

# Fractal Nexus

NOTE TO THE READER

## UNIVERSE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

What you hold in your hands are the first three fragments of a universe in expansion — or perhaps, in reconstruction.

*Fractal Nexus* is still pulsing through the creative process; characters, events, and atmospheres are being adjusted, refined, deepened.

This is a first glimpse of something larger.

The scenes you are about to read *may* change. Some words may vanish. Others perhaps should never have been written. But each one carries the weight of what is still to come.

**This universe is still remembering itself.**

And you are part of this memory in the making.

FRACTAL NEXUS • OPEN CYCLE

[This is a version still in mutation]

# ***The Anomaly***

*"The Portal does not reject bodies.*

*It rejects the spirits that are already corrupted."*

*— Fragment from the Book of Interfaces, forbidden in the NeX*

Stanton had come searching for answers — or perhaps just to confirm what he already feared — under an oppressive night sky where the stars looked like open wounds.

The cracked earth beneath his feet devoured the wind. Or something else. Something that breathed low, crawling invisibly, alert to his solitary presence. Mike Stanton knelt at the edge of a forgotten platform of fractured concrete. Around him, shattered towers loomed like decayed teeth, their exposed circuits pulsing in silent agony — fossilized echoes of an event too ancient to be witnessed.

But he remembered.

At least... some part of him did. The cold wind hissed as he turned Sara's ring around his thumb — a compulsive tic, anchoring him in an ocean of uncertainty. The metal still carried the warmth of absence, tugging him toward a reality that no longer existed. His gaze brushed against the cold alloy of the dormant OmniBrace on his other wrist — another constant reminder. The dry air clawed at his throat. Impossible echoes grazed his hearing, like ancient secrets whispered by the dust itself. Nothing explained how he'd ended up in that precise place — only that he'd been drawn there.

The Portal pulsed in his mind, not as a memory, but as an imminent presence. Suddenly, the OmniBrace on his wrist radiated heat — raw, like an exposed nerve. The screen flickered to life, flashing in sequence:

*[PROTOCOL DENIED]*

*[CLASSIFIED ACCESS: NEURAL Δ.V]*

*[ANOMALY DETECTED]*

The final word sliced the night in emerald light.

— "No... not again," Stanton whispered, teeth clenched. A visceral impulse urged him to face what was awakening there.

In the jargon of the few who knew, anomaly was a call from the hidden strata of reality.

Something beneath — ancient, alive — had recognized him. The ground trembled beneath his boots. It wasn't seismic — it was rhythmic. Intentional. He turned. There was someone there. Or something.

A figure stood beside him — not emerging, but coalescing, as if the shadow itself had condensed and acquired unstable contours.

The blue uniform was torn and stained, yet exuded a thick, bittersweet scent — a sensory detail that clashed with the unreality of the moment. Opaque eyes stared blankly ahead. A murmur escaped, frail, nearly inaudible:

— "It's active..." Stanton felt the chill of another loss. The man was a stranger — perhaps a mirage — but his worn features echoed something familiar.

Before Stanton could speak, the space twisted.

It didn't break — it folded.

It bent like boneless flesh, stitching the air with green symbols that bled light. Stanton's stomach revolted. The technician — if he was real — screamed. But there was no sound. Only a silent gasp as his body unraveled. Not into flesh. But into data.

Lines of emerald light spiraled from what remained, rising as if drawn out by a force that was encoding his essence. Then, the light converged.

The anomaly bloomed. It was like an impossible flower — a vortex of spiraling glyphs, spitting static and memory.

Something emerged from it: a humanoid silhouette, dry and decayed, yet seething with rage.

A scream erupted from its ethereal mouth — a scream that had waited eons to be released: YOU LET THIS HAPPEN, MIKE. The words weren't spoken.

They were imprinted.

Inside Stanton's mind. It wasn't a voice. It was guilt. Thick as congealed blood, saturating his bones. He stumbled backward, heels scraping the dust. The OmniBrace flashed frenetically.

The air thickened — vibrating with the sterile scent of ozone and scorched metal.

The world trembled.

The name Sara ruptured in his mind — a silent scream. The figure dissolved into digital dust.

The glyphs began to fade.

But the emerald glow did not cease.

It merely... retreated, as if part of something deeper.

Something vast. Walls of blackened metal emerged from the scorched soil like roots of a past that had never died.

The NeX-111. The forgotten bunker.

It didn't rise.

It bloomed — as if waiting for the right soul to reactivate it. A faint cry welled up from the ground — or from within.

He touched the terminal that had surfaced.

The screen distorted.

Glyphs rippled in green.

An ancient echo resonated — from somewhere that wasn't memory. — "It's already too late, Mike," whispered a presence. It didn't come from outside.

It was inside. And then — a skeletal finger scraped the screen.

Thin as a final warning. The ground opened.

Not like a fissure.

But like an eye. And the abyss pulled him in. He resisted — for an instant.

A taut muscle, his body arched against the current.

But there was something down there.

Something that didn't want to hurt him.

It wanted to remind him. And so he let go. Not out of weakness —

But recognition. It didn't drag him.

It welcomed him — like a son that always belonged. It knew his name.

It always had. And now, he knew it too.

VOCÊ DEIXOU ISSO  
ACONTECER, MIKE.



# FRACTAL NEXUS



ECOS NO  
NeX-111

Wait for Chapter I