



The Armageddon Compact

As long as society has existed, there have been those who would set themselves above their fellows. Those with power and influence found themselves congregating into groups of like-minded individuals to better manage their control. The wisest among them realized that those who rule in public open themselves to the scrutiny of the masses. By steering mankind from behind the scenes, one could avoid the worst consequences of misspent power. And so, humanity has been ruled since its beginning.

Throughout the years, the hands steering the fate of nations have changed many times over. Organizations rise, and organizations fall. In the modern day, some of the most influential societies have formed together under a treaty of mutual support known as The Armageddon Compact.

In 1465, a member of the Conclave of the New Dawn acquired a mysterious tome said to have been discovered in ancient ruins in the depths of the ocean. They hoped that the forbidden rituals contained within would grant them mastery over the Conclave. Working behind the scenes, a collection of fellow occultists were summoned, and a ritual was performed at the Conclave's then headquarters in Naples. What the ritual's true intent was, none can say. Instead, a rift was torn in the fabric of reality, creating a passageway into what could only be described as hell. What became of the ritualists none can say.

Over the next several hours, those of the Conclave outside the immediate vicinity of the ritual barely survived the unspeakable horror leaking from the rift. The sun itself is said to have turned blue, and corpses rose from their graves as far away as the North Sea. If ritualists from the Society of the Crimson Veil, following the strings of fraying fate, had not arrived a day later, all would certainly have been lost. Fortunately, the warlocks arrived in time and were able to seal the tear.

As the rift closed, with it went any memory of the event. Only those present that were protected by the mind mages of the Crimson Veil remembered what had occurred.

Even still, all memory of the perpetrator's identity, and indeed any direct evidence of their existence, was completely erased from all human history.

In the wake of these horrendous events, the Society of the Crimson Veil and the Conclave of the New Dawn formed a tentative alliance. The Conclave would provide funding and influence to help support the Crimson Veil's mission to suppress and contain such dangerous workings.

This decision would prove wise just seven years later as the same rift would tear itself open once again. With the skilled mystics of the Society of the Crimson Veil, the tear was closed in short order with minimal complications. Unfortunately, that was just the beginning. Thirteen years later, another rift opened, this time far to the north in the Kingdom of France. When the church became aware of the phenomenon, the pope sent the Priory of the Scion to investigate and drive back the forces of hell. Despite their thaumaturgical skill, they were unable to close the Hellmouth until a contingent from the Society and Conclave arrived to assist them.

In the aftermath of this incident, the three groups joined together under a treaty known as the Armageddon Compact, promising to aid one another in protecting this world from that which lies beyond. In time, the scope of the alliance would grow, as each of the three societies influenced each other and began to exert a stronger influence on the mundane world.

Almost two centuries went by without another breach, and those in the Armageddon Compact grew lax in their supposed duties. Their eyes turned once more to material influence. Throughout this time, they were not acting unopposed. From the shadows, the Sisterhood of Eporita worked diligently to counter their abuses, wielding their subtle influences where they could. When on All Saints Day in 1755, another hellmouth opened in Lisbon, the Armageddon Compact was completely unprepared. Fortunately, a coven of the Sisterhood happened to be nearby and worked their magic to contain its energy as best they could.

Unfortunately, the city itself was largely destroyed in the process as fissures opened up in the street, swallowing buildings whole. Eventually, they were able to seal it, but the cost in lives was in the tens of thousands. Shortly thereafter, the Armageddon Compact invited the Sisterhood to join. They agreed to do so under the condition that they would watch the other members of the organization and hold them accountable for any abuses they may inflict. Desperate to bolster their now flagging organization, the societies of the Armageddon Compact agreed.

Over the following centuries, hellmouths would periodically open throughout the world, typically once every five decades or so. The Compact remained vigilant through this time, sealing the rifts as they appeared. It seemed that although it wasn't possible to stop them from opening, a sort of equilibrium had been achieved.

This all changed when a rift opened up in the deserts of Nevada in 1947. The United States military quickly quarantined the area, called in the experts of the Department of Extranormal Affairs, and built a secure military facility around the Entropic Cascade, as they had dubbed the event. It would be several weeks before the Armageddon Compact became aware of the anomaly, and even then, their efforts to gain access to it were largely rebuffed.

For the next 3 years, the Hellmouth remained open and under constant study by the government. Around the world, strange and unexplained events continued to occur with increasing frequency. In time, the DEA realized that the rift was growing, and when an entire nearby town completely vanished, the project itself was in danger of being shut down. Fortunately, a member of the Conclave of the New Dawn with strong influence in the US government was able to spin this to their advantage, gaining access to the site for the Compact's mystics.

Having been preparing for the event, the Compact was quickly able to shut down the rift, triggering natural disasters as far away as the Swiss Alps. At first, it seemed that disaster was averted, but only a year later, another rift opened up. Although it was quickly closed, new rents would appear with increasing frequency, typically no more than a year or two apart. Fortunately, since then, none have been allowed to remain open any longer than a few days, and a new equilibrium was achieved.

That ended with last year's ritual when the entire team vanished. Not only that, but it seems all extant copies of the rituals used to close the hellmouths have vanished with them. At first, it seemed that they had succeeded at their task, but it became quickly apparent that something had gone wrong. None could enter the site of the anomaly. Anyone who did so found themselves back home in their own beds the next morning, with no memory of how they got there. Regardless of how far away they lived from the site. Once again, unnatural events have been occurring with increasing frequency. The Armageddon Compact has assembled a new team to close the rift, but this time, no one knows precisely how it can be done. Even still, an attempt must be made as the fabric of reality grows thin and the fate of the world is at stake.

Welcome to The Crucible Chronicle: Armageddon Compact.