

July

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# AMAZING STORIES

HUGO GERNSBACK  
EDITOR



Stories by  
**H.G. WELLS**  
**A. MERRITT**  
**A. HYATT VERRILL**

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JULES VERNE'S TOMBSTONE AT AMIENS  
PORTRAYING HIS IMMORTALITY

# AMAZING STORIES

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### Our Cover

this month depicts a scene from "Radio Mates" by Benjamin Witwer, in which the scientist—at one time the victim of a vicious plot—is ready to turn the aerial switch, which will cause his sweetheart, in the mammoth transmitter tube, to disappear gradually and be transmitted through space by ether wave action, and be reproduced at some distant point, where he expects to follow immediately in like manner.

## In Our Next Issue:

**THE WAR OF THE WORLDS**, by H. G. Wells (a serial in 2 parts) Part I. In his characteristic manner, this famous author of scientification, gives us a vital, fast-moving story about a not too impossible attack upon the Earth by Martians sometime in the future. He gives us some strange and astounding ideas about the Martians, their means and methods of warfare, and adds to the realism and picturesqueness of the story by his vivid descriptions of well-known localities in England.

**THE RETREAT TO MARS**, by Cecil B. White. The discovery of a complete Martian library in a cave in Africa furnishes this leading author-astronomer of the West ample opportunity to tell an absorbing story of vivid detail about Martians. The mathematics contained in the story only add to its *verisemblance*. This is an unusual story, excellently told.

**THE CHEMICAL MAGNET**, by Victor Thaddeus. The suggestions of what chemistry in the future may yet accomplish is largely responsible for the atmosphere of sober reality which pervades this rather wonderful story. We know that the ocean contains gold in enormous quantities. Why not extract it?

**ELECTRO-EPISODED** in A. D. 2025, by E. D. Skinner. This is humorous story, in which radio out-radios itself, creating many marvelous wonders that seem extremely real and possible; it is a very interesting combination of wit, science and fiction.

**THE SHADOW ON THE SPARK**, by Edward S. Sears. To possess perfect health and a robust physique, does not mean that death from shock is impossible. On the other hand, if such a person dies, apparently from the effect of an operation for the amputation of a leg, some suspicion as to the real cause of his death is justifiable. Our new author weaves his science through this unusual murder story in a thoroughly ingenious manner.

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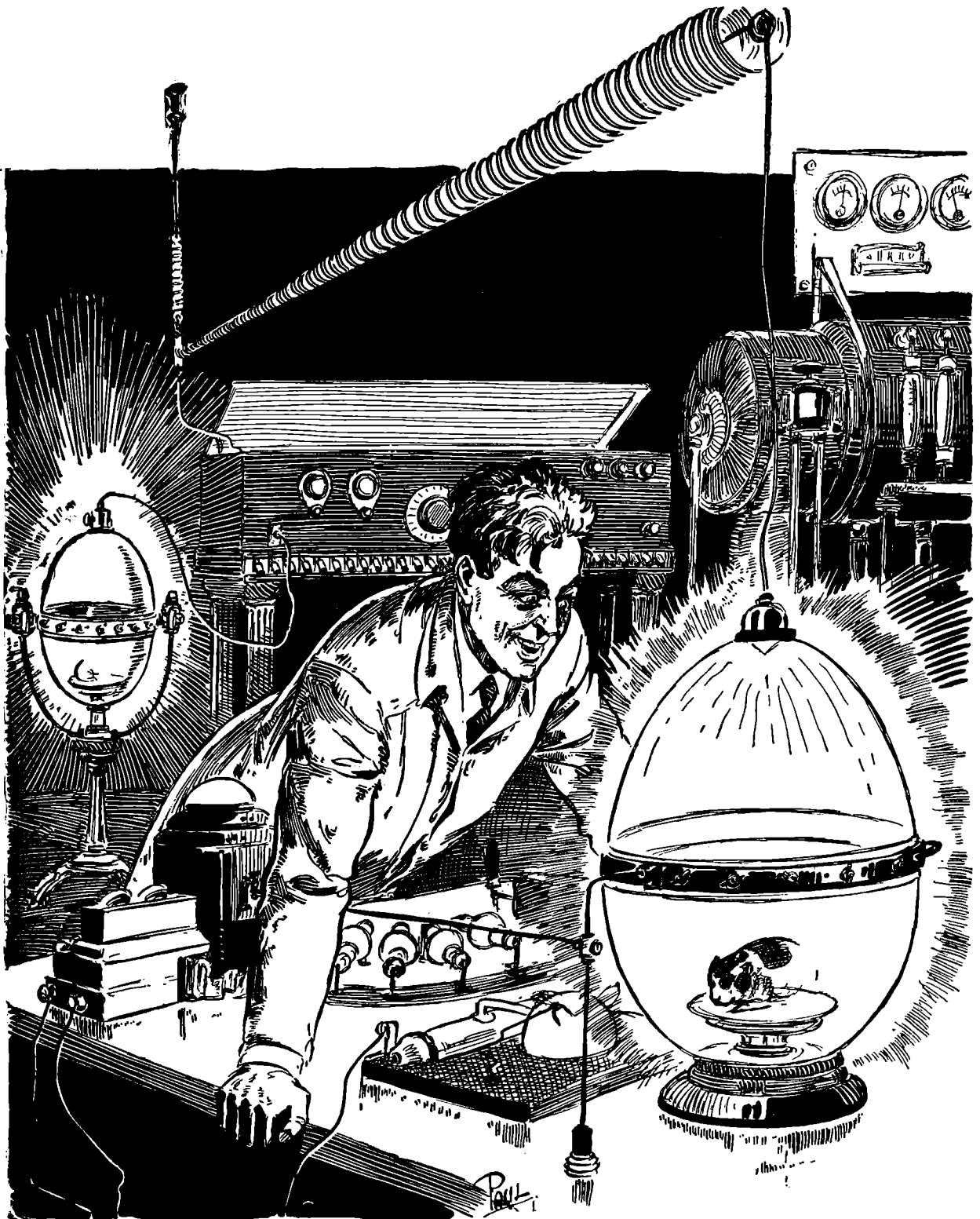
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# RADIO MATES

*By Benjamin Witwer*



"Think of it! A twist of a switch and the living, breathing piglet slowly dissolved before my eyes and vanished along a pair of wires to my aerial, whence it was transferred as a set of waves in the ether to the receiving apparatus—there to reincarnate into the living organism once more, alive and breathing, unharmed by its extraordinary journey!"

**I**T was a large brown envelope, of the size commonly used for mailing pamphlets or catalogues. Yet it was registered, and had come by special messenger that afternoon, my landlady informed me. Probably it was a strain of that detective instinct which is present in most of us that delayed my opening the missive until I had carefully scrutinized the handwriting of the superscription. There was something vaguely familiar in its slanting exactitude, yet when I deciphered the postmark,—“Eastport, N. Y.”—I was still in the dark, for I could not remember ever having heard of the place before. As I turned the packet over, however, my pleasant tingle of anticipation was rudely chilled. Along the flap was a sinister row of black sealing wax blobs, which seemed to stare at me with a malignant fore-knowledge. On closer examination, I noticed that each seal retained the impression of a coat-of-arms, also elusively familiar.

With a strange sense of foreboding I dropped the missive on the table. Queer what ominous significance a few drops of wax can impart to an ordinary envelope. Deliberately I changed into smoking jacket and slippers, poked the well laid fire and lit a pipe before finally tearing open the seals.

There were many typewritten sheets, commencing in letter form:

54 Westervelt Ave.,  
Eastport, New York,  
February 15th.

Dear Cousin George:

Now that you have identified me by referring to my signature on the last page (which I had just done) you will no doubt wonder at the occasion for this rather effusive letter from one so long silent as I have been. The fact of the matter is that you are the only male relative with whom I can communicate at this time. My nephew, Ralph, is first officer of a freighter somewhere in the Caribbean, and Alfred Hutton, your mother's first cousin, has not been heard from since he embarked on that colonizing scheme in New Guinea, nearly a year ago.

I must do all in my power to prevent the bungling metropolitan police from implicating Howard Marsden in my disappearance. It would take no great stretch of the imagination to do just that, and were the State to require Marsden's life as forfeit for my own, then my carefully planned revenge would be utterly frustrated. I have been cultivating the village postmaster for some weeks, ever since this plan began to shape definitely in my mind. I am mailing this letter at three o'clock

this afternoon, for I have noticed that at that hour the postal section of the store is generally deserted. I shall ask him if his clock is correct, thus fixing the time in his mind. Please remember these points. Then I shall register this letter, taking care to exhibit the unusual collection of seals on the back. I shall manage to inform him also that I stamped the seals with my ring and will show him the coat-of-arms, explaining its meaning in detail. These villagers are a curiosity-ridden lot. Upon returning home, I shall drop this same ring into the inkwell which stands upon my desk. Finally I shall proffer my friend the postmaster a fifty-dollar bill in paying for my registry. The registry slip itself will be found within the hatband of my brown hat, which I shall place in the wall safe of my study.

You are becoming more amazed as you proceed, no doubt asking yourself if this letter is the product of a madman or a faker. Before you have finished you will probably be assured that both assumptions are correct. It matters little, for I will at least have firmly established the fact that this letter was mailed by no one else but me. As for the rest, Howard Marsden will corroborate what follows.

To begin at the beginning. As you know, or perhaps you do not know, for I forget that our correspondence has been negligible of late, five years ago I accompanied the Rodgers expedition into Afghanistan. We were officially booked as a geological mission, but were actually in search of radium,—among other things. When I left, I was practically engaged to Venice Potter, a distant relation of the Long Island Potters, of whom you have perhaps heard. I say “practically” engaged because the outcome of this expedition was to furnish me

with the standing and position necessary for a formal demand for her hand. As I said, that was nearly five years ago.

Four months after my departure her letters ceased coming and mine were returned to me unopened. Two months later I received an announcement of her betrothal to Howard Marsden. Received it out there in Afghanistan, when I had returned to the coast for supplies. We'll skip that next year,

during which I stuck with the expedition. We were successful. I returned.

Then I found out where the Marsdens were living, here in Eastport. I'd met Marsden once or twice in the old days, but paid him little attention at the time. He seemed but another of the moneyed idlers; had a comfortable income from his father's estate and was interested in “gentleman farming,”—blooded stock and the rest. I decided that it was useless to dig into dead ashes for the time being, at least until I could determine the lay

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*FROM the telegraph to the telephone was but a step. From the telephone to radio constituted but another such step, and we are now enjoying radio broadcast from stations thousands of miles away. Every time you have an X-ray photograph taken you are bombarded, not by rays, but by actual particles that go right through the walls of the tube, which particles are just as real as if they were bullets or bricks, the only difference being that they are smaller. Thus our scientists lead up to the way of sending solids through space. While impossible of achievement, as yet, it may be possible, years hence, to send living beings through space, to be received at distant points. At any rate, the author of this story weaves a fascinating romance around this idea. It makes excellent reading, and the plot is as unusual as is its entire treatment.*

---

of the land, so to speak. Meanwhile I had my researches to make, a theory I had evolved as a sort of backfire to fill that awful void of Venice's loss,—out there on the edge of the world. Countless sleepless nights I had spent in a feverish attempt to lose myself in scientific speculation. At last I believed I had struck a clue to conclusions until now entirely overlooked by eager searchers. I decided to establish my laboratory here in Eastport, perhaps devoting any leisure hours to an unraveling of that mystery of my sudden jilting. With a two-year-old beard and sunbaked complexion there were few who would have recognized me under my real name, and none in my assumed rôle of "Professor Walters."

**T**HUS it was that I leased an old house not half a mile from Marsden's pretentious "farm." I converted the entire ground floor into a laboratory, living in solitary state upon the upper floor. I was used to caring for myself, and the nature of my experiment being of such potentialities, I felt that I wanted no prying servants about me. Indeed, it has turned out to be of such international importance that I feel no compunction whatever in utilizing it for my own selfish ends. It could be a boon to humanity, yet its possibilities for evil in the hands of any individual or group is so great as to render it most dangerous to the happiness of the human kind on this small globe.

One day, some three months after I had taken up my residence in Eastport, I had a visitor. It was Marsden. He had been attracted by the sight of my novel aerial, just completed. By his own admission he was an ardent "radio fan," as they are popularly termed, I believe, and he spent the better part of an afternoon bragging of stations he had "logged" with his latest model radio set. Aside from my vague suspicions of his complicity in the alienation of my beloved Venice, I must admit that even then I felt an indefinable repulsion towards him. There was something intangibly unwholesome about him, a narrowness between the eyes which repelled me. Yet, although at that time I had no plan in mind, nevertheless I encouraged him in my most hospitable manner, for even thus early I felt, that at some time not far distant, I might be called upon to utilize this acquaintance-ship to my own advantage.

This first visit was followed by others, and we discussed radio in all its phases, for the man had more than a smattering of technical knowledge on the subject and was eager to learn more. At last, one day, I yielded to his insistence that I inspect his set and agreed to dine at his house the following evening. By now I felt secure in my disguise, and although I dreaded the moment when I should actually confront my lost love once more, yet I longed for the sweet pain of it with an intensity which a hard-shelled bachelor like you will never understand. Enough. I arrived at the Marsden's the next evening and was duly presented to my hostess as "Thomas Walters." In spite of my private rehearsals I felt a wave of giddiness sweep over me as I clasped that small white hand in my own after the lapse of almost five years, for she was, if pos-

sible, lovelier than ever. I noted when my vision cleared that her eyes had widened as they met mine. I realized that my perturbation had been more apparent than I imagined and managed to mutter something about my alleged "weak heart," a grimmer jest by far than I intended. Frantically I fortified myself with remembrances of those barren days in Afghanistan, where I stayed on and on, impotent to raise a hand in the salvage of my heart's wreckage.

We chatted politely all through that interminable meal, no morsel of which aroused the faintest appreciation on my dry tongue. Finally the chairs were pushed back and my host excused himself to bring down some pieces of apparatus he had recently purchased, concerning which he professed to desire my invaluable opinion.

No sooner had he left the room than the polite smile dropped from Venice's face like a discarded mask.

"Dick," she cried, "what are you doing here?"

It was my first inkling that she suspected my true identity. I rallied quickly, however, and allowed my self-encouraged bitterness its outlet.

"Had I believed you would recognize me, *Mrs. Marsden*, I should not have inflicted my unwelcome presence upon you, I can assure you."

She bit her lips and her head raised with a jerk. Then her mouth softened again as her great eyes searched mine.

"Yes, but why—" she broke off at the sound of approaching footsteps. Suddenly she leaned forward. "Meet me in the pine grove to-morrow afternoon—four o'clock," she breathed. Then her husband entered.

The remainder of the evening I was forced to listen to Marsden's eager dissertation on the alleged "static eliminator" which had been foisted upon him on his last trip to the city. Mechanically I answered or grunted in simulated appreciation when a pause in his endless monologue warned me that some reply was expected of me; but my pulses were leaping in exultation because of the fleeting hope which those few words from my lost Venice had kindled. I could not imagine why the offer to bridge the breach of years should come from her so voluntarily, yet it was enough for me that she remembered and wished to see me. I cared not why.

I arrived nearly an hour early that next afternoon, for I had been unable either to sleep or work during the interim. I shall not bore you with the particulars of that meeting, even were I free to reveal such sacred details. Suffice to say that after the preliminaries of doubt and misunderstanding had been brushed away—and it was not the simple process this synopsis would seem to infer, I can assure you—I stood revealed as the victim of a most ingenious and thoroughly knavish plot. Boiled down, it resembles one of those early movie scenarios.

You remember I spoke of Venice as related to the Long Island Potters, a branch of the family highly rated in the *Social Register*? You will also remember that before I undertook that expedition I was never particularly certain whence my next

year's expenses were to be derived, nor to what extent, if you understand what I mean. At about the time I was preparing for this expedition which I hoped would make me financially and scientifically independent, this wealthy branch of the family seriously "took up" my darling Venice, inviting her to live with them that summer. I remember now all too late, that even during that confusion of mind caused by the agony of leaving my loved one, coupled with the feverish preparations for departure, chill clouds of censure came from the aloof Potters. They made no effort to mask their disapproval of my humble self and prospects, yet in my blindness I had never connected them intimately with what followed.

It was, in short, the old story of the ingenious man-on-the-ground, the "good match," aided and abetted by the patronesses of the "poor relation." The discriminating Marsden naturally fell in love with Venice, and to his great surprise and chagrin, was decisively repulsed by her. Never before having been refused anything he really wanted in his comfortably arranged life, he became passionately desirous of possessing her. Accordingly, my darling was shown a letter, forged with such diabolical cleverness as to be almost indistinguishable from my own hand. It purported to intrigue me with a very ordinary female at a period coincident with the time I had been so fervently courting my dear one.

She refused to credit the document and dispatched me a voluminous explanation of the whole occurrence. Attributing my silence to the exigencies of distance, she continued to write me for over a month. When no answer arrived after nearly three long months, she at length delivered a hastily planned ultimatum, to which she was later persuaded to adhere through the combined pressure of Marsden and her family, beating against the razed defences of her broken heart. Then it was that I received the betrothal announcement, the only communication her watchful family had permitted to escape their net of espionage.

AS the story unfolded, my heart pounded with alternate waves of exaltation and red rage at the treacherous Marsden. Because of selfish duplicity, he had robbed us both of five years' happiness, for I had forced my darling's admission that she had never loved him, and now despised him as a common thief. My brief moment of delirious joy was sharply curtailed, however, when I came to press her to separate from this selfish swine. After some demur she confided that he was a drug addict. She said that he had been fighting desperately to break this habit ever since their marriage, for his jealous love of her was the only remaining weapon with which to combat his deep rooted vice. Deprived of his one motive, my darling earnestly assured me that it would be a matter of but a few short years before the white powders wrote *Finis* to yet another life. I could see but a balancing of an already overdrawn account in such an event, and said so in no uncertain terms. She did not chide me, merely patiently explained with sweet, sad resignation that she held

herself responsible for his very life for the present. That although she could not love and honor him as she had promised, yet she was bound to cleave to him during this, his "worse" hour. And so we left it for the time, our future clouded, yet with no locked door to bar the present from us.

We met almost daily, unless Marsden's activities interfered. At those times I was like a raging beast, unable to work, consumed with a livid hatred for the cunning thief who had stolen my love while my back was turned. I could not shake her resolution to terminate this loveless match, even though she now loathed the mate she had once tolerated. But in spite of the formlessness of our future, my work progressed as never before. Now my days were more than a mere procession of dates, for each was crowned with the glow of those few stolen moments with my darling Venice.

Came the day of my first complete success. Some weeks previously I had finally succeeded in transmitting a small wooden ball by radio. Perhaps I should say that I had "dissolved" it into its vibrations, for it was not until this later day that I had been able to materialize or "receive" it after it had been "sent." I see you start and re-read this last sentence. I mean just what I say, and Marsden will bear me out, for as you shall see, he has witnessed this and other such experiments here in my laboratory. I have explained to him as much as I wanted him to know of the process, in fact, just enough so that he believes that a little intensive research and experimentation on his part will make him master of my secret. But he is entirely ignorant of the most important element, as well as of the manner of its employment.

Yes, after years of study and interrupted experimental research I was enabled finally to disintegrate, without the aid of heat, a solid object into its fundamental vibrations, transmit these vibrations into the ether in the form of so-called "radio waves" which I then attracted and condensed in my "receiving" apparatus, slowly damping their short kinked vibration-rate until finally there was deposited the homogeneous whole, identical in outline and displacement,—entirely unharmed from its etheric transmigration!

My success in this, my life's dream, was directly the result of our discoveries on that bitter expedition into Afghanistan. All my life I had been interested in the study of vibrations, but had achieved no startling successes or keen expectations thereof until we stumbled upon that strange mineral deposit on what was an otherwise ill-fated trip for me. It was then that I realized that radioactive niton might solve my hitherto insurmountable difficulty in the transmission of material vibrations into electronic waves. My experiments thereafter, while successful to the degree that I discovered several entirely new principles of resonic harmonics, as well as an absolute refutation of the quantum theory of radiation, fell far short of my hoped-for goal. At that time I was including both helium and uranium in my improved cathode projectors, and it was not until I had effected a more sympathetic combination with thorium that I began to receive encouraging re-

sults. My final success came with the substitution of actinium for the uranium and the addition of polonium, plus a finer adjustment which I was able to make in the vortices of my three modified Tesla coils, whose limitations I had at first underrated. I was then enabled to filter my resonance waves into pitch with my "electronic radiate rays," as I called them, with the success I shall soon describe.

Of course, all this is no clearer than a page of Sanscrit to you, nor do I intend that it shall be otherwise. As I have said, such a secret is far too potent to be unloosed upon a world of such delicately poised nations, whose jaws are still reddened from their recent ravaging. It needs no explanation of mine to envision the terrible possibilities for evil in the application of this great discovery. It shall go with me—to return at some future, more enlightened time after another equally single-minded investigator shall have stumbled upon it. It is this latter thought which has caused me to drop the hints that I have. My earnest hope is that you will permit the misguided Marsden to read the preceding paragraph. In it he will note a reference to an element which I have not mentioned to him before, and will enable him to obtain certain encouraging results,—encouraging but to further efforts, to more frantic attempts. But I digress.

With my success on inanimate objects, I plunged the more enthusiastically into my work. I should have lost all track of time but for my daily tryst with Venice. Her belief in me was the tonic which spurred me on to further efforts after each series of meticulously conducted experiments had crumbled into failure. It was the knowledge that she awaited me which alone upheld me in those dark moments of depression, which every searcher into the realms of the unknown must encounter.

Then came the night of November 28th, the Great Night. After countless failures, I finally succeeded in transmitting a live guinea pig through the atmosphere and "received" it, alive and well, in the corner of my laboratory. Think of it! A twist of a switch and the living, breathing piglet slowly dissolved before my eyes and vanished along a pair of wires to my aerial, whence it was transferred as a set of waves in the ether to the receiving apparatus,—there to reincarnate into the living organism once more, alive and breathing, unharmed by its extraordinary journey! That night I strode out into the open and walked until dawn suddenly impressed the gray world upon my oblivious exaltation, for I was King of the Universe, a Weaver of Miracles.

Then it was that my great plan began to take shape. With renewed energy I began the construction of a mammoth transmitter. At intervals I "transmitted" stray cats and dogs of every description, filling several books with notes wherein I recorded minutely the varying conditions of my subjects before transmission. Invariably their condition upon being "cohered" in the receiving tube, was excellent. In some cases, indeed, minor ailments had entirely disappeared during their short passage through the ether. What a study for the medical profession!

I had, of course, told Venice the object of my researches long ago, but had never brought her to my laboratory for reasons of discretion. One afternoon, however, I slipped her in under cover of the heavy downpour. After I had warmed her with a cup of tea, before her astonished eyes I transmitted an old she-cat which was afflicted with some sort of rheumatism or paralysis of its hind legs. When its form began to reappear in the transparent receiving tube, my darling gasped in awed wonder. She was rendered utterly speechless, however, when I switched off the current and released the animal from its crystal prison. And no wonder, for it gambolled about like a young kitten, all trace of its former malady having entirely disappeared! The impression upon Venice was all that I had hoped for, and when I at length escorted her out into the dusk, I felt her quick, awed glances flickering over me like the reverence of a shy neophyte for the high priest.

ALL was set for the final act. I literally hurled myself into the completion of my improved set. The large quantities of certain minerals required caused me an unexpected delay. This I filled with demonstrations in the presence of Marsden, whom I was encouraging as a fellow radio enthusiast,—with considerable unexpected histrionic ability on my part. It was so hard to keep my fingers off his throat! I pretended to explain to him the important factors of my great secret, and drilled him in the mechanical operation of the sets. I had divulged to him also that my greatest desire was to demonstrate my principle on a human being, and like all great scientific explorers, proposed to offer myself as the subject. Venice had strenuously opposed the proposal until the demonstration on the diseased cat, and even now viewed the entire proposition with alarm. Yet I insisted that unless applied to human beings my entire work went for naught, and I finally succeeded in quieting her fears to a great extent.

At last I am ready. I have told my darling how it is impossible to transmit anything metallic by the very nature of the conflicting rays encountered. I have bemoaned the fact that, due to the softness of my teeth since boyhood, my mouth is one mass of metallic fillings and crowns, rendering it impossible for me to test the efficiency of my life's work. As I had hoped, she has volunteered herself as the subject for the great experiment, for her white teeth are as yet innocent of fillings. I have demurred and refused to listen to the idea, permitting myself to be won over only after days of earnest argument on her part. We are not to tell Marsden, for there is no doubt that his fanatical love for her would refuse to tolerate the mere suggestion.

Tonight it shall be accomplished. There is no other way, for that accursed husband of hers seems to progress in neither direction. He will be nothing but a mud-buried anchor until the end of her days, while I—I love her. What other excuse need be offered?

But to the facts. At eight o'clock that drug-soaked love pirate comes to officiate at my trans-

mission through space. I shall meet him with a chloroformed soaked rag. Later he will awake to find himself effectually gagged, with his hands and feet firmly shackled to the wall of a dark corner of my laboratory. These shackles consist of armatures across the poles of large electro-magnets which I have embedded in the walls. At 10:30, a time switch will cut off the current, releasing the wretch, for, above all things, he must live. I debated sending a message for his chauffeur to call for him here at the designated hour. I have decided rather to trust to mechanical certitude than lay my plan open to frustration because of some human vagary.

At nine o'clock Venice comes for the great experiment. Marsden has told her that he will remain in the city over night, at my suggestion, so that in case I fail to materialize after being "sent" he cannot be held in connection with my disappearance. She does not know that I have had my teeth extracted and have been using India rubber plates for nearly a month. By the time she has arrived, the effects of the chloroform will have entirely worn off from my would-be assistant, and I shall have had plenty of time to introduce myself properly to him and explain the evening's program which has been so carefully arranged for his benefit.

Then he will have the excruciating pleasure of watching his beloved wife dissolve into—*nothingness!* Soon thereafter he will witness the same process repeated upon myself, for I have so adapted the apparatus that I need no outside assistance other than a time-clock to actuate the mechanism! Then, at the appointed hour, the current will be shut off and the frenzied wretch will rush to the distant switch controlling the receiving apparatus. As he throws the metal bars into their split receptacles there will come a blinding flash, and behold—the apparatus will have disappeared in a puff of crystalline particles! The secret has returned whence it came!

Then will come that personally prepared hell for my mean spirited forger. As I told you, he believes that he is in possession of enough of the details of my secret to reconstruct the apparatus and duplicate my success. The added details of this letter will assure him into an idiotic confidence

which will lead him on and on through partially successful attempts. I know that no matter whether you sympathize with my actions or not (and I am sure that you do not, for you never have), your sense of justice will force you to show this letter to the proper authorities in order to prevent a fatal bungling.

Meanwhile that miserable sneak will be frenzied with the knowledge that at last, the lover he so long cheated of his loved one is now with her, alone,—where he, her lawful husband, can never follow. And we shall be together, unchanged, awaiting the day when some other enlightened mortal solves Nature's riddle, when we shall once more assume our earthly forms, unhindered by other selfish man-beasts.

Farewell,

BROMLEY CRANSTON.

\* \* \* \* \*

NEEDLESS to say, I hurried to Eastport. But my trip was unnecessary. I found Harold Marsden in a "private sanitarium" for the hopelessly insane. There all day, and as far into the night as the opiates would permit him, he is to be found seated before a radio set, the earphones clamped to his head—listening. His statements, methodically filed away by the head of the place, corresponded wildly with the prophecies of my strange letter. Now he was listening to fragmentary messages from those two he had seen precipitated into space, he maintained. Listening.

And they had disappeared, utterly. I found the large seal ring in the inkwell on the desk. Also the slip in the hatband of the hat which had been placed in the wall safe, unlocked. The postmaster remembered the seals on the letter my cousin had mailed, and the approximate time he had received it. I felt my own reason wavering.

That is why, fantastic as is the whole affair, I cannot yet bear the sound of one of those radio loud speakers. It is when that inarticulate sound they call "static" occurs, when fragments of words and sentences seem to be painfully attempting to pierce a hostile medium,—that I picture that hunched up figure with its spidery earphones,—listening. Listening. For what?

THE END.