



Astounding **SCIENCE FICTION**

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Editor

JOHN W. CAMPBELL, JR.



BY THEODORE STURGEON

Tiny wasn't tiny—but the monster was definitely horrific. Tiny, on the other hand, displayed a quite incredible intelligence for a dog, after one encounter—

Illustrated by Cartier



TINY AND THE MONSTER

She *had* to find out about Tiny—*everything* about Tiny.

They were bound to call him Tiny. The name was good for a laugh when he was a pup, and many times afterward.

He was a Great Dane, unfashionable with his long tail, smooth and glossy in the brown coat which fit so snugly over his heavily muscled shoulders and chest. His eyes were

big and brown and his feet were big and black; he had a voice like thunder and a heart ten times his own great size.

He was born in the Virgin Islands, on St. Croix, which is a land of palm trees and sugar, of soft winds and luxuriant undergrowth whispering with the stealthy passage of pheasant and mongoose. There were rats in the ruins of the ancient estate houses

which stood among the foothills—
—ruins with slave-built walls forty
inches thick, and great arches of
weathered stone. There was pasture
land where the field mice ran, and
brooks asparkle with gaudy blue
minnows.

But — where in St. Croix had he
learned to be so strange?

When Tiny was a puppy, all feet
and ears, he learned many things.
Most of these things were kinds of
respect. He learned to respect that
swift, vengeful piece of utter engi-
neering called a scorpion, when one
of them whipped its barbed tail into
his inquiring nose. He learned to
respect the heavy deadness of the air
about him which preceded a hurri-
cane, for he knew that it meant
hurry and hammering and utmost
obedience from every creature on
the estate. He learned to respect the
justice of sharing, for he was pulled
from the teat and from the trough
when he crowded the others of his
litter. He was the largest.

These things, all of them, he
learned as respects. He was never
struck, and although he learned cau-
tion he never learned fear. The pain
he suffered from the scorpion — it
only happened once — the strong
but gentle hands which curbed his
greed, the frightful violence of the
hurricane which followed the tense
preparations — all these things and
many more taught him the justice of
respect. He half understood a basic
ethic; namely, that he would never
be asked to do something, or to re-
frain from doing something, unless
there were a good reason for it. His
obedience, then, was a thing implicit,

for it was half-reasoned; and since
it was not based on fear, but on jus-
tice, it could not interfere with his
resourcefulness.

All of which, along with his blood,
explained why he was such a splen-
did animal. It did not explain how
he learned to read. It did not ex-
plain why Alec was compelled to sell
him — not only to sell him but to
search out Alistair Forsythe and sell
him to her.

She *had* to find out. The whole
thing was crazy. She hadn't wanted
a dog. If she had wanted a dog, it
wouldn't have been a Great Dane.
And if it had been a Great Dane, it
wouldn't have been Tiny, for he was
a Crucian dog and had to be shipped
all the way to Scarsdale, New York
by air.

The series of letters she sent to
Alec were as full of wondering per-
suasion as his had been when he sold
her the dog. It was through these
letters that she learned about the
scorpion and the hurricane; about
Tiny's puppyhood and the way Alec
brought up his dogs. If she learned
something about Alec as well, that
was understandable. Alec and Ali-
stair Forsythe had never met, but
through Tiny they shared a greater
secret than many people who have
grown up together.

"As for why I wrote you, of all
people," Alec wrote in answer to her
direct question, "I can't say I chose
you at all. It was Tiny. One of the
cruise-boat people mentioned your
name at my place, over cocktails one
afternoon. It was, as I remember, a
Dr. Schwellenbach. Nice old fellow.
As soon as your name was men-

tioned, Tiny's head came up as if I had called him. He got up from his station by the door and lolloped over to the doctor with his ears up and his nose quivering. I thought for a minute that the old fellow was offering him food, but no—he must have wanted to hear Schwellenbach say your name again. So I asked about you. A day or so later I was telling a couple of friends about it, and when I mentioned the name again, Tiny came snuffling over and shoved his nose into my hand. He was shivering. That got me. I wrote to a friend in New York who got your name and address in the phone book. You know the rest. I just wanted to tell you about it at first, but something made me suggest a sale. Somehow it didn't seem right to have something like this going on and not have you meet Tiny. When you wrote that you couldn't get away from New York, there didn't seem to be anything else to do but send Tiny to you. And now—I don't know if I'm too happy about it. Judging from those pages and pages of questions you keep sending me, I get the idea that you are more than a little troubled by this crazy business."

She answered, "Please don't think I'm troubled about this! I'm not. I'm interested, and curious, and more than a little excited; but there is nothing about the situation which frightens me. I can't stress that enough. There's something around Tiny—sometimes I have the feeling it's something outside Tiny—which is infinitely comforting. I feel protected, in a strange way, and it's a

different and greater thing than the protection I could expect from a large and intelligent dog. It's strange, and it's mysterious enough; but it isn't at all frightening.

"I have some more questions. Can you remember exactly what it was that Dr. Schwellenbach said the first time he mentioned my name and Tiny acted strangely? Was there ever any time that you can remember, when Tiny was under some influence other than your own—something which might have given him these strange traits? What about his diet as a puppy? How many times did he get—" and so on.

And Alec answered, in part, "It was so long ago now that I can't remember exactly; but it seems to me Dr. Schwellenbach was talking about his work. As you know, he's a professor of metallurgy. He mentioned Professor Nowland as the greatest alloy specialist of his time—said Nowland could alloy anything with anything. Then he went on about Nowland's assistant. Said the assistant was very highly qualified, having been one of these Science Search products and something of a prodigy; in spite of which she was completely feminine and as beautiful a redhead as had ever exchanged heaven for earth. Then he said her name was Alistair Forsythe. (I hope you're not blushing, Miss Forsythe; you asked for this!) And then it was that Tiny ran over to the doctor in that extraordinary way.

"The only time I can think of when Tiny was off the estate and possibly under some influence was

the day old Debbil disappeared for a whole day with the pup when he was about three months old. Debbil is one of the characters who hang around here. He's a Crucian about sixty years old, a piratical-looking old gent with one eye and elephantiasis. He shuffles around the grounds running odd errands for anyone who will give him tobacco or a shot of white rum. Well, one morning I sent him over the hill to see if there was a leak in the water line that runs from the reservoir. It would only take a couple of hours, so I told him to take Tiny for a run.

"They were gone for the whole day. I was short handed and busy as a squirrel in a nuthouse and didn't have a chance to send anyone after him. But he drifted in towards evening. I bawled him out thoroughly. It was no use asking him where he had been; he's only about quarter-witted anyway. He just claimed he couldn't remember, which is pretty usual for him. But for the next three days I was busy with Tiny. He wouldn't eat, and he hardly slept at all. He just kept staring out over the canefields at the hill. He didn't seem to want to go there at all. I went out to have a look. There's nothing out that way but the reservoir and the old ruins of the governor's palace, which have been rotting out there in the sun for the last century and a half. Nothing left now but an overgrown mound and a couple of arches, but it's supposed to be haunted. I forgot about it after that because Tiny got back to normal. As a matter of fact, he seemed to be better than ever, although, from

then on, he would sometimes freeze and watch the hill as if he were listening to something. I haven't attached much importance to it until now. I still don't. Maybe he got chased by some mongoose's mother. Maybe he chewed up some ganja-weed — marijuana to you. But I doubt that it has anything to do with the way he acts now, any more than that business of the compasses which pointed west might have something to do with it. Did you hear about that, by the way? Craziest thing I ever heard of. It was right after I shipped Tiny off to you last fall, as I remember. Every ship and boat and plane from here to Sandy Hook reported that its compass began to indicate due west instead of a magnetic north! Fortunately the effect only lasted a couple of hours so there were no serious difficulties. One cruise steamer ran aground, and there were a couple of Miami fishing boat mishaps. I only bring it up to remind both of us that Tiny's behavior may be odd, but not exclusively so in a world where such things as the crazy compasses occur."

And in her next, she wrote, "You're quite the philosopher, aren't you? Be careful of that Fortean attitude, my tropical friend. It tends to accept the idea of the unexplainable to an extent where explaining, or even investigating, begins to look useless. As far as that crazy compass episode is concerned, I remember it well indeed. My boss, Dr. Nowland — yes, it's true, he can alloy anything with anything! — has been up to the ears in that fantastic happenstance. So have most of his

colleagues in half a dozen sciences. They're able to explain it quite satisfactorily, too. It was simply the presence of some quasi-magnetic phenomenon which created a resultant field at right angles to the Earth's own magnetic influences. That solution sent the pure theorists home happy. Of course, the practical ones—Nowland and his associates in metallurgy, for example—have only to figure out what caused the field. Science is a wonderful thing.

"By the way, you will notice my change of address. I have wanted for a long time to have a little house of my own, and I was lucky enough to get this one from a friend. It's up the Hudson from New York, quite countrified but convenient enough to the city to be practical. I'm bringing Mother here from upstate. She'll love it. And besides—as if you didn't know the most important reason when you saw it!—it gives Tiny a place to run. He's no city dog. . . . I'd tell you that he found the house for me, too, if I didn't think that, these days, I'm crediting him with even more than his remarkable powers. Gregg and Marie Weems, the couple who had the cottage before, began to be haunted. So they said, anyway. Some indescribably horrible monster that both of them caught glimpses of, inside the house and out of it. Marie finally got the screaming meemies about it and insisted on Gregg's selling the place, housing shortage or no. They came straight to me. Why? Because they—Marie, anyway; she's a mystic little thing—had the idea that someone with a large dog would

be safe in that house. The odd part of that was that neither of them knew I had recently acquired a Great Dane. As soon as they saw Tiny they threw themselves on my neck and begged me to take the place. Marie couldn't explain the feeling she had; what she and Gregg came to my place for was to ask me to buy a big dog and take the house. Why me? Well, she just felt I would like it, that was all. It seemed the right kind of a place for me. And my having the dog clinched it. Anyway, you can put that down in your notebook of unexplainables."

So it went for the better part of a year. The letters were long and frequent, and, as sometimes happens, Alec and Alistair grew very close indeed. Almost by accident they found themselves writing letters which did not mention Tiny at all, although there were others which concerned nothing else. And, of course, Tiny was not always in the rôle of *canis superior*. He was a dog—all dog—and acted accordingly. His strangeness only came out at particular intervals. At first it had been at times when Alistair was most susceptible to being astonished by it—in other words, when it was least expected. Later he would perform his odd feats when she was ready for him to do it, and under exactly the right circumstances. Later still, he only became the super-dog when she asked him to . . .

The cottage was on a hillside, such a very steep hillside that the view which looked over the river overlooked the railroad, and the trains

were a secret rumble and never a sight at all. There was a wild and clean air about the place—a perpetual tingle of expectancy, as though someone coming into New York for the very first time on one of the trains had thrown his joyous anticipation high in the air, and the cottage had caught it and breathed it and kept it forever.

Up the hairpin driveway to the house, one spring afternoon, toiled a miniature automobile in its lowest gear. Its little motor grunted and moaned as it took the last steep grade, a miniature Old Faithful appearing around its radiator cap. At the foot of the brownstone porch steps, it stopped, and a miniature lady slid out from under the wheel. But for the fact that she was wearing an aviation mechanic's coveralls, and that her very first remark—an earthy epithet directed at the steaming radiator—was neither ladylike nor miniature, she might have been a model for the more precious variety of Mother's Day greeting card.

Fuming, she reached into the car and pressed the horn button. The quavering ululation which resulted had its desired effect. It was answered instantly by the mighty howl of a Great Dane at the peak of aural agony. The door of the house crashed open, and a girl rushed out on the porch, to stand with her russet hair ablaze in the sunlight, her lips parted, and her long eyes squinting against the light reflected from the river. "What—Mother! Mother, darling . . . is that you? Already? Tiny!" she rapped as the dog bolted

out of the open door and down the steps. "Come back here!"

The dog stopped. Mrs. Forsythe scooped a crescent wrench from the ledge behind the driver's seat and brandished it. "Let him come, Alistair," she said grimly. "In the name of sense, girl, what are you doing with a monster like that? I thought you said you had a dog, not a Shetland pony with fangs. If he messes with me, I'll separate him from a couple of those twelve-pound feet and bring him down to my weight. Where do you keep his saddle? I thought there was a meat shortage in this part of the country. Whatever possessed you to take up your abode with that carnivorous dromedary, anyway? And what's the idea of buying a barn like this, thirty miles from nowhere and perched on a precipice to boot, with a stepladder for a driveway and an altitude fit to boil water at eighty degrees centigrade? It must take you forever to make breakfast. Twenty-minute eggs, and then they're raw. I'm hungry. If that Danish basilisk hasn't eaten everything in sight, I'd like to nibble on about eight sandwiches. Salami on whole wheat. Your flowers are gorgeous, child. So are you. You always were, of course. Pity you have brains. If you had no brains, you'd get married. A lovely view, honey, lovely. I like it here. Glad you bought it. Come here, you." she said to Tiny.

He approached this small specimen of volubility with his head a little low and his tail down. She extended a hand and held it still to let him sniff it before she thumped him on

the withers. He waved his unfashionable tail in acceptance and then went to join the laughing Alistair, who was coming down the steps.

"Mother, you're marvelous. And you haven't changed a bit." She bent and kissed her. "What on earth made that awful noise?"

"Noise? Oh—the horn." Mrs. Forsythe busily went about lifting the hood of the car. "I have a friend in the shoelace business. Wanted to stimulate trade for him. Fixed this up to make people jump out of their shoes. When they jump they break the laces. Leave their shoes in the street. Thousands of people walking about in their stocking feet. More people ought to anyway. Good for the arches." She pointed. There were four big air-driven horns mounted on and around the little motor. Over the mouth of each was a shutter, so arranged that it revolved about an axle which was set at right angles to the horn, so that the bell was opened and closed by four small DC motors. "That's what gives it the warble. As for the beat-note, the four of them are tuned a sixteenth-tone apart. Pretty?"

"Pretty," Alistair conceded with sincerity. "No—please don't demonstrate it again, Mother! You almost wrenched poor Tiny's ears off the first time."

"Oh—did I?" Contritely, she went to the dog. "I didn't mean to, honey-poodle, really I didn't." The honey-poodle looked up at her with somber brown eyes and thumped his tail on the ground. "I like him," said Mrs. Forsythe decisively. She put out a fearless hand and pulled affection-

ately at the loose flesh of Tiny's upper lip. "Will you look at those tusks! Great day in the morning, dog, reel in some of that tongue or you'll turn yourself inside out. Why aren't you married yet, chicken?"

"Why aren't you?" Alistair countered.

Mrs. Forsythe stretched. "I've *been* married," she said, and Alistair knew now her casualness was forced. "A married season with the likes of Dan Forsythe sticks with you." Her voice softened. "Your daddy was all kinds of good people, baby." She shook herself. "Let's eat. I want to hear about Tiny. Your driblets and drablets of information about that dog are as tantalizing as Chapter Eleven of a movie serial. Who's this Alec creature in St. Croix? Some kind of native—cannibal, or something? He sounds nice. I wonder if you know how nice *you* think he is? Good heavens, the girl's blushing! I only know what I read in your letters, darling, and I never knew you to quote anyone by the paragraph before but that old scoundrel Nowland, and that was all about ductility and permeability and melting points. Metallurgy! A girl like you mucking about with molybds and durals instead of heartbeats and hope chests!"

"Mother, sweetheart, hasn't it occurred to you at all that I don't *want* to get married? Not yet, anyway."

"Of course it has! That doesn't alter the fact that a woman is only forty per cent a woman until someone loves her, and only eighty per cent a woman until she has children.



As for you and your precious career, I seem to remember something about a certain Marie Skodowska who didn't mind marrying a fellow called Curie, science or no science."

"Darling," said Alistair a little tiredly, as they mounted the steps and went into the cool house, "once and for all, get this straight. The career, as such, doesn't matter at all. The work does. I like it. I don't see the sense in being married purely for the sake of being married."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, child, neither do I!" said Mrs. Forsythe quickly. Then, casting a critical eye over her daughter, she sighed, "But it's such a waste!"

"What do you mean?"

Her mother shook her head. "If you don't get it, it's because there's something wrong with your sense of values; in which case there's no point in arguing. I love your furniture. Now for pity's sake feed me and

tell me about this canine Carnera of yours."

Moving deftly about the kitchen while her mother perched like a bright-eyed bird on a utility ladder, Alistair told the story of her letters from Alec, and Tiny's arrival.

"At first he was just a dog. A very wonderful dog, of course, and extremely well trained. We got along beautifully. There was nothing remarkable about him but his history, as far as I could see, and certainly no indication of . . . of anything. I mean, he might have responded to my name the way he did because the syllabic content pleased him."

"It should," said her mother complacently. "Dan and I spent weeks at a sound laboratory graphing a suitable name for you. Alistair Forsythe. Has a beat, you know. Keep that in mind when you change it."

"Mother!"

"All right, dear. Go on with the story."

"For all I knew, the whole thing was a crazy coincidence. Tiny didn't respond particularly to the sound of my name after he got here. He seemed to take a perfectly normal, doggy pleasure in sticking around, that was all.

"Then, one evening after he had been with me about a month, I found out he could read."

"Read!" Mrs. Forsythe toppled, clutched the edge of the sink, and righted herself.

"Well, practically that. I used to study a lot in the evenings, and Tiny used to stretch out in front of the fire with his nose between his paws and watch me. I was tickled by that. I even got the habit of talking to him while I studied. I mean, about the work. He always seemed to be paying very close attention, which, of course, was silly. And maybe it was my imagination, but the times he'd get up and nuzzle me always seemed to be the times when my mind was wandering, or when I would quit working and go on to something else.

"This particular evening I was working on the permeability mathematics of certain of the rare-earth group. I put down my pencil and reached for my 'Handbook of Chemistry and Physics' and found nothing but a big hole in the bookcase. The book wasn't on the desk either. So I swung around to Tiny and said, just for something to say, 'Tiny, what have you done with my handbook?'

"He went *whuff!* in the most startled tone of voice, leapt to his feet

and went over to his bed. He turned up the mattress with his paw and scooped out the book. He picked it up in his jaws — I wonder what he would have done if he were a Scotty? That's a chunky piece of literature!—and brought it to me.

"I just didn't know what to do. I took the book and riffled it. It was pretty well shoved around. Apparently he had been trying to leaf through it with those big splay feet of his. I put the book down and took him by the muzzle. I called him nine kinds of a rascal and asked him what he was looking for." She paused, building a sandwich.

"Well?"

"Oh," said Alistair, as if coming back from a far distance. "He didn't say."

There was a thoughtful silence. Finally Mrs. Forsythe looked up with her odd birdlike glance and said, "You're kidding. That dog isn't shaggy enough."

"You don't believe me." It wasn't a question.

The older woman got up to put a hand on the girl's shoulder. "Honey-lamb, your daddy used to say that the only things worth believing were things you learned from people you trusted. Of course I believe you. Thing is—do *you* believe you?"

"I'm not — sick, Mum, if that's what you mean. Let me tell you the rest of it."

"You mean there's more?"

"Plenty more." She put the stack of sandwiches on the sideboard where her mother could reach it. Mrs. Forsythe fell to with a will. "Tiny has been goading me to do

research. A particular kind of research."

"Hut hine uffefa?"

"Mother! I didn't give you those sandwiches only to feed you. The idea was to soundproof you a bit, too, while I talked."

"Hohay!" said her mother cheerfully.

"Well, Tiny won't let me work on any other project but the one he's interested in. Mum, I can't talk if you're going to gape like that! No . . . I can't say he won't let me do *any* work. But there's a certain line of endeavor which he approves. If I do anything else, he snuffles around, joggles my elbow, grunts, whimpers, and generally carries on until I lose my temper and tell him to go away. Then he'll walk over to the fireplace and flop down and sulk. Never takes his eyes off me. So, of course, I get all soft-hearted and repentant and apologize to him and get on with what he wants done."

Mrs. Forsythe swallowed, coughed, gulped some milk and exploded, "Wait a minute! You're away too fast for me! What is it that he wants done? How do you know he wants it? Can he read, or can't he? Make some sense, child!"

Alistair laughed richly. "Poor Mum! I don't blame you, darling. No, I don't think he can really read. He shows no interest at all in books or pictures. The episode with the Handbook seemed to be an experiment that didn't bring any results. *But* — he knows the difference between my books, even books that are bound alike, even when I shift them around in the bookcase. Tiny!"

The Great Dane scrambled to his feet from the corner of the kitchen, his paws skidding on the waxed linoleum. "Get me Hoag's '*Basic Radio*', old feller, will you?"

Tiny turned and padded out. They heard him going up the stairs. "I was afraid he wouldn't do it while you were here," she said. "He generally warns me not to say anything about his powers. He growls. He did that when Dr. Nowland dropped out for lunch one Saturday. I started to talk about Tiny, and just couldn't. He acted disgracefully. First he growled and then he barked. It was the first time I've ever known him to bark in the house. Poor Dr. Nowland! He was scared half out of his wits!"

Tiny thudded down the stairs and entered the kitchen. "Give it to Mum," said Alistair. Tiny walked sedately over to the stool and stood before the astonished Mrs. Forsythe. She took the volume from his jaws.

"'*Basic Radio*,'" she breathed.

"I asked him for that because I have a whole row of technical books up there, all from the same publisher, all the same color and about the same size," said Alistair calmly.

"But . . . but . . . how does he do it?"

Alistair shrugged. "I don't know! He doesn't read the titles. That I'm sure of. He can't read anything. I've tried to get him to do it a dozen different ways. I've lettered instructions on pieces of paper and shown them to him . . . you know . . . 'Go to the door' and 'Give me a kiss' and so on. He just looks at them and

wags his tail. But if I read them first—”

“You mean, read them aloud?”

“No. Oh . . . he’ll do anything I ask him to, sure. But I don’t have to say it. Just read it, and he turns and does it. That’s the way he makes me study what he wants studied.”

“Are you telling me that that behemoth can read your mind?”

“What do you think? Here—I’ll show you. Give me the book.”

Tiny’s ears went up. “There’s something in here about the electrical flux in super-cooled copper that I don’t quite remember. Let’s see if Tiny’s interested.”

She sat on the kitchen table and began to leaf through the book. Tiny came and sat in front of her, his tongue lolling out, his big brown eyes fixed on her face. There was silence as she turned pages, read a little, turned some more. And suddenly Tiny whimpered urgently.

“See what I mean, Mum? All right, Tiny. I’ll read it over.”

Silence again, while Alistair’s long green eyes traveled over the page. All at once Tiny stood up and nuzzled her leg.

“Hm-m-m? The reference? Want me to go back?”

Tiny sat again, expectantly. “There’s a reference here to a passage in the first section on basic electric theory that he wants,” she explained. She looked up. “Mother! You read it to him!” She jumped off the table, handed the book over. “Here. Section 45. Tiny! Go listen to Mum. Go on!” and she shoved him toward Mrs. Forsythe, who said in an awed voice, “When I was a

little girl, I used to read bedtime stories to my dolls. I thought I’d quit that kind of thing altogether, and now I’m reading technical literature to this . . . this canine catastrophe here. Shall I read aloud?”

“No—don’t. See if he gets it.”

But Mrs. Forsythe didn’t get the chance. Before she had read two lines Tiny was frantic. He ran to Mrs. Forsythe and back to Alistair. He reared up like a frightened horse, rolled his eyes, and panted. He whimpered. He growled a little.

“For pity’s sakes what’s wrong?”

“I guess he can’t get it from you,” said Alistair. “I’ve had the idea before that he’s tuned to me in more ways than one, and this clinches it. All right, then. Give me back the—”

But before she could ask him, Tiny had bounded to Mrs. Forsythe, taken the book gently out of her hands, and carried it to his mistress. Alistair smiled at her paling mother, took the book, and read until Tiny suddenly seemed to lose interest. He went back to his station by the kitchen cabinet and lay down yawning.

“That’s that,” said Alistair, closing the book. “In other words, class dismissed. Well, Mum?”

Mrs. Forsythe opened her mouth, closed it again, and shook her head. Alistair loosed a peal of laughter.

“Oh Mum, Mum,” she gurgled through her laughter, “History has been made. Mum darling, you’re speechless!”

“I am not,” said Mrs. Forsythe gruffly. “I . . . I think . . . well, what do you know! You’re right! I *am*!”

When they had their breath back—

yes, Mrs. Forsythe joined in, for Alistair's statement was indeed true—Alistair picked up the book and said, "Now look, Mum, it's almost time for my session with Tiny. Oh yes; it's a regular thing, and he certainly is leading me into some fascinating byways."

"Like what?"

"Like the old impossible problem of casting tungsten, for example. You know, there is a way to do it."

"You don't say! What do you cast it in—a play?"

Alistair wrinkled her straight nose. "Did you ever hear of pressure ice? Water compressed until it forms a solid at what is usually its boiling point?"

"I remember some such."

"Well, all you need is enough pressure, and a chamber which can take that kind of pressure, and a couple of details like a high-intensity field of umpteen megacycles phased with . . . I forget the figures; anyhow, that's the way to go about it."

"If we had some eggs we could have some ham and eggs if we had some ham," quoted Mrs. Forsythe. "And besides, I seem to remember something about that pressure ice melting pretty much right now, like so," and she snapped her fingers. "How do you know your molded tungsten — that's what it would be, not cast at all—wouldn't change state the same way?"

"That's what I'm working on now," said Alistair calmly. "Come along, Tiny. Mum, you can find your way around all right, can't you? If you need anything, just sing out. This isn't a séance, you know."

"Isn't it, though?" muttered Mrs. Forsythe as her lithe daughter and the dog bounded up the stairs. She shook her head, went into the kitchen, drew a bucket of water and carried it down to her car, which had cooled to a simmer. She was dashing careful handfuls of it onto the radiator, before beginning to pour, when her quick ear caught the scrunching of boots on the steep drive.

She looked up to see a young man trudging wearily in the mid-morning heat. He wore an old sharkskin suit and carried his coat. In spite of his wilted appearance, his step was firm and his golden hair was crisp in the sunlight. He swung up to Mrs. Forsythe and gave her a grin, all deep-blue eyes and good teeth. "Forsythe's?" he asked, in a resonant baritone.

"That's right," said Mrs. Forsythe, finding that she had to turn her head from side to side to see both of his shoulders. And yet she and he could swap belts. "You must feel like the Blue Kangaroo here," she added, slapping her miniature mount on its broiling flank. "Boiled dry."

"You cah! de cyah de Blue Kangaroo?" he repeated, draping his coat over the door and mopping his forehead with what seemed to Mrs. Forsythe's discerning eye, a pure linen handkerchief.

"I do," she replied, forcing herself not to comment on the young man's slight but strange accent. "It's strictly a dry-clutch job, and acts like a castellated one. Let the pedal out, she races. Let it out three-thirty-seconds of an inch more and you're gone

from there. Always stopping to walk back and pick up your head. Snaps right off, you know. Carry a bottle of collodion and a couple of splints to put your head back on. Starve to death without a head to eat with. What brings you here?"

In answer he held out a yellow envelope, looking solemnly at her head and neck, then at the car, his face quiet, his eyes crinkling with a huge enjoyment.

Mrs. Forsythe glanced at the envelope. "Oh. Telegram. She's inside. I'll give it to her. Come on in and have a drink. It's hotter than the hinges of Hail Columbia, Happy Land. Don't go to wiping your feet like that! By jeebers, that's enough to give you an inferiority complex! Invite a man in, invite the dust on his feet, too. It's good honest dirt and we don't run to white broadlooms here. Are you afraid of dogs?"

The young man laughed. "Dahgs talk to me, ma'm."

She glanced at him sharply, opened her mouth to tell him he might just be taken at his word around here, then thought better of it. "Sit down," she ordered. She bustled up a foaming glass of beer and set it beside him. "I'll get her down to sign for the wire," she said. The man half lowered the glass into which he had been jowls-deep, began to speak, found he was alone in the room, laughed suddenly and richly, wiped off the mustache of suds and dove down for a new one.

Mrs. Forsythe grinned and shook her head as she heard the laughter, and went straight to Alistair's study. "Alistair!"

"Stop pushing me about the ductility of tungsten, Tiny! You know better than that. Figures are figures, and facts are facts. I think I see what you're trying to lead me to. All I can say is that if such a thing is possible, I never heard of any equipment that could handle it. Stick around a few years and I'll hire you a nuclear power plant. Until then, I'm afraid that—"

"Alistair!"

"—there just isn't . . . hm-m-m? Yes, Mother?"

"Telegram."

"Oh. Who from?"

"I don't know, being only one fortieth of one per cent as psychic as that doghouse Dunninger you have there. In other words, I didn't open it."

"Oh, Mum, you're silly! Of course you could have . . . oh well, let's have it."

"I haven't got it. It's downstairs with Discobolus Junior, who brought it. No one," she said ecstatically, "has a right to be so tanned with hair that color."

"What *are* you talking about?"

"Go on down and sign for the telegram and see for yourself. You will find the maiden's dream with his golden head in a bucket of suds, all hot and sweaty from his noble efforts in attaining this peak without spikes or alpenstock, with nothing but his pure heart and Western Union to guide him."

"This maiden's dream happens to be tungsten treatment," said Alistair with some irritation. She looked longingly at her worksheet, put down her pencil and rose. "Stay here, Tiny.

I'll be right back as soon as I have successfully resisted my conniving mother's latest scheme to drag my red hairing across some young buck's path to matrimony." She paused at the door. "Aren't you staying up here, Mum?"

"Get that hair away from your face," said her mother grimly. "I am not. I wouldn't miss this for the world. And don't pun in front of that young man. It's practically the only thing in the world I consider vulgar."

Alistair led the way down the stairs and through the corridor to the kitchen, with her mother crowding her heels, once fluffing out her daughter's blazing hair, once taking a swift tuck in the back of the girl's halter. They spilled through the door almost together. Alistair stopped and frankly stared.

For the young man had risen, and, still with the traces of beer foam on his modeled lips, stood with his jaws stupidly open, his head a little back, his eyes partly closed as if against a bright light. And it seemed as if everyone in the room forgot to breathe for a moment.

"Well!" Mrs. Forsythe exploded after a moment. "Honey, you've made a conquest. Hey—you! Chin up! Chest out!"

"I beg your humble pardon," muttered the young man; and the phrase seemed more a colloquialism than an affectation.

Alistair, visibly pulling herself together, said, "Mother! Please!" and drifted forward to pick up the telegram which lay on the kitchen table.

Her mother knew her well enough to realize that her hands and her eyes were steady only by a powerful effort. Whether the effort was in control of annoyance, embarrassment or out-and-out biochemistry was a matter for later thought. At the moment she was enjoying it tremendously.

"Please wait," said Alistair coolly. "There may be an answer to this." The young man simply bobbed his head. He was still a little wall-eyed with the impact of seeing Alistair, as many a young man had been before. But there were the beginnings of his astonishing smile around his lips as he watched her rip the envelope open.

"Mother! Listen!

"ARRIVED THIS MORNING AND HOPE I CAN CATCH YOU AT HOME. OLD DEBBIL KILLED IN ACCIDENT BUT FOUND HIS MEMORY BEFORE HE DIED. HAVE INFORMATION WHICH MAY CLEAR UP THE MYSTERY—OR DEEPEN IT. HOPE I CAN SEE YOU FOR I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK.

ALEC."

"How old is this tropical savage?" asked Mrs. Forsythe.

"He's not a savage and I don't know how old he is and I can't see what that has to do with it. I think he's about my age or a little older." She looked up, and her eyes were shining.

"Deadly rival," said Mrs. Forsythe to the messenger consolingly. "Rot-ten timing here, somewhere."

"I—" said the young man.

"Mother, we've got to fix something to eat. Do you suppose he'll be able to stay over? Where's my



EDD
CARTIER

green dress with the . . . oh, you wouldn't know. It's new."

"Then the letters weren't all about the dog," said Mrs. Forsythe, with a Cheshire grin.

"Mum, you're impossible! This is . . . is important. Alec is . . . is—"

Her mother nodded. "Important. That's all I was pointing out."

The young man said, "I—"

Alistair turned to him. "I do hope you don't think we're totally mad. I'm sorry you had such a climb." She went to the sideboard and took a quarter out of a sugar bowl. He took it gravely.

"Thank you, ma'm. If you don't min', I'll keep this piece of silver for the rest o' my everlahstin'."

"You're wel— *What?*"

The young man seemed to get even taller. "I greatly appreciate your hospitality, Mrs. Forsythe. I have you at a disadvantage, ma'm, and one I shall correct." He put a crooked forefinger between his lips and blew out an incredible blast of sound.

"*Tiny!*" he roared. "Here to me, dahg, an' mek me known!"

There was a roar from upstairs, and Tiny came tumbling down, scrabbling wildly as he took the turn at the foot of the stairs and hurtled over the slick flooring to crash joyfully into the young man.

"Ah, you beast," crooned the man, cuffing the dog happily. His accent thickened. "You thrive yourself here wid de lady-dem, you gray-yut styoupid harse. You glad me, mon, you glad me." He grinned at the two astonished women. "Forgive me," he said as he pummeled Tiny, pulled his ears, shoved him away and caught

him by the jaws. "For true, I couldn't get in the first word with Mrs. Forsythe, and after I couldn't help meself. Alec my name is, and the telegram I took from the true messenger, finding him sighing and sweating at the sight of the hill there."

Alistair covered her face with her hands and said "Oooh." Mrs. Forsythe whooped with laughter. She found her voice and demanded, "Young man, what is your last name?"

"Sundersen, ma'm."

"Mother! Why did you ask him that?"

"For reasons of euphony," said Mrs. Forsythe with a twinkle. Alexander Sundersen. Very good. Alistair—"

"Stop! Mum, don't you dare—"

"I was going to say, Alistair, if you and our guest will excuse me, I'll have to get back to my knitting." She went to the door.

Alistair threw an appalled look at Alec and cried, "Mother! What are you knitting?"

"My brows, darling. See you later," Mrs. Forsythe chuckled, and went out.

It took almost a week for Alec to get caught up with the latest developments in Tiny, for he got the story in the most meticulous detail. There never seemed to be enough time to get an explanation or an anecdote in, so swiftly did the time fly when he and Alistair were together. Some of these days he went into the city with Alistair in the morning, and spent the day in buying tools and equip-

ment for his estate. New York was a wonder city to him — he had been there only once before—and Alistair found herself getting quite possessive about the place, showing it off like the contents of a jewel box. And then Alec stayed at the house a couple of days. He endeared himself forever to Mrs. Forsythe by removing, cleaning, and refacing the clutch on the Blue Kangaroo, simplifying the controls on the gas refrigerator so it could be defrosted without a major operation, and putting a building-jack under the corner of the porch which threatened to sag.

And the sessions with Tiny were resumed and intensified. At first he seemed a little uneasy when Alec joined one of them, but within half an hour he relaxed. Thereafter, more and more he would interrupt Alistair to turn to Alec. Although he apparently could not understand Alec's thoughts at all, he seemed to comprehend perfectly when Alec spoke to Alistair. And within a few days she learned to accept these interruptions, for they speeded up the research they were doing. Alec was almost totally ignorant of the advanced theory with which Alistair worked, but his mind was clear, quick, and very direct. He was no theorist, and that was good. He was one of those rare grease-monkey geniuses, with a grasp that amounted to intuition concerning the laws of cause and effect. Tiny's reaction to this seemed to be approval. At any rate, the occasions when Alistair lost the track of what Tiny was after, happened less and less frequently. Alec instinctively knew just how far

to go back, and then how to spot the turning at which they had gone astray. And bit by bit, they began to identify what it was that Tiny was after. As to why—and how—he was after it, Alec's experience with old Debbil seemed a clue. It certainly was sufficient to keep Alec plugging away at a possible solution to the strange animal's stranger need.

"It was down at the sugar mill," he told Alistair, after he had become fully acquainted with the incredible dog's actions, and they were trying to determine the why and the how. "He called me over to the chute where cane is loaded into the conveyors.

"'Bahss,' he told me, 'dat t'ing dere, it not safe, sah.' And he pointed through the guard over the bullgears that drove the conveyor. Great big everlahstin' teeth it has, Miss Alistair, a full ten inches long, and it whirlin' to the drive pinion. It's old, but strong for good. Debbil, what he saw was a bit o' play on the pinion shaf'.

"'Now, you're an old fool,' I told him.

"'No, bahss,'" he says. 'Look now, sah, de t'ing wit' de teet'—dem, it not safe, sah. I mek you see,' and before I could move meself or let a thought trickle, he *opens* the guard up and thrus' his han' inside! Bull gear, it run right up his arm and nip it off, neat as ever, at the shoulder. I humbly beg your pardon, Miss Alistair."

"G-go on," said Alistair, through her handkerchief.

"Well, sir, old Debbil was an idiot for true, and he only died the way

he lived, rest him. He was old and he was all eaten out with malaria and elephantiasis and the like, that not even Dr. Thetford could save him. But a strange thing happened. As he lay dyin', with the entire village gathered roun' the door whisperin' plans for the wake, he sent to tell me come quickly. Down I run, and for the smile on his face I glad him when I cross the doorstep."

As Alec spoke, he was back in the Spanish-wall hut, with the air close under the palm-thatch roof, and the glare of the pressure lantern set on the tiny window ledge to give the old man light to die by. Alec's accent deepened: "How you feel, mon?" I ask him. 'Bahss, I'm a dead man now, but I got a light in mah hey-yud.'

"Tell me, then, Debbil.'

"Bahss, de folk-dem say, ol' Debbil, him cyahn't remembah de taste of a mango as he t'row away de skin. Him cyahn't remembah his own house do he stay away t'ree day.'

"Loose talk, Debbil.'

"True talk, Bahss. Foh de Lahd give me a leaky pot fo' hol' ma brains. But Bahss, I do recall one t'ing now, bright an' clear, and you must know. Bahss, de day I go up the wahtah line, I see a great jumbee in de stones of de Gov'nor Palace dere.'"

"What's a Jumbee?" asked Mrs. Forsythe.

"A ghost, ma'm. The Crucians carry a crawlin' heap of superstitions. Tiny! What eats you, mon?"

Tiny growled again. Alec and Alistair exchanged a look. "He doesn't want you to go on."

"Listen carefully. I want him to get this. I am his friend. I want to help you help him. I realize that he wants as few people as possible to find out about this thing. I will say nothing to anybody unless and until I have his permission."

"Well, Tiny?"

The dog stood restlessly, swinging his great head from Alistair to Alec. Finally he made a sound like an audible shrug, then turned to Mrs. Forsythe.

"Mother's part of me," said Alistair firmly. "That's the way it's got to be. No alternative." She leaned forward. "You can't talk to us. You can only indicate what you want said and done. I think Alec's story will help us to understand what you want, and help you to get it more quickly. Understand?"

Tiny gazed at her for a long moment, said "*Whuff!*" and lay down with his nose between his paws and his eyes fixed on Alec.

"I think that's the green light," said Mrs. Forsythe, "and I might add that most of it was due to my daughter's conviction that you're a wonderful fellow."

"Mother!"

"Well, pare me down and call me Spud! They're *both* blushing!" said Mrs. Forsythe blatantly.

"Go on, Alec," choked Alistair.

"Thank you. Old Debbil told me a fine tale of the things he had seen at the ruins. A great beast, mind you, with no shape at all, and a face ugly to drive you mad. And about the beast was what he called a 'feelin' good'. He said it was a miracle, but he feared nothing. 'Wet it was,

Bahss, like a slug, an' de eye it have is whirlin' an' shakin', an' I standin' dar feelin' like a bride at de altar step an' no fear in me.' Well, I thought the old man's mind was wandering, for I knew he was touched. But the story he told was *that* clear, and never a simple second did he stop to think. Out it all came like a true thing.

"He said that Tiny walked to the beast, and that it curved over him like an ocean wave. It closed over the dog, and Debbil was rooted there the livelong day, still without fear, and feelin' no smallest desire to move. He had no surprise at all, even at the thing he saw restin' in the thicket among the old stones.

"He said it was a submarine, a mighty one as great as the estate house and with no break nor mar in its surface but for the glass part let in where the mouth is on a shark.

"And then when the sun begun to dip, the beast gave a shudderin' heave and rolled back, and out walked Tiny. He stepped up to Debbil and stood. Then the beast began to quiver and shake, and Debbil said the air aroun' him heaved with the work the monster was doing, tryin' to talk. A cloud formed in his brain, and a voice swept over him. 'Not a livin' word, Bahss, nor a sound at all. But it said to forget. It said to leave dis place and forget, sah.' And the last thing old Debbil saw as he turned away was the beast slumping down, seeming all but dead from the work it had done to speak at all. 'An' de cloud leave in mah hey-yud, Bahss, f'om dat time onward. I'm a dead man now, Bahss, but de cloud gone

and Debbil know de story.'" Alec leaned back and looked at his hands. "That was all. This must have happened about fifteen months pahst, just before Tiny began to show his strange stripe." He drew a deep breath and looked up. "Maybe I'm gullible. But I knew the old man too well. He never in this life could invent such a tale. I troubled myself to go up to the Governor's Palace after the buryin'. I might have been mistaken, but something big had lain in the deepest thicket, for it was crushed into a great hollow place near a hundred foot long. Well, there you are. For what it's worth, you have the story of a superstitious an' illiterate old man, at the point of death by violence and many years sick to boot."

There was a long silence, and at last Alistair threw her lucent hair back and said, "It isn't Tiny at all. It's a . . . a thing outside Tiny." She looked at the dog, her eyes wide. "And I don't even mind."

"Neither did Debbil, when he saw it," said Alec gravely.

Mrs. Forsythe snapped, "What are we sitting gawking at each other for? Don't answer; I'll tell you. All of us can think up a story to fit the facts, and we're all too self-conscious to come out with it. Any story which fit those facts would really be a killer."

"Well said," Alec grinned. "Would you like to tell us your idea?"

"Silly boy," muttered Alistair.

"Don't be impertinent, child. Of course I'd like to tell you, Alec. I think that the good Lord, in His infinite wisdom, has decided that it was

about time for Alistair to come to her senses, and, knowing that it would take a quasi-scientific miracle to do it, dreamed up this—

"Some day," said Alistair icily, "I'm going to pry you loose from your verbosity and your sense of humor in one fell swoop."

Mrs. Forsythe grinned. "There is a time for jocularly, kidlet, and this is it. I hate solemn people solemnly sitting around being awed by things. What do you make of all this, Alec?"

Alec pulled his ear and said, "I vote we leave it up to Tiny. It's his show. Let's get on with the work, and just keep in mind what we already know."

And to their astonishment, Tiny stumped over to Alec and licked his hand.

The blowoff came six weeks after Alec's arrival. (Oh, yes! he stayed six weeks, and longer! it took some fiendish cogitation for him to think of enough legitimate estate business which had to be done in New York to keep him that long; but after that he was so much one of the family that he needed no excuse.) He had devised a code system for Tiny, so that Tiny could add something to their conversations. His point: "Here he sits, ma'am, like a fly on the wall, seeing everything and hearing everything and saying not a word. Picture it for yourself, and you in such a position, full entranced as you are with the talk you hear." And for Mrs. Forsythe particularly, the mental picture was altogether too vivid! It was so well presented that Tiny's research went by the board for four

days while they devised the code. They had to give up the idea of a glove with a pencil-pocket in it, with which Tiny might write a little, or any similar device. The dog was simply not deft enough for such meticulous work; and besides, he showed absolutely no signs of understanding any written or printed symbolism. Unless, of course, Alistair thought about it . . .

Alec's plan was simple. He cut some wooden forms—a disk, a square, a triangle to begin with. The disk signified "yes", or any other affirmation, depending on the context. The square was "no" or any negation; and the triangle indicated a question or a change in subject. The amount of information Tiny was able to impart by moving from one to another of these forms was astonishing. Once a subject for discussion was established, Tiny would take up a stand between the disk and the square, so that all he had to do was to swing his head to one side or the other, to indicate a "yes" or a "no". No longer were there those exasperating sessions in which the track of his research was lost while they back-trailed to discover where they had gone astray. The conversations ran like this:

"Tiny, I have a question. Hope you won't think it too personal. May I ask it?" That was Alec, always infinitely polite to dogs. He had always recognized their innate dignity.

Yes, the answer would come, as Tiny swung his head over the disk.

"Were we right in assuming that you, the dog, are not communicating with us: that you are the medium?"

Tiny went to the triangle. "You want to change the subject?"

Tiny hesitated, then went to the square. *No.*

Alistair said, "He obviously wants something from us before he will discuss the question. Right, Tiny?"

Yes.

Mrs. Forsythe said, "He's had his dinner, and he doesn't smoke. I think he wants us to assure him that we'll keep his secret."

Yes.

"Good. Alec, you're wonderful," said Alistair. "Mother, stop beaming! I only meant—"

"Leave it at that, child! Any qualification will spoil it for the man!"

"Thank you, ma'm," said Alec gravely, with that deep twinkle of amusement around his eyes. Then he turned back to Tiny. "Well, what about it, sah? Are you a superdog?"

No.

"Who . . . no, he can't answer that. Let's go back a bit. Was old Debbil's story true?"

Yes.

"Ah." They exchanged glances. "Where is this — monster? Still in St. Croix?"

No.

"Here?"

Yes.

"You mean here, in this room, or in the house?"

No.

"Nearby, though?"

Yes.

"How can we find out just where, without mentioning the countryside item by item?" asked Alistair.

"I know," said Mrs. Forsythe. "Alec, according to Debbil, that 'sub-

marine' thing was pretty big, wasn't it?"

"That it was, ma'm."

"Good. Tiny, does he . . . it . . . have the ship here, too?"

Yes.

Mrs. Forsythe spread her hands. "That's it, then. There's only one place around here where you could hide such an object." She nodded her head at the west wall of the house.

"The river!" cried Alistair. "That right, Tiny?"

Yes. And Tiny went immediately to the triangle.

"Wait!" said Alec. "Tiny, beggin' your pardon, but there's one more question. Shortly after you took passage to New York, there was a business with compasses, where they all pointed to the west. Was that the ship?"

Yes.

"In the water?"

No.

"Why," said Alistair, "this is pure science fiction! Alec, do you ever get science fiction in the tropics?"

"Ah, Miss Alistair, not often enough, for true. But well I know it. The spaceships are old Mother Goose to me. But there's a difference here. For in all the stories I've read, when a beast comes here from space, it's to kill and conquer; and yet—and I don't know why—I know that this one wants nothing of the sort. More, he's out to do us good."

"I feel the same way," said Mrs. Forsythe thoughtfully. "It's sort of a protective cloud which seems to surround us. Does that make sense to you, Alistair?"

"I know it from 'way back," said Alistair with conviction. She looked at the dog thoughtfully. "I wonder why he . . . it . . . won't show itself. And why it can communicate only through me. And why me?"

"I'd say, Miss Alistair, that you were chosen because of your metallurgy. As to why we never see the beast— Well, it knows best. Its reason must be a good one."

Day after day, and bit by bit, they got and gave information. Many things remained mysteries; but strangely, there seemed no real need to question Tiny too closely. The atmosphere of confidence, of good will that surrounded them made questions seem not only unnecessary but downright rude.

And day by day, and little by little, a drawing began to take shape under Alec's skilled hands. It was a cast-

ing, with a simple enough external contour, but inside it contained a series of baffles and a chamber. It was designed, apparently, to support and house a carballoy shaft. There were no openings into the central chamber except those taken by the shaft. The shaft turned: *something* within the chamber apparently drove it. There was plenty of discussion about it.

"Why the baffles?" moaned Alistair, palming all the neatness out of her flaming hair. "Why carballoy? And in the name of Nemo, why tungsten?"

Alec stared at the drawing for a long moment, then suddenly clapped a hand to his head. "Tiny! Is there radiation inside that housing? I mean, hard stuff?"

Yes.

"There you are, then," said Alec. "Tungsten to shield the radiation. A



casting for uniformity. The baffles to make a meander out of the shaft openings — see, the shaft has plates turned on it to fit between the baffles.”

“And nowhere for anything to go in, nowhere for anything to come out — except the shaft, of course — and besides, you can’t cast tungsten that way! Maybe Tiny’s monster can, but we can’t. Maybe with the right flux, and with enough power — but that’s silly. Tungsten won’t cast.”

“And we can’t build a spaceship. There must be a way!”

“Not with today’s facilities, and not with tungsten,” said Alistair. “Tiny’s ordering it from us the way we would order a wedding cake at the corner bakery.”

“What made you say ‘wedding cake’?”

“You, too? Alec? Don’t I get enough of that from Mother?” But she smiled all the same. “But about the casting—it seems to me that our mysterious friend is in the position of a radio fiend who understands every part of his set, how it’s made, how and why it works. Then a tube blows, and he finds he can’t buy one. He has to make one if he gets one at all. Apparently old Debbil’s beast is in that kind of a spot. What about it, Tiny? Is your friend short a part which he understands but has never built before?”

Yes.

“And he needs it to get away from Earth?”

Yes.

Alec asked, “What’s the trouble? Can’t get escape velocity?”

Tiny hesitated, and then went to

the triangle. “Either he doesn’t want to talk about it, or the question doesn’t quite fit the situation,” said Alistair. “It doesn’t matter. Our main problem is the casting. It just can’t be done. Not by anyone on this planet, as far as I know; and I think I know. It has to be tungsten, Tiny?”

Yes.

“Tungsten, for what?” asked Alec. “Radiation shield?”

Yes.

He turned to Alistair. “Isn’t there something just as good?”

She mused, staring at his drawing. “Yes, several things,” she said thoughtfully. Tiny watched her, moveless. He seemed to slump as she shrugged dispiritedly and said, “But not anything with walls as thin as that. A yard or so of lead might do it, and have something like the mechanical strength he seems to want, but it would obviously be too big. Beryllium—” At the word, Tiny went and stood right on top of the square—a most emphatic *no*.

“How about an alloy?” Alec asked.

“Well, Tiny?”

Tiny went to the triangle. Alistair nodded. “You don’t know. I can’t think of one. I’ll take it up with Dr. Nowland. Maybe—”

The following day Alec stayed home and spent the day arguing cheerfully with Mrs. Forsythe and building a grape arbor. It was a radiant Alistair who came home that evening. “Got it! Got it!” she caroled as she danced in. “Alec! Tiny—come on!”

They flew upstairs to the study. Without removing the green

“beanie” with the orange feather that so nearly matched her hair, Alistair hauled out four reference books and began talking animatedly. “Auric molybdenum, Tiny! What about that? Gold and molyb III should do it! Listen!” And she launched forth into a spatter of absorption data, Greek-letter formulae, and strength of materials comparisons which quite made Alec’s head swim. He sat watching her without listening. Increasingly, this was his greatest pleasure.

When Alistair was quite through, Tiny walked away from her and lay down, gazing off into space.

“Well, strike me!” said Alec. “Look yonder, Miss Alistair. The very first time I ever saw him thinking something over.”

“*Sh-h!* Don’t disturb him, then. If that *is* the answer, and if he never thought of it before, it will take some figuring out. There’s no knowing what fantastic kind of science he’s comparing it with.”

• “I see the point. Like . . . well, suppose we crashed a plane in the Brazilian jungle, and needed a new hydraulic cylinder on the landing gear. Now, then, one of the natives shows us ironwood, and it’s up to us to figure out if we can make it serve.”

“That’s about it,” breathed Alistair. “I—” She was interrupted by Tiny, who suddenly leaped up and ran to her, kissing her hands, committing the forbidding enormity of putting his paws on her shoulders, running back to the wooden forms and nudging the disk, the *yes* symbol. His tail was going like a metro-

nome without its pendulum. Mrs. Forsythe came in in the midst of all this rowdiness and demanded:

“What goes on? Who made a der-
vish out of Tiny? What have you
been feeding him? Don’t tell me.
Let me . . . you don’t mean you’ve
solved his problem for him? What
are you going to do—buy him a pogo
stick?”

“Oh, Mum! We’ve got it! An alloy of molybdenum and gold! I can get it alloyed and cast in no time!”

“Good, honey—good. You going to cast the whole thing?” She pointed to the drawing.

“Why, yes.”

“Humph!”

“Mother! Why, if I may ask, do you ‘humph’ in that tone of voice?”

“You may ask. Chicken, who’s going to pay for it?”

“Why, that will . . . I—oh. *Oh!*” she said, aghast, and ran to the drawing. Alec came and looked over her shoulder. She figured in the corner of the drawing, oh-ed once again, and sat down weakly.

“How much?” asked Alec.

“I’ll get an estimate in the morning,” she said faintly. “I know plenty of people. I can get it at cost—maybe.” She looked at Tiny despairingly. He came and laid his head against her knee, and she pulled at his ears. “I won’t let you down, darling,” she whispered.

She got the estimate the next day. It was a little over thirteen thousand dollars.

Alistair and Alec stared blankly at each other and then at the dog.

“Maybe you can tell us where we

can raise that much money?" said Alistair, as if she expected Tiny to whip out a wallet.

Tiny whimpered, licked Alistair's hand, looked at Alec, and then lay down.

"Now what?" mused Alec.

"Now we go and fix something to eat," said Mrs. Forsythe, moving toward the door. The others were about to follow, when Tiny leaped to his feet and ran in front of them. He stood in the doorway and whimpered. When they came closer, he barked.

"*Shh!* What is it, Tiny? Want us to stay here a while?"

"Say! Who's the boss around here?" Mrs. Forsythe wanted to know.

"He is," said Alec, and he knew he was speaking for all of them. They sat down, Mrs. Forsythe on the studio couch, Alistair at her desk, Alec at the drawing table. But Tiny seemed not to approve of the arrangement. He became vastly excited, running to Alec, nudging him hard, dashing to Alistair, taking her wrist very gently in his jaws and pulling gently toward Alec.

"What is it, fellow?"

"Seems like matchmaking to me," remarked Mrs. Forsythe.

"Nonsense, Mum!" said Alistair, coloring. "He wants Alec and me to change places, that's all."

Alec said, "Oh!" and went to sit beside Mrs. Forsythe. Alistair sat at the drawing table. Tiny put a paw up on it, poked at the large tablet of paper. Alistair looked at him curiously, then tore off the top sheet. Tiny nudged a pencil with his nose.

Then they waited. Somehow, no

one wanted to speak. Perhaps no one could, but there seemed to be no reason to try. And gradually a tension built up in the room. Tiny stood stiff and rapt in the center of the room. His eyes glazed, and when he finally keeled over limply, no one went to him.

Alistair picked up the pencil slowly. Watching her hand, Alec was reminded of the movement of the pointer on a ouija board. The pencil traveled steadily, in small surges, to the very top of the paper and hung there. Alistair's face was quite blank.

After that no one could say what happened, exactly. It was as if their eyes had done what their voices had done. They could see, but they did not care to. And Alistair's pencil began to move. Something, somewhere, was directing her mind—not her hand. Faster and faster her pencil flew, and it wrote what was later to be known as the Forsythe Formulae.

There was no sign then, of course, of the furor that they would cause, of the millions of words of conjecture which were written when it was discovered that the girl who wrote them could not possibly have had the mathematical background to have written them. They were understood by no one at first, and by very few people ever. Alistair certainly did not know what they meant.

An editorial in a popular magazine came startlingly close to the true nature of the Formulae when it said, "The Forsythe Formulae, which describe what the Sunday supplements call the 'Something-for-Nothing Clutch', and the drawing which ac-

companies them, signify little to the layman. As far as can be determined, the Formulae are the description and working principles of a device. It appears to be a power plant of sorts, and if it is ever understood, atomic power will go the way of gas-lights.

"A sphere of energy is enclosed in a shell made of neutron-absorbing material. This sphere has inner and outer 'layers'. A shaft passes through the sphere. Apparently a magnetic field must be rotated about the outer casing of the device. The sphere of energy aligns itself with this field. The inner sphere rotates with the outer one, and has the ability to turn the shaft. Unless the mathematics used are disproved—and no one seems to have come anywhere near doing that, unorthodox as they are—the aligning effect between the rotating field and the two concentric spheres, as well as the shaft, is quite independent of any load. In other words, if the original magnetic field rotates at three thousand rpm, the shaft will rotate at three thousand rpm, even if there is only a sixteenth horsepower turning the field while there is a ten thousand braking stress on the shaft.

"Ridiculous? Perhaps. And perhaps it is no more so than the apparent impossibility of fifteen watts of energy pouring into the antenna of a radio station, and nothing coming down. The key to the whole problem is in the nature of those self-contained spheres of force inside the shell. Their power is apparently inherent, and consists of an ability to align, just as the useful

property of steam is an ability to expand. If, as is suggested by Reinhardt in his 'Usage of the Symbol β in the Forsythe Formulae' these spheres are nothing but stable concentrations of pure binding energy, we have here a source of power beyond the wildest dreams of mankind. And whether or not we succeed in building such devices, it cannot be denied that whatever their mysterious source, the Forsythe Formulae are an epochal gift to several sciences, including, if you like, the art of philosophy."

After it was over, and the Formulae written, the terrible tension lifted. The three humans sat in their happy coma, and the dog lay senseless on the rug. Mrs. Forsythe was the first to move, standing up abruptly. "Well!" she said.

It seemed to break a spell. Everything was quite normal. No hangovers, no sense of strangeness, no fear. They stood looking wonderingly at the mass of minute figures.

"I don't know," murmured Alistair, and the phrase covered a world of meaning. Then, "Alec—that casting. We've got to get it done. We've just *got* to, no matter what it costs us!"

"I'd like to," said Alec. "Why do we *have* to?"

She waved toward the drawing table. "We've been given that."

"You don't say!" said Mrs. Forsythe. "And what is *that*?"

Alistair put her hand to her head, and a strange, unfocused look came into her eyes. That look was the only part of the whole affair that

ever really bothered Alec. It was a place she had gone to, a little bit; and he knew that no matter what-ever happened, he would never be able to go there with her.

She said, "He's been . . . talking to me, you know. You do know that, don't you? I'm not guessing, Alec—Mum."

"I believe you, chicken," her mother said softly. "What are you trying to say?"

"I got it in concepts. It isn't a thing you can repeat, really. But the idea is that he couldn't give us any *thing*. His ship is completely functional, and there isn't anything he can exchange for what he wants us to do. But he has given us something of great value—" Her voice trailed off; she seemed to listen to something for a moment. "Of value in several ways. A new science, a new approach to attack the science. New tools, new mathematics."

"But what is it? What can it do? And how is it going to help us pay for the casting?" asked Mrs. Forsythe.

"It can't, immediately," said Alistair decisively. "It's too big. We don't even know what it is. Why are you arguing? Can't you understand that he can't give us any gadgetry? That we haven't his techniques, materials, and tools, and so we couldn't make any actual machine he suggested? He's done the only thing he can; he's given us a new science, and tools to take it apart."

"That I know," said Alec gravely. "Well indeed. I felt that. And I . . . I trust him. Do you, ma'm?"

"Yes, of course. I think he's—

people. I think he has a sense of humor and a sense of justice," said Mrs. Forsythe firmly. "Let's get our heads together. We ought to be able to scrape it up some way. And why shouldn't we? Haven't we three got something to talk about for the rest of our lives?"

And their heads went together.

This is the letter that arrived two months later in St. Croix.

Honey-lamb,

Hold on to your seat. It's all over./

The casting arrived. I missed you more than ever, but when you have to go—and you know I'm glad you went! Anyway, I did as you indicated, through Tiny, before you left. The men who rented me the boat and ran it for me thought I was crazy, and said so. Do you know that once we were out on the river with the casting, and Tiny started whuffing and whimpering to tell me we were on the right spot, and I told the men to tip the casting over the side, they had the colossal nerve to insist on opening the crate? Got quite nasty about it. Didn't want to be a party to any dirty work. It was against my principles, but I let them, just to expedite matters. They were certain there was a body in the box! When they saw what it was, I was going to bend my umbrella over their silly heads, but they looked so funny! I couldn't do a thing but roar with laughter. That was when the man said I was crazy.

Anyhow, over the side it went, into the river. Made a lovely splash. And about a minute later, I got the loveliest feeling—I wish I could describe it to you. I was sort of overwhelmed by a feeling of utter satisfaction, and gratitude, and . . . oh, I don't know. I just felt *good*, all over. I looked at Tiny, and he was trembling. I think he felt it, too. I'd call it a thank you, on a grand psychic scale. I think you can rest assured that Tiny's monster got what it wanted.

But that wasn't the end of it. I paid off the boatmen, and started up the bank. Something made me stop, and wait, and then go back to the water's edge.

It was early evening, and very still. I was under some sort of a compulsion—not an unpleasant thing, but an unbreakable one. I sat down on the river wall and watched the water. There was no one around—the boat had left—except one of those snazzy Sunlounge cruisers anchored a few yards out. I remember how still it was, because there was a little girl playing on the deck of the yacht, and I could hear her footsteps as she ran about.

Suddenly I noticed something in the water. I suppose I should have been frightened, but somehow I wasn't at all. Whatever the thing was, it was big and gray and slimy and quite shapeless. And somehow, it seemed to be the source of this aura of well-being and protectiveness that I felt. It was staring at me. I knew it was before I saw that it had an eye—a big one, with something whirling inside of it . . . I don't know. I

wish I could write. I wish I had the power to tell you what it was like. I know that it was, by human standards, infinitely revolting. If this was Tiny's monster, I could understand its being sensitive to the revulsion it might cause. And wrongly, for I felt to the core that the creature was good.

It winked at me. I don't mean blink. It winked. And then everything happened at once.

The creature was gone, and in seconds there was a disturbance in the water by the yacht. Something gray and wet reached up out of the river and I saw it was going for that little girl. Only a tyke—about three, she was. Red hair just like yours. And it thumped that child in the small of the back just enough to knock her over—into the river.

And can you believe it? I just sat there watching, and said never a word! It didn't seem right to me that that baby could be struggling in the water. *But it didn't seem wrong either!*

Well, before I could get my wits together, Tiny was off the wall like a hairy

bullet and streaking through the water. I have often wondered why his feet are so big; I never will again. The hound is build like the lower half of a paddle wheel! In two shakes he had the baby by the scruff of the neck and was bringing her back to me. No one had seen that child get pushed, Alistair! No one but me. But there was a man on the yacht who must have seen her fall. He was all over the deck roaring orders and getting in the way of things, and by the time he had his wherry in the water, Tiny had reached me with the little girl. She wasn't frightened either—she thought it was a grand joke! Wonderful youngster.

So the man came ashore, all gratitude and tears, and wanted to gold-plate Tiny or something. Then he saw me. "That your dog?" I said it was my daughter's. She was in St. Croix on her honeymoon. Before I could stop him he had a check-book out and was scratching away at it. He said he knew my kind. Said he knew I'd never accept a thing for myself, but wouldn't refuse something for my daughter. I enclose the check. Why he picked a sum like thirteen thousand, I'll never know. Anyhow, I know it'll be a help to you. Since the money really comes from Tiny's monster, I suppose I can confess that getting Alec to put up the money, even though he would have to clean out his savings and mortgage his estate, would be a good idea if he were one of the family, because then he'd have you to help him make it all back again—that was all my idea. Sometimes, though, watching you, I wonder if I really had to work so all-fired hard to get you nice people married to each other.

Well, I imagine that closes the business of Tiny's monster. There are a lot of things we'll probably never know. I

can guess some things, though. It could communicate with a dog, but not with a human, unless it half-killed itself trying. Apparently a dog is telepathic with humans to a degree, though it probably doesn't understand a lot of what it gets. I don't speak French, but I could probably transcribe French phonetically well enough so a Frenchman could read it. Tiny was transcribing that way. The monster could "send" through him, and control him completely. It no doubt indoctrinated the dog—if I can use the term—the day old Debbil took him up the waterline. And when the monster caught, through Tiny, the mental picture of you when Dr. Schwellenbach mentioned you, it went to work through the dog to get you working on its problem. Mental pictures—that's probably what the monster used. That's how Tiny could tell one book from another, without being able to read. You visualize everything you think about. What do you think? I think that mine's as good a guess as any.

You might be amused to learn that last night all the compasses in this neighborhood pointed west for a couple of hours! Bye now, chillun. Keep on being happy.

Love and love, and a kiss for Alec,
Mum.

P. S. Is St. Croix really a nice place to honeymoon? Jack—he's the fellow who signed the check—is getting very sentimental. He's very like your father. A widower, and—Oh, I don't know. Says fate, or something, brought us together. Said he hadn't planned to take a trip upriver with the baby, but something drove him to it. He can't imagine why he anchored just there. Seemed a good idea at the time. Maybe it was fate. He is very sweet. I wish I could forget that wink I saw in the water.

THE END.

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