

# SLIPSTREAM



ADAM PARSEC

When a fierce storm hits, Alistair's ordinary life is swept away as he encounters Chloe, a girl from another universe with a mission to stop the Cloak—a race of genetically engineered warriors poised for invasion. Alistair discovers he possesses a unique gift: the ability to see these invisible enemies. Now, thrust into a cosmic battle that spans time and space, Alistair and Chloe must join forces with a special agency to protect both their worlds. As they navigate through the swirling voids and intertwining threads of the Slipstream, their journey will test their courage, reveal hidden secrets, and challenge the very fabric of reality. With the fate of two universes hanging in the balance, can they stop the Cloak before it's too late?

# Slipstream

It is difficult to understand the concept of time. In our perception, we move forward, but it is only our perception. Time itself remains constant, existing at every moment instantaneously. We can only observe the frames we're embedded in. We are intermeshed into the fabric of time and space, trapped in a perpetual suspension, locking us in a cycle that will be played out for all eternity.

In between this fabric of existence, in between the universes themselves, lies an infinite void that binds time together. If we could step beyond our realm of existence and into this void, then we could travel to any point in time, to any universe, we would finally break through our cosmic bounds and make the improbable possible.

This is the area known as, the Slipstream.

# Dawn of a New Life

It hadn't always been this way. There was a time when he existed in only one world, where time ran in only one direction. The night sky glistened, and he admired it solely for its beauty. That was when things made sense. His name is Alistair, but friends call him Al.

The year of his eighteenth birthday was when this lanky young man stumbled upon something that would change his world forever. It called into question everything he knew to be true and right, and the very essence of his existence. The things to come had already been; the questions needing to be asked had already been answered. To fully grasp the answers lying ahead, one must open their mind to see this new world.

Our story begins amidst one of the most intense electrical storms Al can recall.

It could've easily been dismissed as a figment of imagination. In fact, that's precisely what Al thought. You know, the trick of seeing someone from the corner of your eye, spotting peculiar shapes on walls, or hearing someone calling your name. Attributing it all to his imagination, Al ventured into the living room.

The wall-mounted TV gave the room the illusion of one much

larger than it was. Discovering the remote hidden behind a cushion, he settled in for another mindless evening. Despite a world of channels, there seemed to be nothing worth watching. The relentless storm showed no signs of letting up, intensifying instead. A removal truck outside swayed in the wind's grip. Lightning forked across the night sky, and thunder made it difficult to hear anything, even if he wanted to. Amidst the chaos, branches from a nearby tree clawed against the house's side. Then, he heard it again, distant yet distinct.

"Al...elp meee!"

A girl's desperate plea for help pierced the air. It was a cry of unimaginable terror, triggering every cell in Al's body into instantaneous action. His heart felt torn from his chest while his mind remained lucid. The plea echoed down the hallway – an unforgettable sound that would haunt his dreams for years to come.

As he stepped into the hall, trembling with adrenaline, nothing could prepare him for what he witnessed. The storm appeared to have breached the house's confines! Dazzling electric-blue light radiated in all directions. Loose pages from a nearby notepad sprang to life, tossed about by the swirling atmospheric disturbance. Walls morphed into shifting, liquid-like surfaces. He dared not touch them, fearing the consequences.

In the midst of the chaos lay a gaping tear in the floor, revealing a whirling void. At its centre was a girl, appearing not much older than Al, clinging to a rope made of light. Her legs flailed, attempting to climb but finding no foothold. Her face etched with exhaustion, her grip seemed to be waning. "Al! Please!" she pleaded, voice trembling. "They're going to kill me!"

Al's heart was nearly pounding through his chest. If he didn't do something soon, she was going to die.

"Al...please..."

Al opened the cupboard nearest him, looking for something he could use to save her. "Blankets!" He shouted out loud in triumph and grabbed the closest one, tossing the end into the abyss towards the girl.

"Grab on." His voice was nearly drowned out by the storm but he could tell she heard and understood. Even though she was weakening, she seemed to find enough strength to grab the blanket and hold on tight.

"Pull now. They're gaining on me. Quick, before they close the slip!"

Her urgency galvanises Al into action. He started to move backwards as the forces around him began to suck parts of his house into the void. Straining to fight against the tide drawing him in, he gave everything he had in one final burst of energy and pulled the girl out of the floor just as the tear closed.

Then, there was silence. The chaos was over. The last of the airborne pages came to rest on a scorched part of the floor beside him. The hallway now resembled a war zone. The

damage was extensive. The whole event that just transpired seemed nothing more than a dazed memory to Al, but his surroundings brought him back to the question at hand.

"Who?...ow? Who are you?"



# A Future Timeline

The Cloak: 3372 B.C., in the heart of a Mayan Temple

The moonlight shone with an unusual brilliance that night, illuminating the temple and the anxious masses gathering at its base. Forest creatures held their breath, and even the stars, tracing their celestial paths, watched with anticipation as events unfolded. The ground trembled, shaking the temple to its core and sending dust and debris raining from the roof and walls, obscuring the occupants' vision.

A breathless guard burst through the doorway. "The gods are restless, Your Greatness. If we do not appease them soon, I fear death will come for us all."

The priest adjusted his headdress and commanded a nearby servant, "Bring the girl child to me at once. The sacrifice must be done now. The time for waiting is over."

Hastily, the priest made his way to the altar outside the temple. As he raised his hands to speak, silence enveloped the gathering.

"No more will we live in fear. The demons that come in the night,



taking us from our beds, must be sent back to the underworld. I fear the gods have been displeased with our offerings thus far. They demand more—the very essence of life, the nectar that runs through a child's veins. The gods demand blood."

A guard emerged, struggling with a frail, terrified young girl as he dragged her towards the altar.

Another violent shockwave rocked the temple and its surroundings. A statue at the temple's base jarred loose, plummeting towards the crowded grounds. Worshipers scattered as the massive stone carving crashed onto the steps, its deafening impact echoing through the entire town, sending birds fleeing into the skies.

Swiftly, the priest and nearby guards pinned the girl's arms and legs down on the altar as she fought for her life. Her desperate screams fell on deaf ears, the crowd fixated on the belief that her sacrifice would bring salvation.

The priest retrieved a sacrificial knife from a carved wooden box, its sharpened stone blade and jade handle adorned with precious stones. He stumbled to the altar, raising his hands above his head.

Tears welled in the girl's eyes as she closed them for the last time. A single tear rolled down her trembling cheek, falling to the altar as another tremor shook the world. A small rock rolls past their feet unnoticed.

A strange blue and white light glistened from the temple's doorways and windows, accompanied by a spiralling wind that ascended into the night sky. The crowd gasped as cloaked, hooded figures emerged from the centre of the light. Four of

them proceeded towards the altar, while the onlookers watched in bewilderment.

The first cloaked figure removed his hood, gazing down at the girl and whispering, "Shhh, it will all be over soon." Looking up, he addressed the crowd in a deafening, deep voice, "I am Kirsin. You will all kneel before me."

Everyone immediately dropped to their knees, recognizing the presence of their gods. Even the priest knelt in fear, head bowed. The gods began conversing among themselves.

"These descendants of apes do not deserve this planet. We should take it now before our world dies," declared the oldest god, Yax. His short, greying hair and weathered face suggested he had witnessed far worse and would let nothing stand in his way.

"No, we have no claim to this world. I won't let you do this. I won't let you harm another innocent child," Kirsin retorted. Though not as old or experienced as Yax, his stern voice projected his power. He positioned himself between Yax and the young girl.

Yax locked eyes with Kirsin. "So it's true, you are the traitor we've been seeking. I had refused to believe it until now. Your father would have died of disgrace if he could hear what I am hearing."

"I'm no traitor. To respect life is not a weakness. I will not let you harm these people," Kirsin asserted.

"But Kirsin, they must fear us if we are to rule this world. You must see there is no other way," Yax countered.

"No, Yax, there is always another way. You are just too

narrow-minded to see it. I will not let you do this," Kirsin insisted.

One of the other gods pulled a gun from beneath his cape, aiming it at Kirsin.

"No, Kirsin, we will not let you do this. Shoot him!" Yax commanded.

Kirsin swiftly clasped his arm to his chest, becoming invisible just as the light from the gun struck him.

Yax, undeterred, reached for the knife at the base of the altar. Lifting it above his head, he shouted, "You will fear us!" He brought the knife down towards the screaming girl.

"Nooooooooo!"