

PROJECT

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Chapter 1
THE OFFER

Dr. Collins walked into the auditorium classroom where a dozen peer professors were waiting to evaluate his request for new project funding. Six whiteboards filled with numbers, equations, and diagrams, stood behind him as he approached the podium. Few could understand the complex mathematical equations displayed on the boards other than Dr. Collins. His audience was patiently waiting for him to begin his presentation.

"Thank you all for giving up your Saturday morning to hear my proposal. I will try to make this brief," Dr. Collins began. "As many of you know, I recently submitted a few white papers that contain some proposed advancements in mathematical equations that help explain my theories and ideas. I've recently had a breakthrough in understanding the relationship between our three-dimensional world and other quantum theories that tap into other dimensions. If my theory is correct, we will soon be able to connect to other dimensions by setting up a modularization platform, which essentially means we will be able to transport people and equipment instantly anywhere in the world. Testing this theory will require an expansion of our current lab and the creation of specialized equipment."

"It will require that I take math to the next level and many of the symbols are of my own creation to help explain our recent discoveries at a quantum level. One of the breakthroughs we find especially exciting is in the field of quantum mechanics, and more particularly, spatial phasing. To describe this, imagine a room where you are aware of the height, depth, and width of the room. With spatial phasing, we are able to expand the physical dimensions of a three-

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dimensional room to be larger than the outside dimensions of the structure. To put it simply, we are able to create a room that is larger on the inside than it is on the outside. We have had some success with small experiments, but quickly ran out of computing power, and electrical power in general. We will need much more of both to take our research to the next level.”

One of the tenured professors on the project committee asked, “What kind of computing power are you looking for?”

Dr. Collins replied, “we will need about thirty percent capacity of a supercomputer to begin with, but over time, our needs will expand to about ninety percent utilization.”

The tenured professor replied, “You do realize that those things aren’t cheap. They could run the university between one-hundred and three-hundred million dollars, plus maintenance costs.”

“The purpose of this meeting is not to review the costs associated with this proposal. I have included cost breakdowns in the packets you received at the beginning of this meeting along with proforma revenue streams to show how the university will recoup its costs. My focus today is on the technical aspects of this proposal and to illustrate the potential for advancing technologies available to us today.”

Another professor on the project committee posed another question and said, “So, speaking of the more technical aspects of your proposal, how much electricity will this new lab require?”

Dr. Collins thought carefully before answering the question, “about 6500 mega-joules, but this could be offset to some degree with built-in generators that will cover more than half of that requirement. There are also opportunities to develop solar panels that will make up the other half of our electrical needs without requiring a major footprint of solar panels. This is a major advancement over the current technology.

“We can harness the energy of the sun and all the energy around us to achieve new heights of quantum theory, as well as provide advancements in how we produce energy around the world, but on the other hand, it could also produce the most powerful

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weapons ever known to man. These are not the kinds of advancements I would like to share, so I would like to restrict my comments to the more positive aspects of my research."

One of his peer professors interjected a question to Dr. Collins, "The idea that we could understand at a fundamental level how atoms bond together or separate has been something scientists have only theorized. Are you saying you have a theory that describes how to dissolve the bond mechanism between atoms through modulated light energy?"

"That's correct", replied Dr. Collins, "But I believe my theory on electromagnetic diffusion provides the foundations of being able to separate atoms at the molecular level. This means that we have found a way to point a beam of light that has been modified by an electrofram inhibitor (EFI) at an object, and by modulating the frequency, we can cause the atoms of an object to separate at the molecular level. So far, we have been successful at demolecularizing a few solid rocks about 10 inches in diameter. Early experiments have shown that when we turn off the machines, the atoms dissipate, and the object is reduced to powder leaving us far less mass than the original object. We don't fully understand the effects of the demolecularizer just yet."

Dr. Ellwood, a fellow professor and colleague, asked another question. "Dr. Collins, if the atoms are separated and left without their bonds, would the mass of the object still be there? What happens to the energy the atoms are giving off? Would this affect the area surrounding the demolecularization?"

Dr. Collins replied, "We are still early in our stages of experimentation and considerable research needs to be conducted before we have a definitive answer to these questions, but I feel, with the proper funding, we can make considerable progress. And, we hardly have the math to explain what is occurring. That is what I am trying to describe through all these equations you see behind me. It requires that I take math to the next level and many of the symbols are of my own creation to help explain our recent discoveries at a quantum level.

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“That is why I am appearing before you today requesting a grant of thirty million dollars. It will allow me to continue my research, hire the people I need, build the necessary equipment, and conduct the experiments needed to help us better understand these new principles of science and what they mean for the future of man.”

Dr. Stoddard, the senior tenured professor and the head of the project committee, spoke up and said, "That kind of funding is hard to come by, and certainly not for a single project; and frankly, this is not the place one would come for that level of funding. If we were to push this forward on a university level, other professors would have to give up their piece of the project-pie to fund your project, as promising as it may be. Without more proof that you can deliver at a commercial level, the university will likely say no. You may be able to get one or two million dollars to keep you going until you show marketable results, but that is the best you will likely receive at this stage in your research. Besides, you're very young and have plenty of time to work these things out. How old did you say you are?" he said with a slight grin.

Dr. Collins replied looking annoyed at the insinuation, “You know very well how old I am, Dr. Stoddard. You asked me that same question last year when you signed off on my second doctorate degree in electrical engineering.”

“Oh yes. That’s right,” said Dr. Stoddard. Well, Let's meet again next year and see how much progress you have made. You have a brilliant mind, and we look forward to seeing what else you come up with. Whatever it is, I'm sure it will be entertaining." The other professors broke out in a round of laughter at Dr. Stoddard's remarks, as they stood up with Dr. Stoddard and began to leave the meeting.

Dr. Collins replied, "Thank you for your time," in a quiet voice, as if speaking to no one. He stood at the podium as he watched everyone leave him standing alone in the large classroom. He slowly began to pack up his papers and wipe down his whiteboards. As everyone was leaving, Dr. Collins walked slowly down the hall to his office feeling dejected. He had hoped that he could convince his fellow professors of his vision and the potential it had for humanity, but the reality was that most of the older professors did not understand

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his work and felt that the time and effort spent on such endeavors would be better spent elsewhere. They didn't see the possibilities that he did and the greatness that humanity could achieve, and the fact that his theory was not widely understood was an indication that they would not fund his projects.

Dr. Collins sat in his office chair behind an old wooden desk with a small lamp with the shade pointing down at a stack of papers on his desk. He was lost in thought, wondering how he could have made a better presentation, thinking that if only he had organized his material better, he would have been able to convince them of the value of his work. While he was thinking about his presentation, a man knocked at his open office door and said, "Dr. Collins, may I come in?"

"Who are you?" said Dr. Collins as the man walked toward his desk and sat in a chair across from him.

"My name is Charles Coen. That was quite a presentation you just made to those dinosaurs out there. You do realize you're talking about twenty feet above their heads, right?"

"That doesn't tell me who you are," said Dr. Collins. "You're not with the university, are you?"

"No, I represent a group of private investors who are looking to fund the next big thing, typically in the way of new advanced technologies. I think it's time you spread your wings and put the full force of your gifted intellect to work where it will really be appreciated and valued. We already have a lab set up for you, along with nearly unlimited funding for staff and equipment that I believe will knock your socks off. Currently, we have about thirty researchers and technicians working at this facility, and who are coming up with some amazing things on their own, but we need someone to point them in the right direction. Interested?"

"Where did you say this facility is?"

"It's in Virginia. Here is a plane ticket that leaves early tomorrow morning, and arrangements have been made for your hotel." Mr. Coen handed him a packet of information. "You'll also find a

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signing bonus in that packet if you like what you see.” The man stood up and extended his hand across the desk towards Dr. Collins. As they shook hands, Mr. Coen said, "Will I be seeing you tomorrow?"

Dr. Collins hardly knew what to say. He was still looking stunned as he stared at the check for \$150,000 in the packet. Then, he said slowly, "Well, I am curious. I...I suppose I'll see you tomorrow."

"Good. I'll send a car to pick you up at the airport. Thank you for seeing me. Good day."

Dr. Collins slowly sat down in his chair wondering what had just happened and thinking to himself, could this be real? Anthony didn't want a repeat of what happened about six months ago when the DOD came knocking offering to have him create weapons for them. He was dead set against using his technology for weaponry if he could help it. He understood very well that if his technology got into the wrong hands, it could be used to offset the balance of power where one country or organization could dominate all others and impose their will throughout the world. He would have no part of it. He believed that his intellect was a gift and was to be used for the betterment of mankind, not to allow bullies to get the upper hand at the expense of everyone else. Anthony was certain that there was no such thing as goodwill, fair play, or 'for the good of mankind' when it came to the DOD, CIA, or NSA.

Six months ago, there was a break-in at his lab and his university office where someone had tampered with his computer and taken a bunch of handwritten notes from a locked cabinet. That was just after his encounter with the DOD where he told them to forget it for the third time. The last time they came knocking, they presented him with a signing bonus of one million dollars, to which Anthony threw a chair at the guy and ran him out of his lab.

Anthony didn't have a problem with working for private industry, he just didn't want to be using his talent to make weapons. What he had discovered was so much better than that. It deserved to be used to enhance people's lives, not destroy them at a more horrific rate than anything that had been developed before. He knew people would say that he was young and naïve, but he wasn't buying into any of that. There's got to be another way to develop my technology

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without being strong-armed by the military. So perhaps this Mr. Coen guy was his answer, Anthony thought. Let's go see what he's got.

Chapter 2

NEW FISH ON THE LINE

Agent Coen of the CIA stepped into his boss's office to give a report. "What do you have?" said the man behind the desk. He had dark hair, and wore a dark suit, and glasses. He was in his fifties with graying temples.

"I think I've found something. There's a twenty-year-old kid with two doctorate degrees in physics and engineering teaching at Columbia University. He says he has a number of scientific breakthroughs that might be something we could steer our way. He is looking for more funding through the university, but they think he's a flash in the pan. The other tenured professors are fighting him about giving up their share of funding for new projects, so I think we may be able to snag this one for ourselves. He claims that if he had the funding, he could develop portals that would transport people, goods, or equipment instantly anywhere in the world, and turn light into energy that could light a whole city, or be used as the most powerful weapon the world has ever known." That last statement caught his attention as he leaned forward in his chair.

"How'd you find this guy?"

"One of my contacts at Columbia called me and said it may be worth my while to attend a lecture by a young professor by the name of Anthony Collins about some new math he created and his theories about the possible advancement of new technologies."

"Does he know who we are?"

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“No. All he knows is that we are a group of investors interested in helping him to commercialize his technologies. I told him that if he was interested, the group of investors I represent would provide nearly unlimited funding to help him set up his own lab and he would run the show.”

“What’s his history?”

“He started his college career at age twelve and completed his second doctorate at nineteen. The stuff he was showing on several whiteboards is what he calls new math and is beyond anything we’ve seen before. It appears to be the math he created to explain his new theories. Some of his colleagues appeared to agree with him, while others appeared to be jealous of this young punk coming to steal their thunder. No family to speak of. Raised by his aunt in a small town outside of Chicago.”

“After the meeting,” Mr. Coen continued, “I followed him back to his office and introduced myself and presented him with my card and I told him I represent a group of investors who are looking for the next big thing in tech and would like to offer him our lab and a nearly unlimited budget to help bring his ideas to fruition. I’m meeting with him tomorrow to introduce him to the lab and show him around. We should be able to have him working with us within a month or so without raising his suspicions.”

“Sounds good. Keep me informed of his progress, and I’ll talk to the Department of Defense to let them know we may have a new fish on the line.”

Chapter 3

GENERAL OPERATIONS

Dr. Anthony Collins was settling into his new home in Virginia where he was now working at ECL Labs Inc. His home was only five miles from the lab where he was overseeing a number of projects. They started out with seven separate projects under development by the team of scientists prior to his arrival and within eleven months, these quickly expanded to thirty-six projects, many of which were about to be handed off to the R & D and marketing teams to bring to market. These inventions ranged from advances in life-saving medical equipment, to equipment for scientific analysis that would help prove his theories related to spatial phasing technologies. Dr. Collins had expanded his staff from 30 scientists and support staff to over 105 people all assigned to different projects or aspects within a project.

As Dr. Collins drove his 7-Series BMW past the guard station in front of his lab, he noticed a couple of black darkly tinted SUVs parked in the guest parking in front of the building. As he scanned his badge to walk into the building, he asked Gerald, the guard at the front desk, “Who do those SUVs belong to?”

“I don’t know,” he replied, “but four military-looking guys met Mr. Coen at the front door about an hour ago and it looked like he walked them back to his office. Should I contact Mr. Coen for you?”

“No Gerald, that’s fine. I have a meeting I need to get to. I will meet up with Mr. Coen later in the day.” It wasn’t uncommon for Mr. Coen to bring existing and potential investors into the lab to give them a tour and show them around. Mr. Coen served as the operations manager, while Dr. Collins managed the lab, its project, and

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technicians. Anthony liked it that way so he didn't have to deal with HR, lawyers, and the myriad of regulatory compliance requirements that always seemed to distract him from getting down to the important work they were doing. *Afterall, isn't that why we are all here?* He thought.

Anthony stood at the front desk by the entryway of the lab in his tailor-made blue suit and tie and thought about how he had come to know Mr. Coen about eleven months earlier in his office at Columbia University. Mr. Coen had assured him from the beginning that he would have full autonomy to run the lab as he saw fit as long as they were able to bring a couple of new products to market each year. Anthony thought it was strange that this was the first time he had seen Mr. Coen meet with the military. He wondered what interest the military would have in the projects they were developing.

Steven Coen, special agent for the CIA, spoke to the group of U.S. generals and other officers who sat across from his desk in a moderately large office equipped with a couch, a bar, and a large-screen TV. To the right of the desk were large windows that provided a lovely view of a man-made lake surrounded by expensive homes and a golf course. Mr. Coen stood up and looked out the window at the beautiful lake surrounding the area. He said, "Gentlemen, our operation has just been activated. We've only been at this for less than a year and you're already trying to strong-arm this kid into developing weapons. We need time to allow things to develop naturally. Now is not the time to put a boot up his ass, which will only serve to scare off our most valuable asset. If we finesse this right, we'll get everything we ever wanted and much more, but we have to be patient."

Three-star General Marshall replied, "Yes, and we have been patient, but we need additional assurances that the \$1.3 billion we put into this operation so far will generate the promised results. I am under tremendous pressure to make sure this operation is successful at capturing the data we need to produce the 'most powerful weapon known to man' as your Mr. Collins put it. Is your young Dr. Collins going to give us what we paid for?"

"Yes. Without a doubt," assured Mr. Coen. "We have surrounded him with a number of handlers who are well-trained to

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know what questions to ask to get him to provide us with the data we need. As soon as he does that, we won't need him anymore. Our own in-house team of scientists, as well as other scientists we have stationed around the world, will use his data and equations to do what needs to be done and then we will dispose of the eccentric and naive Dr. Collins. Rest assured that we have this operation under control. We have already tried the direct approach to getting him to develop his theory of light energy to the point where it could be weaponized, but he has always stopped short, saying that the world is not ready for it yet. I have formulated a plan that I believe will successfully get it out of him. We already have many of his equations, which our scientists say are spot on. Now, all we need is the data, but we need him to show us how to convert light into phase energy. Every attempt we have made on our own has destroyed the equipment we are using. I know he can do it. Just give us time. And besides, if we just can't get him to cooperate, we have another lab offshore where we will put him in a hole, and we will make the rest of his life so miserable, that he will beg us to deliver what we need."

"I hope you're right," said General Marshall. "Those I report to require additional assurances that we are getting a return on our investment. If we don't start seeing some results soon, we will be forced to motivate Dr. Collins more directly." General Marshall and his associates stood, left the room, walked through the front doors of the building, got in their black SUVs, and drove away.

Anthony watched the generals leave as he looked out the window of his office on the sixth floor and thought, *They sure look like they own the place. I sure would have liked to have been a fly on the wall. Why is it that military generals always make my stomach turn?*

Chapter 4
SECRET MEETINGS

Anthony arrived at the office about an hour earlier than usual to go over test results on data that had been running all night on the supercomputer. As Anthony left the elevators on the way to his office, he saw Mr. Coen leaving a meeting in the main conference room with a group of scientists from his team. *What are they meeting about, he thought, and why wasn't I invited?* As he approached the conference room where the meeting was held, he asked Mr. Coen, "What was that all about?"

Mr. Coen looked a little flushed and said, "Oh, that was nothing. I was just gathering data for a new project I am making a bid on to see if we have the capacity to expand our project base. I was going to draw up the numbers and send it over to you later today."

"What kind of project?" Anthony asked. "Does this have anything to do with the military guys who were here yesterday?"

"Yes, actually. It is," answered Mr. Coen, recovering quickly. "They were here asking if we could help them develop computer chips that would diffract plasma energy so it could be controlled more effectively. Their attempts so far have failed, and they are asking for our help. I asked them for their data and the designs that have failed so far so we could fully understand how we could help them. What do you think?"

"I'd be happy to look at their data," said Anthony. "That type of computer chip will require some special designs, and we'll have to modify our equipment to create it if it's what I think it is. I believe it

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will push the envelope of our capabilities by quite a bit. However, don't you think I should have been included in this meeting with my staff? It seems odd that you would hold meetings at six thirty in the morning before most of us arrive for the day."

"Oh, I know, but I know how busy you are, and I didn't want to bother you until I had a more definitive plan of what we would require to bid on this project."

"It could be very lucrative for us," continued Mr. Coen, "so I wanted to get all the facts before sending you the proposal. You understand?" Mr. Coen smiled and shook Anthony's hand.

"Alright, but next time, please include me in the invite for any and all meetings that involve my staff."

"Absolutely. My bad," said Mr. Coen, as he waved his hand to the side. "I will certainly do that."

Anthony smiled and said, "Wonderful. Have a nice day," and walked down the hall toward the elevator that led to his office.

Anthony had an uneasy feeling that he wasn't being told the whole story by Mr. Coen. He asked a couple of his staff scientists what the meeting with Mr. Coen was about, and they gave the exact same answer: "Something to do with the development of computer chips for the military," they said.

People who have not been coached on what to say, he thought, tend to provide different answers or even slight variations in their replies. Not these guys. Hmm, strange. Well, it's probably nothing.

Anthony entered his office and sat down in his tall-back leather chair behind his desk. He looked down at the keyboard on his desk in front of his laptop and noticed it was slightly crooked. He was sure he didn't leave it that way. He always pushes his chair in flush with his desk before leaving for the day and would never leave his keyboard crooked. It was just a thing he always did. His keyboard was only slightly off, but enough for him to know something was up.

Someone's been in my office after hours and sat at my desk, he thought. What were they looking for? He looked around the room to see if anything else was disturbed. He got up from his chair and

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walked briefly around his spacious office. He didn't notice anything else. *But that doesn't mean they didn't touch anything else*, he thought. *If it was technical support, they would have notified me of any updates, and they don't need to visit my office for that. So what was so important that they needed to break into my office to look at my computer? With all the high security measures we've taken, it is hard for me to imagine this wasn't intentional. I use my badge to get in the building, again when I go up the elevator to the sixth floor, and again to open the door to my office. Somebody has some serious clearance, or they are very good at bypassing our security. Only two people have total access to all areas of the lab: me, and Mr. Coen. No one else has direct access to my office when I'm not here. I change the scan code to my badge every month. If they are from the outside, that would take some serious technical skills and equipment to bypass my office door, unless it was Mr. Coen who gave them access. I wonder if he would be so devious?* Anthony wanted answers right now, but he thought to himself, *I have to be patient. I can't afford to tip them off and show that I'm aware they're watching me.*

During his lunch, Anthony left the office and drove about four miles to the nearest electronics store. He purchased the best electronic bug detector they had along with two nine-volt batteries, some black electrical tape, and some wiring. He asked the store manager if they had a back room where they fix damaged or scratched items to make them ready for resale. The store manager replied, "We do have a back room. What do you need?"

"After I make this purchase, I need to borrow your back room for a few minutes, along with a few small tools to make some modifications to my little device here. It won't take long."

The store manager said, "It's against store policy to let customers in the back room."

Anthony pulled out five one-hundred-dollar bills, folded them, and laid them on the counter. "I promise it won't take long."

The store manager looked around to see if anyone was watching him. He swept the bills off the counter and placed them beside the register, then gently eased them into his pocket. The store manager completed the sale and said, "Follow me."

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Anthony grabbed the sack containing the scanner and his receipt and followed the manager into the back room. The manager showed him a work bench and a line of small tools against the wall. The manager said, “If anyone asks what you’re doing here, tell them you’re a vendor working on a returned item.”

Anthony replied, “Got it.” He then went to work on the scanner. He pulled off the back, cut a couple of the wires, and soldered two additional wires together. He then rummaged around the desk drawer and found what he was looking for, a small piece of copper plating he could strip from another device and solder it in place. Once he had all the pieces soldered to the plate, he attached the extra batteries and wrapped the device in black tape to secure everything. He turned on the device and it worked perfectly. It was now about five times more sensitive at detecting any kind of camera or listening device than the stock brand, even if hidden behind a wall or ceramic toilet with a range of about fifteen to twenty feet.

Anthony picked up some lunch on his way back to the office. He had a puzzle to solve, and he now had the right tools to solve it. He parked in his reserved parking stall and made his way up to his office on the sixth floor. He scanned his badge at his office door and walked inside. The first thing he wanted to do was to scan his office for bugs. He turned on the scanner while it was still in the bag so it wouldn’t be picked up by a camera. He then plugged an earbud into one ear so he could hear the scanner beep without alerting anyone who might be listening.

As he entered his office, the lights turned on automatically. He walked over to the windows and pressed a switch that automatically closed his blinds. He then walked back over to the door, closed it, and turned off the lights so he could see the red indicator light through the plastic store bag as he pointed it in different directions throughout the room. If they were watching him through hidden cameras, it would be difficult to identify exactly what he was up to. There was just enough light coming from the hallway to move safely around his office.

When he pointed the scanner at his desk, he could hear the scanner beep through the ear buds. Anthony moved his hand along the underside of his desk and found something stuck to it. He pulled out

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his cell phone and turned it on near the device. There was just enough light from his cellphone to see what was stuck to the bottom of his desk. Now he was really curious because it appeared to be an electronic chip. He didn't touch it but left it where it was. Next, he pointed the scanner at the lamp sitting on his desk. He heard a beep in his ear and saw the indicator light on the scanner light up. He unscrewed the lightbulb, examined the screw base of the bulb, and felt a small wire wrapped around the base connected to a small chip glued to the base.

He crossed the room and sat on his couch. From that vantage point, he pointed his scanner in every direction he could think of, and found, as far as he could tell, four listening devices or cameras spread throughout the room. He realized he couldn't touch them without tipping off those who were spying on him and that he was aware of what they were up to. If Anthony was to have a fighting chance, he would need them to believe that nothing had changed. Anthony walked over and sat in his chair behind his desk and took a moment to think.

If they had taken that much effort to bug my office, surely, they would have planted some kind of spyware on my computer, Anthony thought. He had to get his computer away from his office so he could examine it without it being on camera.

Anthony opened his bottom drawer, pulled out a couple of small screwdrivers and a magnifying glass, and slipped them into his pocket. He then unplugged his laptop and carried it with him as he started to leave his office. As he walked out into the hallway, he looked around and saw that no one seemed to notice him. He then slipped into the restroom, occupied one of the stalls, and locked the door. He sat down, put the laptop face down on his lap, and began to remove the screws.

Using the light from his cellphone, he examined each of the computer chips attached to the mother board. He looked carefully at each component to see if there was anything he didn't recognize.

After a few minutes, he spotted something; an unusual chip. He had built many computers for himself and others over the years, but this didn't seem to make any sense. Using a small screwdriver, he

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pried the chip off the motherboard and examined it. Using the light from his cellphone and the magnifying glass, he looked for identifying numbers of a manufacturer. There weren't any. No identifiable markings at all.

Now that is strange, he thought, because that means this chip was not obtained commercially. Anthony processed this for a moment, then realized. This chip was created at his office, in-house, by his own team, and then planted it in his computer. It was likely recording every keystroke he made, every search, every email. It was very likely that every file was automatically duplicated on the mainframe or transferred somewhere else – or to someone else.

He plugged the chip back into his laptop and put the laptop back together. He rebooted his laptop and looked at his files. He found two files dated last night at 11:51 p.m., password protected. *That's okay, he thought. I don't need to see them. I can very well guess what these files are doing. I'm certain they are code instructions to record every keystroke I make on my computer.*

Anthony returned to his office and sat at his desk. He plugged his laptop back into the docking station, trying to understand the full implications of what he had discovered. *Somebody, he thought, is watching me every minute I'm in the office.*

Going through the list of what he knew so far, he thought, *they are listening to every conversation I have on my phone and being notified of every file I save to my computer. More than that, they are recording every keystroke I make. I must assume they are also watching me outside the office, but where? My home, my car? Are they even following me as I drive around town?* The thought of that made his stomach uneasy.

He had to find out. He grabbed a few items from his bottom drawer, put them in a small backpack he kept in his office, and slid it onto his shoulder. He then straightened his chair to be flush with his desk and left his office. He stopped by the coordinator's office and knocked on the open door.

"Hi, Abigail, got a moment?"

"Sure, what do you need?" she replied.

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“I’ll be working at home the rest of the day. Would you please forward my calls to my cell phone?”

“Sure, Mr. Collins. I’d be happy to.”

“Thanks, Abigail. Have a good day.”

“You too, Mr. Collins.”

Anthony took the stairs. He was too nervous to take the elevator. When he got into his car, he began to think that his office might not be the only place that was bugged. He was anxious to examine his car with the scanner, but he couldn’t do that in the parking lot. He was sure they had cameras watching his every move.

Anthony got into his car and drove off without inspecting the car. He wanted to put some distance between himself and whoever was watching him. After making a few turns and getting about a mile from the office, he looked in the rearview mirror and didn’t see any other cars. He pulled the car to the side of the road and stopped. He put an earbud in his ear and turned on the scanner. As he put the scanner over his dashboard, he heard a beep. He opened the car door, got down under the steering wheel, and saw a small device with a tiny blinking green light attached to some wiring under the dash. He scanned the ceiling near the overhead light and got a beep. He stepped out of the car and continued to scan. He found a little round magnetic device attached to his gas tank under the car. Anthony thought it must be a GPS tracker. *Somebody really didn’t want me going anywhere they didn’t know about*, Anthony thought. He decided to leave all the devices right where they were for now and continued to drive home.

As Anthony drove into the driveway, he opened the garage door, pulled into the garage, and closed it. As he got out of the car, he plugged the earbud attached to the scanner into his ear and turned it on.

He began walking through every room in the house, listening to the beeps from the scanner in his ear. He found listening devices and cameras in every room. It was really creeping him out, but he couldn’t react, scream, or run away as he so desperately wanted to do. He had to calm down and think this through.

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Anthony sat down on his couch in the living room, turned on the TV to appear as normal as possible, and found himself staring out the window. It was hard to realize that his own team was spying on him. Who were they reporting to? Mr. Coen, or someone a lot more powerful? Was that the real reason for the visit from the military guys yesterday? His head was spinning. He had to clear his head and formulate a plan.

After hours of pacing the floor, he realized he needed them to believe he had changed his mind about weaponizing his technology. Anthony thought about all the testing his team had conducted over the past three months and how more and more of their questions were centered around his anti-atomic diffractal theories related to reducing solid objects to dust. Putting the pieces together in his head, he realized that they had surrounded him with operatives posing as scientists for the military.

The military contacted me a couple of years ago when I was a professor at Columbia asking me to build weapon systems for them. I told them no, but it looks like they tricked me into working for them anyway, Anthony thought. The military especially wanted the data for a particular weapon system that Anthony had developed two years before he joined this lab. He called it an Electrofram Inhibitor (EFI) which focuses magnetic wave energy on a single point or object to disrupt the charged neutrons within the atom that bond atoms together. Within seconds, the bonds between atoms of a solid object are reduced to dust, whether it be a vehicle, a plane, a ship, a building, or even a whole city. We can make a city disappear by drilling a tunnel under the city and focusing the beam upward. Focusing the signal on a target for eight seconds will weaken the structure to the point where it is unsafe to operate. A burst of fifteen seconds will completely reduce the entire structure to dust.

After hours of pacing the floor, roaming from room to room in his house, Anthony made a decision. He would give them what they wanted. He wasn't giving up; he was fighting back. He needed to run his experiments and run his data through the lab's supercomputer to finally prove that his theories were correct. If they were going to use him, he was going to use them first, but he had to put his plan into

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action fast before they figured out his plan and do what they do to people who refuse to give them what they want.