

## CHAPTER 38

### *CERN*

IN THE FOOTHILLS of the Swiss Alps, near Geneva, a silver hovercraft slipped out of the clouds, descending into a valley shrouded with mist, lowering onto a landing pad. The hatch door lifted and a set of stairs lowered. Abaddon climbed out, his face determined as he stomped past the two soldiers who waited for him with their heads bowed and fists held over their hearts.

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The soldiers followed their ruler across the landing. The high winds fluttered their black robes and ruffled their wings. Abaddon led them to a barely discernible metal door in the mountainside. He stepped inside, his heavy footsteps clanging on the steel catwalk that spanned the deep pit below.

Abaddon reached the door at the other end, flinging it open, ducking his head under the doorframe as he entered a modern headquarters. Carpet ran the length of the hallway. Affixed to the wall was a sign crafted out of black glass and embellished with the gold-metal letters “C.E.R.N.”. The acronym stood for the French *Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire* or in English: the European Council for Nuclear Research. This was the birthplace of the World Wide Web as well as the home of the Hadron Collider—the world’s largest particle smasher.

The main hallway led past numerous offices with glass fronts where administrators were busy working on their computers. A

few of them glanced up, but the sight of the fallen angels stomping past their windows prompted them to quickly resume their work, pretending they had seen nothing unusual.

Abaddon stormed to the elevators where he jabbed the “down” button. He pushed his way inside before the doors had a chance to fully open, pressing the button marked “C”. The car sped down, passing the data-processing facilities and laboratories. The fallen angels were riding in one of the fastest elevators in the world, yet it took nearly a minute to complete the descent.

The doors opened to reveal a half-dozen men and women wearing white lab coats and hard helmets, all standing with their heads bowed. Abaddon and his soldiers stepped into the wide corridor.

The lead physicist nervously said, “We are pleased to receive you, my Lord God.”

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Ignoring the pleasantries, Abaddon tersely replied, “Take me there, now.”

The man’s throat tightened even more. “Yes, my lord.” He and the other physicists escorted Abaddon and his soldiers to the two electric vehicles parked alongside the wall. A trailer was hitched to one of them and held an oversized high-back chair upholstered in black velvet.

Abaddon stepped over the side rail and sat in the chair. “Let’s go!”

The physicists quickly took their seats.

The vehicles hummed down the half-mile-long corridor while the soldiers walked behind them, their long legs easily keeping pace. Despite the efficiency, Abaddon impatiently seethed. He just wanted to be there, now.

When they reached the office at the end of the corridor, the lead physicist jumped out of the driver's seat, rushing to open the door for Abaddon.

Inside was a large observation room, which offered a view of a thirty-foot-high darkened tunnel. Abaddon sat on the throne-like chair in the center of the room. The physicists took their seats at the control panel under the observation window. The foot soldiers stationed themselves near the door.

Abaddon tersely asked, "Is the black cube in place?"

The lead physicist answered, "Yes, my lord."

"Then let us begin."

"Just a word of caution, my lord. The earth's vibrations have been steadily rising. We're not sure why. This could be—"

"Start it!" Abaddon was tired of these fools.

"Yes, sir. I mean, Lord."

The physicists pushed buttons and double-checked gauges on the control panel. One by one, the indicator lights switched from red to green.

The lead physicist confirmed with his colleagues, "Ready?" They all nodded. "Engage."

The events were set in motion.

The enormous twelve-sided tunnel came to life. Lights flickered on to reveal the metal plates, wires, tubing and superconducting magnets contained within the ultrahigh vacuum, cooled by liquid helium to  $-271.3^{\circ}$  Celsius.

The lead physicist pushed another button. His action released a high-energy particle beam from a containment compartment, which passed through a transparent black cube before shooting into the first of three tunnels. There, the particles built up speed

before rushing into the second larger tunnel, continuing to gain velocity until they were ready for the third and final step. The accelerated particles, hurtling at close to the speed of light, were unleashed into a 27-kilometers circular tunnel that straddled the borders of Switzerland and France. Inside this tunnel were two tubes. The particles whizzed through each in opposite directions, and, at intersecting points, a portion of the particles collided. But these particle collisions were more powerful than they had ever been in the past. Earth's rising vibrations were affecting the process.

The observation room shook. Dust fell from the ceiling tiles.

The lead physicist turned to Abaddon, stating, "My lord, the explosions are too much for the tunnel to handle. We need to shut it down."

Abaddon glared wordlessly at him, his gray eyes penetrating the man's soul. Afraid, the lead physicist turned away, but his words of caution held true. The escalating particle blasts activated the Rhône-Simplon fault line, causing the earth's tectonic plates to thunder as they shifted.

One of the physicist shouted, "It's an earthquake!"

The CERN tunnel developed cracks, but kept working. Sub-zero air hissed through the crevices. The exploding particles began creating dark matter upon impact—the single-most powerful and dangerous substance known to man. The amount of dark matter grew exponentially.

Time distorted.

The mountain seemed to disappear, and, in its wake, a newly formed black hole emerged. Every speck of light was sucked out from the far end of the tunnel.

The window in the observation room threatened to buckle. The physicists stared at the black hole, not knowing what to do or expect.

Pandora's Box had been opened.

The black hole's presence provided a passageway from another dimension. From out of its great void, an ominous cloud rushed toward the observation room, glowing red with demons.

The physicists screamed, tipping over their chairs, falling over each other, as they tried to flee.

Abaddon sat in his chair with an eerie smile pasted on his face.

The ominous cloud swarmed closer, shrieking and tearing at the fabric of reality. The legion of demons rushed into the room, gnashing their teeth, their howls vibrating the walls. In unison, the demons sinisterly asked the ruler, "May we?"

Abaddon nodded.

The demons entered the physicists' bodies, possessing the men and women whose screams of terror suddenly ceased, their eyes becoming catatonic.

Demented and crazed, a woman threw herself against the wall.

Another physicist convulsed on the floor, braying maniacally.

One man examined his lab coat sleeve, then pushed it up to reveal his bare arm. He bit into his own flesh, taking out a chunk. He chewed. Blood dribbled down his chin as he creepily commented, "Delicious."

Abaddon ignored the chaos around him, his eyes fixated on the black hole. Waiting.