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Cariel incites rebellion

Hank followed the trail of the fireball that was Cariel. Sight of anything else was obscured. The helicopter's instrument panels had all died on entering the cloud. He'd had only the briefest of meetings with Helen and the incandescent creature ahead of him, but the whole ship knew they were from Eve, and that was enough. If she was Eve's partner, then nothing was going to stop him from being at the head of the attack force, nor of following her into hell itself if he had to. Two further heavily armed helicopters formed a "V" formation behind him, and he was comforted to know his marine contingent were some of the best fighting men he had ever seen.

Cariel had done a hasty review of the ship's weaponry, and despite Captain Baker's vehement misgivings, Helen had presented such a persuasive argument, that he had finally allowed Cariel to enhance them in some way, or so she claimed. She had certainly been doing something, as the static in the air had forced everyone to vacate the area. She guided the submarine to a position directly under where she said the centre of the city was; and instructed the USS *Fairweather* to a point of latitude, that gave a perfect forty-five-degree attack angle and trajectory range for the ship's ballistics.

There had been a moment of extreme tension when Cariel had faced off Helen's near fanatical insistence, that she be with Cariel in the first wave of the attack. Hank had half expected another barrage of static lightening to drive them all away, and wasn't sure whether it would emanate from Cariel or Helen. But Helen finally succumbed to the creature's calm logic, and slunk off sulkily, grabbing an MB40 machine gun from the weapons rack as she did so. No one tried to stop her. Had Hank never known Eve, he would have counted Helen as the most formidable woman he had ever met, but would have to qualify that, to include only human women.

At an agreed signal from Cariel, Hank hovered his helicopter just