

“Things were going so well, until the extinction...”

by Jack Phinney

Style: A whimsical/cartoonish depiction of Neanderthals, woolly mammoths, early humans, and dogs

Layout: 8 quarter-page mini-comic, with a cover. Each page is one full panel.

Front Cover/

Close-up profile shot of a Neanderthal and a wolfish dog staring each other down, each visible from the shoulders up. The Neanderthal is on the left, and the dog on the right.

Title Caption: *Things were going so well, until the extinction...*

Back Cover/

A woolly mammoth stands on its hind legs, pointing at us with both front feet in a Fonzy-esque “eyy!” pose and a cheesy/cool smile.

Page 1/

Close-up of a Neanderthal flashing a downwards piece sign in a ridiculous tough-guy 'street' pose.

Caption top: *Not all that long ago, and for a very long time before that, we shared the planet with another kind of human...*

Neanderthal: *Whattup*

Caption bottom: *Neanderthals*

Page 2/

A hairy, muscular Neanderthal stands, pondering, holding an authoritative staff made of giant animal bone. Behind him a smaller Neanderthal 'secretary' marks a cave wall with a charred stick, filling in among drawings of animals and strange symbols.

Caption: *Furry, strong, & smart...*

Secretary Neanderthal: *Our projections were correct – the mammoths **are** migrating early.*

Leader Neanderthal: *Excellent...*

Page 3/

In the foreground two shivering 'regular humans' wearing thick furs stand on high ground, watching a group of Neanderthals with spears in the background as they surround a mammoth. Snowflakes are falling.

Caption: *...they were built to rule over a cold world.*

Label pointing to 'regular humans': *Our ancestors*

Label pointing to Neanderthals: *Neanderthals*

Human: *That looks very difficult, and cold. Let's go home.*

Page 4/

Two mammoths run from a handful of humans who chase them with spears. A couple of wolfish dogs run alongside the humans, hunting with them.

Caption: *But they disappeared a few millenia before Earth warmed up, and we took over.*

Mammoth 1: *They look taller to you?*

Mammoth 2: *Somethin's different.*

Label pointing to regular humans: *Our ancestors, sans competition*

Page 5/

Close up focusing on the dogs running with the humans. The humans are only visible up to their mid-torsos. The dogs have pulled out ahead of the group a bit, and charge determinedly forward.

Caption: *why?*

Page 6/

A Neanderthal lands a crippling punch in the gut of a noticeably taller, thinner 'regular human'. Another human is trying to run away, but he's on an ice sheet and his feet are slipping all over the place, whereas the Neanderthal's feet are firmly planted.

Caption: *How could we beat them with the ice age still in full swing?*

Neanderthal: *Bring it, skinnies. I am a blizzard of pain!*

Label pointing to ice sheet: *Home court advantage*

Label pointing to 'regular' humans: *Our ancestors*

Page 7/

Two human hunters stand talking, looking at three wolfish dogs who sit obediently, watching them as if for further instruction.

Caption: *What was our secret? Superior social organization? Better spears?*

Human hunter 1: *They hunt **with** us. Like, on our team.*

Human hunter 2: *Oh, this is big.*

Page 8/

A snooty dachshund sits on the cover of a magazine called "Paleoanthropology Today". It stares right at us, very matter-of-factly and self-righteous.

Caption: *Human ingenuity of some kind, to be sure.*

Dachshund: *Yeah, you're welcome*