

## Contents

Your Star Is Bright And Glowing- Commentary.....	2
They Only Know Me By My Failures- Commentary.....	4
Visitation Hours Are Over- Commentary .....	6
There Were Many Points Of No Return But This Is Where I Realized It Was Over- Commentary .....	9
Intermission 1- Commentary .....	11
Neoliberalism- Commentary .....	14
A Part Of You Is In The Atmosphere- Commentary .....	16
Trash Nobility- Commentary .....	19
Ninety Percent of Reploids and Sixty Percent of Humans- Commentary.....	19
Intermission 2- Commentary .....	24
Nadir- Commentary .....	26
Duel in the Desert- Commentary.....	29
Light Up The Night- Commentary .....	29
Here Comes The Arm- Commentary .....	33
Intermission 3- Commentary .....	35
Area of Zero- Commentary.....	35
Somatics- Commentary .....	38
Final Results: Tanuki Man- Commentary.....	40
All Epilogues Lead Here- Commentary .....	40

# Your Star Is Bright And Glowing- Commentary

hey so the name of this story is just outright a red vox reference, specifically to the lyrics of From the Stars.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2SOkAlcS7Y>

being a song about space and death, it fits with the story being about nearly dying when falling from space. also "your star is bright and glowing" is here being used as a more poetic take on the idea of the flames on a spacecraft during reentry.

up front, i would like to state that drop man and all of his lore baggage is me blatantly inserting ODS'T's from halo into the setting. i think they're cool. i mean shit the whole "door ejecting" thing is extremely just the crash sequence from halo ODS'T minus having to manually arm the door



does anyone else think it's weird that the commander of the maverick hunters after "sigma" was "signas"? does anyone else think it's weirdly restrained of capcom to never go the obvious route and have him secretly be an aspect of sigma the whole time?

regarding the mention of city pop, i always thought it would be sick as fuck to play city pop over footage of a drop pod. specifically always imagined jajauma musume. go listen to it while watching the drop sequence in the intro of halo odst or the helljumpers scene in halo 2, it fucks i think

the bit of this story where i had to un-fuck the situation i engineered was fun. i enjoy writing how a robot would be able to solve problems. linking thrusters to fire based on readings from your own inner ear seems like a cool solution. sort of my take on the rotational docking bit from interstellar, i guess?

i think i really cooked with the idea of a mostly robotic military wing in space that, being mostly robotic, doesn't really care about keeping their stations pressurized.

what's neat to me about this story is that i never really got to explore that drop man is a huge whore in the server's writing. something about rp stuff is that by nature you can't really have your own characters interact much or be too lost in the weeds with npcs. it just doesn't fit the format very well. like if you wrote a scene that was just you directing two of your characters at each other, it would kinda just be yapping? and, like, don't get me wrong, rp is a robust format and you can use narration and implication and environmental storytelling to imply a whole lot about the lives and interiority but like also if something never comes up, i mean, it just doesn't come up. imagining, like, the scene i was involved with where drop man is fighting fucked up slime and scrap zombies during the invasion arc and he's just like "by the way i'm doing this because of the sexy human im fucking. this kill is for the dudes im having gay robot intimacy with." like come on. but if i'm writing my own story i can kinda just engineer peril that forces the dude to reflect and be like "damn. i actually think my career is in danger of really hurting these people. i'm thinking about these memories and wowie thats kinda fucked up."

it's a balance, y'know?

anyway, i don't really have any idea who the big robot on tanuki man's paramedic team is supposed to be. sometimes you just need to invent a guy to do stuff so the scene feels a bit more lived in. disposable npcs. some of my favorite characters have even come from disposable npcs, but not here.

i'm proud of establishing early on the advantages of energon power versus conventional batteries and i'm proud of my take on the x2 intro. i think it's important to establish early on that, yeah, the maverick hunters are depicted as a well-equipped military outfit with the UN, who run the world at this time.

final thing: so wily tower was a hugely important location in bnw and it's kinda gonna come up a whole lot. it was sort of like the citadel from half life 2, just this big scary imposing place. the wily kids that remained loyal hung out there and it had self contained defense manufacturing and shit. the basement is basically an SCP foundation facility?? it's where fucked up stuff got contained. this comes up a bunch in bnw and it comes up a few times in this anthology (assuming you're reading these commentaries after each story instead of all at once at the end.)

## They Only Know Me By My Failures- Commentary

there isnt anything special to this title. its just kinda meant to be tone poetry or like. jade venting i guess.

so uh. just in case you missed it. jade is green biker dude from mega man x2's intro.

<https://youtu.be/1wvoDBEhaOg?si=TY3CavG5RJMHDUIL&t=90>

that dude who dies basically immediately.

jade is a character that got done really dirty because the person that was supposed to be playing his dad was really bad about not finishing what she started lol and then she fucking dipped from the server. this is part of my way of making up for it (as was killing the dad in the invasion to begin with)

it really bites ass also that the project ended when it did, because i explicitly invented jade for the purpose of doing an x2 intro scene. was he going to die? maybe! it would depend! maybe he would have ended up injured like in this scene instead. the purpose of this scene is to attempt to tie together the bits of jade that existed into something cohesive. for that reason it made a whole lot of sense for x2's intro factory stage to actually be the wily tower. it honestly just fit so very well. desert environment, place where the survivors from x1 fled to, relevant to my take on the character. i think i cooked with that. the scene i alluded to where jade's dad was shot down by terra was already me trying to lay the groundwork for some symmetry. so this is just me cashing out on some angst i think i earned.

"ouh but molly the x2 intro factory is built into the side of a mountain or whatever" shut up i fucking earned this plus i can do whatever i want with this if you want something that conforms rigidly to the canon of the games just go play the games bruh

hoping the horror of "haunted by the mangled corpse of my dead dad" comes across well. it was partly inspired by the description of the corpse Jespar is haunted by visions of in the novel *Dreams of the Dying* by Nicolas Lietzau.

by the way, yes, if you look closely, i state the cold war happens. iirc bnw is a setting where the cold war happened but it took a turn where russia eventually joined up with the UN to save itself from economic collapse, effectively turning the UN into the global governing body. theres some other deviations (including, obviously, the proliferation of sentient robots and the wily wars and all that shit) but thats the really big piece of alternate history before the mega man bits really kick in.

oh damn haha i forgot i wrote in "the greener of the two", i think that's cute wordplay. "greener" because jade wears green armor but also "greener" because "green" is military slang for less experienced soldiers.

i really hope i did the angst well. i hope in "cashing it in" i executed it right. kinda drew on my own experiences of incoherently weeping and yapping into someones chest. like, it reads authentic to me, but will it read authentic to you?

## Visitation Hours Are Over- Commentary

this is one of the more straightforward titles. pretty self explanatory.

in case it's not clear, simon is not my character. he was played by the server owner. blue haired slow aging augmented FREAK and a pretty cool guy who doesn't afraid of anything. really cynical. love him. i always envisioned him doing the anime "push glasses up making the entire lenses glint all white" thingy. in fact i kinda specifically pictured him as looking a lot like the therapist from katana zero (a guy chiefly depicted doing that), but way pastier and with a blue color scheme. it was hard to get into the headspace for this one! but it just felt really necessary because, bluntly, i don't think basically most of the bullshit in mega man x and leading up to mega man zero would have happened if simon was still around. like he's flawed because he buys into the system in a libbish sort of way but also like. dude ages slowly. he can bare minimum make good on staying around for a really long time making sure shit doesn't get fucked.



in any case, the bit where he gets frozen because he has gigacancer from being next to a detonating sunstar is actually something the owner told me she had planned, so this story is just built off that. i'm really proud of tomato being like "hey wait cryo is sketchy as fuck". that thing about frozen subjects turning to goo and definitely being dead? that actually fucking happened, dude! look it up!

tomato is one of my faves. she actually started out in a side project, a medieval AU we ran where it was like, mavericks are fucked up mutated beasts, the world is a wasteland, the hunters are just human knights going out and fighting them in search of a fix. grimdark shit. tomato was just a stinky farmer girl that used a spear (easy to train) and cheap armor that was built off of a blacksmith's metal apron. like literally her name was "tomato potato" because she was a farmer and also because i suck ass at naming. which, being shit at naming was less of a problem in a mega man setting where most characters are robots named shit like [occupation/descriptor] [gender] (cut man, splash woman) or [descriptor] [fursona species] (blizzard wolfgang, storm eagle) but it really reared its head when i wanted to do a human. lmao.

i wasn't able to think of a better name when i brought her over to the main BNW project. here, i am wallpapering over it by giving her a common french surname by marriage to some doubtlessly angelic enby.

by the way, please keep note of the "french" part. it \*will\* come the fuck up later. i'll talk about it more in later commentaries. hahahaha man if you're at all dialed in to mega man lore you will either think i'm really funny for it, think i'm a hackfraud for it, or think i'm cooking with it. really, all 3 are true. i am a funny hackfraud that is cooking.

proud of myself for stating that bradley's are still used in the bnw world. i think it is really really really fucking cool to mix the fantastical sci fi of mega man with real world technology.



so, uh, does simon ever get unfrozen? well, i certainly never depict it. he is only ever indirectly referenced going forward. but i'd like to think maybe he does. if only because i like him a whole lot. if he turned into cryo goo i would drink it for a laugh

oh yeah btw just to be clear our lore surrounding X and Zero is that they were out and about in the very ass end of the classic series. Zero as Infinity was hanging out with his family in Wily Tower but got sealed and moved offsite for A Bunch Of Reasons, but it wasn't supposed to take long for him to be dug up by the Hunters and recruited. X, meanwhile, was just straight up never sealed away. I allude to it later but in my mind, after Zero in the X era re-learns of his origins (something I think we would have done as early as X2, because we would have cooked with the whole "serges is wily" horseshit), he would have probably spent time with the remaining wily bots, e.g. in tanuki man's town. like i think that just makes sense.



...i worry a lot that people will/already do see me as trying to make my material overly relevant to the legendary events of the canon, but what am i supposed to do? run a faction that players of canon characters got involved in, and then just write it as not doing anything?

i guess that accidentally happened when I... had an extremely extended severe mental health crisis. I wasn't writing much of anything during that.

tanuki man's words to simon mirror my own disillusionment with real world politics. "this election is the most important of our lives", forever. fell for it again award. if the Dems fucking run that transphobe freak nazi gavin newsom i will straight up vote for whatever hitlerite the republicans run because if the Dems want to slit this tran's throat, she'll slit right the fuck back, yo. and that's on the GODHEAD.

sorry. i got mad because i remembered things about the real world. what were we talking about? mega man? yeah he's a cool guy i guess. really blue and shit.

## There Were Many Points Of No Return But This Is Where I Realized It Was Over- Commentary

again this title is really literal tone poetry. it's basically reflecting tanuki man's view that while a lot of bad things set the tone in a lot of ways and there were way larger scale incidents that would occur, the crash of Sky Lagoon is where he came to terms with the fact that the hope for peace was going to be something to shelve for a few decades at least.

so, if you're not familiar with mega man, this is set during the intro to mega man x4. x4 is a game a lot of people love and i'm kinda not one of them. even with the undub mod, the story is sort of atrocious! so, like, theres these dudes, the repliforce. theyre real honorable

and shit. some kind of ambiguous military/paramilitary/pmc(?) separate from the maverick hunters. zero is in lesbians with one of their higher up men, and in faggots with the sister of that guy. so. um. someone built a flying city for some reason? and placed it in the vicinity of a ground city?! and in the intro stage it gets attacked by magma dragoon and some repliforce goons and x/zero show up and he tries to play it off as "bro i was just the first hunter on site but we gotta go this ship is going down stronger than you by rebecca sugar streaming on spotify now"

so like. ultra instinct 9/11 happens?! this flying turd of a city just flattens the city below???? and x/zero are like "yo repliforce some of your guys were there we need to run an investigation but like it's chill just put ur weapons down"

and the leader guy is like ERM. CRINGE. DECLARING WAR ON HUMANS NOW. and the game is like "hey theres this guy in the shadows thats not sigma even though its obviously him but the leader guy told him to fuck off so dont worry about that" and yeah so it turns out sigma was totally behind everything and corrupting guys and engineered the whole thing for a laugh. and also at some point zero stone cold murders his boyfriend and girlfriend. at least he still has x or whatever.

really fucking stupid game.

anyway yeah apart from the motivational implications this has for tanuki man and also me just wanting to flex how cool copy man (not my character, a bestie wrote him) is, this story is basically just me critiquing the setting and harping on the fact that sky lagoon could only have been built for really stupid and impure reasoning.

guess i also use it to codify that in my vision of a BNW that continued on, repliforce would have just been straight up a branch of the UN military (and by implication, the hunters are more of a specialist policing task force by comparison)

later on in the anthology, i play with the idea that whatever happened in our version of x4, repliforce post secession were seen by some as a legitimate revolution. this would imply that our version of x4 was a lot less dumb, which is something i basically think would have been guaranteed to have happened. not to toot our own dicks or whatever but like it's not hard to write a better x4, and frankly, some of the shit some people wrote about mega man

stuff will just always stick in my head forever. like nowadays i will always view wood man as this heavily spiritual unabomber sort of guy because of the person that wrote him.

oh yeah uh to be clear the mysterious figures tanuki man sees up in the observation room is just x/zero and magma dragoon.

## Intermission 1- Commentary

okay so obviously its hard to look up what a classified document looks like but i DID look up what the UN's classification levels are and gave it the max one.

POI stands for person of interest and the ID's are truncated forms of robot master serial numbers. the 3 letter ID followed by a dash and 3 digits is here 3 letters and 2 digits. so, like DLN-001 Mega Man would be POI#DLN01.

in case you're not really familiar with mega man serial numbers or just don't want to look them up, SRN09 is Star Ruler Number 009 Neptune, one of the Stardroids. and Stardroids is the [REDACTED] word.





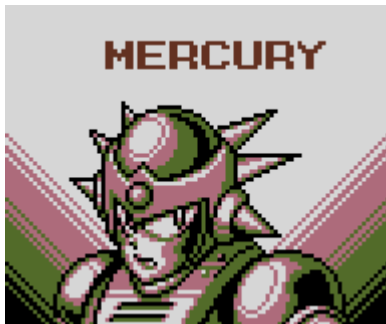
god, the stardroids are so cool. unique boss set, and a lot of tertiary media like the Ariga manga makes them into an aptly huge threat.

writing neptune is weird because i avoid having him refer to himself. just trying to make him feel alien. my version of him is definitely a lot more of a uniform fishman kind of deal, appearance wise.

SRN-008 is pluto, who is a fluffy catboy, btw.



SRN-002 is mercury, this goopy fuck. love him.





is concerned, its pretty alright. so my personal interpretation was that the name was euphemistic- saltwater is corrosive and neptune is a sea creature, so clearly it's some sort of anomalously corrosive brine that just melts shit down.

the bit about the like weird reality warping erosion bomb is something i invented whole cloth, it's just how i personally envision the stardroids sinking an entire fucking coastline. with our powers combined, shit's gonna get fucked. the redacted energy resource are the energy crystals from mega man 3, which we used as a weird plot device; and sunstar is the final boss of the stardroids' game.

## Neoliberalism- Commentary

oh boy, spicy, spicy!

so, x is a pretty alright guy in his own games, right? but he has a pacifism problem. like he's a softie but also involved in a lot of forever hell wars. as much as x7 is a meme game that isn't good, i think its interesting that they reflect this by straight up not having him be playable for the first like quarter(? or half? i forgor) of the game because he's moping about war. in zero 1's ending, he outright states that he retired and \*died\* and is a ghost because he just got so depressed about always fighting mavericks. (side note- x wasn't outright lying but also he sure was omitting a lot until he had to come clean about the dark elf so zero could fix it.) i think the zero series is meant to imply that, like, neo arcadia got evil pilled because x wasn't there to steer it right? but that actually just ties back into tanuki man's whole spiel in the simon story, about how a system is kinda fucked if it can't really self regulate without the threat of some dickhead getting elected and ruining everything. and this kinda naturally lead me to the thought of, like, how do we get from "charismatic leader builds a haven city and dies of the sads" to "that city is now extremely fashy"? well, the obvious answer is that the leader was always a liberal, and you know what they say about who bleeds when you scratch a liberal.

okay, no, i'm not saying that x was or became an outright fascist. that would be... well, silly. but i am saying that it feels like it would make sense for x to be really obsessed with trying

to preserve a sort of status quo that humans in particular value and it probably lowkey comes from a sense of guilt about all the wars. so the speech he gives in this story is extremely... obama. nice sounding rhetoric to mostly say nothing at all. hope. change. drone. strike.

"we will rise to the challenges of this brave new world" omg he said the thing. it's like he's some kind of... man that's mega. x

i guess the whole "forgot about robot masters" award X earned here is kind of an accidental chud moment on his part. lol



i'm proud of the idea that eurasia specifically is what lead to neo arcadia, and that it actually existed in some form as the rebuilt world state prior to the elf wars, and it had extant city states out in the wastes that likely just had their populations consolidated into the main geographic locale after most of them were wiped off the map in the hell that was the elf wars. i think it would tie a lot of things together very neatly. the zero series was always meant to follow on from x5 specifically and inti creates really only got the



opportunity to account for later x games in subtle ways like with the morph tech mirroring next gen reploids (something i imply here, by the wayyyy) or super post-hoc with things like model A calling back to axl in zx advent. the x series is basically a slow motion apocalypse with the world getting more fucked up in each game, and it feels like the zero series is built off x5 and to a lesser extent x6 showing the world as a barren desert after the eurasia incident occurs. zero 4 especially wants to be connected to x5, with it taking place around the crash site and having the x5 end motif built into esperanto and i mean the whole plot point of "weil said we're crashing another space station lol have fun". so like with all of that in mind i think it just made sense to more directly tie neo arcadia as an entity to the immediate outcome of the eurasia incident.

"hey molly, what the fuck was up with that ascii guy?" nothing, really. he was a character a buddy had that i took over. kinda hard to do much with, but a cool enough concept that i sort of just wanted to throw him in at the end. it's really just for the people that were super locked in for bnw. i guess i sort of like the idea that ascii acted as a guardian angel to the individuals in the city. like maybe the elf wars would have been way worse without his subtle interference or whatever. he doesn't come up again but if you wanna pretend he's around when you replay mega man x6 as some sort of dark self flaggelation ritual, go crazy on it. do tricks on it

## A Part Of You Is In The Atmosphere- Commentary

okay so this title is another red vox reference, literally to the same song as with the first story's title. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2SOkAlcS7Y>

this reference is honestly sort of purposeless? like it relates to drop man crossing through the atmosphere on the way back up to space but its kinda only pointing out the symmetry of a story where drop goes back up and <i>doesn't</i> get injured.

i really wish i had finagled "yakub orbital elevator" into the story somewhere but i just couldn't think of a way to make it at all clever. so there it is. yakub orbital elevator.



the worldbuilding in this story is kinda just running off the observation that even peak mega man doesn't actually do a lot with its own worldstate. like we know corporations and society be existing but not much more than that. so im imagining theres like. aerospace shit going on. oh also this story exists to heavily downplay x8's story. like no shade to x8, it's a fine game, but i think on the whole it makes sense if it's a relatively minor event between eurasia and the elf wars. and uh yeah x7 either didnt happen or was a historical footnote. whatever relevance you want to imagine axl had, i sort of imagine that he got involved in way more meaningful shit later down the line.

by the way, i think i cooked with "orbital lattices".

regarding drop man, as much as he enjoys being a soldier, i think he deserves to not be a boot boy for all the bullshit happening in the x series and beyond. so this was how i reconciled that. you may notice that jade was there. are they lovers now? did he rizz jade up after the hospital way back in that second story? or are they just pals? that's something i want you to decide. pick whatever you like more. tell me all about it. thanks

the story very briefly alludes to a "Neo BosNYWash". that's a reference to a pet project of a friend's, though not a friend from the BNW sphere. all you need to know is that it revolves around the idea of boston, new york city, and washington d.c. all expanding and merging into one huge urban sprawl.

anyway, so blizzard wolfgang is one of my all time favorite robot designs in all of mega man. it's such a shame he's locked in such a bad game. he's like the late 90's version of von lycaon from zzz- hot wolfman stuck in some utter garbage.

oh my god, i just looked it up and x6 was in 2001. it came out after 9/11 and less than a month after mgs2. what the fuck? that's a ps1 game. budget title moment. rockman and forte if it fucking sucked moment. i guess blizzard wolfgang is the von lycaon of the global war on terror. wow.

anyway yeah blizzard wolfgang was one of my all time favorite characters to write. in this story i basically ambiguated x6's story so hard that he's still alive and well. i loved him so much and had so many ideas for him oh my god. just my golden boy. his ass was not! going to get capped by that fucker alia. his ass was not! going to be indebted to some weirdo. his ass was going to be exceedingly my most normal and uneccentric character despite being a fuckhuge wolfman with floral patterns on his claws. like i need to emphasize that writing someone who was relatively chill (no pun intended) was actually gonna be pretty fresh territory for me. like tomato is super adhd bouncy, tanuki man is neurotic and weird, drop man is a workaholic, pirate man talks like the flying dutchman, terra was constantly choking on evil cock and then he got unceremoniously capped and it was really funny, et cetera. and i was just gonna have this regular guy having to deal with his weird sad world and being built for a specific dangerous job. godddddd.



and then i had a huge fucking prolonged mental health moment. and then bnw ended. piss

## Trash Nobility- Commentary

i gotta be honest, this story mostly speaks for itself. the title isn't really a reference to anything, it's just about people being good to each other even though society would view them as low class. ari was not an OC of mine in any real sense, but a character i came up with for this story. proud of myself for figuring out a really terrible and dehumanizing serial number format i guess. if this story has any larger purpose in the story of the anthology, it's about showing neo arcadia getting more fashy towards the reploids it relies on for labor.

this story is based on the feeling of going to this one friend's place to smoke weed and be spiritually rejuvenated. we watched a bunch of better call saul one time, so i named the humans in this story after characters from the show, though it's an entirely superficial reference.

"robot tries to smoke weed" sounds funny but i tried to take it seriously. emphasize that it's a really kind moment on the part of the humans.

oh yeah also i imply that the limited lifespan law is back in effect by this time ("this time" being somewhere ambiguously before the elf wars, implying shit was bad even before them)

## Ninety Percent of Reploids and Sixty Percent of Humans- Commentary

this story's title is a direct quote of some text from zero 3, where it is stated that those amounts died in the elf wars. because, like, it's set during them. this is one of the real big stories both for content and in terms of "i needed to make this anthology so i could write this".

I was really keen on having at least one story that depicted the Elf Wars because the games always depicted it as this terrible eldritch event in history and I just wanted to conceptualize what that even looks like. Hordes of fucked up robots modding themselves sketchily with the insane power of cyber elves and going crazy against society seems like an apt way to imagine the first half of the wars, before the mother elf “fixed” everything and then got corrupted and the dr. weil half of the wars happened. And, yeah, just to be explicit, the elf tomato had in the carrier was the mother elf.



penelope is another one of those "my favorite characters i never got to do much with" type deals. she started as a recurring background npc with tin can and i just kept enjoying throwing her into shit.

this is where i formally introduce cyber elves into this anthology and lay down the rules for my interpretation of them. really the main deviation for me is just that fusion elves can be used more than once, but need to be rejuvenated or they'll die. this already seemed to be the implication imo, with their single use nature being a gameplay conceit. like passy, ciel's elf in z1's intro, probably did a whole bunch before she died, and it seems implied she had a prior relationship with ciel. so my read was always that bypassing the energy shield, unfucking zero's arms, and starting him up just put her over the edge.



anyway this is one of those things i mentioned in a prior commentary about how it's sort of hard to build a relationship between two of your own characters in an rp setting. in my head tomato and tanuki man were pretty close friends but it was hard to ever do more than imply it before. well, here, i'm having tin can send someone a pretty far distance to save her from being consumed by war just as a favor. they gotta be close for that to make sense. also worth noting that penelope and tomato being buddies is a whole cloth invention of this story, though i always did imply that tomato had proven herself to tin can as a chill dude

this story is also here to state unequivocally that given how hard humanity fell off, tin can as a faction is very down to just start stealing shit out peoples houses again. five finger discount on cyber elf equipment, very nice.

god. rereading this shit rn and seeing the bit where tomato comes down off the top rope with a chair. that's actually so funny i can feel it like. in my nose. u ever get that? where ur like almost laughing so u feel it in ur nose? god. imagine her just fucking bopping penelope on the head and her head retracts like she's patrick star and it makes the meme metal pipe noise really loud and penelope screams like tom and jerry. imagine it. please

anyway so yeah do you remember how i said to remember that tomato married someone with a french last name? so uh the people that made the zero games were ouiaboos and named everything in french for whatever reason. also they wrote lore somewhere that one of ciel's ancestors created the mother elf. so uh. tomato's partner, a cyber elf scientist, could be the one ;3 ruminate on that one for a while i bet i just blew your fucking mind with that (if you are remotely into mega man lore)

anyway so theres lore that humans basically cannot see cyberspace shit. in zero 2, ciel is always doing research on cyber elves and she wears a little vr headset that flips down out of her hair band. so tomato's shades are like my shitty dollar tree version of that



the "giant horrible machine" in the far distance is a bit of a nod to the earthmover from ultrakill. kinda just imagining its a fucked up mix of a bunch of big construction bots.



meanwhile the weird amalgamate that attacks our protagonists is sort of in my head akin to the security robot from metroid fusion? like, with a dude sticking out of the top? and a bunch of guns strapped to it?



tomato getting cyber elf armor is a reference to the biometals from zx, by the way. if you don't know what that is, the zx games are ones where you gain these abstract little machines called biometals that house the souls of dead people (chiefly x, zero, the four guardians, and totally not axl guys trust us) and they can talk to you and let you wear their armor and use their weapons.

zx and zx advent are sort of stupid story wise but i like the idea of biometals. i also personally believe that they absolutely just house the cyber elves and keep them constantly full of energy. it would make a lot of sense given cyber elves are already explicitly the medium by which several people come back as ghosts, literally including x and phantom, who both have biometals. so basically i think it makes sense if "making temporary armor and weapons" is just already a cyber elf function

i think there's a kind of dark humor to penelope simultaneously being like "armor isn't good to rely on if you get shot" and also "okay let's go risk getting shot". and sure enough tomato literally gets shot. but she's fine so it's fine. if i was a more sadomasochistic writer i might have just outright killed tomato right then and there just to feel bad and hope you do the same. or like treated penelope's "advice" as a death flag and have her die instead. but i like these characters. and i don't generally want to make my reader miserable for no reason. so we're not gonna do that.



"crisis", the pilot, is adapted from a character in the medieval AU i mentioned that tomato originates from. edgy thief man, real name probably not crisis. i want this twink obliterated



and, yeah, explicitly, tomato's family, or bare minimum her kid, make it.

## Intermission 2- Commentary



couching this story in an email exchange was something i decided extremely last minute, but i think it helps to flesh out the world a little. i also think it specifically helps to build up the next story just a little. anyway, bass was not a character i wrote, but the person who did write them did such an otherworldly, godly job of it that it's just one of those permanent lenses. yes, bass WAS a huge faggot that was hugely of the homosex for rock, and yes, this did ruin his life. in a lot of ways, bass was one of the true emotional cores of BNW as a project. and, like, a huge theme of the project was indeed "hey it's actually probably pretty fucked up that some of these people have been fighting for their whole lives and some of them you could reasonably call child soldiers"

rock is seen as a pretty happy dude. prime era capcom certainly liked to put a certain joy into his sprite work and art for shit like mvc2. but... like... would he be happy?

rock seems really tragic to me and i know i'm not alone on this if all the comics and music projects are anything to go off of. like if i had a nickel for every band that made music about mega man being sad about killing, i would have two nickles, and i would shove both of them up my ass

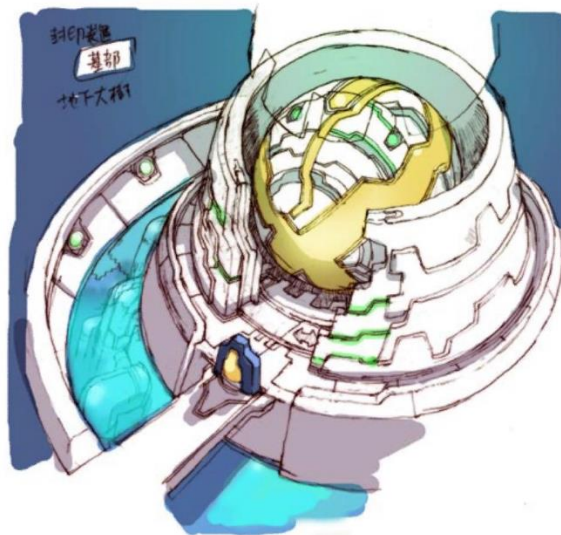
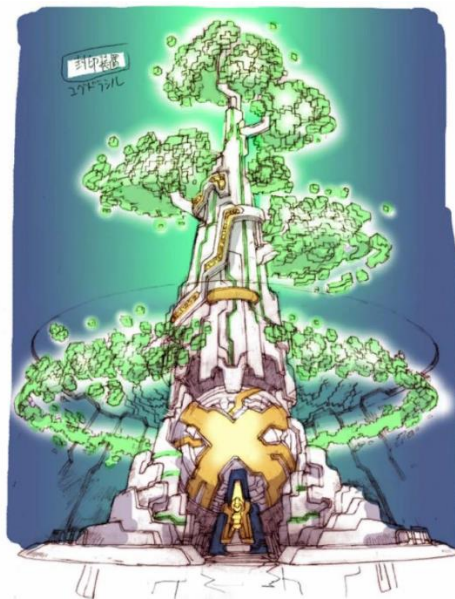
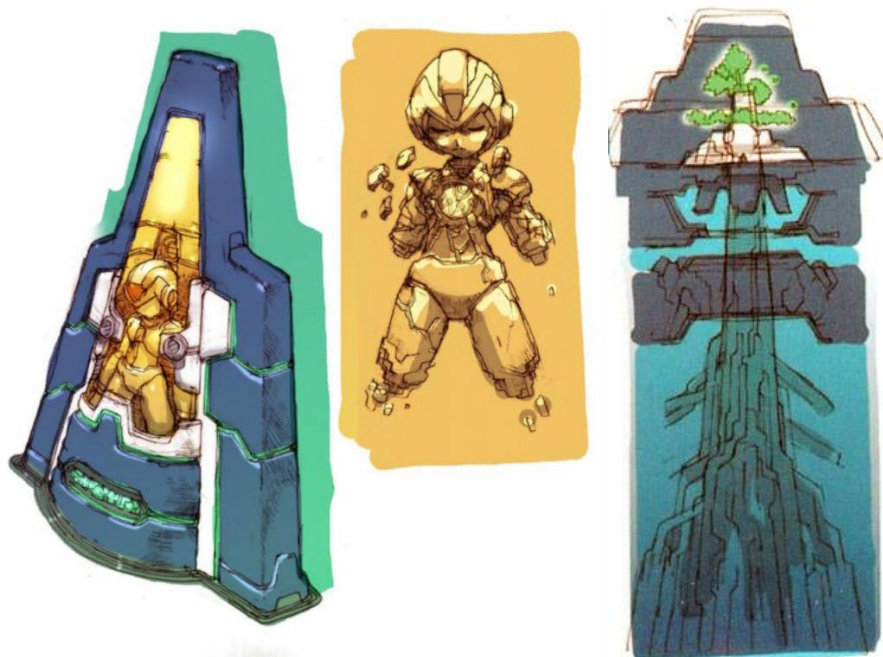
here's some art the bass writer drew. please cry about it. this is honest to god one of my favorite things in all of art. fuck you



oh yeah also i had fun with the email chain in this. harpuia and phantom being all weird and formal and political-maneuvery and x is just like "lmao i raised some nerdy kids. can u pls be less CIA"

## Nadir- Commentary

probably among the more cynical works in the anthology. the name is effectively meaningless beyond "yup these sure are the bad times".



i should draw the sheep scientist at some point.

i wrote this shit well before i wrote the intermissions and when i was done with the intermissions it hit me really hard that totally by accident, x having an inferiority moment about rock lines up really cleanly with him reading a transcript where bass posthumously glazes rock

anyway i wrote x to make what i think is a good point. dr. light sure did "let him choose" but give him a gun by default.

"say the words exactly" is a halo reference.

<https://youtube.com/clip/UgkxshiN74MRh1f2t8Oaj6NA22CQvQlfAKz?si=3CBycVsOVAo1-ZPi>

anyway uh in case its not obvious the second part of the story is literally just x's ghost going backwards through the zero 1 intro stage.

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/inVGHn2\\_yQ?si=ffw8dm\\_ag-Ks1LCS](https://www.youtube.com/embed/inVGHn2_yQ?si=ffw8dm_ag-Ks1LCS)

one of the details i am EXTREMELY prideful of, and which comes up a bunch in the rest of the anthology going forward, is the concept of there being multiple resistances. in the zero series, the resistance emblem is a weird R (for resistance) with an "05" number on top of a red triangle.



some people interpret the red triangle to be in reference to x's triangular forehead gem, with its upwards direction being a challenge to him, an inversion. a lot of people take the view that the resistance symbology remained culturally relevant in the zx era because reploids would wear the red triangle where x's gem was and they probably picked it up from the resistance. none of that matters to me! i am \*infinitely\* more intrigued by the "05" number. for a long time, i've read into this the implication that there were 4 previous resistance movements, and ciel's resistance has a 5 in their emblem in remembrance. i do more with this later on.

anyway, this is another instance of "i hope i did a good job with the angst"

## Duel in the Desert- Commentary

this story is named after a mission of the same name in zero 1. that's about the extent of its depth. the characters in this story are loosely pulled from some vague ideas i've had here and there, but honestly, this is a pretty whole-cloth work. mainly wanted to add a bit of a check in about what tin can is up to and how dense the arcadian hitler particles are; and explore the idea of holographic weapons. i think it's badass. i guess this is extremely extremely vaguely inspired by the bit in jojo part 2 where yung joseph goes to mexico and is stalked by some overdesigned nazi knife guy only to immediately body him and tie him to a cactus

it took a lot of fuckin restraint to make scarab's serial number not be "621" lol furry moment

did scarab join tin can? did he break the conditioning? you decide! these characters don't appear again in this anthology!

## Light Up The Night- Commentary

the title here is a reference to a track by The Protomen. It's a track I couldn't *<i>not</i>* reference frankly.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkLvpt9Z3fA>

admittedly it's a pretty surface level reference other than being a good fightsong. like clawing for relevance here, pirate man sure does light up the night with gunfire and glowsticks i guess

pirate man. what a guy. bitches love pirate man. love cracking open the pirate swear dictionary and listening to flying dutchman clips for inspo. was always fun to do. not even just for the obvious- but also, like... i dunno, i like writing an old dude living his best life. he's got his ambiguous dom, he's got his ambiguous subs. gachimuchi on the high seas. i can't not love him with his weird design and his baller theme- both versions.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jx3VlgVYA6E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRbKmTq7C4E>

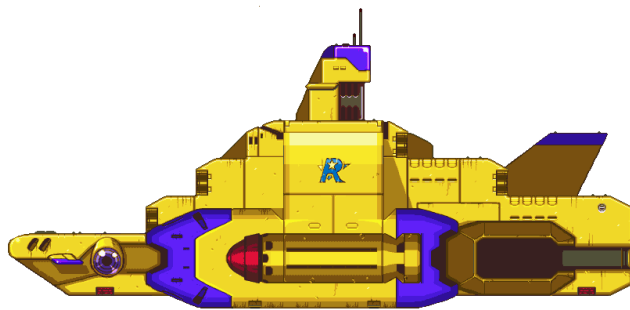
i also really love the demake for mega man 8 bit deathmatch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfUF-LV62E0>

the repliforce submarines are a detail i lifted directly from zero 1. they show up in leviathan's first stage, actually. really odd detail. i mean i guess it makes sense that they would have left some hardware lying around for someone else to find and appropriate, but

idk

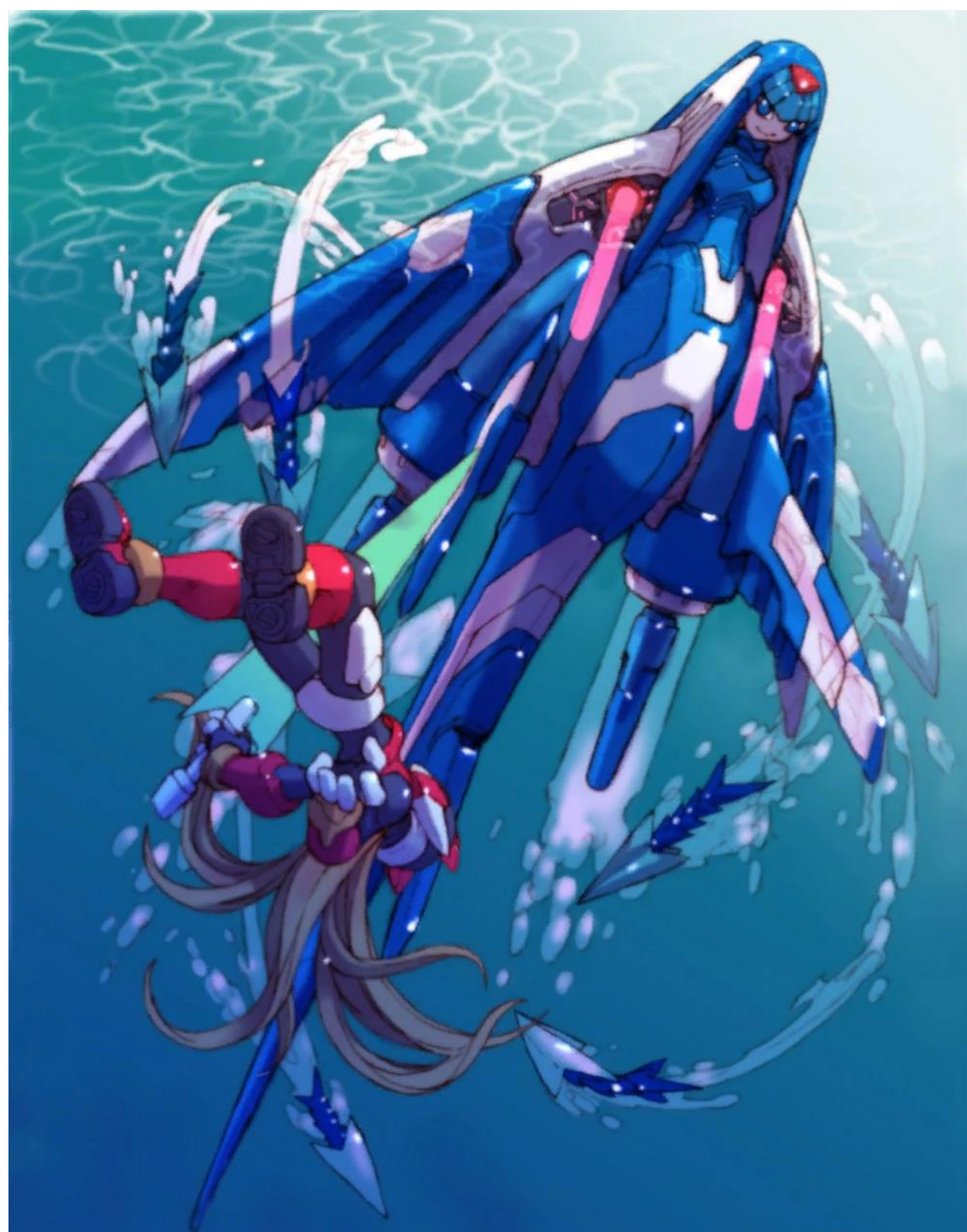
weird



i don't care how unlikely the sunken city being sort of intact-ish is. i think it's cool.

leviathan is using the "armed phenomenon" form from zero 2, a sort of transformy bit all the guardians did for their endgame fights. they were hard boss fights, but not... like, not all that much harder? so i decided to roll with a headcanon that their intended design is for countervehicle purposes.







so uh that whole curse monologue thing pirate man drops is very very a reference to the lighthouse: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrekMzfC7Gw>

you know? i think pirate man could mid diff leviathan. i think he actually was angry and locked in enough that he could have done it. straight up zero would have had one less problem to worry about when his time came if neptune hadn't driven her off. or maybe she also would have fled if pirate man started to really damage her

i think neptune's sense of penance is basically crucial to who he is. I ran the numbers once and if neptune just means a day for every dead person in the sunken LA, it is possible that he is going to be haunting that area for tens of thousands of years.

are pirate man and king actually into each other? okay this one's way less of a "maybe". like theres some wiggle room but i feel like that would make a lot of sense. anyway i didn't write king. it was someone else. she verbatim tried to write him like king harkinian from zelda cdi but strangely it actually just worked. it literally gave him aura. my boy, this peace is what all true warriors strive for

## Here Comes The Arm- Commentary

the title of this song is another protomen reference. it's a really depressing track about dr. light preparing to let himself be killed. it mirrors the story a lot, but light ends up getting a second wind in the end. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQjCh6AjUe4>

this story was... difficult to write and difficult to edit. i genuinely felt it was the most ethical to break the immersion to put a content warning on it.

i also don't think this anthology would be complete without it.

it comes from a personal place. my own suicide attempt. Really this story is barely about mega man, or robots, or sci fi. it's about the conflicting feelings i felt on the day i put a belt around my neck and the doorknob. it's about the desire for peace but the instinctive fear.

petal is a character I wanted to do for a while. he had different names at different times in my head, and sometimes entirely different genders. I wasn't certain his story would end in death, but I knew he had to be a sad person written from an emotionally honest perspective. he had to come from my own suffering.

someday i would like to do a version of him that gets to become consistently happy and okay.

someday i would like to become a version of myself that gets to become consistently happy and okay.

i envy the peace he found.

sorry if that's too real.

if you really need some mega man related commentary, i gave a canonical name to the resistance movement in the mold of elaborately named leftist revolutions, i conceptualized a resistance emblem and implied that they started out complex and became abstractions of the previous with each iteration. i even softly implied that the crashed plane mission in zero 1 is someone from resistance 4 using one of the planes gained from 3. i hope that's enough to chew on. i need to commentate on literally anything else. sorry

## Intermission 3- Commentary

This kinda speaks for itself, i think. just a weird story that you can take or leave. in bnw, we had a less formal format called the "comms channel". basically, in lieu of complex scenes, you could just have characters interact solely through dialogue, by writing text transcripts in designated chats, which were implied to be transcripts of a globally accessible voice chat medium. the advantage is that they're really fast and breezy to write. all of the intermissions were written using this paradigm, but only this intermission directly replicates the syntax (for the most part)

the italicized descriptors were novel, though. a necessity. this shit is sort of scp foundation of me.

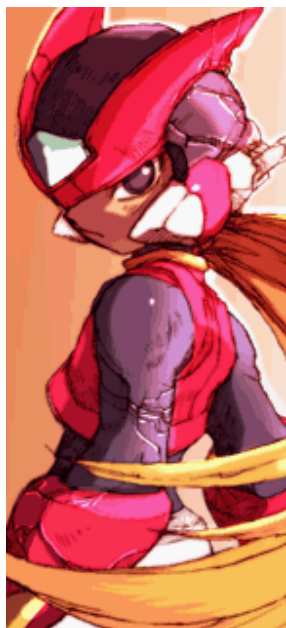
## Area of Zero- Commentary

this story is named after the credits theme to zero 1. relevant because it occurs after the end of zero 1, about 6 months into the year between games.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNgFKXq5noU>

it's definitely one of the "big ones" that i viewed as essential to this anthology. i split it into 3 parts for flow.

zero is such a cool guy.



i wanted to contend with the fact that some people in the world would definitely be old enough to personally remember zero from before his long nap. especially in bnw, where things happen on a faster time scale. having tomato be elderly is, i think, an efficient way to give a vague impression of the time scale of this anthology, or more particularly, the time between our version of x2 and z1.

when zero says he "killed [copy x] with extreme prejudice", this is a callback to cyber elf x telling zero to do exactly that.

the cyber elf that tanuki man uses, pinatari, is actually a reference to an OC i have, with the same name. i've posted art of him on this website. he's a zelda oc, belonging to a race of tiny mouselike people. he's not really relevant, i just wanted to have him show up so the real mollyheads could soyface.



the cyber elf jackson is actually a real cyber elf from the games. apart from the mother elf and x by technicality, he is the only real one that shows up. he's a secret easter egg you get in zero 1 if you played on easy mode or used literally every elf. he's a weird lizard fellow who is a reference to sting chameleon from x1. he allows zero to become invincible while flashing rainbow colors for a few seconds if you hold A, which is actually how sting chameleon's weapon behaves when charged. i'm not implying zero used all the cyber elves or canonically exists in easy difficulty, though. i'm just saying the elf exists and helped zero out of a few binds. his power probably works differently in the BNW continuity. note that i skirted around describing it. in any case, having him be too damaged to use the power again and retiring is a good way to make sure zero isn't just chilling with a god tier elf forever. like lowkey throw croire out if this dude is around. zero would low diff weil and survive ragnarok with jackson in tow.

so uh. zero and cerveau (the mechanic in the photo). i explicitly ship them. i genuinely think there's something deeply homosexual about how cerveau dotes on zero and tells him "don't you dare die". i sincerely think that it's probably really intimate when cerveau is repairing zero and zero, this badass guy, is wincing from cerveau's gentle touch. this is yaoi that is actually yuri. oh my god the longing is real. i'm gonna draw them blushing. fuck you. i'll make them kiss.



when tomato says "That's right. I'm a bona fide human.", this is actually verbatim quoting a bit of dialogue from zero 3, where weil reveals that killing him is theoretically-but-not-really a conflict of interest for what he assumes are but is wrong about zero's motives. however, here, i use the line to a much less creepy effect.

when tomato alludes to having a granddaughter, i am in the loosest and most cheeky sense implying that it is ciel from the zero games. tomato doesn't know at this point that ciel is wrapped up in resistance stuff.

the "nephew" zero alludes to is jade. and, yeah, this means jade is alive and well and reachable. therefore it is safe to assume he isn't living in neo arcadia. lol

also, i just want to be clear, tomato lives fulltime in tin can by this point and has for a good while. she's disgusted by neo arcadia.

zero is like solid snake. he has his shit together. for the most part. but i want him to be with the boy in his life. cerveau is his otacon. FUCK

## Somatics- Commentary

somatics is a form of therapy that relies on the body's senses. this is reflected in tanuki man experiencing tomato's senses for analytical purposes. the title is also a pun on the name of the game "soma", which is about a lot of things including transferring the mind into a machine. unlike in soma, in my story, a true transfer as opposed to a copy is actually possible, but the question is if it can be done in time.

i guess the type of friendship between tanuki and tomato is basically siblinghood? that fits with the vibe that tin can is sort of a large found family.

this story is set in the middle of zero 3's events. the ciel system has been completed, with its data being disseminated to many groups. if you don't know what that means, basically, a solution to an energy crisis was found. that's actually the lotus machine hologram. ciel is commonly associated with images of glowing lotuses. that's the form her solution takes.



so, uh, yeah. whether or not tomato is actively aware of ciel's exploits is ambiguous, but i leave the door open to it via the hope tomato feels lookin at the hologram.

tanuki man has bad distress tolerance when it comes to death. is he going to successfully save tomato and give her an immortal robotic body? well, i mean, i hope so? but if you think it would be a better story if he didn't, you can decide that he failed and had to deal with it.

## Final Results: Tanuki Man- Commentary

the title of this is just a nod to the results screen at the end of levels in the zero games.

this is a document that is meant to mirror the character sheet i submitted to get tanuki man accepted as a character in the bnw roleplay in the first place. but now it's inverted. instead of how he starts, it's where he ends up, who he's become. I added some fields but the vibe is mostly there.

If you are viewing the web version of the BNW Coda, the page for this story is styled to resemble the google docs editor, because that's what we used for our sheets.

as a character, tanuki man started out as merely an alt design of my fursona, until my friend got me into the bnw server and he became his own thing. in a lot of ways, tanuki man is the sort of person i wish i could be. he succeeds at shielding people from the encroachment of fascism. he's competent at a lot of things. he's not me. i'll never be him. but it's possible that i'll achieve some level of success in life. real success, not have money success.

zero saying "wake me when you need me" is another halo reference lol i just can't help myself with this slop <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TnEUckTU-fU>

## All Epilogues Lead Here- Commentary

this story is barely mega man. it's more focused on being conceptual. the title is extremely literal, like yeah you could view the end of the universe as the epilogue to every story ever told.



i know the science is janky in some spots. i know that. that's okay. it's the science i need for the story.

who all from this anthology was on the planet? whoever you want, baby. tomato. maybe drop man and his partners are there. maybe jade. pirate man. King. somehow, petal is there and happy if you want. who was the lover? i mean, probably copy man, right? that would make sense, right? but, truth be told, i just... i couldn't bear to have the story go in such an explicit direction.

like, yes, if i was committing to a big project about tanuki man's near-infinite space adventures at the end of time, i would probably iron out who from earth was still present. but why would i do that?

the point of this story isn't really "about" that sort of shit. it's about tanuki man. it's about his ideals being taken to a lovely extreme. you know he feels the love, right? he knows the name of every one of those trillions of aliens and robots on his planet. he would never call it "his" planet anyway. he just keeps the lights on.

so then what was that ending even about? not the "i love you" part. hopefully you get that i am an extremely sentimental person and i think expressing love is important in moments like this.

i mean, i laid it out in the story, didn't i? my commentary bled into the prose and i gave you suggestions about outcomes

if you want to know my personal take?

tanuki man, his lovers (he's poly), his people, and his planet, they all survive. they witness the birth of a new universe. whether it's the same or on repeat, tin can goes on and on and on. it's about being okay forever. something i wish i could have. it goes on forever because i

love this little town and the funny man that runs it. he lives in my head and i think about him a lot.

you know i'm gonna make a game, right?

i'm gonna make a bunch, actually.

the big project is going to be a platformer that spans from his awakening to the start of the invasion. gonna file the serial numbers off. make it its own thing. include scenes lifted near-verbatim from the server's archives wherever i can.

hire artists and musicians. do a bunch of the art and music. do all the programming and most of the original writing.

after that, i've got some ideas. an expanded version of the invasion as a fire emblem type tactical rpg would be fun. y'know, in a war is hell sort of way. could also make a bunch of original shit that is nonetheless still set in my legally distinct spinoff of a fanfiction project of a slept on video game franchise.

it's always been all about the love.

