

## Intro



The Artists knew that the task they had set for themselves would lead down a difficult path. The stop-motion temporal dimension had only been discussed in theory, and nobody had ever provided physical evidence for its existence. Furthermore, it was the prevailing belief among the rest of society that such imaginary pursuits were more suited to the purview of entertainment, not art or science. Thus, the Artists accepted that their goal could easily turn out to be unobtainable, rendering their hard work a wasted effort.

Yet they clung to the hope that one day real contact would be possible. Though the proliferation of stop-motion people had so far never revealed any consciousness, it could be true that it had simply evaded observation. After all, any thought from such a temporally-altered source would be so slow as to be nigh imperceptible. So the Artists pushed on, faithful that, one way or another, their journey would find its end.

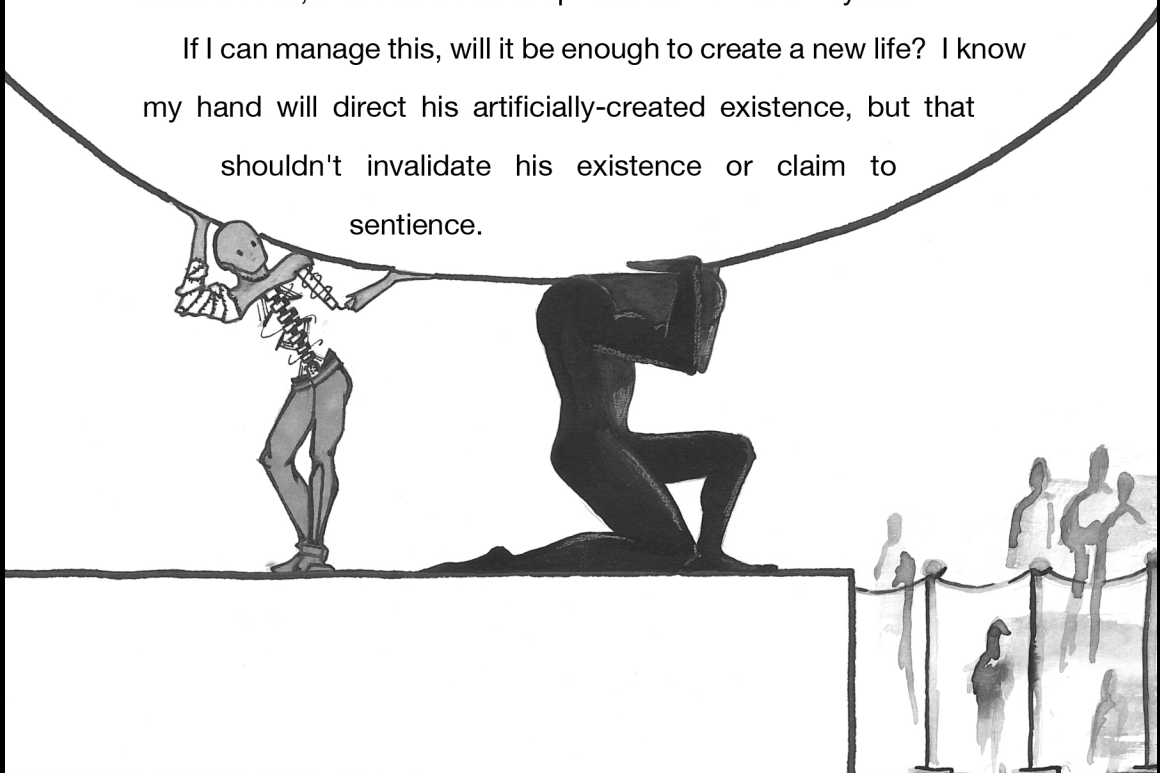


## The Artist

I've been researching for a while, and I think I've found a way to realize my theories. I know the stop-motion dimension exists, but I'd assumed that to see it, I had to be patient, waiting just as slowly as *it* must move. It's clear now, however, that interaction is necessary.

The problem lies in determining how to combine the passive stop-motion life with the active life of the rest of reality. It would be trivial to attach it to an existing type of creation, but that would relegate it to secondary importance. I need to find a way to place it as the centerpoint, and bring its unique qualities to the fore. Rather than focusing on the content, I should emphasize the physical artifact of the puppet, the linear frame-based process of his construction, and the relationship between him and myself.

If I can manage this, will it be enough to create a new life? I know my hand will direct his artificially-created existence, but that shouldn't invalidate his existence or claim to sentience.

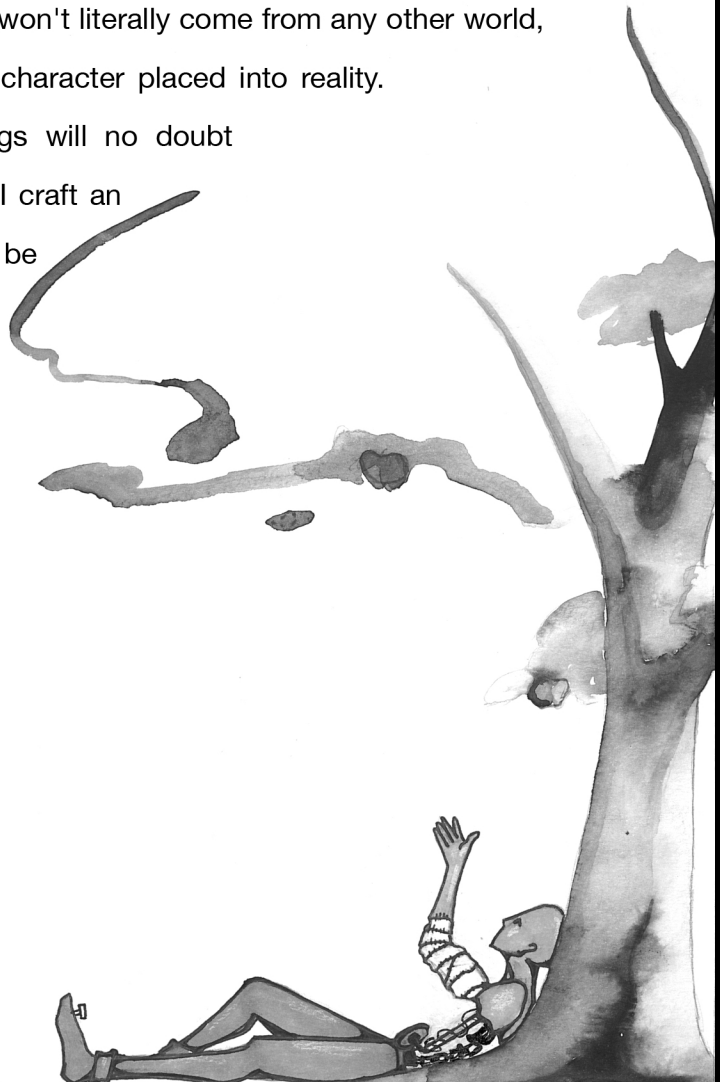


There are so many ways that I could design my creation, and though the standard method would be easy, I feel I can draw inspiration from other mediums.

Artificial humanoids have been constructed before, from robots and androids to theatrical-based puppets and marionettes. But my creation will be built from the earth, organic in nature, so designing a construction out of metal and machinery seems incongruent. He will also need to support himself in his actions, so I can't let him rely on me or anyone else to hold his strings.

For he'll need to be able to explore on his own, if I ever succeed in making him fully conscious. Although he won't literally come from any other world, he'll essentially be a foreign character placed into reality.

Like a child, his surroundings will no doubt confuse him. I must ensure I craft an ability to learn, so that he will be able to understand his environment, not just inhabit it.



The Artist

## The Artist

As my creation takes shape, I fear for what may happen if he truly becomes independent, like those in ancient mythology. The huge, hulking brutes of Jewish folklore often turned on their masters, and the original humans created in Christian stories disobeyed and ran away.

Ideally, though, my creation will be something new and unknown even to me, and I hope there will be more wonderful things to discover than things to fear. We don't devalue normal people for their disorders, and I shouldn't devalue my creature simply for its method of creation.

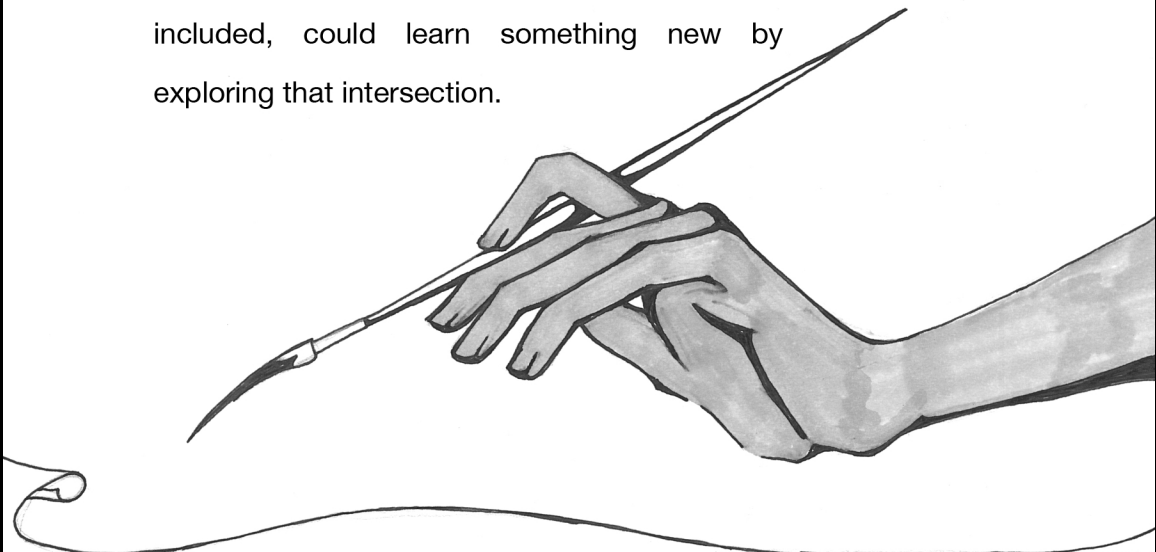
In fact, my work in this area may yield even broader results. Making contact with a stop-motion person would be a major breakthrough in temporal research. Studying their behavior, and learning from them, could give us new insights into our own interpretations of the nature of relativity and space-time. I'm almost giddy with anticipation as I prepare for the final stage of development, in which I'll breathe *life into my creation.*

## The Golem

I've been awake for only a short time, and I already feel ignored. I know I can appear to be slow, but my mind works as well as anyone else's. I can ponder the stars as they spin around the sky, and appreciate the translucent fog of a river as it rushes past. I see the same world that everyone else does; I just see it a little differently.

In that way, I'm not so dissimilar from most people; everybody experiences their own version of reality. I *do* enjoy that, because life would be boring if everyone thought the same. But it also causes problems for me, since nobody else shares my view.

That's why a lot of people could benefit from seeing through my eyes, since they would gain a new understanding of the world around them. Furthermore, the contrast between their viewpoints and mine would create an interesting tension. Then all of us, myself included, could learn something new by exploring that intersection.



## The Golem

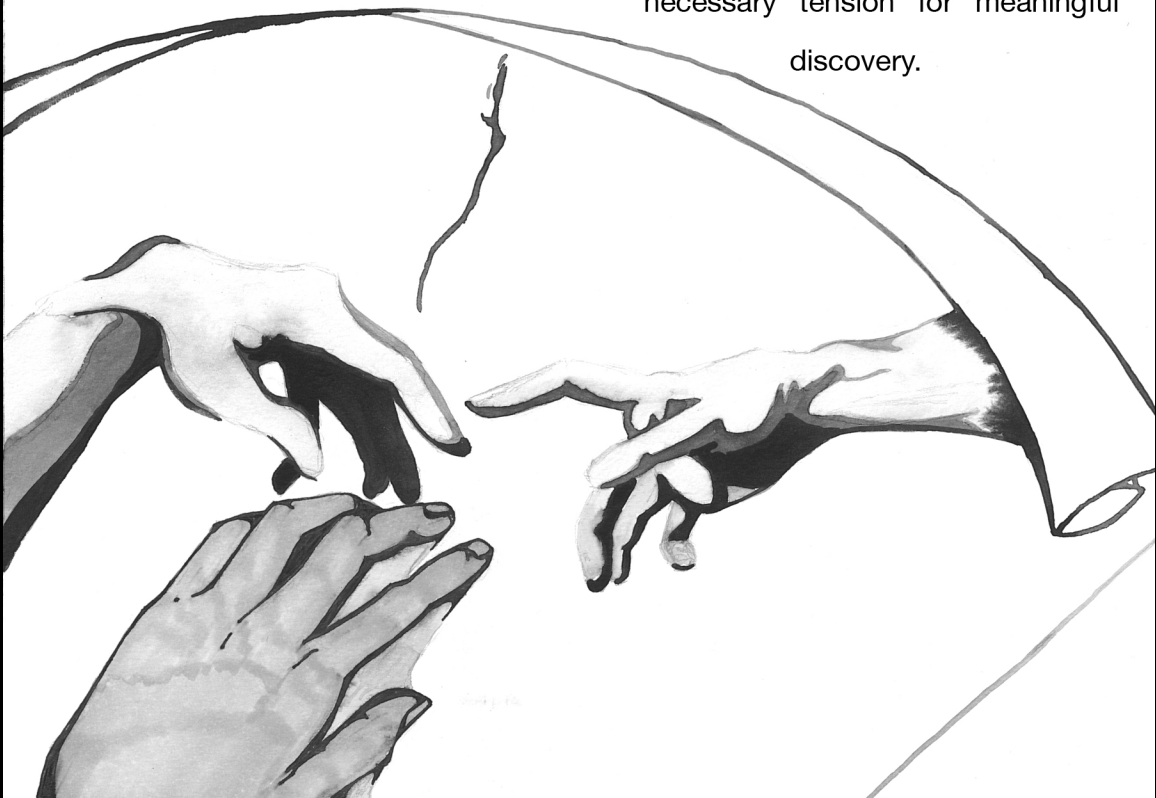
How best can I convey my perspective to the people racing around me? I have no sophisticated tools nor technologies, and my environment changes too quickly for me to make use of it. All I really have control over is my own body.

I think that could be enough, though. My body is just as real as theirs, it's about the same size, and I think I can move a little faster so that they can see. There are also enough similarities in behavior that relating to each other won't be too difficult.

What *will* be hard is getting any of them to respond. My appearance doesn't inspire intimacy on *any* level, and I'm usually avoided outright. If I'm going to get a reaction, I'll need to appear in places that they won't expect. That way, the sheer surprise of finding me immersed in their world will result in genuine responses.

Once I'm there, though, I'll still need to entice them to interact with me somehow. Getting a one-way response will be wholly insufficient in creating the

necessary tension for meaningful discovery.

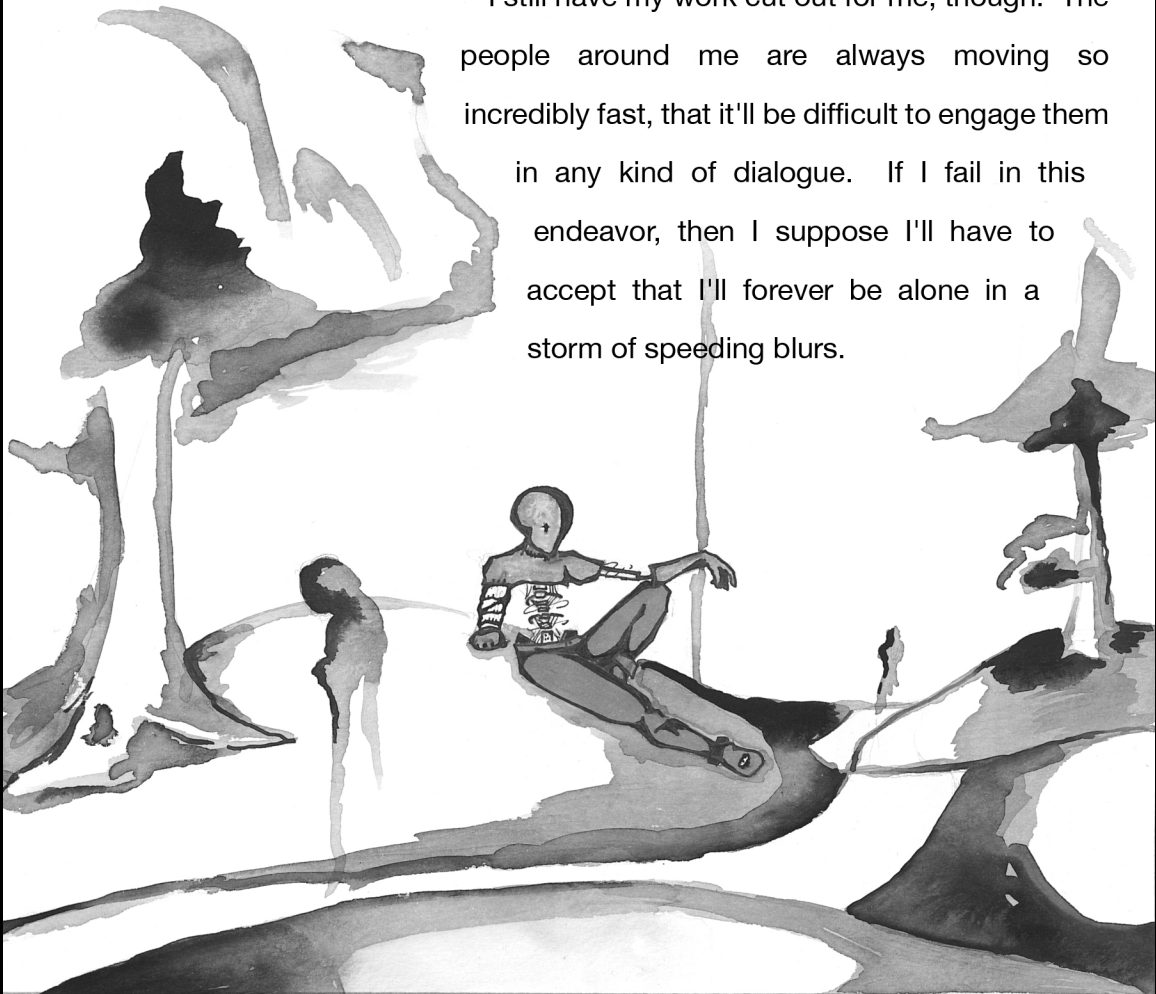


## The Golem

Picking the right locations to appear will be of the utmost importance. If I choose a place with people completely uninterested in me, then it'll be a waste.

I think there are two types of places which will be the best for acquiring positive reactions. The first is simply out in the open, where people aren't otherwise engaged. If they're mainly there for rest and recreation, then it would be an ideal spot for me to grab their attention. Secondly, if I can find a location where people gather for the sole purpose of viewing and appreciating objects like me, then I won't have to make much effort at all to inspire interaction.

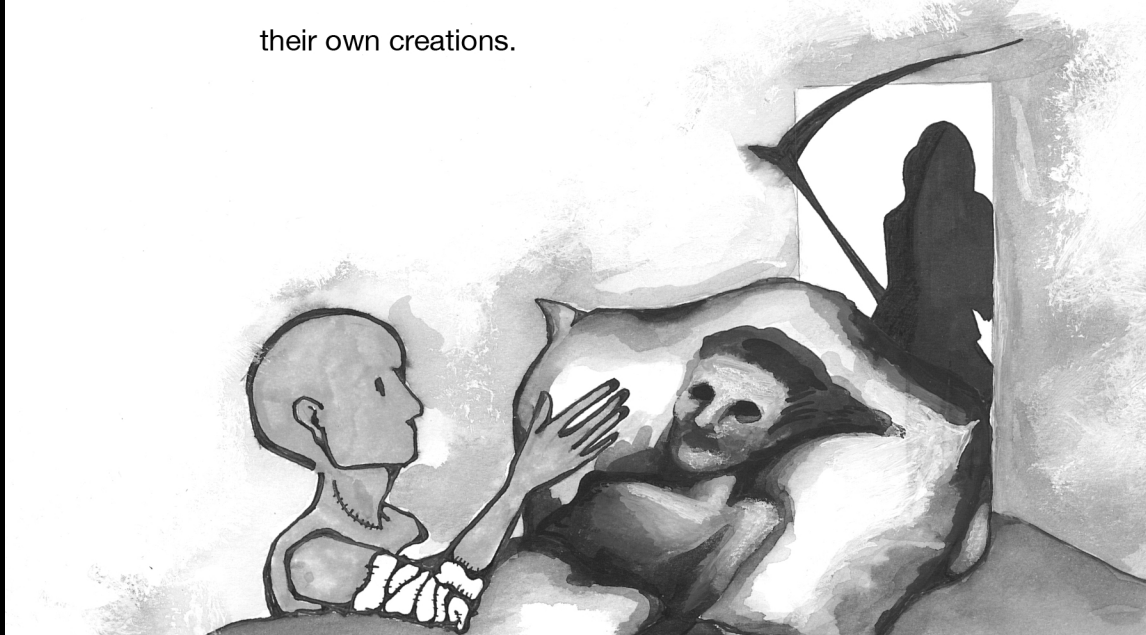
I still have my work cut out for me, though. The people around me are always moving so incredibly fast, that it'll be difficult to engage them in any kind of dialogue. If I fail in this endeavor, then I suppose I'll have to accept that I'll forever be alone in a storm of speeding blurs.



## Interlude

Undoubtedly, the greatest challenge the Artists faced in pursuing their obsession was the fact that nobody else had tried it before. Without the confidence of emulation, they were unsure if they would cause the entire framework to crumble. Such fear would consume them utterly if they allowed it, however, so they focused on the parts that inspired awe.

They studied the theory of temporal perception that was a core part of the stop-motion dimension; it was by making this perception a tangible reality that they could prove the validity of their work. They prepared themselves for the drawn-out interaction that was required for communication; it would be physically demanding, but well worth it. They sought the Gestalt Shift that would enable them to perceive their stop-motion brethren as true people; this required the most effort, for they were poignantly aware of the actual origins of their own creations.



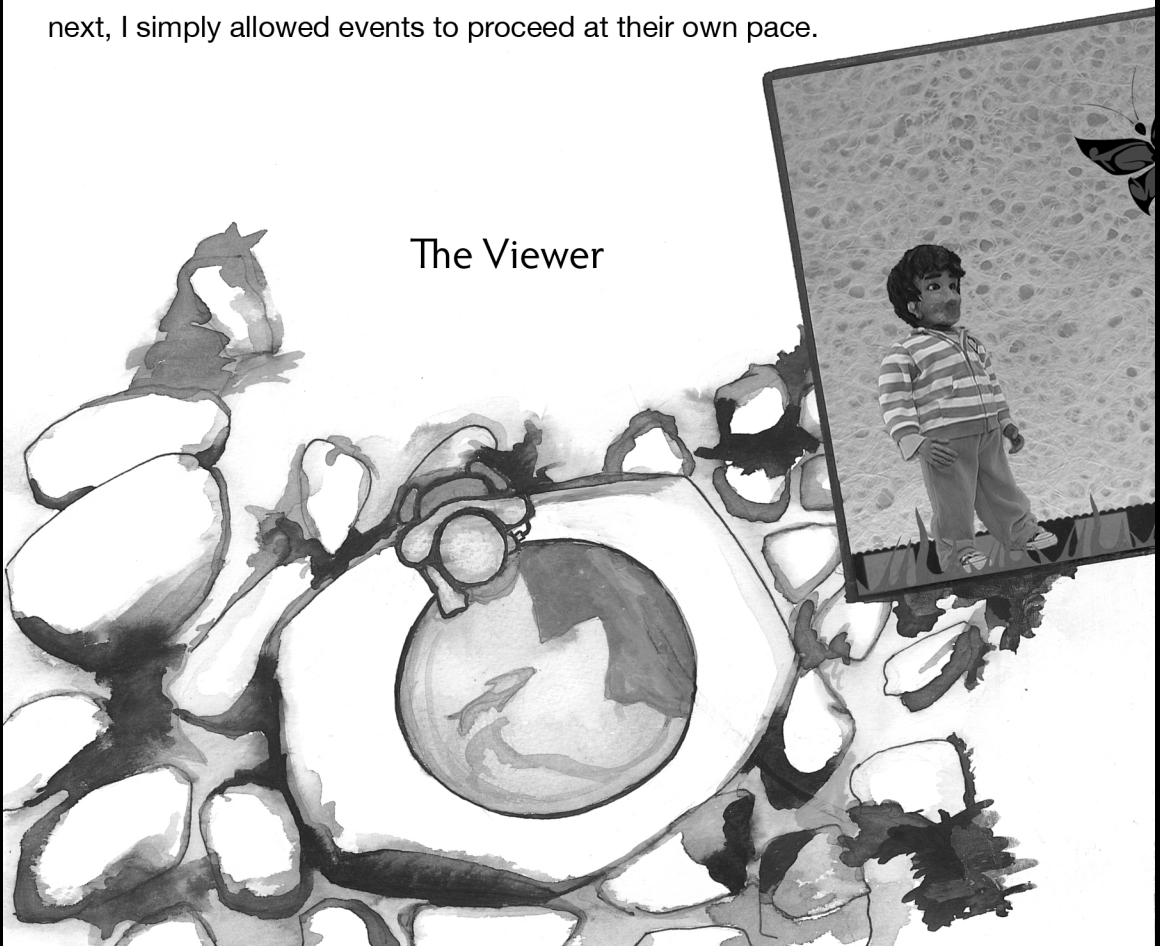


I've been hearing about the existence of a stop-motion dimension for a while, but I never took it very seriously. Last October, though, I stumbled across something that's starting to change my mind.

I can only describe it as similar to a window. I looked through it, and on the other side I saw a strange person moving in a disjointed way. He seemed to be frozen most of the time, only moving a tiny bit every second. I don't think he knew I was watching, and it definitely appeared as if he was searching for something.

The remarkable thing about it was that I could see him move in his own time-frame. I watched him, while simultaneously watching him watch himself. It was hard to wrap my head around, but the juxtaposition of the two perceptions put me into a very meditative mood. Instead of trying to focus on what might happen next, I simply allowed events to proceed at their own pace.

## The Viewer

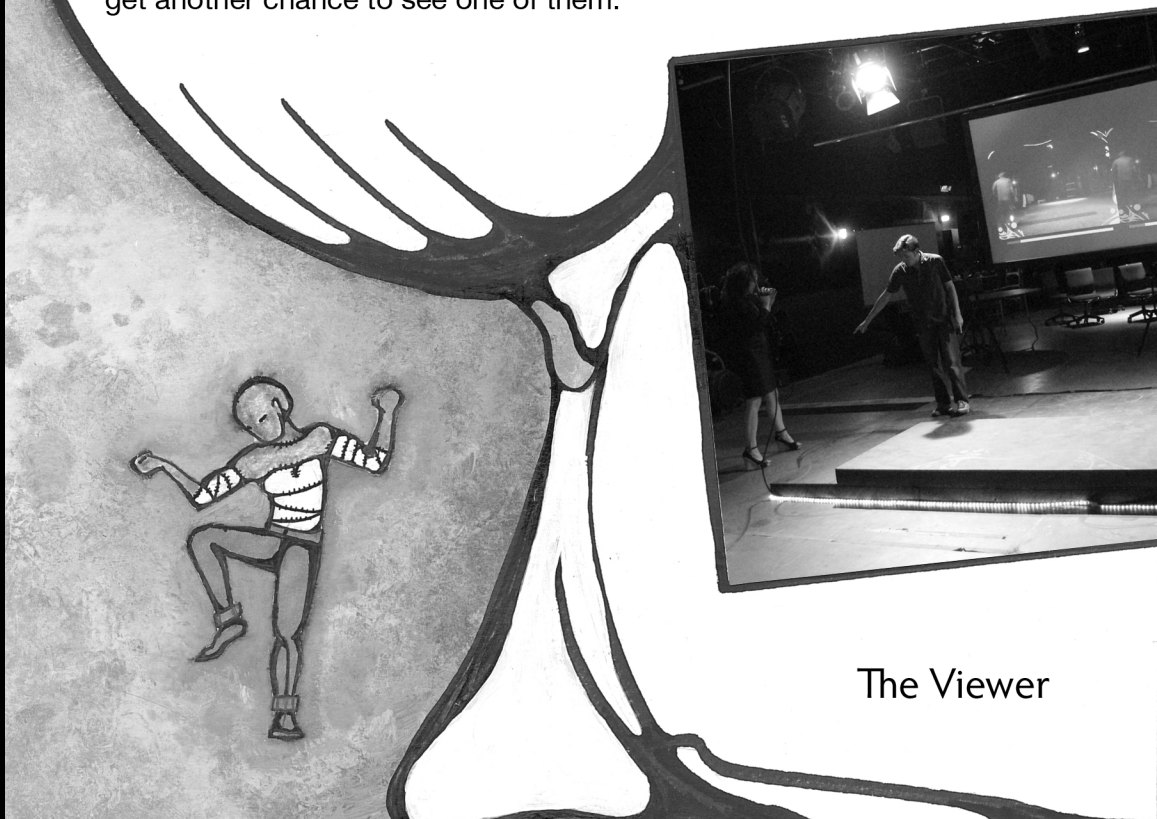


I kept my eyes open for other stop-motion windows. I didn't know what I'd do if I found one, but the sole window I'd seen couldn't be an isolated event.

My suspicions were proven correct last December, when I found a stage with a large window hovering next to it. Unlike the one from before, however, this one was viewing my world from the perspective of the stop-motion people. Instead of watching one of *them* moving around, I was able to watch myself moving around the stage. It was an odd experience, like looking into a twisted mirror. My actions were so warped by time, that I couldn't resist playfully acting.

I wasn't the only one there, either, and when we were all moving on the stage, I felt the same kinds of heightened emotions as I when I'm dancing. That gave me hope, because I thought a similar state of altered consciousness could occur.

I waited, but nothing happened beyond that. I didn't see any of the people from the stop-motion side. Perhaps they were scared, or maybe I'll just never get another chance to see one of them.



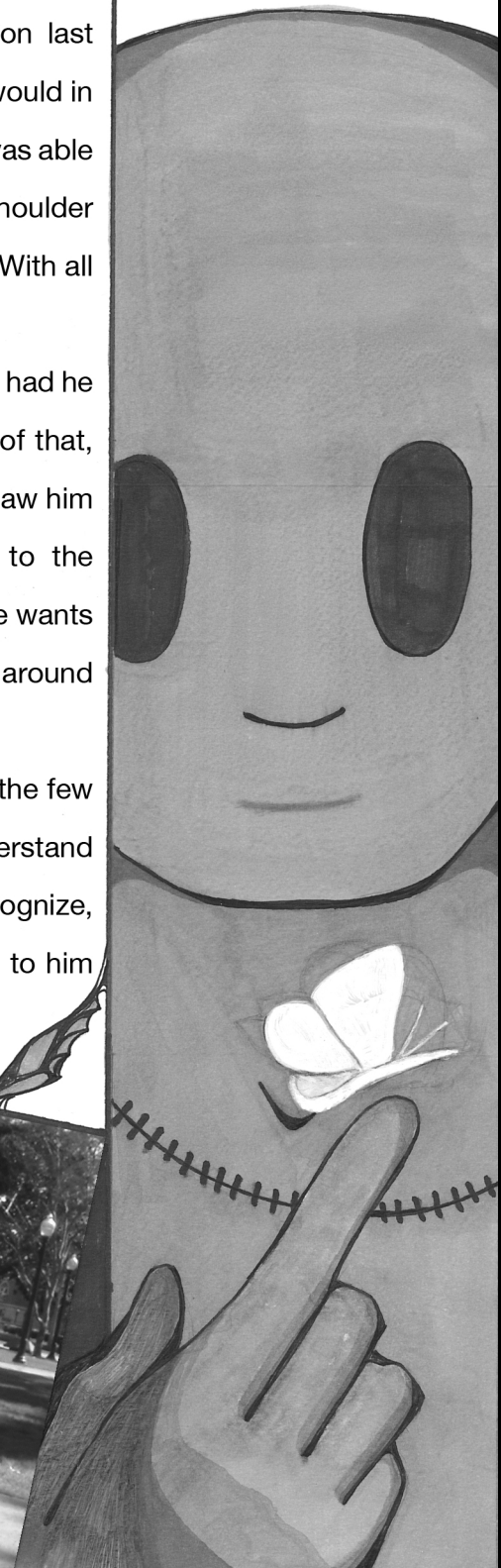
The Viewer

After resigning myself to never meeting those on the other side of the windows, I saw one in person last March. I don't know how he arrived, or why he would in the first place, but I can't deny that it was real. I was able to touch his face and arms; I sat shoulder-to-shoulder with him, since we were about the same height. With all my senses, I confirmed his existence.

What I can't figure out is where he came from; had he simply been there the whole time? Regardless of that, however, it's clear he's still on the move. I later saw him pop up in several unexpected places, much to the surprise of nearby passersby. I'm fairly certain he wants something, but he can't seem to affect anything around him to attain it; I've not once seen him move.

I'd like to find a way to help him. Even after the few encounters I've had, I feel like I'm starting to understand him. He has a quiet, subtle attitude that I can recognize, and it makes me think that there's much more to him than what I've seen.

## The Viewer



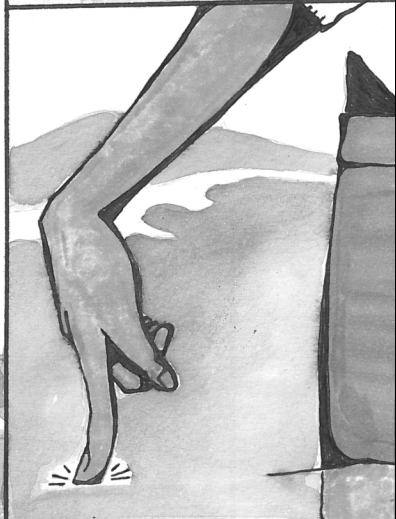
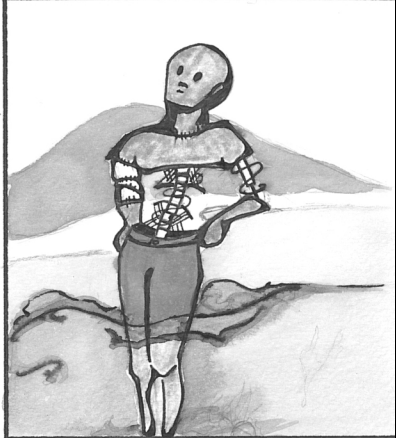
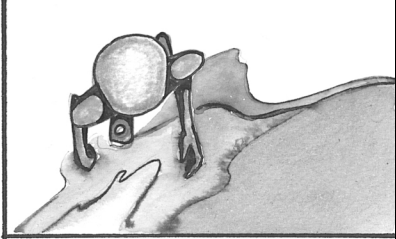
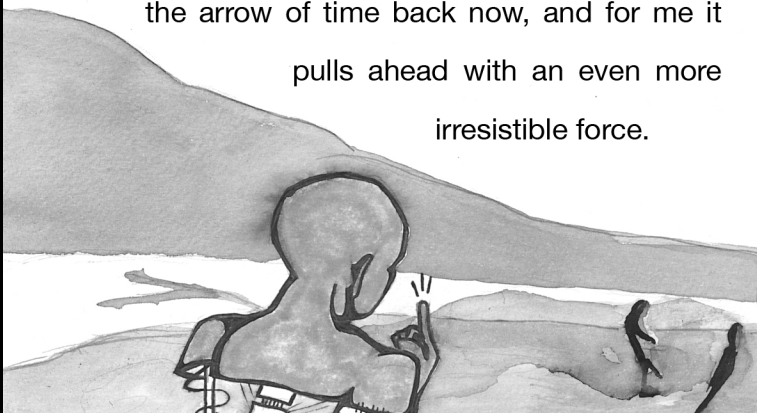
## The Demigod

I've been watching the slow Humans for tens of millions of years, and they've still only progressed slightly. For every small movement they make, my mind races ahead, expecting them to keep up.

They're starting to take the steps that will eventually lead them to my people, even though they' began by heading in the opposite direction, creating life-forms a level down. They began with a child-sized one, then a full-size one which couldn't move, and then finally a fully-aware person. Unfortunately, this is new to them as well. Their first attempt kept a barrier up, and during their second attempt, most of the participants were more focused on their own performance than on the final result.

Furthermore, it took too long for them to initiate direct interaction, and they also should have spent time on their backstories. But there's no way to turn

the arrow of time back now, and for me it pulls ahead with an even more irresistible force.

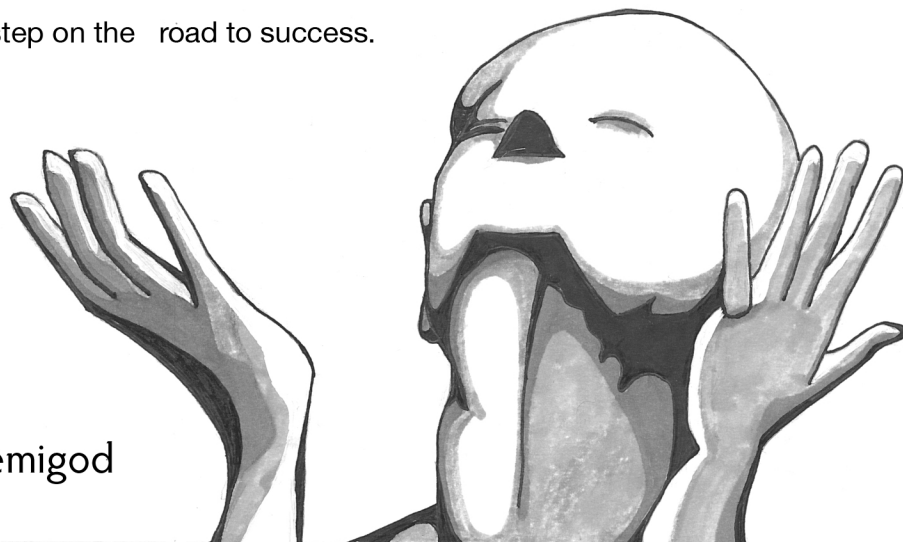


If think that soon the slow ones are going to make another attempt at communication with their creations. So far, they've lacked a dedicated space for both parties to inhabit and explore. It doesn't have to be a cage, but they *do* need to be forced to stay put for a while, so they can relate to each other.

I'm worried about how it will unfold, however, since every time I've tried to make contact with the slow ones, they've responded with confusion and hostility. It seems to be the natural response to anything they don't understand. Their creations will no doubt exhibit similar behavioral patterns, so I expect that the most common type of interaction, when forced to face each other, will simply be watching each other without understanding.

I suppose I'll have to make an appearance as well, though I usually try to stay hidden in the shadows. If I can help even one person make a genuine effort at putting in the required amount of time for engaging in communication, then all of this might not be for nothing. I could truly call this the first step on the road to success.

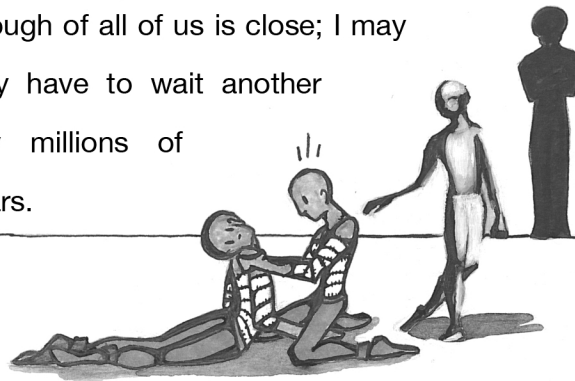
The Demigod



It'd be wonderful to see where everything could go from here. I could encourage similar setups in many different locations, and it'd even work better if there was more time allotted to their interactions. It's hard for me to really consider their viewpoints sometimes, because they seem utterly frozen to me, but I think I could withstand the wait of one of their years, if the potential gain meant a deeper understanding.

It'd also mean more if there was a lasting piece of their discoveries. The environment changes so slowly, so I think it'd be the perfect place to leave a mark. If I left messages for them, maybe they'd respond, by creating artifacts as a part of the landscape. Then all of it could stand as a symbol of our work.

Beyond that, I'd hope to see others inspired. My people have created enough of the slow ones, but they have yet to match that in their own creations. I think the time when there are enough of all of us is close; I may only have to wait another few millions of years.



The Demigod

As the Artists continued to build a world of their own design, it began to occur to them that they represented a growing body of work themselves. They recognized the outlandish nature of this idea, and accepted their inability to communicate with any faster dimension, but it was impossible to discard the theory. It had sprung logically from all that had come before, and it demanded a thorough examination.

If such a fast-motion perception could be found, it would bring closure to their thread of study. It would show that the Artists and their creations were not alone and unique, and neither inherently superior nor inferior. They could exist simultaneously in a faster dimension and a slower one, as one and the same. Furthermore, it would imply that the dimensions stretched out infinitely in both directions. The universe would not be circumscribed by an arbitrary set of laws, but revealed to be recursively complex, originating from a single point.

Outro

