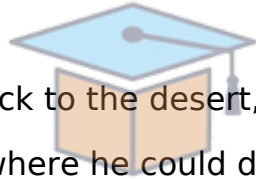


## PART THE SECOND

He remained in prayer a long time, and when he rose, his face shone with celestial joy. He blessed Thais, who watched him through the bars, and then, without speaking a word, left the convent, his heart filled with peace because he had accomplished his mission.



As he journeyed back to the desert, Paphnutius contemplated the magnificent isolation that awaited him, where he could devote himself entirely to the praises of God, undisturbed by the cares of the world. Meanwhile, Thais, secluded in her cell, dedicated herself to prayer and penance, awaiting the day when divine grace would announce her redemption.

Thus, through faith and repentance, they both sought the eternal Kingdom, each in their own solitude, but united in spirit through their shared worship of the divine, confident in the mercy and salvation promised by the Lord to all who sincerely turn to Him. Both their lives, henceforth, were a testament to the transformative power of faith, and the hope it brings for the redemption and salvation of even the most troubled souls.