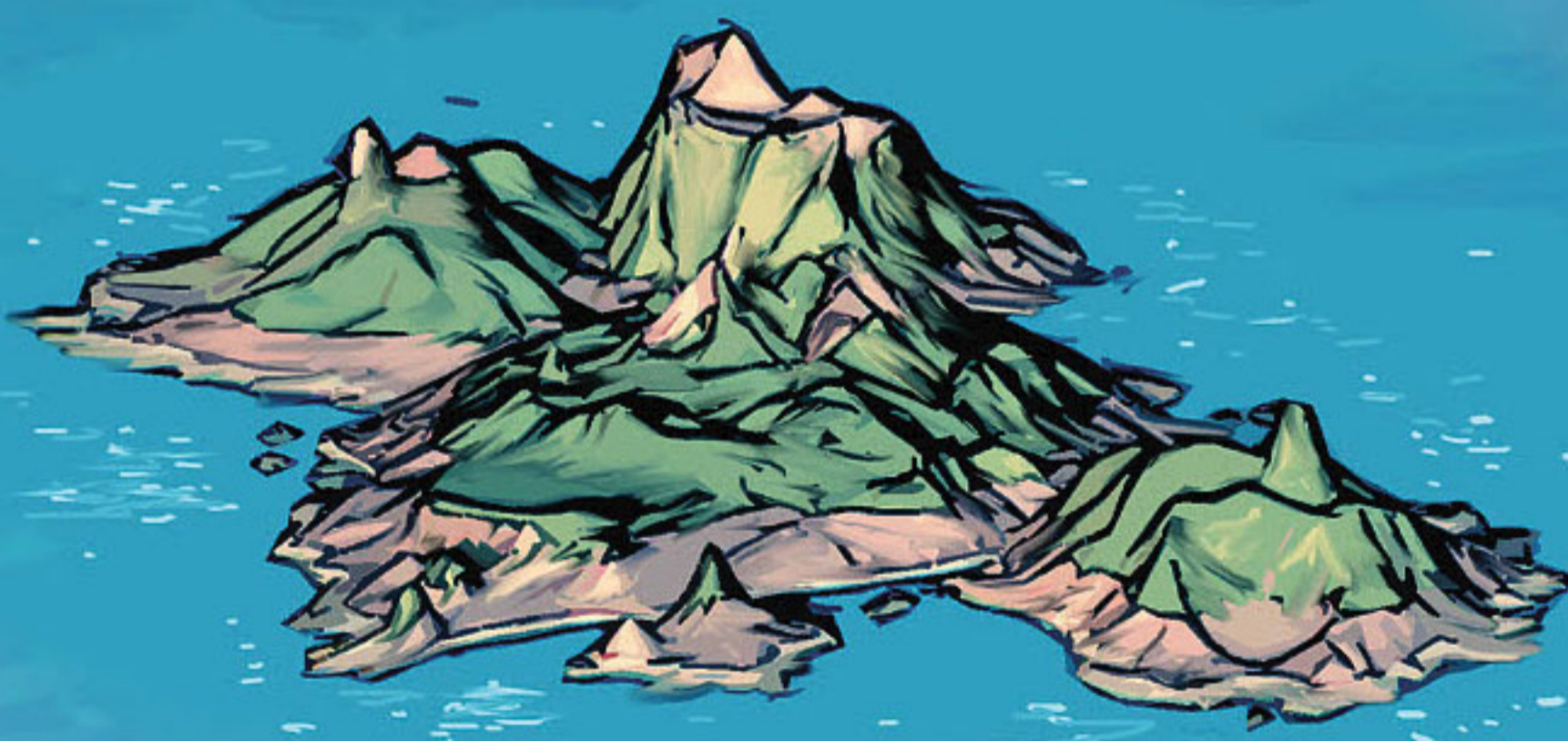


20 YEARS LATER

**APPROACHING
TARGET.**



If I ever have children of my own I won't burden them with the idea that they're special.

STILL THINK YOU'RE GOING TO WIN TONIGHT, RAM?

YOU ONLY BEAT ME 38% OF THE TIME. STATISTICALLY, YOUR CONFIDENCE IS MISPLACED.



I never knew my parents.

SOL has shown me years of their lives. Dad left me a lengthy audio journal.

I have information. Not memories.



I HAVE A NEW STRATEGY.

Dad used a lot of strong words.

Words like "destiny," "special," "unique."

"Change the world." Dad loved that phrase.



I'M GOING TO CHEAT.

That's a lot of pressure to put on a kid.

TARGET ACQUIRED.



DISENGAGE STEALTH FOR FINAL APPROACH.



I've never actually met another human being.



THEY'RE NOT RESPONDING TO NETWORK QUERIES.

My entire life is this island. I've been raised by machines.



WE'RE UNDER ATTACK.



My whole life has been preparation.

For this moment.

**DEFENSIVE
PATTERN DELTA
FIVE.**



The machines won't hurt me. They're forbidden to harm humans.



And I can use that... advantage.



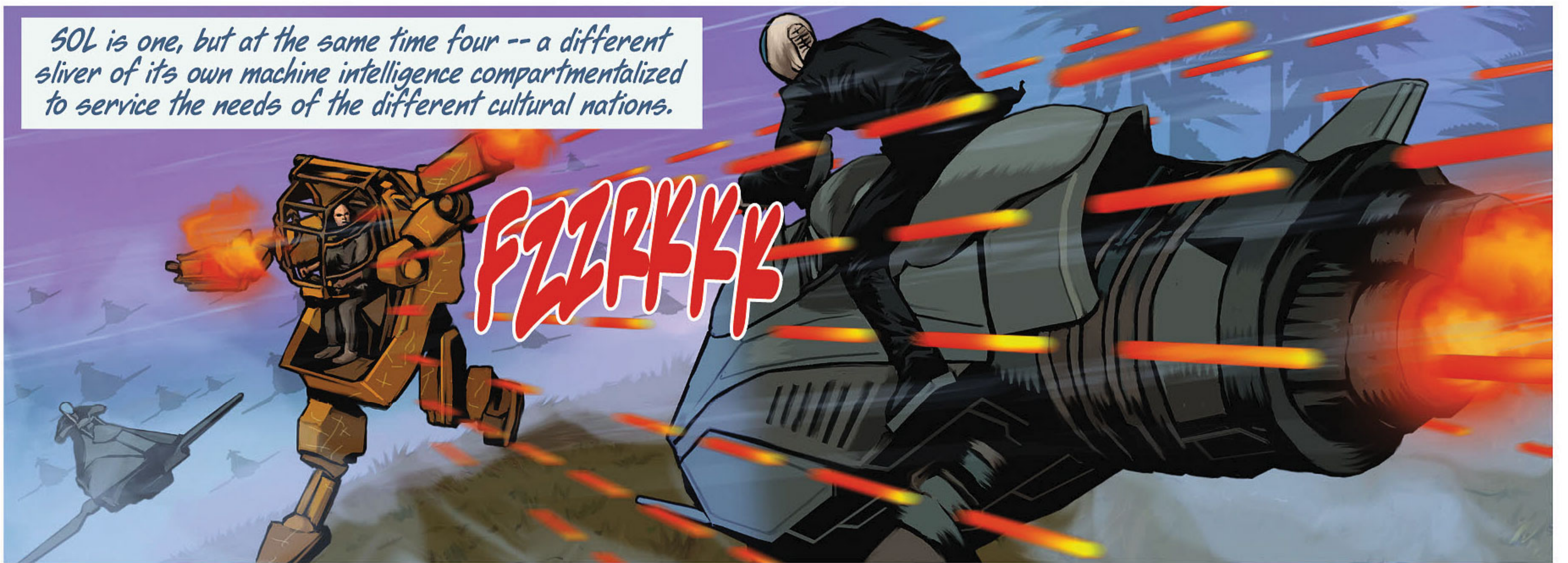
*But they will
destroy each
other.*



SOL, the artificial intelligence that runs everything, is essentially at war with itself.



SOL is one, but at the same time four -- a different sliver of its own machine intelligence compartmentalized to service the needs of the different cultural nations.



Took me awhile to wrap my head around that, but balancing the needs of four disparate societies without violence is difficult.



When a conflict arises, the human Elder councils confer and with SOL's guidance create a resolution.

