



THE MOIRAE
ADDICTION

SAMPLE



NICHOLAS ANTHONY

KRISTINA DAWN



THE MOIRAE

II

ADDICTION



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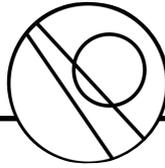
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THE MOIRAE

VOLUME II

ADDICTION

NICHOLAS ANTHONY
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THREAD OF KLOTHO

“Klotho.”

“Klotho.” Persephone’s voice pierces my dreams, pulling me back to reality.

I open my eyes and see a sea of heads turned to face me. A guilty smile creeps across my face. Blushing, I sink into my chair to escape. Slowly the heads turn back around to the lecture.

ADDICTION

“Thank you.” The professor turns back to the blackboard to continue his discussion over the brain. “As I was saying, the human brain is an amazingly malleable thing. It adapts by creating more receptors on the dendrital branch in response to the increased opiate levels...” Chalk lets out a squeak as he finishes drawing the structural formula of dopamine.

“Was I snoring?” I ask.

“Yeah,” Persephone huffs a laugh. “It was great. I mean I don’t blame you, this lecture is like a lullaby.”

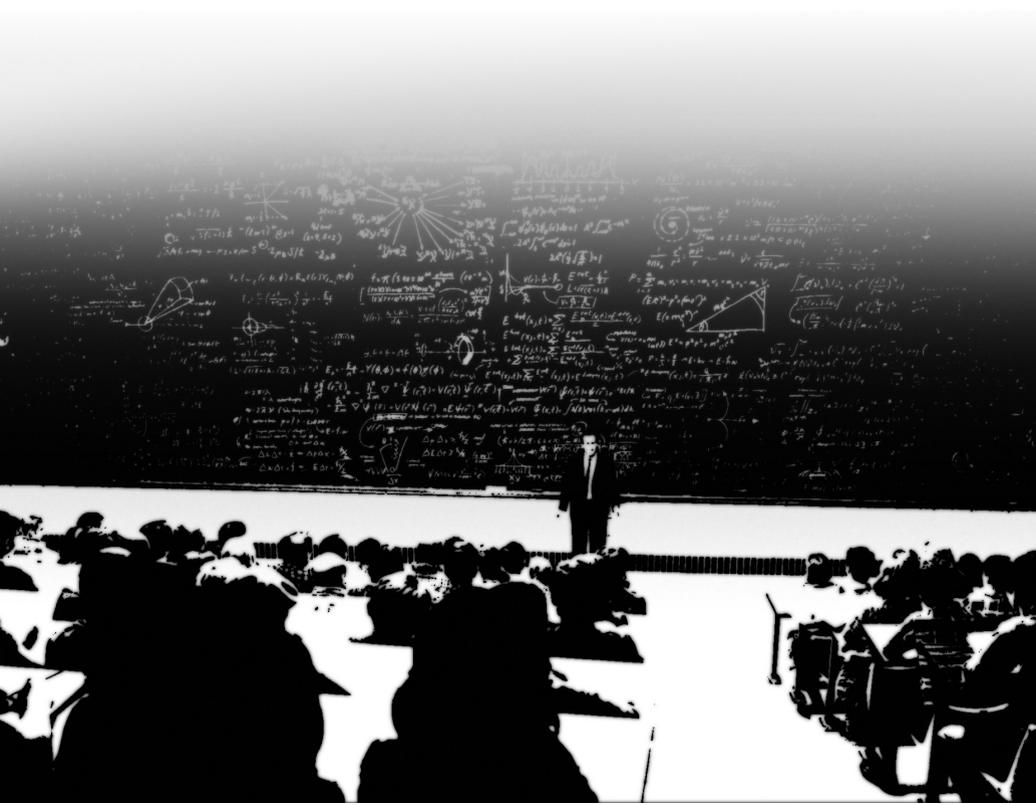
“However, once the substance is no longer there the natural concentration of neurotransmitter is not enough to generate an action potential.”

“So, what are you doing after this?” she asks over the back of her hand, her pencil dangling from her fingers. Her blue hair covers the side of her face already, but the habit of trying to be discrete lingers.

“I’m gonna go have brunch with my sisters,” I answer, scribbling in my notebook as though I’m taking notes. “You?”

“I’m going to a study session with Pandora.” she whispers.

“The resulting dysphoria is what is commonly referred to as withdrawal. Alright, that is enough for today. Read



ADDICTION

chapters 11 and 12 as well as the article on the nucleus accumbens and...”

Persephone rolls her eyes as she turns to follow me. “Oh my god... It’s amazing how bored the mind can get with thinking about itself.”

Students smack books shut and rustle papers into backpacks to ascend the stairs that run down the middle of the lecture hall. We climb among the other students up to the doors at the back.

“Be nice, Persephone. I don’t think the mind is just the brain. I mean it’s only neurobiology. It’s not, like, really about the mind. There is more to people than just a brain, I mean, like their souls.”

“My other professor in my 8am class said something like: ‘The scraps of the soul find refuge under the name consciousness.’ or something like that.”

“But in the book for this class some scientists think that consciousness gives humans free will, and like, make them who they are.”

As we exit out the double doors from the back of the lecture hall, bright light pours in.

“Well, your sister said the thing they call consciousness—like being aware—only lets humans give meaning to what has already been decided for them. Or like, maybe consciousness is just the few thoughts that win out in all the chaos.”

Outside of the auditorium in the distance on the right side corner, the driver’s door of a black limousine hangs open. Iris, with rainbow hair and her typical punk rock attire, hangs cross-armed over the window.

“Kloe, over here!” Iris shouts.

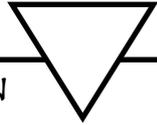
“Well, I still think that even those few things and thoughts would be enough of, well, a kind of universe to be interesting and stuff. See ya, Persephone.” I tuck my

ADDICTION

thumbs under the straps of my pink backpack to steady it as I lightly jog across the street to the limo.

“Later.” Persephone waves.

INTERVENTION AND INDECISION



Moments later Klotho sits at a three person table beside her sister, Lakthesis, in a large and fancy restaurant with hardwood floors, cherry tables with white linen, and a staff dressed in black tuxedos. Lakthesis’s hair is long, crimped, and red-brown with blonde highlights. Her freckled face is adorned with square frame glasses and her elegant body frame is layered with a ruffled soft green dress that gives her a vintage quality.

In her right hand she turns a slender tool that looks like a combination of an expensive pen and a compass used by school children during a geometry lesson. She shuffles some papers in front of her across the white linen table top and then uses the compass-like tool to draw a circle in the middle of one of the pages. With a click the compass

collapses into a pen and she neatly writes what appears to be complex formulas beside the freshly marked circle.

Klotho is dressed in the same low rider blue jeans and tight white baby doll t-shirt from the lecture. Her open pink backpack sits beside her chair. Two knitting needles peek out through the open zipper. She sits immersed in a barely creased novel. On the table in front of her sits a tall glass of chocolate milk in contrast to the mimosa of Lakthesis. Both appear to be waiting for something or someone.

Then, across the dining room strides Atropos. She wears her black hair long and straight. Around her neck is a leather collar. Smoke pours like a cumulonimbus cloud from her mouth. A black corset wraps tightly around her waist and a knee high tattered skirt hangs loose from her hips. Her bare feet ripple the air as they slap against the marble entryway. Taking a seat beside Lakthesis, Atropos tosses a medical bag that has a large green pharmacy cross on the front of it onto the table.

ADDICTION

As Atropos takes a seat, Lakthesis shuffles her paperwork and addresses Klotho, “Kloe, it’s 11:15 and your sister is here.”

Klotho remains seated and motionless, completely engrossed in her book. Lakthesis lifts her menu and briefly familiarizes herself with the choices and then continues, “Have you decided what you would like to order so we can get started here?”

Klotho’s expression intensifies as she is intentionally ignoring Lakthesis’s requests and waves her right hand at her as though she is shooing away an annoying fly. Lakthesis takes notice and offense to the motion and resorts to the command, “Klotho, would you please put the book down and decide what you want.”



Klotho responds in a whimper, “I can’t quit now. I just got to the part where he is meeting her for the first time and realizing that he has loved her all along.”

In a pouting protest, she flips forward in the book searching for the beginning of the next chapter.

“Please, I have six more pages.”

Lakthesis gives in. “Fine, but when you finish that chapter put it away so you can pay attention.”

As Klotho nods her consent and her expression again intensifies with focus as she squints diligently at the small print, Lakthesis turns away from Klotho with a pleased expression that shifts into a stern stare towards Atropos.

“Besides, Atropos, we can talk about your recent behavior while she is distracted.”

As she looks away from Lakthesis, a labored breath rises from Atropos that gives the impression this discussion about her behavior has occurred before. She is obviously

ADDICTION

unwilling to entertain it yet another time. Lakthesis motions to the collar around Atropos's neck saying,

“I was just curious if you'll be changing more things slowly, or should I expect other radical switches?”

Atropos answers in an intentionally evasive response, “One piece at a time. You know, explore each combination.” as though to imply it is none of Lakthesis's business. While answering, Atropos reaches with her left hand into the top of the right breast of her corset to produce a silver cigarette case and a matching lighter that the cigarette case covers by virtue of the way she holds them together in her hand.

Lakthesis motions towards the medical bag resting on the table in front of Atropos and says, “I guess it will be a while longer before you give that up then.”

In response Atropos simply narrows her eyes and lets a brief, huffy exhale escape through her crumpled nose, as though to challenge Lakthesis while removing a single cigarette from its silver case. Lakthesis states in a

disappointed tone, “I’ll take that as a yes. Atropos, you know that you are an important—even an essential—part of everything we are trying to do here.”

Atropos places the cigarette loosely between her lips and blocks the air caused by a passing waiter with her hand. She then moves her hand inward to hold the cigarette between her index and middle finger while she inhales making the tip glow bright orange.

Lakthesis continues, “Recently I have noticed that you are even less excited about being here than you are punctual. I know that your undertakings make you disregard your duties and our schedules. But please, don’t make blatant attempts to sabotage the things I need to do. Regardless of our disagreements, we ultimately share the same goal. If we don’t work together, we will both be disappointed with what happens in the end.”

The waiter taking the order of the table behind Atropos notices the smoke and stops to correct her behavior saying, “Excuse me.” Atropos ignores his polite address, so he attempts to gather her attention again. “Excuse me,

ADDICTION

madam, but smoking is strictly prohibited in this restaurant. I must ask that you put that out.”

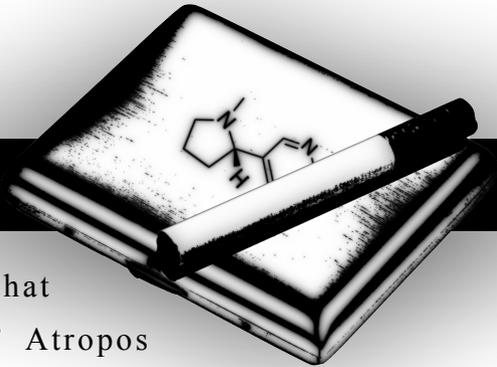
Atropos, holding the cigarette between her fingers, takes one last long draw. Then, not even turning to look at the waiter, she grinds the cigarette into the tabletop burning a perfect circle through the white cloth and into the polished cherry tabletop. She leaves the ashes as she turns to the waiter and proudly smiles, as though to say, “Are you happy now? Now get the fuck away from me.”

She lowers her eyes and an accomplished sliver of a smile escapes before her face turns all the way back to Lakthesis with an expression of frustration. “Really Lak, could we please cut straight to the ultimatum so I can remind you how much I don’t want to be here, and then we can all go our separate ways?”

Lakthesis responds, “I am simply worried about what you do for amusement and the irreversible damage that it could cause if you don’t control it.”

“Oh, well don’t worry about me. I will be just fine.” Atropos says mockingly against Lakthesis’s unease with a snicker that turns into cold apathy, implying that Lakthesis has alternative motives that she is covering with fake concern.

Noticing the sarcasm, Lakthesis corrects, “Actually, I am not worried about you. I am worried about her.” She sits back in her chair and motions across her body at Klotho. “You know she adores you, and if she found out any one of your many secrets, it could be disastrous.”



“Are you really that ashamed of me?!” Atropos exclaims as she again lifts the silver case from the table. “Or are you afraid that if she was ever allowed to know my secrets she might find my radical ways more appealing than your motherly conduct?”

ADDICTION

“I find it hard to find any appeal in being overcome with destructive indulgence,” retorts Lakthesis.

Atropos corrects her with a raised eyebrow, “Deconstructive indulgences, and I overcome them.” She then opens her silver cigarette case and removes another cigarette.

Lakthesis responds, “It is even harder to imagine *you* overcoming something.” Atropos looks up noticing that Lakthesis is staring at the cigarette as though specifically referring to her habitual smoking.

“Fine. Then allow *me* to demonstrate by overcoming my thirst,” Atropos announces while using the cigarette to point at Lakthesis before tapping the filter on the table. Lakthesis simply shakes her head as Atropos raises her hand and snaps twice attempting to get the attention of a passing waiter.

“I thought that we agreed to wait until Klotho was ready before we ordered anything.”

Atropos turns to Klotho and asks, “Kloe, are you finished yet, sweetheart?” Klotho remains enthralled in her reading material, so Atropos leans over the table and lowers Klotho’s book so that their eyes meet. “Klotho.”

Awaking from her immersion in the novel Klotho responds, “Yes?”

“Are you finished?”

Klotho grins deviously and raises her shoulders in a shrug as though admitting she intentionally did something she wasn’t supposed to do and was just caught.

Lakheis notices Klotho’s physical response to Atropos’s question, “She probably went past the chapter where we agreed she would stop.”

“I’m sorry. I just couldn’t stop.”

“Well, do you have any idea what you want?” Lakheis asks.

ADDICTION

“I think I know what I want. I just don’t know if what I want is on the menu.”

Atropos affirms to her sisters, “That shouldn’t be a problem,” as she continues to snap and finally catches eyes with a waiter. She points right at him and turns her hand over slowly to curl her finger, beckoning him over to the table.

The new waiter clearly states, as though rehearsed, “Madam, I will be right with you. I simply need a moment t—”

Atropos fails to break stride, cutting him off, “Good this will only take a moment.” She places the cigarette in her lips and lifts the lighter from the table, raising it to her mouth, and continues, “I would like a glass of Hour-absyn-whatever-the-fuck-its-called-now... and a spoon. Last time you all forgot the spoon.”

In a very judging tone Lakthesis states, “So much for sober.”

“One thing at a time, Lak.” Atropos says gruffly as she lights the cigarette and gestures at Lakthesis while saying her name.

“Yes,” says Lakthesis, “and I would like the—”

“Excuse me, madam,” the waiter interjects turning toward Atropos. “I must ask you to not smoke in the restaurant. As a courtesy to all other patrons, this is a smoke free establishment.”

The words wrapped in smoke, Atropos exhales, “Do you know who the fuck I am? Does it look like I give a fuck about the establishment? Now apologize for interrupting my sister, take our orders, and then scurry along to attend to the pressing business we are keeping you from.”

The waiter stands surprised, and then, as though a moment of recognition takes hold, he looks at Atropos for a second. Stuttering over himself the waiter apologizes, “Uhh... yes madam, um, m-my apologies. Can—may I take your order, please?”

ADDICTION

“Thank you,” Lakthesis says sincerely as though extending her own apology for Atropos’s behavior as she appears to be embarrassed by it. “I would like the butterfly shrimp with a Greek salad and another mimosa. Klotho, tell our new friend what you would like.”

Klotho drops the menu she has since taken up and exclaims, “I can’t decide!”

Lakthesis, with a taste of frustration says, “Klotho, stop playing games.”

Klotho takes a deep breath and closes the menu under her folded hands to show that her selection in food is nowhere on the menu, “Ok. I can’t decide what to order, but I guess for breakfast I want pancakes... three blueberry pancakes, two eggs over easy, some bacon, hash browns with cheese, another glass of milk—strawberry this time—and... and a sugar donut.” Klotho finishes her order and then remembering she has a test to study for adds, “Oh yeah, and a coffee with cream, too.”

Puzzled, the waiter attempts to make sense of Klotho's odd request, "Miss, we don't have pancakes, nor do we have hash browns, nor donuts—"

"Well," Atropos shakes the ashes from her cigarette onto the floor as she interrupts, "it seems you need to find some. Scurry along now. " Atropos then shoos him away with her hand as though an annoying bird is attempting to steal food from her plate.

"Very nice, Atropos," Lakthesis says with an air of not being all that impressed. "Are we ready to take care of business?" Klotho nods. Atropos takes a draw on her cigarette and on the exhale makes two rotations with her hand holding the cigarette, as though motioning Lakthesis to get on with it already. Lakthesis reaches down to her left side into a white messenger bag and produces two stacks of folders: one black and the other white. At the same time Klotho reaches across her body into her backpack. She pulls out a white ball of thread, along with a connected weaving, and the two knitting needles that were poking out of the top of the bag.

ADDICTION

Before Klotho can get very far, Lakthesis says, “There’s nothing that urgent,” as she places the white folders in front of Klotho. Klotho replaces the ball and weaving and untwists her body to face the folders. Lakthesis then places the black folders in front of Atropos and continues saying, “Well, nothing that can’t wait until after brunch. Still, I would like you both to take some time right now to familiarize yourself with the deadlines so we can avoid any... scheduling problems.” Klotho opens the white folder and begins to briefly but attentively look over the pages contained in each folder.

Atropos, on the other hand, simply opens the top folder and, without even glancing at the content, closes it and pushes the stack to the side. She reaches into the bust of her corset and again produces the cigarette case and lighter. Tapping Klotho on the shoulder, Atropos draws the last pull from the cigarette she is currently smoking and then says, “Kloe, can you finish that?” as she motions toward her third-of-a-glass of chocolate milk. Klotho

nods, drinks the milk, and then stares intently as Atropos drops her cigarette butt into the empty glass.

As Atropos flicks the flint on her lighter to start the next cigarette, Klotho embarks on a question that gives rise to a flood of inquiry. “Why do you smoke all the time?”

Atropos exhales and without pause says, “Because, my dear, it is easier to embrace the desire for something than to suspend the indulgence.” Atropos draws on the cigarette, exhales, and then finishes, “That is, at least long enough to calculate the consequences and determine the reason one should refrain.”

Lakheisis sips the rest of her mimosa and exclaims, “Fuck, here we go again.”



THE GRAINS OF SAND

I look over my pink backpack on my shoulder. Brunch is still settling in my stomach. Pancakes, donuts, eggs, bacon, and coffee slosh back and forth as I quicken my

ADDICTION

pace. In the distance a large worn warehouse looms on the horizon. If I looked into my own eyes the mixture would be of fear and uncertainty. Afraid of getting caught and dancing with danger.

I finally come upon the warehouse. There is a heavy green, rusted metal door that I push open with a groan. The hallway on the other side of the door is lit dimly by fluorescent bulbs.

The rooms appear to hold broken circus sideshows. I pass a clown with dark, worn face paint adjusting rabbit ears on a television set showing nothing but static. With his hands pressed to the sides of the old brown metal box, he laughs at nothing in particular and then kisses the screen.



Further down, a woman with facial hair spins a green bottle in the corner of the corridor. An arc of worn stuffed animals and cracked ceramic dolls sit in my path. The bottleneck slows to point at an elephant with cotton hanging out of a socket where the matching black button would be another eye. She lifts and cradles the elephant like an infant, nursing it with the empty bottle.

Around a corner I meet a tall, thin jester leading a large emu-sized bird with a bit through its raven-shaped beak. “I can’t hear you. What’s that that you said?” The jester asks.

I look at him puzzled, “Me?” Both the bird and jester look through me.

“We’re all better. All better...” The bird squawks like a parrot. “All better off dead.”

Finally, I meet a porcelain white man with wild black hair and a worn top hat, dressed in shades of midnight. A monkey clothed in a tattered outfit stands on his shoulder.



“You look lost. What are you looking for?” the man in the top hat asks. His question catches me off guard.

“Excuse me?”

“Everyone that comes here is looking for something. Some are trying to find themselves, or trying to find a way home, or a way to get away. But I think you have come for something else.”

“I got a call. I think my...” I pause to choose my words carefully regarding my personal life to a stranger, “friend is here.”

“He is on the fifth floor. This way.”

Uncomfortable and a little afraid, I clutch the straps of my backpack. He lifts the gate of a large elevator lift open and steps inside. I follow.

“It was you on the phone then. Who... Who are you... and your friends?”

On the old worn control panel, he presses the button for the fifth floor. “We are those that wait in the wings, watching the universe unwind as collision after hopeless collision duplicates the same redundant questions. We remember the answer, but still we wait in anticipation for it to be realized by those that are too afraid to cross that final threshold. The large fragments of a collapsed everything.

“And they, they are the insignificant missing pieces. Nothing but a byproduct of omniscience. We need them as much as a pile needs another grain of sand. Like grains of sand running through the hourglass as a reminder that we are ensnared by temporality. Grains of sand in the eyes of god. A dream and nothing more... then again a nightmare for those of us that know what dreams may come.”

ADDICTION

“Oh...?” I stare out of the lift as the floors go by, confused. Such a completely ridiculous monologue. He must be on something.

He opens the gate and glances back at me, saying. “Here we are. Room 512.”

“Thank you.”

I step out of the elevator and down the hallway searching for room 512. My sneakers rub roughly against the coarse concrete as I walk cautiously down the hall. Worn and uneven numbers of 506 are on a wooden door to my left. In the same hallway, 508 appears. Then 510. Finally, my hand pushes against the door that reads 512 in rustically stained metal.

As I enter I see my Eros. He lays in the distance on a mattress on the floor. Light filters in through a window on the left of the room. On the floor a spoon and tourniquet with a small puddle. His medium length, curly blonde and brown hair frames his chiseled features. However, his expression is vacant, and his features seem sunken.

I rush to his side cupping his head in my hand, and, looking down, I start pulling a syringe needle out of his arm. I rest his head in my lap, stroking his hair.

“I’m so sorry that I said I didn’t want to know,” I whisper. “Now I see that you need help. You can’t do it alone. We’ll get through this, I promise. I promise...”

The shadow of a male figure and a monstrous dog falls across the floor in front of Eros and me. He is a lean with long dreadlocks that are collected in the back. A few dreads fall in front of his face which is littered by scruff.

“I’m sorry for interrupting such a beautiful moment. However, I have a problem...” He interrupts sarcastically.

Two males enter the room behind him and begin to approach me.

“...and you are the only one I know with the answer. Where are the Remains of Chaos?”

ADDICTION

Afraid but defiant, I hug Eros around his neck. “No. No, I can’t tell you.”

His right fingers tighten around brass knuckles that are adorned with three spikes. He snickers, “Oh, I believe you will.”

Snatching Eros by the hair and pulling him from my grip with one hand, I attempt to cling to his sleeve, but he is yanked away.

“No, no!” I shout.

He drags my Eros across the floor while the black dog tugs at his pants. He is barely awake from the drugs and responds very little to the attacks.

“Now, let us test your Love.” He knees Eros in the face. The dog barks in the background as he lifts my Eros from the floor by the throat.

Holding him in the air, the man with dreadlocks punches Eros’s face with the brass knuckles. The spikes are

embedded into his cheek. Blood erupts from the holes as the spikes are pulled from the entry point.

I whimper. My Eros is then backhanded with the brass knuckles. From three gashes, fountains of blood spray in thick streams from his vacant expression: one from the corner of his eye, the second across his cheek, and the third stems from the corner of his mouth.

The man with dreadlocks stands with his hand raised high above my Eros's crumpled body ready to strike again. I scream in the background with an expression of horror. "Stop, stop! I'll tell you everything you want to know! Please just stop hurting him!"

He finally stops. I rush over to him to cradle Eros's broken and bleeding body in my lap. "I'll tell you everything."



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NICHOLAS & KRISTINA

Childhood friends that started writing *The Moirae* at the beginning of their relationship in college.

Together they are raising their three children, baking vegan snacks, and trying to save the planet.



THE MOIRAE

ADDICTION