



WARNING  
Psychothonix<sup>SM</sup>

# TIME & SMITH

BASED ON THE NOVEL  
*TETRASTATUM*

STORY  
TIM SMITH & DR. RICHARD

ART  
KEN KREKELER



"By that pure, holy, four lettered name on high,  
nature's eternal fountain and supply,  
the parent of all souls that living be,  
by him, with faith find oath, I swear to thee."

-Pythagorean Oath

I don't know how I  
got here, nor where  
I came from nor  
where I am going.



I am lost in  
this moment.

I am found in the same.

Small questions  
lead to madness.

Total madness.

It is my fault  
they are dead.

I hold my wife and  
daughter in a moment.

In that same moment,  
they are charred, black  
husks of things that  
once made me whole.

I try to stay warm in  
a windowless room  
with dry, cold air.

Fluorescent light  
bounces off white  
and padded walls.

No matter how loud I  
scream, no one answers.

And then, on a day that  
exists both now and then  
and forever all at once, a  
door is opened...

...and there are two more  
people in my windowless,  
white room.

The moment changes.  
Stays the same.

Please  
prepare the  
patient.

Doctor, are  
you sure he's  
ready for--?

I'm afraid that  
doesn't matter, anymore,  
Nurse Nestpa. He's all  
we have left, now.

He's  
our last  
chance.





Morning, Doctor Smith.

Good morning, Phil.

Noticed your headlights are out again. Can't be driving around like that, ya know.

Electrical short. Been meaning to get it fixed.

Ain't safe.

Yes, I know.



Have you ever driven through a dark road, late at night?

Have you ever turned the headlights off, just to test yourself?

Just to see how long you can last, like that. Hurling yourself through unknown darkness.

Have you ever done that?



I have.

(I had. I will. I did. I am.)

Never lasted more than a moment, of course. I'd lose my nerve, bring the lights back, and sit back, feeling safe and relieved.



But eventually, I'd always try again. Daring myself to feel brave.

That's what we do, as scientists.



We hurl ourselves through darkness, every day.

Looking for light.



A thousand years ago and a thousand years from now, today's demonstration needs to go well for the Brass.



"Doctor Smith..."





...you have General Naiyua on line three.

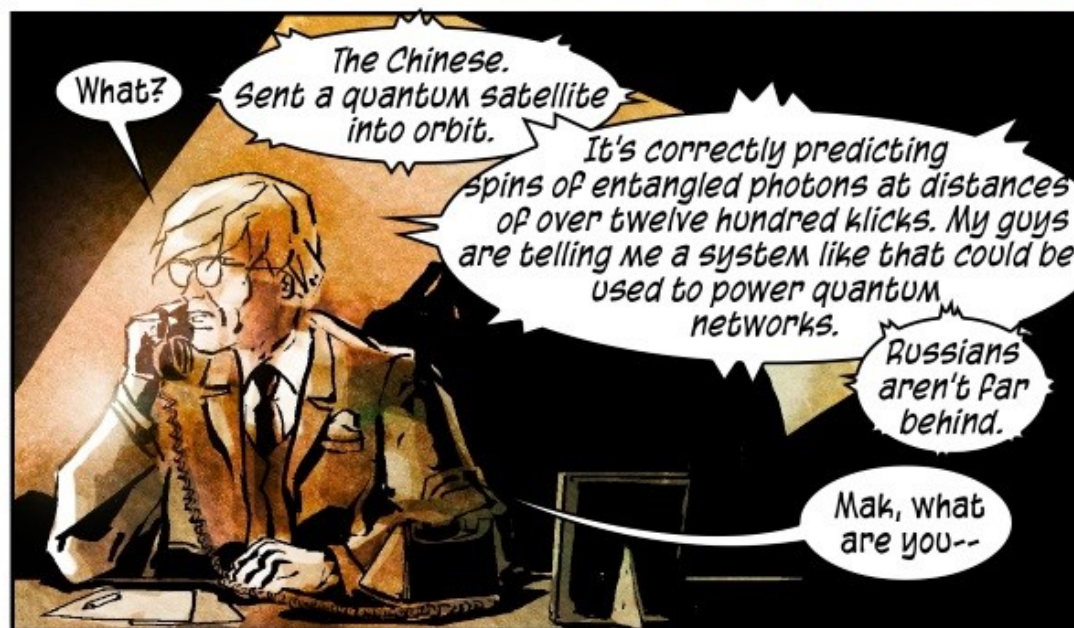
Thank you, Janice.



Hello, Mak.



You hear about this China shit?



What?

The Chinese. Sent a quantum satellite into orbit.

It's correctly predicting spins of entangled photons at distances of over twelve hundred clicks. My guys are telling me a system like that could be used to power quantum networks.

Russians aren't far behind.

Mak, what are you--



Within our lifetime, our enemies are going to be securing encrypted photonic communication. They're going to be networking quantum technology the world's never seen before.



We gave you 1.4 billion dollars, Smith. You gave us back a conceptual construct.

You gave us back an idea.



You're asking us to teleport matter across space-time at a speed faster than light, Mak.

If you know anyone with a faster way to get there, I suggest you start piling for my replacement.



You'd better pray this demonstration of yours goes well, Smith.

Because if it turns out you're the overpaid babysitter I think you are...

...you'll be back to grading papers by Friday.



You'll do Pine, Tim.



Oh. Doctor Richard, hello. I didn't see you.

Have you... How long have you been standing there?



You're a bright man, Tim. Knew that the first week you took my course.

You'll do Pine.




He doesn't say "Good luck."

That's Richard's version of a compliment.



In one timeline, the demonstration goes well.





But time, it seems, is  
an ocean, not a river.

Doctor Richard taught me about  
the three states of existence: alive,  
dead, and somewhere in between.

He believed there was a fourth  
state of being. A state that, if  
reached, would allow one to  
experience time and dimension  
in a more unified, singular way;  
all realities, all possibilities  
would be experienced  
simultaneously.

Very few people  
believed him.

I was one of  
those few.

In another,  
it does not.

And now I know that in  
one timeline, the heart of  
a nurse holds a needle.

In another, that same  
heart holds a sword.

The darkness of a  
power-driven general  
wields a trident..

...or the keys to  
nuclear war.

The wise  
remain  
wise...

...evil stays evil,  
seeking the  
destruction of  
any light...

...and scientists hurl  
themselves into the  
darkness...

...looking for  
that light.

I am not sure if I am a scientist,  
anymore. The knowledge of things  
is... less mysterious to me.


But I am still an explorer.

And here, in the fourth state,  
I will explore the darkness...

...I will find my wife  
and daughter...

...I will learn the  
nature of existence...





...and let the light  
of the Tetrastatum  
guide the way.