

**A BLACKFOOT GRAPHIC NOVEL**

A'paissamma na Victor (Finding Victor)



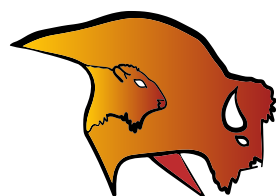


This is a work of fiction. Any similarity to persons living or dead is either coincidental or expressed consent was authorized. The story depicts graphic scenes and is intended for a 14A audience. All events are loosely based on stories, opinions, and experiences of selective Indigenous youth in Calgary. This graphic novel is not to be sold for profit by USAY or any other persons, however, donations can be made at [usay.ca](http://usay.ca).

Several dialects of Blackfoot exist; only one dialect is represented in this work. Traditional Blackfoot legends, stories, and characters inspired the art and story. This work is intended to be used as a language-learning tool, which should be combined with resources to be effective in producing a proficient speaker. Readers are encouraged to consult fluent speakers to learn more about pronunciation and stress patterns. Readers should also consult our Blackfoot Learning Guide at [usay.ca](http://usay.ca) or on our YouTube channel for further language development.

No parts of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without written permission of USAY.

For information regarding permission, please contact **403-233-8225**.



**USAY**

**Copyright © 2020**  
**by the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth**  
**(USAY)**

**Funding generously provided by:**  
Canadian Heritage,  
Aboriginal Peoples Program,  
Aboriginal Language Initiative





# Get our **APP!**

Whenever you see the USAY AR logo scan over the page with your device with the app open, then watch the image come to life. Make sure your ringer is on and volume is up. Now, you can find the AR pages throughout the novel, open the app and enjoy!





# Prayer

**Aayo ihstipatapiyooop, nohk'ksikaakskohsaakinaann ahohk ksisstsikoyik.**  
O Creator, be near us today.

**Kimmaatookinaan, anak kaanomyanistsitapi nit'hipoy.**  
Take pity on us, all peoples included.

**Okky niit'h piipoy, annak kawaapoomahka, payootah, sooyitapii.**  
Also, I pray for all creative who roam the Earth, all birds, and all sea creatures.

**Maakoohkomaanist asookapis kshakoom.**  
Everything on Earth to remain the way it should be.

**Anak maatsoopookhkootima maakohksti piik'khotsimass.**  
All unfortunate people to acquire their needs.

**Noomhpiipoy anak kanaitapi makooohsookapis opatapiisowiy**  
For all people to have a good life, good health.

**Okky ninoohkitoot'hsisk miisaamipaatapiysin, Miistawaatsimaan, kaamotaani, kootsimaan.**  
Also, I ask for a long life, to raise my children to adulthood, to escape harm, and to have all my necessities taken care of.

This is an **AR** practice image, utilize the app to check out the USAY logo come to *life*.

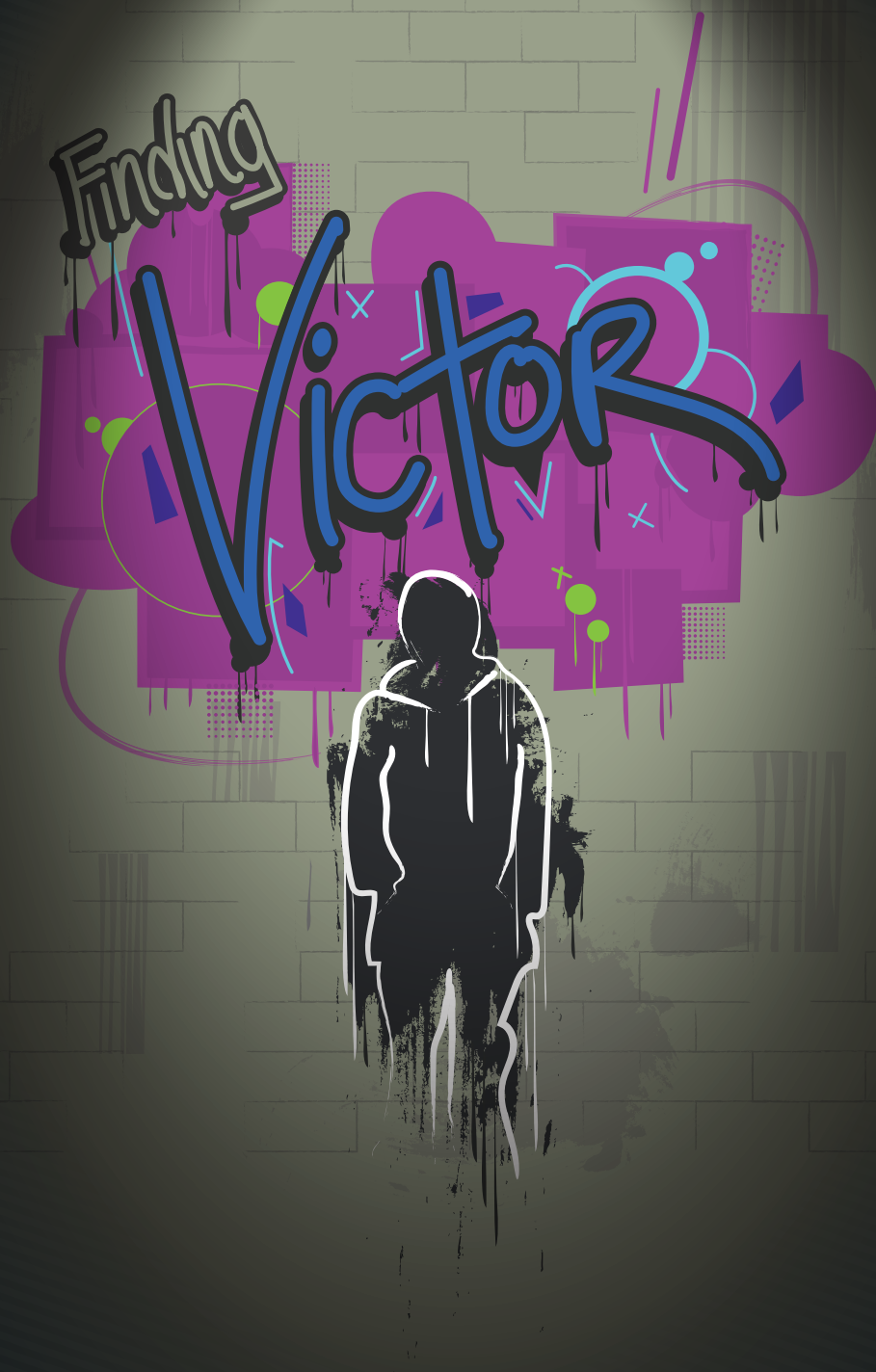


## URBAN SOCIETY FOR **ABORIGINAL YOUTH**

And check out the learning guide below!



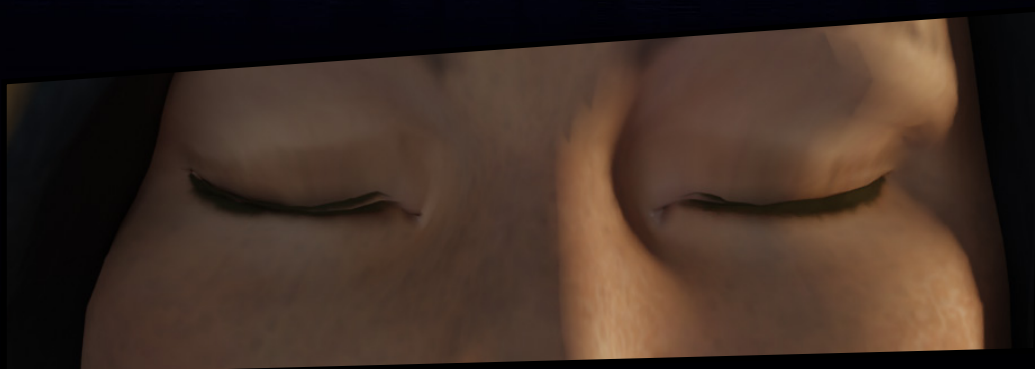




**A BLACKFOOT GRAPHIC NOVEL**

A'paissamma na Victor (Finding Victor)

*I CAN SEE IT IN MY MIND.  
EVER SINCE IT HAPPENED.*



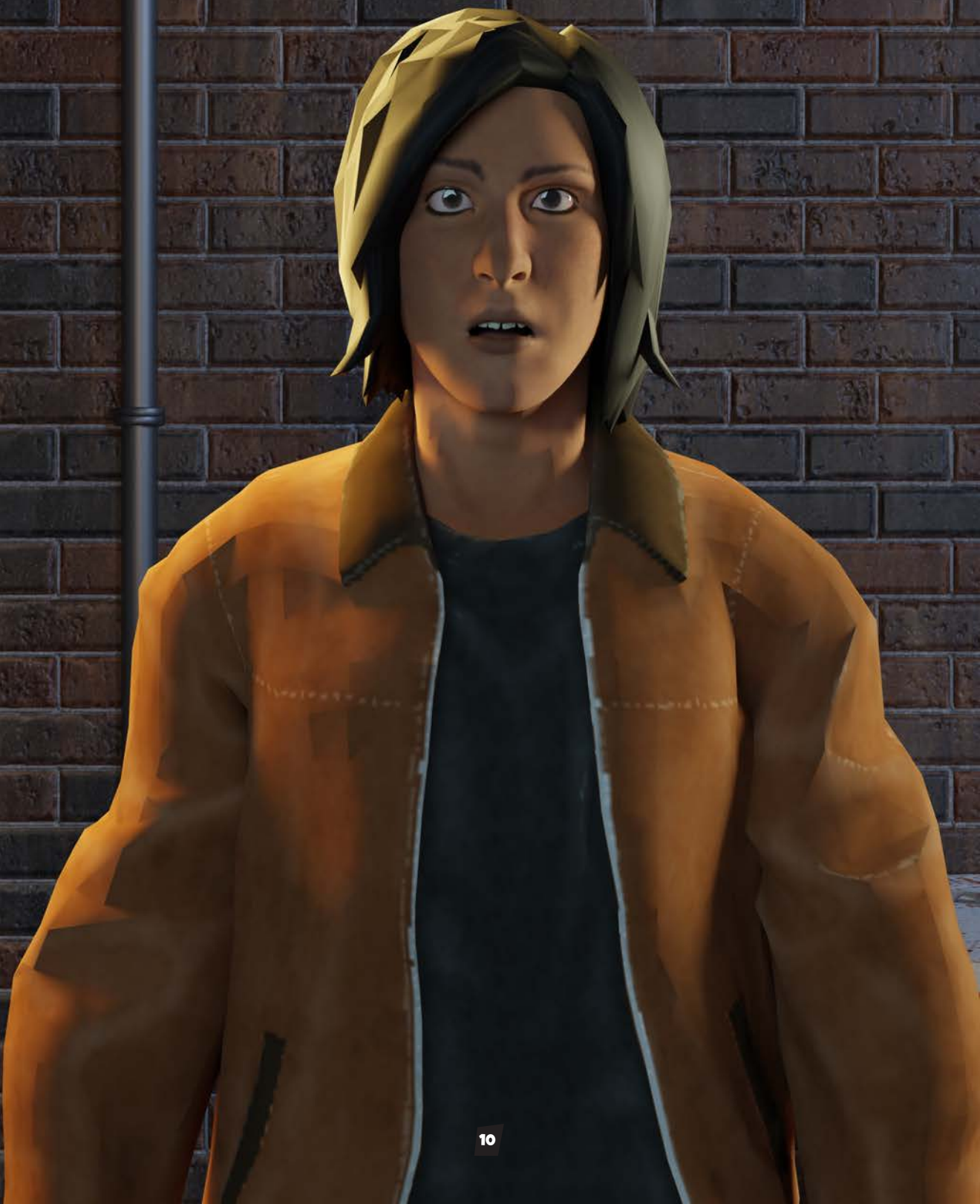
SOMEONE IS THERE. **NITAITSINOAWA** (I SEE THEM) WITH MY OWN EYES. **NITAYOOHTOAWA** (I HEAR THEM) WITH MY OWN EARS.





**OKI (HELLO)**  
**VICTOR!**

**KITSIKSIMATSIMMO**  
**(GREETINGS)!**





WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING OUT  
THERE BY YOURSELF?  
**STAMIPIIT** (COME  
IN)!





I KNOW  
WHAT YOU NEED.  
HAVE A DRINK.

SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.  
**NIKSIMSSTAANISTS** (MY THOUGHTS), BLOCK IT FROM  
MY MIND SO THAT I CAN'T SEE IT ANYMORE.







BUT NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY...

IT STILL APPEARS.

AMOHK ISSPOOHTSI (THE SKY), KIAMOHK  
MIISTAKISTS (THE MOUNTAINS), KIAMOHK  
ISTTSSOOTSI (AND THE FOREST).



**BUT NOT KNOWING.**

**NOT UNDERSTANDING.**



**I HATE HOW IT MAKES ME FEEL. AND I  
DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO.**








**KITAIKIIHPA**  
(WHAT'S GOING ON)?  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

**I WISH I KNEW.**





SOMETIMES IT'S THE ONLY  
THING THAT HELPS.

NIKSI SINAAKSSI KSI AITSINIKATOMIYA AWA  
(THE PICTURES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES).

THE ONLY PROBLEM IS...

AA, IKSOKSINAAKI (YEA,  
IT IS A NICE PICTURE), THAT'S  
REALLY GOOD.

NOT EVERYONE THINKS IT'S A GOOD IDEA.

YOU SURE YOU WANT  
TO PLAY IT LIKE THAT?

TSA KITANIKKOO (WHAT'S  
YOUR NAME)?

YOU DON'T  
KNOW WHO YOU  
ARE? COME ON, HELP  
ME OUT HERE.

MAYBE  
YOU SHOULD  
JUST KEEP  
MOVING HEY?

I DON'T  
KNOW.










VANDALISM.

WHAT'S THAT FOR?

I THOUGHT YOU SAID  
**IKSOKSINAAKI** (IT'S A NICE  
PICTURE).





YOU HIS  
PARENTS?

I HATE WHEN PEOPLE CALL THEM MY PARENTS.  
**MAATAMI NIKSISSTA** (THAT'S NOT MY MOTHER).  
**MAATAMI NINNA** (THAT'S NOT MY FATHER).

THIS IS HIS FOSTER HOME.  
**ANNOM OOKOOWAYI** (THIS IS  
HIS HOME).

APPARENTLY THEY AGREE.

THEY TOLD ME **IKAAHKSOK'APII NOOKOOWAYI** (MY HOME  
WOULD BE HAPPY). **KIANNI MAATSOKA'PII NOOKOOWAYI**  
(BUT IT WASN'T HAPPY, MY HOME).



I'VE NEVER HAD A HAPPY HOME.



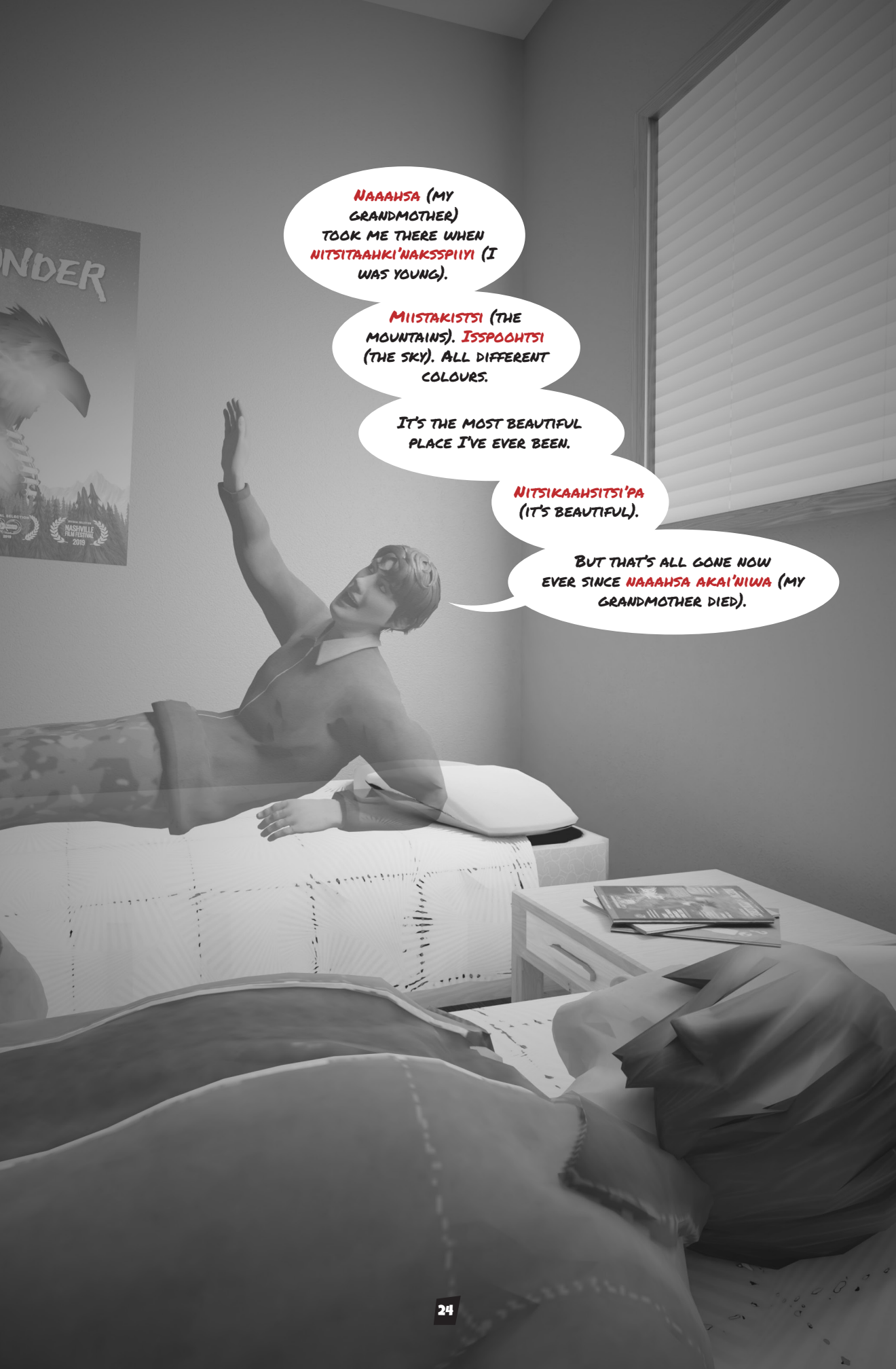
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND A HOME LIKE THAT? **MAATAITSTSII'PA** (IT DOESN'T EXIST).

I CAN'T EVEN FIND MYSELF.  
**NITA'TSOHSI** (I'M LOST).

I HAVE NO SISTERS HERE. NO BROTHERS.  
**MAATATOKOYIKSOKOYIHPA** (I DON'T HAVE ANY RELATIVES). WELL... NOT ANYMORE AT LEAST.

I DO REMEMBER IT WAS DIFFERENT...





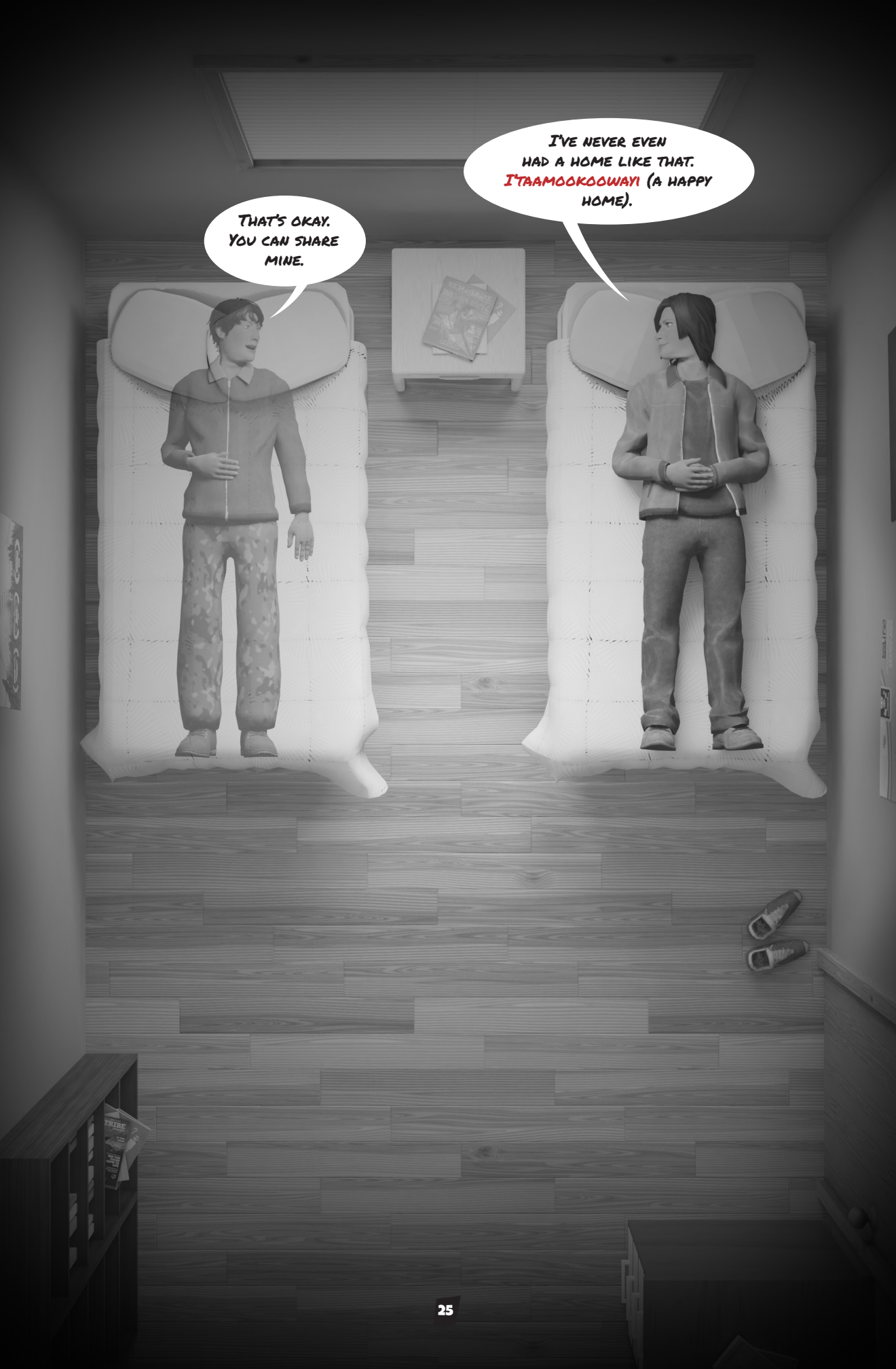
**NAAHSA** (MY GRANDMOTHER) TOOK ME THERE WHEN **NITSITAAHKI'NAKSSPIIYI** (I WAS YOUNG).

**MIISTAKISTSI** (THE MOUNTAINS). **ISSPOOHTSI** (THE SKY). ALL DIFFERENT COLOURS.

IT'S THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE I'VE EVER BEEN.

**NITSIKAAHSITSI'PA** (IT'S BEAUTIFUL).

BUT THAT'S ALL GONE NOW EVER SINCE **NAAHSA AKAI'NIWA** (MY GRANDMOTHER DIED).




THAT'S OKAY.  
YOU CAN SHARE  
MINE.

I'VE NEVER EVEN  
HAD A HOME LIKE THAT.  
**ITAAMOOKOOWAYI** (A HAPPY  
HOME).

WHY'D HE HAVE TO GO AND DO THAT? **NITAAKOHKAANIikka**  
(HE SHOULD HAVE TALKED TO ME).





A man with short grey hair, wearing a teal button-down shirt and dark trousers, stands with his arms crossed. A woman with short brown hair, wearing a green V-neck sweater over a white shirt and grey pants, stands next to him. They are in a room with a light-colored wall. To the left, a poster with a rainbow flag and text is visible. In the foreground, a large, crumpled orange plastic bag is partially visible.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT  
TO DO WITH YOU, MAYBE  
CALL **NIKSI A'PAO'TAKIIKS** (THE  
WORKERS)?

THIS IS THE LAST TIME  
VICTOR! **KIANNIAYI** (THAT'S  
ENOUGH)! YOU CAN'T KEEP GETTING  
INTO TROUBLE LIKE THIS.

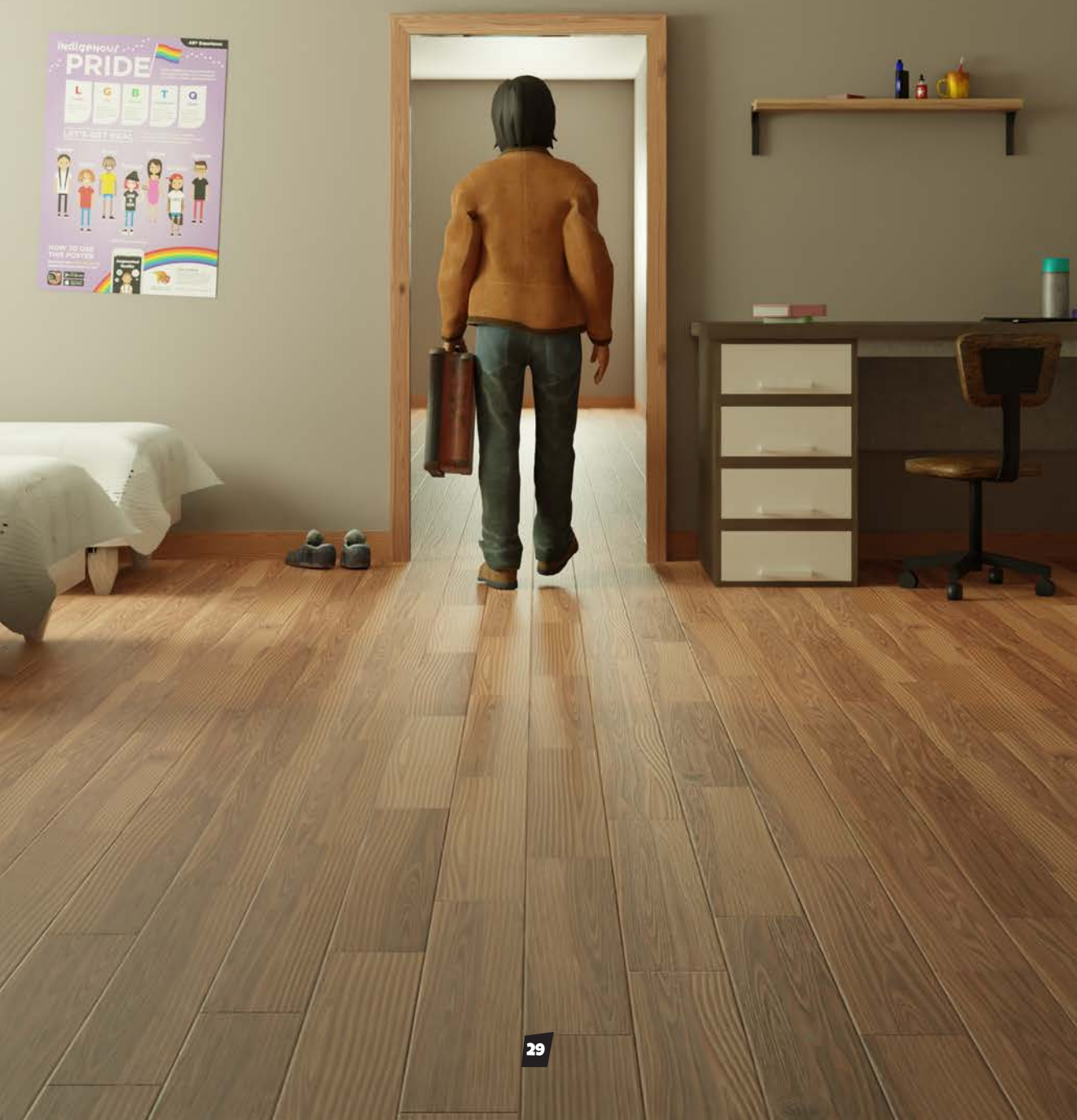
THEY SAY IT'S THE LAST TIME.  
**NI'TOKSKA** (ONE), **NAATO'KA** (TWO),  
**NIIOKSKA** (THREE), **KI AKAKSISTA'PII**.  
(AND IT'S OVER).

THIS ISN'T A DAMN BASEBALL GAME!



**TSIMAA NITAAKOHKITAPOOHPA  
(WHERE WILL I GO)?**

I'M NOT LEAVING IT UP TO **NIKSI A'PAO'TAKIIS** (THE WORKERS).





**NITAAKA'TSOHSI** (I WILL GET LOST).  
I CAN GET LOST ALL ON MY OWN.







VICTOR, **IKKANATTSI** (IT'S BEAUTIFUL)!  
**KISINAAKSSISTSI** (YOUR PICTURES),  
MAKE MORE OF THEM!

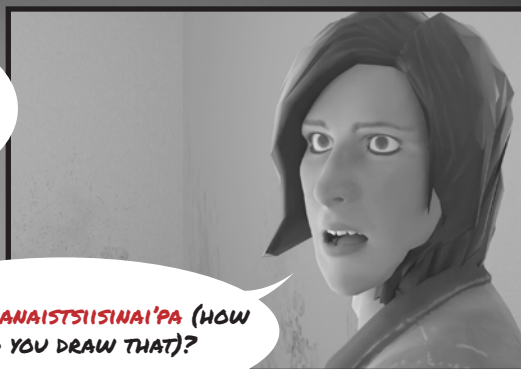
**SINAAKSISTSI** (PICTURES) OF YOUR  
FRIENDS, **SINAAKSISTSI** (PICTURES) FOR  
THE FOREST,

**SINAAKSISTSI** (PICTURES)  
FOR THE VALLEY, **SINAAKSISTSI**  
(PICTURES) ON THE WIND.





YOU EVER DO A  
SELF PORTRAIT?  
**KIYAAKOWAAHTSINGOHSI**  
(DRAW YOURSELF)?



**TSA KIIYAAKANAISTSIISINAI'PA** (HOW  
WOULD YOU DRAW THAT)?

HAVE TO KNOW WHO  
YOU ARE FIRST....







**TAKAA NIISTO**  
(WHO AM I)?

**TSIMAA NITAAKITAPOO**  
(WHERE AM I GOING)?

**SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO KNOW.**

**ANNIMA** (FIRST), I PAINT THE PICTURE IN MY MIND.

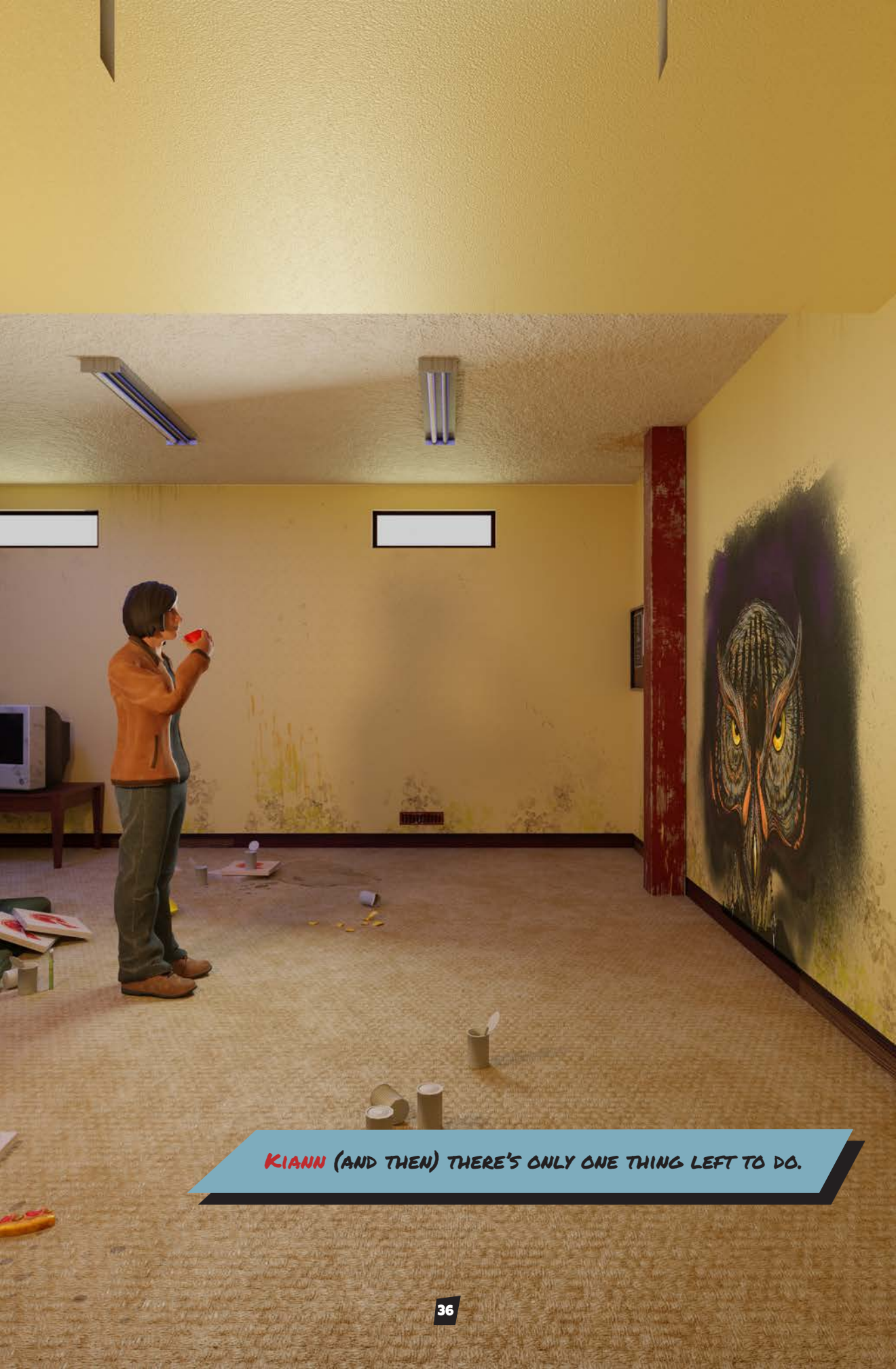






EVEN THEN, **NIMAATOHTSITAPI'TAKI'PA**  
(I CAN'T FIND MYSELF).





**KIANN** (AND THEN) THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO.



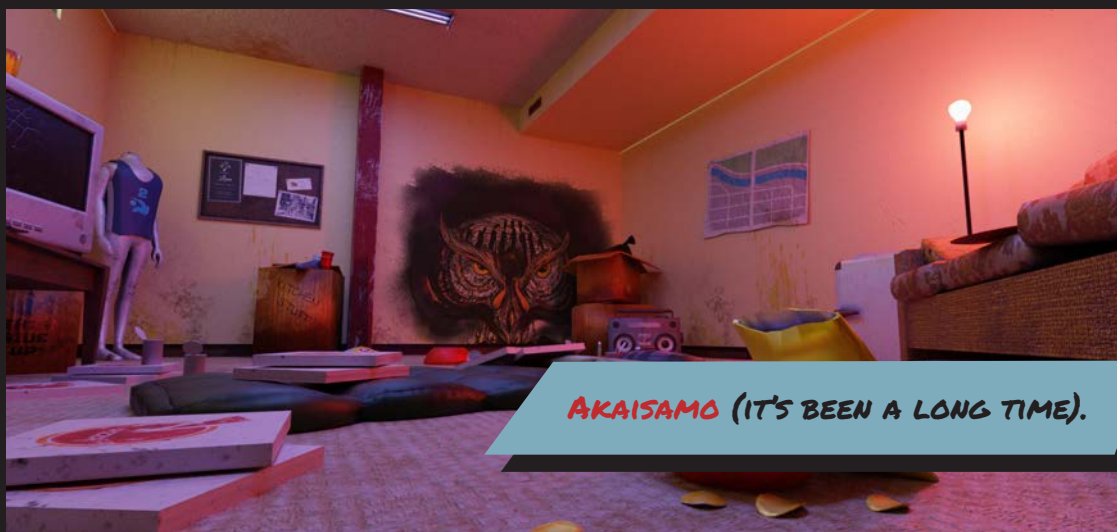
A man with a beard and a grey beanie sits on a floral-patterned couch in a dimly lit room. The air is filled with a hazy smoke. He is wearing a brown jacket and blue jeans. To his left is a floor lamp with a single bulb. On the floor next to the couch is a pizza box with a slice missing. Several small white and yellow objects are scattered on the carpet. The room has a yellowish wall and a green cushioned chair is partially visible in the bottom left corner.

**IKSKIINATTSI.** (IT'S DARK). IT'S DARK INSIDE. IT'S FILLED WITH SMOKE.

AND I WELCOME IT. **IKSOKA'PII** (IT'S GOOD).

ESCAPE IN THE QUIET FOR A TIME.

**BUT THEN TOO MUCH TIME PASSES.**



**AKAISAMO (IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME).**



**MATAPIIKSI (PEOPLE) COME KI (AND) MATAPIIKSI  
(PEOPLE) GO. STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN**

ISN'T THAT  
RIGHT BECKY?

**NOW I AM EVEN NAMING A MANNEQUIN**



**ITAI'SAMMA'PSSI** (TIME IS WASTED). LIKE LEAVES ON WIND.

**ITAI'SAMOVI** (TIME STANDS STILL).  
LIKE ICE ON A RIVER.



AND AT THE END OF IT ALL...



I STILL CAN'T FIND HIM.



VICTOR?

YOU KNOW.  
VICTOR, YOU KNOW  
**KITSAAKIOHKOOKOWAYI** (YOU  
STILL HAVE A HOME).

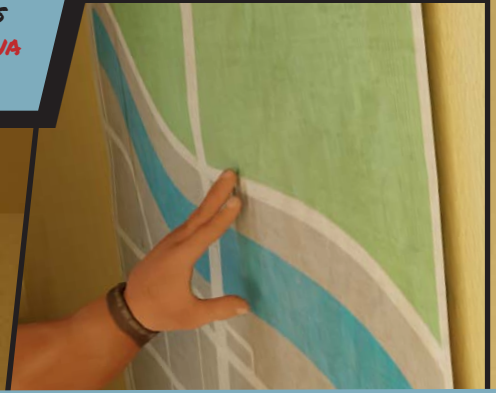


WE ALL MISS LIAM HERE AT GROUP  
TOO, WE WOULDN'T WANT TO LOSE YOU TOO.  
**KITAINOOWA KITSIKSSKINI'TAKI** (I KNOW YOU  
ARE SAD).

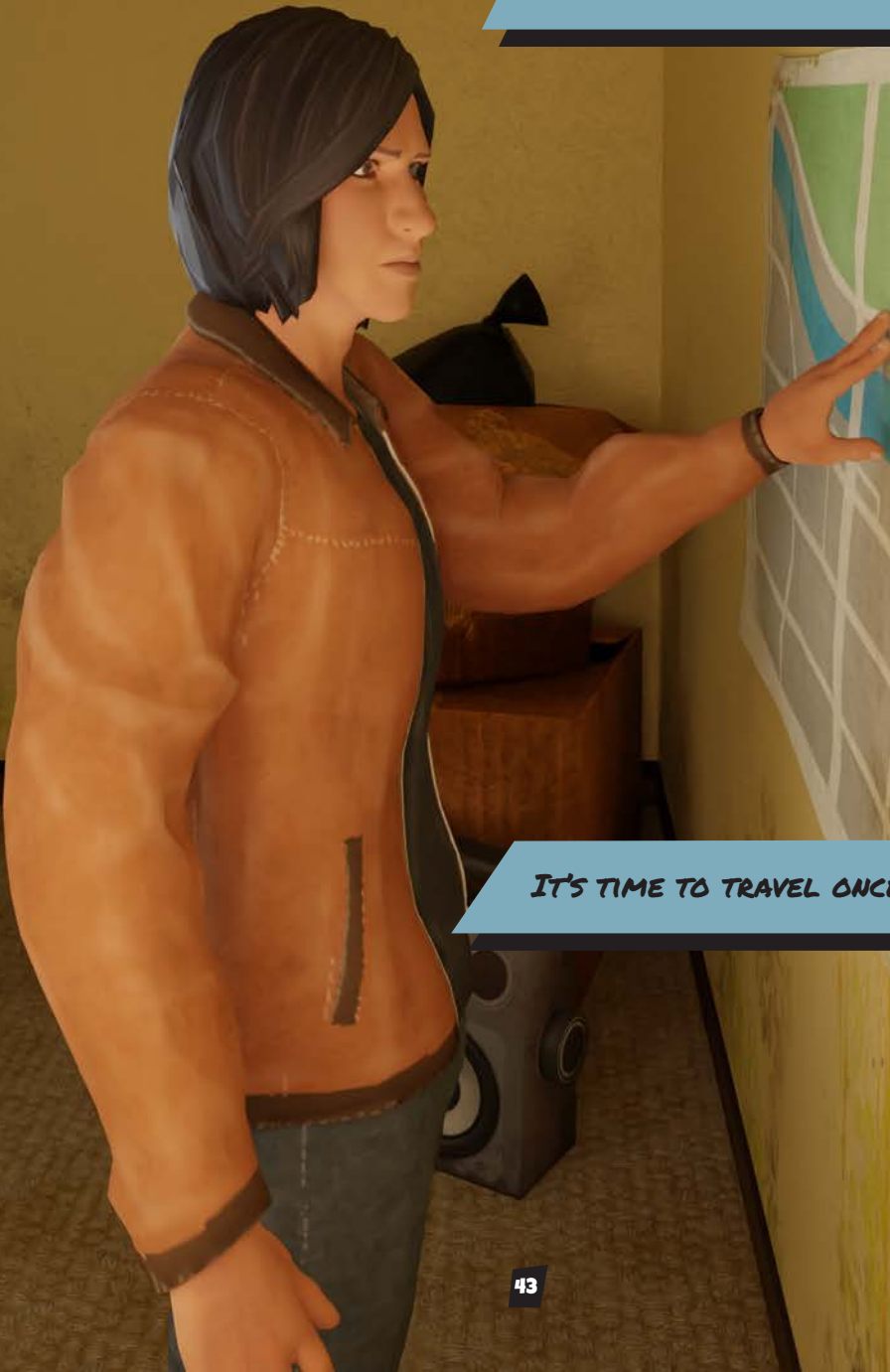





AND THEN WHEN TOO MUCH TIME HAS  
PASSED, AMOYI KI'SOMMI AAKATTOT'OOWA  
(THE MOON WILL COME OUT).



KI AMOYI NAATO'SI AAKOMATAPOOWA  
(AND THE SUN WILL BEGIN TO GO).




IT'S TIME TO TRAVEL ONCE MORE.



MAYBE I'M LOOKING IN  
THE WRONG PLACE.





**NA NAAHSA KI NIISTO**  
(MY GRANDMOTHER AND I), WE  
WOULD WATCH **SOKSISTSIKOISTSI**  
(THE CLOUDS).

FIND  
ANIMALS. FIND  
BERRIES. FIND  
RIVERS.



FIND THAT PLACE, VICTOR.  
**STAMOONKOOONIT** (JUST FIND IT)!  
DON'T GIVE UP.






I DON'T KNOW **ITA'PAISSA'TSI'PI** (WHAT  
I AM LOOKING FOR).





ALL I KNOW IS **MAATSITSTSI**  
**ANNO** (IT DOESN'T EXIST HERE).



A man in a brown jacket and blue jeans is walking from left to right, carrying a red suitcase. He is on a grey surface, possibly a rooftop or a walkway, with a white railing behind him. In the background, a vibrant city skyline is visible at night, with numerous skyscrapers illuminated in various colors like blue, purple, and yellow. The sky is dark and filled with stars.

WHO IS HE TO TELL  
ME NOT TO GIVE UP?

NITAKKAAWA (MY FRIEND). TSIMAA  
ITAITAPOOWA (WHERE DID HE GO)?

WHY DOES HE CARE WHERE I AM?







THE BEST PLACE IS NO PLACE.

THE BEST SOMEBODY IS NOBODY.

*YOU SHOULD KNOW.*



*YOU MADE THAT CHOICE.*



A person with dark hair, wearing a brown jacket over a dark shirt, is shown from the chest up. They have their hands pressed against their temples, eyes closed, and a pained expression on their face. The background is a blurred sunset or sunrise scene with warm orange and yellow tones. A blue text box is in the upper left, and another blue text box is in the upper right.

AND EVER SINCE, NITAIKKITSINI'PA  
(I SEE IT IN MY MIND).

I SEE THAT PLACE.

DID YOU FEEL LIKE ME?



YOU EVER FEEL LIKE ANNI  
OHPAKOYITTSI (A FIRE)?



LIKE ALL YOU CAN DO IS BURN.

OR FADE TO ASHES.



*MAYBE THAT'S NOT ALL I CAN DO...*



FIRST I PAINT THE PICTURE IN MY HEART.







STILL NIMAATOOHKSSKINI'PA  
(I CAN'T FIND MYSELF).



**STAMASINAAKIT**  
(JUST KEEP DRAWING),  
VICTOR.

PICTURES  
ON THE  
WIND.



I ALWAYS GOT IN TROUBLE FOR  
**NISINAAKSISTSI** (MY PICTURES).



**ANNOHK** (NOW) SOMEONE  
WANTS ME TO PAINT THEM?

I DON'T KNOW WHERE  
**NITAITAPOOHPI** (I AM GOING). BUT  
I DO KNOW THAT I WAS HERE.



I CAN MAKE MY MARK



JUST LIKE THEY USED TO  
**MAAHKSINAAKSSI** (WRITE)  
ON STONE.







OKI (HELLO),  
NITAAHIKKO (MY NAME IS)  
VICTOR



DOING A GOOD THING STILL ISN'T EASY.

*Iiyikowa* (IT'S CHALLENGING).

YOU GET SO USED TO THINGS BEING *MAKA'PIIYI* (BAD).



IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY **NITAWAIKANTSO'PISTS.**  
(GAMES I PLAY). I STILL DON'T KNOW WHO I AM.




**SHE HAS BEEN HERE LIKE FOREVER.**

**BUT I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE, SHE PROBABLY  
WON'T LAST ANOTHER MONTH. I DON'T KNOW.**

**SHE'S ALRIGHT I GUESS. SEEMS TO  
ALWAYS DO WHAT SHE SAYS SHE WILL.**





DON'T YOU  
REMEMBER WHAT I  
TOLD YOU?

**KITOHKOOKOWAYI**  
(YOU HAVE A HOME). GO  
SPEAK TO **NIKSI OMAHKITAPIKSI**  
(THE ELDERS).



I HAVE ALWAYS HAD RESPECT FOR **NIIKSI OMAHKITAPIKSI** (THE ELDERS). MAYBE I NEVER GAVE THEM A CHANCE.

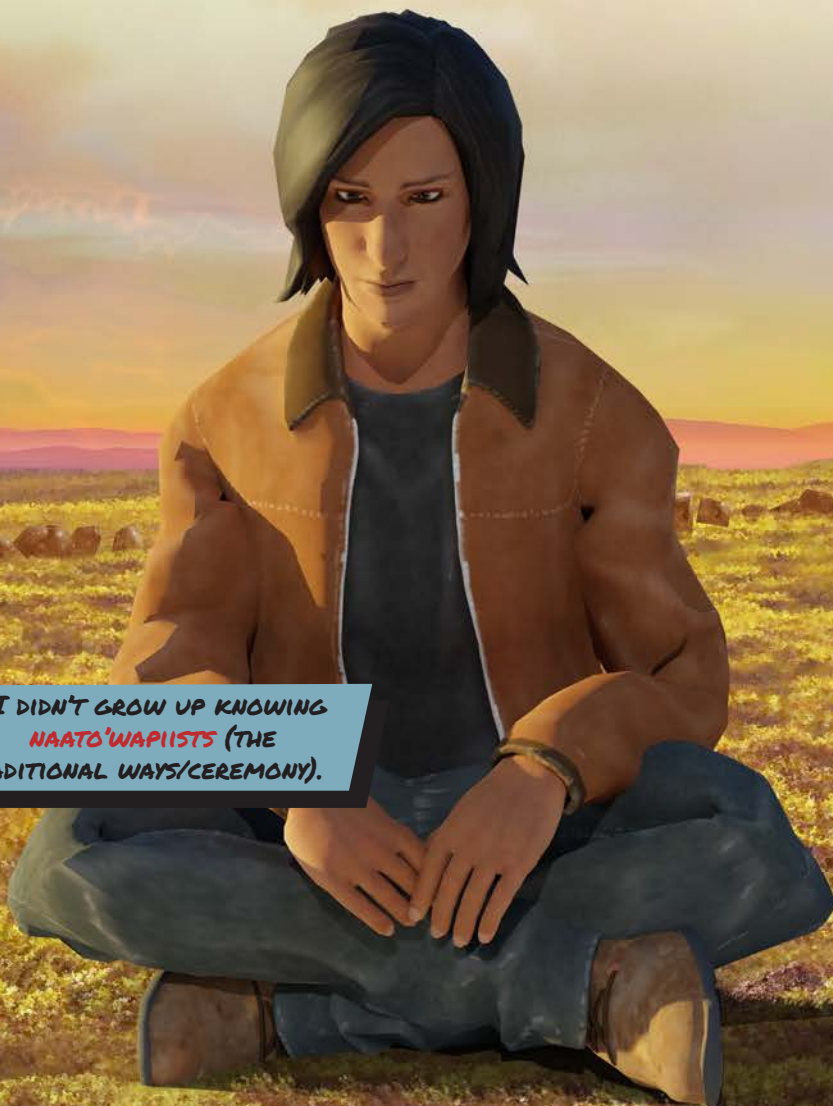


WHAT AM I DOING HERE?



I FEEL LIKE SUCH A FRAUD.

I DIDN'T GROW UP KNOWING  
**NAATO'WAPIISTS** (THE  
TRADITIONAL WAYS/CEREMONY).






An aerial photograph of a group of seven people sitting in a circle on a field of tall, golden-brown grass. In the background, a large, circular stone structure, resembling a henge or a large stone circle, is visible. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The people are dressed in casual clothing, and their shadows are cast long and dark on the grass.

**I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.**

**I DON'T CARE WHERE I GO, BUT I  
AM NOT A REAL NATIVE PERSON.**





HEY, I KNOW THE  
FEELING, LIKE YOU  
DON'T BELONG HERE  
RIGHT?

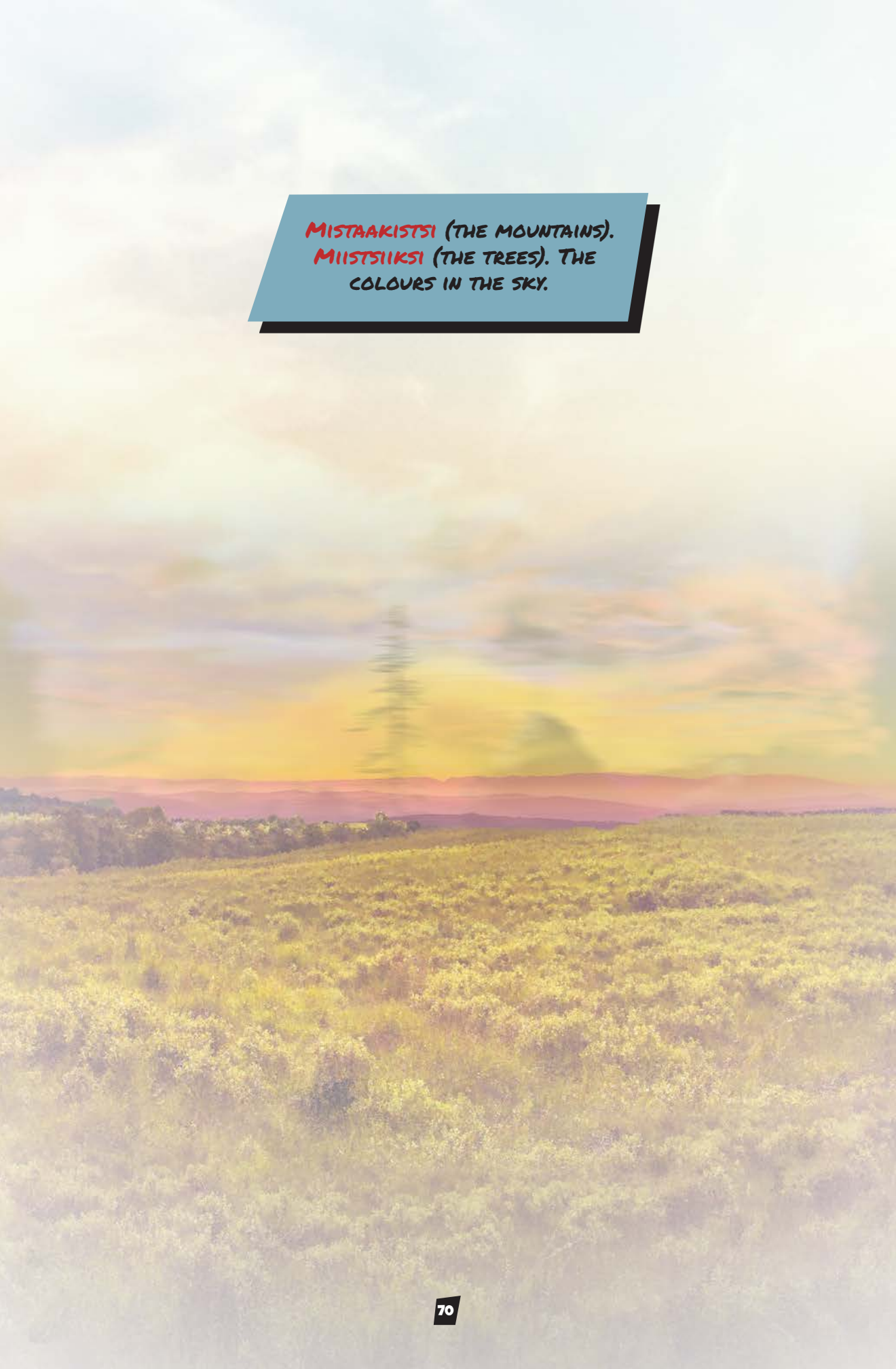
WELL YOU DO,  
IT TAKES PRACTICE AND  
TIME.



**KITSITSITAPIIKOAN**  
(YOU ARE INDIGENOUS).  
YOU BELONG, AND IF YOU  
DON'T KNOW SOMETHING,  
**KAAKAANIKIT.** (JUST ASK  
ME).



MAYBE THIS ISN'T SO BAD. I CAN TRY.  
**IKI'TAAMKSAAHKOMMA** (THE LAND IS  
REALLY BEAUTIFUL).



**MISTAAKISTSI (THE MOUNTAINS).**  
**MIISTSIIKSI (THE TREES). THE**  
**COLOURS IN THE SKY.**



A person stands with their back to the camera in a vast, grassy field. The sun is setting or rising, creating a warm, golden glow across the sky and landscape. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and pink. In the distance, there are rolling hills and a single tall, thin tree stands out against the horizon. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

**KITSI'TAAMKSAAHKO (YOUR HAPPY PLACE), LIAM.**

**YOUR HAPPY PLACE.**

**IT'S YOU.**



SAA (NO)  
VICTOR



IT'S  
YOU.





**NITAAKOHKONOMOKIYAA NOOKOOWAYI**  
**(THEY SAY THEY CAN FIND ME A HOME).**



**IYIKOWA** (IT'S CHALLENGING).

IT'S NOT EASY.

IT'S NOT  
PERFECT.







**ITOOMSTTSITSSI.** (IT'S THE BEGINNING).  
IT STARTS AS **NAATO'YISINAAKSSIN**  
(A PICTURE IN MY SPIRIT).



A full-page artistic illustration. In the foreground, a person stands in silhouette on a jagged, rocky mountain peak. To the left of the person is a tall, slender evergreen tree, also in silhouette. The background is a vast, dramatic sky filled with swirling, colorful clouds in shades of purple, blue, orange, and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is contemplative and majestic.

BUT IT'S NOT THE FINAL DESTINATION.

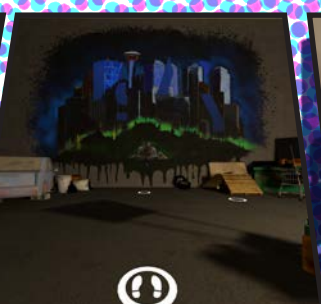
NIISTOWA (IT'S ME).



Some of the content and images in this graphic novel may have triggered an emotional response. Should you need additional supports please use the AR app to scan over the below image for access to help.



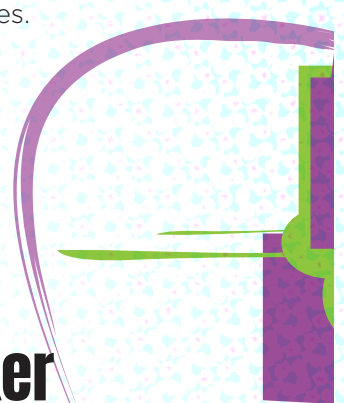
Finding Victor is also a virtual reality escape room. If you would like more information please check out this website by connecting with the AR app.





## Otskapinaaki Heather Bliss

Heather's Blackfoot name was given to her by her late friend and teacher Tootsinam Beatrice Bullshields. She is a non-Indigenous linguist living and working in the traditional and unceded territories of the hənq'ə'minə'm'-speaking peoples. Born and raised in Mohkīnsstsis (Calgary), Heather has been collaborating with members of the Siksika and Kainai communities on documenting and analysing the Blackfoot language for over 15 years. She is a Lecturer at Simon Fraser University and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Calgary.



## Ikino'motstaan Noreen Breaker

Ikino'motstaan Noreen Breaker is a Siksika Elder with specialized knowledge in Blackfoot language and culture. She holds a BA in Canadian Studies from the University of Calgary. As a fluent first language speaker of Blackfoot, Noreen has collaborated with linguists on Blackfoot language projects for over 15 years and has taught introductory Blackfoot language courses at the University of Calgary.



## Natoopii Lee Breaker

Natoopii Lee Breaker is a member of the Siksika Nation and a Horn Society Elder. He is committed to the revitalization of the Blackfoot language and culture.







# #FoundVictor



This is a Blackfoot Graphic Novel based on virtual reality escape room, Finding Victor. It tells the story of Victor who is searching to find himself after the death of his friend Liam. He is lost, confused and depressed and then finds himself homeless. As he searches to find out who he really is, he uses his artwork and the support of his community to find his way.



ISBN - 978-1-7771004-0-7



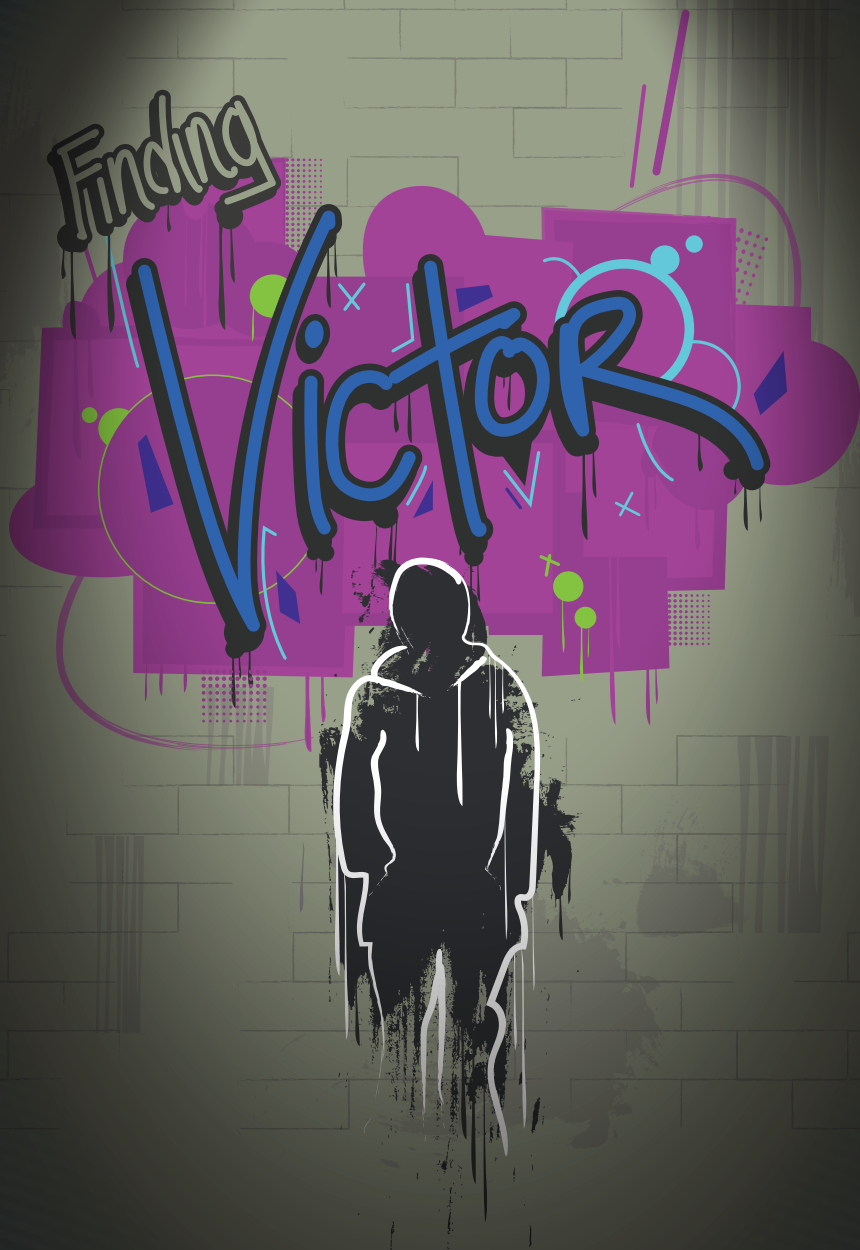
URBAN SOCIETY FOR  
ABORIGINAL YOUTH

Funded by the  
Government  
of Canada

Financé par le  
gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada





**A BLACKFOOT GRAPHIC NOVEL**

A'paissamma na Victor (Finding Victor)



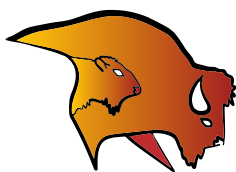


This is a work of fiction. Any similarity to persons living or dead is either coincidental or expressed consent was authorized. The story depicts graphic scenes and is intended for a 14A audience. All events are loosely based on stories, opinions, and experiences of selective Indigenous youth in Calgary. This graphic novel is not to be sold for profit by USAY or any other persons, however, donations can be made at [usay.ca](http://usay.ca).

Several dialects of Blackfoot exist; only one dialect is represented in this work. Traditional Blackfoot legends, stories, and characters inspired the art and story. This work is intended to be used as a language-learning tool, which should be combined with resources to be effective in producing a proficient speaker. Readers are encouraged to consult fluent speakers to learn more about pronunciation and stress patterns. Readers should also consult our Blackfoot Learning Guide at [usay.ca](http://usay.ca) or on our YouTube channel for further language development.

No parts of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without written permission of USAY.

For information regarding permission, please contact **403-233-8225**.

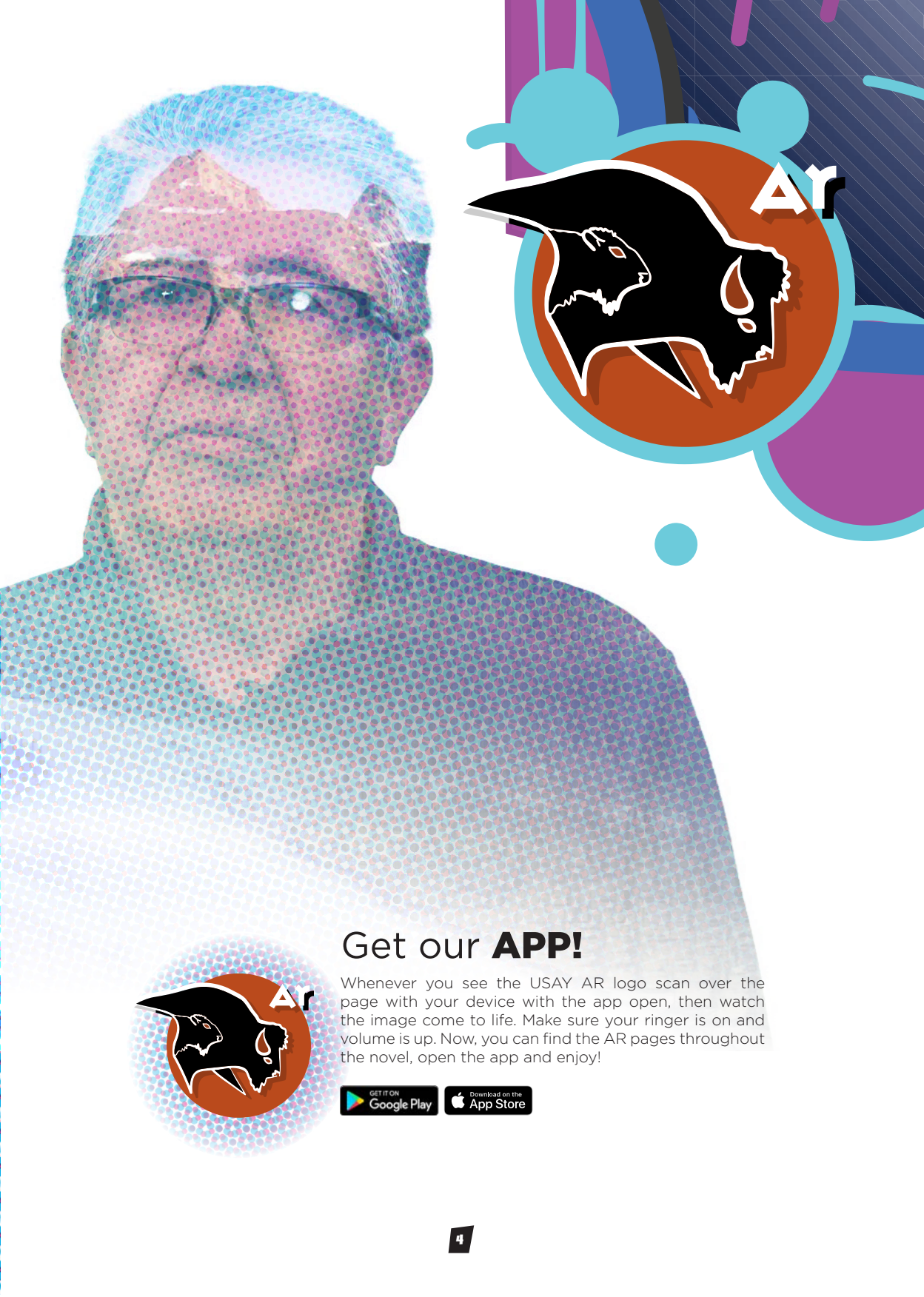


**USAY**

**Copyright © 2020**  
**by the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth**  
**(USAY)**

**Funding generously provided by:**  
Canadian Heritage,  
Aboriginal Peoples Program,  
Aboriginal Language Initiative





## Get our **APP!**

Whenever you see the USAY AR logo scan over the page with your device with the app open, then watch the image come to life. Make sure your ringer is on and volume is up. Now, you can find the AR pages throughout the novel, open the app and enjoy!





# Prayer

**Aayo ihstipatapiyooop, nohk'ksikaakskohsaakinaann ahohk ksisstsikoyik.**  
O Creator, be near us today.

**Kimmaatookinaan, anak kaanomyanistsitapi nit'hpiyoy.**  
Take pity on us, all peoples included.

**Okoy niit'h piipoy, annak kawaapoomahka, payootah, sooyitapii.**  
Also, I pray for all creative who roam the Earth, all birds, and all sea creatures.

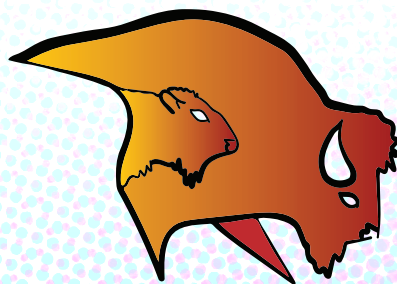
**Maakoohkomaanist asookapis ksahkoom.**  
Everything on Earth to remain the way it should be.

**Anak maatsoopookhkootima maakohksti piik'khotsimass.**  
All unfortunate people to acquire their needs.

**Noomhpiipoy anak kanaitapi makoohsookapis opatapiisowiy**  
For all people to have a good life, good health.

**Okoy ninoohkitoot'hsisk miisaamipaatapiysin, Miistawaatsimaan, kaamotaani, kootsimaan.**  
Also, I ask for a long life, to raise my children to adulthood, to escape harm, and to have all my necessities taken care of.

This is an **AR** practice image, utilize the app to  
check out the USAY logo come to *life*.



## URBAN SOCIETY FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH

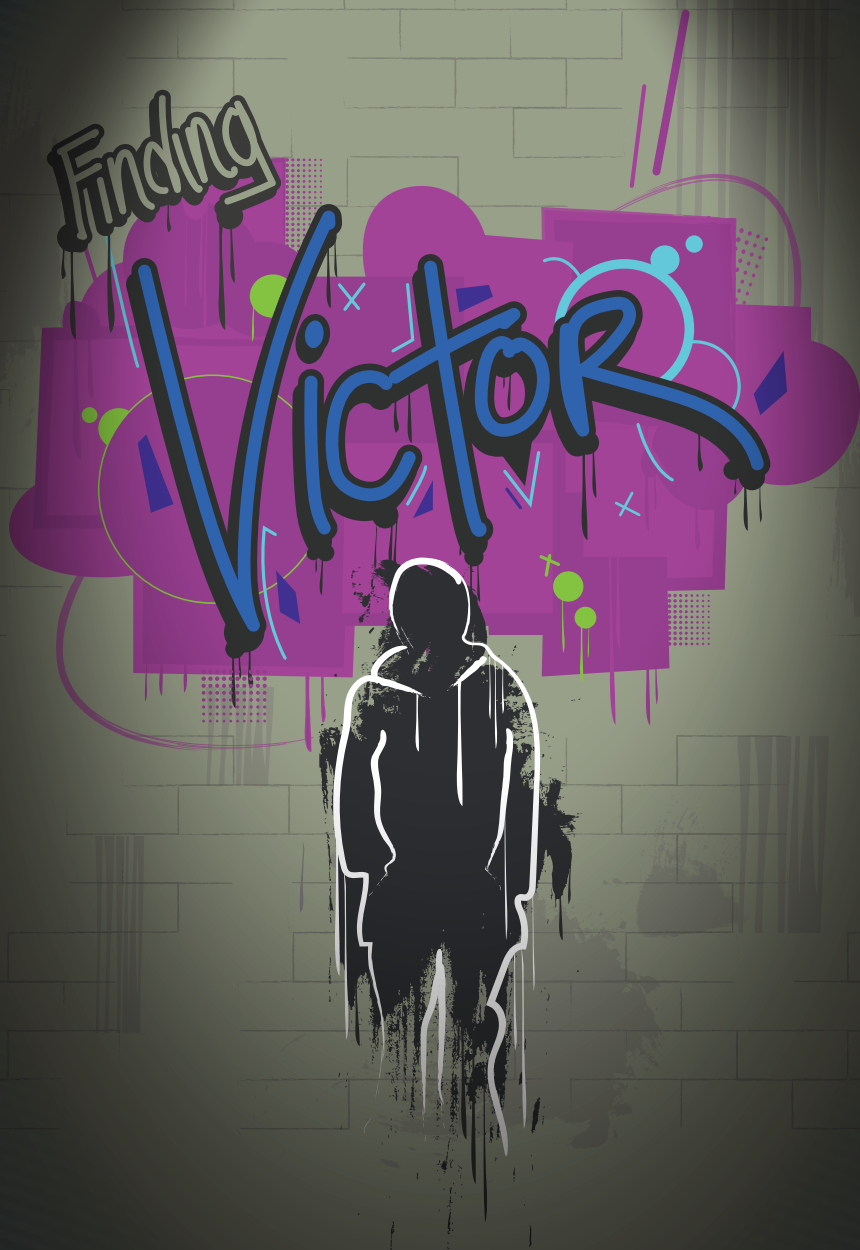
And check out the learning guide below!



## **b**Blackfoot Learning guide







**A BLACKFOOT GRAPHIC NOVEL**

A'paissamma na Victor (Finding Victor)

I CAN SEE IT IN MY MIND.  
EVER SINCE IT HAPPENED.



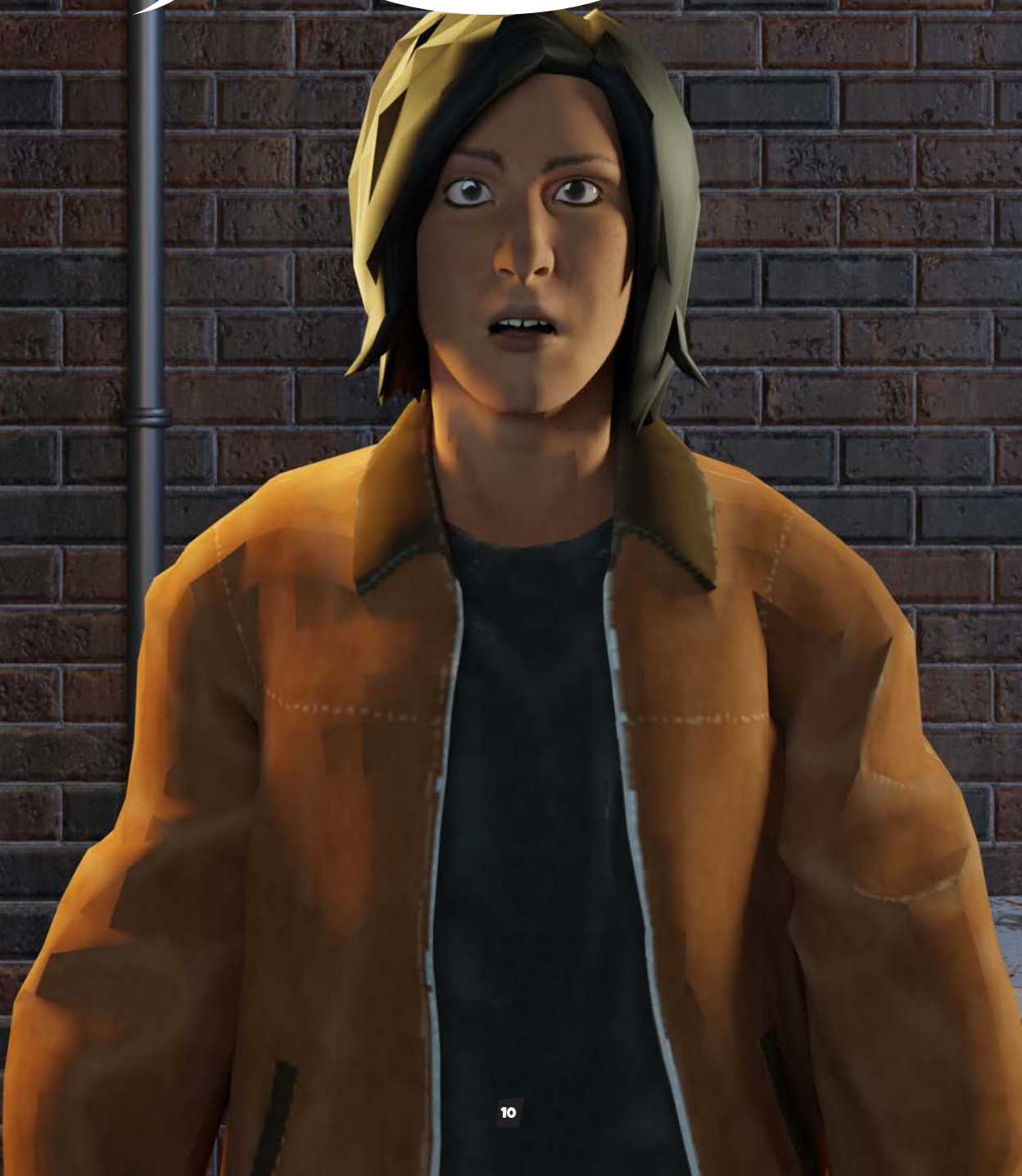


SOMEONE IS THERE. **NITATSINOAWA** (I SEE THEM) WITH MY OWN EYES. **NITAYOOHTOAWA** (I HEAR THEM) WITH MY OWN EARS.



**OKI (HELLO)**  
**VICTOR!**

**KITSIKSIMATSIMMO**  
**(GREETINGS)!**







WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING OUT  
THERE BY YOURSELF?  
**STAMIPIIT** (COME  
IN)!



I KNOW  
WHAT YOU NEED.  
HAVE A DRINK.



SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.  
**NIKSIMSSTAANISTS** (MY THOUGHTS), BLOCK IT FROM  
MY MIND SO THAT I CAN'T SEE IT ANYMORE.





BUT NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY...

IT STILL APPEARS.

AMOHK ISSPOOHTSI (THE SKY), KIAMOHK  
MIISTAKISTS (THE MOUNTAINS), KIAMOHK  
ISTTSSOOTSI (AND THE FOREST).





BUT NOT KNOWING.

NOT UNDERSTANDING.



I HATE HOW IT MAKES ME FEEL. AND I  
DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO.






**KITAIIHPA**  
(WHAT'S GOING ON)?  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

I WISH I KNEW.





SOMETIMES IT'S THE ONLY  
THING THAT HELPS.

NIKSI SINAAKSSI KSI AITSINIKATOMIYAAWA  
(THE PICTURES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES).

THE ONLY PROBLEM IS...

AA, IKSOKSINAAKI (YEA,  
IT IS A NICE PICTURE), THAT'S  
REALLY GOOD.

NOT EVERYONE THINKS IT'S A GOOD IDEA.

YOU SURE YOU WANT  
TO PLAY IT LIKE THAT?  
TSA KITANIKKOO (WHAT'S  
YOUR NAME)?

YOU DON'T  
KNOW WHO YOU  
ARE? COME ON, HELP  
ME OUT HERE.

MAYBE  
YOU SHOULD  
JUST KEEP  
MOVING HEY?

I DON'T  
KNOW.





HOW ABOUT YOU HELP ME  
OUT **MA** (HERE)?



CLANK!



SORRY KID, YOU'RE  
NOT GIVING ME A  
CHOICE HERE.






VANDALISM.

WHAT'S THAT FOR?

I THOUGHT YOU SAID  
**IKSOKSINAAKI** (IT'S A NICE PICTURE).







YOU HIS  
PARENTS?

I HATE WHEN PEOPLE CALL THEM MY PARENTS.  
**MAATAMI NIKSISSTA** (THAT'S NOT MY MOTHER).  
**MAATAMI NINNA** (THAT'S NOT MY FATHER).

THIS IS HIS FOSTER HOME.  
**ANNOM OOKOOWAYI** (THIS IS  
HIS HOME).

APPARENTLY THEY AGREE.

THEY TOLD ME **IKAAHKSOK'APII NOOKOOWAYI** (MY HOME  
WOULD BE HAPPY). **KIANNI MAATSOKA'PII NOOKOOWAYI**  
(BUT IT WASN'T HAPPY, MY HOME).



I'VE NEVER HAD A HAPPY HOME.



HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND A HOME LIKE THAT? **MAATAITSTSI'PA** (IT DOESN'T EXIST).

I CAN'T EVEN FIND MYSELF.  
**NITA'TSOHSI** (I'M LOST).

I HAVE NO SISTERS HERE. NO BROTHERS.  
**MAATATOKOYIKSOKOYIHPA** (I DON'T HAVE ANY RELATIVES). WELL... NOT ANYMORE AT LEAST.

I DO REMEMBER IT WAS DIFFERENT...



**NAAHSA (MY  
GRANDMOTHER)**  
TOOK ME THERE WHEN  
**NITSITAAHKI'NAKSSPIIYI (I  
WAS YOUNG).**


**MIISTAKISTSI (THE  
MOUNTAINS). ISSPOOHTSI  
(THE SKY). ALL DIFFERENT  
COLOURS.**

**IT'S THE MOST BEAUTIFUL  
PLACE I'VE EVER BEEN.**

**NITSIKAHSITSI'PA  
(IT'S BEAUTIFUL).**

**BUT THAT'S ALL GONE NOW  
EVER SINCE NAAHSA AKAI'NIWA (MY  
GRANDMOTHER DIED).**






THAT'S OKAY.  
YOU CAN SHARE  
MINE.

I'VE NEVER EVEN  
HAD A HOME LIKE THAT.  
**I'TAAMOOKOOWAYI** (A HAPPY  
HOME).

WHY'D HE HAVE TO GO AND DO THAT? **NITAAKOHKAANIikka**  
(HE SHOULD HAVE TALKED TO ME).





A man with short grey hair, wearing a teal button-down shirt and grey trousers, stands with his arms crossed. A woman with brown hair, wearing a green V-neck sweater over a white shirt and grey pants, stands next to him. They are in a room with a light-colored wall. To the left, a poster with a rainbow and text is visible. In the foreground, a large, crumpled orange plastic bag is partially visible.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT  
TO DO WITH YOU, MAYBE  
CALL **NIKSI A'PAO'TAKIIS** (THE  
WORKERS)?

THIS IS THE LAST TIME  
VICTOR! **KIANNIAYI** (THAT'S  
ENOUGH)! YOU CAN'T KEEP GETTING  
INTO TROUBLE LIKE THIS.

THEY SAY IT'S THE LAST TIME.  
**NI'TOKSKA** (ONE), **NAATO'KA** (TWO),  
**NIIOKSKA** (THREE), **KI AKAIKSISTA'PII**.  
(AND IT'S OVER).

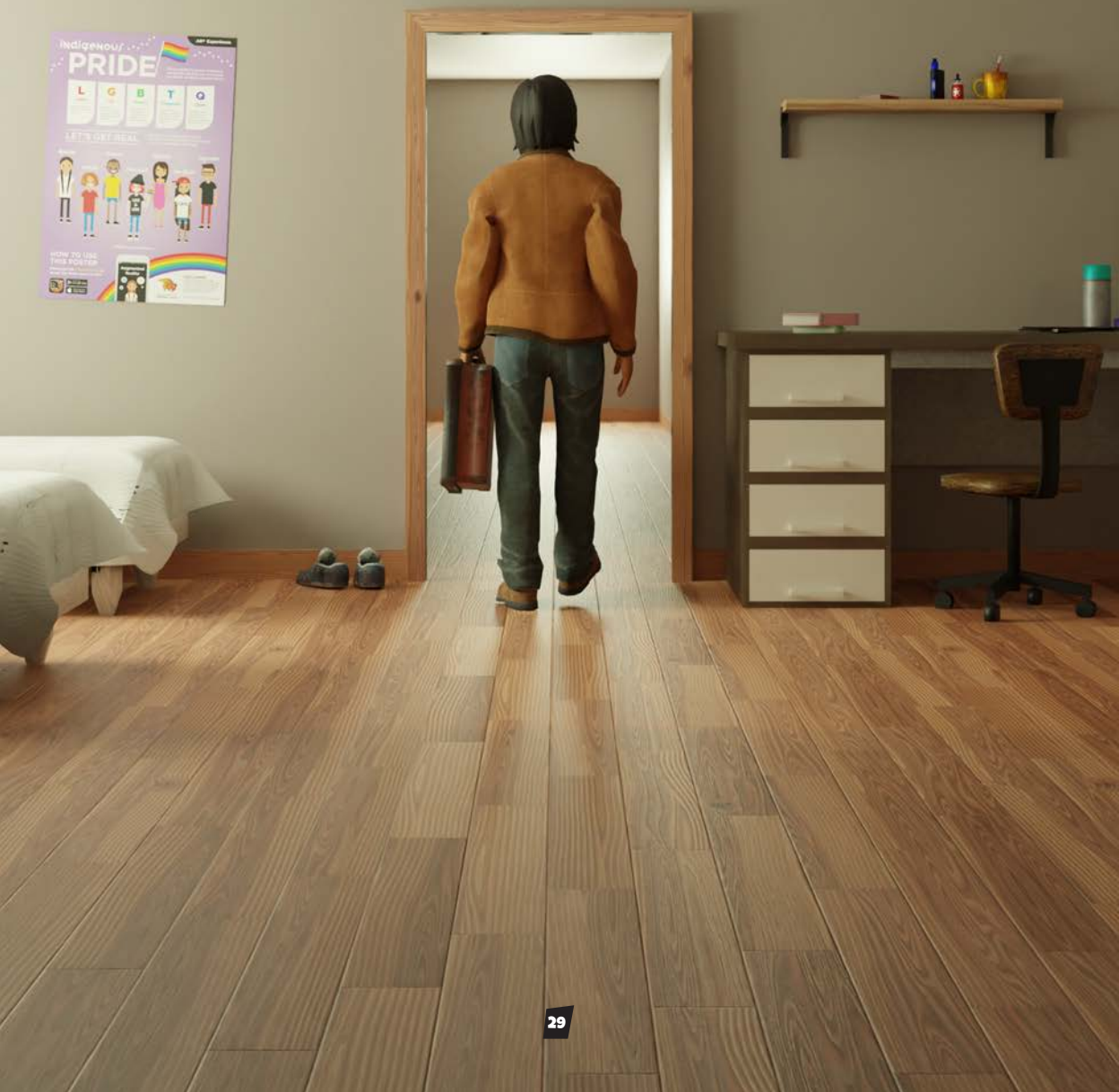
THIS ISN'T A DAMN BASEBALL GAME!



**TSIMAA NITAAKOHKITAPOOHPA**  
**(WHERE WILL I GO)?**



I'M NOT LEAVING IT UP TO **NIKSI A'PAO'TAKIIS** (THE WORKERS).



A man with a beard and a brown jacket sits on a patterned sofa in a dimly lit, cluttered living room. He is looking down at a small object in his hands. The room is filled with various items on the floor: a spilled bag of chips, a red cup, a pizza box, a green cushion, and other debris. A floor lamp is on the left, and a red pillar stands on the right. The walls are yellow and show signs of wear.

**NITAAKA'TSOHSI** (I WILL GET LOST).  
I CAN GET LOST ALL ON MY OWN.



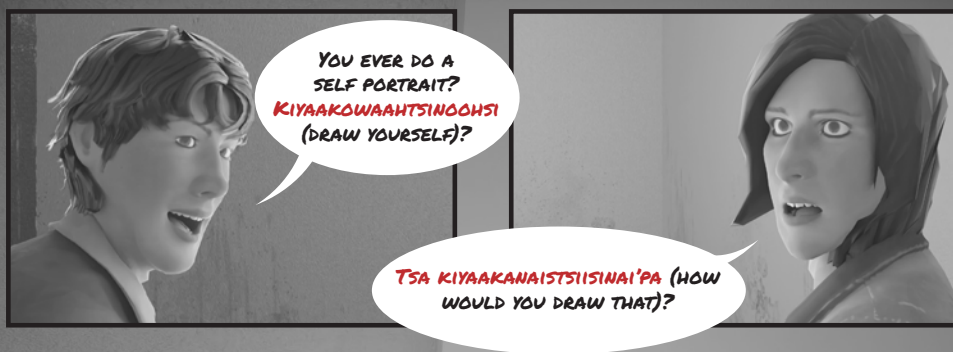


VICTOR, IKKANATTSI (IT'S BEAUTIFUL!)  
KISINAAKSSISTSI (YOUR PICTURES),  
MAKE MORE OF THEM!

SINAAKSISTSI (PICTURES) OF YOUR  
FRIENDS, SINAAKSISTSI (PICTURES) FOR  
THE FOREST,

SINAAKSISTSI (PICTURES)  
FOR THE VALLEY, SINAAKSISTSI  
(PICTURES) ON THE WIND.





HAVE TO KNOW WHO  
YOU ARE FIRST....





**TAKAA NIISTO**  
(WHO AM I)?

**TSIMAA NITAAKITAPOO**  
(WHERE AM I GOING)?

**SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO KNOW.**

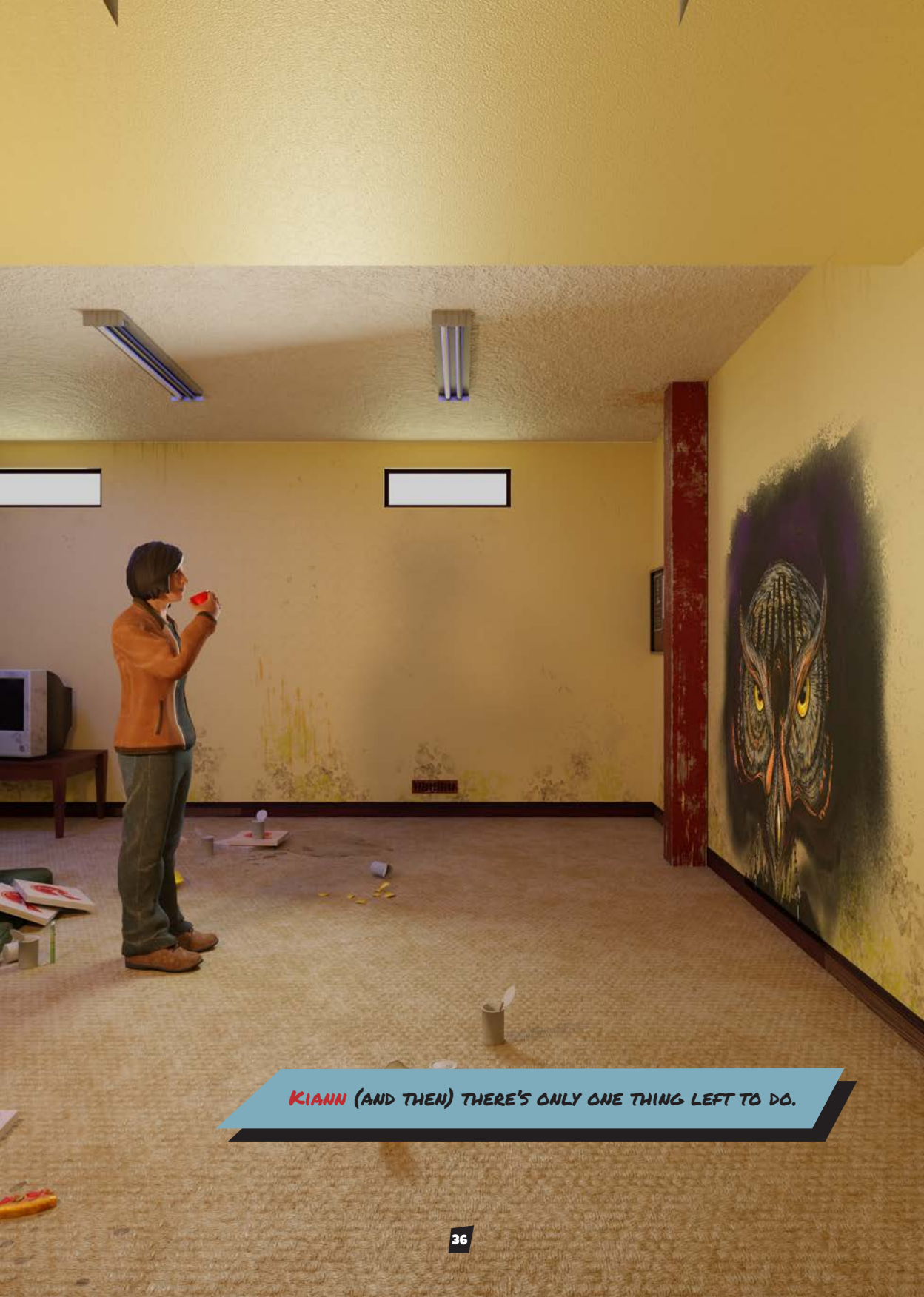
**ANNIMA** (FIRST), I PAINT THE PICTURE IN MY MIND.







EVEN THEN, NIMAATOHTSITAPI'TAKI'PA  
(I CAN'T FIND MYSELF).



**KIANN** (AND THEN) THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO.



A man with dark hair, wearing a brown jacket and blue jeans, sits on a floral-patterned couch. The room is dimly lit, with a single light bulb on a stand to the left. The air is filled with smoke. On the floor next to the couch is a pizza box with a red logo and some scattered food. A green puffer jacket lies on the floor in the foreground. The scene is captured from a high angle.

***IKSKIINATTSI.** (IT'S DARK). IT'S DARK INSIDE. IT'S FILLED WITH SMOKE.*

***AND I WELCOME IT. IKSOKA'PII** (IT'S GOOD).*

***ESCAPE IN THE QUIET FOR A TIME.***

**BUT THEN TOO MUCH TIME PASSES.**



**AKAISAMO (IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME).**



**MATAPIIKSI (PEOPLE) COME KI (AND) MATAPIIKSI  
(PEOPLE) GO. STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN**

ISN'T THAT  
RIGHT BECKY?

**NOW I AM EVEN NAMING A MANNEQUIN**

The background is a dark, abstract composition. In the upper right, the word "JULY" is written in a light blue, hand-drawn font. Below it, the number "25" is also written in a similar style. A large, stylized clock face is visible in the lower left corner, with its hands and numbers rendered in a light, sketchy manner. The central figure is a person running, depicted with broad, expressive brushstrokes in shades of purple, blue, and white. The overall effect is one of dynamic movement and time passing.

**ITAI'SAMMA'PSSI** (TIME IS WASTED). LIKE LEAVES ON WIND.

**ITAI'SAMOYI** (TIME STANDS STILL).  
LIKE ICE ON A RIVER.



A man with dark hair, wearing an orange long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, is sitting at a desk with his head buried in his hands. The desk has a dark wood top and green-painted drawers. On the desk are two white socks and a small orange object. To the left of the desk is a wooden box labeled "KITCHEN STUFF" containing a red cup and a blue sock. To the right is a stack of wooden boxes with a black bag on top. A boombox sits on the floor next to the boxes. The floor is covered with various items: a white sock, a red cup, yellow coins, a white object, and some papers with red markings. The room has a yellow wall and a dark floor.

AND AT THE END OF IT ALL...

I STILL CAN'T FIND HIM.



VICTOR?

YOU KNOW.  
VICTOR, YOU KNOW  
**KITSAAKIOHKOOKOWAYI** (YOU  
STILL HAVE A HOME).



WE ALL MISS LIAM HERE AT GROUP  
TOO, WE WOULDN'T WANT TO LOSE YOU TOO.  
**KITAINOOWA KITSIKSSKINI'TAKI** (I KNOW YOU  
ARE SAD).

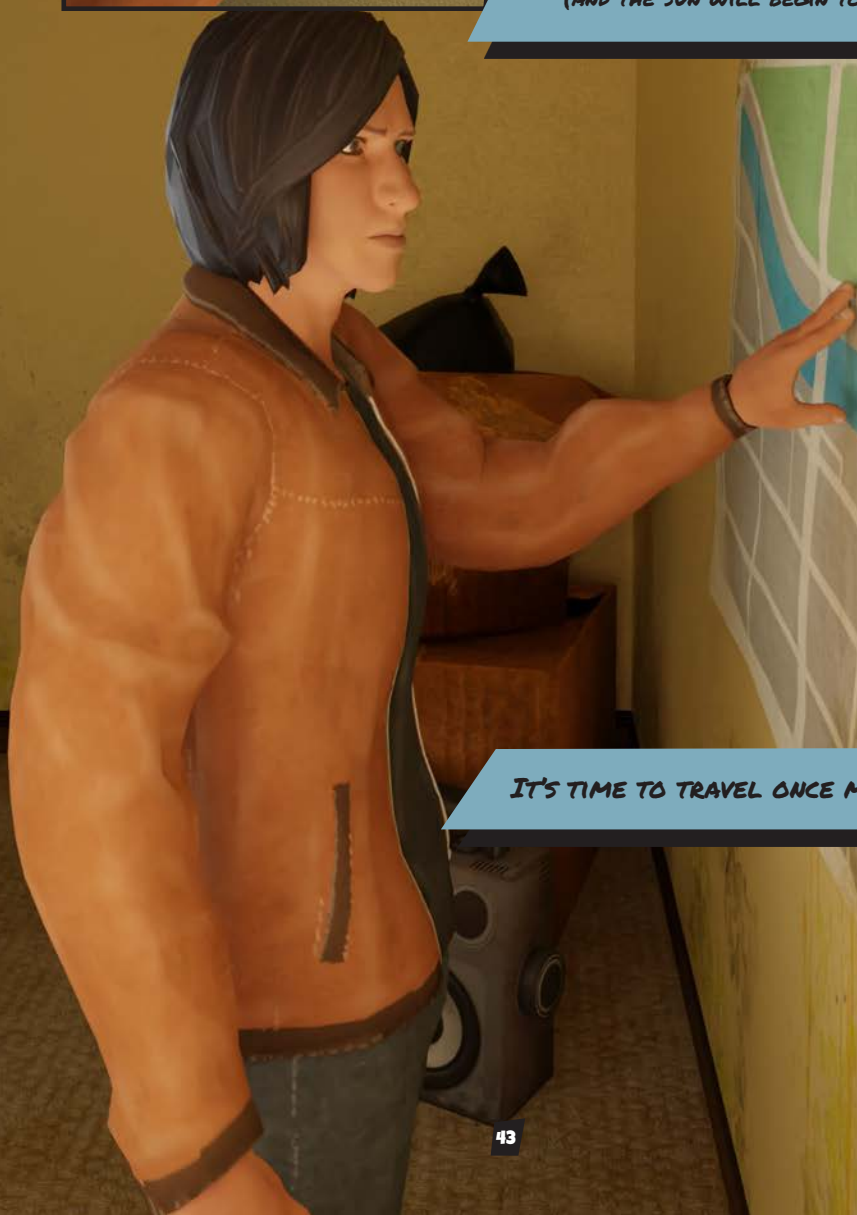





AND THEN WHEN TOO MUCH TIME HAS  
PASSED, AMOYI KI'SOMMI AAKATTOT'OOWA  
(THE MOON WILL COME OUT).



KI AMOYI NAATO'SI AAKOMATAPOOWA  
(AND THE SUN WILL BEGIN TO GO).

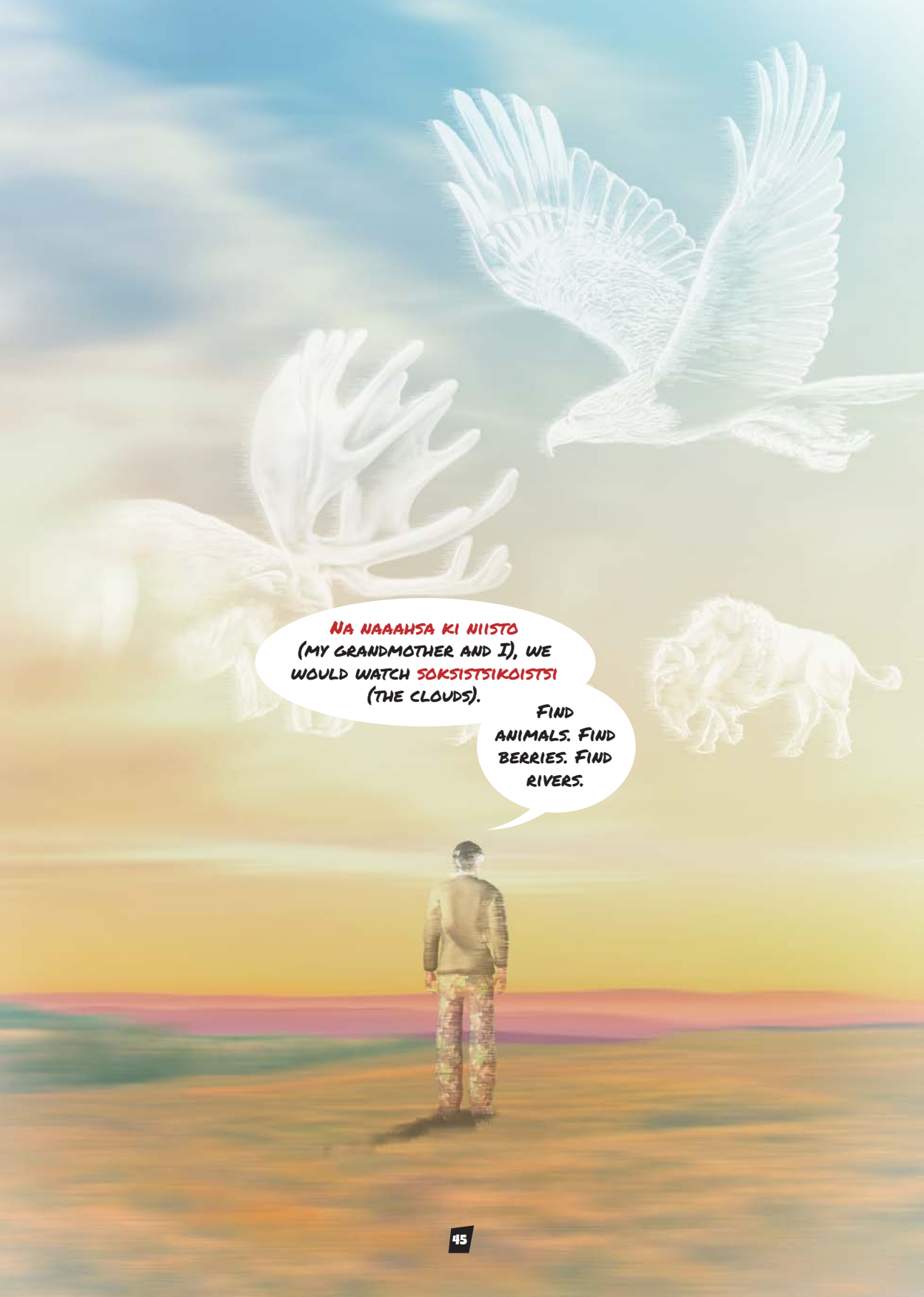


IT'S TIME TO TRAVEL ONCE MORE.



MAYBE I'M LOOKING IN  
THE WRONG PLACE.





**NA NAAHSA KI NIISTO**  
(MY GRANDMOTHER AND I), WE  
WOULD WATCH **SOKSISTSIKOISTSI**  
(THE CLOUDS).

FIND  
ANIMALS. FIND  
BERRIES. FIND  
RIVERS.



FIND THAT PLACE, VICTOR  
**STAMOCHKOONIT** (JUST FIND IT!)  
DON'T GIVE UP.





I DON'T KNOW **ITA'PAISSA'TSI'PI** (WHAT  
I AM LOOKING FOR).





ALL I KNOW IS **MAATSITSTSI**  
**ANNO** (IT DOESN'T EXIST HERE).



WHO IS HE TO TELL  
ME NOT TO GIVE UP?



NITAKKAAWA (MY FRIEND). TSIMAA  
ITAITAPOOWA (WHERE DID HE GO)?

WHY DOES HE CARE WHERE I AM?







THE BEST PLACE IS NO PLACE.

THE BEST SOMEBODY IS NOBODY.

YOU SHOULD KNOW.



YOU MADE THAT CHOICE.



A person with dark hair, wearing a brown jacket over a dark shirt, is shown from the chest up. They have their hands pressed against their temples, eyes closed, and a pained expression on their face. The background is a blurred sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with mountains visible in the distance. Two light blue text boxes with black borders are overlaid on the image.

AND EVER SINCE, NITAIKKITSINI'PA  
(I SEE IT IN MY MIND).

I SEE THAT PLACE.

DID YOU FEEL LIKE ME?



YOU EVER FEEL LIKE ANNI  
OHPAKOYITSI (A FIRE)?



LIKE ALL YOU CAN DO IS BURN.

OR FADE TO ASHES.



*MAYBE THAT'S NOT ALL I CAN DO...*



FIRST I PAINT THE PICTURE IN MY HEART.







STILL NIMAATOOHKSSKINI'PA  
(I CAN'T FIND MYSELF).



**STAMASINAAKIT**  
(JUST KEEP DRAWING),  
VICTOR

PICTURES  
ON THE  
WIND.



I ALWAYS GOT IN TROUBLE FOR  
**NISINAAKSISTSI** (MY PICTURES).



**ANNOHK** (NOW) SOMEONE  
WANTS ME TO PAINT THEM?

I DON'T KNOW WHERE  
**NITAITAPOOHPI** (I AM GOING). BUT  
I DO KNOW THAT I WAS HERE.



I CAN MAKE MY MARK

JUST LIKE THEY USED TO  
**MAAHKSINAAKSSI** (WRITE)  
ON STONE.







OKI (HELLO),  
NITAAHIKKO (MY NAME IS)  
VICTOR

A man with dark hair, wearing a brown leather jacket over a grey shirt and blue jeans, is leaning against a row of yellow lockers. He is looking down at his hands. The room is modern with light wood flooring, a large dark wood bookshelf with a TV, a purple ottoman, and a white shelving unit. A large red and black structure is visible on the right.

DOING A GOOD THING STILL ISN'T EASY.

*Iiyikowa* (IT'S CHALLENGING).

YOU GET SO USED TO THINGS BEING *makap'ihi* (BAD).



IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY **NITAWAIKAHTSO'PISTS.**  
(GAMES I PLAY). I STILL DON'T KNOW WHO I AM.






*SHE HAS BEEN HERE LIKE FOREVER.*

*BUT I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE, SHE PROBABLY  
WON'T LAST ANOTHER MONTH. I DON'T KNOW.*

*SHE'S ALRIGHT I GUESS. SEEMS TO  
ALWAYS DO WHAT SHE SAYS SHE WILL.*





DON'T YOU  
REMEMBER WHAT I  
TOLD YOU?

**KITOHKOOKOWAYI**  
(YOU HAVE A HOME). GO  
SPEAK TO **NIKSI OMAHKITAPIKSI**  
(THE ELDERS).



I HAVE ALWAYS HAD RESPECT FOR **NIIKSI OMAHKITAPIKSI**  
(THE ELDERS). MAYBE I NEVER GAVE THEM A CHANCE.

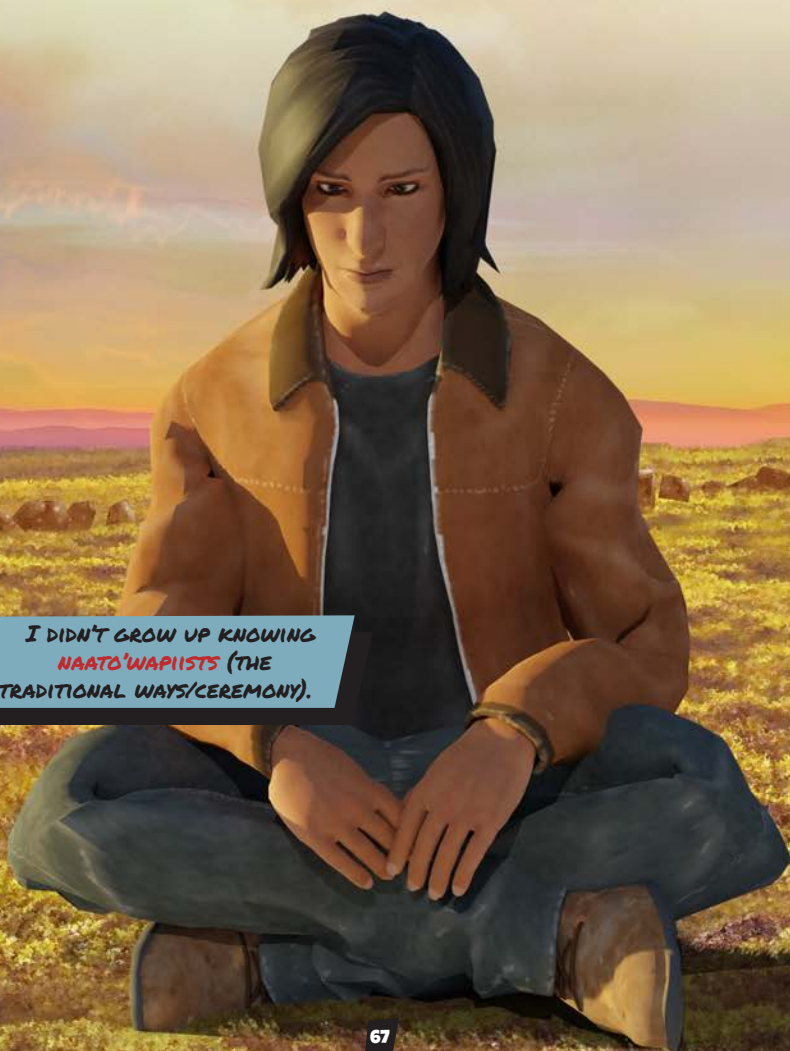


WHAT AM I DOING HERE?



I FEEL LIKE SUCH A FRAUD.

I DIDN'T GROW UP KNOWING  
**NAATO'WAPIISTS** (THE  
TRADITIONAL WAYS/CEREMONY).








I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.

I DON'T CARE WHERE I GO, BUT I  
AM NOT A REAL NATIVE PERSON.





HEY, I KNOW THE  
FEELING, LIKE YOU  
DON'T BELONG HERE  
RIGHT?

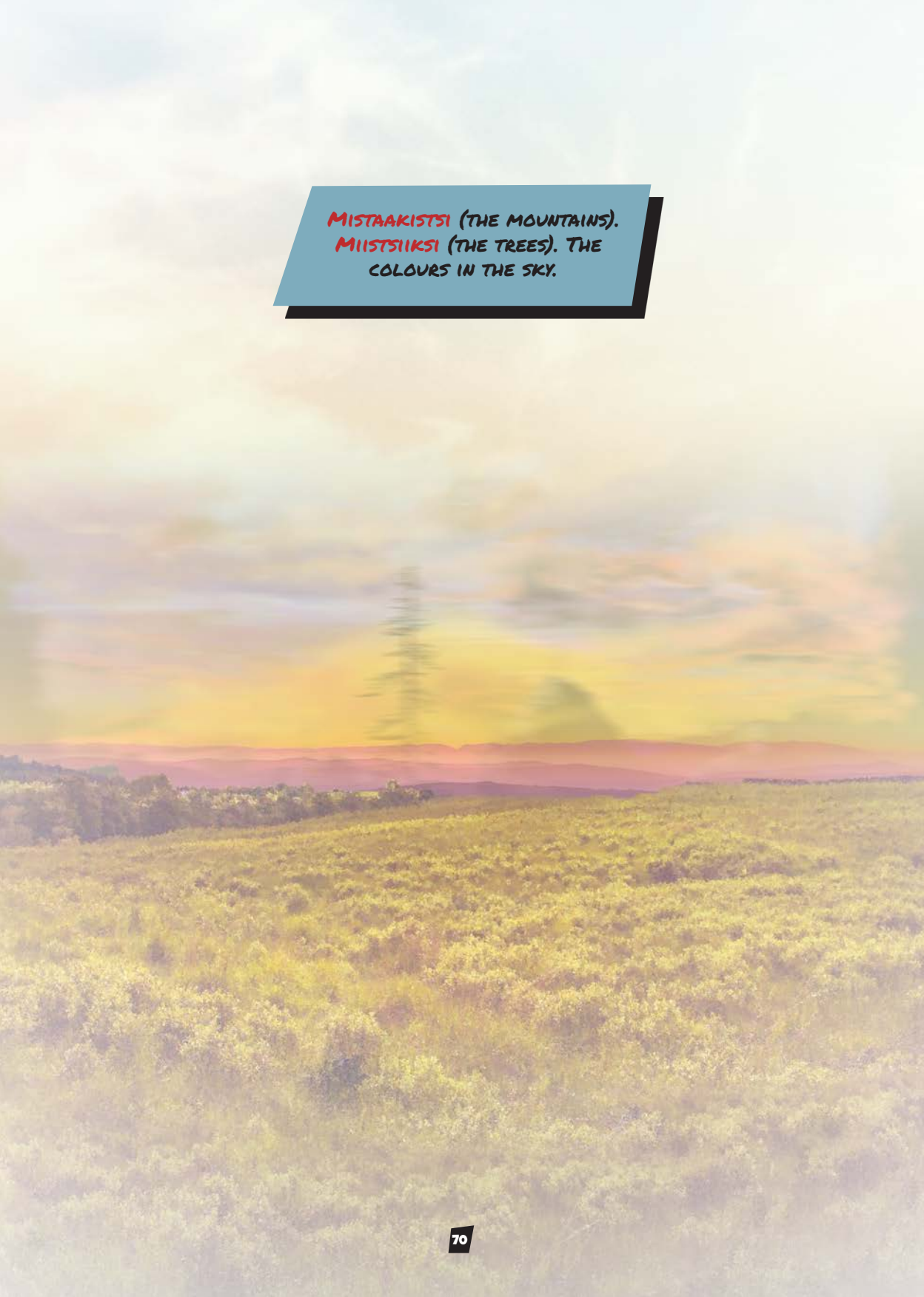
WELL YOU DO,  
IT TAKES PRACTICE AND  
TIME.



**KITSIITSITAPIIKOAN**  
(YOU ARE INDIGENOUS).  
YOU BELONG, AND IF YOU  
DON'T KNOW SOMETHING,  
**KAAKAANIKIT.** (JUST ASK  
ME).



MAYBE THIS ISN'T SO BAD. I CAN TRY.  
**IKI'TAAMKSAAHKOMMA** (THE LAND IS  
REALLY BEAUTIFUL).



**MISTAAKISTSI** (THE MOUNTAINS).  
**MIISTSIKSI** (THE TREES). THE  
COLOURS IN THE SKY.



A person stands with their back to the camera in a vast, grassy field. They are looking out over a landscape of rolling hills and mountains under a dramatic, colorful sky at sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with soft, pastel clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and pink. A single tall, thin tree stands to the left of the person. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

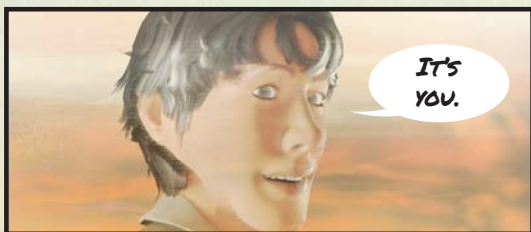
**KITSI'TAAMKSAAHKO (YOUR HAPPY PLACE), LIAM.**

**YOUR HAPPY PLACE.**

**IT'S YOU.**



SAA (NO)  
VICTOR



It's  
you.





**NITAAKOHKONOMOKIYAA NOOKOOWAYI**  
**(THEY SAY THEY CAN FIND ME A HOME).**





**IYIKOWA** (IT'S CHALLENGING).

IT'S NOT EASY.

IT'S NOT  
PERFECT.





**ITOOMSTTSITSSI.** (IT'S THE BEGINNING).

IT STARTS AS **NAATO'YISINAAKSSIN**  
(A PICTURE IN MY SPIRIT).



A full-page artistic illustration of a person standing on a rocky mountain peak. The person is silhouetted against a vibrant, multi-colored sky filled with swirling clouds in shades of purple, blue, orange, and yellow. To the left of the person is a tall, dark evergreen tree. The foreground shows dark, jagged mountain rocks. Two light blue text boxes with black borders are overlaid on the image.

BUT IT'S NOT THE FINAL DESTINATION.

NIISTOWA (IT'S ME).



Some of the content and images in this graphic novel may have triggered an emotional response. Should you need additional supports please use the AR app to scan over the below image for access to help.



Finding Victor is also a virtual reality escape room. If you would like more information please check out this website by connecting with the AR app.





## Otskapinaaki Heather Bliss

Heather's Blackfoot name was given to her by her late friend and teacher Tootsinam Beatrice Bullshields. She is a non-Indigenous linguist living and working in the traditional and unceded territories of the hənqə'minə'm'-speaking peoples. Born and raised in Mohkínssis (Calgary), Heather has been collaborating with members of the Siksika and Kainai communities on documenting and analysing the Blackfoot language for over 15 years. She is a Lecturer at Simon Fraser University and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Calgary.

## Ikino'motstaan Noreen Breaker

Ikino'motstaan Noreen Breaker is a Siksika Elder with specialized knowledge in Blackfoot language and culture. She holds a BA in Canadian Studies from the University of Calgary. As a fluent first language speaker of Blackfoot, Noreen has collaborated with linguists on Blackfoot language projects for over 15 years and has taught introductory Blackfoot language courses at the University of Calgary.

## Natoopii Lee Breaker

Natoopii Lee Breaker is a member of the Siksika Nation and a Horn Society Elder. He is committed to the revitalization of the Blackfoot language and culture.





# #FoundVictor



This is a Blackfoot Graphic Novel based on virtual reality escape room, Finding Victor. It tells the story of Victor who is searching to find himself after the death of his friend Liam. He is lost, confused and depressed and then finds himself homeless. As he searches to find out who he really is, he uses his artwork and the support of his community to find his way.



ISBN - 978-1-7771004-0-7



URBAN SOCIETY FOR  
ABORIGINAL YOUTH

Funded by the  
Government  
of Canada

Financé par le  
gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada