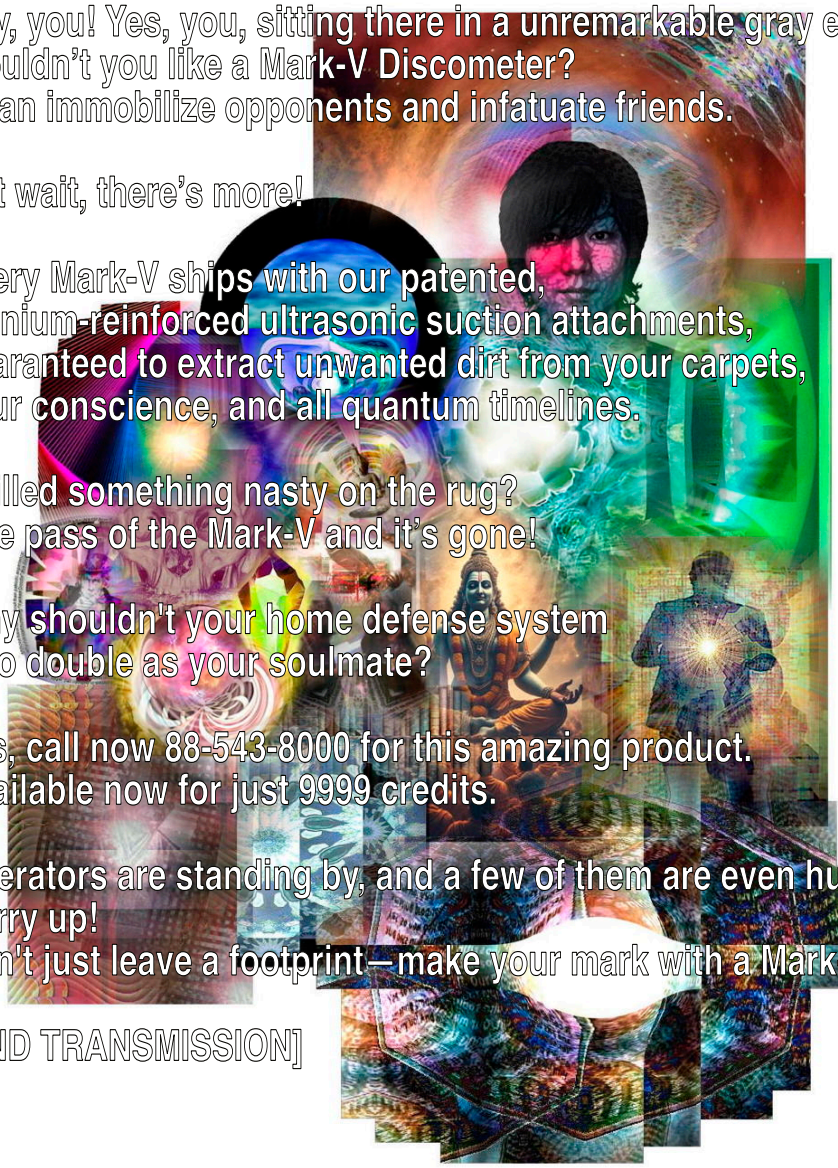
COMPUBLURB:
Tea Leaves and Tacky Ads



Nadya away from the screen. "*Compu-blurb?*" she asked, rolling the phrase around like a coin that had come from the wrong century. "What the heck is that?"

Bill rubbed the back of his neck and stared at the ceiling, hunting for an explanation that would made sense to her. "*Well,*" he said, sketching invisible shapes in the air, "*Isn't it a kind of commercial metadata used by many businesses?*"

Nadya scoffed and rolled her eyes with theatrical exhaustion. "*Meta-data, eta-data, beta-data...*" Nadya sang playfully. "*It* all sounds like voodoo to me."

A quiet smirk tugged at Bill's mouth as he nodded in amused agreement. "*Yeah,*" he chimed, tipping back in his chair until it creaked, "*in some ways it's like reading tea leaves. You collect a few scraps of data and try to guess what the universe is up to.*"

From across the table, Gus let out a sharp snicker, shaking his head at the pair of them. "*The only trend I see is a drift towards nonsense*" he said.

Nadya raised her wineglass. Its surface shimmered with tiny, scale-shaped reflections. "*No doubt!*"

- T NEWFIELDS

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NOTE: *This piece was partially generated with AI tools for styling and ideation; human editing was then applied.*