

Journey from the Sun

Episode IV - Mars

Written by Matt Bader

Draft #9

Final Draft

Characters:

Boy (<i>Boy</i>)	M. Lead. 19. Bright eyed and enthusiastic youngster with a heart for adventure. Optimistic even in the face of an increasingly cynical world. A young man of principle, loyal to those he loves. Adores Tavas and tries to learn as much as he can from him while doing his best to understand him. Helluva pilot. He has run away from home in order to visit the underworld, Pluto, where he might finally meet his father. He has long played the lieutenant to Tavas's lead, but with his idol incapacitated, he must grow into the hero of the story.
Tavas (<i>TAH - vəs</i>)	M. Supporting. 20. The God of Pluto. In a final attempt to repair their celestial union, the Father and the Mother created the God of Pluto, the most perfect of their children; a being capable of growing more powerful than both of them combined. The Mother ended up stealing him away for herself, in hopes of raising him to rise against the Father and destroy him. But without The Father to forge a divine body, she shoved his mind into a mortal body, and he was thus born as his own vessel; the mind of a god with the body of a Plutonian. He has been told all his life who to love, but never given any himself. Genius intelligence. Wise beyond his years, but it brings him no comfort. Unimaginably lonely.
Christine (<i>kri - STEEN</i>)	F. Featured. N/A. A tiny floating supercomputer crafted as a companion for the gods, dubbed a "Pixel." Helps get the boys out of the trouble they inevitably fall into.
Mela (<i>MEEL - ə</i>)	F. Lead. 22. Tech savvy sneakster and Scaedic Apothecary (knows how to make potions and tonics using some dark magic) Fervently devoted to the Last Born and her cause. Has been secretly tracking Boy and Tavas since Earth. Determined to redeem herself
Jerod St. John (<i>jə - RAHD saynt JAHN</i>)	M. Lead. 20s. Bright, young Marian. Galactic Enforcement officer. Has been undercover for years and worked his way up to becoming V'Drata's right hand soldier. His dad left shortly after his sister was born. Swore to become an officer after his mom was killed by thieves. Ended up having to raise Khatya.
Chief (<i>CHEEF</i>)	F. Supporting. 50s. Stern, principled, progressive leader of the Galactic Enforcement Officers and the head of planetary intelligence. Has devoted her life to protecting the citizens of Mars.
Khatya St. John (<i>KAH - tee - ə - saynt - JAHN</i>)	F. Supporting. Teenager. Jerod's strong willed and free spirited younger sister. Wants to be a doctor one day. Naive, but very eager to be helpful however she can.

Ricki Bartz (<i>RIH - kee - bahr - TEZ/TES</i>)	M. Supporting. 20s. Jerod's best friend and partner undercover. Pilot/driver. Slick. Popular with the ladies. Doesn't speak to his family anymore. Wishes he could start all over.
The Governor	M. Supporting. 40s. The controversial leader of the fourth planet. Bursting with charisma, and a thirst for control. Has thinner skin than he leads on.
V'Drata (<i>v - DRAHT - ə</i>)	M. Featured. Ringleader of The Insurrection, a group of religious extremists devoted to tearing down the Federal Union and restoring power to Mars' true goddess, The Last Born.
Soldiers/ Insurrectionists	<p>N. Ensemble Soldiers for the Federal Union of the First Born Planets. Worship the Father and the First Born. Loyal to the Governor.</p> <p>Citizens of Mars who have been part of an underground resistance to the Union. Today, on the 1000th anniversary of the imprisonment of the Goddess of Mars, they have emerged. Now, they are openly revolting against the government. Worship the Mother and The Last Born. Loyal to V'Drata.</p>
The Ephors (5x)	N. Featured. Political elders shrouded by secrets who rule alongside the Governor. They each have differing points of view on the unfolding events, but they operate as a chorus.
Intercom	N. Ensemble. A robotic intercom voice in the station.
The Last Born	F. Supporting. The imprisoned Goddess of the colonized planet of Mars. She has been blinded, humiliated, and locked away for a thousand years by her own brother. Her Mother has been cast out. Her Father and her own people have left her to rot. The planets and the heavens will crumble before her rage if she is set free. If...
Alexios	M. Featured. The fabled hero of the Mercurian army; a demi-god who rallies his soldiers to victory against the tyrannical Goddess of Mars and liberates an entire planet during the legendary Battle of Mars. He is the vessel of the First Born, the God of Mercury. He has the mind of a god, but the body of a mortal.
Herald	N. Ensemble. A loud boi
Chorus	N. Ensemble. Introduces the audience to the origins of our story. Operates as a Greek chorus.

--Chapter 1: Where do we begin?

(a stage)

(a chorus)

Herald: It began with a scream.

(a wild shriek pierces through the air)

Chorus: *(Each line may be attributed to one member or spoken in unison.)*

A scream that emptied men's stomachs
That rippled across the fields
That sickened the very soul
Of all who heard it,
And all did hear it.
Wave after wave of insufferable sound,
Crashing over every household, every ear,
Infecting the people with writhing convulsions.
Children wailed in agony;
Men and Women were broken,
Sundered from any sense of who they were
Or what was what
Or why.

It came from the depths of Olympus Mons.
Mount Olympus.
The crown jewel of the fourth planet from the Sun
And the castle of its Goddess,
The Goddess of Mars
She was The Last Born of the Royal Gods,
Cursed with a hideous scar
Running down her face.
An error of creation long ago
That had divided the solar system in two.

For in the days of long before
The Father and Mother lived together--
The Father as builder and wielder of light;
The Mother as designer and weaver of shadow.
Together they created four children
Each more perfect than the last
Until the last--
Until The Father's first and final slip

Marred their daughter's face beyond repair.
As retribution for deforming her child,
The Mother had sought to strike her fellow creator down
And so the Father cast her out,
Building a great and mighty wall
That stood impregnably between the children of the sun
And the wasteland stretching beyond.

This was the state of the realm--
Recognizable in every twist
Of the Last Born's scar.
This was the world that she had created.
She cursed the solar system with her hideous scar
And the system cursed her in return.
But she was not without her blessings.
Indeed, she was cunning.
Indeed, she was strong,
And she possessed
The most beautiful blue eyes.
Eyes that were the envy
Of every being, high or low,
Mortal or immortal.
Eyes that were no one else's but her's,
Until one day
 One day.
 This day.

*(Silhouette: We see a shadowy figure rip out **The Last Born's** eyes.)*

This day the ground did tremble.
The soil seemed to open up
And swallow cities whole,
Feasting upon the helpless
By the incalculable masses.
And, worst of all, the crown of Mars
Olympus Mons
 Split open,
Gushing fire,
 Rock
 Dust
 And ash,
Blankets of ash to swaddle the sky,
No light from the Father to guide
The helpless and the hopeless,

Only the light from the fire of Olympus Mons;
The fire of the Last Born's rage.
All of her subjects turned toward the light
As their Goddess rose from the burning orifice,
And bore, for all to see, her empty sockets.
She thundered at them from the fiery peak
Demanding to know who had seen;
Demanding to know who knew
The fate of her beloved eyes.
And promising to punish them all
Until her eyes were returned
And their thief, destroyed.

This was the judgement of The Last Born.
Empty of remorse
But filled with guile.
She knew this could not have happened
Without the aid of the gods.
Surely one of them must know,
Who took away her eyes.
But what is a Last Born Goddess to do
Against the might of her three older siblings
And the unquestionable power of her Father?
Our Father.
Take away their favorite toys.
Take away the people
Take away us,
And thus she cast an eternal darkness
Over the crust of a beaten world.

The gods looked on in horror
At the atrocities of their sister
As she and her most devoted followers
Swept over every Marian city.
But only one god called out for action:
The First Born, *MEN*
The God and Warden
Of the planet Mercury;
The pride of his Father,
Our Father.
The First Born was enraged
At the subjugation
Of the Marian people,
And he vowed to protect them

No matter the cost.
The Father begged him to stay
For a god that leaves their planet
Must do so with a vessel,
The body of a mortal,
And therefore risks their very life
If ever they embark on such a quest.
But the Father also saw the determination
That beamed from his son's eyes
And knew there would be no persuading him.
So he blessed him, and granted him Sol
His personal sword
The finest creation from his forge
And the most powerful weapon in the solar system.
This, he gave unto his son
Upon condition that at his journey's end
The Father would no later awake to find
His sword and son returned to him.

The First Born called upon his army
The soldiers of Mercury
To embark upon a most noble quest
Of lifting their Marian brothers
From the shackles of bondage
Or perish under the crushing weight
Of eternal and irredeemable shame.
Not one soldier refused this calling.
Nor did one soldier withhold the desire
To be chosen as the First Born's Vessel.
Many boasted of their strength,
Their brilliance, and their bravery.
Many professed that they were princes,
Generals, and heroes of wars past.
But The First Born chose none of them.
He chose a man
Like any other
To receive the greatest honor of his planet
And the great responsibility with which it came.
A man like any other
Or so it seemed.
His name was Alexios.

Alexios: Brothers and sisters!

Chorus: The body of a mortal
Holding the mind of a god.

Alexios: Children of the sun!

Chorus: As his last soldier
Stepped off the ship
Onto the salt-white soil
Of the ruined Marian planet,
Alexios spoke to them all.

Alexios: Tyranny dies at the ends of your blades
And civilization sleeps behind your shields!
When the sun shines once more on this weathered sphere
Let it find no trace of the evil that once reigned.
Go forth and do the work of The Father.

Chorus: Our Father.

The Mercurian army fought bravely and bitterly,
Slowly retaking the planet.
With every village and every station they took,
More liberated Marians joined their cause.
But as they finally approached the great volcano,
A tremendous army stood before them
Made up of the many inhabitants
Still loyal to their Goddess
And led by the towering Goddess herself

The exhausted Mercurian soldiers
Began to feel that they had fought long enough
“This is insane!”
“This is more than insane, this is a death sentence!”
“I will fight, but I will not be a sacrifice.”
“Alexios, our ships are right behind us
Ready to depart on your command
The Goddess of Destruction stands in front
A tranquil passage homeward stands in back.
Why press on?”
“Why go forward?”
“Why not bring your people home?”
“Send us home”
“Send us home”
“Send us home”

*(The chanting increases until the voice of **Alexios** pierces through it.)*

Alexios: What if it were me?

(They quiet down.)

What if it had been me?
Who ripped open the ground,
Blackened your skies
And starved you of Our Father's light,
Would you have cried out?
Or what if it had been you
Kneeling before the destruction of your home
At the hands of a tyrant
Unafraid to punish you for a crime you did not commit,
Would you have yearned for justice?
If it were your spouse at your side
And your children clutching your leg
Would you bow before the ruler
That would readily destroy them?
Or would you stand your sacred ground
And fight to your dying breath
If but to say to them you are Mercurians!
And Mercurians do not submit to tyrants.

Dwell on that all you like.
Dwell on what you'd do if it were you,
But it is not you.
It is your Marian allies who face this reality--
Your allies who have bled right along your side;
Who have marched as many miles,
Who have slain as many foes,
And who have lost as many friends
As you have in this struggle.
Where will they go when you retreat?
What home have they to which they might return?
Do their families rest safely away from the danger?

If you wish to go back to Mercury
While you may still call it safe,
Then turn around and get aboard that ship.
If you wish to see your home, do so;
Go and hold your loved ones with affection.

Do this, and I will bless you,
But I will not follow.

Because, brothers and sisters,
I cannot forget myself.
I cannot forget our Marian comrades standing here today
Who, I have no doubt,
Would be answering the call if it were me;
Who would proudly draw their swords If it were me,
Spill their blood if it were me,
Break their bones if it were me;
In the name of what is right
They would no doubt give their life if it were me,
But it is not me!
It is the whole of Marian existence
Which faces its complete extinction,
With a bag drawn over its head
And a rag shoved down its throat
And no one left to rescue it but us.

Brothers and sisters,
It is you, it is we who have been called
To liberate the oppressed,
To defend the needy,
To vanquish tyrants,
To chase the highest honor,
To risk that we must forfeit
All that we hold dear
Because we will not allow it to be taken from us!
Who among you
Will join me in the battle
Between everything you love
And everything you hate?
To those who say, "Aye!"
Await glory,
Immortality,
And the chance to strike at the heart
Of the ultimate wickedness
In the history of our creation!

(The soldiers get freaking hyped.)

(The battle horn sounds as the enemy yells and charges toward them. A moment of hesitation.)

Your families are watching us,
Your fellow creatures are watching us,

The gods themselves are watching us,
Come with me
And I will make those who stay
The envy of those who return.

(Title Card: "Journey from the Sun. Episode IV: Mars)

(They fight.)

Chorus: And so the two sides fought
Until, at last, the Mercurians prevailed.
Alexios beheld the blind tyrant,
But in an act of mercy,
He took pity on his sister,
Who was truly the least fortunate
Of the children of the Father,
Our Father,
And decided to spare her life.
However, he knew
That such wickedness must be punished
And could never be allowed to reign again.
And so he sealed her in the deepest vault
Of Olympus Mons
And converted her former palace
Into a divine prison
From which she could never leave. *GIRLS*

The Last Born: Justice?
This is my Justice?
This isn't what you want,
But simply what is right?
How can you be so blind?
You who would reduce me
To the lowest of the low
Who would have me buried and forgotten
For ideals.
Where were your ideals
When he desecrated my body?
Where was your lust for justice then?
When he took away my eyes
I came to you for justice.
And now you've come
To take away my voice.
But I cannot be silenced,

Not forever.
No matter how long I must wait
One day, I will return.
And when that day arrives
I will not come to you for justice,
But revenge.

(The tomb is sealed; the cell is locked; the mountain is closed up; peace.)

(Black)

*(caption: "A Thousand Years Later.
A battered spaceship tumbles down the tracks of Mercuria Station)*

--Chapter 2: Journey from the Sun

(the chorus speaks to the audience)

Chorus: Have you ever wondered
About the origin of the cosmos?
How the planets of our solar system
Came to be?
We will share with you the story.
We will keep the memory alive--
The memory of Mars,
The Salt White Planet,
Glistening perfectly
In the Father's light;
Burying something frightful deep below-
Until one day.
One day.
This day.
The day that Mars would change forever;
The day it became "The Red Planet."
And it began
Much like before
With a scream.

(And then, the world of the play. Real time.)

Boy: AAAAAAAGGGGGHHHHHH!!!!!!

(horrible crashing, grinding, screeching noises as this spaceship slowly comes to a halt.)

(pause)

*(The crash site of Mercuria Station. A mangled vehicle rests in one section of the station, carrying two individuals. It is night time, the world outside the station is pitch black. One of the individuals, **Tavas**, is holding Sol, the same sword that **Alexios** was wielding in the prologue. Sol glows, providing light in the area. As the dust settles, the **Boy** inspects himself for his continued existence, before turning to **Tavas**)*

Boy: Holy shit that worked!

*(**Tavas** is lying on the floor, motionless.)*

Oh no. No no no no no.

*(He runs over to inspect his friend. He is alive, but unconscious. The glow from Sol fades as the **Boy** continues to inspect **Tavas**. A voice cries from the other end of the station)*

Distant Voice (Bartez): WHAT THE-?!

(The distant figure begins scrambling away.)

*(The **Boy** grabs onto **Tavas** and begins to carry him towards a doorway labelled exit. As he is about to reach it, a siren wails. Metal barriers quickly collapse in front of the doorway, blocking any sort of passage. They are completely trapped. Only an automated voice escapes through the intercom.)*

Intercom: Attention all travelers. Please remain calm. A breach has been detected and a lockdown has been issued. This lockdown is for your safety and the safety of the Marian people.// *(dialogue goes on)*

Boy: // *(over the intercom's dialogue)* Christine, can you see if there's a way out?

*(a tiny "Pixel" of light emerges from a pocket in **Tavas's** suit.)*

Christine: [friendly beeps]

*(The little glowing Pixel hovers around until she finds a vent. She scans the vent. She flies inside it. Meanwhile, the **Boy** has carried **Tavas** into one of the nearby shops. He watches **Christine** fly away before receiving a text message. He checks his phone.)*

*(**{Braces}** denote a text message)*

Christine: {Stay there. I'll open the doors.}

*(A flashlight shines toward the vent **Christine** just went through. The **Boy** immediately drops to the ground. Waits. The light passes. He receives a message from an unknown source.)*

Unknown (Mela): {You need to get out of there.}

Boy: {Who are you?}

Unknown (Mela): {The only person who can get you out.}
{Meet me at the broken clock}

*(the **Boy** looks up to see a large clock hanging on the wall at the opposite end of the tracks. As he does this, the flashlight scans toward him, and he drops out of view before it passes over him. He looks at the vent **Christine** flew through)*

*---(Cut to **Christine** travelling through the ventilation system, She overhears a pair of voices echoing through the shafts.)*

Guard (Jerod): (V.O.)(bouncing through the vents) Stay here and watch. Alert me if you notice anyone else. I'll be right back.

*(She receives a message from the **Boy**)*

Boy: {First Born finally smiling on us. Cargo ship on the opposite tracks.}

Christine: {Can you pilot it?}

*(Suddenly, the fans start spinning, dragging **Christine** along with the air. She gets sucked into the control room.)*

Girl (Khatya): What the hell is that?

(Christine is startled, she turns around and notices a girl looking at her phone. The girl does not appear to notice Christine or be talking about her.)

Girl (Khatya): Oh my (pause) Wait a minute-

*(she turns around and heads toward the security panel. **Christine** ducks into hiding. The girl is looking at security camera footage around the station.)*

(exclamation, like "Dear God...") Sweet Sunlight...

(she takes out her phone and makes a call)

Hello? Hello?... *(straight to voicemail)* What!?!... Nooo, no no no no... Uhm... *(She starts recording the security camera footage on her phone)* Look, see! There they are! That's them, The Runaways! That's them. *(she stops filming and runs out the door)*

(Christine floats out of hiding and starts interacting with the computer systems.)

Christine: *(to Boy)* {I'm overriding the lockdown now. Are you ok? We need to get out of here, someone is on to us.}

(pause. An alert says the message was not delivered.)

{Hello?}

---*(Cut to the crash site. The **Boy** is carrying Tavas toward the broken clock.)*

Boy: This is stupid this is stupid this is stupid this is-

(The flashlight is moving towards him again so he ducks into nearby cover)

(He notices a T-17 Maiden Class Cargo Ship lying vacant on the opposite tracks)

Boy: *(to Christine)* {First Born finally smiling on us. Cargo ship on the opposite tracks.}

Christine: {Can you pilot it?}

Boy: *(under his breath. As if the answer was obvious)* Can I pilot it...

*(The **Boy** looks up to see a giant rat staring him in the face.)*

*(As soon as the **Boy** recoils, a mysterious figure grabs him from behind and begins strangling him with one arm.)*

Mela: Alright, do I have to feed you to Glix, or are you gonna listen to me?

*(the **Boy** nods and gives a thumbs up)*

I'm about to let go of you, and when I do, you're gonna be silent, you understand?

*(The **Boy** affirms. **Mela** releases him from her chokehold and he can breathe again.)*

Unlock your phone.

Boy: Why?

(Glix snarls)

Mela: *(sweetly)* Because I said so.

(the Boy unlocks his phone. Mela quickly installs something onto it.)

There. You're completely off the grid, which you'll need to be if you don't want that thing hunting you down, let alone the military. For an added bonus, this won't jam your signal anymore.*(holding up a small, blinking device before placing it back on her belt)*

Boy: Who are you?

Mela: My name is Mela, and I'm the only one who can get you out of here.

Boy: My name is-

Mela: I know who you are.

Boy: You do?

Mela: Yeah. You're travelling around with the God of Pluto, that tends to make the news. Come on, we need to get out of here.

Boy: I have a friend who's finding me a way out. I'm sure she can override this lockdown.

Mela: I know a way that's safer and faster.

Boy: By the broken clock?

Mela: You catch on quick. *(to Glix)* Alright, Glix, go!

(Glix scurries off)

Guard (Bartez): I know you're in here!

Mela: Once he's distracted, follow me and don't stop.

(pause)

Wait for it.

(pause)

(gunshots)

Go.

*(They take off toward the broken clock. The **Boy** carries **Tavas** over his shoulder, quite slowly. They have a ways to go as they have to cross each track to get to the other side)*

---(Cut to **Christine** back in the control room. She is frantically texting the **Boy**)

Christine: {Are you ok?}

{Are you ok?}

{Are you ok?}

{Are you ok?}

{Are you ok?}

*(**Christine** goes back to gain access to the security cameras. She locks into one of them, and we see what appears to be a soldier of some kind with his gun raised, pointing it intermittently around the room. Something scurries by in the corner and he quickly points in that general direction and fires. This goes on for a bit more. Then **Christine** changes the cameras a few times, trying to find the **Boy**. Nothing. Eventually, she switches to a camera viewing the grounds outside of the building.)*

---(Cut to the streets of Mercuria City, just outside the station.)

*(Huge masses of **Insurrectionists** stand outside, burning and butchering whatever they can find.)*

Soldiers: Death to the Father
Freedom to the Last Born
Death to the Governor
etc.

(Out of the cacophony of shouts emerges a unified chorus)

Lead Soldier: *(in a call and response style)* Only in darkness

All Soldiers: May we finally see

Lead Soldier: Only in darkness

All Soldiers: May we finally see

Lead Soldier: Only in darkness

All Soldiers: May we finally see

Lead Soldier: Praise be!

All Soldiers: Praise be. Praise be. Praise be. Praise be. (*and so on*)

*(The soldiers gather round a central figure, a leader in a mask: **V'Drata**. There is a dead girl lying beside him. Another girl is on her knees, in front of him. There is a ringlike visor over her eyes. She is in agonizing pain)*

Civilian girl: I believe! I believe! I believe!

V'Drata: (*clutching her throat, silencing her*) Yes. You finally do.

(He presses a handgun to her temple and pulls the trigger)

(The crowd cheers at the completion of the ritual)

V'Drata: (*turning to one of his soldiers*) Come. The end is upon us. And there is so much left to be done.

-----(*Cut back to **Boy** and **Mela** with **Tavas's** limp body. They reach the wall underneath the broken clock. **Mela** starts going through her bag*)

(she takes out a red gelatinous substance and smears it on the white bricks in front of her.)

Boy: What are you doing?

Mela: You'll see.

Boy: You said you'd get us out of here, this is a wall. What are we doing standing in front of a-

Mela: I said you'll see. (*turns toward the other end of the station*) Here Glix! (*makes animal calling sounds*)

(Each brick of a person-sized section of the wall begins changing colors, sizes, shapes, densities, states of being, chemical composition before returning to a shape that fits the original outline, but with totally different colors, textures, and compositions.)

Boy: Woah.

*(**Glix** returns)*

Mela: Who's a good boy, who's a good boy? (*Starts rustling his fur.*) (*beat. To **Boy***) Come on, this is our ticket out.

Boy: Wait, I'm not leaving without our Pixel

Mela: You have a *Pixel* with you?

Boy: Yeah, she's the one trying to lift the lockdown. I can't leave without her.

Mela: (*as more footsteps echo in the space, sounding closer to them*) You don't have a choice.

Boy: Yes, I do and this is it. (*on his phone*) Why can't I text her?

Mela: I got you off the grid, remember? Off the grid means off the grid.

Boy: Can't you put me back on so I can text Christine and then take me back off?

Mela: That's not how the program works.

Boy: Sounds like a crappy program, then.

Mela: (*pause*) Excuse me?

Boy: Look, I'm just saying why do we get to wait for your friend over here, but I can't wait for mine?

(*Glrix snarls*)

Mela: My friend is here, yours isn't. Sometimes life isn't fair. Now come on, let's go.

Boy: She's not just my friend, she's his friend too. (*indicating **Tavas***)

Mela: Yeah, and what happens to him if your friend doesn't come back?

(*pause*)

What would he tell you to do right now?

--Chapter 3: A Revolution, a UFO, and a Weapon of Mass Destruction.

(*At the Temple of Heroes, one of Mars' most famous landmarks; the center of religion and government. The **Ephors** sit together at one end. **Chief** stands at another. **The Governor of Mars** sits on a central throne. There is a **Condemned Ephor** chained to a*)

*central altar. The scene begins with **The Executioner** holding his sword over the head of the **Condemned Ephor** on the altar.)*

Ephor: Where are The Runaways?

Chief: We don't know.

Ephor: What do you mean we don't know, we knew a minute ago.

Chief: Well that was a minute ago. This is now, and now we do not know.

Ephor: What happened?

Chief: We're not sure.

Ephor: You're the Chief of Planetary Intelligence how can you be "not sure" where the God of Pluto is?

Chief: If it makes you feel any better, he's almost certainly dead. I'm not sure how anyone could have come out of that crash alive. Which means Sol should just be sitting right there.

Ephor: We are dealing with a matter of interplanetary security, I don't want any question marks. Governor Mallard, we are the last line of defense. If there is even the slightest chance that the runaways are still running, then we must assume that they are, and we must assume they still have Sol-

Chief: Which is why I have sent two of my very best men to confirm the matter.

Ephor: Two?

Chief: Galactic Enforcement Officers Jerod St. John and Ricardoss Barteaux. They're our closest agents to the landing site. They've been working undercover to track V'Drata and the inner circles of the Insurrection.

Ephor: You're sending... two?

Chief: If I had a third to spare, I'd use 'em.

Ephor: You don't just have a third, you have an army. You have armies upon armies of the First Born Union's finest soldiers.

Chief: Yes, and I need them to deal with this.

*(more footage of **The God Killer**, this time blasting the surface of the planet and flying around.)*

It landed near the Northern Ice Caps not long after the Runaways landed in Mercuria Station. Since then, it's been ripping apart everything it sees. We don't know what it is or what it wants. We just know that it's been following the Runaways since at least Venus. I'm terrified of what might happen if it reaches any of our cities, so I'm sending in our army to try to contain it. Have I explained to the Ephors how and why I do my job to their satisfaction?

(silence)

(The Governor claps)

Governor: Wow, Chief, I did not know you had that in you. I mean, you had Sydnar over here shitting in his suit pretty much the whole time, which doesn't mean much for the fate of the solar system but it does bring a smile to my face so good for you. It's refreshing to see someone actually try to do their job around here.

I want as much intel as we can possibly get about whatever the hell just landed in the ice caps, and I want that thing contained. But keep a contingent on the frontlines here; the second I give V'Drata a whiff of my underwear, he's gonna start sniffing, so don't give him one. Chief, get your boys into Mercuria Station and get that sword. May the Father watch over them. If he does, we'll be the first government in Marian history to stop a revolution, a U.F.O, and a weapon of mass destruction all at the same time. If he doesn't... well...

*(The Executioner swiftly cuts the **Condemned Ephor's** head off)*

For the good of The Father.

Ephors and Chief: Our Father.

---(Cut to Khatya St. John's bedroom. She's chilling, listening to music on her headphones just vibing and minding her own business.)

Jerod: *(bursting through the door)* Khatya!

Khatya: *(screams)*

Jerod: It's me! It's me.

Khatya: What happened? Is everything ok?

Jerod: Yes, everything's ok, but we need to go now. Do you have everything packed?

Khatya: What? No, you said we weren't leaving for // another hour.

Jerod: // Ok, just take what you have now and let's go.

Khatya: Wait, let me just pack some-

Jerod: Come on! We have to go now, we don't have time. *(They exit)*

-----*(cut to the streets of Mercuria City)*

V'Drata: Children of Mars. Students of the Truth. We have watched and we have waited. We have hidden our heads in shame. We have suffered at the hands of a god who is not our own. And we will not suffer any longer. The time has come for vengeance. Praise be.

Insurrectionists: Praise be.

V'Drata: The time has come for purity. Praise be.

Insurrectionists: Praise be.

V'Drata: The time has come for freedom from the long, unending night. Praise be!

Insurrectionists: Praise be!

*(screaming, shouting, cheering from the **Insurrectionists**)*

V'Drata: The age of shadows is over. The age of greed and impunity shall henceforth cease. On this night, we are The Insurrection. On this night, we show the world the Truth our Goddess gave us. On this night, we shall fight until we set our Savior free. And tomorrow, she will free us in return.

-----*(cut to a car.)*

Khatya: Where are we going?

Jerod: Mercuria Station.

Khatya: Why are we in such a rush?

Jerod: I've gotten into a lot of trouble with the wrong people. Some of them might try to stop us from leaving.

Khatya: Why don't you tell V'Drata?

Jerod: I kind of already have.

Khatya: What did he say?

Jerod: He said you should stop asking questions and let me focus on driving.

(pause)

Khatya: Where's Ricki?

Jerod: He's back there.

Bartez: Hi.

Khatya: *(startled)* Oh! Have you been back there the whole time?

Jerod: Did you really just ask that?

Khatya: I've just never heard him that quiet before, *(to Bartez)* You ok back there?

Bartez: Yeah, I'm fine.

Khatya: You sure? *(she starts to open her bag)* I can get you something-

Jerod: He's fine. Although, I'm glad to see the medkit made the trip.

Bartez: I've just got a headache, that's all.

Khatya: I can get you something for that-

Jerod: Sis. Let the man be.

Khatya: Fine. *(she zips up her bag and she starts to pray)*

Jerod: In a few short minutes we'll be there anyway. Ricki will get the ship ready, and you and I are gonna be on lookout duty until he's done. Then we're gonna get on the ship, take off, and then we'll have plenty of time to tell you all about our crazy night. Now do you- *(He notices Khatya praying)* What are you doing?

Khatya: *(as if the answer was obvious)* Praying.

Jerod: I'm talking to you.

Khatya: Yeah, and I'm praying.

Jerod: *(beat)* ok.

Khatya: What?

Jerod: Nothing, go back to praying.

Khatya: *(beat)* Ok, fine, I will.

--Chapter 4: The Spark

(As if a memory)

*(Mela is kneeling on the ground, shivering, bloodied. Two guards hold her in place. She wears a visor like the one we saw **Civilian Girl** wearing earlier. **V'Drata** stands over her.)*

V'Drata: The Goddess of Mars has chosen you to bring the boy to her. It is as she whispered.

Mela: As she whispered.

V'Drata: You have been offered a second chance.

Mela: I am grateful for this.

V'Drata: Will you deliver the boy?

Mela: I will do anything my Goddess asks of me. I will find him, I will bring him, and by all the gods at once, I will set her free.

V'Drata: The boy will set her free. And for your sake, I hope you will remember your place when he does.

*-----**(Cut to the inside of a space shuttle, carrying The Boy and Mela over Mercuria City. The Boy looks out the window and sees the rioting and destruction and destruction taking place below.)***

Boy: That's not all for us, is it?

Mela: *(She exits prayer)* Don't flatter yourself. That right there is the result of a literal millennium of religious suppression. Those people are trying to topple the Union and finally free our

goddess, they have no interest in you. But the Union is very interested in you. Which leaves you, who are you two interested in?

Boy: No one. *(referring to Tavas)* Well, I guess he's interested in a doctor right now, but we're both just trying to get to Jupiter.

Mela: Good luck with that.

Boy: I'm well aware of how difficult it is.

Mela: I don't think you are, otherwise you wouldn't be trying.

Boy: Then you clearly don't know me as well as you think you do.

(Glix growls at the Boy)

Mela: Shhh, Glix, he's a friend. A friend. *(to Boy)* Here, pet him.

Boy: I'll pass.

Mela: You want him to not eat you?

(The boy slowly reaches out to pet Glix. It goes well)

There we go. See? Not so bad. He's the sweetest murroid in the solar system once you get to know him.

(Their hands briefly touch.)

(Some time.)

Boy: Why are you helping us?

Mela: *(long pause)* Remember how I said the government was very interested in you?

(The Boy nods)

I don't really like the government a whole lot. When they're unhappy, I'm usually happy. And they're REALLY unhappy right now.

Boy: But they'll only stay unhappy for as long as they can't find me-

Mela: Oh, they can't find you.

Boy: Not even a chance?

Mela: They have absolutely no clue where you are right now. Far as they know, you landed in Mercuria Station and disappeared into another universe.

Boy: And there's no way they can relocate us?

Mela: Nope, we're gone.

Boy: Not even the God Killer?

Mela: That's his name? *(pause)* I don't know for sure about him- or her, or whatever it is. But if there's a girl in this solar system who can hide you from that thing, it's me.

Boy: So no chance Christine could find us?

Mela: Unfortunately, no, but believe me, that's for the best right now. You've been chased a lot. You can finally relax a little.

Boy: Wait, how did you know that?

Mela: You think it was just the happiest coincidence that I just found you in Mercuria Station? I've been tailing you since Earth.

Boy: What? How?

Mela: Haven't I convinced you by now that I know how to stay off a radar?

Boy: Yeah, I guess.

Mela: You're welcome, by the way.

Boy: Thank you.

(pause)

Mela: Sorry if I was a little rough on you earlier today, I was in a hurry, you know?

Boy: Yeah, I understand, now. Sorry for not listening to you. I wasn't thinking straight.

Mela: Don't worry about it. We're safe now, including your friend here. When we get to the vault, I'll give him something that'll fix him up brand new.

Boy: And then get us some transportation to Jupiter?

(pause)

Mela: If you give me some time, I'm sure I can find you something that will get you off the surface. But getting through The Belt's a different story.

Boy: There's no way you could get us through The Belt?

Mela: Not without an I.D.

Boy: Can you get one?

Mela: My specialty is avoiding the Union, not infiltrating them.

Boy: There has to be a way!

Mela: There is a way. Just not the way you're thinking.

Boy: Tell me.

Mela: No one is sneaky enough to get past The Belt. But there is someone strong enough to go through it...

Boy: Who?

Mela: The Goddess of Mars.

Boy: Only the Last Born can get me through?

Mela: If you help her in return, yes.

Boy: What does a goddess need my help for?

Mela: Her freedom.

(silence)

Boy: Her freedom?

Mela: Her freedom.

Boy: No.

Mela: Why not?

Boy: It's just not... right.

Mela: *Right?* Says who?

Boy: I don't know, says-

Mela: Says every authority figure you've ever had in your life. You ever stop to ask yourself why?

Boy: She burned down a planet- her own planet!

Mela: She tried to protect it. She tried to protect it from this. (*motions to the Temple of Heroes as they pass over it.*) Tell me this planet is anything more than just a Union tourist attraction and a place to find men for The Belt.

Boy: There has to be something else; some other price that you can name.

Mela: Do you not want to do it, or do you only think he wouldn't want you to do it?

Boy: Little bit of both.

Mela: Who cares what he thinks?

Boy: Look, Mela, I don't know if you caught this during your espionage, but I'm the pilot of this duo. I make ships fly. I don't decide if setting the literal Goddess of Destruction free is the optimal course of action.

Mela: Who gave her that name? The Father. The First Born. The winners. They tell you she'll destroy you if you set her free. But what has she done for the last thousand years besides rot away in a cell? -While the governments of this planet have been harvesting her people for all the worth they provide.

(*pause*)

Look, whatever you think of him, Tavas is just another one of the winners. That doesn't mean he's bad, it just means that he has every reason to take that kind of decision personally. He can't think about what something like this means to us. You can.

This is your choice to make.

(*the last bits of the surface, with the Temple at the center, are finally obscured by clouds.*)

--Chapter 5: Memory of Moons

*(the faces of **Jerod** and **Bartez** appear on a screen. They are gaming, but from separate places. They're talking to each other over the Marian equivalent of Discord)*

Bartez: He's behind the corner-

Jerod: I'm right behind you-

Bartez: Make sure he doesn't stick me. MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T STICK ME!

Jerod: I'm covering. I'm covering.

Bartez: Ok I'm planting.

Jerod: Watch out watch out, they're both wrapping around on the right.

Bartez: Get back! What are you doing, get back!

Jerod: Nah, I'm gonna do it to em.

Bartez: No you're not. // No you're not. No you're not. No you're not! No You're Not!!

Jerod: I'm gonna do it to em. I'm gonna do it to em. Say goodbye to DADDY

(shot)

(immediate) double kill.

(shot)

Both: OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

(They celebrate excessively)

Bartez: Oh, man, that was gorgeous.

Jerod: That was a beauty.

Bartez: What a note to end on.

Jerod: Yeah, what a note to end on.

(pause)

You down for one more?

Bartez: Yeah, sure.

Jerod: Great.

(They start setting up for the next match)

(They're interrupted by breaking news about V'Drata's latest purge)

(a moment)

Jerod: Did you hear about the Kannadiy (*KAN - ə - dee*) girls?

Bartez: *(pause)* Yeah.

Jerod: Gone.

Bartez: They didn't make it? I heard about the robbery part...

Jerod: He purified them....

Bartez: *(pause)* Sweet Sunlight.

(silence)

Jerod: We can't just keep *sitting* here.

Bartez: What do you want me to do, man? Walk up to V'Drata and ask him to politely get in a police cruiser with us?

Jerod: I want you to politely put a bolt through his temple. He's a fanatic, Bartez. And now he's a paranoid fanatic. How long is it gonna take until he figures me out? Until he figures us out? What'll happen to Khatya?!

Bartez: I don't know, but I imagine it'll be a lot better than what will happen to us after V'Drata's bodyguards watch us kill their leader.

Jerod: I don't care as long as it keeps Khatya safe.

Bartez: Yeah! Then she'd have a dead mother *and* a dead brother!

*(pause. **Bartez** knows he's crossed the line)*

Of course, I only say that because she doesn't have to. We could...

Jerod: We could what?

Bartez: We could leave.

Jerod: We could abandon the mission?

Bartez: You give one word to Chief that our cover is compromised and she'll pull all three of us out.

Jerod: *You* can have that conversation with her, I'm staying right here.

Bartez: She wouldn't buy it coming from me, it has to come from you.

Jerod: Well, I'm not lying to my commanding officer, our cover is just fine.

Bartez: Our cover is the opposite of just fine, you said it yourself.

Jerod: No, I implied that our cover is *going* to be the opposite of "just fine" soon, but it's fine right now. If we strike first, we'll get him.

Bartez: We? How are you getting that close to him?

Jerod: I'm not, you are. He trusts you.

Bartez: Bullshit.

Jerod: Believe me, I wouldn't be asking you to do it if I thought I could get away with it.

Bartez: None of us are getting away with it, you're talking about a suicide mission, Jerod. I feel like that's the part you're failing to grasp.

Jerod: I'm not failing to grasp anything, Ricki, I'm just not afraid to die. You think I haven't considered what I'd be putting Khatya through? I don't need a lecture on what it's like to lose someone I love. It's hard. And it will be hard for her again. But you and I both know that this is how it has to be. One day, she'll see that too. She'll see a little girl just like her walking down the street, who has never known the fear that maybe today, a lunatic will cut her eyes out in order to please a disgraced goddess. I will not let Khatya die but I cannot let V'Drata live. And I'm willing to give my life if it means I won't have to choose.

Bartez: But what if you didn't need to give your life?

What if I told you V'Drata is planning a planet wide uprising next week, on the one thousandth recurrence of the Last Born's imprisonment.

Jerod: He's leaving the shadows?

Bartez: No, he's bringing the shadows to the rest of the world. But he'll be out in the open purifying everything he can see, as will every one of his soldiers. What if that's when we take him out-- in all of the chaos? Then we pick up Khatya and we go to Mercuria Station where, lo and behold, there's a transport waiting for us, courtesy of Ricki Bartez Enterprises. What if, after that, we could go anywhere?

Jerod: Government would have us arrested the moment we set foot in-

Bartez: *(holding up an I.D.)* Anywhere.

(beat)

Jerod: How did you get that?

Bartez: How do you think I got it?

Jerod: I thought you two weren't on speaking terms.

Bartez: HQ doesn't know that, they just see the last name. *(pause)* It wouldn't be easy, but it could work. Kill V'Drata, save Khatya, save ourselves as a bonus. Fly to, I don't know, Jupiter? Maybe one of the moons, we've got 79 to choose from. Find some girls. Settle down. Start over. *(He waits for a response. Jerod says nothing)* It's a lot to think about. Sleep on it and we can talk about it later. I'm sorry I brought up your mom like that... come on, you wanna play one more?

(The screen flicks off.)

--Chapter 5b

-----*(cut to Mercuria Station) (Crash Site and Control Room)*

Intercom: Attention all travelers. Please remain calm. A breach has been detected and a lockdown has been issued...

(Jerod and Khatya are in the Control Room. Bartez is at the crash site. The officers talk to each other through personal communication devices.)

Jerod: Bartez, are you ok?!

Bartez: Yeah, I'm fine. Come right now.

Jerod: What are you doing? You just let the entire city know that someone is in here, there's no way V'Drata's not coming-

Bartez: Something just landed in the station.

Jerod: What? What do you mean some *thing*?

Bartez: Crashed. Crash landed. It's on fire.

Jerod: And you want us to *come* to it?

Bartez: Yes. Now.

Jerod: I think you need to come to us. We're on the second floor in the control room.

Bartez: We need to find it.

Jerod: What are you talking about?

Bartez: ...

Jerod: Bartez, you're not making any sense, you need to come find us now... Bartez?...
Bartez?... DAMN IT!

Khatya: Is Ricki ok?

Jerod: Yes, Ricki's ok, he's just being difficult. I need to get to him. *(he tries to open the door, it doesn't respond.)* What's going on?

Khatya: It won't open.

Jerod: I can see that. *(he tries harder to open it. No avail.)*

Khatya: It must be the lockdown.

Jerod: I think you're right.

Khatya: Maybe there's something on here that could disable it.

(she goes to the security panel to look for something that might unlock the door.)

(Jerod gets a call. He makes sure he's out of earshot before answering.)

Jerod: Hello?

Chief: Have you seen Barteze? Is he drunk right now? I can barely understand a word he says!

Jerod: Yes. No. Agreed.

Chief: What's the matter with him?

Jerod: I'm no doctor, but getting bashed in the head probably had something to do with it.

Chief: *(beat)* Father forgive me-

Jerod: Chief, we need evac. Now.

Chief: No can do, we have an urgent mission for you.

Jerod: It's too late, Barteze and I blew our cover.

Chief: Forget about V'Drata! My coordinates have you at Mercuria Station, is that correct?

Jerod: Yes.

Chief: The Runaways are headed there, or what's left of them is.

Jerod: We finally got them?

Chief: Probably. But we need to be certain. Confirm it for us, and if Sol is still intact, retrieve it.

Jerod: What do I do if they aren't dead?

Chief: Let's hope it doesn't come to that.

Jerod: Do I have any back up on the way?

Chief: I'm sorry. It's just you two.

Jerod: Chief, V'Drata is coming after us!-

Chief: *(sharply cutting him off)* I am aware of the circumstances, officer St. John. We're in an extremely difficult situation right now at headquarters. The main concern is that Sol must be returned to us. At all costs. Once you have it, I'll evacuate you two immediately. Do you understand your orders?

Jerod: Yes Ma'am!

Chief: For the good of The Father

Jerod: Our Father *(call ends)*

(Jerod puts two and two together. He turns to Khatya)

Jerod: You got any idea how to use that thing?

Khatya: No.

Jerod: That's what I was afraid of. *(shoots the lock. Slides open the door)* Stay here.

Khatya: I'm coming with you.

Jerod: No you're not, you're staying right here. It's too dangerous.

Khatya: But you said-

Jerod: That's an order. I'll be right back. *(starts to leave)*

Khatya: I don't take orders from you!

Jerod: This is really not the time-

Khatya: First you told me everything's alright now you're telling me it's too dangerous to come along. Which one is it? If Ricki's in trouble I wanna help.

Jerod: Ricki's not in trouble, he just needs my help and I need your help. I need someone to watch the cameras here and tell me if they see anyone break in. I need to know where they are so I can avoid them. I need you to be my little birdy in the sky, will you do that for me?

Khatya: Don't talk to me like I'm still a kid.

Jerod: Then stop acting like one. *(pause)* Stay here and watch. Alert me if you notice anyone else. I'll be right back.

(As Jerod leaves, we see a memory sequence depicting flashes of the events between Jerod and Bartz's planning and Jerod picking up Khatya. The depiction is fragmented; like the memory. The location is unclear.)

Jerod: *(V.O.)* I would never have suspected Brother Ricardoss to be the turncoat.

V'Drata: *(to Jerod)* (V.O.) Rejoice, my student. We have found him just in time. *(V'Drata strikes Bartz over the head)*

(Jerod and V'Drata are standing over a kneeling Bartz. Bartz is bound, gagged and bloodied.)

(V'Drata twists one of the handles over Bartz's left eye. Bartz screams in pain as a screw is driven into his eyeball.)

V'Drata: Do you see it now? Can you finally see the truth?

Bartz: *groans* [yes]

V'Drata: Are you ready to become pure?

Bartz: *groans* [YES]

(V'Drata draws a handgun and gives it to Jerod)

V'Drata: *(to Jerod)* It is up to you now, my student. Redeem yourself before the Goddess above all Gods.

(Jerod takes the hand gun and hesitantly points it at Bartz.)

(He raises the gun towards V'Drata and pulls the trigger. The gun is empty.)

-----ACT II-----

--Chapter 6: Bad News

(At the Temple of Heroes. The Governor is absent from his throne, and the Ephors are scrambling/discussing inaudibly)

(We see Chief sitting around. waiting.)

(suddenly, Chief's phone begins to vibrate.)

(She hurriedly pulls it to her ear.)

Chief: Chief speaking. Have you found it?

(she listens to what he has to say, but the dialogue is inaudible to the audience.)

Intercom: All rise for the Governor of Mars.

*(she, along with the Ephors in the room, snap to attention as **Governor** strolls in)*

Governor: Status report.

Ephor: Well, sir, we have some bad news and we have some good news. Which news would you like first?

Governor: I'll take the bad. Give it to me straight.

Ephor: The God Killer has broken through our barricades in the ice caps and appears to be heading in the direction of Mercuria City.

Governor: Alright.

Ephor: V'Drata's Insurrection has taken control of roughly 15% of the city-

Governor: Is that all? I'll only get madder if I find out you watered anything down.

Ephor: ... V'Drata's Insurrection has taken control of roughly 50% of the city, mostly poor residential areas and the abandoned manufacturing sector. Similar revolts are happening across the planet.

Governor: Sounds good.

Ephor: We still don't know if The Runaways survived the crash. Officers Jerod St. John and Ricardoss Barteaux are scouring Mercuria Station for Sol, but have not found it yet.

Governor: Ok... And what's the good news?

Ephor: There is no good news, sir. I was just watering it down.

Governor: *(To **Chief**)* How long is it gonna take your boys to find Sol?

Chief: It shouldn't take them long, sir. I was-

Governor: I wanna put some more boots in there if it means we can find it faster.

Chief: We need all our boots here to defend the city. We have refugees pouring in who need to be cared for, and we cannot underestimate this God Killer's strength. He could wipe out everything if we aren't careful.

Ephor: Sir, there's one more piece of bad news.

Governor: Alright, let's hear it.

Ephor: V'Drata is sending a broadcast out now.

Governor: WHAT?

Ephor: He's broadcasting.

Governor: No, I heard what you said. Put it on now, what's he saying?

V'Drata: (V.O.) Soon, you will all bear witness to the Truth...

Governor: That's Mercuria Station. What the hell is he doing outside of Mercuria Station?!

Chief: I don't know, but whatever it is, it can't be good.

Governor: Why is he just standing outside of it? Why isn't he going in? Does he know? How come I don't know if he knows? Isn't that what I pay you people for? I'm sitting in the middle of a circus act, and everyone's looking at me like I'm the Father forsaken clown! What is V'Drata doing within pissing distance of Sol?

Ephor: (*Innocently*) Maybe we'll find out if we listen to the message.

(*The **Governor** shoots that **Ephor** on the spot.*)

(*Long pause*)

Governor: Now... Does anyone else have any bad news they'd like to share?

(*pause*)

Chief: Sir, there's one more thing you should know...

--Chapter 7: The God of Pluto

(*As if a memory*)

Tavas: What would you give to meet your dad?

Boy: Well I'd give just about anything.

Tavas: What if I could take you to him. At the edge of the solar system. (*beat*) Would you come with me?

*(The ship carrying **Boy** and **Mela** lands. An agonizing moan bellows. It is pitch black.)*

Mela: We're here.

*(The **Boy** throws **Tavas** over his shoulder. They step out of the shuttle and into a dark expanse of apparent nothingness. The characters are illuminated so that the audience can see them)*

Boy: I can't see anything.

Mela: Just follow my lead.

(She guides him into the chamber. There's another moan, even louder)

Boy: *(startled)* Aah!...

Mela: Don't worry, I've got you. Come on, it's only a goddess.

Boy: Where is she?

Mela: Behind this. *(she places his hand on the gate in front of them)* She's been locked up for a thousand years. But tonight, we set her free.

Boy: ...

Mela: *(referring to **Tavas**)* Put him down.

Boy: But what if I can't find him again?

*(**Glix** is heard whimpering)*

Mela: Stay Glix. Stay. Staaaaaaay. Good boy. *(back to the **Boy**)* He'll stay right by Tavas, ok? And with this little guy on duty, he's not going anywhere.

Boy: Ok. *(Gently puts **Tavas** down.)*

Mela: Come on, the sooner you free her, the sooner I can bring back your friend. I can't see him now, but he didn't look like he had much time left on the ship, and I doubt he's gotten any better.

Boy: *(referring to **Tavas**)* How do I know you'll save him if I do it?

Mela: You don't. But I will. You can trust that or you can stay right where you are. Either way, his clock is ticking, and it's running out a lot faster than mine is.

(Another moan from behind the gate)

Boy: What do I have to do?

Mela: *(leading him to the center)* The lock is right here. Press this button when you've found the combination.

Boy: I don't even know what I'm supposed to do, how does this thing work?

Mela: At the center of the lock stands a figure, he looks into the horizon and watches where the ground meets the night sky. He gazes in awe at the majesty of its emptiness, until a handful of iridescent moons rise from the surface and spoil the view. Their bright pinks and yellows and greens and reds stain the night sky and he calls out to the gods for a celestial remedy. Using the rotating gears, alternate the planetary satellites until the figure can only see the colorless new moons. When no color is visible to the figure, the Goddess will be unsealed.

Boy: Did you memorize all that?

Mela: Yep.

Boy: Wait- what? How?

Mela: It's inscribed right below you.

Boy: *(looking closely at the base)* You can read that?

Mela: Not with my eyes. With my fingers. Believe me, you get used to it around here.

Boy: *(trying to read with his fingers)* At... the... canto-center...

Mela: Yes, at the center, there's a guy, there's some colored moons in front of them and he doesn't wanna see them anymore so start moving them around!

Boy: Why's he got a problem with colored moons?

Mela: I don't know, I didn't write it! Please just start moving the moons.

Boy: Ok, ok! Uh... *(he fiddles around with the lock)* Wait a minute, this feels like... Oh, it's like an orbital puzzle.

Mela: You've seen this before?

Boy: Something like it, yeah. Bunch of little orbs floating around the center, and you've gotta match the colors up to their respective quadrants. They're pretty popular back at home. I used to solve them all the time as a kid. Although, I've never done one this large -

Mela: Whatever! Just solve it!

Boy: I'm working on it! It's kinda hard when you CAN'T SEE THE COLORS...

*(A violent shake rocks the entire cave. The characters fall down. **Glix** is heard scampering. They begin to get up slowly.)*

Mela: What was that?

(another violent shake)

(a series of smaller shakes continues rocking them intermittently)

Boy: Oh no...

Mela: What?

Boy: Mela, I think your clock is running out a little sooner than you expected.

Mela: *(another big shake)* That's impossible! I hid you. How did it find us?

Boy: Doesn't matter. Revive Tavas.

Mela: Not until you open that lock

Boy: I can't open up the lock if I can't see it! If you revive Tavas, he can illuminate Sol for us, and that'll give me enough light to work.

(pause)

Mela!

Mela: Alright, alright! *(she quickly, but carefully makes her way to an alcove where she retrieves a small glowing red vial. She makes her way to **Tavas**)* Before you freak out, I'm just letting you know that this stuff *really* hurts. So he's probably going to wake up screaming, but he's gonna wake up.

(she begins administering the medicine)

This stuff is called "Tears of the Empty Socket" And you better thank me cause this is my last vial. It's super rare and hits super hard, but it-

Tavas: AAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHH

AHHH

AHHH

AHHHHHHHHHHH

FATHER FORGIVE ME. HO HO... AHHHHhahahahaaaaaaaaa.

Boy: Tavas! Tavas are you ok? How do you feel?

Tavas: *(beat. Suddenly pacified. Somewhat astonished)* Better. *(beat)* Although, I can't see anything-. *(He draws Sol and illuminates the room)*

Boy: Tavas! *(he starts to move toward him but-)*

Mela: *(drawing a knife directly to Tavas' throat)* Stay right there!

Tavas: Woah woah WOAHI!

Mela: *(to the Boy)* Not until you meet your end of the bargain.

Tavas: Are those the Gates of Alexios? Are we in Olympus Mons? *(pause)* *(to the Boy)* What's your end of the bargain?

Boy: I'm gonna set the Last Born free.

Tavas: Are you insane!?

Boy: Name me my other options.

Tavas: Literally anything but that. *(inspecting his pockets)* Christine! *(realizing she's not there)* Christine?!

Boy: You were dying, I was blind, Christine is lost somewhere in Mercuria Station and The Godkiller is blasting his way through the mountain to come kill us. I think that brings you up to speed. If you have any alternative ideas for getting us out of here, I have a very open mind right-

Mela: Shut up! Both of you! *(to the **Boy**)* I did my part, now you do yours...

--Chapter 8: Not for Justice...

*(back at the initial crash site. **Jerod** is running towards **Bartez** who lingers near the ship wreck.)*

Jerod: Bartez!

*(**Bartez** turns and aims in **Jerod**'s general direction)*

Hey! Hey, it's me. It's Jerod. Put your weapon down, it's ok.

What's the matter? What did you see?

Bartez: Someone- something's-- I don't know, man.

Jerod: You saw something?

Bartez: Yeah there was this Murroid and it kept running at me-

Jerod: Woah, take it easy there. Mercuria Station has a few of those. How's the ship, is it ready?

Bartez: I can't fly.

Jerod: What do you mean?

Bartez: I can't fly like this. My brain, my eyes, I can't.

(pause)

Jerod: Well then, we've got to find Sol, come on.

Bartez: They have it.

Jerod: They? Who's they?

Khatya: Jerod!

*(we see **Khatya** running as fast as she can to them)*

Jerod: Khatya, what are you doing here, I told you to stay put!

(she shows him the footage on her phone. He stares in disbelief.)

Khatya: I tried calling you, but your phone wasn't picking up. It's The Runaways...

Jerod: We've gotta find them.

Khatya: What about the mission?

Jerod: This is the new mission: Find the Runaways. They have to be in here somewhere, Ricki must have locked everything down in time.

Bartez: Gone.

Jerod: What? Where, where did they go, we'll find them.

Bartez: Through there *(pointing to the wall **Boy, Mela, and Tavas** went through in chapter 2.)*

Jerod: That's a wall, Ricki. Come on, let's just find them and we can get you home.

Khatya: Ricki, are you ok?

Jerod: He's fine, Khatya.

Khatya: No he's not! We need to get him help, straight away.

Bartez: I'm fine.

Jerod: See, he says he's fine. Now please go back to the control room.

Khatya: I'm not leaving him like this.

Jerod: *(beat. Unsure what to do)* You know what? Fine, stay with him if you want. Look for those Runaways if you wanna be extra helpful. You can look over here, and I'll go look over here.

(Jerod heads to a different section of the crash site)

And watch out for murroids! *(he takes out his phone)*

Chief?

Chief: (V.O.) Chief speaking. Have you found it.?

Jerod: Chief... They're alive.

-----*(cut to the Temple of Heroes)*

Governor: *(to Chief)* You told me they were dead!

Chief: I told you they were almost certainly dead and that my men were on it-- my best men!

Governor: Oh how consoling. The entire Insurrection is about to pour into Mercuria Station and seize the most powerful weapon in history, but I can rest assured knowing that all *two* of the guys we have in the station are the best two guys we have. This is ridiculous-- I want boots on the ground in Mercuria Station as soon as Fatherly possible.

Chief: Governor Mallard, I regret that I have damaged your trust in my judgement, but that thing *(referring to **The God Killer**)* is here. It is ripping open Olympus Mons. We need to continue to contain this God Killer and we need to start evacuating the city, it's people are in danger. My men will get you the sword in time.

-----*(cut to the Crash site at Mercuria Station)*

*(**Khatya** and **Bartez** are inspecting the station, **Bartez** is checking out the wall below the broken clock)*

Bartez: Come on, you stupid bastard, open up. Open up!

Khatya: Ricki, if you tell me one more time that you're fine, I will beat you over the head until you tell me that you aren't.

Bartez: *(sigh)* I'm not fine.

Khatya: Thank you. *(she takes off her bag and opens it up)* Where does it hurt?

Bartez: Everywhere.

Khatya: Ok, well then take this *(she takes out some stronger medicine and gives it to him.)*

Bartez: Ah...

Khatya: Feeling better? That should numb the pain for now. *(she reaches to take off his helmet)*

Bartez: No.

Khatya: I'm sure I've seen pictures of worse, come on- *(she starts to take it off)*

Bartez: *(He grabs her wrist.)* Please. I don't want you to see me like this.

Khatya: Why can't you just tell me what happened? What is going on right now?

(pause)

Bartez: Make me one promise, and I'll tell you everything.

Khatya: Everything?

Bartez: Everything.

Khatya: *(beat)* Ok.

Bartez: You're a good kid, Khatya. Whatever you do... don't take it out on your brother.

-----*(cut to the Temple of Heroes)*

Governor: Y'know, I read a few reports about your vaunted officers and I discovered that they've been undercover for four years. I don't care if you're the First Born himself and you wake and sleep at the altar of the Father, you spend that much time that close to a prophet-

Chief: Jerod St. John is an exemplar of loyalty and service. He would never betray this planet because he would never forget what its opposition did to him.

Governor: And what about Bartez?

(beat)

Chief: He's a gifted officer who St. John has had no trouble keeping in line.

-----*(Cut back to the crash site at Mercuria Station.)*

Jerod: Come on! What are you guys doing? We don't have time to sit around...

*(he notices **Bartez** lying down; seemingly unmoving)*

-----*(Cut back to The Temple of Heroes.)*

Governor: That's not what I heard. I heard he asked a commandant for the keys to a long distance freighter and access to The Belt. That commandant's last words were that Bartez was planning to escape tonight with two others. You see, it seemed a little too convenient that your best men were just *right* there at Mercuria Station waiting for the Runaways to land...

-----(*Cut back to the crash site at Mercuria Station.*)

Jerod: (*running up to him*) Barte! Are you ok? (**Barte** moves and groans)(**Jerod** sighs in relief) Don't scare me like that. Come on, we've still gotta find Sol.

Khatya: Why didn't you tell me?

-----(*Cut back to The Temple of Heroes.*)

Governor: (*as he pulls up footage on the screen*) ...Speaking of which, we finally tapped into the Mercuria Station security cams and... would you look at this, I'm told that that is Jerod St. John's sister, now what do you think she might be doing there? I can't imagine they have too many "bring your kid sister to work" days within the ranks of religious terrorists.

-----(*Cut back to the crash site.*)

Barte: Khati, don't do this. He only wanted to-

Khatya: Shut up, Barte.

-----(*Cut back to The Temple of Heroes.*)

Governor: The Ephors have begun to doubt your mens' integrity, but I'm beginning to doubt yours, Chief. What I don't doubt is that we need to flood Mercuria Station with every soldier we have until it has been washed of Insurrection. We will not let Sol fall into V'Drata's hands. (*beat*) I'm sending in every soldier we have ready

Chief: I'm afraid I can't let you do that sir.

Governor: Well, then it's a good thing you can't stop me either.

(*A **Guard** handcuffs **Chief** while the **Ephors** watch*)

Governor: Your time is up, Chief.

-----(*Cut back to the crash site.*)

Khatya: Why didn't you tell me?

Jerod: Tell you what?

Khatya: You still won't tell me!- You are unbelievable.

Jerod: Tell you what, Khatya? I don't know what you're talking about.

Khatya: Ricki told me about everything.

Jerod: Ricki is a little brain damaged, bud (*to Bartz*) no disrespect. (*back to Khatya*) Might not wanna take everything he- [says as something grounded in reality]

Khatya: Oh yeah?! How did he get the brain damage, huh? What do you think happened?! You think maybe V'Drata cracked him over the head or something? Right before half purifying him? Why would V'Drata wanna do a thing like that? Is it because maybe you were planning to kill him?-- Kidnap me right after and go to some remote alien hideaway? But that can't be true. That isn't the Jerod I know. The Jerod I know would never uproot his sister from her entire world to go on some fake mission for The Last Born. Unless he just so happened to be an undercover Galactic Enforcement Officer on a Union Payroll!

Now do you know what I'm talking about?!

(*silence*)

Jerod: I was going to explain everything on the ship.

Khatya: Why?

Jerod: This is why. This, right here, is exactly why.

Khatya: No, why did you hide it in the first place?

Jerod: To keep you out of danger. Which is why Uncle Ricki should never have told you in the first place!

Khatya: I was in danger the minute you started spying on V'Drata whether I knew about it or not, so don't give me any shit about keeping me safe. Why did you lie to me that this was happening? Why did you lie about who you are?

Jerod: Because I never wanted you to live my life, Khatya, I never wanted you to have to deal with *this*. Sure, I liked that I didn't have to worry about my kid sister slipping up around the wrong person. And yeah, maybe having a sibling so wrapped up in her beliefs helped me get a little closer to V'Drata; helped me save a few more lives. But the minute I entered V'Drata's life, I had to wear a mask that I could never take off. Tell me you aren't happy you didn't have to grow up in one too.

Khatya: Well, I'm glad you can take it off now. I barely even recognize you.

Jerod: We still have a sword to find, so you better get used to it. Say a couple prayers for us, maybe that'll help.

Khatya: Fuck you!!

(some machinery near the exits begins to whirr and hum)

Jerod: You wanted to grow up, Khatya. This is what it looks like. Welcome to the real world.

Khatya: Oh like this is all something I somehow asked for? You want me to thank you for ruining my life?!

Bartez: Guys.

Jerod: I ruined your life? I ruined your life?? I'm the only reason you're still here right now, and not rotting away in some Father forsaken dumpster!!

Bartez: Guys!

Khatya: I'd rather be a corpse than the sister of a filthy turncoat!!

(The gates suddenly lift up. Everyone is dead silent.)

*(Standing outside and staring at them is an army of **Insurrectionists** led by **V'Drata**.)*

--Chapter 9: The Night of the Thousandth Recurrence

-----*(Cut to the Vault of Olympus Mons. **Mela** is still holding a knife to **Tavas** while the **Boy** is scrambling to solve the puzzle. He seems to be in the zone.)*

Mela: How's it coming?

Boy: Almost done, should be open... now!

-----*(Cut to the Mercuria Station Control Room. **Christine** lifts the lockdown and opens up the sealed entrances.)*

Intercom: The lockdown has been lifted. Thank you for your cooperation.

Christine: [Excited beeps]

-----*(Cut back to the Vault of Olympus Mons.)*

(The Gates remain sealed)

Mela: *(restraining her anger)* This isn't funny.

Boy: I wasn't joking! It should be open, why are they-- *(noticing that there are still a few colored moons in the figure's line of sight)* wait, what? I thought I-- did I mess up the algorithm?

Mela: I brought him back, I will take him right away!

Boy: No! Please, I'm not stalling. I did the algorithm, I don't know why there are still moons in the way.

-----*(cut to the crash site.)*

Bartez: Get down! *(Bartez shoves Jerod and Khatya into cover)*

(An Insurrectionist opens fire and shoots Bartez in the head.)

Jerod: NO!

(More Insurrectionists open fire. Khatya pulls him closer to her so he's not looking at Bartez's corpse.)

Khatya: Don't look at him. You can't right now, you understand?

-----*(Meanwhile, back in the volcano, we see Boy working on the puzzle, struggling with it.)*

Boy: This is all wrong, the algorithm isn't working!

Mela: Then use a different one, I don't know!

Boy: There is no different one, there's only one! That's how you solve these things. The moons just won't go away. There's-

Mela: *(V.O. distant; as if a voice in the Boy's head)* Not with my eyes. With my fingers.

-----*(cut back to the crash site.)*

V'Drata: CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!

(the soldiers stop firing)

(He motions to one of his soldiers to start broadcasting. That soldier takes out a device and starts filming)

We have surrounded you, my former student. There is no escape. Discard your weapon and come forth.

Jerod: You want me, come and get me.

V'Drata: Your fellow turncoat has made his choice, but you are not yet beyond redemption.

Jerod: Whatever sick designs you have in mind for us, V'Drata, I'm not giving you the chance.

V'Drata: I said nothing of the girl, did I not? If you wish so desperately to see her spared in this life then your cooperation is required.

Jerod: You would let her go?

V'Drata: If she wishes to crawl in hell alongside her mother then so be it. But I know you see the errors of the Union. I know you understand the suffering they have caused. Renounce your oath to them and you may still find favor before it is too late.

-----(*Cut to the volcano*)

(*The **Boy** is thinking*)

Mela: (*V.O. similarly distant.*) When no color is visible to the figure, the Goddess will be unsealed.

(*The **Boy** looks at the figure's face*)

(*He places his thumb over the figure's eyes*)

-----(*Cut to the crash site*)

Jerod: I will never kneel before a monster who uses the promise of an afterlife to give him power in this life.

V'Drata: You are a traitor to your entire planet. You are a deceiver, a cheat, and a spindler of lies. You would seek to silence the voice of The Last Born herself- there is no creature more monstrous than this. But your manipulations have not tainted our cause; they have not spoiled our purity. And you will let me prove this to the world here and now. Or I will gut the child while you watch.

Jerod: You will do no such thing.

V'Drata: (V.O.) Then you will fight me, hand to hand-- And I will show them upon whom our Savior smiles.

-----(*Cut to the volcano*)

(*Click*)

(*The **Boy** has pressed the button.*)

--Chapter 10: The Price of Loyalty

-----(*Back in the volcano, The gates begin to open*)

Mela: You did it! (*she runs up and hugs the **Boy** firmly*) I knew you could do it. She knew you could do it... she...

(*as the gates draw open further, they all gaze into the darkness as **The Last Born** emerges.*)

(***The Last Born** cripples **Tavas** and holds him in place with her powers*)

The Last Born: Little brother... it's so nice to finally meet you.

(***Tavas** struggles against **The Last Born's** grip, but without success*)

(***The Last Born** appears to be absorbing energy from **Tavas**.)*

Boy: Let him go!

(***The Last Born** attempts to grab the **Boy**, but he blocks it with Sol*)

Mela: Wait... My queen of queens.

The Last Born: The girl speaks?

Mela: (*beat*) she does... if her Goddess will so gracefully listen.

The Last Born: And what does the girl have to say?

Mela: Forgive the boy. He still has much to learn but I am happy to teach him for you.

The Last Born: To teach the boy is to keep the boy around. What use have I of such an ill mannered child?

Mela: He's not a child. He's bright, he's bold, and he understands the cause we're fighting for! I've shown him how the Union has desecrated your home, and he believes in your truth!

Boy: Yes, I believe in your truth.

The Last Born: The boy is merely my brother's puppet. He will do however his god commands him. *(she strengthens her grip)* And for that, he will join him.

Mela: No, my goddess, the boy is free now. He chose to open the gates!

Boy: I did.

The Last Born: You mean he chose at Tavas's suggestion.

Boy: No, in spite of it!

The Last Born: Oh really? *(Turning to Tavas)* What *did* he have to say, I'm dying to know...

Boy: He had his reservations, but-

The Last Born: *(She tightens her grip on them both)* I can't imagine why...

(Tavas is suffering, and Boy is struggling against the force of The Last Born's grip.)

Mela: The boy had his reservations too. But he listened and he changed; he knows now what The Union truly is. And he can do something about it. He carried The solar system's most prized possession from Mercury to Mars; not even my father could have served you so highly. This is no ordinary mortal. Think of the service he could be.

The Last Born: You have spoken enough on the boy's behalf! I alone will judge if he is loyal, and I will judge if he is fit to serve.

Boy: Then let me speak!! *(she relaxes her grip on him)* What service?! Just tell me, just say what you want from me and I'll do it. Please. I opened the lock, I set you free, I did it all by my own accord; in spite of Tavas. And in spite of everything I'd ever been told about the fourth planet. So what's the service? Name it. I just released the literal Goddess of Destruction, there is apparently nothing I can't or won't do. I've given you your freedom, I'll give you anything else, and all I ask for in return is that you let us go, and give us some Father Forsaken transportation to Jupiter.

(pause. The Last Born releases her grip on Boy)

The Last Born: It appears you have served me well, boy, and I reward those who serve me well... You want a transport? It's yours. What about free passage all the way to Pluto?

You can have that too. No more chases, no more Unions, just an open pathway to the end of the system. I will let you continue on your Journey from the Sun. I will even let you keep Sol.

*(dragging **Tavas** toward the **Boy**, exposing his neck.)*

But I won't let you keep him.

*(**Boy** hesitates)*

Boy: I don't understand. Why?

Mela: It doesn't matter why, it matters that The Last Born decreed it.

Boy: Tavas is good, he means you no harm. He has done nothing to your planet or its people.

The Last Born: The blood of my Father runs through his veins, his very presence means me harm.

Boy: But he can leave. He can leave that all behind. He'll come with me and we won't stop until we are far, far away from everything on your world and everything you plan to do with it.

The Last Born: And how do I know he won't come back?

Boy: Because our business isn't here.

The Last Born: You claim to know his business?

Mela: No, my Queen, of course he doesn't think he knows the business of a god.

Boy: Yes. I think I do. I've been to half the solar system with Tavas, and watched every conceivable evil try to kill us. I ran with him. I bled with him. He is not the god you think he is.

The Last Born: Do not pretend for a moment that he is understandable to you. You are a mortal, and he is everything that you will never be. But that you could become right now. He is the only thing left in your way.

Boy: What? No. How? I wouldn't even be here if it wasn't for him.

The Last Born: But you are here now. The only question left is where do you want to go? And what are you willing to give in order to get there?

Boy: Not that. Anything but that. I will not let him go.

Mela: If you don't let him go then you'll be let go. By her right now or by Tavas down the road. You are a mortal and he is a god. If he decides he doesn't need you anymore there's nothing stopping him. No one can stop a god. Not even you.

The Last Born: But you could become one, right now. Sacrifice him to me, and I will make you my Vessel. Kill him, and I will give you powers beyond your wildest fantasies. Whatever you desire will be yours. Food. Wine. Women. Worshippers from every planet singing of your glory. Armadas at your beck and call, monuments erected in your name. Even the soul of your father.

(That gets to him.)

You set out to merely meet him, but together we can bring him back. What wouldn't your mother give to see her men again? What wouldn't your father give to go back home?-- To stand before his son and wrap him in his arms. His son-- a god, and a hero; his son, the savior of the solar system. How proud of his son would he be?

Let go of Tavas, and I will provide.

(Boy looks at Tavas for a moment. He goes up to him and raises Sol over his head. The volcano shakes)

Mela: This is your choice.

(The Boy charges up Sol. Winds up to cut Tavas's head off)

(The volcano shakes again)

Boy: No.

(Boy shoots an energy beam into the ceiling.)

(A figure falls from the ceiling, landing with so much force that it knocks everyone down)

(The God Killer has arrived.)

--Chapter 11:. The Dual Duels

Intercom: (V.O.) Union Forces 10 minutes to arrival.

-----*(cut to crash site at Mercuria Station. Jerod and V'Drata are back to the present time)*

(Jerod steps forward and meets V'Drata in the center of the space. There is a brief, almost reverent moment of acknowledgement. All eyes are upon them.)

(the ground shakes briefly, rattling some bystanders, but not the fighters)

-----*(cut to the vault at the heart of the volcano)*

*(During the fight sequence in the volcano, **The Last Born** and **The Godkiller** are fighting each other in the background. It feels like we are watching two titans go against each other with their occasional slow, colossal strikes. Meanwhile, though, we are focused on the ants fighting beneath them: **Boy, Mela, Tavas, and Glix**)*

*(**Boy** rushes to help **Tavas**. They head towards the entrance to the shuttle, but **Glix** is blocking the way.)*

*(**Boy** turns around and sees **Mela**. She draws her two daggers)*

*(**Boy** and **Tavas** are back to back.)*

Tavas: You think you can handle her?

Boy: Yeah.

Tavas: I mean the sword, you think you can handle the sword?

Boy: I guess we'll find out soon enough. You got Glix?

Tavas: What's a Glix?

Boy: The thing right in front of you.

Tavas: If I can handle a God Killer I can handle a Murroid.

Boy: Missed you, dude.

Tavas: Go get em, ace.

*(Both fight sequences start at the same time, we see starts of **Boy v. Mela**, **Tavas v. Glix**, and **Jerod v. V'Drata**)*

*(we focus on **Jerod v. V'Drata** first. Watch them fight. Seems pretty even.)*

-----*(cut to The Temple of Heroes.)*

*(The **Governor** is watching for developments at Mercuria Station)*

Intercom: (V.O.) Union Forces 5 minutes to arrival

*(Cut to the volcano, **Tavas** is just trying to keep **Glix** at bay. **Glix** almost gets him, but **Tavas** eventually wins and knocks **Glix** out. He's exasperated.)*

*(Then we go to **Boy** v. **Mela**. **Mela**'s combat experience is definitely showing, but the **Boy** is staying alive.)*

Mela: You had a choice. Billions have lived and died without a single chance to make a real choice, but you had one.

Boy: And I made it.

(combat beat)

Mela: You chose to defy a goddess.

Boy: I saw no reason not to.

Mela: Her name is the Goddess of Mars, how is that not enough for you?!

Boy: Because I am still a Mercurian. And Mercurians do not submit to tyrants.

Mela: She is your savior and you will show her respect.

Boy: Tavas is my savior. And he earned it.

*(That does it, **Mela** is **PISSED**. She starts whooping his ass. **Boy** is doing his best, but clearly overwhelmed)*

Mela: I showed you the tyrants! I showed you the suffering in the street! I brought you before the Goddess above all gods so you could do something about it. You had a chance to become a god and you threw it away.

*(**Mela** finally knocks him down and wins the fight.)*

Mela: Talk all you want about Tavas-- I'm the one who saved your life.

What did I earn?.

(beat. **Boy** is lying on the ground defenseless)

(**The Last Born** lets out a cry. **Mela** turns around to see her Goddess losing her fight with the **The God Killer**)

(**Mela** looks into the **Boy's** eyes. The **Boy** is staring back.)

(**Mela** rushes to protect her goddess. She notices **The God Killer** is standing inside the vault)

(**Boy** runs to **Tavas** and helps him up. They run into the shuttle and take off)

(Back to **Jerod** and **V'Drata**. Now **Jerod** is starting to falter)

(Meanwhile, in the volcano, **Mela** is trying to help, but has no idea what to do. **The God Killer** is clearly in control of the fight. She notices that **The Last Born** and **The God Killer** are right between the Gates of Alexios, with **The God Killer** standing inside the prison cell.)

(**Mela** runs to the lock in the center)

(**The God Killer** winds up for final blow)

(**Mela** presses the button on the lock.)

(The Gates begin to close, and **The Last Born** pushes **The God Killer** back.

(The Gates close, locking **The God Killer** inside.)

(**V'Drata** is now wiping the floor with **Jerod**.)

(He lands a brutal blow and knocks him down.)

Khatya: No!

----- (cut to the Temple of Heroes.)

(The **Governor** still watches)

Intercom: (V.O.) Union Forces 1 minute to arrival.

-----*(cut to the crash site)*

(V'Drata kicks Jerod while he's down)

(Khatya rushes towards the center, where they were fighting, but is stopped by two Insurrectionists who run to intercept her. They hold her back.)

Please no! Please don't take him from me!

(Khatya is completely beside herself)

Jerod: Help... me....

V'Drata: Citizens of Mars! This man has betrayed you.

And yet, even after all he had done, I still gave him a choice. *(kick)*

He chose the Union. He chose to test me and my strength.

(Jerod groans in pain)

And now he grovels for his life. Because he knows what awaits him once his life is finished. *(an Insurrectionist offers him a knife)* This is no Marian. This is a demon... And today we have defeated it.

(cheers from the crowd)

Khatya: *(drowned out by crowd)* Wait! Stop! PLEASE!

(V'Drata gets down on one knee and presses the knife against Jerod's neck)

(The broken clock rings)

(out of nowhere, the wall below the broken clock explodes)

(The explosion stuns everyone.)

(Boy and Tavas step forward from the hole, with Tavas wielding Sol.)

(All eyes and all cameras fall on the gleaming sword, bursting with energy)

*(Except **Jerod**, who grabs the knife from **V'Drata**'s hand and stabs him through the chin with it)*

*(**V'Drata** falls dead)*

(black)

--Chapter 12: The Eruption

The Last Born: (V.O.) And when that day arrives
I will not come to you for Justice
But Revenge.

-----*(cut to just outside the crash site)*

*(**Union Soldiers** finally arrive and open fire on on **Insurrectionists**)*

(chaos ensues as the Battle of Mercuria Station breaks out)

*(**Khatya** gets up. Sees the battle raging outside. Sees **Jerod** pinned down by **Insurrectionists**. One of them pulls a lockdown switch)*

Intercom: (V.O.) Attention all travelers. Please remain calm. A breach has been detected and a lockdown has been issued.

*(**Khatya** starts running toward the control room)*

-----*(cut to the vault at the heart of the volcano)*

The Last Born: Bring me the Boy, and bring me my little brother.

-----*(cut to The Temple of Heroes)*

Ephor: Sir, we have the Runaways completely surrounded. The sword will be yours in no time.

Governor: Very well then, some good news for the Chief before we give her the ole send off.

-----*(cut to the vault at the heart of the volcano)*

Mela: I am sorry to inform you that they have escaped...

The Last Born: ... escaped?

Mela: Yes...

The Last Born: Where are they?

-----*(cut to the crash site)*

(Boy and Tavas take cover as Insurrectionists shoot at them. Tavas watches as the Insurrectionists blast away at Jerod)

Boy: Look, our best shot of getting out of here is that ship.

(He points to the cargo ship where a group of Insurrectionists have taken cover)

Tavas: You mean *that* piece of junk?

Boy: It's a T-17, those things are built to last, we'll be fine.

Tavas: Can you pilot it?

Boy: Yes, I can pilot it.

(a blast narrowly misses him and he ducks)

Tavas: What do we do?

Boy: I think we go get some guns from that guy.

Tavas: What are we gonna do, just walk up to him and ask for them?

Boy: Yeah.

Tavas: Can we trust him?

(another blast)

Boy: I don't know, but he's the only one who isn't shooting at us, come on!

-----*(cut to the Vault)*

The Last Born: You saw them running away and you let them escape?!

Mela: I feared for your safety, I could not bear the thought of freeing you only to lose you.

The Last Born: *(swelling with power)* Who is it stands before you?! Some lowly sorceress?
Some weaver of tricks and traps? Or is it stands before you The Last Born Child of the

Sun? *(she tries to begin the eruption, but starts coughing and fading. Power simmers down. She is too weak from the fight.)*

Mela: I only wanted to protect you.

The Last Born: And now you have destroyed me.

Mela: You can still go after // the

The Last Born: // The Runaways are gone! *(beat)* The Union will retrieve Sol. Father will win. I will be locked away until the end of time. Why did I think you could redeem yourself?

-----*(cut to the Temple of Heroes)*

Ephor: Long live the Union! And long live the Governor of Mars!

(Chief is splayed out on an altar. Tied down.)

Soldier: Sir, your ship is ready.

Governor: *(to Ephors)* Well, I'm off to get my sword, but you can take it from here, can't you?

Ephor: With pleasure.

-----*(cut to the heart of the volcano)*

Mela: You believed in me because you are wiser than all the gods put together. You believed I could redeem myself because I can. Because I will. Believe in me again, and I will give you your revenge.

The Last Born: I had limitless power within my grasp and you let it slip away.

Mela: Give me one more chance, and you will have it back.

The Last Born: Just how exactly will a mortal give me dominion over Mars?

Mela: I won't just give you Mars. I'll give you the Union. I'll give you the Half-sibling realms. The Belt. The Sun. The edges of the Wasteland. All for you. I'll give you the entire solar system-

The Last Born: -If I give you my mind.

Mela: If you make me your Vessel.

The Last Born: I would need a sacrifice.

Mela: Then I will find you one. Send me after Tavas and his blood will drip from your altar. Name anyone in the system and I will bring you their head.

The Last Born: I have waited a thousand years to taste Marian air, I will not wait one minute more for you to fetch someone far away. How fortunate, then, that the only sacrifice I desire is waiting for me right here.

(Glix squeaks/whimpers)

-----*(cut to the Temple of Heroes)*

Ephor: Before the eyes of the Father and in the eyes of his children appointed to uphold his sacred word, you have been found guilty of the high crime of treason against the Father and against the First Born Union.

-----*(cut to the heart of the volcano)*

Mela: *(a moment of realization)* No, my Queen of Queens, he's done nothing wrong, he's only served you with the purest loyalty possible, and will continue to serve you so. I am the one who failed, let me re-

The Last Born: Silence! You let the God of Pluto escape from my altar. A pet is a pitious offering next to that, but I will accept it as a promise of so much more to come.

-----*(cut to the crash site)*

(Boy and Tavas are quickly making their way to the crashed ship)

(They slide next to a startled Jerod)

Boy: woah woah, easy there. Look, you don't want to get shot at, we don't want to get shot at, you have an extra gun. It's the beginning of every great friendship.

(pause)

(Jerod hands Boy his extra gun)

Jerod: You cover the left flank, I'll get these guys.

Tavas: Unbelievable...

(they fight. Shootout time.)

*(The trio are finishing off the last of the **Insurrectionists**. The last one starts to run away.)*

Jerod: *(To **Boy**)* Quick, hand me that. *(referring to the **Boy's** gun)*

*(He does so. **Jerod** aims and shoots the **Insurrectionist** from a long distance.)*

Boy: Nice shot, you really know your way with a-

Jerod: *(pointing one gun, maybe both if he's feeling extra, at the Runaways)* You're under arrest.

Boy: Oh come on!

-----*(cut to inside the **Governor's** ship. One of his soldiers is giving him a report)*

Soldier: Sir, we've cleared out the last of the Insurrectionists from the Station. We'll apprehend the Runaways momentarily.

-----*(cut right back to the crash site)*

Tavas: I don't know who you think you are, but I promise you this is neither the time nor the place.

Jerod: *(pulling up his phone)* Chief, I've apprehended The Runaways. With Sol. Requesting immediate evac.

Boy: You really don't wanna go through with that.

Jerod: Shut up! Listen to me. My boss only cares about the sword. If you put it down and back away, I'll say you got caught in some crossfire. But if you try anything funny, I will have no trouble forgetting that you helped me.

Boy: Officer, hear me out. I really-

Jerod: Kid, just step away, I am trying to save your life.

Boy: And I'm trying to save *yours*. You are in danger right now, everyone is. There is an enraged Goddess inside of that volcano, and if you can believe us, we just set her free.

Tavas: Woah woah, *you* set her free.

Boy: Yes!! Ok? I set her free. And last I checked she was having a friendly discussion with The God Killer over which of them deserves to live.

Tavas: We didn't stick around to find out who was right. But whoever erupts from that mountain top will be very intent on having that same discussion with us. And both of them will burn down this entire planet to prove they're right.

Boy: Point being, whatever reward you're hoping to cash us in for, you're not gonna be around to enjoy it for much longer. No one's gonna be around to enjoy anything much longer if we don't get off this planet now.

Soldier: (V.O.) *(Through the phone)* Copy that, Officer St. John. Chief's status has been compromised. We're sending an evac team your way right now. Governor wants the sword at all costs. Kill the Runaways if you have to.

*(Jerod steadies his gun(s) on **Boy** and **Tavas**) (long pause)*

Jerod: Either of you know how to fly a T-17 Maiden Class Cargo Ship?

(blasts suddenly ring out as Union soldiers are breaking through the lockdown barricades.)

Jerod: *(Handing **Boy** the keys)* Get to the ship, I'll cover you.

*(**Boy** and **Tavas** run to the T-17)*

(into his phone) Khatya, where are you?

-----*(cut to the control room)*

Khatya: Come on, come on, there's gotta be a way to unlock this...

*(An **Insurrectionist** walks in behind her.)*

Insurrectionist: Well, well, what do we have here?

Khatya: Stay back! Get away from me!

*(The **Insurrectionist** grabs her)*

Khatya: No! Stop! Please... Let Go!

*(**Christine** pops out of a vent and sees **Khatya** struggling. She starts aggressively flicking the **Insurrectionist**)*

Insurrectionist: Hey- what the- ow. ow! *(He lets go of **Khatya**. **Khatya** grabs the handgun from his holster and shoots him in the leg.)*

OOOOOOOWWWW OW. OH SACRED MOTHER HAVE MERCY. Please!... Make it st-

*(**Khatya** shoots him in the head)*

(silence)

*(**Khatya** looks at **Christine**)*

-----*(cut to the heart of the volcano)*

The Last Born: Show me your devotion, and I will make you more powerful than you can possibly imagine.

Mela: My Queen, surely there is a sacrifice more worthy of your name.

The Last Born: Do you do defy the judgement of The Last Born? Or do you do as she decrees?!

Mela: I will always do as my Goddess decrees, but I am begging of you. Just this once. Let me find another way. He's done nothing to deserve this fate.

The Last Born: Who has poisoned your mind with such ludicrous feelings? I offer you power, I offer you redemption, I offer you the sacred honor of being the Vessel to The Last Born. You would throw away your seat in history to keep a Murroid?

Mela: If he is no use to me then let me leave him be. Let him be free to live out the rest of his days in peace. At least let his last moments in this life be something other than a death at my hand. I can bring you governors, or generals, or any of the most despicable turncoats alive. Why must I betray my only friend?

The Last Born: Because I am all that matters! And soon, I will be you. You are asking to become a goddess and I must know that you are ready. A goddess has no friends, she has only those who would die for her, and those who live to destroy her. If you wish to wield my powers then you must abandon any wish for weakness. That is what a friend is to a goddess. Submit to me and only me, and I will make you my vessel. I will take you to every planet until all has been made right. We will find every traitor, and every scoundrel, and we will make them pay for what they did to us. Will you turn all this down for a murroid?

Mela: No.

The Last Born: Will you abandon everything you've worked for so that you can have a friend?

Mela: No!

The Last Born: Will you throw away your redemption to die in the shadow of a boy?!

Mela: NO!

(she stabs Glix)

-----*(immediately cut to the Temple of Heroes)*

(Chief's head gets cut off. The execution ritual is complete.)

Ephor: For the good of the Father!

All Ephors: Our Father!

(The ground begins to tremble)

-----*(cut to the crash site)*

*(Jerod is volleying fire at the **Union Soldiers** as the ground starts to tremble here too.)*

*(**Boy** and **Tavas** are both in the cargo ship. **Boy** is sitting at the helm.)*

Boy: *(calling out)* Come on St. John we gotta hurry! *(he starts firing up the engines)*

*(**Tavas** stands at the ship entrance and starts providing covering fire for **Jerod**)*

*(**Jerod** grabs the I.D. card from **Bartez's** body before taking off toward the ship)*

Jerod: *(Taking out his phone)* Khatya! Get to the ship now!

-----*(cut to the heart of the volcano)*

The Last Born: Oh the smell... the taste... the purity... How I have waited for this day!!

-----*(cut to Mercuria Station. At the entrance to the T-17. **Jerod's** holding soldiers off)*

Tavas: What are you doing? Close the door!!

Jerod: I'm not leaving without my sister!

Tavas: We can't wait any longer, that volcano is gonna blow!!

Jerod: I said I'm not leaving!! *(into his phone)* Khatya! Where. Are. You?!

Khatya: *(from a distance)* Right here!! *(**Khatya** and **Christine** are both running/floating toward the ship from the path to the control room)*

Boy: I see her! She's coming from the stairway. And so is... *(looking closely)* Christine!!

-----*(cut to the heart of the volcano)*

The Last Born Only in darkness.

Mela: May we finally see.

The Last Born: Only in solitude.

Mela: Are we finally strong.

The Last Born: Show me you are ready to become the Goddess above all Gods.

-----*(cut to Mercuria Station)*

Jerod: Come on, Khatya, hurry!!

Tavas: She's not gonna make it in time!

Boy: Yes she will! She's almost here!

-----*(cut to the heart of the volcano)*

The Last Born: Feel the blood of Mars coursing through your veins. Show me that you have what it takes to bring a system to its knees. Show me he has no more hold on you, and never will again. Tell him what you have learned! Tell him what you finally see!!

*(Over the course of this monologue, the two characters become one. **Mela** becomes **The Last Born's Vessel**.)*

Mela: That it was !!!

I have done it! I have set her free!

I have remembered my place,

and it is seated at the highest heavenly throne.

I am the Goddess of the White Planet,

Last Born of the Father and Mother;
Warden to a world that is no longer my own;
Free.
Free to make choices;
Free to exert my voice
And free to finally be heard;
Not in whispers, but in shouts,
And in every stretch of space within the system.
I am the eyeless queen,
ready at last to be gazed upon.
I am the rightful ruler of the subjects of Mars.
I am the daughter you disfigured
And the daughter you commanded to be whole.
And you will know my sockets still bleed
When I drown you in an ocean of fire and red.

(Olympus Mons erupts)

--Chapter 13: The Red Planet

*The ship takes off into space. It has successfully escaped, and we see that **Khatya** did make it in time, along with **Christine**. They, along with **Boy**, **Tavas**, and **Jerod** heroes are safe. They gaze out the window of the ship and watch the eruption. Red light pours out and blankets the sky, followed by dust and ash. Destroying everything. **The Red Planet** is born.*

Chorus: This is the story of a daughter
Robbed and rebuked
And left to show the world that she belonged.
This is the story of a burning temple
That perished long before it was knocked down
And long after the people had any chance to save it.
This is a story about sacrifices;
About the gods who built the rules
And the mortals who enforced them;
About broken dreams and fractured expectations;
And the story of how an illusion
Was finally and utterly shattered.

This is the story of Mars
The Red Planet.
Burned
And forgotten;
A relic of a time gone by.

But this is also a story of hope;
Of the refusal to give up;
Of the heroes who dared to believe
That this was still a world worth believing in;
And who learned that in the quest for what we want
We must never lose sight of what we have
Or who we are
Or why.

This is a story of loss
At the hands of something cold and uncaring.

This is a story of miraculous growth
In the face of unprecedented adversity.

This is the story of us,
And it wasn't supposed to go this way
But who says that it has to be over?

--Post Credits Scene--

(Inside The Last Born's prison cell, in the heart of Olympus Mons)

(Darkness and silence)

*(The Gates of Alexios slowly lurch open, casting light on **The God Killer**, sitting center)*

*(**The God Killer** looks up at a figure we cannot see. We can only see their shadow)*

Unknown voice: The debt has been repaid...

(cut to black)

--The End--