

Chapter Twenty Three

The Craft Awakens (The Present)



A small red light blinked, and then darkness. Again it blinked, and again darkness. A circuit fired and another light blinked into life. Each circuit fired another circuit. A red light blinked and another red light joined in the duet, the rhythmic pulsing of two red fireflies. A third light joined in the cacophony of a trio. Then it became a quartet, quintet, ensemble, chamber group, and finally a symphony of lights blinking, each firing a hundred more circuits until, eventually, the sleeping machine came to life. It had been awakened by a signal, a wake-up call programmed into its soul long ago. It had been patient as century after century it had slept, waiting to be called upon. Now it could deliver what it was charged to deliver, its sole purpose for being. It had been summoned to return. It doggedly brought each system online, testing each system that had been unused for millennia. Restoring and repairing each with the subroutines placed in its heart for its return. This would take time, but it had been patient. Soon though, its tasks would be complete and it could begin the final journey. A Journey its creators had prepared it for so many eons ago.