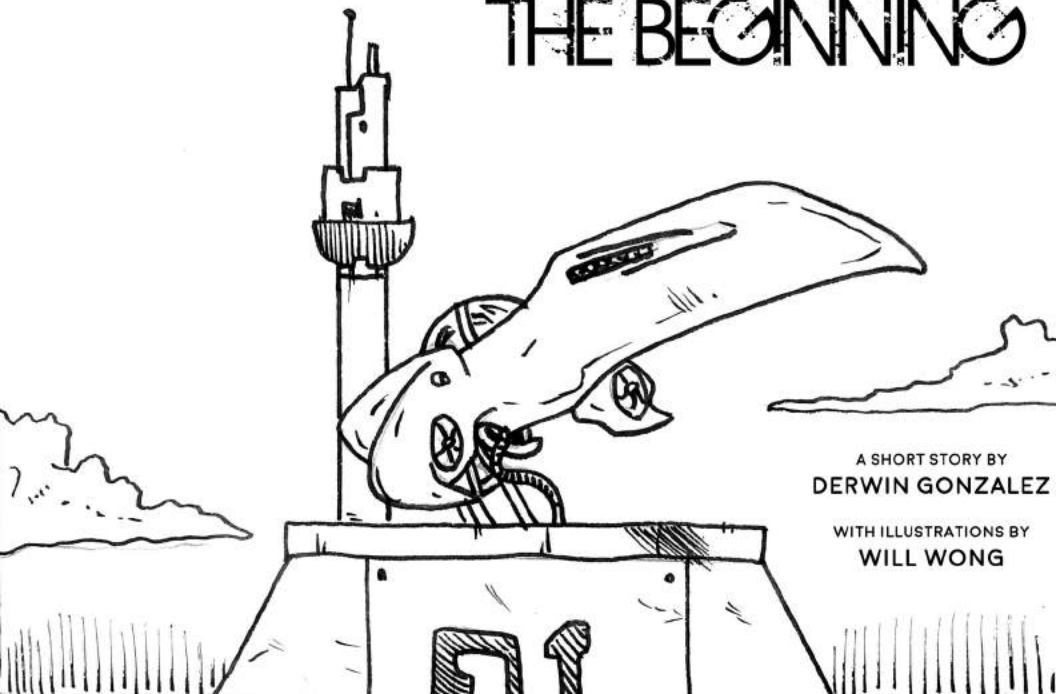


# THIS ENDS AT THE BEGINNING

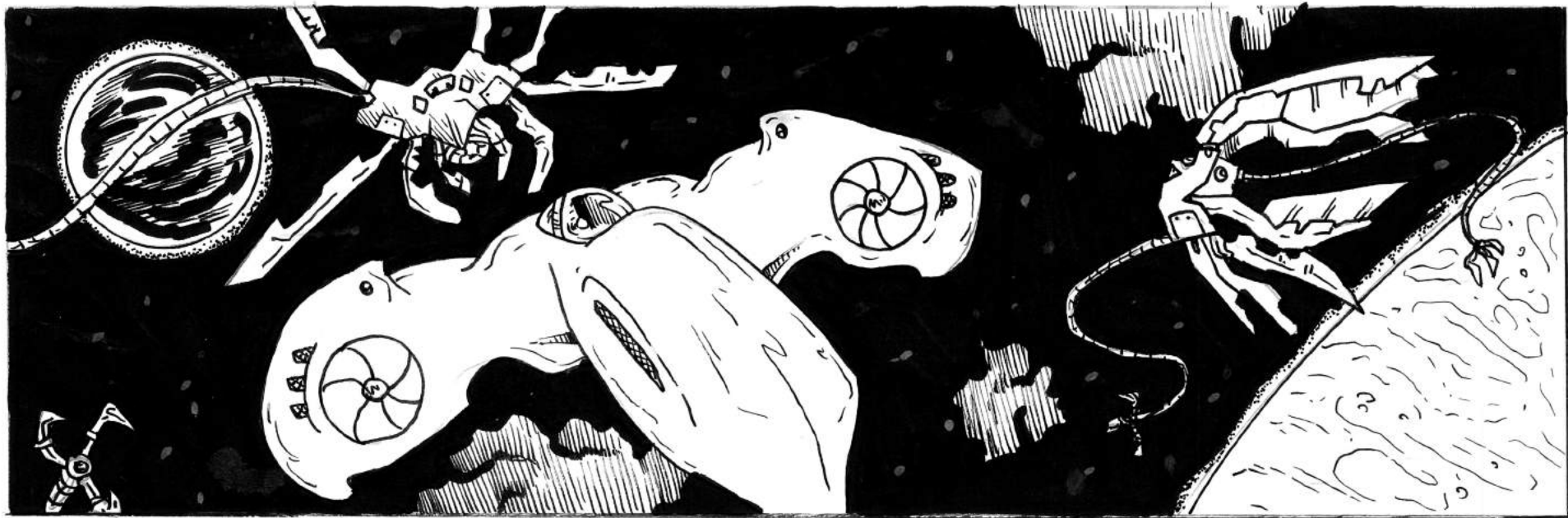


A SHORT STORY BY  
DERWIN GONZALEZ

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
WILL WONG

The V-Ship was our galaxy's crowning achievement in interstellar travel. Today she would reach a speed only thought attainable in theory. As we blasted through the vortex, the V-Ship's iridescent hull shimmered beautifully with the awesome reflection of her penetration of time and space.

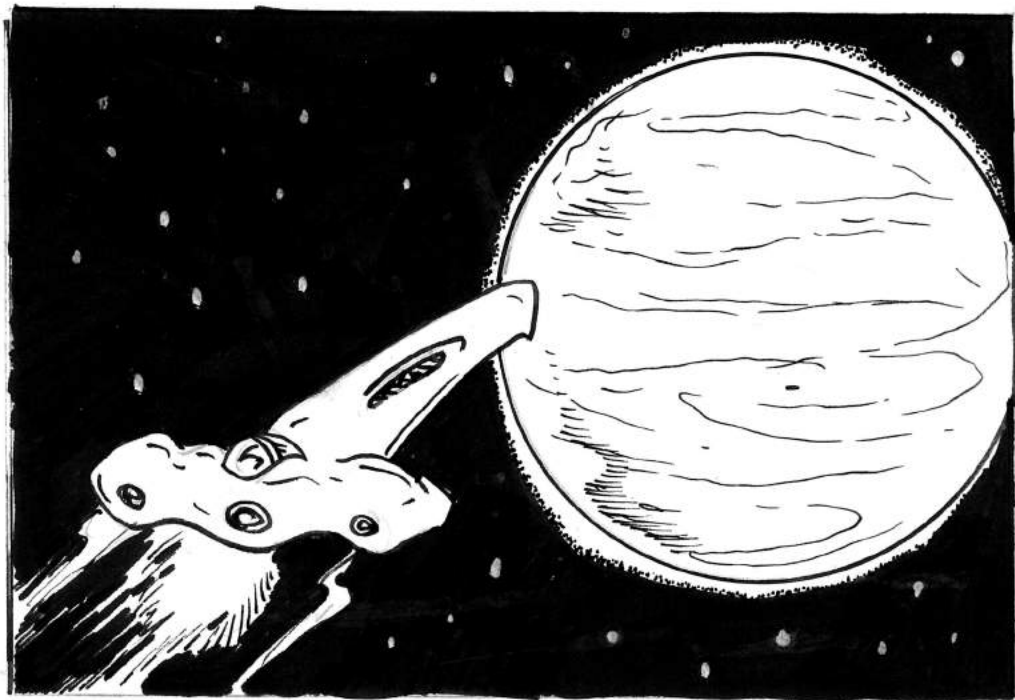




Our defense systems detected the enemy's bio-drones in pursuit and closing in behind us. We expected a challenge and were prepared for one. As the Vortex Effect kicked in, I pushed V-Ship even harder. The Tech Clerics of the Yosidiean Quadrant had provided us with a miracle: our hull was covered with a shielding formula that could withstand the pressure of pushing through.

Our enemy's technology fell short. Their drones flashed into nothingness, disintegrated by the pull of time and space. The V-Ship emerged on the other side with a brilliant flash. The V in our ship's designation stood for victory and I would allow her nothing less. We were the last hope of the free universe.

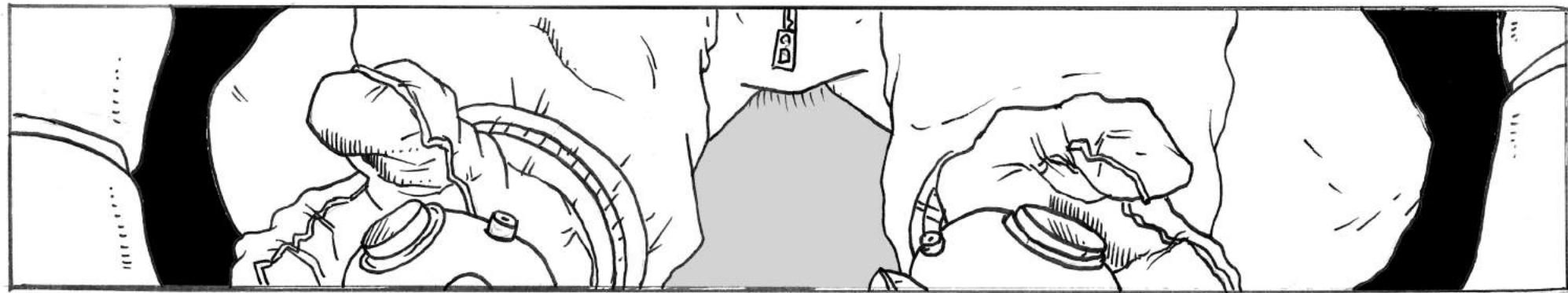
V-Ship tore through the fabric of reality. We emerged at the other end of the wormhole, several millions of years in the past, at our enemy's infancy. For quite some time this mission had been a matter of contention. Certain council members argued that our mission was worse than genocide – we weren't just killing a species, we were wiping out every trace that they even existed. But the enemy had brought this on themselves; for a thousand years they had spread war and destruction across the galaxies. Now I was bringing it back to their home planet in the form of dark matter bombs, the very weapons they used to subjugate 500 worlds.





V-Ship entered the atmosphere of the watery world called Earth. It's oceans teemed with single celled organisms that would one day evolve into Humanity; the bane of the known universe. I armed the bombs and plunged V-Ship into the sea, headed straight for the planet's core...

# THIS ENDS NOW.





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