

Alliance of the Eight Continents to work on bringing this theoretical technology into the “physical realm”. All of the other scientists who used to do the “dirty work” were stationed in Asia, which got hit very hard fourteen years ago in the Collective Extraterrestrial Invasion of 3674. The entire laboratory was destroyed, and all but two of the scientists were killed. Those two scientists were now part of Joe’s 28-man team, and they headed the assembly committee in the North America-based laboratory.

The invasions started thirty-size years ago, on the Fifth of May, 3652. Before that day, humankind had never successfully made contact with extraterrestrials. “First Contact” involved the extraterrestrials, nicknamed the “buggers”, tossing a rock half the size of the Moon towards the Earth, striking South America dead-on. This occurred during the war between Japan and New Australia. but the devastation was so terrible that humanity necessarily needed to unite. It was agreed at a United Nations summit meeting that humanity itself would be lost if the countries did not work together to face the threat.

Except North Korea, who sided with the extraterrestrials immediately. They were quickly shut up by a couple of conveniently-placed nuclear bombs.

It was now Joe’s job to develop the first working Quantum State Shifter. The QSS was based on theory that had been being developed for just under a century at that point.

In theory, the QAA could send any matter across dimensional borders, and at any point in spacetime, forward or backward in the fifth dimension. It would, *in theory*, “shift” matter out of sync with the universe, into another spot in the fifth dimension. This had huge implications for the situation of the bugged invasion. Buggers, at that point, could strike at any time, and they generally spaced out their attacks ten years or so. Their strike location seemed to be random, though attacks always seemed to strike land; no bugged strike had ever hit an uninhabited ocean. Humanity did not have much actual hope of surviving on Earth in this universe, so it needed to run away.

The QSS would serve three purposes. First, people would be able to venture out into the new universes to collect new resources. The idea was that scientists would “shift” into another spot in the fifth dimension, grab useful resources, and “shift” back. The resources could be used to generate energy, or to fortify defense bases on Earth.

Second, the QSS provided hope of escape. If it’s possible to shift “refugees” onto other worlds, humanity can live on, safe from the buggers.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly: the QSS can send people to any point in spacetime in the other universe. If a QAA were to be set up in the other universe as well, scientists would be able to travel FTL and also in time. By shifting to the location of the QSS in the other universe, then shifting from that QSS to the desired time and location in the initial universe, travel throughout all four dimensions in this slice of the fifth dimension would be possible.

The only concern was energy. The more you move in all five dimensions, the more energy the shift costs. Luckily, resources would become available from other universes once the QSS went online.

At five forty-six in the morning, as Joe was poring over his team’s work and checking for flaws, Joe felt the ground rumble under his feet. His heart sank as he quickly realized where he’d felt the sort of rumble before. When Asia was hit by the invasion, he had felt the same thing. He knew that, although it certainly was not occurring in North America, someplace had just been hit very