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No. 3



THIS magazine is the answer to thousands of requests that we have received over a period of years, demanding a second look at famous fantasies which, since their original publication, have become accepted classics. Our choice has been dictated by your requests and our firm belief that these are the aces of imaginative fiction.

—The Editors.



ASTOUNDING!

The Radio Man.....Ralph Milne Farley 6
In Three Parts—Part I

BIZARRE!

The Diminishing Draft
 Waldemar Kaempffert 28
She played with dangerous secrets of modern science and became a tiny toy of fate

STRANGE!

The Lord of Death.....Homer Eon Flint 42
Three Earthmen unveil the last secret of a dead planet

EERIE!

LightsPhilip Fisher 78
The dead signaled "Danger Ahead"—and the living laughed

EXCITING!

The Conquest of the Moon Pool..A. Merritt 84
In Six Parts—Part II.

WEIRD!

Who Is Charles Avison?
 Edison Tesla Marshall 110
He came back from space to attend his own funeral

STARTLING!

The Gravity Experiment.....J. U. Giesy 118
The amazing story of Professor Zapt's latest scientific prank

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My Jeanne had turned into a little statuette of wondrous beauty!

The Diminishing Draft

By WALDEMAR KAEMPFERT

Author of "Science Today and Tomorrow," just published

Frivolous fingers play with Science's secrets in a perilous game of hide-and-seek

WELL, I've engaged an assistant," I announced to my wife one day at luncheon.

"I am glad of that. You have been working much too hard. Who is he?"

"It isn't a 'he,'" I replied as carelessly as I could. "It's Jeanne Briand."

"But why Jeanne Briand? What qualifications has she? What does she know of biochemistry?" she inquired, too searching. I thought, in that high-pitched, staccato voice of hers which latterly had grated on me.

"She's taken her master's degree," I

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explained as best I could, "and besides, she had a course in biology under Calhoun."

The wife of a university professor may not be versed in the subject with which his name is identified, but she knows that academic standards are high. Knows that a vivacious, copper-haired, laughing-eyed girl who has dabbled in a few text-books and chased butterflies with a net is not ordinarily given an important post in a famous biochemical laboratory.

"I think you might have taken young Mitchel or some other postgraduate in your department."

That was all we said. She suspected something. There was no question of it.

And so Jeanne was duly installed in my home laboratory. I made it very plain to her that she must keep regular hours, also that she must conduct herself as my assistant and not as the woman whom I loved and whom I hoped to wed.

FROM the first I had my misgivings. It was Jeanne who conceived the idea of working in the laboratory with me—not I. She was as out of place among my instruments and reagent bottles as a wood nymph.

It is needless to dwell on the circumstances that swayed us, needless to recount here how difficult it was to part whenever we had passed an hour together, needless to picture the dreamy longing that hung over us both until our hands and lips touched again. That is a characteristic of every week-old love.

"Please let me help you in your work," she pleaded over and over again. "I want to be near you always. Let me do anything—anything. I can keep the instruments clean. I can write down your notes. It is unbearable to see you only like this, once in a long while. Let me work with you in the laboratory."

"But you forget," I reasoned, "that the laboratory where I do most of my work is in my own house. And I am married. Some day we shall be together always. Think of the risks that we would run. We

can't have a scandal. Sooner or later we would be discovered."

I had intended to make a clean breast of the whole affair to my wife and free myself from my marital ties in the conventional way, even though it meant the end of my university career. But Jeanne could not and would not wait. A man of stronger will than mine would have yielded. The desire to have her ever near me, to see the winsome smile on her face, to sense her presence in the same room, moved me more than her arguments. In short, I yielded.

Scientifically speaking, she was all but useless in the laboratory. She had some talent for drawing, and so I employed her in making diagrams for my treatise on "Experimental Evolution."

She radiated femininity. She had an elfish way of interrupting me in my work. At the most critical stage in dissecting the head of an insect under the glass, she would come up and stroke my hair or kiss the nape of my neck. If I reproved her, she wept, which meant much kissing away of her tears and mollifying her with the endearments that all lovers automatically invent on the spur of the moment. And yet, she honestly tried to help me, simply because of her slavish devotion to me.

Although she needed constant supervision, her drawings were excellent. Indeed, they soon justified her presence in my laboratory in the eyes of the entire university.

It was about a fortnight after she became my nominal assistant that I assigned to her the task of making a series of sketches to demonstrate the effect of baroturpinol on parameba.

I may mention in passing that parameba is a microscopic animal—a mere cell—found in stagnant ponds, and that in a dilute solution of baroturpinol the whole structure of the creature undergoes a remarkable change. It was I who discovered the effect of baroturpinol on microorganisms of the parameba class. Immersed in baroturpinol the few cells of which parameba is composed dwindle and

dwindle under the microscope until finally the organism, still keeping its own shape, disappears.

I had completely misinterpreted this disappearance of microorganisms under the action of baroturpinol. I thought that they merely disintegrated. It was Jeanne who taught me otherwise.

One day, while she was engaged in making the drawings which would show the progressive disappearance of parameba, Jeanne exclaimed:

"They've come back again!"

"Who has?" I questioned, thinking that she was talking of people whom we knew. Besides, I was engrossed in correcting the proofs of a scientific paper.

"Why, the parameba. I can't understand it!"

A glance convinced me that she was right. In less than a minute I saw a specimen literally grow under my eyes into a full-fledged parameba. I can liken the proceeding only to the coming of an object toward one, with all the attendant increase in size that the movement implies.

PERHAPS I may make myself clearer if I say that the restoration of parameba, as I saw it then and many times after, was like a railway train traveling toward one from the distance. At first a far speck is visible; then the outline of a locomotive engine can be distinguished; and at last a huge machine and thundering cars threaten to crush one out of existence.

But that was not all. *Parameba came back alive!* Every biologist and chemist supposed that baroturpinol was a deadly poison. At all events, I had noticed that when any microorganism was brought into contact with even a trace of baroturpinol, all activity ceased. Death seemed necessarily to precede the process of shrinking. I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw my resuscitated parameba tumbling about with that characteristic moving motion by which it is so well known.

"What have you been doing?" I asked.

"Just what you told me to do."

"Dear, dear Jeanne," I said, taking her two hands in mine. "Do you know that you have made what may prove to be a very important discovery in biology? Do you know that you may have upset the whole theory of life?"

She clapped her hands. But at the time the wonderful scientific significance of what she had seen was lost to her. She saw that I approved of her, and she was happy.

But what did this astonishing revival of parameba mean? Over and over again I watched for the return of specimens under the microscope. Parameba would not return. I questioned Jeanne closely; I even watched her prepare a few slides herself, hoping that she had unconsciously departed from the routine that I had prescribed and had contaminated the baroturpinol in a way that would explain everything.

At last she remembered. She had touched the slide with a little glass rod in order to shift it on the stage of the instrument. The rod did not seem clean. She thought to improve matters by wiping it. A painstaking and conscientious laboratory worker would have used a piece of sterile cotton. Jeanne used her pocket handkerchief. It was clear enough that that little piece of linen was strangely linked with the accidental revivification of parameba.

My deduction was confirmed when I, too, experimented with the handkerchief. I deposited a single drop of stagnant water on a clean glass slide. Under the powerful lens I saw parameba tumbling about. Then I added a drop of baroturpinol (one gram of baroturpinol to a cubic centimeter of distilled water is the proportion, as every one knows), and at once all activity ceased. Apparently killed, the specimens of parameba began to shrink in that curious manner upon which I had already dilated. I took a glass rod and wiped it on Jeanne's handkerchief. First making sure that parameba had quite disappeared, I touched the little drop of moisture on the slide.

My guess was right. It was Jeanne's handkerchief. Parameba came rushing back to life as startlingly as at first.

The handkerchief had been definitely linked with the phenomenon, but I was in the dark as much as ever. What mysterious properties had this little piece of fabric that it should thus divert the whole course of modern biochemistry?

"Tell me, Jeanne," I said, "did your handkerchief touch anything here—some solution?"

"No, I'm sure."

"But you must have done something with it. Feel. It's a little damp."

"I wiped my eyes with it," she admitted reluctantly. "I had been crying at something that you said."

I did not stop to inquire what it was that I had said. A light dawned on me. Her tears had so uncannily brought back parameba to life! And tears—what are they, when stripped of all sentiment, but salt water?

A spectroscopic analysis of Jeanne's handkerchief convinced me that common salt had the property of bringing back parameba to life.

Dozens of experiments showed that almost any solution of salt would answer; the stronger it was the more quickly did life triumph over death.

AND now began an investigation which was a strange mixture of scientific research and love-making. To Jeanne it was like a play. She was very much bored when I would repeat tests perhaps twenty-five or fifty times simply to be sure of my results. But when we experimented with a new organism, she was all eagerness, all dancing eyes and clapping hands.

It was Jeanne who made the discovery in the first place, and Jeanne who developed its full possibilities. She had no well-considered plan of work: she simply allowed her impulses, her girlish whims to sway her.

"I want things to happen," she would say, as I tried to explain to her how time-wasting was this unscientific, haphazard,

blind plunging into a new and unexplored field. And yet, through her insatiable desire for excitement, her dramatic interest, we found out what really happened when higher organisms were subjected to the action of baroturpinol.

As for me, I confined myself entirely to simple-celled organisms, all so small that they cannot be seen with the naked eye. Here, I thought, was enough work to engage me for years. But that was too tame for Jeanne. She had the imagination and the daring that seem to accompany scientific ignorance.

I kept a little aquarium in one corner of the laboratory—a spawning glass jungle of fresh-water life. It was a never-ending source of entertainment for her. I have known her to sit for an hour at a time watching crayfish crawl lazily along on the bottom, or a school of tiny goldfish fighting for a crumb that she had mischievously tossed in.

One day—it was about two months after she came to me—she ran to me all radiant, holding a bowl at the bottom of which were two or three tiny golden flakes. They were so small that I had to hold the bowl against the window and view them by transmitted light.

"What have we here?" I asked, wondering what new fancy had seized her.

"Goldfish," she said.

"Nonsense," I retorted.

"Yes, they are," she insisted. "I took some Japanese goldfish from the aquarium and dropped them into baroturpinol, and they all shrank up like this."

If the original discovery of parameba's disappearance and return had startled me, how shall I describe the stupefaction that this announcement called forth? I saw at once what I had only guessed at before. Parameba had shrunk beyond the limits of visibility under the microscope, which accounted for its utter disappearance. But the goldfish, being much larger, had shrunk until each became perhaps the size of a dot on the letter "i."

I gazed at the girl with increasing wonder. Never would it have occurred to me

to leap at once from simple microscopic organisms to so high a form of life as a fish. On the other hand I must say that it was my academic timidity, if I may so call it: my systematic way of proceeding stepwise from one experiment to another, that had led to the original misconception of baroturpinol's effect.

To every physician and every biologist in the world, baroturpinol was simply a germicide. True, Tilden, who had discovered it, had noticed that it had a curious puckering effect on living tissue, for which reason it had been condemned as quite useless as a substitute for mercury bichloride, phenol, and similar agents, and had been adopted simply as a convenient and cheap hospital sterilizer. And now comes my Jeanne, my capricious, dancing, playful Jeanne, a mere trifler in science, and at once uncovers the hidden possibilities of a completely misunderstood compound, not because she is a biologist, but because she simply wants to be amused.

Obviously it was my business to find out whether, like the microscopic organisms that I had thus far examined, the baroturpinoled goldfish would be revived by a solution of common salt. I decanted the liquid in the bowl, washed the inanimate, shimmering flakes in distilled water, and then filled the bowl with a solution of salt.

The drama of parameba's return to life was repeated on a more striking scale. Very slowly the dead creatures began to expand. Soon they assumed their normal shapes—not, I repeat, that they had lost them by shrinking, but simply that the curves of their bodies were developed. It was not until they had regained their full size that life itself returned.

To me the thing was as startling as if a man, who had been poisoned by prussic acid, and who had been pronounced dead, were to open his eyes, get up, and walk. I took some pains to explain all this to the intensely amused Jeanne, and I repeated the experiment with a particularly large goldfish which I abstracted from the

aquarium. I made no impression whatever upon her. She promptly christened the fish "Lazarus" when he came back to life, and adopted him as a pet.

This impulsiveness of hers, this reckless disregard of all system and plan, could this be a form of mental activity which I had been wrong in regarding rather lazily as showing only an average order of intellect? Some one has defined intuition as a swift deduction from present facts. If that be so—I am no psychologist—then we must reckon with intuition as well as with the slower and more deliberate methods of reasoning in scientific research.

If Jeanne was anything she was intuitive. I felt that I must credit her with powers that were denied me. After all it was she, and not I, who had stumbled upon the amazing action of baroturpinol. I had done little beyond repeating her fanciful experiments under rigorous scientific control. She showed me the stars, as it were: I merely counted them.

THE possession of a common secret strengthened the tie between Jeanne and myself. It was as if we had found some beautiful, priceless gem which we had decided to keep for ourselves and never to show to the world. We lost all self-control. In the beginning we had maintained a semblance of formality. She kept regular laboratory hours, coming in the morning at nine and leaving at about five in the afternoon. It was always "Professor Hollister" and "Miss Briand" when we spoke to each other before others.

But in truth the hours that we spent together in the laboratory each day heightened our love for each other, made us more and more indispensable to each other. It became so difficult for us to leave each other out of our sight that we even went into the woods together for specimens to be experimented with in the laboratory. These specimens she could easily have gathered for me quite alone. The university students and the villagers began to talk about us.

It was my wife, of course, who imparted that information to me.

"You are making yourself ridiculous," she announced.

"Indeed? How?"

"Every one is talking about you."

I pretended not to understand. An attempt of mine to divert her attention from a topic which it made me uneasy to discuss, failed ignominiously.

"Even the postmaster in the village comments on your conduct with Jeanne Briand. Every one stopped talking when I came to the regular sewing-circle yesterday, and looked at me in a pitying sort of way. If you have no consideration for yourself, at least consider me."

I got up and stalked out of the room. I was neither polite nor brave.

The time had come for action. I could not go on in this way. A scandal was inevitable, and the best that I could now do was to mitigate it in some way. Jeanne and I must separate until such time as I could free myself with the aid of the divorce courts. I must tell her.

She read in my face that something was wrong when I stepped into the laboratory late that afternoon.

"You are in trouble, dear," she said. "What is it? Tell me."

And then I told her of the conversation with my wife, of the utter impossibility of concealing our true relations much longer.

"We must separate, Jeanne, if it's only for a little while—until I am free. And then we shall come back to each other again, and we will work together in the laboratory not as professor and assistant, but as man and wife."

She burst into tears. Never before had I seen a human being in such distress. She was convulsed with anguish, so that her whole body shook. I took her in my arms and did my best to soothe her.

"It will only be for a little while," I repeated over and over again. It was all that I could think of, all that I could say.

The sun had long since set, and the laboratory was soon quite dark. We sat

together on the couch in the corner in close embrace, Jeanne's head on my shoulder.

"You must rest," I said, and laid her on the couch and sat beside her.

She half-murmured, half-moaned something and let me do with her as I would.

How long she lay there I did not realize at the time. Hour after hour slipped by. At last it struck me that we could not stay thus all night—that I must take Jeanne home.

"Come," I admonished her, "we must go now. It is very late."

I helped her to her feet, pressed a button, and turned on the electric light. She was as limp as a drooping flower, all numb and listless. I walked to the closet and took her hat from its peg.

As I did so I heard footsteps in the corridor leading to the laboratory. Who could this be?

Completely unnerved as I was, distracted by Jeanne's despair, I was incapable of thinking clearly. It was one in the morning by the laboratory clock. Jeanne never stayed in the laboratory later than six. No one must find her here now.

In my ordinary senses the fall of a footstep in the corridor would not have disturbed me. Now I acted automatically and with cowardly absurdity. I ran to the door and locked it instead of flinging it open wide.

There came a knock.

If some one had leveled a pistol at me and threatened to shoot me, I could not have been more alarmed. Jeanne, too, was frightened. We looked at each other questioningly, two helpless lovers.

"Let me in," shrilled a voice outside. It was my wife's. From what she had told me earlier in the day, I inferred that she must have been watching Jeanne like a cat, and that she carefully noted when the girl came and went. Where to find her now she knew only too well.

Concealment was useless.

"What do you want?" I asked.

A flood of impassioned accusations fol-

lowed, in which Jeanne was referred to as "that woman," with much incoherent repetition of the phrase "wrecked home." The situation was damning.

MONTHS ago I had decided that the divorce proceedings should be free from the usual scandal. But what a ghastly story this would make in the newspapers! I could read the suggestive headlines and the salaciously worded account of the manner in which my wife had trapped me—a university professor. The sensational newspapers in particular would rejoice in the opportunity of pillorying the supposedly academic scientist and of exposing him as if he were a libertine in cap and gown.

It was Jeanne who saved us. I stood like one paralyzed, not knowing what to do. It was the rustle of her skirt that brought me to my senses. I turned around just in time to see her raise a beaker of baroturpinol to her lips and pour it down.

I know that I cried out: for there was a sudden cessation of the clamor outside the door. I rushed to Jeanne's side. Good Heavens! What would the effect be?

Never had we experimented with baroturpinol on anything higher than a fish. She lost consciousness in my arms. I thought she was dead. She was pallid and stiff, as if *rigor mortis* had set in. Then came over her that change which I had observed under the microscope and in the test tube. Her form dwindled and dwindled in my arms as if it were slipping from me, until at last I held nothing but her limp clothes.

It was as if both her soul and her body had drifted away from the room. As if she had slipped out of her earthly fabric like a butterfly from its chrysalis. I dropped the bundle on the floor and began to grope within it. Somewhere within these folds I knew must be the shrunken body of my Jeanne.

At last I found it—a little white form. I slipped it into my pocket. The clothes and hat I stuffed into a chest.

My courage had returned now. I stepped

to the door, unlocked it and flung it wide open. My wife entered, and with her a maid—whom she evidently brought as a witness. Her lips were tightly drawn; her eyes were mere slits. If ever there was an infuriated woman bent on vengeance, it was she.

She looked about her. Under other circumstances her astonishment would have been comical. All this furtive watching, all these clamorous accusations—all for nothing? She darted to the closet in which Jeanne would hang her hat and coat and I my laboratory aprons, convinced that Jeanne was hidden there. She threw back the door with such violence that the knob indented the plaster wall.

"Where is she? What have you done with her?" she screamed.

"You see that you are mistaken; there is no one here."

She saw that further inquiry would be useless. Outwitted but not deceived, she swept angrily out of the room. I locked the door after her.

I sat down at the laboratory table, took out of my pocket the thing that had once been my Jeanne, and placed it before me. My eyes were blurred with tears. So this was all that was left to me of Jeanne. This was the price of my weakness and my cowardice! She was dead now, and I felt as if I had been an accomplice in her suicide.

There comes an interval in every grief, an interval of calm, during which all mundane affairs seem trivial and even one's own misery becomes petty. It is as if one had passed out of a long, dark, narrow passageway into a vast open twilight beyond. In one of those intervals of calm I regained sufficient control of myself to examine the white remnant of Jeanne.

The thing that to my fevered touch had felt like a mere shapeless mass when I hastily thrust it into my pocket, revealed itself as a little statuette of wondrous beauty. It seemed carved out of ivory, this exquisite miniature, frozen Jeanne. What would not Cellini have given if he could have shaped a figure so beautiful?

Everything was white except the hair, her eyebrows, and the lashes of her closed eyes. The lips were delicately tinted like a budding rose, but they had not the rich color of pulsating life. As for her hair, it still lay in tiny coils about her hair, a mass of twisted, coppery brown. Jeanne must have been in the act of falling when I caught her in my arms. One foot of the little figure was raised, and it seemed as if she were about to sink down on one knee.

A sculptor would have marveled at the mere material of which this rare work of art had been fashioned. It seemed like wax; yet it had nothing of the oiliness of wax to the touch. Could it be ivory? It was too exquisitely white.

And then the wonderful perfection of its detail! I was afraid to touch the lashes of the eyes, lest I should break them. And the little ears, how finely they were modeled! The little hands and feet, how scrupulously every curve and line and hollow had been preserved! And the dear body of her, how plastic for all its lifeless rigidity!

For the first time in my life I understood the ecstatic ravings of artists when they endeavored to reveal to others the beauty that is so evident to them. Beauty such as this left one inarticulate.

The face perplexed me—or rather its expression. Jeanne was all gaiety and animation. But this reduction of herself suggested nothing of that. How could it? Jeanne was motion personified, flitting hither and thither like a butterfly. These placid features, with no trace of the smile that lit up the dearest face in the world, were still and cold.

The aspect of this precious, pallid beauty, all that was left to me of Jeanne, overcame me. I know that I sobbed and I am not ashamed to own it. I vowed to myself that I would preserve this remnant of her, this visible evidence of her self-sacrifice, as a thing to be worshiped. I would enshrine it in some secret, fitting way: it would be my holy of holies.

Dawn was breaking. I washed my hot,

fevered face and held a water soaked towel to my swollen eyes for a few minutes. Fresh air and a long walk would do me good, I thought. I wrapped the white figure tenderly in cotton, dropped it into my pocket, and then walked out into the open.

I must have wandered about in a stupor. For the life of me I cannot now tell where I went or how I returned. I know that the sun was well up in the heavens when I found myself in and went to my room. In the afternoon I had to give a lecture on Mendel's laws to the senior class in biology. I flung myself down on the bed, dressed as I was, hoping that I might snatch an hour's sleep, so that I might not appear too manifestly beside myself with grief.

I MUST have dozed for I was awakened by a knock at the door. It was the maid. I was wanted at the telephone.

"Say that I can't be disturbed," I directed her.

"She says it's very important," was the reply.

"Who does?"

"Miss Briand's landlady."

My state of mind can be imagined when I say that I could not divine why Jeanne's landlady wished to speak to me on the telephone. I found out quickly enough when I answered.

Did I know where Miss Briand was? asked the voice over the telephone. She had not been at home all night, and it was now past noon. Was she at the laboratory yesterday? When did she leave? Should her disappearance be reported to the police?

I could tell from her voice that the woman was concerned more about herself than about Jeanne. She ran a respectable house, she insisted again and again. She did hope nothing had happened which would compromise her or her establishment. I reassured her as best I could and promised her that I would look into the matter of Jeanne's disappearance and communicate with her again.

Her reference to the police startled me. It brought me to my senses. It had not occurred to me before that a human being cannot step out of existence, as it were, unchallenged. Suppose the police were to descend on the laboratory and investigate!

What could I say? No one would believe me, of course, if I told the truth. About the experiments with parameba and how they had led step by step to Jeanne's undoing. Even if I summoned the best experts, even if they confirmed my discoveries, what biologist would be bold enough to administer baroturpinol to a human being and prove that even the highest forms of life yielded to the strange influence of that mysterious compound? And what human being, short of a madman could be found who would willingly sacrifice himself? Good Heavens!

And then there were Jeanne's clothes. They would surely be found in the chest.

I sank into a chair. My whole body was bathed in a perspiration of fright. Suppose that I were accused of murder? A divorce scandal was bad enough, but a murder, a murder—

Lecturing was out of the question. I telephoned to the university that illness would prevent me from attending and that the class was to be dismissed. I had to think this out; I must gain time: My case was clearly desperate.

All at once a ray of hope flashed upon me. Why not try salt? If parameba, a sea-urchin, a goldfish—and a fish is, after all, not so very low in the scale of evolution—can be restored to their natural proportions and to life, why not a human being? Yes, perhaps the salt solution would save me and bring back my Jeanne to me.

But what reason had I to suppose that because a few animals could be reduced and expanded at will, I might bring Jeanne back to life? Suppose that the little statuette should return to life, but to remain a mere miniature of Jeanne? That was too horrible!

Worse still, suppose that the figure should reassume the girl's natural shape,

but that no spark of life would reanimate the body? What then? I should be worse off than ever. The white remnant of her that I carried with me could be hidden. The clothes in the chest, too, could be disposed of. No one could prove that Jeanne was really dead.

But a lifeless body—

I fled into the laboratory. If ever a man was on the verge of madness, it was I. Tormented by grief at the loss of Jeanne and stricken with terror at the prospect of arrest, I felt like a wild beast at bay.

I longed for some simple-minded, practical, unscientific friend to whom I could turn for counsel in my need. I knew the difference between a holothurian and a jellyfish, but in the cloistered university I had lost track of human hearts and problems. However, my problem was my problem; I alone could solve it.

It came to me very clearly at last that I owed it to Jeanne to make some effort at resuscitating all that was left of her. The resolution was more easily made than carried out. Where should I conduct this momentous experiment?

The laboratory naturally suggested itself first. I dismissed the thought almost at once. There was no vessel large enough to hold a human body, and suspicion might be aroused if I had one brought in. I might go to a hotel and engage a room and bath; the bathtub would surely serve the purpose.

But suppose that the little figure of Jeanne should swell and magnify, and suppose that life should not return. I would have to explain the presence of a corpse in my room—the corpse of a woman who had played a part in my life and for whom the police were searching. That would help neither Jeanne nor me. Better a thousand times that she should remain in my pocket than that!

Finally I came to the conclusion that I must go to some lonely place by the sea. Had we not discovered early in our investigations that any solution of salt, even seawater, performed the miracle of bringing back to life organisms which had been

diminished by baroturpinol? Besides, would it not be easy to dispose of the corpse if life did not return?

I looked at my watch. It was just half past three. Glaston-by-the-Sea was three hours' distant by the railway. If I left this afternoon, by night all my doubts and fears would be dispelled.

I had not slept in twenty-four hours. Some rest I must have. My nerves were so unstrung that I could feel my eyelids quivering; I could hardly touch a book or an implement without dropping it.

So I went into my room, and bathed, and threw myself down on the bed to catch what little sleep I could.

GLASTON-BY-THE-SEA is a fishing village comprising nothing more than a dozen houses. In front of it lies the ocean; in back tower cliffs of limestone. The sand stretches on either side of the village for miles and miles. Walk ten minutes away from the village and you might as well be in the Desert of Sahara for any signs of human life that you can see.

I knew the coast well; many a specimen had I collected among the rocks as the tide went out.

It was dark when I alighted from the train, four miles from Glaston. The full moon was rising in the east—a great round, yellow topaz that crept higher and higher in the sky. I had not counted on a bright night.

To carry out a hazardous experiment in the aspect of that cold, luminous disk seemed too public. It was so like a round, inscrutable face that looked down at me in benignant curiosity. Then it occurred to me how strangely fascinated Jeanne had always been by the full moon. How she had longed for the time when we might watch it rise together in some such lonely place as this, shut off from the strife and the clamor and the prying eyes of the world. I am not superstitious, but it did seem as if that great ball in the sky might be a good omen.

At about ten o'clock I reached the shore two miles above Glaston; for I had care-

fully avoided the village. It was flood tide. The sea was dappled with opalescent ripples. Now and then a swelling wave would roll up on the sands and the water would tumble reluctantly back again in a vast expanse of foam. Only the rhythmic wash of a smooth sea broke the silence of that moonlit solitude.

Jeanne's clothes and hat I had brought with me in a traveling-bag. I took them out and spread them on the beach just as I imagined she would have arranged them herself in her chamber.

Now that I thought of it, this idea of coming to Glaston and making an heroic attempt to bring Jeanne back to life seemed like a stroke of genius. What if the experiment did fail? What if the reduced image of herself did resume its normal shape, but without coming back to life? I could leave the corpse on the sands. It would seem as if she had died in some inexplicable way.

Here were her clothes all neatly arranged, testifying mutely in my behalf. There was no sign of violence.

One by one I took off my own clothes and laid them down beside Jeanne's. Very, and carefully I unwrapped the parcel in which I had carried her about. I feared that I might break off a strand of hair or nick a foot or hand.

Holding the figure in my outstretched hands as if it were a sacred image, I walked into the sea straight toward the moon, my face uplifted. This was more than a scientific experiment. Human life, human happiness, human love were at stake.

Now that I look back at the events of that unforgettable night, the whole proceeding must have seemed more like a religious ceremony than a frantic man's desperate effort to save the thing that he held most precious. Surely no worshiper who had ever entered an ancient Egyptian temple was more reverentially hopeful than I, nor more innocently expectant of a miracle that would sweep away all earthly doubts and reveal the hand of destiny itself pointing toward the light.

Slowly the water rose to my knees, to my waist, and at last to my breast: It lapped the frail figure in my hand. I clutched the thing lest it should slip from my grasp. How long I stood thus, shoulder-high in the waves, I do not know. Perhaps it was only five minutes, perhaps as long as a quarter of an hour.

I know that I was stricken with terror for a time; for the figure in my hands might have been made of stone for any change that I could feel.

Was I to fail? Was Jeanne hopelessly, irretrievably dead?

Then a moment came when the figure seemed to slip in my hands. I grasped it tighter lest I should lose it. Still it slipped—slipped as a fish slips in the hands. Now I realized what was happening. Jeanne was growing, literally growing in my crooked fingers! I almost swooned.

Even if the swelling miniature were not the most precious thing in the world to me, even if it did not mean happiness and life itself, I would have found it difficult to retain my self-control. Very, very slowly the figure grew to the size of a child. I had to hold it in my arms now; it was not only larger, but perceptibly heavier.

A doubt assailed me. Would it stop growing? I prayed that it might keep on.

Presently it grew so large that I could no longer hold it in my arms alone. I walked back a few steps and lowered the figure so that its feet touched the bottom. But I saw to it that it was completely immersed, fearful lest some monstrous effect might be produced if even a shoulder were dry and could not grow with the rest.

In half an hour, I should judge, what had been apparently an exquisite statuette, something that I could carry in my pocket, had become the full-sized form of my Jeanne. But it was still hard. There was no feeling of yielding flesh—nothing but the rigidity of so much clay.

For that I had been prepared by the observation that I had made in my laboratory. Life returned to a shrunken organism slowly, almost hesitantly.

At last I felt Jeanne soften in my arms.

She was a thing of flesh now. Her form had become supple and flexible; I could feel it as so much tissue.

And then the miracle of miracles happened! Her bosom heaved; she sighed; her eyes opened. She moaned, and stared at me, utterly bewildered. Her mind could not orient itself at first. In a dim way she seemed to realize who I was.

I could feel her arms tighten about my neck, and so I carried her to the beach, in the most ecstatic and exalted state in which I have ever been.

I TOLD my wife everything—everything of the initial experiments with parameba and the goldfish, everything except Jeanne's bold swallowing of the baroturpinol in a critical situation and of her subsequent miraculous reanimation. Jeanne meant all to me; and my wife had ceased to be, if I may say so, what she never was. I wanted a divorce, and I said so frankly.

"So this is to be the end?" she sobbed bitterly.

"I see no other way. To remain as we are, and to pretend that all is as it should be between us, would mean misery for both of us. It is better that we should part."

"But what if I should refuse? Is it right that you should begin a new and happy life and that I, after all these years, should drift about aimlessly and wretchedly? This home is mine as much as yours. I made it what it is, and shall I give up everything for a woman whom I hate?"

There was much more in the same vein. I had not counted on this. It was partly bitter hatred of Jeanne that swayed her and partly wounded pride.

It had never occurred to me before that marriage means more to a woman than the building of a nest and the gratification of the mating instinct. In her scheme of existence the conventions or vanities of married life are enormously important. Her conjugal rights, the social status brought about by the mere act

of marriage are to her what his patent of nobility is to a duke—something not to be relinquished without a struggle.

My wife refused point-blank to divorce me.

“But that is senseless,” I argued. “If I stay here, our life will be a mere travesty; if I leave you and go my own way you will not be unhappier. What do you gain by refusing?”

“You can’t marry a woman who has ruined my life, and whom I hate. By refusing to divorce you I destroy her. No decent man or woman will befriend her, knowing what she is to you.”

With that she flounced out of the room.

This turn of events I had not foreseen. I knew that divorce meant the end of my university career, and for that I was fully prepared. But to have the finger of scorn pointed at the woman I loved—

I am a social being. Companionship means much to me, and it meant as much to Jeanne. For a few months we might be sufficient to ourselves. Then would come a time when I would wish to spend an evening with congenial friends, and Jeanne with women who give teas and form organizations for the uplift of the poor and unenlightened.

What then? I could hardly venture to cross the thresholds of those temples of purity and virtue whither I would eventually be drawn, and on my arm a woman whose relations to me were regarded as scandalous.

And she—she would undoubtedly be rebuffed if she sought to enter the circle within which she now moved so freely.

You see that a scientist can be far more practical in his reasoning than the world supposes. After all, his whole training teaches him how to deal with facts.

I was to meet Jeanne that evening in a dense grove, near a little farmhouse about half a mile from the end of the trolley-line. Ever since her astonishing restoration we had arranged to see each other there three times a week. Her return to the laboratory was out of the question for the time being.

There she was at the appointed time and place, looking very demure in a neat white dress which she had made herself. She saw that I was troubled, and I told her at once the outcome of the afternoon’s parley.

Either she would not or she could not see the situation in its true light. Was I not everything in her life? She was more than willing to forego ordinary social intercourse if she could only work and live with me. A thousand reasons she advanced to prove how unnecessary the outer world must be to us.

She was a born romanticist, living perpetually in a fairy castle on a mountain-top capped with silvery clouds. In that atmosphere there is no time; Jeanne lived only in the present. I could hope for no practical assistance from her. I must reason this problem out for myself.

So I changed the topic at the first opportunity, and we passed the rest of the evening in the usual lighthearted way.

During these meetings we talked chiefly of the romantic possibilities of baroturpinol.

“How simple and cheap it would be for us to travel,” she would ramble on. “You could carry me in your pocket just as you did to Glaston; or I could pack you away in my handbag and take you with me. If I had a friend, I might even have myself sent to you by parcel-post. Salt water you can get everywhere.”

Of course I smiled at this, but I’m not so sure that Jeanne was not serious.

That was the last I ever saw of her.

TWO days later I was to keep my tryst with Jeanne for the third time that week. I was in the grove at the appointed hour. She did not come. Was she detained? Or was she ill? I fretted and fumed, hoping that each figure that loomed up in the darkness (for the grove was near the road) might be Jeanne. At eleven o’clock I gave up all hope of seeing her that night.

My wife met me as I opened the door of my house.

"May I speak to you a moment?" she asked.

I hung up my hat and followed her into her own room. She took from her safe a little box and laid it on her dressing-table. Next she raised a window which opened on a paved court below. It was clear she was following a well-thought-out plan of action.

"I believe you wish to say something to me," I said to relieve my suspense.

"Yes." Nothing more.

She untied the box, concealed it from me as she did so. Presently she turned around, holding in her hand an envelope.

"Read this," she said. "It came yesterday."

The envelope had been steamed open. It was addressed to me in Jeanne's handwriting.

"And so you open and read my letters?" I queried angrily.

"When I suspect that they concern me, I do," she retorted coolly.

I reproduce it here. That letter and a lock of hair that she once gave me are all that I have of Jeanne.

Dearest Dick:

I have been thinking so much of that wonderful night on the beach at Glaston—the night when I was born again on the bosom of the sea, just as if I were another Aphrodite. How beautiful it was to awaken and find myself looking at you by the light of the moon! I want to live all that over again, to come back from oblivion and find myself clinging to you.

If I were to ask you, I know that you would never consent to my becoming a dead image of myself again. You would suspect my motive if I were to ask you for some baroturpinol. So I have bought what I need. If you will come to meet me in the grove beyond the farm at the usual time on Friday, you will find only a little white Jeanne in the midst of her clothes.

Put her in your pocket and take her with you to Glaston next Monday. The moon will then be full.

Jeanne

WAS I frightened? I can hardly say. It was as if some one had struck me a blow. I was stunned.

Intuitively I sensed the diabolical thing

that my wife had done. I had told her enough of my first experiments; the rest Jeanne's letter made sufficiently plain.

"When I read this," she explained, all the while standing, "I understood everything. I know now what happened in the laboratory that afternoon when I knocked at the door.

"Now, listen carefully to what I say. I have told you that I hate this woman, that I will not permit her to take from me what is rightfully mine. Late this afternoon I went to the place that she mentions in her letter. I did not know just when she was to meet you, and I didn't care. It was merely a matter of waiting. I hid myself behind some bushes and watched.

"A little while after sunset I saw her down the road. She came into the grove and sat down on the grass. Then she took off her hat and laid it beside her. She sat very quietly, looking down the road through the trees. At first I thought that she was afraid and that she would not take the solution at all. Then I realized why she did nothing. She was waiting for you.

"She was clever! She was not going to run the risk of leaving a heap of clothes in a grove an hour before you came, with the chance of arousing the curiosity of some boy who might wander into the grove. She would wait until she saw you far away. You would reach her just at the right moment. So it proved. I could see you myself fully a quarter of a mile away; it was still quite light. She never took her eyes off the road. I think she must have seen you before I did. She opened her handbag and took out a bottle before I caught my first glimpse of you.

"The next I knew, she had placed the bottle to her lips and drained it off. I turned away. I didn't want to see her shrivel up before my very eyes. A quarter of a minute, I thought, would be about long enough for her to shrink. So I counted fifteen and turned around. Where she had sat was only a heap of clothes.

"There was not a second to lose now. You were almost at the grove. I crawled

out of the bushes and gathered up everything, clothes, hat, and all. Then I ran away from the place just as you were about to enter."

All the while she had been handling the box. I knew what it contained, and my brain was feverishly busy devising and rejecting, over and over again, plans to get it away from her; by stealth if possible, by force if necessary. I should have leaped from my seat at once and seized her, but I sat still dazed, as if in a kind of hypnotic trance.

"And here is your Jeanne," she almost screamed as she took out a white, sitting figure. "You will never, never have her

again. I take her so, and this—*this* is what I do to her!"

This time I did act. I leaped to my feet, knocked over the table that she had so ingeniously placed to obstruct me, and rushed at her.

But I was too late.

She was at the open window.

She raised her hand high above her head, posed there for a fraction of a second, the very incarnation of hate and vengeance. Then she dashed the white thing upon the stone pavement of the court below.

I heard it break into a hundred pieces as it struck.