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AN EVENT GROUP THRILLER



NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF LEGEND

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*Event*  
*Legend*

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This is a work of fiction. All of the characters, organizations, and events portrayed in this novel are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.

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For my father—who I lost this past year, I wish I had been as good to you as you were to me. Twenty-twenty hindsight can be a horrible and haunting thing. I can only hope and pray that you could see beyond my youth, see the man, and know in your heart  
I tried to be the best I could be.

For Roxie—a cousin, now a sister, for enduring the unendurable, the loss of a child, it should happen to no one in the entire world.  
My heart is broken for you.

For Maribeth—to the ghosts of youth, may we forever be haunted and happier for it.

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# PROLOGUE

## THE FALL OF OLYMPUS

13,000 BCE

The council elder sat alone in the darkened chamber. His mind focused on the empire's dire situation and the harsh judgment that history would render upon his great civilization. The cruelty they had shown against the lesser peoples of the world was now coming back a thousandfold to haunt the ringed continent. This judgment, this disaster, had begun three years earlier, with the rebellion of the barbarian nations in the outer empire, north and south.

When the elder closed his eyes, he thought he could actually hear the far-off cries of citizens and soldiers alike as they prepared for the final defense of what the barbarians thought of as Olympus and the very gods they once worshiped. While he sat secure inside the Empirium Dome, safe behind the eight-foot-thick triangles of crystal that made up the geodesic bubble, the rest of his world stood unprotected against the onslaught of the allied barbarian nations assaulting the empire.

He opened his aged, half-blind eyes and looked at the order that the Empirium Council had written out only an hour before condemning not only the barbarians but *themselves* as well. Thinking this, his attention turned to one of the duplicate Keys for the weapon.

Androlicus reached out and with a shaking and age-spotted hand removed the silk wrap that covered the huge diamond before him. He stared deep into the immense blue gemstone for a moment and then allowed his fingers to touch the deep and swirling tone grooves etched into its surface by their finest scientists. There were two more Keys such as the one before him—precious stones that had taken fifty lifetimes to find and half as much to engineer, and were the secret at the heart of the Great Sound Wave.

One Key was being prepared even now, far below the earth. The second was hidden in the land of the hostile Nubians, many hundreds of kilometers to the south in the farthest reaches of the empire. The third sat before him, identical in shape and design and meant to control the uncontrollable.

The great doors of the Empirium Chamber swung open, bathing the room in bright sunlight, dispelling the long shadows that had so long held the elder prisoner. The old man closed his eyes against the brilliance of the day as he heard the general march quickly into the chamber and directly to the council table.

“By your leave, Great Androlicus.”

The old man finally opened his eyes to give the general a sad, knowing look before throwing the silk over the three-foot-diameter blue diamond on the chamber table.

“General Talos, I have called you away from the empire's defenses for this.” The old man tapped the document with his aged hand. “It is here with my mark upon it as the Empirium Council has demanded, thus completing my culpability in the extinction

of our empire.”

Talos’s eyes darted to the marble tabletop. He slowly reached for the handwritten document, but Androlicus gently laid the full weight of his hand and arm down upon the scroll. He pulled it back as if to withhold it, stopping the general short.

“Our time is at its zenith, My Lord,” Talos said. “Our forces on the western and northern peninsulas are close to being overwhelmed, our defenses breached by the combined might of the Macedonians, Athenians, and Spartans. We must act soon or all will be lost. Even now, the Thracians and Athenians are loading the allied states’ full invasion force on the Greek mainland. They have drained citizens from as far away as Mesopotamia.”

“With my sign upon this order our demise has already come to pass even as we stand here,” Androlicus replied. His eyes went from the general to the silk-covered diamond.

“My Lord?” asked Talos, confused.

Androlicus smiled sadly and nodded his head, his long white hair and thinning beard shimmering as the sunlight played on his face.

“We are set upon a course that is far more deadly than those hordes of barbarians we fear so.”

“The Science Elders and Earth Council have assured—”

“Yes, yes, yes,” the old man said, cutting short the general’s response. “We have all been assured the technology is foolproof.” He pulled the document back to him and looked at it. “*Foolproof*. This word seems to have more meaning these days.”

“My Lord, to delay—”

Androlicus suddenly stood, the action so fast that it belied his 107 years.

“To delay is to continue thinking! To delay is to devise another way of ending this! To delay is to stop fools who think more violence delivered from untested theory is the answer to our woes!”

General Talos straightened, standing at attention and staring straight ahead as if suddenly transported to the parade ground. His bronze helmet was crooked under his left arm and his right hand stayed at his ivory-handled sword.

“You have my apologies, old friend.” The elder knew that with his words he had wounded the general, the very last of the great Titans.

The general blinked and then looked at Androlicus. He slowly placed his helmet with its long plume of blue feathers and trailing horsehair on the long, curved marble table before him, then allowed his bearded face to soften.

“You are tired. How long has it been since you slept?”

The old man turned and looked at the large tapestry on the council-chamber wall. The weaving of threads showed the great plain and deserts surrounding their tiny inland sea. Their small continent was at its exact center situated between the four great landmasses to the north, south, west, and east. It also depicted the almost endless western sea beyond the Pillars of Heracles, named after the barbarian Greek hero to the north who was even now leading his monkey-people to the very gates of Androlicus’s home city.

“My lack of sleep is but the least of what ails me. Besides, I foresee my long-needed rest is very close at hand.”

“Don’t say this thing. We will prevail. We must!”

Androlicus uncovered the third Key. “This will fail. The tone grooves mean nothing. The pitch is all wrong and the weapon will be uncontrollable. The Key and its tones will only enhance the Wave to a level that is far beyond the science to keep it caged.”

He saw the look of confusion upon the face of this simple but brave Titan.

“The illusion has been perpetrated by testing on plates that are weak and old. Ah, but the crust beneath our own feet?” He wagged his finger at Talos. “Well, they are new, deep, and strong. It will surely end our world. This diamond has the ability to store and increase power; and coupled with that fact, the plate diagram is wrong and will assuredly destroy everything and everyone.”

“You are a great scholar, but the sciences, they—”

“*They* are wrong. I have studied the Tone Key and the plate diagram and have discovered it will only work on the smallest of scales. Once the realignment of active plates begins, nothing in our science can control the result. If I am right and the diagram lies—if the fault lines and plates are all interconnected—this Key and her sisters will not control the earth’s rage, but put a sword point to an already wounded beast. There is a reason why the gods have made the blue diamond so hard to find—it may generate more power to the Wave from the stored energy of light, heat, and the very electricity generated by our very own bodies. As I said, it’s uncontrollable.”

“Then why do you sign the order for the weapons use, My Lord?”

The look on the old man’s face told the general everything. He knew then that the fate of their civilization was sealed. This great man was going to allow the world to have its way. The barbarians’ freedom from their grip was at hand and Androlicus was going to allow it to happen because it was their time. From many nights of talk by warm fires, he knew Androlicus to be an advocate of the barbarians. He philosophized that they just needed a start to become as themselves, an advanced, thinking people.

Talos saw the old man relax.

“Tell me, what of your defense, or should I say preemptive strike to the south?” Androlicus asked while turning once again to look at the tapestry map of the north of Africanus.

“The Gypos prepare their voyage across the inland sea, possibly on the morrow,” he said and then lowered his head.

The old man caught his friend’s awkward silence after the brief report and turned to look at him.

“Your armies were defeated in the Egyptian Delta?”

“They were slaughtered to a man. We were no match for the combined force sent against us. There were not only barbarians from the west; our former allies, the Nubians Africanus, allied with the Gypos.”

“How many are dead?” Androlicus asked, closing his eyes before he heard the answer.

“Six thousand citizens we sent into Egypt will not be joining us for the final defense of the inner circle. That, coupled with the defeat of General Archimedes by the barbarian Heracles on the northern outer ring and that damnable Jason upon the sea ... five thousand more of our men will not be defending the second ring. The Gypos have also poisoned the Nile, so I have ordered the destruction of the great aqueduct; it has already fallen into the sea. There will be no more fresh water to our shores.”

“We have lost eleven thousand soldiers in this one day alone?” The elder turned, as

if by looking the general in his eyes the statement would not—just could not—be true.

“It seems our ancient enemies have learned the ways of war well from us.”

Talos’s face betrayed his sadness as he told the rest of the story. “Arrayed against us are Heracles, who is barely above the mentality of a cave dweller, and also Jason of Thessaly, who is but a thief of the ship and oar designs of our science. The allied armies still bear mostly stone axes, wooden swords, and sharpened sticks, but they have defeated the greatest nation the world has ever known.”

“I would say the gods have turned on us, wouldn’t you, my great Titan?” murmured the old man in reply.

“The past will always find a way to punish the present.” Talos smiled sadly. “The sins of the fathers will always curse the young.”

Androlicus nodded in agreement.

“Our greatest treasures, they have been hidden well?” he asked.

Talos had the slightest trace of a smirk etching his hard mouth. “It was difficult, as we lost thirty-two screening ships to Jason in the Poseidon Sea, but yes, old friend, the greatest of treasures is safe along with the histories, our heritage, science, and the libraries. Shipped to the farthest reaches of the western empire, not even our followers will know where they are buried.”

“Good, good. Now I am as weary as I have never been before.”

“You are sure the weapon will fail?” Talos asked, wanting just a glimmer of hope, not for himself but for the very people he was sworn to protect.

“It is as uncontrollable as we are arrogant. Who are we to believe we can manipulate the very planet we walk upon? We can only hope that the secret of its use will never be found. The bronze maps, the plates, the disks, they are all destroyed?”

“Except for the single plate map and dimensional disk sent with the treasure ships.”

“The plate map should have been destroyed,” said Androlicus angrily.

“Lord Pythos loaded the plate map himself as a safeguard in case we needed the second Key.”

Androlicus placed his hand on the cool surface of the large blue diamond. “No, he won’t need a second or third Key. It ends here. It ends today.”

Androlicus slowly pushed the order forward without removing his eyes from the Titan.

“Give this to that madman below the earth and may the gods have mercy on us. I am sorry you will die by the side of that fool.”

“I am also. What of you, My Lord?”

“I have my devices.” He lowered his head, a move that made the general feel desperate for his old friend. “These old eyes have beheld too much. I have seen that which I was not meant to see. I choose not to witness our arrogance of science at work.” His voice broke. “We could have been such a great people. We wanted to be, at one time ages ago.”

The elder looked around the great chamber within the safety of the Crystal Dome; the wonder of the ages.

General Talos took the order and, with one last glance at the covered third diamond, turned away, feeling as if he were leaving a dying father behind. He slowly walked through the great bronze doors of the chamber, closing them behind him, leaving the chamber once again in darkness, as well as the great Empire of Atlantis.

The great tectonic-plate chart was carved directly into the stone walls of the giant and ancient volcanic cavern one mile beneath the city of Lygos, the centermost island in the rings of Atlantis, a mountainous plateau the barbarians thought of as Olympus. To the ordinary citizen the wavy lines and circles of the chart were but a meaningless jumble of scribbles. The only recognizable feature on this strangest of maps were the three great circles of Atlantis.

The diagram was five thousand years in the making and was the great achievement of their time. The Great Poseidon Sea was mapped in intricate detail, but the lines did not stop there. They also coursed through the entire known world, even unto Europa. Hinduss and the vast, barbaric Asiatic nations of the Far East world of the Dragon Men, the Chi, were also depicted. The lines on the diagram diminished as they crossed the vast western Sea of Atlantia and west toward the two giant and mostly unexplored continents of the Far West. Their vast explorations for the past five thousand years were designed toward mapping the faults and continental plates of as much of the world as possible, because only the gods knew from where their next enemies would arise.

The giant chart was engineered by the science of their time. The strange lines actually mapped the minute fault lines of most of the known world, active and extinct, discovered using divining apparatuses. The thicker lines were the actual plates that moved whole continents like slow-moving glaciers throughout the history of the planet.

“Are the warships fully aware of the extreme nature of their mission?”

General Talos glared at the old and slight man before him. The elder, Lord Pythos, had once been an Empirium Council member but had resigned over thirty years before to conclude his work on the science of the Wave. A maniacal passion had consumed the ancient earth scientist for the latter part of his eighty-five years of life.

“The admiral knows his duty and need not be reminded. His destruction is assured, so you may receive your signal, Pythos.”

“Excellent,” he said as he looked knowingly at the general. “Think not that I am fooled by your being here at this time. I am fully aware that the traitor Androlicus has sent you to dispatch me if the plan fails. I am only surprised he has not chosen to do this foul deed himself.”

“To that great man you are not that important; the lesser the task, the lesser the messenger. Your station is far too low for him to be here. And if you once more refer to him as a traitor, that will be the last word you ever utter from your foul mouth.”

Unfazed, the old man continued. “Shame; he would have seen the miracle our people so crave. One that will destroy our enemies and shake their homelands with their mud-and-stick huts to dust.”

Talos scowled at the crazy old man and then angrily raised his sword for the chain of flags to be readied for the signal. Five hundred of his more severely wounded soldiers had been pulled from the defense of the second circle of Atlantis against the probing invaders. Their duty here would be to relay the signal to the last two warships of the Grand Fleet.

Pythos walked over to a large bronze-and-iron box. He ruthlessly shoved a Nubian slave out of his way and gestured for two guards to lift it. Then Pythos became agitated as the men did his bidding, almost crying out when one of the soldiers let his

end slip his grasp. Once steadied, Pythos approached and lifted the wooden lid. His gaze locked on the object inside. He reverently reached in and brought out the Tone Key. He swallowed as he did so. He held the large, perfectly round diamond up to a flaming torch and laughed as he felt its heat rise as it absorbed the flames' light.

Talos could see deep etchings upon its surface. Strange lines like impressions or gouges that were not natural flaws spiraled around the entire round diamond. The general did not understand how the diamond produced the unheard sounds that activated the great bells on the seafloor, as its science was far beyond the mind of a soldier.

Pythos turned and walked over to a large cylinder. He ordered one of the guards to lift a large lid on what looked like a bronze barrel lying on its side. Once opened, Pythos laid the blue-tinted diamond inside with the care of a mother bedding a newborn child. Then he reached up and brought down a large spike tipped with a much smaller blue diamond, only ten centimeters in diameter. This strange spike had a thick copper wire running from its top. The other end disappeared into the large barrellike device. He placed the spike into one of the diamond's deep grooves specially chosen for the targeted stratum of seabed, then he gently closed the lid.

Talos allowed his eyes to follow the copper line to a large wheel. The teeth on that wheel disappeared into the teeth of a larger one and that into an even larger cog. There looked to be thirty such wheels aligned side by side, reduction gearing for a device the general would never be able to fathom.

"Start the paddlewheel!" the old man shouted.

Sixteen hundred naked barbarian slaves, captured Greek, Egyptian, and Nubians, began pulling the thick ropes. As they strained as one mass of humanity, the giant floor gate began to slide back on its iron tracks. Steam and heat shot out like a caged animal and assaulted those in the great cavern. The slaves closest to the gate immediately burst into flame. Their very flesh caught fire as they screamed and ran, and archers who lined the upper tiers of the cavern quickly and mercifully brought them down.

As the gate slowly continued to slide open, whips cracked and men screamed. Muscles bunched and feet dug harshly into the grooved stone floor. More flame sprang from the lava well as the flowing river of magma passed by the opening at over sixty kilometers per hour. Still the gate to the volcanic vent needed to be wider and the taskmasters' whips sang their agonizing song.

"Yes, yes!" the old man moaned under his breath. "That is wide enough!"

The slaves, many burned through to the bone, fell to the floor as women ran to them with water and cooling salve.

Pythos watched and grinned as his plan of action began to take shape. He signaled for the next phase. Five thousand slaves, these bigger and far stronger than the gate slaves, stood as one. Women threw water on their scarred backs in preparation for the great heat that would slam them like the very Wave they would soon produce. Far above them, the great paddle-wheel hung motionless in its cradle. The words and hieroglyphs extolling the assistance of the gods etched deeply into the engineered metal made up of the new, hardened steel. The one million copper spikes placed in bundles of a thousand prickled around the great machine. Above the wheel was a three-meter-thick copper plate, held in place by a spun steel cable that bore its massive

weight.

“Lower the lightning wheel to the midpoint marker.”

The slaves moved in unison not by ordered word but by the crack and scream of the whip. They started pulling the six-hundred-foot-long ropes connected to the wheel. With feet slipping and trying to find purchase on the stone floor, the wheel at first refused to move. Old women threw sand beneath the feet of the slaves to soak up the water from the steam and pouring sweat of the thousands. Now finding purchase with the help of the grooved stone beneath their feet as they strained against the ropes, the cavern echoed with the rumble and creak of the giant wheel as it started to move. With a loud roar, it became free of its iron cradle far above the straining mass of men.

A signal command echoed and the five thousand slaves dropped the ropes and ran to the far side of the open lava gate. Some overflow of the four-thousand-degree magma caught several hundred of the sweating and burned slaves as they ran by. It rendered their flesh and bone to ash so quickly that not one of their screams escaped their lips.

Taskmasters’ whips cracked, and once again sand was thrown by the slave women for purchase as the slaves gained the opposite side of the running river of flame and melted stone. They picked up the identical ropes in a desperate hurry as far above their heads the great wheel had started to roll down its elongated track toward the open gate.

“Arrest the wheel before its momentum carries it too far. Hurry or all will be lost!” the old man screamed as he pulled a whip from one of the guards and pushed him aside. His eyes were aflame as he whipped the nearest slaves mercilessly.

The five thousand slaves worked as one as they pulled against the gathering momentum of the sliding wheel as gravity fought to push it down its track. The front ranks, seventy-five slaves in all, were pulled into the open magma gate by the momentum of the wheel. The giant paddlewheel finally started to slow as it reached the halfway point. It hit a twenty-foot-wide downward-angled notch and came to a grinding, ear-splitting halt as it finally arrested. The slaves fell to the floor as one just as a loud cheer went up from the armor-sheathed guards lining the walls.

Talos observed that the slaves still alive and nearest the old man were bloodied and burned. Many more were lying dead at the feet of Pythos. The old scientist slowly turned and looked at the general.

“Now, we wait for the signal from the sea.”

Two massive warships waited at anchor four kilometers from the northern shores of Atlantis. Admiral Plius, cousin and trusted naval adviser to Talos, held hand to brow, shielding the blazing sun from his eyes as he scanned the green sea before him. He was beginning to think that the people of his nation had received a reprieve from the barbarians and the expected invasion and the bulk of the Greek alliance would not come. That brief thought and hope died in his mind as the first flash of metal against the rays of the sun twinkled in the distance, just above the horizon of the sea. The admiral removed his helmet, the long blue plume of dyed horsehair gathering at his feet as he stepped down from the prow of the ship.

“The Spartans, Thracians, and Macedonians have been sighted,” he said as he took the shoulder of his sailing master.

As the rest of the gallant crew looked out over the gunwales, they saw ten thousand

flashes of brightness, as many as the stars in the night sky starting to twinkle off the surface of the sea. The dreaded battle fleet of the alliance would soon to be upon them.

As the admiral watched, the lead ship started to take a wavering, almost dreamlike shape in front of one thousand allied Greek ships of all shapes and design.

The lookout from above called out, “The lead ship has a black hull, black as death, and scarlet sails!”

The admiral knew the legend of the man on the lead ship with the black hull and scarlet sail.

“My Lord, should we signal the mainland?” his ship’s captain asked. “The Thracian king Jason and his fleet will soon be upon us!”

“Loose the signal,” he ordered with no enthusiasm.

“Loose the signal!” the captain called out.

At the stern of the massive warship was a catapult, its rear stocks removed and the front reinforced to give it the proper angle of trajectory. A sword severed the restraining rope and sent the flaming signal missile high into the blue, cloudless sky. The admiral watched it and prayed that it would be seen through the screening smoke of his burning homeland—the home soil, on which neither he nor his men would ever tread again.

Green signal flags were lowered quickly after the signal was seen from the sea. They coursed down the five-mile-long tunnel as a green wave roaring against stone. In all, the signal took only one minute from the time of the catapult signal to reach its goal.

The slaves again strained and pulled. Whips cracked and captured men from the northern and southern regions grimaced as leather slapped backs already bloody. Slowly the giant paddlewheel started to ease up out of the notch that held it.

More slaves were added as the wheel started down the last hundred meters of iron track. The great machine picked up speed and the slaves started to panic as the wheel gained momentum. The whips cracked, but this time the slaves cowered not from the pain of the lash but from fear of the great paddlewheel as it rolled down the tracks toward the flowing lava. Finally, the taskmasters lost control as the men dropped their ropes and arrows started to cut them down for their cowardice.

Pythos watched intently because he knew that there would be no stopping the giant apparatus now as it carried the full weight of its bulk down the guiding track. One and a half million tons taxed the bending and wrenching thirty-meter-thick iron rail. The great wheel finally slammed home at the bottom, again notching itself in a loop of iron that would hold it in place.

Thousands of tons of molten rock shot into the air as the wheel’s massive weight struck the open vent, incinerating slaves and their masters when lava splashed upon them.

“You fool, you’ll kill us all,” Talos said as he grabbed the arm of Pythos.

The old man looked at the general and laughed. “Yes, maybe, maybe, but look, my large friend!” he screamed, pointing upward.

Talos pushed the old earth scientist from him but froze as he saw the great paddlewheel start to turn from the force of flowing lava. Ever so slowly at first, it quickly started to gain momentum. As the wheel turned, its long steel spikes arrayed

along the outer side of the paddles were dripping great drops of molten rock as it exited the lava flow. "Release the cooling water, now!"

Above the giant wheel, another gate opened and seawater came forth, striking the steel brushes and cooling them to prevent their melting. Steam shot into the air and soon the environment was nearing intolerable. The interior heat of the great cave had risen to 140 degrees. The paddlewheel moved faster and faster. The spikes were now connecting with the thick copper plate above and generating an electrical field.

No river or water flow in the world could equal the power of the flowing lava vent. As the great Titan watched, another gate opened and fresh water from the city cascaded onto the paddles and the water was trapped when a door sealed them shut. The live steam was shot through a pipe connected to the wheel's center and that pipe led to the tremendously spinning diamond in its case. Once the steam was released from the paddle, the door would spring free and start all over again as it was dipped into the fast-flowing lava.

The toned grooves whistled their result through the large conducting needle and out into the bronze wire, where not only the tone was carried but the electrical lightning that was needed to power the great bells on the seafloor.

"Red flags—strike!" Pythos ordered.

Talos swung his sword hand down and the long line of signalmen brought large red pendants down to strike the cavern floor.

At sea, the admiral saw three large catapult launches as the missiles streaked from the inner peninsula of the city of Lygos. He quickly nodded his bearded face, giving the signal to connect the line. As he turned away, he saw that Jason's lead ships were but three thousand yards from his lone vessel as the second ship in his line began connecting the thick line of copper.

Flaming catapults shot from the barbarian ships started striking the waters around the admiral's vessel as a mile to his rear the second Atlantean warship struggled with the giant grease-covered line of bending copper.

Onboard the second ship, the great cable had been pulled from drums of wood that had been brought to the shoreline and protected with the remaining soldiers of the army of Talos. Thousands were dying on shore so that this vessel could have the time to make the connection of the thick wire to the strange-looking stanchion protruding from the surface of the Poseidon Sea. The floating connection was held in place by a buoy through which another, even thicker copper wire ran to the bottom of the sea, where the great sound inducers had been placed against the sea bottom. They sat directly over the hidden fault line that the Ancients had mapped with their divining skills hundreds of years before.

Sailors struggled with the giant looped end of the line as the first of the Greek's catapult missiles started to strike the admiral's ship. Some were aware that the large warship had started to burn; others were fighting madly with the weight of the cable. As they fought, they started to feel the vibrations that signaled that the power of the giant machine was ramping up, that only seconds remained before the Wave that started belowground sent the killing force through the line.

"Hurry, loop the line over the buoy!" the captain called out.

Finally, as he watched, the giant copper ball on the tip of the floating marker accepted the wire, and just as a hundred men started to let go of the line the electrical charge coursed through, immediately killing sixty of his seamen as they started to shake and jump. The stench of burning hair and flesh drove the others back in fear and horror.

As the great paddlewheel moved faster far below the main city, the giant two-foot-thick brushes scraped against the copper plate at an ever-increasing rate of speed as the magma current hit its peak. The wire running from the city to the sea and up onto the deck of the second ship finally glowed red and softened as the wood railing and then the deck itself burst into flame. The flames lasted only seconds before the ship itself convulsed, and vanished in a great explosion.

On the sea bottom, arrayed along the mapped fault line above the very crust of the earth, were two hundred giant copper bells that had sound-inducing forks installed inside. Electrical current running through the mysterious blue diamond and the thick spike that was spinning around the grooved surface produced a high-pitched sound that could not be heard by the human ear, but could be felt by all through their teeth and bones. The diamond created the invisible wave sent through the copper line to the submerged bells, where its minute vibrations ran into the forks inside the submerged bells. There, the sound, the vibration, the wave grew and expanded outward into the seabed that covered the great fault line. As the sound wave from the great inductors slammed into the seafloor, some of it escaped—a minuscule fraction of the din—and every fish in the sea for three hundred miles died. The now-powerful sound wave was sent on its course through to the fault and through to the very tectonic plates that wedged against each other with over a trillion metric tons of force that held the great halves in place.

The sound wave struck and the edges started to crumble along a two-hundred-kilometer stretch of plating, the force of which would be felt on the surface of the sea as a directionless wave. The ships of Jason's fleet were tossed about like children's toys as the sound and the swells grew in size and violence. Finally, the two great halves could not withstand the attack and started to crumble in earnest. In addition, the cascading effect cracked the very surface of the great sea bottom. The two plate edges crumbled and collapsed and two miles of the restraining edges fell apart, and the two plates, having nothing to hold them back, whip-cracked and slammed into each other at over a hundred kilometers per hour, creating a ripple effect that was broadcast to the seabed the plates held above them.

The first devastating effect after the two halves collided created a great chasm in the seafloor, not the effect the Atlantean scientist had anticipated. Instead of the force being pushed up and out, it went down. The madman had been seeking a tidal wave of immense proportions that would swallow up the invading fleet of Greek warships, a wave that would eventually wash up on the northern coast of the barbarians' homeland. With Atlantis sitting high against the mainland to the north and south, they themselves would be protected against the tidal surge. But instead the seabed lurched upward and the supporting volcanic lava lake beneath cascaded into a void of a great, widening chasm, taking the sandy bottom of the Mediterranean with it, and that was followed quickly by the sea itself.