

Echoes of Tomorrow

Discovering Digital Positionality with Orange and the Architects

Anna Lena Menne, Makēda Gershenson, Alissa Steer
Illustrated by Radunkel

Descriptive Comic

Copyright Notice

Echoes of Tomorrow: Discovering Digital Positionality with Orange and the Architects.

First published January 2024 on www.digitalpositionality.com - Berlin, Germany

This comic is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for private study, research, criticism, or review, no part of this comic may be reproduced by any process, in print or digital form, without explicit prior permission. The comic is available for free download on www.digitalpositionality.com, and a limited number of printed editions will be distributed for free. For inquiries regarding the use or reproduction of content, please contact Anna Lena Menne via contact@digitalpositionality.com.

Edition
First Edition

Authors
Anna Lena Menne, Makēda Gershenson, Alissa Steer

Illustrator
Radunkel

Funded under the Excellence Strategy of the Federal Government and the Länder by the Berlin University Alliance

Disclaimer

Echoes of Tomorrow is a narrative exploration that delves into our dynamic lived experiences in the digital age. Positioned at the intersection of the physical realm (Earth), the social sphere, and the digital world, Digital Positionality aims to illuminate the interconnected dimensions shaping our experiences in our contemporary world. Our intent is to foster self-awareness and empower individuals to navigate these dimensions with intention.

However, this account is a curated perspective and does not claim to represent an absolute truth. It is a fictional narrative that encourages critical reflection on the themes presented. We invite readers to engage with the story as a starting point for personal exploration rather than a definitive portrayal of reality.

The story may contain themes and visuals that explore planetary and societal challenges, injustices, personal reflections, and the complexities of digital existence. Some content may be emotionally impactful. Reader discretion is advised.

Accessibility

We are committed to making our content accessible to everyone. If you encounter any barriers or have specific accessibility needs, please contact us at contact@digitalpositionality.com so we can try to provide the necessary support.

Comic Guide

Thank you for engaging with our comic on digital positionality. In the following pages, we'll navigate the storyline using a text script. Each page is labeled with the number of panels it contains, followed by a narrative description of those panels. A panel is a distinct

section of the page containing images and text that represents a specific moment or scene in the story.

As characters are introduced, we'll provide detailed descriptions of their appearances. The majority of the comic is illustrated in black and white, with occasional appearances of colors. Each color serves a specific purpose:

- Orange: This is the color of the main character, Orange. Whenever the color appears at other points in the comic, it symbolizes hope, agency, and possibilities for action.
- Blue: This color is of Alfred, the AI teacher. In the comic, it symbolizes the status quo, reflecting a Eurocentric worldview. This perspective values objectivity, rationality, and technology's superiority as opposed to nuanced subjectivity and other alternative worldviews, often considering societies deviating from this ideal as primitive or ahistorical. The word "glitches" in the comic narrations also appears in blue.
- Violet: This is the color of Viola Ion, a spirit perceived only by Orange. In the comic it symbolizes ancestral intelligence, signifying ever-emergent collective wisdom through engagement with unique lived experiences across time and space. Thus, the words "ancestral intelligence" and "future ancestors" in the narrations appear in violet.

Page 1 (10 Panels)

Panel 1: The first scene opens with a birds-eye view of Earth from the vast universe. The planet is surrounded by an array of satellites, electronic devices, and communication signals, showcasing the profound technological presence on our home planet. In the distance, other stars and planets twinkle, emphasizing the cosmic expanse beyond our world.

Panel 2: We zoom in from the vast universe to Orange, our main character, lying in bed, their face reflecting fatigue and disinterest. The dimly lit room symbolizes their disconnection from the world around them. Next to Orange, the smart home device on their bedside table displays a Happy Birthday sign. In a thought bubble, Orange thinks to themselves, "It's my birthday, but I feel burnt out and uninspired."

- We get to know Orange. Orange is a non-binary individual with a vibrant orange appearance, symbolizing their curiosity and transformative nature. They have expressive, wide eyes that reflect their inquisitive and determined personality. Their hairstyle is dynamic, with strands that defy gravity, representing their ability to challenge established norms.

Panel 3: The next panel shows the world outside Orange's window. The hyper-technological world is visible, characterized by polluted skies, struggling ecosystems, and broken windows. A narration says, "The hyper-technological world bears the visible scars of the climate crisis and other grave challenges."

Panel 4: Orange boards the school bus, surrounded by disinterested students. The bus interior showcases a futuristic design. The narration tells us, "Orange embarks on their daily school commute, feeling disconnected from the world around them."

Panel 5: Orange is sitting inside their school classroom. Alfred, an AI teacher, delivers a lesson on the planet's pressing issues. Their arm moves in a looping motion. The atmosphere is sterile and stagnant, reflecting a lack of engagement. The classroom feels

boring and not very exciting, with students disengaged at their desks. Alfred says, "Now, let's talk about human history, the Earth, and the crises it faces. Information and Communication Technology (short, ICT) plays a crucial role in saving our planet."

- Introduction of the character, Alfred. Alfred is another non-binary character adorned in a captivating cool blue hue. Resembling a humanoid robot, Alfred's unique form features roles instead of feet and a distinct absence of legs. Standing at human height, their slender build and articulated arms grant them a remarkably human-like range of motion, emanating an authoritative aura. Atop Alfred's form, a head showcases a pair of expressive, luminescent eyes that convey their analytical abilities.

Panel 6: Alfred moves like a glitch in a video game, which the narration confirms, stating, "The AI teacher, Alfred, exhibits strange glitches in their movements." The word glitches is colored blue in the narration.

Panel 7: Next, Orange is sitting at their desk as they listen to Alfred's lesson. A look of frustration and confusion is evident on their face. They notice the strange way Alfred moves, like a glitch. Orange thinks to themselves, "This doesn't make sense. How can technology save the world when there are so many problems in this high-tech world?"

Panel 8: This panel closes up on Orange's eyes even further, filling the entire panel, showcasing tiredness, and revealing a deeper frustration with their surroundings. Orange thinks, "I can't put my finger on it. Maybe I'm just tired. But something feels off. Is this the kind of life we're supposed to have?"

Panel 9: The next panel zooms out again, and we see Orange slumping in their seat, feeling overwhelmed and drained, looking tired and defeated. They are surrounded by their disinterested classmates, emphasizing their feeling of isolation and the weight of the challenges they face. Frustrated, Orange thinks, "Ugh, I can't do this alone. I need help to figure it out."

Panel 10: Orange's eyes close, and they drift into an uneasy sleep. Orange appears twice in the panel, looking uncomfortable and scratching their head. Around them, there is no longer the classroom but a distorted background. There are a couple of black and blue glitches highlighted in blue with a checkered pattern. The narration tells us, "Orange falls into a restless slumber, haunted by conflicting thoughts, unanswered questions, and a growing sense of urgency."

Page 2 (9 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "As Orange sits up from their slumber, they are greeted by the calming and purposeful presence of a wise figure: Viola Ion."

Panel 1: A mysterious figure in a captivating violet hue, surrounded by an aura of wisdom, approaches Orange, who is still fast asleep on their desk. Viola Ion's presence exudes tranquility and purpose, creating an atmosphere of mystical significance. She awakens Orange by saying, "Awake, young one. Open your eyes. There are worlds within worlds you've yet to realize."

- We are introduced to Viola Ion, a non-binary character whose appearance showcases a striking violet or purple color. They exude an aura of wisdom and compassion, with a calm and serene expression that conveys deep insight and understanding. Viola's hair flows gracefully to shoulder length, embodying a

Echoes of Tomorrow: Descriptive Comic

gentle yet powerful presence. They embody a sense of spiritual connection and wisdom.

Panel 2: Orange has a surprised expression on their face, startled awake and clinging to their desk. Orange is captivated by Viola Ion's ethereal presence and wise demeanor. With awe and curiosity, Orange asks Viola Ion, "Who... Who are you?"

Panel 3: Viola Ion talks to Orange with their arm raised, radiating a sense of reassurance, and says, "Viola Ion here, a guide and friend. There are some mistruths that I'm here to end. You see, it's not technology sustaining Earth and humanity. Our ancestral home, our Mother Earth, is our true connection to our existential worth."

Panel 4: Orange wears a thoughtful expression, their hand raised to their chin. Skepticism lingers, but a flicker of hope begins to ignite within them. Conflicting thoughts reflect their inner turmoil and the start of their journey of self-discovery. Orange asks Viola Ion, "But everything I've been taught emphasizes the power of technology. How can it be wrong?"

Panel 5: Viola Ion's eyes shimmer with compassion as they stand and reach out a hand to Orange, saying, "The pieces will fall into place in due time. Trust in the journey. I'll admit it's a climb. Each day you awake is a gift—a new chance. The world needs you now. Things won't change happenstance."

Panel 6: Orange is deep in thought, walking away from the encounter with Viola Ion. Their mind is filled with a mix of curiosity and unease. As they reflect on their current birthday, a realization dawns upon them, bringing a newfound sense of purpose. Orange thinks to themselves, "What if there's more to my birthday than I realize? Perhaps it holds the key to finding purpose in my days."

Narration: "The next day, Orange awakens to yet another birthday, only to discover themselves trapped in a perplexing time loop. Have you ever found yourself in a situation similar to Orange's now, where your reality was shaken, and you faced dismissive responses from your guardians or peers?"

Panel 7: Orange wakes up in bed, their eyes opening to realize it's their birthday again. It's the same image as on the first page. The same happy birthday sign is displayed on their smart device, creating a sense of déjà vu. Confusion and unease wash over them as they think, "Wait, wasn't it my birthday yesterday? Why am I experiencing the same day all over again?"

Panel 8: Orange expresses their confusion and frustration to their Guardian, seeking answers and understanding. Orange tells their Guardian, "Something weird is happening. I'm stuck in a loop, reliving the same day." Their Guardian replies, "Off to school. Don't be silly! It's just your imagination running wild. You'll forget all about it soon enough. Just focus on your school work so you can build a good future for yourself."

- Introduction of Orange's Guardian. The non-binary Guardian is taller than Orange and has a lighter shade of orange color. They have big, round eyes, and their hair hangs down in strands. Their clothing has traditional elements, including a V-neck collar that represents their connection to the past.

Panel 9: Orange is boarding the school bus again. It's the same scene as on page 1. Orange looks anxious, looking around and noticing that everyone else seems unaware of the repeating day. As they start questioning their own connection to reality and

perception, feeling isolated in their experience, Orange thinks to themselves, "Am I losing my mind? Why doesn't anyone else see that everything is repeating itself?"

Page 3 (7 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "The familiar sound of AI teacher Alfred's voice fills the classroom as they deliver the same lesson as the day before. Orange observes the repetitive pattern in their words and actions and comes to a disturbing realization."

Panel 1: Alfred, the AI teacher, stands at the front of the classroom, delivering the same lesson as the day before. Alfred's arm seems to move oddly again, almost glitching. Orange sits among students who listen passively, unaware of the day's repetition. Alfred says, "Throughout history, technology has played a pivotal role, advancing our society and improving our lives."

Panel 2: Orange is sitting at their desk, one hand raised to their head and their eyes wide open, staying alert and observant during the lesson. They notice patterns in Alfred's words and actions, mirroring the repetitive nature they've been experiencing. Orange thinks to themselves, "Hold on... Alfred's words and actions seem to be stuck in a loop, just like my own life. Is there a connection?"

Panel 3: Orange suddenly has a realization and begins to put the pieces together. They sit at their desk, hands raised to their head, with multiple ellipses and mathematical formulas appearing around their head. Their eyes open wide, Orange better understands that they have been stuck in a loop, unable to escape the boundaries of the system they are in, thinking, "I'm living in a loop! I'm confined within the boundaries of this constructed system. Why have I never questioned the stories I've been told before?"

Narration: "Seeking answers, Orange turns to Viola Ion, who guides them to a hidden sanctuary for ancestral intelligence within the library. Despite the books appearing empty, Viola Ion emphasizes self-discovery and critical reflection as the key to unlocking profound wisdom within." The words ancestral intelligence are colored violet in the narration.

Panel 4: Orange approaches Viola Ion with a sense of urgency. Orange's face is filled with desperation and a longing for answers. They wrap their arms around themselves. Viola Ion, on the other hand, radiates a calm and wise aura. Orange asks, "Viola Ion, I need your help. I feel trapped in this endless loop. Is there any way out?"

Panel 5: Viola Ion, a beacon of wisdom and understanding, confirms Orange's suspicions. They compare their situation to an escape room, where the loop represents the limitations of the dominant worldview. The space around them takes on a sense of confinement, displaying a mix of walls, doors, stairs, and holes where bodies and heads disappear. Viola explains, "This loop may seem like there's no escape. Limited boundaries, the only landscape. You're never alone, despite common belief. Escaping this room will offer relief."

Panel 6: Viola Ion leads Orange to a hidden section in the library, a sanctuary dedicated to ancestral intelligence. The library is full of mystique and ancient artifacts, with shelves lined with books and objects that seem to hold secrets waiting to be uncovered. Viola Ion says, "Follow me, Orange. Within the hidden stacks, you'll find wisdom of a special kind. Break free from this reality. Release your fears—the key lies here."

Panel 7: Orange opens a book that appears empty among a collection of seemingly empty books in a hidden section of the library. Viola Ion reveals to Orange that these

books actually hold profound wisdom, simply waiting to be discovered. Viola Ion tells Orange, "Upon first glance, we cannot see. Yet, tools to meet the truth will help us be open to the wisdom that will set us free."

Narration: "Viola Ion urges Orange to challenge the status quo, guiding them on a quest: sketch a map and carve a distinct path. Yet, before embarking on this journey, it is crucial to expose the glitches in society's systemic flaws—moments of reflection that reveal systemic contradictions and disruptions. This will unlock the ancestral intelligence hidden within the library's pages." The word glitches is colored blue and the words ancestral intelligence are colored violet in the narration.

Page 4 (9 Panels)

Panel 1: Viola Ion and Orange look at the book together in the first panel. Viola Ion stands behind Orange, warmly encouraging them to embark on a journey of self-discovery and liberation, saying: "The time is now to find your way. Escape this path day by day. Question all that you've been taught. Our future world needs a new plot. Explore new ways to see and be. The key is curiosity."

Panel 2: Orange and Viola Ion sit across from each other in the library, engaged in a deep conversation. Viola Ion explains the importance of paying attention to glitches, the inconsistencies in their surroundings, as a way to unveil the constructed nature of society. "When the world seems to make no sense, and the system seems to fail, be not afraid to seek a new truth. The glitches will reveal a new trail. Cracks in the system are there to see. Look closely enough, you'll see the balance that could be. Yes, the reality is tough."

Panel 3: Viola Ion and Orange sit amongst the books. Viola Ion shares their critical knowledge about the social world, discussing how inequality is reproduced and how hidden mechanisms perpetuate injustice. They encourage Orange to explore beyond their familiar routine and question the established order, saying, "Our social world is a complex place, power dynamics and inequities abound. But when we unearth mechanisms untold, we shape our worlds, and remedies can be found."

Panel 4: Orange, visibly frustrated, resists critical self-reflection and yearns for the comfort of the past. They hold their hands to their head, grappling with a challenging truth that challenges their identity. The atmosphere intensifies with shadows and violet glitches, obscuring the surroundings and signaling internal turmoil. Orange says, "It's hard to face these truths. It feels like I'm betraying who I thought I was. Who am I without what I've known?"

Panel 5: Orange's internal conflict takes a visual form as the scene splits into two contrasting images. On one side, a serene depiction unfolds as Orange lies peacefully in bed at home, embodying familiarity and comfort. On the opposite side, violet glitches and a shadowy version of Orange accompanied by a question and exclamation mark represent an unsettling unknown. Caught in the middle, Orange stands, visibly torn between the desire for the security of routine and the imperative for change. A narration at the panel's top provides insight into Orange's struggle: "Orange grapples with confronting society's constructed nature. But isn't it normal to experience fear or helplessness when facing big world problems?"

Panel 6: Orange's discomfort with these possible changes is reflected in their body language and facial expression. They resist Viola Ion's guidance, their shoulders tense and brows furrowed. The background depicts the split panel between comfort and violet

glitches. Orange says, "Change is scary. Can't I just go back to how things were? It's easier to live that way."

Panel 7: Viola Ion gazes at Orange with empathy, their eyes filled with understanding. Orange looks up at Viola Ion, still skeptical, and their brows furrowed. Viola Ion tells Orange, "Hesitation makes so much sense. Change is difficult and often scary, but holding onto the status quo stops transformation that's necessary."

Panel 8: Orange's expression softens with curiosity and vulnerability. They lean in, their body language open and receptive, saying, "I want to make a difference, but it feels like too much to handle."

Panel 9: Viola Ion embraces Orange, placing a reassuring hand on Orange's shoulder and offering guidance and support by saying, "The truth is tough, yet the time is now. It's natural to feel overwhelmed. Face your fears and challenge yourself. It's time to take your place at the helm."

Page 5 (7 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Panel 1: The page starts with Orange sitting in their classroom, carefully observing their classmates at the surrounding desks. The classroom is filled with students, each with a depressed or exhausted expression on their face. A narration says, "Back in the classroom, Orange quietly observes their environment, trying to spot more glitches..." The word glitches is colored in blue in the narration.

Panel 2: The previous narration continues into the next panel, stating, "...their awareness sharpens, revealing social structures and hierarchies that have been around them all along." The glitches in Orange's surroundings become more apparent as they notice small details around them. The panel is split into two sides. One side has classmates flaunting wealth with stylish clothing and the latest gadgets, while the other depicts students with fewer material possessions occupying different social groups. These disparities are visually represented through varying clothing styles, gadgets, and the arrangement of students in the classroom.

Narration: "Increasingly aware of the inequities surrounding them, Orange feels isolated. Questioning widely accepted beliefs, they yearn for understanding in a world adhering to unchallenged norms."

Panel 3: Alfred continues their lesson, discussing the idea of developed and developing countries. A large map is displayed on a screen, showing demarcated borders dividing countries into "Developed" and "Developing." Alfred says, "Developed countries have to assist the developing ones and bring them out of poverty. This is achieved through economic growth and embracing capitalism."

Panel 4: Orange's critical thinking intensifies as they sit at their desk, hands raised to their head, questioning the fairness and validity of the dominant perspective. They recognize that these categories, hierarchies, and borders are deeply rooted in history and may not accurately represent people's diverse life experiences and complexities. Their expression reveals a mix of overwhelm, confusion, and skepticism. Encircling them are persistent blue glitches adorned with a checkered pattern, visually symbolizing the ongoing disruption and interrogation of established norms. Orange thinks, "Why do some nation-states have power over others? Shouldn't everyone have a voice in shaping their own future? Something doesn't add up."

Panel 5: Orange gazes around the classroom, realizing they are alone in their observations. The feeling of isolation and being different intensifies as they understand that their peers don't notice what they see, symbolized by their physical separation from the rest of the class. Orange whispers to themselves, "Am I the only one who notices? It's like I'm living in a completely different reality now."

Narration: "The stark contrast between the idealized image of ICT in class and the harsh realities around Orange becomes glaringly evident. As they witness the prevailing injustices that afflict both the Earth and the social world, the discrepancies grow more noticeable, and Orange starts to keenly observe the glitches." The word glitches is colored blue in the narration.

Panel 6: Orange sits by the window on the bus ride home, their face pressed against the glass. Outside, the polluted skies and struggling ecosystems come into view. The sky is dark and hazy, and they notice signs of environmental degradation. The contrast between the idealized image of technology and the actual condition of the Earth is evident. Even the street outside exhibits signs of disruption, with blue checkered glitches manifesting, visually underscoring the disconnection between technological aspirations and the environmental challenges facing the world.

Panel 7: Orange's attention shifts to the people outside the bus window. At a nearby bus stop, they observe individuals awaiting transportation. Among them, a person in a wheelchair struggles with navigating the environment and confronting physical barriers that impede mobility. Blue boundaries, resembling glitches, accentuate the obstacles and limitations hindering the person's movement. In response to this observation, Orange's contemplative thoughts surface, "Why is the world built in a way that only certain people can move around easily? Everyone deserves to participate in society freely."

Page 6 (7 Panels, 1 Narration)

Panel 1: The next page starts with Orange continuing to look outside the bus window, attentively observing a group of construction workers laboring tirelessly under harsh conditions. A person in a luxurious car impatiently honks and speeds past, displaying a stark contrast in privilege and a disregard for the workers' presence. Blue glitching boundaries visually emphasize these two groups' social and economic disparities. In response to this scene, Orange thinks, "Workers deserve respect, too. Why can the privileged honk while they have to stay silent and endure harsh conditions?"

Panel 2: Orange remains fixated on the bus window, witnessing an unfortunate incident unfold where someone becomes the target of discrimination solely based on their appearance. The individual endures insults and unfair treatment from a group of people who judge them by their outward appearance. Blue and checkered glitching speech bubbles poignantly highlight the prevalence of prejudice and bias in the encounter. In response to this distressing scene, Orange thinks, "Appearance shouldn't define how we're treated. Who decides what's acceptable? Each person is worthy of respect, rights, and dignity for who they are, not how they look. This isn't fair!"

Narration: "Orange connects glitches to societal power patterns, realizing intentional design fuels inequality. Heading home, a profound understanding hits them: every choice and action shapes our world. The structures they're in aren't fixed; they can be reshaped." The word glitches is colored blue in the narration.

Panel 3: Moving away from the window, Orange sinks back into their seat with a hand raised to their chin and eyebrows raised. Deep in contemplation, their face mirrors a mix

of determination and realization, reflected in the thought, "These glitches are definitely not random. They're signs of something bigger—the hidden power dynamics that shape our lives." Surrounding Orange, a violet cloud encapsulates an echo of Viola Ion's words: "Our social world is a complex place, power dynamics and inequities abound. But when we unearth mechanisms untold, we shape our worlds and remedies can be found."

Panel 4: Despite the feeling of alienation and the weight of their observations, Orange experiences a glimmer of hope, marked by a sudden realization. Their face lights up with an Aha! expression, right arm raised, and index finger extended. Eyes wide open, Orange realizes that their ability to perceive beyond the constructed norms gives them a unique perspective and an opportunity to challenge the status quo. Orange thinks, "Maybe Viola Ion was right. I do feel a little isolated, but perhaps this awareness is a gift. This is a call to action. I can make a difference."

Panel 5: Orange wakes up in bed, their face expressing tiredness and frustration as they realize it's their birthday again, for the third time. The room is dimly lit, and their smart shows the same Happy Birthday sign, reinforcing the existence of the never-ending cycle. Orange thinks, "Not again! Another morning, another round in this never-ending cycle. Is there no escape?"

Panel 6: Orange is on their way to school, the same bus scene repeating itself. Amid this routine, Orange questions the purpose of attending classes that offer no new knowledge or growth within the repetitive cycle. They express dissatisfaction with the lack of meaningful learning and personal growth, thinking: "Why do I have to go through these same classes? I'm not learning anything new!"

Panel 7: The next panel shows a close-up of Orange's face, shining with a newfound resolve. One fist raised, they realize waiting for others to initiate change is not enough, and the power to break free from the cycle lies within themselves, thinking, "I can't rely on others to break this cycle for me. The power to create change lies within me."

Page 7 (7 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "Back in school, Orange skips class, aware it won't offer new insights. Now attuned to glitches, Orange taps into ancestral intelligence. The books reveal untold perspectives, challenging oppressive systems, exposing global glitches, and showcasing the power of their ancestors' wisdom. Think of books, documentaries, media that have helped you discover some dominant ideas about history and exploitation." The words ancestral intelligence are colored in violet and the word glitches is colored blue in the narration.

Panel 1: Orange enters the library section dedicated to ancestral intelligence, walking through a mystical passage toward a dark destination. Lined with endless books, the path creates an otherworldly atmosphere. Orange thinks, "The answers I seek may lie within the wisdom of my ancestors. It's time to uncover the knowledge they hold."

Panel 2: Viola Ion gracefully extends a book toward Orange, who eagerly receives it, symbolizing their readiness to delve into ancestral knowledge and wisdom. The once-empty books now pulsate with their ancestors' untold stories. Viola Ion remarks, "You're back, and you're ready. I can see it in your eyes. Open mind, open heart... Explore the stories of the wise."

Panel 3: Seated on the floor amidst stacks of books, Orange is fully immersed in reading and absorbing the profound messages within. The ancestral wisdom resonates with Orange, and in a moment of realization, they think, "These messages, these glitches..."

They are the result of Ancestral Intelligence guiding me towards a different path." The words ancestral intelligence are colored in violet.

Panel 4: The realization dawns upon Orange that they can create future perspectives and histories. They embrace the opportunity to explore alternative futures and define their version of a "good life." Determined, Orange stashes one of the books into a bag draped across their body. Out loud, they declare, "Someone wrote history. I'm someone. I can write the future in a different way. I have the power to shape my own future and explore alternative ways of living a "good life."

Narration: "Fueled by determination, Orange is eager to continue on their quest—to draw a path to escape the loop. Yet, as they reach for a book in the library, the journey reveals its complexity. The weight of profound knowledge and the gravity of responsibility bear down upon them."

Panel 5: Crouched beneath towering stacks of books in the ancestral intelligence section, Orange's face reflects a mix of urgency and fear. One arm raised to shield themselves, it seems as if the book stacks could collapse at any moment, creating a palpable sense of overwhelming knowledge and the weight of responsibility. Orange's thoughts echo their apprehension, "I can't do this alone. I need others to join me. But connecting with other people scares me. What do I know? What if they reject me?"

Panel 6: Viola Ion approaches Orange, emanating warmth and encouragement. Their reassuring smile lights up the scene as they gently touch Orange's previously raised arm, offering comfort and support. Viola Ion's presence brings a calming assurance, and with kindness in their voice, they advise Orange, "To make the change you want to see, you must bring people together. Be brave, lean in, ask for help, and get organized. It'll be easier to weather."

Panel 7: Orange contemplates Viola Ion's words, one arm raised to their chin, eyes looking upward. The realization of mobilizing their classmates to address the existential crisis becomes evident. A spark of realization appears above Orange's head, signaling the moment of clarity. Viola Ion stands supportively behind Orange. Orange declares, "You're right. We have to rally. We're in this together. This cycle of crises affects us all, and a better future is waiting for us."

Page 8 (7 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "In the classroom, Alfred assigns a group project, presenting Orange with a chance to interact with their peers and seek support. However, conflict brews within Orange's group."

Panel 1: In the classroom setting, Orange occupies a table with two classmates, exchanging glances as Alfred stands at the front of the room with an instructive gesture. Alfred's arm moves in the familiar looping motion as they say, "Today, you will work in groups to explore solutions for global challenges."

- Introduction of Friend 1, who presents as a non-binary individual with an air of privilege. Their well-groomed appearance includes a v-neck sweater, dark pants, and short, styled hair. Confidence radiates from their posture and expressions, signifying their advanced position within established social hierarchies.
- Introduction of Friend 3, who is a non-binary person wearing a tracksuit with dark, curly hair extending to shoulder length. Their posture seems closed off sometimes, but despite grappling with systemic challenges, their expressions

emanate resilience and determination, symbolizing strength in the face of adversity.

Panel 2: The group work unfolds in the panel with Friend 1 confidently seated on the desk, gesturing assertively, advocating for the dominant Eurocentric perspective, saying, "ICT and innovation are key to progress. We need to focus on economic growth and market-driven solutions." Friend 2, sitting at the same desk, clenches their fists, eyes fixed intensely on Friend 1, and challenges them out of frustration, "Here we go again. The world is spiraling into chaos, and your solution is just more of the same? This is so played out. Can't you think of anything outside the box?" Friend 3 stands slightly apart, hands closed in front of their body, eyes looking upward. Accustomed to being unheard, they remain silent, harboring a longing to be heard, thinking, "They take up so much space. I wish I could be heard too." Friend 3's body language reflects both the desire and hesitancy to contribute.

- Introduction of Friend 2, who emerges as an activist challenging the status quo and advocating for social justice. Depicted as a non-binary individual, they exude a bold and rebellious appearance with a distinctive style—wearing a dark vest adorned with activist buttons. Their hair is short, stubbly, or shaved on the sides, sticking up on the top. Determination and a fiery spirit characterize their expressions, embodying their activist nature.

Panel 3: Tensions escalate within the group as Friend 1 dismisses Friend 2's perspective, labeling them a conspiracy theorist. Friend 1 gestures dismissively, adopting a stance of condescension, while Friend 2, standing their ground, expresses frustration. Friend 2 stands with hands propped up on the desk, leaning towards Friend 1 in an aggravated manner, who accuses them with, "This is absurd. You can't just blame the system. You're just buying into conspiracy theories."

Panel 4: The panel zooms in on Orange's face, their eyes wide open in shock, with a hand covering their mouth. Orange's expression conveys concern and a sense of helplessness as they witness the escalating conflicts within the group. Feeling a wave of hopelessness, Orange grapples with uncertainty, unsure of how to bridge the gap between the differing viewpoints. In their thoughts, Orange reflects, "How can we ever find common ground?"

Panel 5: Viola Ion leans in, whispering into Orange's ear with an aura of empathy and understanding. Orange listens attentively as Viola Ion imparts words of wisdom, "When we clash in conflict, we can choose to fight or flee. When we open our hearts and minds, we can grow with empathy. Beliefs that differ can coexist despite inequity. To heal, we have to feel and make space for all to see."

Narration: "Tension brews in Orange's group, but guided by Viola Ion, they discover the transformative power of constructive conflicts. Courageous despite their hesitancy, they take the lead in the group discussion, steering their peers toward constructive dialogue, empathy, and collaboration. What helps you to keep going in a difficult discussion?"

Panel 6: Inspired by Viola Ion's words and the intensity of the group exchange, Orange assumes a leadership role. Standing at the group's center, both hands extended in a stop motion, Orange exudes confidence and purpose. The three classmates gather around, their expressions reflecting curiosity and attentiveness. With a sense of urgency, Orange exclaims, "Wait, wait! We all have thoughts... and feelings... and experiences. We could learn from our different angles and see what we couldn't see before. Can we make just a little more space to hear from each other? We need *each* of us to make this work."

Panel 7: Friend 3 feels empowered and speaks up, sharing their perspective on the negative impact of technology on the environment and the lack of opportunities in their hometown. Friend 3's body language changes, becoming more assertive and passionate, with one finger raised. The other Friend 1, Friend 2, and Orange turn their attention towards Friend 3 who says "I've seen harm caused by the current system. In my hometown, mineral mining for ICT damages the environment and leaves workers struggling. It's frustrating that our voices are often ignored, and opportunities are scarce..."

Page 9 (5 Panels, 1 Narration)

Panel 1: Friend 1 and Friend 2 express surprise and curiosity, leaning in to better understand Friend 3's perspective. Their faces display a mix of surprise and interest. Friend 1 and Friend 2 both lean forward, with Friend 1 stating, "I had no idea it was this serious," while Friend 2 asks, "But how can we solve these problems?" Feeling more comfortable to share their thoughts, Friend 3 stands tall, their hands gesturing comfortably but with one fist clenched. Speaking with conviction, Friend 3 emphasizes, "That's the thing. It's not about others solving our problems. We don't need a savior. We need to be heard and given the chance to design solutions for us and by us."

Panel 2: The classmates continue their thoughtful discussion, collectively realizing the glitches and gaps in the dominant narrative. Forming a circle, each of them has a moment of revelation. Friend 1 expresses, "Oof. I never even thought of this before. I've been living comfortably within the status quo. You're not wrong, and it's really unfair." Friend 2 adds, "Hmm. I guess I've been driven by my own beliefs. Diverse perspectives are really crucial to understand the whole picture, so we can address structural problems together. I want to see change that lasts." Meanwhile, Friend 3 internalizes, thinking, "Whoa. My voice matters here. I can add perspectives that can really shift the dominant narrative."

Narration: "Together, the classmates gain a deeper awareness of the glitches in the world around them and redirect their focus from personal concerns to addressing broader societal issues together, each bringing their own unique strengths to the table. What knowledge or skills do you have that might address societal issues?" The word glitches is colored blue in the narration.

Panel 3: As the classmates actively listen and engage with one another's perspectives, they start to notice the glitches in their surroundings, representing their growing awareness of the gaps and flaws in the dominant narrative. The checkered blue glitch-like patterns now look like lightning and symbolize the systemic issues they are uncovering. Their attention shifts from their individual concerns to the larger structural and societal problems that extend beyond their personal experiences. The glitch patterns emerge around the classmates, intertwining with the scene. Each classmate says something to express their growing understanding, expressing what they can contribute to the group. Friend 1: "I'm beginning to understand the relative privileges I hold. I can and want to use them to support others. It feels good to be a part of positive change." Friend 2: "I can recognize the importance of working with others toward systemic social change. We need to address the root causes of injustice to move towards a more just society. It's less exhausting than fighting everyone all the time." Friend 3: "Being heard and understood makes such a big difference. I can see a brighter future for me and those I love. I'll keep advocating for the needs of my community and practice amplifying my voice. I don't have to do this alone."

Panel 4: The glitch patterns intensify, visually reflecting the heightened awareness of the classmates. The glitches swirl around them, symbolizing their growing understanding and urgency for change. Friend 1 and Friend 2 jump in surprise as the glitches intensify.

Orange, amidst the swirling glitches, speaks with conviction. One arm extended and their bag secured tightly around their body, "We have to keep challenging the system we're living in. We can create a new story—a future that acknowledges our interconnectedness and makes space for diverse perspectives. We can build a more just and sustainable future... together."

Panel 5: The friends and Orange huddle closely, forming a united front, their faces showing determination and solidarity. Orange says, "Listen" A narration at the panel's top tells us, "Orange shares the glitches uncovered and wisdom gained from ancestral intelligence. They speak of breaking free from the loop and charting a path out. The classmates, inspired, join hands in this collective quest." The word glitches is colored blue, and the words ancestral intelligence are colored violet in the narration.

Page 10 (7 Panels, 3 Narrations)

Narration: "Suddenly, the glitches erupt, plunging the world in pitch-black darkness, leaving a sense of helplessness in its wake. The system resists, so Orange and their friends face a new challenge—navigating without their senses. Drawing a map in this isolated uncertainty seems impossible." The word glitches is colored blue in the narration.

Panel 1: The world suddenly plunges into pitch-black darkness. The panel is completely black except for a pair of orange eyes. The artificial intelligence algorithm of the loop resists and is short-circuited by the ancestral intelligence unlocked by Orange and the friends, isolating them and leaving the group feeling alone and disoriented.

Panel 2: The panel zooms into Orange's eyes. The violet, glowing spirit of Viola Ion appears, almost like a dream. In a violet cloud, they impart kind words of encouragement and guidance to Orange amidst the darkness, "Start where you are to get where we're going. You have all that you need—the movement is growing. The quest is always to question, you can overcome this oppression."

Panel 3: Amidst the pitch-black darkness, Orange starts questioning their surroundings, wondering if they truly stand alone or if the darkness is merely a ploy to keep them isolated. The shape of Viola Ion, slightly transparent, embraces Orange from behind. Orange raises their voice, calling out to their friends in the dark, "Is anyone there? Are you all still with me?"

Narration: "Undeterred in their quest and guided by the resonance of each other's voices, they navigate the oppressive darkness."

Panel 4: In response to Orange's call, the voices of their friends begin to echo back. One by one, they respond, reassuring Orange that they are not alone. The panel is still completely black except for the three pairs of the friends' eyes. Friend 1: "I'm here, Orange!" Friend 2: "You're not alone. We're still here with you!" Friend 3: "We're together in this, Orange!"

Panel 5: Orange stands in front of the black backdrop, eyes looking up, bag secured, realizing they need to chart a new path to escape the loop and challenge the dominant narrative. They understand the importance of exploring and understanding the existing structures and making them visible, thinking, "The established system must be disrupted! I need to find opportunities to challenge the dominant narrative. But first, we need to explore. We need to understand these lines, these structures that hold us."

Panel 6: In the darkness, the silhouettes of Orange's friends emerge. Guided by the sound of each other's voices, they find each other, touch their index fingers, and a faint,

shining violet light emits from their connection. Though the darkness still looms, this light helps them see their immediate surroundings better. A narration at the top of the panel says, "Reaching out, their fingers touch, and a radiant light emerges..."

Narration: "Viola Ion fades away, leaving Orange and their friends as the very ancestors whose wisdom they sought. Now, as future ancestors, they are ready to confront the unknown. They embark on exploration, seeking to understand their surroundings and continue on their quest: drawing a map and finding a way out." The words future ancestors are colored violet in the narration.

Panel 7: The panel zooms into the friends and Orange touching their index fingers, the glowing light from their fingers looking similar to the glowing spirit of Viola Ion that starts to fade away on the right of the panel. Within the violet bubble, Viola echoes, "You have all that you need—the movement is growing," leaving Orange and their friends to navigate the path independently. Now, torchbearers, they carry the wisdom and responsibility to shape the future in the pitch-black darkness. Orange exclaims, "WE ARE THE FUTURE ANCESTORS!"

Page 11 (7 Panels, 1 Narration)

Panel 1: In the pitch-black darkness, Orange and their friends cautiously explore their immediate surroundings: a vast, empty expanse with only the faint outlines of their figures visible. Their index fingers emit a shining violet light independently, like small beacons, illuminating their path, creating a stark contrast against the dark void that surrounds them. The friends collectively think, "Where are we?" as Orange leads the group, saying, "This darkness is overwhelming, but we have to find a way out."

Panel 2: Orange takes out the book they have continued to carry in their bag from the ancestral intelligence library section and starts drawing as the fingers of the friends illuminate their sight. They draw a big round circle representing the Earth. Orange explains, "Alright, let's start our map with the Earth. This is where we all come from, the nurturing planet that supports our existence."

Panel 3: The panel shows the violet light illuminating a big plug in an outlet.

Panel 4: The group's attention is drawn to a massive plug connected to the outlet. Its outline appears faintly in the darkness, hinting at its significance. They gather around and look up at it, curiosity etched on their faces as they try to make sense of its purpose and function. The glow from their fingers casts a light on their curious expressions. Friend 2 asks, "What could this plug be for?" Friend 1 contemplates, "Looks like an energy source. ICT needs energy and other natural resources from the earth to power itself." And finally, Friend 3 realizes, "Wait... could this darkness be the digital world?"

Panel 5: Orange continues to draw the map, now adding a circle that represents ICT above but overlaying the circle that represents the Earth. The violet lights from the friends' fingers illuminate the scene. Orange says, "Exactly! This plug may represent the dimension of ICT. It requires energy and resources to power itself, just like our smart devices."

Narration: "Orange, tuning into ancestral intelligence, leads the group on their quest as future ancestors. They begin to reflect critically using what they have—their smartphones and their diverse lived experiences." The words future ancestors are colored violet in the narration.

Panel 6: Orange checks their bag and finds a smartphone, its faint glow offering another ray of light in the darkness. The smartphone's light bathes Orange's face with a soft glow, illuminating their thoughtful expression. They recall, "Viola Ion said to start where we are and use what we have. Our smartphones could be useful."

Panel 7: Engaged in a conversation, the friends discuss their different devices. The glowing screens of their smartphones are the focal point of this panel, symbolizing the disparity in access and capabilities. Friend 1 and 3 hold their smartphones, showcasing various models and technologies. Friend 1 says, "I love my smartphone! It's packed with the latest features and apps. I can do so much with it." While Friend 3 contributes, "Mine is an older model. It does the basics, but I wish I had access to more functionalities." Behind their smartphones, Friend 2's face, who doesn't have a phone, is shown, their silhouette standing apart from the glowing screens of their friends. The absence of light around them emphasizes their disconnection from the conversation, highlighting disparities. Friend 2 explains, "I don't have a smartphone, I know I can't really contribute, but I am skeptical about surveillance."

Page 12 (6 Panels, 1 Narration)

Panel 1: Huddled together as a group in the darkness, their index fingers shining violet lights, they reflect on the implications of digital inequality and its connection to broader social and environmental dimensions. Orange says to Friend 2, "You're contributing a lot! It seems that our smartphones represent more than just technology. They reflect access, skills, opportunities, and outcomes. It's like a mirror reflecting the inequities present in the larger challenges we face."

Panel 2: Orange continues to draw the map, now adding a circle representing society to the right, overlaying the other two circles representing the Earth and the Digital World. The violet lights from the friends' fingers illuminate the scene. To the right, a smartphone is depicted. A narration on top tells us, "Orange's map unfolds—a puzzle connecting Earth, ICT, and the social world—reflecting their position at the intersection of this complex reality."

Narration: "As their exploration continues, the group taps into the strength of their diverse perspectives. Each friend contributes their knowledge of ICT, enriching the group's understanding of the unfamiliar surroundings."

Panel 3: Orange and the three friends still stand huddled together, surrounded by darkness, their glowing fingers illuminating their bodies and faces. They look determined and curious to unravel the mysteries of this new realm. Orange says, "Now that we know where we are, we need to figure out what is inside this black box of ICT to chart our path out."

Panel 4: In the darkness, Friend 1 stands alone with a single violet glowing finger raised, ready to illuminate the mysteries within the digital void. Their confident stance conveys a sense of expertise. With determination in their voice, they declare, "I've studied some coding. Let me explain how digitization works and how information is organized."

Panel 5: Friend 1 continues to talk about the concept of digitization, surrounded by the hovering numbers 0 and 1, symbolizing the binary language and logic of ICT. They explain, "Digital technology or ICT operates on a logical and objective level. It reduces everything to 0s and 1s—a foundation for digital systems that operate on preset rules, like algorithms."

Panel 6: As the friends venture deeper into the digital realm, the 0s and 1s converge to form a large interface in front of them, resembling a shimmering tapestry of interconnected data. A narration at the panel's top tells us, "The surrounding darkness undergoes a transformation, and a vast interface materializes in front of them, a bridge between themselves and the expansive digital world."

Page 13 (3 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Panel 1: Friend 2 offers a different perspective, emphasizing that technology goes beyond mere numbers, encompassing human thoughts, expressions, emotions, and social systems. They assert, "Digitization, and therefore, ICT is not just numbers. It's made by humans—a reflection of human thought, expression, experiences, and our social systems!" As they contemplate these contrasting ideas, the surroundings brighten, and the 0s and 1s converge within the interface, forming a massive, shiny mirror. The three friends and Orange stand in front of it, looking surprised with wide-open eyes.

Panel 2: Friend 3 shares how their community's languages and cultures are inadequately recognized or represented in the digital realm, leading to challenges and exclusion. They express, "Plus, we can feel ICT in everyday life. But it's not a reflection entirely! For me and my community, it's as if many parts of who we are remain invisible in this digital world." These frustrations and challenges manifest through the glitching interface, where Orange, Friend 1, and Friend 2 appear but not Friend 3, illustrating the interconnectedness of digital and real-life inequities.

Narration: "A revelation strikes: ICT tends to mirror real-world inequities. Suddenly, the friends are confronted with reflections of their deepest emotions, secrets, and desires, feeling surprise and shame as unfamiliar images expose hidden facets of themselves to each other. Have you ever considered what defines your personalized online experience, the hidden "self" collected through platforms, and more?"

Panel 3: Friend 1 stands before the luminous interface, one hand raised to their head. The interface reveals a digital projection where they are enveloped by a multitude of people expressing love and affection. The digital representation shows Friend 1 being carried by an adoring crowd, hearts filling the speech bubbles above them. However, in reality, Friend 1 appears embarrassed as their friends witness the vulnerability beneath the surface—an unspoken desire for constant love and validation.

Narration: "On the shiny surface, Friend 1 appear surrounded by an overwhelming crowd, engulfed in a never-ending celebration. Faces pressed close, people shower them with attention and affection, a scene of adoration and validation."

Page 14 (2 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Panel 1: Friend 2 is now standing in front of an interface with one hand raised to their chin. On the interface, the image shows them taking center stage on a towering skyscraper. They address not just a crowd but the vast world of internet users. They gesticulate dramatically, almost as if they are performing on a grand stage, while the crowd looks up to them with awe and admiration. In front of the interface, Friend 2 shows a hint of hesitation and embarrassment in their expression, indicating their fear of being perceived as self-centered now that others see their inner desire.

Narration: "Friend 2 takes center stage on the interface, standing on a towering skyscraper! Addressing a city full of people, giant screens broadcast their speech to every corner. Gesticulating dramatically, they perform on a grand stage, the crowd below in awe."

Panel 2: Friend 3 stands before the interface, arms crossed and eyes wide open. On the digital projection of the interface, Friend 3 is portrayed behind a fissure in the Earth, shouldering the weight of a world, beads of sweat reflecting the struggle. However, their expression is determined. Another manifestation of Friend 3 stands in front of the Earth's gash, observing Friend 1 and Friend 2 on the other side, appearing serene and content, oblivious to their presence. Despite their attempts, Friend 3's voice cannot be heard, and they cannot pass the threshold.

Narration: "On their back, Friend 3 carries a weight that is not their own. Despite their best efforts, they struggle to move through the world as others do. Their voice is unheard, and they watch with fierce determination as others move through a threshold they cannot pass."

Page 15 (4 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "Slightly shocked, the friends open a search engine on the interface, seeking answers. The results reveal that the mechanism of personalization not only shapes their images but also crafts unique realms of information tailored to their individual perspectives. Have you ever questioned how your perception is shaped by the selective images and information you see online?"

Panel 1: The friends, with expressions ranging from curiosity to bewilderment, gather around the interface. Orange, with a sense of determination, points towards a search bar on the interface. They decide to open a search engine as Orange declares, "Let's use what we have here to search for answers."

Panel 2: The digital realm responds with a plethora of floating screens showcasing diverse news articles, data charts, and information—an embodiment of the vastness of the digital world and the abundance of data at their fingertips. However, as the search results manifest around them, it becomes apparent that each friend is enveloped by personalized search outcomes meticulously tailored to reinforce their individual perspectives. Thought bubbles emerge above each friend. Friend 1 contemplates, "But isn't this information true? It aligns with what I've always believed." Friend 2 realizes, "I never realized I could be sabotaging my own activism by only seeing what I want to see." Friend 3 reflects, "I kind of expected this, but it doesn't change how I feel."

Panel 3: Orange dismisses the floating news articles around them with a wave of their arm, asserting, "We can't rely on this digitized world. While it may help us, it's shaped by the same contradictory system that defines our social reality on Earth. Let's keep moving in our quest to carve a new path."

Panel 4: The interface begins to glitch drastically, signifying the increased disruption of the status quo. The glitching intensifies, revealing the fractures in the digital world's dominant narrative, and finally, the interface breaks down.

Narration: "The interface begins to glitch intensely, breaking down before them. Ahead lies an opportunity for change, a disruption of the status quo."

Page 16 (6 Panels)

Panel 1: The group stands at the edge of where the interface once existed, in awe, wide-eyed as the digital dimension unfolds before them. The vast and mysterious digital realm sprawls like a breathtaking landscape, captivating their senses. From a bird's-eye perspective, the grandeur of the digital expanse below is highlighted in blue. The image

depicts a fusion of computer chips shaping into intricate buildings. A narration at the panel's top tells us, "The digital world dimension is waiting to be explored, and it's full of wonders. What opportunities or challenges within the digital sphere are you curious about?"

Panel 2: From a distance, Orange observes striking disproportions in the digital landscape. Various regions take shape in different forms and sizes, symbolizing the unequal internet penetration and access levels. Orange remarks, "This isn't a mere reflection of society. The digital world doesn't mirror; it forges a new, distorted reality. We need to reconsider what we've been taught. There's a lot we need to understand."

Panel 3: Orange and their friends venture into the digital sphere, walking side by side across a blue bridge into the distorted landscape. They each leave footsteps with every step they take. Orange declares, "Let's go. We have to explore to find our own path out."

Panel 4: A narration at the top reveals, "The group ventures into the diverse digital world to understand how it works. North America is filled with ads and a sensationalist consumer culture that can be hard to escape." It looks like the friends and Orange are venturing through a digital city. The depiction of the North American region zeroes in on the pervasive presence of advertisements and information flooding digital screens. While the atmosphere exudes vibrancy, the imagery strongly advocates consumerism and sensationalized content. Visual elements include notifications of news and sales signs, underscoring the sensationalist nature of this digital terrain. Shadowy figures loom in the background, tracking their every move.

Panel 5: In the South American region, the panel highlights the existence of locally relevant content, but it appears overshadowed by content from more dominant regions. The digital landscape is depicted as lively and colorful, yet there's a sense of limited representation of South American culture and perspectives. The friends and Orange walk through another digital city and leave footprints wherever they go as shadowy figures follow their every move. A narration at the top of the panel says, "South America's digital representation raises questions about its own cultural online visibility, with Global North platforms drowning out local ones."

Panel 6: The panel showcases a digital landscape with unique Chinese platforms and narratives in the Chinese region. Information flow is depicted as regulated and controlled, with specific pathways blocked or restricted. The presence of the state's influence on information is symbolized by watchful eyes looming over the digital landscape. The friends are hesitantly standing in front of what looks like a cold and vastly clean hallway. The narration at the top of the panel tells us, "China's digital landscape is tightly regulated and raises concerns about the state's tight grip on the distribution of information to the people."

Page 17 (5 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "Back on the ledge at the interface, exhausted, Orange and their friends reflect on the complexity of the digital world. It's not the simple utopia or dystopia they imagined but a multi-layered landscape full of both challenges and opportunities."

Panel 1: Exhausted and back on the ledge where the interface was, Orange and their friends engage in a reflective conversation. The panel focuses on their expressions and body language as they share their observations and thoughts about the digital world. Each character's face conveys their contemplation and realization. Orange remarks, "Wow, look at these split spheres! South America, limited local representation. China, its own separate digital world. North America, with overwhelming consumption and

sensationalism." Friend 1 expresses concern, "It's concerning how certain powerful actors can manipulate the information we see, shaping our knowledge." Friend 2 agrees, "Absolutely! Each region seems somewhat isolated in its own digital bubble, missing out on diverse ideas and perspectives." Friend 3 adds, "And the voices of underrecognized communities are getting drowned out. There's so much missing context. And we haven't even explored the entire ground yet."

Narration: "Amidst those diverse encounters, a pervasive theme emerges—constant tracking and surveillance. Their every move leaves digital footprints, and shadowy figures lurk in the background."

Panel 2: The group becomes acutely aware of their constant tracking and surveillance. The atmosphere is tense, filled with a sense of crisis, overwhelm, and exhaustion as Orange and their friends grapple with the unsettling realization. Orange's inner monologue echoes, "They're watching our every move! We can't escape this constant surveillance. How do we chart a new path if we are being followed?" Huddled together, their expressions reveal deep concern and weariness. Behind them, the blue background symbolizes the intrusive nature of surveillance. At the same time, in front of them, a violet cloud delivers an echoing message from Viola Ion: "To make the change you want to see, you must bring people together. Be brave, lean in, ask for help, and get organized. It'll be easier to weather."

Panel 3: The panel comes alive with waves of blue and violet blending into each other, adorned with 0s and 1s. Amidst this digital landscape, multiple computer windows pop up, and at the forefront, a large red sign with a prominent X grabs attention. A window in the front reads "SOS WE NEED HELP". A narration at the panel's top explains: "Urgency drives the friends to leverage the power of social media and networks. They rally and send out a distress signal, finding allies through the expansive digital dimension."

Panel 4: A horde of faceless users responds to the distress signal, leaving behind an array of footsteps. As they gather around Orange and their friends, who stand together, smiling, chaos intensifies in the digital world. Orange yearns for Viola's guidance, understanding they have been entrusted with the responsibility of charting their own path. Embracing the power within themselves and their collective journey, Orange stands tall, surrounded by allies, emanating empowerment and unity with a radiant glow. At the top, there is a violet cloud that echoes Viola Ion, saying, "Start where we are to get where we're going. We have all that we need—the movement is growing. The quest is always to question. We can overcome this oppression."

Panel 5: Orange takes charge and leads the group to the plug they had discovered at the start of their journey through the digital world. With Orange standing at the cable, surrounded by anonymous users, they all look at the gigantic plug in front of them. The users are dark silhouettes with some wearing hats and headphones. Orange points to the plug with one arm raised and suggests, "Let's try to pull this plug together!" A narration at the top of the panel says, "In a decisive moment, Orange leads the horde of people toward the gigantic plug they discovered earlier."

Page 18 (6 Panels, 1 Narration)

Panel 1: Orange and the group of dark silhouettes of users collaborate to initiate a temporary shutdown of the digital system. They are all pulling the cable of the plug with all their strength, trying to disconnect it from the power source. Still, violet and blue swirls around them indicate that the system is undergoing a transformation or disruption. At the top of the panel is a narration reads, "Together, with all their strength, they pull the plug and initiate a temporary system shutdown."

Panel 2: The digital world glitches and shakes as their collective force triggers a system malfunction. Artificial Intelligence is now undergoing a transformation into Ancestral Intelligence, breaking free from the binary constraints that once held it captive. The digital realm undergoes a radical shift as ancestral knowledge and wisdom replace biased algorithms and controlled narratives. Blue and violet swirls merge with a commanding black pull that reads "OVERRIDE: SYSTEM MALFUNCTION." A narration at the top of the panel declares, "A commanding voice emanates from the digital system: "SYSTEM MALFUNCTION: Override activated... Artificial Intelligence is being updated to Ancestral Intelligence." The words ancestral intelligence are colored in violet.

Narration: "The universe glitches more intensely than ever before, and the digital realm undergoes a radical shift. Ancestral intelligence takes the reins, strengthened by their combined voices and perspectives to disrupt the status quo, a light breaking the binary mold." The word glitches is colored blue, and the words future ancestors are colored violet in the narration.

Panel 3: Orange, standing alone in the middle of the panel, looks disoriented and finds themselves alone again. Surrounded by a swirling vortex of violet and various shapes, Orange experiences a strange sensation, as if being pulled away from this vivid reality. The surroundings start to blur and fade, transitioning back to a more monochromatic state, and the once-colorful digital landscape begins to dissolve.

Panel 4: Orange, still standing in the swirling vortex of violet, looks up disoriented with their eyes half closed. One hand is raised to their face as if shielding their eyes from sunlight. An echo of Viola Ion appears in a violet cloud, saying, "Awake, young one. Open your eyes. There are worlds within worlds you've yet to realize."

Panel 5: Orange wakes up in class, surrounded by their dazed and burnt-out classmates. Sitting at their desk, eyes slowly opening, Orange is bathed in a violet glow, wondering, "Was it all just a dream? Or did I really reshape the future?" One classmate lies on their desk looking bored, repeating Alfred's words from their lecture slowly, saying, "Developed countries have to assist the developing ones and bring them out of poverty..." A narration at the panel's top says, "Orange wakes up, back in class. The memory of their journey feels distant, but the sense of connection and potential remain."

Panel 6: Sitting in their seat, Orange's mind races with the profound experience of their dream. They notice a sign on their index finger, glowing faintly purple. Glancing at their classmates, they see Friends 1, 2, and 3 also carrying dazed expressions, Friend 1 sitting next to Orange, and Friend 2 and Friend 3 sitting behind them. As Orange notices that each of the friends' index fingers also still has a violet glow, Orange thinks, "Their fingers!! The digital realm isn't just a distant, separate place. It's shaped by all of us. We can break the binaries and design a more just future."

Page 19 (5 Panels, 1 Narration)

Panel 1: Orange stands up, addressing their classmates with newfound confidence and a determined expression. They turn around with one arm raised and the other on their desk for stability. They challenge the monotony of the lesson, the passive learning, and the lack of new experiences. Other classmates at another desk behind them look confused as Orange says, "This is nefarious nonsense! We're not learning or experiencing anything new. We have a choice. It doesn't have to be this way! Our current reality is not inevitable." In the background, the AI teacher Alfred's lesson continues, "...this is achieved through economic growth and embracing capitalism."

Panel 2: Orange now moves away from their desk, standing strong and tall, both arms off the desk, with one arm gesticulating. Behind them is AI teacher Alfred. Orange becomes a symbol of hope, wisdom, and inspiration. Encouraging their classmates just as Viola supported them, Orange announces, "We can make a difference together... by joining our strengths!"

Panel 3: Friends 1, 2, and 3 also raise their arms in fists, showing support for Orange. Friend 2 is now sitting on the desk. They all have excited expressions on their faces, and in unison, they shout, "Yeah, we can do this!" Above them is a violet cloud, an echo of Viola Ion that reads, "The pieces will fall into place in due time. Trust in the journey. I'll admit it's a climb. Each day you awake is a gift—a new chance. The world needs you now. Things won't change happenstance."

Narration: "United, Orange, and their friends leave the classroom in an act of resistance, leaving Alfred, the AI teacher, behind, unable to intervene in their unexpected choice."

Panel 4: Orange takes the lead, accompanied by their three friends and the rest of the classmates, leaving the classroom in a unified act of defiance against the imposed constraints of the system. As they stride out, Alfred, the pre-programmed machine, is left behind, unable to intervene. In a futile attempt, Alfred gestures, calling out, "Wait, come back! Resistance is not a part of this program!"

Panel 5: Walking side by side, Friend 1, Friend 2, and Friend 3 notice the subtle violet glow on their fingers, a silent reminder of the journey they shared. They exchange knowing looks, a silent understanding passing between them—realizing the potential they hold to shape the digital world and their own future. Friend 1 turns to the others, breaking the silence, "That was one wild trip, huh?" Friend 2 agrees, "Definitely! But it felt so real like we were actually reshaping the world." Friend 3 chimes in, "Let's do it again but for real this time."

Page 20 (3 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "In the library, Orange and their classmates gather, uniting as "The Architects of the Future." Taking the lead for now, Orange shares their newfound knowledge, presenting the map they drew of their digital positionality and recounting the path they took in the dream."

Panel 1: Inside the library, Orange and their classmates assemble in a tight circle on the floor, uniting as "The Architects of the Future." Around them are ceiling-high bookshelves. Excitement fills the air as they prepare for a new journey. At the center of their gathering, a vibrant banner proudly displays the group's name, "The Architects of the Future," symbolizing their shared mission. A palpable sense of enthusiasm radiates from the group, ready to embark on a journey of learning and growth together.

Panel 2: Orange, holding a button in their hand, enthusiastically imparts their newfound knowledge to the group. They delve into ancestral history, the Earth, and the social world, emphasizing the concept of digital positionality in our technology-driven era. With a press of the button, Orange projects an image, revealing the familiar Venn diagram of digital positionality drawn during their dream journey through the digital world – a map of their surroundings. Orange engages the group, saying, "Have you ever heard of digital positionality? Listen ..."

Panel 3: Engaged in a lively discussion, Friends 1, 2, and 3 actively share their personal insights and transformative stories. The panel captures the trio standing united, each contributing a unique perspective to the conversation. Their camaraderie fosters a sense

of connection, openness, and mutual understanding. Friend 1 reflects, "You know, I used to be indifferent to the struggles others faced. I come from a relatively privileged background, but now I realize the importance of using my privilege to support those who face injustice. I want to be an ally and advocate alongside them." Friend 2 adds, "I used to be so set in my ways as an activist. I believed my approach was the only way to bring about change. But through our journey and discussions, I've learned to embrace open-mindedness and find a collective approach." Friend 3 asserts, "I've spent a long time feeling oppressed and unheard, but I've had enough. Now, I feel like a force to reckon with. Our experiences and knowledge have empowered me to demand recognition and change. Together, we can make a difference."

Narration: "As each of the friends shares their individual learnings, a spark ignites within the larger group, and they contemplate their own well-being in relation to the others. At this moment of shared introspection, the group feels ready to embrace their individual power and create a brighter future collectively."

Page 21 (4 Panels, 3 Narrations)

Narration: "Drawing from their dreams and the guidance of Viola Ion, they draft a plan, recognizing that a meaningful life lies in balancing the challenges of their crisis-ridden world with the promising potential of technology."

Panel 1: Huddled together and seated in the library amidst books and gadgets, The Architects of the Future delve into collective learning and exploration. Their camaraderie is palpable as smiles and laughter fill the room, fostering a strong sense of unity and friendship. The shared quest for knowledge bonds them together, injecting hope and anticipation into their efforts to overcome burnout and navigate the challenges in their crisis-ridden world. Proudly hanging above, the banner "The Architects of the Future" symbolizes their unity and shared purpose. With determination in their eyes, they collectively express, "Let's make a plan!"

Panel 2: Seated in a circle on the library floor, The Architects of The Future realize that a fulfilling life lies in finding a balance between the challenges of their crises-ridden world and the promising potential of technology. They understand that technology can challenge old ways of thinking and historical patterns of crises. Taking the lead for now, Orange sits with one knee pulled to their chest and a raised fist, symbolizing guidance and determination, explaining, "In making this plan, we need to embrace and leverage the magic of technology while questioning the existing norms, practices, and perspectives..." The group members have determined expressions, showing their eagerness to create a positive change.

Narration: "The Architects carefully reflect on the benefits of the current system while considering what should be left behind in order to create space for new ideas and applications. What elements would you want to keep or discard for a more just digital future?"

Panel 3: In contemplation, they consider what aspects of the dominant narrative can be retained. Orange stands with a smile, attentively listening amid a gathering of "The Architects of the Future" as ideas flow freely. One classmate expresses, "I think we should keep emphasizing education but rethink how and what is taught in a modern world." Another classmate adds, "Agreed. We could prioritize digital positionality in our approach."

Panel 4: They also reflect on what needs to be discarded as they envision alternative futures. Friend 1 smiles while standing behind two other classmates engaged in

contemplation. One classmate asserts, "The mindset that ICT alone can solve everything is problematic." Another classmate says, "True. Our plan needs to focus on critical and reflexive thinking from various angles at the same time."

Narration: "Ready to confront challenges with a renewed sense of purpose, the Architects of the Future re-enter the hyper-tech world plagued by crises."

Page 22 (4 Panels, 1 Narration)

Panel 1: Brimming with determination, the Architects of the Future gather outside the school, ready to confront the challenges and lead others towards a brighter, alternative future. As they re-enter the hyper-technological world still marred by crises, depicted in the background, they hold their heads high, sporting smiles and a renewed sense of purpose. United in spirit, they declare, "We have the knowledge, the passion, and the will to build a sustainable future. Let's get started!"

Panel 2: Seated by the window on the familiar bus ride home, Orange gazes out at the hyper-technological, crises-ridden world passing by. In stark contrast, Orange appears wide awake, wearing a thoughtful expression with a glimmer of excitement in their eyes. They contemplate the day's journey and envision the bright future ahead, thinking, "This is just the beginning of something amazing."

Narration: "Returning home, Orange eagerly shares their adventures but is met with initial skepticism from their Guardian. Undeterred, Orange passionately shares the wisdom gained during their journey and ultimately finds support."

Panel 3: Back at home, Orange enthusiastically shares their experiences with their Guardian, who appears both intrigued and puzzled, scratching their head. The room is filled with family photos and technology, symbolizing their lives' blend of tradition and modernity. The Guardian asks, "What are you talking about? Glitches, ancestors, and technology? I don't understand how this helps you live well and be successful." Orange responds, "With the Architects of the Future, we can begin to create a world where we all can thrive. And I promise I'm doing my best to be a part of the change I need to see in this world. This isn't just for me. This is for all of us."

Panel 4: In a heartwarming moment, in the same room, the Guardian embraces Orange, expressing support and love, recognizing that Orange is destined to lead a meaningful and impactful life. The embrace symbolizes their shared love and support despite their different perspectives on the world. The guardian shares, "Wow, that sounds like quite an adventure. I may not fully grasp it all, but I'm proud of you and your friends for taking charge and making a difference!"

Page 23 (8 Panels, 2 Narrations)

Narration: "In their room, Orange unplugs their devices, deciding to take a temporary break from their personal connection to the digital world. Though they're aware that the vast digital realm continues outside their room, they fall asleep peacefully. What small changes could you implement in your life to achieve a similar sense of calm and agency?"

Panel 1: As the day draws to a close, Orange sits on the bed in their room with a window behind them, ready to embrace a new perspective. With determination in their eyes, they reach for the smart device next to their bed—the one that displayed the happy birthday sign—symbolizing a temporary disconnection and signaling their choice to take a break from the digital world.

Panel 2: Tucked into their bedsheets, Orange is peacefully sleeping with one arm behind their head, and next to them, the smart device stands unplugged on their bedside table.

Panel 3: The following day, Orange wakes up in bed to a serene silence in the room, both arms behind their head. They feel a sense of relief that the loop is finally broken, yet they realize that every day presents a new opportunity for growth and change. Viola Ion's voice echoes in a violet cloud, reminding them of the gift of each new day and the importance of taking action in shaping the world, "Each day you awake is a gift—a new chance. The world needs you now. Things won't change happenstance."

Narration: "As Orange awakens, silence fills the room. The time loop they woke up to is broken. Relief washes over them, realizing each day is a canvas for change. Equipped with newfound agency, Orange views their reality through the lens of digital positionality, aware of its interconnected dimensions in their surroundings."

Panel 4: Looking at their smart home device, Orange reflects on the interconnectedness of the Earth, the Social World, and the Digital World, realizing how they shape daily life interactions. With a pensive expression, Orange is enveloped by images symbolizing the dimensions, portraying human connection on Earth and binary code in the form of 0s and 1s. A violet cloud echoes Viola Ion's wisdom, "Explore new ways to see and be. The key is curiosity."

Panel 5: Orange stands tall with a determined expression, their posture radiating confidence and readiness, adorned metaphorically with a hero's cape. Orange now uses technology with a sense of self-determination, finding inspiration and purpose in tackling the obstacles and challenges ahead. In their mind, the thought resonates, "I am no longer a passive user, but a future ancestor and an architect of the future, shaping the digital landscape with agency."

Panel 6: The focus zooms in on Orange's hand, confidently plugging the smart devices back into the outlet next to their bed, initiating a system restart. Orange is prepared to reconnect and navigate the digital landscape with a newly awakened perspective. The smart device chimes in, "Rebooting. System restart initiated: Welcome back Orange!"

Panel 7: Feeling inspired and uplifted, Orange stands in their room and requests the smart device to play a song to accompany them as they prepare for the day. Orange confidently says, "Thank you. Device, play 'A Change Is Gonna Come' by the Fugees."

Panel 8: With joy in their heart, Orange hums along to the powerful lyrics as they brush their teeth, foam around their mouth. The room is filled with a sense of positivity and anticipation, a violet glow enveloping the surroundings.

Page 24 (1 Panel, 1 Narration)

Narration: "And so, dear reader, Orange's story continues—a tale of resilience, growth, and hope. The next steps are up to you, what will your next adventure be?"

Panel 1: Encompassing the entire page, Viola Ion addresses the reader directly, emanating her ancestral energy and a violet glow. With arms raised, they declare, "Although our story comes to a close, what's in store for us—nobody knows. Upon your quest of self-discovery, you'll shape our path toward a brighter destiny. A just and sustainable future can be, the future remains unwritten, you see. In your hands, you hold the key... to endless possibilities."

End of the comic.

Digital Positionality

Explore additional resources at www.digitalpositionality.com to enhance your self-determination using the concept, stay up-to-date, and join our growing community.

Feedback

For constructive feedback and inquiries, feel free to reach out to contact@digitalpositionality.com.

About us

Digital Positionality extends far beyond its role in this comic; it's a concept we explored in a research project, delving into the intricacies of the digital age. At its core, Digital Positionality captures a person's ever-changing position in the interconnected web of our planet's socio-technical network. Imagine it as a way to understand where you stand in three important dimensions: the physical world (Earth), the social world, and the digital world. So, what does this mean for you? Well, it significantly influences how you see and engage with the world around you. But it's also like having a unique compass for the three-dimensional space that shapes how you perceive and interact with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to improve your life—enhancing your chances and outcomes. Importantly, it's a tool for challenging and changing structures that have historically been unfair.

Digital Positionality is about understanding your positioning in the world—both offline and online—and using that understanding to make things better for yourself and others. It's like having a map that helps you navigate the digital landscape, ensuring you're empowered and contributing to a fairer, more equitable world.

We are a passionate team of students based at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin. Our drive stems from a shared belief in the importance of meaningfully understanding the diverse personal positions, perceptions, and power in the digital landscape to design a more sustainable and equitable future collaboratively. Our journey commenced as an X-Tutorial, a research initiative funded under the Excellence Strategy of the Federal Government and the Länder by the Berlin University Alliance. Embracing core principles of Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR), our approach centers on collaboration, listening to lived experiences, and transforming knowledge creation into a collective endeavor.

Starting in October 2022, we focused on exploring the theoretical foundations of digital positionality and reflecting on our personal experiences with ICT. In January 2023, we shifted to understanding the digital positionalities of individuals from diverse backgrounds in Berlin. Through various activities, including utilizing an electronic can phone, conducting a focus group discussion, and organizing creative workshops, we gained invaluable insights into how people perceive and interact with ICT. A remarkable outcome emerged from these discoveries and our own transformative journey—this comic, a powerful reflexivity tool meticulously crafted to cultivate self-awareness and critical thinking about one's digital positionality. It not only reflects the complexities and challenges of our modern lives back to us but also aims to empower readers to navigate them with intention and awareness to build alternative futures collectively from the grassroots up. We extend an invitation for you to join us on this transformative journey toward a more equitable digital future!

[Black and white image of a young female with light skin. She sports curly blonde hair slightly longer than shoulder length, dark eyebrows, and looks straight at the camera wearing a black long-sleeve shirt]

ANNA LENA MENNE

I am a Master's student in Global Studies at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, where I also worked as the tutor and research lead of digital positionality. My research explores digitization's historical and current social context, unveiling the complexity of digital transformation. I hold a Bachelor's in Media and Communications from Freie Universität Berlin and previously studied abroad in the UK, South Africa, and Thailand.

[Black and white image of a woman with dark skin, piercing brown eyes, and a friendly smile. Her hair is open and curly, disappearing behind her dark t-shirt. She leans onto something, crossing her arms, looking right at the camera]

MAKĒDA GERSHENSON

I am a co-researcher of digital positionality and a Master's candidate in the Futures Research program at Freie Universität. I hold Bachelor's degrees in Psychology and German Studies and a Master's in Education from Stanford University, as well as an Executive MBA from Quantic School of Technology. My work focuses on emotional intelligence and equity in education to create community-based interventions.

[Black and white image of a young female with light skin and long straight blonde hair that she wears half up and half down, her bangs framing her face as she looks over her left shoulder into the camera light smirk on her lips, wearing a dark puffer jacket]

ALISSA STEER

I am a co-researcher of digital positionality and a Master's student in Media and Political Communication at Freie Universität Berlin. My research focuses on critical theory and platforms. I hold a Bachelor's in Media Research from Technische Universität Dresden and currently work as a student assistant in the research group Politics of Digitalization at the Berlin Social Science Center.

[Black and white image of a woman with light skin and freckles, leaning her right cheek onto her hand supported by a table, looking right at the camera. She wears her hair in two creped ponytails and has bangs that fall in her face. She wears a checkered sweatshirt]

RADUNKEL

I am an illustrator and cartoonist for the comic on digital positionality, and I have a Bachelor's in communication design from the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen. The focus of my work is concentrated on human characters, humor, and different forms of togetherness. I love working for and with people who want to make the world funnier, more fair, collaborative, and better.

Acknowledgments

As we conclude this chapter of our journey, we are deeply grateful to everyone who played a role in bringing this comic to life.

- Thank you to our fellow students, whose shared dedication and camaraderie have been a source of energy and inspiration throughout both semesters.
- Appreciation goes to Tomma Sukiwho, Malte Bergmann, Lutz Reiter, and the Design Research Lab Berlin for generously providing the electronic can phones. Your contribution facilitated candid conversations, allowing people around the city to express their thoughts on ICT.
- We extend our gratitude to the participants in our focus group discussion. Your insights have invaluabley enriched our project, shaping its trajectory with your diverse perspectives.
- A warm thank you to Mosaik-Services Integrationsgesellschaft mbH for granting us access and the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations.
- Our appreciation also goes to the high school students who actively contributed to our workshops.
- Furthermore, we acknowledge the Berlin University Alliance for their funding, which was instrumental in realizing this project. Special acknowledgment to the Student Research Opportunities Programx (StuROPx), Dr. Julia Rueß, Dr. Nina Lorkowski, and Judith Bönisch for their support.
- Finally, we sincerely appreciate Dr. Bianca Herlo, Prof. Dr. Nadja-Christina Schneider, and Prof. Dr. Boike Rehbein for supporting the X-Tutorial. Your academic and institutional backing has transformed a theoretical vision into a tangible force for social change.

Your support has been instrumental in every step of this remarkable journey. Thank you for being an integral part of this transformative experience.