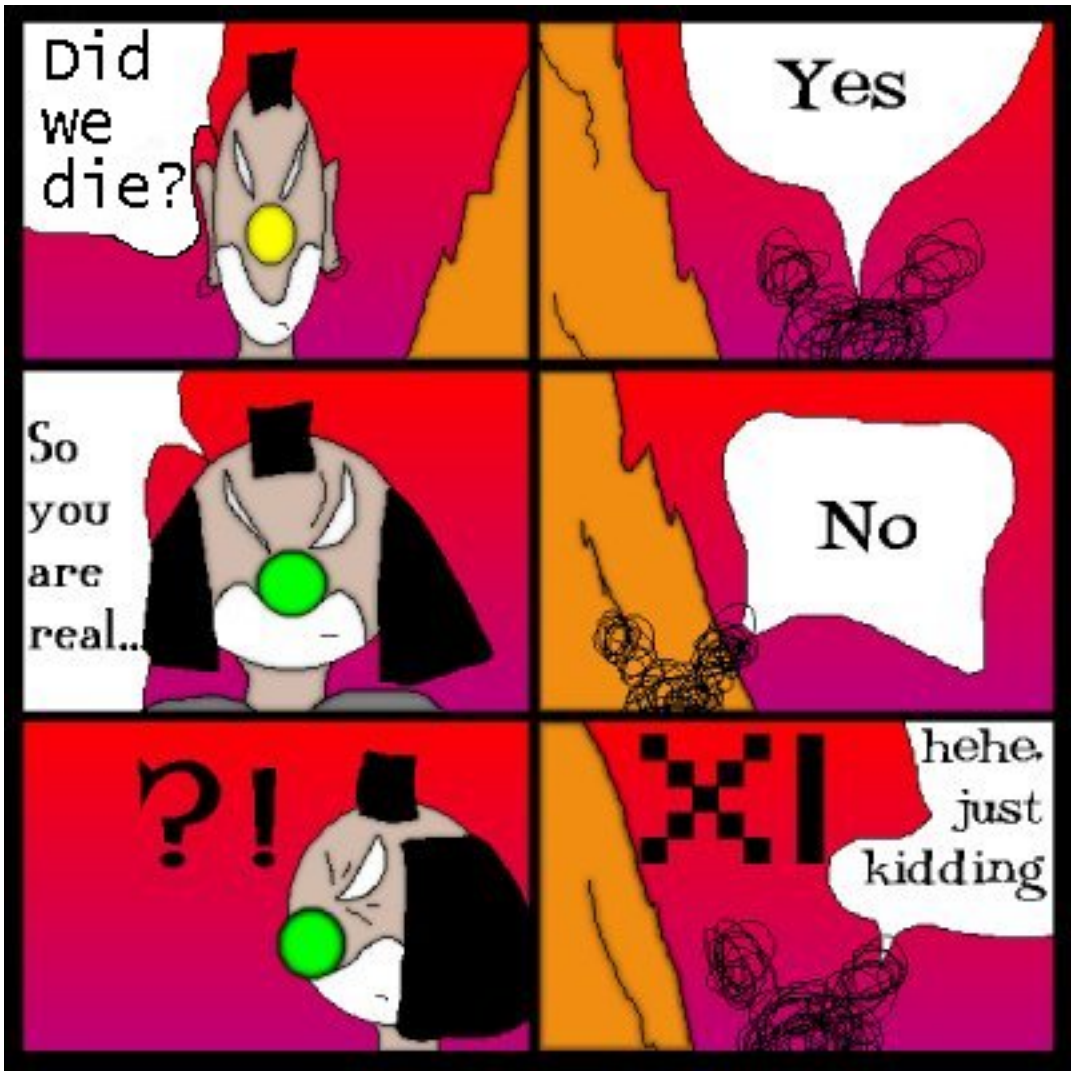

POP
SNAP
VI

We need to follow him
Can I stay here?
No, you both must go through the gateway
VII
And what the hell are you?
FOLLOW MANTELLAN
Poof


8
You heard the midget squiggle, let's go... Sotirod, where'd you go?
I'm hiding
LET'S GO
Fine....


9


Hello Garmani brothers.
we are the Gallows.
Do not fear us. for
we are on your side.
You two must guide
the three adventurers.
They are your friends
and will aid in getting
revenge
on Mantellan.
10

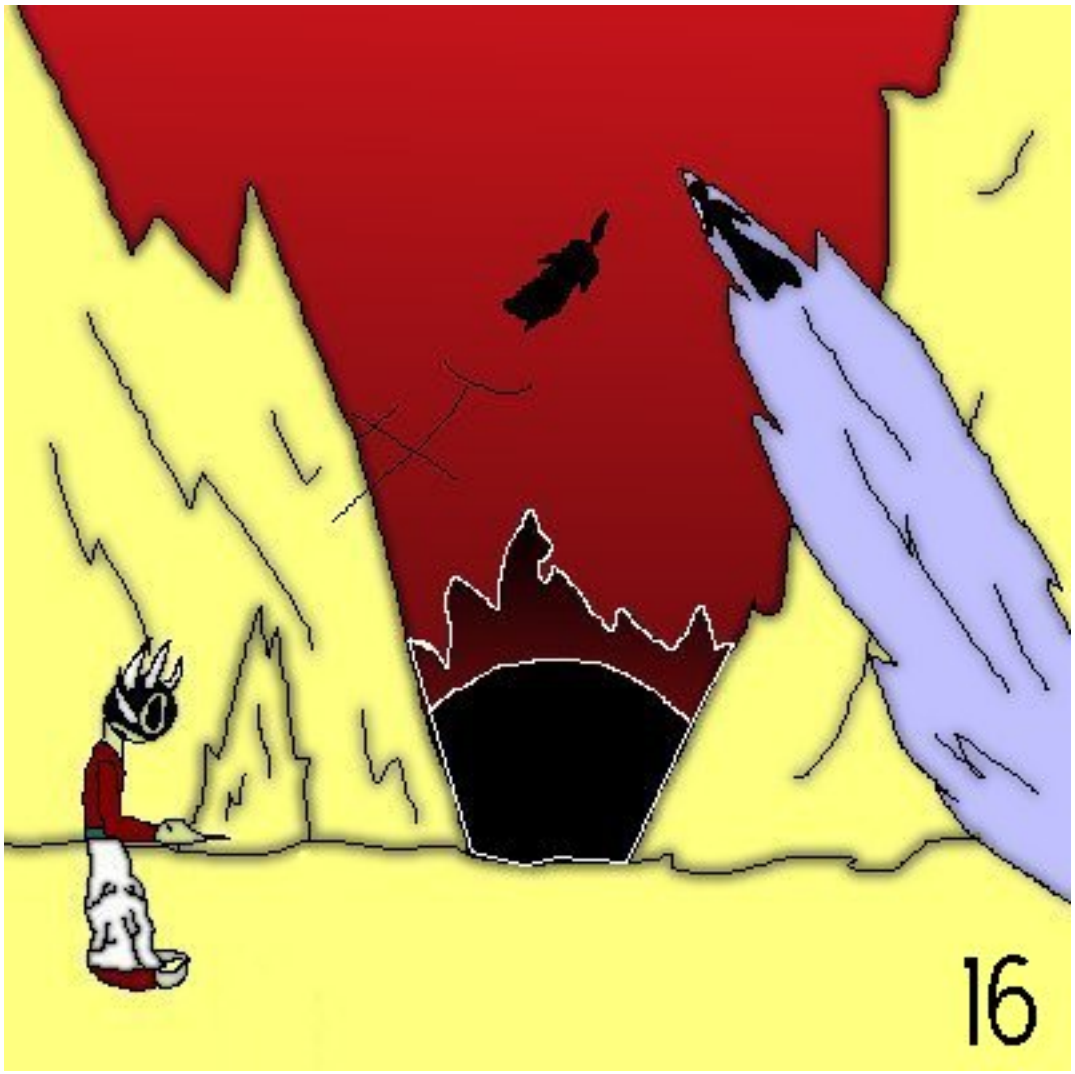

Did we die?
Yes
So you are real...
No
?!
hehe. just kidding

AAAHHH!!!!
HLP!!! HLP!!!
What Now?!
It's them
1 2

XIII

It's them.
14

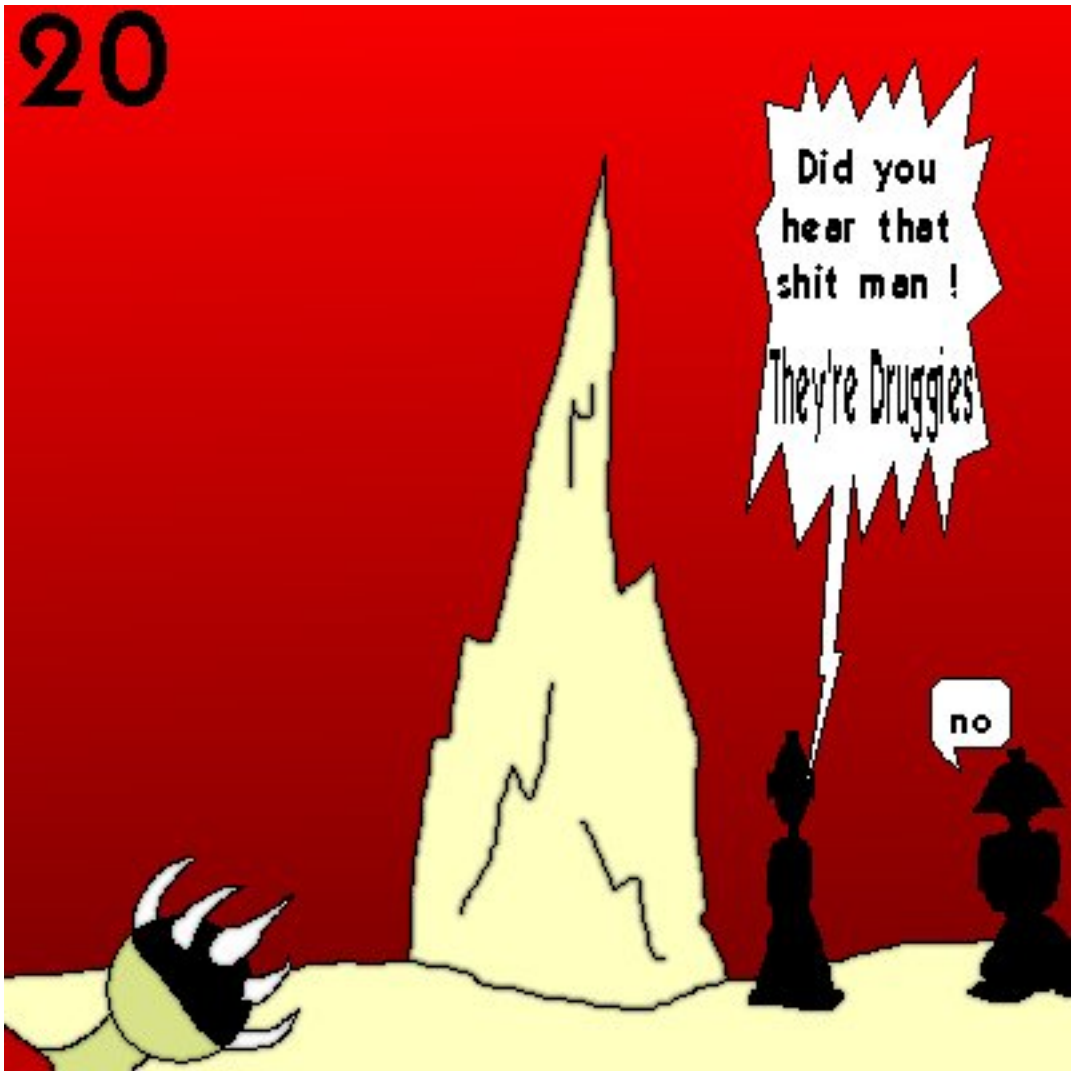
15
Those are the fuckers that jumped me
NO DUUDE!!!
Choke
throw


16

What the hell is wrong with this place? It keeps changing color.
The blue sun of Aspimiria has a dark side that only shows itself every 500 years. Because of an unbalance in time, we have just lost 150 years.
The unbalance is caused by the struggle for power inside the Gifts of the Gallows. The dark side is getting stronger as we speak.
17

Hey squiggle fucked
WHAT THE HELL
HAPPENED TO MY
POWERS.
Your powers have drawbacks. Because of the unbalance, the elementos can only be used if you do not harm anyone.
dude!
18

WHY DIDN'T I HURT THAT DRAGON?
You are too weak to harm the taxis of Aspimiria.
TAXIS!!!??
Similar to your taxis, only they suck blood for payment.
I thought I fealt drunk !
hehe, ya. And I thought it was just all that magical shit.
19


20
Did you hear that shit man !
They're Druggies
no

They're crazy!
They're hyped up on some kind of drug
That doesn't explain why they can fly !
maybe it's a new drug
DUDE, HE'S BLUE !!!!

If we go home will it be 150 years later?
If you do not fix the time here first your planet might not be there when you get back.
So, how do we fix it?
You must defeat Mantellan
22
We're in!!
How do we do it?

We must use the rest of the Gallow's energy to create two elementos. After that only our dark brothers exist, and we cannot help.
23

24
Something's Wrong !!!!

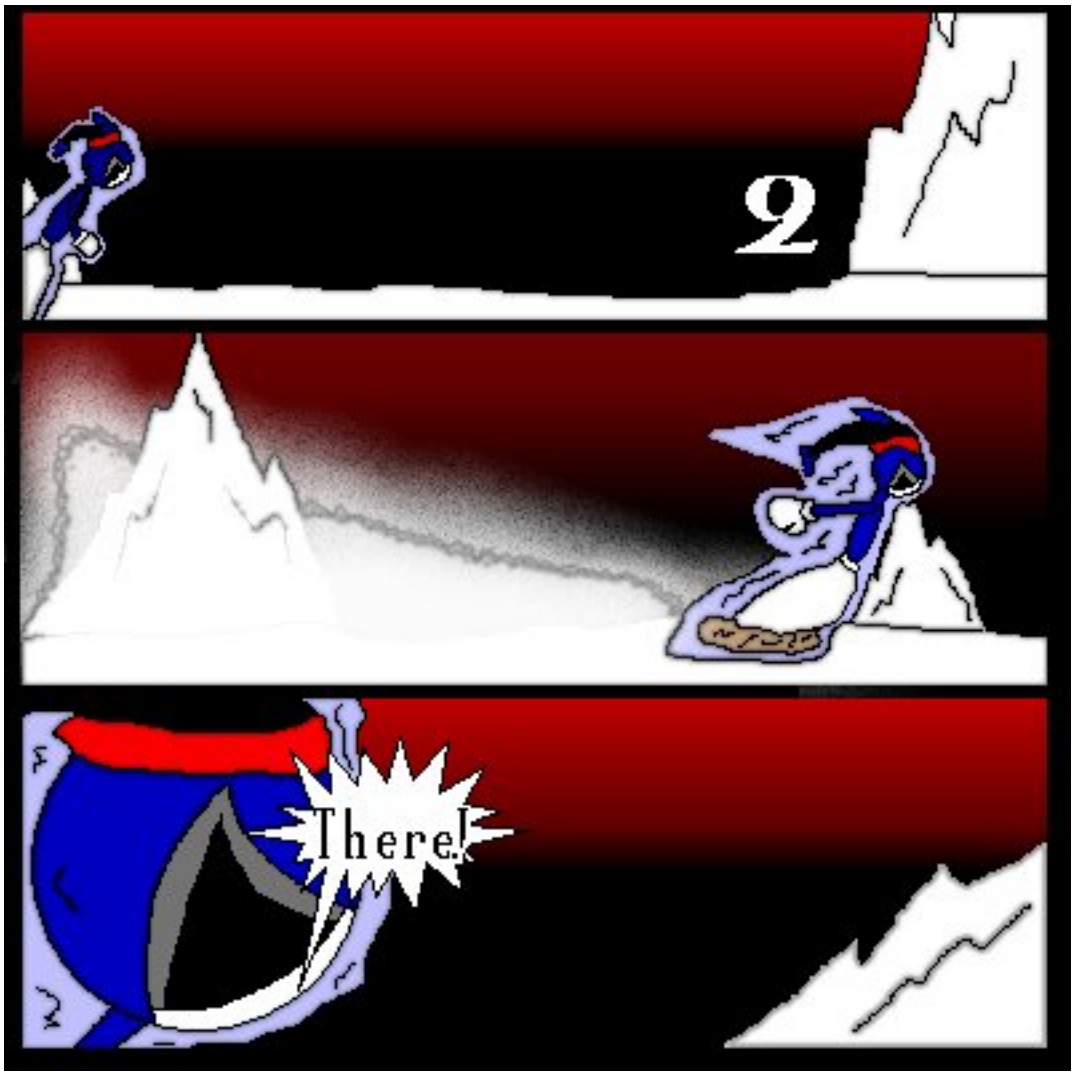
Brother, you are a pussy.
25

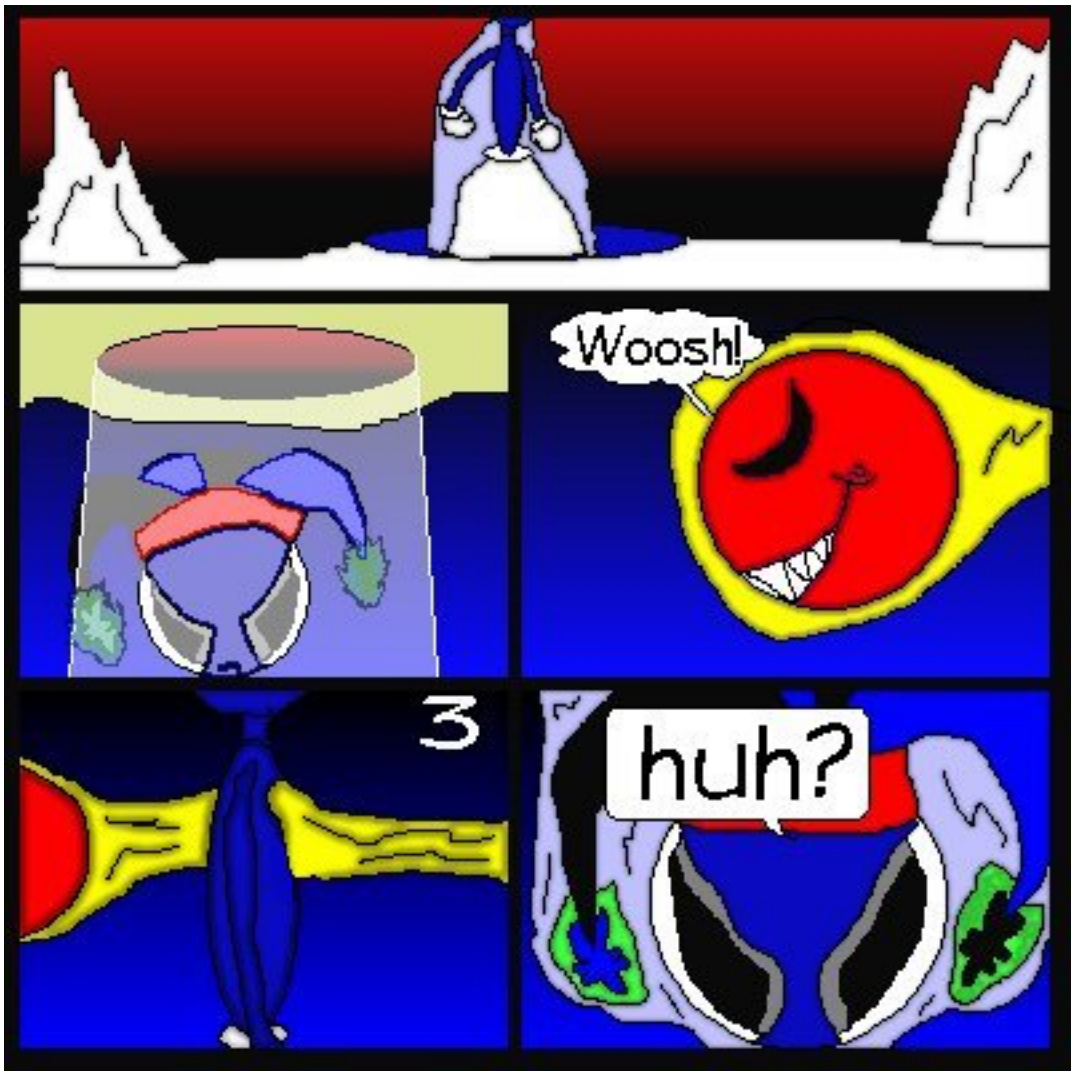
We could easily destroy Mantellan with this kind of power
I'm not so sure about that dude.
He's right, we're not strong enough yet.
Speak for yourself
let's go dude
WAIT FOR ME !!!!!
jump
26

They have no chance.
So, what do we do then?
We need more power.. if only the Gallows were still here.
I have an idea, but I need my lucky hat for luck.
27
I have it, here
You two stay here I'll be right back.

that was mine.
Shuttup
To Be Continued.....
28

Never before seen glimpse at Episode 5 of the Baggy Brigade


9
There!


Woosh!
3
huh?

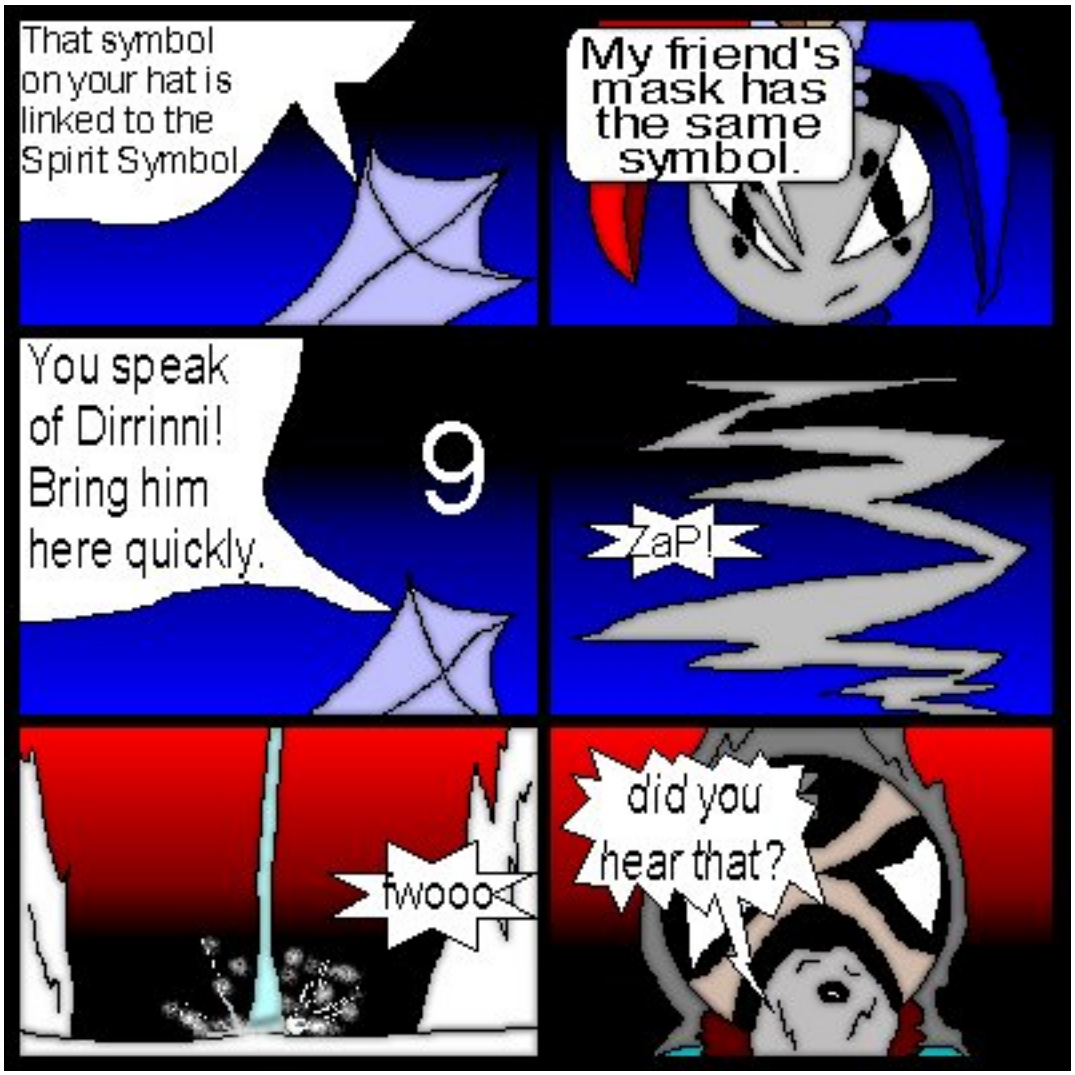
That hat!
It can't Be!
Lysandus?
Is that you?
it depends...
are you a good crystal,
or a bad one?
4
I am Glanda,
the good crystal
of the Nort.

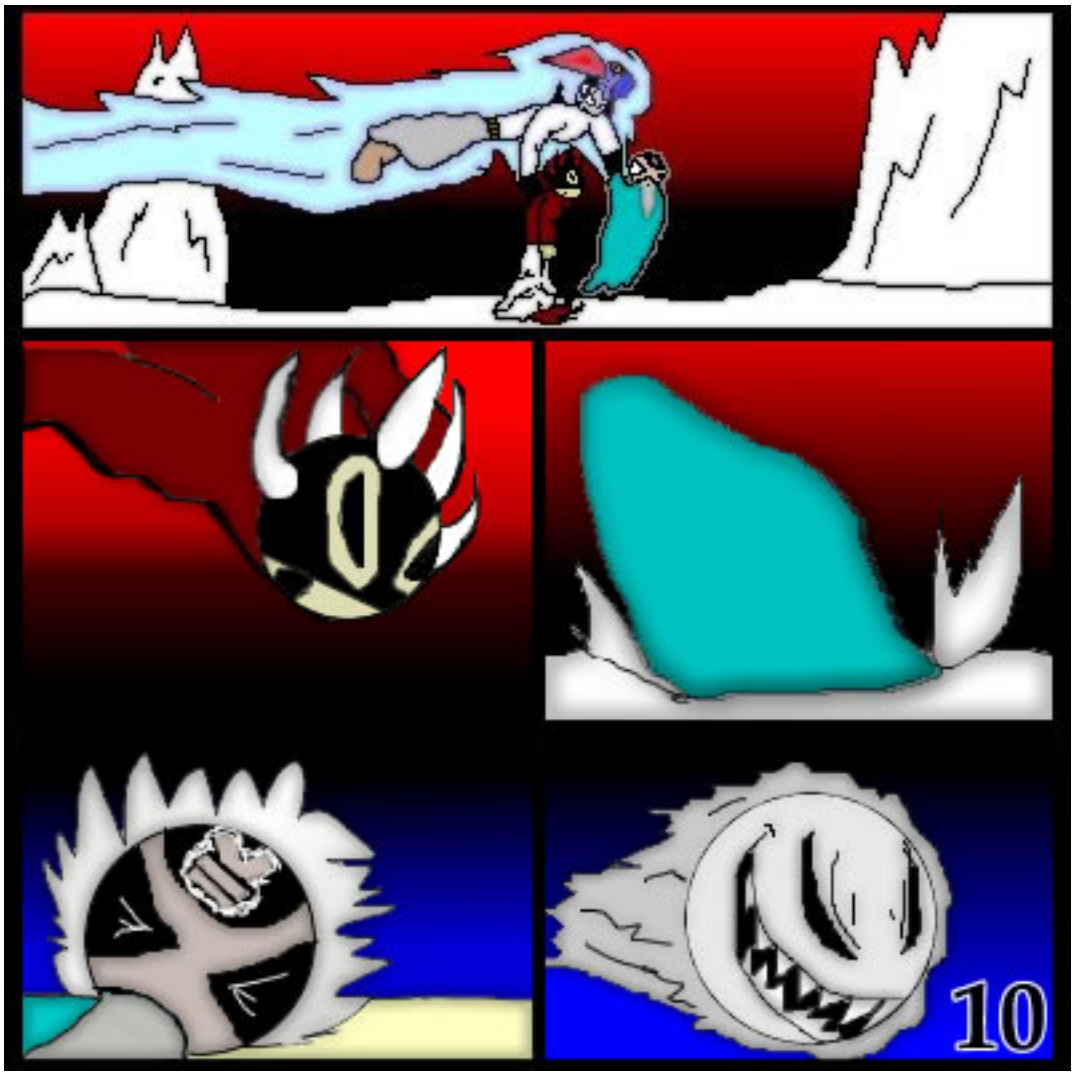
NORT?
Forget it, something a plate told me.
was it red?
YES!! Lysandus, It is You!
that plate haunts me
5
I should have known it was you, you look like your father Ghester

you know my father?
Not now, not yet.
6
yes
First, hold up your hat.
woosh

It.....
changed
put it on
AAAHHHH!!!
7
yes..

8


That symbol on your hat is linked to the Spirit Symbol.
My friend's mask has the same symbol.
You speak of Dirrinni! Bring him here quickly.
9
ZaP!
fwooo
did you hear that?


10

11
I understand, but what about Orsidium?

A final thank you. With your support and the support of all my friends and family, I have confidence that I will one day have more time to dedicate to Lys, and beyond.