

PROLOGUE

I see things so clearly now. I know where you came from. I know where you will go. Outside of your world, knowing is as hollow as ignorance, but perhaps my knowledge may be useful to you... Those with still something left to live for.

But what makes one alive? I am certainly here. I can see you. I know who you are. Your thoughts cannot escape me. I can move across time and space in ways in which your fleshy vessel cannot, but yet I still think you would not consider me to be alive... Though I assure you, I am much more real than you.

I am no longer like you. I am not subject to the cosmic laws that bind Zeus, Hera, Ananke, or Dione to Nibirou. Poseidon does not steer my ship, and Hades has no claim to my soul. But you, mere mortal, would be all the wiser to learn of who answers to whom, as the Gods need you just as much as you need them.

There are layers upon layers of reality, pillars upon pillars of perspective. You, the mortals of Earth, experience a thin slice of what the universe truly is. To say that your sliver of heaven is meaningless is quite true when compared to the vastness of eternity—but yet your piece has unequivocal meaning to you. So listen close, for this is your story.

Who I am was once important. What I am now is only to be experienced. You have no emotional attachment toward me, but I will be your eyes and ears. You will learn about your purpose through me. If at the end of your story I am still meaningless to you, then I will have failed... and you will have all died. However, until I fail, you shall continue to hear me—you will begin to see me in the faces of strangers, you will feel me in each quiet moment. Not as a haunting, not as a reminder, but as a promise of your Ascension—me forever being an expression of your virtue.

What your kind calls “Gods” are very much real. Zeus lives. He and his Pantheon have been serving you since your creation, and they will continue to do so until your demise. They are your superior in the eye of Nibirou—but remember, their perfection is not a barometer of righteousness. Perfectly evil is just as perfect as perfectly good; perfection being the essence of ones true calling.

Before understanding the challenges ahead, first, you must accept who you are. Why have mortals forsaken their creator? Its protector? What role has your kind played in fostering this dire juncture that threatens existence? What meaning do ancient texts laced beneath religion have in the history of your people? What paranoias have corrupted your psyche, time and time again, that lead you to slaughter your own savior?

Your Gods are reshaping the past to ensure a future. By delivering justice throughout key moments in time, Zeus is correcting the course of man to prevent your self-destruction. Destiny coincides with his effort, but for entirely different reasons than your own. Fate has exploited you and this is why my words are held within your hands. Collective destiny demands it. Celestial prophecy ordains it.

And, now, for why Ananke has lead you to me—the catalyst has returned. A celestial prophet. The long awaited beacon of the Gods and king of mankind—a mortal has been reborn to fulfill his lot. While it warms me of what this reunion represents, and you will be filled with pride to share his moment in time, symbolism means nothing once the Gods begin their march toward war. This mortal’s soul is the reason Earth still exists, and the savior the Gods have been preparing for. His path will become your path; together turning the key of cosmic wisdom, embodying justice, and advancing the essence of humanity.

In this moment you hold the codex of Olympus. These pages contain your future. The Artifacts I've entwined provide context to the atrocities committed by your people. They explain the divine response to your histories by the Gods, and they illuminate the only path of salvation offered by the Celestials. In Books I and II, I've curated valuable moments and conversations across time. In Book III, I've provided you with a window into the present. Remember, you see what I see. You feel what I feel. This is your caution. Consider this the final book of mankind—for the lips of wisdom are sealed except to the ears of understanding.

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 23 - TRANSMIGRATION THE FINAL BOOK: GODS

"Seriously though, Billy. What's going on? Unless you're looking for a space monkey, what do you need me for?"

"Give yourself some credit. I just thought you might like to come along for the ride. Unless this sort of thing is in Milan or Dubai, Pom could care less. Plus there's someone there I want you to meet. Or rather, who wants to meet you."

Josh twisted his brow with confusion but remained quiet allowing William to elaborate.

"Her little joke, attending the Space Symposium. She's a longtime friend."

"So what, you're setting me up?"

William roared with laughter. "No, not that! She's...she's a very interesting woman. I told her how you and I have been spending a lot of time together, talking philosophy. We'll just grab a drink after and say hi."

"That's fine... But I still don't get it."

William tried to explain. "She sees the world in a very unique way. I thought you might appreciate that. No big deal."

"Okay," Josh agreed, feeling there was more to the story. "Let's hope I don't disappoint."

"Oh and, Josh"—William looked over at him—"let's keep this between you and I. It's nothing underhanded, just avoiding unnecessary trouble. Ana and I have a bit of history, which Pom is fully aware of, but it will always be tender... No sense in stirring the pot."

Josh remained silent, uncomfortable with William's request. He didn't like the thought of lying to Pom, as she and he had become quite close, just as he and William had. Also William's infidelity irritated him; he couldn't understand how someone's eye would be able to wander with a woman like Pom at home. But, most importantly, he was disappointed that William placed him in the middle. Regardless of William's affairs, Josh didn't want to be an accessory to something that could potentially upset Pom.

"I know what you're thinking," William said, "and it reaffirms my decision for you to meet Ana. I know you've grown close with Pom. I also know you'd do things differently than me, and that's why I'm proud to call you my friend. But life isn't so cut and dry, Josh. Temptation isn't your vice..." He paused as he tried to conjure up the appropriate words. "Without Ana, we wouldn't have our amazing daughters who have had a tremendous impact on the world. I'm not

exaggerating when I say that those girls have changed the lives of millions of people. The world is a much better place because of my weakness. Yes, that came at the expense of Pom, but what's the greater good? What's most important?"

William had never opened up to Josh about his personal affairs and Josh wasn't quite sure how to respond. He felt tremendous objection with William's rationalization of his actions, but didn't want to outright judge the man.

"I don't know, Billy," Josh began. "Honesty is usually the best policy. It sounds like you're justifying poor judgment by the serendipitous outcome of superb offspring... I mean, what if your children with Ana grew up to be heinous, or even normal. Would those ends justify the means?"

"Well, that's the odd thing about destiny: it's inevitable," William replied. "Those girls had to be born, they were needed. Destiny exploited my weakness, a character flaw of mine, in order to put forth what the world needed."

"Wow," Josh said, taken aback by William's explanation. "You've done a lot of great things, Dr. Hork, almost other worldly things. But you're speaking as if you're chosen. The odd thing about destiny isn't that it's inevitable, but it's that we don't know what it is. It's not like we have a map or checklist of the future."

"But what if you did? What if you did know your destiny? Would that still make my actions dishonorable? Knowing the outcome of the greater good?"

Josh turned to look out the window. "You're suggesting that you have a crystal ball and there's only one way to do things. That almost makes it worse. Knowing your destiny and still not finding an honorable or honest solution with Pom to achieve the same outcome."

William remained quiet, allowing Josh to explain himself.

"Destiny is an excuse for poor actions," Josh continued. "It's a self-fulfilling prophecy. You believe in your destiny, so therefore you actively seek it out, and it eventually becomes you. By adding the 'cosmic mystical' element, you relinquish accountability and responsibility. You just blame your actions on the gods. It was their will for you to sleep with that woman, not yours."

"How would one honorably explain conceiving a child with another woman?" William asked, looking over at him out of the corner of his eye.

"That's my point—you can't now. Honesty has to start from the beginning. If you knew that infidelity or flesh of another is your vice, perhaps you shouldn't have married. It's selfish, Bill. You placed your desire—your 'destiny'—above your wife."

There was a long pause.

"Who's to say you couldn't have had those amazing daughters, who changed the world, with Pom?" Josh added.

"Their mother for one," William quickly replied. "Those girls aren't great because of me, it's because of Ana."

Josh was silent, still looking out the window to avoid William's eyes.

"You're right, though," William muttered. "I'll be the first to admit that I didn't handle things properly. I hurt Pom, and I'll always feel terrible for it. I wish I had as much wisdom at your age..."

Josh sighed. "Billy, I wasn't trying to insult you. You and Pom have your own relationship and arrangement. I don't know the complexities and it has nothing to do with me... I just don't like being put in the middle."

"Fair enough," William said as he stared blankly through the windshield. "Sometimes I forget who I'm talking to. Someone who actually practices what they preach... Speaking of

preaching, I guess you'd have to believe in God to believe in destiny, then?" He eased the conversation away from his personal affairs but was enjoying Josh's thoughts on morality.

"Abstractly, destiny's just a really fortunate excuse for a lot of people to do a lot of bad things. That's the problem with man mingling with Gods, or religion."

William was intrigued. "Explain."

"Beyond diminishing personal accountability, an unintended consequence or not, once you cut through all of the ritual and teachings, the bottom line is that religion completely devalues life. The entire premise of there being something after this world inherently makes the existence we're currently living less important or less precious. With the promise of something more after life, something greater, it makes death much easier to accept."

"Interesting observation."

"A religious authority, priest or bishop, can paint the picture of a glorious afterworld and use that to manipulate followers into either being good to one another, or to wage horrific wars. If you die along the way, which we all will one day, that's actually a good thing because now you're home with God. And who doesn't want to be with God?" Josh said sarcastically.

"Why do you think people go along with this notion?"

"They're seeking a cause and effect to existence, an explainable reaction. They try to understand unfathomable things that happen during life, creating reasons to justify man's relevance on a cosmic level—usually by attributing their lives to a larger concept such as religion or destiny. The only way to ease the guilt of bad decisions, things that can't be reversed or reconciled here on Earth, is to atone to an unearthly being. The thought of being completely insignificant in the universe is more difficult for the human mind to accept than a utopia governed by a bearded man in the clouds."

"So I take it you don't believe in God, then?" William cocked his head with the question.

"I'm not foolish enough to say that. I can tell you with all certainty that I don't believe in any religion operated by a mortal man, but I'm wise enough to say that I don't know about God. I'm able to admit that I don't understand. My mind is completely open—literally anything is possible because I have no way of knowing one way or another."

"Without God or a greater purpose, what's the point of getting out of bed?" William pushed.

"By having tremendous value and respect for the life you currently have," Josh replied. "By understanding that being alive is completely unique and precious—something to be worshiped, to be celebrated. Our singular personal existence in the vast universe is so rare, so exponentially unlikely, that it shouldn't be wasted by lying in bed. You won the lottery just by being born."

"That's a pretty sober way to look at things. Uncomplicated."

"I think that's a big problem with religion as we have it, it's been manipulated into a tool of social control and discipline rather than a source of profound thought on the human experience. When did the belief of God become synonymous with marriage or shellfish, even goodwill or war? God doesn't have anything to do with those things."

"Or interchangeably he has everything to do with all things..." William added.

"Right. And that's a completely valid argument as well," Josh agreed. "But remember that slippery slope because you can't pick and choose God's miracles. If he has everything to do with all things, then he's then equally responsible for healing the sick as he is for murders at an elementary school shooting."

"What do you think, Josh?" William questioned him intently. "Do you think God has something to do with the murders of children?"

Josh took a deep breath and tried to articulate an answer. “No. My vision, or ideal of what God is or would be, wouldn’t be involved in that. I feel that God is removed from our daily activities. I see him as a creator and protector of humanity, but not as a personal babysitter. While he may have given life, he’s not in control of my soul or who I am. I don’t feel he has any interest in or control over my personal ‘destiny,’ though I’m sure he wishes general goodwill to everyone—like a father wishing his sons the best in life, though boys can still grow up to become murderers and rapists... I don’t know what God is...” He then hesitated. “I’m not sure if he’s from the ‘other side’ or if he’s just from another world... Maybe that’s one in the same? I don’t know, I see him being more human than a fairy tale. He couldn’t have been perfect if he created us in his own image.”

William let out a wild grin and found a bit of humor in Josh’s comment on perfection. His approval encouraged Josh to keep going.

“You know how history tends to paint a glorious picture of the past, elevating certain battles or men above the rest—like our founding fathers? Somehow the realism of them as humans, with all of their many imperfections, mistakes, and outright terrible deeds have been lost over time? I think that’s happened with God exponentially over the thousands of years. We choose to only remember the good stuff.”

“Your God sounds pretty down to Earth,” William said, as he continued to smile. “He could be living among us and we wouldn’t even know.”

Josh smiled back. “Of course. Or, you know, we could have evolved from sludge... Here’s one thing I don’t get about modern religion. God has helpers—angels, right?”

William nodded.

“So basically the whole monotheism and polytheism is pure semantics. Everyone knows Zeus was king, or the Abrahamic God is big chief god, so what’s wrong with showing his helpers, Poseidon or Gabriel, some appreciation? All of the religions have ‘angels’ or saints that perform the same functions as the Greek and Egyptian ‘gods,’ yet it was worth killing everyone and decimating cultures over that nonsensical subtle difference.”

“Religion isn’t about logic, it’s about faith.”

“I guess that’s my problem. I have an unwavering belief and faith in life. I think God does, too—that’s why he bothered creating it.”

“The end doesn’t justify the means...”

“Exactly. Faith is an awesome thing, having belief in something is powerful and unifying. However, when that faith is tied to an organization that is responsible for millions upon millions of deaths throughout history, the little bit of good they do does not outweigh the bad. It has nothing to do with forgiveness or reform, some things just simply can’t be undone. Faith and ideology are not justifiably worth dying or killing over, and I’ve never understood how someone can convince themselves that it is.”

“What could be more honorable than dying for God?” William asked.

“Are you serious?” Josh scoffed. “God doesn’t want you to die for him, that’s not why he made you. That’s like fucking to preserve virginity. He didn’t create humans so they would kill each other over abstract concepts. Dying to protect life—the thing God created—or fighting against the oppression of the inalienable rights of life, I’d consider that much more honorable.”

“Kind of like our government, then.”

Josh rolled his eyes. “If you believe in the liberation of oil fields and other strategic resources, sure. The government doesn’t care about life unless it can tax it. Our government took a crafty lesson from religion. It has exploited the fundamental concept of freedom to propel its own

agenda. Instead of using the word 'god' like religion does, they just insert the word 'freedom' and the propaganda is the same."

William chuckled. "You don't believe in government or religion... What's left, anarchy?"

"As soon as any organization—religion, government, corporation, nonprofit, or a person starts to manipulate their own beliefs to acquire power, conceal motives or agendas, lie, threaten, oppress, condemn—it's corruption, Bill. I can't support an institution that's lost its virtue."

"The picture of young Joshua Bach is becoming a bit clearer," William remarked. "Such principles aren't going to make life easy."

"Tell me about it. I'm basically thirty years old and can barely support myself. I can't stand our financial system... Do you know how hard it is to not have a cent of debt to your name? The bank isn't my master. I refuse to be a part of an institution that is more concerned with share prices than the product they're creating or service they're providing."

"That's noble, but not entirely realistic."

Josh raised his voice. "Why not? All it takes is for people to stop believing. Just as religion can't exist without faith, neither can our system. If people, one by one, no longer allowed their good intentions to be exploited, no longer fed a system that was corrupt and broken—it would vanish. It can't operate unless people believe in it and perpetuate it."

"I suppose that's easier to say if you have nothing to lose." William paused. "If you had a business, house, family—established roots into the system, it'd be harder to turn your back on it."

Josh was silent for a moment, then continued. "I agree. You know the types of things I think about? I'm afraid that I'm too poor to fall in love. Not only would I have to fully step into the corrupt system—meaningless job, underwater mortgage, vehicles with an expiration date—but if we decided to have children, I'd have to bring them into this cycle. I wouldn't be able to afford a private school or tutors, so they'd be educated by one of the world's most mediocre school systems—by design—that teaches them just enough to get by, so they can find another meaningless job and start the process all over again with their children. It's so complacent. Everyone knows it's wrong, everyone knows it's broken, but no one has a gun to their head. There's no immediate threat, so no one does anything. It's a slow cancer. As soon as it gets bad enough to take action, it will be too late."

"You do have your freedom," William's tone was hollow. "What if your child breaks the cycle? It just takes one—Spartacus."

"Why can't I be the One? Why my son? Why always the next generation?"

William looked over at him out of the corner of his eye. "You speak of revolution, my boy."

"Billy, I don't want to wage a war... I just want reform, an awakening. Has mankind always been so dishonest and self-serving? When did prophets become profits?" Josh said with bitterness.

Another long pause filled the traveling automobile, as Josh looked through the window at the city streets intently with a grave scowl.

William finally broke the silence. "I got you pretty worked up, didn't I?"

"I'm not asking for perfection, Bill. You and Pom are a perfect example. Mistakes were made, intentional or not, but at some point you had to be honest with one another. You had to agree on the future you wanted to create together and put the past behind you. You had to do what was right for your children, and I'm sure it was hard. I'm sure it still is. But look what you've done. Things at one point were broken, and you fixed them. I don't know the young William Hork, but I know the man next to me now and there's no one more honest and virtuous. You've matured into an individual with compassion, foresight, strength, experience and wisdom. You're

not perfect, but you're damn close. I want that. I want that for man, for society. I want humanity to mature into what I know it can be."

William looked over at Josh and without question saw the man he once knew over 2,000 years ago. Sitting in his car beside him was the spitting image of the young Israelite with his soul on fire. His bleeding heart and passion had been masked by the youthful exterior, but there was no denying the complete transmigration of Lesous Nazareth into Joshua Bach. The young man's words, his conviction, and his virtue made it clear to William that the second coming was upon him and that Lesous was finally ready to fulfill his destiny.

"I don't know what to do, Bill." Josh's tone had become disheartened. "I don't have a bottomless playbook full of answers, but you know when something is wrong or when it is right. The truth is absolute. It's like the weather—you can't control or manipulate truth. It just is."

William smiled as he pulled into the entrance of the Broadmoor Resort, where a parking valet waited. "I think Ana will be quite pleased I brought you. Long overdue."

Josh let out a deep breath of air, trying to calm himself. "I'm sorry, Dr. Hork. I usually don't get so riled up, I prefer the rhetorical debates." He then smiled. "I hope I didn't offend you. You know how much I think of you and Pom."

William laughed. "Offend? Josh, my boy, I feel as though I've been searching for your honesty for millennia! I enjoyed every word and know there was no malice behind it."

"I respect you. Pom, too. I just don't want anything to mess that up."

"A man of conviction," William said. "I crossed the line by trying to cover my own hide and you corrected me. I admire that. Not many have the gumption to speak up...to not allow someone to stand in the way of doing the right thing."