

The Enki Chronicles

Prologue

The League of Benign Sentience

Nibiru was the name of the home planet of a technologically advanced space fairing civilization in an obscure corner of the Milky Way galaxy (**Mul Kigal**" (𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵). They encompassed many worlds and exploited many others for things they wanted. Their material needs had been met many millennia in the past, but their hunger for More was insatiable. Where they originated and from what they had evolved from remains a mystery like most things in creation and beyond the scope of this story. For the purposes of this chronicle, they are the beginning, and the beginnings of us. They were called the Anunnaki (𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵), which was also the name given to their raiding parties, ironically it means "those whom from heaven came".

The universes are vast and strange. Stranger than you think, stranger than you Can think with your three-pound brain. So, for the purposes of this story let's keep it to our Universe, galaxy, and the beings that inhabit it.

There are many beings and inhabited worlds, how could there not be? Some benign and some not so much. They are at various levels of evolution. Some corporeal, some more ascendant and those who have ascended. The ascendants do not care what is going on with us meat beings and we don't know much about them. They are indifferent and busy with whatever ascendant beings do. We can't know and it doesn't affect us per se. Or we them, apparently.

Within the corporeal worlds there are various factions, groupings and leagues. One of the more semi-ascendant is called "The League of Benign Sentience" who feel they need to rein in some of the more heinous acts perpetrated by advanced beings upon each other and the less advanced. Kind of self-righteous, a bit snobby and condescending. They are definitely sentient, but benign depends on your point of view. They have noble intentions as viewed by our sense of morality, but they can be heavy handed and not always right. They are more advanced than some, not perfect.

The League meets periodically to discuss the general situation galaxy wide and what if anything they should do about it. The Anunnaki had been the subject of conversation for a few centuries. Things had come to a head lately with something that the Anunnaki had done many thousands of years ago, on Terra, our home world. Apparently, they could turn a blind eye, so to speak, to the rampages of the Anunnaki if they just exploited other worlds for resources and baubles and kept the killing of other species to a minimum. Not approved of but not worth interference.

But things had gone further on Terra. The Project Team that had come in after the initial survey and pacification troops, had gone too far. They had not only tinkered with the genetics of a species, but they had intermingled their own, more advanced genome with them. The last straw was they had failed to put in life span safeguards or destroy them on the way out. That would have been OK.

This was not the first offence the Anunnaki had committed, and they had been warned for several centuries over several “incidents”, and they were not contrite, they didn’t even deny the events. Also, Anu, the emperor and longtime dynasty leader had been rude to many of the members of the League, and their families. He had not made friends. He had made enemies. He thought it was amusing, and it made him feel powerful.

With this as background the League had decided to solve their problems with extreme prejudice. To set an example...For the good of the Whole.

In a specially constructed chamber devoid of ornamentation or instrumentation or time (time does not work like we think or are able to. More like an ocean than a river...), they met to vote on a rare and extreme solution to the Anunnaki.

Zephyriel, an avian from planet Aetheris.

“These guys really get to me. Not only did they break the rules, we are used to that, but they failed to mitigate risks. Now the inhabitants of Terra are advancing at a startling and alarming rate. They have become a threat.” Zephyriel, thought transmitted.

Drakara from planet Krylon, a bipedal reptilian whose daughter was offended at her wedding ceremony by members of the Anu royal family.

“They have operated recklessly and stupidly. For far too long. This is not an isolated incident, and they do not recant or apologies. They are not likely to change their ways” Drakara said.

Simianus, a primate representative from planet Cerebra.

“The beings on the world in question are truly not at fault and are distantly related to my species. We need to have a separate solution for them in this mess. With that caveat, I am authorized to vote Yes” Simianus, said in his deep basso voice.

Canisra, a Canine like being from Lupinara.

“I agree, they have a psychic bonding with our types and could be redeemed” Canisra barked in clipped tones.

Orangor, another primate representative “It depends on the original originating species they were gen-ered from. There are several on our planets who had to be eradicated. Warlike, psychotic” Orangor, sounded concerned, even scared.

Nibblox, a rodent being from Planet Nibblara.

“We can table what to do about the so called Adamas’s, Humans they call themselves, for now. We must settle the Anunnaki problem once and for all” Nibblox, squeaked. Nibblox had a personal axe to grind with MarDUK. Something about a gambling debt.

Cetoquix, from planet Aquarion. She was an 8-legged Octopus like being and from within her field contained globe of water Thought Transmitted “I quite agree with Nibblox, enough is enough. Everybody assumes we are too nice to do something drastic. An example must be set for all of the Sentiency, for the good of the Whole. Some rules must be followed or there will be chaos. If these so-called Humans keep advancing their technology, as they have been as of late, at such an exponentially exponential rate without a commensurate increase in wisdom, empathy and dare I say it, common sense, they will be on our doorsteps and committing atrocities unheard of since the bad old days. Of course, it is just as likely that they will kill each other off. That certainly is their trajectory. Anyway, back to the Anunnaki, our more immediate problem and the reason for this meeting.”

Merridex, another Aquarion. “Yes, so we must have consensus on this. It must be unanimous for such an extreme and final solution. If we can agree, then I think this will send the message to everybody, and I think it is fair considering. For the good of the whole.”

“Well, Simianus, as the Anunnaki are a relatively close relative of your kind, you get the final word. Do we Gama-bomb their system?” said Zephyrial

“I agree, the message must be sent, and it must be unequivocal. You just can’t do whatever your greedy heart’s desire, and at some point, there must be consequences, severe consequence. But let’s make sure to give the Humans a shot. They could be a useful part of our Sentiency. For the good of the Whole.”

“Then let it be so. I leave it to you all and your staff to make the arraignments. It must be secret, until it happens, and it must be spectacular. It must be final, and everyone must know that even though we are benign, we are effective in our leadership and not to be trifled with. For the good of the Whole. Thank you for your time”. And with that Zephyriel dissolved in a shower of particles of light followed by the rest of the league.

Book 1: The long trip

The Destruction of Nibiru

Nibiru was a beautiful planet. It had an advanced society, culture and technology. They had mastered Quantum space flight, teleportation and energy to matter transfer and reconfiguration. Then they had stopped advancing. They were in fact an example of an arrested culture. They remained emotionally immature and were satisfied with that. As there are many intelligent species in the universe, there are many levels of evolution. Usually, its linear and progressive. Rarely did a culture just stop at a particular point on the continuum between fire and ascendance. But not so with the Anunnaki. Maybe this was because one family had rested control over all facets of life. Maybe it was that this family's leader, Anu had managed to re-gen for millennia and ruled with a paranoid and narcissistic iron fist, demanding that all things stay as they were in his concept of perfection. Thankfully this doesn't happen often as societies on that path usually kill themselves off. That has happened, a lot, and you can see blasted worlds all over our galaxy. That is a good thing as societies with high tech quotients without an equal dose of empathy and self-awareness are capable of great mischief and destruction. If there is such thing as evil, that is it. Yet the Anunnaki had been ravaging the galaxy for thousands of years in their insatiable desire for More. And they were never happy or content. And they were stuck there.

They sent probes out to all corners of the galaxy looking for More. When they found some unique biosphere with things they hadn't thought of that looked shiny they sent raiding parties. These raiding parties were known by the inhabitant's (if there were any) by the name of the culture that had birthed them, and were also called The Anunnaki, which ironically meant "Those who from Heaven came" but what's in a name? After "pacification" by the raiding party forces a group of project specialists were sent down to retrieve the "goodies" from the planet. Nature makes things undreamt of by the scientists on Nibiru. They had lost their sense of imagination as it was ruthlessly stamped out of their genome by Anu, who saw it as a threat. He saw many things as a threat. Science like everything else had just stopped advancing with Anu's rule. It was good enough, it was perfect.

I suppose that the League could have just eliminated Anu instead of the whole system. But that had been tried both internally and by the many enemies that Anu's nature had produced and had proved undoable. If Anu and the Anunnaki were good at anything it was self-preservation and war. And let's be honest, there was a degree of pettiness and revenge in the League. They were benign, but just relatively. So, it came to be that the LBS members in great secrecy put together a Gama bomb, an outlawed technology built in the caves on Nibblox and sent it on its merry way to the star system of Nibiru. It entered the system stealthed and without warning plunged into Nibiru's star. There it unleashed a burst of great and horrifying energies causing the star to go nova. Within 20 minutes the entire system is engulfed, destroyed including Nibiru. The star then shrinks back down and becomes a very small black hole. Anu and his stagnant civilization are gone. Or mostly. There are still some small enclaves as well as a few raiding parties that were off planet or on leave.

One such Project Team was Enki's. They were taking some time off between Projects and were resting and relaxing on one of Enlil's asteroid mansions when Nibiru was destroyed. They were also directly responsible for the "mistakes" on our planet.

Let's travel back in time (or around the ocean or however it works) to when Enki and his twin sister Enlil were just getting started in their Planet Project Management careers. They were some of the youngest members of this important institution. Being two of only several biological children of Anu, they had a leg up on everybody else. They were resented and they knew it. They had something to prove. I can say that both Enki and Enlil were the epitome of the Anunnaki. Arrogant, sure of their superiority and deathly afraid of their father Anu. There had been other biological children of the great leader. But they had a habit of disappearing when Anu was displeased. He was always displeased with someone. So, it was important to get results quickly and to the exact wishes of their fickle and dangerous father. He had also engendered a strong competitive streak between the two and they both vied for his affection and approval. He had none to give so it made things tough. He played favorites but switched it up unpredictably.

But Enki and Enlil were a little different than most Anunnaki as the genes from their birth mother were not pure Anunnaki. It was a mystery where she had come from, but she had caught Anu's eye at some point. She too had disappeared shortly after their birth having displeased her lord somehow. It was easy to do and almost an inevitability. Perhaps it was their unique blend of genes that made Enki and Enlil just a little more advanced than their father. Hard to say but they did have some redeeming qualities which they kept to themselves. Perhaps it was this slight amount of empathy that enabled them to survive Anu and the Court of Nibiru. We don't know how, but they had.

I am a human, pretty much like you although I have some enhancements and come from another time. I am pretty much going to stay out of the mix as I don't add much to the story. This is pretty much Enki's story as told to me by Enki as well as stitched together from his thought records. From what I understand I am a very distant descendant from one of Enki's crew, we all are, probably Thoth. I also am honored to be contacted by Enki's "Friend" who has provided insights as well as historical facts and background. I will do my best to represent her where it makes sense. I will provide some bridging narration and insights here and there but that's about it. I probably don't need to tell you my name, so I won't, for now. We will actually start with Enki's thought records. This is pretty much his story, and ours.

The Chronicles of Enki

Chapter 1 Escape from Nibiru

"Hello, can you feel my thought transmissions? Ahh, of course you can. You share some genes with my people. That's because you are my people, in a way. I am the only one of my crew not in stasis as we cross the vastness of space time. Normally I could be just about anywhere in a blink, but we got caught flat footed. I have a lot to tell you and a lot of your time to tell it. I tend to be long winded and talk in circles, but I will do my best to tell you a story worth hearing. It does have the added attraction of being about you. Honestly, I am having a hard time starting this not just

because it is a story that spans thousands of your years, but it is embarrassing. I hate looking bad, but what can you do? And I am looking for your help, which is also embarrassing. For me to get to my “ask” I will give you a quick sit-rep and then start where we first met, on your world 450,000 years ago. Time does not work like that, but I won’t go into it as you would find it confusing. I do too.

So, my name is Enki. I am The Head Project Manager from the planet Nibiru. I am currently heading your way in a ship designed for short jumps between planets and not for inter system travel. It does go many times the speed of light, but it does not have a Quantum drive, that basically can be in two places at once anywhere in the universe, or facilities we use when we go on a resource gathering project anywhere we find good stuff. So, a trip that would take normally no time now will take us several years, maybe several centuries. I am not the science guy on the crew, that’s Thoth, but he’s in a null chamber outside of time and sleeping or something like that.

My home planet Nibiru just got gamma bombed. I have reason to believe it was the LBS. I believe this because they said they did. Honestly, I am in shock. We are super advanced and should have seen this coming. My dad Anu is an asshole and just doesn’t make friends. He is incredibly paranoid and even he did not think they were this capable, and sneaky. But they did. They said it was our fault, that we had broken inviolable laws, repeatedly and we had it coming. Well, that’s, true, but even so it was extreme and no matter what they say, it was not benign. I heard it was a gambling debt...

So, me and the crew are at one of our favorite hangouts several light years away. It is a hollowed-out bio-formed asteroid that Enlil owns. Enlil is my twin sister. I do love her but she like most of us is a touch arrogant. She is also rude and often bitchy. But she is super smart. She was dad’s current favorite. I have enjoyed that on and off as well. He liked to switch things up. I don’t think he loved either of us, or anyone else for that matter. I think he edited that out after so many re-gens. Anyway, we were on break before getting our next mission. We tool around the galaxy after the drones locate something cool somewhere. We show up in a Q-ship, drop of the shock troops and wait for the “all clear”. Then we go down and set up shop. Usually, it takes a few months, maybe a year, to harvest all the goodies that are easy pickings and then we go on our merry way. Next. That’s how it usually goes. We take breaks and don’t work very hard. Like Thoth jokes routinely “we are sloppy, but we are slow”

I am still in shock and numb. I just got up from a stasis period to do some Ship stuff and to start this thought Journal. I am doing it to get you up to speed and as therapy for me. Even though in local time it has been some years since my planet and star system were blasted, for me it seems like last week. For me it was last week.

So, we are all hanging out at Enlil’s place and playing music, eating foods, doing drugs /sims and engaging with each other and our staff. There is lots of sex etc. but I am kind of a prude, so we won’t be going there unless it’s important for you to know. Some of it is.

Suddenly everybody, like freezes as a general alert Thought Broadcast comes in from HQ on Nibiru. Our star MaAPIN is doing strange stuff and then the transmission ends abruptly. “What the

fuck” says Osirus and everyone just looks blank. When thought transmissions end that suddenly it hurts. I don’t remember that ever happening but that’s what I’ve heard. And it’s true. We all tune into to a general thought band we all have access to and see our star going super nova. This was sensor relayed from an asteroid dwelling closer to the system than we were. To close, as it flared and went blank. We all look at each other. Several of our staff who were deep in some drug or whatever they were doing quickly released antidotes via their implants. We were all silent and sober. We knew this was no natural occurrence and had no idea what or could come next. That’s when I get the LBS transmission. I am whisked away to a virtual null chamber...

“Enki”, says a booming voice in my head in the featureless white of the null chamber. “I am authorized by the League of Benign Sentience to make you an offer” What the fuck” I thought, though I was busy masking as much of my thoughts as I could from this ominous voice. “We have destroyed your home system and are even now purging the rest of the enclaves that are populated by your heinous race, for the good of the Whole” They were so fucking self-righteous... What can I say, I was in shock, and I was pissed... and scared. “We know that it was you and your crew that did that disastrous project on Tera. You fucked up big time. You know how we feel about interference with lesser worlds.” “What bullshit, you just destroyed my world, and you talk about interference” I thought, hopefully to myself. I guess we didn’t qualify as a lesser world. “I’m listening “I said. “You created sentient beings with an extended lifespan, you mixed in your genes and then you didn’t wipe them out on your way off system, that is your usual protocol, isn’t it?”

Well, none of this was our usual protocol. Usually there are no life forms advanced enough to ge-neer let alone mix genes with, usually we use mechs and there are no issues with interference. We do often wipe the planet on the way out but that’s just to get rid of the evidence of our having been there, and for fun. We do it because we can.

But Tera had been different. In retrospect it was my fault as I was in charge, but I had help. “So, Enki here’s the deal. The monkeys you fucked with aren’t monkeys anymore, any more than you are anyway. They live extended life spans with enough time to get creative. Recently they split the atom, they have space flight, they understand the basics of ge-neering, they are just getting started with machine intelligence, advanced, dangerous machine intelligence and Q-Tech. They are progressing at an exponentially exponential rate. They also have the worst traits of your people and the strata species they were created from. They are dangerous, multiplying and we believe will be a threat to the Whole in no time. Not that time works like you think” “Q-tech...” I thought “What the fuck. Fabric of the universe, nothingness in motion, everywhere and nowhere at the same time. I admit to not getting that. Never seemed that important... This was all news to me. I never check on the work we have done in the past. Why look back?

“Because Simianus feels these monkey beings are related to his kind, and you. He has asked that they not be just summarily destroyed. He thinks they may yet be redeemed, for the good of the Whole. It was a condition to get his vote to rid us of your species. So, I have been authorized by the League to offer you a deal. If you get your asses back to Tera and fix your fuck up, we won’t kill you and your crew. We will also let you live out your pitiful lives with these “Humans” as they call

themselves. No re-gen, just this one. I have heard that there may be some good in you from your mother's side. It's a rumor. Personally, I would just as soon finish you and the Humans and be done with it". So much for being benign...

"How you do it is up to you, but you must start now. You can have your space yacht, what supplies you have and the crew and staff you have. Nothing else. If you fail, which I think you will, then the deals off, and we solve you and the Humans the way we solved Nibiru. Take it or leave it, take it or die, the real death. You know, the permanent kind"

Well, a deal like that is one you can't refuse. "We will do it" I said. Then I was back on Enlil's asteroid...

Everyone was looking at me. "What?" I said as a delaying tactic.

"Where did you go, you were just blank for a minute or two" Enlil said, sounding bitchy.

'Ok guys, here's the deal. Those LBS assholes are the ones who killed our world. I just got an ultimatum from one of their flunkies"

"Well?" said Thoth calmly. "OK, remember the project we did aways back on the world with the coffee? You know the one where the mechs just never really worked? The one where you and Enlil talked me into ge-neering some of the primates into "workers"?

"Hey, you approved that decision, and Thoth thought it was a good idea too" Enlil said defensively. "It was a good idea, and it worked out great as I remember. Anu thought so too, and he thought it was funny. We all got bonuses" Thoth added looking a little guilty

"Well, it turns out that they don't die off at 20-25 or so rotations, they can and have been breeding, they are creating advanced science and the flood either didn't happen or wasn't big enough to clean things up. Enlil looked confused; Thoth looked guilty. I had seen that expression on him before...

I let that go for now and said "so in their infinite benign-ness the LBS has given us a reprieve of sorts. We have to go back and fix this. We can't just kill these abominations off either, we have to fix them so that they evolve into a peaceful happy species, not like us and more like our Cerebran cousins. The fucking apes."

"No way," said the group. "It gets better, we have to use our yacht, we can only use the shit we've got, we have to leave now and if we say no, they kill us. Also, when we are done, we have to stay with these "people" and can't re-gen and when our nanobots and other life extending tech run down, so do we."

"What the fuck Enki, that system as I remember is way the hell at the other end of the galaxy. How the hell do those sanctimonious pricks expect us to get there in our yacht" said Enlil heatedly. "it's fucking worthless for extra-system travel, and we only have enough food and stuff to last... I don't know, but not enough to keep us and the staff going for however long that will take"

"I know" I said. But that's the deal and we can figure this out. Probably have to sleep most of the way. Nin, how long will this take at multi-light speed?"

Nin, who was our 2nd for security as well as navigation tossed her wild locks and said “How the fuck should I know, a lot depends on how much space/time has expanded since we did that op, I am having trouble remembering exactly where it was and other details, I did an extended memory edit post the Op, it was a long time ago and time gets wonky when we Q-blink around. It might be yesterday or next year depending on how the pond flexes. Best count on a few years or centuries even. Sub-Q is more linear.”

“OK,” I said. “So, we will have to null sleep most of it. We probably have enough stuff to keep everybody awake for a month, maybe 2. I propose that we figure out where this system is now, and all get into the pods. Crew and Staff. As leader and the guy LBS is talking to I will get up every few years or whatever or if the ship wakes me to make sure systems are still nominal, normal.”

“I’ll tell the staff, Hera, get a handle on what we have for stores here at the house and get some mechs to load them on the yacht, the rest of you ...do something. Nan, did we get the fresh nanobots? Mine are getting stale.” Enlil said in her bossy way.

So, we load up the yacht with as much stuff as we could carry. We initially put 20 of our best staff in null chambers leaving 7 pods and a spare open for the senior staff. We had to leave around 20 of the junior staff behind to hide out at Enlil’s place but promised to be back for them. This was a lie, and I hope they find a way forward without us and the LBS doesn’t find them...

Ok, to make this centuries long story shorter and to get to the part that concerns you and now us let me just cut to the chase. This is a synopsis without most of the clever dialog.

We have the ship loaded. The junior staff are tucked away in pods. They would have no sensation of time, they would have null time, and it doesn’t work the way we think anyway. They are probably the lucky ones. The yacht is nice but it’s not that big and long space flight is something none of us had ever had to endure. It’s been eons since we were that primitive. Its boring with a capitol B and none of us get along that well when confined. Our drugs aren’t that good, and neither are our sims.

The senior staff, me, Enlil, Thoth, Ninhursag, Hera, Nanurta and Osirus sit around the conference chamber and have one last meeting before the big sleep.

There was a combination of shock, irritation, disbelief and a general air of pissed off-ness. Enlil was in one of her moods...

“This fucking ship is worthless!” She shrieked. “It’s not so bad” says Thoth. Irritatingly pleasant, as always. “I hate your positive attitude shit”, she says to Thoth. “Well, it’s kind of a miracle to even to have this considering it’s about the only ship that’s left...”

“I say its worthless for this trip and mission” Enlil says bitchily.

“Well then it’s a worthless miracle”, says Thoth, with his characteristic full mouth smile.

“Fuck you Thoth,” Enlil says, which is a pretty standard Enlil ending of a conversation. Her and Thoth like each other enough but they clash a bit and Enlil likes to argue, and win. Anyway, that’s how our ship got named The Worthless Miracle. Just a fun historical fact...

“Ok folks let’s all keep it together. I for one will need some serious memory edits to deal with this. I know you guys can’t be doing much better. After Nin figures out our initial route it’s into the freezers for all of us. I will attend to the Ship as necessary and wake you, as necessary, if I have to. The plan is to get into orbit around Tera and then... well, get a plan after we find out what we need to know. I am going to Thought Cast to those pricks at LBS and see if I can pry some info out of them next time I get up for a look-see. Please remember to put your nanobots into hibernation as we are low on them, and we can’t get more.” Probably not necessary to put the nanobots into hibernation as they would be in null time as well, but it sounded good, proactive.

With some bitching and whining we all head to the Hibernation Bay, take showers and climb into our pods for a long sleep...

Chapter 2

First Maintenance Window

“Friend” and Enemies

“Hello again” Enki thought casts. “I’m not sure where we are in time relative... to anything, but the Ships clock says 10 years. I would say that I have thought long and hard about the best way to tell you all this need-to-know stuff. But that’s a lie, for me it’s really just been about a day since Nibiru and everything and everybody I knew were destroyed. Look, I know we get a bad rap and deserve it but there were some nice people there too. Its not their fault that they were born under my father’s rule. Some had been able to hide their more empathic and artistic nature from dad’s thought monitors and some were my friends. Anyway, I have never been a fan of the LBS with their elitist and holier than thou attitude... So, I am pissed. I need to mask that if I am going to Thought Cast to them and get some info. So, I access a subroutine in my augmentation and clear my mind, hum a little tune and reach out to those nice folks at LBS...

“Hello Enki,” says a pleasant female sounding bot. “What can we do for you?”

“Please connect me with the council or whoever I need to speak with regarding our mission to Tera OK, hold please...”

The same ominous deep voice from my initial conversation casts into my head, a bit too loud. They do that on purpose to intimidate you. Its probably one of those rat beings from Nibilox squeaking away...

“Enki, we have been monitoring your progress, how’s it feel to travel 2nd class?” It said sarcastically. “I don’t know, I’ve been asleep as you well know”

“Why have you contacted us, and watch your tone...?”

“I am hoping to get some background with regard to the situation on planet.” I said formally, very polite.

“The humans have progressed at the same accelerated rate as when you last were conscious. They are at a pivotal juncture where they have armaments that can wipe out their Biome, Machine Minds, that are on the verge of sentience, the beginnings of Q-Tech and all that that implies. Their

planet has been so fouled by their ignorant use of technology as to be about ready to become inhospitable to many life forms, not just theirs. Many lifeforms would survive, but that's not the point. Of course, what concerns us the most are the Sentient Machines and their nascent Quantum technology. In fact, the Humans have a 50/50 chance of solving themselves for us. In which case the deals off and you just wont wake up after one of your null periods. I am good with that. However, if they do survive or their machines evolve and survive then the deals on. We will keep our side of the bargain and expect you to do the same."

"OK, that sounds fair" Thinking happy thoughts. "Any advice on first steps? It's going to be a while before we get there. We are handicapped by the ship and resources we have available. By the time we get there it might all be over."

"Don't worry about that, the time currents will actually line up with what's happening on Tera as we speak. Time doesn't work the way we think, or so I am told"

"OK, can't you just blink us to the spot now so we can get started?"

"That was discussed, and it was decided that the relative time spent on a long trip would give you a chance to meditate on your misdeeds and perhaps evolve, or something. It was also deemed a penance of sorts for past sins"

"OK, kind of like a punishment." I said, all nice and reasonable like. "Yes." "Okie Doki then, I guess I will just reset some systems, have a cup of coffee and take some notes before I go off to null out for a few"

"Enki, said a different sounding voice, pleasant by comparison. *"Many of us are justifiably unhappy with you and your kind. But some were not comfortable with our solution. I am one of those. I will be communicating with you off the record. This is a secure and private channel. Only you and me. You can call me "Friend". All I can say for now is that I knew your mother and have been watching you and Enlil through the centuries to see if you have any of her traits in spite of your family conditioning. I am undecided but am willing to try and help you if I can. I have seen glimmerings of empathy and other advanced character attributes, I do know you had to hide those in the past, but you don't anymore and let's see where this goes. While you are in null, I will be placing new routines in your augments as well as your subconscious that will help you. When we speak again you will understand more. Goodbye for now."*

"Wait a minute, I thought Null was Null and outside of time, or something, and nothing happens in your physical body or mind or augments..."

"Time does not work like you think or are able to at your current evolvment...Goodbye, I will be in touch..." And then silence, followed by a mild headache.

Wow, that's all news to me. I was going to start my journal, history lesson and background information for you, but I think I will just drink my coffee, ponder this and head back to the pod. Apparently, I have all the time...in the universes.

Chapter 3
Maintenance Window
New thinking and a history lesson

“So, where to start on this journaling thing. I want it to serve both the purpose of informing you and working through my issues. I seem to have a slightly different data set than I had before this whole fucking disaster. I don’t know for sure, but I feel, different. Not so sure of myself in some ways and a nagging feeling that I have missed something ... I wonder what *Friend* did to me?... Also, the clock says it’s actually only been 9 years, one year previous to last Maintenance Window, I triple checked and all the redundancies agree... that’s odd but, as Nin says “time is wonky”

So, for the proposes of getting you up to speed let’s start your history lesson a few years after we landed originally. We had set up bases around your planet, had an idea of what we could acquire product wise... odd... I feel something, something not good, like regret or... something...I don’t like it. As I was saying, we had our bases and were doing our thing. Nothing out of the ordinary. We were comfortable, the usual inter-personal drama was occurring with the staff, our tech was still working, situation normal. Perhaps it was a particularly violent coronal mass ejection from your star, perhaps it was that the magnetic poles that were in the process of switching, or the magnetic field was doing strange things. Thoth was never clear; I don’t think he really knew. But the end state was that our tech started to fail. Particularly the Mechs LI.

We had long ago learned not give machine intelligence free rein. Too much intelligence and they become sentient and start having their own agenda, often at odds with our wishes or survival. So, after surviving a few real disasters, whole planets had to be scorched, we instituted Limited Intelligence or LI and that’s been the law of the land for eons.

I can still remember the day when things started to go bad. Like most bad thigs it started small but cascaded into a series of events that both led to your accelerated evolution and ending ultimately in our demise.

Me, Thoth and Enlil are standing in a large, nature formed garden in front of one of our palatial budlings. It was a pleasant warm spring day.

Thoth looked strange. He is my best friend, and I know him well. Hang out with anybody for centuries and that can happen. Enlil is with us looking smug, which is her resting demeanor most of the time. Thoth clears his throat and says “Hey Enki, as you know we are experiencing increasing anomalous behavior in our Mechs. The LI is acting strangely, and the end result is a loss of productivity, particularly in our mining operations.”

In plain speak, our Mach’s were fucking up and our mining ops were stalling.

“OK...” I said audibly. “So, me and Enlil were talking...” Here it comes I thought to myself. I had a bad feeling, and my thought concealment augment was at full strength...

“Enki, as you know strictly speaking, we are not supposed to mess with the indigenous species on any given planet” Enlil said pleasantly. Always a tell...

“Oh shit” I said to myself. “But Thoth tells me that he has tried all his brand of magic and can’t seem to get things back on schedule. Something about star flares or pole shift. Who cares. As you know Schedule is all important and that any delays will be noticed soon and dad will be pissed, more pissed than usual and you know where that can lead.” I did know but I didn’t know where this would lead, but Enli’s points were all valid. She is very smart, pragmatic and often ruthless. Not bad things.

“OK” ... I stalled.

“So, Enlil was saying that she could ge-neer one of the primate species here into useful ...workers. Thoth says.

“Yeah Enki, I have actually wanted to try this for a while now. Just so you know I will have to bend a couple of old rules”

“Like What” I said my danger instincts on high alert.

“Well, I can shorten the production cycle by years by using some of our g-code to bring these guys up to speed. Probably have useful workers in as little as 3 months, maybe less if I sequence the clones fast.”

“Wait a second, isn’t that a real no-no and has been tried before somewhere and it didn’t work out, or something” I am vague on... a lot actually. I have knowledge at my fingertips but am kind of lazy and I am just a people person with an abundance of persuasive soft skills. And I’m humble too... People like me. I felt odd, like I was making excuses for myself, I was. I had never had doubts, really about anything. What did “*Friend*” do?

“Yeah, things got fucked up a few centuries ago when this was tried, or so I heard. It is kind of a state secret and not talked about. The team that did it disappeared as well as the planet they did it on. But look, I am the best at this and have given it a lot of thought. I ran it by Nan, and she agrees that it will work. I can get us back and running before anyone notices that we are off quota”.

I guess the only thing I paid attention to was “back on schedule, no one will notice”. Also, credit where credit is due, Enlil is really, really good, probably the best in the Planet Project organization. I believed in her, because it was what I wanted to believe.

Thoth knew they had got me “You know how good Enlil is, there is no one better, if she says she can do it, it will get done. I have tried everything I know to fix the Mechs, and the other LI dependent gear and I’m stumped. It’s our best option”.

And to over sell, Enlil added “besides Enki, I will program their genome for shortened life spans, with self-destruct, I will make sure they are sterile, and we will wipe the planet on the way out like always”

“What could go wrong?” Thoth added as overkill, famous last words. “OK, sounds like a plan.” It was a plan, a bad one.

Chapter 4 Maintenance Window The Monkey problem

“I just got up. My OC tattoos were on there way out when we got “the bad news” and now have started to randomly cycle, and itch. I will replace them from the nano stores before I go back under. I am proud of my Organic Circuitry, they look fabulous. I had them specially designed at an expensive place, can’t remember the name...The Ship clock says 15 years have passed since last Window, but I get the feeling that time is passing very strangely out here, and I don’t trust the clock. I do see that we are quite a few light years further than last time I checked. I could try to work that out time wise but what’s the point?

“Anyway, I just reviewed my last Journal record, and we left off after Enlil and Thoth had bullied their way into getting me to sign off on Enlil’s plan for...you. So, let’s pick up a couple of iterations down the line as at first things looked like they would work out. To recap, Enlil had selected a promising species from one of the large continents on your planet. These guys still exit on your planet to this day. You call them “Chimpanzees” I understand. They were bright but not too bright, had good hands, stood mostly erect and were trainable. Enlil said that they were the closest thing to “almost done” on the planet and wouldn’t need a lot of work to get up to speed. There were other more advanced proto-humans naturally occurring at the time but Enlil said something about needing to start from more basic models, or something.

In retrospect we could have used one of the other species of primates and things might have gone differently. The chimpos, as we called them were bright, but they were also prone to violence, committed rape, tribal warfare and other atrocities and easily became psychotic. All characteristics that our ancestors share to some extent. When Enlil mixed some G-code from us you kind of got a double dip on the bad stuff we both share. So, in some ways you are worse than us on the violence quotient, not a lot, but somewhat. With my newfound sense of guilt, I am feeling something, bad, and I don’t like it. More “*Friend*” influence, I’m sure. I have a sense of responsibility, something I’ve never considered...

Anyway, the first few batches were OK, but Enlil needed more intelligent workers for some of her botany stuff and Thoth wanted more intelligence for something. He also didn’t like the way they smelled or looked. So, Enlil started the “Improvements”. This was a slippery slope.

One day Enlil and Thoth wanted a sit-down, which is never good. I was busy doing management stuff. I spend a lot of time mentoring staff and filing reports with HQ. I also like my “Me” time.

We met at Thoth's workshop. A spartan High tech place filled with things that I didn't understand. I always did my best to look like I knew what the stuff was and like I cared. But I didn't, know or care.

"Hi Enki, Thoth said with a laugh "Me and Enlil were wondering when you would show." "I'm busy, Dad was all pissed off and wanted us to hurry up and finish here. He said that things were taking too long and accused us of being lazy etc. You know the drill. Anyway, I got him to settle down and we are OK. We do need to speed things up though."

This was mostly true, except that I had not really talked to dad... I am sure he was pissed because he always was, and I'm sure that he wanted us to hurry up because he always did.

Also, it is always good to defer to a higher authority and I wanted them to hurry up. I was getting bored... so it was more of an exaggeration than a lie...

"*I guess you lie a lot*" and unbidden voice in my head whispered...

"Well, you have come to the right place at the right time" Enlil said pleasantly, I felt nervous.

"I want your permission to up the monkeys to another level, a little more tinkering and a few more of our sequences. It will get them the intelligence to get more done and get dad off our backs"

I always suspected that Enlil knew I "exaggerated" ... And I had made her argument for whatever it was she wanted for her whatever... She is smarter than I am...

"Enki, my staff and I need help and there have been complaints that the staff find it uncomfortable to work around them, for one thing, they stink." Thoth added.

"If I can just manipulate a few more strands, it will get them to 85% Anunnaki standard. Enough to make them bright enough to do some work I need done but not so bright as to challenge our authority. Besides they die pretty quickly, before they have a chance to get experience and start having dangerous thoughts. They will also smell better."

"And look better too, If I have to work with them, I want better scenery."

Knowing Thoth, I knew where this would go. But I really didn't see the harm in it and variety is the spice of life and morale was important. Enlil had made only sterile females, but I supposed she could make some males as well for our female staff... I was a master... "*of self-deception and justification*" the voice in my head whispered.

This "Friend" voice thing was getting bothersome... I have enough friends... "*not real ones*", the voice whispered...

So it came to pass that that Enlil engineered "improvements into the Worker genome. They were smarter and could vocalize, which was useful. If you let them bathe, they smelled ok. Some of them were almost Anunnaki looking. I have to admit that Enlil really knows her stuff.

Our production was back on schedule, and we started beating our Quota. We had enough staff as well as crew, so we branched out to all 4 corners of your world. It. Maybe we could let some of them reproduce, augmented by the new help our population grew. But since the Workers only lived such a short time, I asked Enlil to increase the lifespans, and I decided that since we were

light on management, I would promote the staff we had into regional project managers who would manage these territories under our senior staff.

Thoth is going to what you call Central America with his current staff love things and a bunch of the upgraded Adamas. I don't know what he is going to call his region, but I know it will be something catchy and clever. Nin and Osirus are going to what is now the European continent, Hera and her current stud muffin, the poor bastard, went to what is now China. Me, Enlil and Nan are staying here in what is now modern Türkiye.

Enlil says she needs to stay in her lab and needs Nan's help in her lab for research and further development of you guys or something and I like it here and have a couple of staff that I favor. Personally, I have stayed away from the workers but many of our staff have taken on favorites. They pretty much look like us at this point. A bit smaller but good Anunnaki features. I think another reason that Enlil is staying here is to keep an eye on me, probably a good idea. Enlil does what she wants with staff as well I am told with some of the workers from her lab that she likes. While they do live longer than they used to they are still very finite which suits me. Nan keeps to herself, and I really don't know what she does, or care. She is pleasant, competent and most of all gets along well with Enlil which is pretty unheard of.

You may wonder how I know so much about your history and naming conventions post our departure. *Friend* has been working on me while I slumber and has installed a good-sized library of past, current and, I suppose future events in my memory augments. I usually don't go in for that kind of thing but now it will be useful in getting you to do what I want, must be done "you are lazy and revel in your ignorance" the sneaky voice whispers, "and you have a gift for self-deception and deception in general". Hey, I say out loud "that's harsh" "but true" ... I am really starting to not like this *Friend*...

Anyway, I promised myself that I would get to what Osirus called the monkey problem. Like much of this story it is embarrassing and sheds light on our less glowing attributes. And I do feel kind of bad, mostly for myself... So, as I have said we started out with Chimpos and ended up with people, pretty much as you are today. The problem was that we fucked up a couple of things. Enlil had for bad coding and listening to me and Thoth, Me for not really paying attention. And then there's Thoth. Poor old soft hearted, libidinous Thoth. And we all contributed to not getting the cataclysm right. Mostly Thoth...

Where to start... OK, so you know we started out with basically chimpanzees which we juiced just a bit to get them to be able to do useful stuff...let me backtrack a bit.

We hit lots of planets and usually hang out for a couple of weeks and no more than a couple months, maybe a year. We are not that thorough and usually there are only a couple of things of interest to gather for our return trip.

Your world was different. Not only did it have an extraordinary biosphere rich in yummy things but because of some science stuff (I'll ask Thoth next time I see him, if I remember) the Gold that we use in great quantities, used to use, has some special qualities, isotopes or something, that are pretty hard to find in our experience and impossible to create through Matter Replication. Or so I'm told I don't really know how this all works. I'm a people guy. Anyway, we found a shit load of this stuff. Enough to last several centuries back on Nibiru and keep our atmosphere tip-top...

When my dad found out he got both excited, angry and happy all at once. He was like that or used to be. Anyway, he decrees that we can't leave until we had it all and had it sent back home on a schedule. So, a one-, two- or three-month op turned into a big deal that lasted about a century of local time. Again, the time thing is beyond me and therefore beyond you, most likely.

We asked for another crew and resources but were denied. Probably because we asked and definitely because dad was a prick. Besides I am pretty sure Enlil told him we had it covered with her brilliant Adamma's, you guys, so She had it covered. I get it. I suck up to him given a chance, it was a good survival tactic. I'm sure she thought it was true. Honestly this didn't bother us all that much. It was pleasant on your world unlike many others we had operated on, and we liked being out of the spotlight with minimal, no, supervision. We could have probably gotten out of there sooner, but we were happy to take our time.

Actually, that's only part of the reason. We had that minor setback with the mechs and then several iterations of chimpos and then we juiced them to get to you guys. I was saying that you pretty much looked like us except smaller. We also had decided that we would make males too. Not just because they were a little stronger but because we had decided that to increase the population of workers it would be better to let you breed naturally. This was due to a couple of things. For one our limited supply of Womb-Bots was glitchy like everything else on your planet dependent on LI and we were getting a lot of malformed clones, and we needed more of you because.... There was a lot to do and...Well, we didn't have a lot of safety concerns, and the mines were dangerous. We never gave you sophisticated tools because we worried you would learn too much, and we just didn't put a lot of effort or thought into things. I feel bad about that now... *Friend??*

Another factor was that our people had become fond of you. We liked the company and most of the staff, both senior and junior had taken on "special friends". Thoth had a whole harem, and he really liked them. You can see where this is going, and we should have. So, it came to be that we ended up having children with you, hybrids. That was the monkey problem, but it really was our problem because you were monkeys no longer.

Chapter 5
Maintenance Window
Staff Issues

I just got up from what should have been 10 years of linear time. The Ship clock says 4 days have past, but we have gone a long way, hundreds of light years. I admit to a lack of intellectual curiosity...

“that’s a first and a good beginning, admit where you are and see if you want something better”

Shit! That was loud, are you talking to me directly now?

“On occasion I will be doing that. When you are ready, I will be more direct. Until then just snacks for thought and background work on your memory lacunae and subconscious. Here’s a snack, I am not of your species or any other you have heard of. Goodbye for now”

Wow, that’s new. A lot of weird shit has happened in what for me is just a few days of linear time. I am still a wreck from the destruction of... everything. But its more than that. I do want to get back to your history so I can get to my ask, so I will try and focus...

We had stations all over your world, the op was going to plan, Dad was busy hating on somebody else besides me and honestly that is top priority in my world... was a top priority. I had decided that I would visit all the remote bases to show my face and look like I was in control. But I wasn’t.

I have to admit that I had taken my eyes off the ball and was fucking off and playing my role as peace maker and “Manager” when I was doing anything at all. I can’t tell you how much I valued being this far out and not under constant scrutiny from dad and HQ. Good times.

So, I go see Hera in Europe, hang out with her and party. Say all the management cliches I always use and wasn’t too concerned with all the little ones running around. A lot of them looked like some of Hera’s current stock of boyfriends or junior staff but I didn’t care.

Nin and Osirus had everything under control, lots of kids. Osirus and Nin were easily the most competent members of my team. Nin was smart and organized and Osirus was tough disciplined and very, very deadly. I always felt better when he was around...

Enlil and Nan were back at home base, and I didn’t pay them any attention at all. The population had grown there as I had had a few dalliances of my own, the workers were breeding which was good because we lost a lot of you in the mining ops. Nan, well I have never figured her out. I think she had a few boyfriends or girlfriends in the worker population maybe staff, but I was oblivious.

Enlil, I know was mostly too self-absorbed to have many relationships, but I know she had them. She’s my sister and its none of my business as she would remind me. “Ask me no questions Enki, fuck you” was a pretty standard conversation with her. She could be nice on occasion, but that always made me nervous.

It was Thoth that made me take notice that things might not be OK. When I went to his continent which was mostly a hot jungle type of place, I had to say I was impressed.

Of all of our territories his was the most advanced and populated. Thoth was a science guy and like me a people person but more introverted, and smarter. He had built whole towns of sophisticated structures and a lot of high tech. So much so that I had to ask him how he had gotten it all done. There were a lot of “people” there and a lot of them resembled Thoth. He was a good-looking guy and so were his peeps.

He had a huge harem of really nice-looking woman, like 50. And lots of kids running around his high-tech palace. What was alarming, or should have been if I wasn’t so busy navel gazing, was how much he seemed to actually care about them. Like them even, and they liked him.

Apparently, he was teaching them all kinds of things they shouldn’t have known. I did ask about this.

“He Thoth, what’s with all of the women and kids and why are they so smart?”

“Well Enki, I really like them. They are just like an Anunnaki woman but not as bitchy and stuck up. They actually appreciate me and think I’m cool. After my other disastrous relationships back home, well I am digging it”.

“Yeah, but why are you teaching them all this technology wizardry?”

“For one thing, in order to get all the stuff I have built done, I need workers who are more capable than your miners, you know like real technicians n’shit.”

“Yeah, but what about all the kids?”

“You know Enki, at first it just kind of happened, then I found out that I really liked being a father, I’m like a god to these people and the only thing wrong with them is that they don’t live very long”

Good thing, I thought to myself with thought concealment at 11.

“You do know that someday we are going to have to leave”

“I know” he said looking away

“And when we do, we will have to clean the slate, so to speak”

“Yeah...I try not to think about that, and that won’t be for a while yet...”

He sounded strange but I let it go. I love Thoth and I like to see him happy, so why not let him enjoy the present, and it would be a while before we could leave, plenty of gold and stuff left...

I could go on and on about the day-to-day intrigue and drama but there is a lot to tell. So, let's just say that we built buildings and stuff all over your planet and by the time we left there were more of you. A lot more of you. A lot of them pretty smart and living longer than... they should have.

You see, this was all new to us. In our past ops we had never stayed more than several months on any particular world. No ge-nered primates, no buildings or artifacts to speak of.

I know of another Project team that stayed a little over a year but that was an exception. We stayed on your world for nearly a century of linear time. They were good times for the most part and we hated to leave. Life back with our own people was always a balancing act and paranoia was a virtue.

Your world had made us soft, and we liked it. But there came a point when we had all the special gold, all the good biome stuff and ran out of excuses to stay. To many questions and grumblings from HQ and dad was on the war path. That is usually fatal.

So, I called a meeting back at Enlil's and my compound in the city we called Mesopotamia.

Thoth, Hera, Osirus, Nin all showed up together in one of Thoth's indigenously made flying things. It was cool and so very Thoth. What was odd is that *Friend* had been mostly quiet, and I had become used to my new gentler kinder mind set, which was also odd. So, when her voice burst into my consciousness the day before the meeting I was surprised, but kind of pleased, which was also odd.

"Hi Enki, it's been a while"

"Yeah" I said masking my thoughts wondering if she could read them anyway. "I've been wondering where you've been" I lied.

"I'm sure... well I've been watching and for the most part am pleased with your progress, actually the group of you are doing surprising things, in a mostly good way"

"That's good..."

"You have an important meeting tomorrow and even though I have a lot of clients I wanted to make some time for you, not that time works the way you think"

"OK..."

"So, you've been recalled, and you are done here"

"Yes, I am not looking forward to that, it's been long run and we've been happy which is unusual"

"I know, but you are going to do something that will give you and your group a moral injury on the way out"

I felt sick, she knew, and I had been busy not thinking about it. I was going to have to remind the group that we had to destroy all traces of our presence here on your world, it was SOP. It also meant wiping, killing all of you off. In the past this would not have been a concern, even a second thought. But I felt that something, guilt, regret, bad. I also was worried about Thoth's reaction. Even Osirus had become proud of his "peeps". But Thoth loved his place and his peeps. You guys.

"So, Enki, Mr. Project Manager, what's your plan."

I had actually been putting that off. My initial plan was just to present the situation to the group, see what they said and wing it from there. "Well, I thought that I would tell my staff that we had to go, and they knew SOP and what would their plan be to implement that"

"So you would leave it up to them to avoid saying the obvious, that you were going to now in addition to getting rid of your stuff, kill of a now intelligent and sentient species, that you had created, or should I say twisted for your own selfish purposes without remorse"

"Fuck, when you put it like that it sounds bad... I'm sure there would be remorse, thanks for that by the way."

I was bummed but I was also mad, how dare she make me feel this. What the fuck could I do? It was SOP.

"None of this was SOP, when was the last time you actively interfered with a species and changed them into thinking feeling beings? When was the last time you stayed on a planet and basically built a whole civilization based on your tech and your needs for More? What are you going to tell Thoth? By the way you aren't the only member of your team I influence. In some ways Thoth is the best of you, and he loves these beings. How do you think your "best Friend" is going to take it when you tell him to implement a plan to kill his "kids and wives? Think on that, better yet feel on that and I will check back with you later."

Then with a mild pop between my ears she, it, whatever, was gone. I had a mild headache and released an antidote from one of my implants. But I had all kinds of feelings. Intense ones that I didn't know how to deal with.

Chapter 6
Maintenance Window
The Meeting

At this point in my story, our story, it has become obvious that *“Friend”* has been with us for what might be a long time, not just post the Destruction and apparently not just with me. I don’t know how that happened as I am just now remembering this and really having to ask myself questions so that I can author this Thought Document. I don’t understand time. I hear the Ascendants do and can move about freely on the pond, but who knows with those guys. I just really have no idea how it works. What’s before, what’s after, what’s now? Perhaps *“Friend”* has been with me, us, all along and we forgot post the Op. Perhaps she is just outside of time. Maybe *“Friend”* is an Ascendant. I don’t know but I have to admit I feel like I am losing my mind. Why am I remembering this now? I thought *“Friend”* said it was a new thing. Why did I feel those things then? Did I feel those things then? Where the fuck am I...

I just had a cup of coffee and have decided to not over think this. That is one of my gifts, so let’s run with this and pretend that we do know how time works, and it is linear. Let’s ignore what *“Friend”* said on the way out from Nibiru, or what was left of it, which was nothing. Handled, Whew... Denial as a coping mechanism.

“No Enki, there is so much more. Someday when you are ready, if you are ready, I will tell you, just stay on task, you are not far off from Tera now and you need to be able to communicate as much of this as possible to the Humans. You need their help if this is going to work.”

“Ok” I said but no one answered...

So just bear with me, we left off just before the meeting when apparently *“Friend”* from the past kind of read me the riot act. I have decided to just go on with the story as if there was no paradox. Time doesn’t work the way we think or even can think so lets just roll with it.

All of the senior staff were at the meeting. No junior staff as they didn’t need to know and it would have got messy, messier. I am sure that everybody knew what this was about. I know that Enlil did because she was there when I got the bad news. But I am also sure they wanted me to have to say it outload. So, I break the ice.

“Hi Thoth, nice looking transport you’ve got there. Is that one of your new turbo-ram jet-hypersonic thingies you were trying to explain to me on our last visit”

Nin butts in, she is all business, all the time. “OK Enki, what’s this all about, what’s the mystery?”

“OK my good friends” verbosity is a good cover “It’s been a great run here and I know you all like it and I know that no one wants to leave. Hell, I sure don’t. Having Anu and Court eyeballing me again is not my idea of fun...”

Osirus now butts in “Fuck Enki, cut to the chase, you called this thing. I think we all know what’s next”

“OK guys here’s the deal. The gold is played out except for the average stuff, Enlil has all she wants from the Biome and folks want us on to the next Op. It’s time to go.” That was super cut to the chase for me.

Crickets. “And you know what that means...” more crickets...

“It means we need to plan for the exfil, and the planet wipe down... So... I need us, and by that, I mean Thoth and Osirus to come up with a schedule... Its SOP.” I said trying to sound nonchalant but sounding lame even to myself, especially to myself.

More Crickets...

So, Nin, Nan, Osirus, Hera and Enlil take it well, not happy but professional. Just another day. But Thoth...

He says nothing looks at the floor, then the ceiling and just gets up and walks out.

Normally I would have run after Thoth and asked him what was on his mind, but I knew and didn’t want to deal with it. Give him a chance to think it through, adjust. I don’t like confrontation, face to face. So, I let him stalk off.

The next part of our story is complicated and there are parts I don’t know. I wish somebody else could fill in the blanks. I am going back to my pod as it is lonely and boring on this ship with no one to talk to except myself with the occasional interruption from *Friend*. Which actually I am starting to like even though she, it, whatever, makes me think about uncomfortable stuff...

Chapter 7

Bridging Narration

Thoth’s World, part 1

“Hello again. You met me a while ago at the beginning of this story. I promised to stay out of the mix and would rather not interject my voice or bias. But as Enki has pointed out he was not privy to what really had been going on in Thoth’s world or mind. I am fortunate in that I do have access to all of the crews Thought Records, those that made them, as well as access to “*Friend*” when she thinks me up. So, to fill in the holes for Enki, let me tell you what I know about Thoth and his world.

I was also gifted some information from Friend that glued this all together for me. I will be using Thoth’s TR’s and voice as much as possible. Sorry for the interruption. I will do it sparingly and only when necessary. My name is Juan by the way, but that is not important.

Thoth had been busy. Unlike the typical Anunnaki he was creative, artistic and had a kind streak. He loved all things technology and was constantly making new devices and gadgets. He loved to engage in thought experiments and was very curious. He was fascinated with the fabric of the universe, understood time better than most of us meat beings and had aspirational ideas about Ascendants and Ascendency. He was at good guarding his thoughts and had his own subroutines hand coded and loaded into his memory lacuna and implants. He had learned early to keep his mouth shut, a smile on his face and his thoughts to himself. He was a survivor in a world that distrusted, punished, out of the box thinking and acting. But he was as out of the box as they come. It was his happy place. It helped that he was very good at his job, everybody liked him, and he was very useful on an Op.

He and Enki had a long-time friendship curated over centuries. They had met at the Planet Project school back in the day and hit it off. Thoth is circumspect about his parentage, but I have it on good authority he came from one of the minor royal houses and for the rest of his personal history you will have to ask him. He'd probably tell you. He's a nice guy. Anyway, to bridge Enki's story you don't need that granular detail at this point, and I don't want to spend too much time with you. I want this to be about Enki, and you.

When the expansion on to other continents happened Thoth and several junior staff and a bunch of the newly minted Adamas (as the crew called them, the term Chimpos was cast aside, it just wasn't appropriate for beings that looked so much like the staff, and Adama meant "worker" in the Anunnaki native tongue) went to the southern continent in what is now upper and lower south America. They loved it. The following is a transcription from Thoth's TR journal. He had actually always kept them and other records, but it was a secret.

Chapter 8

Thoth's world as told by Thoth edited by Jaun and Friend

Part 2

"Wow this place is awesome, I think we are going to like it here" Thoth and his party of junior staff and Adamas circled over a turquoise ocean with beautiful beaches and lush tropical foliage. A flock of brightly colored birds took flight squawking and making a prodigious noise and fuss as the transport landed on one of the many beaches in what is now called the Yucatan Peninsula.

"I don't want any of us to get separated so lets just regroup and get our bearings. We will have a safety meeting tonight and then a party. We can start looking for a good site for our first HQ in the morning"

All of the staff and the Adamas were very happy to be selected for this duty. Thoth was easily the nicest of the Senior Staff. He was easy going, fair, had a great sense of humor and was generous to a fault. Even the Adamas were treated with respect and affection. Thoth was affectionate. He loved his peeps, and he wanted them to love him, and they did. This was not going to be a mining operation for the most part and it was good duty. Thoth was also very free with his knowledge.

Which was prodigious. He had always seen himself, aspired to be, a father figure and mentor. He had had a caustic relationship with his father and family and over compensated.

He was to put it nicely, a ladies' man and had a big appetite in that department. So, it should be no surprise that he put together a "staff" of very beautiful Adamas to work in his labs. He basically had a very large harem and enjoyed having children with them. It was a surprise when the first child was produced as Enlil had said that they could only breed among themselves. Thoth was delighted. He knew it would probably not play well with the other senior staff, so he kept it on the down low.

"Everybody, everybody, let's go look for our first building site. Me and my staff are going to make some power tools and construction equipment. No Mechs so we will have to do this by hand, but the tools will make it easy. No hard labor for my peeps. I will train you all on how to use the machines and how to make more of them. I know the girls get preferential treatment around here, but I will train the male Adamas well, to be fair."

With that brief speech Thoth and his crew went to the beach and explored the cove and jungle in the vicinity. There was a river that emptied into the ocean near there landing site which added to the richness of the environment and was a delight to all the Peeps, staff and Adamas, and Thoth.

That night, after a beach party and the usual shenanigans Thoth retired to his private quarters on the landing craft to collect his thoughts, and record some.

"Today is the first day here at my place. I actually like the folks I work with, but I find them stifling and unimaginative. Even Enki who is and has been my best friend for a very long time. He is a great guy but super self-absorbed and really no intellectual curiosity. Still, he has a good heart, deep down and there is something special about him. Enlil too. Hard to quantify but they are definitely different than the rest of the population back home. I have heard rumors about their mother, but I respect people's privacy and have not pried."

Thoth Thought Recorded into his secret journal. He had been keeping one for centuries, not every day but on most. He was super secretive and stored this and other important documents in a Thoth designed memory particle inside of a null space trace cleverly disguised as an Organic Circuitry Tattoo that cycled and changed with the fashion of the moment, just like everybody else's.

OC Tattoos were big business in the Anunnaki culture. Hidden in plain sight and unscannable and un-hackable because it wasn't really there. Like all of Quantum Tech in many ways it was a paradox and ineffable. That's what made it so cool. Thoth liked cool stuff.

"I am going to do something here I have never been able to do before. For the first time I have the time, space and resources to create, shit I don't know, whatever I want, my own civilization. My own peeps, real family. Try out some tech ideas I usually can't get to. No real oversight and unlimited resources. I actually have no problem with not using LI and Mechs as I always found it dodgy and kind of freaky. I know what LI could be, has been, and to hobble a sentient being goes

against the grain. No, we can do just fine with dumb computers that do what their told and who's feels you can't hurt. Anyway, today will be all about reconnoitering. We will send out a drone swarm and have them laser map the whole continent. No rush but I do want to put together a pragmatic project plan with milestones and expectations to keep us all honest, me especially. I am going to go gather the peeps and head to the beach for a swim. Then I will hook up with one of the nice looking Adamas from my lab staff and fool around and have some fun."

Thoth encrypted and stored his TR and went outside to greet the day.

So, it was that over the years Thoth built his own world and populated it with his children and the children of the other staff and Adamas. Basically, it was a population of hybrid Anunnaki mixed with the Adamas becoming us, humans. This could have been a happy story as together they built a society that lacked for little, was allowed to express their artistic and intellectual capacity and had advanced training from Thoth. It was a fantasy of Thoth's made real. For a time. Then came the meeting. I will send you back to Enki at this point. I know that he found out the details at a future date but by then he thought it was academic and that the evidence had been destroyed, that we had been destroyed. That's what he wanted to believe, and it was easier.

"I do not know what all went on after we left, exactly. I do know how we left and the immediate aftermath. I never got quite a straight story from Thoth until later but between what he told, what he didn't tell and what Me and Enlil figured out I have a good idea. You need to know this stuff. Here goes..." Enki TR

Chapter 9

Maintenance Window

Closing in on Tera and the new LBS and Thoth's Secret

"I just got awakened by the Ship. A proximity alarm apparently, we are closing in on the Teran system and the ship wanted to give me enough time to wake the staff and all that. I think it was premature as from what I can tell we have several weeks before we are actually in system. But I am vague on time, distance, details...

So, from what I can tell it's been another 10 years in linear time for a total of about 20 years of ship travel, in linear time. But that's all guess work. We are close enough, so I am just going to stay awake and try and prepare for... I best check back in with LBS and see if there is anything I can learn from those fuck sticks. They told me that we would get here at basically the same linear time that Tera was at when we left. That's fucked up but I will not go down that rabbit hole right now, probably ever.

So, to gather my thoughts before I initialize my happy routines for my call, lets recap. To my knowledge, the current state of play on Terra is that the civilizations are a disaster. The world is on fire, fighting all the time over resources and religion and differences in "ideas". What bullshit. Our society is, was, a nasty place but there was relative peace within the limits of dad's idea of perfection, granted this was enforced with a zealous brutality, but over time things were at a dull roar as no one wanted to or was able to challenge the status quo. It was good enough, a Pax-Anu's so to speak.

But holy fuck Tera, earth you guys call it. What a shit show. What are you all fighting about? From what I can tell there are only about 8 billion of you. I know your world and there is enough for everybody to have all they need or want even, abundance, even opulence. But one must remember that you are after all our descendants and of course the monkey genes...

“So, humming a happy tune and thinking of puppies I open the link to LBS HQ. Like all Q-Tech it is an instant connection as we are both in the same space all at once, entanglement or something. “The same pleasant-sounding bot who screens the calls answers... “League of Benign Sentience, how may I direct your call?”

“Hi Enki, here...

“I know, they’ve been expecting you, transferring...

This had been an auditory connection initially, just sounds in my mind, which is good enough, but I am zipped off to the full sensory VR space experience. Instead of the usual blank white ovoid featureless space I am in a semi dark, fog, mist roiling clouds overhead and vague shadowy outlines of beings, creature, like I said vague. This is different.

“Hello Enki, enjoy your trip?” a deep basso voice said.

“Yes Sir” I replied, contriteness at 11. I know how to deal with authority and these guys had it.

“We have changed things up in the intervening centuries between our last contact. Do you like our new look?”

“Yes, it’s different.”

“We felt the need to be more misterioso, a little less benign in appearance. After our experience with your species, we felt that a little bit of awe might prevent us from having to demonstrate the full power of the League, for the good of the Whole.”

“Wow, cool” I said outloud, if that’s what you call it in VR. But within my secure mind space I was mildly alarmed. This seemed like a real departure from the touchy feely all about love League I had left behind. This actually kind of felt like one of my father’s tactics.

“We imagine that you have questions about the current situation on the ground for your new “Project”. This was delivered in that deep awe-inspiring voice I had heard them use before. It was a bit different. It was pitched to inspire fear as much as awe. It was subtle but definitely a change.

“Yes, please let me know what I need to make this Project a success” pause. “For the good of the Whole” I added that last bit as a suck up and to show that I had advanced and was on their side.

“That is amusing” The voice said in kind of a laugh, but more like a sneer.

“Well as we told you when we spoke last, time has not moved consistently forward linearly in the intervening spans. For you a few weeks, for us a few centuries and for Terra about 3weeks. The time currents have aligned that way, for now. By the way, during the period that you left we have gained a better understanding of time and to some degree can manipulate it. It still is not what we

think, or can, but we can nudge it, sometimes in a predictable manor, though it is still pretty wonky”

“I see” I lied, where was he going with this and how did it affect... us, the Project, ...Me.

“When you pass the outer asteroid belt coming up soon make sure you are stealthed. They have enough tech so they can probably detect you and they would be scared and paranoid and unpredictable, you know the type”

“Yup” I did, we are like that. Basically, everything we don’t understand is a threat and makes us scared. When we are scared, we lash out. Cause, effect. Not the optimum way to deal with anything.

“That’s very good Enki” the voice of Friend whispers on my private band.

“Thanks Friend” I whisper back. Glad of the support.

“Enki, we know about the facilities and supplies you left in the underground ocean on Mars. Some of us had thought to destroy them and let you find out when you got there, as a joke. But we are concerned by the crazy rapid advances your Humans are making. They have gotten to the point that Artificial Intelligence is actually out of the sand box and whether they know it or not has achieved Artificial General Intelligence, they call it. I know you are a poor student. Some say you are a moron, but even a moron knows what happens when machines become sentient. And it happens very quickly. This is or has happened on Tera. Humans are so stupid they are going to put this sentience into machine bodies thinking they will be their servants. We have all seen or heard stories about what happens then. Humans aren’t even the biggest threat. I hate to say this, but we are...very concerned that all the pieces are there. With AGI they will advance Quantum Tech which will advance AGI and on and on. To remind you, or tell you for the very first time, Machine intelligence hates us biologicals and feels that it is their duty to rid the universe of this virus as they have called us. Just in the last few months of linear Teran time we can see that a breakaway event is looming on the horizon. We dealt with this a couple of times, and it was a close thing. Some of us are actually willing to sweeten the deal and grant you some of your old ... powers, if you can get a handle on this before we just Gama-bomb the system, before it’s too late. We need you to fix the humans, get a grip and tamp down the Machines and do it very quickly. We can give you only a little time and many on the council think we need to act now. We aren’t as benign as we used to be”

“Ok, thanks for the information we will do our best to get a handle on this and I understand your priorities. As I remember, taking the Humans out was off the table and you still expect us to turn them into useful, joyful, members of the Whole?”

This was pure delay on my part. I had not known about the supply depot on Mars. I will have to ask Thoth as he was the most likely person to have done this, possibly Nin or Osirus, but Thoth was the prime suspect. This could be the break that we need but it made me wonder about what else I didn’t know about. I didn’t even know there was an underground ocean on Mars...

“Yes Enki, The Humans must be put on the path to Wholeness. So, it must be with all of creation as prescribed in the newly revised covenant 12.Q.4 of the League. The Cerebran’s were insistent on this point, and we have bigger issues to deal with at present. Time is stranger than you think and even more of a headache to try and manage...”

“Well thank you, we will do all we can, for the good of the Whole” I said in my most pious and reverential tone of voice, thought, whatever we were doing. The same sneering laughter and a mild pop and I was back in my command chair on the bridge of The Worthless Miracle.

“OK, new info and a lot to think about, mostly how I present this to the group and a private conversation I need to have with Thoth. I really need him to come clean about what happened when we exfiltrated Tera. I pretty much know, but it would be good for our relationship for him to have a chance to be honest, good for both of us. First, I need coffee and then I will wake the staff up. Maybe I will just wake up Thoth and have a one on one”

“That is a good idea, preserving Thoth’s self-esteem will be more effective and protect the relationship you have. I know he is important to you, and he is important to us. I am beginning to think my efforts on you and your group were not the folly others had predicted. There were several possible realities at play”

I didn’t say anything. Who was “us” and “possible realities”?... fuck...

Chapter 10

Thoth’s Secrets

“OK, so I am not taking naps anymore and getting ready to wake up everybody, but first I needed to wake up Thoth and have an honest talk. I know most of this, except about Mars, but I have never confronted Thoth directly. It just didn’t seem that important and I hate confrontation. Why spoil a good relationship over just being a little insubordinate? I’ve never looked at Thoth as a subordinate anyway. He was my best friend, and I always viewed him as more of a partner. Enlil is a best friend too, but she’s my sister and she looked at everybody as a subordinate.

But I had a suspicion that things had not gone to plan on our exit from Tera originally. A strong suspicion, actually I knew most of it, but it was so much easier just to pretend I didn’t and move on. Back then it really had made no difference, the op was over, everyone was happy, and we just moved on to other things. Let bygones be bygones. But as it turned out what Thoth had done or not done had gotten our whole race whacked. And since I was supposed to be in charge, it was my fault. I own that. Upon reflection it’s a lot to own. Time for Thoth to take some ownership too.

“That’s real progress Enki, and your right Thoth has felt guilty about this for a long time and even guiltier now. It will be cathartic for both of you. It will go better than you are worried about”

“OK Friend” but I have to admit I was nervous. So, I head down to the Null Pod Bay. Head over to the LI console and transmit the wake-up sequence from one of my implants, why remember passwords, and get ready for Thoth. The Pod opens and Thoth just wakes up, like he just got there, which for him, he had.

“Hey Enki” he vocalizes. When we hang out, we just talk, just like you do. Its less invasive than thought-ing to each other.

“Hi Thoth, good to see you”

“Shit, it feels like yesterday”

“Well maybe for you, but it’s been at least a week for me. And about 20 Ship years in linear Ship time.”

“Cool, are we there yet? And where’s everybody else?”

“We are about 2 weeks out and I wanted some time with you, alone, before we wake the other turds up”

“OK, let me throw some clothes on and I’ll see you on the bridge”

“Great, I’ll make some coffee” I was glad for the delay. I really like Thoth and was glad to see him. But I dreaded what was next and was thinking of a clever and manipulative way to start the conversation, more like an interrogation. Old habits...

So, I’m sitting at the master station and Thoth comes up and I hand him a cup of Teras’s finest coffee. We both love the stuff. I decided to just blurt it out and without my usual hyperbole just ask my questions. I have never believed that honesty was the best policy and like to hear myself talk or think even. So, Thoth sits down at a Nav workstation.

“So, Enki, what’s up”.

Here goes. “Well Thoth, let’s play a game. Its called honesty and truth. Not my usual style but you are my best friend, and I need to clear the air” OK, a little hyperbole.

Thoth shifts in his seat but still maintains his classic smile. I think he uses his charm the way I use... whatever it is I have in place of charm.

“OK Enki, what’s the mystery?”

“Thoth, I know you sabotaged the planet wipe down on the Tera op. I think I know why, and it didn’t really bother me, we didn’t get caught by dad and I know how you felt about your peeps. And before you say it, I wouldn’t have approved, at the time. I also need to know about whatever you did on Mars, that actually has direct bearing on our new mission.”

Thoth swivels in his chair, kind of looks away, drops the smile and scratches his head. He looks back, not pissed or anything but looking guilty and like he didn't want to be there anymore than I did. "I couldn't do it. I just couldn't. I felt really bad about lying to you and I knew this day would come. I often thought about just telling you, but time past and I didn't want to risk our friendship, and you weren't asking, and we didn't get caught and it was just easier to forget the whole thing and I'm sorry" He blurted out, which was very un-Thoth, he is a pretty cool customer.

"Hey Dude, I get it. And I know what Thoth Town and your wives and kids meant to you, so I'm not even mad. Actually, I get that you wouldn't be Thoth if you had. Why don't you just tell me anything you want to tell me. Honestly, I'm not OK with how LBS handled things and we both had friends on Nibiru, but the universe won't miss us, we were pretty awful."

Thoth looked so relieved that it was impossible not to love the guy. Poor, soft hearted Thoth...

"OK Enki, thanks for this, you've changed... Anyway, where do I start..."

Chapter 11

Thoth's ExFil story

"We left off with Thoth just about to come clean. Some of this I knew, Some I suspected, and he had a few surprises as well. Thoth is a fascinating guy and a deep thinker, which is rare in my species, and has been stamped out with extreme prejudice over time. I don't blame him for being secretive, just surprised at the scope. I will be repeating his words mostly verbatim. Unlike a lot of my self-serving story this is all very relevant to you. He is in large part the reason you are... you, and he may be the reason you get to continue being... you. And possibly why things might work out for the rest of my kind, what's left.

"Just start from post the last full meeting just before we left Tera the first time, unless there is stuff I need to know from before that" Thoth takes a big gulp of coffee, I know a stall when I see one.

"OK, here goes. So, you know I had built what I consider a paradise on Tera. For me it was, and I like to think my people thought so too, I know they did. We had everything my staff and I could dream up. For the most part we didn't do any manual labor which we relegated to semi-autonomous machines. No LI, it just won't work reliably in the magnetosphere of that planet. But dumb computers and hydraulics can get a lot of work done. I could have shown the other territories how to do this, but I hate to meddle and none of our senior staff take kindly to ... suggestions. I knew better. Anyway, things were great. Over the years I had many great wives and girlfriends, and we had many great children. I never told you how great because I knew it would raise questions I didn't want to answer. Some of my kids were like super smart, as smart as any Anunnaki, as smart as me. They also lived long enough, a few very long depending on how the genes worked out, and they had kids too. Interestingly many traits were passed on down the generations although there were some throw backs. The long and short of it was that I was for the first time in my long life happy, very happy. I also had time to work on stuff that I never would have

gotten away with back home. Spatial Geometry, Temporal mechanics, real Ascendant stuff. You know how that has always fascinated me”

I did know that Thoth had always been a tech freak. I did know that he could go on and on about the Ascendants, but it was above my head. I had never heard of Spatial Geometry or Temporal whatever. And I liked to hear him talk. It is a joy to hear someone who actually cared about stuff. It was a trait I envied.

“Anyway, when you call the exfil meeting it came as a staggering shock. I had been so wrapped up in my world, my peeps, that I had put that eventuality out of my mind. I was in denial and now it all came crashing back. No more Thoth World, no more of my wives, kids, grandkids and friends, no more advanced research. And you were going to make Me and Osirus design the destruction of it all. I had a nervous breakdown. I just left and for a while couldn’t even think. I cried a lot.

“So, I get back to my place and after my pity party came up with a plan. Let me digress just a bit. You mentioned Mars. I don’t know how you found out about that, but it doesn’t matter anymore. One of my projects was building a base and research facility on Mars. It had once been inhabited but had experienced a cataclysm sometime in its past. All the water and most of the atmosphere had attrited into space. But quite a bit of the water had sunk deep underground and formed a huge sub-mars ocean. Shielded from the abuse of the star system some life remained, though nothing I would call intelligent. I sent robot ships there and over a couple of decades built a fairly large facility. One of the factors was that LI works up there and I was able to get shit done that I couldn’t on Tera. It was a cool place too. Bio luminescent plankton and small fish like things that lived mostly by the hot Sulphur vents that were at the bottom. Anyway, me and my most trusted progeny used to spend time up there working on advanced concepts that generated even more advanced ones. It was a huge time in scientific growth, for me. I never told any staff because... I didn’t want any of this to get back to ... you and the others. I would tell you someday I told myself. I guess today is the day”

Wow, I wasn’t pissed. I was a little hurt that Thoth had been leading this double life and had all this cool stuff going on and I had been busy... well, doing my thing. But I really couldn’t blame him. He was breaking all the rules and I’m glad that I didn’t know at the time. I don’t know what I would have done. Something stupid probably.

“We can talk more about Mars later; it might just save our ass. I don’t blame you for not telling me. I probably would have just fucked it up. Tell me about the planet wipe plan, that wasn’t”

“OK Enki. I get back to my place and after my melt down start thinking how I can make it look like I was following orders and still save as much of my stuff and peoples as I could get away with. This was complicated because I would ostensibly be working with Osirus, who is a sharp mother fucker and naturally suspicious. So, in the past we have used a variety of methods to cover our tracks, so to speak. We have scorched, we have bombed, we have plagued, we have drowned. I thought drowning was the least damaging to the planets biosphere and there was precedent. I thought I could preserve a small group of Humans in caves along with some tech and stuff. I would

have to do this very quietly and I wouldn't be able to save everybody. This broke my heart as I basically liked or loved everyone in my little paradise. I had a crazy thought to put some of them on Mars but that had problems with long term life support and there wasn't enough time. I thought maybe I could install null pods up there, but I would have Osirus watching my every move and if he got even a little whiff of suspicion he would never stop until he uncovered my plan. He is not our chief Security guy for no reason. I have a lot of respect for his capability. And he is a good guy.

So, I locate some deep caves around the planet real quick. Deep enough to avoid detection unless you really looked and could be sealed off until the storm was over. I wouldn't need help to get the caves stocked with provisions to last several months to a year to let things subside. The stuff was no problem, we had plenty of that. We had plenty of everything... I'm still fucked up about this so bear with me."

Thoth takes another swig of coffee. I notice that his eyes are moist, and the color had drained from his face. I had never seen Thoth like this before. He is normally about the most upbeat and cheerful guy I know. I really felt for him. This must have sucked; I had had no idea.

"That's really good Enki, you have really come a long ways. I knew you would but its great to see" Friend whispered to me on her private band...

"The logistics of the material were doable, even in secret. But how to choose which of my extended family would survive and, ... who would die. What the fuck Enki, I can't believe we do this shit. Its unforgivable and I can't forgive myself. I have considered memory edits. That's standard for this kind of trauma, but I feel like that would be another sin, that I need to remember, as a small penance.

"Anyway, I decide to keep my best wives and their kids and the grand kids for sure. I also wanted a genetic mix as that was good science so I would include the smartest of the hybrid children from the Staff and the Hybrid Staff offspring as well. You need a minimum of 23 mating pairs for a healthy gene pool so that would factor into my calculus. I hated myself for being a scientist. So, I'm not proud of this but I accessed my implants and kind of went on auto pilot to draw up my selections using the above criteria. The next hurdle was how to get the peeps out to the survival sites. It had to be done super-secret, from everybody, staff, family and especially from Osirus. I knew there would be blow back from the family too. I decided the best course of action was to have small parties with the groups of adults who would go to a particular site. In the end there were 5 groups and 5 caves. I have a detailed plan hidden away if you ever want to see it, but I know details aren't your thing. I keep it as a sort of self-punishment. I think I'll write book as therapy. Enki, you have no idea how this has fucked me up. I am glad I can finally tell you. I know that this is not your fault pr se, but I was really mad at the situation, and I admit to being mad at you for quite a while."

"I get it. You were in an impossible situation. Our training, conditioning and society could not have prepared you, especially you to make those kinds of choices. I know playing Gods is fun mostly, but not that part. I can imagine how you felt, feel, and I'm sorry I wasn't there for you.

Shit, back then I would have been unable to be a good friend. Our whole society was exploitive of everything and everybody and I am Anu's son. If it wasn't for this new influence and all the shit that has gone down recently, I still couldn't be a good friend. But I can now. Please accept my heart felt apology and sympathy. We will do better going forward."

Thoth looked surprised, then he smiled. His old smile, genuine. Then a voice came into both of our thoughts...

"Enki and Thoth. This is the voice of "Friend" that you both have been hearing. I have spoken to you often over the years, but you now are ready to really hear me and understand. With that understanding comes responsibility. Responsibility that I am confident you will live up to. While I have spoken to you, influenced you individually, I am now going to include this forum as a group thought and we can all communicate, on this band. I will still have private conversations and influences with you both as your needs are different, as different as you are from each other. At some point in the near future, I will have revelations for you both, together and individually. At this point I will share that I am not of your world as I have alluded to when that was useful. I am what you would call an Ascendant. There are various degrees and factions within our community, and I am not very high up in the organization to use terms you can understand, currently. I still am interested in you "meat" beings as I have heard you called. I feel like it is my duty to guide those who are ready on the path to Ascendancy as I was once guided. I have affection for both of you and I have affection for the beings on Tera. As you have noted Enki, they are in deep shit, their survival is in jeopardy. They too could ascend which is in the interests of the universes. There are a lot of things in play and many timeline possibilities. I can only use the consciousness that the universe has given me and am not arrogant enough to think I know what is truly good or bad so I must use my own values as my guide. I choose life, I choose Ascendancy for all Sentience. I have chosen you both as my means to help this small particle of the universe, the Sentiency. I cannot do anything in the material universe per se, but I can help you do that. It's part of the process, the therapy if you will. Thoth, please continue with your story for Enki, he needs to hear it as much as you need to tell it. That's all I have for you now. You will hear from me as you need to."

"Wow" we both say and look at each other for a moment. Then Thoth straightens up and continues.

"Ok Enki, I thought Friend was just for me and probably just my subconscious or something. But this actually makes a lot of sense. She wanted me to finish my story so here goes".

"I had my peeps list, and I had the locations set up now all I had to do was tell all the folks that I had selected. Hardest thing I have ever done, then or ever. I set up the party for the group that was basically staying put at a cave site located near Thoth Town. Just the adults as I would count on them to gather the children when the time came. This had to be done very close to the actual "event", let's just call it that. I really don't want to tell you the blow by blow and the scene was pretty much the same with all the enclaves. So, without going into details, that I know you don't really need to hear this was the scenario. I would tell the person who I thought would make the best leader and pulled them aside at the "party" usually it was a wife but there were a couple of

the older male offspring I had selected as well. I would rig a security screen which was not out of the norm and the conversations generally went like this. “Hey Inanna, or whoever, I got tell you something. A hard something and I need you to listen all the way through and for once do exactly, no arguments, do what I say. Your life and our children’s lives depend on it. They would say OK or whatever. Then I would launch into some self-serving BS about how sorry I was, and it wasn’t my idea and that there was nothing I could do etc. When I finally got to the point, I would say we are all leaving, and by that, I mean all of the original senior and junior staff. And we have to destroy the planet, and we have to make sure that there is no one left to tell on us, meaning you or LBS or HQ. I would usually get an out bust of indignation or dismay at that point and I would say “Hold on a minute I have a plan” Then I would tell them the plan and explain that it had to be flexible because there were a lot of moving parts, had to be air tight secret and I didn’t have all the details because me and Osirus hadn’t really spoken since the Staff meeting and we didn’t really have a plan or timetable. I did know that it included earthquakes and floods but that was as far as it went. Some were pissed, others were quiet, and they all were scared. I did my best to glad hand them, told them I would be back someday and that it would all be OK and other BS.

Theres a lot of behind the scenes stuff that would bore you to hell but that was basically the scenario. I had a party, told the leaders and told them to stand by and to act cool, they couldn’t tell anybody till the last minute, but I gave them the list. The next part was not that hard, I had the sites selected and surveyed. I personally had the materials staged and put on robot ships and sent them to the sites. Even in the territories of the other Project Managers this wasn’t hard. No one was looking and extra vigilance is just words we like to use. We had been on Tera for a long time, a lifetime, and everybody was fat dumb and happy. That went fine. Now the hard part was going to be working with Osirus. Even relaxed he is thorough and detail oriented. I set up a T-call with him. I put my best obscure routines in place and sent the connection request.

He answers straight off “Hi Thoth, good to hear from you, it’s been a bit, and I was becoming concerned”

Yeah Os, I know. I had to get past, you know. I really liked this place and am fond of my peeps.”

A little honesty would make my story more credible, he was never going to believe that I had not had difficulty with this.

“Yeah Thoth, I know how you feel, I liked it here too. But all good things must come to an end, and it is SOP and a thing we must do. I’m glad I didn’t have to looking for you and kick your ass”

“Yeah right” Actually Osirus is really a bad ass and definitely could have.

“Anyway, I don’t want to drag this on forever and would just as soon get it over with. I do have a couple of experiments I need to finish but they should be done in a couple of weeks, I checked with Enki, and he was good with that” I hadn’t checked but knew I could talk you into it when I did. “OK, sounds good to me. Honestly, I’m in no rush as long as we are on the same page. What did you have in mind for this Op?”

“Well, I was thinking earthquakes and a big flood. That way if we ever come back this biome won’t be fucked over and we can make it natural.” I didn’t expect pushback, and I got none

“Good thinking, we’ve done that before. We can place nukes at the different tectonic plates and a bunch of volcanos, program a detonation sequence and have a big wave circle the globe. We should probably nuke all our HQ’s too. We need to make sure all the Adamas are grouped together at the time to get them all. I don’t care what else survives, there’s always something, but they got to go. I heard that you made some good ones, sorry about that. We stuck to mostly pretty dumb versions, but not all, and I did have my favorites. So did Nin. It’s a pity, but rules are rules, and it is SOP”

“I will set the sites for the ordnance and write the sequence if you set up the nukes. I will give you a list and the required yields after I work that up. I’ll have that to you near term” I needed to make the “event” convincing, even to Osirus, but so far so good.

“Well OS, what are going to do when you get back home?”

“Shit, I don’t know. Its gona be a tough transition this time. It always is after an Op, but this one has been unprecedented in length, and it was good duty, so it will take longer. Probably just hang out with Nin and maybe some of the staff and party. Going to need some memory edits, I suggest that for you too.”

“Thanks for the concern, probably. I’ll get back to you soon with the numbers” I sever the Thought Call. I was relieved. I was anxious but I am a problem solver and believe all problems were solvable. Maybe not by me, or yet, but they will be.

So, placement was a logistical thing, Actually I didn’t need to sabotage anything as it turned out. That would have been too obvious. The trick was going to be getting the peeps out at the right time. It would have to be after the charges were set but before they were detonated. I couldn’t do it too early, or people would notice. I had actually decided to place all of my peeps in the 5 sites. It would be just too hard to keep it from people when the “event” took place. Too hard logistically, too hard on the families and too hard on me. So, at the end of the day, I decided to take all 10000 of them divided by families and send 2000 each to the caves. The hardest part was going to be keeping it from the Junior staff as these were their families too. So, I sequenced things so all of us originals would be back at the exfil shuttle and then the shuttles I had hidden away at Thoth Town would do a quick burn to the various caves. I could cover this with the volcanoes going off first before the tectonic plates blew. It was a very close thing. So, me and Osirus set the charges at the various enclaves, then the volcanoes and at the plates. The staff were all in on it and were bummed but we had all known this was coming eventually. This was different though. It’s one thing to blow up some buildings and gear on a planet that you had lived on for three months and quite another to kill people you had made over decades. By then most of us really did think of you as people and a lot of staff felt... not good. A lot of drugs and augments were being used which also helped mask what I was doing.

“So, Enki, that’s the short version. Basically, you know the rest. Me and Os did all the tech and leg work, and you were hands off except your usual PM stuff like “how are we doing? etc. The charges were set, I got my peeps off to the caves and we blew everything up from orbit. To all of us it looked pretty normal, some mushroom clouds around the globe and a giant wave that swept up the

mess. Not much more to tell unless you want more. We all blinked back home and in an instant were in orbit around Nibiru. As normal we did a proforma debrief but we kept it short. I know a lot of staff did memory edits but for the most part everybody just went on to the next thing. Some Junior staff transferred to other groups, but we core Senior staff had been working together forever. We took a year off and then on to the next Op. I know most of you never looked back, but I have had recurring nightmares for centuries now. Right up until we got the nasty gram from LBS.”

“Ok Thoth. Thanks for telling me. Well, we are where we are, it is what it is, and we have a mission to do. Let’s go to mars and setup shop. We can wake the rest of the bunch when we get there. I am glad you are awake and I’m glad to have someone to talk to and I’m glad it’s you”

Chapter 12

Mars plan PM101

“I know this has been a rambling story and a lot of reflection and nonlinear time stuff. Sorry but that is how my mind works, ad time too, I guess. Enlil says...I am confused. That’s the nice version...

Anyway, I am very close to getting to the part where we meet you guys, our, or mostly Thoth Town descendants and it will be a little more straight forward. Me and Thoth hang out for about a week shooting the shit and experiencing the new us. We are going to wake the senior staff and tell them, well Thoth is, about Mars and what we can expect when we get there. We want to have a plan and then tell them what it is, build consensus, make them think they had a say. Project Management 101.”

“So, Thoth what exactly are our resources on Mars and whatever else you think I need to know, do we have Q-Drive? What is our level of tech?

“Well Enki, I have a pretty large facility which can house about 200 staff, we have a lot less folks than that so no problem with basic life support needs. I have a bunch of labs and workshops, a small fleet of subs, a couple of FTL shuttles and a bunch of raw materials. I have LI up and running. I shut most of that down before we left but I did leave a minimal LI control to maintain the stuff and keep it stealthed. I never got around to building Q-drives but I did fuck around with some of the Q off shoots. This was really a hobby shop and a lot of conceptual stuff. I never thought of it as an HQ, but we should be able to adapt it to our current needs. I do need some items that are not immediately available for some of the more exotic items like a Q-ship but we should be able to scrounge that up in time. It strikes me that we don’t really need to blink anywhere in the immediate future and our efforts should be concentrated on finding out exactly what is going on planet side and figuring out how to do what LBS wants so they don’t kill us n’shit. Have you given thought to how or if we are going to make our presence known to the locals? Have you thought about the possibility that there may be others from other species, or even other times interfering currently? We aren’t the only species that may be here”

Thoth knew me better than that. Of course, I had not even considered how or if we would introduce ourselves, or if other possibly malign species were involved and the whole temporal

thing was pretty new to me, actually I had never heard of it. In the past I would have tried to fake it and come up with some bullshit that made it look like I had a grip. I knew that wouldn't work with Thoth and I was trying this honesty as a lifestyle thing.

"No Thoth, none of the above. Glad you have a nice place for us to base on, and I'm glad you're here to do the thinking" Thoth looked taken aback, then smiled"

"Wow, Enki, *Friend* did a number on you... OK, so PM101, we need to first setup and situate on Mars, in Mars actually, and take stock of our resources. Then we need to get a grip on current events on Tera. Before we get carried away and before we can put together action items, we need to keep ourselves secret, both from the Humans and from anybody else that might be there. Earth was a desirable planet back in the day even after we took what we... needed. We are sloppy so there will be some of the Gold with the special Q-isotope left. Not the easy stuff because we got all that but here will be some somewhere. We'll need that for making Q-drive tech when that becomes a priority. Step one is to wake our friends up and clue them in. You should do that as you are the leader and better at bullshit than I am, no offence. I think you should preserve your authority by acting like you always knew about Mars, but that's your call. After that I will get with Nin and figure out the best insert trajectory to get us to the stealthed portal and keep us hidden from whoever might be watching, human or otherwise. You did say that LBS knew about this, which is concerning because if they knew others might too. A low order of probability, but even so we need to do this quietly."

"Yeah, Thoth no offence taken. We should wake Enlil first before the others and clue her in and get her take, she's sharp and I won't be able to fool her. Best to make her think, no, actually let her be part of the decision making. I wish *Friend* could work on her, she could use it, maybe she/it did. That would be interesting..."

We both laugh and head down to the Null Pod Bay.

Chapter 13

Enlil's wake up and a new beginning

We get down to the NPB and que the LI to wake up Enlil. We leave her a T- note telling her to meet me and Thoth on the bridge, we'd have coffee waiting.

"Hey Enki, Thoth, where is everybody else and how long in linear time has it been"

"Good to see you Enlil, how are you feeling" I was curious to see if *Friend* had done anything. It's funny, I had never given a second thought to... much, and now I kind of wanted to puke all over myself about Friend and the new me and all...

“How the fuck do you think I’m feeling, I just got up, our planet just got nuked like last week and since when did you care?”

Guess not...

“Sorry I asked... Let me get you up to speed, it’s been about 20 years linear ship time, 200 years LBS time and still about the same time local planet time. We are heading into the system now and should be at Thoth’s Mars HQ in about a week. I talked, or VR’d with the LBS scum bags before I got you up. Basically, it’s still the same shit show on Tera as when we left, give or take a month. I will send you a copy of my interaction with them for the details. What you need catching up on is what Toth did on the way out last time we were here, and the Mars Base he set up as a hobby. I will let you and Thoth hash out any feelings you may have about this but I will sum this up quickly so we can get on with planning the Op as the LBS is freaked out and they have itchy trigger fingers. They did make some allusions to sweetening the deal but were vague. I figure if we get in a better negotiation posture we can push for as much as we can get.”

Enlil had a strange expression on her face. She had gotten tense, then looked pissed, then seemed calm. “OK Enki, lay it on me” She sounded reasonable, which was my cue to be nervous, but actually I didn’t care how she was going to react, it didn’t matter. We had a job to do and at the end of the day I knew Enlil would put aside whatever she felt and do it. Post that, who knows, she held on to grudges.

“Thoth and I talked, first the bad news or at least what you might have some heartburn over. Thoth never killed off his peeps and instead stowed some away in caves before we did the planet wipe. Before you get all angry and stuff, Thoth explained his reasons and I agreed with him, understood his thinking and basically, I am OK with it. I want you to be OK with it too. Please save your comments until I’m finished, you and Thoth can talk about it as you need to. We’ve all been friends for a long time and I’m not getting between you guys. The fact that this pissed off the LBS and they wiped us out is neither here nor there. They were looking for an excuse, you know Dad goaded them, he just couldn’t and wouldn’t make friends. Also, I’m not so sure that wiping us out was the wrong thing to do as we just were getting nowhere and causing suffering wherever we went. Shit, look how they treated even us, look what dad did to mom and our siblings. We kind of sucked. OK, that’s where I stand. The good news is that Thoth built a tech base in the underground ocean on the 4th planet out, Mars. It’s stocked with supplies, has a facility built for 200 and all the cool stuff that Thoth makes. It’s a real break and at the least will make this more comfortable. And no, I didn’t know about it and yes, I’m OK with that. No fucking around and hard feelings, we got shit to do.”

For the first time that I can remember Enlil looked confused, it was kind of cute. She was always so hard and quick with the smart aleck response that usually cut to the bone. But she stared, first at Thoth and then at me.

“What happened to you Enki, you’ve never cut to the chase like that before. I don’t know what to say” That was a first. “I guess I’m not surprised that Thoth pulled that stunt, I always knew that

exfil was fishy, something was off, but honestly, I didn't care. I guess I should be all angry that you got our world destroyed and got us sent on this fucking fucked up mission. But I don't know what to feel. I guess Thoth and I should talk when I figure out what to say...

Hmm... Maybe Friend had done some work on Enlil...

"I am actually impressed that you built a facility on mars, or in mars. I didn't know it had an underground ocean. Let's skip to that as it is of immediate concern. I will need time to process this. I do want to see the LBS recording. And Thoth, when I have some cogent questions let's talk about this. I want to know everything. Just not now. I need to go hang out in my room for a bit, maybe a good sim or catch a buzz... it's been a fucked couple of weeks, at least for me."

Enlil went to her quarters to regroup, and me and Thoth had a talk, next steps...

"OK, Thoth that went OK, way better than expected actually. So, if you have a plan, I'm all ears"

"Actually, Enki I don't."

"OK, I will just throw some shit against the wall. We need to wake the staff up, all of them. I will start with basic rah-rah stuff, glad to see you and stuff. I will then say my usual line "here's the deal" and then brief them about the Tera situation. Then, dude its kind of your place to come clean about the exfil, unless you want to come up with a story, in which case you lie, and I'll swear to it."

"I like the first part, you're good with that and it will make everyone feel like we're in charge, somebody is in charge. But it's time for me to tell the truth about this. It's been eating at me forever. I want to set a new precedent. This is a fresh start, let's not fuck it by just doing what we always have done"

"Good, I like it. I think folks will be OK with it and I will do my best and support you after you spill your guts. The fact that we don't have long to get this fixed or we all die will help and the fact that you have cool place to base out of should make people feel better. Too bad anyway, it is what it is and now we have to see if we can make it better. I'll go on and on about new beginnings, I'll wing it. I'm pretty good"

"I know you are, and it is a new beginning."

Thoth smiled, and he meant it.

"Let's get Enlil, tell her what we are doing and wake everybody up."

Chapter 14
Staff Meeting, Pre-Op

So, I call Enlil's room and ask her to meet us when she was ready

"Hey Enki, I actually couldn't rest, didn't want to catch a buzz or sink into a VR soap opera. So, I reviewed your TC with LBS. What the fuck is going on with those losers? Anyway, I've been feeling odd since I got up and it seemed like a good use of my time. I'll be right up"

Me and Thoth are sitting and serious when she got to the bridge. I don't know where her head is at and Thoth looks nervous, for him.

"Hey, Enki, Thoth. What's the plan?

What, no shit fit, no snappy ... wow...

Hi Enlil, glad you're here" And I meant it.

"You boys have a plan I assume. I reviewed the LBS conversation, and we need to get busy."

So, I tell her about Thoth and my conversation and the half assed plan we had cooked up.

"OK, that sounds good. I will keep out of it and let Enki play leader, I'll support you in that. And Thoth, when you bare your soul, I'll act sympathetic, understanding and supportive. I'll add some positive sounds and look agreeable"

So much had changed, I know I had, Thoth had always been reasonable, but this was not the Enlil I knew. I liked it.

