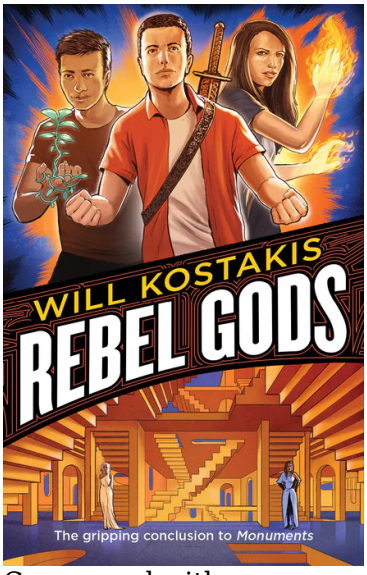
Emily Booth, "Entry on: Rebel Gods (Monuments, 2) by Will Kostakis", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2021). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1331. Entry version as of October 30, 2026.

Will Kostakis

Rebel Gods (Monuments, 2)

Australia (2020)

TAGS: Agape Ancient Warfare Gods Immortality Labyrinth Magic Sculpture



Cover used with permission from Rebel Gods by Will Kostakis, Hachette Australia, 2020.

General information	
Title of the work	Rebel Gods (Monuments, 2)
Country of the First Edition	Australia
Country/countries of popularity	Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2020
First Edition Details	Will Kostakis, *Rebel Gods*. Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2020, 245 pp.
ISBN	9780734419262
Genre	Fantasy fiction, Urban fiction
Target Audience	Young adults
Author of the Entry	Emily Booth, University of Technology, Sydney, Emily.Booth@uts.edu.au
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Creators



Will Kostakis by Pru.mitchell, 2017. Retrieved from Wikipedia, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 (accessed: February 7, 2022).

Will Kostakis , b. 1989
(Author)

Will Kostakis is an Australian children's and young adult fiction author of Greek heritage. His first book, *Loathing Lola* (2008), was published when he was only 19. His second novel, *The First Third* (2013), won the 2014 Gold Inky Award, and his third novel, *The Sidekicks* (2016) was his first book published in America. Kostakis was awarded the 2020 Maurice Saxby Award by the School Library Association of New South Wales for his services to Australian children's and young adult literature. He predominantly writes realistic fiction, however he has since branched out with his 2015 science fiction short story in *Begin, End, Begin: A #LoveOzYA Anthology*, and urban fantasy duology, *Monuments* (2019) and *Rebel Gods* (2020).

Sources:

Author's website (accessed: August 3, 2021).

Interview with the author (accessed: August 3, 2021).

Blog post (accessed: August 3, 2021).

Author's Twitter (accessed: August 3, 2021).

Author's Goodreads (accessed: August 3, 2021).

Author's Facebook (accessed: August 3, 2021).

Author's Instagram (accessed: August 3, 2021).

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Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Previous book: *Monuments* (Series, Book 1): *Monuments*.

Summary

Rebel Gods continues on from *Monuments*. Connor, Sally, and Locky have not noticed any signs that the newly-freed Rebel Gods are interfering with humanity, but they are still on guard. Over a dinner Connor doesn't need to eat, because he is now a god, he discovers his mother Eleni has started dating again after her divorce. Connor joins Sally and explores a mysterious tunnel, which leads to Locky's basement bedroom. The trio explore a buried vault hidden on another school campus. They crack a puzzle using the former Monuments' powers, concluding with Connor activating an ancient statue to write them a coded message. Guardian Larissa translates most of the message, which shares the history of the Rebel Gods: one controlled human's fear, one controlled love, and one controlled hunger. While the god of hunger has already died, the message implores the reader to kill the remaining Rebel Gods without hesitation, or they will destroy the world.

Locky alone is troubled by the prospect of killing the Rebel Gods. As a distraction, he and Connor visit a nearby homophobic church which recently prevented the installation of a rainbow pedestrian crossing. As a prank, Locky dyes the church's lawn rainbow, like an LGBT+ pride flag, using his powers. The next day, Connor discovers Locky's rainbow lawn prank has gone viral. Larissa translates the rest of the message revealing that the Rebel Gods will seek out Connor and his friends. Sally sneaks into Connor's school and emphasises that the rainbow grass prank has made them hyper-visible to the Rebel Gods. Connor invites her to dinner with his mother, as she has been grieving and living alone. Connor's teacher informs him he has contacted Connor's mother regarding his grades and changed behaviour, which forces Connor to "come out" about being a god to her. Upon hearing of Sally's living circumstances, Eleni insists she temporarily move in with them.

The next day, Connor visits the rainbow lawn, and, amidst a throng of worshippers who believe it to be a miracle, meets Agapi, the Rebel God of love. Agapi states she has a proposition for Connor and will

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wait until he trusts her to discuss it. When they learn of the proposition, Locky is curious and Sally is sceptical, but they agree to meet with her on the condition that they record the conversation and play it back later, to ensure they are not influenced by her magic at the time. However, Connor lies and says he couldn't find Yuki, Agapi's messenger cat who can contact her. In reality, he plans to return later and speak to Agapi alone. Connor spends the night delivering pizzas with the Hound-turned-ally Pete (from *Monuments*), who then drops him off to meet with Agapi. Agapi declares she has no interest in manipulating him. They disappear into the Parallel - the alternate dimension the Rebel Gods were trapped in. As they travel through the labyrinth, Agapi reveals she wants Connor to kill her sister.

They emerge from the labyrinth in an expensive Paris restaurant where Agapi influences a waiter to serve them for free. Connor is unsettled by the horrifying physical transformation that occurs when she users her magic. When Connor returns to Sydney, he discovers the whole night has passed and Sally is unhappily waiting for him. She accuses him of going behind her back, and criticises his plan of trusting the Rebel Gods; she wants to just kill them. At dinner with Connor's mother, he, Locky, and Sally watch security camera footage on the news that exposes Locky as the "vandal" who made the rainbow lawn. They drive Locky home to explain to his family, and learn his house is surrounded by a throng of "worshipers". They attribute this footage and public adoration to Agapi's influence. Sally tries to train Connor in physical combat to fight Agapi and the other Rebel God, Fóvos, who controls fear.

The next day, Connor and Sally travel to Locky's house and discover the worshippers have developed a cult-like obsession with Locky, finally making Connor suspicious of Agapi. He tells Locky, who is unwilling to accept that she has ill intent, as he wants to use his newfound public influence to create social changes relating to Queer People, First Nations people, climate change, and more. Later that day, Connor has dinner with Locky's family, and realises they are all under Agapi's influence. Connor realises a homophobic news anchor who has thus far resisted Agapi's charms may be under the influence of Fóvos, but when he tries to contact Agapi, he discovers the messenger cat Yuki is gone. At home, Connor finds a sheath for his sword inherited from Darroch on his bed, and a portal to Fóvos in his wardrobe.

Connor, Sally, and Locky travel through the Parallel and meet Fóvos

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in a North American gym, living under the name Effie. They ask her to cease influencing humans, but she claims human fears have become too dominant and destructive and that she can calm society. However, the trio dislike the implication that Fóvos is entertained by people's fears. Fóvos turns on them, amplifying Connor and Sally's fears until they are catatonic, intending to send them home with Locky as a warning against interfering with her. However, Locky kills Fóvos by willing her nerves to die, and as a result, the blue half of the labyrinth in the Parallel begins to fall apart. Locky is deeply troubled by his own actions and it is decided that Connor must be the one to defeat Agapi. At the same time, Agapi turns Locky's devoted cult into hateful rioters, and he tries to placate them with a speech. Agapi appears in the crowd, and while she is distracted, Connor tackles her into the Parallel.

Connor has a brief delusion that Locky and his mother are with him in the Parallel instead, however he realises it is Agapi's influence and breaks free. Connor kills Agapi, but the final exit from the Parallel is sealed and the whole maze is collapsing. Connor wanders the Parallel and meets a small boy who is the personification of the realm. He earns the boy's trust, realises he can reshape the Parallel, and creates a doorway out of it. Back at his mother's house, he discovers he has been gone four years. He reunites with his mother; then the next day, with Sally, who has resumed high school and finished Year 12. She tells him Locky learned how to "edit" their DNA and remove their godliness, and Connor is heartbroken that they will continue to age while he does not.

The next day, Connor visits Locky, who reveals he is still a god because he cannot edit himself, and returns Connor to being a human. Locky then tricks Connor and seals himself away in the Parallel, fearing the potential he has to manipulate humans. Connor discovers Locky's family knew and accepted this plan. However, they hope he will return. Connor visits the family every Tuesday for a long time; finally, one day, he arrives and discovers the signs that Locky has made it home. The book ends just before the pair reunite.

Analysis

While *Monuments* only drew on Greek myth in a limited capacity, *Rebel Gods* directly draws on Ancient Greek concepts of love, fear, and hunger for the characters of the Rebel Gods. Agapi, the Rebel God of love, likely gets her name from the concept of "agape": the highest

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form of love, which is pure, self-sacrificing, unconditional, and godly in nature. Agapi claims she wants to remain in the human world to create an era of love. However, unlike her namesake, Agapi is portrayed as hateful. She employs her power to drive those under her influence to frenzied, cult-like levels of adoration for Locky, which easily becomes a mob-like hatred when they believe he has betrayed them.

Similarly, the Rebel God of fear, Fóvos, likely inherits her name from the Ancient Greek figure of "phobos": the being that personified extreme fear and panic. Fóvos is similarly changed from her original incarnation: she manages a community gym and unobtrusively feeds on the fear of her patrons each morning. She claims she wishes to stay in the human world to help tame human's fears, which have become uncontrollable and contributed to a rise in hatred and extremism, alluding to recent global political climates and increasingly conservative governments. While not as aggressive and destructive as Agapi, she is capable of unleashing the darker side of her power: fear so intense that it could induce death.

The heightened conditions of love and fear, intensified by Agapi and Fóvos, are represented in *Rebel Gods* through the motif of the rainbow lawn. Locky's recolouring of the grass outside a homophobic church – a declaration of pride in his sexuality, and revered by members of the public as either a great prank or a bona fide miracle – provokes outrage from an extremist commentator and the church themselves. The rainbow lawn is at once a sign of love and a fearful object, demonstrating the proximity between these emotions in human's daily lives. Additionally, the third Rebel God, Peína, died in the millennia prior to the commencement of the series. However, her name likely comes from "Penia", the Ancient Greek goddess of poverty and need. In the "Monuments" duology, Peína was the Rebel God of hunger. Little is known about her.

When Connor is trapped in the Parallel, the desert universe that previously encased the Rebel Gods, he encounters a small boy. The boy is attacked by wolves who dissolve into sand, in the same way that the architecture was crumbling. Connor realises the boy is in fact the personification of the Parallel, and that the whole realm is alive. The notion that the universe itself is sentient, and that other living beings are merely parts of its own soul that are temporarily separated, is a concept from Stoic philosophers and their beliefs about physics. This may have had some influence on these particular aspects of the

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	Parallel. However, in an interview, Kostakis' stated that the primary inspiration for this alternate dimension was M. C. Escher's artworks. The interconnected labyrinths of staircases, towers, and other terrain depicted in Escher's artworks are a clear influence on the architecture of the Parallel. These structures are portrayed on the front cover of *Rebel Gods*. As in *Monuments*, *Rebel Gods* uses the genre of urban fantasy to explore young adult themes such as identity (including cultural background and sexual orientation), coming-of-age, family and friendship, and awareness of politics in broader society. The duology includes numerous logic puzzles and fast-paced action to engage the reader, reflecting the influence of video games on the world-building. Kostakis crafts a story where, rather than being bound to stereotypical narratives about suffering due to their identities, a diverse cast can form close bonds, go on adventures and save the world.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Agape Ancient Warfare Gods Immortality Labyrinth Magic Sculpture
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Coming of age Death Diversity Divorce Emotions Family Friendship Heroism Identity LGBTQI Magic powers Multiculturalism Queer
Further Reading	Waller, Alison, *Constructing Adolescence in Fantastic Realism*, London: Taylor & Francis, 2009.
Addenda	Entry based in the first edition.

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