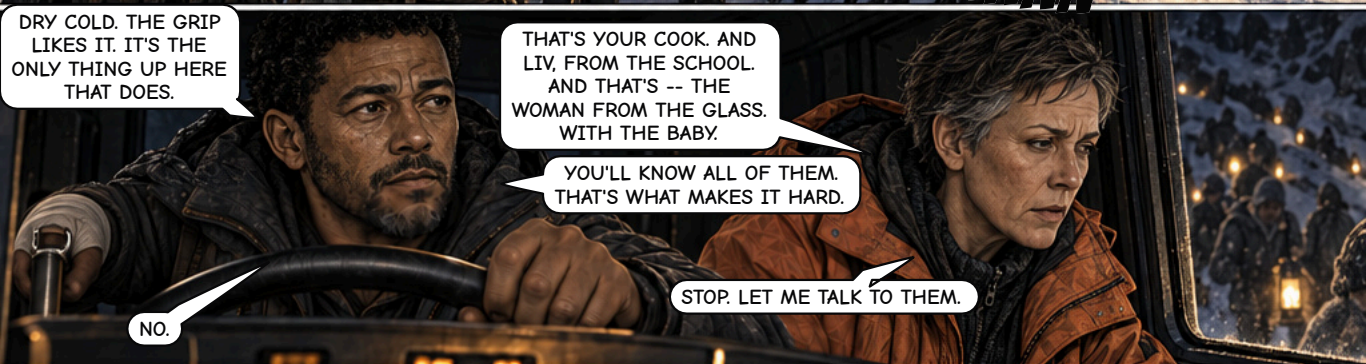




CHAPTER ELEVEN · THE MOUNTAIN











UNDER AN AURORA THE COLOR OF RUST, THE TWO SIDES
FACED EACH OTHER.

STEP OUT OF THE DOOR,
RUNA. YOU TOO,
PROFESSOR. NOBODY HERE
WANTS TO HURT ANYBODY.

THE PICKS
ARE FOR THE
ICE ON THE
HINGES.

THEN PUT THE
PICKS DOWN.

AND THE
CRATES ARE
FOR THE DOOR.

LARS. SHUT UP.

IT'S THE SHIP! HE'S
BROUGHT HIS SAILORS!

YOU'VE
SEEN ME
SHOOT,
HENRIK.

I'VE SEEN
YOU SHOOT
A BEAR.

THEN
YOU KNOW
I DON'T
MISS WHAT
I AIM AT.

SO WATCH
WHERE I AIM.

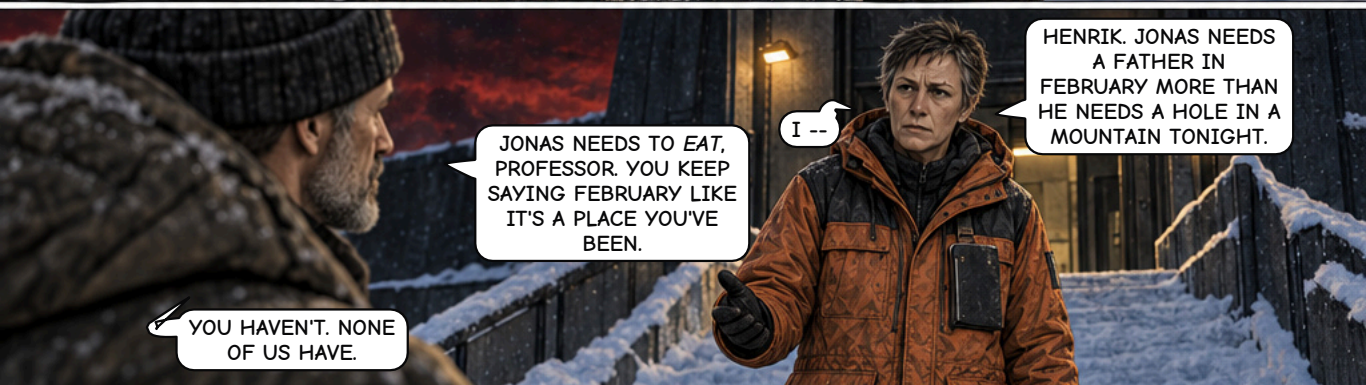
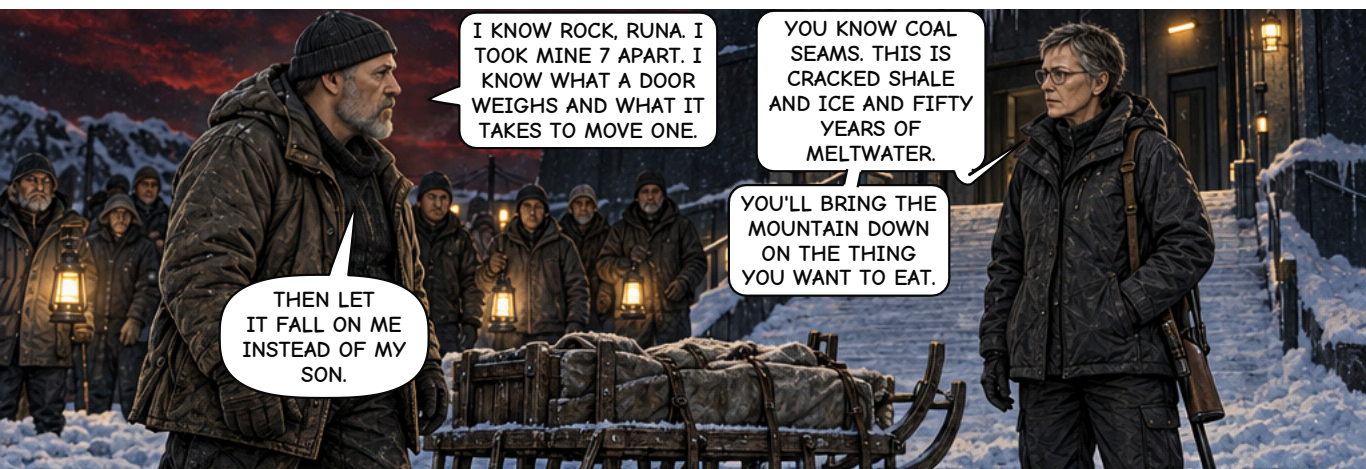


STEADY. STEADY.

NOBODY UP HERE IS MY
ENEMY. MY CREW CARRY
BLANKETS AND SOUP.
ANYBODY WHO STOPS
SHIVERING, THEY'LL FIND
YOU.

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON,
CAPTAIN?

THE SIDE THAT WALKS DOWN THIS MOUNTAIN. ALL OF IT.





BARLEY. NORDIC BARLEY, BRED FOR SUMMERS WHEN THE SUN NEVER SETS. GIVE IT TWENTY-TWO HOURS OF LIGHT A DAY, AND IT DOESN'T WAIT FOR SPRING.

TWENTY-TWO HOURS OF LIGHT. WHERE? IT'S BEEN DARK SINCE OCTOBER.

ON THE SHIP.



TEN WEEKS. SEED TO SEED. EVERY PLANT GIVES BACK TWENTY, THIRTY.

SEEDS AREN'T FOOD. NOT THIS WINTER. BUT PLANT THEM, AND BY NEXT WINTER WE'LL HAVE SEED ENOUGH FOR FIELDS -- IF ANYONE EVER HAS FIELDS AGAIN.

IF, I'M NOT HIDING THE IF, THEO. I'VE NEVER HIDDEN AN IF FROM YOU.

WE'LL BE DEAD BEFORE YOUR BARLEY.

"IF."

NOT ALL OF US. NOT IF WE'RE HONEST ABOUT THE GAP.

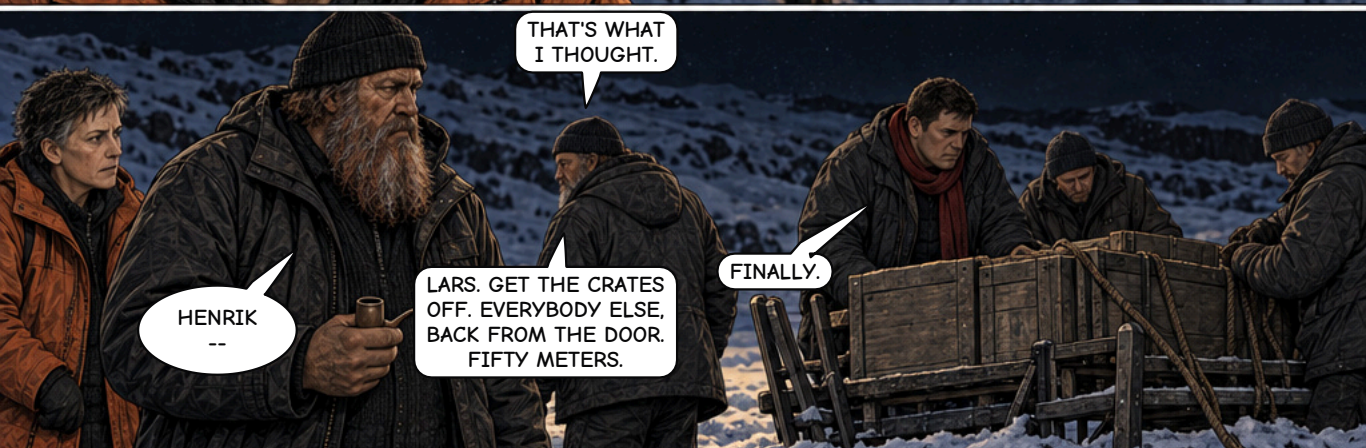
WHAT GAP?



THE STORES RUN OUT IN EARLY FEBRUARY. BOREALIS COMES IN THE MIDDLE OF FEBRUARY, IF IT COMES AT ALL.

THE GAP IS TWO WEEKS.

AND WHAT DO WE EAT FOR TWO WEEKS?





GRANT CALDER HAD
WALKED THE WHOLE ROAD.

SORRY. I'M -- SORRY. I'M LATE.
I SAT ON THEM TOO LONG.

SAT ON
WHAT?

MAE. GIVE ME THE MANIFEST.



FORWARD HOLD. FOUR CRATES.
FREEZE-DRIED. A YEAR OF FOOD FOR
ELEVEN PEOPLE. FELIX PACKED IT.
I KEPT IT.

...YOU KEPT IT.

THAT'S THE KEY. THAT'S THE MANIFEST.
EVERY MEAL, BY COUNT. I'VE ALWAYS
BEEN GOOD AT MANIFESTS.



LET ME SEE
THAT. BRING
THE LIGHT
CLOSER.

ELEVEN PEOPLE, A YEAR,
AT TODAY'S RATIONS.

THAT'S ABOUT TWO WEEKS
FOR THE WHOLE VALLEY.



...TWO WEEKS.

WHY NOW?

BECAUSE MY DAUGHTER'S BEEN CARRYING
IT FOR ME SINCE OCTOBER. BECAUSE
HANNE WILBERG DIED THINKING I OWED
HER A SPOOL.

EAT MINE. PLANT THEIRS.







TWO WEEKS. HIS
TWO WEEKS. AND
THEN YOUR
BARLEY, IF.

DOES IT,
CAPTAIN?

IF THE
SHIP
GIVES IT
LIGHT.



THE CONVERTERS THAT
TURNED HER
PROPELLERS ARE
SITTING ON THE QUAY.
YOU ALL WATCHED ME
PULL THEM OUT OF HER.

THE POWER THAT USED TO
TURN THE SHAFTS HAS
NOWHERE TO GO. IT'LL
LIGHT THE SEED.



YOU BROKE YOUR SHIP FOR
THIS TOWN. AND NOW YOU'LL
FARM IN IT?

THE SEA PLANTS NOTHING. BUT
SHE'LL KEEP A LIGHT ON.

RUNA.

OPEN THE DOOR.



I VOTED
FOR NONE OF
THE WORLD'S. I'M
ASKING FOR
YOURS.

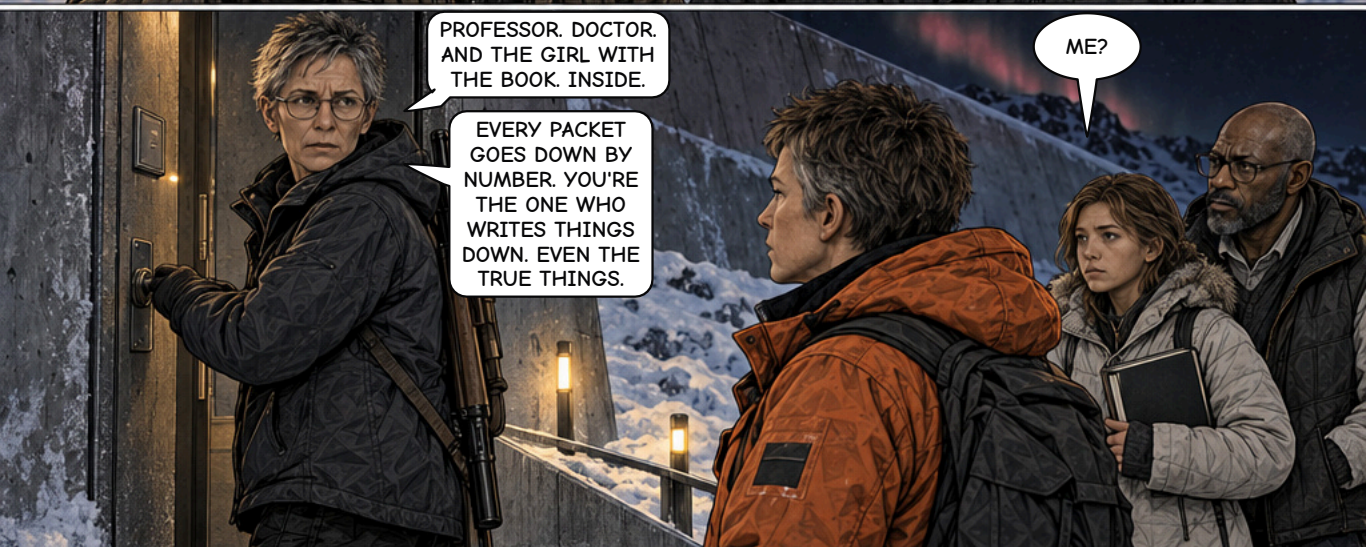
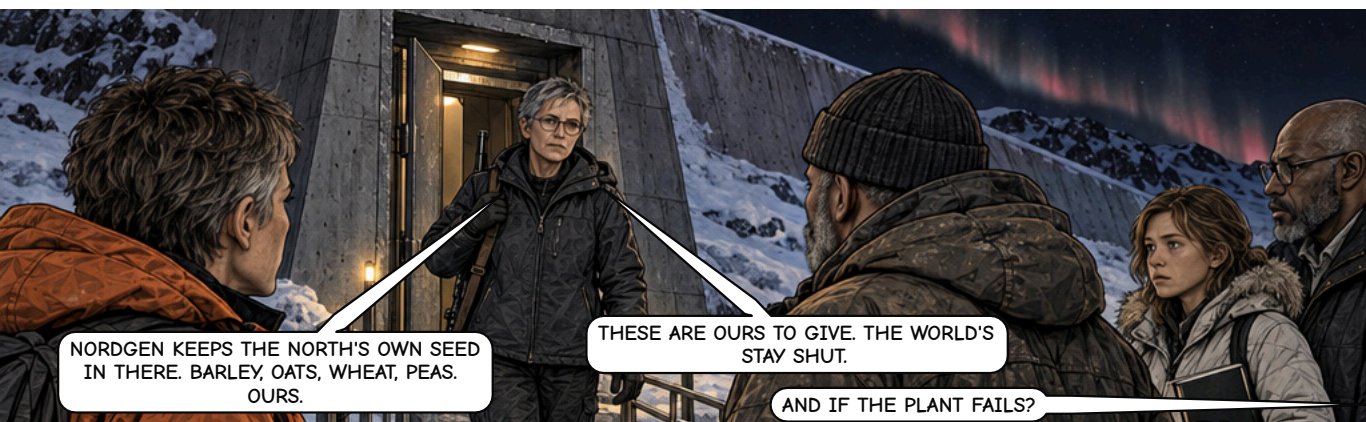
YOU VOTED "NOT
ONE PACKET." I
HEARD ABOUT IT
UP HERE.



...YOU HAD
BETTER BE
RIGHT
ABOUT THE
BARLEY,
PROFESSOR.

I'D BETTER BE
RIGHT ABOUT A
LOT OF THINGS.

NO. JUST
THE BARLEY.
THE REST I CAN
FORGIVE.



INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN. MINUS EIGHTEEN.

IT'S COLDER
IN HERE THAN IT
WAS IN OCTOBER.
THE MOUNTAIN'S
WINNING, AT
LEAST.

PENCIL DOESN'T
CARE. PENS DIE
UP HERE.

SOMETHING
SHOULD.

MY PENCIL'S
FREEZING.

SYRIA. MANILA. SAINT
PETERSBURG. FORT
COLLINS. THESE STAY
SHUT. TONIGHT, AND
EVERY NIGHT I'M ALIVE.

I'M NOT SAYING IT TO
YOU, PROFESSOR. I'M
SAYING IT TO THEM.

I KNOW.

NORDGEN. OURS.
NORTHERN BARLEY
FROM FARMS OLDER
THAN THE AIRPORT.

YOU SAID THAT LAST TIME, DOCTOR.

IT'S SO
SMALL.

LAST TIME I WAS LOOKING
AT IT AS DINNER.

PROFESSOR. OVER THE LINE.

IN OCTOBER
YOU'D HAVE SHOT
ME FOR THAT.

IN OCTOBER YOU WERE A
VISITOR. TONIGHT
YOU'RE CARRYING.

DO I
COME
TOO?

YOU STAY ON THE
LINE AND WRITE.
THAT'S WHAT A
LINE'S FOR.



WE DON'T COUNT SEEDS UP
HERE. WE WEIGH THEM.

A FEW DOZEN FROM EACH,
AND TWO HUNDRED KINDS.



BARLEY. OATS. SPRING WHEAT. PEAS AND
FLAX FOR SEED. KALE AND MUSTARD FOR
GREENS. SOMETHING GREEN IN FEBRUARY.

FLAX?

OIL, ONE DAY. THREAD,
ONE DAY. HANNE WOULD
HAVE WANTED FLAX.

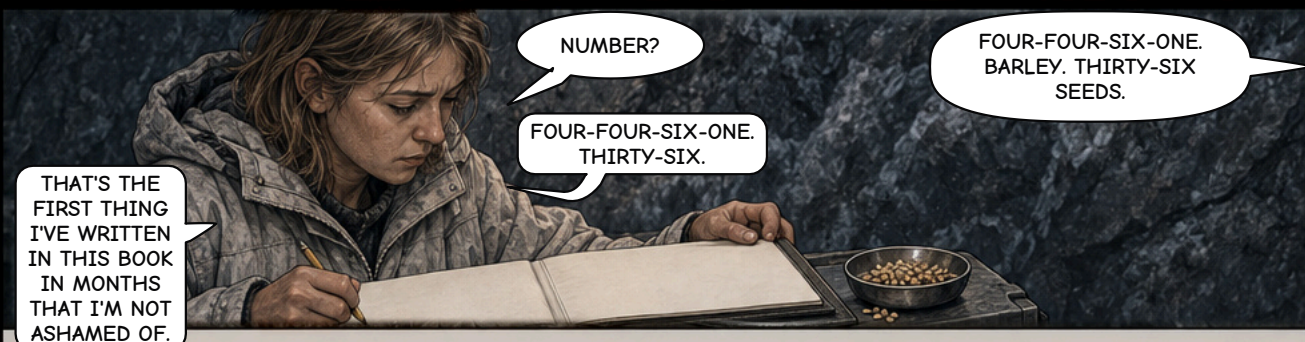


NUMBER?

FOUR-FOUR-SIX-ONE.
BARLEY. THIRTY-SIX
SEEDS.

THAT'S THE
FIRST THING
I'VE WRITTEN
IN THIS BOOK
IN MONTHS
THAT I'M NOT
ASHAMED OF.

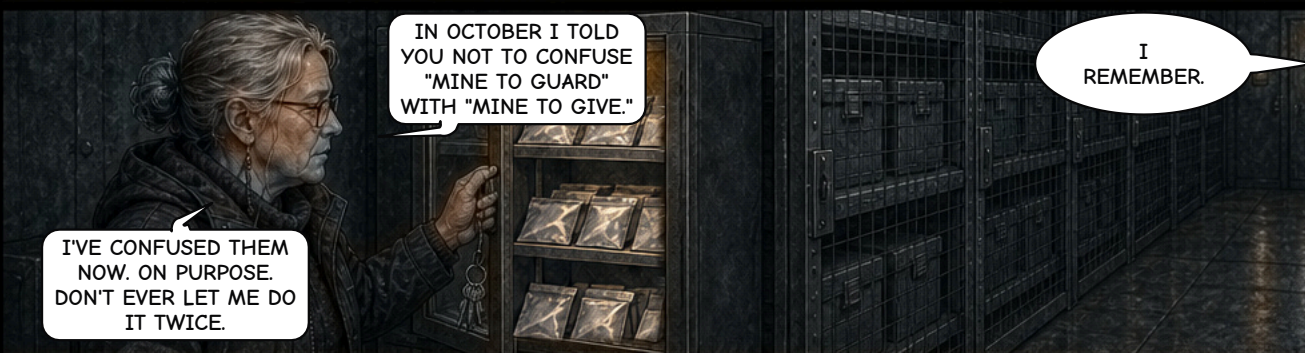
FOUR-FOUR-SIX-ONE.
THIRTY-SIX.



IN OCTOBER I TOLD
YOU NOT TO CONFUSE
"MINE TO GUARD"
WITH "MINE TO GIVE."

I
REMEMBER.

I'VE CONFUSED THEM
NOW. ON PURPOSE.
DON'T EVER LET ME DO
IT TWICE.



EVERYTHING THE
SHAFTS USED TO EAT.
IT'S JUST SITTING
THERE, CAPTAIN.

...SAY
AGAIN?

DARIA. HOW MUCH CAN
YOU GIVE THE HANGAR
WITHOUT TAKING A WATT
FROM THE TOWN?

THEN PUSH THE
HELICOPTER OUT ON
DECK. WE'RE BRINGING
YOU A GARDEN.







MINE 7, THEN.
EVERY STICK
COUNTED.

EVERY
STICK, LARS.

NO. YOU
COULDN'T.

I COULD
RUN THE
COUNT, IF
YOU --



WHY TONIGHT?
YOU HAD TWO
MONTHS.

I KEPT LOOKING
FOR A VERSION
WHERE I DIDN'T
HAVE TO. I'M
GOOD AT FINDING
VERSIONS. IT'S
WHAT THEY PAID
ME FOR.

AND?

THERE WASN'T ONE.
THERE WAS JUST
MY DAUGHTER,
STANDING IN THE
HOLD, HOLDING THE
FLASHLIGHT FOR
ME.



THEO.
CARRY THIS.

ME? I
VOTED --

YOU VOTED.
THEN YOU WALKED
UP WITH THEM,
AND YOU STOOD IN
FRONT OF THE SLED.
CARRY IT.

ARE YOU ANGRY?

FURIOUS.
CARRY IT.



NO.

THAT ISN'T
SCIENCE,
PROFESSOR.

YOU DIDN'T
KNOW HE'D
COME.

I HAD SOME
EVIDENCE. HE
KEPT FIXING THE
QUEUE.

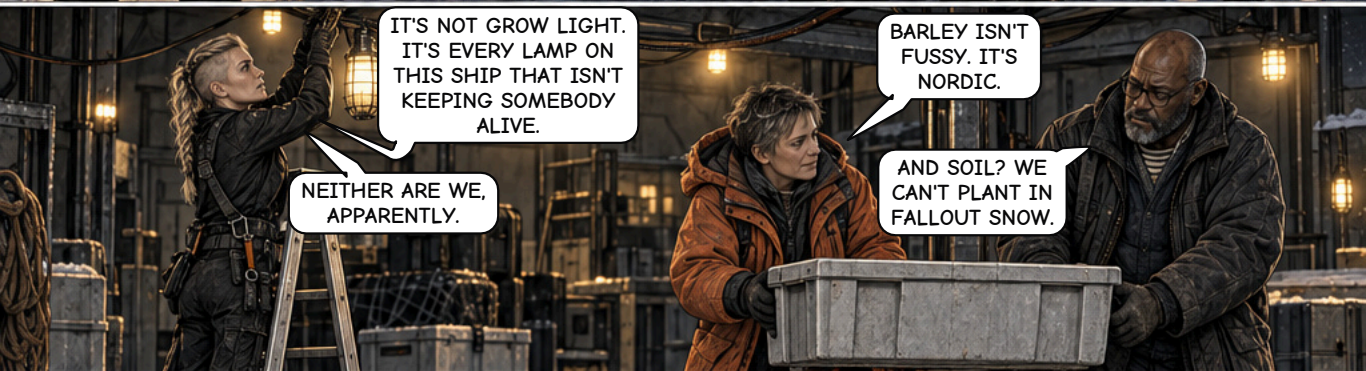


YOU BET A
MOUNTAIN
ON A MAN
FIXING A
QUEUE.

YOU BET A SHIP ON
A RADIO SIGNAL.

TWO GAMBLERS. ONE
ROAD. I'M WALKING
BACK HERE SO I CAN
SAY I WASN'T WITH
YOU.

...LOOK. DARIA'S
OPENED THE
HANGAR.

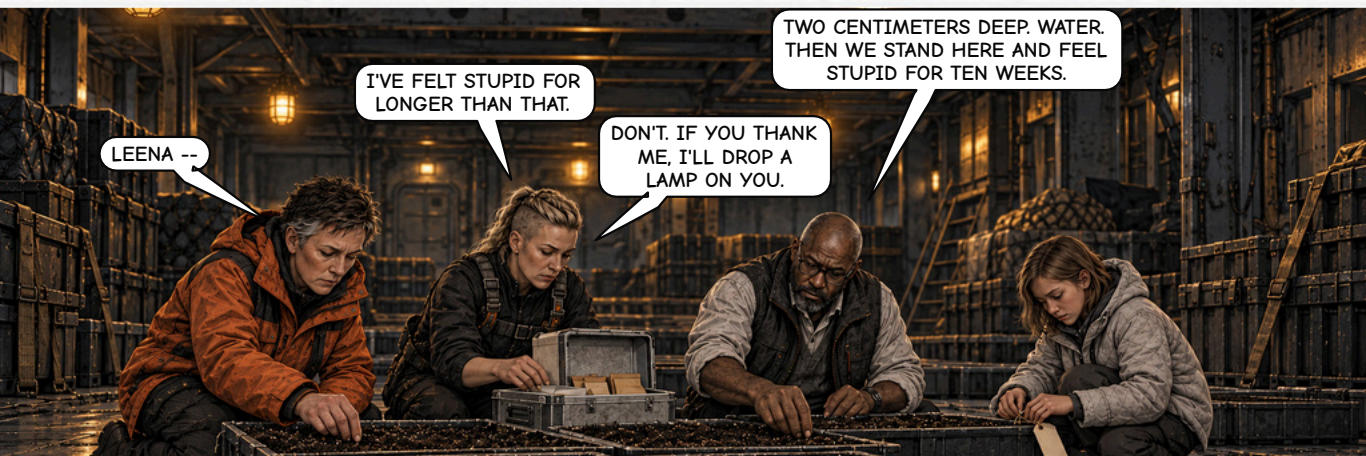


THE HOLDS THAT HAD CARRIED THE CABLE TO SVALBARD.

WHERE DO YOU WANT THESE?

HOLD TWO. ROW BY ROW. ASK MAE WHICH ROW.

...ASK MAE. RIGHT.



I'VE FELT STUPID FOR LONGER THAN THAT.

TWO CENTIMETERS DEEP. WATER. THEN WE STAND HERE AND FEEL STUPID FOR TEN WEEKS.

LEENA --

DON'T. IF YOU THANK ME, I'LL DROP A LAMP ON YOU.



IT KNOWS NOW.

HOW LONG UNTIL IT KNOWS IT'S BEEN PLANTED?

HOW LONG UNTIL I KNOW?

FOUR DAYS, IF IT'S WARM. A WHITE ROOT. THEN A GREEN SPIKE.

MIDNIGHT. ON THE DARKEST DAY OF THE YEAR, THEY PRESSED THE FIRST SEEDS INTO SOIL.



