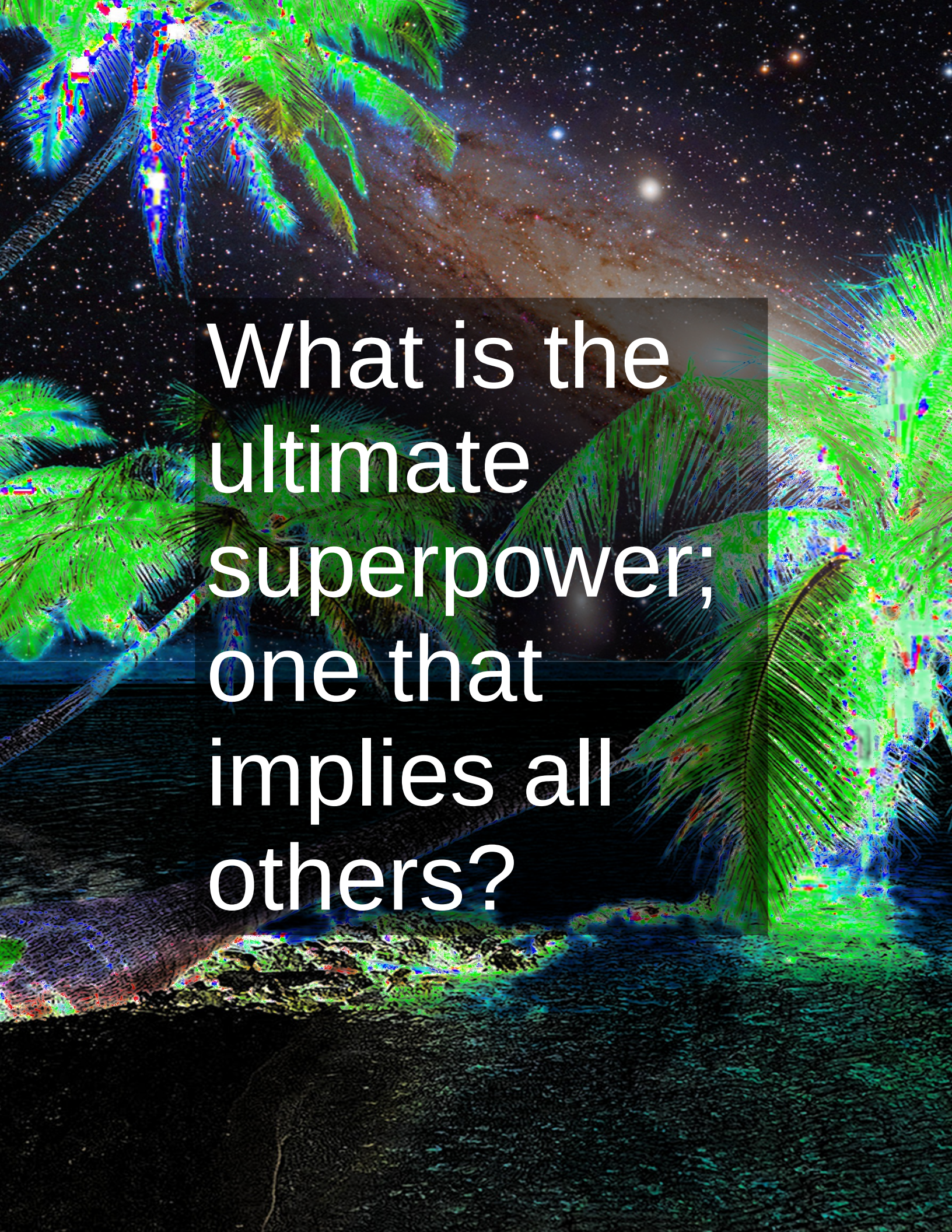


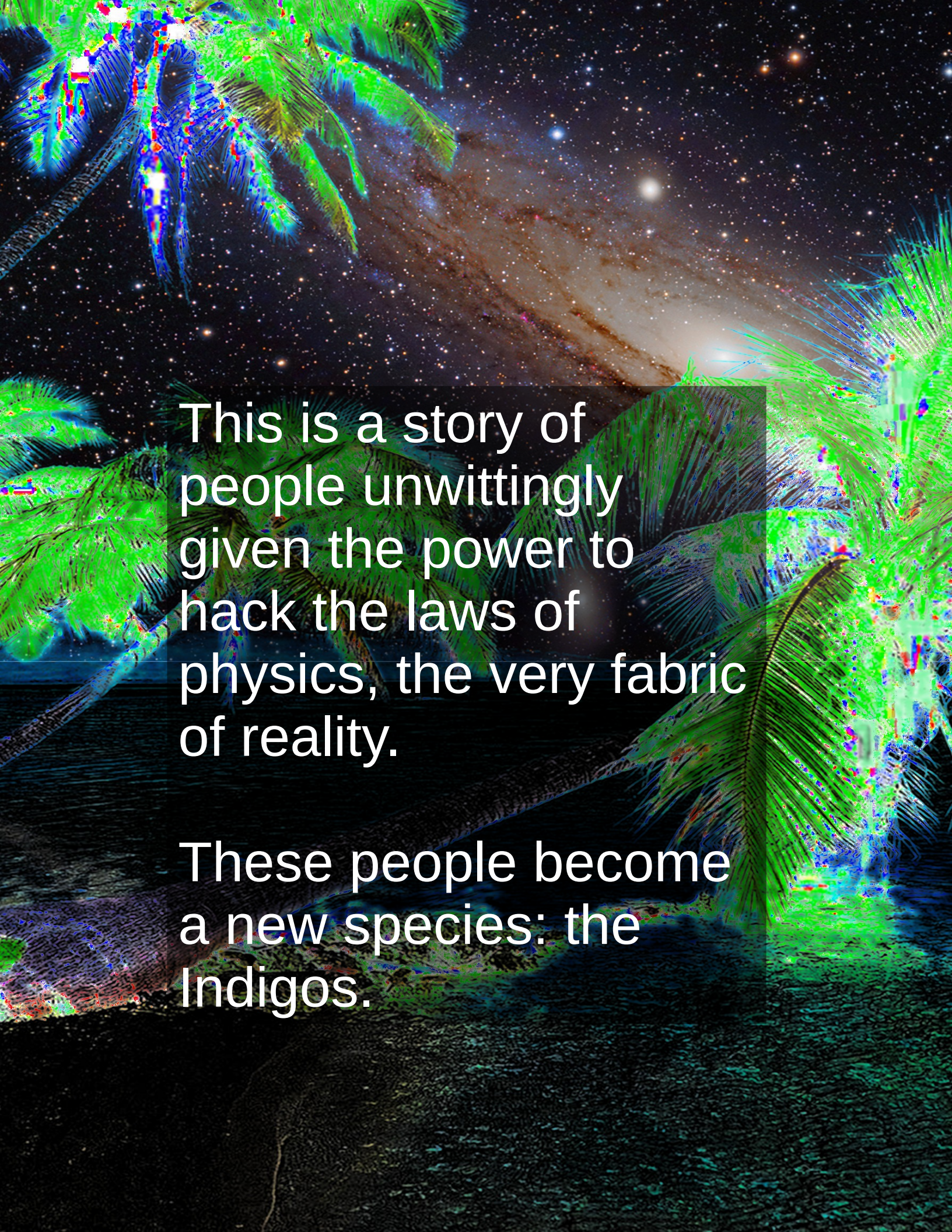
A man and a woman are shown in a close, intimate embrace. The man, on the left, has dark hair and a beard, and is wearing a dark leather jacket. The woman, on the right, has long, wavy blonde hair and is also wearing a dark leather jacket. They are looking at each other with soft expressions. The background is a dramatic, fiery orange and red space scene. In the lower half, the Earth is visible as a large, glowing sphere with a bright horizon line. To the right, the Moon is shown as a smaller, cratered sphere. The overall mood is romantic and futuristic.

# Indigo Rising

Justin R. Smith

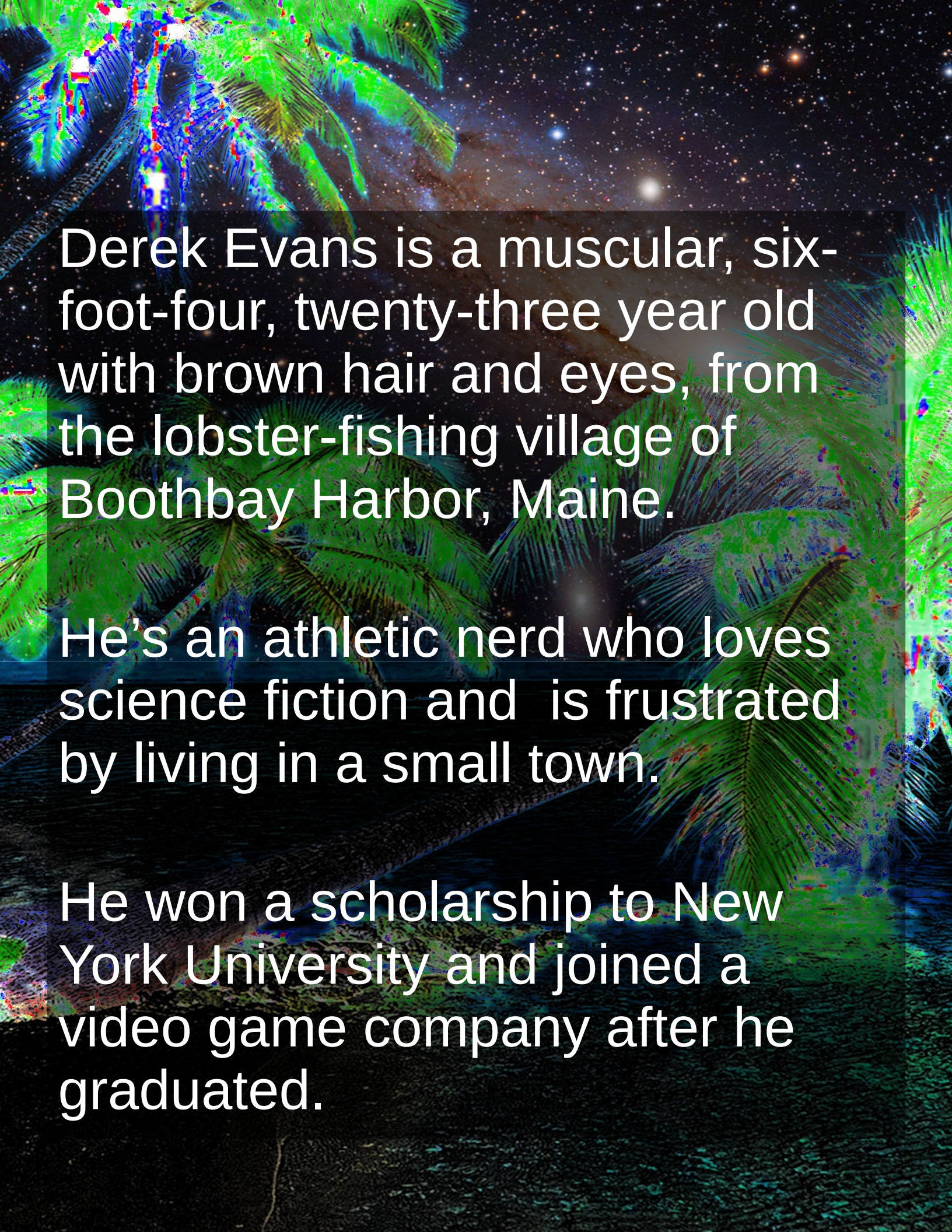
A tropical beach at night with palm trees and a starry sky. The palm trees are illuminated with vibrant green and blue lights, creating a magical atmosphere. The sky is dark and filled with numerous stars, with a prominent band of light, likely the Milky Way, stretching across the upper portion of the frame. The foreground shows the dark, textured ground of the beach, possibly covered in sand or small rocks, with some light reflecting off the surface.

What is the  
ultimate  
superpower;  
one that  
implies all  
others?



This is a story of  
people unwittingly  
given the power to  
hack the laws of  
physics, the very fabric  
of reality.

These people become  
a new species: the  
Indigos.

A night scene featuring several palm trees in the foreground and a dark, starry sky in the background. The palm trees are silhouetted against the dark sky, and the stars are scattered across the upper portion of the image. The overall atmosphere is serene and celestial.

Derek Evans is a muscular, six-foot-four, twenty-three year old with brown hair and eyes, from the lobster-fishing village of Boothbay Harbor, Maine.

He's an athletic nerd who loves science fiction and is frustrated by living in a small town.

He won a scholarship to New York University and joined a video game company after he graduated.

Depressed over a bad breakup, he signs up for a drug trial and takes an experimental drug developed by the world-famous neurologist Harry Pembroke:

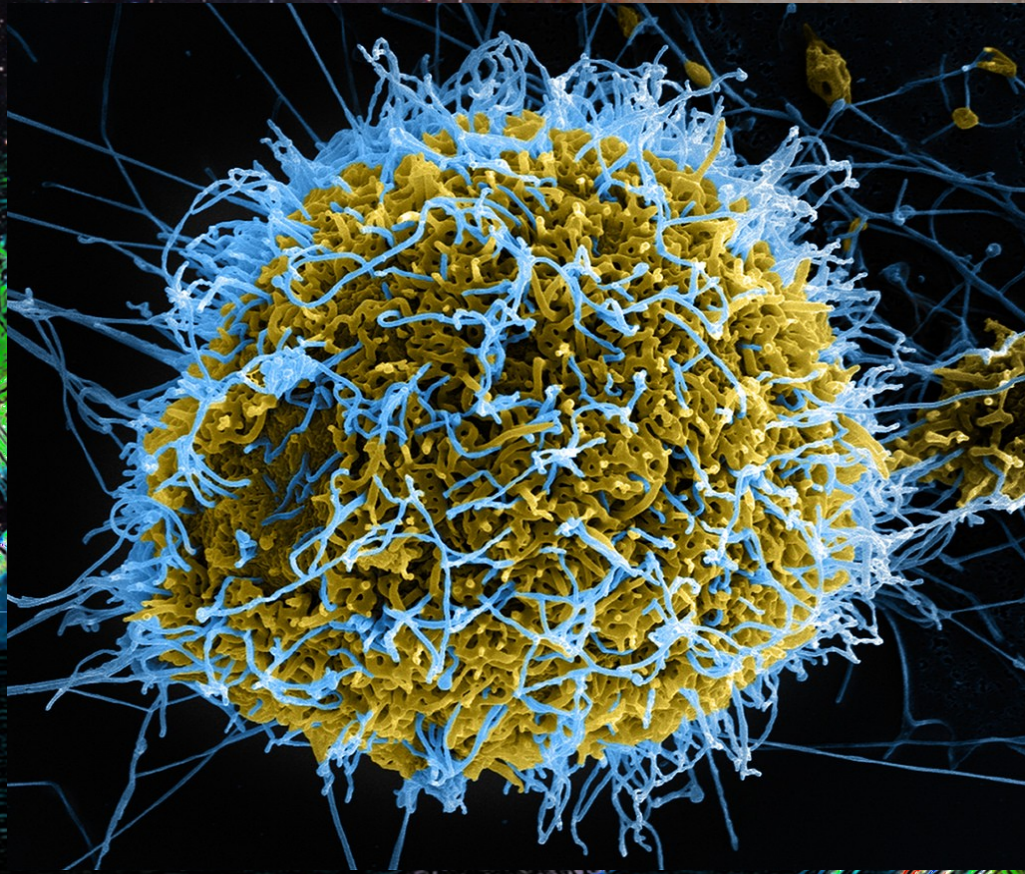


He has strange dreams



and sees Pembroke murdered.  
He has entered the Spirit World,  
the crossroads of all existence.  
Note: *the special effects here  
are minimal.*

Unknown to him, Pembroke has infected him with a DNA-altering virus.



Research at the University of Pennsylvania inspired this. They developed an artificial virus that cures congenital blindness.

A coworker, Alessandra Giancana, catches the virus from him.



“Allie G” is the acting head of art and animation at the video-game company where she and Derek work.



The background of the entire image is a tropical night scene. It features several palm trees with their fronds silhouetted against a dark, starry sky. The lighting is a mix of natural night light and some artificial, colorful lights (possibly from a festival or event) that create a vibrant, multi-colored glow in shades of green, blue, and purple. The overall atmosphere is serene yet lively.

Her parents emigrated from Taormina, Sicily.

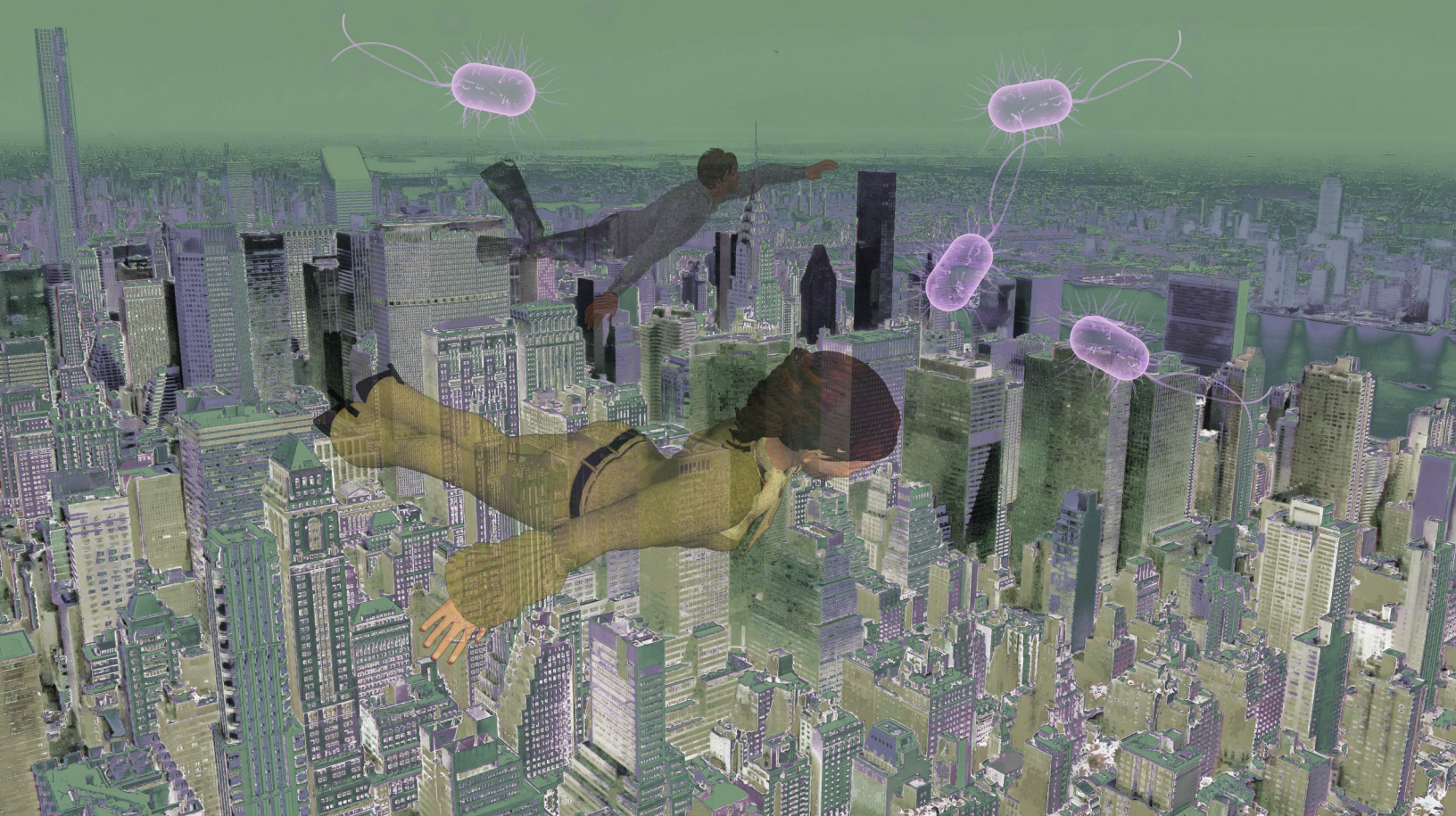
Her grandfather is a Mafia don. Her father and younger brother were killed in a war with a rival gang. She blames her grandfather and *despises* "Mafia Culture."

She grew up in Brooklyn and is an artistically talented but streetwise New York woman who advised a friend that "men are chickenshit."

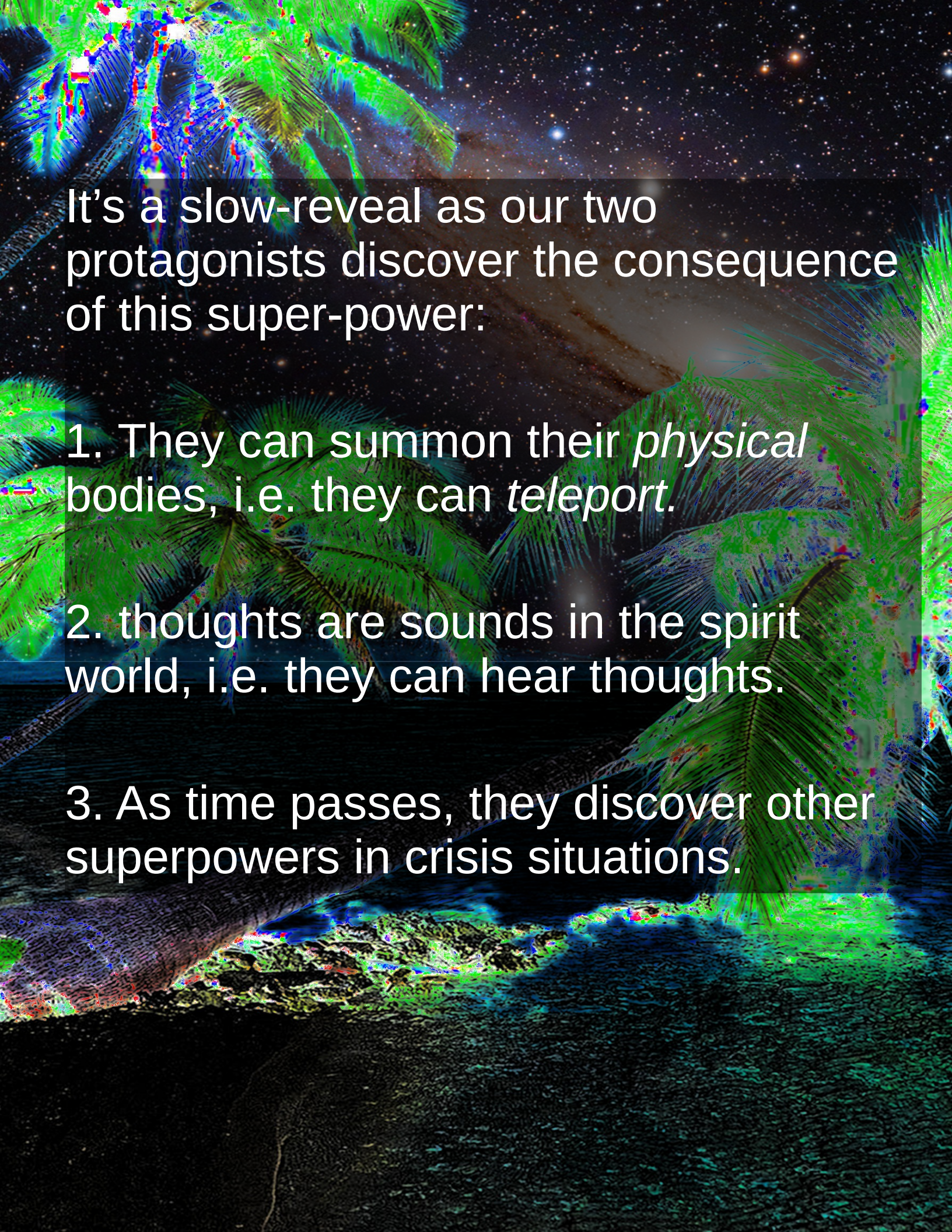
Think Marisa Tomei in "My Cousin Vinny."



Soon, Derek and Allie can both soar through the spirit-world



Note: *the special effects here are minimal (basically a moving-picture version of photoshop).*

A tropical beach scene at night. The foreground shows dark sand and the base of palm trees. The middle ground features several palm trees with their fronds silhouetted against a dark sky. The sky is filled with numerous stars and a faint, glowing band of light, possibly the Milky Way. The overall lighting is dark, with some highlights from the stars and the moon or a bright star.

It's a slow-reveal as our two protagonists discover the consequence of this super-power:

1. They can summon their *physical* bodies, i.e. they can *teleport*.

2. thoughts are sounds in the spirit world, i.e. they can hear thoughts.

3. As time passes, they discover other superpowers in crisis situations.

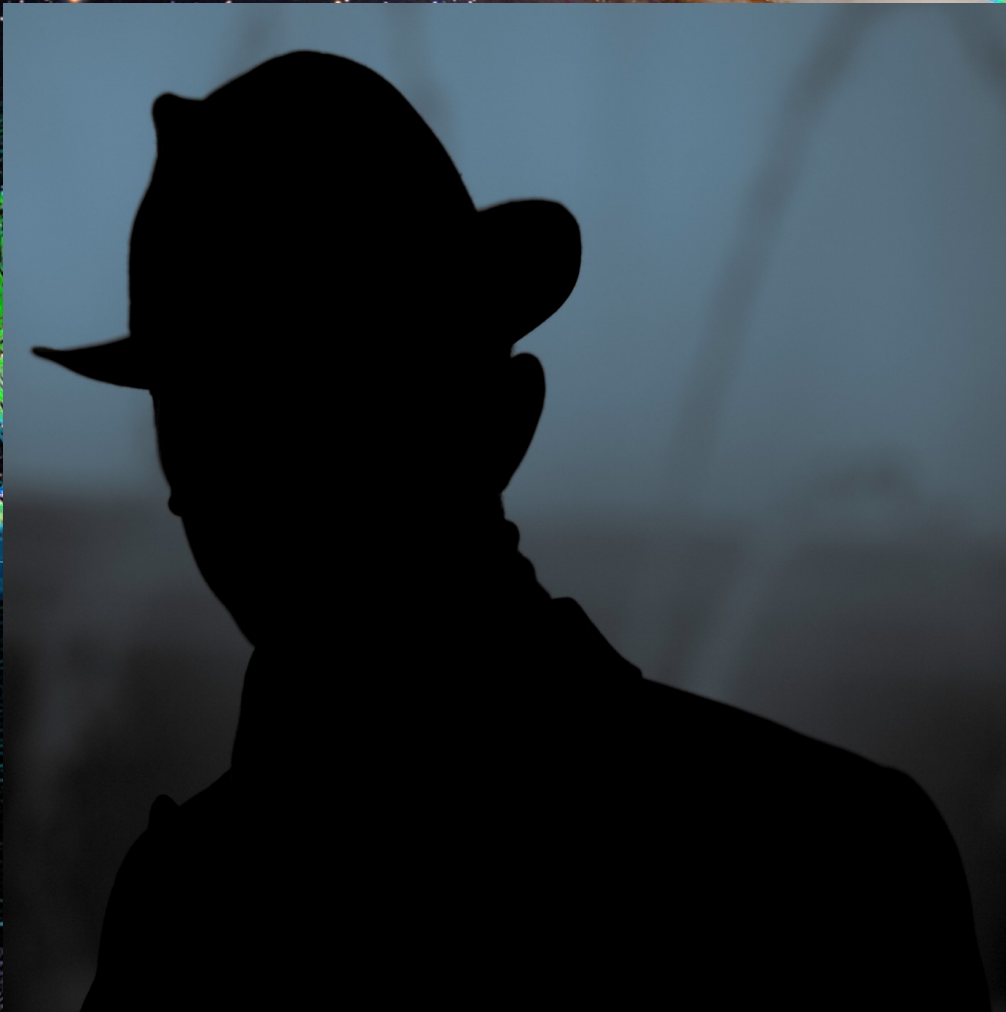
They use these abilities in  
casinos and on Wall Street



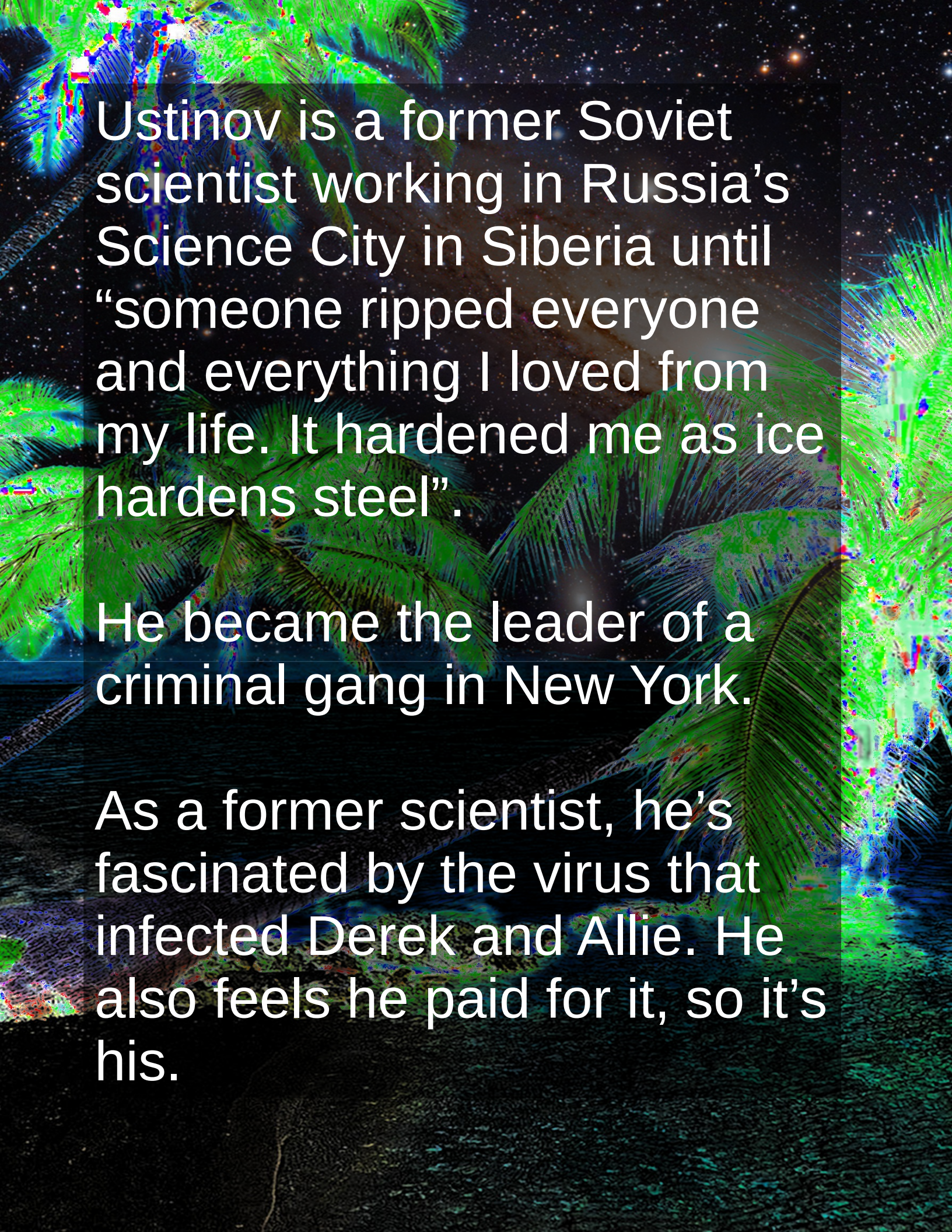
and fall in love.



Vladimir Ustinov, the Russian mobster who financed Pembroke's research wants his due



He wants more than mere money, though.

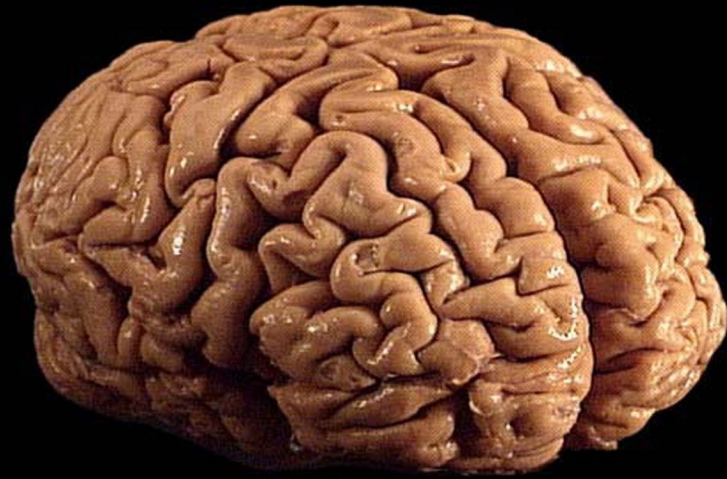


Ustinov is a former Soviet scientist working in Russia's Science City in Siberia until "someone ripped everyone and everything I loved from my life. It hardened me as ice hardens steel".

He became the leader of a criminal gang in New York.

As a former scientist, he's fascinated by the virus that infected Derek and Allie. He also feels he paid for it, so it's his.

He wants to harvest the virus from our protagonists



and wages war with them!

He must do this before their immune systems destroy all traces of the virus.



A night scene featuring several palm trees in the foreground. The sky is dark and filled with numerous stars, with a faint, glowing band of light, possibly the Milky Way, visible in the upper portion. The palm trees are silhouetted against the starry background, and some of their fronds appear to have a slight shimmer or glow, suggesting a magical or otherworldly atmosphere.

The mob attempts to kidnap  
Derek's family.

Derek and Allie discover a  
new superpower: they can  
*reset* from injuries.

They teleport-in-place to an  
earlier (uninjured) version of  
themselves.

The only downside is  
momentary amnesia.

Our protagonists and their families flee to the north shore of Oahu.



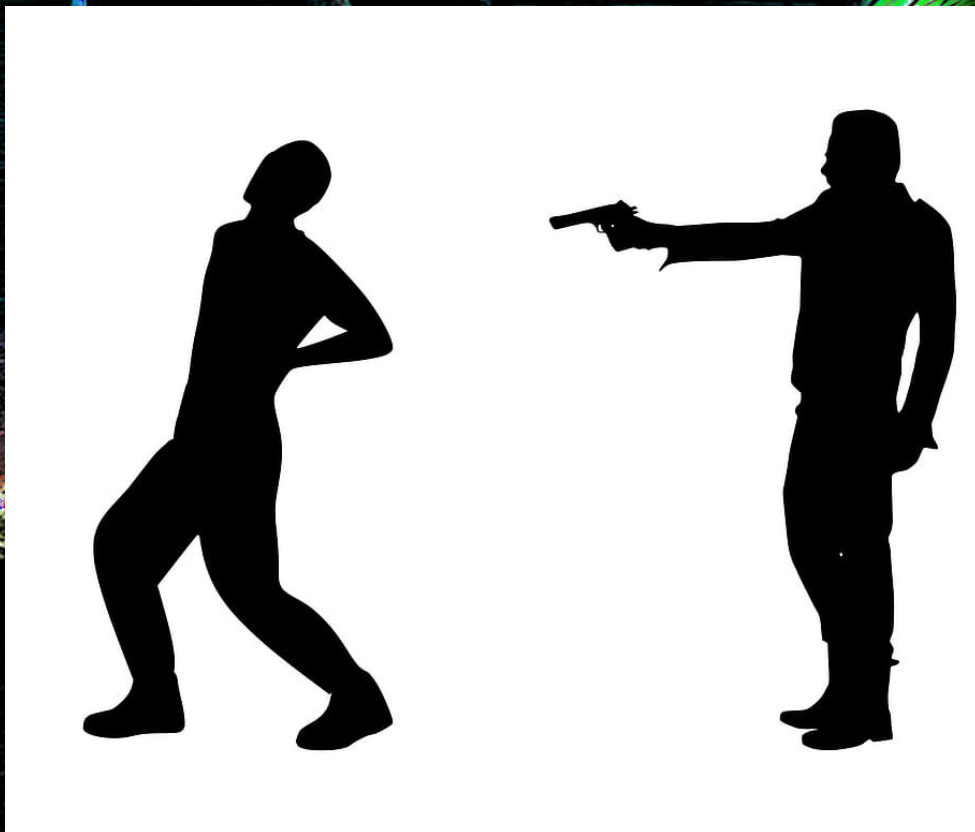
From there, they scan the gangsters and give the police perfect “anonymous” tips. This costs the Ustinov mob hundreds of millions



Ustinov's gang argues that his war with Derek and Allie is "bad for business".

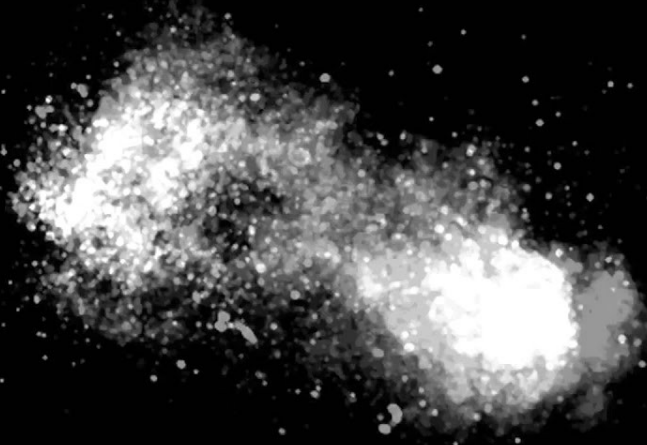
One of Ustinov's lieutenants openly says this.

Ustinov doesn't take criticism well



The man Ustinov killed is the secret lover of his right hand man.

This constant battle has worn Derek down. He catches a cold and spreads the virus



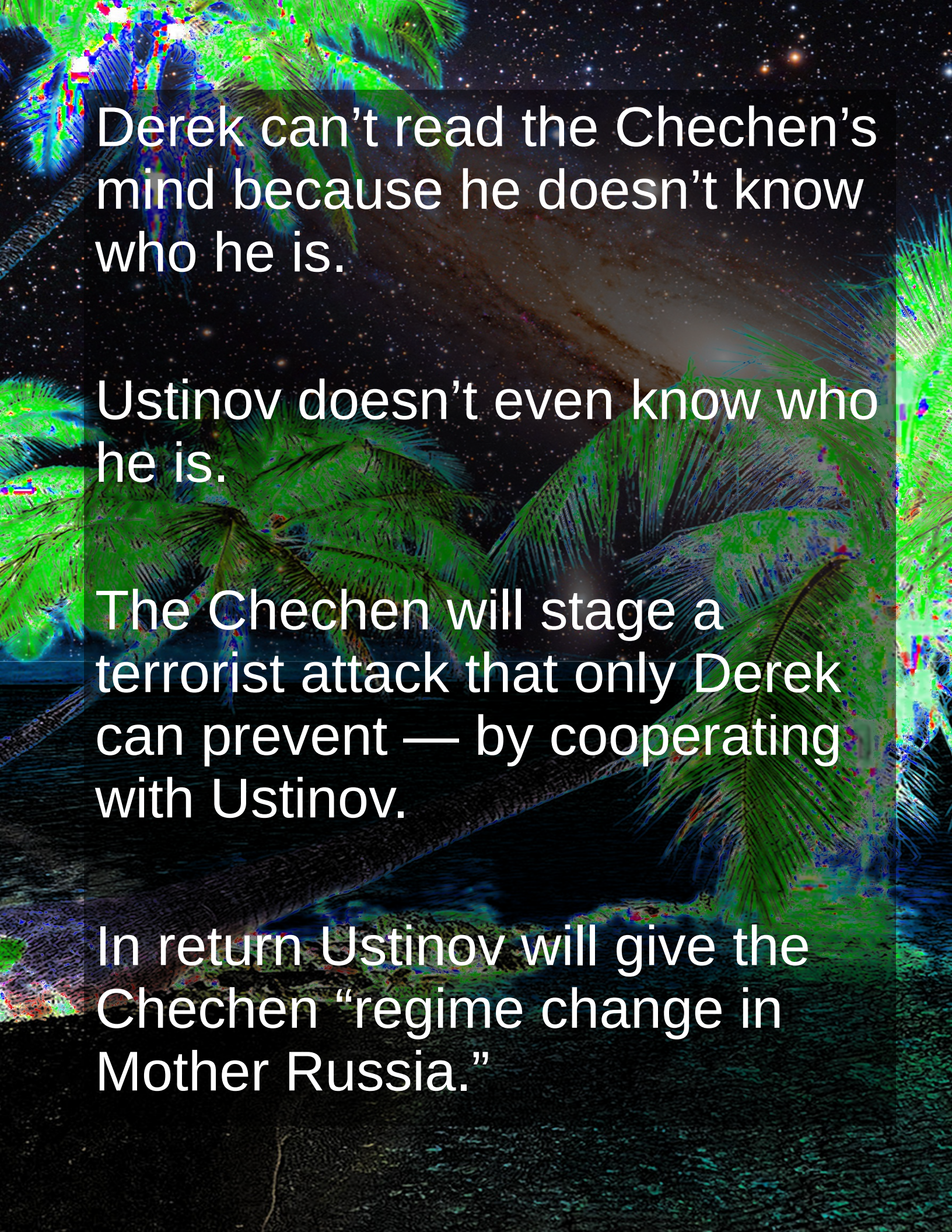
Bouro uiba and Bush (2014)

Derek and Allie's families (and Derek's sister's boyfriend) all develop super-powers.

Now immune to Ustinov's threats, they all teleport home.

Ustinov finally finds a way to attack Derek. He enlists the aid of a terrorist he has never met: *The Chechen*.



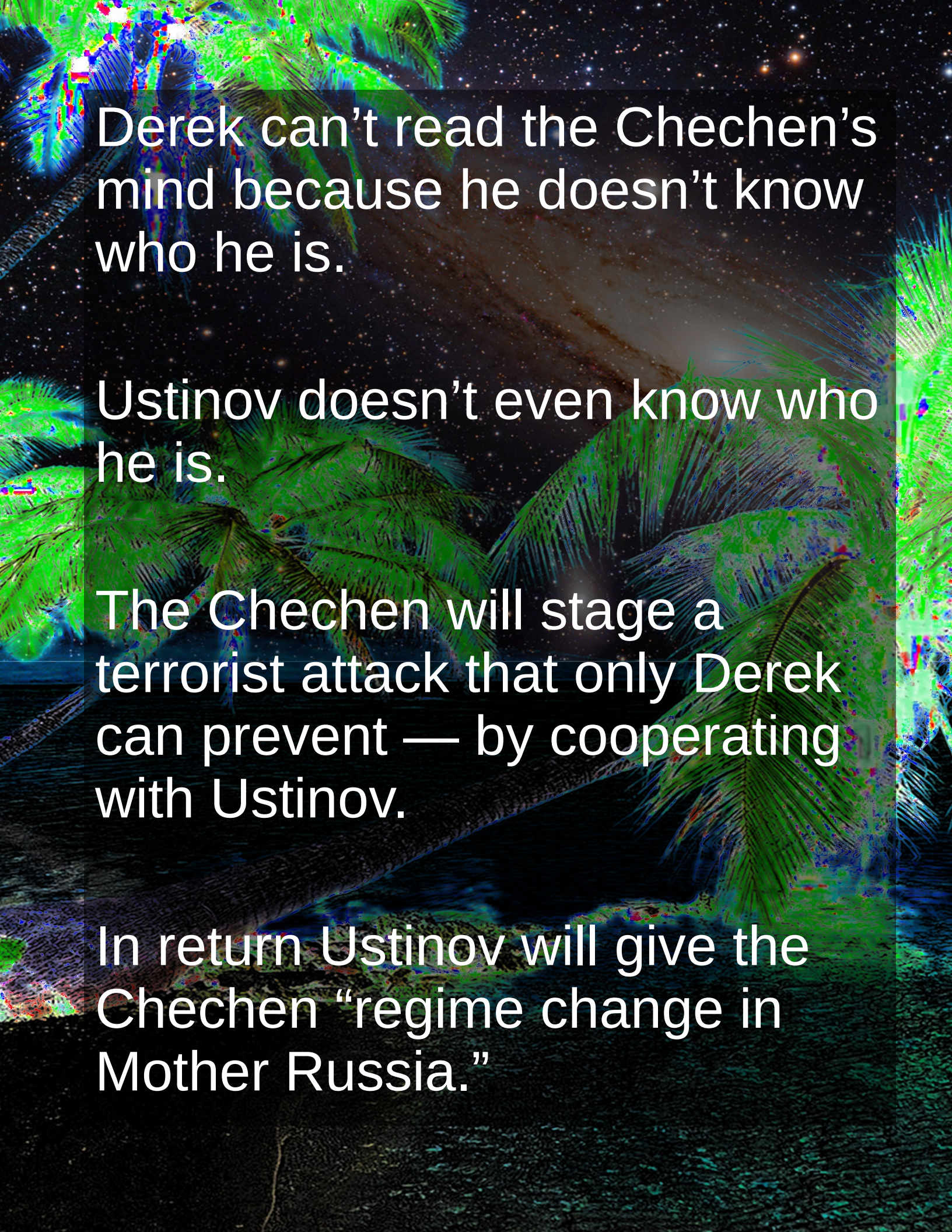
A tropical beach scene at night. The sky is dark and filled with stars. Several palm trees are visible, their fronds illuminated by a bright, warm light source, possibly the moon or a low sun, creating a strong glow. The foreground shows the dark, textured ground of the beach.

Derek can't read the Chechen's mind because he doesn't know who he is.

Ustinov doesn't even know who he is.

The Chechen will stage a terrorist attack that only Derek can prevent — by cooperating with Ustinov.

In return Ustinov will give the Chechen “regime change in Mother Russia.”

A tropical beach scene with palm trees and a starry night sky. The palm trees are silhouetted against a dark sky filled with stars and a faint nebula. The foreground shows the dark, textured ground of the beach.

Derek can't read the Chechen's mind because he doesn't know who he is.

Ustinov doesn't even know who he is.

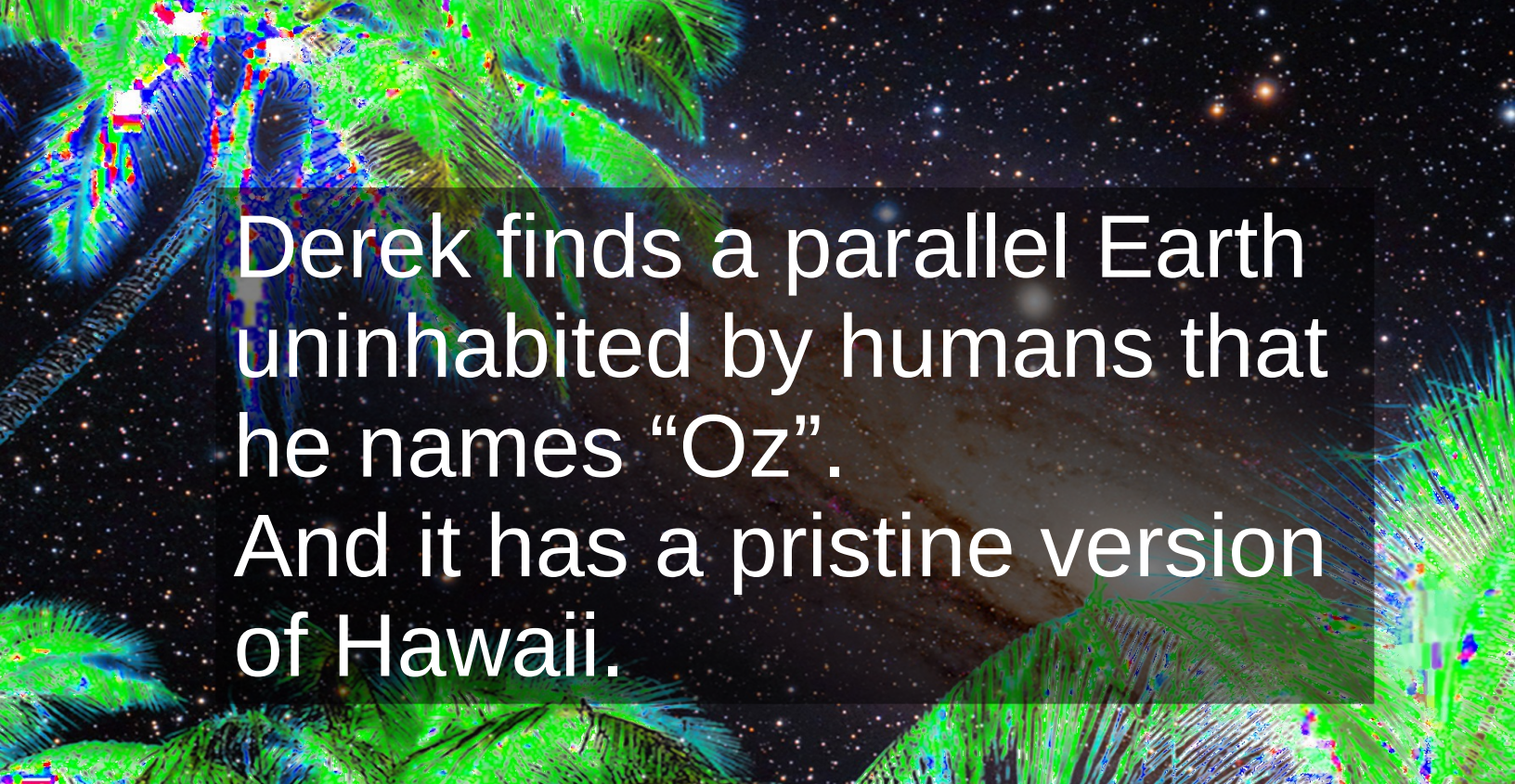
The Chechen will stage a terrorist attack that only Derek can prevent — by cooperating with Ustinov.

In return Ustinov will give the Chechen “regime change in Mother Russia.”



In the lull between battles,  
Derek discovers he can  
access parallel universes.



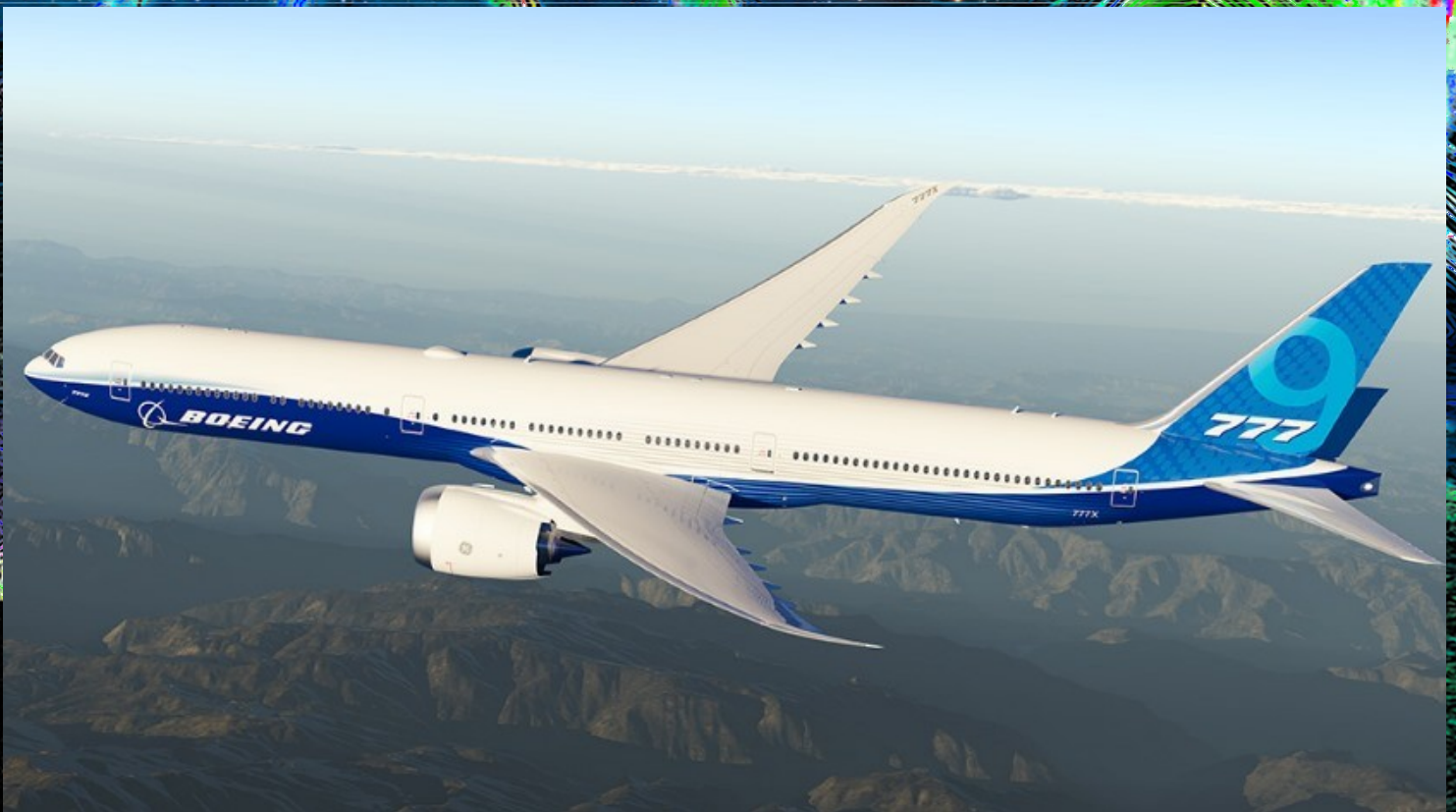


Derek finds a parallel Earth uninhabited by humans that he names "Oz".  
And it has a pristine version of Hawaii.



The  
Chechen's plan finally  
takes shape:

Mount bombs on 100  
long-haul flights:



Ustinov can disable all but one, if Derek submits to a brain biopsy




Ustinov quickly acquires  
Derek's superpowers.

Derek resets and leaves.

When Ustinov enters the  
Spirit World, the souls of his  
many victims attack him.



A night scene featuring several palm trees silhouetted against a dark sky filled with stars. The palm fronds are illuminated with a vibrant, multi-colored light (red, green, blue, yellow) that creates a shimmering, ethereal effect. The ground in the foreground is dark and textured, possibly sand or a similar surface.

Ustinov is unable to use his newly-acquired superpowers.

Derek and his sister save the passengers on the one remaining plane that has a bomb on it: a nonstop flight from New York to Honolulu.

The news media calls it the “Miracle of Flight 1108”.

Justinov fights with  
Derek and dies.

Derek disposes of his  
body in the Oz timeline.



Derek and Allie finally  
got their honeymoon



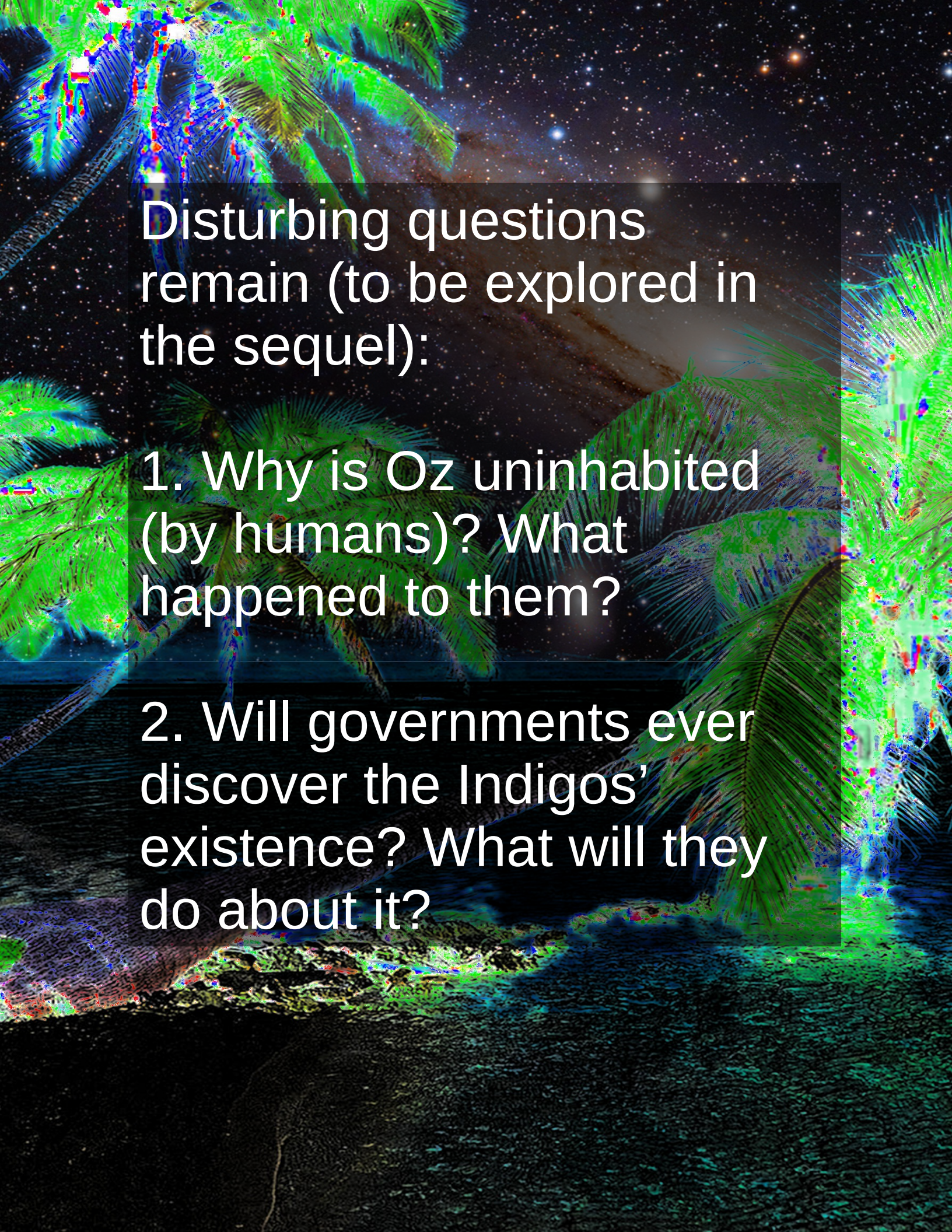




Derek transports a house  
to Hawaii in the Oz  
timeline.

It becomes the Indigos'  
retreat and homeland.



A tropical beach scene at night. The foreground shows a dark, pebbly beach. Several palm trees are scattered across the middle ground, their fronds silhouetted against a dark sky filled with stars and a faint, glowing nebula. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and serene.

Disturbing questions remain (to be explored in the sequel):

1. Why is Oz uninhabited (by humans)? What happened to them?

2. Will governments ever discover the Indigos' existence? What will they do about it?