

Weird Tales



ALL STORIES NEW—NO REPRINTS

SEPTEMBER, 1946

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Not Human



BY BERT DAVID ROSS

I ECHOED Parhampsa's words: "Not human!" My first thought, considering the Hindu's broken English was that he had used the wrong word. "Don't you mean 'inhuman'?"

"No my friend. This Djarling, whom our so unhappy Rene call her son—he is not human. He is a tulka." The dark unfathomable eyes of Parhampsa seemed to penetrate the inner workings of my being.

Heading by A. R. TILBURNE

Have you before ever met that mute, animalistic monstrosity—the tulka?

"A tulka?" I groped frantically—some-where I had heard that word. Something about it connoted a monstrosity—a mute, animalistic entity.

"I have not speak before," said Parhampsa, "because that Rene have not told me until today that she will stay here with you until all is finished."

I barely registered the ominous note in his words. I was struggling to make the hook-up between Djarling, Rene's six-foot curly-haired blond giant of a son, and a tulka.

"For your safety it is that I speak now," continued Parhampsa. "You notice how quickly he grow strong in the three days since we came ashore? And how Rene grow pale?"

That was the very thing which had made me bring Parhampsa out to the garden where we could talk alone—that almost miraculous change in Djarling in those few days since I had met the three of them at Smith's Cove in Scattle and brought them here to my home at the Heights.

"You mean," I asked, gripping the iron railing, "his sudden recovery has something to do with being 'not human'?"

"Yes, my friend. A tulka have no life of its own. Djarling exist only as part of Rene. She brought him into life—her life force feeds him—and he will dissolve when she die—"

I looked aghast at his passive face. "But how? How did she create him in the first place? And why was he so weak, so different—almost dead—when you landed, just three days ago?"

The picture flashed through my mind—my meeting them at the dock—Rene fighting off reporters, Parhampsa dignified and silent, a colorful turbaned being from the mystic East; and Djarling. Rene's wire a week earlier had not forewarned me of these two; it had only said:

ARRIVING EMPRESS THIBET MON-
DAY PLEASE MEET BOAT-URGENT.
RENE

Standing there in the waiting room as I first saw them, Rene was flushed and distraught by the persistence of a chap with a

camera and his companion whom I recognized as the society reporter on the Gazette.

I hurried across the big waiting room to Rene's rescue. There was that strange expression in her eyes as she looked at Djarling standing between herself and the Hindu. Djarling was weaving unsteadily on his feet, his fashionable clothes bagging ridiculously, many sizes too large for him, his face and eyes those of a living corpse who might recently have escaped from some concentration camp.

From her expression, I judged him to be some stranger who was molesting her. But I was not even close enough to call, when I saw her face change. It flooded with pity. She reached for his hand and held it under her arm.

My attention jerked back to what Parhampsa was saying: "On shipboard, the long voyage from Bombay, Djarling have to sleep in a cabin apart from Rene—a cabin of steel."

He leaned against a madrona tree and gazed across the Sound as though he had answered everything.

"Look here!" I argued. "Of course he would sleep apart from her! Why should that make him sick?"

Parhampsa found it difficult to explain.

A tulka, it seemed, was a being whom by certain magic forms one created for some specific purpose. The size, age, sex and all physical attributes were identical with those of the picture formed in the mind of the one by whom or for whom the tulka was created.

A tulka could not eat nor speak. It needed no sleep. It need only touch the one who called it into being to be renewed in vigor. When its creator slept it lapsed into coma. When the creator died, it disintegrated.

Djarling had been created at the time of that fateful expedition across the Himalayas—the one on which Rene's husband Pierre Rodener the anthropologist was lost.

In the dangerous passes high in the jagged peaks and the ice-packed trails, Rene had seen those mute figures which joined the expedition, seeming to appear from nowhere. One of them walked at her side, holding her from slipping.

"She insist on knowing who are these strange helpers," explained Parhampsa.

"When I tell her and explain, she ask if I create one for her, just as she picture him. That night she make the image before she sleep. In the morning he stand at her side, his hand touching her wrist when she awake. She name it Djarling."

"What did Pierre think about it? They say he used to be madly jealous of Rene. I never met him, you know."

"He did not like this Djarling. But he did not live to build his dislike into hate. Djarling push him off the trail. They tell you, in the newspaper that he slip. Not so. Djarling push him."

I could feel my back hair rise. "You mean—this thing—this Djarling—murdered—"

Parhampsa stopped me quickly with a sharp gesture.

"Remember: Djarling have no life of himself. He is but the expression of Rene. She feel angry for a moment—just as you feel at times. At that moment, Djarling was at her husband's side. He pushed him over the cliff."

The Hindu's deep searching eyes were fixed on me. I felt he was reading every thought that tumbled through my mind.

"And you ask," he put into words for me, "how this creature, this tulka, may be destroyed? I who have create him have power also to release him. I beg Rene, before we leave Thibet, to permit that I release him."

"Why didn't she—"

"She cry out: 'My Son! It is my Son! All my life I have seen him in my dreams—his curly golden hair and blue eyes and his beautiful body! I can not kill him now! I can not!'"

"My God! What are we going to do?" I implored.

Parhampsa answered in his quiet even voice: "It is for her, Rene, to say—not for me, though perhaps for you. Your Karma, through many lives, is linked with hers."

"Past lives, you mean? Or lives to come? I remember when I first met her as students together, how strongly I was drawn to her—"

"Yes, she tell me—about how she marry Professor Rodener because you not speak to her of marriage—"

"She told you that?" I cried. "I thought that she loved Rodener. I didn't want to come between her and the famous anthropologist—if she loved him!"

Parhampsa's dark eyes held a soft friendliness. "Perhaps now you will act, my friend. No?"

"But what can I do? If she is the only one who can give the word to destroy this monster—but tell me, Parhampsa: how *can* they be killed, or destroyed?"

"We who create them know also how to release them. If love for you give Rene strength to decide, then at her command I shall destroy Djarling and return his essence to my own land from which it came."

"Yes, for God's sake don't leave any of its germs lying around here. Fancy what Hitler would do with an unlimited army of tulkas, indestructible by any weapon—not eating—"

"But unless Rene rouse herself to beg this of me soon, she die. She grow weaker hour by hour. It is for you to know this I have left her side and come here to talk. This country is not like India. Here the air is full of strong vibration of hate, fear, lust—here tulka grow powerful."

I swung and started for the house, fast. Parhampsa with long strides went calmly at my side.

"Tell me," I asked, remembering the fate of Professor Rodener, "can Djarling harm me?"

"Only if Rene wish you harm. But I do not think she have in her heart any hate for you. Beside, I shall be near, watching, my friend. . . . Now, if you please," said Parhampsa, stopping, "while you talk to her for the next two hours I shall retire alone to the silence."

He turned down the terrace toward his room. I opened the rear door of the hall and went in.

I heard voices in the parlor. A wide-brimmed black missionary Stetson hung on the rack. I strode into the parlor, knowing I would find the well-known Reverend Tobias, lanky, black-garbed as always—and his eagle-nosed wife.

Rene rose as I stopped in the doorway. She said to me: "Oh Clark! I'm glad you came!" She steadied herself, holding to her

chair. Her face—the dear Irish oval face that had risen in my memory whenever in the past I thought about getting married, was strangely transparent in the sunlight.

She struggled for energy to speak. "Reverend Tobias wants me to return with him. There is a meeting of the executive board of the Alumni Association at the White Building at three-thirty today. He wants me to confer with them. They are planning a series of lectures for me in the fall."

As though I had suddenly become clairvoyant I could see through the shell of pink powder carefully dusted on her cheeks to simulate health. Underneath I could see the tissues of her flesh, devitalized, chalk white.

I was shocked at seeing how near she was to collapse. But before I had time to reply, a door at the far side of the room opened and Djarling stood there, looking in.

He was buoyant with life. His clothes, which had been six inches too large for him only three days ago were tight now and his beautifully muscled shoulders and neck bulged above his open white sport shirt.

There was a little twitter of surprise and admiration from Mrs. Tobias. And the Reverend took a step forward, his eyebrows arching.

Rene swayed and clutched the chair.

"The blond devil!" flashed through my mind as sudden realization came to me. "That's why she is so weak—her strength has gone into—him!"

I heard Rene murmur imploringly: "Not now Djarling, please! I'll call you."

And the creature with its tight blond curls turned, smiling amiably and went out.

Reverend Tobias stood immobile, his face questioning. I caught Rene's haunted eyes.

I lied. I had to. They knew Rene had been married only three years. She could not introduce Djarling as her son!

"That's a friend of mine," I lied. "Djarling is his name. He's staying here with me, Reverend Tobias. He came across on the same boat with Rene: he and a very interesting Hindu named Parhampsa. . . . Djarling—sounds like 'darling' doesn't it?"

Rene lifted her eyes to mine in mute gratitude.

Angular Mrs. Tobias twittered: "I

thought of course Mrs. Rodener said 'darling' and I couldn't imagine—"

"Now my dear," interrupted the Reverend in rounded pulpit tones.

I lied on: "Djarling had planned a set of tennis with Rene—with Mrs. Rodener. She needs exercise and rest. I don't like to see her start a lecture tour, not until she has regained her strength—"

The Reverend interrupted me: "But Mrs. Rodener must go with us to this meeting of the Alumni Association. It is very important. As Chairman, I have the responsibility—"

I helped Rene into a cloak and managed to whisper: "I *must* talk to you just as soon as you come home.—Djarling is—"

I FELT that Rene, separated from Djarling, was out of danger of his sucking her precious life force. Parhampsa was not to be disturbed for almost two hours. I could do some concentrated thinking and get at the solution of this perplexing problem.

I knew I could think better if I ate. I went to the kitchen and the cook helped me ravage the refrigerator. I found a knuckle of ham, a pitcher of lemonade and celery. These, with some hard rye bread, I took to my study.

An hour later I went into the music room and played Brahms. His music always relieves me and makes it easier for me to think.

I do not know how long I played. A hand laid on my shoulder startled me and jerked me back to reality.

It was Parhampsa. "Where is Rene?" he demanded.

I told him. "She will phone when she is ready to come home and we shall drive—" He was standing motionless, his strange eyes wide. "Why—what is wrong?" I asked. "Did my playing—?"

"Come! Quickly! You know where this meeting is being held? Is your car fast? We must reach her before he does!" He looked at me almost with anger and made an imperious gesture as I remained passive.

"Before *he* does? Who? Whom do you mean?"

"Djarling! Hurry! Talk later!"

I stumbled from the bench. "But Djarling is—" I was following his quick stride

across the room. "But look here, man—Djarling does not know where she is!"

I stopped, holding to the door, that he might realize that Djarling was in no danger of reaching her.

"Fool!" he exclaimed. "We have so little time! Come!"

Something about the tempo of his movements, his words—so different from his usual calm—sent a tremor of fear through me. I ran for the garage.

We roared out of the drive and along the winding asphalt through the Heights. It had been raining and I had to slow down for the dangerous curves and crossings. Finally I reached the arterial and then I made speed.

"How far?" Parhampsa asked me.

"In the White Building, center of town. That's nine miles. . . . But how will Djarling get there? How will he know where to find her? He didn't hear—"

"He would go to her across mountain or desert or sea—taking the shortest path. There is a link between them that guide him."

"But he's never been in city traffic, has he? How about that?" I had a sense of impotence even while asking the question.

"He will know. He has only to call upon her for guidance. Her intelligence live in him also—"

I focused on making my way down the heavy traffic of Ballard Avenue. Then I cut across the dangerous maze of Queen Anne streets and hit forty along Fifth Avenue to within a few blocks of Pike. Here I swung into a parking lot and called out to the attendant:

"Have a kid drive my car around the block until I come back—it'll be ten minutes or so." I expected, of course, that we were going to hurry Rene away from the meeting and take her home at once.

The red light stopped us at Fourth and Pike.

"There he is!" exclaimed Parhampsa.

I saw Djarling coming up Westlake. The streets were crowded but even at that distance I could see people make way for him and stop to turn and stare as he passed.

He was still in his white flannels, sport shirt open at the neck, his beautiful tight

golden curls shining as the sun reflected from the rain on his hair.

His tennis shoes and cuffs of his trousers were bedraggled. I fancied that he had cut diagonally across Queen Anne Park through the grass.

"There's the green light—let's cross," I said to Parhampsa. "He'll have to stop for the red light and we'll have time to reach Rene—third floor on the—"

I froze. Cars had been moving, a solid stream. Behind the first of them an oasis formed; a big passenger bus in the middle of the block had held up traffic. Now it was coming down the hill from the Olympic Hotel, picking up speed.

Out from the dense crowd where Djarling stood, a little girl walked quickly, waving her hand at someone on the opposite curb and calling "Mamma! Mamma!"

A woman dashed to catch her and draw her back. She missed and she jumped back, herself, to safety.

Djarling nonchalantly followed the child, who was running now. He stopped leisurely and looked at the bus bearing straight down upon him.

There was a screech of brakes. The bus swung sideways. Djarling disappeared under the hood. The driver released the brakes, to roll free as the bus passed over him.

Women screamed. From the crowd near me I heard that strangest of human sounds—the sighing half-hysterical moan of horror mingled with the "Ah's" of gratification at witnessing a horrible accident first-hand.

Djarling lay transversely across the road, flattened like a figure of straw at his extremities, bulging in the middle.

The muddy treads of the huge dual tires had printed their passage across his flannels and across his white shirt and golden curls and his head was flattened to the thinness of a waffle. There was no sign of blood!

For a moment no one moved. Then a few men stepped from the curb and started toward him, tentatively. They hesitated, stopped to stare, and turned back.

"Watch!" Parhampsa whispered in my ear.

I could not believe what I actually witnessed.

The golden curls were moving as though

some horrible putrescence had already set in. Then I saw that the whole head was swelling—reshaping itself! I could not drag my eyes from it to see if his flattened limbs were reforming too.

There was a movement in the crowd—tensing as they pushed forward to watch this unbelievable thing. And from their throats rose gasps and cries. I heard the “kerplop” of women fainting and dropping on the sidewalk.

Djarling stirred, shook himself, and rose to his feet. His head, turned away from me, was flat on both sides as though it had merely been crushed half-flat in a press. Yet even as I stared, the ears and cheeks rounded out!

Smiling, he walked toward the curb!

The crowd fell back to either side making a passageway. Their faces were white with terror. But his glowed pink.

“Quick!” I heard Parhampsia urge. I realized that he had already dragged me halfway across the street. We dashed into the White Building behind Djarling.

And behind us streamed a host of frenzied mortals.

They were crying: “It is a Miracle Man! He was killed! I saw Him killed! And He is alive! He MUST be a Miracle Man!”

They crowded up the stairs behind us, shoving and crying out. Djarling never once looked back.

He went along the hall. And now I know how it was that he had walked the nine miles from my home to the center of the city in so short a time. I had to run to keep up with him.

The door opened, down the hall. The gaunt tall form of Reverend Tobias stood there, a sheaf of papers in one hand, the other hand raised, commanding silence.

Djarling pushed past him unconcerned almost upsetting the astounded Reverend.

“What is the meaning of this?” demanded Reverend Tobias looking first at me, then at Parhampsia and then staring dumbfounded at the mob in the hall.

Shouts made a bedlam in the marble-lined corridor. The foremost of the mob elbowed their way past me and shoved the Reverend aside. He caught one of them by the arm and pulled him to one side.

The excited man was answering the Reverend’s rapid-fire questions. The mob kept pouring into the room, to the evident consternation of the group seated at a paper-strewn table.

Parhampsia and I went quickly across the room to Rene. Djarling had reached her side and was standing close to her, gripping her wrists with his hands, his head tilted back, his eyes partly closed.

Rene was white; in another minute she would have fainted. Her eyes sought mine. Parhampsia said, very low: “Make him stand away from you—quickly!” Rene obeyed, and the tulka, smiling, did as she told him at once.

I started to explain to Rene what had happened, when two policemen marched into the room. Reverend Tobias caught their elbows and drew them into a huddle with several of the mob. One of the officers kept looking across at us. Soon he came faltering across the room. He stared at Djarling as though in awe. He spoke to me:

“This—this here guy in the flannels—he’s living at your home in the Heights?”

“Yes, that is true,” I answered.

“Well, Mister, we gotta take him out there right away. This thing that’s happened—it’ll cause a riot. We’ll call a squad car—’taint safe fer you and him to walk on the streets—even s’posin’ we could let you go.”

“Bring the car around,” I said. “Tell me which entrance and I’ll have my party there. There are four of us—Mrs. Rodener here, and my two friends—”

“Sorry, Mister, I’ll have to take you and the Hindu down to Headquarters to make a report—the chief’ll want to know all about him—” looking blinkingly at Djarling.

I argued but I could not wangle permission even for Parhampsia to go with Rene. The policeman practically dragged us off with him. Before I left Rene I managed to whisper:

“I’ll be home right away. Don’t let Djarling ride beside you or touch you—*please!*”

And then, Parhampsia stalking ahead, the officer and I following, we made our way through the crowded hall.

It was an hour before the chief was ready to see us. He had been questioning wit-

esses brought in by other officers and had evidently been saving the interview with Parhampsa and myself until all the reporters who were in his good graces had arrived.

I phoned John, out at the house, to tell him to lock all the doors and windows after Rene and Djarling arrived.

"They're here already!" said my man. "And there's a policeman at every door and a whole string of 'em solid clear around the estate! What's happened?"

I did not try to explain. I asked Parhampsa what in God's name we should do.

"Do nothing," he said curtly. "Karma is more powerful than man. We can but try to hold back the tragedy."

"Tragedy! . . . But you've told me that you can destroy this beast just as soon as Rene gives permission. I'll get it from her. We'll race back to her just as soon as they let us out of here. . . . Tell me—what is there that can happen? What can Djarling do to her?"

Parhampsa was regarding me speculatively. His eyes reminded me of my father's that time in my childhood when he was debating whether or not to explain the facts of life to me.

"You must be told," he said finally. "Rene is very weak. She is close to the end. She grow faint—Djarling stand over her gripping her wrists. Suddenly her life surge into him. From that moment he talk and think while she lie, eyes open but unable to move or sleep!"

"Oh! God! How long could that go on? How could you stop it once it got that far?"

"Only by if she die or be killed can he be destroyed then. In the time of Bhudda a tulka ruled as Rajah Bondar. The true Rajah lay in the palace, a shell only. His wives kept him alive with milk and broths. The tulka ruled for years—years of crime and gluttony and terror. . . . In their lives since then, the wives have learned from the terrible Karma they brought upon themselves that it would have been less a sin to have cast the shell of the true Rajah into the fire—"

An officer interrupted beckoning us to follow him. The chief called me to the desk. I couldn't give him much satisfaction. I told him that the Being (they were all

using this name for Djarling, though in quite a different sense than I used it) and Parhampsa had arrived three days before with Rene and I knew nothing about the past of either of the men. The chief called Parhampsa and started a long process of questioning. I saw a chance to make a break.

I excused myself to the reporter who had cornered me. I beckoned to an imaginary person near the door as though I wanted to speak to him. The crowd let me through.

Then at the door I called to someone in the hall: "Oh, Harry! Wait a minute—I want to talk to you!" It worked again.

I caught up with the fellow in the hall. He laughed, saying: "I guess you took me to be someone else." We went along to the washroom together. I knew that there was an entrance to it from both halls.

I went straight through the room and out into the other hall. From there on I made time. Once out on the avenue, where dusk had brought out the street lights, I ran. At the first drug store I popped into the phone booth and called a taxi. And then I remembered my car.

I wondered if the parking lot manager was still having a boy drive it around the block. I phoned the lot and told them to have my car at the curb, ready.

The taxi seemed to take an hour going the few blocks to the parking lot. But once I was in my own car and out of the downtown traffic, I made up for it.

The police stopped me at my home but they let me through when I identified myself. The crowds around the grounds were milling aimlessly or standing under the light of street lamps or in front of automobile headlights reading papers with big headlines—some rush edition undoubtedly of the "miracle."

John let me in and got me past the two lieutenants on the inside.

"Where is she?" I demanded. "Where is Mrs. Rodener?"

"She is in her room—and the man who hasn't spoken—the one all this fuss is about—he is with her. . . . Say, it isn't true what they're saying is it—"

I didn't wait to answer. I took the stairs three at a time and ran down the hall to her room.

"Rene!" I called. "May I come in?"

There was no answer. My heart was pounding so hard I could hear nothing else as I stopped to listen.

"Rene!" I warned her. "I'm coming in!"

I opened the door.

She was there, lying on the bed and Djarling stood beside her holding her wrist tightly in his hands. I could see her hand white and fragile, hanging limp. He hadn't paid any attention to me. He was leaning, listening as though to hear signs of life in Rene.

I rushed to her and jerked her hand from him. Then I knelt down over her to shield her. I felt his two powerful hands circle my chest and lift me as effortlessly as if I had been a child instead of a two-hundred-pound man.

A wild idea had come to me on that drive home. It was uppermost in my mind now that I faced the crisis.

I left the room and hurried to the bathroom. I jerked out the medicine chest with the drugs and hypodermics. I had to read a lot of the labels before I found one I could use.

I remember wishing that I had used the darn kit at least once since I had stowed it there for an emergency.

Back in the room, at Rene's side, I knelt at her side, this time leaving Djarling in possession of her wrist. I stroked her hair. Djarling looked down at me blankly.

Then I slipped my right arm under her head as though to support it. And I worked the hypodermic out from inside my coat sleeve where I had concealed it. I got it ready, my thumb on the plunger, my forefinger hunting the spot on her neck where I could plunge the needle safely.

Parhamps had said: "When she sleeps he loses consciousness." But would a drug make him drop her wrist—in time? My trembling hand forced the needle, quickly, clear in.

I saw her eyelids that had been wide open, flicker and relax. But I had no time to watch, for above me I heard an inhuman strangling moan—it was the same awful sound I once heard a huge pig make when our hired man plunged a knife deep in its throat to pierce its heart.

The whole weight of the tulka body—the Being who had conquered death!—fell forward across myself and Rene.

I struggled free and rolled him on the floor. My first thought was to hide the hypodermic. Then I realized that there was no need of that—I had not murdered him!

My next concern was to get the great heavy body into the adjoining bedroom. This I managed by lifting it on an upholstered chair on rollers and shoving chair and body through the door. I locked the door to the hall and bolted the windows.

And then I sat down at Rene's side and waited.

Half an hour later I went down to direct the lieutenants to order the cordon of police to give immediate entrance to Parhamps when he arrived.

It was an hour before he joined me. He was calm and uncommunicative. He made no comment when I told him what I had done.

I asked: "How long will Rene have to remain unconscious before Djarling will shrink small enough so I can put him in the refrigerator?" I realized from Parhamps's expression how grotesque my question must have sounded. My relief at getting the best of Djarling had stirred a kind of grisly humor in me.

"Why the refrigerator? Is that not where food is stored?"

"I have an extra one. You said the tulka would shrink if we kept him away from Rene and within steel walls. . . . There is about this large a space." I outlined with my hands.

"Three days," Parhamps assured me.

"And will he keep growing smaller all the time—now that we have separated him from Rene?"

"Yes. But very slowly after she wake. It will be a month before he can be encased in a glass ball. A year later he will have shrink to size of a small diamond."

"Diamond?" I questioned. "You mean we could enclose him in a diamond and leave him there for good?"

"Yes. But you must guard it carefully—for if ever it be unsealed he will come back again and it will be to do over. But in three days when you wake Rene you must ask her

to give permission for me to release him. That is safer."

I CALLED in a doctor and a nurse. They supplied nourishment to Rene intravenously. I kept her asleep three days.

The cordon of police remained, weary and harassed by the near-rioting mobs that milled about the place. Twice I had to appear on the balcony and address them by loud speaker. I assured them that the "Being" did not choose to show Himself!

And then, after stuffing the baby-sized mass of flabby flesh that had been Djarling, into the refrigerator, I let Rene wake.

I told her all that had happened. And I told her, too, what these three days at her bedside had brought clearly to me, that I loved her; I had always loved her!

When she bent her pale fragile face toward mine and gave me her lips I thought that we had won our victory. But even though Parhampsa added his pleas to mine, I could not bring her to give her consent to have Djarling released.

We had let the chief come to the estate to make a search after I phoned a frantic message to him that the "Being" was nowhere to be found!

I was so happy and buoyant by that time that I let my facetiousness rule me. I took the "Being"—he was pretty small by this time—and compressed him in a deep vegetable tray and covered him with a bunch of beets!

But I made my mistake when, a month later I had an idea how nice Djarling would look in the green crystal butter dish—it was so like a coffin!

Next day, while I was out on the links and Rene was busy preparing her lectures on Thibet, she went to the spare refrigerator for ice!

John told me, when I came in that Rene had been in her room all afternoon. He thought he had heard her weeping.

I ran up. She answered plaintively, saying that I might come in. She was covered up, in bed. When I went to her, she put back the warm white blankets and there, close against her side, was the pink baby-sized Thing!

It was moving, its tiny fists clutching one of her wrists!

"My God! Rene! You'll bring it back to life! Oh, why did you do this? Don't you *want* our freedom?"

She burst into sobs, reaching for my hand.

"Lover—I can't kill him! I can't! Parhampsa has begged me and so have you—but he seems a very part of myself! He is the son whom I have dreamed of—and I have a terrible feeling that I will kill my own son, if I give Parhampsa the right to disintegrate him. . . . What shall we do! . . . What is there we can do—unless I kill myself?"

She became hysterical. I tried to quiet her but could not. She let me take the Thing and wrap it in a blanket and put it at her side. I pinioned its arms so they could not reach her wrists, however.

I rang for John and whispered for him to call my doctor.

RENE, exhausted, fell asleep. The doctor tiptoed in and I whispered to him to inject an opiate again.

This time I kept her unconscious until the Thing was small enough so that I could stuff him into a tin deposit box—I had to put him into something I could carry downtown to a rented locker in a cold storage room.

I walked right along with the mob on Eighth Avenue, carrying the "Being" in his tin box. I wondered how many of those I passed were still excited about the miraculous appearance and disappearance of the Miracle Man!

I wish now that I had put him into the diamond engagement ring which I gave Rene before we were married. Then he would always have been safe. But like a damn fool I had him poured into a hole the jeweler bored in a smaller diamond—one of those in the necklace I gave her:

A year ago the necklace was stolen!

Some jeweler will buy the necklace from a fence. He will notice that one of the stones is imperfect. He will cut it into smaller stones.

And Djarling, freed, across desert or sea or mountain will return! And it will all have to be done again!