

# KAÍVEN | Chapter One

noumena ashitaka hundimägi-mei

*Draft (v0.1) - January 9, 2026*

*sa*  
*helna varë*  
*helna nü*  
*sa elën*  
*jää kai*  
*silna na*

## PAGE 1 - THE MOUTH OF NIGHT

### PANEL 1 (WIDE / EXTERIOR)

Wrecked ship against a gargantuan black hole. Accretion disk like a burning crown. Light warps.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): We have run so long that even the stars feel tired of watching us.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): The ship is ruined, its bones cracked, its skin torn, and there is no kindly harbor in the void.*

### PANEL 2 (INTERIOR / BRIDGE WIDE)

Crew slumped. Consoles flicker. ZÁALI stands, rigid, hands braced as if holding reality steady.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): They trusted me. That is the sharpest thing in the room.*

### PANEL 3 (DETAILS / SYSTEM READOUT)

Cracked screen: HULL 12%. Failing seals.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): How many times can a man make the same choice and still call it bravery?*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): How many times can he lead others into fire and name it **the only way**?*

(( *caminos largos sin un final* ))

### PANEL 4 (CLOSE-UP / CREW FACES)

Silent tears. Tremors. Someone's hand hovering near an eject lever.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): I wanted a simpler life once.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): A house. A door that locks. Mornings that mean bread and not battle.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): But I stepped onto this road, again, and again, and each time I told myself it was the last.*

### PANEL 5 (LOW ANGLE / ZÁALI + WINDOW)

Black hole swollen larger.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): Why do I keep doing this?*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): Why does it feel... like repeating?*

### PANEL 6 (FULL-BLEED / EXTERIOR)

Ship tiny, being drawn in. Stars smear.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): As if some unseen hand has set the pieces upon the board before I ever touch them.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): As if the world has grooves worn into it, and my feet find them no matter how I fight.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): If this ends the way it always ends... then what, in the name of all the lights that ever were, was I meant to learn?*

## PAGE 2 - A SMALL GRAVE

### PANEL 1 (WIDE / PARK)

A modest park. Trees. A bench. Summer light. At the edge, a patch of dirt turned over.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): Pain is not a stranger. It is the oldest crewman aboard every ship I have ever flown.*

### PANEL 2 (MEDIUM / YOUNG ZÁALI)

ZÁALI, 6 years old, kneeling with a small shovel. Dirt on his hands, cheeks wet. Beside him: a small bundle wrapped in cloth, his dog.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): It sits quietly in the corner while we laugh, and it does not laugh with us.*

(( *sabor a silencio en cada rincón, grita el vacío de mi corazón* ))

### PANEL 3 (DETAIL)

His tiny fingers press earth down gently, like tucking someone in.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): It watches us eat, and sleep, and make promises we do not understand the cost of.*

### PANEL 4 (MEDIUM / THE OLD MAN ENTERS)

A mysterious old man stands a few steps away, simple clothes, unassuming, but somehow too still for the world. No sinister vibe. Just weight.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): Then, when the alarms begin, it rises as if it has been waiting for its proper work.*

### PANEL 5 (TWO-SHOT / OLD MAN + CHILD)

The old man crouches to ZÁALI's level. Gentle distance.

OLD MAN

What was his name?

## PANEL 6 (CLOSE-UP / YOUNG ZÁALI)

ZÁALI looks up, watery eyes, throat tight, can't answer. His mouth opens but no sound comes.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): They tell you existence is a gift.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): If so, it is a gift wrapped in thorns, and the blood on the ribbon is usually yours.*

## PANEL 7 (MEDIUM / OLD MAN, SOFT)

The old man's expression is calm, tender, certain in a way that's almost frightening because it's kind.

### OLD MAN

I understand your pain.  
You will see them again... your dogs.  
Just not in the way you probably expect.  
You are too young to understand... but time will  
show you.

## PAGE 3 - BACK TO THE SHIP

### PANEL 1 (INTERIOR / BRIDGE)

A jolt. Sparks. Crew brace.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): I have crossed a hundred skies. I have tasted a hundred triumphs.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): None of them were clean.*

### PANEL 2 (EXTERIOR / SHIP)

Ship tumbling slightly as gravity pulls.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): Victory is only a word we use when grief has not yet caught up.*

### PANEL 3 (MONTAGE)

Overlay images like memory shards: a helmet spinning in space, a hand slipping away, a body wrapped and sent outward.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): I remember faces the way sailors remember storms.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): A smile that went out.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): A hand reaching for mine... only emptiness.*

### PANEL 4 (CLOSE-UP / ZÁALI'S HANDS)

His hands tremble, then steady.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): I have buried companions in places that do not allow graves.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): I have left them drifting where no planet will ever claim them.*

#### **PANEL 5 (CLOSE-UP / CREW MEMBER)**

A crew member, awake now, staring at ZÁALI as if asking without words: why again?

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): It is a strange thing, to be called **leader**, when all your path is marked by those who followed you and did not return.*

#### **PANEL 6 (WINDOW / BLACK HOLE)**

The black hole now dominates.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): Some nights I wonder if I am a collector of endings.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): And the worst of it is not that I lost them.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): The worst of it is that I can still feel them... aching where they used to be.*

### **PAGE 4 - THE OLD MAN LEAVES**

#### **PANEL 1 (MEDIUM / OLD MAN STANDS)**

The old man rises with effort that looks performed like he's pretending to be old.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): There are losses you can accept: the swift, clean kind, where the universe is merely cruel.*

#### **PANEL 2 (DETAIL / YOUNG ZÁALI'S FACE)**

Z'AALI's grief shifts into confusion, hope intruding like an unfamiliar guest.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): And then there are the other losses... the ones that return.*

#### **PANEL 3 (WIDE / THE PARK PATH)**

The old man begins walking away along the path. Sunlight behind him.

YOUNG ZÁALI

...I'll see him again?

#### **PANEL 4 (OVER-SHOULDER / OLD MAN, NOT TURNING AROUND)**

The old man does not look back... like looking back would break a rule.

OLD MAN

Yes

## PANEL 5 (SURREAL HINT / CHILD POV)

For a moment, the world feels subtly wrong: a bird freezes for a fraction, leaves hang too still, the old man's outline **double-exposes** as if time stuttered.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): They do not return as they were.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): A familiar laugh in a stranger's mouth.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): A gaze that once knew you, now sliding past as if you are smoke.*

## PANEL 6 (MEDIUM / YOUNG ZÁALI ALONE)

ZÁALI kneels by the small grave, staring after the old man. The park feels larger now, as if it contains an infinite distance.

# PAGE 5 - THE SEARCH BEGINS

## PANEL 1 (MONTAGE / SPACEPORT CROWD)

Adult ZÁALI in a crowd on a distant world. He spots someone with a familiar posture.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): I have found them again. Sometimes years later. Sometimes worlds away.*

## PANEL 2 (MONTAGE / NEAR-MISS DOOR)

A door closes. ZÁALI arrives late.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): ...and I have missed them by a single choice, a single hour, a single wrong door.*

## PANEL 3 (MONTAGE / DIFFERENT LIFE)

A person laughs, same laugh as someone we saw die earlier, but in a different face.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): Do you know what it is to search for a person across the breadth of the cosmos, armed only with grief and intuition?*

## PANEL 4 (MONTAGE / SILHOUETTE)

A silhouette in rain and neon. ZÁALI's heart in his throat. It's not them.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): To see a silhouette in a crowd and feel your heart lunge like a dog straining at the leash only to be disappointed, again.*

## PANEL 5 (MONTAGE / THE NAME FALLS)

ZÁALI speaks a name (balloon cropped). The stranger smiles politely. No recognition.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): To speak a name you are not sure you are allowed to speak, and watch it fall to the floor between you like a dead thing.*

## PANEL 6 (BACK TO PRESENT / BRIDGE)

Adult ZÁALI on the bridge again, eyes hollowed by years.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): They do not remember dying for me.*

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): And I... I remember too much.*

(( en la sombra se esconden verdades... te busco en el aire en mil paisajes ))

## PAGE 6 - THE ARCHITECT

### PANEL 1 (SHIP SHUDDERS)

Reality leans.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): What breaks him is the pattern.*

### PANEL 2 (VISUAL PATTERN MONTAGE)

Repeated imagery across time: the same reaching hand, the same farewell, the same red warning light, like the cosmos has a template.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): The sense that suffering is not an accident, but a design.*

### PANEL 3 (BLACK HOLE AS EYE)

Frame the hole like an eye. Let the lensing look like a face for a heartbeat.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): I have stared into the dark long enough to suspect it stares back.*

### PANEL 4 (THE “SEAM”)

A nav-map glitches into impossible geometry. A faint grid behind the stars only for a moment.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): There are days I feel the seams of the world beneath my fingertips.*

### PANEL 5 (ZÁALI'S DECISION)

He stands straighter. Crew sense it.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): And I know... that there will be another battle after this one.*

### PANEL 6 (HINT OF A GREATER WAR)

A symbolic panel: nine distant points of light arranged not like stars but like chosen placement. Or nine “shadows” implied in the lensing.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): against the hands that set the rules of the game and call it existence.*

(( dime ¿dónde va lo que no se dice? ¿se pierde, se queda o cicatriza? ))

## PAGE 7 - THE VOW

### PANEL 1 (CREW QUIET)

A hand on a shoulder. Exhaustion as intimacy.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): If I were wise, I would let the dark take us gently.*

### PANEL 2 (TEMPTATION OF REST)

Peaceful composition poisoned by the black hole's edge.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): But I cannot.*

### PANEL 3 (FLASHBACK MICRO-BEAT)

Tiny insert panel: young ZÁALI's wet eyes. The old man's voice echoes.

OLD MAN

You will see them again...

### PANEL 4 (ZÁALI RISES)

He becomes something sharper.

*CAPTION (ZÁALI): And if suffering is the law, then I will become its heresy.*

### PANEL 5 (FULL-BLEED / DOOR IN THE DARK)

In the blackness: a hairline seam, like a doorframe made of nothing.

*Lo var delna.*

*Lo var na kaelle nor.*

*Eth etheth silna varën, na eth kuul.*

*Ja na tal kaelna...*

*(( cada sombra guarda un secreto pero mi sombra ya no tiene miedo ))*