

THE LAST WARM PLACE

CHAPTER SIX

TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY-ONE





12 October. Day Twenty-Eight.

Guide pulse agrees with the charted deep-water turn.



Above our ship background. Within the first exterior work band.

Record time, shielding, and return path before anyone steps ashore.



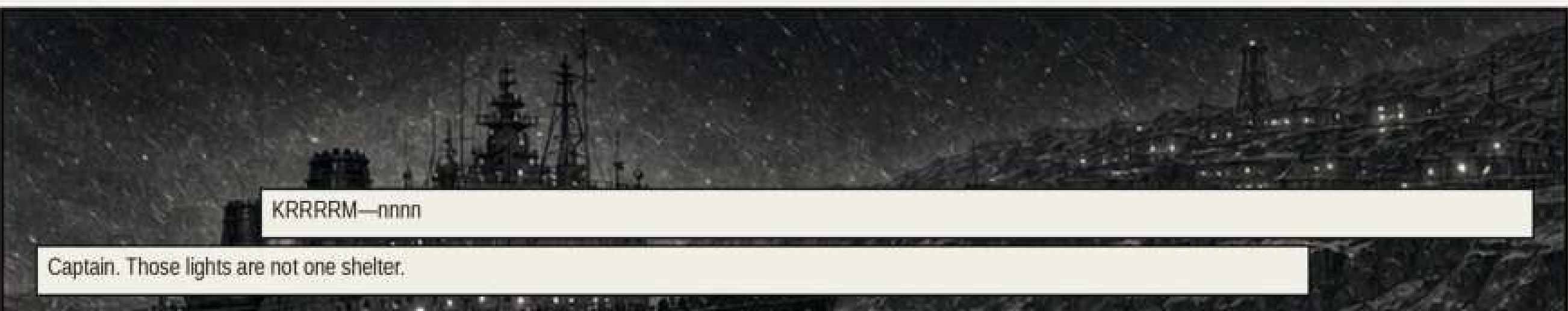
No harbor pilot. No voice reply.

The lamps are giving us a shoulder, not a welcome.



Dead slow. Keep verified water astern.

One earned ship-length at a time.



KRRRRM—nnnn

Captain. Those lights are not one shelter.



Four organized light groups beyond the quay.

The packet named one facility.



Zvezda, hold thirty meters off. Quay edge is undermined.

Living voice. Same guide source.



Identify yourself. State total living ashore.

Solveig Halden. Civil engineer. Emergency coordination.

Forty-three are at Borealis.



That is not the number he asked for.

State everyone.



Two hundred eighty-one living people ashore.



HOSPITAL AND CLINICS — 67



MINE SHELTERS — 75

BOREALIS — 43



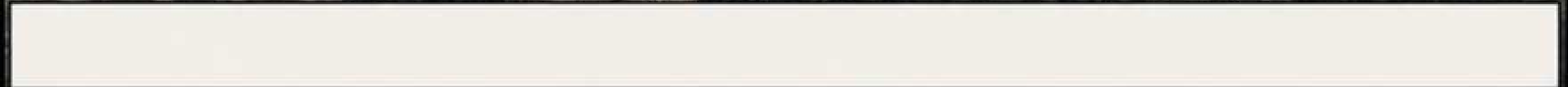
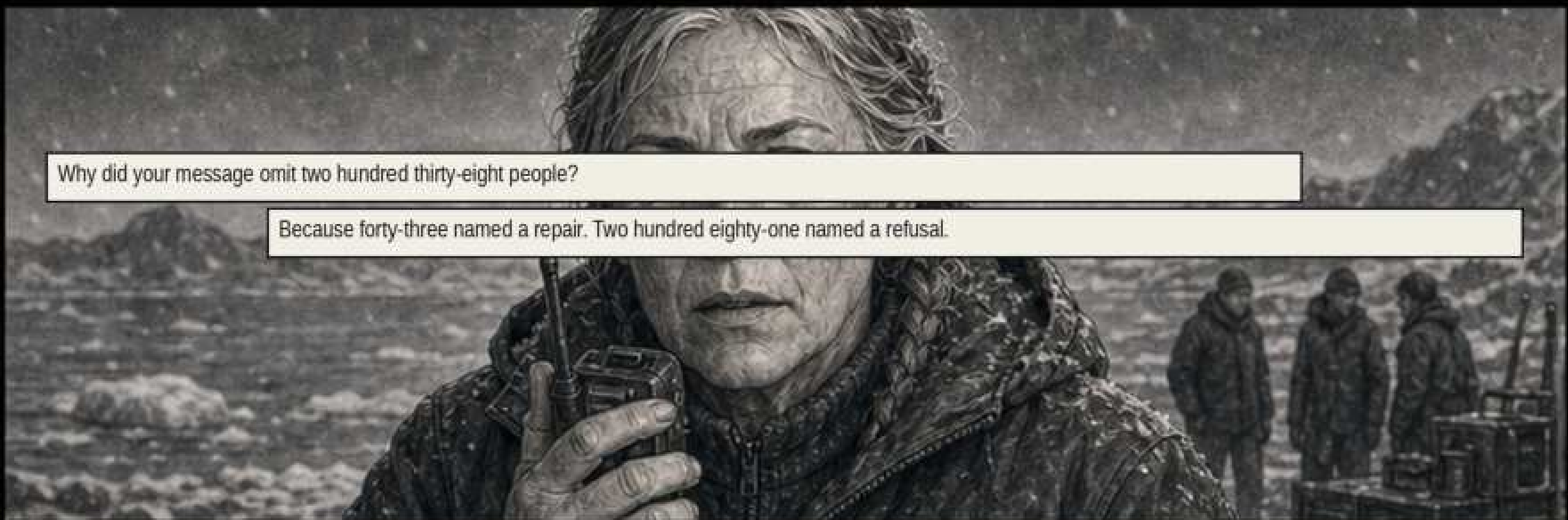
43 AT BOREALIS + 238 ELSEWHERE = 281 ASHORE

173 SHIPBOARD + 281 ASHORE = 454 LIVING PEOPLE



Why did your message omit two hundred thirty-eight people?

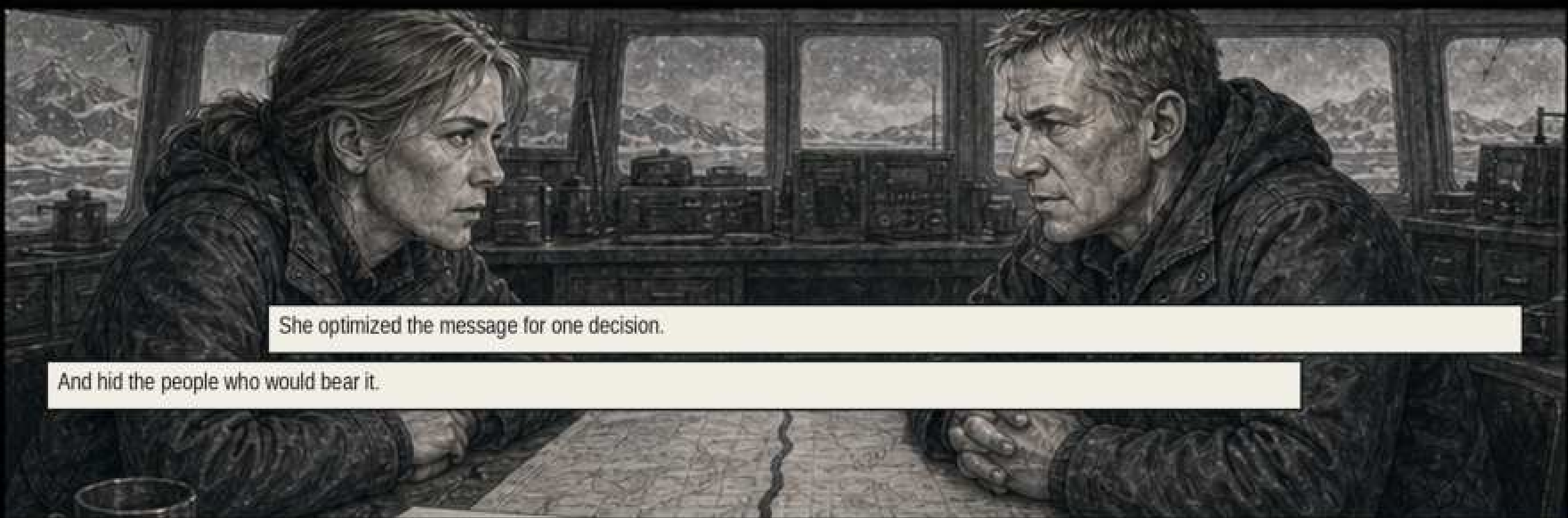
Because forty-three named a repair. Two hundred eighty-one named a refusal.



I did not invent the count. I designed the sentence to bring you.

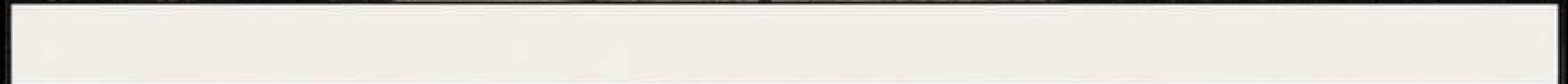


Maintain separation. Preserve departure planning before the fjord closes.



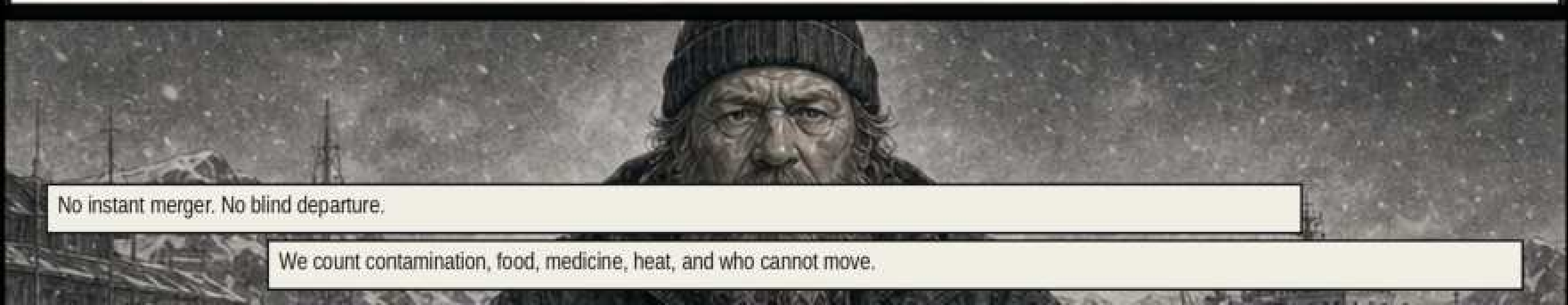
She optimized the message for one decision.

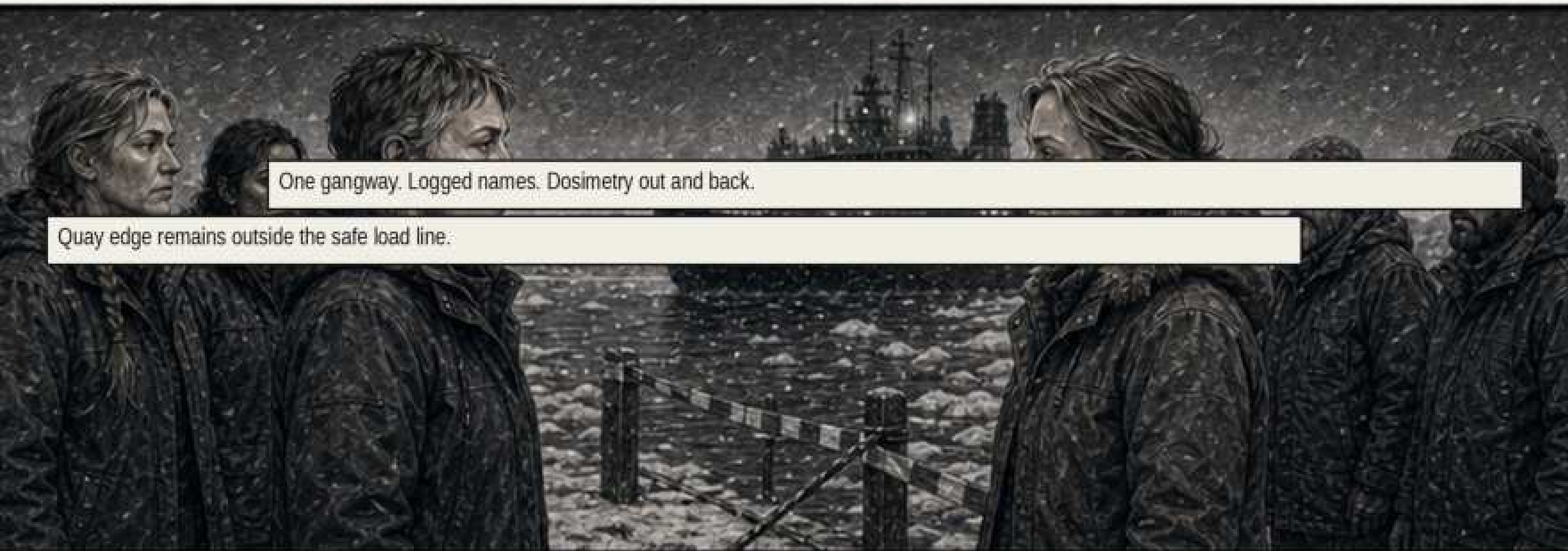
And hid the people who would bear it.



No instant merger. No blind departure.

We count contamination, food, medicine, heat, and who cannot move.





One gangway. Logged names. Dosimetry out and back.

Quay edge remains outside the safe load line.



You came farther than the message deserved.

People deserved the chance. The message still enters the record.

These doses are for named patients after allergy and renal checks.

Understood. No general distribution.



No shore connection from this cable state.

Inspection only. Connection remains unauthorized.



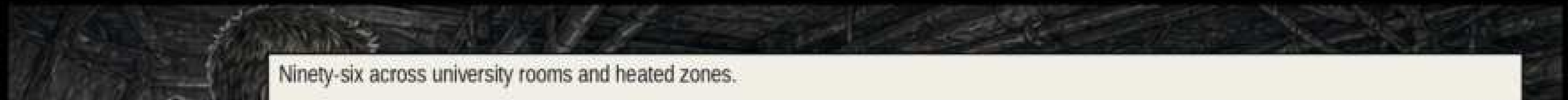
POPULATION — SUPPORTED / DISTRIBUTION — CHECKING

CONTAMINATION / FOOD / MEDICINE / HEAT / EXTRACTION — OPEN



Astrid Nilsen. Abdominal trauma before our arrival. Still unstable.

Alive enters the count. Prognosis enters separately.



Ninety-six across university rooms and heated zones.

Names, ages, medicines, mobility. Not one household repeated.



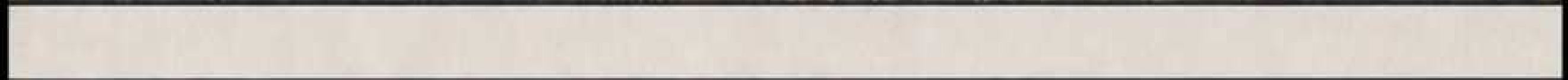
Seventy-five here. West access is collapsed.

Then one exit is a life-support failure, not a convenience.



This network existed before we arrived.

Record who runs it before offering to improve it.



238 OUTSIDE BOREALIS — VERIFIED

43 AT BOREALIS — VERIFIED BY FACILITY ROLL

281 ASHORE — SUPPORTED



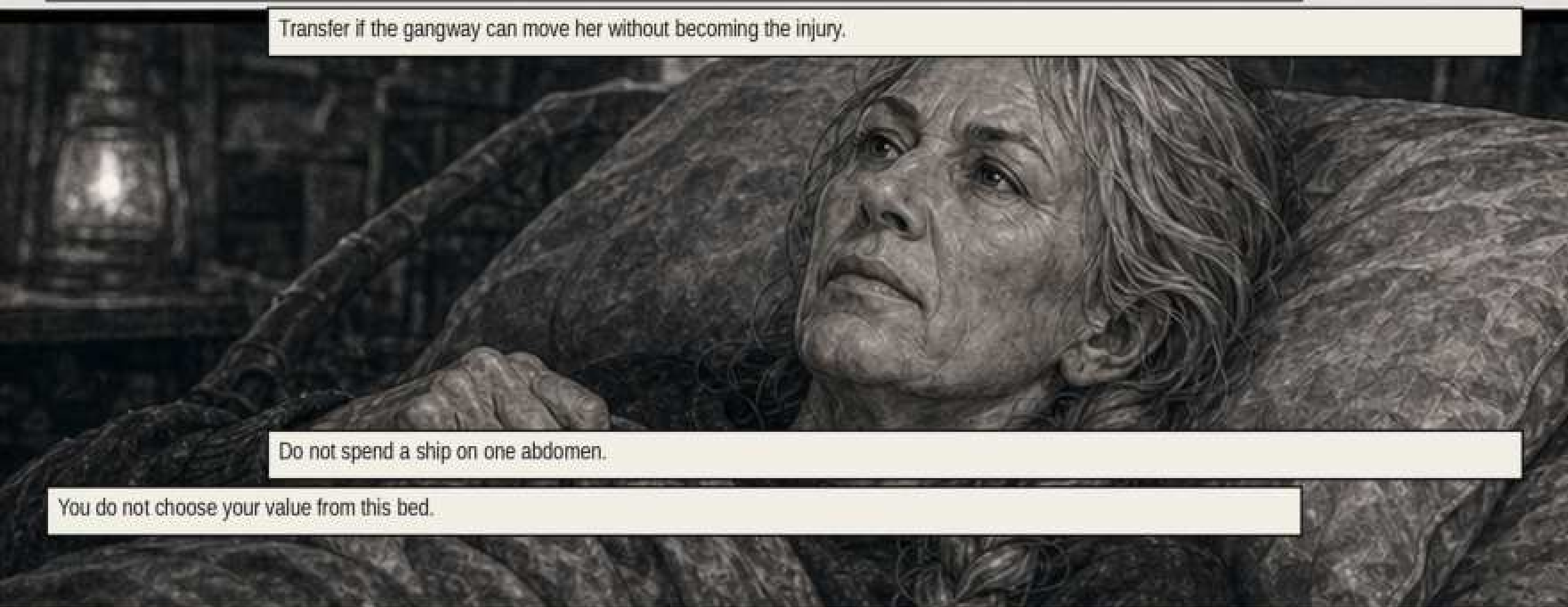
Her abdomen is rigid. Bleeding may be contained or only slowed.

We have no operative imaging and limited blood.



Monitor pressure, pain, urine, and mental status hourly.

Transfer if the gangway can move her without becoming the injury.



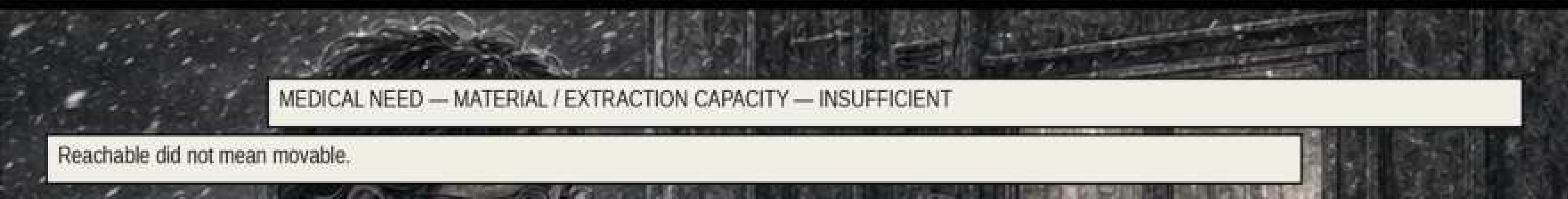
Do not spend a ship on one abdomen.

You do not choose your value from this bed.



At least thirty-one cannot climb or transfer safely today.

Then departure is also a selection plan.



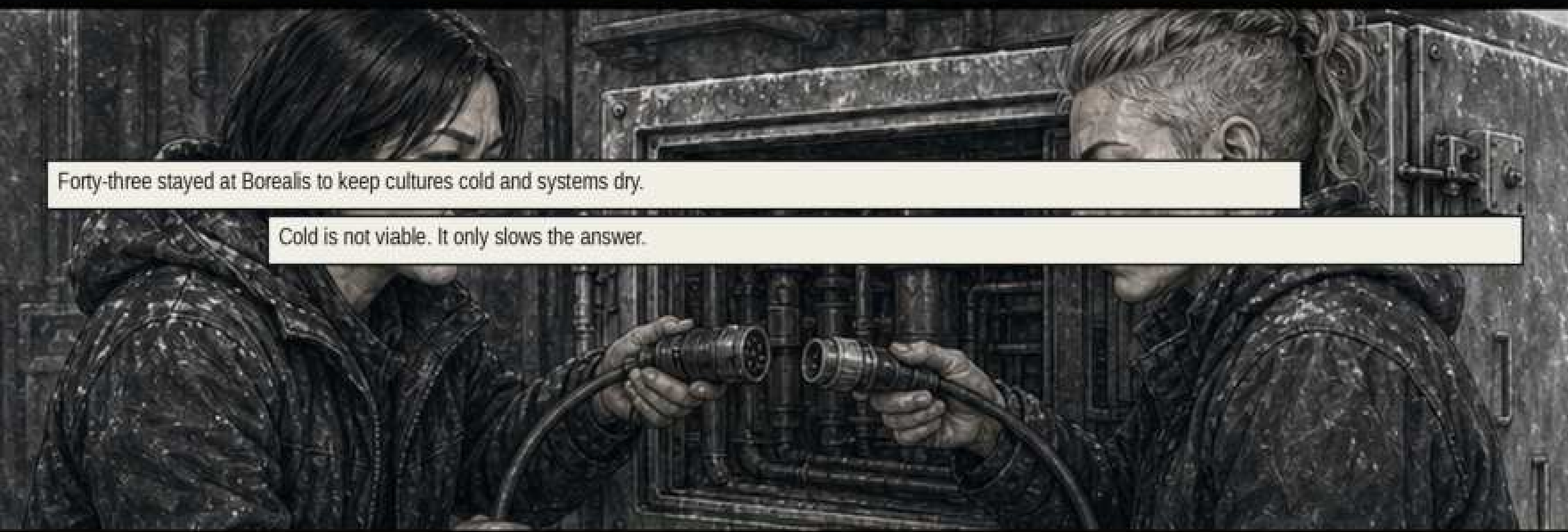
MEDICAL NEED — MATERIAL / EXTRACTION CAPACITY — INSUFFICIENT

Reachable did not mean movable.



Forty-three stayed at Borealis to keep cultures cold and systems dry.

Cold is not viable. It only slows the answer.



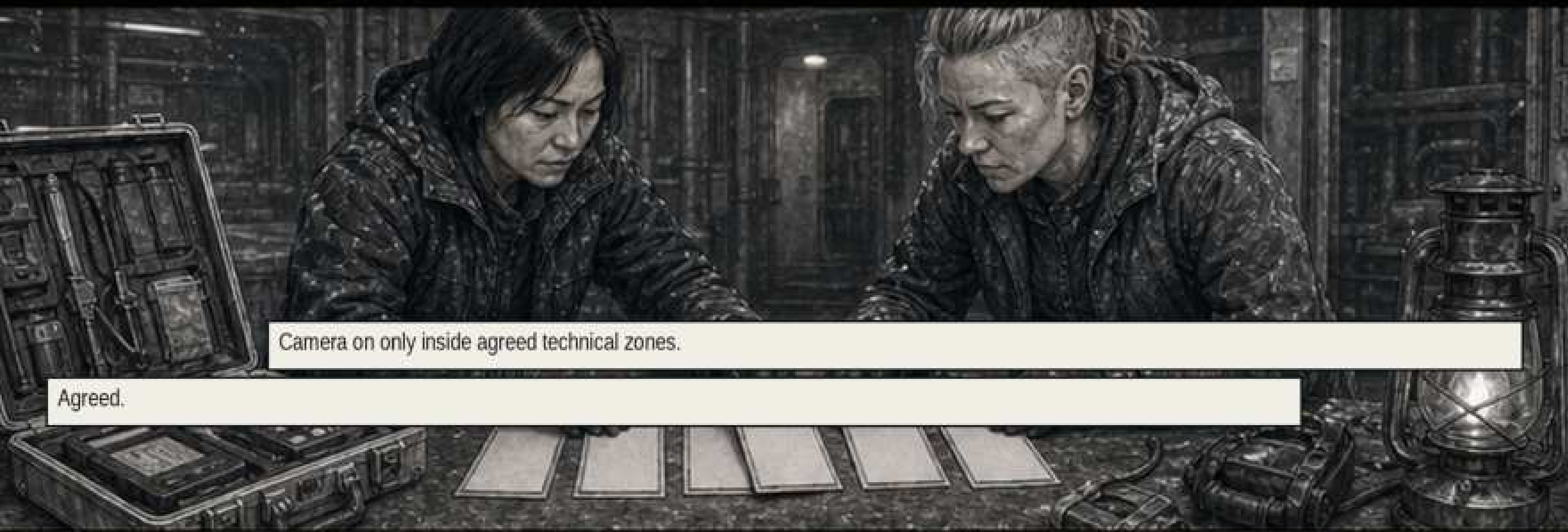
EXPORT PACKAGE — UNPROVEN / CONNECTION NOT AUTHORIZED

No cable energization during inspection.



Without power, the last serviceable train stays cold.

Then we inspect what power would be asked to trust.



Camera on only inside agreed technical zones.

Agreed.



Why gamble on bacteria? The Seed Vault is intact.

Intact does not mean edible.



The Vault holds duplicate accessions for depositing genebanks.

Seeds are still food.

CALORIES NOW

PLANTING MATERIAL

FUTURE CROP DIVERSITY

They overlap only after land, light, nutrients, labor, and time.



Who owns the deposits?

Each depositing genebank. Only that institution may request return.



Return window ninety minutes. Weather abort remains mine.

Inspection, not requisition.

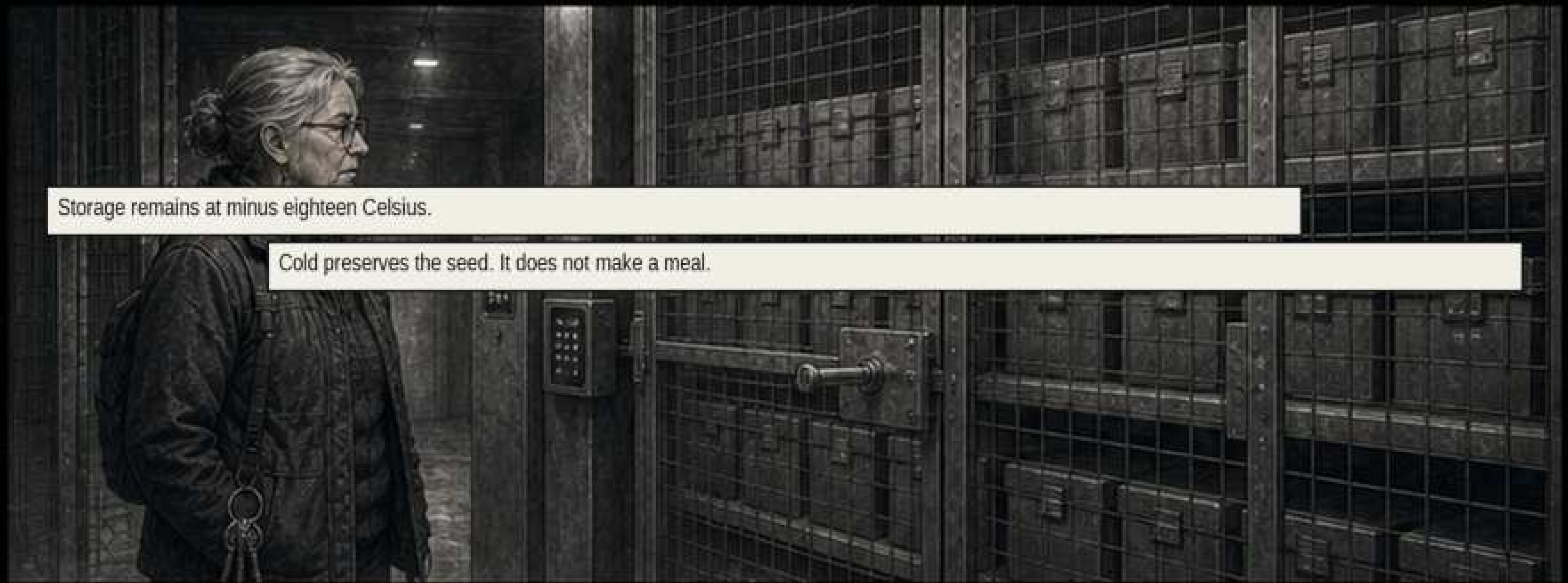


The symbol was larger than the door.



Storage remains at minus eighteen Celsius.

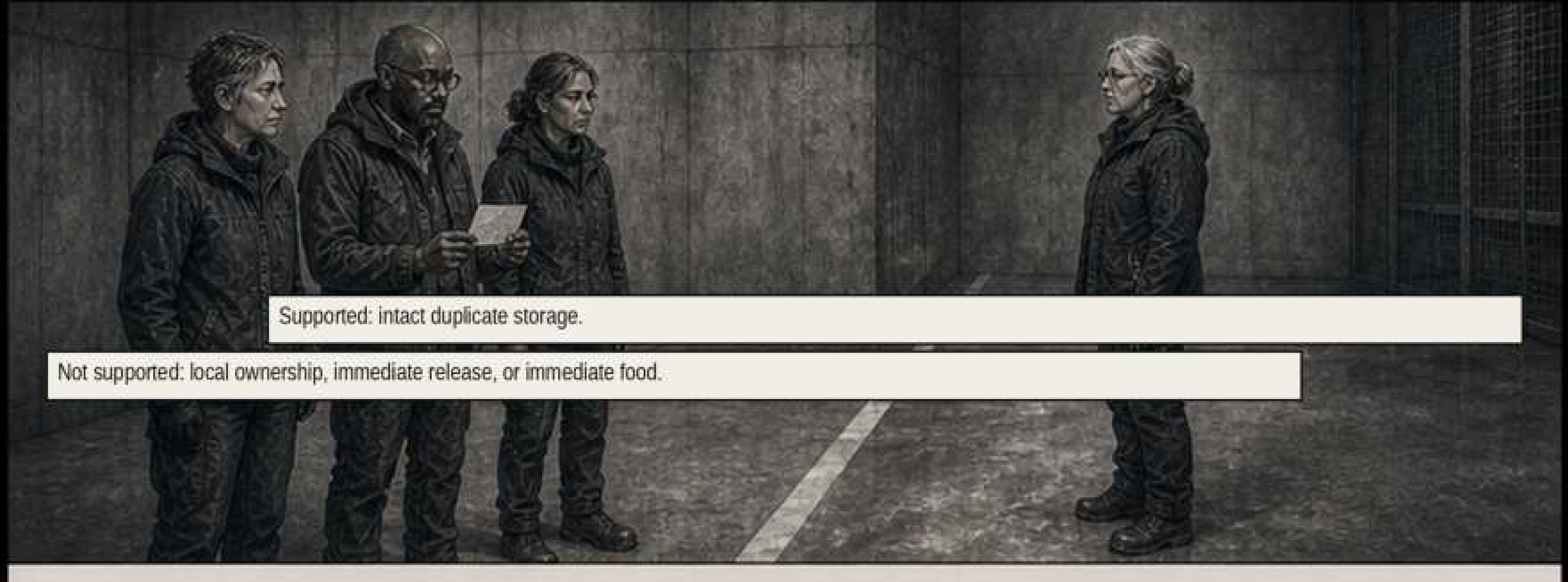
Cold preserves the seed. It does not make a meal.



Black-box conditions. We do not open deposited containers.

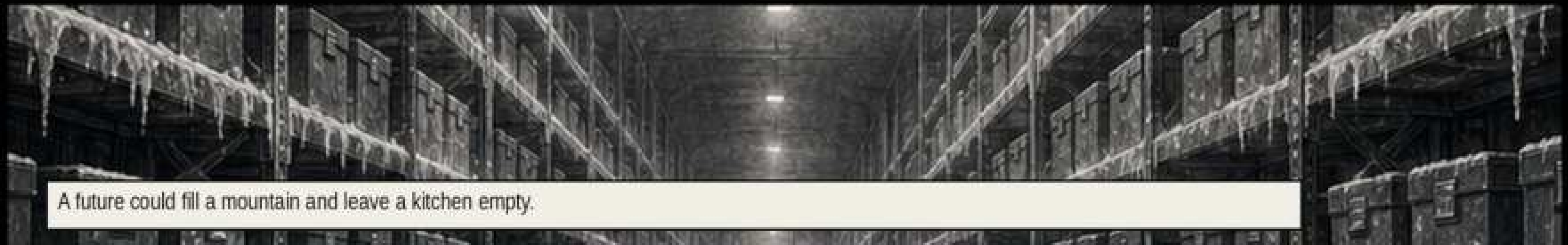
Accessions are dried samples in sealed pouches.

Grams of diversity are not sacks of grain.



Supported: intact duplicate storage.

Not supported: local ownership, immediate release, or immediate food.



A future could fill a mountain and leave a kitchen empty.



A returned sample must germinate, grow, reproduce, and multiply.

The first harvest may be seed for the next planting.



No field appears because a pouch opens.

We need suitable conditions through more than one generation.



Variety matters to future health.

It does not replace current protein, fat, carbohydrate, or medicine.



NordGen has a separate working collection for agreed propagation.

Separate ownership. Separate inventory. Separate decision.



Can the Vault change January's ration?

No.

Then write what it can change.



SUPPORTED — INTACT DUPLICATE STORAGE

NOT SUPPORTED — PANTRY / LOCAL OWNERSHIP / IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LATER USE — AUTHORIZED RETURN / WORKING COLLECTION / PROPAGATION



So the safest food in the world cannot feed my son.

It safeguards crops people may need after he survives this winter.

In a catastrophe, control rules should be revisited.

Revisited by a legitimate system. Not by whoever reaches the door.



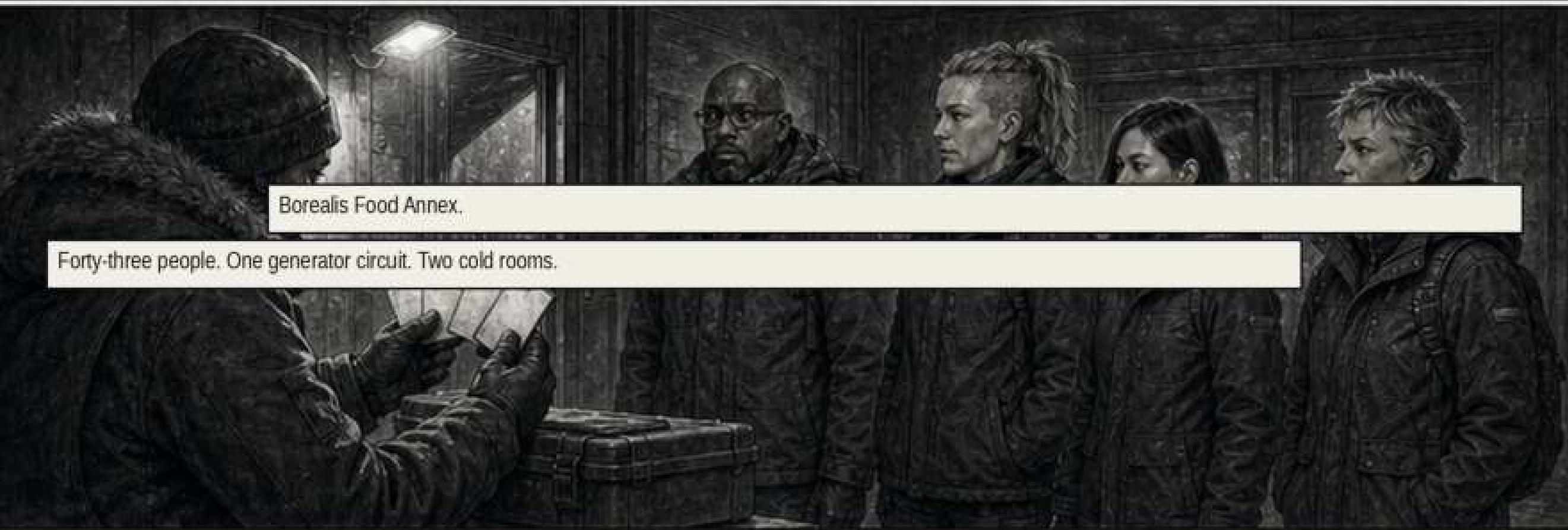
The Vault is a future asset and a current calorie zero.

Protect it from hunger and from hope.



SHIPBOARD PLANNING STATE — 113.16 DAYS / 17 JANUARY 2035

COMBINED FOOD AUDIT — OPEN / NO NEW DATE



Borealis Food Annex.

Forty-three people. One generator circuit. Two cold rooms.

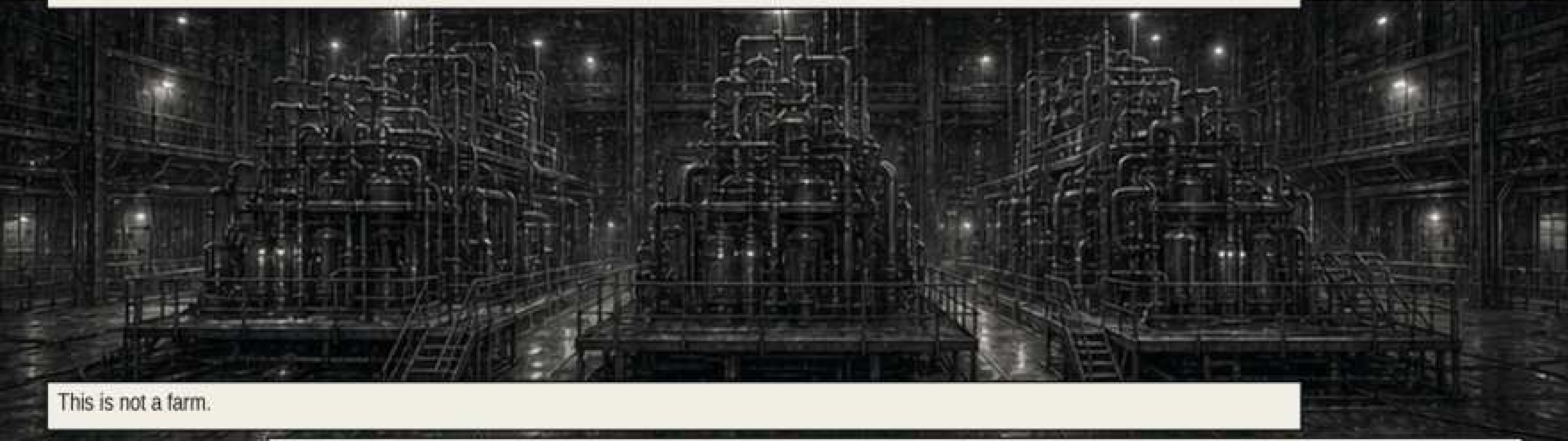


BOREALIS ROLL — 43 / VERIFIED

Facility count confirmed.

Barrier pressure is unstable.

Stable only while the small compressor holds.

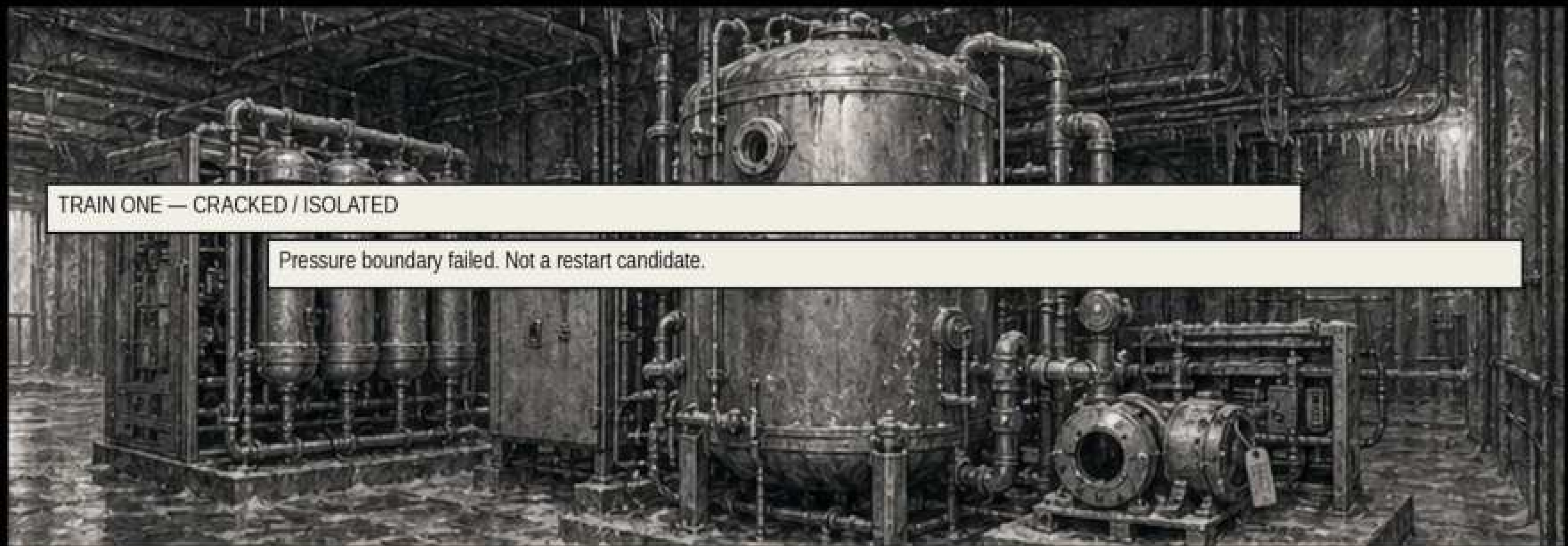


This is not a farm.

It is a continuous chemical and biological load.



Nothing has produced food since the grid failed.



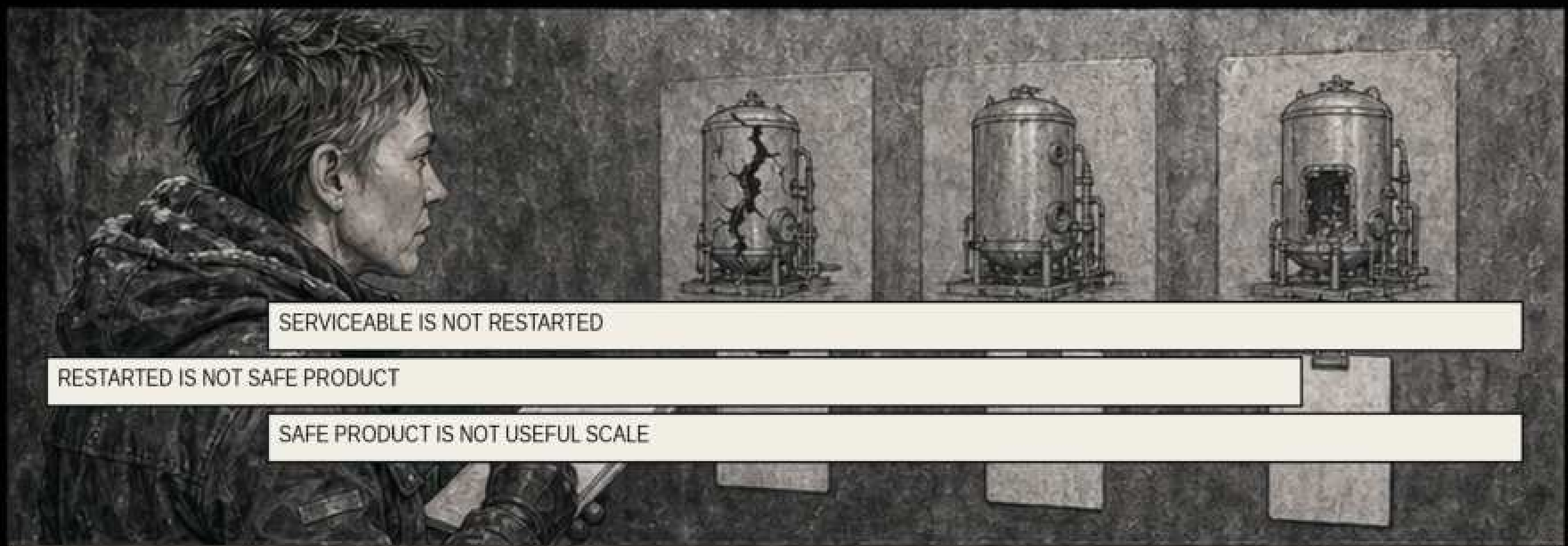
TRAIN ONE — CRACKED / ISOLATED

Pressure boundary failed. Not a restart candidate.



TRAIN TWO — SERVICEABLE / COLD

Mechanical path plausible. Sterility unproved.



SERVICEABLE IS NOT RESTARTED

RESTARTED IS NOT SAFE PRODUCT

SAFE PRODUCT IS NOT USEFUL SCALE

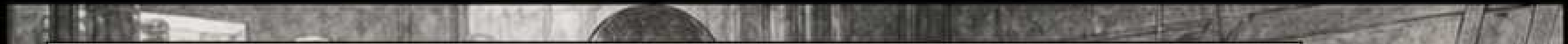
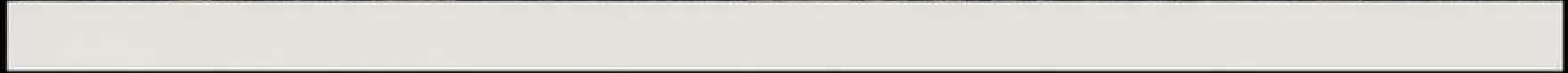


One dead. One possible. One future donor or future machine.



Electricity first splits treated water.

Hydrogen becomes feed. Oxygen becomes feed and hazard.



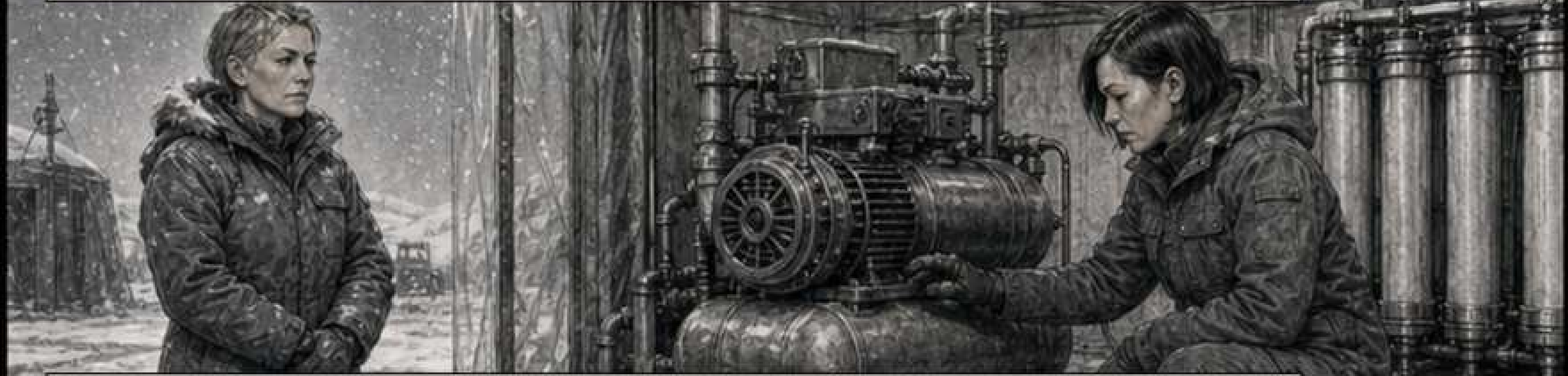
Gas balance must stay inside narrow limits.

And every failed interlock narrows them further.



Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, minerals, clean water.

Air was the slogan. This is the recipe.



Current power preserves cultures and barrier pressure.

It cannot run fermentation and drying.



POWER / GAS / NUTRIENTS / STERILITY / GROWTH / HARVEST / DRYING / FOOD-SAFETY REVIEW

Every slash is a place the claim can fail.



Temperature crossed the preferred band twice.

Duration?

Unknown between manual readings.

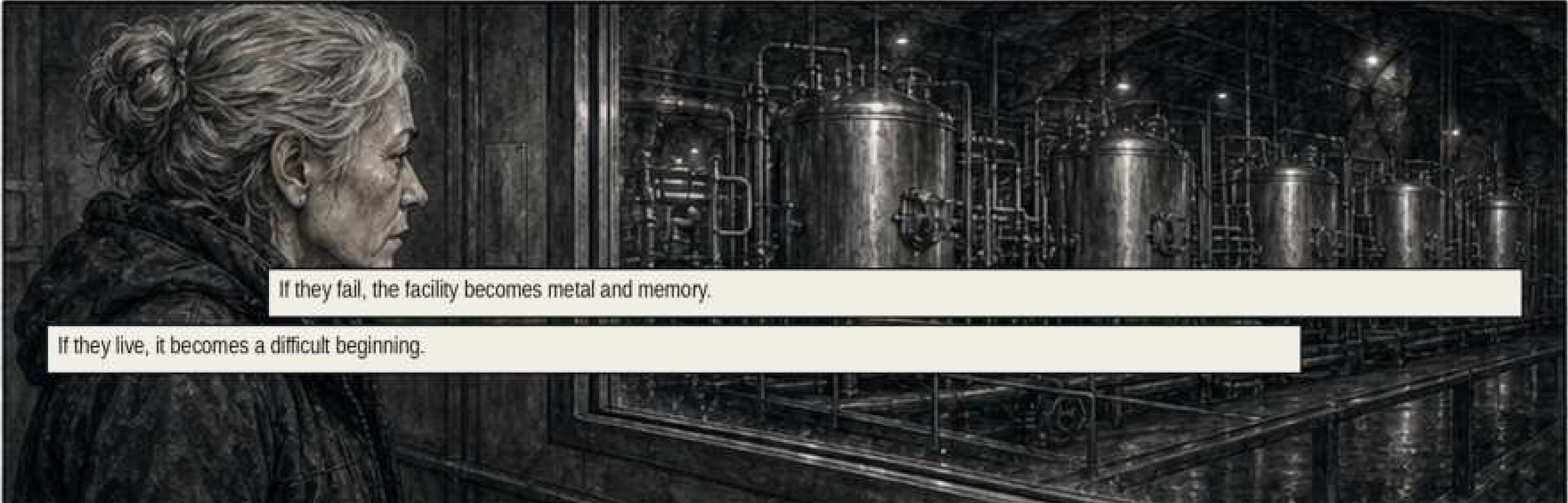


Some cells respond. Contamination is not excluded.

Barely viable, not viable enough.

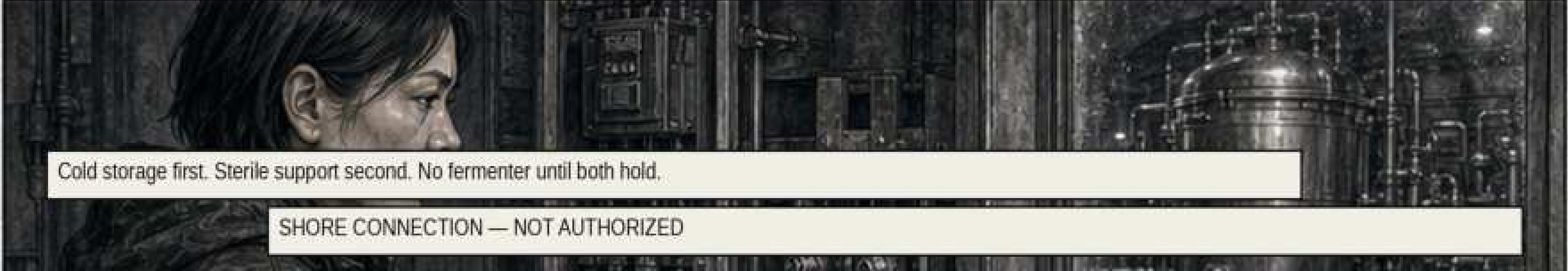


We need growth, purity, and repeatability before inoculation.



If they fail, the facility becomes metal and memory.

If they live, it becomes a difficult beginning.



Cold storage first. Sterile support second. No fermenter until both hold.

SHORE CONNECTION — NOT AUTHORIZED



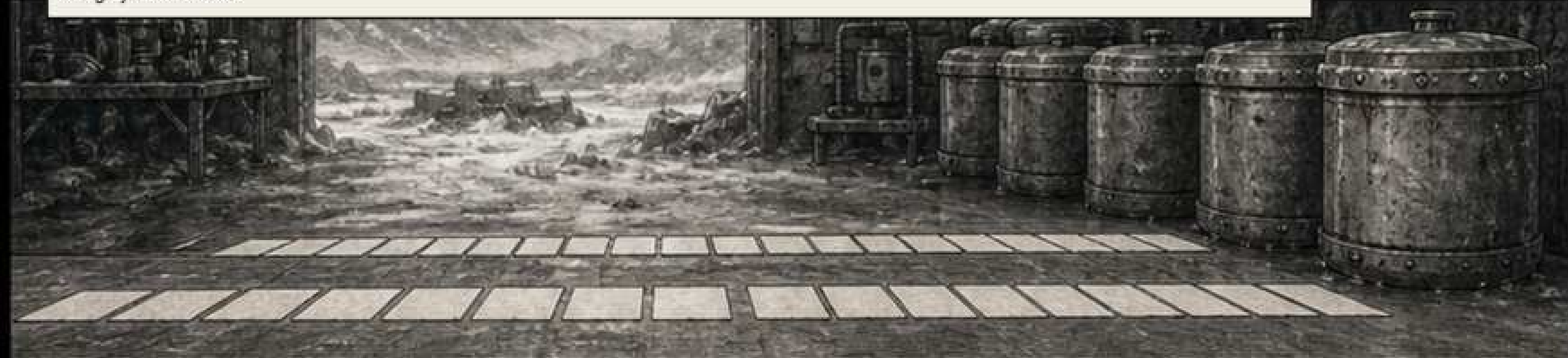
CLEAN / VERIFY / INOCULATE / GROW / TEST / HARVEST / DRY / REVIEW



First safe ingredient: eighteen days if every stage holds.

Round the public claim.

Roughly three weeks.



Useful scale requires Train Two stable and Train Three rebuilt.

Ten to twelve weeks if parts, power, and cultures cooperate.



PROTEIN — YES

SOME FAT — POSSIBLE

CARBOHYDRATE / VITAMINS / COMPLETE DIET — NO



CAN FEED IF RESTARTED

MAY PRODUCE ONE INGREDIENT AFTER SAFE RESTART



SHIPBOARD USABLE CALORIES — APPROX. 38.9 MILLION



ASHORE USABLE CALORIES — APPROX. 52.0 MILLION

Labels, spoilage, and blocked access move this number.

COMBINED DRAFT — APPROX. 90.9 MILLION KCAL

POPULATION IN QUESTION — 454



MEDICAL / AGE / LABOR / ACCESS / SPOILAGE — NOT RECONCILED

Equal arithmetic is not equal metabolic need.



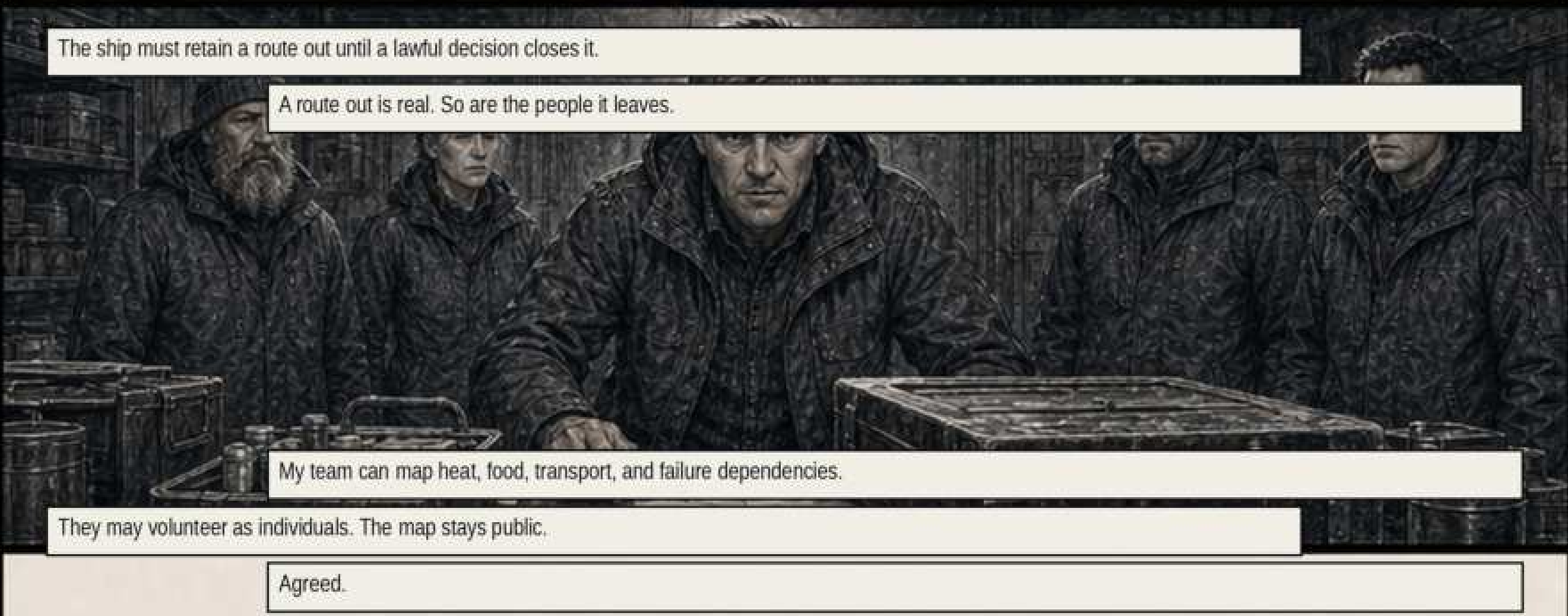
NEW COMBINED RATION DATE — NOT YET SUPPORTABLE

Ninety million is not abundance when four hundred fifty-four people spend it.



One evidence record does not create one command.

It does remove the excuse of separate numbers.



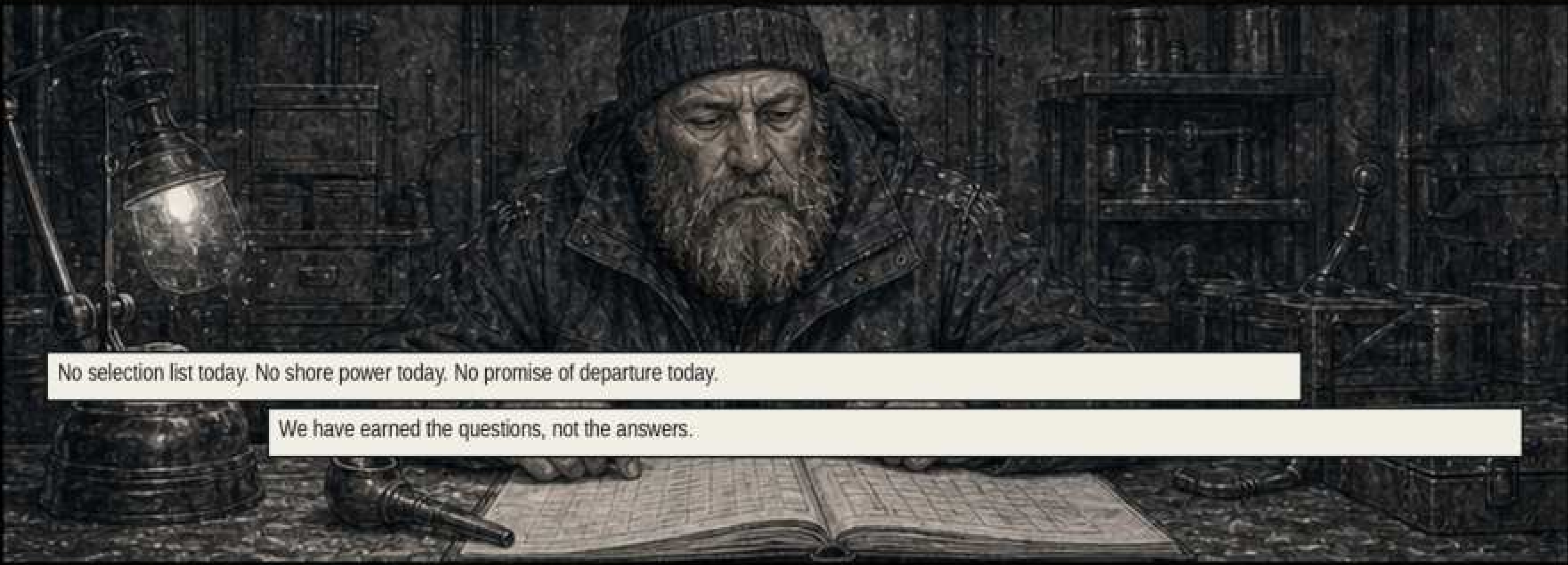
The ship must retain a route out until a lawful decision closes it.

A route out is real. So are the people it leaves.

My team can map heat, food, transport, and failure dependencies.

They may volunteer as individuals. The map stays public.

Agreed.



No selection list today. No shore power today. No promise of departure today.

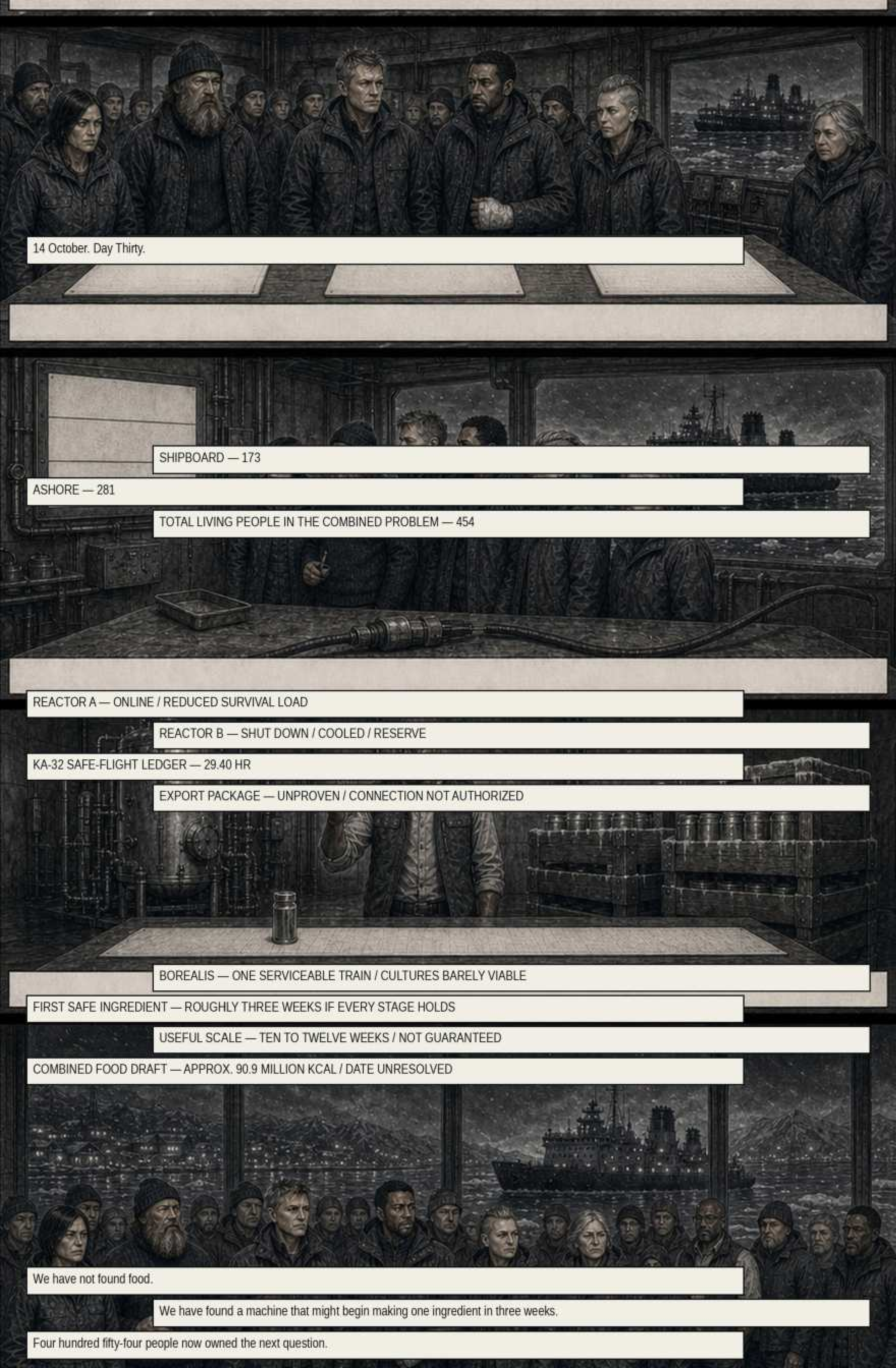
We have earned the questions, not the answers.



BOREALIS MESSAGE — FACILITY COUNT TRUE / SETTLEMENT TOTAL DELIBERATELY OMITTED

Put my name under it.

And every consequence after it.



14 October. Day Thirty.

SHIPBOARD — 173

ASHORE — 281

TOTAL LIVING PEOPLE IN THE COMBINED PROBLEM — 454

REACTOR A — ONLINE / REDUCED SURVIVAL LOAD

REACTOR B — SHUT DOWN / COOLED / RESERVE

KA-32 SAFE-FLIGHT LEDGER — 29.40 HR

EXPORT PACKAGE — UNPROVEN / CONNECTION NOT AUTHORIZED

BOREALIS — ONE SERVICEABLE TRAIN / CULTURES BARELY VIABLE

FIRST SAFE INGREDIENT — ROUGHLY THREE WEEKS IF EVERY STAGE HOLDS

USEFUL SCALE — TEN TO TWELVE WEEKS / NOT GUARANTEED

COMBINED FOOD DRAFT — APPROX. 90.9 MILLION KCAL / DATE UNRESOLVED

We have not found food.

We have found a machine that might begin making one ingredient in three weeks.

Four hundred fifty-four people now owned the next question.