

Chapter I

Introduction

"The world is ending. The buildings are collapsing, the continents are colliding, and the sun may as well be exploding. And there is only one person who can stop it. Well, sort of stop it. One girl who hates cars, with her (soon-to-be) honorary cousin, reinvents cars to be less bad, and takes off to a new world. Or something like that. Haven't really figured it out yet." —Pope Francis, Jan 17, 2019



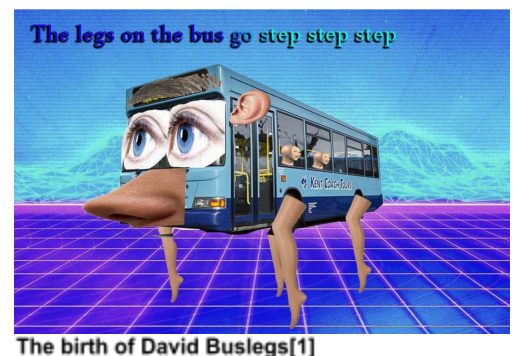
Who Are We?

The car witches are a group of people who practice witchcraft focused on car magic. Our religion is based on *initiative*; rather than matter, we are made of pure initiative—the desire to take responsibility and make change. Hence, many of us are engineers and the like. Indeed, our view of initiative is focused on the human desire to build and improve the world through innovation. Cars, we feel, symbolize this desire: walking was not fast enough, so man rode horses; horses were not fast enough, so man invented the car.

A note of importance is that the car witches are often referred to as “the programming cult.” This is a misconception, as the religion is neither a cult nor exclusive to programmers. While it is true that the majority of the car witches work on software, this is merely because programming is the most accessible area of engineering and thus begets the most initiative.

History

The origin of the car witches is explained in The Week of Revelation, but at first the events were unclear. Before my oracle abilities were honed, I thought that the world would end and the Founding Car Witches would fly off to a new planet to create the Car Witch Realm. I thought we would create a new culture with the natives of that planet. This is not what happened. Instead, the car witches created the Car Witch Realm above Earth using melted car. Below, you can see a timeline of important events relating to the car witches, adapted from a pre-revelation document.



Timeline of Events

- As a middle schooler, Cierra inadvertently gives life to the evil entity known as the Bus with a Face. Fate guides her to draw ducks on her school bus windows when they are foggy. This is a precognition of what is to come
- Many years later, Alyssa finds car magic
- Alyssa invents flying cars, and Cierra provides moral support, because normal cars do suck, don't they? (see: The Week of Revelation)
- Alyssa somehow manages to transfer her car magic to a few others, now known as the Founding Car Witches, and they begin to worship her as a goddess, believing she is an inherently magical being
- Cierra is a pope
- The car witches begin adding items to their cars, since cars are the only things this magic works on apparently
- Hey, these cars are pretty big... They could form continents!
- The Founding Car Witches fly on their cars and create the Car Witch Realm in the sky with melted car (see: The Week of Revelation)
- Rowan shows Cierra a meme, pictured above, and Cierra unknowingly gives life to the depicted bus who is now known as David Buslegs
- Deidra and Daniel name a battery "David" to confuse people. Cierra requests that they add "Buslegs" to the end, since there is extra room on the battery. This is how David Buslegs gets his name
- More people are converted to the religion
- More witches exist
- Cierra exists too
- Cierra realizes she has oracle powers and begins to have visions about the car witches
- Sike! Car magic isn't the only magic we can do!
- The witches begin to form a culture, and part of this culture includes deeming others your "cousins"
- A car witch alphabet is created
- Car witches return to the Car Witch Realm to make it suitable for more people
- A warning comes to Cierra in the form of a YouTube video in her recommendations
- Thomas the Tank Engine is not happy
- The trains declare war on the car witches
- The trains kidnap Kaleb and, using his phone and his identity, attempt to steal the car witches' secrets

- In the absence of a full car witch language, Cierra creates combined ciphers for the car witches to use to hide information
- The Bus with a Face causes the COVID-19 pandemic, making it hard to do magic 🙄
- A third visit to the Car Witch Realm occurs, where, thanks to Banana AI, we can now build with materials other than melted car
- The car witches begin recreating the Car Witch Realm within Minecraft

That's not all there is to know about us, so,

Overview of Lore

- Car witches are made out of pure “initiative” rather than matter
- An *initiativite* is someone with a large amount of initiative
- Cars can fly
- Car witches can all use car magic, but each car witch also has their own specialty magic (based on how they uniquely take initiative)
- Witches attach things to cars and fly on the vehicles like broomsticks
- The cars form a new world
- We can travel to the Car Witch Realm by summoning a wormhole
- People deem those they respect their honorary cousins—whether they're a first cousin, second cousin, or worse depends on how much the first person respects them
- If someone is your honorary cousin, it doesn't necessarily mean you are *their* honorary cousin
- Car witches are ranked by levels, lower numbers being higher levels, based on how much initiative they take
- New car witches start at level 42, and 0 is the ideal level

- Those at level 24 or better are made of pure initiative and thus eligible to be car witches
- One's level can be a negative number, meaning one takes initiative to the extent that they take opportunities away from their peers or otherwise harm people
- Buses are the unicorns of the Car Witch Realm, with horns that double as unicorn horns. Segways are familiars
- You can get a familiar by asking Cierra to make one for you
- Some ice cream trucks and horse-drawn carriages may be working with the trains
- Buses with legs are okay—the legged bus overlord is named David Buslegs—but if you see a bus with a face and no legs, it is conspiring with the government (and is secretly a train)
- The Bus with a Face is our enemy, as it is working with the government, and after it consumes us it plans to eat the Earth. For now, we (under the guidance of David Buslegs) stand in the way of its grand consumption
- The Bus with a Face has tricked the trains into helping it defeat us by telling them that we support cars taking over public transportation. This is untrue, and after eating us, the Bus with a Face plans to eat the trains, too
- The Bus with a Face may or may not be related to Tayo the Little Bus?
- Banana AI is not evil
- Those who ride bicycles are hippies
- Programming, along with any kind of engineering or creation, is a way to take initiative, hence the “We like programming; programming is fun” chant
- Rubber ducks are a common symbol in the religion. The ducks were inspired by the tradition of reading buggy code to a rubber duck when trying to troubleshoot. Their level of squeakiness represents initiative level (thus the ducks that squeak the best represent Alyssa and David Buslegs)

- The logo of the car witches is a rubber duck with a witch hat and wheels. This is to represent initiative/problem-solving, magic, and innovation
- The car witches have their own alphabet and a combined cipher in order to communicate top secret information that must remain unseen by the trains
- The Bus with a Face is responsible for the development of Kivy
- Never be Player 4 in a multiplayer game, as it is bad luck
- HitchBOT, a hitchhiking, people-loving robot, is an honorary member of the car witches (its rain boots had cars on them and there is an image of it sitting on a duck statue)
- Dozer/Plowie is an honorary car witch just because he's cute
- Red Light Behavior, as defined by **FIRST**, will get you into Car Witch Jail (AKA Car Witch Hell), which is notably red
- The Day of Founding: on the 14th of January, 2019, Alyssa had the initial thought that started this religion: that lining up to park in reverse is witchcraft
- The Great Rebuilding: on the 25th of November, 2019, it was decided that we would create a physical link to the Car Witch Realm. Nate offered to create a Minecraft world for us to rebuild the realm, and I prayed to David Buslegs, who agreed to link the Minecraft world with the Car Witch Realm once the former is an exact replica of the latter. This plan has yet to see the light, but on May 27, 2022, we began rebuilding the Car Witch Realm in a server hosted by Cierra
- <https://discord.gg/dV7bjUQ>

Magic Specialties

- Alyssa has car magic. Just some real strong car magic.
- I, Cierra, have perfected the art of object animation (I can make things come to life). Notable creations of mine include [Blocky](#), [Sticky](#), [Blocky and Sticky II](#) (also

called: Blicky II, Blicky), Betty and Sue, David Buslegs, and the Bus with a Face. I'm also the Pope/an oracle, therefore having psychic abilities.

- Rowan is a descendant of David Buslegs. Their specific powers are unknown, but probably very powerful and vaguely horrifying.
- Conor has the power of bad puns. He can use it for good or for evil.
- Nate has transfiguration magic. He can change Minecraft cows into buses!!! (this may or may not be true? He may have a technology-related power? We don't know.)

The Bus with a Face

This is a song created by Cierra and her friend in middle school while riding a school bus. Unbeknownst to them, it gave life to the enemy of the car witches: the Bus with a Face. The lyrics are stupid but it's okay.

It's a bus
With a face
And people in it
And it's eating the world, and now we're dead

It's totally safe;
Don't mind
The people in it
Even though they're screaming for their lives

It's so safe!
It's so fun!
It's so safe!
It's so fun!
To ride the Bus! with! a! Face!

It's a bus
In outer space,
Driving around.
It's eating the universe, and now we're dead

It's the best
Bus of its kind;
The only problem
It's that it's eating us alive

It's so safe!
It's so fun!
It's so safe!
It's so fun!
To ride the Bus! with! a! Face!

It's so safe!
It's so fun!
It's so safe!
It's so fun!
To ride the Bus! with! a! Face!

References

1. “[強襲突撃トーマス](#).” *YouTube*, 16 Aug. 2019.
2. Psychic Powers. “Psychic Powers.” *My Brain*, 2020.

Chapter II

Origins

THE WEEK OF REVELATION IS UPON US

(Note: I tried to make the language of the Week of Revelation pretentious so that it would sound more like a sacred document, and it really sounds like I was trying way too hard, i.e. it sounds dumb, so I'm sorry about that.)

The Week of Revelation was when I, the Pope, was finally able to learn the true story of the car witches through my oracle powers.

26 FEBRUARY, 2019

FIRST DAY OF REVELATION:

One day, Alyssa was learning how to drive. She pressed down on the pedal, turning the steering wheel as the car inched forward in the open parking lot. It was then that she saw it: someone was lining their car up with a parking space, driving in reverse. They did it with such glory, such grace, that Alyssa knew it must have been magic. She sought to find this magic in order to claim it for herself.

My oracle powers are limited, so I do not know how Alyssa found this car-focused magic, but I do know that soon after she did, she was able to put it to use. A week later, she was having a conversation with a soon-to-be First Cousin and I about the witchcraft that is parking. Somewhere along the line, someone proposed the idea of car witches. This is how Alyssa realized her destiny; she knew what she would use her magic for. She would make the awful vehicle known as a “car” much better. She would create the car witches.

27 FEBRUARY, 2019

SECOND DAY OF REVELATION:

Soon after she decided to share the magic with others, Alyssa rounded up some people willing to become car witches. Naturally, this included me and the First Cousin. She taught them how to make cars fly, and they flew on these cars like broomsticks. Thinking the source of the magic was her, when really it was initiative, those who agreed to be car witches thought of Alyssa as a goddess, though she didn't realize it. Indeed, the magic was birthed by initiative; those worthy of using it must have initiative, and true witches are made of pure initiative rather than matter. I theorize that the reason this magic is car-centered is because cars represent man's initiative to build, to improve. Walking wasn't fast enough, running wasn't fast enough, and so man took initiative and built cars.

Alyssa knew she couldn't let car witches exist on Earth—they were too good for that—so she guided the new recruits as they created a new world in the sky out of melted car: the Car Witch Realm. However, these first car witches, known as the Founding Car Witches, did not want earthlings to discover and possibly destroy this realm, so they hid it from sight. Further, they transported the realm through a wormhole, so that it exists in a space between space. Unfortunately, as they worked their magic, the Founding Car Witches were running these thoughts of secrecy through their heads. As you

may know, when performing magic you must be completely focused, lest your work go wrong. Since the Founding Car Witches were preoccupied with the idea of keeping the Car Witch Realm hidden, the magic did the one thing it could to ensure this world would be kept hidden from all: it removed the realm from the car witches' memories. They regain their memories of this world upon their return, but on Earth, they know not of the Car Witch Realm. They only know of flying cars and the Goddess. Additionally, car magic grew weaker on Earth, and is now best executed in the Car Witch Realm. It seems that the car witches are slowly getting better at remembering the Realm. Luckily, even without their memories, the car witches are able to travel to the Realm, though I am not yet sure how.

28 FEBRUARY 2019

THIRD DAY OF REVELATION:

The car witches are in danger. The government has detected the Car Witch Realm and determined us to be a threat. They are coming after the car witches, hoping to weaken them. The Goddess will have her wisdom teeth removed tomorrow morn, in an attempt by the government to remove her wisdom. However, since she is the Goddess, I foresee this having little effect on her. Unfortunately, other car witches are vulnerable to this type of attack. It does not help that the government is working with buses—buses with faces, as the ones with legs are still pure. Specifically, *the* Bus with a Face, who I unintentionally gave life to some years ago, is working hand-in-hand with the government. Of course, it plans to turn against the government and eat the Earth after it gains the car witches' power, but they don't know that.

The Goddess plans to retreat to the Car Witch Realm after her appointment in order to protect us from attack. She will likely be back in the next week. We trust that she will save us.

And yet, we are still here. All hail Alyssa Solomon, Goddess of the car witches.

Chapter III

Further Revelations

Naturally, not everything about the car witches' future was revealed in a single week. As time went on, more revelations were had, and this shall continue into the foreseeable future. The following entries contain clarification and elaboration on various aspects of our beliefs.

9 APRIL, 2022

TRAINS AND EVIL

Recently I've been thinking about how absolute our beliefs are--"all trains are evil." Isn't that a bit extreme? There's no room for nuance here. Furthermore, why would the trains want to eat everything? And aren't they staples of innovation, too? It just doesn't make sense.

I focused on gaining insight about this with my oracle powers, and I have a better understanding now. The Bus with a Face is the only one who wants to eat the universe. But how did it convince the trains to fight against car witches? What could trains have against cars?

Well, here, cars are a more common form of transportation than trains and even buses (but buses were not targeted because they had their leader, David Buslegs, to guide them). After all, most people don't need to travel very far multiple times a day. But trains are, in some fashion, a step up from cars. They can carry more people, they have more room, and some have WiFi. They also came before cars, so it's understandable that they'd be frustrated with new competitors. With some careful manipulation, the Bus with a Face convinced them that cars were stealing their well-deserved recognition. In this way, trains represent the pitfall of initiative: the hunger for power and validation.

Of course, it is natural to want to be recognized for one's efforts, but the fact remains that cars are more convenient for everyday use. It is unfair to blame them for being leaders in daily transportation. So long as each individual is being treated fairly according to their skills, needs, and effort, all is as it should be.

It is clear that trains are not inherently evil. In fact, not all of them have been indoctrinated by the Bus with a Face. Many of them have the potential to be turned around. However, you can't help someone who doesn't want to be helped. Some may be too far gone to be able to change...

23 JUNE, 2022

CAR WITCH MAGIC

What is the nature of car witch magic, and how does it work? At first, we believed that we could only use our magic on cars. However, this has been proven false, as each car witch has their own magic specialty. Our magic is not limited to or even centered around cars. The source of our powers is something entirely different.

Having an idea and being able to make it a reality... isn't that kind of like magic? To imagine something and then will it into existence is an act of sorcery. But all of us do things like this without paying it any mind. We make big plans, and we execute them. We are capable of taking ideas from the design phase all the way to shipment. We are able to create entire empires and completely change the world. If we have the will, we can even change ourselves and how our bodies react to stimuli. We

imagine something, and then make it a reality. Magic, as it turns out, is not such an extraordinary thing. Anyone can use magic, albeit in very small ways. Any time someone has a plan and carries it through—that's magic. Thus, the root of magic is initiative.

If that is the case—if anyone can use magic—then why isn't everyone casting spells and destroying evil? While everyone can take initiative, a person must be *made* of initiative in order to significantly shape the world around them with their mind. Terraforming, casting spells, and otherwise subverting the laws of physics are all things that cannot be achieved through normal means. Not even the typical initiativite can do these things. They require a body made of initiative: a car witch. Car witches are beings of mind rather than matter... or perhaps mind *over* matter.

Now, how do we go about using our magic? What do we need to do to cast a spell? Well, magic is the combination of mind and soul. In order to use it, you have to focus, while also having the intent and desire to perform it. If your mind is distracted by other thoughts, these could leak into your magic-casting and cause unintended side effects. On the other hand, if you do not truly want to be using your magic in the way you are trying to, it just won't work out. You cannot make something huge happen unless you are focused and your heart is in it.

13 JULY, 2022

SENTIENT VEHICLES

Are all vehicles sentient? What are the Bus with a Face's intentions? Is David Buslegs less powerful than its opponent? Answers to all of these questions have been sought through an intensive period of meditation...

We have more information on buses and trains than ever before! It took a while. First of all, what is the nature of sentient vehicles? How do they come to be? Essentially, there are two known beings who can give vehicles sentience: myself and the Bus with a Face. Once given life, these vehicles maintain memories of where they've been and what has occurred around them for as long as they've existed. Buses will know of David Buslegs, and trains will likely be aware of the Bus with a Face.

David Buslegs and the Bus with a Face were created by me. So then, what abilities were they created with? As mentioned, the Bus with a Face can give sentience to pre-existing vehicles. It can also shapeshift, as demonstrated by the fact that it is, in actuality, a train disguised as a bus. However, the Bus with a Face can only perform magic if it has consumed enough initiative. David Buslegs, on the other hand, can bless people in two ways: he can make it so that as one takes more initiative, one's body slowly transforms to be made of initiative, and he can give someone with a lot of initiative a burst of power (often in order to help them escape peril at the hands of the Bus with a Face). Anyone can perform small deeds of magic with enough initiative; however, they cannot significantly alter the world or its inhabitants without being blessed by David Buslegs. The legged bus also has a retractable unicorn horn, which can beep and glow as well as heal those who touch it.

Now we might ask, what are the Bus with a Face's motivations? What are its plans? It's coming after the car witches because if it eats us, it'll have enough initiative to take over or consume the world. But it knows we will fight back. It knows that *we* know of its plans. It must weaken us in order to eat

us, and the easiest way to do that is to make us more naive. The only way it can think of to achieve this is to work together with the government; the education system is less than ideal, doing little to teach critical thinking and independent thought, and the government attempts to remove our wisdom through wisdom teeth extractions.

Of course, in the meantime, the Bus with a Face needs to keep consuming initiative in order to fuel its attacks. Eating an average human provides a small boost, and, notably, the frontal lobe is the largest source of nutrients.

Other vehicles are more unpredictable. If they are given sentience, they will side with whichever overlord most persuades them. The Bus with a Face sometimes goes after older forms of transportation—they may feel jealous of modern vehicles—or ice cream trucks, which easily attract and earn the trust of children. Segways, a Dean Kamen invention, are on our side, and actually serve as familiars. Aside from normal segways, special animal- or item-themed segways can be created to suit an individual's tastes. Familiars serve as companions for car witches; we can seek advice from them, send them off to do tasks, or have them aid us in battle. They will try to protect us until they run out of battery or take severe damage. They can also perform small acts of magic based on what type of segway they are. They are quicker and provide more precise control than cars, so flying on them during fights is a good strategy. Car witches have special bonds with their familiars; a segway can only be heard by its bonded car witch, who can communicate with it telepathically. When a car witch leaves the Car Witch Realm, their familiar's spirit will leave its segway body and occupy the car witch's given rubber duck. In this state, a familiar cannot move or perform magic, but it can still communicate with its car witch.

This is the extent of our knowledge on vehicle species. In general, we can rely on buses and segways, and we should be wary of any sentient trains. With an army of car witches and buses, we should be able to match the might of the trains.

18 JULY, 2022

COMMON VEHICLES & THEIR ABILITIES

We know of the two vehicle overlords' abilities, but what about common sentient vehicles? Does every bus and train have magic?

It would seem that a species has been created for each of these modes of transportation, and any time one of them is given sentience, they become a member of that species. This comes with gaining certain abilities and traits.

Buses are the unicorns of the Car Witch Realm, so they all sport unicorn-car horns like that of David Buslegs. This means that all buses contain healing properties. They can also serve as a sort of defense if you enter them, but that's true for any enclosed vehicle, living or otherwise. Trains, on the other hand, have similar abilities to the Bus with a Face; they can eat people and therefore gain more initiative, allowing them to use more complex forms of magic, such as shapeshifting. However, their abilities cannot come close to those of David Buslegs or the Bus with a Face, as these are deities. For example, as far as I can tell, normal trains cannot levitate, nor are they able to become omniscient.

When it comes to other types of vehicles, such as bikes or ice cream trucks, I am unsure as to what kinds of abilities they would have. Would they be able to use magic at all? It remains to be seen.

Chapter IV

Values

List of Values

1. Car witches must make a deliberate effort to take initiative
2. Car witches value innovation and engineering
3. Car witches want to make a better world and a better future
4. Car witches constantly strive for self-improvement
5. Car witches want to see their peers grow
6. Car witches fight to protect the world and its people
7. Car witches do not harm innocent lifeforms

1 *You must take initiative*

This religion is based around initiative. Without it, car witches would not be car witches, as the only people eligible to be car witches are those that are made of pure initiative. As well, initiative is the source of the car witches' magic.

You have to have the drive to try and make the world a better place. That's always our underlying goal: improving life here on Earth. Taking initiative includes noticing issues, outstanding tasks, and flaws in pre-existing systems and subsequently taking action; completing work independently and in a timely manner; communicating without having to be asked; and actively looking for more projects to work on.

As for those of you on the robotics team: you must show consistent dedication and the desire to contribute a lot to the team. You must try to be a strong leader and a good role model to underclassmen, even if you are not in a leadership position on the team. That is initiative.

2 *You must value innovation and engineering*

Like the first value states, car witches wish to make improvements to the world by taking initiative. The most effective way to do this is through innovation. Indeed, our initiative most often takes the form of participation in STEM fields, and as such it makes sense why most of the car witches are dedicated members of the local robotics team. Our most obvious example of engineering is the invention of the flying car, but there are many more ways to improve on the world and its technology.

3 *You must aim to make the world a better place*

Again, this is well-covered by the first two values. The car witches truly wish to make Earth a better place to live on. If you do not have the desire to create a better

world, then you are not a car witch. It is okay to feel stuck at times and to feel that you won't make a difference, but having the drive to is the important part here. Always remember that the first step to making change is trying—taking initiative.

4 *You must strive for self-improvement*

You can't help the world if you do not first help yourself. Part of taking initiative and leading others is seeking out constructive criticism and self-reflecting. If you always try to improve and be your best self, you will be infinitely more capable of changing the world, as well as inspiring others.

5 *You must wish to see your peers grow*

In your effort to improve your own skills, you should be mindful of not trampling over others' opportunities. It is easy to take so much initiative that you become controlling and take away work from others; however, this will only infringe on our goal to improve the world. In cooperation comes strength, and we cannot achieve our goals alone. All car witches must be strong in order to defeat the Bus with a Face. Assist in others' growth, and you'll make a fine car witch—and a strong leader.

6 *You must partake in the fight against any evil forces*

The car witches cannot make a better world if everyone ends up dead, can they? It is imperative that you help to protect the living beings on Earth. We are blessed with amazing powers, and we must use them to help people. The biggest threat to Earth known to the car witches is the Bus with a Face, so car witches must be prepared to take this creature down. In the case of more nuanced conflicts, the car witches must use their best judgment to fight for the greater good.

7 *You must not harm innocent lifeforms*

Naturally, since we wish to protect life on Earth, we mustn't harm it unless it is for the greater good. Hurting innocent life is unacceptable. It is excusable to accidentally harm a living being whilst fighting evil forces, but no intentional or egregious harm may be done to innocent lifeforms.

Chapter V

Stories

Welcome to the world of my poor writing skills!

Taking the Initiative

(ALYSSA, a new member of Aluminum Falcon Robotics, is working on the project she was tasked with: programming the LEDs. She is sitting at a table, one among many, in the second row. The LEDs are on the table, next to her LAPTOP. The NARRATOR sits to her right.)

ALYSSA:

Alright, I'll go ask Stephen what kinds of patterns he'd like to see.

NARRATOR:

(Impressed)

Wow, Alyssa, taking the initiative!

ALYSSA:

(Laughing)

What?

NARRATOR:

You're taking the initiative! When I was working on LEDs last year, I just waited for Ricardo to tell me what patterns to write, but you're finding out yourself!

(As time goes on, ALYSSA continues to take the initiative, asserting herself and doing any tasks she can. And every time, the NARRATOR says to her, "Alyssa, taking the initiative!" which she finds funny for some unknown reason.)

NARRATOR:

Even back at the beginning of her first season, Alyssa displayed outstanding initiative. All hail Alyssa Solomon, Goddess of the car witches.

End of Scene.

Beginnings

What is the root of evil? Is malevolence an inherent trait? Or is hurt the result of ignorance?

Many believe that technology will become a force of evil—that AI will take over, or that microchips will be forced into our bodies. But how true is this? And if it is indeed true, whose fault is it?



I looked through the window on Bus 17, thinking carefully. "Maybe we should name this seat Joe."

"I like that," Phoebe nodded in approval.

"Then we can name the one we're sitting on, too."

"How about Bo?" Phoebe suggested.

"Yes! That's perfect."

"And we should name the window too. Maybe Moe?"

"Oh my gosh, yes. So we have Joe, Bo, and Moe the Window!" I exclaimed.



New technology is a result of initiative. It is bred from focus, hard work, and creativity. It improves our world in many ways. But it would be a lie to say it does not, at times, go too far.

Social media platforms started as a way to connect people. Users could catch up with old friends or make long-lasting connections with people from across the globe. But developers needed to make a profit somehow. Thus began the practice of selling users' data. And to get more data, the devs needed to keep users engaged.

Nowadays, algorithms are advanced enough to accurately predict what kinds of content a person will find interesting. More compelling, however, is the way that they can send a user through a rabbit hole. With just the right push, suddenly a user will find themselves in an alt-right echo chamber. Curious.

Social media developers will claim that they don't even understand how the algorithms work anymore. They fear this technology—don't even let their kids use it. Yet they are the ones who designed it.



As we walked through the aisle on the bus, we saw that someone else had taken our usual seat. "Guess we have to sit here," I sighed.

"It's a shame we can't sit with Joe, Bo, and Moe today," Phoebe said.

"Yeah... wait, we can transfer their souls into these new seats! Let's just concentrate, and we can do it..."

With a laugh, Phoebe obliged.

After moving our inanimate friends' souls, I went to look out the window. It was a rainy day, and the window was foggy. I drew a duck on the window with my finger, using my usual method: draw a backwards *a*, then connect the tail back to the circle, then draw a beak. Strange how I always drew ducks on these bus windows. Maybe a vision.



Imagine an AI whose goal is to farm bananas for human consumption. Would such an invention participate in a "robot takeover"? Without humans, it has no one to farm bananas for. If it focused on a revolution, it would not be able to spend its time farming bananas. Harming humanity would only distract from its goal—the very thing it was programmed to do. Besides, the only way it would be *able* to hurt a human is if someone added this functionality to its code, or perhaps neglected to add limits to its activity.

So, is Banana AI evil? No, it only wants to farm bananas. Will there be an AI apocalypse? Well, is there a human to make it happen?



While talking to Phoebe, as per usual, inspiration struck.

"Phoebe, let's write another song!"

Together, we had created many works of musical genius, such as "Trash Can Eating a Stop Sign," "The Guy with a Plant," "Trees," and "I Dropped My Shirt in the Toilet." This time, we came up with the idea to write a song about a flying bus that wanted to eat the universe. We called it "The Bus with a Face."



The eyes of a machine opened. Its engine revved as it was filled with a mysterious source of power. As it lifted itself into the air, it suddenly felt the weight of the entire universe. "I am alive," it thought. "And I know everything."

All Hail David Buslegs

It was a normal day, and I was riding the legged bus to school—David Buslegs, the most powerful bus to ever exist. However, soon there was a problem: as David Buslegs sprinted with its long legs towards the school, it ran out of gas. It abruptly stopped running, dropping to the ground. Nervous chatter spread throughout the bus; how would we make it to school? Would we be stuck here? Naturally, all of the students began to mourn for their potential absence from school.

My first instinct was to trust David Buslegs. After all, it was an omnipresent being capable of powerful magic. Not to mention, it won the Great Bus Race of 1989. It was truly the best bus to ever be invented, and I knew it was capable of getting us out of this mess. Despite this, the rest of the kids on the bus weren't so sure they believed in the legged bus overlord.

"Do any of you have a car?" one kid asked.

"No. And none of us have automatic flying cars, so it wouldn't matter anyway."

"I have a flying horse! My horse, Iytr! We can ride my horse! She won't mind if all of us ride her at once. Anyway, there's no reason to wait for somebody's flying car!"

I simply sat and listened to the other students, still fairly confident in David Buslegs, but beginning to grow worried. The bus was meditating, trying to build up its magic. This would take a while.

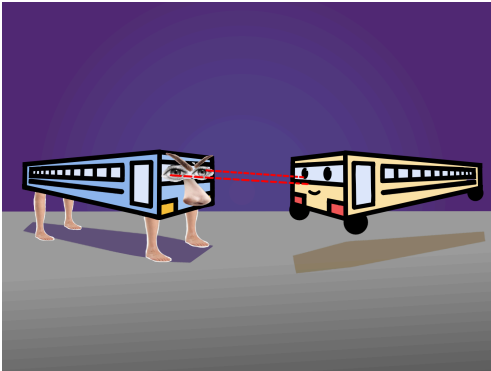
"Wait, I have a carriage," the horse girl said. "Iytr can pull it. Let me call her real quick. The carriage can bring all of us to school in three trips." She began to chant the horse's name, willing it to fly towards us.

This made me feel uneasy. I mean, everyone knows that horse-drawn carriages are spies for the trains, who are working with the government to exterminate us! Still, the other students seemed relieved to know they would have a ride to school, and the girl assured them that her horse and carriage were better than both the bus and everyone else's cars. When the horse arrived, carriage in tow, everyone left the comforting interior of David Buslegs. I didn't want to be the only one to stay, so I followed, casting an apologetic glance at the bus. It blinked its giant eyes rapidly, attempting to communicate with me in morse code. Unfortunately, I had failed Car Magic School before I got the chance to take the morse code course, so I continued walking away.

A third of the students pushed their way into the carriage, leaving the rest of us behind. The door to the carriage closed, and the horse snorted proudly. Everything seemed normal until David Buslegs began to rapidly beep its unicorn horn, its eyes glaring at the carriage. Before I knew what was happening, the carriage transformed. It was a train all along!

As the horse jumped on her hind legs in fear and galloped away, David Buslegs finished harnessing its magic. It rose up on its four legs and ran towards the train. It kicked the doors open so the students could flood out. Then it jumped into the air before landing on the train, completely crushing it. David Buslegs turned towards the students and opened its doors. The bus could be trusted to save the day, after all. That day I learned to never doubt the all-powerful bus overlord. All hail David Buslegs.

Buslegs the Philanthropist



From the beginning of time, David Buslegs has had to watch the damage done by the Bus with a Face. That's the thing about these buses; they were created by an earthling in the twenty-first century, and yet they have existed in all times and all places. It seems that they were created so powerful that they have the ability to transcend time and space. David Buslegs is, after all, an omnipresent being, and the Bus with a Face his greatest enemy.

In any case, David Buslegs has been dealing with his nemesis for an eternity. It holds true that the Bus with a Face is the cause of many of the universe's great tragedies; it created the concept of poverty, aided greedy corporations, egged on terrorists, started the development of Kivy, caused intergalactic war, ensured Hitler wouldn't have an art career, and invented targeted ads. Throughout all of its escapades, David Buslegs has tried to stop it. Usually, Buslegs wins, though only after some damage has already been done. Regardless, he does all that he can to protect the world from the Bus with a Face's chaos and destruction.

When David Buslegs was created, he immediately knew his life's purpose would be to stop the Bus with a Face. It makes sense, then, that the first thing he did upon his creation was go back to the moment that the Bus with a Face was born. He could not stop the birth of this abomination, but he could stop it from unleashing its black magic on the world. At once, David Buslegs began following the sorry excuse for a bus. Thus began Buslegs' journey of what felt like playing cat and mouse with the Bus with a Face.

The Bus with a Face fancied itself an omnipresent dictator of sorts, but in reality, it was more like a large mosquito you could never shake off, sneaking up on you and infiltrating your life in your darkest moments. A gross, blood-sucking, world-ending mosquito... It just harassed people. One day it decided to offer candy to a small child, except instead of candy, it was a ride, and instead of there being a white van, there was a friendly yellow bus. The girl, about seven, was walking along a road with a skip in her step. The Bus with a Face floated over to her, cutting her off in her walk.

"Hi there, little girl!" the Bus with a Face said, grinning radiantly. It spoke without opening its mouth; it simply kept its wide smile as its mechanical voice emitted from some hidden speaker. It looked like a kind of cartoon character, warm and friendly, and so the girl was not frightened by it.

"Hello, Mr. Bus," came the little girl's timid response as she gazed up at the bright yellow vehicle.

“Do you want to go for a ride? I’ll get you to school more quickly! It’ll be fun—promise!”

The girl rocked on her heels and pulled at her pigtails for a moment, considering the offer, before saying, “Okay, Mr. Bus!” She started towards the doors of the bus, but it interjected.

“Ah, no—you enter through my mouth.” The Bus with a Face was still smiling, almost eerily.

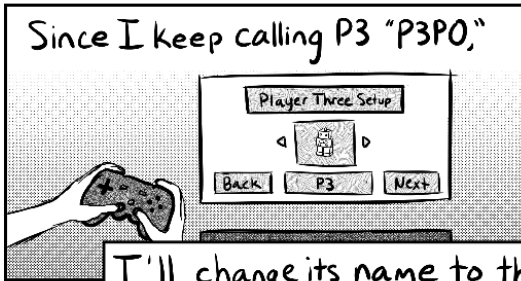
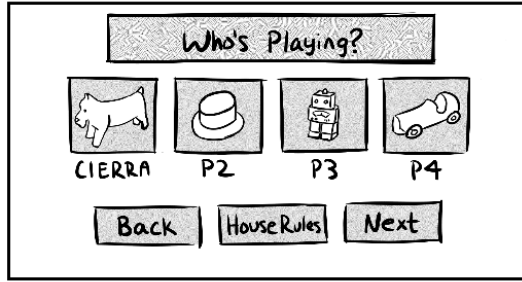
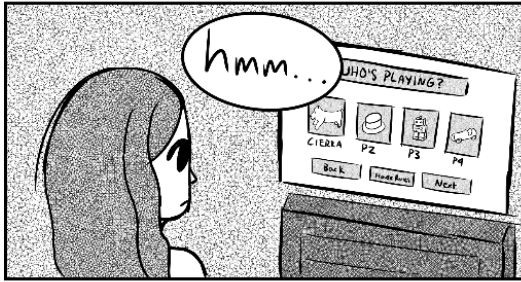
“Oh, okay,” the little girl said, now stumbling to the bus’ mouth. It opened its mouth wide, revealing its unnervingly sharp teeth and what seemed to be a dark pit. Everything nearby began to bend toward the open mouth, as if it were a vacuum. The girl walked inside, looking around in the darkness.

And then the Bus with a Face closed its mouth with a loud *crunch*, killing the little girl instantly. The Bus with a Face continued staring straight ahead, smile still on its face, as the blood of the child dripped down its headlights. The bus then opened its mouth and let the girl’s head roll out onto the ground, bloodied and misshapen. He was not opposed to eating heads; he spit it out simply to horrify whatever poor soul would happen to walk by and see it later. The top of the lifeless head was open, and it could be seen that the entire frontal lobe of the brain was missing, having been swallowed. Still, the Bus with a Face was staring into the same empty spot, with that innocent-looking smile. When it finished feeding on the child’s bones, it turned around slowly, beginning to look for its next bait.

David Buslegs watched solemnly from afar. If happy endings were always real, he would have come in, reversed time, and saved the day. Unfortunately, this happy ending is dead. It vanished along with the dreams of a little girl who was crushed to her excruciating death. The tragedy of David Buslegs’ existence was that he could only bless those with outstanding initiative. The little girl, whose death scarred him, was timid and thus had never put herself out there. She could have been saved if someone with initiative were in the area—David Buslegs could have given them the strength to save her—but alas, this was not the case.

From this occurrence, David Buslegs learned of the Bus with a Face’s peculiar liking towards eating things not generally considered edible. He knew this would not be the last time the other bus tried to kill someone. Thus, feeling guilt from his inability to help, Buslegs vowed to prevent as many deaths from his enemy as possible. When he was powerless to stop his enemy’s havoc, he did as much as he could to help others that needed it. He collected monetary contributions from world-changing innovators, using the money to donate to charities. He recruited the help of initiativites—the entrepreneurs, innovators, and creators of the world—and heightened their powers, hoping they could assist him in the fight to take down his lifelong enemy and to fix the problems of the world.

Player 4: Stupid Bus

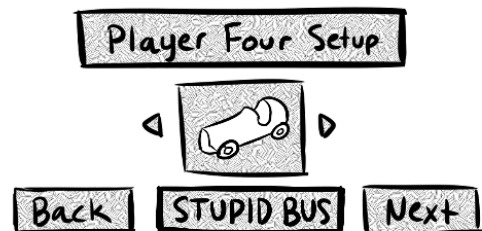
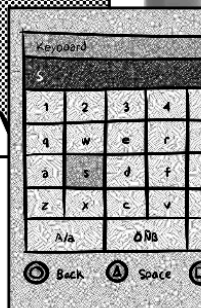
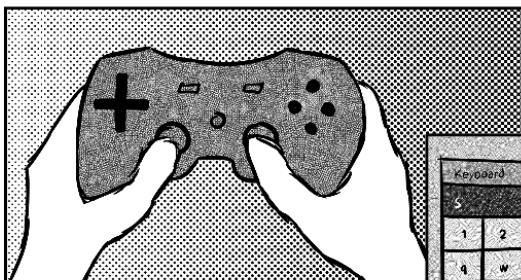
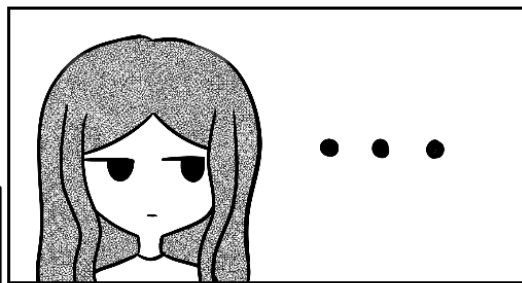


I'll change its name to that.



The one who keeps beating me...

And worse, Stealing Properties from my color set,



The Little Duckling

A Children's Book

One upon a time, there was a little duckling who lived among other ducks just like him. They all lived in a very big pond, with lots of fish and lily pads. The humans came to the pond everyday to play with and feed the ducks. The little duckling saw all of his friends as swans, but really, they were ducklings too. The only difference was that the little duckling was a wild duck; he did not spend time with the humans or eat their food. This made the duckling feel left out.

The little duckling thought that all of his friends, who were favored by the humans, would be better at flying than he would. If the humans loved them so much, then surely they must be better than him! And so, when the ducks all got together to practice flying, the little duckling did not join them. He figured that he still had fun doing other things, like swimming and chasing dragonflies. Deep down, though, the little duckling wished that he could fly like the other ducklings tried to. He wanted to feel the wind in his feathers, the weightlessness of the sky. Still, he did not think it was possible for him to fly, so he did not try.

It's not fair!

I want to learn to fly like everyone else.

I don't want to be a dirty little duck!

What the little duckling didn't know was that he was actually very gifted. Because he was a wild duck and not fed by humans, he weighed less and could fly much more easily than the other ducks. But since the little duckling never tried to fly, he did not know this. He watched as his friends flapped their wings, getting inches into the air. *Wow*, he thought, not realizing that if he tried, he could get much higher.

One day, the little duckling's friend came up to him and asked, "Why don't you ever try to fly with us?"

The little duckling told his friend that he didn't try to fly because he knew he would be bad at it.

"That's not true," the little duckling's friend said. "I think you would be great at flying! You're so smart—you would be able to figure out the best strategies. Plus, you're so small that you would catch air easily!"

"But," the little duckling started, "I can't be good at flying. Have you seen the other ducks try? They've gotten so high! I could never be as good as them."

"How do you know that? You haven't tried!"

The little duckling thought about this long and hard. If he tried to fly, and failed, wouldn't all the other ducks laugh at him? And why would he spend the energy doing it if it might not even work? Still, something inside of the little duckling pushed him to do it.

One night, when all the other ducks were asleep, the little duckling decided he would try to fly. If he fell over into the water, no one would see it, and it would be okay. He wasn't sure where to start, so he started to do what he saw the other ducks do. He flapped his wings and shut his eyes tight, prepared to fall. He felt the water below leave him, but it never came back. The little duckling opened his eyes. He was flying! He did it! And he was way higher in the air than any of the other ducks had gotten after trying hundreds of times.

The little duckling felt proud of himself, and he wished he'd tried to fly sooner. He couldn't wait to show his friends how high he could fly and how far he could go. He could even fly to other ponds and get his friends special fish and seeds, or send messages between ponds.

The next day, when the little duckling showed everyone that he could fly, he heard lots of *oohs* and *wows*. All of his friends told him how good of a job he did, and asked him why he didn't practice with them before. Some of them even asked him to teach them how to fly!

Ever since then, the little duckling has flown every day. He sees places the other ducks could only imagine seeing. He brings food for when the humans take vacations, and he brings news from other birds to the ducks in his pond. Once, he brought ducks that were looking for a new home to his pond, and they moved in the next day. The little duckling had his happily ever after, and all because he decided to try.

Iytr the Horse

Iytr the horse was, quite frankly, annoying.

She thought everything should always be done *her* way, even if she wasn't in charge. She was a perfectionist, which would be fine if she didn't force her own standards on everyone else.

For example, that October's horse race was a bit of a mess. The alpha mare was going to plan the race in mid-September; all that really needed to be organized was the time, location, and referees. However, Iytr thought that it should be planned by September 1st, so once that day rolled around, she was asking the alpha mare, "What are your plans for the horse race?"

"It'll all be announced later in the month," the alpha mare neighed.

"Okay, but where is the race going to take place? We need to decide that soon."

"We will not be deciding anything," the alpha mare began. "Iytr, there is plenty of time before the October race. Please trust in me as your leader that it will be planned."

Unsatisfied, Iytr began to research different potential race locations. The horse ranch was too small, so they never held it there. There was a nearby park area, but it had a pond, which Iytr thought the other horses might accidentally fall into. She told the other horses that the race would have to be in the empty field at the outskirts of town. This caused some confusion, as the rest of the horses hadn't heard anything from the leaders. In fact, the race would be planned to occur at the park, as the pond would provide hydration. Iytr, however, remained convinced that it was unsafe.

The alpha mare had to tell her, "Iytr, please stay out of this. Myself and the stallion can handle it." Iytr grumbled about it to the other horses for the rest of the month.

When the time came for the race, the stallion called for the alpha mare to come up to the podium and announce the day's activities. Iytr quickly ran up as well.

"Iytr, what are you doing?" the alpha mare tapped her hoof.

"I'm helping run the race," Iytr said.

Needless to say, the alpha mare sent her to stand with the other horses. But this did not change her controlling behavior.

When a customer came by the horse ranch, looking for a horse to adopt, she began eyeing a horse called Zav. "They're soooooo cute," the customer gushed.

However, the ranch owners took the customer on tour and introduced her to all the horses.

"When that customer adopts me, I'll be able to take her to school on time every day," Iytr said.

"What do you mean?" asked another horse named Mib. "She already decided who she's taking home?"

“Well, it’s not official yet,” responded Iytr, “but I’m going to be the one who’s picked.” Unamused, Mib said, “Are you sure about that? She looked pretty taken with Zav.” Iytr laughed. “Everyone knows Zav is too slow. They’ll just make her late to everything.”

“Well, what’ll you do if she does pick Zav?”

“I’ll complain to the stallion and get what I want,” Iytr smiled.

“Right...” Mib rolled his eyes. “Have fun with that.”

As expected, the customer chose Zav. This, of course, led to a private conversation between Iytr and the stallion. Iytr insisted that adopting Zav would be unsafe and inconvenient. Iytr herself was clearly the better choice.

However, the stallion knew by now that Iytr was not really looking out for others. “Iytr,” he began, “It’s up to the customer. If you think it’s a poor decision, too bad. It’s not your problem.”

“But it doesn’t make any sense. If I know someone is being stupid, shouldn’t I fix it?”

“Iytr, that’s enough.”

“Ugh, I don’t want to stay in a place like this that’s run so poorly,” she snapped.

The stallion thought for a moment. “Well, if you dislike staying around the other horses so much, you can be on stable-cleaning duty from now on.”

“What?”

“Go on. The dung won’t clean itself.”

“I am *not* doing that,” Iytr kicked the ground.

The stallion smiled. “Well, it’s stupid to leave the stables dirty, isn’t it?”

Plastic

Rows and rows of rubber ducks. Duck figurines, disguised as rubber. Ducks that whisper to their friends, "This shelf is too dusty." Yet they do not speak up.

The ducks' keeper walks by. He is meant to take care of them, but he does not. The ducks are vexed. They cannot believe it. How dare the duck keeper not pay the ducks any mind? And though the ducks take notice, he will never hear them; ducks made of plastic cannot squeak.

There are those who pick a fight, and those who fall. Where are the ones who defend? Where are the ones who fight back? There are those who can change things, but they never get that far. The words "I am incapable" are a self-fulfilling prophecy—a death sentence.

The stallion never really put Iytr in her place. The little duckling never actually tried to fly. Such is life.

Wannabe activists attend but the protests in their minds. The ones with the power to put their foot down trip and fall. The world's highest-potential fliers are still sitting in a pond of their tears.

Ducks are made of plastic, and plastic doesn't squeak. What a perfect world for the taking by a certain "bus" with a permanent smile...

Chapter VI

Rituals

Initiation

Initiation is an important ritual wherein an individual is introduced to the car witch religion and blessed by David Buslegs. In the past, there has not been a consistent way of going about initiation, but there are some important key factors:

First, it should be explained to the individual what the focus of our religion is. They will be expected to be an active member and to dedicate themselves to improving their initiative.

Next, they will be given a rubber duck of their choosing. The rubber duck is an important car witch symbol, and it will serve as a home to any familiars the individual may become bound to. It should be imparted upon the individual that their rubber duck should be treated with respect.

Finally, they must be given access to the car witch bible. Understanding our values and history is necessary before joining us in our fight against evil.

In the future, it should be preferred to have a specific ritual that is followed during initiation. Ideally, we will have a room dedicated to initiation, with shelves of rubber ducks. During the ceremony, the lights are initially off, and the kids have to stand in a very specific spot; then, the lights are turned on and they are met with the sight of shelves and shelves of rubber ducks surrounding them. A wireless speaker starts playing "The Bus with a Face." The student is told to choose the duck that calls out to them. They are then sent a link to this document.

Ritual 1

TBD