

Legion

“What do you think about the argument, Cosmos?”

“It is all we can do, Scribe. Time results in more change than reason. Remember this friend.” The two friends walked through the forest, engaging in stimulating conversation as they traveled to do missionary work, far away from the Hollow, a subterranean village in the Land of Hedon. The place the two travelers were headed was the Land of Nod, bordered on its three sides by the desert, the sea, and the forest they now passed.

“What about the work we are going to do?” Scribe paused. “What brought us here to this dark forest my friend?”

“Nothing brought us here. We came here by our own deduction. I used to believe in a thing called happiness, a thing called freedom, a thing called truth... but then one day it faded away until I, a mere being such as myself, met an aging man, full of knowledge, who let the stagnant water flow once again, who let that search for purity run like those dammed waters. Hope my friend, that is why I am here.”

“What do you mean by hope?”

“Hope that opening the bookstore will someday change things. That is why we are doing this missionary work for the Order, is it not?”

“I suppose...”

“Time, as I have said, will make more change than reason, but it is books that will give us this time. It is a false notion, what some call superstition, that keeps the people of Nod from owning and reading books. What is your belief, Scribe?”

“I just like to read and write and certainly sleep.” I do not see what is wrong with reading about the Nature of things, such as the three books we shall sell.

“There are those who are in power that think they can shelter others from the Ahriman and only let them eat of the Ogdoad. But we shall change this, Scribe.”

“What is our new associate’s belief, what is he like?” Scribe envisaged.

“He is well articulated, keeps to himself, and creates a sense of insight in his silence. His belief remained a mystery.”

“Know thy enemy for They and I are one.” This was the first thing he told me. And when I asked him his belief on books, he said only that “All good books begin at the end.” I do not know exactly what he meant by what he said of books, but I consider that he intended that They and I are the same in manifold: They are the others such as us to the people of Nod or the people of Nod to us; and They and I are one perchance in that strict sense, that the Nodic people and the Hedonic people are the same, just of different custom.

“How will we get the bookstore going, we know not enough of the people of Nod’s ways to run it? And what will this bookstore be called? It needs a name does it not? What does this man with no name think we should call it Cosmos?”

“That it does Scribe, a name that is. It does need a name. But this ‘man with no name’ will tell us what to call it once we have established ourselves there and made the necessary arrangements to open the bookstore. An investor named Mr. Jackal will help us with the monetary elements of our work in the Land of Nod. Mr. Jackal is a friend of the articulate one and mine. He is not a book reader himself but is indifferent to such a belief and will help us establish a bookstore and maintain it for a portion of our profits.”

“But why should we gain from our work, Cosmos?”

“We will not Scribe, only a fee that will sustain us, our work, and those who help us in Nod.”