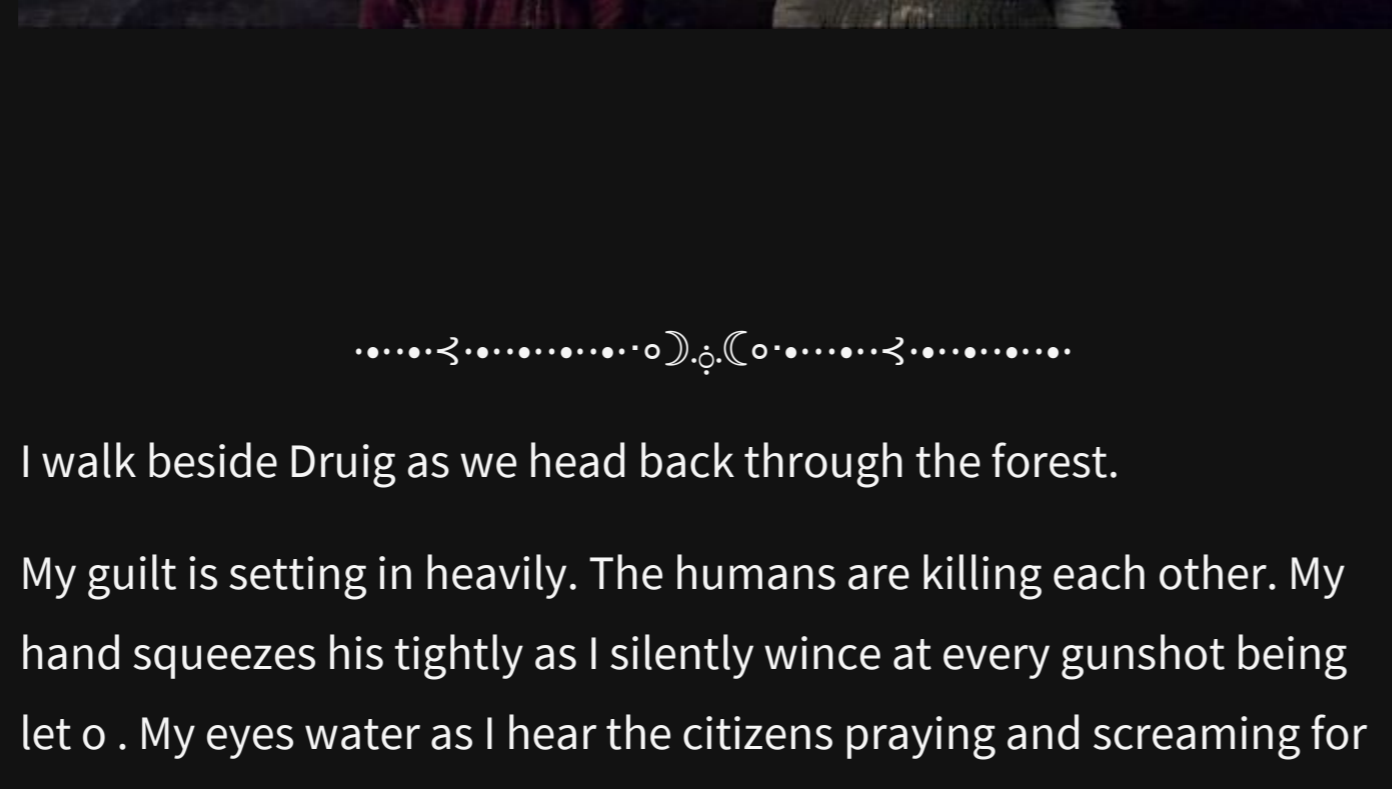


## final battle

◀ ⏪ ⏩ ▶

"Go easy on me, baby."

◀ ⏪ ⏩ ▶



I walk beside Druig as we head back through the forest.

My guilt is setting in heavily. The humans are killing each other. My hand squeezes his tightly as I silently wince at every gunshot being let o. My eyes water as I hear the citizens praying and screaming for god to help them.

Begging for Mother Earth to help them. Why do they have to beg for me?

I, am not allowed to intervene. My lip quivers and Druig's eyes catch mine. He squeezes my hand again attempting to reassure me even in the slightest. Bringing it to his lips and nodding to me silently

Druig turns his gaze away from our hands interlaced and down at the destruction of Tenochtitlan, gunshots and screeching echoing around us. Thena and Makkari speed towards us and slide into walking pace with Druig and I.

I reach out for Makkari's hand and she squeezes it and nods to me. Ajak looks around and says "Where are the others?"

"We had to spilt up, Makkari signed.

Thena smiles and says "There were far more deviants then you told us of, Phastos."

Phastos shakes his head and says "I'm sure that was fun for you."

Thena's grin widens and she says "It was."

I shake my head at her happiness. How does this not effect the others as it effects Druig and I? I mean I enjoy a good battle as much as the others and we did really well fighting the deviants but these innocent humans are slaughtering eachother in troves.

I look around and Phastos clears his throat getting the groups attention as he looks at a hologram of Earth "Once the others kill these last Deviants every single deviant will be eliminated. They'll be extinct and not returning ever. We have done our job well."

I nod not fully wanting to accept that we are done fighting together to defeat deviants just as we have for centuries. I rub Druig's shoulder as I place my chin on it. Makkari still holds tightly to my le hand. I close my eyes and press a kiss to his cheek as my lips tremble.

Druig could feel the fear within me and the sadness as he looked to the many piles of dead bodies that scattered the forest I grew to love dearly. My heart aches as I see Zane the little boy I taught sprawled across the ground dead.

A sob nearly escapes my lips as my hand covers my mouth. I go to walk over to him when Makkari pulls me back towards her. Druig makes eye contact and I flinch at the impending gunshots let out throughout the Forrest.

Please... no more fighting. No more killing. Please just stop. Please.

Druig couldn't help it anymore his eyes began to glow as he looked away from my gaze

"Don't." Ajak's voice snapped both Druig and I out of our bubble of concentration and anger. Druig glared daggers at her. Ajak chimes in, keeping her composure easily "We don't interfere in their wars."

Druig shakes his head and says "This isn't war Ajak, this is genocide." His eyes trail to me as mine remain on the soldiers sprinting towards each other. My eyes slowly close as I see soldiers drop to the ground limply. I think I'm going to be sick.

This is the worst part of the job. Seeing the people I got to know extremely well be slaughtered.

I didn't sign up for this.

Druig frustratedly says "Their weapons are too advanced. Too deadly. You're advancements in their weapons wasn't a good idea."

Phastos sco s and defends himself "Evolution of humans includes technology. This is all how it's supposed to go. I can't stop them. There's nothing I can do."

Druig shakes his head angrily and pats Gaia's hair down and turns back towards the fighters saying "No, you're right. There's nothing for you to do. But there is for me."

His eyes gleam golden and I see Eira the little girl I grew fond of as I taught at her school cry for her father as her mother begged her to come with her. She turns and makes full eye contact with me. My heart aches and pulls to step in.

I take a step forward as she screams "Mother Gaia!"

Eira slumps to the ground as her and her mother drop dead. Something within me snaps.

"Too much death..."

Druig's composure slips as my eyes turn white. He loses control of the soldiers.

I pry my hand away from Makkari's and I hit her away with a blast of cosmic energy.

Ajak shouts "Gaia!"

Kingo shouts "No! Gaia!"

Druig turns to me quickly and Phastos mutters "mahd wr'ry... I've never seen it before in person...oh my god."

I scream as I slam Druig away from me. His eyes glimmer as he attempts to gain control but he can't. He's too distracted at everyone's speaking and arguing.

Too many powerful minds in one place.

Gaia turns to the group and Ajak says "Gaia."

I stare blankly at the group and Ajak says "Everyone behind me. Druig get behind me.."

He shakes his head and Ajak steps towards me with her hands raised. Makkari groans as she stands up, she signs "I should have brought a shovel."

Kingo says "Is anyone else mildly terrified?"

Thena shrugs and says "I'm up for the challenge."

I fire repetitive shots at Ajak and the others as Druig pulls at my abdomen. I wound him throwing him at least 20 feet away from me. He shakes his head and Ajak heals herself as the burns seep through her skin. "Gaia. We are here. As a team and we all love you. Druig is here. He loves you."

"Dead."

Kingo winces and says "Where's Ikaris? A little pew pew and tackle by him would completely take care of this situation."

Ajak is forcefully shot back into the trees and impaled through the abdomen from my hit to her. She sighs and begins to pull her body from the sharp branch.

Two by two the team attack and attempt to tame me.

Kingo screams "I DON'T WANT TO HURT HER!"

Druig grits his teeth as he saunters over quickly. "She won't even remember this once she wakes up. It's alright to rough her up a bit."

Ajak looks to him and angrily says "You knew of this."

With most of the team down and attempting to recover quickly Thena forms a strong cosmic sword. "I hate to say this but I've always wanted to fight you."

Druig aggressively forces his way into Gaia's mind wincing and seething from the burning sensation he can never get used to.

Gaia's eyes present golden tendrils through the vacant white. He's slowly gaining access to her mind.

Thena and I hold eachother at a standstill as my orb of cosmic energy attempts to push her cosmic sword away from me. One of my hands releases the orb and my right hand solely holds the orb as the other forms a cosmically flamed fist. I uppercut Thena and her head jerks back as she stumbles back into the ground.

She shakes her head and mutters "It's too late... too late."

Sersi stands as she rubs Phastos' injured shoulder. "Thena? What's wrong?"

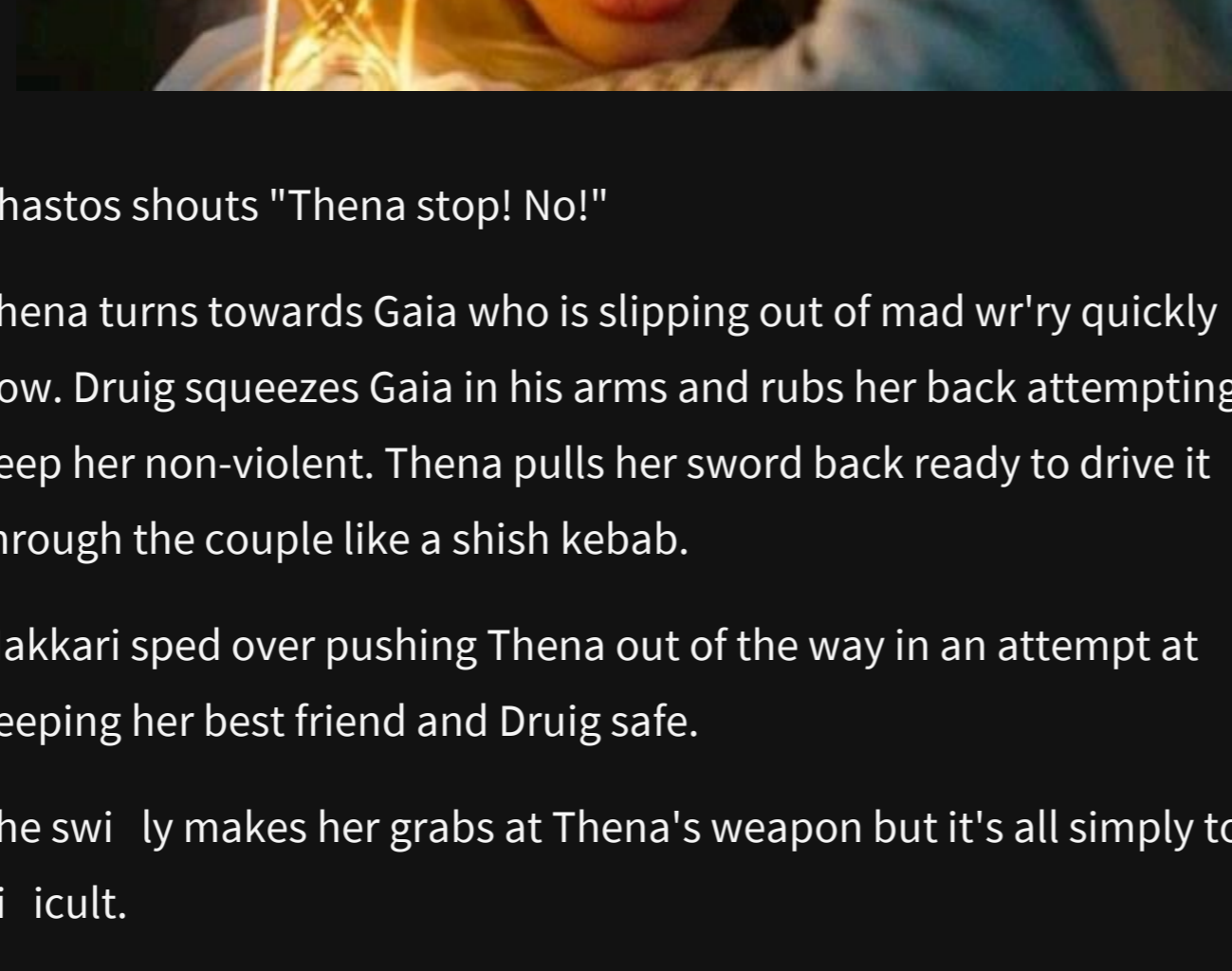
Gaia stands hu ling and standing extremely still. Druig got it.

He is in control.

Kingo swi ly punches me across the face and Druig shouts "I got it Kingo! That punch was unnecessary!" I stand tall again and slap Kingo across the face. Kingo sco s and says "I know you just made her slap me Druig!"

A smirk presents itself on Druig's face as shit hits the fan with Thena.

Thena's eyes go white quickly and she says "Everyone's going to die." Druig approaches Gaia, only wanting to address one mad wr'ry'd woman at a time. Sersi says "Thena... Are you okay?" Thena formed a sword quickly lunging towards Sersi. Makkari swiped Sersi out of the way.



Phastos shouts "Thena stop! No!"

Thena turns towards Gaia who is slipping out of her mad wr'ry quickly now. Druig squeezes Gaia in his arms and rubs her back attempting to keep her non-violent. Thena pulls her sword back ready to drive it through the couple like a shish kebab.

Makkari sped over pushing Thena out of the way in an attempt at keeping her best friend and Druig safe.

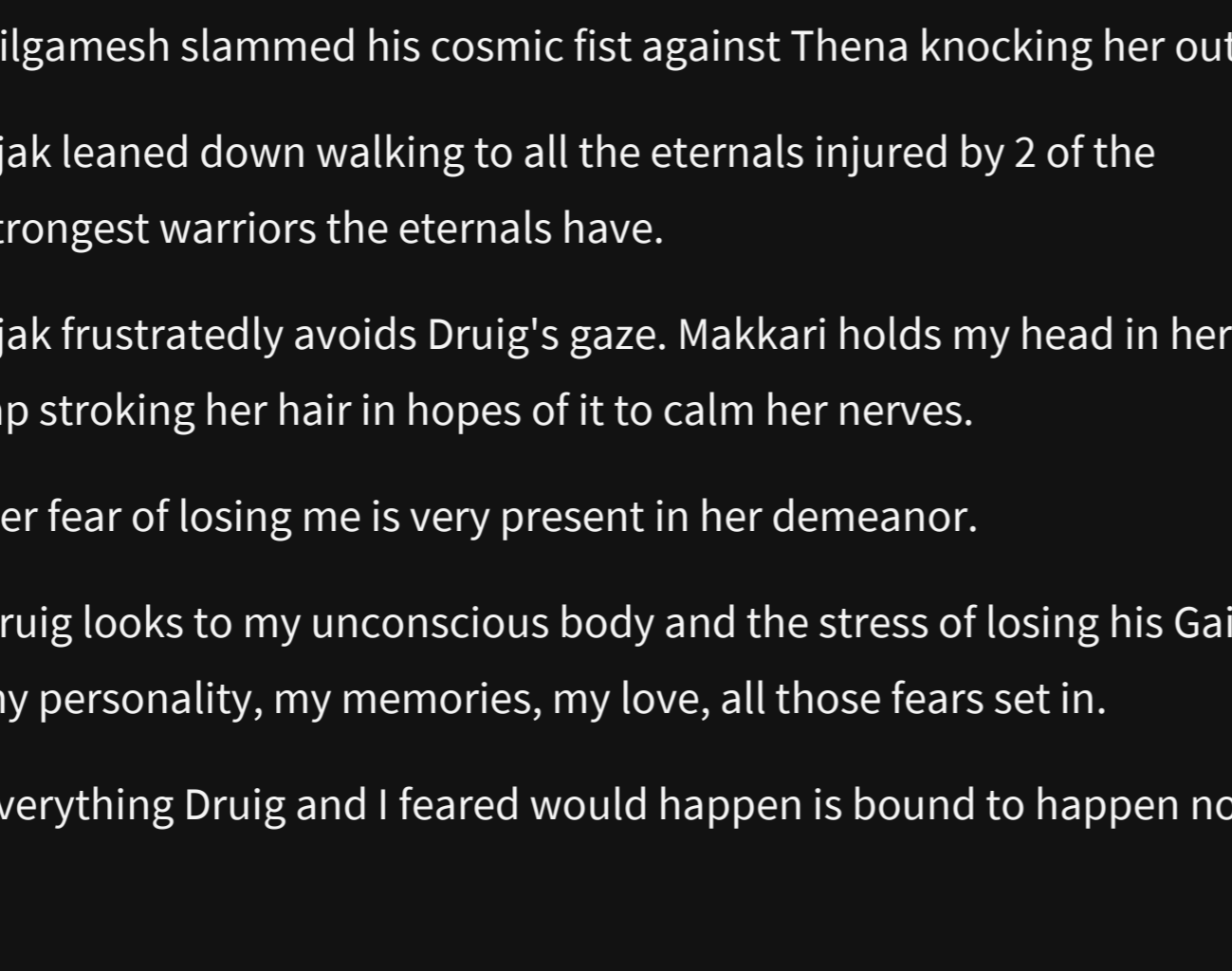
She swi ly makes her grabs at Thena's weapon but it's all simply too di icult.

Ajak clears her throat directing Thena's attention to her now. She extends her arms out to Thena and Thena pierces through Ajak's skin. Easily, she heals her skin continuing to walk towards the white eyed eternal.

I slip out of mad wr'ry and sink into Druig's arms losing consciousness. He turns towards Thena seeing her attacking Ajak.

Oh great. Another nuts eternal. While my nuts eternal is unconscious in my arms.

Ajak spoke so ly to Thena in hopes to get through to her "Don't listen to your mind. Listen to my voice. My voice only Thena. It's Ajak..."



Druig slowly li s Gaia quietly and steps backwards away from Ajak and Thena.

Ajak speaks so ly and in hushed tones "You are safe. You are loved. You are Thena. Our Thena."

Thena remains unphased as any form of composure Thena has slips away. Ajak backs up and Thena aggressively drives her sword through Ajak's abdomen.

Gilgamesh looked at the scene happening very confusedly as he approaches the group. He wraps his arms around her attempting to stop her fighting "Thena. No. No. No."

Phastos warns Gilgamesh "Gil, she's not herself right now. She's slipped into mahd wr'ry." Thena attempted to stab Gilgamesh but he swi ly avoided the jabs towards him. He shouts at her "Thena!"

Gilgamesh slammed his cosmic fist against Thena knocking her out.

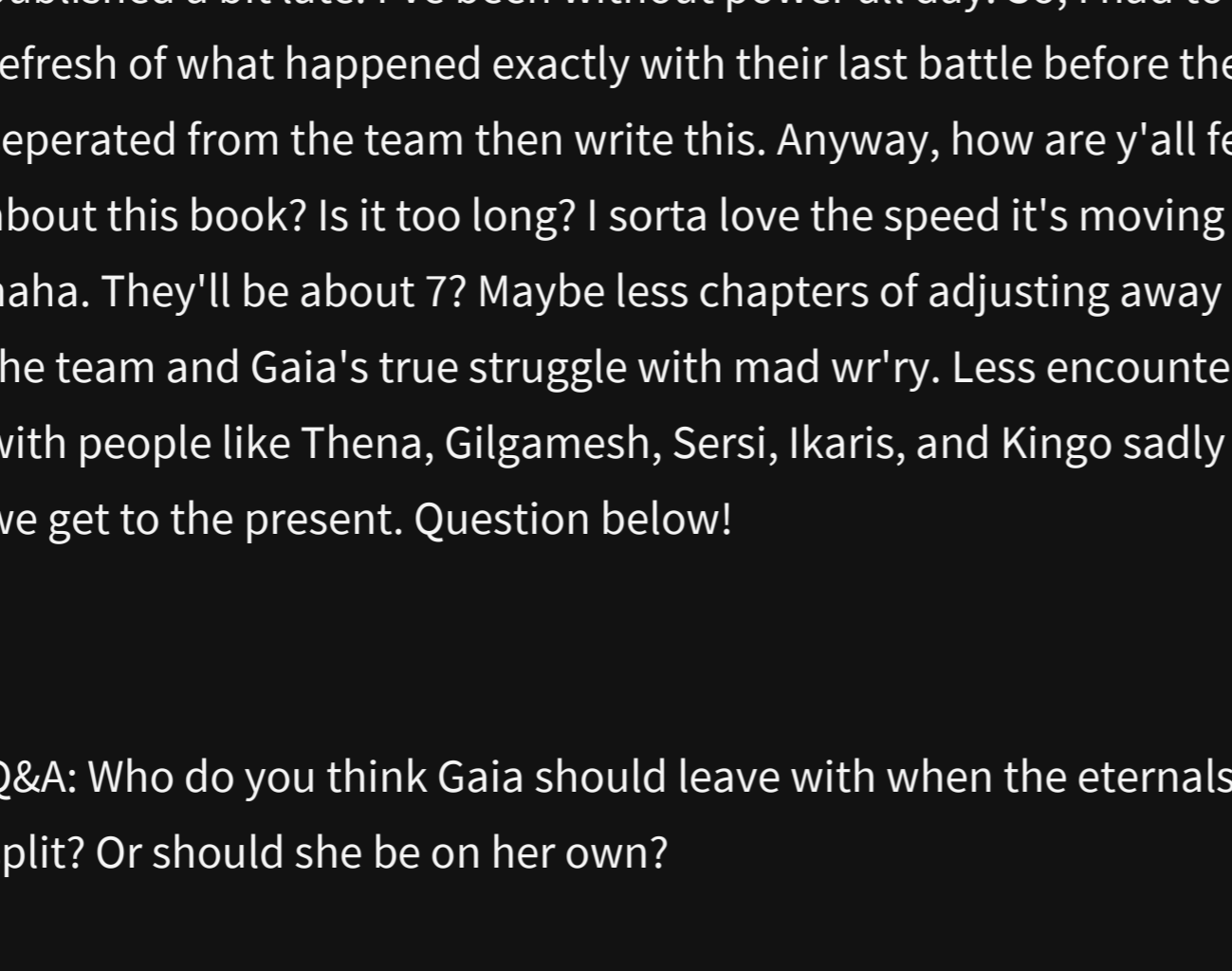
Ajak leaned down walking to all the eternals injured by 2 of the strongest warriors the eternals have.

Ajak frustratedly avoids Druig's gaze. Makkari holds my head in her lap stroking her hair in hopes of it to calm her nerves.

Her fear of losing me is very present in her demeanor.

Druig looks to my unconscious body and the stress of losing his Gaia, my personality, my memories, my love, all those fears set in.

Everything Druig and I feared would happen is bound to happen now.



a/n: So, shit hit the fan. Kinda. Next chapter is the discussion of the team and then the clean break away from them. Sorry this was published a bit late. I've been without power all day. So, I had to get a refresh of what happened exactly with their last battle before they seperated from the team then write this. Anyway, how are y'all feeling about this book? Is it too long? I sorta love the speed it's moving at haha. They'll be about 7? Maybe less chapters of adjusting away from the team and Gaia's true struggle with mad wr'ry. Less encounters with people like Thena, Gilgamesh, Sersi, Ikaris, and Kingo sadly until we get to the present. Question below!

Q&A: Who do you think Gaia should leave with when the eternals split? Or should she be on her own?

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