

## PROLOGUE: GENESIS

**A**eons ago, the Creator created both the Titans and the Gods. He saw them first in his dreams and visions and, after he had created them, they lived on with him, long before the universe was born.

He loved them and cared for them as if they were his children, teaching them the great creative arts. When the Gods started painting and sculpting, the Creator watched their efforts proudly and said nothing, knowing not to intervene, like a prudent father anxious not to discourage his children's imaginations.

Each God concentrated on depicting his individual favourite theme. Hephaestus, for instance, would paint using great swirls of red, orange and yellow and eventually created fire. Poseidon preferred the cool blues and greens, which led to him creating water.

The more they drew and painted, carved and sculpted, the better their technical skills became and there was a growing coherence between each of their works – as if many separate pieces of one great plan were coming together by design.

Finally, the Creator spoke up, summoning them all to one place in order to lay out his plans to them. Although they were Gods themselves, they listened to

his every word, absorbed and continually astonished by his wisdom and his vision.

“The time has come for you to work in unison,” he boomed. “From now on you will labour together in order to create a mighty work of art, each of you exercising your freedom of expression and imagination. Every one of you will leave your personal mark on the project while bearing in mind the rough outline that I am proposing. I will not be intervening at any point in your task. I will merely be watching your progress and willing you to succeed. You are all my creations and I am happy to see you moving forward with your work in companionship, setting your common goals in harmony, complementing each other’s efforts, and creating your own individual pieces of the puzzle.”

Inspired by the Creator’s faith in them, the Gods set to work with both love and enthusiasm. A fabulous variety of colours and materials started to fill the endless chaos. Dazzling, bright hues contrasted with darker and subtler tones as the mighty artwork slowly started to come to life, growing into the greatest masterpiece that had ever been created.

True to his word, the Creator merely waited and watched the development of his work as it moved inexorably toward perfection.

The Titans were also watching the progress of the Gods’ work and some of them began to talk amongst themselves, speculating as to whether they should add some extra details to the work. Would the Creator look favourably on them, they wondered, and appreciate their skills? The more they talked the more certain

they became that if they did this they would be able to make themselves stand out from the Gods and that they would consequently find themselves raised to the top of the pecking order.

Some of them were actually annoyed that there was still a lot of empty space in the artwork, which they felt they should have been invited to fill. Others wanted to retain ownership of at least some of their creations and were reluctant to hand everything over to the Creator.

“Since we are the designers,” they said, “our works belong to us!”

The other Titans listened to their more vociferous companions, nodding wisely all the while, until eventually they were all in agreement; they should be rewarded for their work. The Gods, however, remained strongly opposed to the idea.

In this way, little by little, an unpleasant darkness crept into existence – a souring of the atmosphere and a malevolence of spirit.

Still, the Creator merely watched, lost in thought as he looked down on the turn of the events. Eventually he rose from his seat and reached out his hand to his creations – both to the Gods and the Titans.

“You were all created in my own image,” he said. “But you are all very different. Germs of envy and jealousy have been taking root in your souls, leading to greed and ingratitude. I made you powerful, and most powerful of all are the Titans, but you have dared to ignore my commands.

“You would be unable to do any of this without

my permission. You know that if I wanted, I could terminate your existence. The reason this artwork and all of you still exist is because I am allowing it. I promised you I wouldn't interfere and I will keep my word. But it is clear that the destiny of the creatures who are about to be brought into existence is to live in a parallel world where both Good and Evil will exist and where they will constantly be forced to decide which path to choose.

“Study your paintings and your sculptures carefully, for this is the world you are creating – the sphere that will be your home from now on. You will be this world's Gods. You will be its dawn and dusk. And your King will be Zeus, because he is gentle and wise. I am withdrawing from the project in order to rest for a while. Later, I plan to build new universes, as well as new Gods, both for your own cosmos and for the other realms that I will create. Remember that you are still entitled to create new worlds yourselves, but only once and never again.”

At that moment the Gods were flooded with light and gained the ability to possess knowledge. They learned about the past and they became virtually all-knowing about the present. They were even able to predict some parts of the future. But it would never have been possible for them to know absolutely everything because that would have made them almighty and omniscient, privileges that belonged only to the Creator.

Continuing with the task that had been set before them, the Gods watched the dawn of the new world

– the genesis of millions of different species of animals and of human beings. They admired their creations and they loved them. They believed this was the final stage in the completion of the artwork – the last step that made the world beautiful, lacking nothing. Meanwhile the Titans were growing increasingly restive and they hatched plans to dominate the Gods' creations by turning them into their slaves, taking pleasure in the thought of people in pain and finding amusement in the misery of others.

The Gods, however, all stood steadfastly beside their individual creations and this was the beginning of the very first conflict between Good and Evil.

Zeus, King of the Gods, saw what was happening and called a meeting of all the Gods to decide what should be done. He convinced them to unite and face down the Titans, which led to the first Clash of the Titans. In the course of the struggles many Gods were killed, but eventually they triumphed and the Titans were overthrown, banished and imprisoned in Tartarus for all time.

The fact that they were imprisoned, however, did not stop them from constantly dreaming of amassing a new army powerful enough to eliminate the Gods and to enthrone them in their place. In their hearts, however, they always knew it was no more than a dream and so they laid out other – more devious – plans for revenge. They decided that they would convert as many people as possible to their side, making them want to destroy His Creation, the World, and enticing them to join them in Tartarus, where they would

become their slaves.

Aware of what was happening, Zeus called a new meeting, at which the Gods divided up the World in parts and went to live amongst the people. Each God took the place which best befitted him in order to watch over and protect the people from the forces of Evil whenever possible. Dozens of Gods left their home on Mount Olympus, leaving behind only the primeval Gods, with the exception of Poseidon, who was sent to the Sea due to his everlasting love of water. There, he became God of the Oceans and of all the creatures that live within them.

The son of Erebus and Earth, who was later considered to be the personification of Cosmogony, asked the Creator to send him to the Skies.

“Earth would be nothing without the Sky,” he explained, “It would be a dark, dull place. Tartarus has no sky and that is why it is Hell. The sky is beautiful and peaceful. This is why I want to live there, so that I will be happy and free.”

And so it came to pass, and this God was named Uranus.

The Gods took on human form so that they could walk among human beings whenever they wanted to, in the bodies of either men or women. This allowed them to observe people’s problems from close by and to propose solutions to anyone who needed them. In this way they did not interfere with the element of free choice. They also taught human beings the arts of painting, sculpture, poetry and music.

Meanwhile the Titans created the one who was

given many different names by human beings, including Satan, Diablo and the Devil, and he taught people completely different things. Mainly, he instilled in people a hunger for the art of War.

“Why shouldn’t you be the dominant ones?” he would whisper in their ears, repeating the same words to everyone he came upon, sowing the seeds of greed in their minds, creating a thirst for domination in their hearts and a lust for power.

In their own search for power, the Titans and the Devil came up with the concept of money. Their thinking was that if they invented something that everybody believed they needed and for which people would be ready to make sacrifices in order to obtain it, it would become a powerful weapon. War was their main aim and they soon realised that humans could easily be persuaded to fight one another for money.

The Devil worked tirelessly to spread the message. “Why,” he would ask people, “should you share the things you have strived for?”

“But what other option do we have?” people asked.

“Why, to sell those things to other people,” the Devil said, as if it were the most perfect of answers.

“What does *sell* mean?” they asked.

“It means that you will give them what they want and, in return, you will receive from them what you need.”

With those few words the concept of trade was born. To begin with, it was simply the exchange of products. Someone would give apples and receive

oranges. Two sheep would equal one cow. But, in time, this developed into different kinds of trade. The most complex of which occurred when somebody had something that no one else had, but everyone needed. The owner of that rare thing, rather than trade it for an object of equal value, would try to exchange it for something even more rare.

“What should I demand in this trade?” they would ask the Devil.

The Devil would deliberately propose unreasonable things, which inevitably led to conflicts. To solve these conflicts the Devil suggested the solution that had been in his mind all along – the invention of money.

It was at that moment that the Gods saw what was happening and decided that they must intervene.

“I will not allow this evil to continue manifesting itself!” Zeus roared.

“Too late,” the Devil sniggered. “The lust for power and wealth has already spread through the whole of humanity.”

Determined to limit the spread of evil as much as possible, Zeus appointed the Goddess of Wisdom, his daughter Athena, to divide out money and give it to people who truly deserved it, according to the quality of various elements, including their minds, their strength, their mood, their beliefs and their characters.

Athena did as she was bid, but no human beings seemed able to comprehend the wisdom of this action. None of them was willing to accept the superiority of any other. Every person asked, “*Why him and not me?*”

All of them considered themselves superior to everyone else and none believed that the Gods had treated them justly.

The Devil took advantage of this, adding fuel to the fire and sowing more seeds of doubt and jealousy in people's minds.

"You have seen how the Gods treat you," he told everyone. "All the time that you were admiring and loving them, they were laughing at you."

"So," the people said, "what do you suggest we do?"

"As I have always told you, you should fight! You should stand up for your rights and prove your true value to everyone who has dared to doubt you."

Believing that they saw the sense in the Devil's argument, men started to fight and the first wars between human beings spread across the vast lands like a forest fire, while the Devil continually fanned the flames.

Watching the horrors unfold before them, Zeus and the other Gods realised that humans would always be vulnerable and easily enticed into the nets of Evil. Thus, they would have to be continually alert in the struggle for Good.

This struggle continued as the centuries turned into millennia. Wars were forever breaking out, but alongside the times of mindless destruction there were also great peacetime achievements which led to the discoveries of science and technology. But alas, these too relied on money in order to progress and they often led to human manipulation and wars. Moral

depravity and environmental destruction ran parallel to progress in medicine and longevity.

Humans didn't take care of the environment and failed to respect the many beautiful plants and animals that the Gods had created for them thousands of earth years before.

Mankind learned how to travel to other planets but at the same time created weapons so powerful that they eventually destroyed the planet and every single living being on it, so that only the Gods survived.

The Gods wept when they saw what had become of their creation and at the loss of so many beautiful things. But as they reflected on the destruction, their sadness turned to anger and finally their anger was replaced by a determination to restore life to the planet. They vowed to do all they could to stop it from ever being destroyed again.

They also formed a safe haven which they called the 'Elysian Fields,' a paradise of lush growth, waterfalls, animals and exotically coloured birds, and they decided to exile anyone who attempted to harm the world to Tartarus.

Then they created 'The Land of the White Sun,' a place for all the mythical creatures of the ancient worlds. It was there that they placed the Sacred Flame, the Universal Cosmic Source which would keep the world in balance and ensure its continued existence.

The Gods also created the Orizons, an advanced species of humans who travelled between the Land of the White Sun and the Earth. They were made the secret guardians and protectors of the Sacred Flame,

which was the source of their power.

The Titans, however, were never going to give up that easily. Their ambition became to destroy the new worlds too and to seize the Sacred Flame, thereby acquiring its power to use in freeing themselves and kill the Gods who they hated with an all-consuming vehemence.

