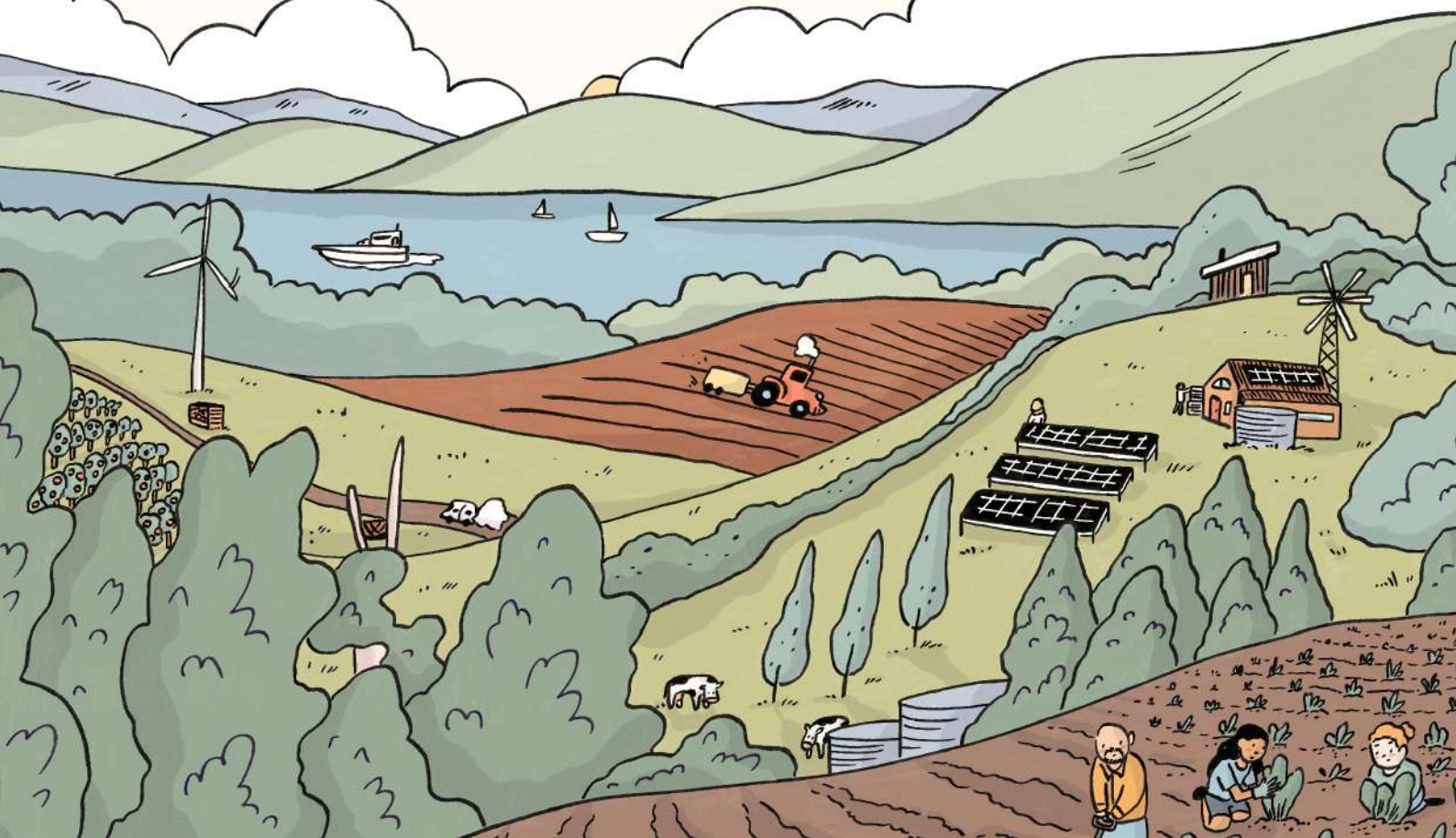
HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

LIVEABLE CLIMATE FUTURES

OUR STORIES OF RESILIENCE IN A CHANGING WORLD





Introduction

"The climate is changing, and the effects are already being felt through more frequent natural hazards, pressures on our communities, and an increasingly uncertain future. To make sense of what lies ahead, Huon Valley Council and its community came together to explore what that future might look like. The stories in this book reflect that shared process. Some imagine a Huon Valley that has done everything right. Others sit with the harder possibilities - futures we hope to avoid but must be willing to face. Collectively, they offer a new way to engage with climate change, rooted in science and shaped by local voices. Some stories may be confronting to read - but remember, they are not inevitable. If Council, community, and our partners work together, we can shape a liveable future for the Huon Valley."

The Huon Valley Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the South East Nation, the Melukerdee people of the Huon River and the Lylequonny people of the Far South. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

This project, Understanding Future Climate Risk: Co-Designed Applications for Local Decision-Making, was funded by the Australian Government under the National Emergency Management Disaster Risk Reduction Package. This project has been delivered by the University of Tasmania and Huon Valley Council and supported by the NESP Climate Systems Hub.


HUONVILLE, 2070,
POPULATION 50,000




I'M PADDY


OUR VALLEY IS KNOWN FOR ITS WILDLIFE


I LOVE WATCHING THE SWIFTIES IN THE TREES EVERY MORNING


THE OTHER WEEK WE GOT SNOW OUT WEST


A WHOLE METRE OF IT, BEAUTIFUL BUT WEIRD


THEN THE NEXT DAY WE GOT A MASSIVE RAINSTORM, 400MM IN 12 HOURS!
IN AN UNPRECEDENTED TURN OF EVENTS




GO GO GO!








TWO TOILET ROLLS MAX!


NADA ...


HEY PADDY...
YEAH, VH HUH...
IS IT OK IF WE COME TO STAY?


CHEERS PADDY
UNCLE PADDY!
Hi Kids




THIS IS A VINTAGE WORD GAME THAT MY FATHER USED TO LOVE
WOW, IT'S OLD!


THIS SET USED TO BELONG TO HIM


GRRR...


CLK!


HOT MEALS HERE!


KNOCK KNOCK


Hi!
WE'RE ALI AND JEFF, FROM THE COMMUNITY GARDEN


WE'RE JUST MAKING SURE YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF FOOD AND WATER


I'M ALL GOOD, THANKS FOR STOPPING BY


WOULD YOU LIKE SOME OF MY PEACH JAM?


THANKS BUT NO THANKS! IF WE ACCEPTED ALL OF WHAT WE WERE OFFERED TODAY WE'D BE HAULING AROUND SANTA SACKS OF PRODUCE!
PLEASE GIVE IT TO SOMEONE WHO NEEDS IT MORE!


Ok FAIR ENOUGH, I'LL GIVE IT TO MY NEIGHBOURS


RECKON IT'LL BE READY FOR US TO MOVE BACK IN SOON
NO RUSH MATE!


THANKS PADDY!
BYE PADDY!


I FEEL SORRY FOR EVERYONE WHO LOST PRECIOUS HEIRLOOMS IN THE FLOODS — THEY HELP US STAY CONNECTED TO THE PAST AS WE FACE THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THE FUTURE

2070

WHOOSH!

PSSSH!

CRUNCHHH!

LUDO!

MUM?

CRACK!

AHHH!

MUM!!!

IT'S DIED DOWN A BIT, LET'S TAKE SOME FOOD TO OUR NEIGHBOURS

I'M SCARED BUT OK

WE'RE ON OUR WAY OVER NOW

THANK YOU! TAKE CARE, WE'VE GOT A LOT OF DAMAGE DOWN HERE

WE WERE LUCKY THAT OUR HOME SURVIVED DUE TO THE REGULATIONS

WE HELPED REBUILD

AND POOLED OUR CARS WHILE THE DOCKS WERE REBUILT

WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF WE HADN'T HAD SO MANY SYSTEMS IN PLACE?

HAVE A GOOD DAY AT SCHOOL!

BYE MUM!

WE'VE HAD SO MANY DISASTERS OVER THE YEARS... WHY DIDN'T THE PEOPLE IN POWER DO MORE WHEN THEY STILL COULD?

2070

Hi! My name is Jimmy and I'm 7

Community Centre
Health Centre
Grandma's House
Our House
Oval
School

My dad works on the ferry

And my mum is a teacher at my school

Sometimes she teaches us history and geography

Antarctica used to be this big!

Sometimes she does workshops for grown-ups in the hall

And that's how you can darn a sock!

She knows how to do everything!

RRRR!

Sorry kids, soccers' been cancelled because of the heatwave

UGH!

COME ON!

YUM!

THANK YOU!

Hi GRANDMA!

JIMMY!

We used to play in the snow when I was a kid

You could touch it?

Of course we could! It crunched when we walked on it

It glowed at night

And when it touched our skin it turned into water

When I was young we didn't have all these heatwaves

You're brave and strong Jimmy, you've already seen too many

Zzzzz...

Go and get an icy pole, and get one for the kid over there too

They don't have any power where they are, they've had a blackout

Ok

Two icy poles please!

Here you go!

Would you like an icy pole?

Icy pole!

SLURP!

He he! Thanks!

Wow!

Would you like to see my fossils?

Mum! Can we give Jimmy some honey when our hives are good again?

Of course we can!


2070


MY NAME IS ZEN AND I LIVE WITH MY PARTNER SORAYA


WE'VE CHOSEN NOT TO HAVE A FAMILY, THE FUTURE IS TOO UNCERTAIN


I'M A CYBERSECURITY ANALYST, HAVING GOOD INTERNET ACCESS IS IMPORTANT FOR MY WORK


SOMETIMES I WORK NIGHTS IF IT'S BEEN DOWN DURING THE DAY


WE LIVE IN AN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY






THE WORLD CAN FEEL VERY UNSTABLE, BUT THESE HABITS KEEP ME FEELING GROUNDED AND CALM

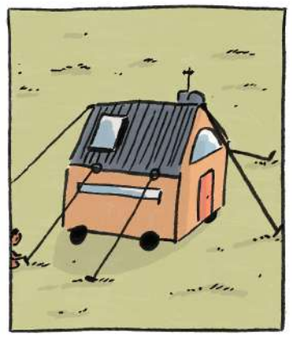

ALERT
SEVERE WEATHER WARNING
BZZZ!




DO YOU NEED ANY SUPPLIES, DAVO?
ALL GOOD THANKS, MATE!

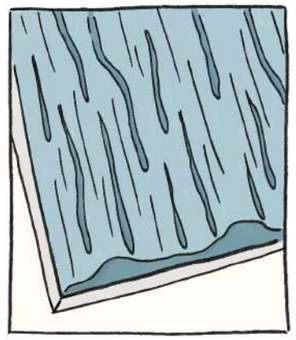

YOU OK, JAN?
YEP, ALL SET


BATTERY'S ALL GOOD!




WE'VE GOT ANOTHER STORM HERE, I'LL BE OFFLINE FOR THE REST OF TODAY








ROAD CLOSED

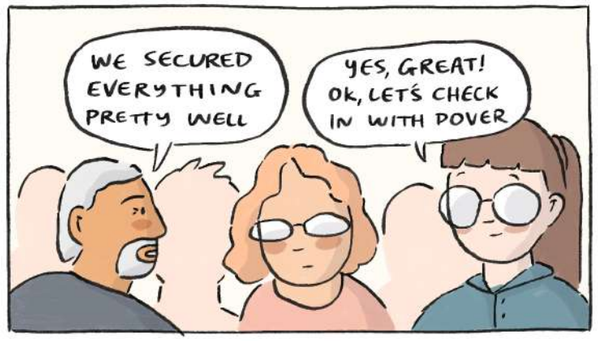




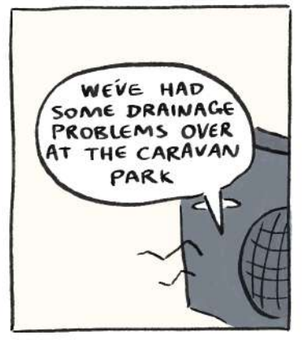

Ok, SETTLE DOWN! LET'S GET STARTED!


WHAT DO WE THINK WE DID WELL?


OUR FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES WERE FULLY STOCKED


WE SECURED EVERYTHING PRETTY WELL
YES, GREAT! Ok, LET'S CHECK IN WITH DOVER


DOVER, HOW'S IT GOING?


WE'VE HAD SOME DRAINAGE PROBLEMS OVER AT THE CARAVAN PARK


WE'VE GOT A PLAN FOR NEXT TIME THOUGH


GOOD TO HEAR! WE'LL FERRY SOME DRINKING WATER OVER IF YOU NEED, KEEP US POSTED


THESE STORMS CAN BE SCARY, BUT THEY'VE ALSO BROUGHT US ALL CLOSER TO NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES TOO

2070
ALL DONE!
THANKS LIVI!
RUMBLE...
GO ON GIRLS! GET OUTTA HERE!
BETTY!
MOO!
BETTY!
ARGH!
SOS!
OVER HERE!
BETTY!
NO!
TA
ALL RUINED...
MOO! MOO!
HEY GIRLS
MOO!
LIVI! I BROUGHT YOU SOME SEEDS!
DAD GAVE ME SOME SPARES!
OH! THANK... THANK YOU
YOU CAN DO IT!
I'M GOING TO CALL YOU BETTY




2030
UNCLE MIKE!
UNCLE MIKE!
PLANT QUIZ!
PLEASEEE!


WHO IS ARISTOTELIA PEDUNCULARIS FRIENDS WITH?




WHERE DOES IT LIKE TO HANG OUT?
WHAT DOES IT DO FOR WORK?


I KNOW THIS ONE!
SHH!

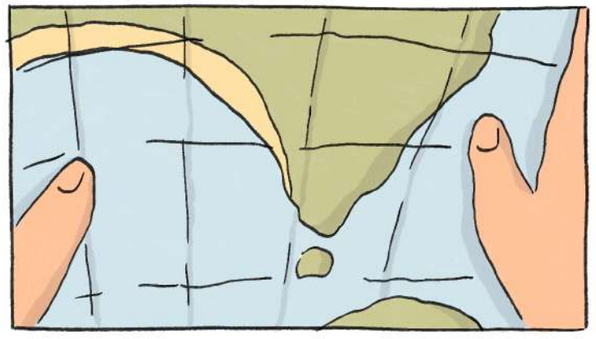

Ok GIRLS, TIME FOR SCHOOL!
YAY!
GIMME A SEC!


MEANWHILE ON A FARM NEARBY...



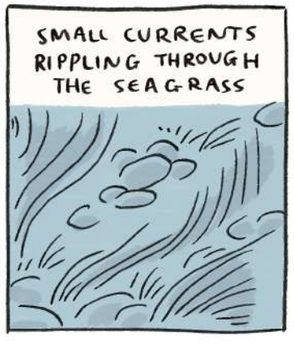







I CAN ALMOST SEE IT AS IT WAS


STUDDED WITH REEFS AND OYSTER FARMS


SMALL CURRENTS RIPPLING THROUGH THE SEAGRASS




OH MY GOODNESS, I CAN'T GET MY NET TO CLOSE...


DO YOU WANT ME TO FIX IT FOR YOU?
UGH, I'M SO BAD AT THIS... I MISS THE OFFICE...


COME ON, FOCUS!


THEY'RE MY FRIENDS NOW, BUT I DIDN'T ALWAYS HAVE FRIENDS HERE


IN THE PAST 3 YEARS I'VE MET MORE PEOPLE HERE THAN IN THE 30 YEARS I LIVED IN CYGNET


SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE LOST THEIR HOMES, AND SO MANY STILL WILL


HA HA


THE WORLD BEYOND THE VALLEY GROWS MORE UNCERTAIN. MORE PEOPLE ARRIVE EACH DAY.


BUT THERE IS SOMETHING THAT GIVES ME HOPE


WITH EVERY TRAGEDY WE FORM NEW BONDS OF TRUST


WE'RE LIKE THIS NET, WITH EVERY NEW STRAND OF CONNECTION WE SHARE MORE WEIGHT


THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, 2050






DID YOU TEXT MUM?
DON'T BE SILLY, I RADIOED HER. CHECKED IN ON NAN TOO


Hi EVERYONE


Ok, TIME TO SETTLE!


WE WERE GOING TO DO FIRST AID TRAINING


BUT HOW ABOUT WE DO SOME RELAXATION INSTEAD?


HUH?


WHEN DID YOU LAST LIE AROUND LIKE THIS?


SHHH!


I HOPE EVERYONE STILL OUT THERE IS OK




ONE, TWO, THREE ...






I KNOW ITS SELFISH, BUT I'M GLAD I DON'T HAVE TO SEE THIS ROUND OF DAMAGE




I REMEMBER WHEN THE FOOD FORESTS WERE STILL ORCHARDS


WHEN WE HAD MORE APPLES THAN WE COULD EAT OR SELL
FRESH APPLES


I USED TO WORK THERE, REGENERATING THE SOIL, PLANTING NUT TREES, BERRY BUSHES, HERBS AND GROUND COVER


WOW, SOUNDS LIKE THOSE WERE THE DAYS


I'M STILL NOT USED TO THE PEACH AND OLIVE TREES


I'VE BEEN HERE ALL MY LIFE, BUT I HARDLY RECOGNISE IT NOW


LISTEN TO ME! I SOUND ANCIENT!
OUR GENERATION HAS CERTAINLY SEEN A LOT OF CHANGE




2070
MUUUM, IT'S TOO HOT!
WE'RE ALMOST DONE!


I WISH I WAS IN THE FOREST WITH MY FRIENDS INSTEAD



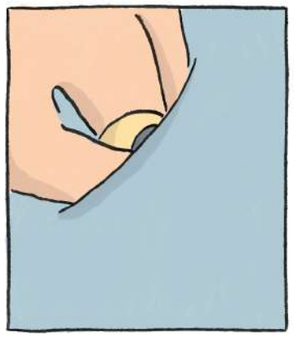

CLINK!






EH?


IS IT AN EXTINCT ANIMAL?




REMEMBER THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS GARBAGE!





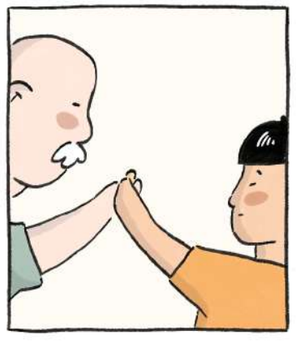





KNOCK KNOCK
GRANDPA!


I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU


BUT REMEMBER, I'm SAVING IT FOR THE MUSEUM




HA HA HA!


IT'S A MINION!


WHAT'S A MINION?


HAHAHA!
SLAP!


WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!


AH HA HA HA...


HE HE!
I GOTTA GO. BYE GRANDPA!


HEY SIS!


HEY!
GIVE IT BACK!


CLUNK!


I CAN COUNT ON MY HANDS HOW MANY PEOPLE HERE REMEMBER MINIONS


MAYBE I GOT IT IN A HAPPY MEAL WHEN I WAS THEIR AGE...


WE DON'T HAVE AS MUCH NOW


EVERYTHING IS RIGHT HERE, WE DON'T THINK ABOUT THE REST OF THE WORLD SO MUCH.


I DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S GOOD OR BAD


BUT I KNOW WE'RE SO LUCKY HERE


WE HAVE IT GOOD.


2030




NOT PORRIDGE AGAIN!
WE WANT BACONNN!


C'MON, IT'S HEALTHY!


I WISH WE COULD AFFORD BACON
UGH!
EW!


MY TEACHERS' SALARY DOESN'T GO FAR THESE DAYS


BYE MUM!
BYE!


WAIT!


I LOVE YOU


LATER...
I DON'T BLAME THE NEWCOMERS, BUT LOTS OF PEOPLE DO


THE FIRST ARRIVALS WERE THE WEALTHY, RIGHT?


RIGHT.
MOST OF MY FRIENDS ARE PRICED OUT OF BUYING A HOME NOW


EVEN THE WORST HOUSES ON THE HIGHWAY COST A FORTUNE NOW


I GOT IN JUST BEFORE IT ALL WENT UP


I BROUGHT MY MUM WITH ME, I WANTED TO GET HER OUT BEFORE BRISBANE BECAME UNBEARABLE


AT THE HEALTH CLINIC...


I WANT A GP WHO CAN SPEAK ENGLISH!


OUR ISLAND IS BEING SOLD TO THE CHINESE!


SIGH


TO US MAINLANDERS, CLIMATE REFUGEES


HA HA!


I GUESS IT'S TRUE


IGA


Hi!
Hi EMMA!


I FORGOT HOW MUCH IT STINKS DOWN HERE


IT'S THE FISH


ONE MORE DIE-OFF AND THE FARMS WILL BE GONE


LOOKS LIKE THINGS ARE QUIET FOR NICO...




256 DEAD
NO
TURN IT OFF!


Ok, ok... HOW ABOUT THE FOOTY?


STEVO DOWN!


UGH
CRK


CHEERS!


CARBON CAPTURE: THE ANSWER WE'VE ALL BEEN LOOKING FOR?


I DON'T THINK THOSE TECH BROS CAN FIX THIS

2050
WAITING FOR THE SUPERMARKET TO OPEN...

TICK... TICK... TICK...

MAYBE THEY'LL HAVE SPINACH TODAY

IT WOULD HELP IF WE COULD RELY ON INTERNET BANKING INSTEAD OF CARRYING ALL THESE COINS AROUND

THE INTERNET USED TO FEEL LIKE MAGIC, LIKE IT JUST EXISTED IN THE AIR

NOW ALL I CAN THINK OF IS THAT SINGLE CABLE LINKING US TO THE MAINLAND

OK, FIRST TEN ONLY!

OPEN

HUH?

I'M SO GLAD WE DON'T HAVE TO WAIT LIKE THEM

THE WEEKLY DELIVERIES MAKE IT SO MUCH EASIER

IT WAS WORTH US INVESTING IN THAT AMERICAN START-UP

MAYBE ONE DAY MY MONEY WON'T BE WORTH ANYTHING EITHER...

THE VAULT UNDER THE SEA WILL ROT AND I'LL BE NO BETTER OFF THAN THE REST OF THEM

MEANWHILE AT THE OLD SPORTS GROUND...

MANY OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE LIVED IN THE HUON FOR GENERATIONS, BEFORE THEIR HOUSES WERE DESTROYED IN THE FIRES AND FLOODS

OTHERS ARRIVED MORE RECENTLY, FORKING OUT THE LAST OF THEIR SAVINGS FOR PASSAGE ACROSS THE STRAIT

SPIRIT OF TASMANIA

THE VILLAGE WAS JUST TENTS AT FIRST, 'TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION'

BUT THE WEEKS TURNED INTO MONTHS, WHICH BECAME YEARS

PEOPLE BUILT SHELTERS WITH WHATEVER THEY COULD FIND

LIFE IS ROUGH, AND EVERYONE IS USED TO SHARING SKILLS AND RESOURCES

COUGH COUGH

THEY BEAR THE BRUNT OF EVERY NEW STORM

GIMME THAT!

BRONTE! STOP PULLING!

COUGH COUGH COUGH

I'M GOING TO PUT A CUT IN IT SO THE WIND CAN PASS THROUGH WITHOUT TEARING IT

HERE, MUM

THANKS, LOVE

GIRLS-

COUGH COUGH COUGH


2070 IN A COMMUNE
UP THE VALLEY


COUGH!
COUGH!


SHH...


WE MUST COOL THE FEVER




ALL THE CHILDREN SEEM TO FALL ILL EVENTUALLY


THE WATER ISNT CLEAN
SQUELCH


WE CANT FEED THEM WELL


WE DONT HAVE ENOUGH MEDICINES


ITS A WONDER ANY OF THEM SURVIVE


MEANWHILE IN HUONVILLE...
UH... BRONTE ...

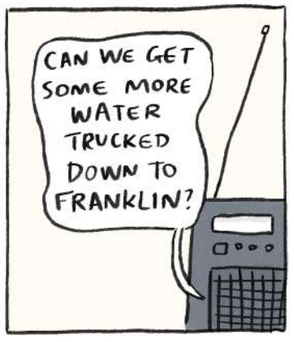

Ok, TIME TO START THE MEETING
FWIP!


AS YOU KNOW, MY SISTER PASSED AWAY THIS WEEK


BRONTE, WE DONT HAVE TO-
SIGH


Ok, FIRST ON THE AGENDA


LETS REVIEW THE WEEKLY RADIO BROADCASTS


CAN WE GET SOME MORE WATER TRUCKED DOWN TO FRANKLIN?


SEND IT. CHECK HOW THEIR DESALINATION SYSTEM IS GOING TOO


CAN WE GET A DOCTOR UP AT THE COMMUNE PLEASE? WE'VE GOT A CHILD WITH SUSPECTED SEPSIS.


THE COMMUNE?


WHEN WAS THIS?
ABOUT AN HOUR AGO


WE CANT SPARE ONE, WERE OVERRUN AS IT IS


IF THEY GET HERE THE GP CAN SEE THEM


COMMUNE, YOU COPY?


...


LEAVE A MESSAGE FOR THEM


BACK AT THE COMMUNE...


COME ON, ENDURANCE


I HOPE THEY SEND SOMEONE SOON...


WE USED TO HAVE CABINETS FULL OF MEDICINES


THERE USED TO BE A HOSPITAL IN CYGNET BEFORE THE FIRE...


WE TOOK IT ALL FOR GRANTED


I HOPE THAT SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD THEY CAN PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM THIS

Scenarios

Paddy

The year is 2070. My name is Paddy, and I am 65 years old. I have watched the Huon Valley evolve from a population of 20,000 to 100,000. This was far beyond what anyone believed our community would grow to — even the government. Despite the influx of people, our community has adapted and changed. Our public buildings have ecological walls flourishing with plants. Our Valley is known for its wildlife — brush and ringtail possums, pademelons, platypuses and sea eagles. Even the swift parrots are starting to come back. I love to watch them darting through the trees — a flash of green, almost too quick to see.

We had a bad day a few weeks ago. It snowed for two days out west. One metre of snow covered everything. Beautiful but weird. Then the next day a massive rainstorm: 400mm in 12 hours. You should have seen the river. Everyone was on the move, like cockroaches moving to higher ground. The bridges were washed out, and low-lying buildings flooded. Power lines experienced brown or black outs for those on the grid. Food supplies at the local IGA were running short. Water supply was interrupted. It was scary.

We weren't totally unprepared. We had backup power supplies, independent from the main grid, and flood-safe transport routes. Mobile housing is allowed here within council housing standards, so many people living in flood-prone areas were able to get their whole home out of the way before it was too late. We have plenty of food grown locally in the Valley, and there were even emergency stores in case our growing areas were destroyed.

The next day, Huon Valley Council sent two young people out to ensure we had food, water and shelter. It was really nice to have them drop by — it made me feel looked after. I tried to give them some jam, but they laughed and said that if they accepted all the little gifts they'd been offered along their route, they'd be hauling Santa-sacks of produce around! I'll save my jam for my neighbour, instead.

Since then, we've been slowly begun rebuilding what was destroyed by the floods. Our soil was impacted by the flooding, so we've had some issues cultivating crops. Many people are still staying with friends or in emergency accommodation. I trust that we'll get back on our feet with time. My home was not impacted by the flooding, and it felt good to be able to provide temporary housing for a couple of friends who were flooded out. We stayed up late and I taught them how to play Scrabble; a vintage word-game that my father used to love. The set I have used to belong to him. I feel sorry for everyone who lost precious heirlooms in the floods — they help us stay connected to the past as we face the future.

Miriam

The year is 2070. My name is Miriam. I am a 34-year-old woman living in the Huon Valley area. I live in a house I built myself overlooking the Huon Sea, which extends from Grove to the hills of Bruny Island. Each day, I catch the ferry to Cradoc, where I work as a bushfire engineer. There are so many fires these days. Sometimes I think about the past and feel angry that the people in power did not do more when they still could. But then I think about how much worse things could have been here if it wasn't for those who lived here before me, and I feel grateful for all they've done to make these disasters more manageable for us.

I will give you an example. There was a bad day, about a month ago, when winds of 140 knots blew in after a severe drought. It was a Saturday, and I was at home, preparing seeds for the community seed library. The wind took out many trees and blew our ferries ashore, damaging wharfs and docks. It was frightening. My son Ludo was playing in the garden and was almost crushed by a tree. As a community, we found ourselves stranded, cut off from the rest of the valley. No one could get in or out, and the normal communication lines were down.

Thankfully, we were able to share food with our neighbours. We had water tanks, so water was still plentiful. Our back-up radio systems made sure we could still reach out to others for help. Many of the older houses were damaged. I was particularly sad to see the old post office destroyed; it had been there for a century, and it was such a unique building. I was one of the lucky ones — my own house survived. When I had built it, I'd been slightly irritated by the updated council standards, which required me to think about things that I didn't want to think about at the time. After the storm, though, I was relieved. Because we had a good number of houses still standing, we were able to support one another through the re-build period. We supplied power to our neighbours through our off-river pumped hydro in combination to the battery on our electric boat. Although the ferry system was damaged, our local sailing clubs were able to come to the rescue, helping carry those who had been separated from their communities or stranded without support.

It took a while to clean up, but all able-bodied community members helped out. We've been practicing for similar scenarios for a long time, and have the skills to recover quickly in such a situation. Some people were hurt, but the local health centre — which was revamped a few years ago — was well equipped to act quickly and independently without needing to transfer patients. We've learned things from that disaster, and already we're putting small changes in place so that next time we can be even more prepared. For example, we've upgraded and reinforced our ferries.

I sometimes wonder what it would have been like if things were different — if we didn't have a national volunteer service to help us rebuild, or back-up communications systems, or water tanks, or ways of growing food locally. It helps me remember how much these efforts really do help.

Jimmy

The year is 2070. My name is Jimmy, and I am 7 years old. People say the times we live in are hard, but my life is great. I live in a small community village. There's a school, a community hall, a sports field, and a GP surgery that has free honey-drops at the counter. There are other kids like me here, but there are much older people too. My dad works on the ferry from Franklin to Cradoc, and my mum is a teacher. Sometimes she teaches us history and geography in the school, and sometimes she teaches workshops for other adults in the community hall. My mum has lots of skills, and she loves to share them — she knows woodworking, and sewing, and even meditation.

Summers here are so hot. In school we've learned that it wasn't always this way. I've seen pictures from the old days when the mountains around our village are capped with snow. When she was a child, my grandma used to walk up into the mountains in the winter to play in it. She says it makes a nice crunching sound when you walk on it, and that it glows in the moonlight, and when it falls on your skin it melts into water.

Grandma didn't live through many heatwaves when she was young. She says I'm brave and strong for having faced so many already at my age, but I don't really know what that means. I don't usually do much in a heatwave, I just sit on the ground underneath one of the big shady trees or in the air-conditioned community hall with Grandma while she takes a nap.

The other day my soccer training was cancelled, but I also got two icy poles in the afternoon from the community cool room. In other towns, Grandma says heatwaves are dangerous, especially for people like her. Not every town has big shady trees and an air-conditioned space for people to go. On the day I got the icy poles, the community hall was full of people I didn't know from other villages over the river. My dad had helped them get over on the ferry. I was grumpy because there were lots of people in the hall and it was noisy, but my dad told me that they didn't even have power where they had come from. The heat was so bad that everyone had their fans going at once and their generators failed. They didn't have solar there.

Our house is a passive house, and it stays cool no matter what. We had a family come to stay with us that night – they had a daughter my age. I showed her my fossil collection. We told them they could come back anytime they needed to, but they said that hopefully they wouldn't need to come for any more emergency sleepovers, because their village was planning to make some changes to help them deal with the heat in the future. They promised to visit for lunch and tea, though, and said they'd bring us some fresh honey from their bees once the hives recovered.

Zen

The year is 2070. I am a 34-year-old man named Zen. I live with my partner, Soraya, in a tiny home in an intentional community. We once thought about having children, but we didn't know what kind of a future they would have to face, and so we eventually decided not to. I sometimes mourn the future we could have had together if things were different in the world, but it feels good to have reached the decision to focus on giving our time to the other people and children who already live in a community.

I work from home most days as a cybersecurity analyst, so high quality internet services are important to me. Although I spend a lot of my days (and even some of my nights) in front of a computer, I love the natural environment that surrounds me, and I enjoy being part of the community I live in. We grow veggies in the community garden, keep chickens and do sunrise yoga in the pavilion in the common area. The world can feel very unstable sometimes, but these habits keep me feeling grounded and calm.

I try my best to have a sense of routine, but it's not always easy. The other day there was an intense storm. I got an alert through my phone. We're used to storms, here, so all of us have emergency plans, both as households and as a community. First, I checked in on my most vulnerable neighbours — an elderly couple down the street, and a woman about my age whose son has a disability — to see if they were okay. Then I checked that the community battery was well-protected. Finally, I hunkered down with Soraya in our tiny home, which we made sure was secured with the ground anchors.

The storm hit, but we didn't lose power. The main roads were closed due to some damage. There was a brief internet outage, but I had enough time to warn my colleagues that I'd be offline for a day.

We're lucky, here, because we aren't dependent on the main grid. We have a big community battery, and a community space that opens up as soon as it's safe to provide support to anyone who needs it. We are like one big family here. Luckily, no one was injured or experienced any major damage this time. There was a bit of debris afterwards, and some minor water damage, but we all put aside a day to clean up. Even though it wasn't that bad, we all know that worse storms could come in the future.

After the storm we had a big meeting over biscki and beer to discuss whether we needed to update anything about our emergency plan for future events. We scheduled a working bee to restore the veggie patch. The roads were still closed, but we were able to use the radio to check in with a similar community nearby and hear about their experience. They had some good ideas for how we can improve drainage after heavy rain, and we shared our own strategies for protecting our power source from damage. These storms can be scary, but they've also brought us all closer, and made us feel closer to neighbouring communities, too.

Olivia

The year is 2070. My name is Olivia, and I am 65 years old. I live in a transportable community and work at the community farm. On my days off, I volunteer at the repair café. I love passing down knowledge to the next generation, so I always encourage my nieces and nephews to come to the repair café and to bring their friends. Sometimes they show me new ways of doing things that I've never thought of before. I don't have children, so this contact with the younger generations is important to me. They call me 'Livi' and tease me for my old-fashioned expressions. To them I'm an old lady! But I'm fit for my age, and I live an active life, riding my bike to get around.

I am old enough to remember when extreme weather events were still rare occurrences. Last year we had a particularly dry summer. Our crops struggled, and the landscape looked yellow and wan. We all kept hoping for rain. Last week, it came all at once, as though the sky were dumping everything it had been holding in. The earth was so parched so hardened that it couldn't absorb the water quickly enough. It wasn't long before the water was knee-high. It destroyed my farm. I lost all my seed stock, which I'd built up over years. The main farm building stayed standing, but my house was destroyed, and a tree crushed my shed. I was able to bring some animals to safety, but had to set others free and hope they could fend for themselves. My favourite cow, Betty, drowned before I could get to her. A loose piece of sheet metal caught my ankle in the water, and I had to radio my sister and her husband, who came and brought me to safety. As we left, I could hear Betty bellowing from far away above the rush of the water — a terrible, heart-wrenching sound.

In the days that followed, I grieved Betty and all I had lost. It helped me to stay busy, both rebuilding my own farm and helping others. The local micro-grid still had power, and the Community Resilience Hub helped me house the animals that I'd saved. Our greywater ponds captured enough water to make sure we could survive the next drought, so at least the rain wasn't wasted. We had a well-protected seed bunker, from which I took just enough seeds to help me restart my crop. I stayed with my neighbours, Jenny and John, while I rebuilt my home with the help of friends. Sometimes I had to wait a few days for a tool to be returned to the library of things, as many others were in the same position as me.

I won't say it was an easy time. Some part of me feels tired of starting again all the time, knowing that another storm and another drought will come. But I feel grateful to live in a community where I am so well supported and feel so connected to those around me. Every time there's a disaster, we learn a little more. At the moment I'm expanding the seed bank and planning for more high-ground points to protect more animals. One of my older cows has had a calf; it has lovely, curious eyes. I have called her Betty.

Adaptation

2030

It's a summer morning in the Huon Valley. It's going to be a hot day, so Emma is up early to give the garden water while it is still cool. She loves these blue morning hours when the birdsong is loud and ecstatic.

Her girls are eating breakfast in the communal dining hall they share with their neighbours. She knows her elder daughter, Maxine, will be pestering the old botanist Mike while he drinks his morning coffee, plying him with as many questions as she can fit in the short time before the school day begins. She writes down all the names for the plants in a little notebook that she takes with her everywhere. To help her learn about these plants as part of an ecosystem, rather than isolated specimens, Mike encourages her to make notes about them as though they were people. 'Who is Aristotelia peduncularis friends with?', he would say. 'Where does it like to hang out? And what does it do for work?'

There are a few communal farms like theirs dotted around the Huon Valley. At first, it happened largely on the tenants' own initiative — groups of people who got together to pool their savings and buy land that none of them would be able to afford on their own. Since the council stepped in to help facilitate these co-ownerships, though, they have become more numerous.

In a similar farm not far away, Yasna gathers up the oyster shells that she has left to dry in the sun. She carries them down to the shoreline in some mesh bags she has woven out of twine. On a tarp, there are piles of local rocks, which people have begun to arrange by size and shape.

Mike brings a map, pieced together from stories handed down from his ancestors, of what these bays looked like just a few centuries ago, before white man came to the island. When he closes his eyes, he can almost half-see the bay as it was; and, he hopes, as it may be again one day; studded with reefs and oyster farms, small currents rippling through the seagrass.

As she works, Yasna half-listens to the chatter around her, and lets her mind wander. She listens to Nico and Marion bickering over the best way to make an anchor for the baby seagrass shoots. She listens to Mike belly-laughing at his own jokes. She would count most of the people here friends, now; but it wasn't always this way. In the past three years, she has met more people – and spent more time with them – than she had in the whole three decades she had lived in Cygnet before that.

It has been a difficult time. Many people have lost their homes, and many more still will. The world beyond the valley grows uncertain, and each day more people are arriving, fleeing worse conditions elsewhere. Despite this, something has been happening here in the valley that Yasna has faith in. With every new small tragedy, there are new bonds of trust formed. She looks down at the net in her hand and thinks: we are like this net. With every new strand of connection, we can carry more weight.

2050

It has rained for days. Today the rain is particularly fierce. It lashes the windows and bears down on the roof of the town hall with a relentless pressure. Inside the Town Hall, those that have gathered for Mei's workshop struggle to sit still. They know that the workshop is a distraction; they are really in the hall because it is the safest place to be.

Camp mattresses and sleeping bags are stacked up against the walls, and over the rain they can hear the clatter of pots and pans as their friends and family members busy themselves preparing food in the kitchen next door. For those old enough to remember a time before the undersea cables failed, it would have been unimaginable that people could coordinate a mass evacuation operation like this without internet. The valley made the shift to radio and local bulletin boards slowly, over a period of several years, so by the time internet here was too patchy to be helpful, everyone was already in the habit of the new channels of communication.

Mei has been running her basic first-aid training for some time, so many have the skills, by now, to perform CPR or splint a broken arm. Some have attended more specialist classes. The difference for Mei and her clinic is noticeable: with someone with baseline medical training on every communal farm and block, the wait times have become manageable again. And she's not the young woman she used to be — she knows she can't keep practicing for ever. Mei considered continuing her preventative medicine programme today, but she knows that it is not the best time for people to be taking in new information. Instead, she tells everyone to find a comfortable place to sit or lie-down.

The rain continues to fall, and a near-silence settles over the hall. For a community that has put so much work into thinking about the future and the past — planning, being ready, always learning and improving — it is difficult sometimes to simply be present. As Mei's instructions grow increasingly sparse and intermittent over the white noise of the rain, most in the hall give themselves over to rest, knowing well that when the storm is over, there will be no time to sit still. They spare a thought for their friends and family still out there in the weather, helping with last minute evacuations, scouring the valley carefully for anyone who might have been overlooked.

When the rain has cleared and the flood waters have receded, they get to work straight away. Only a short head-count is necessary: they have protocols in place for storms like these. Not everyone has spent the night in the hall. Some have been moved into council-owned houseboats; floating accommodation that is moved around the valley on waterways as necessary; this time, they have been relocated to the parts of the river where the waters rise slowly.

Emma stays in the hall while her adult daughters go with a group to check the state of the food forests. Selfishly, a part of her is glad she does not have to see for herself the devastation the flood has wrought on the food forests. She remembers when they were still apple orchards, producing more apples than anyone could eat or sell. She and others worked on the old orchards for years, regenerating the soil, and planting layers of nut trees, berry bushes, herbs and ground cover. As the climate warmed, they had to adapt what they planted. Part of her has not yet got used to seeing peach and olive trees thriving here. She has known this landscape all her life, but now, it is only-half familiar to her. She wonders if all elderly people feel this way, but she suspects that her generation has seen more change than most.

2070

Momo is tired of digging. It's his turn today to help his mother prepare a site for a new dwelling, but it's hot, and his friends are in the forest today learning bushcraft. He'd rather be there, in the cool, dark and wet tangle of the old-growth trees, where the mushrooms glow with a light of their own. The rhythm of his spade in the earth lulls him into a stupor. Then, suddenly, a flash of yellow in the dark soil. He checks that his mother isn't looking, and digs it out carefully with his hands. It's tiny; no longer than his pinkie figure. It looks like a statuette of some sort of animal, with its yellow hue and enormous bug-eyes, except that it's wearing human clothes. Maybe it's of one of the animals that went extinct, Momo thinks. He feels his heart racing. It's been a long time since he's had a find like this. Before anyone else can see, he tucks it deep in his pocket.

Back home, Momo adds the figurine to his collection. Only one other person — the man they all call Pepe, knows about his private hoard. Pepe knows that it's important to Momo that the collection stays secret; at least until it's large enough to constitute a genuine museum that he can open to the public. Until then, Momo is scared that if his mum or dad were to find out, they'd take things away, saying that someone in the village might have find a use for it. 'There's no such thing as garbage', his mum likes to say. Everything gets put to use.

When he gets home, Momo places the figurine carefully in his secret box. Their dwelling is quiet. It's a relief to be home. Outside the soil is still breathing out the heat of the day, but in here, with its thick hemp walls and polished adobe floor, it is as cool as a spring morning. His mother is still working, using every minute of light left. His dad is out helping with dinners in the hall, and his sisters are checking the fish traps.

Momo runs to the dwelling next door and wakes Pepe up — he feels bad doing this, but it won't be long until his family are home. Solemnly, he opens the box and pulls out the little yellow plastic marvel. Grandpa looks at it for a moment and then bursts out laughing. It takes a few minutes for him to get the words out. 'It's a minion!' he gasps finally, and then goes on chuckling to himself. 'What's a minion?' Momo says. 'What's so funny?', but Pepe refuses to elaborate further. Disgruntled, Momo gives up, and wanders home, just as his sisters arrive home with fresh trout from the river.

Back in his own dwelling, as his laughter subsides, Pepe falls into a strange reverie. He could count on two hands the number of people left in the village who would know what a minion is — or was. It may have even belonged to him, once — that exact specimen — carried home from a McDonalds Happy Meal. So much has changed since then. They have less, and the forces of nature intrude on their lives more; but in many ways, life feels calmer. Perhaps, Pepe reflects, it is simply that he thinks less frequently about the wider world now, and thinks more about the welfare of those in his immediate vicinity — people, plants, animals. He doesn't know if this is a good or bad thing. Sometimes, when they radio other communities far away to exchange stories and advice, he feels guilty about how easy they have it by comparison, with no poisons that linger in the soil and the water, and no guns other than those the council keeps for hunting. When the guilt subsides, though, he feels only pride.

Impact

2030

It’s a summer morning in the Huon Valley. Emma makes breakfast for her two girls in their rental on the highway. The girls complain about having porridge again; they want bacon. ‘It’s healthy’, she tells them, but the truth is she’d love some bacon herself. They’re barely making rent as it is. Everything costs more, and her teacher’s salary hasn’t changed.

Before the girls leave for the bus stop, Emma checks their pollution masks. Once, you didn’t need those here, but the valley’s crowded now, and traffic crawls past their house coughing black fumes. Emma keeps the windows shut against it, even though the girls complain about the heat. None of them sleep well. They wake groggy, sheets damp with sweat.

Emma doesn’t blame the newcomers, but a lot of people do. The first arrivals were the wealthy—people with homes in three states who could chase the most forgiving weather. Most of her friends have given up on ever buying a home. Even the worst houses along the highway sell for a fortune. A few got in before prices skyrocketed. Emma’s friend Mei, a doctor, moved south with her ageing mother after Brisbane’s heat became unbearable. She’d hoped Tasmania would be easier, but the local clinic is as overstretched as the one she left behind. A few times she’s had patients demand a ‘doctor who speaks English’. Some make pointed remarks about how their island is going to be ‘sold to the Chinese’. Most of Mei’s friends are recent mainland arrivals too. When one joked that they were ‘climate refugees’, she laughed—then realised it was true.

In town, tempers flare easily. The supermarket owner now pays his nephew for security. The heat makes people short-tempered, and the beach, once a refuge, reeks of rotting fish. The salmon farms won’t last much longer—another mass die-off or two and they’ll be gone — but by then it might be too late to restore what’s been lost. Already, the those who once made their livelihoods from the sea are turning to other industries. Some, too old to retrain, are simply turning to drink.

The pub’s doing good business these days, but there’s less chatter in there than there used to be. The pub manager, Nico, can’t stand the silence, so he puts on the TV. Whenever the news is on, people ask him to change it. They watch the footy or Grand Designs instead, trying not to think about the players collapsing from heat or the mansions with underground bunkers ‘for emergencies’. When his thoughts turn dark, Nico reads about carbon capture projects and tells himself the tech people will fix it.

2050

Yasna waits at the supermarket door. It won't open for another hour, but the line already snakes down the street. She crosses her fingers for spinach, though she'll take whatever she can get. She tried growing food in her garden, but the soil's dead. Not long ago, her neighbour once sprayed both their yards to kill African feather grass; it worked, but nothing else survived. All over the valley, construction has been churning up the earth, and with biosecurity measures failing, new invasive species have taken root.

Behind her, Maria checks her bag again to make sure she brought enough cash. Like most people, she withdrew her savings months ago and hides them under the floorboards. The internet has failed too often to trust the banks. The last time she saw her GP, they were taking notes by hand. She used to think the internet was magic—something that just existed in the air. Now she pictures the single cable still linking Tasmania to the mainland, dragged endlessly back and forth along the seabed, a tangle of drowned metal and rubber.

When the supermarket doors open, only the first fifth of the queue is let in. A bulletproof SUV crawls past in the traffic, drawing a few looks. Behind its tinted windows, Flora turns up the radio and tries to keep her eyes on the road. She's never been in that supermarket. She and her husband get weekly deliveries from an underground aquaponics facility—an American startup she helped fund. But as the queue snakes past in her peripheral vision, she can't shake the thought that she's being warned of her own future—that one day her money will mean nothing, and the aquaponics vault will rot beneath the earth while she stands in line along with everybody else, hoping for a few onions.
A few blocks away, on what used to be the sporting ground, there's the ramshackle beginnings of a village. Many of the people lived in the Huon for generations before losing their homes to fires or floods. Others arrived recently, forking out the last of their savings for a ride on the Spirit, or maybe even risking it with one of the smaller vessels, which, though cheaper, often don't make it across the Bass Strait. The village was just tents at first. They called it 'temporary accommodation'. But weeks turned into months, and months turned into years. People built shelters out of whatever they could find. Life here in the temporary village is rough, but in many ways, it's more functional than in other parts of the Huon Valley. The people forced to relocate here are don't have much, and they are used to sharing skills and resources. Now, as the storm approaches, they are among the few people who notice. An old naval barometer is nailed to a post on the central medical facility. When the red flag goes up, everyone starts preparing.

Emma lives here now, older, her lungs failing. She spends her days resting, watching her daughters, Bronte and Maxine, as they secure the neighbours' dwellings with rope, cutting slits in the tarps so the wind can pass through. On the far edge of camp, Emma spots a pale shape—a bird, a Masked Owl—perched alone in daylight. She gasps and tries to call her daughters. She hasn't seen one since she was a girl. But the wind swallows her voice, and by the time her daughter returns for more rope, the owl is gone.

2070

On a hill overlooking the valley, in the large central room of what was once a private mansion, a child struggles to breathe. An elderly woman places a cool cloth on the fevered forehead and steps back, shaking her head. The mother reaches out weakly, trying to comfort her daughter, but she's too exhausted herself. All the children born here seem to fall ill eventually. The contaminated water, the poor nutrition, the lack of medicine. She wonders how any survive at all. The elderly woman, Flora, watches from across the room. It's absurd to think this house was once hers, and that she ever believed she could survive here alone. Now twenty-three people shelter within these walls, pooling what little they have.

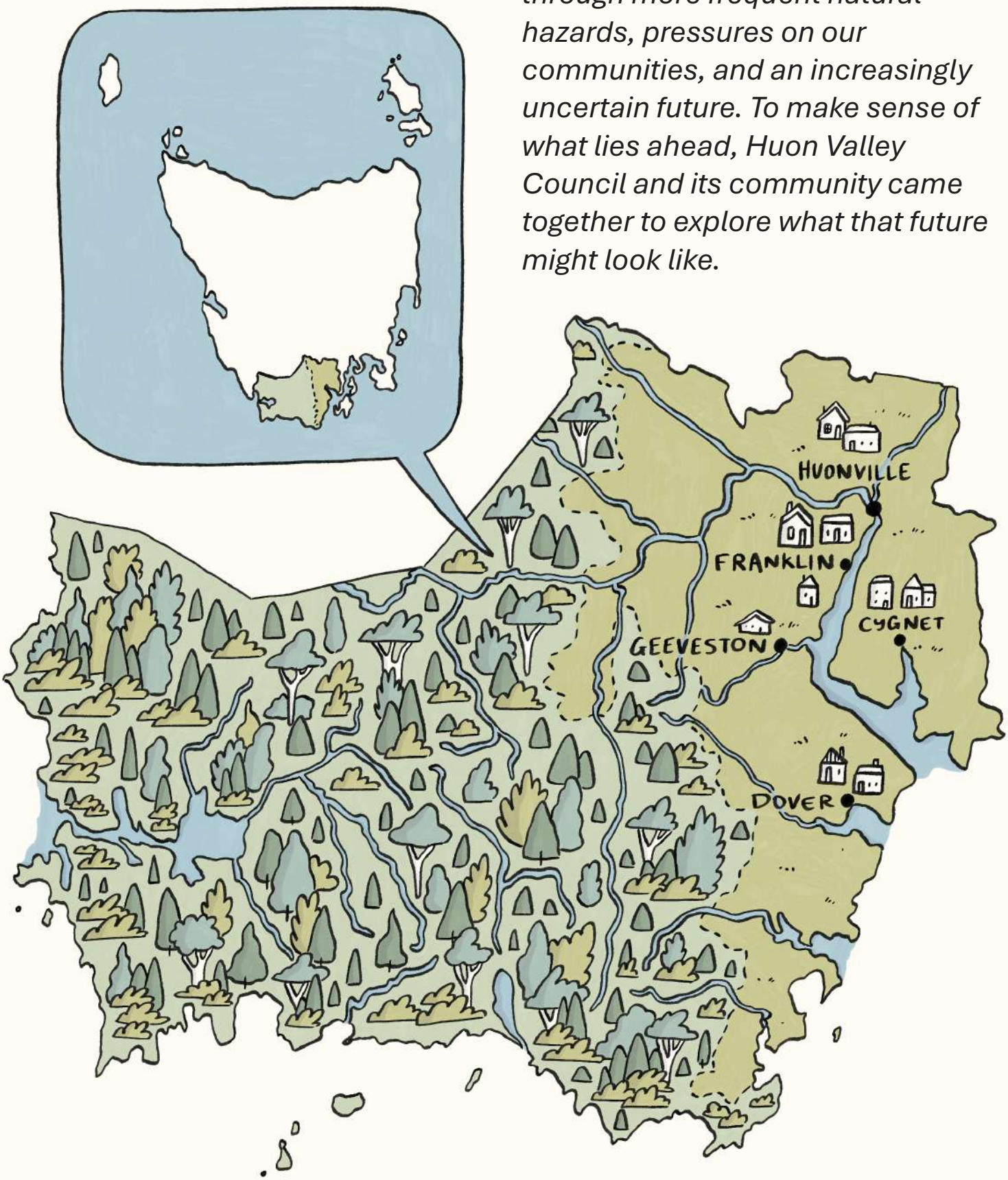
The sick child needs a healer who lives four hours away in the Village. There are some old enough to remember a time, before the Great Fire, when that Village was just a patch of sporting grass in the middle of a much bigger town called Cygnet.
They are old enough to know, too, that calling it a 'Village' is a bit of a stretch. Even so, people from the mansion cannot visit the Village freely; only in emergencies. Resources are scarce everywhere, and strangers are viewed with suspicion. There's always the risk of bringing back disease, or worse being refused the journey home if you're thought to be infected.

Far away in the Village, Bronte is chairing the weekly meeting. It is the first time she has done so since the death of her sister Maxine. They review broadcasts picked up by the radio that week. There was one from a commune on the hill requesting a doctor for a sick child, but they cannot spare their own, not for a journey of that distance. There are people coming from everywhere each day, needing help. Already the doctor is too busy to train others. They radioed back telling them that if they can bring the child to the Village, she will treat them there, but they got no reply.

When visitors arrive, people from the Village have trouble understanding them. Everyone on this island once spoke the same language, but now, with only these scant radio broadcasts connecting them, dialects have begun to emerge again. New circumstances have made new words necessary, and old ones have disappeared. The little ones grow without knowing what was once meant by 'airplane' or 'bandicoot' or 'avacado'. Sometimes, on the radio, news reaches them of places where communities are not so mistrustful of one another; where people learned sooner and more quickly how to care for each other; where resources are managed collaboratively, and the landscape is not so contaminated. Some of them dream about trying to make the journey to these places; if only to learn from them and return. But theirs is only a small and ageing population. Most are weak and too tired to travel, and those that are young and fit enough are needed here.

Back deep in the bowels of the former mansion, the mother sits beside her daughter's makeshift bed. The child's breathing has become shallow. She's only seven years old and born three years after the Fire, into a world that has forgotten how to protect its children. The mother strokes her daughter's hair and whispers the name she gave her at birth, a name chosen for the quality she hoped the child would possess: Endurance. Outside, Flora stands at the window, looking down toward where the Village must be. She thinks of all the medicine cabinets that once filled her mansion's bathrooms, thrown out years ago when they expired. She thinks of the hospital that once stood in Cygnet, now just rubble and ash. She thinks of how quickly everything they took for granted simply vanished. The child's fever breaks just before dawn, but she doesn't wake. Her mother holds her until the sun rises over the contaminated valley, hoping that somewhere in the same world, there are other people who have found a way to keep their children alive.

"The climate is changing, and the effects are already being felt through more frequent natural hazards, pressures on our communities, and an increasingly uncertain future. To make sense of what lies ahead, Huon Valley Council and its community came together to explore what that future might look like.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

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National Environmental Science Programme