

The
ET
Machine

Deception

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“The possibilities of willpower and self-control appealed tremendously to my vivid imagination. Until finally my will and wish became identical, and they are so today... and in this lies the secret of whatever success I have achieved. My imaginings were equivalent to realities.”

Nikola Tesla.

Prologue

The year was 2028. Earth celebrated a significant milestone, marking approximately 140 years since electricity became widely accessible. SpaceX's Starship, gleaming against the dark void of space, carried six brave engineers on the boldest mission ever attempted: to touch Mars and lay the foundation of a colony beyond Earth, before they finally returned to Earth after a brief stay on Mars.

Billions watched as history unfolded, hearts bound by hope, fear, and pride. This was more than a voyage; it was humanity's chance to prove that survival was not limited to one fragile planet.

And then—disaster.

The landing attempt on Mars ended in an unfortunate setback, resulting in an unsuccessful touchdown. Red dust rose, alarms screamed, and the dream of Mars trembled on the edge of ruin. Remarkably, all six explorers survived, but the mission that was meant to herald a new beginning was now marked by uncertainty and doubt.

Yet, in that moment of chaos, no one could imagine how this story would truly unfold—or how deeply it would change the course of the human race.

Chapter 1

What is the ET Machine? You make it sound like it will transform our world.” Damian, a young Controller of the skies who was recently exiled from his family, set down his log journal. He was sitting on a beach in a galaxy not too far away, contemplating his failed attempt to reconstruct the very existence of space. Damian needed to focus on the remarkable news being revealed to him.

“The ET Machine is a one-of-a-kind creation. Its design was conceived by two brilliant minds from the past, but they didn’t build it. It’s fairly sophisticated,” Luke explained with a chuckle. “It now enables them to traverse anywhere in the cosmos instantly! By utilizing the machine, they reached the edge of their universe. Two of them entered the portal that was open for their race. Upon their arrival, they were greeted by Controllers David and Celeste. They are now here; they’re among us! This is what I gathered from listening in on a conversation between Seraph, Adam, and the Makers.”

Damian found his interest to be thoroughly piqued. “Is that so?” he pondered, drumming his fingers on his knee as he considered what Luke had discovered. “Then perhaps I need to revise my efforts to control the existence of space. Maybe we should understand the machine’s capabilities before we do anything else. Do you think this machine is a threat to us?” He let out a tired sigh. “I was so close to controlling space by

recreating *cosmic nonexistence*; it was all at my fingertips. Tell me, Luke, what else is this ‘ET Machine’ capable of besides interstellar travel? Did they mention anything else?”

“Yes,” Luke replied honestly. “The Makers have spoken highly of its future capabilities. They foresee that it will soon be capable of delivering mind control and mind reading.”

The brilliant young Controller was silent, considering the information given to him. “That sounds astounding, and that worries me the most. How is it that this species got to be so advanced, so quickly? I was so close to achieving my goal before I was tricked. I was misled, through her deceptions, of which she practiced so artfully. This ET Machine you speak of, could its potential capabilities be used against me? Is she thinking of reading my mind? What if we controlled this machine?”

Luke offered a cautious smile. “Well, you’ll need to hurry up then. She’s already requested that the Makers expedite the enhancements. They’ll initially focus on mind reading, and from what I understand, they’re quite skilled and very intelligent. However, if they continue to significantly advance the machine, it could potentially decipher space itself. I believe it possesses that potential. To answer your question, she likely intends to use it to monitor you by reading your mind. Especially considering *our* recent attempt to reconstruct and control space itself.”

Damian’s eyes widened as he dropped both his hands in his lap. “Are you serious? Mind reading! Fuck! Shit!”

Chapter 2

A Controller of Space, known as a CoS, gazed out over a seemingly boundless area of compressed dark energy within space. From his gateway viewpoint, he observed the massive dark void, almost as if it were watching back, presenting itself as the ideal universe in the creator's eyes.

His concentration was interrupted by the voices of his two sons, who had come to stand beside him. They stood there for a moment before he spoke to them. "Isn't it beautiful?" he asked. His sons nodded in agreement. "This vast expanse of compressed dark space is utterly empty and silent. It's peaceful because it lacks mortal life and light, perhaps."

David, the youngest son with lighter hair and a softer voice, was the first to respond. "We genuinely love your creation. Its tranquility is truly captivating."

The father nodded but remained neutral in his response. He turned to look at his other son. "Jacob? What do you see?"

Jacob, the dark-haired elder son, responded swiftly. "I see a well-organized area of space. It's clean, compressed, and uncomplicated. It's easy to control."

"In the universe I have created for us, there is only darkness; there is no light anywhere. Did you know that our Dark Sphere is likely not alone? Space is incredibly vast."

Finally, the Father steps away, fully focused on his two sons as he continues to help them comprehend the significance of his speech. “Everything is perfect in our dark world, except for one thing.” Jacob and David exchanged puzzled glances. They had never heard of any weaknesses within their Domain Space. It seemed almost unbelievable that such a thing could exist, but their father nodded in acknowledgment of their silent query.

“Our Domain space only has one universe, but is capable of holding many. However, our sphere of space is becoming increasingly compressed,” the father explained. “When compression becomes too extreme, the space collapses into a super-compressed black hole—still a universe, but dangerously unpredictable. If left unmanaged, it could rupture.” Jacob’s eyes widened in surprise, deeply troubled by the thought of their universe being destroyed. “Regrettably, if this occurs, it will unleash an expansive force that will scatter the compressed matter and energy across the vast emptiness of its universe space. The outcome is likely to be a transition to a vastly different universe, where everything will certainly not be the same. Trauma is highly probable. If this happens, this region of space within our Domain may become Lit.” The father could sense by their expressions that his sons were troubled, but he reassured them with a smile. “However, my sons, there is some good news. There is a way to manage our space by disconnecting a portion of its outer edges, along with its energy.”

“Are you referring to the Twilight Space in the Horizon?” David asked.

“I am. It’s an area of space not yet compressed into the core. By separating it, we can reduce the pressure in our core

universe, allowing us to continue uninterrupted. We need a second universe.”

Jacob and David were both awestruck by the revelation. Never before had he spoken about the emergence of a second universe. Yet here they were, with their father smiling and confirming its reality.

“So,” the father continued, “going forward, there will be two universes: The Old Universe, the one we currently live in, and this New Universe, which will henceforth be known as the Evolving Universe. Both will be nicely contained within our Domain.” He walked up to his sons, placing his hands on their shoulders. “The New Universe I create will be yours to manage, and you both will relocate there. I have faith in both of you.” He smiled proudly at them. “I know you two can manage it.” Jacob was ecstatic at this revelation, but David had his questions.

“What shall be its state? Shall we make it a Dark Universe or a Lit Universe?” This earned him a bewildered look from his sibling. “Of course it will be Dark,” Jacob trounced his words. “It will be just like his. Right?” To his surprise, their father shook his head.

“That decision is yours to make together. I give you freedom to choose.” He replied. “I genuinely can’t determine which is better for both of you.

A Dark Universe is straightforward and what we’ve always had. A Lit Universe, on the other hand, would signify profound changes to the cosmic landscape.

“So, why should we even consider a Lit one?” David asked.

“Because of its potential. It illuminates the universe, and with that comes the possibility of life. There are boundless possibilities after light occurs. Yes, some of the events that

arise may turn out negatively, but others could only bring good. Light may help us to further understand how to manage the cosmos as we know it, and for some, that pursuit of knowledge and the beauty of a lit universe is worth all the challenges it may throw at you.”

Jacob, unimpressed by the description and benefits of a Lit Universe, only found it emboldening for his brother. David, however, had a clear vision for this new realm. He fervently hoped to sway his brother’s mind. The father chuckled, sensing their differing preferences. “As my sons, it’s time for you to decide how to shape this universe on your own terms. Therefore, I make this decree: if the New Universe turns dark, Jacob will be the primary ruler, as he favors dark worlds and a ‘stay-as-we-are’ philosophy. But if it becomes a Lit Universe, David will be the primary ruler.”

The brothers exchanged glances, anticipating the numerous debates, arguments, and attempts to convince each other before any transformation could occur.

“I will visit you both again once you have established your space and your offspring are older. Remember, it is entirely up to you to govern your new space.” He chuckled. “After all, my departure is imminent. One day, my title of CoS will need to be filled by one of you, or perhaps by one of your offspring. That change is imminent. I can sense it.”

Turning back to his gateway viewer, the CoS made a subtle motion with his hand. Although nothing was audible or visible, they all felt a subtle shift in their domain. With this simple gesture, the Twilight Space was peeled away from the Old Universe. It now sat there as a new slate of empty space.

Chapter 3

David gazed out of the observation gateway at the brilliant, distant stars and galaxies that presented themselves in all their splendor. He wondered silently how anyone could witness the beauty before him and yearn for it to be dark instead of lit.

“When you breathe potential into a new universe and allow things to grow and develop organically, it provides a sense of pride that cannot be matched,” David whispered to himself.

Were things a bit messy? Perhaps, but as the younger of his father's sons, he would argue that he had been doing a commendable job so far. The Lit Universe was expanding and meticulously organized with galaxies, reflecting the ideal characteristics of any universe. Moreover, with the first signs of life emerging on a pale blue sphere deep within his domain, David felt a profound sense of pride in the accomplishments of himself and his partner, Celeste.

Celeste was currently gazing at the vast, distant galaxies through her large-screen viewer. She was mesmerized by the beauty of the lit galaxies in the distance, occasionally zooming in and out on some of them to get a closer look at their intricate configurations.

Celeste, with her striking auburn hair that bordered on gold, captivated David with her deep, dark brown eyes. David, according to Celeste, was a cosmic beauty with exquisite

features, and she believed he was the most beautiful being in the universe.

“I never imagined galaxies could come in such diverse shapes and sizes,” Celeste remarked to David, who chuckled softly from his seat, diligently logging in information about a newly discovered galaxy.

“You’ve been observing these formations for an eternity,” he replied. “Don’t you ever tire of it?”

“I can’t help it,” Celeste sighed, her eyes glistening with admiration. “I’m mesmerized by the colors and shapes. Everything is simply wonderful.” She spun her seat to face him. “We were confined to that Dark Universe for so long. I detest what Jacob did to you. These stars and formations are simply breathtaking.”

David paused his work to smile softly at his companion. “I try not to dwell on how he betrayed me and deceived me. My father thrived in his dark space. It wasn’t until Damian’s mistake that we finally understood the essence of light.”

“No one should live without experiencing the beauty of a lit universe, David,” Celeste hummed. “In an unexpected turn of events, we should be grateful to Jacob—or rather, to his son, Damian, for the unexpected incident that created and shaped a lit universe for us. If it weren’t for him, we would still be trapped in that dark world your brother adored so much. Fortunately, it was thrust upon us.”

“Incident! Call it what you will,” David replied, expressing his daily gratitude for the prodigious gift bestowed upon them. A thoughtful sigh escaped his lips. “However, between us, I had always harbored a suspicion that such an event would eventually unfold. Jacob, in his negligence, never supervised his son’s activities, particularly when he engaged in

space compression, a concept capable of altering the very fabric of existence. We merely required sufficient time for Damian to make a fateful error, and he did. Consequently, our Lit Universe was born, and I now rule it. While it was undoubtedly a monumental blunder on his part, I must admit that I am indeed grateful for its occurrence.”

Celeste smirked, raising an eyebrow at his question. “So, you could observe that mistake from a light-year away and choose not to intervene?”

“Can you blame me?” he retorted, his voice laced with sarcasm. “After Jacob deceived me, he has only himself to blame. Our fate was sealed by destiny. Damian placed me in power, and I now oversee the Evolving Lit Universe, as is my *rightful place*.” David’s voice faltered for just a moment, and he clenched his fists, remembering the small silver locket Jacob had promised to return—but never did. The sting of that betrayal lingered, sharper than any words, a quiet reminder of trust shattered.

He paused, sensing the bitterness in his tone. Taking a deep breath, he let go of his tension. “But let’s save our festivities for another day. The status quo in the Cosmos cannot last forever. He needs to be monitored, and if Jacob refuses to cooperate, then we will.”

Celeste asked, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, “Do you think he’s treacherous?”

“He won’t remain idle indefinitely. He’s not an immediate concern. If you could kindly monitor the progress of the new species, I’ll return later and talk more about it.”

“Of course,” she replied with a warm tone. David kissed her on the back of the hand and departed from their

observation deck. With that, she turned back to resume her annotations.

Celeste, tasked with overseeing a vast expanse of stars and planets, found herself at the center of a complex sector. Within this sector, a sphere of compressed dark energy, in its middle stage of life, held immense significance. She had named this cluster of stars the Milky Way. Celeste's responsibility was to monitor and document all new life forms that existed on the planets within this quadrant. Her vigilant gaze was always fixed on the planets sustaining life, but one planet stood out for its rapid evolution. It was only 26 cosmic years out from its foggy core and positioned with enough distance from its local star, a stark contrast to the thousands of young spheres orbiting the billions of stars that made up this unique formation.

Chapter 4

Celeste informed her family members, who were sitting around a table in their main room, that she had to travel to Andromeda. “Please keep an eye on the human race and record their activities. We need to monitor their progress.”

After Celeste departed, Seraph expressed her curiosity about the lit universe. Her two brothers exchanged glances of genuine interest, and she continued her earnest inquiry. “How did it originate? Who else exists in the vast expanse of space?”

Jon grimaced and nodded in agreement. “Perhaps we are not yet old enough to have this knowledge.”

“We are older than the Earth we are observing. I know my internal clock tells me that we are of age now,” Seraph concluded for him.

Jon chuckled. Despite being the same height as his sibling brother, Luke, Jon’s frame stood out the most. He took great pride in maintaining his physical well-being, and when combined with his father’s brown hair and his mother’s graceful features, he was undoubtedly the most visually appealing member of the family.

“I know where she keeps a logbook,” Luke exclaimed, his eyes wide with excitement. Jon and Seraph exchanged surprised glances, their attention drawn to Luke. “Could it be that the logbook holds the secrets to the cosmos?”

Out of his siblings, Luke was the most dissimilar to his parents. In fact, one might even question his family ties. He had darker hair and a darker complexion, more akin to distant relatives. The only striking resemblance to his parents was his mother's deep, dark brown eyes.

Seraph's response was quick. "Yes, where is it? I want to read it!" She looked just like her mother in many ways. She was the same height and had the same beautiful auburn hair, even though she was a bit thinner. Like her dad, she had the same deep blue eyes and was more outgoing. Seraph was always persistent and determined, but she had a big heart.

"Seriously? She never tells us anything about the dark past! This is our chance to discover how we transitioned from a dark world to a lit one!"

Luke shrugged casually. "I agree with her. Don't you want to read this book? It might tell us what happened and possibly why."

Jon was quiet for a moment before closing his eyes with a sigh. Finally, keeping his voice as low as possible, as if someone were listening, he said, "Yes, I want to know. Of course, I want to know..."

"How are we supposed to assist them in managing the Universe if they don't disclose the origins of our Lit Universe?" Seraph cut off Jon's chance to say any more.

Jon couldn't refute this point. "I'm eager to learn more about our Domain Space. So, I agree we read the logbook. We do have the right to know."

Luke grinned and rose from his chair. "Come on, we're wasting time. I'll show you where it is."

Surprisingly, Celeste's bedroom was quite small. The lights in the room were dimmed and had an amber hue, and as they entered, they could sense a pleasant incense in the air. Luke led his siblings to the bed, and there it was—the book. Upon seeing it lying in the open, he was utterly bewildered. “Wait, it wasn't here last time. Why is it there?”

Despite all the advancements they had, Celeste always liked to keep things simple. It was a physical paper-based book, dark brown and looking fairly aged. The book was highlighted by the nearby lamp on a table next to the bed, but even without the lamp, the book looked to be glowing softly on its own as if it had a power of its own or was powered by an external source.

“Why do I feel as if she left it for us to discover?” Seraph whispered. She picked up the book, and they decided to sit on the edge of Celeste's bed to read it properly. Her brothers took up positions sitting by her side. As the three huddled over it, Seraph read the title aloud.

“The Controllers – Logbook,” she said, glancing at her brothers. “An interesting name.”

Seraph moved on and opened the book, noticing that some chapter titles were grayed out, while two were available for reading. They were ‘Transmission – Interconnect’ and ‘Life-Forces and Powers.’

Jon observed, “Fascinating, some chapters are blocked from reading.”

Out of curiosity, Seraph flipped to “Controlling Existence,” only to find that the pages were covered in unrecognizable characters. “Hmm, what is this?”

Luke let out a surprised grunt. “This chapter is blocked from reading; move on to others.”

“Well, we can’t read this! Why would these chapters be blocked?” Seraph complained.

“To keep the beginning from us, I suppose,” Jon answered with a sigh. “Keep looking.”

Seraph sighed and flipped through the book, discovering only two chapters were unblocked.

“Oh! Finally, one we can read!” Luke exclaimed with a laugh. “Transmission - Interconnect” - they didn’t hesitate to dive right in. They sat there for a while, engrossed in their reading, neither of them uttering a single word. Eventually, they read what they could, and Seraph closed the book with trembling hands. They gazed at each other with awe.

However, this awe didn’t last long, and soon, frustration grew within Seraph. “Why are some chapters hidden?”

“So, this is another way we can travel through space and connect physically. Transmission – Interconnect is a new method for moving around within the Lit Universe. Sounds incredibly cool. We should try this out, Jon.” Luke muttered.

“I agree. I don’t care about the other chapters right now. We need to descend to this developing planet called Earth, the one we should be monitoring anyway. We can be right in the thick of the action. We can be part of this firsthand! Maybe Celeste wanted us to read the book so we could get to Earth and make our marks. That had to be her intent. Don’t you think so? I’m right?”

Seraph eagerly agreed. “Now that we’ve discovered this alternative mode of travel, you must give it a try. It’s the right thing to do. You two should test it out and embark on a trip to Earth before she returns. Explore, discover, and witness the state of the human race. Make your journey remarkable. I intend to dedicate some time to reading this chapter titled

‘Life-Forces and Powers.’ This chapter is specifically open to me for reading.”

Jon remained somewhat hesitant, but Luke was brimming with excitement, surpassing even his own eons of anticipation. He couldn’t help but grin as he attempted to persuade Jon to tag along.

As the brothers set off, Seraph once again flipped through the other chapters, hoping to find another one that was open for her to read. But there was only one, and soon she found herself staring down at a chapter titled Life-Forces and Powers.

Chapter 5

“Hello, I’m back!” Celeste called out to her family from the entranceway, stepping into the main room. “Sorry, I forgot to grab my—” Celeste froze as her eyes met Seraph’s, who held a book that contained secrets of the cosmos. Seraph hastily closed the book and tried to hide it, but it was too late. Celeste approached her with a raised eyebrow. “I see you found my book.”

“Luke mentioned that you kept a logbook of the cosmos, and we were simply curious about our origins.”

Celeste remained silent, taking the book into her hands and contemplating its significance. It was a moment of pure connection between mother and daughter, a chance to discuss Seraph’s unique qualities as a female controller. “Where are your brothers?”

“They are currently on Earth.”

“I see,” Celeste offered her daughter a small smile. “That gives us some time to talk. You’ve recently come of age, so it’s time.” Seraph’s brow furrowed as her mother sat by her, one leg crossed over the other. Without hesitation, she flipped to ‘Life-Forces and Powers. How much of this have you read?”

“Apparently, only two chapters are available to read; the rest are locked. So, I’m confused and wondering why. I have so many questions!”

“Show some patience,” Celeste cautioned, a smile on her face. The two laughed softly before the matriarch began explaining. “Unique forces are inherent in certain female Controllers. However, not all possess these advanced forces or capabilities. As for female Controllers themselves, they are not rare in the Cosmos, but only a select few possess special forces. You are one of them, which is what makes you special. I cannot explain why some are born with these forces. Honestly, I don’t know, but perhaps you will discover the answer later in your life. Time will tell.”

Seraph was astounded by what she was being told and was more than happy to continue listening. “Do you have them? Can you tell me more?”

“No, I don’t have them, and I don’t understand why you do. But now that you’re of age, you possess new energies and powers. The logbook briefly explains them, so let’s review it. You possess the extraordinary ability to transform your body. You can alter your physical appearance and present yourself as two distinct forms. One of these forms is known as the Image mode, while the other is the Spirit mode. In the Image mode, your body undergoes a metamorphosis, transforming it into an image. Imagine it as the transformation of water into vapor through heat. When you enter your Image mode, you transform into something resembling vapor, but it’s merely a translucent image.”

Seraph nodded slowly, absorbing the information. “But how do I actually convert?”

“Oh, it’s quite simple. All you need to do is mentally commit to the transformation. Once you do, the process begins instantly. There are no specific steps or physical movements involved.”

Seraph's eyes widened with excitement, clearly eager to learn more.

"For the simplest mode, called Image mode, before you commit, you need to choose the image you want to manifest. Just think of the image you desire, and voila! It's done. Others will perceive you as you want them to," Celeste explained.

"So, if I wanted to assume the identity of another person, could I do that?"

"There are no limitations to your appearance. Yes, you can project any image and any color you desire. Celeste flipped through a few pages. "The image you choose to project is entirely yours. This ability enables you to pass through objects. However, it's crucial to remember that you're merely an image, not a physical entity."

"And what if I want to revert to my original form?"

"You simply have to mentally commit again." Celeste then pointed at a diagram on one of the pages. "So, the other form is Spirit mode. This is a unique mode where you become invisible and can perform various actions, such as entering the body of another being to merge with them. In Spirit mode, you can access the minds of others, allowing you to examine their thoughts and emotions. It's akin to mind reading, and you can even influence their thoughts, but that requires a deeper understanding of this force, which you'll gradually acquire. I can't reveal much more about it. Are you following me so far?"

"Image mode and Spirit mode. Got it. What else?" Seraph nodded curtly. "Mentally commit to a mode, and I'm in a different one. Great, I might as well start practicing."

Celeste placed a hand on her daughter's arm to prevent her from standing up. "Hold on, not yet. You need to consider the

implications of your actions and how you'll transition between modes. Certain conditions may make reverting undesirable. This is crucial. You don't want to get stuck in a mode."

Seraph sat back down, her brow furrowed, but eager to learn more. Seraph nodded in understanding, and Celeste continued, offering her daughter an apologetic smile. "It's a lot to absorb at once. Are you following?"

"Of course, keep going. What else should I know?"

"Alright then, Celeste continued. "You can only stay in Image or Spirit mode for a while before you must return to your physical state."

Seraph's face grew worried. "Wait, what happens if I stay in a mode for too long?"

Celeste reassured her daughter with a comforting touch on the arm. "That won't happen. If you lose track of time, your body will remind you. It will weaken, but to be honest, I don't want to say what happens if you can't convert back. It's not good."

"I think I've got the states and modes down pat," Seraph replied with a soft smile. "I'll remember to watch the clock."

Chapter 6

Sometime just after the creation of the Lit Universe, Jacob was finishing up his logs when he noticed a blip on his viewer, indicating a new arrival from the transporter area. With a flick of his wrist, he identified the visitors as David and his three children: Jon, Seraph, and Luke. An annoyed sigh escaped his lips, and he gestured for the four to enter.

Unlike his brother and father, David had brown hair and eyes that were a rare shade of blue in the Cosmos.

“Jacob!” David greeted his brother as he left his observation deck. “It’s a delight to see you again.”

“You appear to be in high spirits. Overseeing the new Lit Universe hasn’t left you too disheartened, has it?”

David offered a small, albeit weary smile. “It’s undoubtedly different compared to the old Dark Universe you had us in. Trauma and turmoil are constant. There are many things to monitor. Nevertheless, I enjoy it. It’s rewarding to witness the advancement of life on some of these planets.”

“Where is Damian?” Luke asks. Jacob’s face lit up with realization as he noticed his own offspring were nowhere to be found. He cursed, pinching the bridge of his nose. “He must still be in his lab. I had warned him he needed to be here by now.” He’s been so confined to his own little world that he barely knows his own family. He glanced over at David’s children. “I’ll show you where his planet is.”

David raised a brow in concern. “You gave him his own planet?”

“As you know, Damian is fascinated with experimenting with the new materials available in the Lit Universe. Some of them are novel to him. It’s best that he has his own space where he can inevitably cause some damage again. You were rewarded for his actions when he was young, but I can no longer control his activities. As a result, he spends a lot of time alone.”

Luke lit up at the prospect of visiting Damian’s personal planet. He was eager to see what he was currently working on.

Luke, guided by Jacob’s instructions and coordinates, led the way to Damian’s small solar system and his lonely planet. Although it was small, it was brimming with vibrant flora, nurtured by the moderately sized star it orbited. As they approached the lab’s entranceway, they were instantly captivated by the sight before them.

The lab was enormous, a labyrinth of diverse devices and structures. Large chambers housed fluctuating materials, while intricate devices of various shapes and sizes adorned multiple levels.

After absorbing everything, they finally located Damian by following the sound of someone murmuring to themselves. They turned the corner and found Damian at a desk, diligently inputting equations into his holographic viewer while simultaneously recording his personal notes into his voice recorder. Seraph cleared her throat, causing Damian to jump up and glance at the three of them. “What brings you here?” he inquired.

Seraph playfully smirked at him. “We came to visit. This was all planned, don’t you recall?”

Damian blinked in surprise, glancing at the Cosmic date. “Oh. Uh, sorry!”

“Don’t worry,” Luke assured him, approaching the desk. Behind Damian stood an enormous holographic display filled with equations and notes. “What is all this stuff?”

Damian glanced back at his work. “Oh! This is just my notes on the creation— formation of nonexistence to existence in space,” he admitted.

“That sounds ominous, but intriguing. Tell us more about it!”

Damian paused, momentarily wondering if Luke was genuinely interested. “My father often dismisses my fascination with Nonexistence, claiming it’s illogical to pursue or that it would only bring trouble. Consequently, he’s tried to discourage me from my passion rather than support it.” As soon as he realized Luke was serious, Damian jumped up and walked over to the hologram. “Okay, so there are three stages that exist within space: Nonexistence, Preexistence, and, of course, Existence. Nonexistence precedes all things, which is what I intend to recreate. Nonexistence isn’t emptiness—it’s purity. Everything else is corruption. If one were to recreate Nonexistence, they would essentially gain control over the entire Cosmos because Nonexistence is a state that requires control, and only a Controller can achieve that, as far as I know. I hope you’re following me because this is quite complex, yet also quite basic. Jon, Seraph, and Luke stood by as Damian launched into an incessant lecture. His hands flailed around, conjuring holograms, pulling up notes, and displaying devices with excitement. He rambled on, his smile widening as he introduced them to his machinery. Jon struggled to keep up, Luke was astounded, and Seraph felt a

growing sense of anxiety. Damian was undoubtedly a genius for his age, but there was something peculiar about his relentless explanations. Everyone had their own interests and diversions, but as Damian continued, it became evident that his pursuit to create a state of nonexistence and perhaps control the cosmos was more of an obsession than just a juvenile dream.

As it became increasingly evident that Damian had no intention of stopping anytime soon, Seraph cleared her throat, interrupting him as he demonstrated his matter compressor. “Um, this is all very intriguing, but what else can we do?”

“Oh! Sorry,” Damian chuckled, rubbing the back of his neck. “I constructed a cosmic cruiser and taught myself how to operate it. This machine can travel at incredible speeds. We could embark on a journey around the lit universe if you like?”

The three of them lit up with excitement at the prospect. “Yeah! Yeah, that sounds fantastic!” Luke exclaimed, eagerly following Damian to where the space cruiser was parked.

They all boarded the cruiser, which comfortably accommodated the four of them. Damian effortlessly maneuvered the controls, soaring through the multiverse, while Luke watched in awe.

As they traversed the universe beyond light speed, dodging asteroids and navigating through swirling gas clouds and dark matter, Damian’s excitement grew as he discussed dark matter and dark energy. Seraph, however, wasn’t thrilled about the reappearance of Nonexistence in the cosmos. Jon, too, remained silent, captivated by the sights before him and unable to interrupt. Luke, on the other hand, genuinely engaged in the conversation, asking questions and expressing his fascination with Damian’s ideas. While he may not have

fully comprehended them, he readily agreed with Damian's explanations and eagerly sought more information.

Damian couldn't help but grin at the sound of Luke's enthusiasm. He was glad to have someone to share his ideas with and was delighted to see Luke absorbing the information with genuine interest. Seraph, meanwhile, found herself smiling awkwardly throughout the conversation.

"Luke's really invested in Damian's theories," Seraph whispered to Jon. "I've never seen him so engrossed in these sorts of things."

Jon looked at Seraph in surprise. "I suppose, I mean, I don't fully comprehend it, and it's not something I would pursue as a subject of study, but it does pique my interest."

Seraph forced a smile. "Perhaps I'm merely overthinking things," she whispered to herself.

They returned to the lab, where Damian continued his work on theories, accompanied by Luke. Jon followed them as they walked through the lab, while Seraph stayed back, simply observing her surroundings. A sense of unease washed over her as she witnessed firsthand Damian's intense passion for reworking the cosmos.

Chapter 7

Celeste, proud of her daughter's progress, lauded her for her mastery of mode conversions. Seraph, acknowledging her inner power and the ability to read others' thoughts, responded with a sense of awe. Celeste, filled with admiration for her budding female Controller, gently requested that Seraph focus her powers solely on reading and listening to others. She cautioned against influencing someone's actions, emphasizing the importance of taking things slowly. With a deep breath, she turned around, leaving the room to gather her thoughts and reflect on the newfound knowledge she had acquired. Seraph expressed gratitude to Celeste for her unwavering support and expressed her desire to further explore her powers on others. However, she also acknowledged the need for solitude to process everything she had learned and to ensure that she used her abilities responsibly.

Seraph, already aware of Damian's whereabouts from her earlier family visit, sensed his vulnerability by being alone on a remote planet far away from prying eyes. He had the mind she desired scan into next.

"I've had enough of experimenting on humans. I'm ready to read a Controller's mind!" she declared. "Celeste's revelation that Damian was responsible for the accidental formation of the Lit Universe and his ongoing experiments with dark matter are reason enough to pay him a visit. I'm

destined to intercept and challenge him. Now that I understand Celeste's deep concern for Damian, I'm compelled to take this action."

Seraph found Damian in his lab, already preparing for his next dark matter compression test. Damian had inherited many of his father's features, including a darker complexion and dark hair. Although he was shorter than his father, he more than compensated for it with his exceptional intellect and unwavering passion for his cosmic ambitions. His personality resembled that of a young child who always craved candy and would weaken if he didn't get what he wanted. However, most could hardly match him in a strategic battle. Damian was highly intelligent, very persistent, and a cunning young Controller.

"Okay, finding his planet was a breeze. I'll take up an inconspicuous position and observe him for a while before infiltrating his mind." Seraph assumed a position and sat, observing Damian as he engaged in a relentless conversation with his devices. After a considerable period, she entered Damian's mind while in Spirit mode. "Alright, I'm inside. What a chaotic whirlwind of jumbled thoughts, equations, technical theories, and personal ambitions. Just like his father, Damian has exceptional intelligence. His thoughts delve into profound and intricate depths. I can't decipher all his thoughts, but one thing is certain: Damian is furious about destroying his father's universe. It seems like an interruption caused the Big Bang—the massive conversion of compressed space. He feels utterly responsible for that catastrophic event. I don't

understand why Damian believes that recreating a new state of nonexistence in the cosmos will allow him to control all of space entirely? I'm astounded to discover that Damian thought of using his control over a new state of existence so that he could overthrow other Controllers and dominate the new universe." Seraph paused for a moment before continuing to scan his memory.

"Why does he feel the lit universe rightfully belongs to his father? Something must have happened to make him think this. I wonder if Damian's father was no longer fit to rule, and he was kicked out. He seems to be harboring a lot of bitterness towards his father."

Before Seraph left his mind, she discovered a deep, dark memory that Damian had visions of not only conquering the current universe but also the entire cosmos for himself. She was astounded by the intricacy of his thoughts and even more so by his desire for every knee in the universe to bow before him.

Chapter 8

Oh, you're so beautiful! My spitting image," Celeste fawned, watching Lisa gently brush her hair. "You'll be loved on Earth." As Lisa finished fussing, Celeste noticed her apprehensive expression and smiled. "Don't worry, you'll have all the time you need to figure things out. Your bodily immunity is impenetrable, your smile is captivating, and you won't age like humans do. You're our scribe to record the events of the Human Race." Lisa was a unique type of humanoid, with flesh and bones, much like Adam, but her purpose in life was to document the events and the progression of intelligent life after the Lit Universe came into existence and the human race began. There was something oddly deliberate in Lisa's gaze—as if she was waiting for a signal unseen. Lisa had another reason for her existence, but that story will be revealed at the appropriate time. "You and the other humanoid, David 2, will be very busy keeping a watchful eye on the race."

"Please refer to my humanoid as D2. Your creation is named C2. But if you prefer to call her Lisa, that's fine with me. I created D2," her partner, David, called out from across the room.

Celeste briefly ignored David's interruption and continued softly to Lisa. "Anyway, you two will report any significant

human events to us,” she said. “But there’s more to your story than just this.”

Lisa’s eyes lit up with excitement, realizing that there was more to her destiny than being a scribe probe. “Really? What else is there for me?”

Celeste chuckled softly. “Many human centuries from now, you’ll meet someone incredibly talented—a creator unlike any other. When that time arrives, he’ll invite you to join him for a very special project.”

Lisa’s brow furrowed in curiosity. “How will I know where to find him? How will I know if it’s the right person?”

“Don’t worry about that,” Celeste hummed. “You’ll know when the time is right. Be patient and try to be still when you meet him. From there, you can simply continue your work. Just know that once you meet this talented man, my legacy will be set. Got it?”

“Got it,” Lisa replied with a curt nod.

On the other side of the room, David studied his humanoid, “D2, you’re now finished and ready to go. Good luck and be prepared for the event when it’s time. You also have a dual purpose, D2.”

“Will do,” D2 replied.

“Good. Just remember that a different creator will spend time with you around the same time C2 will be called for her role. Trust your instincts. When that time arrives, you’ll have set something in stone.”

D2 exuded confidence. With that settled, David took a step back, concluding his preparations. “So, D2, are you ready to be sent to Earth?”

“Yes, I believe so. Thank you.”

Chapter 9

Thank you all for joining me to discuss my retirement,” announced the CoS.

Sitting around the large table in the main meeting room were Controllers: David and Jacob, along with David’s partner, Celeste, and their children, Jon, Luke, Seraph, and Damian. Jacob’s partner, Ester, did not attend.

“To be honest, I’m undecided about who to choose as my successor.” David and Jacob exchanged glances, both thrilled that their father hadn’t made a decision yet. “I’ve studied humans on various planets to gain insights into this decision-making process. I’ve observed leaders of tribes, clans, and higher societies who pass on their rulership through different criteria. Sometimes, the selection is based on the firstborn, while at other times, they impose arbitrary restrictions, such as wealth or the gender of the potential heir. I can’t help but laugh at such primitive thinking. It’s Neanderthal-like decision-making. It makes me wonder why I allow them to exist in the first place. They’re not much different from the extinct species that preceded them. They are still primitive and haven’t made significant progress. But who knows, perhaps they can teach us something, and I can employ their tactics to resolve my own dilemma: Who should I choose to be the new CoS? However, I must divert my attention. There’s a moral to my speech.”

Clearing his throat, the CoS continued, “I have a better idea; one that I genuinely believe is the most effective way to transition my power, and it eliminates me as the decision-maker. And, surprisingly enough, it can even be entertaining for us. Let’s be honest, at the very least, those humans have brought some excitement to our world. So, let’s allow the human race to make the decision for us. Shall we?” Seraph, Jon, and Luke began to converse among themselves, already attempting to decipher the CoS’s intentions. Meanwhile, Damian muttered incoherently, but his words remained indistinct. “The human race has now developed advanced societies, and they are beginning to demonstrate their intellectual capabilities,” he continued. “This species now exists on numerous planets. Most iterations of this species appear capable of numerous advanced developments in the future. Despite this progress, we now have a preset Reset Clock, ticking down until it reaches the day when it will trigger and cleanse them. This event will occur in about 100 Earth years from now; I believe the Earth year would be around 2035, give or take some years.”

When he noticed everyone’s attention, he continued. “This particular Reset Clock was triggered and set a long time ago, just after the Jurassic clock struck. You all remember the Dino Clock, which you all set to propel that species from stagnation.” He chuckled softly. “So, I propose we rename this current Reset Clock to the ‘Race Clock.’ We can use it to help me select my replacement.”

“Must there always be a Reset Clock running?” Luke asked.

The CoS responded calmly, “Yes. Clocks or intervals of existence are inevitable in the cosmos, as all things are. He

began to stride back and forth as he explained further to Luke. “Our underlying Cosmic laws dictate that unless there is significant progress within the Cosmos itself, and it, as in Space, is expanding, the Reset Clock will be activated. Please don’t misunderstand; contracting has the same effect as expanding.”

Damian raised his hand this time. “So, you’re going to use a Clock to find your replacement?”

“Very sharp of you, Damian,” earning a proud smile from Damian. “We can make this routine change more engaging by transforming the Reset Clock into a ‘Race Clock.’”

David was taken aback but didn’t protest. Instead, he asked, “You want a race?”

“I do,” he admitted. “The decision will be made at the endgame. The ruler of the winning Universe will get to select a new CoS. This must happen before the Race Clock expires. The bet is that the Human Race will race for its survival, which will be known as ‘The Human Race.’ Isn’t that poetic?”

Jacob chuckled. “Very much so,” he agreed, and surprisingly, David nodded in agreement.

“If a human race from any planet, regardless of the universe, can develop the technology, knowledge, and ability to reach the edge of their universe and pass through the portal to the original universe, it will have two remarkable effects.”

The Father raised one finger. “It will end the current Reset Clock and grant humans an extended period of existence, which will be determined at a later time.”

He raised a second finger. “It will decide who will inherit my title as the Controller of Space. As I mentioned, the ruler of the winning Universe gets to then select my replacement.

Therefore, if David's Lit Universe gets intelligent life to enter the portal, he will choose my successor. This could, of course, be himself, and the same applies to Jacob and his newly created Emerging Universe. His expression became resolute. "And *no cheating* this time, understood, David, Jacob? The winning species must be naturally evolving, intelligent, and not the result of manufactured technology. So no humanoids allowed."

David blinked in astonishment before chuckling softly. "You've put a lot of thought into this, haven't you?"

The Controlling Father hummed contentedly. "I understand it might be a bit intricate, but I've documented everything in detail." Now displayed on the holographic monitor were the guidelines for the new Human Race. "I've also sent copies to your viewers, so feel free to refer to them as well."

The CoS surveyed the round table, patiently waiting for his family to absorb the information before he inquired, "So, do we have a consensus?"

David and Jacob locked eyes, their silence lingering as memories of their first competition still burned bright in their minds.

After a moment, they both smiled, their sibling rivalry rekindled by the transition from darkness to light. They grinned tauntingly at each other, their eyes meeting once more before they turned to face their father.

The CoS was delighted to see his son's reactions. "Well then," he said simply. "Let the Human Race begin."

Chapter 10

Celeste looked up from her viewer to see David standing by the gateway viewer, gazing over their Lit Universe. He should have been delighted to see a planet thriving beyond expectations and a species steadily advancing. This was their best chance to gain succession powers within their Domain Space. However, there was something amiss. Celeste was well aware of what David was agonizing over, but she urged him to let it out. "I know it concerns you."

David let out a slow exhale. "The survival of the Lit Universe might depend first on our ability to fend off Damian's efforts to change the very state of it," he murmured, expanding on his belief that something was creeping towards everything they had worked so hard for. "We must ensure the current state of the Lit Universe remains intact and keep the Human Race running. They have to reach their goal. That species must win. I'll send everyone a message. It's imperative that they attend a meeting as soon as possible. They need to understand my fears."

"At least Jon and Seraph will," Celeste whispered softly, expressing a mild concern for Luke. "It's better if he isn't involved."

David closed his eyes and nodded. "It's time we stop pretending. Luke may have gone dark."

Gathered around the main table in the lounge were David, Celeste, Seraph, Jon, and Adam. Adam, David's loyal servant, was created by David from a special species of apes that developed on a warm planet early after the Lit Universe was born. Adam was a well-built mountain of a man with dark skin and a healthy beard. Despite his intimidating stature, he was incredibly caring and gentle. If one looked closely, one could notice small markers of his early ape heritage, but that didn't diminish his intelligence compared to his peers. Adam had been with David and Celeste for a long time and had become more of a family member than a servant.

David was about to commence the family meeting when Seraph inquired, "Where's Luke?"

A brief silence ensued before Adam responded, sparing the parents the difficult task of informing Seraph that Luke might be with Damian and involved in a potential universe-ending plot. "I'm sorry, Seraph, but it's for the best that he's not here."

Seraph yearned to delve deeper into the matter, but she placed her trust in Adam's judgment. Jon, on the other hand, remained silent, averting his gaze and urging David to proceed with the meeting.

"I won't belabor the issue here. I understand that Damian is once again diligently working on a new process to achieve his ultimate compression," he began. "I believe his objective is to reverse our Lit Universe not only to darkness, but he might even be interested in taking it a step further and aiming to recreate a state of nonexistence on a cosmic scale. And if he

succeeds in this endeavor, he could potentially gain control over Space, the state of existence, or even the entire cosmos.”

Jon, irritated, spoke up. “He tried this once before, and it resulted in the creation of the Lit Universe. Why would he want to repeat that? Why would he want to revert to a state of nonexistence? Isn’t that illogical? With everything reset and gone?”

David hummed, understanding his son’s frustration. “Yes, you would think so. However, controlling the state of existence is a power that cannot be underestimated. If he succeeds in this, it will end everything we know, including this Lit Universe. We would be thrust back into darkness and without control. Nothing else will be immune.”

Seraph spoke up this time. “I believe Damian and Luke have been meeting occasionally,” she told them, her voice filled with worry. “In fact, I think he is with him right now. Damian apparently needs something within the Lit Universe to facilitate his new compression process, and I suspect he was using Luke to achieve that objective.”

“A rather grandiose claim,” Jon remarked to his sister, sounding more dismissive than usual.

Seraph frowned deeply at her brother. “I understand you don’t want to believe our brother is entangled in such a scheme, but he’s gradually distancing himself from the family.”

Jon, despite being able to comprehend his sister’s argument, remained hesitant about the idea of Luke collaborating with Damian. “Luke is not like that. He is a rational Controller. He glanced around at his family. “Well, if it’s true, what can we do to stop Damian?”

Celeste took the floor, pacing back and forth as she began to share her knowledge. She reached up and waved at the holographic display on the table.

“In the countless cosmic years of documentation that I have access to, controlling existence has always been an area of my somewhat limited familiarity,” she explained. “The writings are quite concise. I possess and maintain a logbook known as *The Controllers*. Allow me to present what I know about existence before you.” She displayed an image of one of the pages on the hologram. It contained detailed diagrams and charts that provided information on the three stages within the cosmos: nonexistence, preexistence, and existence.

“From my research, she continued, “I’ve discovered the actuality of another controller—a superior controller, separate from us and beyond our level. I firmly believe this controller initiated or at least orchestrated some aspect of our existence space.”

Seraph cleared her throat, seeking clarification. “I’m lost, what do you mean?”

Celeste responded, “At the very least, I believe this higher controller had some involvement in creating or defining these three states within the cosmos.”

Jon nodded in understanding. Celeste glanced at her partner, hoping he could shed some light on the situation. David nodded and resumed the conversation.

“So, if we were to make an educated guess, we believe Damian might possess a deeper understanding of the various existence states than anyone else does,” he admitted. “I’m at a loss as to how he would have come to know this; it’s possible that he gained this knowledge through his constant compression tests, theoretical research, and formulation of

hypotheses based on dark matter and energy creation. He treats it with the same level of self-exploration that he did when he was alone on his planet for so long, finding satisfaction in solitude, playing with it. His parents were unable and unwilling to guide him, likely because his intellect surpassed their comprehension. He has a vast collection of tools, you know. And now, we believe he seeks more energy from our Lit Universe to enhance his conversion process, so that he can further explore and expand his ‘sandbox of toys.’”

Jon burst into laughter, “I’ve always noticed a slight self-absorption in him at times, but there’s no denying his intelligence. During our gatherings, Damian would often veer off into tangents, many of which were difficult to follow...”

“He’s undoubtedly intelligent,” Celeste concurred. “Perhaps far beyond a genius. He’s likely highly theoretically intellectually gifted, and I believe he’s on a mission. I think some of the answers we seek may lie with this other Controller, or unfortunately, only within Damian himself.”

Seraph fell silent, her mind contemplating whether her powers could be effective on a mind as intricate as Damian’s. The last time she attempted to influence someone’s mind, it had been effortless, but she hadn’t gained much from it.

Celeste nodded in agreement, then recalled something. “There was more I wanted to discuss about Controllers and potential information, but I seem to have misplaced my logbook, *The Controllers*. I’ve been searching everywhere for it.” She glanced between her two children. “Have you two seen it?”

“No, I haven’t since that one time,” Jon replied, then turned to Seraph.

Seraph had been deep in thought when asked about the book. She was thinking about how to at least gain some insight into Damian's plans. She wondered if her power could be used to influence his mind. It wasn't until Jon cleared his throat that she could respond. "I don't have much to contribute," she admitted, "except that Damian is unlikely to abandon his efforts. Perhaps Adam might be able to shed some light on this for us?" Everyone turned to look at the only man who hadn't spoken up yet throughout the entire meeting. "Adam, what are your thoughts?"

"Honestly, I don't have much to add. Perhaps I could pay him a visit and try to be his ally. He might need a partner. If I can get close to him, he might share his thoughts with me."

Chapter 11

On a watched corner of the Lit Universe — a small Croatian village, mid-1800s — a child was born who would change how people understood energy. Hardship would mark his life, but he was not without a guide.

Seraph spoke softly to the newborn. “The secrets of the universe reside in Energy and Transmission. Invisible transmission underpins everything. Learn it, and doors will open.” Although this little boy had only experienced life for a few minutes, he was already being equipped with a bit of knowledge to achieve greatness. “You must persevere and strive with unwavering determination,” Seraph communicated this information through a mind connection from her spirit mode. “Understand that invisible transmission forms the foundation of all inventions. Wireless transmission and invisible transmission are not the same thing! Moreover, the study of non-physical phenomena unlocks the doors to your potential future—a future brimming with possibilities!”

Seraph prepared to leave the nursery room, leaving the little boy with a final thought: “Your memory is already brimming with all the tools you’ll need for your journey on Earth. It will be your own intellect and innovative brilliance that will amplify these etchings I impart to you. You are destined to build, inspire, and lead the Human Race.” Just before she departed, she said, “Happy Birthday, Nikola.”

Seraph left the house, leaving behind a small warmth, like the echo of a bell — a memory the boy would never know he owned. She decided to take a rest on a park bench near the street where he was born.

As she observed the swaying grass and the distant murmur of people, a pigeon descended from a tree branch, pecking at the ground in front of her. Seraph smiled down at the bird. “Hello there, how are you doing today?”

The pigeon remained silent, merely gazing up at her curiously before adjusting its wings.

“You know, my feathered friend, intelligence alone won’t be enough. If the Human Race is to triumph in this race, I must keep an eye on the other partner. He will be named Albert. A beautiful name for a baby boy, don’t you think?”

The pigeon continued pecking at the ground, and Seraph chuckled. “Exactly. Now, Albert and Nikola will need to meet one day. When they do, they must combine their unique understanding of energy and transmission. Their collaboration is crucial for our victory.”

Seraph offered the pigeon a warm smile. “I’m excited, aren’t you?”

It would be in Germany that another special child would be born, nearly two decades after Nikola’s arrival.

Years passed since Nikola’s birth, and after working for various companies, he found himself once again working independently. He didn’t mind; at least in this case, he had complete control over his inventions.

Before him lay a series of potential patents and well-drawn sketches of a coil, resembling the one named after him. “I envision a superior coil,” he confided in his assistant, Jonathan. “A device capable of generating the precise frequency of energy that would allow us to explore far beyond our solar system. The crucial element, apart from insight, is financial backing,” he emphasized, before expressing frustration. “I would have already had dozens of these devices manufactured had it not been for Edison, you know,” he muttered.

“Perhaps you should seek a sponsor,” Jonathan suggested, but Nikola scoffed at the very idea.

“If only,” Nikola scoffed. He ran a hand through his hair. “People call these ideas preposterous. Nobody invests in what they cannot immediately profit from.”

Nikola and Jonathan were in their lab when they noticed unusual signals coming in from one of their receivers, which they had built earlier.

“Jonathan,” he called out, “can you listen to this? I believe these signals are intelligently controlled.”

Jonathan listened in and agreed that he had heard it too. At this, Nikola’s head swirled with the realization that he was indeed capable of something extraordinary. He just needed to find someone he could trust to collaborate with.

“That night, as he sipped his drink, he couldn’t shake the feeling that he couldn’t work alone anymore. But who could help him when his own colleagues dismissed his ideas as crazy?”

Chapter 12

Damian was stationed in his lab, now pondering his past accomplishments and setbacks. A message from his father appeared on his viewer, emphasizing caution against further experimentation with space compression. Undeterred, Damian's insatiable curiosity about the cosmos' origins and the potential to control it propelled him to send a generic response before returning to his logbook records.

"I now know of the essential components, some of which were forged when the Lit Universe emerged, albeit hastily during my youthful days. Had I not made that fateful mistake, I would never have seen the light. Ha! Anyway, the building blocks required to re-form the cosmos to a state of nonexistence were concealed within a Dark Universe and some within the Lit Universe. These elements are indispensable for this grandest of all events to unfold." He paused, pulling away from the logs and closing his eyes to speak freely. "From the moment I transformed my father's black, lifeless hole of a Dark Universe into a Lit one, my sole focus has been on successfully compressing dark matter space and the energy that lives within it. Many have dismissed the concept of nonexistence in space, but I firmly believe it to be a reality. If there is matter and space, and a universe

encompassing them, there must have been a point in time before all that existed.” Damian’s mind drifted back to his inaugural experiment to compress dark matter space—the cosmic equivalent of the *Big Bang*, as humans commonly refer to it.

“I’ve meticulously reviewed my notes, ensuring my accuracy in methods, yet I made a mistake. *The Big Bang* I created was grand and awe-inspiring, but there’s a *bigger bang—to yet to bang*. I now comprehend that my actions were on a minuscule scale compared to the vastness of the Cosmos, yet the procedure and concept remain the same. I witnessed a state of zero, a fleeting moment of non-existence preceding the birth of the Lit Universe. However, this event occurred only at a local level—within a Dark Universe. It didn’t encompass anything beyond its Domain Space. Consequently, it was barely measurable compared to a Cosmic Bang.”

There was a sudden chirp from his viewer, signaling an incoming request for entry into his lab. “Ah, it appears he’s here. I’ll return with a follow-up and conclude the entry after our meeting.” He silenced the voice recorder and pressed the button on the viewer, allowing Controller Luke to enter.

Upon meeting, the two relatives embraced in a tight hug. They pulled apart, smiling at each other before Damian cleared his throat and returned to his table.

“Good day, Luke. Thank you for coming,” he greeted, adopting a more professional tone. “Please, take a seat. I want to get straight to the point.” He observed Luke nodding and taking a seat before launching into his work. “I wish to share my vision of something entirely unique. In fact, it’s likely the

only occurrence in the cosmos. Imagine a universe devoid of dark or light spaces, stars.”

“So, you propose a Dark Universe?” Luke inquired, and Damian shook his head.

“Luke, imagine stepping back in time to the very beginning, when nothing existed—not the Dark nor the Lit worlds we know today. What if we could somehow return to that primordial era? Have you ever contemplated the origins of everything?”

Luke pondered for a moment. “Are you referring to time travel or some form of recreation?”

Damian nodded. “Yes, but not through time travel. My ambitions extend far beyond that. I aspire to become the Controller who restores the state of Nonexistence within the Cosmos. By doing so, I would emerge as the sole future Controller of Space—Existence.” He chuckled softly. “My mind is abuzz with the possibilities that lie ahead, Luke.”

“Boundless, I suppose,” Luke offered. “Just like the cosmos itself.”

The darker-haired Controller grinned, pleased that Luke hadn’t abandoned the idea yet. “So, Luke, I’ve devised a plan to attempt another cosmic conversion using a novel process and materials from two distinct universes,” he commenced. “All my testing indicates that we can achieve a state of nonexistence, a concept my father once dismissed as impossible.”

Damian reclined in his seat, activating the holographic display to showcase the intricate formulas he had meticulously

crafted to execute this potential test. The hologram's extensive nature necessitated scrolling backward and forward to fully reveal the formulas and equations.

"And... are you certain this time will be successful?" Luke inquired, expressing his understandable apprehension.

Damian nodded adamantly. "I wouldn't have contacted you if I hadn't been prepared," he assured Luke. "To gain control of space, we must first restore the Cosmos to a state of nonexistence, and for that to happen, I need assistance from another universe—the Lit Universe, in particular." He folded his hands on his lap. "The Lit Universe teems with dark matter and compressed energy in every galactic core. My theory is simple: merge that with a Dark Universe core—a giant black hole of pure energy—and compress them fast enough. The two fuse into a single, volatile seed. Hold it long enough, and everything collapses into nothing. Release it, and it detonates into a true Cosmic Bang—an empty canvas for a new existence. And Luke, in space compression...size decides everything.

Luke snorted in response. "Yeah, it matters in the erection process, too."

Damian suppressed a fond snicker, trying to stay focused. "Very funny, but kindly keep your attention on the subject. Now, follow me. I'm going to show you what I've constructed."

He stood up and led Luke to an elevator. As they descended into the planet's upper crust, the elevator doors opened to reveal a lab ten times larger than Damian's original workspace. "This lab is for simulation testing," he explained.

“It’s where I conduct experiments to prove my theories, the very ones that could rewrite the cosmos.”

“During my first unfortunate attempt,” he continued, “the outcome was your father’s Lit Universe.” As they stepped out into the lab, Luke’s jaw dropped in awe. “I achieved nonexistence,” he said, “but it failed. I realize that even if I hadn’t been distracted by my father, the outcome would have been the same. I lacked the necessary elements to create total nonexistence.” A smile spread across his face as he turned to Luke. “The good news is that we finally have the missing link for creating a Cosmic rewrite: it’s the Lit Universe your father rules.”

He climbed up a set of stairs and sat at an observation table, inviting Luke to join him. Luke eagerly took a seat. “A Controller who rules Existence Space will have incredible powers, Luke, the likes of which you couldn’t even imagine.”

“Let me show you how my lab operates,” Damian continued, piquing Luke’s interest. Damian began to elaborate, showcasing his abilities by effortlessly turning on machines with a mere wave of his hand. He gestured for Luke to follow him to one of these remarkable machines. It was approximately the size of a refrigerator, yet it was adorned with an extensive array of tubes and dials. Luke couldn’t help but whistle in awe, expressing his admiration.

“Now, to demonstrate, Luke, I intend to initiate a controlled experiment under specific conditions. I aim to create a tiny dark sphere using a small amount of dark matter. This sphere will gradually attract all the matter within the chamber.” Damian turned to face Luke. “This is a simulated

compression test of matter. It differs from the real thing, where all matter is simultaneously pulled in. The purpose of feeding ‘the entity’ (my nickname for the dark core you see in the center of the vessel) is to maintain control.”

Luke nodded in agreement.

Damian continued, “In live mode, once the core forms, it doesn’t stop—it pulls in the entire Universe, then everything beyond. What remains is a void, small yet infinite. Inside it lies everything that ever was...and nothing at all.”

“The concept is difficult to grasp,” Luke admitted. “But tell me, Damian, if this explanation makes sense from my perspective.” Luke took a long pause and a deep breath before expressing his opinion. “I understand that throwing the Cosmos into chaos can be radical, but it can also be beneficial. I now see that *chaos* can exist at any level and anywhere throughout the Cosmos. Controlled chaos can be beneficial! It all boils down to the scale of the chaos. However, the difference between mad chaos and controlled chaos lies in the fact that there is a winner if it’s controlled. The rewrites are consistent. In another intriguing twist of these rewrite scenarios, and at our personal level, Damian, we are both distancing ourselves from people we care about, our family. This can lead to trauma or chaos in our lives. We are breakaways and are now embarking on our own journeys. Does this make sense to you, Damian?”

“That’s incredibly profound, Luke, to equate a cosmic catastrophe with a family breakup.” Damian hummed with delight. He turned to his eager assistant, awaiting his response.

“So, Luke, are you in?”

Luke didn't need to ponder deeply; his questions had already formed during the lengthy explanation. "It sounds fascinating," he replied. "What's my role? Why do you need me? It appears you have everything organized and ready to proceed."

Damian anticipated this question and had a prepared response. "Here's the catch, Luke: I require the energy from your father's Lit Evolving Universe, the one you inhabit, to merge with my father's Dark Emerging Universe. To initiate this colossal compression, we must commence with small implosions within both the Dark and Lit Universes. These implosions must occur simultaneously to draw them together. As they grow in size and density, they become akin to super magnets, attracting everything until there's nothing left to pull in. When the compressions of the Lit space form a single sphere, and then it collides with the Dark black holes in space, its power exponentially increases. The ultimate outcome is a state of nonexistence."

Luke's expression remained skeptical. "So, that's a massive undertaking. How do I initiate implosions? How many are required, and where should I begin?"

"I will provide you with the necessary instructions, coordinates, and the process to initiate the entire operation at the appropriate time."

Luke nodded curtly in acknowledgment, a soft grin spreading across his face. "Alright, let's begin."

"Excellent. Our initial step is to validate my knowledge together, you and I."

Luke raised an eyebrow. “Yeah, but I recall you saying you had everything meticulously prepared and tested?”

Damian chuckled. “Well, after what transpired last time... Our final validation must involve a visit to the Cosmic Archives. From what I gathered, the virtual realm is now under the control of your father and directly supervised by his ape-man servant, Adam, wasn’t it?” Luke nodded, and Damian couldn’t suppress a snicker. “A prehistoric ape-man as the overseer of the cosmic reference archives. Your father demonstrated remarkable resourcefulness in creating Adam. I believe we both understand his method of crafting an ape-man with exceptional intelligence. And now, he resides among us in the Cosmos, overseeing the archives, no less.”

Realizing he had veered off topic, he cleared his throat and resumed. “In any case, we must conduct as extensive research as possible on the subject: Controlling Existence.” He couldn’t resist a sly smile. “I am certain that a certain son of a ruling Controller could assist us in gaining access.”

“Alright, I can facilitate our entry.”

Damian’s excitement was palpable as he realized he was just a few elementary steps away from achieving his desired greatness. “Excellent. I’ll contact you once I’m ready,” he replied.

Chapter 13

I've been a prominent figure in the scientific world for most of my life. My groundbreaking invention, the induction motor, delivered Alternating Current, which I meticulously designed and planned the deployment of. AC powers the modern luxuries of the human race. I also created the Tesla Coil, which, if completed, would have had an even more profound impact on mankind. My peers have lauded my contributions, but my patents and ideas have been stolen, and my visions have been abandoned due to capitalist favoritism. Those who prioritize power and profit over the well-being of the masses have disregarded me. Despite my success, I feel like I've failed, and I'm growing old.

Nikola glanced at his friend. "Do you understand?" A solitary white pigeon perched on the windowsill of Tesla's hotel. It blinked at him, shifted slightly, and remained there. The pigeon was no ordinary bird. Seraph rode its mind like an old friend, tapping into Tesla's thoughts with a voice only he could hear.

"See? I knew you would understand," he chuckled. "I lack the motivation to complete my revised coil. My drive has vanished, and I feel defeated. Even if I finished it, I doubt I could bear the thought of it being stolen from me." He let out a long, soft sigh and then poured himself a few more fingers of whiskey. "The Tesla Super Coil I had envisioned was also too

advanced for humanity. Even if I desired to complete the final design, I lack a reliable method to bring it to life. Why can't I convince others of its capabilities, despite my proven brilliance to them?"

The white pigeon shifted on the windowsill, still struggling to find comfort with its oddly shaped legs. Could you blame Seraph for having some difficulty? Although it wasn't her first time appearing as a bird at Nikola's hotel window.

Seraph, inside a white pigeon, would regularly perch near Tesla's window and tap on the glass, patiently waiting for it to open. It seemed that birds held a special fascination for him, and her appearance as one appeared to be quite charming to him. While being a bird offered its own perks, Seraph's primary purpose was to serve as a source of motivation for him. She listened to his laments, answering with a steady telepathic nudge.

"Mr. Tesla, you possess a brilliant idea that deserves to be brought to fruition," Seraph communicated. "The human race will not progress at a rapid pace if you continue to spend your days lounging in bed."

Nikola Tesla had long since abandoned the notion of whether the voice in his head was a sign of insanity. He simply knew that it only appeared when the pigeon was present, so he playfully responded, believing it to be a form of communication with his inner self. "Is that so?" he hummed, taking a sip of his whiskey.

Seraph ruffled her feathers slightly while continuing. "You must complete your designs for the new I.C.E.D. device. This device is crucial for humanity's technological advancement and interstellar transportation. There's another man you haven't collaborated with, but I'm certain you've heard of

him. His name is Albert Einstein, and he can assist you in finalizing your Super Coil.”

Nikola sipped his whisky thoughtfully. “The Super Coil, yes,” he hummed. “A groundbreaking invention on my part. I simply added a secondary layer of coils around the primary, then ran them in parallel, but in opposite directions, and modified the voltage of each coil. It successfully passed a test! Theoretically, if built to the right size, it could generate a unique force capable of transforming matter.” He offered the bird a glance. “Everyone else has dismissed me outright. What makes you believe a theoretical physicist with no experience in developing such technology can aid me in my endeavors?”

Seraph maintained her firm communication. “It’s not about having the same skills, Nik. Can I call you Nik?”

“No. Well, okay. You’re my friend.”

“You and Einstein are two halves of a whole. Your minds complement each other,” Seraph reasoned. “You’ll discover that he’s in a predicament similar to yours. Go visit this man. You’ll find working with him to be invigorating.”

Nikola remained silent, sipping his glass and gazing out at the rather gloomy skies outside. It was an exceptionally cloudy day. “With my redesigned and enhanced coil, transforming matter would be possible.” He smiled fondly down at the bird. “You, my feathered friend, are the reason for this new insight.” He laughed softly to himself. “Who would have thought? A bird’s brain brings my imagination back to life.”

The pigeon cooed happily, a testament to Seraph’s successful motivation of Tesla to get off his butt. She thought to herself, “Tesla is at least partially motivated. Now, I must ensure that both men are in the same location simultaneously.”

Chapter 14

Tesla, on a mission to meet the renowned physicist Albert Einstein, found himself in a cozy coffee shop in Switzerland, a frequent spot for Einstein to take breaks after meetings with other astrophysicists. Tesla spotted Einstein through the coffee-shop window — untidy hair, a slow smile — Tesla quickly entered and greeted Einstein before he could order.

“Mr. Einstein, my name is Nikola Tesla. May I buy you a cup of coffee?” They shook hands and settled in at a table for two, with two steaming cups that would go barely touched as hours passed by in their conversation.

Nikola and Albert quickly became engrossed in a discussion about their latest theories and concepts, particularly Tesla’s inventions. As they talked endlessly about the inter-workings of the Universe, all the while Seraph watched from a distance. They hit it off quite well. Initially, Nikola was a bit reserved, while Albert primarily presented his theories on space and the Universe’s workings. Nikola focused on an invention to control space, believing that it could be managed. Nikola was often silent, but when he had the floor, he was relentless and passionate in sharing his theories. Einstein was intrigued by Tesla’s concepts and rough sketches of his revised coil.

At the conclusion of their initial meeting, they decided to meet again, this time in secrecy. They chose a small

warehouse in the United States, which Einstein had previously used for storage. During their discussions, both men expressed their shared interest in exploring the creation of energy and the transmission of matter.

After a few meetings, Tesla presented his detailed concept for an Instant Transmission, which he affectionately nicknamed 'IT.' Einstein, in turn, shared his concept for Matter Instantly Moved, but he held back on naming it.

They spent weeks meticulously exploring how each concept could be seamlessly integrated into a single entity, potentially leading to the development of a future device with the extraordinary ability to reach the very edge of the universe.

"I am captivated by the potential of your Local Realism concept," Nikola remarked as he delved into Einstein's profound work. "I am particularly intrigued by the concept of entangled particles being split and controlled. My revised Super Coil promises to provide this unparalleled power."

Albert merely nodded in agreement, allowing Nikola to elaborate further. "With my Super Coil, I envision the creation of a novel form of natural energy that possesses the extraordinary ability to disintegrate an object into its constituent particles, rendering it virtually invisible. This energy, when combined with your Local Realism theory, holds the potential to enable the instantaneous transportation of physical objects, voices, and of course, data across vast distances."

"We could determine the mechanism to regulate this phenomenon by utilizing a control panel within the coil," Einstein proposed. "If we manage the particles effectively and maintain their order, the output could surpass the speed of light."

Nikola tapped the blunt end of his pencil on the table, appearing more animated than he had in years. “We should design this new machine to have three distinct stages of progression. This approach will simplify its construction and testing, and I have a strong feeling that we will require it. Inventing is a resource-intensive endeavor.”

“Then, let us begin our work,” Einstein suggested. “Allow me to outline the three phases of design for this machine, Nikola.” After receiving a nod of approval, he began. “The initial phase of the machine would be designed to transmit communications across space at near-instantaneous speeds, enabling us to listen in or communicate with the far reaches of the universe.”

“Simple enough,” Nikola remarked. “May I propose the second phase?”

“Of course,” Albert replied.

Nikola turned in his chair to reveal a basic sketch of the machine in its second phase. This was an idea he had been contemplating for some time. “The second phase would enable the disintegration of matter into neutral energy, rendering an object invisible. Once an object is invisible, like space, it becomes ready to be transmitted through the beam of particles generated in the third phase of the machine.”

“And what would that entail?” Albert inquired.

“For the third and final step of the machine, Nikola explained, it would enable the transmission of matter over a beam of energy particles generated by splitting space particles, connecting them, and aligning them in a row, to form a beam, as suggested by your local realism— entangled particles theory.”

“Agreed,” Einstein responded. “In essence, these phases of development would allow for instant communications, instant transmission of objects, even a human body, anywhere in the Universe. Does that sound accurate for the phases?”

“It does,” Nikola affirmed. “We must meticulously examine every aspect of every state until we are certain it won’t fail. All the designs are interconnected; phase 1 relies on phase 2, and so on. However, there’s something more crucial we must address.”

Albert raised an eyebrow in curiosity. “Oh?”

Nikola chuckled. “What should we name our new device?” He smiled at his colleagues’ laughter and shared his idea. “How about calling it T.E.?” he suggested. “It stands for Tesla and Einstein.”

“No way,” Albert protested. “I prefer the E before the T. It’s alphabetically correct.”

Nikola, who would be the one to build it, greatly preferred his name to be first. However, ET did sound better, and he didn’t have a strong objection. Nevertheless, he believed they couldn’t come up with a better name. “Perhaps,” he tentatively agreed. “Yes, it sounds more powerful that way,” Nikola defended. “However, I believe we should name it: The ET MACHINE. Ultimately, in the future, it will likely be referred to simply as ‘The Entity.’”

After sharing a laugh, Nikola couldn’t help but sit back in his chair and ponder. “Remember how my original coil was merely intended for energy generation? Ha! Now, with these remarkable improvements, it has the potential to transmit bodies across the entire universe and potentially reach distant civilizations, if they exist.”

Albert chuckled and offered Nikola another finger of whisky when prompted, but he refrained from doing so for himself. “Well, I’m certainly glad we’re collaborating on this, Nikola.”

The meetings between the two men would continue for several months before their designs were finalized and documented.

Einstein spoke first. “These unpublished designs are revolutionary and must not be disclosed or sold to anyone. If this machine ever becomes operational, it could level the playing field between humanity and the cosmic forces of space. However, this assumes that the technology is capable of achieving what we believe it can. Accelerating objects beyond the speed of light would give humanity a significant advantage. Nevertheless, the human race is not prepared for this invention at this time, so we must keep it concealed until they are ready.”

Tesla, troubled by Einstein’s words, closed his eyes and murmured, “I feared you would say that.” For weeks, he had confided in a bird about his struggles to regain recognition. Now, after six months of assisting in the formulation of something that would once again be locked away, he wondered what “invention” truly meant. Regardless, he was certain that he would be long deceased before he could witness their creation of moving matter instantly across space.

Tesla wasn’t a fan of Einstein’s idea, and his expression showed it. Einstein understood his reluctance but pressed on. “Nikola, we can’t share this with mankind. Yes, the human

race would benefit from interstellar communication, but let me remind you, my friend, that part of this machine needs to be launched into outer space to work. Besides that, the technology is just not there yet.”

Initially, Tesla resisted, but soon he nodded in agreement with Einstein’s reasoning, even though he wasn’t thrilled about it. “In that case, we should package up these documents and keep them out of anyone’s hands for many years. By then, the human race might not need such a device anyway.”

“Agreed.”

Tesla and Einstein, having completed their work, decided to open a bank safe deposit box and store their designs. It was a deposit vault with a prepaid eighty-year deposit that would expire in the year 2028 and be opened by their co-beneficiaries, the United Parcel Service.

As the day drew to a close, Einstein and Tesla found themselves in the warehouse, engaged in small talk. They knew that their paths would eventually diverge, but for now, they were content to be two friends sharing jokes, sipping coffee, and contemplating the future.

Despite their collaborative efforts, however, a single question lingered in their minds: What comes next?

Tesla entered his hotel room, stretching as he approached the window and marveled at the world outside. However, he paused when a familiar pigeon descended and perched on his windowsill, pecking at the window, urging him to open it.

Tesla opened the window and gazed down at the bird with curiosity. “You’ve returned, I see? You can get around, my feathered friend. What brings you here?”

“You’ve done remarkable work, Nikola,” Seraph praised. “It appears that you and Albert make for an exceptional team. It seems.”

“Thank you very much,” Nikola replied with a smile. “I would tell him that myself, but I’m not sure how he would react to me conversing with birds and seeking their advice.”

Seraph chuckled. “Indeed, that’s a valid concern. Nevertheless, I understand that the technology required to activate the ET Machine may not be readily available for many years. However, I want you two to have the opportunity to witness your machine in action, functioning in real time.”

Nikola raised an eyebrow in intrigue. “Oh? And how do you plan to accomplish this?”

“I intend to preserve you,” she explained. “Your work is not yet complete. The human race still needs you both, and with your ET Machine by your side, I am certain you will achieve even greater accomplishments in the future.” She tilted her little head. “How does that sound?”

Nikola took a moment to ponder her words carefully, but he couldn’t quite comprehend why he needed to consider it. He had already made up his mind. “Well, then, I suppose I will see you in the future?”

Chapter 15

What precisely are we seeking?”

“Anything on controlling the State of Existence—how it shifts, who directs it. I want to know if the cycles of the Cosmos truly hinge on space compression. Maybe it works on expansion and contraction. We need to know when the last reset happened, and what forces trigger the leap from one state to another. I highly doubt we will find anything, but we need to look. Clear enough?”

Luke offered a smile. “Got it, sounds straightforward.”

They arrived at an entrance to a virtual realm in space, disconnected from any universe or domain of space. It felt like a pocket dimension, suspended apart. Faint, web-like strands pulsed from its core, tethering it to the vastness beyond.

“I believe this repository of information has existed for longer than we’ve been around, Luke. I must say, this is vastly different from what I recall when I used to visit long ago.”

As they stepped through the portal, they saw numbers and symbols floating in rows and columns, each representing stored information. It was a vast, open room with a lounge area. There were no doors, walls, or floors. To access information, one simply used a large holographic panel on the room’s side. Not everything was accessible to casual readers. Restrictions usually applied to Cosmic status and ranking, which each reference article could easily detect. Despite this,

the comprehensive catalog of information was still overwhelming, which is why there was a virtual librarian tending to the room. She was an elderly woman who displayed her image as a translucent hologram, embodying the true essence of simulated intelligence.

“Hello! I’m your virtual assistant. How can I help you?” she transmitted.

Damian’s impatience cut through at once. “I’m looking for information on controlling Cosmic Existence.”

The librarian nodded. “I understand. That’s a complex subject. I have a few resources you can explore.” She entered a search of reference numbers into her portable viewer and pulled up several relevant entries, along with the locations where to find them on the search panel.

“Thank you, I think we can take it from here,” Damian said. Damian and Luke spent a considerable amount of time scanning the references until they finally found two promising results. One was a logbook, and the other was a book. The logbook mentioned the other book as one of its sources of information. The logbook was titled *The Controllers*, and the source book was called *Controlling Existence*.

Luke glanced over Damian’s shoulder at the image of the book and its summary. “Do you have something?”

“I do. Here’s what I found. In the logbook called *The Controllers* under a section called ‘Controlling Existence,’ it briefly describes a Controller who can create Space within their designated Domain.” He tapped on the virtual image, causing it to shift and reveal part of the actual contents. “A Controller of Existence possesses the ability to generate Existence space from empty space. Once Existence is created,

it can only be managed by an assigned Controller of that specific space.”

Luke’s brow furrowed in thought. “That’s all there is?”

“Correct,” Damian hummed in response. “It also mentions the book titled ‘*Controlling Existence*’ as its source, but it’s not currently available for reading in this collection.”

A sigh escaped Luke’s lips. “She likely overlooked it then. I suppose we should begin our search by examining book by book.”

As they continued their search, the librarian passed by again. “You’re still looking for information, I see. Is there anything I can assist you with?”

Damian turned away from Luke and gave a nod. “Yes, we’re looking for a book called *Controlling Existence*. References indicate its existence, but it’s not showing up as available. I’m having difficulty locating it.”

The librarian searched her internal database for a few seconds before nodding. “I understand that the book exists,” she confirmed. “However, we haven’t been able to make a copy yet. The master copy is either missing, has been checked out, or is blocked from being read. Consequently, we don’t have it available. I apologize for not being able to assist you two more.” She bowed before turning to leave. “If you require further assistance, I will be available.”

Damian, exhausted from sifting through a wealth of information in a short span, sighed heavily. “This was a complete waste of time.”

Luke cleared his throat, a hint of amusement in his voice. “Actually, I can’t quite explain why I didn’t connect the dots earlier. ‘*Controlling Existence*’ is the same name as a chapter

in Celeste's logbook titled '*The Controllers*.'" Damian's reaction, a sudden jump, made Luke chuckle softly. "I've read parts of her logbook, but half the chapters are locked, including the one titled '*Controlling Existence*.'"

Damian stared at Luke, bewildered by his audacity. "Can you somehow obtain it?"

Luke sighed, making a vague gesture with his hand. "I suppose I could try. It's usually on Celeste's nightstand, so she'll likely notice its absence soon. I'm certain there's a chapter titled '*Controlling Existence*,' but even if I managed to get the book, that chapter was locked the last time I checked."

Damian pondered the situation. "Well, there must be a way to crack the code. We might need to hack into it. I have tools for that." Luke raised an eyebrow, but Damian persisted. "I'll have to research the locking mechanisms of these books to unlock them." He paused to let out a hearty laugh. "Or we could just smash it open—but somehow I doubt the cosmos rewards brute force."

"Yeah, not your best idea," Luke agreed, before presenting his own solution. "What if I could borrow the book for a short while? Perhaps the librarian has a way to read it or look into it. She must deal with this issue frequently. We could ask her."

Damian nodded in agreement.

They found the librarian once again. Giving a polite smile, Damian asked, "Hi again. If we have a book that was accidentally left locked, is there a way to have you access it?"

The librarian nodded cheerfully. "In a way, yes! I can provide a summary of a single chapter, but I can't access a locked book. That privilege is reserved for individuals with the appropriate permissions, such as age, rank, and status."

Damian thanked her and discreetly pulled Luke aside. “When was the last time you read the book?” he inquired.

Luke needed a moment to process the question. “It was only once. I had recently come of age, and we all read about the Transmission–Interconnect process. Do you recall me mentioning it to you?”

“Of course, I remember you telling me about it, and I did use it once. I met some interesting humans while on Earth. However, you never mentioned that you learned of this from a logbook, but that doesn’t matter.”

It was then that Luke cracked a smile. “I suppose I could try, but I’m not sure if I could hold the logbook for that long, or even if I could at all. David and Celeste are already a bit wary of me spending time with you.” Damian’s expression turned sour, but the truth was undeniable. “I’ll do my best to obtain the logbook for a while. She travels frequently; I can take it then.”

Chapter 16

Luke eagerly awaited Celeste's message of arrival at her destination, wishing her a safe trip before sending a message to Damian. She's gone. Come over quickly," he said.

Almost instantly, from across the two universes, Damian appeared beside Luke, a grin on his face. "So, how long do you think she'll be away?" he asked casually.

"Hmmm, long enough, I hope," Luke replied. "It's a pure coincidence that she had to leave just as I arrived."

"Great! So, let's not waste any time, eh?"

The two quickly made their way to Celeste's room. The book *The Controllers* sat on the nightstand, inviting them to take it. Damian eagerly brought it to the family room, eager to begin reading. Before he could even open it, Luke nudged him.

Damian glanced at Luke, who merely smiled in response. "Before we delve into this, I discovered something you'll be interested in seeing."

Confused, Damian followed Luke to Adam's rest area. In the back of the room, on Adam's bookshelf, was a book titled "*Controlling Existence*" wedged between two imposing tomes.

Damian blinked, then let out a disbelieving laugh. . Luke chuckled in explanation. "Coincidentally, Adam is the

manager of the archives. I intended to inquire about the book with him, but he wasn't present. So, I searched his bookshelf and found this." He held up the book called *Controlling Existence* with a grin. "It's the missing piece! We now possess the logbook and the referenced book."

Still reeling, Damian forced a grin. "Looks like fortune's on our side."

"As I suspected, the initial pages seem jumbled, suggesting that this book is coded. '*Controlling Existence*' is locked," Luke regretted. "Fortunately, we have someone who can help us."

"Let's go!"

As they reentered the cosmic archives, Damian and Luke were greeted by the same virtual librarian they had seen before. "How may I help you both?" she asked pleasantly.

"We've located the checked-out books, '*Controlling Existence*,' and the logbook, '*The Controllers*.' Damian said, sliding the books forward on the counter, explaining that Adam, the archives overseer, had checked out the book and requested its return. He apologized for the delay."

The librarian quickly flipped through the pages and handed it back to Damian. A virtual copy of this book is now available for reference, so normally we discard the original, but you can have it back. We've initiated this process for any older books. '*Controlling Existence*' is now accessible for reading."

She gestured to “The Logbook - *The Controllers*,” explaining that it’s an original, unfinished work that wasn’t scanned in. However, she could share some details about it. Ultimately, it should be returned to its owner so they can complete their ongoing updates.

Damian’s enthusiasm was evident when he asked, “Can you share any details about ‘*Controlling Existence*’? Does it contain information on managing, controlling, or creating Space?”

The librarian nodded with a smile. “Of course, I can help you with that. In the book ‘*Controlling Existence*,’ it delves into the concept of space and existence. It highlights how to create a state of nonexistence. Let me display it for you.” A holographic image materialized in front of them, displaying excerpts from the book.

She cleared her throat, even though she was entirely virtual. As she began speaking, her voice carried a sense of familiarity as if she were recalling the excerpts from memory.

“The very first step to creating Nonexistence is outlined here. Let me read what it says: ‘*A Controller who oversees a Dark Universe and a Controller who oversees a Lit Universe must get their opposing universes to clash. The fusion generates such an intense force of compression, resulting in the complete annihilation of existence.*’”

Damian cut her off, impatience flashing. He already knew most of this and wanted specifics. “Could you please provide more details about the first step of the process? Are there any additional insights in the other book?”

The librarian nodded. “Yes, under the chapter titled ‘*Controlling Existence*,’ in the logbook ‘*The Controllers*,’ there’s a precursor step to merging universes.”

Damian, impatient, gestured for her to continue right away. “Yes, yes, what is it?”

She began to read very calmly.

“One way to achieve nonexistence is to significantly increase the gravitational forces between two universes, one dark and one lit, to allow for a faster collision of the two spaces. The black holes of each universe must collide at ramming speed to initiate their fusion. Gradually merging them won’t work because they’ll constantly repel each other.” She continued.

“To achieve this, first, you must merge the centers of all the galaxies in a lit universe, their black holes, and the center of a completely dark universe, which is essentially a gigantic black hole. The dark energy within these black holes is the key to making this happen. For the merger to begin, both regions of space must separate from their current location and be driven outward away from each other. Once they’re far enough apart, they’ll automatically break their universe-al gravitational pull and be forced back into each other, but now at super fast speeds. This is the process to initiate the formation of nonexistence in space, as documented in the logbook.”

Damian grimaced, “That’s likely why my first test failed.” The virtual librarian smiled warmly at him and continued, “There’s little else written about creating nonexistence besides the fact that existence originates from preexistence.”

Damian recalled the formulas still etched in his mind. “Are you certain about reversing gravitational forces being the initial step?” he inquired, wanting to confirm his understanding.

“This is how it’s recorded in the book,” the librarian affirmed. “I believe I’ve shared all the details about the subject nonexistence from both books. So, is there anything else I can assist you with?”

While Damian processed the information, Luke smiled at the librarian. “He thanked the librarian for her help.

Damian, are you okay?”

Damian recalled his mistakes in the first experiment. Satisfied with the information, he said, “Just as I suspected, I was likely missing a step. We’ll need to adjust the initial stages of the process, Luke.” He chuckled. “Thankfully, we came here. I would have missed that crucial step and inverted another_universe once again.”

“That’s great to hear,” Luke said, glancing at the librarian.

“I’ve added them to our repository,” she replied. “They should be returned to their owner. Unfortunately, our new policy is to store all books in a virtual private networked environment.” She looked between the two of them. “Is there anything else you need?”

Damian and Luke exchanged glances before concluding that they had what they came for. They thanked the librarian and left.

“I need to return these books to their original place,” Luke sighed, holding up the two books. “I’ll let you know when I can help plan the next steps.”

Damian returned to his lab and commenced planning the fusion of two universes, considering the newfound method he was grateful to have discovered.

Chapter 17

The year was 2028. Inside SpaceX headquarters, many workstations lay deserted. The company's employees were now gathered in a large room, where a program director, known simply as Meredith, stood before a large trunk on a table. The room's entrance was now locked to ensure that no one from the outside could witness this momentous occasion.

"Alright, everyone, please settle down. My name is Meredith. My friends and colleagues sometimes refer to me as my short name, M, so you might find I use M when referring to myself. She gestured for the crowd of onlookers to tone down their excitement. "The second box has just been delivered by UPS and the representatives from the bank. This box has been sealed for over ninety years. I will be overseeing its contents and sharing them with you as we unveil it. Let's take a look together and discover what lies within." Meredith's grin widened as she struggled to contain her own excitement. "This could be a pivotal moment for the scientific community and humanity as a whole."

Flanked by a smaller team of her high-level colleagues, she cautiously opened the box and began to remove its contents.

"The first thing I notice is a letter and a notebook." With meticulous hands, she flipped through the notebook. "As we expected, it appears to be a shared notebook from Nikola Tesla

and Albert Einstein. It's filled with diagrams and handwritten notes."

A grin spread across Meredith's face in response to her findings. "The cover letter simply states: 'This is the combined work of two of the greatest minds of our time. Enclosed herein is how to construct 'The ET Machine.'"

Promising her coworkers that they would hear more about the discoveries within the box, she decided to change course. "There's a lot to sift through, and I had no idea that the box contained detailed instructions on how to build a machine. So, we're going to divide into smaller teams to expedite the process of understanding what we have before us."

For days, the team dissected every detail of the notes until they finally brought order to the chaos. By the end of the month, they had consolidated all their information and commenced further meetings to discuss the task of constructing a machine that Albert Einstein and Nikola Tesla had conceptualized many years prior.

"Good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining us. We won't waste any time. Our purpose here is to discuss and implement plans to bring Einstein and Tesla's proposed machine to life. To achieve this, we'll once again form separate teams to focus on these efforts. On a projector, the project director displayed bullet points of information and scans of diagrams to facilitate everyone's understanding.

"These written theories propose a modified local realism concept," M explained. "Einstein's theory suggests that by

dividing space particles, which we believe are dark matter particles, using the new, modified Tesla Super Coil, they can create a split particle that maintains a connection and communication with the original particle, even over vast distances.”

The program director paused, scanning her colleagues’ faces for their reactions. “Building this device will require us to comprehend the implications of dark matter or dark energy particle division. Unfortunately, we have limited knowledge in this area. From their notes, it’s uncertain which type of space particle needs to be split, and once split, does the split particle remain permanent or can it be reverted to its original state? Moreover, the communication process between the split particles also remains unclear.”

She then pulled up some handwritten notes on the large screen. “From what we’ve gathered, the device described here has the potential to enable interstellar space communication and travel.”

Murmurs of agreement rippled through her peers. “Isn’t this exciting? We need a diverse group of engineers from across the globe to study this novel process. Additionally, we’ll require a separate team to delve into Tesla’s groundbreaking Super Coil design. Let me continued, Once all teams are assembled and we feel confident in implementing this technology, construction and testing will commence.”

Several months later, Meredith convened the team again. The months spent studying the technology and concepts of the

proposed ET Machine were finally bearing fruit. The key engineers assembled in a large conference room.

“I would like to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for the immense effort you have put into comprehending and deciphering the intricate instructions provided by Albert Einstein and Nikola Tesla,” M said to the team.

“I want to thank you all for your unwavering dedication, we have gained enormous confidence in the fact that our current technological capabilities are advanced enough to undertake the construction of the model outlined in the notes. We have reached a pivotal juncture where we possess the necessary knowledge to commence construction on the ET Machine.”

A wave of excitement rippled through the crowd at the prospect of finally embarking on humanity’s most ambitious project to date. M turned on the projector, displaying a general outline of their construction plans.

“The construction plan for the two primary components of the Machine is as follows:”

The Control Unit: Responsible for splitting dark matter particles to create a continuous, infinite beam, forms the E part of the machine.

The Anti-Matter Molecule Unit: Responsible for the deconstruction of matter, forms the T part of the machine.

M turned to her peers and explained, “The ET Machine was composed of two primary components: the E and the T. Surprisingly, Einstein had developed the Transmission component, while Tesla had contributed to the Energy component. The name might have been confusing to them, as it is to us. However, the machine’s name clearly reflects the

ideas and concepts each man had envisioned during their research. Therefore, we will divide the work accordingly. So, let's begin constructing the machine!"

After a year of meticulous construction and rigorous testing, the day of reckoning had finally arrived. The year 2029 had dawned, marking the completion of the ET Machine.

As the director addressed her team, a far more cheerful tone filled her voice. "Today marks a momentous occasion, my esteemed colleagues. We have finally reached the culmination of our efforts; the ET Machine is now complete."

"We successfully tested and established a 'Communication Link' using the Primary Control Unit," she summarized. In this test, the team created a communication beam composed of split dark matter particles, the stuff that bind our universe and even our bodies- together, between two points in our Universe. During the second transmission test, we aimed to determine the speed at which a message could be sent to the Andromeda Galaxy, our closest galaxy, which is approximately 2.537 million light-years away. Similar to the moon test, the message, reading 'Hello from Earth,' was transmitted and received instantly at the endpoint of the beam. Notably, the particle beam formed an endpoint at Andromeda, enabling the message to be transmitted back to Earth in a closed loop.

The display transitioned to a new slide presenting the results of the Matter/Anti-Matter Movement test. The Program Director resumed her presentation, providing further insights into the findings of this crucial experiment.

“Our Anti-Matter Discovery team conducted a test to assess the ET machine’s capability to convert matter and transmit it over the particle beam. After several attempts using conventional voltage, the team discovered that the force generated in the Transport Room enabled the complete disappearance of an object, in this case, a small doll. This achievement was a resounding success.”

She then presented scans of Nikola Tesla’s meticulous and precise handwriting. “Now that the machine is nearly ready for use, I would like to provide everyone with a comprehensive overview of its mechanics. The technology and theories employed in the machine are nothing short of brilliant and extraordinary. Here are some excerpts written by Tesla regarding his super coil, or the T component of the Machine.”

‘Our machine’s output will generate a novel form of energy: a dark energy electrical force; dark energy, is the force responsible for making our universe expand. This new energy force also differs from Alternating Current and Direct Current; it’s a unique type of Space Current. I’ve dubbed it Dark Energy Space Current.

‘The new coil design has the potential to transform an object or even a living being into dark matter. In essence, dark matter is simply empty space in space, but it serves an important role: it holds everything together; it’s the glue. The human body is basically made up of dark matter particles, glued together. Once an object, like a body, is converted into dark matter particles via the coil, it becomes easily transportable through the use of the transport beam.’

‘The tragedy lies in our current technology being woefully inadequate or nonexistent. Consequently, we rely on our future generations to translate our words into a device using the

advanced achievements available at that time. We are hopeful that this will guide humanity to the boundaries of the known cosmos.

“Of course, that was merely half of the brilliant duo,” she remarked, swiftly flipping over to Einstein’s meticulously handwritten notes. “It’s a pity such a brilliant mind was born too early in this world. The wonders he could have inspired in today’s generation are truly remarkable. Now, let us delve into the inner thoughts of Albert Einstein regarding the E component of the machine.”

There are three steps to transporting an object from one location to another.

First, establish the transport layer by forming a beam of dark energy. This is achieved by splitting dark energy space particles and connecting them to form a continuous beam.

Second, via the coil, create a force field around an object to render it invisible by disintegrating its particles to the point of invisibility.

Third, align the dark matter particles that make up the invisible object and send them over the beam in the correct order.

This three-step process enables the near-instantaneous transfer of objects.

Disintegrating an object: Once the object is enveloped in the force field of the Coil, it disintegrates the object into tiny molecular particles, all of which are aware of each other because they are entangled. My modified Local Realism theory states that split particles, even if they are split thousands of times, are always in constant contact with their split particle; they are entangled, and they know how to reassemble with their split partner particle, on demand. So,

here is the fascinating part: when physical objects are transmitted, they are basically invisible dark matter particles, which can be precisely reconstructed at the receiving end of the beam. The particles possess the remarkable ability to gather and reattach to one another. This is the ingenious aspect of the self-reconstruction of an object. Remarkably, there's no requirement for a remote device to facilitate the object's reform. This groundbreaking concept has never been conceptualized before.'

'This entire process can all be managed by the Control Unit within the ET Machine. The particles need a relative transmission order, and with that order, anything can be disassembled, moved, and reassembled.'

'Once an object is rendered invisible, it can be instantly transported to another location and almost instantly reassembled.'

'As split particles continue to be split, they become easier to split and manage. This concept was inspired by my mentor, Isaac Newton's law of infinitesimals, which states that there are infinite numbers between zero and one. Dividing a number in half is similar to dividing a particle; when divided repeatedly, it becomes so small that it becomes invisible. It's important to note that creating the beam is a different process from breaking down an object. Both involve splitting particles. The transport beam consists of dark energy particles linked together but split only twice, whereas making an object invisible is splitting particles zillions of times until it creates empty space, or dark matter.'

'A layperson might wonder if it's feasible to move a living organism like a human being. The answer is quite straightforward. The process remains the same, except for a

few preparatory steps. The initial step involves a brief freeze of the biological unit, which effectively sets it at a Specific Point In Time. You have to S.P.I.T on it.'

'This technology is boundless. One day, it will become feasible to instantly travel anywhere in the universe. Upon reaching a distant location, you will arrive at the same age as when you departed from your starting point, effectively eliminating the issue of aging during travel. The 'time factor' during transmission will no longer be a concern.'

'Perhaps one day, it may become possible to transfer the thoughts of one individual into the mind of another or simply read the mind of another being. On the extreme end of the spectrum, we may even be able to comprehend the very boundaries of the cosmos itself. And how it all began.'

M turned to face all the SpaceX engineers with a grin. "I see the entire team is left speechless. This is a bit overwhelming, I suppose. In my opinion, the silence in the room is a testament to their brilliance. Fascinating times lie ahead of us. From what I just read, we are at the beginning of an unprecedented race; the future of this machine is unparalleled, and it just might save humanity from itself."

Chapter 18

Meredith stood before the team once again, pride shining in her eyes at all they had accomplished.

“Now that we’ve thoroughly tested all the components, the final instruction in their notes instructs us to retrieve an object from the specified coordinates. We’ve successfully tested the two primary devices, both of which have been operating in space for some time. The James Webb telescope has been restored to full functionality after receiving a substantial upgrade that enhances its ability to capture distant images with unprecedented clarity. Moreover, all three components—the James Webb telescope, the Control Unit, and the Transporter—are functioning flawlessly as per their design.”

She smiled around at her colleagues. “A few months ago, we discovered something extraordinary through the upgraded telescope. We detected an anomaly at the far edge of the universe—what appears to be a portal into another realm. We believe it to be an opening, a portal to another space. Initially, the team that made this discovery was astounded, initially suspecting an issue with the telescope. However, the same image persisted after each recalibration.”

“We’ve gathered you here to decide whether to use the ET Machine to send a message to the Portal.” She smirked. “Or, even better, if the new ET Machine is ready, why not send an probe to explore it?”

The director displayed a remarkably clear image of the opening on the projector.

“This is what we see—it certainly resembles a large doorway.” She gestured to everyone in the room with open arms. “So, what’s next, folks? Maybe we have an open discussion about our next steps?”

Just then, a man walked into the room and addressed the group. “Greetings, everyone. For those of you unfamiliar with me, I’m Meredith’s colleague. We work closely together. I primarily work behind the scenes here at SpaceX, ensuring the organization remains on track. I also assist her in making the right engineering decisions, specifically for projects like this one. You can address me as Mr. M. My decision is to simply follow the last page of the instructions the makers left for us. The one that instructs us to first retrieve two objects using the ET Machine? I believe it was Albert Einstein and Nikola Tesla’s wish, to complete this step first if and when the machine was ever built. Perhaps, by doing this, it will provide us with more information about the machine itself.” With that, Mr. M departs the room.

Almost everyone in the room agreed, judging by the positive murmurs that filled the air.

“Okay, it’s time to reveal the last piece of Einstein and Tesla’s legacy. ”

“All systems are functioning,” an engineer from the Control Unit announced. “We are prepared to initiate the process of transmitting the objects situated at the specified

coordinates back to Earth. However, the coordinates seem to be located at—” He paused, his brow furrowed in confusion. “The... south pole?”

Meredith, who was overseeing the machine activation, paid no attention to his comment, as if she already knew the objects’ location. “Einstein and Tesla were correct about everything so far. We must trust their judgment on this matter. Now, please activate the power source!”

In an instant, two enormous capsules materialize in the center of the room, resting flat with a curved glass window perched atop them. These capsules were large enough to accommodate a person. As the foggy window gradually clears, bodies begin to reform within the capsules. Everyone was watching in awe. Inside each capsule, two fully formed men emerge from the empty space. However, these weren’t ordinary bodies; they were something extraordinary.

Everyone in the room stands in a state of stunned silence, their jaws dropped in disbelief, before one man finally speaks up. “Is that... it can’t be!”

Out of sight, Seraph was watching the return of the two men she had preserved long ago. Now, through the ET Machine, they were back to life. It took a few moments, but gradually, both men began to stir.

Now fully awakened from their deep sleep, and standing for the first time in decades, Albert Einstein and Nikola Tesla stood alongside their time capsules and stepped into the modern world.

The program director was awestruck, but managed to keep her composure as she approached the two men. “Welcome, Mr. Einstein, Mr. Tesla, I presume?” she greeted them. “We

used the instructions you had on the last page to retrieve your bodies. Your machine works!”

Nikola and Albert were in awe, simply taking in everything around them until Nikola processed what had just been said. “Wait... what instructions? Did the white pigeon play a role in this? Is our machine truly working?”

Albert couldn’t help his disbelieving laugh. “And we’re here to see our creation in action! “Fascinating, nothing less than unbelievably fascinating!”

Nikola rolled his shoulders and flexed his limbs, exclaiming, “Impressive, my feathered friend kept her word. I’m back, and I feel fantastic!”

M couldn’t contain her grin, while the other researchers were astounded. The two men whose groundbreaking work had been completed years ago had finally come to life and brought back the very creators. “There’s so much to tell you. Yes, we built your machine—and it’s been over 80 years since you left us. Come, let us show you what we’ve accomplished.”

Einstein and Tesla exchanged amused glances, chuckling at the realization that their machine design had come to fruition.

“We understand you haven’t been back for just a few hours, but we need to show you what we discovered a few months ago,” the Director informed them. “Using your ET Machine, we intend to contact this portal, which is located in a region at the outer edges of the Lit Universe. We would be honored if you could guide us in our next steps for the human race.”

Albert barely managed to suppress his chuckle of disbelief. He glanced over at his friend, Nikola, who appeared positively thrilled. As he turned back to the door in space, Einstein realized that their journey into the annals of history had only just commenced.

Chapter 19

Lisa sought Seraph's help in verifying the Human Race entries. She wanted to ensure their accuracy before providing an update to Celeste's and her Controller logbook. Lisa was confident that Seraph's new abilities could validate her findings.

"Alright, Lisa, let's begin. I hope your documentation aligns with my scan results of past human events." Seraph said, settling back and closing her eyes to delve into her mental logs of recent human history.

"To start, I will focus on prominent humans who were born and who may be connected to either my brothers or any other Controllers who visited Earth. I will also consider those who have made significant contributions to the Human Race thus far. Are you ready, Lisa?"

"I am."

Seraph smiled and closed her eyes, focusing intently on her mental scan. "Alright, here's what I've found." The first crucial connection is to a man named Galileo, born in 1564. Seraph murmured. "But... he was born the year Michelangelo died. A torch passed from one genius to another."

"Yes, but that wasn't significant."

Seraph paused, her eyes widening in surprise. "Wait a minute, how is this possible?" She turned to Lisa, her brow

furrowed in concentration. Lisa understood the significance of the look before any further explanation was given. “Why are you appearing on this ancestry tree for Michelangelo, Lisa?”

Lisa averted her gaze, a smile tugging at her lips. “Probe D2 and I may have crossed paths several times in the distant past. We were both lonely wanderers, traversing the endless expanse of Earth. We never imagined anything significant would come of our encounters. Life finds a way, and fate intervened—hormones, fertility, desires.”

Seraph observed Lisa with keen interest. “I’ve never witnessed you with a child before.”

Lisa nodded in acknowledgment. “We met a mother who had tragically lost her child to disease and couldn’t bear the thought of losing another. I knew my duties left no room for motherhood. When I placed the child in her arms, I felt both relief and a tearing grief I never admitted to anyone. That is why my name appears on the tree.”

Seraph refrained from asking any more questions and simply moved on. “So, the DNA of D2 and C2 travels forward in time to the 1500s, leading to the birth of a child named Michelangelo, the renowned Michelangelo. She couldn’t help but smirk. “Isn’t that incredible?”

Lisa merely chuckled in response. “Shall we proceed?”

Seraph nodded and closed her eyes once more. “I now perceive that your bloodline extends to other prominent descendants beyond Michelangelo.” Newton! And from his lineage, it continues and terminates at Einstein, as in Albert. Yikes!”

Lisa looked apologetic as she replied, “I never imagined my DNA bloodline would be connected to the Human Race, especially with one of the creators of the ET Machine.”

“Well, it appears you’ve made a substantial contribution to the race,” Seraph replied, glancing at her with one eye. “Now, let’s focus on Luke’s bloodline. I see two notable individuals were born as his descendants. One was Leonardo da Vinci, who was born in 1452 and passed away in 1519. The other, as I mentioned, was Galileo Galilei, who was born in 1564 and died in 1642.”

Lisa’s listened intently and swiftly transcribed all the information, concluding just a few seconds after Seraph’s brief pause. She closed her eyes once more, allowing her memory to process the information. “There’s more,” she recalled. “Not from Luke, but from Jon this time. They clearly have distinct paths ahead, but it’s unclear where Jon’s journey will lead or if the Human Race is affected by his DNA.”

“Yes, Seraph, I am aware of that.”

“Let’s get back to Luke, after Galileo,” Seraph hummed. “His lineage traces forward in time to a man born in 1856 who will die in 1943. His name is Nikola Tesla, the other creator of the ET Machine. Seems both makers are connected to cosmic DNA, how interesting. I assume you knew that, Lisa. However, there’s another man born much later with Luke’s half DNA through Tesla, but I can’t make that backward connection to the actual source. Interestingly, Tesla’s DNA continues beyond his death even though he did not get married!”

“Yes, I knew that.”

Seraph paused, then refocused her mind to search back further into the past. “I see there’s another connected to Tesla before he was born, but the connection is unclear. I also can’t see the name of the future descendant; it’s a human being connected to Tesla. It seems like his DNA is crisscrossed too

much for me to decipher, or something else is blocking it. I wonder why that is? Perhaps I just need to concentrate harder; maybe I can see the connection. I see a face and a destiny, but there's something uncannily striking about it..." Seraph's expression scrunched in worry as she thought about how to dig into her memory connections. "I don't think I can get through these connections. I'm tired, and it's all wickedly tangled DNA."

"Seraph!" Lisa yelled out.

Seraph was startled awake, feeling a wave of exhaustion wash over her. "That was tiring," she said, sitting up properly and blinking away her confusion. "I'm sorry; I didn't realize how much it drained me. It looks like we still have a few outstanding connectors to link up."

Lisa touched Seraph's arm gently. 'We'll finish later. For now, we've uncovered more than enough to shake history.' Seraph exhaled, nodding, though unease lingered in her eyes.

Chapter 20

Adam found himself alone with Luke, something that hasn't happen in quite a while. The air between them was thick with unspoken history, and Adam knew this was his chance to plant a seed.

“You know, Luke, I’ve been overseeing the archives for so long that I can’t recall a time when I wasn’t involved.”

Luke was astounded. “You oversee it, huh? That explains why you were always away. Do you know about the rare books held there?” Luke nodded slowly, absorbing the information. “So, who manages the archives when you’re away?” he asked.

“I created a virtual assistant who is permanently available,” he replied. “She diligently monitors the archives and assists Controllers in finding the material they need for their research. Her capabilities are so exceptional that I hardly need to be present anymore.” Adam adopted a thoughtful expression. “Yes, I do have knowledge of the rare archives held there. Some time back, I discovered a book in the archives. It was a small book titled ‘*Controlling Existence*.’ It appeared quite old, with only a few dozen pages and no author listed.”

“An intriguing title for a book,” Luke remarked. “‘*Controlling Existence*.’ Was it informative?”

Adam appeared to be struggling with how to act and to be nonchalant, but ultimately shook his head. “To be honest, I

don't recall much of it. I checked it out and it's now in my personal library. It only mentioned how to merge forces to achieve extreme compression in space."

"I understand..."

Adam waited for any further questions about the book. He was aware that a book titled *Controlling Existence* would be of significant interest to Damian's cause, and Adam was determined to get to Damian via Luke by means of the book.

"It's been great catching up, Adam sighed, finishing his drink. "But I have to go now. I have some duties to attend to. Would you like to continue this conversation some other time?"

Luke offered a smile. "Sure, we can catch up another time.

Adam, in a bold move, added one more comment for Luke to ponder before he left. "Just one more thing, Luke. Have you heard about the two humans from Earth who designed an instant transport system? Their names are Einstein and Tesla. They documented their invention many human years ago and called it the ET Machine. It's now operational; in fact, it brought them back to life. Their accomplishments are truly remarkable. I have immense admiration for their profound understanding of the Cosmos, Universes, Space, and Dark Energy."

Luke was silent for a moment before he just said, "That's sounds very interesting, Adam."

Adam, sensing the lack of enthusiasm, paused briefly before continuing. "I believe in the human race," he declared with unwavering conviction. "I want to see them succeed," he tilted his head. "What are your thoughts on the Human Race, Luke?"

“The human race holds no significance for me,” he replied simply. “They are disposable, and their time is drawing to a close. If they manage to surpass the deadline, fine; if not, the Universe won’t miss them. I don’t truly care, and I am uncertain whether it will make a substantial difference in the long run. I doubt they will emerge victorious in the race. Time is running out for them. Thank you for chatting with me, Adam.”

“See you around, Luke.”

“It’s Damian I must see, and a single call will get me in,” Adam thinks to himself. After waiting a long while to let Luke spread the news, Adam used his holographic viewer on his desk. He sent a call out to Damian. The call was picked up almost instantly.

Chapter 21

Damian gestured for Luke to enter, rounding the desk to clasp his hand appreciatively. “Thanks for coming,” he said with gratitude. “I understand traveling to the edges of your universe for a planet more or less in the middle of nowhere is a tad difficult, but you can’t get privacy like this anywhere else, am I right?”

“I’m glad we have a remote safe haven. There are lots of prying eyes into what you and I are doing,” Luke hummed, taking a seat just as Damian was doing the same. “So, I’m assuming we have all the steps in place to merge the Dark and Lit universes.”

The holographic display device before them suddenly came alive with vivid imagery of notes and theoretical formulas. “So, Luke, with the new knowledge I’ve gained from the Book Controlling Existence and from Celeste’s logbook, this has helped refine and verify the correct steps to initiate the grand event in the Cosmos— we’re ready for the Cosmic Genesis. A rebirth not seen in eons.” Damian turned away from the display, grinning at Luke. “I must admit, if it weren’t for that innocent virtual librarian who unveiled a single step of hidden information, we wouldn’t be ready to kick this off today. He couldn’t help but shake Luke’s arm in excitement. “I must express my gratitude for obtaining the book from Adam’s shelf—a truly remarkable discovery!”

Damian waved his right hand at the hologram, urging it to transform into a chart displaying a series of definitions.

“Behold this?” the young prodigy unveiled. “The Librarian shared this information; it originates from the chapter titled ‘*Controlling Existence*.’ The chart illustrates the various phases or states of Existence within the Cosmos, presented in a sequential order. It also provides insights into the Entities that exist in Space. When I was much younger, my initial experiment test was successful; I successfully created Nonexistence in Space. However, it was limited to a restricted local area of the cosmos, as Adam had mentioned in our recent conversation. I generated a massive black hole that subsequently exploded and gave birth to the Lit Universe, along with the incompetent human race that has come to be. The process lacked the appropriate energy particles.”

“For total nonexistence to be created, you need the necessary elements, some of which only exist in a Lit Universe,” Luke surmised, earning a pat on the back.

“Exactly! The space compression I conducted at a young age failed to undo the immense gravitational pull of dark energy within space, so it could not engulf everything from everywhere. The way I see it now, space needs to go in reverse. The forward motion or expansion of space needs to go backwards, very fast. So, I have incorporated a slingshot effect to make the universes break away from each other and then reverse back into each other. Albeit very fast. I think it will work.”

Luke nodded, expressionless. “And it left the Lit Universe in its wake.”

“Mmmhmm, if not for my error, a Lit universe wouldn’t exist, and without it, we wouldn’t have the ability to recreate

Existence by means of Nonexistence. He chuckled. "It's funny how that works out, isn't it? The CoS managed to construct a Dark Universe from Twilight Space by executing a compression process akin to mine, but that's as far as he could go. However, with this new Universe-merging process, the outcome should be vastly different." He stood up from his seat, brimming with excitement.

Damian's grin widened. "So, we'll drive our two universes apart by altering the vacuum of space within and around them. And we will change the amount of available dark energy in each universe, so the pulling power it has will be significantly less. This will enable us to move space outwardly away from each other, akin to the slingshot effect. However, before we can proceed, we must initiate compression within the galaxies of the Lit universe to create a single black hole. Right now, there are billions of little ones, internal to the galaxies. Once we have two exceptionally large black holes, they must collide. Breaking gravity by altering dark energy is the key to this entire process. Regardless, this will generate the amplified gravitational velocity necessary for the complete and rapid merging of our two supermassive black holes in each universe. The outcome, Luke, will be immense compression so dense that all the other matter in the cosmos will be drawn in and then ultimately compressed in a similar manner to a single sphere in a single location. The final step will lead to the complete annihilation of everything, followed by a complete rebirth of entity space!"

Luke remained silent, observing Damian intently and nodding in agreement when necessary. His arms were crossed, indicating his reserved demeanor. Unlike usual conversations, this one felt more unsettling.

“So, Luke, we’re returning to our respective universes and initiating the dark energy compression process I just reviewed. This needs to occur across multiple black holes,” Damian explained.

“There was a long pause before Damian turned to look at Luke. Grin wide, hair wild, coat hanging loose—he looked less like a leader and more like a madman who believed the cosmos was clay in his hands. “So! Shall we begin?”

Luke blinked in surprise. “As in now?”

Damian shrugged. “I don’t see why not. It shouldn’t take too long. We simply need to disseminate the seeds of compression across the vast expanse of space. Once we are finished, let’s meet back here to witness the process unfold before our eyes.”

Luke and Damian had returned to his rogue planet. Damian pulled up a live data feed from his control room, detailing the core stats and searching for any anomalies that might indicate something was wrong.

Damian cackled. “Yes, let us witness the dawn of a new era in the cosmos.” As he smirked, he relaxed in his chair, his eyes fixed on the data feed that streamed in at an alarming pace. “It won’t be long now.”

However, as time passed, an unexpected amount of nothingness persisted on the screen. Damian’s brow furrowed in confusion, a subtle fear creeping into his mind. Had he overlooked something crucial? He tried to shake off his doubts, placing his faith in his own work.

Chapter 22

The Earth year is 2030. In a vast control room, SpaceX's Program Director stood before a talented group of scientists, all focused on a common goal. Their esteemed guests, Einstein and Tesla, had also joined them. They were finally adjusted from their cryogenic sleep.

"Greetings, everyone," Meredith said warmly. "A special welcome to Mr. Einstein and Mr. Tesla, joining us for their very first team meeting. I hope you two are feeling well. I believe my colleagues have shared our cosmic discovery with you. Through meticulous observation with the new Cosmic Scope, there is something extraordinary out there—a doorway in deep space, a portal that may lead to another world."

"If I may ask, Nikola inquired, could you please share the general consensus among your colleagues gathered here today regarding the nature of this doorway and the subsequent steps to validate it?"

"That's an excellent question, believe what we are witnessing is an invitation. Why else would there be a door of some kind? We all think it's specifically designed as a transportation landing spot. It clearly appears to be a portal leading to something else."

"Let's power up the ET Machine and try out the new communications mode," Nikola added. "I would love to see my Super Coil and the machine in operation."

“Yes, of course, that’s precisely what we’re here to discuss today. As we all know, the machine is capable of establishing a direct transport line between any two points anywhere in the universe, and possibly even beyond. And we’ve proven that it can send objects over the beam, as evidenced by the presence of these two men here today. The other supervisors and I have decided that sending a communication message first is the appropriate course of action. It would also be the safest option, as we genuinely don’t know if what lies at or behind this opening is friendly or hostile.”

Ultimately, Einstein who had assumed the unspoken roles of humanity’s representatives, proposed a simple message:

“This is the Federation of Earth Science. We seek contact. Please acknowledge.”

“That sounds like the perfect first intergalactic message.” M responded. The message was swiftly entered and sent; the team members eagerly watched the screen for a response.

Meanwhile, Damian was dialed into the Cosmos, watching for his space compression signals to show up. He happened to be viewing the location of the ET Machine on his viewer. He began tapping his fingers, grimacing in concentration.

“I can’t allow those messages to be received,” he whispered to Luke. “If the Human Race manages to contact the Portal before my space compression reaches a critical point where it can’t be halted, it could potentially sway the CoS’s decision regarding his replacement, and that could change things

radically. To think that all my work could be undone by some insignificant humans..." He sighed, closing his eyes.

"I have to hand it to Adam. Had he not mentioned the humans and their extraterrestrial machine during their last conversation, I would not have known how fast those humans were rapidly advancing. Their new technology now poses a threat. I did not see that coming. If David becomes the CoS, I'll be exiled," he whispered with a sigh. "That would be unfortunate." Despite all this, Damian returned to his confident demeanor while watching his compression process continue. "Thankfully, I have a way to block those messages," he said with a happy hum.

"I see your intentions, Damian," Seraph thought to herself, observing from a distance. "Are you attempting to alter the course of the Human Race? Such actions are prohibited during the race, especially from you. It won't be as simple as you think to change this, as I possess methods to counter your efforts. I will ensure that those messages reach their intended destination safely. You need to leave the human race alone."

SpaceX engineers engaged in a discussion after receiving an automated message from the space portal in response to their message. The response read: *'Come forward. We have prepared an atmosphere suitable for your species.'*

Einstein said to the team of engineers after receiving the message, "We should go. It's our invention, and besides, no one even knows we're back from the dead. Nobody will miss us."

Meredith joined the discussion, affirming, “Yes, it is your invention, Albert, and you two are the best suited for this mission. The ET Machine is well-tested, and after soliciting our team members, most of the engineers concurred that you and Nikola should embark on a journey to the Portal and explore this virtually unknown region of space. Without any opposition, Einstein and Tesla eagerly agreed. The meeting continued and focused on how to prepare for their trip. It was the very next day after their farewells that they entered the transporter area together.”

“Good luck, fellas,” Meredith said. “Empower!”

Einstein and Tesla vanished from the room and reappeared at the Portal door’s entrance in a blink. After being beamed across the cosmos almost instantly, they reappeared and exchanged disbelieving glances. From SpaceX headquarters on Earth, the two men were confirmed as having arrived intact at the portal door.

“I suppose it works. I see you, Albert. What a wondrous sight. I can breathe—how delightful is that!”

“Should we knock on the door or just open it?”

“What’s the worst that could happen? They might send us back?”

“Well, they could send us to Hell, though I doubt it—we’ve done nothing wrong. Or perhaps into oblivion, though truthfully, that’s where we already exist. Perhaps we’ll be served for lunch. We could be on the menu today—‘Roasted Men.’ Hmmm, or perhaps it’s ET on a Stick, skewered man, not a pleasant thought. Okay, there is no time for sick commentary; we need to remain positive. But do you have any significant sins you’d like to confess to me? Now would be an opportune time, Nik?”

“No, not really, but there were moments when I harbored thoughts of killing Edison. So, they could kill us, but we were already essentially dead anyway. I’m going to knock on the door.”

“Let’s do it together. The knocker looks quite heavy.” Together, they grasp the door knocker and manage to raise it. It drops with a single loud bang, and the door slowly opens.

“Come on in, we knew you were coming and we’re waiting for you.” David and Celeste are sitting in two chairs, looking at the door.

“Mr. Einstein and Mr. Tesla, I presume? Congratulations on being the first to reach the Cosmic Portal. Heaven’s Gate!” David says. “This is the first time we’ve ever had other living beings arrive here and use this door. In fact, it’s the first time the door knocker has been used. It makes such a strange sound.” David remarks to the two men.

“We welcome you both to the Old Universe, the first universe. That’s a remarkable machine you’ve created. And you may not know this, but since you’re the first to reach the portal, you’ve won the race.”

Tesla, feeling bold, asked, “What race?”

Celeste replied, “The Human Race, silly. You see, the human race was in a race, and you were about to become extinct because the Reset Clock was approaching zero. This clock serves two purposes. Firstly, it ensures that the Controllers take action in the Cosmos. Alternatively, it prevents the Controller from getting bored by watching the same species for eons. Secondly, this clock ensures that life resets without prejudice. It is a governing rule in the Cosmos. Life or existence must be reset periodically. Darkness must revert to light, and light must return to darkness occasionally.

These events can lead to complete existence changes, but that's rare. Perhaps we will revisit this again."

David adds, "So, your human race, on the planet Earth you came from, was on a race against a clock. The good news is you won the race, and Celeste and I won. And I will now become the new Controller for our given domain space, which now includes three universes. You arrived from the Lit Universe of which you both lived in, or did live in, and that is good news for the human race."

"Apologies if this sounds absurd, but your mere existence was at stake. When I say your existence, I mean the entire human race, encompassing every planet, galaxy, and universe, but only within your domain. Your entire existence would have been eliminated," Celeste explained.

"You see, there are many planets and more than one human race. All the species on those planets were engaged in a race against the Reset Clock. If your species reached this door within the clock period, a reprieve will be granted," David continued.

"We do not control other factors that could end your existence at a local level, such as self-inflicted weapons, bombs, wars, plagues, or depleting the planet's resources," David interrupted Celeste.

"So, the bottom line is, congratulations on making it! We welcome you both to stay here in the Cosmos with us forever, kind of, where you can assist us in the sciences and perhaps even advance your machine. You'll live for a long time. So, how does that sound?"

Einstein and Tesla stood frozen in shock. Tesla clears his throat and asks, "The Bet. To be clear, you mean you were

betting on the Human Race, right? When did all this setup happen?”

David and Celeste exchanged glances, and Celeste suggested they both deserved a more detailed explanation.

“Let me transfer the history to you both, so you can have a memory of the events that led to this situation. To facilitate your understanding. Meanwhile, take a moment to look around; living in the Cosmos is remarkably similar to your world.”

“By the way, we’re delighted that the statue of David and the portrait of Mona Lisa have endured so well and continue to be cherished by humanity. Do you notice the resemblance to us? Our probes, D2 and C2, affectionately known as Lisa, played a commendable role in posing for those two exceptional artists. We can delve deeper into why they were created at another time.”