

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Thirty thousand years ago, near the end of the existence of the Neanderthals, a world of incredible fauna, flora, and landscape flourished in North America. The last Ice Age was approaching, threatening the way they had lived since migrating from Asia.

It can be debated whether or not Neanderthals ever made it to the American continents, whether or not they were able to throw spears to bring down game, even whether or not they could speak. But, since their brains are known to have been larger than ours, it's possible some of their senses were keener also. Maybe they even had room for telepathy.

Because fiction can foreshorten history, the Neanderthals might even have existed side by side with Cro-Magnons, referred to here as Tall Ones, or even the little Hobbit people discovered in Indonesia, named *Homo floresiensis*, and called Mikino here. I have taken out an artistic license to move them all to North America.