

RECALLED TO LIFE

ROBERT SILVERBERG

“You’ve condemned all of us to death,” Harker said tonelessly.

The men he addressed were geniuses. The astonishing technique they had discovered enabled them to restore corpses to full, healthy life. But when faced with opposition, they fought back blindly and stupidly. As a lawyer, Harker could scarcely count the charges that might be made against them: kidnapping, murder, illegal scientific experimentation. . . .

They had one chance. If they could revive the dead Senator Thurmond, they might still find a way to present their gift to humanity and to save themselves. Harker watched, numb-brained, while Vogel and the other surgeon prepared the complex reanimating instrument.

Minutes passed. The eyes of the body on the table opened and stared at the ceiling. But they were the dull, glazed eyes of an idiot!

Acclaimed by experts, raved over by readers when it originally appeared, Robert Silverberg’s greatest novel has been unaccountably ignored by book publishers until now.

Here it is.

RECALLED TO LIFE

ROBERT SILVERBERG

LANCER BOOKS • NEW YORK

A LANCER SCIENCE FICTION CLASSIC • 1962

To Larry T. Shaw

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LANCER BOOKS, INC. • 26 WEST 47th STREET • NEW YORK 36, N.Y.

Chapter I

THAT MORNING James Harker was not expecting anything unusual to happen. He had painstakingly taught himself, these six months since the election, not to expect anything. He had returned to private law practice, and the Governorship and all such things were now bright memories, growing dimmer each month.

Morning of an Ex-Governor. There was plenty to do: the Bryant trust-fund business was due for a hearing next Thursday, and before that time Harker had to get his case in order. A pitiful thing: old Bryant, one of the glorious pioneers of space travel, assailed by greedy heirs in his old age. It was enough to turn a man cynical, Harker thought, unless a man happened to be cynical already.

He reached across his desk for the file-folder labelled BRYANT: Hearing 5|16|33. The sound of the outer-office buzz trickled into the room, and Harker realized he had accidentally switched on the interoffice communicator. He started to switch it off; he stopped when he heard a dry, thin voice say, "Is the Governor in?"

His secretary primly replied, "Do you mean Mr. Harker?"

"That's right."

"Oh. He-he doesn't like to be called the Governor, you know. Do you have an appointment with him?"

"I'm afraid not. Terribly foolish of me-I didn't realize I'd need one. I don't live in New York, you see, and I'm just here for a few days--"

"I'm extremely sorry, sir. I cannot permit you to see Mr. Marker without an appointment. He's extremely busy, you see."

"I'm quite aware of that," came the nervous, oddly edgy voice. "But it's something of an emergency, and--"

"Dreadfully sorry, sir. Won't you phone for an appointment?"

To the eavesdropping Harker, the conversation sounded like something left over from his Albany days. But he was no longer Governor of New York and he was no longer the fair-haired boy of the National Liberal Party. He wasn't being groomed for the Presidency now. And, suddenly, he found himself positively yearning to be interrupted.

He leaned forward and said, "Joan, I'm not very busy right now. Suppose you send the gentleman in."

"Oh-uh-Mr. Harker. Of course, Mr. Harker." She sounded startled and irritated; perhaps she wanted to scold him for having listened in. Harker cut the audio circuit, slipped the Bryant file out of sight, cleared his desk, and tried to look keenly awake and responsive.

A timid knock sounded at his office door. Harker pressed the open button; the door split laterally, the segments rising into the ceiling and sliding into the floor, and a man in short frock coat and white unpressed trousers stepped through, grinning apologetically. A moment later the door snapped shut behind him.

"Mr. Harker?"

"That's right."

The visitor approached Harker's desk awkwardly; he walked as if his body were held together by baling wire, and as if his assembler had done an amateur job of it. His shoulders were extraordinarily wide for his thin frame, and long arms dangled loosely. He had a wide, friendly, toothy grin and much too much unkempt soft-looking brown hair. He handed Harker a card. The lawyer took it, spun it round

right-side-up so he could read it, and scanned the neat engraved characters. It said:

BELLER RESEARCH LABORATORIES

Litchfield,N.J.

Dr. Benedict Lurie

Harker frowned in concentration, shook his head, and said, "I'm sorry, Dr. Lurie. I'm afraid I've never heard of this particular laboratory."

"Understandable. We don't seek publicity. I'd be very surprised if you had heard of us." Lurie's head bobbed boyishly as he spoke; he seemed about as ill-at-ease a person as Harker had ever met.

"Cigarette?" Harker asked.

"Oh, no-never!"

Grinning, Harker took one himself, squeezed the igniting capsule with his index-finger's nail, and put the pack away. He leaned back. Lurie's awkwardness seemed to be contagious; Harker felt strangely fidgety.

"I guess you're wondering why I came here to see you, Mr. Harker."

"Yes, I am."

Lurie interspliced his long and slightly quivering fingers, then, as if dissatisfied, separated his hands again, crossed his legs, and gripped his kneecaps. He blinked and swivelled his chair slightly to the left. Sensing that the sun slanting through the window behind the desk was bothering Lurie, Harker pressed the opaque button and the room's three windows dimmed.

Lurie said finally, "I'll begin at the beginning, Mr. Harker. The Beller Research Laboratories were established in 2024 by a grant from the late Darwin F. Beller, of whom you may have heard."

"The oil magnate," Harker said. And a notorious crank. The lawyer began to regret his impulsive action in inviting the gawky stranger in to see him.

"Yes. Beller of Beller Refineries. Mr. Beller provided our group with virtually unlimited funds, established us in a secluded area in New Jersey, and posed us a scientific problem: could we or could we not develop a certain valuable process? I'll be more specific in a moment. Let me say that many of the men Mr. Beller assembled for the project were openly skeptical of its success, but were willing to try-a triumphant demonstration of the scientific frame of mind."

Or of the willingness to grab a good thing when it comes along, Barker thought. He had had little experience with scientists, but plenty with human beings. Lurie's speech sounded as if it had been carefully rehearsed.

"To come to the point," Lurie said, uncrossing his legs again. "After eight years of research, our project has reached the point of success. In short, we've developed a workable technique for doing what we had hoped to do. Now we need a legal adviser."

Harker became more interested. “This is where I’m to come in, I suppose?”

“Exactly. Our process is, to say the least, a controversial one. We foresee multitudes of legal difficulties and other problems.”

“I’m not a patent lawyer, Dr. Lurie. That’s a highly specialized field of which I know very little. I can give you the name of a friend of mine-“

“We’re not interested in a patent,” Lurie said. “We want to give our process to mankind without strings. The problem is, will mankind accept it?”

A little impatiently Harker said, “Suppose you get down to cases, then. It’s getting late, and I have a lot of work to do before lunch-time.”

A funny little smile flickered at the corners of Lurie’s wide mouth. He said, flatly, “All right. We’ve developed a process for bringing newly-dead people back to life. It works if there’s no serious organic damage and the body hasn’t been dead more than twenty-four hours.”

For a long moment there was silence in Harker’s office. Harker sat perfectly still, and it seemed to him he could hear the blood pumping in his own veins and the molecules of room-air crashing against his ear-drums. He fought against his original instincts, which were to laugh or to show amazement.

Finally he said, “I’ll assume for the sake of discussion that what you tell me is true. If it is, then you know you’re holding down dynamite.”

“We know that. That’s why we came to you. You’re the first prominent figure who hasn’t thrown me out of his office as soon as I told him why I had come.”

Sadly Harker said, “I’ve learned how to reserve judgment. I’ve also learned to be tolerant of crackpots or possible crackpots. I learned these things the hard way.”

“Do you think I’m a crackpot, Mr. Harker?”

“I have no opinion. Not yet, anyway.”

“Does that mean you’ll take the case?”

“Did I say that?” Harker stubbed his cigarette out with a tense stiff-wristed gesture. “It violates professional ethics for me to ask you which of my colleagues you approached before you came to me, but I’d like to know how many there were, at least.”

“You were fourth on the list,” Lurie said.

“Umm. And the others turned you down flat?”

Lurie’s open face reddened slightly. “Absolutely. I was called a zombie salesman by one. Another just asked me to leave. The third man advised me to blow up the labs and cut my throat. So we came to you.”

Harker nodded slowly. He had a fairly good idea of whom the three others were, judging from the nature of their reactions. He himself had made no reaction yet, either visceral or intellectual. A year ago,

perhaps, he might have reacted differently-but a year ago he had been a different person.

He said, "You can expect tremendous opposition to any such invention. I can guess that there'll be theological opposition, and plenty of hysterical public outbursts. And the implications are immense-a new set of medical ethics, for one thing. There'll be a need for legislation covering-ah-resurrection." He drummed on the desk with his fingertips. "Whoever agrees to serve as your adviser is taking on a giant assignment."

"We're aware of that," Lurie said. "The pay is extremely good. We can discuss salary later, if you like."

"I haven't said I'm accepting," Harker reminded him crisply. "For all I know right now this is just a pipe dream, wishful thinking on the part of a bunch of underpaid scientists."

Lurie smiled winningly. "Naturally we would not think of asking you to make a decision until you've seen our lab. If you think you're interested, a visit could be arranged some time this week or next--"

Harker closed his eyes for a moment. He said, "If I accepted, I'd be exposing myself to public abuse. I'd become a storm-center, wouldn't I?"

"You should be used to that, Mr. Harker. As a former national political figure--"

The former stung. Harker had a sudden glaring vision of his rise through the Nat-Lib Party ranks, his outstanding triumph in the 2024 mayoralty contest, his natural ascension to the gubernatorial post four years later-and then, the thumping fall, the retirement into private life, the painful packing-away of old aspirations and dreams-

He nodded wearily. "Yes, I know what it's like to be on the spot. I was just wondering whether it's worth-while to get back on the firing line again." He moistened his lips. "Look, Dr. Lurie, I have to think about this whole business some more. Is there someplace I can call you this afternoon?"

"I'm staying at the Hotel Manhattan," Lurie said. He retrieved his calling-card and scribbled a phone number on it, then a room number, and handed it back to Harker. "I'll be there most of the afternoon, if you'd like to call."

Harker pocketed the card. "I'll let you know," he said.

Lurie rose and shambled toward the door. Harker pressed the open button and the two halves of the door dropped into their slots. Rising from the desk, he accompanied Lurie through the door and into the outer office. The scientist's stringy frame towered five or six inches over Harker's compact, still-lean bulk. Harker glanced up at the strangely soft eyes.

"I'll call you later, Dr. Lurie."

"I hope so. Thank you for listening, Governor."

Harker returned to the office, reflecting that the final Governor had either been savagely unkind or else a bit of unconscious absent-mindedness. Either way, he tried to ignore it.

He dumped himself behind his desk, frowning deeply, and dug his thumbs into his eyeballs. After a moment he got up, crossed to the portable bar, and dialed himself a whiskey sour. He sipped thoughtfully.

Resurrection. A crazy, grotesque idea. A frightening one. But science had come up with a method for containing the hundred-million-degree fury of a fusion reaction; why not a method for bringing the recent dead back to life?

No, he thought. He wasn't primarily in doubt of the possibility of the process. It was dangerous to be too skeptical of the potentialities of science.

It was his own part in the enterprise that made him hold back. What Lurie evidently had in mind was for him to act as a sort of public advocate, arguing their case before the courts of law and of human opinion. It was a frighteningly big job, and if the tide swept against him he would be carried away.

Then he smiled. What have I to lose?

He eyed the tridims of his wife and sons that occupied one corner of his desk. His political career, he thought, couldn't be any deader than it was now. His own party had cast him loose, refusing to name him for a second term when he indiscreetly defied the state committee in making a few appointments. His law practice did well, though not spectacularly; in any event, he was provided for financially by his investments.

He had nothing to lose but his good name, and he had already lost most of that in the political mess. And he had a whole world to win.

Revival of the dead? How about a dead career, Harker wondered. Could I revive that too?

Rising from his desk, he paced round the office, pausing to depolarize the windows. Bright morning sunshine poured in. Through his window he could see the playground of the public school across the street. Thin-legged girls of nine or ten were playing a punchball game; he could hear the shrieks of delight or anguish even at this distance.

A sudden sharp image came to him: himself, nine years before, standing spreadlegged on the beach at Riis Park, with Lois staring whitefaced at him and three-year-old Chris peeking strangely around her legs. It was a blisteringly hot day; his skin, to which sand had adhered, was red, raw, tender. He heard the booming of the surf, the overhead zoop of a Europe-bound rocket, the distant cry of refreshment-venders and the nearer laughter of small girls.

He was not laughing. He was holding a small, cold, wet bundle tight, and he was crying for the first time in twenty years. He huddled his drowned five-year-old daughter to him, and tried to pretend it had not happened.

It had happened, and Eva was dead—the girl-child who he had planned would be America's darling when he reached the White House, fifteen years or so from now.

That had been nine years ago. Eva would have been nearly fifteen, now, flowering into womanhood. He had no daughter. But she could have lived, Harker thought. Maybe.

He returned to his desk and sat quietly for a while. After twenty minutes of silent thought he reached for the phone and punched out Lurie's number.

Chapter II

BARKER HAD an appointment to visit old Richard Bryant at three that afternoon. He was not looking forward to it. Since Bryant was confined to his home by doctor's orders, it meant that Harker would have to visit the old man, and that meant entering a house where death seemed to hang heavy over the threshold, a house filled with graspingly impatient relatives of the venerable hero of space-travel's infancy.

At half past two Harker notified his secretary that he was leaving; he gathered up the portfolio of relevant papers, locked his office, and took the gravshaft down to street level. He emerged on First Avenue, and walked quickly downtown toward 125th Street.

It was a bright, warmish, cloudless May afternoon. A bubble of advertising was the only blot on the otherwise flawless sky. The Manhattan air was clean, tingling, fresh. Harker never breathed it in without thinking of the vast dynamos of the puritron stations every ten blocks apart, gulping in tons and tons of city soot each second. In his second year as Mayor, the entire Brooklyn puritron assembly had "accidentally" conked out for four hours, thanks to some half-forgotten labor squabble. Harker remembered the uproar that had caused.

At 125th Street he boarded the crosstown monorail and moments later found himself disembarking at the Riverside Drive exit. He signalled for a cab; while he waited, a bleary-eyed old man shuffled over to him, shoved a gaudy pamphlet in his hands, greeted him by name, and shuffled away.

He looked at it. It was one of the many official organs of the Watchtower Society. As he stuffed it in the corner disposal-bin, he smiled in recollection of that organization's motto: MILLIONS NOW LIVING WILL NEVER DIE.

Gravely he proposed a substitute: MILLIONS NOW DEAD WILL LIVE AGAIN.

The attendant images effectively choked off the mood of good humor that had been stealing over him. He remembered that in only two days he would be journeying across the Hudson to see whether the Beller Laboratories people had actually hit on something or not.

The cab drew up. Harker slid into the back seat and said, "Seventy-ninth and West End, driver."

The house was a massive, heavily-chromed representative of late twentieth-century architecture, settling now into respectable middle age. Harker had visited it on three separate occasions, and each time his discomfort had increased.

It had no gravshaft; he rode up in a human-operated elevator. The operator said, "I guess you're going to visit Mr. Bryant, eh, Mr. Harker?"

"That's right."

"The old gentleman's been poorish lately, sir. Ah, it'll be a sad thing when he goes, won't it?"

"He's one of our greatest," Harker agreed. "Many people up there today?"

"The usual lot," the operator said, halting the car and opening the door. It opened immediately into the foyer of the huge Bryant apartment. Almost at once, Harker found himself staring at the fishy, cold-eyed face of Jonathan Bryant, the old man's eldest son.

"Good afternoon, Jonathan."

“Hello, Harker.” The reply was sullenly brusque. “You’re here to see my father?”

“I didn’t come for tea,” Harker snapped. “Will you invite me in, or should I just push past you?”

Jonathan muttered something and gave ground, allowing Harker to enter. The livingroom was crowded: half-a-dozen miscellaneous Bryants, plus two or three whom Harker did not know but who bore the familiar Bryant features. A horde of vultures, Harker thought. He nodded to them with professional courtesy and passed on, through the inner rooms, to the old man’s sickroom.

The place was lined with trophies-one room, Harker knew, consisted of the cockpit of the Mars One, that slender needle of a ship that had borne Rick Bryant to the red planet nearly fifty years ago, an epoch-making flight that still stood large in the annals of space-travel. Trophy-cases in the halls held medals, souvenir watches, testimonial dinner-menus. Old Bryant had been a prodigious collector of souvenirs.

His doctor, a tiny man with the look of an irritated penguin, met him at the door to the sickroom. “I’ll have to ask you to limit your stay to thirty minutes, Mr. Harker. He’s very low today.”

“I’ll be as brief as I can,” Harker promised. He stepped around the barricade and entered.

Helen Bryant, oldest of the daughters, sat solicitously by her father’s bedside, glaring at him with the tender expression of a predatory harpy.

Harker said, “If you’ll excuse me, Miss Bryant, your father and I have some important business to discuss.”

“I’m his daughter. Can’t I-“

“I’m afraid not,” Harker said coldly. He waited while she made her proud retreat, then took her seat at the side of the bed.

“Afternoon, Harker,” Bryant said in a tomb-like croak.

He was not a pretty sight. He was seventy-three, and could easily pass for twice that age-a shrunken, leathery little man with rheumy, cataracted eyes and a flat, drooping face. There was little about him that was heroic, now. He was just a dying old man.

The needles of an intravenous feed-line penetrated his body at various points. He no longer had the strength to swallow or to digest. It was difficult to believe that this man had made the first successful round-trip flight to another planet, back in 1984, and that from his early thirties until his stroke four years ago he had been a figure of world importance, whose words were eagerly rushed into print whenever he cared to make a statement.

He said, “How does it look for next Thursday?”

Harker’s jaws tightened. “Pretty good. I hope to be able to swing it.”

“How have you set it up?”

Harker drew the papers from his portfolio. “Twenty million is to be established as a trust fund for your grandchildren and for the children of your grandson Frederick. Thirty million is to be granted to the

Bryant Foundation for Astronautical Research. Fifty thousand is to be divided among your children, ten thousand to each.”

“Is that last bit necessary?” Bryant asked with sudden ferocity.

“I’m afraid it is.”

“I wanted to cut those five jackals off without a penny!” he thundered. Then, subsiding, he coughed and said, “Why must you give them so much?”

“There are legal reasons. It makes it harder for them to overthrow the will, you see.”

The old man was reluctant to accept the idea of giving his children anything, and in a way Harker could see the justice of that. They were a hateful bunch. Bryant had garnered millions from his space-journey, and had invested the money wisely and well; there had been an undignified scramble for the old hero’s wealth when a stroke appeared to have killed him in ‘28. He had confounded them all by recovering, and by cutting most of them out of his revised will—a document that was being contested in the courts even while the old man still lived.

At three-thirty, the penguinish doctor knocked discreetly at the bedchamber door, poked his head in, and said, “I hope you’re almost through, Mr. Harker.”

At that moment old Bryant was trying to sign a power-of-attorney Harker had prepared; his palsied hand could barely manage the signature, but in time he completed it. Harker looked at it: a wavy scrawl that looked like a random pattern on a seismograph drum.

“I’m leaving now,” Harker told the doctor.

Bryant quavered, “What time is the hearing next Thursday, Harker?”

“Half past eleven.”

“Be sure to call me when it’s finished.”

“Of course. You just relax, Mr. Bryant. Legally they can’t trouble you at all.”

He reaped a harvest of sour glances as he made his way through the trophy-cluttered halls to the elevator. It was a depressing place, and the sight of the shattered hero always clouded his mind with gloom. He was glad to get away.

Riding a cab downtown to Grand Central, he boarded the 4:13 express to Larchmont, and eleven minutes later was leaving the Larchmont tube depot and heading in a local cab toward his home. At quarter to five, he stepped through the front door.

Lois was in the front room, standing on a chair and doing something to the ceiling mobile. Silently Harker crept in; standing with arms akimbo at the door, he said, “It’s high time we junked that antique, darling.”

She nearly fell off the chair in surprise. “Jim! What are you—“

“Home early,” Harker said. “Had an appointment with old Bryant and the medics tossed me out quick, so I came home. Gah! Filthy business, that Bryant deal.”

He slipped out of his jacket and loosened his throat-ribbon. He paused for a moment at the mirror, staring at himself: the fine, strong features, the prematurely iron-gray hair, the searching blue eyes. It was the face of a natural leader, an embryo President. But there was something else in it now—a coldness around the eyes, a way of quirking the corners of his mouth—that showed a defeated man, a man who has climbed to the top of his string and toppled back to the ground. With forty years of active life ahead of him.

“Hello, Dad. Want a drink?”

It was the already-deepening voice of twelve-year-old Chris that drew him away from his reverie. In recent months he had let the boy prepare his homecoming cocktail for him. But today he shook his head. “Sorry, son. I don’t happen to be thirsty tonight.”

Disappointment flashed briefly in the boy’s handsome face; then it faded. Minor setbacks like this meant little to a boy who had expected once to live in the White House, and who knew now it wouldn’t be happening.

“Where’s Paul?” Harker asked.

“Upstairs doing his homework,” Chris said. He snorted. “The ninny’s learning long division. Having fits with it, too.”

Harker stared at his son strangely for a moment; then he said, “Chris, go upstairs and give him some help. I want to talk to Mum.”

“Sure, Dad.”

When the boy had gone, Harker turned to his wife. Lois at forty-three years his junior—was still slim and attractive; her blonde hair had lost its sheen and soon would be shading into gray, but she seemed to welcome rather than fear the imprint of age.

She said, “Jim, why did you look at Chris that way?”

In answer, Harker crossed to the table near the window and his fingers sought out the tridim of dead Eva, its bright colors losing some of their sharpness now after nine years. “I was trying to picture him as a teenage girl,” he said heavily. “Eva would have been fifteen soon.”

Her only outward reaction was a momentary twitch of the lower lip. “You haven’t thought of her for a long time.”

“I know. I try not to think of her. But I thought of her today. I was thinking that she didn’t have to be dead, Lois.”

“Of course not, dear. But it happened, and there was no help for it.”

He shook his head. Replacing Eva’s picture, he picked up instead a tiny bit of bric-a-brac, a kaleidoscopic crystal in whose depths were swirling streaks of red and gold and dark black. He shook it; the color-patterns changed. “I mean,” he said carefully, “that Eva might have been saved, even after the accident.”

“They tried to revive her. The pulmotor-“

“No. Lois, I had a-a person visit me this morning. A certain Dr. Lurie, from a certain research laboratory in New Jersey. He claims they’ve developed a technique for bringing the dead back to life, and he wants me to handle promotion and legal aspects. For a fat fee, I might add.”

She frowned uncertainly. “Reviving the dead? What kind of crazy joke is that?”

“I don’t know. But I’m not treating it as a joke; not until I’ve seen the evidence, anyway. I made an appointment to go out to Jersey and visit their lab on Friday.”

“And you’ll take the job, if they’ve really hit on something?”

Harker nodded. “Sure I’ll take it. It’s risky, of course, and there’s sure to be a lot of public clamor in both directions-“

“And haven’t we had enough of that? Weren’t you satisfied when you tried to reform the state government, and wound up being read out of the party? Jim, do you have to be Quixote all the time?”

Her words had barbs. Harker thought bleakly that being able always to see both sides of a question, as he could, was a devil-granted gift. Wearily he said, “All right. I tried to do something I thought was right, and I got my head chopped off as a result. Well, here’s my second chance-maybe. For all I know they’re a bunch of lunatics over there. I owe it to myself and to the world to find out-and to help them, if I can.”

He pointed at the tridim of Eva. “Suppose that happened now-Eva, I mean. Wouldn’t you want to save her? Or,” he said, making his words deliberately harsh, “suppose Paul dies. Wouldn’t you want to be able to call him back from-from wherever he had gone?”

For a moment there was silence.

“Well? Wouldn’t you?”

Lois shrugged, turning her hands palm outward. “Jim, I don’t know. I don’t know.”

Chapter III

AT THREE minutes past two on Friday afternoon Marker’s secretary buzzed him to let him know Dr. Lurie had arrived. Harker felt momentary apprehension. Cautious, even a little conservative by nature, he felt uneasy about paying a visit to a laboratory of-for all he knew-mad scientists.

He turned on an amiable grin when Lurie arrived. The scientist looked less gawky than before, more sure of himself; he wore what seemed to be the same rumpled clothing.

“The car’s downstairs,” Lurie said.

Harker left word at the front desk that he was leaving for the day, telling the girl to refer all calls to one of the other partners in the firm. He followed Lurie into the gravshaft.

The car idled in the temporary-parking area outside-a long, low, thrumming ‘33 turbo-job, sleekly black and coming with a \$9000 pricetag at the least. There were three men inside. Lurie touched a knob; the

back door peeled back, and he and Harker got in. Harker looked around.

They were looking at him, too. Minutely.

The man at the wheel was a fleshy, hearty-looking fellow in his late fifties, who swivelled in a full circle to peer unabashedly at Harker. Next to him was a thin, pale, intense young man with affectedly thick glasses (no reason why he couldn't wear contacts instead, Harker thought) and sitting at the far side in back was the third, a coolly self-possessed individual in black clothes.

The fleshy man at the wheel said, "How do you do, Governor Harker. I'm Cal Mitchison-no scientist I, heh-heh! I'm public-liaison man for Seller Labs."

Harker smiled relatively courteously.

Mitchison said, "Man next to me is Dr. David Klaus, one of Beller's bright young men. Specialty is enzyme research."

"H-h-hello," Klaus said with difficulty. Harker smiled in reply.

"And to your left is Dr. Martin Raymond. Mart's the Director of Beller Labs," Mitchison said.

"Pleased to meet you," said Raymond. His voice was deep, well-modulated, even. Harker sensed that this was a man of tremendous inner strength and purpose. Raymond was a type Harker had seen before, and respected: the quietly intense sort that remained in the background, accumulating intensity like a tightening mainspring, capable of displaying any amount of energy or drive when it was needed.

"And you already know Ben Lurie, of course," Mitchison said. "So we might as well get on our way."

* * *

The trip took a little over an hour, with Mitchison making a crosstown hop via the 125th Street Overpass, then ducking downtown to 110th Street and taking the Cathedral Avenue rivertube across the Hudson into New Jersey. The Village of Litchfield turned out to be one of those Jersey towns of a thousand souls or so that look just like every other small Jersey town: a railroad siding, a block or two of shopping center, bank, post office, then a string of old split-levels rambling away from the highway in every direction.

Mitchison, handling his big car with an almost sensuous delight, drove on through the main part of town, into the open country again, and about a mile and a half past the heart of the village suddenly turned up a small road prominently labelled PRIVATE: KEEP OUT. TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTUED.

The road wound inward through a thick stand of close-packed spruce for more than a thousand feet, at which point a roadblock became evident. Two apparently armed men stood guard at either side of the road.

Mitchison opened the doors and the five occupants of the car got out. Harker took a deep breath. The air out here was sweet and pure, and not with the mechanical purity of Manhattan's strained and filtered atmosphere. He liked the feel of fresh air against his nostrils and throat.

Lurie said to the guards, "This is Mr. James Harker. We've brought him here to visit the labs."

“Right.”

The guard who had grunted assent took a red button from his pocket and jammed it against Harker’s lapel. It adhered. “That’s your security tag. Keep it visible at all times or we can’t answer for the consequences.”

“What if it falls off?”

“It won’t.”

Harker and his companions followed round the roadblock while Mitchison took the car somewhere to be parked. Harker saw three large buildings, all of them very old, and several smaller cabins behind them, at the very edge of the encroaching forest.

“Those are the dormitories for the researchers,” Lurie said, pointing to the cabins. “The big building over here is the administrative wing, and the other two are lab build-ings.”

Harker nodded. It was an impressive setup. The group turned into the administrative building.

It was every bit as old-fashioned on the inside as outside. The lighting was, of all things, by incandescent bulbs; the air-conditioners were noisily evident, and the windows did not have opaquing controls. Harker followed the other three into a small, untidy, book-lined room-and, suddenly, he realized that Dr. Raymond was taking charge.

“This is my office,” Raymond said. “Won’t you be seated?”

Harker sat. He reached for his cigarettes and Raymond interjected immediately, “Sorry, but no smoking is permitted anywhere on the laboratory grounds.”

“Of course.”

Raymond sat back. Klaus and Lurie flanked him. In a quiet, terribly calm voice, Raymond said, “I think Dr. Lurie has explained the essentials of our situation.”

“All I know is that you claim to have perfected a process for restoring the dead to life, and that you want me to act as legal adviser and public spokesman. Is that right?”

“Indeed. The fee will be \$600 per week for as long as your services will be required.”

“For which you’ll insist on my full-time participation, I expect.”

“We have confidence in your ability, Mr. Harker. You may apportion your time as you see fit.”

Harker nodded slowly. “On the surface, I don’t see any objections. But naturally I’ll expect a thorough demonstration of what you’ve achieved so far, if I’m to take on any kind of work for you.”

Levelly Raymond said, “We would hardly think of employing you unless we could take you into our fullest confidence. Come with me.”

He opened an inner door and stepped through; Harker walked around the desk to follow him, with Klaus and Lurie bringing up the rear.

They now were in a large room with the faint iodoform odor Harker associated with hospitals; it was brightly, almost starkly lit, and Harker saw two lab tables, one empty, one occupied by a dog, both surrounded by looming complex mechanical devices. A bearded, grave-looking young man in the white garb of a surgeon stood by the dog-laden table.

“Are we ready, Dr. Raymond?”

Raymond nodded. To Harker he said, “This is Dr. Vogel. One of our surgeons. He will anesthetize the dog you see and kill it.”

Harker moistened his lips nervously. He knew better than to protest, but the idea of casually killing animals in the name of science touched off a host of involuntary repugnance-reactions in him.

He watched stonily as Vogel fitted a mask over the dog’s face—it was a big, shaggy animal of indeterminate breed— and attached instruments to its body.

“We’re recording heartbeat and respiration,” Raymond murmured. “The anesthetic will gradually overcome the dog. In case you’re concerned, the animal feels no pain in any part of this experiment.”

Some moments passed; finally Vogel peered at his dials, nodded, and pronounced the dog in full narcosis. Harker fought against the inner tension that gripped him.

“Dr. Vogel will now bring death to the dog,” Raymond said.

With practiced, efficient motions the surgeon slit the animal’s bloodvessels, inserted tubes, adjusted clamps. An assistant glided forward from the corner of the room to help. Harker found a strange fascination in watching the life-blood drain from the dog into dangling containers. The needle registering the heartbeat sank inexorably toward zero; respiration dropped away. At last Vogel looked up and nodded.

“The dog is dead,” he declared. “The blood has been drained away. This pump will ensure oxygenation of the blood during the period of the animal’s death. We will now proceed to the next table—“

Where, Harker saw, another dog had been placed while his attention had been riveted on the death scene. This dog lay in a slumped furry heap that grotesquely reminded Harker of Eva as she had looked when they pulled her from the sea. His throat felt terribly dry.

“This animal,” Vogel said stiffly, “underwent the killing treatment nine hours and thirteen minutes ago. Its blood has been stored during that time. Now—“

Spellbound, Harker watched the surgeon’s busy hands as he and the assistant fastened tubes to the dead animal’s body and lowered a complicated instrument into place. “We are now restoring blood to the dead animal. When the indicator gauge reads satisfactorily, injection of adrenalin and other hormones will restore ‘life’ to the animal. The blood is being pumped back at the same rate and rhythm that the animal’s own heart uses.”

“In some cases,” Raymond remarked, “we’ve restored dogs dead nearly thirty-six hours.”

Harker nodded. He was forcing himself to a realization of the gulf that lay between these calmly efficient men and himself. Yet they needed him and he needed them; neither type of mind was complete in itself.

The resuscitation of the second dog took fifteen minutes. At length Vogel nodded, withdrew the reviving apparatus. The heart-beat indicator was fluttering; respiration was beginning. The dog's eyes opened wearily. It wagged its tail feebly and almost comically.

Lurie remarked, "For the next several hours the dog will show signs of having undergone a serious operation-which it has. In a day or two it'll be as good as new-once the stitches have healed, of course. In Lab Building Two we can show you dozens of dogs that have been through the killing process and were returned to life, happy, hearty-"

"This dog," Raymond said calmly, "is the son of a dog we temporarily 'killed' two years ago. The period of death doesn't seem to interfere with later mating or with any other life process."

While they spoke, Vogel was repeating the process of revivification on the dog that had been killed twenty minutes before. This time Harker watched with less revulsion as life returned to the animal.

In a dry voice he said, "Your experiments-are-well, impressive."

Raymond shook his head. "On the contrary. We've merely repeated work that was carried out more than eighty years ago. These techniques are far from new. But our application of them to-"

"Yes," Harker said weakly. "To hitman life. That's-that's the clincher, I'd say."

Harker realized that Raymond was staring at him coldly, appraisingly, as if trying to read his mind before proceeding to the next demonstration. Harker felt his face reddening under the scrutiny.

"We're lucky enough to be able to-ah-clinch things," Raymond said.

"With a human being?"

Raymond nodded. "You understand that getting human specimens for research has been our gravest problem. I'll have to ask you not to voice any of the questions that may arise in your mind now."

Harker nodded. He could recognize a security blanket when it was lowered.

Raymond turned and said in a mortuary voice, "Bring in Mr. Doe."

Two attendants entered, carrying a sheet-shrouded form on a stretcher. They deposited the figure on the vacant lab table that had held the second dog. Harker saw that it was a man, in his late sixties, bald, dead.

"Mr. Doe has been dead for eleven hours and thirteen minutes," Raymond said. "He died of syncope during an abdominal operation. Would you care to examine the body?"

"I'll accept the evidence on faith, thanks."

"As you will. Dr. Vogel, you can begin."

While Vogel worked over the cadaver, Raymond went on, "The process is essentially compounded out of techniques used for decades with varying success-that is, a combination of pulmotor respiration, artificial heart-massage, hormone-injection, and electrochemical stimulation. The last two are the keys to

the process: you can massage a heart for days and keep it pumping blood, but that isn't restoration of life."

"Not unless the heart can continue on its own when you remove the artificial stimulus?"

"Exactly. We've done careful hormone research here, with some of the best men in the nation. A hormone, you know, is a kind of chemical messenger. We've synthesized the hormones that tell the body it's alive. Of course, the electrochemical stimulation is important: the brain's activity is essentially electrical in nature, you know. And so we devised techniques which--"

"Ready, Dr. Raymond."

Harker compelled himself to watch. Needles plunged into the dead man's skin; electrodes fastened to the scalp discharged suddenly. It was weird, vaguely terrifying, laden with burdensome implications for the future. All that seemed missing was the eery blue glow that characterized the evil experiments of stereotyped mad scientists.

He told himself that these men were not mad. He told himself that what they were doing was a natural outgrowth of the scientific techniques of the past century, that it was no more terrifying to restore life than it was to preserve it with antibiotics or serums. But he sensed a conflict within himself: he knew that if he accepted this assignment, he could embrace the idea intellectually but that somewhere in the moist jungle-areas of his subconscious mind he would feel disturbed and repelled.

"Watch the needles," Raymond whispered. "Heartbeat's beginning now. Respiration. The electroencephalograph is recording brain currents again."

"The test, of course, is whether these things continue after your machinery is shut off, isn't it?" Harker asked.

"Of course."

Time edged by. Harker's overstrained attention wandered; he took in the barren peeling walls of the lab, the dingy window through which late-afternoon light streamed. He had heard somewhere that the old-fashioned incandescent bulbs emitted a 60-cycle hum, and he tried unsuccessfully to hear it. Sweat-blotches stippled his shirt.

"Now!" Vogel said. He threw a master lever. The equipment whined faintly and cut off.

The heartbeat recorder and the respiration indicator showed a momentary lapse, then returned to their previous level. The EEG tape continued recording.

Harker's eyes widened slightly. A slow smile appeared on Raymond's face; behind him, Harker could hear Lurie cracking his knuckles nervously, and bespectacled Dr. Klaus tensely grinding his molars together.

"I guess we did it," Vogel said.

The dead man's arms moved slowly. His eyelids fluttered, but the anesthetic insured continued unconsciousness. His lips parted-and the soft groan that came forth was, for Harker, the clincher he had been half-hoping would not be forthcoming.

The man groaned again. Harker felt suddenly weary, and turned his head away.

Chapter IV

BARKER'S SHOCK reaction was violent, instinctive, and brief. He quivered uncontrollably, put his hands to his face, and started to lose his balance. Raymond was right there; he caught him, held him upright for a moment, and released him. Harker wobbled and grinned shamefacedly.

"That's strong stuff," he said.

"I've got stronger stuff in my office. Come on."

He and the lab director returned to the adjoining room. Raymond closed the door and clicked it; Lurie and Klaus remained in the lab. Raymond reached into his bookcase, pushed a thick black-bound volume to one side, and withdrew a half-empty bottle of Scotch. He poured a double shot for Harker, a single for himself, and replaced the bottle. Harker swallowed the liquor in two frantic gulps. He gasped, grinned again, and shakily set down the glass. "God. I'm roasting in my own sweat."

"It isn't a pleasant sight the first time, I guess. I wish I could share some of your emotional reaction, but I'm blocked out. My dad was a biochemist, specialty life-research. He had me cutting up frogs when I was three. I'm numb to any such reactions by now."

"Don't let that trouble you," Harker said. He shivered. "I could live very happily without seeing another demonstration of your technique, you know."

Raymond chuckled. "Does that mean you're convinced we aren't quacks?"

Harker shrugged. "What you've got is incredible. I wonder if I've got the voltage needed to handle the job you want me to do."

"You wouldn't be here if we didn't think so."

"I was fourth on the list," Harker said. "Lurie told me."

"You were my personal choice. I was outvoted. But I knew you'd accept and the other three would turn us down without even coming out here to investigate."

"I haven't said I've accepted," Harker pointed out.

"Well? Do you?"

Harker was silent for a moment, his mind returning to the impact of the scene he had just witnessed. There was still plenty he had to know, of course: the corporate setup of this lab, including knowledge of the powers that had "outvoted" the director; the financial resources behind him; the possible bugs in the technique.

A dozen implications unfolded. His mind was already at work planning the campaign. He was thinking of people to see, wires to pull, angles to check.

"I accept," he said quietly.

Raymond smiled and reached into his desk. He handed Harker a check drawn on a Manhattan bank for \$2400, payable to James Harker, and signed Simeon Barchet, Treasurer.

“What’s this?”

“That’s four weeks salary, in advance. Barchet’s the trustee who administers the Beller Fund. I had him write the check yesterday. I was pretty confident you’d join us, you see.”

Harker spent a quietly tense weekend at home with his family. He told Lois about the assignment, of course; he never kept things from her, even the most unpleasant. She was dubious, but willing to rely on his judgment.

He worked off some of his physical tension by playing ball in the back yard with his sons. Chris, entering adolescence, was developing an athlete’s grace; seven-year-old Paul did not yet have the coordination needed for catching and throwing a baseball, but he gave it a good try.

On Sunday the four of them drove upstate to a picnic-ground, ate out, even went for a brief swim though it was really too early in the season for that. Harker splashed and laughed with his sons, but there was an essential somberness about him that Lois quietly pointed out.

“I know,” he admitted. “I’m thinking.”

“About the Beller Labs business?”

He nodded. “I keep finding new angles in it. I try to guess what the reaction of the organized churches will be, and what political capital will be made. More likely than not the parties will take opposite stands. Somebody will dig up the fact that I used to be a National Liberal bigwig, and that’ll enter into the situation. After a while it’ll become so confused by side-issues that-“ He stopped. “I don’t sound very enthusiastic about this job, do I?”

“No,” Lois said. “You don’t.”

“I guess I really haven’t made up my mind where I stand,” he said. “There are too many tangential things I don’t know about yet.”

“Like what?”

Harker shook his head. “I’m trying not to think about them. This is my day off, remember?”

On Monday he polished off his routine work early, by half-past-ten, and stepped out of his office. He walked down the beige corridor to the door inscribed WILLIAM F. KELLY and knocked.

“Bill? Me, Jim.”

“Come on in, boy.”

Kelly was sitting back of an impeccably clear mahogany desk, looking well-barbered, well-manicured, well-fed. He was the senior partner of the law firm that now called itself Kelly, Harker, Portobello, and Klein. In his late fifties, ruddy-faced, quick-witted, Kelly was by religion a loyal Catholic and by politics a determined maverick.

He said, "How's the ex-Governor this morning?"

Harker grinned. Kelly was the one man who could not offend him with those words. "A washed-up has-been, as usual. Bill, I've got a big offer to do some work for a Jersey outfit. I think it's going to tie me up for the next few months. I thought I'd let you know."

Kelly blinked, then grinned, showing even white teeth. "Full-time?"

"Pretty near."

"How about your pending cases?"

Marker said, "I'm keeping the Bryant case. Fuller and Heidell will have to be handed over to someone else, I'm afraid."

"I guess you know what you're doing, Jim. Who's the big client?"

"Hush-hush. Nice pay, though."

"Can't even tell old Bill, eh? Well, I know better than to pry. But how come you're telling me all this, anyway? I don't give a damn what work you take on, Jim. You're a free agent here."

Calmly Harker said, "I thought I'd let you know because the account's a controversial one. I want you to realize that I'm doing it on my own hook and not as a member of K.H.P. & K. When and if the boomerang comes around and hits me in the face, I don't want you and Mike and Phil to get black eyes too."

Dead seriousness replaced the amiable grin on Kelly's pink face. "Have I ever backed off a hot item, Jim?"

"You might back off this one."

Kelly leaned forward and turned on all his considerable personal charm. "Look here, son, I'm a decade older than you are and a damned sight cagier. Maybe you better talk this thing out with me. If you're free for lunch--"

"I'm not," Harker said doggedly. "Bill, let's drop the whole thing. I know what I'm getting into and I didn't come here for advice. Okay?"

Kelly began to chuckle. "You said the same damn thing the night you were elected Governor. Remember, when you started telling me about how you were going to turn the whole State machine upside-down? I warned you, and I warn you again, but you don't learn. The only thing that got turned upside-down was you."

"So I'm a fool. But at least I'm a dedicated fool."

"That's the worst kind," Kelly drawled amiably. As Harker started to leave the older man's office Kelly added, "Good luck, anyway, on whatever you're getting your fool feet tangled up in."

"Thanks, Bill. Sorry I have to be so tight-mouthed."

On his way back to his office he passed the reception-desk; Joan looked up at him and said, “Oh, Mr. Harker-call just came in for you. Mr. Jonathan Bryant’s on the phone. He’s waiting.”

“Switch it into my office,” Harker told her. His brows contracted. Jonathan? What does that particular vulture want? Harker cut round the desks in the outer office and let himself into his sanctum. He activated the phone. There was the usual three-second circuit-lag, and then the gray haze of electronic “noise” gave way to the fishbelly face of Jonathan Bryant.

“Hello, Harker,” he said abruptly. “Just thought I’d call you up to let you know that I’ve obtained a stay of the hearing on my father’s will. It’s being pushed up from the 16th to the 23rd.”

Harker scowled. “I don’t have any official notice of that fact yet.”

“It’s on its way via court messenger. Just thought I’d let you know about it.”

“Go ahead,” Harker said. “Gloat all you want, if it gives you pleasure. Your father’s will is unbreakable, and you know it damn well. All this stalling-“

“Legal delay,” Jonathan corrected.

“All this stalling is just a waste of everybody’s time. Sure, I know you’re hoping the old man will die before the hearing, but I assure you that can’t influence the outcome. If you’re that anxious to collect, stop obtaining postponements and just pull the old man’s feeding-plugs out. It’ll save a lot of heartache for all of us, him included.”

“Harker, you lousy politico, you should have been debarred twenty years ago.”

“The word you want to use is disbarred,” Harker said coldly. “Suppose you get off my line and stop bothering me now? I’d call you a filthy jackal except that I’m too busy for slander suits just now, even suits that I’d win.”

Angrily he snapped off contact and the screen blanked. Nuisance, he thought, referring both to Jonathan and to the postponement of the hearing. He didn’t seriously believe that the Bryant heirs were going to upset the old man’s will, and the quicker he got the case off his personal docket the faster he would be free for full-time work on the Beller Labs account.

He took a doodlepad from his desk and scrawled three names on it:

Winstead.

Thurman.

Msgnr. Carteret.

Leo Winstead was the man who had succeeded him in the Governor’s mansion in Albany—a steady, reliable National Liberal party-line man, flexible and open in his views but loyal to the good old machine. He would be one of the first men Barker would have to see; Winstead would give him the probable Nat-Lib party-line on the resurrection gimmick, and he could be trusted to keep things to himself until given the official release.

Clyde Thurman was New York’s senior Senator, a formidable old ogre of a man with incalculable

influence in Washington. Harker had been a Thurman protege, fifteen years ago; publicly old Clyde had soured on Harker since his futile attempt at political independence, but Harker had no idea where the old man stood privately. If he could win Thurman over to his side, Senate approval of revivification legislation was a good bet. The Nat-Libs controlled 53 seats in the 123rd Congress; the American-Conservatives held only 45, with the other two seats held down by self-proclaimed Independents. In the House, it was even better: 297 to 223, with twenty Independents of variable predictability.

Harker's third key man was Monseigneur Carteret. The Father was a highly-respected member of New York's Catholic hierarchy, shrewd and liberal in his beliefs, and already (at the age of 38) considered a likely candidate for an Arche-piscopacy and beyond that the red hat.

Harker had met Father Carteret through Kelly. While he was no Catholic himself, nor currently a member of any other organized group, Harker had struck up a close friendship with the priest. He could rely on Carteret to give him an accurate and confidential appraisal of the possible Church reaction to announcement of a successful technique for resuscitating the dead.

Harker ripped the sheet off the doodlepad and pocketed it. He hung poised over his desk, deep in thought, his active mind already picturing the interviews he might be having with these people.

After a moment he reached for his phone and punched out the coordinates of Father Carteret's private number. Might as well begin with him, Harker thought.

A pleasantly monkish face appeared on the screen after several rings. "Yes? May I help you?"

"I'd like to speak to Father Carteret, please. My name is James Harker."

"Pardon, Mr. Harker. Father Carteret is in conference with Bishop O'Loughlin. Would you care to have him call you when he's free?"

"When will that be?"

"A half hour, I'd say. Is your matter urgent?"

"Reasonably. Tell the Monseigneur I'd like to make an appointment to see him some time today or tomorrow, and ask him to call me at my office."

"Does he have your number?"

"I think so. But you'd better take it anyway, just to make sure. MON-4-38162."

He blanked the screen, waited a moment, and dialed the number Raymond had given him to use when calling the Laboratory. The pale, goggle-eyed face of David Klaus appeared on the screen.

"I'd like to talk to Raymond."

"Dr. Raymond's busy in the hormone lab," Klaus said sharply. "Try again in an hour or so."

Harker frowned impatiently; he had taken an immediate dislike to this jittery little enzyme researcher. He said, "You tell Raymond--"

"Just a minute," a new voice said. There was confusion on the screen for an instant; then Klaus' face

disappeared and the precise, tranquil features of Martin Raymond took their place.

“I thought you were busy in the hormone lab,” Harker said. “Klaus told me so.”

Raymond laughed without much humor behind it. “Klaus is frequently inaccurate, Mr. Harker. What’s on your mind?”

“Thought I’d let you know that I’m getting down to immediate operation. I’m lining up interviews with key people for today and tomorrow as a preliminary investigation of your legal situation.”

“Good. By the way-Mitchison’s prepared some publicity handouts on the process. He wants you to okay them before we send them to the papers.”

Harker repressed a strangled cough. “Okay them? Listen, Mart, that’s exactly why I called. My first official instruction is that the present wrap of ultra-security is to continue unabated until I’m ready to lift it. Tell that to Mitchison and tell him in spades.”

Raymond smiled evenly. “Of course-Jim. All secrecy wraps on until you give the word. I’ll let Mitchison know.”

“Good. I’ll be out at the lab sometime between here and Wednesday to find out some further information. I’ll keep in touch whenever I can.”

“Right.”

Marker broke contact and stared puzzledly at the tips of his fingers for a moment. His uneasiness widened. His original suspicion that behind the smooth facade of the Beller Research Laboratories lay possible dissension was heightened by Klaus’ peculiar behavior on the phone-and the idea of Mitchison doing anything as premature as sending out press handouts now, before the ground had been surveyed and the ice broken, gave him the cold running shudders.

It was going to be enough of a job putting this thing across as it was-without tripping over the outstretched toes of his employers.

Chapter V

MONSEIGNEUR CARTERET’S private office reminded Harker somehow of Mart Raymond’s. Like Raymond’s, it was small, and like Raymond’s it was ringed round with jammed bookshelves. The furniture was unostentatious, old and well-worn. As a concession to die 21stCentury, Carteret had installed a video pickup and a telescreen attachment to go with his phone. A small crucifix hung on the one wall not encumbered with books.

Carteret leaned forward and peered curiously at Harker. The priest, Harker knew, suffered from presbyopia. He was a lean man with the sharp facial contours of an ascetic: up-thrust cheekbones, lowering brows, grizzled close-cropped hair turning gray. His lips were fleshless, pale.

Harker said, “I have to apologize for insisting on such a prompt audience, Father.”

Carteret frowned reprovingly. “You told me yesterday it was an urgent matter. To me urgency means-well, urgency. My column for the Intelligencer can wait a few hours, I guess.”

His voice was dramatically resonant. He flashed his famous smile.

Harker said, "Fair enough. I'm here seeking an ecclesiastical opinion."

"I'll do my best. You understand that any real opinion on a serious matter would have to come from the Bishop, not from me-and ultimately from Rome."

"I know that. I wouldn't want this to get to Rome just yet. I want a private, off-the-record statement from you."

"I'll try. Go ahead."

Harker took a deep breath. "Father, what's the official Church position on resurrection of the dead? Actual physical resurrection here and now, I mean."

Carteret's eyes twinkled. "Officially? Well, I've never heard Jesus being condemned for raising Lazarus. And on the third day after the crucifixion Jesus Himself was raised, if that's what you mean. I don't see--"

"Let me make myself clear," Harker said. "The Resurrection of Jesus and of Lazarus both fall into the miracle category. Suppose-suppose a mortal being, a doctor, could take a man who had been dead eight or nine hours, or even a day, and bring him back to life."

Carteret looked momentarily troubled. "You speak hypo-thetically, of course." When Harker did not answer he went on, "Our doctrine holds that death occurs at the moment of 'complete and definitive separation of body and soul.' Presumably the process you discuss makes no provision for restoring the soul."

Harker shrugged. "I'm not capable to judge that. Neither, I'd say, are the men who have developed this-ah-hypothetical process."

"In that case," Carteret said, "The official Church position would be that any human beings revived by this method would be without souls, and therefore no longer human. The whole procedure would be considered profoundly irreligious."

"Blasphemous and sacrilegious as well?"

"No doubt."

Harker was silent for a moment. He said at length, "How about artificial respiration, heart massage, adrenalin injections? For decades seemingly dead people have been brought back to life with these techniques. Are they all without souls too?"

Carteret seemed to squirm. His strong fingers toyed with a cruciform paperweight on his desk. "I recall a statement of Pius XII, eighty or ninety years ago, about that. The Pope admitted that it was impossible to tell precisely when the soul had left the body-and that so long as the vital functions maintained themselves, it could be held that the person in question was not dead."

"In other words, if resuscitation techniques could be applied successfully, the patient is considered never to have been dead?"

Carteret nodded slowly.

“But if the patient had been pronounced dead by science and left in that state for half a day or more, and then reanimated by a hypothetical new technique-?”

“In that case there has been a definite discontinuity of the life-process,” Carteret said. “I may be wrong, but I can’t see how the Vatican could give such a technique its approval.”

“Ever?”

Carteret smiled. “Jim, it’s a verity that the Church is founded on a Rock, but that doesn’t mean our heads are made of stone. No organization lasts two thousand years without being susceptible to change. If in the course of time we’re shown that a reanimation technique restores both body and soul, no doubt we’ll give it approval. At present, though, I can foresee only one outcome.”

Harker knotted his fingers together tensely. The priest’s response had not been a surprise to him, but he had hoped for some wild loophole. If any loophole existed, Carteret would have found it.

Quietly he said, “All right, Father. I’ll put my cards on the table now. Such a process has been invented. I’ve seen it work. I’ve been retained as legal adviser for the group that developed it, and I’m shopping around for religious and secular opinions before I let them spring the news on the public.”

“You want my secular opinion, Jim, now that you’ve had the religious one?”

“Of course.”

“Drop it. Get out of this thing as fast as you can. You’re asking for trouble.”

“I know that. But I can only see this process as a force for good-for minimizing tragedy in everyday life.”

“Naturally. And I could offer you six arguments showing how it’ll increase suffering. Is it a complex technique requiring skilled operators?”

“Yes, but-“

“In that case it won’t be available to everybody right away. Are you going to decide who lives and who stays dead? Suppose you’re faced with the choice between a good and virtuous nobody or an evil but talented creative artist.”

“I know. I don’t have any slick answers to that, Father. But I still don’t think it’s any reason to suppress this thing.”

“Maybe not. On a purely secular level, though, I tell you it’s sheer dynamite. Not to mention the opposition you’re bound to get from religious groups. Jim, listen to me: you had a wonderful career once. You wrecked it. But now you’re continuing your headstrong ways right to the point of self-destruction.”

“Which is frowned upon by your Church,” Harker snapped, irritated. “But-“

“I’m not talking about my Church!” Carteret thundered. “I’m talking about you, your family, the rest of your life. You’re getting into very deep waters.” “I’ll shoulder the responsibility myself.” “I wish you could,” the priest murmured. “I wish any of us could. But we can’t ever do that, of course.”

He shrugged. “Go in peace, Jim. Any time you want to talk to me, just pick up the phone and call. I guarantee no proselytizing.”

“Of course everything we’ve just said is confidential, you understand.”

Carteret nodded. He lifted his arms, shaking the sleeves of his cassock back. “Observe. No concealed tape-recorders under my garments. No telespies in the wall.”

Chuckling, Harker opened the door and stood at the threshold a moment. “Thanks for talking to me, Father. Even if I can’t agree with you.”

“I’m used to disagreement,” Carteret said. “If everyone who came in here agreed with everything I said, I think I’d lose my faith. So long, Jim.” “Goodbye, Father.”

* * *

Harker emerged on the steps of the old cathedral where Carteret had his office, paused for a few deep breaths, and looked around. Fifth Avenue was humming with activity, here at noontime on a Tuesday in mid-month.

He thought: Tuesday, May 14, 2033. A pleasant late-spring day. And any time I decide to give the word, the entire nature of human philosophy will change.

Harker walked downtown to 43rdStreet, stopped in for a quick coffee, and headed toward the Monorail Terminal.

Puffing businessmen clutching attache cases sped past him, each on some business of no doubt vital importance, each blithely shortening his life-span with each new ulcer and each new deposit of cholesterol in the arteries. Well, before long it would be possible to bring these fat executives back to life each time they keeled over, Marker thought. What a frantic speedup would result then!

He bought a round-trip ticket to Litchfield and boarded the slim graceful yellow-hulled bullet that was the New Jersey monobus. He sat back, cushioning himself against the first jolt of acceleration, and waited for departure.

The eleventh commandment: thou need not die. Harker shivered a little at the magnitude of the Beller project; each day he realized a little more deeply the true awesome nature of the whole breakthrough.

Mitchison was waiting for him at the Litchfield monobus depot in the big black limousine. Harker climbed in, sitting next to the public-relations man on the front seat.

“Well?” Mitchison jammed his cigar into one corner of his mouth. “What did the padre have to say?”

“Precisely what we all expected.”

“Nix?”

“His unofficial feeling is that the Church will condemn this thing the second it’s announced.”

“Umm. Take some heavy thinking to cancel that out. How about the politicos?”

The car pulled into the Beller Labs private road. Harker said, "I'm going to Albany later in the week to see Governor Winstead. After him I'll go after Senator Thurman. Depending on what they say--"

"The hell with that," Mitchison growled. "When do you figure we can release this thing to the public?"

Harker turned round in his seat. In a level voice he said, "When you're planning to touch off a fusion bomb, you look around first and make sure you won't get scragged yourself. Same here. This project's been kept under wraps for eight years, and I'm damned if I'll release anything now until I see exactly where we all stand."

"And you'll pussyfoot around for months?"

"What do you care?" Harker demanded. "Are you getting paid by the week or by the amount of publicity you send out?"

Mitchison grunted something but made no intelligible answer. They pulled up at the roadblock and Marker got out at the right; the guards nodded curtly to him this time but made no attempt to interfere as he headed toward the administration building. Mitchison took his car to the parking-area.

Knocking at Raymond's door, Harker said, "You there, Mart?"

The door opened. A diminutive hatchet-faced man peered up at him. "Hello, Harker."

Taken off balance, Harker blinked a moment, then said, "Hello. I don't think we've met."

"You've seen my name. At the bottom of your check. I'm Barchet. Administrator of the Beller Fund."

Harker smiled at the little man and looked past him to Raymond. He shook his head. "It's no go, Mart. The Father says the Church will oppose us."

Raymond shrugged. "We could have figured on that, I guess. You see Winstead on Friday?"

Harker nodded. "I hope for better luck there." "Doubtful," Barchet snorted. His voice was an annoying saw-edged whine. Harker wondered whether the little man was going to be around the Litchfield labs very often; he had a deep dislike for moneymen.

Ignoring Barchet's comment, Harker said to Raymond, "Mart, how solid is the tenure of the people in this organization?"

"What do you mean?"

"Do all the affiliated men have verbal contracts like me, or are some inked in black-and-white?" "Most of the research men have verbal agreements." "How about Mitchison?"

Barchet turned to peer at Harker. Raymond frowned and said, "Why Mitchison?"

"I'll be blunt," Harker said. "I'd like to bounce him. He doesn't seem very capable and he's awfully trigger-happy about releasing data on the project. If it's okay with you, I'd like to bring in a couple of the boys who handled my gubernatorial campaign. They--"

Interrupting icily, Barchet said, "It seems to me we have more than enough people of radical political

affiliation working for us now. Anyone who handled a Nat-Lib campaign would be no asset to our work.”

Harker goggled. “I was a Nat-Lib Governor! You hired me, and you think that two press-agents-“

“I might as well tell you,” Barchet said. “You were hired over my definite objections, Mr. Harker. Your party happens to be the one in power, but it definitely does not represent the main ideological current of American enterprise. And if we succeed in our aims, I like to think it will be despite your presence on our team, not because of it.”

“Huh? Who the hell-“

“Wait a minute, Jim,” Raymond cut in. “And you too, Simeon. I don’t want any fighting in here!”

“I’m simply stating views that I expound regularly at our meetings,” Barchet said. “For your information, Mr. Harker, Cal Mitchison is the best publicity-agent money can buy. I will not consent to his dismissal.”

“You may have to consent to my resignation, then,” Harker said angrily. “Dammit, Mart, if I knew this outfit was run by-“

“Watch yourself, Mr. Harker,” Barchet warned.

“Calm down, Jim.” Raymond disengaged himself from his desk and, glowering down at Barchet, said, “Simeon, you know damned well Harker was approved by a majority of the shareholders. You have no business raising a squabble like this now. He was hired and given free rein-and if he wants to fire Mitchison, it’s within his province.”

“I insist on bringing the matter before the Board-and if Mitchison is dismissed without full vote, I’ll cause trouble. Good day, Dr. Raymond.”

The little man sailed past Harker without a word and slammed the door. Harker grinned and said, “What was he so upset about?”

Raymond slumped wearily behind his desk. “Barchet’s the official voice of old Beller in this outfit-and Beller was as conservative as they come. He thinks you’re an arch-radical because you held office for the Nat-Libs. And the little bugger carries a lot of weight on the Board, so we have to humor him.”

Harker nodded. He understood now what Raymond had meant when he said he had been “outvoted” in the matter of hiring Harker as first choice. It did not increase his opinion of Beller Research Laboratories.

“I wouldn’t blame you if you quit today,” Raymond said suddenly. “With Mitchison on pins and needles to give the word to the public, and that idiot Klaus battling for my job because he’s tired of enzyme work-“

“Klaus? But he’s just a kid!”

“He’s twenty-nine, and for an ex-prodigy that’s ancient. Degree from Harvard at fifteen, that sort of thing. I have to keep close watch on him or he’ll put a scalpel in my back.”

“Why not fire him?” Harker suggested.

“Two reasons. He’s got a contract, for one-and for another I’d rather have him with us than agin’ us, if you know what I mean. Lesser of two evils.”

Raymond sighed. “Great little place we have here, Jim. Sometimes I feel like closing the windows and turning up the gas.” He shook his head reflectively. “But it wouldn’t work. Someone would drag me next door and bring me back to life again, I guess.”

He reached into the bookshelf and produced the liquor bottle. “One quick shot apiece,” he said. “Then I want to take you round back to show you the rest of the lab.”

Chapter VI

THE GRAND tour of the laboratory grounds was as disturbing as it was stimulating. Seemingly tireless, Raymond marched him through room after room where elaborate experiments were going on.

“Serotonin-diffraction goes on in here. This room’s plasma research; remind me to bring you back some time when the big centrifuge is running. Fascinating. This is Klaus’ enzyme lab, and down here-“

Harker puffed along behind the lab director, listening to the flow of unfamiliar terms, dazzled by the array of formidable scientific devices. He saw kennels where lively dogs bounded joyfully up and down and struggled to lick his hands through the cage; it was a little jarring to learn that every dog in the room had been “dead” at least once, for periods ranging from a few minutes to twenty-eight hours. He met a grave little rhesus monkey that held the record; it had been dead thirty-nine hours, two months before.

“We had a pair of them,” Raymond said. “We brought this fellow back at the 39-hour mark, and held the other off for nine more hours in hopes of hitting a full two days. We didn’t make it. The surviving monk moped for days about it.”

Harker nodded. He was swept on; into a large room lined with ledgers, which Raymond said contained all the records of the Beller Laboratories since its opening in 2024. White-smocked researchers turned to look up as Harker and his guide passed through into a long, well-lit lab room, then out into the afternoon warmth and across to the other building, for more of the same.

“Well,” Harker said finally, after they had returned to Raymond’s office. “It’s a busy place.”

Raymond nodded. “We keep it moving. And it gets results. Despite everything, it gets results.”

Despite everything. Harker didn’t like the implications of that. He was beginning to form a picture of Raymond as an able man surrounded by stumbling-blocks and obstacles, and bulling his way through none-the-less. He wondered how it would be once he got the campaign into full swing, not too many weeks from now.

Harker leaned back, trying to relax. Raymond said, “Is it too early for you to give me an outline of the program you’re planning?”

Harker hunched his shoulders forward uneasily. “It’s still in the formative stage. I’m seeing Governor Winstead on Friday, as you know, and early next week I’ll go down to Washington and talk to Senator Thurman. If we get them on our side, the rest is relatively easy.”

“And if we don’t?”

Harker did not smile. "Then we have a fight."

"Why do you say that? Can't we just set up an instruction center and start resuscitating?"

"Pardon me, Mart, if I say that your approach's a naive one. We can't do any such thing. Not even if you limit use of the apparatus to fully qualified M.D.s. You see, anything as radical as this will have to be routed through the Federal Health Department, and they'll simply boot it on up to the President, and he'll refer it to Congress. What we need is a law making use of your technique legal."

"Is there any law saying it's illegal to reanimate the dead?" Raymond asked.

"Not yet. But you can bet there'll be an attempt to ram one through, before long. Which is why we have to put through a law of our own."

Raymond fell silent; his blue-cheeked face looked grave. An idea occurred to Harker and he said, "Do you have any idea how big our public-relations budget is?"

Raymond shrugged. "Pretty big. I guess you can have three or four hundred thousand, if you need it."

"Three or four hundred million is more in line with what we'll need," Harker said. He saw the stunned expression on Raymond's face and added, "Certainly at least a million, to begin with."

"But why? Why should it be necessary to sell the idea of restoring life? You'd think the people of America would rise up and acclaim us as saviors."

"You'd think so, wouldn't you?" Harker shook his head bleakly. "It doesn't work that way, Mart. For one thing, they'll be afraid to try it. There'll be plenty of 'zombie' jokes, and behind those jokes will be unvoiced fear. Uh-uh, Mart. If we're going to put this thing across, we'll need a big public-relations budget. And we can't let a bubblehead like Mitchison handle the job."

"It'll take a little time to fire him."

"Why?"

"You heard Barchet. Mitchison's Barchet's man. We'll have to go through shareholder channels to get rid of Mitchison."

"How long will that take?"

"Two weeks, maybe three," Raymond said. "Will that hold things up too badly?"

"We'll manage," Harker said tiredly.

* * *

Harker spent the next morning, Wednesday, at his office, tidying up unfinished business. The delay on the Bryant hearing had come through, and he read the document carefully, scowled, and jammed it into his desk drawer. He phoned the Bryant home and learned that the old man was very low; the doctor refused to let Harker speak with him. Harker suspected the fine hand of Jonathan Bryant lurking behind that ukase, but there wasn't much he could do about it. The old man wasn't going to last forever, anyway-but Harker genuinely wanted him to hold out until after the hearing, at least.

Nasty business. Jonathan had deliberately obtained the stay of hearing with the hope that his father would die before the case came up.

He left the office at noon, spent some time downtown in the public library trying to find some books that would give him a little scientific background, and headed for home about four that afternoon. His home life had been suffering, a bit, in the week since he had plunged himself fully into the Beller Labs project. He had been coming home at odd hours, which upset Lois' routine, and his attitude was one of withdrawn introversion, which made things tough on the children. Still, they all were very cooperative about it, Harker thought. He hoped he could make it up to them when the pressure let up.

If the pressure ever let up.

Thursday passed slowly. Harker remained at home, in his study, and tried to read the books he had brought from the library. He was surprised to learn that formal resuscitation research dated from the middle years of the past century. He traced down a few of the terms Raymond had thrown at him, and learned a bit about the mechanics of the Beller reanimation technique.

But, he realized when he put the books down, he knew very little in detail. He had simply skimmed the surface, acquiring a veneer of terms which he could use to impress the even-less-educated.

A politician's trick, he thought. But what else could he do?

He woke early on Friday, before six, and made breakfast for himself. By the time he had turned off the autocook and set the kitchen-servo to mopup, Lois and the children were moving about upstairs. They had come down for breakfast before he was ready to leave.

"Morning, Dad," Chris said. "Up early, eh?"

"I have to make a 9:30 jet," he explained. "It's the last one before noon."

Paul appeared, thumbing his eyes, yawning. "Where you going, Daddy?"

"Albany," Harker said.

The seven-year-old looked awake immediately. "Albany? Are you Governor again, Daddy?"

"Hush, stupid!" Chris said savagely.

But Harker merely smiled and shook his head. "No, I won't be Governor any more, Paul. I'm going to visit Mr. Winstead. He's the Governor now."

"Oh," the boy said gravely.

Harker reached the West Side jet terminal at ten after nine. The big 150-seater was out on the field, surrounded by attendants. It would make the trip to Albany in just under thirteen minutes.

It was a silly business. It took him twice that long to get to the terminal from his home. But modern transportation was full of such paradoxes.

At nine-thirty-five the great ship erupted from the landing-strip; not much later it was roaring over

Westchester, and not very much after that it was taxiing to a smooth and uneventful landing just outside Albany.

Thirteen minutes. And it took twenty-five minutes more for the jetport bus to bring them across the Hudson into Albany proper after the flight.

His appointment with Governor Winstead was for eleven that morning. Declining the public transport service, Harker walked through town to the governor's mansion—a walk that he had come to know well, in his four years in Albany.

The town hadn't changed much. Still third-rate, dirty, bedraggled; one of his proposed reforms had been to move the Capital downstate to New York City, where it really belonged, but naturally the force of sentiment was solidly against him, not to mention the American-Conservative Party, whose New York stronghold Albany was.

He smiled at the memory. He had fought so many losing battles, in his four years as Governor.

* * *

The guards at Winstead's mansion recognized him, of course, and tipped their hats. Harker grinned amiably at them and passed through, but he felt inward discomfort. Their jobs were pegged down by civil-service regulations; his was not, and he had lost his. In an odd way it made him feel inferior.

He travelled the familiar journey upstairs to the Governor's office. Winstead was there to greet him with outstretched hand and a faintly abashed smile.

“Jim. So glad you could come up here.”

“It's not a courtesy call, Leo. I'm here to ask some advice.”

“Any way I can help, Jim, you know I will.”

Harker experienced a moment of disorientation as he took a seat facing Winstead across the big desk that had been his until a few months ago. It was strange to sit on this side of the desk.

He looked for ways to begin saying what he had come here to say. He sensed the other man's deep embarrassment, and shared it in a way, because the awkwardness of this first meeting between Governor and ex-Governor was complex and many-levelled.

Winstead was ten years his senior: a good party man, a reliable workhorse who had come up through the ranks of the Manhattan District Attorney's office, and who had turned down a judgeship because he thought he had a shot at the race for Governor. But the party had chosen the bright, me-teorically-rising young Mayor, James Harker, to be the standard-bearer instead, and an avalanche of Nat-Lib votes from downstate had swept Harker in.

Then it had been necessary to discard Harker four years later, and good dependable old Leo Winstead was trotted out of private law practice to take his place. The Nat-Lib tide held true; Winstead was elected, and now it was the ex-prodigy who entered private law practice instead of using the Governorship as a springboard into the White House.

Harker said, “Leo, you carry weight with the party. I don't any more.”

“Jim, I-“

“Don’t try to apologize, Leo, because it’s my own fault and none of yours that I’m where I am now. I’m simply asking you to exert some influence on behalf of a project I’m involved in.”

It was a naked attempt at lobbying. Harker hoped Winstead’s unconscious guilt-feelings would lead him to support the Beller people.

“What sort of project, Jim?”

“It’s-it’s a sort of revolutionary breakthrough in science, Leo. A process to reanimate people who have been dead less than twenty-four hours.”

Winstead sat up. “Are you serious?”

“Dead serious. I’m going down to Washington next week to see Thurman. This thing really works-and I want to get it legally approved.”

“And where do I come in?”

“You’re a powerful official, Leo. If you came out in praise of this new development-“

“Dangerous business, Jim. The Church-“

“I know all about the Church. And you can bet our friends the American-Conservatives will make some kind of political capital about the news. The Nat-Libs will have to take a favorable stand on this.”

“Suppose we don’t?” Winstead asked. His voice was tense and off-center; he ran his knotty hands nervously through his bushy shock of white hair. “You know as well as I do that this is no time to hop off supporting anything too farfetched.”

Barker began to feel a sense of exasperation. “Farfetched? Leo, I saw a dead man come back to life right in front of me. If you think-“

“I don’t think anything. Thinking’s not my job. If you’ll pardon my saying so, Jim, you did too much thinking for your own good when you were in Albany. This thing has to be handled with kid gloves. It wouldn’t surprise me if the government clamps down and bottles it all up until it’s been fully explored.”

“Federal Research Act of ‘92,” Harker said thinly. “It guarantees freedom of research without government interference, as you know well enough.”

Winstead seemed to be perspiring heavily. “Laws can be repealed or amended, Jim. Listen here: why don’t you go see Thurman? Find out how he stands on the matter. Then come back here and maybe we can talk about it again.”

It was obviously a dismissal. Winstead had no intentions of getting involved with something that had so many ramifications as this.

Tiredly Harker rose. “Okay. I’ll see Thurman.”

“Good.”

“One more thing, Leo-this project hasn’t been announced to the public yet. Since you’re aware of the fuss it’s going to kick up, I hope you’ll be thoughtful enough to keep your mouth shut until we’re ready to spring it ourselves.”

“Of course, Jim. Of course.”

Chapter VII

IT WAS a very long weekend.

Harker reached his home at five-thirty that evening, having left Winstead around noon. He had had a miserable chlo-refia-streak lunch on the wrong side of State Street and spent the early afternoon strolling around Albany, easing the inner tension that gripped him. He made the 4:15 jet back to New York.

Chris was watching the video when he came in; it was a weekend, and the boy had no homework. He hopped up immediately and said, “Drink, Dad?”

“Martini. Very dry.”

The boy busied himself with the pushbutton controls of the autobar while Harker hung up his hat and jacket. Lois appeared from the general vicinity of the kitchen.

“Did you see Winstead?”

He nodded. “Yeah, I saw him. He isn’t interested, I guess.”

“Oh. Dr. Raymond called, from the labs. He wanted to know if you were back yet. I told him you’d call as soon as you came home.”

Harker picked up the phone, yanked down on the longdistance switch, and punched out Raymond’s number. He waited, hoping Raymond himself would pick up and not Klaus or Barchet or someone like that.

Raymond did. He looked inquisitively out of the screen and Harker told him exactly what Winstead had said. When he had finished the flat, weary recital, he added, “I’m going to Washington on Monday. But if Thurman gives me the brushoff, we may be in trouble.”

Raymond grinned with unconvincing heartiness. “We’ll get through somehow, Jim. Have faith.”

“I wish I could,” Harker said.

He sipped the drink Chris put in his hand, and after a little of the cold gin had filtered into his bloodstream he felt better. It was a false comfort, he knew, but it was comfort all the same. He went upstairs to the sitting-room, picked out a musictape almost at random, put it on. The selection was a mistake: Handel’s Messiah, Part III. He listened to the big alto aria that opened the section:

. . . I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

And though worms destroy this body, yet in my fish shall I see God.

For now is Christ risen from the dead. . . .

After the final notes of the aria had died away came the Chorus, slow, grave:

. . . Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. . . .

The jubilant tones of “Even so in Christ” sent startling shivers of illumination through him; it was as if he had never listened to these words before (“Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. . . .”). The words pursued him everywhere.

Twenty minutes later, after the last melisma of “Amen,” he abruptly turned the set off; dinner was about ready, or at least it should be. It was. He ate quietly, deep in thought.

On Saturday he was a little more lively; he worked around the house, took Chris and Paul for an hour-long hike in the early afternoon, spent some time before dinner watching the telecast of the Yankee-Dodger interleague game from Los Angeles. He and Lois visited neighbors in the evening; it was a pleasant, relaxed three or four hours. He was beginning to think he could forget about the problem that was starting to grow.

But Sunday his short-lived forgetfulness ended. It was breakfast-time; Paul was struggling under the bulk of the Sunday Times, which had been left in the box outside, and Lois was bringing the pancakes to the table. As he took the paper from his youngest son, Harker turned to Chris and said, “Switch on the audio. Let’s see what the morning news is like.”

There was a click. A resonant, almost cavernous voice said:

“... he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I-“

Impatiently Chris reached out and changed the station. Harker, shaking his head, annoyed. “No, Ghris. Get that back. I want to hear it.”

“The Bible, Dad?”

Harker nodded impatiently. As Chris searched for the original station Lois said, “That’s St. Matthew, isn’t it?”

Chuckling, Harker said, “St. John, unless I’ve forgotten all my Sunday Schooling. Your father ought to hear you say a thing like that.”

Lois’ father had been a stern Bible-reading Presbyterian; he had never approved of Harker. The radio preacher said:

“... Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth,

bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them-“

“All right,” Harker broke in suddenly. “You can change the station now.”

Chris said, “How come you wanted to hear that, Dad?”

“It’s a very famous passage.” Harker smiled. “And I have a feeling we’re all going to get to know it pretty well before summer comes.”

After supper Sunday he packed for his trip to Washington; he took an extra change of clothes, because Thurman’s secretary had warned him that the Senator was very busy and might not be able to see him until Tuesday. Harker reflected privately that that was fine treatment to accord a man who had once been virtually the titular head of the party, but complaining would have done him less than no good.

He came downstairs again after packing, and spent the next several hours watching video with the family: a silly, mindless series of programs, ideally designed to give the mind a rest.

At quarter past nine, in the middle of an alleged ballet sequence, the screen went blank. Harker frowned, annoyed; then an announcer’s face appeared.

“We interrupt this program to bring you a special announcement from our newsroom.

“Richard Bryant, hero of Earth’s first successful voyage to another planet, died quietly in his sleep an hour ago, in his Manhattan apartment. He would have been seventy-four next month.

“He was assured of immortality on the first of August, 1984, when he radioed from Mars the triumphant message, ‘Have landed Mars One safely. Am on way back. Mars is pretty dreary.’ From that day on, Rick Bryant was a hero to billions.

“We return you now to the regularly-scheduled program.”

Cavorting dancers returned to the screen. In a soft, barely-audible voice, Harker cursed eloquently.

“Gee, Dad! Rick Bryant died!” Chris exclaimed.

Not long after he had taken the case, Harker had induced the old man to autograph a copy of his book *I Flew to Mars for Chris*; since then, the boy had taken deep interest in Bryant’s career.

Harker nodded. To Lois he said, “They didn’t even give him a chance. The hearing would have been last Thursday, but his son got it postponed.”

“Do you think this will affect the outcome, Jim?”

“I doubt it. That document was pretty solid. Damn, I wanted old Bryant to have the satisfaction of knowing he died on top.” Broodingly he stared at his slippers. “If any of them had any guts, they would have lied to him, told him his will was upheld. But of course they didn’t. They’re just so many vultures. Hell, I guess I’d better phone. As the old man’s lawyer, I’d better get in touch.”

He went upstairs to his den and switched on the phone. Punching out the Bryant number, he waited a moment; an intercepting service took the call and said, “We represent the Bryant family. Only friends of

the family and immediate relatives can be put through just now, sir.”

“I’m the late Mr. Bryant’s lawyer,” Harker said, staring at the monogrammed pattern on the screen. “James Harker. Will you put me through?”

There was a momentary pause; then-“I beg your pardon, sir. Your name does not seem to be on the list. You understand that in a time of grief such as this the Bryant family accepts your condolences in the sincere spirit in which they are offered, and regrets that it cannot devote personal time to you as yet. We suggest that you call back tomorrow, when the shock of Mr. Bryant’s departure has lessened.” ... -The intercepting-service monogram disappeared from the screen. Harker scowled.

The cold-blooded lice. Hiring a service to dish out all that unctuous crap, meanwhile making sure I don’t have a chance to talk to anybody there.

He took a deep breath and punched out another number: the home phone of District Judge Auerbach, who was scheduled to conduct the Bryant hearing next Thursday.

Auerbach appeared on the screen, plump, sleepy-looking. Harker said, “Sorry to disturb you on a Sunday night, Tom. You’ve heard about the Bryant business?”

Auerbach nodded. “Too bad, I guess. He was very sick.”

“No doubt of that. Look, Tom, his sons are being sticky about their phone. I’m on the black-list and can’t get through to them. Has Jonathan phoned you tonight?”

“No. Is he supposed to?”

“I don’t know. I just want to notify you that I’ll be out of town on business tomorrow and maybe Tuesday, in case you or he or anybody is trying to reach me. But I’ll be back in plenty of time for the hearing on Thursday. There isn’t another motion for a postponement, is there?”

“Not that I know of,” Auerbach said. “Be seeing you in court on Thursday, then?”

“Right.”

He returned to the television room. The ballet was still going on.

“Well?” Lois asked.

“I couldn’t reach the Bryants. They hired an intercepting service,” Harker said darkly. “I spoke to Tom Auerbach, though. The hearing’s still scheduled for Thursday. Jonathan just didn’t want the old man to be alive when it was held.”

I wouldn’t put it past them to murder old Bryant, he thought. Cold-blooded bunch.

He stared at the screen, but the colorful images only irritated him.

* * *

Idlewild was a busy place the following morning. Harker got there at half-past-nine, and the sprawling buildings were jam-packed.

“Flight 906 leaving for London via TWA in fifteen minutes- Flight 906 leaving for London via TWA in fifteen minutes-“

He heard a deep-bellied boom; someone next to him said, “That’s a cross-country job, I’ll bet.”

Sure enough, the loudspeaker said, “Now departing, Flight 136 for San Francisco-“

Above him a neon board flashed. The bright letters said: Flight 136. Lv Idlwld 0932, Ar SF 1126.

Less than two hours across the continent. Harker thought: the plane that had just taken off two minutes ago was probably somewhere over Pennsylvania or Ohio by now.

“Attention, please. Flight 199, United Air Lines, for Washington D.C., departure 0953, now boarding-“

That was his plane. Leaving in about twenty minutes, and arriving in Washington only about twenty minutes after that. Harker looked up and saw a great golden stratocruiser coming in for a landing on a distant runway. All around him he felt the nervous urgency of people traveling.

Inwardly he began to grow tense. He had checked off two of the three names on his scrawled list; neither had been of much encouragement. Only Senator Clyde Thurman remained, and Thurman represented the old-guard conservative wing of the Nat-Lib party; there was no telling how he would react to the news that a technique had been developed for-

“Attention, please. Telephone call for Mr. James Harker. Mr. James Harker, please report to any ticket desk. Telephone call for James Harker-“

Puzzled, Harker shoved his way through the crowd to the desk in the foreground and said to the uniformed clerk, “I’m James Harker. I was just paged for a phone call.”

“You can pick it up in there.”

Harker stepped through into a waiting-room and picked up an extension phone-audio only, no visual. He said to the operator, “I’m James Harker. There’s a phone call for me.”

“One moment, ple-ase.”

There was the sound of phone-jacks being yanked in and out of sockets. Then Mart Raymond’s voice said, “Hello? Jim?”

“Harker here. That you, Mart?”

“Oh, thank God I caught you in time! I phoned your home, and your wife said you’d gone to the airport to make a 9:53 jet! Another few minutes and you’d have been aboard the plane, and-“

Harker had never heard Raymond this excited before. “Whoa, boy! Calm down!”

“I can’t. Cancel your trip and get out here right away!”

“How come? I’m on my way down to see Thurman.”

“The hell with Thurman. Haven’t you heard the news?”

“What news? About Bryant, you mean? How-“

“No, not about Bryant,” Raymond snapped. “I mean about the project. Hell, I guess you haven’t heard yet. It only broke about five minutes ago.”

Harker stared strangely at the receiver in his hand. In as level a voice as he could manage he said, “Mart, what are you trying to tell me?”

“Mitchison!” Raymond gasped. “Mitchison and Klaus- they issued a public statement about five minutes ago, telling the world all about the project! The lab is swarming with reporters! Jim, you’ve got to get out here at once!”

He hung up. Harker let the receiver drop into its cradle. He moistened his lips.

The mask of secrecy was off. From now on, they were accountable to the world for their every move.

Chapter VIII

BARKER HAD thought Idlewild was in a state of confusion, but he realized he still had a lot to learn about ultimate chaos when he reached Litchfield, an hour later. Cars clogged the highway for a quarter of a mile on each side of the private road leading to the laboratories. He saw television cameras, sound trucks, men who looked like reporters.

He ducked through the milling mob and tried to slip unobtrusively along the spruce-bordered dirt road to the administration building. But it was a foolhardy attempt; he hadn’t taken more than ten steps before someone yelled: “Hey! There’s Governor Harker!”

A dozen of them surrounded him in a minute. Harker recognized a few of the faces from his mayoralty days—a Times man, one from the Star-Post, one from the Hearst combine. Harker strode doggedly along, trying to ignore them, but they blocked his path.

“What are you doing here, Governor?”

“What’s your opinion on the reanimation bit? You think they’re serious?”

“How will the Nat-Libs react?”

“Do you figure there’ll be a congressional investigation?”

They crowded around him, waving their minirecorders and notebooks. In a loud voice Harker said, “Hold on, all of you! Quiet down!”

They quieted.

“In answer to half a dozen of your questions, I’m here because I’m legal adviser to Beller Laboratories. The statement that was released to the press earlier today was an unofficial and possibly inaccurate one. I’ll have an official statement for you as soon as things are under control here.”

“Does that mean the reanimation process doesn’t actually exist?”

“I repeat: I’ll have an official statement later.” It was the only way to handle them. He spun, pushed his way forcefully but with care between the Times and Scripps-Howard-Cauldwell, and made his way up the hill.

The roadblock still functioned-only this time there were five guards there instead of two, and three of them held mul-tishot rifles, the other two machine-pistols. Harker approached and said, “How come the firearms?”

“It’s the only way we can keep them back, Mr. Harker. You better go in. Dr. Raymond wants to see you.”

Harker nodded grimly and stepped through the cordon. He half-trotted the rest of the way.

Raymond’s office was crowded. Barchet was there, and Lurie, and two or three of the other researchers. Raymond, his face gray and stony, sat quietly back of his desk.

“Here,” he said. “Read this. It’s the text of the handout Mitchison released.”

Harker scanned it.

“Litchfield, N.J., 20 May (for immediate release)-security wraps today came off an eight-year-old project that will be the greatest boon to mankind since the development of modern medicine. A process for bringing the dead back to life has left the experimental stage and is now ready for public demonstration, according to famous biochemist David Klaus, 29, a Harvard graduate who has spearheaded the project in recent months.

“Klaus stated, ‘The technique developed at this laboratory will make possible restoration of life in all cases where death has taken place no more than twenty-four hours before the reanimation attempt, provided no serious organic damage was the cause of death. A combination of hormone therapy and electrochemical stimulation makes this astonishing and miraculous process possible.’”

“The Better Research Laboratories of Litchfield, established in 2024 by a grant from the late Darwin F. Seller, was the birthplace for this scientific breakthrough. Further details to come. Cal Mitchison, publicity.”

Harker dropped the sheet contemptuously to Raymond’s desk. “Bad grammar, bad writing, bad thinking-not even a good mimeograph job. Mart, how the dickens could a thing like this have happened?”

Klaus and Mitchison must have cooked it up last night or early this morning. They handed copies of it to the local press-service stringers in town, and phoned it in to all the New York area newspapers.”

“We didn’t even have time to fire him,” Harker muttered. “Well? Where is he now?”

Raymond shrugged. “He and Klaus are gone. I sent men looking for them as soon as I found out about the newsbreak, but no sign of them.”

“Operation Barn Door,” Harker snapped. “Most likely they’re in Manhattan getting themselves interviewed on video. I see Mitchison didn’t bother to mention anyone’s name but Klaus’ in this alleged handout.”

“What would you expect?”

Harker whirled on Barchet, who looked very small and meek suddenly, with none of his earlier blustery self-assurance. “You! You’re the one who brought Mitchison into this outfit!”

In a tiny voice Barchet said, “Recriminations are useless now, Mr. Harker.”

“The hell with that. Did you tell Mitchison I was going to have him sacked?”

“Mr. Harker, I-“

“Did you?”

Helplessly Barchet nodded. Harker glared at him, then turned to Raymond and said, “There you have it, Mart. Mitchison heard he was getting canned, so he whipped this thing out now, while he could get fat on us. Well, we’re stuck with this statement. There are 500 hundred reporters on the front lawn waiting for official word from us.”

Raymond had not shaved that morning. He ran his fingers through a blue-stubbled growth of beard and then locked his hands over his forehead. In a sepulchral voice he said, “What do you suggest? Deny the Mitchison release?”

“Impossible,” Harker said. “The word has gone out. If we deny it, the public will never believe a further word we say. Uh-uh.”

“What then?”

“Don’t worry about it. First thing is to prepare a release saying that the early announcement was premature, that Mitchison and Klaus are no longer connected with this organization-“

“Klaus has a contract.”

“The contract has a clause in it about insubordination or else it isn’t worth a damn. Have somebody send a special-delivery letter to Klaus informing him that his contract is voided. Keep a couple of carbons. Send a letter of dismissal to Mitchison, too.”

Harker paused to wipe sweat from his face. Even in the small room, the airconditioners had little effect.

He went on, “Next thing: I’ll draft a release confirming the fact that you’ve developed this technique, and I’ll sign my name to it. When I’m done, have it mimeographed and distributed to everybody out there. That cancels out Mitchi-son’s poop, anyway. After that-“ he frowned-“do you have any human cadavers around the place? Revivable ones, I mean?”

Raymond shook his head.

“Too bad. Find one. We’ll give a demonstration of the technique to any of the pressmen who have strong enough stomachs to want to watch. And then-“

“Don’t you think that’s a little risky?” Lurie asked mildly.

“What? The demonstration?”

Lurie nodded, grinning foolishly. “Well, I mean, something might go wrong-“

“Like what?”

“There are flaws in the process,” Raymond cut in. “We haven’t fully perfected it. I was meaning to talk about them to you, but of course this thing coming up makes it impossible to iron the bugs out in time, and-“

“Hold it,” Harker said. He felt a chill start to rise up his back. In a flat voice he said, “You gave me the impression that this process worked all the time. That if the body was in good enough shape to live, and hadn’t started to decay, you could revive it. Suppose you tell me about these so-called ‘bugs,’ right here and now.”

There was a brief, ominous silence in the room. Harker saw Raymond glare sourly at Lurie, who cowered; the other staff researchers looked uneasy, and Barchet nibbled at his nails.

At last Raymond said, “Jim, I’m sorry. We didn’t play it square with you.”

“Go on. Bare your soul to me now, Raymond. I want to know everything.”

“Well-ah-the process doesn’t always work. About one out of twenty times, we can’t bring the patient back to life.”

“Understandable. If that’s the whole trouble-“

“It isn’t. Jim, you have to understand that death is a tremendous shock to the nervous system-the biggest shock there is. That goes without saying. Sometimes the shock is so great that it short-circuits the brain, so to speak. And so even though we can achieve physiological reanimation, the mind-ah-the mind is not always reanimated with the body.”

Harker was stunned as if by a physical blow. He took one step backward, groped for a chair, and lowered himself into it. Forcing himself to keep calm he said, “Just how often does this happen?”

“About one out of every six tries, so far.”

“I see. “ He drew in his breath sharply, cleared his throat, and fought to hang on to his self-control. The whole thing had taken on an unreal dreamlike atmosphere in the past two hours. And this was the crusher.

So one out of six revivifications produced a live idiot? Great, Harker thought. So a public demonstration will be like a game of Russian Roulette. One chance out of six that the whole show will blow up in our faces.

“How long will it take you to iron this thing out?” he asked.

“All I can say is that we’re working toward it.”

“Okay. Forget the demonstration. We don’t dare try it until things calm down. Remind me to cut your throat for this, Mart. Later.”

There was a knock on the door. Harker nodded to Barchet, who opened it. One of the laboratory guards stood outside.

“The reporters are getting out of hand,” he said. “They want to know when they’re getting their statement.”

Harker stood up and said, “It’s five minutes to eleven now. Tell them that I’ll have a statement for them before noon.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Get me a typewriter,” Harker said to Raymond.

A typewriter was produced. Harker fed a sheet of paper in, switched on the current, and began to type. He composed a hasty 250-word statement disowning Mitchison, crediting Raymond as head of the project, and declaring that full details of the technique would be released as soon as they were ready.

He signed it James Harker, and added parenthetically, (Former Governor of New York-now legal adviser to Seller Research Laboratories.)

“Here,” he said, handing the release to Raymond. “Read this thing through and approve it, Mart. Then get it mimeographed and distributed to that wolfpack out there. Is there a vidset around anywhere?”

“In A Lounge,” Lurie offered.

A Lounge was in the small dormitory in back. Harker said, “I’m going there to pick up the news reports. Lurie, I’m requisitioning you to set up office space for me someplace in Dormitory A. I want a phone, a vidset, a radio, and a typewriter. And I don’t care who has to get pushed out of the way.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Good.”

He jogged across the clearing toward Dormitory A, pausing only to look back briefly at the horde of newsmen straining at the barrier down the hill. A Lounge was packed with lab researchers, clustered around the video. They moved to one side as Harker entered.

He recognized Vogel and said to the bearded surgeon, “Has there been much about us on yet?”

Vogel laughed. “Much? Hardly anything but!”

Harker stared at the screen. A newscaster’s solemn face stared back. “... a discovery of staggering importance, if we can credit this morning’s release. Further details will be brought to you as bulletins the moment information is received at the network newsroom.”

Harker wrenched the channel-selector dial one turn to the left. A new voice, equally crisp and solemn, was saying: “. . . called for an immediate Senate investigation. The cry was echoed by Nat-Lib Senator Clyde Thurman, who declared that such a scientific finding would have to be placed under careful Federal regulation.”

A third channel offered: “. . . the President had no comment on the news, pending further details. Vice-President Chalmers, attending a meeting in Detroit, commented: ‘This is not as incredible a development as superficial appearances would indicate. Science has long had the power to save human lives; this is merely the next step. We should not lose our sense of proportion in considering this matter?’ “

Harker felt a sudden need for fresh air. He muscled his way through the crowded lounge and out onto the dormitory porch.

Confusion reigned everywhere. His tentative plans for making a careful survey of the situation had gone up in one puff of press-agentry; from now on, he would have to improvise, setting his course with desperate agility.

He tried to tell himself that things would quiet down before long, once the initial impact had expended itself. But he was too well schooled in the study of mass human behavior to be able to make himself believe any such naive hope.

The man in the street could only be thinking one thing now: that the power of death over humanity had ended. In future days, death would have no dominion.

But how would they react? Jubilantly, or with terror? What would they say when they learned that five times out of six, life could be restored-but the sixth time a mindless idiot was the product?

Fear and trembling lay ahead, and days of uncertainty. Harker let the warm mid-May sun beat down on him; he stared up at the sky as if looking into tomorrow.

The sky held no answers. Confusion would be tomorrow’s watchword. And there was no turning back, now, not for any of them.

Chapter IX

BARKER HELD his first news-conference at three-thirty that afternoon, in the hastily-rigged room that was now his Litchfield office.

By that time, it had occurred to him that he had become, not only the legal adviser of the laboratories, but the public spokesman, publicity director, and chairman of the board as well. Everyone, Raymond included, seemed perfectly willing to delegate responsibility to him.

He made a list of eight selected media representatives- three newspapers, both press services, two video networks and one radio network, and invited them to send men to his conference. No others were allowed in.

He told them very concisely what the Beller technique was, how it had been developed, and what it could do. He used a few technical terms that he had picked up from his weekend reading. He did not mention the fact that the technique was not without flaws.

When he had finished his explanation, he called for questions. Surprisingly few were forthcoming. The news seemed to have stilled the tongues of even these veteran reporters.

At the close of the conference he said, “Headquarters for further Beller news will be right here. I’ll try to make myself available for comment about the same time every afternoon.”

He watched them go. He wondered how much of what he had said would reach the public undistorted, and how much would emerge in garbled and sensationalized form.

Toward evening, he started finding out.

Harker reached his home in Larchmont about seven that evening, utterly exhausted. Lois was at the door, anxious-faced, tense.

“Jim! I’ve been listening to the news all day. So have the boys. Your name’s been mentioned every time.”

“That’s nice,” Harker said wearily. He unsnapped his shoes and nodded hello to his sons, who stared at him strangely as if he had undergone some strange transformation during the day.

“I’ll be spending most of my time at Litchfield until things get calmer,” he said. “I may even have to sleep out there for a while.”

The phone rang suddenly. Harker started to go for it, then changed his mind and said, “Find out who it is, first. If it’s anybody official tell them I’m not home yet. Except Raymond.”

Lois nodded and glided off toward the phone alcove. When she returned, she looked even more pale, more tense.

“Who was it?”

“Some-some crank. There’ve been a lot of those calls today, Jim.”

He tightened his lips. “I’ll have the number changed tomorrow. Nuisances.”

The late editions of two of the New York papers lay on the hassock near his chair. He picked up the Seventh Edition of the Star-Post. A red-inked banner said, CAN LIFE BE RESTORED? READ NOBEL WINNER’S OPINION!

Harker glanced at the article. It was by Carlos Rodriguez, the Peruvian poet, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2018. Evidently it was a philosophical discussion of man’s right to bring back the dead. Harker read about three paragraphs, then abruptly lost interest when another headline at the lower right-hand corner caught his eye. It said,

RICK BRYANT REMAINS DEAD, SAY SPACE PIONEER’S HEIRS

New York, May 20-The body of “73-year-old Richard Bryant, early hero of the space age, will be cremated on schedule tomorrow morning, according to a family spokesman. Commenting on the growing public sentiment that the famed Bryant be granted a reprieve from death for his epochal flight to Mars, Jonathan Bryant, his oldest son, declared:

“The feeling of my family is that my father should go to eternal rest. He was an old and sick man and frequently expressed the desire to sleep forever. We emphatically will not subject his remains to the dubious claims of the so-called reanimators currently in the headlines: “

Harker looked up.

“Listen to this hogwash, Lois!” He read her the article, bearing down with sardonic malice on Jonathan’s more cynical remarks.

She nodded. “I heard about it before. Seems some people got up a quick petition to bring old Bryant back to life. Jonathan’s statement was broadcast about five this afternoon.”

Scowling, Harker said, “You can bet they’ll rush him off to the crematorium in a hurry, now. They waited four years for him to die, and they’d be damned before they let him be brought back to life!”

The phone rang again. Lois slipped away to answer it, while Harker busied himself with the papers. She returned in a moment, looking puzzled, and said, “It’s a Father Carteret. He begged me to let him talk to you. What should I tell him?”

“Never mind. I’ll talk to him.”

He picked it up in the foyer, where the phone was audio-only. “Father Carteret? Jim Harker speaking.”

“Hello there, Jim.” Carteret sounded troubled. “I-I guess you meant what you said, that day you saw me. It’s all over the papers.”

“I know. Some knucklehead sprang the thing prematurely, and we’re stuck with it now.”

“I thought I’d let you know that ecclesiastic circles are in a dither,” Carteret said. “The Archbishop’s been on the phone to Rome half the day.”

Harker’s throat tightened. “Any news?”

“Afraid so. The Vatican has issued a hands-off order: no Catholic is to go near your process in any way whatever until the Church has had ample time to explore the implications. Which means a few months or a few centuries; there’s no telling.”

“So it’s a condemnation, then?”

“Pretty much so,” Carteret agreed softly. “Until it’s determined whether or not reanimation is sinful, no Catholic can let a member of his family be reanimated-or even work in your laboratories. I hope everything works out for you, Jim. There’s nothing you can do now but stick to your guns, is there?”

“No,” Harker said. “I guess not.”

He thanked the priest for the advance information and hung up. Storm-clouds were beginning to gather already. His earlier mood of gloom and desperation had washed away, he found, much to his surprise.

He knew why. The battle had been joined. No more behind-the-scenes skulking; he was out in the open as the standard-bearer of Beller Labs. It promised to be a rough fight, but that didn’t scare him.

“This is my second chance,” he said to Lois.

She smiled palely. “I don’t understand, Jim.”

“I was elected Governor of New York on a reform platform that nobody in the party organization took seriously except me. I waded in and started to make reforms, and I got my teeth rammed down my

throat for it. Okay. I lost Round One. But now I'm in the thick of the fight again, fighting against ignorance and fear and hysteria. Maybe I'll lose again-but at least I'll have tried."

She touched his arm, almost timidly. Harker realized that he had never really seen into his wife before: seen the contradictions in her, the caution, the timidity, and the core of toughness that was there too.

"This time you'll win, Jim," she said simply.

It didn't look that way in the morning.

THURMAN SPEARHEADS REANIMATION INQUIRY, the Times announced, and the story revealed that Senator Clyde Thurman (N-L, N.Y.) had urged immediate Congressional investigation of the claims of Beller Research Laboratories, and from the tone of Thurman's statements it was obvious that he was hostile to the whole idea of reanimation. "Sinful . . . possibly a menace to the fabric of society. . . ." were two of the terms quoted in the newspaper.

The Times also printed a full page of extracts from editorials of other newspapers throughout the country, plus a few comments from overseas papers that had arrived in time for the early editions.

The prevailing newspaper sentiment was one of caution. The East Coast papers generally suggested that careful scrutiny be applied to the alleged statements of Beller Labs before such a process be used on any wide scale. The Far West papers called for immediate scientific study of the Beller achievement, and most of them implied that it would be a tremendous boon to humanity if the claims were found to be true.

The Midwest papers, though, took a different approach, in general. The Chicago Tribune declared: "We fear that this new advance of science may instead be a step backward, that it may sound the trumpet-call for the decline of civilization as we know it. A society without the fear of death is one without the fear of God"-and so on for nearly a full column.

The overseas notices were mixed: the Manchester Guardian offered cautious approval, the London Daily Mirror ringing condemnation. From France came puzzled admiration for American scientific prowess; the Germans applauded the discovery, while no word was forthcoming from Russia at the moment. The Vatican statement was about what Car-teret had predicted it would be.

He reached the Litchfield headquarters about quarter past ten that morning. There was the usual gaggle of newsmen cluttering up the highway, even though the skies held a definite threat of rain. However someone had had enough sense to rope off the approach to the laboratory grounds, and so he had no trouble getting past the gauntlet of reporters and into the area.

Raymond and Lurie were in the office when Harker got there. They had a huge pile of newspapers spread out all over the floor.

"Makes interesting reading," Harker said amiably.

Raymond looked up. "We never expected this, Jim. We never expected anything like this."

Harker shrugged. "Death is the most important word in the language, right after birth. What comes in between is immaterial; everybody goes through his days remembering that all his life is just a preparation for the moment of his death. You've changed all that. Did you expect the world to take it calmly?"

Lurie said, "Show him the letters, Mart."

Raymond sprang to his feet and shoved a thick file-folder at Harker. "Take a look at these, will you? It's enough to break your heart."

"They come in truckloads," Lurie said. "The Litchfield postmaster is running hourly deliveries down to us because he doesn't have room for the stuff up there."

Harker reached into the folder and pulled out a letter at random. It was written painstakingly by hand on blue-lined yellow paper. He read it.

"Dear Sirs,

You will probably throw this letter in the waste-basket but I beg you to consider it sincerely. My wife age 29 and the mother of our four children is sick in the Hospital with cancer and the Dr. says she will not live more than 1 more week.

We have all been praying for her but so far she shows no sign of getting well and does not recognize us. I read of your miracle discovery in this morning's paper and hope now you can bring my Lucy back to life when she is gone. I enclose a self-addressed envelope so you can let me know if such would be possible, I will immediately upon her death bring her to you so you can give her back to me. I speak for our children Charles age 6 Peggy age 4 Clara age almost 3 and Betsy age fourteen months. May God bless all of you and keep you from suffering what I have been suffering, and I will live in hope of hearing from you.

Yours gratefully,

Charles Mikkelsen

R.F.D. * * *1, Delaware, Minne.

Harker put the letter down, feeling a strange sense of bitter compassion. He said nothing.

Raymond said, "We have hundreds like that. Some of the damndest things, too. People with relatives dead ten years want to dig them up and bring them to us."

Harker shook his head. "There's no chance you can help any of these people? How about this woman?"

"The cancer one? Not a chance. If it's as bad as he says it is, the malignancy has probably metastasized right up and down her body by now. Maybe we could bring her back to life, but we couldn't keep her alive afterward."

"I see. How about other diseases?"

Raymond shrugged. "If the organic damage is beyond repair, we can't do a thing. But if it's repairable, you can figure a good chance of success. Take a patient with cardiac tissue scarred by repeated attacks. One more attack will finish him -and so would any operation to correct the condition. But now we can 'kill' him ourselves, install an artificial heart, and reanimate. He could live another thirty years that way."

"In other words--"

The phone rang. Raymond swivelled around and scooped it lightly off its cradle without activating the

video. He frowned, then said, “Yes. Yes. I get you. No, we won’t make any such concessions. Go ahead, then. Sue, if you like. We’ll countersue.”

He hung up.

“What the blazes was that?” Harker demanded.

“Do you know a lawyer named Phil Gerhardt?”

Harker thought for a moment, then said, “Sure. He’s a flashy lawsuit man, about as honest as snow in the Sahara. What about him?”

“He just called,” Raymond said, scratching the lobe of one ear thoughtfully. “Seems he’s representing Mitchison and Klaus. They got their dismissal notices and they’re suing for a million bucks plus control of the Labs. Isn’t that lovely?”

Chapter X

BARKER LOOKED up the phone number of Gerhardt’s New York office, called, and spoke briefly with the lawyer. It was not a very pleasant conversation. Gerhardt seemed almost offensively bubbling with confidence, gloating as he informed Harker that it was only a matter of days before the court tossed Raymond and Harker out of control of Beller Labs and reinstated Klaus and Mitchison. No, Harker was told, he would not be given the present whereabouts of the two dismissed employees. And yes, the suit had already been filed—control of the labs and \$1,000,000 in punitive damages.

“Okay,” Harker said. “I’ll prepare a counter-suit against your clients on grounds of malfeasance, insubordination, and half a dozen other things. I don’t mind fighting, Gerhardt.”

He hung up. After a moment’s thought he pulled a sheet of notepaper from a desk drawer and started to jot down notes for the counteroffensive. This was an additional nuisance; things grew more complicated by the moment.

And Gerhardt was a prominent member of the American-Conservative Party’s national committee. Harker could see the battle-lines beginning to form—with Klaus and Mitchison, Gerhardt, the American-Conservatives, the organized churches, Jonathan Bryant, and Senator Thurman on one side, and, at the moment, nobody but Harker, Raymond, and the staff of Beller Labs on the other.

During the day tension rose at the Litchfield headquarters. The phone rang constantly; from time to time the mail-truck arrived with more letters, and Harker found it necessary to clear out one of the less important lab rooms to store them.

“Have a couple of men start going through them,” he told Lurie. The gangling biologist had slipped easily into the role of messenger-boy and general go-between. “Have all the letters pleading for revivification of long-dead relatives burned immediately. Likewise the ones asking for miracles we can’t perform, like that cancer business.”

“How about the abusive ones?”

“Save those,” Harker said. “It helps to know who our enemies are.”

The afternoon papers again devoted most of their frontpage space to the news, and the Times in addition

ran a well-handled four-page symposium in which many noted scientists discussed the entire concept of reanimation with varying degrees of insight. Harker skimmed through it rapidly and paled when he came across a comment by Dr. Louis F. Santangelo of Johns Hopkins. He read it aloud to Raymond:

“There is the distinct possibility that death causes Irremediable damage to the brain. So far the Better researchers have been extremely silent on the subject of the mental aftereffects of reanimation. We must consider the chance that the process may produce living but mindless bodies-in short, walking corpses, or the zombies of legend.”

Raymond looked up, troubled. “Santangelo’s a brain surgeon, and a good one. Too damn good, Jim. He’s smack on the nose.”

Harker shook his head. “I don’t like this for two reasons. One is that it happens to be accurate; two is that it puts the ‘zombie’ stigma again, this time thanks to a reputable scientist.” He reached for a fresh sheet of notepaper. “Mart, give me the figures on human reanimations so far, will you?”

“To date seventy-one attempts. Successful resuscitation in sixty-seven cases.”

“Uh-huh. And how many of your sixty-seven suffered no mental aftereffects?”

“Sixty-one,” Raymond said.

“Which leaves six zombies.” Harker felt a sudden chill. The frenzy of the first few days of publicity had left him no time to discover some of the vital information about the laboratory. “What did you do with the six?”

“What could we do? We chloroformed them and returned them to the source. It was the merciful thing to do- and it’s no crime to kill a man who’s already been pronounced dead.”

“Where’d you get these seventy-one?”

Raymond looked evasive. “Locally. We got a few from a hospital in Jersey City. That’s where we got the man you saw revived. Some came from auto accidents in the neighborhood. Medical supply houses, too. Three of the bodies were of staff-men at the labs who died naturally.”

“And where are the sixty-one successful revivees?” Harker asked.

“It’s all in the records. Twelve of them are in hospitals, recuperating. Death really jolts the nervous system, you know. It takes two or three months to make a full recovery. Twenty have returned to normal life. Six of these don’t even know they were dead, incidentally. We keep careful watch over them.”

“How about the rest?”

“The recent ones are still on the premises, in Lab B. I guess I didn’t get a chance to show you the ward.”

“I guess not,” Harker said wryly. “Well, we’re going to have to issue a general statement on your experiments so far. Get Vogel and Smathers to write it up, and I’ll revise it into releaseable form. Tell them not to say anything about the six idiots, but it’s okay to mention the fact that four of the cadavers couldn’t be revived.”

* * *

Vogel delivered the first draft of the statistical summary about one-thirty that afternoon. Harker read it through once, made a couple of changes, and typed it out. He stressed the fact that many of the reanimatees had returned to normal life. He did not mention that six of the revivals had been unsuccessful, and that the patient had had to be destroyed.

The release was mimeographed and was ready in time for his daily three-o'clock press conference. He handed out the sheets and waited.

Times said, "Could we have the names of the successful revivifications?"

"Flatly impossible. This is to protect them, naturally. They still aren't in perfect health."

"When was the first successful reanimation?" asked Associated Press.

Harker glanced at Raymond, who said, "Exactly ten months ago. To be exact, it was at 3:30 in the afternoon on Tuesday July 17 of last year. Dr. Vogel operated."

"What was the name of the patient?" United Press shot out quickly.

Harker laughed. "Good try, but no score. Patients' names will not be revealed."

"How many unsuccessful attempts were there before the July 17 success?" Times wanted to know.

"I don't have the exact figure," Harker said, because Raymond had neglected to give it to him. "Mart, what would you say? About--"

He hesitated. Raymond caught the hint and said, "I'd estimate approximately thirty attempts over a period of two years."

"And there have been seventy-one tries since then?" Transcontinental TV said.

"Right. With sixty-seven reanimations."

"All completely successful?" the sharp Times man said.

Harker looked vague. "Varying degrees of success," he replied ambiguously.

"Would you care to elaborate on that, Mr. Harker?"

"Not just now."

Video cameras recorded his statement. He was used to the televised press-conference, from long experience in public office, and he maintained a perfectly guileless expression while uttering the evasion.

The Scripps-Howard-Cauldwell man said, "As you know, Senator Thurman is pressing for a detailed Senate investigation of your laboratory. Would you welcome such an investigation?"

"If it's conducted fairly and without prejudice," Harker said, "of course we'd welcome it. We're not trying to fool anyone. We've discovered something wonderful and we want the people of the world to

share in it.”

“How do you feel about the American-Conservative party stand on reanimation?” Times asked.

“I wasn’t aware there was one.”

“They issued a statement at noon today. It implies that the National-Liberal Party is going to exploit the discovery for its own personal advantage. They point to your presence as legal adviser as proof of that.”

Harker smiled, but beneath the smile was sudden bitterness.

So it would be political capital too? He said, “This comes as a big surprise to me. I don’t have any formal affiliation with the National-Liberals, though of course I generally support their program. I’m not even a member of the national committee. And we’ve received no encouragement or anything else from them.”

“But you were a former Nat-Lib governor, Mr. Harker. Doesn’t that make you a major figure in the party hierarchy?” Scripps-Howard-Cauldwell asked.

It was a loaded question. Harker mopped the sweat from his forehead, glared straight into the eye of the video camera, and said, “I still vote Nat-Lib, if that’s what you mean. But ex-governors are just ex-governors, period.”

“How about the claim of Cal Mitchison and David Klaus that there have been unethical practices in this lab?” Transcontinental TV asked slyly.

Harker said, “I hardly think that’s worth talking about. Mitchison and Klaus are former employees who didn’t perform competently and who were discharged. It’s as simple as that.”

“You were the lawyer for the late Richard Bryant,” said the Times man. “Did you make any attempts to have Mr. Bryant resuscitated?”

“I did not. The family issued a statement expressing no desire to have Mr. Bryant revived, and at no time did anyone here suggest that he should be. The movement to revive Richard Bryant was strictly unofficial.”

Harker was starting to weary under the barrage of questions. He looked at his watch; the half-hour he allotted to these conferences had elapsed. He felt as if he were wrung dry.

“I’ll have to ask you to cut it short now,” he said. “Unless there are any other very urgent questions, we’ll stop here.”

Times said, “One question, Mr. Harker. Have any reanimations taken place since the announcement of the process yesterday morning?”

Harker shook his head. “The answer is no. Until the legal status of reanimation is settled, we’re not proceeding with further experiments on human beings”-he regretted the unfortunate word experiments as soon as it passed his lips, but by then it was too late-“although we’re continuing with other phases of our research. We’ve been bombarded with requests for reanimations, but we don’t intend to attempt any.

Obviously a legal decision on the validity of our process is needed first. The death-certificate laws, for

instance; they'll have to be considered. And a host of other things. Well, gentlemen, I think our time is just about up."

The fearsome blaze of the video cameras died away, and the newsmen packed up their pocket recorders and left. Marker sank down wearily behind the desk and looked at Mart Raymond.

The scientist smiled admiringly. "Jim, I don't know how you do it. Stand up to those eagles, I mean. The pressure doesn't let up for a second."

"I'm used to it," Harker said with forced casualness. His stomach felt knotted, tight; his throat was dry and seemed to be covered with hundreds of small blisters. His legs, under the desk, quivered of their own volition.

Gradually, as the minutes passed, he recovered his poise. The press-conference had been a sort of purgative; he had put forth all the thoughts that had been boiling within him during the day.

The battle, he saw now, would be fought on a number of fronts-but the essential standpoint was a politico-legal one. They had to secure Congressional approval for the process. And they had to win friends and influence people in a hurry, before the various splintered opponents of reanimation, the Beller Labs, and James Harker could join forces and provide a united front.

What would happen if reanimation lost? No doubt the technique would survive, no matter what the legal verdict was. But it would become an undercover, furtive activity, as abortion had been before the permissive laws of the late twentieth century. And undercover meant dangerous, illegal equated with deadly. The tools of medicine are always deadly in unskilled hands.

No doubt about it, the fight was on. It was, thought Harker, the old, old struggle-the battle to give humanity something it craved, despite the obstacles provided by fear, greed, and ignorance. The essential fact-that of the conquest of death-could easily be clouded over by half-truths, distortions, and the well-meant fanaticism of self-righteous pressure groups.

I fought this fight once before, Harker thought. And I let myself be beaten. Em this time Ym not giving up. There's too much at stake.

Chapter XI

THE NEXT morning-Wednesday-Harker found a neatly typed note sitting on his desk when he reached his office in Dormitory A. It was from Raymond. It said simply, "We got a call from Washington at 0800. Investigating committee headed by Thurman is on its way north to snoop around the lab. They're arriving noon today."

Methodically Harker destroyed the note and turned his attention to the morning papers. He felt tense, but not unduly so; the Senatorial investigation could be the beginning of success in their campaign, and in any event it would put an end to these days of doubt. He would know at least how the reanimation project stood in the eyes of the Senate.

On this, the third morning of the Era of Reanimation, almost the entire front page of every paper was given over to a discussion of the subject. His press conference had been given a great deal of space, and as usual the Times had printed the full text. He read the other articles with a queasy sense of expanding confusion.

MANHATTAN-The late Richard Bryant was cremated here today despite a demonstration urging his reanimation. At least fifty banner-waving demonstrators attempted to interfere with the ceremony, but police maintained order.

“We are sure Father would never have approved of such an awakening” declared Jonathan Bryant, 42, oldest son of the space hero-

MONTREAL (UP)-A mob destroyed the home and office of Dr. Joseph Pronovost this afternoon after he refused to resuscitate a 9-year-old girl who had died the night before. Dr. Pronovost, 58, a general practitioner, claimed to have no knowledge of the Beller reanimation technique announced Monday. Despite his statement, relatives of Nancy St. Leger, a victim of leukemia, broke into the doctor’s home and attacked him.

Dr. Pronovost was reported to be in good condition at Sacred Heart Hospital-

CORPUS CHRISTI, Tex. (AP)-Four men and two women suffered injuries here this evening as a result of a rumor that a Beller reanimation was taking place at a local funeral home.

More than thirty persons entered the Burr Funeral Parlors in an attempt to prevent the reanimation. A funeral service was in progress, and the injuries resulted when guests turned back the intruders. The funeral continued as scheduled after the disturbance.

There were other similar stories elsewhere in the newspapers: violence on both sides of the controversy, angry and ill-informed people trying to prevent or to bring about re-animations. Harker gloomily put the papers aside.

Dark forces were being unleashed. He suspected there was violence yet to come. The fabric of society had been unbound; anything might happen now.

At twenty minutes to twelve, Benedict Lurie stuck his head in Barker’s door and said, “A helicopter full of senators just landed outside. Raymond’s talking to them right now.”

“How many?”

Lurie shrugged. “There were ten in the copter. I couldn’t tell you how many are senators.”

“I’ll be right out,” Harker said.

He filed away the newspapers, cleaned his desk, and selfconsciously straightened his clothing before he went outside. A little group stood in the clearing formed by the area between the three main buildings. Harker saw Mart Raymond,

Vogel, Barchet, and Dr. Smathers, and they were talking to- among others-Senator Clyde Thurman.

Harker joined them. Thurman was the first to notice him; he stared at Harker glintingly and rumbled, “Ah-Harker. Hello, there.”

“How are you, Senator?”

“Never better. Harker, you know these men? Senator Brewster of Iowa, Vorys of South Carolina, Dixon of Wyoming, Westmore of California. Gentlemen, you know Mr. Harker-former Governor of

New York, of course.”

Harker shook hands all around. He knew most of the senators at least casually; Dixon and Westmore represented the Far West branch of the Nat-Libs, while Brewster and Vorys were arch-Conservatives.

Thurman was the chairman of the committee, and would have the deciding vote in case of a tie. Harker felt apprehensive of that. The venerable senator was ostensibly a Nat-Lib; at least he was elected every six years under that label. But in the past decade he had been trending increasingly toward conservative ways of thinking, and away from the party he had helped to found forty years earlier, in the great political upheaval and reshuffling of the 1990's.

Each of the senators was accompanied by a staff assistant. That made ten in all.

Thurman said, “The hearings will begin next week, Mr. Harker. We're here for a preliminary look-see, you understand.”

“Of course.” Harker glanced at Raymond and said, “Mart, have you been introduced?”

Raymond nodded.

Harker went on, “Mr. Raymond is the director of the labs. He'll conduct you wherever you would like to go, on the premises.”

Raymond looked worried; Harker had seen the faint harried expression growing on the dapper lab director's face in the past few days. It troubled Harker. Raymond was a good organizer, a level-headed scientist-but he was showing alarming signs of crumbling under the sudden pressure brought about by Mitchison's treasonous press-release.

Harker edged close to him and murmured, “What's on the schedule for the senators?”

Through tight lips Raymond replied, “The main event's a cadaver.”

“You're going to risk it? “

Raymond shrugged. Worry-lines tightened his cheeks. “We'll have to do it sooner or later. Why not now? “

Marker made no reply. Attempting a human reanimation in front of the senators was a long-shot gamble, even with odds of five to one in favor of success.

If the experiment succeeded, they had gained very little; if it failed, they had lost everything right at the start. The odds of five to one were highly deceptive. But Harker decided to go along with Raymond, just this one time.

He said, “Shall we begin our tour, gentlemen?”

* * *

Raymond had evidently been working frantically all morning to set things up. The labs were spotlessly clean, everything well-ordered and well-dusted. The researchers had received their instructions, too; every one of them looked Constructively Busy, doing something scientific-looking no matter how trivial.

In reality, most of them spent a good half their time staring into space, making doodles on scrap paper, or thumbing through textbooks-but senators could never be expected to believe that such idle acts were part of genuine scientific research.

The tour began with a rapid and exhausting general survey of the labs; Raymond served as guide, giving forth bristling scientific terminology at every possible opportunity. The senators looked impressed.

The senators also looked increasingly weary-all except Thurman, who strode along next to Raymond and Harker and put forth a never-ending string of questions, some of them pointless and others embarrassingly perceptive.

As he struggled to keep pace with Thurman, Harker felt a surge of new admiration for the Nat-Lib patriarch. Thurman was a ruggedly built man, well over six feet tall and still erect of bearing; his face was a craggy affair dominated by massive snowy-white eyebrows and a thatch of silver hair, and his voice was a commanding rumble.

It was Thurman who had completed the destruction of the old Democratic and Republican parties by serving as organizer for the National-Liberal Party that carried the 1990 congressional elections; he had then persuaded the incumbent President Morrison to run for re-election on the Nat-Lib, rather than Democratic ticket, in '92-and, by '94, the obsolete political parties had vanished, replaced by a more logical alignment of liberal against conservative.

Now, Harker thought, the party lines were blurring again; perhaps it was an inevitable force at work. There were liberals in the American-Conservatives, and some early Nat-Libs, especially Thurman, were with increasing regularity voting for Conservative-sponsored measures. Perhaps in another fifty years' time a further reorganization would be needed; it seemed to be necessary about once a century, judging by past performance.

As they explored the enzyme lab and watched the big centrifuge at work in the serotonin room, Harker wondered how he stood with Thurman now. Fifteen years ago, he had virtually been a son to the senator, serving for a while as his private secretary before being tapped for prominence in the New York Nat-Lib organization. Thurman had guided him up through the Mayoralty, saw him into the governor's mansion in Albany-and then, when the party decided to ostracize him, Thurman had not said a word in his defense. It was more than a year since he had spoken to the veteran legislator.

"These dogs," Senator Vorys said as Raymond and Vogel demonstrated reanimation on a pair of spaniels-"they feel no pain?" Vorys was a waspish, bald little man, with seemingly a lifetime tenure as American-Conservative Senator from South Carolina.

"Absolutely none," Raymond assured him.

"Animal experiments are legal," remarked Senator West-more, the Californian Nat-Lib. "No grounds for objecting there."

"I wasn't objecting," snapped Vorys. "Merely inquiring."

Harker smiled to himself.

The dogs were cleared away in due time; Harker saw the tension-lines reassert themselves on Raymond's face, and he knew the main event was about to begin.

When Raymond spoke, his voice was thin and strained. “Gentlemen, I know you’ve come here for one main purpose -to see if human life can be restored. The time has come for us to demonstrate our technique.”

Raymond licked his lips. Tension mounted in the lab room. The senators stirred in anticipation; the five staff men scribbled notes furiously. Harker felt dry fingers clutching at his windpipe. It was a feeling he remembered having felt on two election nights, at that moment just after the polls had closed-when, with the die irretrievably cast, there was nothing to do but wait until the electronic counters had done their job and announced the winner.

He waited now. Two white-smocked assistants rolled in an operating-table on which a covered cadaver lay.

In a harsh, edgy voice Raymond said, “We secure most of our experimental cadavers from local hospitals. We have permits for this. The body here is approximately the one hundredth we have used in our work, and the seventy-second since the first successful reanimation.”

The covers were peeled back. Harker flinched slightly; the body was that of a boy of about twelve or thirteen, and it was not a pretty sight.

“This boy drowned late yesterday afternoon in a nearby lake,” Raymond said hoarsely. “All conventional methods of resuscitation were tried without success.”

“You mean artificial respiration, heart massage, and things like that?” Senator Dixon said.

“Yes. The boy was worked over for nearly eight hours, and pronounced dead early this morning. When I phoned the hospital to arrange for a demonstration specimen for you gentlemen, I was allowed to speak to the boy’s father, who gave permission for this experiment.”

Five mimirecorders on five secretarial wrists drank in Raymond’s words. Harker felt growing anxiety; still, he had to admit that using a boy for the experiment was a good touch -if the experiment worked.

He was not afraid of total failure; that could always be explained away and accepted tolerantly. It was the one-out-of-six chance that frightened him, the worse-than-failure of restoring the boy’s body and not his mind.

Raymond nodded to Vogel, who again was presiding over the reanimation. The bearded surgeon clamped the electrodes to the boy’s temples and wrists, and lowered the great hooded bulk of the reanimator.

“The initial attack will come simultaneously through the electrodes and through hormone injections,” Raymond said droningly. “Heart massage will follow, as well as artificial operation of the lungs. Keep your eyes on these instruments; they measure heartbeat, respiration, and the electrical activity of the brain.”

The room was terribly silent. Vogel moved swiftly and smoothly, confidently, without tension. He threw three switches. The archaic light-bulbs overhead dimmed slightly at the instant of power-drain.

Dribbles of sweat rolled down Marker’s face. The five senators watched eagerly; he wondered what they were thinking now, how they were reacting as electrical currents rippled through a dead brain and hormones raced through a stilled bloodstream.

The boy was dwarfed by the hovering instrument that simultaneously clung to his exposed heart, pumped his lungs, jolted his brain, fed awakening substances to his blood. The needles on the indicator gauges began to flicker gently.

Harker felt little of the earlier revulsion this sight had caused in him. Now he stared at the slim thin-limbed body of the boy, his skin mottled with the blue imprint of asphyxiation, and waited for the miracle to take place.

Minutes passed. Once Thurman coughed and it was like a physical blow. Needles rose on dials, wavered, fell back as Vogel decreased power, stepped forward again as the delicate fingers nudged the rheostat a few fractions of an inch upward.

“Watch the EEG indicator,” Vogel murmured.

The needle was tracing out an increasingly more agitated line. The calmness of sleep was ending.

“Respiration approaching normal. I’m shutting off the lung manipulators.”

The heart-pump followed. Frowning, Vogel moistened his lips and yanked down on toggle-switches, finally drawing the main rheostat back to point zero.

“Artificial controls are withdrawn,” Vogel said. “The life-process continues.”

The boy lived. Raymond said quietly to Harker, “The EEG patterns are normal ones. The boy’s mind is okay. We did it.”

We did it. Harker felt a sharp sense of triumph, as if he personally had accomplished something. The senators would have to react favorably to something like this, he thought.

He glanced at Thurman. The old man was gray-faced, disturbed. Harker said, quietly, “Well, Senator? You’ve just seen a miracle.”

He wasn’t prepared for the reply, when it came. Thurman shook his great head slowly from side to side like a dying bison and said, “Jim, this is nightmarish. In the name of all that’s good, boy, why did you get mixed up in it?”

Chapter XII

TWO HOURS later, the Senate committee had gone, but the gloom of their presence still hovered darkly over Harker.

A delayed reaction having nothing to do with the visit of the senators had struck him. The old wounds of that day at the beach were open once again; once again he huddled Eva’s cold little form against his.

Somewhere else on the laboratory grounds, surgeons were working over a twelve-year-old boy, stitching together the surgical apertures that had been made to permit resuscitation. By tomorrow, the boy would be out of anesthesia. In a few weeks, he would be walking around, healthy, recalled to life after twenty hours of death.

Eva had drowned. She had not been saved.

“I don’t understand it,” Mart Raymond exclaimed vehemently. “It just doesn’t make sense.”

Drawn for a moment from his painful memories, Harker said, “What doesn’t make sense?”

“Thurman. How can he stand there and watch a dead boy come to life, and end up twice as solid against us as he was before?”

Harker shrugged. “I wish I knew. I thought we won them over with that show-until Thurman spoke up. The old fossil is fogged up with age, I guess. He’s got some preconceived idea that it’s immoral to bring back the dead, and having it done right in front of him just solidified his thinking.”

The strain was showing on Raymond, Harker saw. His gray eyes were red-rimmed and bleary; his face had grown thin. He had given up a career in medical research to handle the job of running Beller Labs-and perhaps he was regretting that, now.

He said, “Thurman is supposed to be a Nat-Lib. I could understand those two Conservatives turning up their noses, but I thought-“

“Yeah. So did I. But Thurman’s an old man.”

“The Conservatives came out against reanimation today, didn’t they? Doesn’t he realize he’s helping the opposition if he fights us?”

“Maybe he doesn’t think of them as opposition any more,” Harker said. “He’s eighty-eight years old. He may look alert and bright-eyed, but that’s no guarantee against senility.”

“If he votes against us,” Raymond said, “we’re cooked. How can we win him over?”

“The hearings begin next Monday. We’ve got four days to figure out a line of attack. Maybe the old buzzard will die before Monday.” Harker reddened slightly as he spoke the words; the thought of a universe without Clyde Thurman in it was a mind-shaking concept for him.

He looked at his watch. Five minutes to three. Right on the button, Lurie stuck his head in and said, “Time for the press conference, Jim.”

Leadly Harker nodded. “Okay. Send them in, Lurie.”

* * *

He ran through what he had to say in less than half an hour. He told them that the senatorial committee had been there and had- watched the successful reanimation of a twelve-year-old boy. He expressed a hope that the demonstration had impressed the senators favorably, and did not mention that Thurman’s remarks implied a negative reaction.

There was a brief session of sporadic questions; then Harker pleaded exhaustion and hustled the newsmen out. He felt tremendously weary, but at the same time there was the excitement of knowing he was in a fight, and a tough fight.

He phoned Lois and said he would be home in time for dinner. She was being cooperative beyond the call of wifely duty, he thought. He was hardly ever home these days, and when he did show up at

Larchmont he was a pale, exhausted ghost of himself, with little energy left over for family life.

The evening papers came in about half past four. Marker had been preparing a plan of attack for the Senate hearings the next week; he looked up when Lurie silently dropped the stack on his desk.

There was a statement from Mitchison and Klaus in most of the papers, to the effect that the Beller Laboratories were in the hands of-approximately-power-hungry madmen, and that they should be stripped of control immediately.

“I wonder what they hope to gain by that?” Raymond asked. “Even if they do succeed in getting control of the labs, they’ll have thoroughly loused up the whole idea of reani-mation.”

Harker nodded. “We’ll shut them up soon enough. I spoke to Gerhardt this morning and he said the hearing’s coming up soon.”

“How about this other thing you’re involved with? The Bryant case. When’s the hearing on that?”

“Tomorrow,” Harker said. “I’ll be tied up with that all day, I guess. But then I’ll be free to devote full time here.”

He skimmed through some of the other papers. More news of mob disturbance; this business of mobbing physicians because they either allegedly had been practicing reanimation or had refused to reanimate some newly-dead person was becoming disturbingly more frequent. There were three instances of it in the late editions-in Idaho, Missouri, and Louisiana. The mobs acted with fine impartiality, rioting on both sides of the question. Harker brooded for a while over that.

The editorial pages universally hailed the decision of the Senate to hold an immediate investigation; the papers seemed divided here too, the Conservative ones urging suppression of reanimation and the Nat-Lib papers pleading for sane consideration and government control.

By now everyone was getting into the act: philosophers, painters, athletes, ministers of foreign countries, were all quoted copiously pro and con reanimation. The Russians at last were heard from: Georgi Aksakov, President-General of the Federated Socialist States, sent a note of congratulations to President McComber on the American conquest of death, and extended hope that America would follow the time-honored custom of sharing its scientific developments with the other nations of the world.

By now word had reached the settlements on the Moon and under the Mars Dome, too; by wire came messages of enthusiasm from the two international colonies. It was only to be expected, Harker thought, that the space colonists would welcome the breakthrough with joy. There was no breeding-ground for hysterical anti-scientific reaction on an airless world where only scientific miracles daily insured survival.

It was fast becoming a contest between darkness and light, between education and ignorance-a contest complicated by the presence of educated, intelligent, utterly sincere fanatics in the camp of the opposition.

“We must have regard for the soul,” declared the spokesman for the Archbishop of Canterbury. “A limitation has been placed on the term of man’s life. We must proceed with care when we destroy a limitation of God.”

It was, Harker had to admit, a reasonable attitude- granted a framework of beliefs which he and much of the rest of the world did not share.

“The United States has always been the world pioneer,” declared Senator Marshall of Alabama, the elder statesman of the American-Conservatives. “We never show fear as we approach the boundary between the known and the unknown. But we must exert caution in this new step, and take care lest we move recklessly forward and unleash forces which can destroy the bonds of society.”

The medical societies had statements, too-sound ones. “The problem,” declared an A.M.A. spokesman, “is essentially a soul-searing one. If the Beller process is valid, every physician will have the power to return life to the dead. Shall he make use of this power whenever he can? Or will there be the danger of giving life indiscriminately, to those perhaps who do not merit a reprieve? What will happen if a dead man’s family refuses the right of reanimation? Can the physician proceed? And is he guilty of murder if he does not? Who will make the decisions? An entirely new code of medical ethics must be developed before any wide scale practice of reanimation can be permitted.”

These were sound viewpoints, and Harker had no issue with them. But there were other, more hysterical voices clamoring in the newspapers, and hundreds of vituperous letters had already descended on the Litchfield post office as well.

People who feared death feared reanimation more. There were those who assumed that reanimation might become the property of an aristocracy that would perpetuate itself over and over, while leaving the common people to death. There were those who dreaded the return to life of a loved one, who were unwilling to face again someone who had been “beyond” and returned.

Fear and ignorance, ignorance and fear. Harker read the letters in the newspapers, and his head swam. The ones received direct were even worse.

. . . you are violating the command of God brought on us by Adam’s fall, Harker. But you will rot in Hell for it. . . .

. . . you Harker and Raymond and the others there should have been strangled in your cribs. Bringing the dead back from the grave is disgusting. You will fill the world with a race of undead zombies. . . .

. . . . I know what it is to have a loved one die, do you? (Yes, Harker thought.) But I would not want to touch the lips of one who was dead. . . .

Harker paused a moment in thought as he read that last letter, wondering how he would feel had Eva been brought back to him there on the beach. He had assumed that he would welcome the idea, but now he remembered Lois’ doubtful answer to the question, and it seemed to him that he himself was doubtful too now. Would he be able to embrace a daughter who had died and had been reanimated. Could he-He shook his head in bitter self-contempt. Ym overtired, he thought. All this superstitious muck is contagious. The life process stops, it starts again-and is anything lost? Wake up, Harker. Of course you’d have hugged Eva if she had been brought back to life.

It had been a long day. He riffled through a few more letters, but the emotional impact was too great for him to bear after all the other conflicting events of the day. It was not easy to read letters from people who had pleaded for the re-animation of a loved one on Monday, and who now wrote bitterly to say that the period of grace had passed, and by their silence the reanimators had become murderers.

.... my fiancee Joan who was seventeen and electrocuted in a kitchen accident Sunday night could have been saved if you had been willing. But three days have gone by and now she is forever gone. . . .

Even more hellish than watching the slow ebb of life from a dying person, Harker thought, must be the wait while the hours pass after death, and the time for reanimadon passes with them. New torments had been loosed upon the world, he saw. He felt like a man riding a tiger that grew larger with each day.

He picked up another one:

.... you may remember I mentioned my wife mother of our four children who was close to death from cancer. Well she died the night I wrote to you, and not having heard from you yet I suppose you can not help me in this matter. I understand revival must be done on day of death, since she has now been gone two days I am arranging, for her burial. Though I am unhappy and disappointed I do not hold bitterness in my heart against you, may God forgive you for having let Lucy die. . . .

Harker remembered that one: Mikkelsen, from Minnesota. The implied accusation of murder, cloaked as it was by the prayer for God's forgiveness, chilled him. He put the letters away, phoned across the lab to Raymond, and said he was going home for the day.

"Good luck with that hearing tomorrow," Raymond said.

"Thanks."

The air was clean and warm as he stepped outside; at five in the afternoon of an almost-summer day, the sun was still bright, the sky blue and curiously transparent. Harker tried to blot away the network of human suffering whose vortex he had apparently become; he drew in a deep breath, expanded his chest, swung his arms loosely at his sides.

A yellow dart crossed the sky and was gone; after it came the abrupt blurb of sound. It was a southbound rocket to Florida. No doubt it would be landing in Miami before he had reached his own home.

He remembered the legal fight when rocket service had been instituted on a commercial basis, almost thirty years ago. The jetlines had fought tooth and nail against introduction of rocket service; yet, today, both jets and rockets served the cause of transportation amicably enough.

There had been the Moon wrangle too, back in the trouble-wracked twentieth century. He had cut his legal teeth on the suits and countersuits; they were standard fare in every law-school. The Moon had been reached almost simultaneously by America and Russia in the early 1960's, during a period of international conflict and danger, The Socialist revolution in Russia in 1971 had ended the threat of atomic war, but even so it had not been until 1997 that the United States agreed to join forces with the Federated Socialist States in making the Moon base truly international in character.

There, too, forces of reaction had fought the merger on grounds that seemed to them just and necessary. They had been defeated, ultimately-and now, the Moon base and its newer companion on Mars were hailed as triumphs of the harmony of mankind.

Now reanimation. The old struggle was joined again. Harker told himself that the force of history was on his side, that ultimate victory would be his. But what sacrifices would be made, what campaigns fiercely fought, before then?

He reached his home at six-fifteen. Lois had the video set on, and even as he stood in the doorway the words of a newscaster drifted toward him:

“Senator Thurman of New York and four colleagues today visited the Seller Laboratories and witnessed an actual human reanimation which was successful. Senator Thurman later commented, and I quote, There is no doubt that a restoration of life took place. What is in doubt is whether this power is one that mankind should permit to be used, end quote. Senator Thurman will head a committee to study the implications of reanimation. Hearings begin Monday in Washington-“

Thurman was chairman, and Thurman had already indicated opposition. It was not a good omen. Harker kissed his wife wearily and said to Chris, “Get me something strong to drink, lad. I’ve had a tough day.”

Chapter XIII

THE HEADLINE the next morning, black against the faint green of the paper, was, THURMAN TO OPPOSE LEGALIZED REANIMATION. Harker read the story at breakfast; it seemed the veteran senator had had a chance to think things over, and his conclusion was that reanimation was unmitigatedly evil and should be suppressed.

Harker tried to pretend he had not seen it. It was a staggering setback; it negated any possible gains they might make at the hearing next week. With the vote of the tie breaking chairman already committed to their opposition, Harker thought, what chance did they stand?

He glanced quickly over the rest of the front page. Riot in Des Moines; accusation of reanimation leads to attack on doctor in Missouri. And-Harker nearly choked on his breakfast coffee-what was this?

RETURN TO LIFE A FAILURE PATIENT SUICIDES

New York-Police are searching the Hudson River this morning for the body of 58-year-old Wayne Janson, who allegedly jumped to his death from the lower level of the George Washington Bridge late last night. “Wayne was in a state of despondency since sub-nutting, to the Seller reanimation technique two months ago,” said Jonathan Bryant, of 312 W. 19thSt., a close friend of the dead man. “He suffered a stroke in February and placed himself in the hands of the Better people. I was notified of his death and reanimation early in March, but when he returned to Manhattan he seemed to be entirely changed. His whole personality had changed. He-

“Excuse me,” Harker muttered to his wife. Clutching the paper, he ran to the phone and tapped out Mart Raymond’s number.

“Mart? Jim. Have you seen this Wayne Janson thing in the paper?”

“What’s that?”

Harker rapidly read the article. Raymond was silent for a moment, then said, “Huh? Who does he think he’s kidding?”

“What do you mean?”

“We’ve never had anyone of that name here. Bryant’s obviously fabricating something.”

“I figured that when I saw his name in the article. You better check the records, though. We’ve got grounds for a suit if you’re right.”

“Jim, I tell you we’ve never carried out any reanimations on anyone named Wayne Janson. Bryant is

obviously trying to smear us.”

“Smear me,” Harker corrected. “But I guess it amounts to the same thing.”

“What are you going to do?”

“Nothing yet,” Harker said. “I’ll wait until the police find the body and then demand proof from Bryant.”

“But there is no body, Jim! It’s just a hoax!”

Grimly Harker said, “It may be a hoax, but I’m willing to bet there’s a body. Jonathan isn’t that foolish!”

* * *

The long delayed Richard Bryant will hearing took place at last at half past ten that morning, in the gray-walled, luminolite chambers of District Judge T. H. Auerbach. The affair was almost a farce; it lasted no more than twenty minutes.

Jonathan Bryant was not there. His sister Helen was the official representative of the Bryant children, and she explained curtly that Jonathan was “overcome with grief at the death of a very dear friend last night” and would not attend.

Six other Bryants were in court, all of them hungry for the old man’s millions. They had retained a lawyer named Martinson who briefly and concisely explained that the old man had not been in sound mind at the time of making the will, and that it was therefore invalid.

It was a flimsy stand, and Harker said so. He spoke for no more than ten minutes. Judge Auerbach smiled politely, said he had studied the briefs from both sides with care, and ruled in favor of upholding the will.

Just as simple as that. Helen Bryant tossed Harker a glance of molten hatred and flounced out, followed by her younger brothers and sisters. Auerbach leaned forward from his bench and said to Harker, “I’m glad that’s over with. One more delaying injunction-“

“There wouldn’t have been one, Tom. They just were waiting for old Bryant to kick off. Jonathan didn’t want to give him the satisfaction of winning while he was alive.”

Auerbach shrugged. “They really didn’t have a claim to the money. Were they just trying to make trouble?”

Harker nodded. “Trouble’s their specialty, Tom.”

“Well, you’re through with having trouble with the Bryants now, I guess.”

Harker shook his head slowly. “No,” he said. “Not by a long shot.”

* * *

He rode uptown from the courthouse and stopped off at his law-office for the first time in a week. The girls in the outer office stared at him strangely, as if he had undergone some frightening apotheosis and was no longer just the firm’s newest partner.

He crossed left and rapped on Bill Kelly's door. The plump lawyer smiled at him as he entered, but without much warmth.

"Morning, Jim. Long time no see."

"I've been busy."

"I know. I know all about it."

Harker ignored Kelly's tone and said, "I've just come from the Bryant hearing. Thought I'd let you know that it's over. Poof: fifteen minutes!"

"The will was upheld?"

"What else? It was just a case of wilful petty obstruction on the part of the Bryant family. They're mean, twisted people, Bill. They've lived all their lives in the shadow of one great man-Rick Bryant-and I guess they chose this time to show him and everyone else just what Great Big Important Persons they really were." He scowled.

There was a pained expression on Kelly's face that seemed to have nothing to do with the Bryant affair. Slowly Kelly said, "Jim, this completes all the current work you're doing here, isn't that right?"

Harker nodded. "I turned over the Fuller and Heidell cases to Portobello. That was to leave me clear for--"

"Yes. I know." Kelly's face reddened even more than normally, and he squirmed wretchedly in his inflated pneumatic desk-chair. "I've been following the papers, Jim. I've been following the whole thing."

"I warned you it was hot."

"I know. I didn't know how hot it was, though. Jim, this hurts me," Kelly said. "I'm going to ask a favor of you. It's a lousy thing to ask, because it shows I don't have guts or the courage of your convictions or something along those lines. But--"

Harker said, "I'll spare you the trouble of putting it into words. The answer is yes. If you think my presence on your firm letterhead will hurt the firm, Bill, I'll resign."

A look of gratitude appeared on Kelly's fleshy sweat-shiny face. "Jim, I want you to understand-that is-look here, I asked you to come in with me when your party booted you out, and don't think I didn't get my wrist slapped for it. But this reanimation thing is too big. I don't want to get associated with it in any way. And so-well it seemed to Portobello and Klein and me--"

"Sure, Bill." Harker had a sudden dizzying vision of himself standing at the rim of a bottomless abyss, but he heard his voice saying, calmly, rock-steady, "I'll draft a note informing you that I'm resigning because of the pressure of outside activities."

Hoarsely Kelly said, "Thanks, Jim. And if this thing blows over-if it all works out-we'll have a spot for you here. Don't forget that."

"I won't." Not even because you don't mean it, Harker thought. It wasn't possible for Kelly to mean it.

It was just a formal ritualistic statement, this implication that he could come back at a future time.

He was through here. Probably he was through with private law practice forever. Kelly was a brave and intelligent man, but Kelly had been afraid to keep the hot potato named James Harker on his letterhead any longer. No one else would welcome him either. Beller Labs was the straw to which he had to cling now.

He stood up.

“Okay, Bill. Glad we got everything cleared up. Just thought I’d tell you about the wrapup on the Bryant case. I’ll clear out my office next week.”

“No hurry about it. Oh-nearly forgot.” Kelly consulted a memo slip. “Leo Winstead’s office phoned here for you earlier today. The Governor wants you to call him back between one-thirty and three this afternoon.”

Harker frowned momentarily. Winstead? What does he want with me? He said to Kelly, “Thanks, Bill. And so long.”

* * *

He bought a noontime edition of the Star-Post and ate a gloomy little meal by himself in a nineteenth-floor automated restaurant overlooking the East River. He pushed the meal-selector buttons almost at random; the result was largely an assortment of cheap synthetics, but he hardly cared. He ate abstractedly, not looking at his food but at the increasingly more troubling news in the paper.

There was a new statement from Senator Thurman, more doggedly anti-reanimation than the last. Apparently Thur-man’s views on the subject mounted in vitriol-content in hourly increments; now he said that “reanimation is of dubious value in mitigating human sorrow-a crude and unsatisfactory process that robs life of dignity.” Evidently he had read about the Janson suicide. And speaking of that Yes. The body had been found and identified, according to a story at the bottom of Page One. Wayne Janson, 58, an unmarried industrialist. Listed as suicide; Jonathan Bryant identified body. Investigation now proceeding as a result of Bryant’s statement that Janson had recently undergone re-animation.

And a statement from David Klaus, too, evidently released by Mitchison: “The Janson case proves that the Beller technique can be a dangerous and destructive instrument in the wrong hands.” He recognized Mitchison’s blunt word-sense, the equating of technique and instrument.

At half past one he made his way to a public phonebooth, sealed himself in, snapped on the privacy-shield, and called the operator.

“I’d like to make a charge-account call to Albany.”

She took his name and home phone, assured him that the call would be billed to his account, and put him through to the Governor’s mansion. A relay of secretaries passed him along to Winstead.

The booth’s screen was small, a seven-incher, and definition was poor. Even with that handicap, though, Harker could see the rings around Winstead’s eyes. New York’s Governor obviously had had little sleep the night before.

“I got your message, Leo. What goes?”

Winstead said, "You know about Thurman and his stand on reanimation, don't you?"

"Of course. Thurman visited the lab yesterday."

"And then proceeded to issue a series of statements blasting your project," Winstead said. The Governor looked like a man about to explode from conflicting tensions. In a tight-strung voice he said, "Jim, we held a caucus on the Thurman situation last night. First let me tell you that the Nat-Libs have decided to issue a public statement praising your outfit and asking for careful consideration of reanimation."

Harker smiled. "It's about time someone said he was on our side."

"Don't break your arm patting your back," Winstead warned. "The Amer-Cons forced our hand. It took all night for us to agree to support you. A lot of us aren't in favor of reanimation at all."

"And a lot of you aren't in favor of anything I'm in favor of," Harker said crisply. "But what's this about Thurman, now?"

"He's killing us! How can we come out pro-reanimation when the elder patriarch of our party is issuing statements condemning it?"

Harker shrugged. "I'll admit you have a problem."

"Any such inconsistency would make us look silly," Winstead said. "Jim, would you do us a favor?"

The idea of doing favors to the party leaders who had summarily expelled him less than a year ago did not appeal to him. But he said, in a cautious voice, "Maybe. What do you want?"

"We haven't approached Thurman directly yet. We'd like you to do it."

"Me?"

Winstead nodded. "Go down to Washington and appeal to the old gorilla's sense of sentiment. Plead with him to come back to the fold. Thurman was once very high on you, Jim. Maybe he still is."

Harker said, "I saw Thurman yesterday and he wasn't running over with sentiment. He came, he saw, and he condemned. What more can I say to him?"

Winstead's face grew agitated. Harker wondered what pressures had been exerted on the Governor to make this phone call. "Jim, this is for your sake as well as ours. If you can win Thurman over, Congressional approval of reanimation's a cinch! You're just cutting your own throat by refusing to go down."

"You know I'm not anxious to do favors for--"

"We understand that! But can't you see you'll be helping yourself as well? We'll try to make things easier for you if you convince Thurman."

Harker grinned pleasantly. It was fun to see Winstead squirm. "Okay," he said finally. "I'll go down to see Thurman first thing tomorrow morning."

Chapter XIV

FRIDAY MORNING. Ten-fifteen a.m., on the morning of May 24, 2033.

James Marker stared out the round vitrin porthole at the fleecy whiteness of the clouds over Washington. The two-hundred-fifty-mile flight from Idlewild had taken about twenty minutes, by short-range jet.

Now the big passenger-ship plunged down toward the Capital's jetport. Harker felt the faint drag of gravity against his body and thought that a spaceship landing must be something like this, only tremendously more taxing. The ship quivered as its speed dwindled, dropping from 700 mph to less than half that, and halving again, while the 150-passenger ship swooped down from its flight altitude of 40,000 feet.

Harker was seeing Thurman at half past eleven, at the Senator's office. He rolled the phrases round in his mind once again:

“Mr. Thurman, you stuck by me long ago-“

“You owe this to your party, sir-“

“A forward step toward the bright Utopia of tomorrow, Senator-“

None of the arguments sounded even remotely convincing. Thurman was a stubborn old man with a bee in his bonnet about reanimation; no amount of cajoling was going to get him to alter his stand. Still, Marker thought, he owed it to himself to try. The hearings began on Monday, under Thurman's aegis. It would not hurt to have the patriarch sympathetically inclined. Nor would it be undesirable to have Leo Winstead and the whole Nat-Lib leadership beholden to him, Barker reasoned.

The yellow light flashed and a soft voice emanating from a speaker next to Marker's ear murmured, “Please fasten your safety belts. We'll be landing in a few minutes.”

Mechanically Harker guided the magnetic snaps together until he heard the proper click. The ship broke through the thick layer of clouds that blanketed the sky at 20,000 feet, and the white, neat, oddly sterile-looking city of Washington appeared below.

Harker hoped there would be no further difficulty over the Janson case while he was gone. Police investigators had arrived at the labs in mid-afternoon the day before, wanting to know if a reanimation had been carried out on the late industrialist. Raymond had flatly denied it, but at Harker's advice had refused to turn over the laboratory records to the police until subpoenaed to do so.

. The inspectors had left, making it clear that the matter was far from at an end. Harker smiled to himself about it; any comprehensive investigation was bound to prove that the whole affair had been staged by Bryant, taking advantage of his bachelor friend's suicide declaration to smear the re-animators.

But the suicide was in the newspapers, and no amount of unmasking ever really cancels out unfavorable publicity. The public would-with some justice-now link reanimation with possible mental deficiency afterward. Harker longed to have Jonathan Bryant's neck between his hands, just for a minute.

Troublemaker!

He leaned back and waited for the landing.

It took nearly half an hour for Harker to make the taxi-jaunt from the jetport to Capitol Hill, longer than the transit-time between New York and Washington. It was nearly eleven when he reached Senator Thurman's suite of offices-imposing ones, as befitted a senator who not only represented the second most populous state in the Union but who had held office for nearly seven terms.

A pink-faced, well-starved secretary about two years out of law-school greeted Harker as he entered the oak-panelled antechamber.

"Sir?"

"I'm James Harker. I have an appointment with the Senator for half past eleven."

The secretary looked troubled. "I'm sorry, Mr. Harker. The Senator appears to be ill."

"Ill?"

"That's right, sir. He hasn't reported to his office yet today. He's always here by nine sharp, and it's almost eleven now, so we figure he must be sick."

So far as Harker knew, Clyde Thurman had not known a day's illness yet in the twenty-first century. It was strange that he should fall ill this day of days, when Harker had an appointment to see him.

But it was not like Thurman to run away from a knotty problem, either. Harker said, "Have you checked with his home?"

"No, sir." The secretary appeared to resent Harker's question. "The Senator's private life is his own."

"For all you know Thurman died this morning!"

A shrug. "We have not received word of any sort whatever."

Harker paced up and down in the antechamber for fifteen minutes, sitting intermittently, fidgeting, glancing up nervously every time the big outer door opened to admit someone. He thought back thirty-odd years, to the time when eight-year-old Jimmy Harker was reported to his school principal for some obscure, forgotten offense. He had sat in just this manner in the anteroom of the principal's office, waiting for the principal to come back from lunch to administer his punishment-his head popping around every time a clerk opened the big door, his stomach quivering in fear that this might be the principal this time.

In time, he recalled, the principal had come-and had not expelled him nor phoned for his father, merely reprimanded him and sent him back to his classroom. Perhaps the same thing might happen today, he thought, perhaps some miraculous change of heart on the part of old Thurman-

But no miracles took place. Eleven-fifteen went by, and eleven-thirty, and there was no sign of Thurman. Clerks serenely went about their routine duties, ignoring the tense, sweating man in the outer office.

At ten to twelve Harker rose and confronted the secretary again. "Any word from Thurman?"

“Not yet, sir,” was the bland reply.

Harker crooked his fingers impatiently. “Look here, why don’t you phone his home? Maybe he’s seriously ill.”

“We never disturb the Senator at home, sir.”

Harker glared at the man, exhaled exasperatedly, and growled, “I guess you won’t give me his home phone number, then.”

“Afraid not, sir.”

“Is there anything you will do? Suppose you phone the office of Senator Fletcher for me, then.”

Fletcher was the Senate Majority Leader, another veteran Nat-Lib who was likely to know where to reach Thurman if anyone was. A little to Harker’s surprise, the secretary said, “You can use the phone back here. Just pick up and tell the switchboard who you want.”

The phone was audio-only. A metallic voice said, “Your party, please?” and Harker, resisting the temptation to ask for Thurman’s home number (it was probably restricted) said, “Would you connect me with Senator Fletcher’s office?”

Four secretaries later, Harker heard the deep, confident voice of Pennsylvania’s Fletcher say, “What can I do for you, Harker? Heard you were in town.”

“I’m here to see Senator Thurman,” Harker said. “Do you know where-“

“Thurman? Where are you now, Harker?”

“At the Senator’s office. He isn’t here, and I thought you might know-“

“Me? Harker, if I knew where Thurman was I’d be talking to him and not to you. I’m looking for him myself.”

Harker’s hopes sank. “Have you phoned his home?”

“Yes. Nobody there has seen him since early last evening. If you get any word, Harker, call me back.”

The line went dead. Harker stared at the phone thoughtfully a moment, then replaced the receiver. He walked over to the smug secretary and said casually, “You better start looking for a new job. Senator Thurman hasn’t been seen since some time last night.”

“What? But-“

Interrupting the agitated reply, Harker said, “You better make some quick phone calls. I’ll be back later if the Senator turns up.”

The next two hours were hectic ones at the Capital. Harker picked up an early afternoon newspaper when he saw the huge scare-head reading WHERE IS SENATOR THURMAN? The article simply said that the 88-year-old Senator had last been seen at his huge bachelor home in nearby Alexandria shortly after dark the previous night, and that nothing had been heard of him since.

Secret Service men were combing Washington and the outlying districts. The three-thirty headlines screamed, THURMAN STILL MISSING!

No word has been received yet of the whereabouts of Senator Clyde Thurman (N-L, N.Y.), who vanished from his home early last evening. The veteran lawmaker is slated to preside over the controversial reanimation hearings beginning Monday, if-

At four o'clock there was still no sign of the missing senator. Harker phoned the jetport, made reservations for a four-thirty flight back to New York. At five, he was at Idle-wild; he phoned Lois from there, told her what had happened, and said he was going straight out to Litchfield and would be home later, after supper.

The New York evening papers were full of the Thurman disappearance. Harker thought of phoning Winstead, then changed his mind; the Governor was well aware by now that Harker could not have kept his appointment with Thurman. Instead he rented a cab and travelled quickly out to the Seller Laboratories.

He got there shortly after six. The place was oddly empty; evidently the reporters had grown tired of clustering around the entrance to the dirt road. Three guards, fully armed, stood by the blockade in the yellow-brown light of very late afternoon.

"Hello, Mr. Harker. You can go in."

"Where's Raymond?"

"Main operating lab," the guard said.

Frowning, Harker moved past and headed across the clearing to the lab building. A late-spring breeze whistled down through the spruces, chilling him momentarily; the sun was a dying swollen reddish ball hovering near the horizon. Harker felt a strange foreboding sense of fear.

Three white-garbed medics guarded the lab entrance. Harker started to go past; one of them shook his head and said, "Very delicate work going on in there, Mr. Marker. If you're going in, be sure to keep quiet."

Marker tiptoed past.

Inside, he saw a tense group clustered around the operating table: Raymond, Vogel, Lurie, little Barchet, and a surgeon Marker did not know. There was a figure on the table. Marker could not see it.

Raymond detached himself from the group and came toward him. The lab director's face was pale, almost clammy; his lips hung slack with tension, and his eyes bulged. He looked frightened half into catatonia.

"What's going on?" Marker whispered.

"Experiment," Raymond said, shivering. "God, I wish we hadn't started this."

Raymond seemed close to collapse. Puzzled, Marker edged closer to the table, shunting Barchet to one side to get a better view. Five guilt-shadowed faces turned uneasily to stare at him.

For a long moment Marker studied the exposed face of the cadaver on the table, while billowing shock-waves clouded his mind, numbed his body. The enormity of what had been done left him almost incapable of speech for a few seconds.

Finally he looked at Raymond and said, "What have you people done?"

"We-we thought--"

Raymond stopped. Barchet said, "We all agreed on it after you left yesterday. We would bring him here and try to convince him that we were right. But he had a heart attack and d-died. So--"

In the yellow light of the unshielded incandescents the lie stood out in bold relief on Barchet's face. It was Lurie who said finally, "We might as well tell the truth. We had Thurman kidnapped and we chloroformed him. Now we're going to revive him and tell him he died of natural causes but was reanimated. We figure he'll support us if--"

Wobbly-legged, Marker groped for a lab stool and sat down heavily, cradling his suddenly pounding head in his hands. The monstrosity of what had been done behind his back stunned him. To kidnap Thurman, kill him, hope that in reviving him he would be converted to their cause--

"All right," Marker said tonelessly. "It's too late for saying no, I guess. You realize you've condemned all of us to death."

"Jim," Raymond began, "do you really think--"

"Kidnaping, murder, illegal scientific experimentation- oh, I could strangle you!" Harker felt like bursting into tears. "Don't you see that when you revive him he's bound to throw the book at us? Why did you have to do this when I was gone?"

"We planned it a long time ago," Barchet said. "We didn't think you'd be back in time to see us doing it."

Vogel said, "Perhaps if we don't carry out the resuscitation, and merely dispose of the body--"

"No!" Harker said, half-sobbing. "We'll reanimate him. And that'll be the end of this grand crusade. Finish." He looked down at Thurman's massive head, imposing even in death. His voice was a harsh hissing thing as he said, "Go on! Get started!"

He watched, numb-brained, as if dream-fogged, while Vogel and the other surgeon prepared the complex reanimating instrument. His heart pounded steadily, booming as if it wanted to burst through his ribcage.

He felt very tired. But now, thanks to this one master blunder, all their striving was at an end. Thurman, awakened, would denounce them for what they had done. After that, they ceased to be scientists and would be mere criminals in the eyes of humanity.

Harker listened to the murmured instructions being passed back and forth over the table, watched the needles entering the flesh, the electrodes being clamped in place. Minutes passed. Vogel's thin hand grasped the controlling rheostat. Power surged into the dead man's body.

After a while Harker rose and joined the group round the table. Needles wavered and leaped high, indicating that life had returned. But-

“Look at the EEG graph,” Raymond said hollowly.

The graph held no meaning for Harker. But he did not need to look there to see what had happened.

The eyes of the body on the table had opened, and were staring toward the ceiling. They were not the beady, alert, eager eyes of Senator Thurman. They were the dull, glazed, slack-muscled eyes of an idiot.

Chapter XV

FOR A moment, no one spoke.

Harker stood some five feet from the operating table, looking away from the creature under the machine, thinking, These people are like small boys with a new shiny toy. I should never have trusted them alone. I should never have gotten involved in this.

“What do we do know?” Lurie asked. The gangling biologist was nearing a state of hysteria. Sweat-drops beaded his forehead. “The man’s mind is gone.”

“Permanently?” Harker asked. “There’s no way of restoring it?”

Raymond shook his head. “None. The EEG indicates permanent damage to the brain.”

Harker took a deep breath. “In that case, there’s nothing for us to do but kill him again and dispose of the body.”

The suggestion seemed to shock them. Barchet reacted first: “But that’s murder!”

“Exactly. And what did you think you were committing the first time you killed Thurman?” There was no answer, so he went on. “According to the present law of the land, you were all guilty of murder the moment you put the chloroform-mask over Thurman’s face. The law needs fixing, now, but that’s irrelevant. You made yourselves subject to the death penalty when you abducted him, incidentally.”

“How about you?” Barchet snapped. “You seem to be counting yourself out.”

Harker resisted the impulse to lash out at the little man who had caused so much trouble. “As a matter of fact, technically I’m innocent,” he said. “The kidnapping and murder both were carried out without my knowledge or consent. But there isn’t a court in the world that would believe me, so I guess I’m in this boat with you. At the moment we all stand guilty of kidnapping and first-degree murder. I’m simply suggesting we get rid of the evidence and proceed as if nothing had happened. Either that or call the police right now.”

Raymond said, “I think you’re right.” The lab director’s face was green with fear; like the rest of them, he was awakening slowly to the magnitude of their act. “We did this thing because we thought we were serving our goal. We were wrong. But the only way we can continue to serve our goal is to commit another crime. We’ll have to dispose of the body.”

“That won’t be hard,” Vogel said. “We dispose of bodies pretty frequently around here. I’ll do a routine dissection and then we’ll just make sure the parts get pretty widely scattered through the usual channels.”

Raymond nodded. He seemed to be growing calmer now. “Better begin at once. Chloroform him again and do the job in the autopsy lab. Make it the most comprehensive damn autopsy you ever carried out.”

Silently Vogel and the other surgeon wheeled the body out, with Lurie following along behind. In the empty operating room, Harker glared at Raymond and Barchet. He felt no fear, no apprehension—merely a kind of dull hopeless pain.

“Well done,” he said finally. “I wish I could tell you exactly how I feel now.”

Raymond pursed his lips nervously. “I think I know. You’d like to strangle us, wouldn’t you?”

“Something like that,” Harker admitted. “Why did you have to do it? Why?”

“We thought it would help us,” said Barchet.

“Help? To kidnap and kill a United States Senator? But— oh, what’s the use. Just remember now that there are six of us who know about this. The first one who cracks and talks not only sends all six of us to the gas chamber but finishes reani-mation permanently.”

Suddenly he did not want to be with them. He said, “I’m going to my office to get some papers, and then I’m going home. Can I trust you irresponsible lunatics for an entire weekend?”

Raymond looked boyishly at his shoes; Barchet tried to glare at Harker, but there was something sickly and unconvincing about the expression. Harker turned and headed out.

* * *

He made the long journey from the lab to his home by taxi, an extravagance that he did not often permit himself. Tonight it seemed necessary. He had no heart for facing other people in a public jet, for buying tickets at a terminal, for doing anything else but sitting in the back of a cab, with the driver shrouded off by his compartment wall, sitting alone and staring out at the bright night city lights as he rode home.

Friday, May 24, 2033. Harker thought back to the morning when Lurie had first come to him. That had been a Wednesday; May 8, it had been. Two weeks and two days ago, and in that time so much had happened to him, so many unexpected things.

He had lost his affiliation with the law firm. He had re-entered public life, this time as publicity agent, legal adviser, and general champion of a weird and controversial cause. He had become a stranger to his family, a man bound up entirely in the many-levelled conflicts arising out of the simple announcement that a successful reanimation technique had been developed.

He had watched two dogs and two human beings, both of them dead, return to the ranks of the living. He had watched a third man, a great man, a former idol of his, suffer death in the name of this strange cause.

He had become a murderer and a kidnapper. Unintentionally, true, and after the fact; but his guilt was as sure as that of the man who had lowered the chloroform.

Forces ranked themselves against him: Mitchison, Klaus, Jonathan Bryant—petty little men, those three, but they could cause trouble. Barchet, who was on their side and still managed to hurt them with

everything he did. The Church; the American-Conservative Party; the ignorant, fearful people of the world, swayed by whatever hysteria happened to be in the air at the moment.

Had it been worth it?

He thought back, putting himself in the shoes of that James Harker of May 8, 2033 who had made the decision to go ahead. The bait had been the image of Eva, drowned, beyond his grasp. Eva might have lived.

Yes, he thought, it's worth it.

Abruptly the gloom began to lift from him. He realized that none of the things that had happened to him mattered- not the dismissal by Kelly, nor the crimes for which he had assumed the burden, nor the inner turmoil which was exhausting him. How transient everything was!

The important fact was reanimation-the defeat of death. The end of death's dominion. That was his goal, and he would work toward it-and if he destroyed himself and those about him in the process, well, there had been martyrs in man's history before. That Evas of tomorrow might live, Harker thought, I will go ahead.

"Larchmont, mister," the driver called out. "Which way do I go?"

Harker gave him the directions. They reached his home a few minutes later; the fare was over \$10, and Harker added a good tip to it.

The cab pulled away. Harker stood for a moment outside his home. The sitting-room lights were on, and one of the upstairs bedroom lights. It was shortly before ten, and since it was the weekend Chris would still be up, though young Paul had long since been tucked away.

And Lois probably sat before the video, waiting patiently for her husband to come home. Harker smiled gently, put his thumb to the identity-plate of the door, and waited for it to open.

Lois came to the door to meet him. She looked pale, tired; when she kissed him, it was purely mechanical, almost ritualistic.

"I was hoping you were in that cab, Jim. How'd everything go?"

He shrugged. "I don't know, Lois. I feel beat."

"Come on inside. Tell me about your day."

He followed her into the sitting-room. The autoknit stood to one side; she had been making socks, it seemed. The video blared some hideous popular song:

If I could hold you in my arms,

Baby! And cuddle up and-

Harker jerked a thumb toward the screen. "Is this the sort of junk you've been watching?"

Lois smiled faintly. "It's a good tranquilizer. I just let the sound bellow out and numb my mind."

He thumbed the off-switch set in the table before the couch, and the singing died away, the image shrank to a spot of tri-colored light and then to nothing at all. His hand sought hers.

He found himself wishing she would get up on her back legs and yowl, just once. It would be good for both of them. But she was so wonderfully patient! She had said nothing, or little, when he had stubbornly defied the national committee and gone ahead with the reform program that could only have ended his political career, and did. She had barely objected when he told her of his new affiliation with the Beller people, and she had said nothing in these past ten days, when the pressure of conflicting cross-currents had kept him bottled up within himself, unloving, cold.

He tried to say something affectionate, something to repay her for the suffering he had caused, the lonely evenings, the tense breakfasts.

But she spoke first. "They still haven't found Senator Thurman, Jim. I heard the nine-thirty newscast. Isn't it terrible, an old man like that disappearing?"

Sudden coldness swept through him. "Still-haven't found him?" he repeated inanely. "Well-I guess-ah-that old buzzard's indestructible. He'll turn up."

"How do you think this will affect the hearing on Monday?"

Harker shrugged, only half-listening. He was thinking, You know damn well where Thurman is, and you're afraid to tell her. Why don't you speak up? Don't you trust your own wife? He wet his dry lips. "I-I suppose they'll choose a new chairman if something's happened to Thurman. But--"

"Jim, are you all right? You look terrible!"

"Lois, I-want to tell you something. Today--"

He stopped, wondering how to go on. She was staring intently at him, curious but not overly curious, waiting to hear what he had to say.

The phone rang.

Grateful for the interruption, Harker sprang from the couch and darted around back to take the call on the visual set. He activated it; Mart Raymond's face appeared on the screen.

"Well?" Harker said immediately, in a low voice. "Is the evidence all taken care of?"

Raymond nodded agitatedly. "Yes. But that's not what I called about. Barchet's dead!"

"What? How?"

"It happened about five minutes ago. He was getting ready to leave, and we were discussing-you know, what happened tonight. He had a heart attack and just dropped. It must have been all the excitement. His heart was weak anyway, he once said."

Harker could not repress the tide of relief that rose in him. Barchet had been the cause of half of his troubles-Mitchi-son and Klaus, for one, and the Thurman affair for another. Still, a man was dead, and that was no cause for rejoicing, he told himself coldly.

He said, "That's too bad. Did he have a family?"

"Just a wife, but she died years ago. He was alone."

Harker nodded. "You'd better notify the local police right away."

"Jim, what's the matter with you?" Raymond asked incredulously.

"What do you mean?"

"Barchet's in the operating room now. Vogel's getting ready to try a reanimation on him."

"No!" Harker said instantly.

"No? Jim, we can't just let him die like that!"

"Barchet was a troublemaker, Mart. He was the weak link in the organization. Now we're rid of him; let him stay dead. It's one less witness to the thing that happened today."

In a shocked whisper Raymond said, "You can't mean what you're saying, Jim."

"I mean exactly what you're hearing. Barchet was unstable, Mart. He pressured you into doing all sorts of cockeyed things. If he lived, he'd end up revealing the Thurman business before long. Let him stay dead. That's an order, Mart."

Raymond seemed to shrink back from the screen. "It's almost like committing murder, Jim! The man could be saved if we--"

"No," Marker said, with a firmness he did not feel. "There'll be trouble if you cross me, Mart. Good night."

He broke the contact with a shaky hand.

Lois gasped when she saw him. "Jim! It must be bad news. You're utterly white."

He sat down heavily. "One of the Beller executives just had a heart attack. A man named Barchet-a runty little fellow who enjoyed sticking lead pipes between the spokes of smoothly running machines. I just ordered Mart Raymond not to attempt reanimation."

His hands were quivering. Lois took them between hers. Harker said, "It's like murder, isn't it? To refuse to reanimate a man, when it's possible to do so. But it's better for everyone if Barchet stays dead. Nobody will miss him. God, I feel awful."

"Remember the McDermott case, Jim?"

He frowned, then smiled at her. "Yes," he said. McDermott had been a factory hand, an overgrown moron of 22 who had beaten his 70-year-old father to death one night shortly before Harker had become Governor of New York. The verdict had been speedy, the sentence one of execution. With the boy in the death house and the night of the execution at hand, his aged mother had relented, lost her vindictiveness, pleaded with the new Governor Harker to commute the sentence.

The boy had had a long criminal record. The court had found him guilty. He had murdered his father in cold blood, premeditatedly. He deserved the full penalty.

Harker had refused to commute. But then he had spent the rest of the evening staring at his watch, and at the stroke of midnight had burst into an attack of chills.

He nodded slowly now. "I refused to commute Barchet's sentence. That's all there is to it."

Chapter XVI

THE NEWSPAPERS Saturday morning gave full play to the Thurman disappearance. Several of them ran biographies of the missing senator, tracing his political career from the early founding days of the National-Liberal Party to his present anti-reanimation stand.

The police and FBI statements were simply mechanical handouts, repeats of last night's assurances that no stone would be left unturned. Harker read them with some amusement. He had slept well, and a good deal of last night's tension had departed from him.

He had come to a calming conclusion: Raymond and Bar-chet had done a violent thing, but these were violent times. Somehow he would have to forget about the shocking Thurman affair and continue along the path already entered upon.

The obituary pages contained one item worth note:

SIMEON BARCHET

Simeon Barchet of 210 Princeton Road, Rockville Centre, L.I., treasurer of the Better Research Laboratories, died of a heart attack at the Better office in Litch-field, New Jersey yesterday. His age was 61.

Mr. Barchet joined the organization of the late oil operator D. F. Better in 2014, after serving as a vice-president of the Chase Manhattan Bank. Upon Mr. Belter's death ten years later, he became a trustee of the Better Fund and participated actively in the operation of the laboratory in Litchfield.

He left no survivors. His wife, the former Elsie Tyler, died in 2029.

Harker felt inward relief. Raymond had not dared to defy him; the reanimation of Barchet had been stopped as he had ordered.

It was only to be expected that some keen-eyed reader would read the Barchet obit and wonder why an official of the Seller Laboratories had been allowed to die on the premises, when reanimation equipment was right there. No doubt the question would be raised in the afternoon papers, since any news of the Beller researchers rated a good play.

He was not mistaken. At noon Mart Raymond called; he stared somewhat reproachfully at Harker out of the screen and said, "Some reporters just phoned up, Jim. They saw Barchet's obit and want to know how come he wasn't reanimated. What am I supposed to tell them-the truth?"

Harker scowled. "Don't tell them anything. Let me think. Ah-yes. Tell them Barchet was despondent over personal affairs, and left a memo imploring us not to reanimate him. Naturally, we abide by his last

request.”

“Naturally,” Raymond said acidly. “Okay. I’ll tell them. It sounds halfway plausible, anyway.”

The newspapers moved fast. By nightfall the story had been promoted to the front pages, generally headed with something like BELLER MAN CHOOSES DEATH. The editorial pages of the Star-Post’s evening edition had an interesting comment:

NATURAL DEATH OR SUICIDE?

Yesterday Simeon Barchet, an executive of the now-famous Beller Research Laboratories, died suddenly of a heart attack. According to his colleagues at Beller, Mr. Barchet had been in a despondent frame of mind and left instructions that he was not to be reanimated.

The situation exposed a new facet of the already-explosive reanimation situation. Can wilful refusal to undergo reanimation be considered suicide? According to time-honored principles of law, suicide or attempted suicide is an illegal act. In this case, the odd paradox arises of a man already dead committing what can only be termed suicide. Should reanimation be given the cachet of legal approval during the forthcoming Congressional hearings, then it is clear that a testament forbidding reanimation will reach beyond the grave to bind the dead man’s survivors, counsel, and physicians in a conspiracy to abet suicide.

Obviously this is an impossible state of affairs. It demonstrates once again that the staggering Seller Laboratories success, which renders death in many cases merely temporary, will unavoidably bring about a massive revolution in our codes of legal and medical ethics, and indeed a change in our entire manner of life.

As he looked through the heap of newspapers, Marker began to feel that the tide was turning. The hysteria was dying down. Men were realizing that reanimation was no grisly joke, no hoax, but something real that had been developed and which could not be stamped out.

There were relatively few cries for wholesale suppression of the process. A Fundamentalist minister from Kansas had got his name into the papers by demanding immediate destruction of all equipment and plans for reanimation apparatus, but his was an isolated voice.

The tone of the Star-Post editorial seemed to be the tone of the consensus. Men of intelligence were saying, Reanimation exists, for good or evil. Let’s study it for a while and find out what it can do and how it will change society. Let’s not scream, for its suppression, but let’s not unleash it entirely before we know what we’re letting loose.

The most authoritative of the secular anti-reanimation voices had belonged to Clyde Thurman, and that voice now was stilled. The act had been one of colossal audacity and thoughtlessness, and even now Harker found it difficult to endure the memory of the noble old warrior’s mindless eyes; but, he had to admit, it had silenced a potent force for suppression.

Perhaps these were times for violence and audacity, Harker thought.

In that case I’m the wrong man for my job. But it’s too late to help that now.

Sunday’s papers continued the general trend toward reasonable consideration of the reanimation case, and also reported no progress in the search for the missing senator. It was learned that the reanimation

hearings would begin as scheduled on Monday-not in Washington, though, but in New York. Late Sunday evening a messenger appeared at Harker's door and handed him a document.

It was a subpoena, requesting him to be present at 10:00 the following morning at the Hotel Manhattan, where the Congressional hearings would begin.

Harker arrived there half an hour early. The hearings were taking place in a meeting-room on the nineteenth floor of the big hotel. Federal law required the presence of the press at Congressional hearings; television cameras were already set up, and at the back of the room Harker saw the four senators who had visited the labs: Brewster, Vorys, Dixon, Westmore. Two American-Conservatives, two National Liberals. The fifth seat had been left vacant, obviously for Thurman; but Thurman would not be likely to take part in the hearings, though only a few men knew that fact with any certainty.

Mart Raymond was there already, wearing not his stained lab smock but a surprisingly natty tweed suit. Vogel had been subpoenaed too, but not Lurie. Next to Raymond sat a plumpish woman Harker had never seen before; she was middle-aged and dressed in an obsolete fashion.

"Jim, I want you to meet someone," Raymond called to him as soon as Harker entered. He crossed the room to the front row of seats and Raymond said, "This is Mrs. Beller. She's acting as representative for the Beller Fund since Bar-diet died."

"Dreadful, about poor Mr. Barchet," the woman said, in a highly masculine baritone. "Pleased to meet you, Mr. Harker. I've heard so much about you. My late husband was deeply interested in your career."

I'm damned sure of that, Harker thought. For as many years as he could remember, the name of Darwin F. Beller had headed the list of contributors to the annual American-Conservative Party campaign fund. He said aloud, "How do you do, Mrs. Beller."

He looked toward the platform where the senators sat. Brewster looked grim, Vorys peeved; Dixon and Westmore, the Nat-Lib members of the commission, both wore identical uneasy smiles.

Television cameramen seemed to be under foot everywhere, checking camera angles, adjusting mike booms, testing the lighting. A small, harried-looking man with close-cropped hair came scurrying up to him, jabbed a microphone under his nose, and said, "Mr. Harker, would you mind saying a couple of words into this?"

"What do you want me to say?"

"That's fine, sir. Now you, Mr. Raymond, and then after that I'd like to hear the lady speak."

It was a voice-test. Someone yelled out, "Harker's fine! Raymond could stand more resonance!"

"Would you mind getting more chest into your voice, Mr. Raymond?"

"I'll do my best," Raymond said.

The man with the microphone scurried away.

Harker watched the time on the big clock above the dais. Ten minutes to ten. The room was slowly filling up, not only with newspapermen. Raymond pointed out a couple of well-known medical men; Harker spotted two lawyers, including one who had issued a ringing denunciation of reanimation a week

before.

At ten sharp Senator Westmore rose, smiled apologetically at the video camera, and said, “Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. As acting chairman of the Senate Special Investigating Committee dealing with the problem of the discoveries of the Beller Research Laboratories, I hereby ask for your attention and call this hearing to order.”

The room fell silent. In the hush, the throbbing purr of the official stenographer’s recording machine was clearly audible. After a pause Westmore went on, “We begin this session in the absence of our chairman, Senator Thurman of New York. I’m sure you’ll all join me in the hope that the beloved senator is safe, wherever he is, and that his unusual absence will soon be explained. However, the-shall we say- delicate nature of the Beller discoveries makes it imperative that this Committee elicit facts and present its findings to Congress immediately, and so we are proceeding on schedule despite our chairman’s absence.

“Our purpose is to draw forth information on the subject of reanimation. First I think it is well to question the director of the laboratory which developed the technique, Dr. Martin Raymond.”

Raymond rose, a trifle awkwardly, and as he did so Senator Vorys requested permission to question him. Permission was granted.

Vorys said, in this thin, penetrating voice, “Dr. Raymond, you recognize me, do you not, as a member of the group of United States Senators who visited your laboratories recently?”

“I recognize you. You were there.”

“In our presence you applied your reanimation technique to a twelve-year-old boy. Am I correct?”

“You are.”

“The boy was dead?”

“He had drowned the day before.”

“And where is this boy now?”

Raymond said, “Recuperating from the aftereffects of his experience. He’s in good health, but still pretty weak.”

“Ah. Would it be possible for you to bring this boy to a session of this Committee?”

“I don’t believe so, Senator. The boy’s not ready for any travelling yet. And it would violate our policy to present him to the video audience. We try to keep the identity of our patients secret.”

“Why do you do that?”

“To protect them. Reanimation is still in its early stages. The social implications are still unclear.”

“Ah. Would you object if the members of this Committee paid the boy a visit, then, to ascertain the current state of his health?”

“That could be arranged,” Raymond said.

There was a moment of silence. Vorys stared keenly at Raymond and said, "Would you trace briefly for us the history of your laboratory, the nature of your process, and the results you have obtained so far."

Speaking easily and freely now, Raymond told of the original Seller bequest, the gathering-together of the laboratory staff, the early failures. He outlined a rough sketch of the technique as it was now practiced. "To date we've had about seventy successful reanimations," he finished.

"And how many failures?"

"About ten out of the seventy. Previous to our first successful reanimation we had thirty consecutive failures?"

"I see. And what is the nature of these failures?"

Raymond began to fidget. "Ah-well, we don't succeed in restoring life."

"The body remains inanimate?"

"Yes. Most of the time, that is. I mean--"

It was too late. Vorys pounced on the slip gleefully and said, "Most of the time, Dr. Raymond? I don't quite understand. Does that mean that some of your failures result in actual reanimation, or partial reanimation? Will you make yourself clear?"

Panicky, Raymond glanced at Marker, who shrugged and nodded resignedly. It had to come out eventually, Harker thought.

The squirming Raymond was a pitiful sight under the merciless lights. He said in a hopeless voice, "I guess I ought to be more specific."

"That would help, Dr. Raymond."

"Well," Raymond said, "Counting the boy we reanimated when you were at the labs, Senator, we've had 72 reanimations since the first success. No, 73. In 62 of those cases, we've had complete success. In four others, it was impossible for us to restore life at all. And in the remaining seven"--now it comes out, Harker thought--"we achieved reanimation with partial success."

"In what way partial?" Vorys pressed.

Raymond had run out of evasions. He said, "We restored the body to functional activity. We were unable to achieve a similar restoration of the mind, in those seven cases."

Chapter XVII

THE NEWSPAPERS had a field day with Raymond's unwilling revelation. Even the traditionally sedate Times devoted six of its eight columns to a banner headline about it, and a story which began,

Public faith in the Beller reanimation process was seriously shaken today by the surprising revelation that reanimation sometimes produces a mentally deficient individual.

Dr. Martin Raymond, head of the Beller research organization, made the statement in New York at the opening session of Senate reanimation hearings. He declared that seven out of seventy-three experimental reanhnations had produced “mindless beings.” In four other instances, neither body nor mind was successfully recalled to life.

In the other papers, it was even worse. The Star-Post, which had been growing more sympathetic each day, demanded atop its editorial column, WHY HAVE THEY BEEN HIDING THIS? The Hearst papers, which had never been sympathetic to the cause of reanimation, grew almost apoplectic now; their key slogan was the label, “The Zombie-Makers,” which they used in reference to the Beller researchers not only in the editorial (a vitriolic one) but even in several of the news columns.

At the Litchfield headquarters, the flood of abusive mail threatened to overpower the local postmaster. It was impossible to read it all, and after Harker picked up a scrawled letter that threatened assassination for him and his entire family unless reanimation experiments ceased, he decided to read none of it at all. They stored it in one of the supply-buildings in back, and Harker gave orders that any overflow was to be destroyed unread.

On the second day of hearings, a few new faces were in the auditorium. They were faces Harker did not enjoy seeing. They belonged to Cal Mitchison and David Klaus, and with them was their lawyer, Gerhardt.

With Senator Thurman still not found, Brewster presided over the second session—a heavy-set, slow-moving man with the ponderously tenacious mind that went with those physical characteristics. With the opening formalities out of the way, Brewster said, “We would like to hear from Dr. David Klaus, formerly of the Beller Research Laboratories.”

Harker was on his feet immediately. “Senator Brewster, I’d like to enter an objection. This man is the principal in a lawsuit pending against our laboratory. Anything he says in his favor this morning may be prejudicial to us in the lawsuit.”

Brewster shook his head slowly. “This is not a court of law, Mr. Harker. We are interested in hearing Dr. Klaus’ statements. You will have ample time to refute them later, if you wish.”

Harker subsided. Brewster looked at Klaus, who stood with his hands knotted nervously together, a thin, slab-jawed, scrawny bright-young-scientific-prodigy type. “Dr. Klaus, you were formerly employed by the Beller Laboratories, were you not? Would you mind telling us why your employment there was terminated?”

Stammering as usual, Klaus said, “I was discharged by order of James Harker shortly after he came to work there. It was a purely malicious act.”

Harker fumed, but Brewster waved imperiously at him to keep him quiet. The Senator said, “Please keep personal differences out of this, Dr. Klaus. How long were you employed at the laboratories? “

“Three years. I was in charge of enzyme research.”

“I see. And you were aware that the reanimation experiments were occasionally producing-ah-idiots?”

“Yes, sir. We all were aware of that.”

“Were attempts being made to safeguard against this unfortunate result, Dr. Klaus?”

Klaus nodded. "My department was working on a chemical method of insuring full recovery of mental powers. I don't know what's been done since my dismissal."

"He's lying!" Raymond shouted. "His group never had anything to do with--"

"Please, Dr. Raymond," Brewster said fiercely. "Your outburst is uncalled-for."

To Klaus he said, "Do you feel that this hazard of the reanimation process can be overcome in the course of further research?"

"Definitely. But the present management of the laboratories is heading in the wrong direction. They've rejected my ideas-which were close to being perfected-and instead chose to suppress the whole affair."

Harker felt his pulse mounting. Klaus seemed icily calm and there, speaking now with cold precision-most unusual for him. He sounded as if he had rehearsed this speech all morning.

Brewster said, "It would seem to me that the directors of the Beller Laboratories were guilty of an act of bad faith. Wouldn't you agree, Dr. Klaus?"

"Definitely, sir."

"Thank you. We would like to hear from Mr. James Harker, now."

Moistening his lips, Harker rose and took his place in the spotlight. Brewster gave place to Dixon, for which Harker was thankful; the American-Conservative Senators had a way of conducting hearings as if they were representatives of the Spanish Inquisition.

Dixon said, "Would you tell us how you became affiliated with the Beller outfit, Mr. Harker?"

"I was approached by Dr. Lurie of Beller," Harker said. "I had retired to private law practice after conclusion of my term as Governor of New York State. Dr. Lurie requested me to handle the legal aspects of reanimation."

"Ah. How long have you been connected with Beller, then?"

"Dr. Lurie first approached me on May 8. Roughly three weeks ago, Senator Dixon."

"And you have acted as spokesman for the laboratory since May 8?"

"No, sir. My first public statement for Seller appeared on May 20. It was occasioned by the premature and unauthorized release of information to the public by Dr. Klaus and our then public-relations agent, Mr. Mitchison. This was the act of insubordination for which they were dismissed from the laboratory."

"You infer that the first public announcement of the Beller reanimation experiments was made without your consent or knowledge?"

"That's right, sir."

"Why did you intend to maintain continued secrecy?"

“The process was not quite perfect, sir. A few more weeks of work and we could have eliminated the possibility of mental loss. It was my plan not to bring the matter to the public notice until then-but Dr. Klaus took it upon himself to inform the world without my knowledge.”

Harker glanced at Brewster and Vorys. They were frowning; perhaps he had gotten through to them. He wondered if his words would counteract the tide of unfavorable reactions already swelling.

Dixon said, “Could you tell us how close you are to actual elimination of the hazard of insanity?”

“Sorry, I can’t. That would be Dr. Raymond’s province. But I will say that research at our laboratory has virtually ceased during this period of uncertainty.”

There was a whispered conference at the dais, and abruptly Vorys replaced Dixon as interrogator.

“Mr. Harker, does the name Wayne Janson mean anything to you?”

Brewster and Vorys had evidently primed themselves well for the attack. Harker said, “Yes, Senator Vorys. Janson was an industrialist who committed suicide last week.”

“It means nothing else to you?”

“No.”

“No one of that name underwent reanimation at the Beller Laboratories?”

“No, sir.”

Vorys paused momentarily. “The late Mr. Janson was supposed to have undergone reanimation several months before your employment at Beller. Is it possible that he did experience treatment there, and that you don’t know about it?”

“I’ve examined the list of patients at Beller since the beginning of experiments there. No one named Janson is on the list.”

“Perhaps he entered under another name.”

“We have photographs of all patients, Senator. None of them corresponded to the photo of Mr. Janson published in the newspapers.”

“In other words, you deny that he was ever a patient of the laboratories?”

“Exactly.”

“But a close friend of the late Mr. Janson claims that he did secretly enter the Beller laboratories of his own will shortly before his death of natural causes, was reanimated, and suffered such mental disturbance afterward that he took his own life.”

Harker said quietly, “It’s obvious that one party is lying, isn’t it? Our records indicate that no such person ever entered the labs for treatment. The burden of proof, I believe, rests with the other party.”

“We have only your word for this,” Vorys went on obstinately. “And you are not even under oath. Will

you make these records of yours available for public inspection?"

"It would be against our policy."

"We could subpoena the records," Vorys warned.

Harker shrugged. "That's within your rights, of course, I admit. But exposure of the names of our patients would probably have adverse effects on them, psychologically and otherwise."

"That sounds very good, Mr. Harker. But it could also be an excuse for hiding something."

Resisting the impulse to lose his temper-for Vorys was obviously deliberately baiting him-Harker said, "I believe it would be possible to grant you and your three colleagues access to our records, to prove the fraudulent nature of the Janson matter. But public exposure of the names would not be necessary, would it?"

"Quite possibly not. Thank you, Mr. Harker. We will recess for one hour now."

As soon as Harker had left the stand, Mart Raymond approached him and said, "Things are getting rough, eh?"

Harker nodded. "Vorys and Brewster are out for our scalps. The American-Conservatives must be preparing to come down hard."

"I'm sorry about letting that statistic slip yesterday, Jim--"

"Forget it. It had to come out sooner or later, and maybe if we had announced it at the start we wouldn't be having so much trouble now. Well, it couldn't be helped. Let's go get some lunch."

As they rode downward in the gravshaft toward the hotel dining room, Harker said, "Exactly how close are you to getting the bugs out of the process?"

Raymond looked vague. "A week, a month, maybe a year. We know what causes the mental breakdown-most of the time. It's a matter of hormone impurity, generally. Of course, in some cases the brain suffers severe damage in the process of dying, and we'll never be able to lick that any more than we can revive a man who's been blown apart by dynamite. But I'm pretty sure we can lick the defects in our own system soon."

"And what probability of success would you predict after that?"

Raymond shrugged and said, "Who knows? Nine out of ten successes? Ninety out of a hundred? Until we have ten or twenty thousand case histories behind us, our statistics don't mean anything."

Harker nodded thoughtfully. The meal was a quiet one; neither man said much. Harker was going back over the morning's session, trying to pick out the phrases the press would leap on.

He hoped he had discredited the Mitchison-Klaus combine and Bryant by his refutation. Surely the public would see that Mitchison and Klaus were vengeful power-seekers and nothing more, and that the whole Janson affair was nothing but a malicious hoax.

But he overestimated the public's ability to distinguish truth from slung mud, it seemed. The early

afternoon papers were already on sale by the time the hearing resumed for the afternoon.

The headline on the Star-Post was, KLAUS SAYS HARKER FIRED HIM; CHARGES BELLER 'BAD FAITH'

The story, slanted heavily in Klaus' direction, implied that the enzyme man had been on the verge of a brilliant discovery when Harker maliciously sacked him. As for the Janson case, it referred to Marker's "uncomfortable evasions."

The tide was turning. The public fancy had seized on the one fact, grotesque and horrifying enough, that in a few cases reanimation resulted in dreadful mindlessness. On that slim base, a massive movement aimed at the total suppression of reanimation was beginning to take form and grow in strength.

Harker had seen the phenomenon before, and had been helpless before it. The great insane raging tide of public opinion had sprung up from what had been a smoothly-flowing stream, and once its mighty power had been channelled toward a definite end, there was no standing against it.

He had the uncomfortable feeling that only a miracle could save things, now. And miracles were not easy to come by, in this secular age.

Chapter XVIII

AS THE hearing ground along into its third day, and its fourth, and then its fifth and sixth, things grew even worse. The "zombie" phrase became a favorite, not only of the press and the public, but even of Brewster and Vorys. The fact that seven of the seventy-three reanimation subjects had been revived sans intellect had become the main issue. In his rare moments of relaxation, Harker wondered how the world would react if it were ever learned that one of those seven had been none other than the missing Senator Thurman.

Very much as Harker had expected, the American-Conservative Party intensified its previous belief in "caution" into what amounted to condemnation of the whole process. Maxwell of Vermont, the Senate Minority Leader, delivered an off-the-cuff but probably carefully-rehearsed speech at a Chicago gathering of American-Conservative committee-men, in which he referred to reanimation as "That mess engineered by a one-time lame duck of a National-Liberal, that unholy conspiracy against human dignity."

Later the same day, the chairman of the Nat-Lib national committee was quick to announce that James Harker had voluntarily severed his party connections in January, was now a private citizen, and in no way represented the membership of the National-Liberal Party. It was a neat disavowal that took the Nat-Libs off the hook in case the reaction against reanimation grew stronger, but left them an avenue of entry just in case public opinion should swing back in favor of Harker.

Work at the lab had come practically to a standstill. "If we only had a few more weeks," Raymond mourned, "we might be able to lick the remaining defects and get public approval. But they won't leave us alone to work."

A delegation of FBI men and the four investigating senators visited the laboratory a week after the hearings had begun, and Raymond and Harker reluctantly showed them the data on the revivifications so far-excluding that of Senator Thurman, which had not been recorded in any way whatever.

They checked through the photos, compared them with those of Wayne Janson, and left. That night the FBI issued an official statement which read, in part, "Examination of the Belter Laboratories' records

does not indicate that the late Mr. Janson ever received treatment there. Since there is nothing in Janson's own private papers that leads us to believe he as much as knew of the existence of the Beller organization prior to its public announcement, we must conclude that no reanimation did take place."

This left Jonathan Bryant in an ambiguous position, since he continued to maintain that Janson had undergone reanimation, and had suffered a severe change in personality as a result, leading to his suicide.

"This ought to settle Jonathan for good," Harker crowed when the text of the FBI exoneration reached him. After all, it had to be obvious to everyone that Bryant had perpetrated a hoax designed solely to discredit reanimation and arouse popular fears against it.

But again Harker was wrong. The day after publication of the FBI statement, Jonathan Bryant was subpoenaed to appear before the investigating committee. The questioner was Senator Vorys. The interchange between Bryant and Vorys was widely reported in the late editions that day:

* * *

SENATOR VORYS: You knew the late Wayne Janson well?

BRYANT: I was his closest friend. VORYS: When did he first mention reanimation to you?

BRYANT: About January. He said his doctor had told him about the experiments going on in Litchfield.

VORYS: What is the name of this doctor?

BRYANT: I'm sorry, I don't know, Senator Vorys.

VORYS: Very well. Go ahead.

BRYANT: Well, Wayne suffered a stroke in February and he told me then that he was going to Litchfield, that he felt close to death and was volunteering for reanimation.

VORYS (Interrupting): The FBI did check and found that Janson had been away from home during February and March.

BRYANT: Yes, sir. Well, Janson came home late in March and told me of his experiences. He seemed moody, depressed, very different from usual. I tried without success to cheer him up. Then one night several weeks ago he phoned me and said he was going to end it all, to jump off the George Washington Bridge. In his conversation he attributed his desire for death to a morbid change that had come over his mind as a result of the Seller treatment.

VORYS: You're aware, are you not, of the FBI statement which says that to the best of their knowledge Janson never had any contact with the Seller people?

BRYANT: Of course. The key phrase there is "to the best of their knowledge." I have no doubt that the Beller people have suppressed this case as they've suppressed so many other things since James Harker started running them.

The ten-minute colloquy between Vorys and Bryant, widely quoted and republished everywhere, served not only to discredit the FBI statement utterly, but to convince the public that Harker had indeed suppressed the records of the Janson reanimation.

A magnificent scientific discovery discredited because of a ten percent imperfection. An FBI investigation thrown into the rubbish-heap because of one man's bitter determination to crush an old enemy.

Harker studied the newspapers each day with increasing bitterness. The original importance of the Beller process seemed to be getting lost under the welter of side-issues, the jackal-like snapping of Klaus-Mitchison and Bryant, the political fencing of the two great parties, the hysteria of the people faced with something beyond easy acceptance.

Only one issue had not been raised yet-luckily, for it was the deadliest of all, having a basis of truth. No one had accused the Seller people of murdering Senator Thurman.

It was a logical accusation, against the background of insane charges already raised. After all, Thurman had been the most vigorous and most important of the enemies of reani-mation, and he had disappeared on the eve of the hearings themselves! It seemed obvious to Harker that someone would think of implying that the Beller group had done away with their tough, intractable enemy.

But no one raised the cry, perhaps because it was too obvious. A thousandth time, Harker was grateful for that momentary impulse of steely purposefulness that had led him to condemn Barchet to continuing death. Of the six people who had known the fate of Senator Thurman, only Barchet was likely to crack and reveal the truth-and Barchet was out of the picture now.

* * *

The eighth day of the hearing came and went; Vorys grilled poor Lurie mercilessly on minor scientific details, while Brewster got Vogel to explain some of the surgical fine-points of the reanimation technique.

"You have to admire those two boys," Harker said after that session. "They've really brushed up on the pertinent subjects."

"I haven't had a quizzing like that since I left medical school," Vogel said, nervously tugging at the dark strands of his beard.

"And for what?" Raymond wanted to know. "Just to use up the taxpayers' money. They've found out all they want to know about us."

Harker nodded gloomily. You only had to pick up any newspaper, listen to any reasonably right-wing news commentator, attend any church, even walk in the street and talk to people at random.

The response was the same. Fear.

Fear of reanimation; fear of that one-chance-out-of-six that the result would be a so-called "zombie." Desperately Harker tried to counteract the swelling tide of fear. He scraped up money for a full-page ad in the Times, headed, THROW OUT THE BABY WITH THE BATHWATER?

His line of argument was that the reanimation process should not be condemned for its failures, but praised for its successes. It was in the early stages, the experimental years. What if aviation had been suppressed because of the early crashes? Research had to go on.

The response to the advertisement was a lessening of hysteria in responsible places; the Times itself

echoed his feelings in its own editorial the next day. But he sensed he was not reaching the people. And the people feared reanimation. There was no doubt of that, now.

The hearing rolled along into early June, and then one day Dixon announced that this was the last week; the committee would enter private deliberations preparatory to delivering its findings to the Senate as a whole.

Harker approached Senator Dixon privately and said, "Tell me, Senator-how are our chances?"

The Wyoming liberal frowned quizzically. "Hard to say. The Committee's deadlocked two-and-two, you see. We may fight all summer about it."

"Vorys and Brewster are dead against it?"

"Absolutely. They heed the voice of the people, you see, Every minority party has to. It's the way they became a majority again."

Harker said doubtfully, "How's the feeling in high Nat-Lib circles?"

Dixon shrugged. "Right now, the feeling runs toward taking the Beller labs over and continuing reanimation research under federal supervision-with you and Raymond still in charge, of course."

"Fine!"

"Not so fast," Dixon warned. "We've got a Congressional majority, but that doesn't mean a thing. The way the people are murmuring, it looks pretty bad for getting that measure through."

"You mean you may have to switch your stand?"

Dixon nodded. "Jim, you know all about political expediency. You tried to knock down the stone wall when you were Governor, and got nowhere. If the people say, junk reanimation, then we'll have to junk it."

Hotly Harker said, "Junk it? The way I was junked as Governor?"

Dixon smiled. "I'm afraid so. It's this business of the seven idiots, Jim. That scares people more than you can imagine."

"But we can lick that problem-eventually!"

"Maybe you can. But the voters don't believe that. All they see is the short-range possibility. And they're more afraid of having a loved one turn into a zombie than they are of death. After all, you can't very well kill your wife or son or father if you've had him reanimated and he turns out to be an idiot. You have to go on supporting him. It's pretty frightening."

Doggedly Harker said, "I think we can get over that particular hump."

"Then reanimation's in. Jim, I'm not so foolish as to think that we can ever go back to where we were two months ago. The Beller process exists; it can't be destroyed. But it can be battled around in committee and sidechannelled and circumvented until the time is ripe for popular acceptance. And the Party may have to do that to you, though I hope it doesn't happen."

“Do you think it will, though? “

Again the sad smile. “Read the newspapers, man. Read your mail!”

Harker read his mail.

He ploughed through hundreds of vicious, sweat-provoking letters. He sorted them out: favorable on one side, unfavorable on the other. The unfavorable pile grew so high it toppled over, and he started a new one; the pile of encouraging letters was no more than three inches thick.

They were letters of raw hate, most of them. The kind of thing that went, My beloved mother/father/sister/brother/son/daughter/aunt/uncle/grandmother/grandfather/ died last week, and I want to tell you she/he had a decent Christian burial and went to his/her eternal repose. Naturally I feel sorrow at my loss, but Yd rather be dead myself than let a loved one of mine get into your hands. Sure, maybe you’ll bring him/her back to life-but who wants to see the hollow mindless shell of someone you once loved? Not me, brother. Not me.

It was an enlarging experience to read those letters. Even when he had held public office, Harker had never received so many, nor such loaded ones.

It was astonishing. They gloated in the triumph of death, they thanked God they had not allowed their beloved ones to be reanimated, they extended curses for Harker and his whole family. He was the target of their hate, the symbol for reanimation.

At first he was irritated, then angered; anger passed, and turned into compassion. Perhaps some of these same people had written to him a month ago, pleading to have a loved one restored to them by the new miracle of science. Now, confused by the haze of conflicting tales, of lies and partial truths, their earlier willingness turned to repulsion.

Harker wearily baled the letters up again, and left Litch-field to spend some time with his puzzled, unhappy family. They were accustomed to seeing their father’s name in the headlines; it was old stuff to them. But this public hatred was new to them, and difficult for them to understand.

It was not too late, Harker thought. The forces of confusion could be put to rout; the dominion of death could at last have boundaries staked out.

But the public faith had to be regained. Some spectacular demonstration, some act of faith that would capture their imagination and end the sway of ignorance.

But what? How?

Harker had no answer. And the answer, when it came, arrived from an unexpected quarter.

Chapter XIX

AT LITCHFTELD again, the next day, Harker was reading through a lab report, comprehending not very much of it, when a diffident knock sounded outside his door.

Probably Lurie with the papers, he thought. “Come in!”

A slim figure in ecclesiastical robes entered. Harker blinked and said, "I didn't expect to see you here, Father Carteret."

"Nor I. But I thought I would make the trip."

"Sit down," Harker urged. "What's on your mind?"

"Jim, I asked you to come to me if you ever had any troubles. You have them now. I thought I'd stop over and find out if I could be of any help."

Harker felt faintly irritated. He liked the priest, but he felt no desire for unasked advice. "Father, if you've come to tell me I ought to quit this outfit while I still have my soul, forget it."

"The time for telling you that is past."

Harker stared at the priest coolly. "Then why are you here?"

"To help you. I have a suggestion for you-a rather strange one. But first: let me tell you that the Church is reconsidering its stand."

"What?"

Carteret smiled gently. "The Church moves slowly; don't anticipate anything for the next several years. But I have it on good understanding that as soon as your technique is perfect-that is, as soon as you can restore body and mind every time-the Church will no longer withhold its approval from reanimation."

Harker chuckled. "I'd say that bet was pretty well copped. The if there is a pretty big one."

"I know. But a necessary one. I'm praying for your success, Jim."

"You? But you warned me away from this thing!"

Carteret nodded. "You took the step, anyway. And perhaps I made an original error in judgement."

"Well, that's neither here nor there. Reanimation is going to be squashed by Congress anyway."

"What do you mean?"

"Simply that the defect in the process has aroused such public horror that Congress is afraid to legislate in our favor."

"And you don't expect to overcome that defect?"

"Not immediately. Another six months, maybe-but by that time it'll be too late."

Carteret steepled his long thin fingers reflectively. "You tell me, then, that your real problem is a failure of public relations. If you could sell your product to the people, Congress would follow along."

"In a word, that's it."

"I thought so."

“You said you had a suggestion to make,” Harker reminded the priest.

“I did. It’s an idea for capturing the stream of public opinion. I’m anxious to see your project succeed, Jim. It may sound strange, coming from my lips, but that’s the truth. I suffered to reach this opinion.”

“And what’s your idea?”

An odd smile appeared on Carteret’s thin face. “It’s one that bears the test of time, Jim. Our Savior went meekly to the Cross, and on the third day he rose. It was an act that has captured the imaginations and hearts of men for two thousand years.”

Harker frowned. “I don’t quite see-“

He stopped. Abruptly the deeper meaning of the priest’s words was borne in on him, and he stared at Carteret aghast, wondering.

“Would you do something like that?” he asked.

“If I had faith in my cause,” Carteret said. “Do you have faith in yours?”

Hesitantly Harker said, “I-think so.”

“Therein lies the answer, Jim. Think about it a while. Don’t rush yourself. I’ll leave you now, and let you get used to the idea.”

* * *

Alone, Harker stared through the office window at the dark, rain-streaked sky outside. Summer lightning crackled suddenly across the darkness; moments later thunder came rolling down from the hills.

A cold sweat came over him as he revolved Carteret’s words in his mind: Our Savior went meekly to the Cross, and on the third day he rose.

Do I dare, he wondered?

It was, he knew without doubt, the act that would settle the fate of reanimation for good. With success would come triumph; failure for him unquestionably meant the downfall of the project.

Shall I risk it?

Do I dare?

He thought back over a life that had lasted forty-three years, a comfortable life, most of it spent in easy circumstances as he rose through law school to political prominence, then down the other side of the curves into a shortlived obscurity. He had never known real danger in his life. There had been enemies, of course-political ones, who had worked his downfall. But that was a gentle kind of strife, a chess-game more than a pitched war.

This was different.

This was life or death, on the line-and for what? For a cause. He had never known a cause he might be willing to risk death for. Now that the risk presented itself, he wondered if he had the courage to submit to it.

Harker sat quietly for perhaps half an hour, thinking. Then he reached for the phone and dialed his home number. Lois answered. In a calm, level voice, he told her exactly what he was going to do.

She was silent for a moment; then she said simply, “Jim, why do you have to do this thing?”

How can I explain? he wondered. How can I show her that a moment can come when you stand between life and death, and the choice is entirely yours?

He said, “I think it’s the only way, Lois. It’ll prove to the world that reanimation can be trusted.”

“But the awful risk, Jim-“

One chance out of six for idiocy, he thought bleakly. “I wouldn’t do it if I thought it was risky, Lois. The whole point is that it isn’t risky. You think I want to be a goddam martyr?”

“Sometimes I think you do, Jim,” she said very quietly.

He chuckled harshly. “Well, maybe. But I know what I’m doing. It’ll hammer home reanimation the way no amount of talking ever could.”

After a long pause she said, “When-when would you do this thing?”

“I don’t know. I’d have to discuss it with the others here first. And we’d need to arrange for proper publicity. Unless the whole world finds out about it, there’s no sense doing it.”

Forty-three years of life converging toward one moment of decision in a bare little room on a rain-soaked New Jersey hill, Harker thought. And this is probably the weirdest motive for suicide in the history of the human species.

Lois said, “Do you have that much faith in those men?”

“Yes. How can we expect the people to trust us, if we don’t trust ourselves?”

“All right,” she said. Her voice held undertones of quiet resignation. “I guess I ought to fight and cry and tell you not to do it, but I know you too well, Jim. Go ahead, if you think you have to do this thing. I-I guess you might as well have my permission, because I know you’ll go ahead and do it anyway.”

There was the hint of a crack in her voice. Harker smiled palely, thankful that the roughly-furnished office he had here did not have a visual pickup on the phone. He did not want her to see his face now, for he knew his face was that of a frightened man.

“Everything’s going to be okay,” he told her, and broke the contact.

It was still raining. He pulled a waterproof from the closet, slung it over his shoulders, and dashed across the clearing to Mart Raymond’s office. The sky was dark, gray, bleak.

Raymond was working on records when Harker entered -proceeding mechanically, with the air of a man

marking time. They were all marking time, waiting for the Congressional decision.

Harker said, "Mart, tell me something."

"Go ahead."

"How close are you to ironing out the business of loss of mind?"

Raymond shrugged. "I told you. A month's more work, maybe. A little less, if we're lucky."

Nodding, Harker said quietly, "Look here, Mart: I'm going to pull a Mitchison." "Huh?"

"I mean, I'm going to jump the gun and announce that you've already straightened things up, and that from now on reanimation will work every time, provided no vital organs are damaged and that decay hasn't begun."

"What's the point of doing that? It isn't so."

"It will be so, sooner or later. Sooner, I hope. But I have an idea for a sort of publicity stunt, a grandstand play that should clinch the idea of reanimation's safety. Or else finish us altogether."

Harker walked to the window and stared out. Raymond said, "Jim, what the dickens are you talking about?"

Harker turned sharply. "Very simple. We're going to give a public demonstration of reanimation, sometime in the next couple of days. In order to prove the absolute safety of the process, I'm going to allow you to kill me under laboratory conditions and bring me back to life."

"Are you crazy?"

"Desperate. It's not quite the same thing."

"But suppose it doesn't work? What if you remember how Thurman looked?"

"I do. I'll take my chances. If it doesn't work, then we're not much worse off than we are now." Harker turned again and stared out the window.

The rain had stopped; the sun was out. A rainbow arched proudly across the low hills, a many-colored ribbon stretching out to the horizon.

* * *

Harker drafted two press releases during the afternoon, and by nightfall they had reached print in the newspapers. Both caused sensations.

At seven that evening he tuned in the video at one of the laboratory dorm lounges, and heard a news commentator say, "Exciting news from the Seller Research Laboratories of New Jersey today. The last technical flaw in the reanimation process has been licked, according to lab director Martin Raymond. The Seller Lab statement declared that from now on reanimation will be virtually foolproof, with no risk of possible insanity as before."

“As if to drive home the importance of this new development, a simultaneous statement comes from James Harker, who of course is closely affiliated with the reanimation researchers. Harker let it be known this afternoon that he is suffering from a rare heart ailment, one which has been hitherto impossible to correct because the necessary surgery cannot be performed on a living man.

“Harker declared that he is so confident of the Bellar technique’s results that he will submit to the operation, necessitating temporary ‘death’ and then will be reanimated at the conclusion of the operation.”

Harker listened soberly to this largely fictitious news broadcast. He had no heart ailment; the last technical flaw had not been eliminated.

But never mind, he thought. The essential fact was the last-the reanimation. The rest was camouflage.

One chance out of six. He felt oddly calm about his decision. At last he had found a cause in which he had faith, and he did not expect to be let down.

Chapter XX

THERE SEEMED to be a sheath of fog wrapped around him, or perhaps it was a section of cloud. White, soft, without substance, it buoyed him up. He did not open his eyes. He did not need to; the images he saw against the inner surfaces of his eyelids far eclipsed any the mundane world might hold.

Harker saw glowing masses of color, a sky of red bordered with turquoise, clouds of gold, smaller flecks of chocolate and ultramarine. He heard the distant rumble of voices, or was it thunder?

He remembered things.

He remembered someone (Mart Raymond?) looking down at him, lips drawn, eyes ringed with shadows, saying, “Jim, do you really want to go through with this thing?”

He remembered Lurie, looking awkward and ungainly. Poor Lurie. Lurie had got him into this whole mess in the beginning, hadn’t he?

Lois had been there too, her face a blank emotionless mask. And there had been others-the four senators, Vorys, Brewster, Dixon, Westmore. The four horsemen of the Apocalypse. The ghostly riders of death.

Reporters? Video men? Yes, there had been quite a crowd.

Harker stirred gently in the cradling mass of fog that held him. He had never been so comfortable in his life as now, lying in what seemed to be free fall, no weight on him, no conflicts meshing in his tired brain, nothing to do but relax and dream of yesterday.

There’s Vogel, he thought. The surgeon, wielding his tools. Complex dark many-tendrilled machine looming up over me. Yes.

Vogel is whispering something to someone now; I can’t catch it.

They lower something over my face. Sweet, too sweet; I breathe deeply.

I sleep. Time passes.

Harker floated gently, guiding himself with his arms, travelling lightly down a river of radiant brightness. No weight. No sensations. Only the endless lovely bath of color, and the distant rumble of thunder.

This is heaven, he thought, pleasantly. Not a bad place at all.

Timeless, voiceless, airless, lifeless. A kaleidoscope of blues and violets overhead. I am pure energy, he thought, unfettered by the ties of flesh.

This is the kingdom of death. There was the odor of lilies somewhere, a cool sweet white smell. I James Harker being of sound mind-

A golden flame, child-sized, soared near him in the noth-ingless. It's Eva, he thought. Hello, Eva. Don't you remember your dad?

The golden flame swooped laughingly past him and was gone. Harker felt a momentary pang, but it too passed on; this was heaven, where there was no sadness.

The rumble of thunder grew louder.

(Voices?)

(Here, Harker thought?)

I have given myself voluntarily into the hands of death, he announced silently. Of my own free will did I consent to have the sanctity of my body violated and the free passage of air through my nostrils interfered with. And with the stoppage of the heart came death.

Frowning, he tried to remember more. Recollection grew dim, though, as if he were glimpsing the world he had left behind through a series of warped mirrors. He could see faintly into the world of living people, but the surface was oddly glazed, unreal.

Again came thunder, louder, closer.

Someone said, "I think he's waking up."

Harker remained perfectly still, struggling to penetrate the meaning of those words. I think he's waking up.

Waking up? From death?

"He's definitely coming out of it."

Yes, Harker thought, I'm waking up. Returning to the blurred world I left behind so long ago.

He was still bound to that world. It would not release its grip on him. It wanted him, was calling him.

Recalled to life!

With a sudden convulsive moan and whimper, Harker woke.

* * *

His mouth tasted cottony, and at first his eyes would not focus. Gradually the world took shape about him. He saw three faces hovering above the bed in which he lay; behind them were green electroluminescent hospital walls, broken by a window through which warm summer sunshine Streamed in. Yes, he thought. Recalled to life. Yea, though I ixalk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. . . .

He matched faces with identities. The squarish face badly in need of a shave-that belonged to Mart Raymond. The Oval one, ringed by blonde hair shading into gray-that face belonged to Lois. And the other, the lean ascetic rectangle of a face, that was owned by Father Carteret.

Harker said, "I guess it worked. Where am I?" His voice was hoarse and rusty-sounding, like a musical instrument long neglected.

Mart Raymond said, "It worked beautifully. You're in Newark General Hospital. You've been here in anesthetic coma for two weeks. Ever since the operation."

Two weeks, Harker thought. It seemed like two minutes ago that Vogel had lowered the anesthesia cone over his face.

"How-did things work out?" he asked.

It was the priest who spoke. "Perfectly, Jim. You're a national hero."

He glanced at Lois, who bent over Harker and clutched his hand. Hers seemed cold, Harker thought.

They left him after a while, and he lay back in the bed, thinking that it was good to be alive again. The sunlight was bright and warm in the room; it should be nearly August, he thought.

Some time later he was fed, and some time after that a nurse appeared bearing a thick stack of newspapers. "The Times since your operation, Mr. Harker. Your wife thought you'd like to see them."

He thanked her and reached hungrily for the topmost paper. It was today's; the latest edition. The banner headline was, HARKER OUT OF COMA, and they had the picture of him that had been used for his campaign posters back in 2028.

He leafed back. . . . July 30, July 29, July 28. ...

At the bottom of the heap was the July 16 paper, with the account of his sensational submission to death. They described the event in detail: how, cheerful to the last, he had been wheeled into the operating room, anesthetized, killed. The operating room had then been cleared of all but the surgeons, who proceeded with the cardiac operation according to the papers. When the "operation" had been "successfully concluded," an hour later, the observers were called back. Thirty-eight people had watched his untroubled return to life.

He thumbed on through the papers. The suit of Klaus and Mitchison against Beller Laboratories had been thrown out of court on the 18th. The next day, the F.B.I. had repeated its earlier statement exonerating the labs of any guilt in the matter of the death of Wayne Janson, and this time there was no further statement from Jonathan Bryant.

There were statements from various ranking government officials, though. They unanimously favored setting up a federal research grant project for studying further applications of reanimation.

The nurse appeared and said, "Mr. Raymond would like to see you, sir."

"Send him in."

Raymond grinned and remarked, "You look like you've been getting up to date."

"I have been. Things look pretty good, don't they?"

"They look tremendous," Raymond said. "Dixon phoned from Washington to say that Vorys and Brewster have been won over. The Committee's recommending a multi-million dollar federal grant to us for continuing research."

"Great! Now I suppose you can lick the business of insanity, Mart."

Raymond grinned cheerfully again. "Didn't I tell you? We broke through that wall about four days ago. It's a matter of insulating the hormone feed lines. Yours was the last risky reanimation."

Before Harker could reply, the phone by the side of his bed chimed briefly. He picked it up and heard a voice say, "Albany calling for Mr. James Harker."

"That's me," Harker said.

"Go ahead, Albany."

There was a pause; then a new voice said, "Jim? Leo Winstead here. Just heard the news. Everything all right?"

"Couldn't be okayer, Leo."

Winstead coughed. "Jim, maybe this is too soon to ask you to think about returning to work, but I want to put a proposition to you."

"What kind?"

"New York State is short one senator right now. I have to appoint somebody to replace Thurman, I guess. And it seemed to me that you—"

Harker nearly let the phone drop. When he had recovered his poise he said, "I'm still a sick man, Leo. Don't shock me like that."

"Sorry if I did. But it's a job I think you're equipped to handle. Interested?"

"I sort of think I am," Harker said wryly.

When he had finished talking to Winstead, he hung up the phone and looked at Mart Raymond. "That was Governor Winstead. He's naming me to the Senate to fill the rest of Thurman's term."

“Wonderful!”

“I suppose it is,” Harker admitted.

He sent for Lois and told her about it, and she wept a little, partly for joy and partly, he suspected, because she did not want him to take on any new responsibilities.

Harker flicked the tears away. He stretched gently, mindful of his sutures.

Lois said, “It’s all finished, isn’t it? The struggling and the conniving, the plotting and scheming? Everything’s going to be all right now.”

He smiled at her. He was thinking that the stream of events could have come out much worse. He had taken a desperate gamble, and he and humanity both were that much the richer for it.

But the world as he had known it for forty-odd years was dead, and would not return to life. This was a new era- an era in which the darkest fact of existence, death, no longer loomed high over man.

Staggering tasks awaited mankind now. A new code of laws was needed, a new ethical system. The first chapter had closed, but the rest of the book remained to be written.

He squeezed her hand tightly. “No, Lois. It isn’t all finished. The hardest part of the job is just beginning. But everything’s going to be all right, now. Yes. Everything’s going to be all right.”

THE END