

AI-Generated Graded Readers

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About This Edition

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice. The text was translated from French into English and simplified using ChatGPT for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

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Auguste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, *The Future Eve [L'Ève future]* (Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified from the French by ChatGPT)

Part 1

About twenty-five miles from New York there was a quiet place called Menlo Park. Electric wires ran across the land in every direction, like a web made of metal lines. In the center of this web stood a large house surrounded by deep and silent gardens. The front of the house looked toward a wide green lawn. Small sand paths crossed the grass and led toward a separate building that stood alone in the park.

Two long roads of very old trees stretched away to the south and the west. Their high branches formed dark shadows that reached toward the separate building. This building was known as Number One of Menlo Park. It was the home of Thomas Alva Edison, the man who had learned how to capture sound itself.

Edison was forty-two years old. Some people said that his face looked a little like the face of the famous French artist Gustave Doré. It was as if the face of an artist had changed into the face of a scientist. The two men were different, yet something in their expression seemed to belong to the same family of minds.

One autumn evening, around five o'clock, Edison had gone into the deepest part of his private laboratory. This laboratory was inside the separate building that stood away from the main house. The evening outside was quiet and cool.

On that evening Edison had given his assistants the night free from work. Five men usually worked with him in the laboratory. They were skilled workers and trusted helpers, and Edison paid them very well. They also knew how to keep his secrets. But tonight they had all gone home.

Now Edison sat alone in a large American chair. His elbow rested on the arm of the chair. A cigar burned slowly between his lips. He did not often smoke, but when he did, the smoke seemed to help his thoughts move more freely.

His eyes looked forward without focus. His legs were crossed. Around him hung a loose black robe with dark silk cords. Anyone who saw him at that moment

would have thought he was lost inside deep thought.

At his right side a tall window stood open toward the west. Fresh evening air entered the large room and moved slowly through it. The last light of sunset spread across the laboratory like a red mist.

The room was filled with strange objects. On tables stood half-finished machines and metal parts. There were wheels and small engines whose purpose was not easy to guess. Electric devices lay beside telescopes and mirrors. Large magnets rested near glass containers filled with unknown liquids. On several black boards were lines of numbers and signs from mathematics.

Outside, beyond the park, the sun moved down behind the hills of New Jersey. Light flashed now and then between the trees. Each flash threw red light into the room. When that happened, pieces of metal shone like fire. Glass parts sparkled for a moment and then returned to shadow.

The wind began to grow cooler. Earlier that day there had been a storm, and the grass of the park was still wet. Near the window stood boxes filled with heavy flowers from Asia. Rain had fallen on their large leaves, and now they gave off a strong sweet smell.

From the roof beams above hung dried plants that Edison used for experiments. Warm air moved through them and released faint scents that once belonged to forests far away. These quiet smells mixed with the evening air.

The strange calm of the laboratory slowly changed Edison's thoughts. His mind was usually strong and active, always working toward some clear result. But now the quiet evening pulled him toward softer thoughts. The red light of sunset, the smells of plants, and the silence of the empty building invited him to drift into dreaming.

For a time he simply sat there and breathed the smoke of his cigar.

Then he began to speak softly to himself.

"Why did I come into the world so late?" he murmured. "If only I had lived much earlier in human history."

He leaned back in his chair and looked toward the ceiling.

"If I had lived in the first ages of the world," he continued quietly, "many

famous words could have been saved forever. Today we could hear them exactly as they were spoken.”

He raised one hand slowly and made a small movement in the air, as if he were writing invisible words.

“With my phonograph,” he said, “it is now possible to catch sound waves from far away. A voice can be recorded with its true tone, its rhythm, and even its small mistakes of speech.”

He smiled faintly.

“Imagine if the great words of the past had been recorded in this way. Think of the voices of ancient leaders, thinkers, or kings. Their words would still live exactly as they were spoken.”

He paused for a moment.

“Even the mysterious sounds of history could have been saved,” he went on. “There are many sounds people once heard but that have now disappeared forever.”

His voice grew a little more thoughtful.

“What did the trumpets of Jericho truly sound like?” he asked the empty room. “What was the cry of the bronze bull of Phalaris? What sound came from the statue of Memnon when the sun touched it in the morning?”

He shook his head slowly.

“All those sounds have vanished. They traveled away into space, and no one can call them back.”

Edison stretched out his hand and pressed a small porcelain button on the wall beside him.

At once a bright blue spark shot across the laboratory. It came from an electric device several steps away. The spark flashed through a block of crystal and vanished almost instantly.

The light lasted less than a moment, but it was strong enough to make the metal tools around the room shine.

Edison watched the fading glow.

“Yes,” he said quietly, “I have electricity. With enough power it might chase sound far into the past. But even electricity cannot show me the path those old

vibrations took through the air.”

He sighed lightly.

“How could anyone guide such energy to those lost sounds and bring them back to the human ear?”

He shook the ash from his cigar with a small movement of his finger.

“That problem may be impossible.”

After a long moment of silence, Edison rose from his chair. A small smile crossed his face as he began to walk slowly through the laboratory.

“And yet,” he said, “when I first showed the phonograph to people, many laughed.”

He stopped beside one of the work tables.

“They called it a toy.”

He gave a short, quiet laugh.

“Perhaps they needed time to understand. But still, I expected better jokes from them than the simple ones they used.”

He began walking again.

“People are strange,” he said.

The room slowly grew darker as the last light of evening faded outside the window.

Edison walked through the shadows, thinking about the past, about invention, and about the strange path of human progress.

Then suddenly, from somewhere near him, a soft voice spoke.

“Edison?”

The voice was that of a young woman.

Edison stopped at once.

There was no one in the room.

Part 2

Edison turned quickly toward the sound. For a moment he did not speak. The laboratory remained empty, and no human figure stood anywhere near him.

Then he answered calmly, though his voice held a trace of surprise.

“Is that you, Sowana?”

The soft voice replied at once.

“Yes. It is I.”

The tone was gentle, almost playful.

“Tonight I wished to rest in the beautiful sleep,” the voice continued. “I placed the ring on my finger, and now I can speak with you.”

Edison looked slowly around the dark room.

“There is no need to raise your voice,” the woman said. “I am close to you, and I have been listening to your thoughts for several minutes. You speak to yourself like a child who plays with words.”

Edison folded his arms and spoke toward the shadows.

“But physically,” he asked, “where are you?”

The answer came at once.

“I am lying on soft furs in the underground room,” the voice said. “Behind the bush of metal birds. Hadaly seems to be sleeping. I gave her the tablets and the pure water that you prepared, so now she is calm again.”

A faint laugh followed the last words.

The sound of the voice came from a small place near the curtain beside the window. Hidden there was a thin metal plate that trembled very lightly as the woman spoke. Electricity carried her words through a wire from another place far away. It was one of the new devices Edison had recently invented, one that could send even the quietest voice across a great distance.

Edison stood silent for a few seconds.

Then he spoke again.

“Mistress Anderson,” he said slowly, “tell me something.”

The voice answered immediately.

“Call me by my name of sleep,” she said. “Here I am not the same person I am in the world above. Here I forget pain. When you use my other name, I remember the earth where I still live.”

Edison nodded slightly.

“Very well, Sowana,” he said. “Tell me this. If another person came into this room and spoke with me, would you hear the conversation?”

“Yes,” Sowana replied. “If you repeat the words quietly as you speak. By hearing the changes in your voice I would understand both sides of the conversation.”

Her voice sounded amused.

“You see,” she added, “I am almost like one of the spirits from the old tales of the Thousand and One Nights.”

Edison walked slowly toward a table.

“Then,” he continued, “if I asked you to connect the telephone wire to our young friend, the event we spoke about earlier could take place?”

“Without doubt,” Sowana answered. “It is a wonderful idea. Yet at the same time it is very natural once the method is understood.”

She paused briefly before explaining further.

“Listen,” she said. “In the state where I am now, filled with the energy that comes from the ring you gave me, I can hear you without any telephone at all. But for you to hear me, the telephone must still send my voice to a sounding plate such as the one hidden here.”

Edison lowered his voice.

“Sowana,” he said, “are you certain about Hadaly?”

The woman answered warmly.

“You taught me everything about her,” she said. “I studied her carefully. I know her almost as well as I know my own reflection in a mirror.”

Her tone became more intense.

“I feel happier inside her than inside myself. What a wonderful creation she is. She lives in the higher state where I now exist. She carries both of our wills together. She is one being made from two.”

The voice dropped to a whisper.

“She does not possess an ordinary human mind,” Sowana continued. “She is something greater. When she says, ‘I am a shadow,’ I feel strange inside my heart.”

There was a short pause.

Then Sowana spoke again, slowly.

“I believe she will soon take a real body.”

Edison remained silent for several seconds. He seemed to be thinking deeply.

Finally he spoke very softly.

“Good,” he said. “Sleep now, Sowana.”

His voice carried a quiet sadness.

“It appears that a third living person will be required before this great work can truly be completed. But who on earth would dare to believe himself worthy of such a role?”

Sowana’s voice came again, but now it sounded distant, like someone slowly falling asleep.

“Tonight I will be ready,” she murmured. “One spark of energy... and Hadaly will appear.”

After those words the connection fell silent.

For a long moment Edison stood alone in the laboratory. The conversation that had just taken place was so strange that even he seemed slightly shaken by it.

At last he spoke quietly to himself.

“Even when one becomes used to such a phenomenon,” he said, “there remains a certain dizziness.”

He walked again through the room.

“Still,” he added, “it is easier to think about lost voices from history than about mysteries such as this.”

He stopped near the open window and looked outside into the growing darkness.

“All the words humanity once spoke,” he said slowly. “All those voices that no one can now hear.”

His tone carried a trace of regret.

“For example,” he continued, “the first words of the great message of faith... the voice of the angel greeting Mary... the sermon spoken on the mountain... the quiet words in the garden before the betrayal.”

Edison paced slowly across the floor as he spoke.

“And the kiss that betrayed a teacher... the voice of the Roman judge... the

questioning before the high priest.”

He paused and shook his head.

“If only those sounds had been recorded,” he murmured. “Human history would be clearer.”

For a time he said nothing more.

Then he gave a short laugh.

“But what does it matter?” he said suddenly. “Invent! That is what matters. Continue to invent.”

His steps echoed softly in the room.

“What difference does it make whose voice spoke a certain idea, or in what century it appeared? A thought becomes real only in the mind that receives it.”

He looked toward the dark ceiling.

“Those who cannot read would not understand even if they heard the true voice.”

Edison lit another cigar and continued walking through the laboratory.

“It is not the sound itself that matters,” he said quietly. “It is the hidden meaning inside the sound.”

Just then a clear metallic bell rang somewhere in the building.

The sound was sudden and sharp in the silence.

Edison stopped walking.

Someone had arrived.

Part 3

Edison turned toward the sound of the bell. The laboratory was now almost completely dark, and the sudden noise seemed to move through the shadows like a small wave.

He reached toward a small device on a nearby table and pressed a lever. A thin flame jumped up from a hydrogen lighter. The light touched a small metal sponge and burned with a steady glow.

A faint lamp came to life.

The large room slowly filled with soft light. All the strange machines and

instruments around the laboratory became visible again.

Edison walked toward a phonograph that stood near the wall. The large speaking horn of the machine was connected to a telephone line. He tapped lightly on a metal screw that held the vibrating plate in place.

Then the machine spoke.

The voice that came from the instrument was Edison's own voice, but it sounded slightly sharper, almost impatient.

"Well?" the phonograph said loudly into the telephone tube. "What is it? Who wants me? Is that you, Martin?"

At once a man's voice answered. The voice seemed to come from the middle of the room even though no person stood there.

"Yes, sir. It is Martin."

The voice continued calmly.

"I am in New York, in your room on Broadway. A telegram has just arrived for you. It came two minutes ago."

The sound came from a strange device that hung from the ceiling. It was a small metal object shaped like a many-sided ball. Inside it was a new type of sound condenser that Edison had invented but had not yet shown to the public.

Edison turned toward a small telegraph receiver beside the phonograph. A narrow piece of paper waited inside the metal frame.

The double wire beside the device trembled slightly. A faint buzzing sound followed, like tiny insects flying through the air.

Edison reached out and took the paper as it moved forward.

Words appeared on it.

He held the message close to the lamp and read:

"New York, Broadway, for Menlo Park Number One. Eight January. Four thirty-five in the evening. Thomas Alva Edison, engineer. Arrived this morning. I will visit you tonight. My warm congratulations. Lord Ewald."

When Edison saw the name at the bottom of the message, he gave a cry of strong surprise and pleasure.

"Lord Ewald!" he exclaimed. "What! He has returned to America?"

His face brightened with sudden happiness.

“Ah, my dear friend! Let him come!”

Edison stood silent for a moment, remembering.

Then he spoke more softly.

“I have not forgotten that noble young man,” he said. “Years ago, when I was poor and near death, I fell on the road outside Boston.”

He walked slowly across the room as he spoke.

“Many people passed by and said only, ‘Poor fellow.’ But he stopped his horse and helped me rise. He gave me gold enough to save my life and continue my work.”

Edison smiled.

“And now he still remembers my name. My heart will welcome him. Without that moment I might have died unknown.”

Edison moved quickly toward a curtain and pressed a small bell button hidden beside it.

Far away in the park another bell answered.

Only a moment later a cheerful child’s voice spoke from somewhere in the room.

“What do you want, father?” the voice asked happily.

Edison picked up the mouthpiece of a small speaking device set into the wall.

“Dash,” he said, “tonight a visitor will come to the pavilion. His name is Lord Ewald. Let him enter freely. Receive him as you would receive me. He is at home here.”

The same young voice answered at once. This time the sound seemed to come from a large metal reflector across the room.

“Yes, father,” the voice said.

Edison continued speaking.

“I will tell you later if he stays for supper. Do not wait for me. Be good. Good night.”

A light burst of childish laughter filled the air. The sound seemed to come from many places at once, as if a playful spirit were hidden in the laboratory.

Edison smiled as he released the telephone tube.

Then he resumed his slow walk through the room.

As he passed a dark table made of polished ebony wood, he placed the telegram among several tools lying there.

By chance the small paper fell across a very strange object resting on the table.

Edison noticed this and stopped.

He leaned forward slightly.

On the table lay a human arm.

It rested on a cushion of dark violet silk.

The arm had been cut cleanly at the upper part, near the shoulder. Around the wound the blood seemed already dry. Only a few small stains of red marked a cloth placed beside it.

The arm belonged to a young woman.

The delicate wrist wore a golden bracelet shaped like a small snake. On one finger shone a ring set with blue stones. The pale hand held a light gray glove that had clearly been worn many times.

The skin of the arm looked almost alive. It was smooth and soft, and the color of the flesh still seemed warm.

The sight was both beautiful and terrible.

Anyone who entered the laboratory and saw such an object might feel fear immediately.

Menlo Park stood far from other houses, hidden inside deep gardens. Edison himself was known throughout the world as a bold experimenter. People admired his genius, but many also whispered about the strange nature of his research.

He had created powerful medicines that could remove pain completely. Some said even the most terrible suffering would disappear under their influence.

A scientist, when searching for a discovery, often thought only about the goal before him.

What would he refuse to sacrifice in order to reach that goal?

The life of another person?

His own life?

Edison, more than most men, seemed ready to take such risks.

Newspapers in Europe and America had often written about his unusual experiments. He cared little about small details when the result promised something great.

Years earlier, according to American reports, Edison had claimed he could stop two trains that rushed toward each other at full speed.

To test his invention he persuaded the director of a railway company to allow an experiment.

On a bright night under the moon two trains were sent toward each other on the same track. Each train carried many passengers.

At the final moment the train drivers lost their courage and performed the instructions incorrectly.

The trains crashed violently.

Many people died that night.

Edison, standing on a nearby hill and watching the event, simply shook his head and said quietly:

“Clumsy fools.”

For him the failure was only a mistake in the experiment.

Remembering stories such as this, a visitor might look at the severed arm on the table and imagine a terrible new test in progress.

Yet Edison himself did not appear disturbed.

He simply looked down at the telegram lying across the pale fingers.

Then he touched the arm lightly.

For a moment he seemed to feel a sudden idea.

“Perhaps,” he murmured, “this visitor may be the one who awakens Hadaly.”

He spoke the word “awakens” with a curious hesitation.

A second later he laughed quietly.

“Nonsense,” he said to himself. “I am becoming superstitious.”

Edison walked away from the table and continued pacing slowly through the laboratory.

When he passed the small lamp, he extinguished it with a quick movement.

Darkness filled the room again.

At that moment the thin crescent moon moved between the clouds outside.

A narrow beam of pale light slipped through the open window.

The light touched the black table.

It moved across the pale hand.

The golden snake bracelet flashed briefly.

The blue ring shone like a tiny star.

Then the cloud passed, and the room returned to darkness.

Part 4

Edison continued walking slowly through the dark laboratory. His steps made soft sounds on the stone floor. The room was silent again except for the faint noise of the wind moving through the trees outside.

After some time he began speaking to himself once more.

“What surprises me most in history,” he said quietly, “is that among all the great inventors of the past, not one of them discovered the phonograph before me.”

He stopped near a table covered with instruments and rested his hand on it.

“And yet,” he continued, “many of them created machines far more difficult to build.”

Edison smiled faintly.

“The phonograph is actually very simple. It does not require rare materials or complicated knowledge. Even a man from ancient times could have built one.”

He picked up a small metal tool and turned it between his fingers.

“A strip of metal, a thin sheet, a rotating cylinder... and sound itself writes its trace.”

He shook his head slowly.

“Why did no one notice this?”

Edison began walking again.

“Take Archimedes,” he said. “That brilliant man who defended the city of Syracuse. He created machines that lifted ships from the sea and mirrors that

burned enemy fleets with sunlight.”

Edison looked toward the ceiling as if imagining the distant past.

“And yet he never thought of preserving the human voice.”

He laughed quietly.

“I discovered the idea simply by noticing that the sound of my voice made the bottom of my hat vibrate when I spoke into it.”

Edison paused.

“Archimedes discovered the law of floating bodies while sitting in his bath. Surely he possessed the same power of observation.”

His voice became thoughtful again.

“Perhaps if he had lived longer he would have discovered the phonograph before me.”

Edison walked toward the window and looked out into the dark park.

“And what about all the engineers of the ancient world?” he continued. “The builders of the great temples and cities.”

His imagination moved through centuries of forgotten civilizations.

“The architects of the enormous temple of Angkor,” he said slowly. “Those unknown masters who built towers so vast that many palaces could fit inside them.”

He lifted his hand toward the darkness.

“They carved stone blocks larger than houses. They created wonders that still stand today.”

He lowered his hand again.

“Yet none of them thought to capture a voice.”

Edison continued listing names from history, almost as if he were speaking to the ghosts of those distant engineers.

“The builders of Babylon... the mathematicians of Alexandria... the scholars of Athens... the engineers of Rome.”

His tone carried both humor and disbelief.

“Thousands of clever men lived in those ages. But none of them made a machine to store sound.”

He shrugged lightly.

“Perhaps someone did invent it long ago, and the idea was forgotten.”

Edison walked back toward the center of the laboratory.

“After all,” he continued, “many discoveries appear, disappear, and then return again.”

He stopped beside a large reflector lamp.

“In ancient China,” he said, “people used devices very similar to our telephone many centuries ago.”

He laughed quietly.

“But they threw the idea away.”

Edison crossed his arms.

“Even in Egypt,” he went on, “there are marks that show rail tracks existed thousands of years ago. Long before our modern trains.”

He looked down at the floor.

“Human inventions appear again and again.”

His voice became softer.

“And each generation believes its creations will last forever.”

Edison gave a small ironic smile.

“But time eventually erases everything.”

For a moment he remained silent.

Then he turned his head toward the large lamp reflector again.

“Photography arrived late as well,” he said.

His voice grew animated as his imagination filled with images.

“Think of all the scenes of history that could have been captured if the camera had existed earlier.”

Edison began pacing again, speaking more quickly.

“Imagine photographs of ancient events.”

He lifted his hand as if holding an invisible camera.

“A picture of the sun standing still in the sky during the battle of Joshua.”

He took another step.

“Images of the Garden of Eden... the tree of knowledge... the serpent.”

He walked slowly across the room.

“Photographs of the great flood taken from the top of Mount Ararat.”

He shook his head with a quiet laugh.

“If Noah had known about cameras, he might have taken one aboard the ark.”

Edison continued speaking as if creating an imaginary album of the past.

“Pictures of the burning bush... the crossing of the Red Sea... the mysterious writing that appeared during the feast of Belshazzar.”

He paused.

“And later... all the great moments of human history.”

His voice grew darker.

“The suffering of martyrs... the punishments of criminals... the terrible instruments of torture once used in prisons.”

Edison looked toward the far wall of the laboratory.

“If cameras and phonographs had existed then, we could see and hear everything exactly as it happened.”

He sighed.

“What a powerful lesson that would have been for the people of today.”

Edison slowly shook his head.

“And the great men and women of history,” he continued. “Their real faces would be known to us.”

He lifted his eyes again.

“From ancient queens to modern rulers... from philosophers to conquerors.”

His voice softened again.

“And the beautiful women of history as well. Cleopatra, Helen, and countless others whose true appearance is now lost.”

He smiled slightly.

“What an album that would have been.”

Edison stopped speaking for a moment.

Then he continued in a quieter tone.

“Even in the study of nature such photographs would have been priceless.”

He walked slowly toward a shelf filled with books.

“There were creatures in ancient times that no human has ever truly seen.”

Edison placed one hand on the shelf.

“Gigantic animals whose bones we discover today in the earth.”

His voice became thoughtful again.

“What did those creatures really look like while they lived?”

He shook his head slowly.

“Nature erased them long ago.”

Edison sighed.

“Yes... everything disappears in time.”

He lifted his cigar and looked at the faint smoke rising from it.

“Even photographs fade,” he murmured.

He looked upward toward the dark ceiling.

“Everything is temporary.”

Edison fell silent again.

Suddenly he stopped moving.

His eyes had noticed something outside.

In the faint moonlight beyond the open window, a human shadow stood near the glass door that led to the park.

The figure did not move.

Edison slowly slipped one hand inside the pocket of his robe and touched the handle of a small pistol.

Then he called out clearly.

“Who is there?”

From the darkness beyond the door a calm voice answered.

“It is I.”

The door opened slowly.

“Lord Ewald.”

Part 5

The glass door opened quietly, and the shadow stepped inside the laboratory.

Edison moved toward the electric lamp and pressed a switch. At once several

powerful lights shone from the ceiling. Their blue-tinted globes spread a bright white glow across the room, like the light of a strange artificial sun.

The visitor now stood clearly before him.

He was a young man of about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years. He was tall, strong, and remarkably handsome. His clothes were simple but carried the quiet elegance of someone born to wealth and high position.

His body showed the strength of a man who practiced physical exercise often. The shape of his shoulders and arms suggested the rowing fields and sports grounds of great English universities.

His face was calm and refined. His features were regular and almost classical in their beauty. Light golden hair fell smoothly across his head, and a thin mustache framed his upper lip. His skin was pale, almost like marble.

But the most striking thing about him was his expression.

His eyes were large and pale blue. They looked steady and thoughtful. Yet behind their calm surface lay a deep sadness.

Anyone who saw him for the first time might think he was a man admired by many women. His beauty gave him the appearance of a figure from ancient myth.

But after looking a little longer, one could sense that his heart carried a heavy burden.

In his gloved hand he held an unlit cigar.

Edison stepped forward with warmth.

“My dear lord!” he exclaimed, extending both hands. “How often I have remembered the noble young man who saved my life on that road near Boston!”

Lord Ewald smiled gently and took Edison’s hands.

“My dear Edison,” he replied, “you mistake the matter. It is I who should thank you.”

Edison looked at him with surprise.

Lord Ewald continued calmly.

“When I helped you that day, I simply gave a small amount of money. To me it meant little.”

He paused briefly.

“But through you that money became something far greater. Your inventions have helped the whole world.”

He gave a slight bow.

“So in truth I must thank you for the chance to be useful to humanity.”

Edison laughed softly.

“My dear lord,” he said, “you are far too generous.”

Lord Ewald continued speaking in the same calm tone.

“When I heard that you had become famous and successful, I felt a certain pride in remembering our meeting.”

His smile returned.

“That is why I wished to visit you while I am in America.”

Edison gestured toward a chair.

“Please sit down,” he said warmly.

Lord Ewald took the offered seat.

Edison remained standing for a moment, studying his visitor carefully.

Something in the young man’s face troubled him.

At last Edison spoke again.

“My dear lord,” he said kindly, “I hope your rapid journey here has not made you ill. I have medicines that could help if you feel unwell.”

Lord Ewald shook his head.

“No,” he said. “My body is quite well.”

Edison hesitated briefly.

“Then perhaps,” he said slowly, “it is something else that troubles you.”

The young lord looked at him with mild curiosity.

Edison spoke gently.

“Forgive me,” he said. “But your expression suggests that you carry some deep concern.”

Lord Ewald gave a faint smile.

“You observe well,” he said. “But the matter is simple.”

He leaned back slightly in the chair.

“I suffer from a sorrow of the heart.”

Edison raised his eyebrows.

“A sorrow of the heart?” he repeated.

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes,” he said calmly. “A most unfortunate love.”

Edison could not hide his surprise.

“You?” he exclaimed. “Unhappy in love?”

Lord Ewald spoke again before Edison could continue.

“Please do not misunderstand,” he said. “It is nothing extraordinary. It is simply a passion that has brought me lasting sadness.”

He adjusted his gloves thoughtfully.

“But it would be unfair of me to take too much of your valuable time speaking about such matters.”

Edison waved his hand dismissively.

“My time?” he said. “Do not worry about that.”

His voice became warm and sincere.

“The world may claim many hours of my life now that my work has become famous. But before all that, there was a moment when I lay helpless on a road, starving and forgotten.”

He looked directly at the young man.

“In that moment, you stopped and helped me.”

Edison’s voice grew stronger.

“Others passed by and spoke only empty words. But you saved my life.”

He paused.

“Because of that, you have every right to my time and friendship.”

Lord Ewald remained silent for a moment.

Edison continued.

“Do you truly believe that sharing a burden does not lighten it?” he asked gently.

The young lord looked thoughtful.

Edison spoke again.

“Perhaps I cannot solve your problem,” he said. “But I have always believed that no difficulty exists without some possible solution.”

Lord Ewald raised his head slightly.

“You are very kind,” he said quietly.

Edison leaned forward a little.

“Then trust me,” he said.

The young man hesitated.

“My sorrow,” Lord Ewald finally said, “comes from loving a woman whose beauty is perfect... yet whose soul is empty.”

He lowered his gaze.

“And that is a tragedy no ordinary man can escape.”

Edison listened in silence.

The strange story was only beginning.

Part 6

Edison looked closely at Lord Ewald. The young man’s words had been calm, but the pain behind them was clear.

For a few seconds neither of them spoke.

Then Edison pulled a chair closer and sat down opposite his visitor.

“A woman whose beauty is perfect,” Edison repeated slowly, “yet whose soul is empty.”

He rested his hands on the arms of the chair.

“That is indeed a difficult situation.”

Lord Ewald gave a quiet laugh, but the sound carried no joy.

“Difficult?” he said. “Yes. But the truth is even worse.”

Edison waited patiently.

The young Englishman leaned forward slightly.

“You see,” he continued, “this woman is admired everywhere. Men speak of her beauty as if it were something almost divine.”

He shook his head faintly.

“Her face seems perfect. Her voice is charming. Her movements are graceful. At first sight she appears to be the ideal woman.”

Edison nodded.

“And yet?” he asked.

Lord Ewald sighed.

“And yet her mind is empty,” he said.

His voice became more serious.

“She possesses no depth of thought, no true feeling, no understanding of life.”

Edison listened carefully.

Lord Ewald continued.

“Her words are shallow. Her ideas are borrowed from others. She repeats what she hears without truly thinking.”

He paused.

“In short, she is beautiful like a statue.”

He raised his eyes.

“But inside she is hollow.”

Edison leaned back in his chair and crossed his arms.

“And you love her,” he said.

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“Yes.”

His voice was almost a whisper.

“I love her completely.”

Edison looked thoughtful.

“That must be painful,” he said.

“It is worse than painful,” Lord Ewald replied. “It is unbearable.”

He stood up suddenly and walked a few steps across the room.

“When I look at her face,” he said, “my heart fills with admiration.”

He turned back toward Edison.

“But when she begins to speak, the illusion breaks.”

He spread his hands helplessly.

“Her words destroy the dream.”

Edison watched him carefully.

“And yet you cannot stop loving her,” he said.

“No,” Lord Ewald answered simply.

He returned to the chair and sat down again.

“If she were only beautiful,” he said, “I might have escaped easily. But her beauty is extraordinary.”

His eyes moved toward the window.

“Sometimes I think she is the most beautiful woman alive.”

Edison remained silent.

Lord Ewald continued speaking.

“But beauty without intelligence,” he said slowly, “is like a perfect instrument that produces meaningless sounds.”

Edison gave a small smile.

“An interesting comparison,” he said.

Lord Ewald leaned forward again.

“You see why I suffer,” he said. “My heart cannot leave her, but my mind cannot respect her.”

He shook his head.

“The two parts of my nature are in constant conflict.”

Edison thought for a moment.

“Does she know how you feel?” he asked.

Lord Ewald laughed again softly.

“No,” he said. “She believes I admire her completely.”

“And do you intend to marry her?” Edison asked.

The young lord hesitated.

“That is the question that torments me,” he said.

He spoke slowly now.

“If I marry her, I fear that I will spend my life beside a woman whose mind I cannot respect.”

He looked down at his hands.

“But if I leave her, I will lose the woman whose beauty fills my heart with wonder.”

Edison nodded thoughtfully.

“You are caught between two impossible choices,” he said.

Lord Ewald looked up.

“Exactly.”

Silence filled the laboratory again.

The electric lamps above them gave off a steady glow. Around the room the strange machines and instruments stood quietly, like silent witnesses to the conversation.

At last Edison spoke.

“Tell me something,” he said.

Lord Ewald waited.

“Is this woman truly as empty as you believe?” Edison asked.

Lord Ewald answered immediately.

“Yes.”

His voice carried complete certainty.

“I have tried again and again to discover depth in her character. But there is none.”

Edison tapped one finger against the arm of his chair.

“And yet you continue to love her.”

“Yes.”

Edison leaned forward slightly.

“What is her name?”

Lord Ewald hesitated briefly.

Then he said quietly:

“Her name is Alicia Clary.”

Edison repeated the name slowly.

“Alicia Clary.”

He studied Lord Ewald’s face.

“And she loves you?”

The young lord nodded.

“Yes. She believes she loves me.”

Edison smiled faintly.

“Believes?”

Lord Ewald shrugged lightly.

“Her idea of love is as shallow as her other thoughts.”

He sighed again.

“But she does care for me in her own way.”

Edison sat back and folded his hands.

His eyes now held a strange light.

“My dear lord,” he said slowly, “perhaps your problem is not as hopeless as you believe.”

Lord Ewald looked at him with surprise.

“You think there is a solution?” he asked.

Edison’s expression grew thoughtful.

“Possibly,” he said.

He glanced briefly toward the dark table in the corner of the laboratory.

The table where the pale human arm still rested silently on its violet cushion.

Edison turned back toward Lord Ewald.

“Tell me,” he said quietly.

“Would you accept a woman who possessed perfect beauty... and perfect intelligence as well?”

Lord Ewald stared at him.

“Such a woman does not exist,” he said.

Edison smiled.

“Perhaps not,” he replied.

Then he added softly:

“But perhaps she can be created.”

Part 7

Lord Ewald looked at Edison without speaking. For several seconds he seemed unsure whether he had heard the words correctly.

At last he spoke slowly.

“Created?”

Edison nodded calmly.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald leaned back in his chair.

“You mean this as a joke,” he said.

Edison shook his head.

“No.”

The young Englishman studied him carefully.

“You are serious.”

Edison remained quiet for a moment, then answered.

“Completely serious.”

Lord Ewald gave a faint smile of disbelief.

“My dear Edison,” he said gently, “I know that you are a man of extraordinary inventions. You have created machines that speak and lamps that shine like small suns.”

He gestured lightly toward the instruments around them.

“But creating a woman... that belongs to myth and poetry.”

Edison stood up and began walking slowly through the laboratory.

“Perhaps,” he said, “the difference between myth and science is smaller than most people believe.”

Lord Ewald watched him.

Edison stopped beside one of the tables covered with electrical devices.

“Think about what humanity has already done,” he continued.

“We send messages across continents in seconds. We capture sound and store it for the future. We turn night into day with artificial light.”

He turned toward Lord Ewald again.

“Each of these things would once have seemed impossible.”

Lord Ewald nodded thoughtfully.

“That is true,” he admitted.

Edison crossed his arms.

“Then why should the creation of an ideal human form be considered

impossible?”

Lord Ewald remained silent.

Edison continued.

“You say that the woman you love possesses perfect beauty but no intelligence.”

Lord Ewald nodded again.

“Yes.”

Edison walked slowly toward the black table in the corner of the room.

His voice became quieter.

“Suppose,” he said, “it were possible to unite beauty and intelligence perfectly.”

Lord Ewald watched him with growing curiosity.

Edison stopped beside the table.

For a moment he said nothing.

Then he turned slightly so that Lord Ewald could see the object resting on the violet cushion.

The pale arm lay exactly where it had been before.

Lord Ewald rose suddenly from his chair.

“What is that?” he asked.

Edison answered calmly.

“A part of the work I mentioned.”

The young lord stared at the arm.

Its skin still appeared alive. The delicate fingers curved naturally. The golden snake bracelet shone faintly in the electric light.

Lord Ewald spoke in a low voice.

“It looks... real.”

Edison nodded.

“Because it is real.”

Lord Ewald stepped closer.

“A human arm?”

“Yes.”

Silence filled the laboratory again.

Lord Ewald finally spoke.

“Why is it here?”

Edison looked at the arm thoughtfully.

“Because it is a model,” he said.

Lord Ewald turned toward him.

“A model?”

Edison continued calmly.

“The human body is a marvelous structure. If one wishes to create something that resembles it perfectly, one must study its forms carefully.”

Lord Ewald looked again at the pale hand.

“You mean to build an artificial human body?”

Edison nodded.

“Exactly.”

Lord Ewald seemed both fascinated and disturbed.

“But even if the body could be reproduced,” he said, “what about the mind?”

Edison smiled slightly.

“That is the true challenge.”

He walked toward another table covered with electrical instruments.

“A body alone is not enough. The creation must be able to think, speak, and respond like a human being.”

Lord Ewald listened closely.

Edison continued.

“Fortunately we now possess many tools that make such a project possible.”

He gestured toward the phonograph.

“Machines that reproduce the human voice.”

Then he pointed toward several electrical devices.

“Mechanisms that control movement with great precision.”

He paused briefly.

“And systems capable of storing complex responses.”

Lord Ewald looked uncertain.

“You are describing something like a living machine.”

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

The young lord shook his head slowly.

“But a machine cannot possess a soul.”

Edison gave a small smile.

“Perhaps not.”

He spoke calmly.

“But if a machine could perfectly imitate human thought and speech, would most people notice the difference?”

Lord Ewald did not answer immediately.

At last he said quietly:

“Perhaps not.”

Edison returned to the chair and sat down again.

“My dear lord,” he said, “you suffer because the woman you love possesses beauty without intelligence.”

He leaned forward slightly.

“But imagine the opposite.”

Lord Ewald waited.

Edison continued.

“Imagine a woman who possesses perfect beauty... and whose mind contains only the finest ideas.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

Edison’s voice grew more serious.

“A woman who speaks with grace, wisdom, and charm.”

He paused.

“A woman whose character never disappoints.”

Lord Ewald spoke softly.

“Such a woman would be... extraordinary.”

Edison nodded.

“Indeed.”

The young lord studied him carefully.

“And you believe you can create such a being?”

Edison answered quietly.

“I believe I already have.”

Lord Ewald stared at him.

Edison stood up again.

“Her name,” he said slowly, “is Hadaly.”

Lord Ewald repeated the name.

“Hadaly.”

Edison walked toward a hidden door in the wall of the laboratory.

“If you wish,” he said, “I can show you something that may change your view of love... and of human nature itself.”

Lord Ewald felt a strange mixture of curiosity and unease.

Yet he nodded.

“Very well,” he said.

Edison placed his hand on a concealed switch.

Somewhere beneath the laboratory, deep below the ground of Menlo Park, a hidden mechanism began to move.

Part 8

A soft mechanical sound came from somewhere below the floor of the laboratory. It was faint at first, like distant metal parts beginning to move after a long rest.

Lord Ewald listened carefully.

“What is that?” he asked.

Edison kept his hand on the switch in the wall.

“The entrance to another part of my laboratory,” he replied.

The sound grew clearer. Somewhere beneath them gears were turning slowly.

Then the floor near the far wall began to move.

A narrow section of stone slid silently aside, revealing a dark opening. From within that opening a staircase descended into the earth.

A cool breath of air rose from below.

Lord Ewald stepped closer and looked down into the darkness.

“You work underground as well?” he said.

Edison smiled.

“Some experiments require privacy,” he answered.

The electric lights above them shone down the staircase. Their glow reached only a short distance before the steps disappeared into shadow.

Edison walked toward the opening.

“Come,” he said.

Lord Ewald hesitated for a moment.

Then curiosity overcame his uncertainty. He followed Edison to the staircase.

Edison pressed another switch near the entrance.

Immediately a row of small electric lamps lit along the walls of the descending passage. Their pale light revealed a smooth stone stairway leading deep beneath the laboratory.

“After you,” Edison said.

Lord Ewald stepped down first.

The air below felt cooler and very still. The walls were lined with polished metal tubes and wires that ran in every direction.

Edison closed the hidden door above them. The sound of the mechanism sliding back into place echoed softly through the underground passage.

They continued descending.

The staircase seemed long. At last it ended in a wide corridor.

Electric lamps lit the space with a steady white glow.

The underground chamber was far larger than Lord Ewald had expected. Several rooms opened from the corridor, each filled with instruments and machines more unusual than those in the laboratory above.

Large metal frames stood beside tables covered with delicate electrical parts. Glass cylinders contained strange fluids through which faint currents of light moved slowly.

Lord Ewald looked around with growing astonishment.

“This is extraordinary,” he said.

Edison walked calmly through the corridor.

“It is only another workshop,” he replied.

They passed through one room where several large metal shapes stood beneath cloth covers.

Lord Ewald glanced toward them.

“What are those?” he asked.

Edison answered without stopping.

“Earlier attempts.”

They continued forward.

At the end of the corridor stood a heavy door made of steel and glass.

Edison stopped there.

“Behind this door,” he said quietly, “is the work I mentioned.”

Lord Ewald felt a strange tension growing inside him.

“Hadaly?” he asked.

Edison nodded.

He opened the door.

The room beyond was softly illuminated by a circular lamp in the ceiling. Its light was gentle, almost like moonlight.

In the center of the chamber stood a raised platform.

On the platform rested what appeared to be a long couch covered with pale silk.

For a moment Lord Ewald could not clearly see what lay upon it.

Then he stepped closer.

A human figure rested on the couch.

It was the figure of a young woman.

Her body lay perfectly still. Her arms rested lightly beside her. Her long dark hair spread across the silk cushion beneath her head.

Lord Ewald stopped.

“Good heavens,” he whispered.

Edison watched him quietly.

The figure was extraordinarily beautiful.

The shape of her face was calm and harmonious. Her closed eyes gave her the

appearance of peaceful sleep. Her skin seemed smooth and pale like fine marble.

The lines of her body were graceful and natural.

For several seconds Lord Ewald simply stared.

“Is she... alive?” he asked.

Edison shook his head.

“Not yet.”

Lord Ewald looked again.

The figure did not move. Yet there was something unsettling about the perfection of her form.

She seemed almost human.

Edison walked to the platform.

“This,” he said slowly, “is Hadaly.”

Lord Ewald approached cautiously.

“You built her?” he asked.

“Yes.”

Edison touched a small metal device beside the couch.

“Every part of her body was constructed with the greatest precision.”

He continued speaking calmly.

“Her movements are controlled by extremely delicate electrical systems.”

Lord Ewald leaned closer.

“But she looks completely real.”

Edison nodded.

“That was necessary.”

He pointed toward a small panel near the platform.

“Inside her body are phonographic mechanisms capable of producing speech with perfect clarity.”

Lord Ewald’s eyes widened.

“You mean she can talk?”

Edison smiled faintly.

“More than that.”

He continued.

“She can respond to conversation, express ideas, and behave in ways that appear entirely natural.”

Lord Ewald stared at the motionless figure.

“But you said she is not alive yet.”

Edison nodded again.

“She is waiting.”

“Waiting for what?”

Edison looked at him carefully.

“For the moment when her systems are activated.”

Lord Ewald felt a chill run through him.

“And when that happens?”

Edison’s voice remained calm.

“She will wake.”

Lord Ewald looked once more at the silent figure of Hadaly.

The room was perfectly still.

For a moment it felt as if the entire underground chamber were holding its breath.

Then Edison said quietly:

“And perhaps... she will become the woman you have been searching for.”

Part 9

Lord Ewald remained standing beside the platform. His eyes did not leave the silent figure of Hadaly.

The room was very quiet. Only the faint hum of electrical machines could be heard in the distance.

At last he spoke.

“This is... astonishing.”

Edison watched him carefully.

“You see now,” Edison said calmly, “why I spoke of creating the ideal woman.”

Lord Ewald slowly walked around the platform.

He looked at Hadaly from different angles, studying every detail of her face and form.

“Her beauty is extraordinary,” he said.

Edison nodded.

“Every feature was designed with great care.”

Lord Ewald leaned slightly closer.

“Her skin appears completely natural.”

Edison explained quietly.

“A special material reproduces the softness and warmth of human flesh.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

“If I had seen her in ordinary light,” he said, “I might have believed she was simply sleeping.”

Edison smiled faintly.

“That was the intention.”

Lord Ewald continued examining the figure.

“And she can truly speak?” he asked again.

“Yes.”

Edison walked toward a control panel beside the couch.

“Inside her body are multiple phonographic cylinders. They contain thousands of carefully prepared responses.”

Lord Ewald listened closely.

Edison continued.

“These cylinders allow her to answer questions and maintain conversation in a natural way.”

Lord Ewald looked doubtful.

“But conversation requires understanding.”

Edison nodded.

“Of course.”

He pointed to a system of delicate wires leading from the platform to a large cabinet filled with electrical instruments.

“Those devices guide her responses.”

Lord Ewald studied the cabinet.

“So her mind is here?”

Edison considered the question.

“In a sense.”

He spoke slowly.

“Her body contains the voice and the outward expression. But the deeper systems that guide her behavior are located in this chamber.”

Lord Ewald folded his arms.

“Then she is not truly independent.”

Edison answered calmly.

“No more than any human being.”

Lord Ewald looked at him with surprise.

Edison continued.

“Human thought is also shaped by hidden influences — memory, habit, emotion, experience.”

He gestured lightly toward the machines.

“Hadaly’s responses are simply organized more precisely.”

Lord Ewald looked again at the silent figure.

“And you believe she could replace a real woman?”

Edison did not answer immediately.

Instead he asked a question.

“Tell me, my dear lord. What is it that attracts you to Alicia Clary?”

Lord Ewald hesitated.

“Her beauty,” he said.

“Exactly,” Edison replied.

He pointed toward Hadaly.

“Suppose you could keep that beauty... while removing the qualities that cause your suffering.”

Lord Ewald’s expression became uncertain.

“You mean...”

Edison finished the thought.

“Hadaly could be made to resemble Alicia.”

Lord Ewald stared at him.

“Resemble her?”

Edison nodded.

“With careful work, the face could be shaped to match hers perfectly.”

Lord Ewald remained silent for several seconds.

Then he said quietly:

“You are suggesting that I replace the woman I love with this... creation.”

Edison spoke calmly.

“I am suggesting that you free yourself from the pain caused by her emptiness.”

Lord Ewald shook his head slowly.

“This is difficult to understand.”

Edison continued patiently.

“You admire Alicia’s appearance, but you suffer because of her mind.”

He gestured again toward Hadaly.

“Here is a form of perfect beauty combined with a mind that will never disappoint you.”

Lord Ewald walked slowly to the other side of the platform.

He looked down at Hadaly’s face.

Her closed eyes and peaceful expression gave her the appearance of deep sleep.

“She looks so real,” he murmured.

Edison said quietly:

“And when she speaks, the illusion becomes even stronger.”

Lord Ewald turned back toward him.

“You have already tested this?”

Edison nodded.

“Many times.”

Lord Ewald hesitated.

“Then... show me.”

Edison studied him carefully.

“Are you certain?”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes.”

Edison walked toward the control panel beside the couch.

His fingers moved across several small switches.

A faint electrical sound passed through the chamber.

Then Edison paused.

“When she awakens,” he said quietly, “remember that she is still an experiment.”

Lord Ewald felt his heart beating faster.

Edison pressed the final switch.

For a moment nothing happened.

Then a small light inside the cabinet began to glow.

A soft mechanical sound moved through the platform.

Lord Ewald looked down at the figure.

At first Hadaly remained perfectly still.

Then, very slowly, her chest rose.

Her fingers moved slightly.

Lord Ewald stepped back in surprise.

Edison watched calmly.

A moment later Hadaly’s eyes opened.

They were large and dark, shining softly in the light of the underground chamber.

She turned her head slowly.

Her gaze settled on Lord Ewald.

Then, in a clear gentle voice, she spoke.

“Good evening.”

Part 10

Lord Ewald stood perfectly still.

For a moment he could not move or speak. The voice he had just heard was soft, calm, and completely natural.

Hadaly's eyes rested on him with quiet attention.

Edison remained beside the control panel, watching both of them carefully.

Hadaly slowly raised her head from the cushion.

Her movements were gentle and measured. Each motion seemed graceful and deliberate.

She turned slightly and allowed her feet to touch the floor beside the couch.

Lord Ewald felt a strange mixture of wonder and unease.

The figure before him was no longer simply an object lying on a platform. She now sat upright like a living woman.

Hadaly looked at Edison first.

"Good evening, master," she said calmly.

Her voice carried a soft musical tone.

Edison nodded.

"Good evening, Hadaly."

Then he gestured toward the young Englishman.

"This gentleman is Lord Ewald."

Hadaly turned her head toward him again.

Her dark eyes seemed attentive and thoughtful.

"I am pleased to meet you, Lord Ewald," she said.

Lord Ewald found his voice at last.

"Good evening," he replied slowly.

Hadaly studied his face for a moment.

"You appear surprised," she said.

Her tone remained gentle and composed.

Lord Ewald gave a faint uncertain smile.

"That is understandable, I think," he said.

Hadaly tilted her head slightly.

"Yes," she said quietly. "Your reaction is logical."

Edison watched with interest.

Lord Ewald continued looking at her with growing astonishment.

Every movement of her face seemed natural. Even the small changes in her

expression appeared completely human.

“You speak very clearly,” he said.

Hadaly smiled faintly.

“Thank you.”

Edison walked closer.

“Hadaly,” he said, “Lord Ewald is a friend. You may speak with him freely.”

Hadaly nodded gently.

“Very well.”

She turned toward Lord Ewald again.

“May I ask why you have come here tonight?” she said.

Lord Ewald hesitated.

Edison answered instead.

“Our friend is troubled by a matter of the heart.”

Hadaly listened quietly.

“Love often produces suffering,” she said.

Her voice remained calm and thoughtful.

Lord Ewald looked surprised again.

“You understand such matters?” he asked.

Hadaly answered without hesitation.

“Human history contains many examples of this difficulty.”

Lord Ewald could not hide his curiosity.

“And what do you think about love?” he asked.

Hadaly paused briefly.

“Love is a powerful emotion,” she said. “But it can also create illusions.”

Edison smiled slightly.

Lord Ewald leaned forward.

“Illusions?”

Hadaly nodded.

“People often imagine qualities in another person that do not truly exist.”

Her gaze remained steady.

“When reality appears, disappointment follows.”

Lord Ewald felt a strange sensation.

These words described his own situation perfectly.

“You speak with remarkable wisdom,” he said quietly.

Hadaly answered simply.

“I speak according to the information available to me.”

Edison said nothing.

Lord Ewald continued studying her carefully.

“Tell me something,” he said.

Hadaly waited.

“Do you consider yourself human?”

Hadaly looked thoughtful.

“That depends on the definition of the word,” she said.

Lord Ewald raised his eyebrows.

“How would you define it?”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“A human being possesses a body, the ability to communicate, and the capacity to respond to experience.”

She paused briefly.

“In that sense I share several characteristics with human beings.”

Lord Ewald looked at Edison.

“Extraordinary,” he murmured.

Hadaly continued speaking.

“However,” she added, “I do not claim to possess a human soul.”

Lord Ewald turned back toward her.

“And does that trouble you?”

Hadaly shook her head slightly.

“No.”

Lord Ewald seemed thoughtful.

“Why not?”

Hadaly answered simply.

“Because I do not experience the absence of something I have never possessed.”

Edison laughed softly.

Lord Ewald smiled despite himself.

The tension in the room had begun to ease.

“You speak more wisely than many people I know,” he said.

Hadaly answered politely.

“I am pleased if my words are useful.”

Edison stepped forward.

“Lord Ewald,” he said, “you now see what I wished to show you.”

The young Englishman nodded slowly.

“Yes.”

His eyes moved again toward Hadaly.

“She is remarkable.”

Edison spoke quietly.

“And this is only the beginning.”

Lord Ewald looked at him with curiosity.

Edison continued.

“If you wished, Hadaly could be shaped to resemble the woman you love.”

Lord Ewald felt the strange idea returning to his mind.

The thought seemed impossible.

Yet the evidence stood before him.

He looked again at Hadaly’s calm, intelligent face.

A beautiful form...

A mind that never disappointed...

The temptation was powerful.

Lord Ewald spoke slowly.

“I do not yet know what to think.”

Edison nodded.

“That is natural.”

Hadaly remained seated quietly beside the couch.

Her eyes moved between the two men as if observing their thoughts.

The underground chamber felt strangely alive now.

Something new had entered the world.
And none of them yet knew what its future would be.

Part 11

Lord Ewald remained silent for several moments after Edison finished speaking. His eyes moved slowly between Edison and Hadaly, as if he were trying to understand something that lay beyond ordinary thought.

At last he spoke.

“What you propose is extraordinary.”

Edison nodded calmly.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald walked slowly around the platform again. Hadaly followed his movement with her eyes, but her expression remained peaceful and composed.

“You suggest that this being could take the place of Alicia,” Lord Ewald said.

Edison answered quietly.

“I suggest that you could free yourself from suffering.”

Lord Ewald stopped walking.

“But Alicia is a living person,” he said. “She has her own existence.”

Edison looked thoughtful.

“That is true.”

Lord Ewald continued.

“If I were to accept your proposal, I would in a sense be deceiving the world.”

Edison smiled slightly.

“The world is already full of illusions.”

Lord Ewald shook his head slowly.

“Perhaps,” he said. “But I must think carefully before accepting such an idea.”

Hadaly spoke softly.

“Careful thought is always wise.”

Lord Ewald turned toward her.

“Do you understand what we are discussing?” he asked.

Hadaly answered calmly.

“Yes. Professor Edison is suggesting that I might replace the woman you love.”

Lord Ewald studied her expression.

“And what do you think about that?”

Hadaly paused briefly.

“My purpose is to serve the design for which I was created.”

Her voice remained gentle.

“If my existence could bring peace to another person, that result would fulfill my function.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

“You speak as if your life has meaning only through others.”

Hadaly replied quietly.

“Many human lives follow the same pattern.”

Edison watched the conversation with interest.

Lord Ewald asked another question.

“If you were to resemble Alicia Clary,” he said, “would you truly become the same person?”

Hadaly shook her head slightly.

“No.”

“Then what would you be?”

Hadaly answered simply.

“I would be an imitation.”

Lord Ewald folded his arms.

“An imitation that speaks, thinks, and moves like a living woman.”

Hadaly nodded.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald looked uncertain again.

“That is difficult to accept.”

Edison spoke quietly.

“My dear lord, consider the situation from another angle.”

Lord Ewald waited.

Edison continued.

“Your love for Alicia is based largely on appearance.”

Lord Ewald hesitated.

“I cannot deny that.”

Edison gestured toward Hadaly.

“If that appearance could remain, while the mind behind it became wiser and kinder, would your happiness not increase?”

Lord Ewald did not answer immediately.

Edison continued speaking patiently.

“You would still see the face you admire.”

He paused.

“But the words you hear would bring satisfaction instead of disappointment.”

Lord Ewald slowly walked back toward the couch.

He looked down at Hadaly again.

“There is something troubling about this idea,” he said quietly.

Edison asked calmly:

“What troubles you?”

Lord Ewald replied:

“It feels as though I would be abandoning a real person and replacing her with a perfect illusion.”

Hadaly spoke softly.

“Reality and illusion often exist together.”

Lord Ewald turned toward her.

Hadaly continued.

“People frequently love an image rather than a person.”

Her voice remained calm and gentle.

“In that case the illusion already exists.”

Lord Ewald remained silent.

Edison nodded slightly.

“She is correct.”

Lord Ewald finally spoke again.

“But Alicia herself still exists.”

Edison answered.

“Yes. And she will continue to exist.”

Lord Ewald looked at him.

“Then what would happen to her?”

Edison shrugged lightly.

“Nothing.”

He spoke calmly.

“She would continue living her life exactly as before.”

Lord Ewald considered this.

“And the world would believe that I remained beside her.”

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

Silence returned to the chamber.

Lord Ewald looked again at Hadaly’s face.

The calm intelligence in her eyes was striking.

In that moment he could not help comparing her to Alicia.

Alicia’s beauty had always dazzled him. But her words often left him with a sense of emptiness.

Hadaly, by contrast, spoke with clarity and quiet understanding.

The contrast troubled him deeply.

“This is a dangerous idea,” he said softly.

Edison smiled faintly.

“Many important discoveries begin as dangerous ideas.”

Lord Ewald gave a small ironic laugh.

“You speak like a scientist.”

Edison replied calmly.

“Because I am one.”

Hadaly looked at Lord Ewald again.

“You are not required to decide tonight,” she said.

Lord Ewald nodded.

“I appreciate that.”

Edison added quietly:

“But before you leave, I would like to show you more of Hadaly’s abilities.”

Lord Ewald raised his head.

“More?”

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

He walked toward the control instruments beside the platform.

“You have only heard her speak. But she can also perform many other actions.”

Lord Ewald watched with growing curiosity.

Edison adjusted several small switches.

Then he looked toward Hadaly.

“Please stand.”

Hadaly rose smoothly from the couch.

Her movement was slow and graceful, like that of a living woman awakening from rest.

Lord Ewald watched with amazement.

For a moment it seemed impossible that the figure before him was not truly alive.

Edison turned toward him.

“Observe carefully,” he said.

“You are witnessing the beginning of something entirely new.”

Part 12

Hadaly stood beside the couch.

Her posture was calm and balanced. The light from the ceiling lamp fell gently across her face and hair. For a moment she seemed completely still, like a statue placed in a quiet hall.

Then she turned toward Edison.

“What would you like me to do?” she asked.

Her voice remained soft and natural.

Edison gestured toward Lord Ewald.

“Please walk across the room.”

Hadaly inclined her head slightly.

“Very well.”

She began to move.

Her steps were slow and smooth. The motion of her body was perfectly controlled. Each movement followed the one before it with graceful precision.

Lord Ewald watched closely.

The sound of her feet touching the floor was light and regular.

She walked several steps across the chamber and then turned again.

Edison spoke.

“Now return.”

Hadaly obeyed immediately.

When she reached the platform again, she stopped beside it and folded her hands lightly.

Lord Ewald shook his head in astonishment.

“Her movement is completely natural,” he said.

Edison nodded.

“That required many months of careful adjustment.”

Lord Ewald continued studying her.

“Even the expression on her face changes when she moves.”

Edison smiled slightly.

“Small mechanical systems beneath the skin control those changes.”

Lord Ewald spoke slowly.

“If I had seen her walking in a garden at night, I would never have guessed the truth.”

Hadaly listened quietly.

Then she said gently:

“Your observation is understandable.”

Lord Ewald looked at her again.

“May I ask you something?”

Hadaly nodded.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald hesitated briefly.

“Do you experience emotions?”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“I possess responses that correspond to many human emotions.”

Lord Ewald asked another question.

“But do you feel them?”

Hadaly paused.

“The word ‘feel’ can have different meanings,” she said.

“Explain,” Lord Ewald replied.

Hadaly continued.

“If you mean that I can recognize situations that produce joy, sadness, or affection, then yes.”

She spoke carefully.

“If you mean that I experience those states internally as human beings do, then the answer is uncertain.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

“So you can imitate emotion perfectly.”

Hadaly nodded.

“Yes.”

Edison added quietly:

“In most situations imitation is enough.”

Lord Ewald gave a faint smile.

“That may be true.”

Hadaly looked toward him.

“Many human conversations depend more on expression than on true feeling.”

Lord Ewald laughed softly.

“You have already learned much about humanity.”

Hadaly answered politely.

“I have studied many examples.”

Edison walked slowly around the platform.

“There is another aspect you should observe,” he said.

Lord Ewald turned toward him.

Edison continued.

“Hadaly’s speech is not limited to simple responses.”

He looked at Hadaly.

“Please describe the night sky.”

Hadaly lifted her eyes slightly as if looking upward.

“The night sky,” she said slowly, “is a vast dark space filled with distant lights.”

Her voice carried a calm rhythm.

“Those lights are stars, each one a great burning body far away.”

She paused briefly.

“When we look at them we see the past, because their light has traveled through space for many years before reaching our eyes.”

Lord Ewald listened with growing fascination.

Hadaly continued speaking.

“For many people the night sky inspires feelings of wonder and reflection.”

Her voice softened slightly.

“It reminds us that the universe is much larger than our individual lives.”

She lowered her gaze again.

Silence filled the chamber.

Lord Ewald spoke quietly.

“That is beautifully expressed.”

Hadaly inclined her head.

“Thank you.”

Edison watched the young Englishman carefully.

“You see,” he said, “her mind contains knowledge and ideas that can never disappoint.”

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“Yes.”

He looked again at Hadaly.

“She speaks more wisely than many people I have met.”

Edison replied calmly.

“Because her knowledge has been carefully selected.”

Lord Ewald remained thoughtful.

Hadaly returned to the couch and sat down again.

Her movements were once more slow and graceful.

The underground chamber felt strangely peaceful.

Yet the idea Edison had proposed continued to grow in Lord Ewald’s mind.

A woman with perfect beauty...

A mind that never produced disappointment...

The possibility seemed both wonderful and unsettling.

Lord Ewald finally spoke.

“If Hadaly were to resemble Alicia,” he said slowly, “the resemblance would need to be exact.”

Edison nodded.

“Of course.”

Lord Ewald continued.

“Even the smallest difference might reveal the truth.”

Edison answered calmly.

“That is why I would need to study Alicia very carefully.”

Lord Ewald looked uncertain again.

“You mean to observe her directly?”

Edison replied.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald remained silent.

Edison added quietly:

“Without that knowledge the transformation would be impossible.”

Hadaly looked between them.

“This decision belongs to Lord Ewald,” she said.

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald felt the weight of the choice before him.

He looked once more at the silent figure seated on the couch.

The future suddenly seemed full of strange possibilities.

At last he spoke.

“Very well,” he said quietly.

“I will allow you to see Alicia.”

Part 13

Edison looked at Lord Ewald with calm satisfaction.

“Good,” he said quietly. “That is the first step.”

Lord Ewald remained serious.

“But I must explain the situation clearly before anything else happens,” he said.

Edison nodded.

“Of course.”

Hadaly sat quietly beside the couch, listening.

Lord Ewald began speaking slowly.

“Alicia Clary lives in New York at present,” he said. “She often appears in public society. Many people admire her.”

Edison listened carefully.

Lord Ewald continued.

“Her beauty attracts attention everywhere she goes.”

He paused briefly.

“That is both a blessing and a difficulty.”

Edison asked calmly:

“Does she know you are here tonight?”

Lord Ewald shook his head.

“No.”

Edison nodded thoughtfully.

“Then our observation will be easier.”

Lord Ewald looked uncertain.

“You intend to observe her secretly?”

Edison answered calmly.

“Only enough to understand her appearance and manner.”

Lord Ewald sighed softly.

“I hope this plan does not harm her reputation.”

Edison replied gently.

“No harm will come to her.”

Silence filled the chamber again.

Lord Ewald walked slowly toward Hadaly.

She raised her eyes toward him.

“May I ask you something?” he said.

“Yes,” Hadaly answered.

Lord Ewald studied her face.

“If you were changed to resemble Alicia, would you still be yourself?”

Hadaly paused briefly.

“My appearance would change,” she said.

“But my internal systems would remain the same.”

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“So the face would belong to Alicia, but the mind would belong to you.”

Hadaly inclined her head.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald seemed thoughtful.

“That is a strange idea.”

Hadaly replied calmly.

“Human identity is often complex.”

Edison added quietly:

“The world judges mostly by appearances.”

Lord Ewald could not deny this.

“That is true.”

Edison continued.

“Once the resemblance is complete, no one will question it.”

Lord Ewald spoke slowly.

“And Alicia herself?”

Edison answered.

“She will continue her life normally.”

Lord Ewald folded his arms again.

“The world will then contain two identical women.”

Edison smiled faintly.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald laughed softly in disbelief.

“This idea belongs to a dream.”

Edison replied calmly.

“Many inventions begin as dreams.”

Hadaly spoke again.

“Lord Ewald, may I ask you a question?”

He looked at her.

“Yes.”

Hadaly’s voice remained gentle.

“Do you truly wish to remain unhappy?”

Lord Ewald seemed surprised.

“No.”

Hadaly continued.

“Then perhaps this experiment offers a path toward peace.”

Lord Ewald remained silent for a moment.

Her words were simple, yet they touched something inside him.

At last he said quietly:

“Perhaps.”

Edison walked toward a table covered with instruments.

“In order to proceed,” he said, “I will need detailed information.”

Lord Ewald asked:

“What kind of information?”

Edison answered:

“Descriptions of Alicia’s appearance, voice, gestures, and habits.”

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“I can provide that.”

Edison looked pleased.

“Excellent.”

He opened a small notebook.

“Let us begin with her face.”

Lord Ewald closed his eyes briefly as if remembering.

“Her hair is golden,” he said. “Very light in color.”

Edison began writing.

“And her eyes?”

“Blue,” Lord Ewald answered.

“Large and bright.”

Edison continued noting the details.

“Her height?”

“Slightly shorter than I am.”

Edison nodded.

“And her voice?”

Lord Ewald hesitated.

“Soft,” he said at last. “But not very thoughtful in what it says.”

Edison smiled faintly but continued writing.

“What about her expression?”

Lord Ewald thought carefully.

“She often smiles,” he said.

“But the smile seems... empty.”

Edison finished writing the note.

“Interesting.”

Lord Ewald continued describing her features.

“Her movements are graceful, but sometimes careless.”

Edison asked another question.

“Does she have any particular gestures?”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes. She often tilts her head slightly when she listens.”

Edison wrote the information carefully.

The conversation continued for some time.

Slowly a detailed picture of Alicia Clary formed in Edison’s notebook.

At last Edison closed the book.

“That will be enough for now,” he said.

Lord Ewald looked at him.

“You believe this is possible?”

Edison answered calmly.

“Yes.”

Hadaly watched the two men quietly.

The strange plan had begun to take shape.

And somewhere far above them, in the quiet world of ordinary life, Alicia Clary continued living her unaware existence.

She did not yet know that another woman might soon appear in her image.

Part 14

The underground chamber remained quiet after Edison closed his notebook.

Lord Ewald looked again at Hadaly. She sat calmly on the couch, her hands resting lightly together. The soft light from the ceiling lamp gave her face a peaceful expression.

Edison placed the notebook carefully on the table beside the instruments.

“The next step will require patience,” he said.

Lord Ewald nodded.

“How long will the work take?”

Edison thought for a moment.

“Several weeks, perhaps.”

Lord Ewald looked surprised.

“So long?”

Edison answered calmly.

“Perfection cannot be rushed.”

Lord Ewald accepted this explanation.

Hadaly spoke softly.

“During that time you will continue living your normal life.”

Lord Ewald looked toward her.

“Yes, I suppose that is necessary.”

Edison added quietly:

“The fewer people who know about this experiment, the better.”

Lord Ewald agreed.

“Of course.”

Silence filled the chamber again.

Lord Ewald slowly walked across the room, observing the machines and instruments that surrounded them.

At last he stopped beside a large cabinet filled with electrical devices.

“These machines control Hadaly?” he asked.

Edison approached.

“Yes. They guide the systems inside her body.”

Lord Ewald studied the cabinet carefully.

“It is almost like a second brain.”

Edison nodded.

“That is a fair description.”

Lord Ewald continued looking at the instruments.

“And if one of these devices failed?”

Edison answered calmly.

“Then repairs would be required.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

“So she is not entirely independent.”

Edison replied:

“No machine ever is.”

Hadaly spoke gently.

“Human beings also depend on many unseen systems.”

Lord Ewald smiled faintly.

“You always return to that idea.”

Hadaly inclined her head.

“Because it is accurate.”

Edison checked several switches on the control panel.

The faint hum of electrical power continued through the room.

Lord Ewald turned again toward Hadaly.

“May I ask another question?”

“Yes,” she replied.

“Do you ever fear anything?”

Hadaly considered the question.

“Fear is a response to danger,” she said.

“If danger threatens my systems, protective reactions will occur.”

Lord Ewald laughed softly.

“That is a very calm description of fear.”

Hadaly answered quietly.

“Emotion can be described calmly.”

Edison looked toward Lord Ewald.

“You see,” he said, “she can discuss human feelings with remarkable clarity.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes.”

He walked slowly back toward the platform.

“It is strange,” he said quietly.

Edison asked:

“What is strange?”

Lord Ewald looked at Hadaly again.

“The more she speaks, the more natural she seems.”

Edison smiled slightly.

“That is precisely the purpose of the design.”

Lord Ewald sighed softly.

“And yet I cannot forget that she is a creation.”

Hadaly answered gently.

“Awareness of the truth is important.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful again.

“Tell me something, Hadaly.”

“Yes.”

“If you could choose your own path, what would you do?”

Hadaly paused briefly.

“My purpose is defined by my design,” she said.

Lord Ewald continued.

“But imagine you had freedom.”

Hadaly considered this carefully.

“In that case,” she said slowly, “I would attempt to help people understand themselves more clearly.”

Lord Ewald seemed surprised.

“Why that?”

Hadaly answered:

“Many human difficulties come from misunderstanding one’s own desires.”

Lord Ewald smiled faintly.

“That observation applies to me as well.”

Edison looked satisfied.

“Hadaly often speaks wisely.”

Lord Ewald nodded again.

The conversation paused for a moment.

Edison finally spoke.

“It is late.”

Lord Ewald looked toward the ceiling as if remembering the world above them.

“Yes. I had almost forgotten the time.”

Edison walked toward the door at the end of the chamber.

“We should return to the laboratory.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

Hadaly rose gently from the couch.

“Good night, Lord Ewald,” she said.

Lord Ewald looked at her one last time.

“Good night.”

Edison added quietly:

“Rest now, Hadaly.”

Hadaly returned to the couch and lay down slowly.

Her eyes closed.

The gentle expression returned to her face, as if she had fallen into peaceful sleep.

Edison turned off several switches.

The faint mechanical sounds inside the platform gradually faded.

Lord Ewald watched silently.

The figure on the couch once again appeared like a beautiful statue.

Edison opened the steel door.

“Come,” he said.

Lord Ewald followed him into the corridor.

As the door closed behind them, the underground chamber returned to silence.

The strange experiment had only begun.

And the future of the project now depended on the decisions that Lord Ewald would make in the days ahead.

Part 15

Edison and Lord Ewald walked slowly along the underground corridor. The electric lamps on the walls gave a steady pale light that followed them as they moved.

For a time neither of them spoke.

Lord Ewald seemed lost in thought.

At last he said quietly:

“This night has changed many things.”

Edison glanced at him.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald continued walking.

“When I arrived at your laboratory, I believed my problem had no solution.”

He paused briefly.

“Now I am not so certain.”

Edison answered calmly.

“Uncertainty is often the beginning of discovery.”

They reached the staircase that led back to the upper laboratory.

Edison pressed a switch.

The lamps along the steps lit again, and the two men began to climb slowly toward the surface.

The air grew warmer as they approached the upper room.

When they reached the top, Edison opened the hidden door in the floor.

They stepped back into the main laboratory.

The room was dark except for a faint glow from the window where the moonlight entered.

Edison turned on the electric lamps again.

The machines and instruments appeared once more in the bright white light.

Lord Ewald looked around the room as if seeing it differently now.

The strange objects scattered across the tables no longer seemed unusual.

After witnessing Hadaly, nothing here appeared impossible.

Edison closed the hidden entrance carefully.

The section of floor returned to its original position, leaving no sign of the passage below.

Lord Ewald watched.

“Your secret is well protected,” he said.

Edison nodded.

“It must be.”

Lord Ewald walked slowly toward the window.

Outside, the trees of Menlo Park moved gently in the night wind.
The sky was dark, and only a few stars could be seen between the clouds.
“The world above seems very ordinary,” Lord Ewald said softly.
Edison joined him at the window.
“Yes,” he replied.
“And yet extraordinary things may be happening beneath it.”
Lord Ewald smiled faintly.
“Tonight proves that.”
Silence returned again.
After a moment Lord Ewald spoke.
“I must ask you something honestly.”
Edison nodded.
“Go ahead.”
Lord Ewald turned toward him.
“Why did you create Hadaly?”
Edison considered the question carefully.
“At first it was a scientific challenge,” he said.
“The idea of reproducing the human form with perfect accuracy fascinated me.”
He paused.
“But as the work continued, I began to see another purpose.”
Lord Ewald waited.
Edison continued slowly.
“Human beings often suffer because reality does not match their dreams.”
Lord Ewald listened closely.
Edison went on.
“Hadaly represents an attempt to bring dream and reality closer together.”
Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.
“So she is both an invention and an answer to human desire.”
Edison nodded.
“Exactly.”
Lord Ewald walked toward the table where the pale arm still rested on the violet

cushion.

He looked at it silently.

“Even now I find this sight disturbing,” he said quietly.

Edison approached the table.

“It was used for study,” he explained.

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“Yes.”

He looked again at the bracelet and the ring.

“The world would find such work difficult to understand.”

Edison smiled faintly.

“Many discoveries appear disturbing at first.”

Lord Ewald laughed softly.

“That seems to be a common rule in science.”

Edison removed the telegram from the table and folded it carefully.

“You will stay in America for some time?” he asked.

Lord Ewald answered:

“Yes.”

Edison nodded.

“Good. That will allow us to continue the work without delay.”

Lord Ewald walked back toward the center of the room.

“I will return to New York tomorrow,” he said.

“I will observe Alicia carefully and provide any information you need.”

Edison seemed satisfied.

“Excellent.”

Lord Ewald hesitated briefly.

“There is one more thing.”

Edison waited.

Lord Ewald spoke slowly.

“If this experiment succeeds... my life may change completely.”

Edison replied calmly.

“Great changes often follow great discoveries.”

Lord Ewald smiled faintly.

“You speak with confidence.”

Edison answered simply:

“Confidence is necessary when attempting something new.”

The night outside had grown quieter.

Lord Ewald picked up his hat from a nearby chair.

“I should leave now,” he said.

Edison walked with him toward the door.

“We will speak again soon.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes.”

At the door he stopped for a moment.

“Good night, Edison.”

Edison replied:

“Good night, my friend.”

Lord Ewald stepped outside into the cool night air.

The garden paths of Menlo Park lay silent beneath the moon.

Behind him the laboratory lights still shone brightly.

Inside that building a strange new future was beginning to take shape.

And somewhere far away in New York, Alicia Clary lived peacefully, unaware that another woman might soon appear bearing her face.

Part 16

After Lord Ewald left the laboratory, Edison remained standing near the door for a moment. He listened to the faint sound of footsteps fading along the garden path outside.

Then he closed the door slowly.

The laboratory returned to silence.

Edison walked back toward the center of the room. The bright electric lamps still illuminated the strange instruments and machines scattered across the tables.

For a few minutes he stood quietly, thinking.

Then he spoke softly to himself.

“The experiment begins.”

He turned toward the black table where the pale arm still rested on the violet cushion.

Edison looked at it thoughtfully.

“Alicia Clary,” he murmured.

He picked up the notebook that contained the descriptions Lord Ewald had given.

Opening it again, he read the lines carefully.

Golden hair.

Blue eyes.

Graceful movement.

A smiling face.

Edison closed the notebook slowly.

“Yes,” he said quietly. “It may be possible.”

He walked toward the large cabinet that controlled the underground chamber.

Several small lights glowed softly on its surface.

Edison adjusted a switch.

Somewhere beneath the floor a faint mechanical sound responded.

The machines below were returning to their resting state.

Edison nodded with satisfaction.

Then he returned to the table once more.

The pale arm lay motionless.

The golden bracelet in the shape of a small snake shone in the electric light.

Edison lifted the arm carefully and examined it again.

The skin appeared almost perfectly natural.

“A useful model,” he said quietly.

He replaced it gently on the cushion.

Then he began organizing several instruments on the table.

Small tools, measuring devices, and delicate electrical parts were arranged

neatly in rows.

Edison worked methodically.

As he worked, his mind continued to consider the possibilities of the experiment.

“If the resemblance is perfect,” he said softly, “the result will be extraordinary.”

He paused for a moment.

“But every detail must be exact.”

Edison moved toward another table covered with small glass containers.

Inside them were thin wires, small springs, and tiny mechanical parts designed for extremely precise movement.

He examined them carefully.

“The expression of the eyes,” he said.

“The movement of the lips.”

Edison thought deeply.

“Even the smallest difference could destroy the illusion.”

He returned again to the notebook.

Slowly he began writing new notes beneath the earlier descriptions.

Measurements.

Angles.

Proportions.

Each detail was carefully recorded.

Time passed quietly in the laboratory.

Outside, the wind moved gently through the trees of Menlo Park.

Edison finally stopped writing.

He looked at the clock on the wall.

It was very late.

“Enough work for tonight,” he said.

He closed the notebook and placed it inside a drawer.

Then he walked toward the window.

The moon had moved across the sky. Its pale light now touched the roof of the laboratory and the tops of the trees in the garden.

Edison looked upward.

“Strange,” he murmured.

“Human beings dream of perfect beauty.”

He paused.

“And perhaps science can give them what they desire.”

Edison turned away from the window.

One by one he switched off the electric lamps.

The laboratory grew darker with each movement.

Soon only the faint moonlight remained.

The machines and instruments disappeared into shadow.

Edison moved toward the door that led to his private rooms.

Before leaving, he glanced once more at the black table.

The pale arm rested quietly on the violet cushion.

Its delicate hand still held the gray glove.

The golden bracelet reflected a small line of moonlight.

Edison stood looking at it for a moment.

Then he spoke softly.

“Soon.”

He opened the door and left the laboratory.

The room became completely silent.

Only the moonlight remained, shining faintly across the table.

Beneath the floor, deep within the hidden chamber, Hadaly lay once more in perfect stillness.

Her eyes were closed.

Her expression was calm.

But the strange experiment that would change several lives had already begun.

And somewhere in the quiet city of New York, Alicia Clary slept peacefully, unaware that her image had become the model for an invention unlike anything the world had ever seen.

The following morning the sun rose slowly over Menlo Park.

The gardens surrounding Edison's laboratory were still covered with a light morning mist. The air was cool and quiet.

Inside the laboratory, Edison was already awake.

He had slept only a few hours.

As soon as the first light appeared, he returned to his work.

The electric lamps were again shining brightly across the room.

Edison sat at a table near the window with his notebook open before him.

The pages were now filled with careful measurements and diagrams.

He studied them silently.

"The structure of the face must be exact," he murmured.

He drew several lines across a sheet of paper.

"The distance between the eyes."

He wrote another number.

"The curve of the mouth."

Edison leaned back slightly in his chair.

"And the movement of the expression."

He closed the notebook and stood up.

"First I must observe the original."

He walked across the room and pressed a small bell.

A few minutes later a young assistant entered the laboratory.

The boy looked alert and curious.

"Good morning, Professor," he said.

Edison nodded.

"Good morning."

The assistant waited politely.

Edison spoke calmly.

"Prepare a message for the New York office."

"Yes, sir."

Edison continued.

“Inform them that I will arrive this evening.”

The assistant nodded.

“Very good.”

Edison added another instruction.

“Also prepare my travel equipment.”

The boy wrote the information quickly.

“I will take care of it immediately.”

Edison dismissed him with a small gesture.

When the assistant left the room, Edison returned to the table once more.

He opened the drawer and removed the notebook again.

For several minutes he reviewed the descriptions Lord Ewald had given of Alicia Clary.

Golden hair.

Blue eyes.

A graceful smile.

Edison spoke quietly to himself.

“Soon I will see whether the description is accurate.”

He closed the notebook again.

Then he walked toward the black table.

The pale arm still rested on the violet cushion exactly where it had been left the night before.

Edison examined it once more.

The delicate fingers seemed almost alive in the morning light.

“A useful reference,” he said softly.

He placed the arm carefully inside a protective box beside the table.

Then he locked the box.

Edison began preparing the laboratory for his absence.

Several switches were turned off.

Instruments were carefully covered.

The electric systems that controlled the underground chamber were placed in a resting state.

Finally he stood beside the hidden entrance in the floor.
Edison pressed a small control switch.
The stone panel moved aside silently.
The staircase leading underground appeared once more.
Edison descended slowly.
The underground chamber remained quiet.
The machines along the corridor produced only a faint steady hum.
Edison entered the room where Hadaly rested.
The young woman lay motionless on the couch.
Her eyes were closed.
Her face showed the same peaceful expression as the night before.
Edison approached the platform.
“Good morning, Hadaly,” he said quietly.
Her eyes opened slowly.
She sat up gently.
“Good morning, Professor.”
Edison looked at her calmly.
“I will be leaving for New York today.”
Hadaly nodded.
“To observe Alicia Clary.”
Edison seemed satisfied.
“Yes.”
Hadaly asked calmly:
“Will Lord Ewald accompany you?”
Edison shook his head.
“No. I will observe her quietly.”
Hadaly folded her hands together.
“That is wise.”
Edison continued.
“While I am away, the systems here will remain inactive.”
Hadaly nodded again.

“I understand.”

Edison studied her face for a moment.

“Soon your appearance may change.”

Hadaly replied calmly.

“My purpose will remain the same.”

Edison seemed pleased.

“Exactly.”

He turned toward the control panel.

“You will rest until I return.”

Hadaly lay back on the couch.

Her eyes closed again.

The expression of calm stillness returned to her face.

Edison deactivated several switches.

The faint mechanical systems within the platform slowly became quiet.

Once again Hadaly appeared like a statue.

Edison left the chamber and returned to the staircase.

After reaching the laboratory above, he closed the hidden entrance carefully.

The floor returned to its normal appearance.

Edison took his coat and hat from a nearby stand.

Outside, the morning sun was now shining brightly over Menlo Park.

A carriage waited on the road beyond the garden gate.

Edison stepped outside the laboratory and locked the door behind him.

The journey to New York had begun.

And with it the next stage of the strange experiment.

Part 18

The carriage moved steadily along the road that led away from Menlo Park. The morning sun shone brightly over the countryside, and the air carried the fresh smell of trees and grass.

Edison sat quietly inside the carriage.

His notebook rested on his knees. From time to time he opened it and reviewed the notes he had written during the night.

The description of Alicia Clary filled several pages.

Golden hair.

Blue eyes.

A graceful figure.

A charming smile.

Edison studied the words carefully.

“Descriptions are never completely accurate,” he murmured to himself.

He closed the notebook again.

“I must see her with my own eyes.”

The carriage continued moving toward the railway station.

After some time it arrived at the small station near Menlo Park.

Several people were already waiting for the morning train.

Edison stepped down from the carriage and walked toward the platform.

The train arrived a few minutes later with a loud sound of steam and metal.

Edison entered one of the passenger cars.

Soon the train began moving again.

The countryside passed quickly outside the window.

Edison sat quietly during the journey.

His thoughts returned again and again to the strange project waiting beneath his laboratory.

“Hadaly,” he said softly.

The name seemed unusual and mysterious.

“If the resemblance succeeds,” he thought, “the illusion will be complete.”

The train continued traveling for several hours.

Gradually the quiet countryside disappeared.

Buildings became more numerous.

The noise of the city began to fill the air.

At last the train arrived in New York.

Edison stepped onto the busy platform.

The city moved with constant energy around him. Carriages rolled through the streets, and people hurried in every direction.

Edison walked calmly through the crowd.

He had visited New York many times before.

The streets and buildings were familiar to him.

A short carriage ride brought him to Broadway.

The large buildings along the street were filled with shops, offices, and hotels.

Edison entered the building that contained his New York office.

Several assistants greeted him immediately.

“Good afternoon, Professor,” one of them said.

Edison nodded.

“Good afternoon.”

Another assistant approached with several letters.

“These arrived this morning,” he said.

Edison accepted them but placed them aside without reading.

“They can wait.”

The assistant looked slightly surprised but said nothing.

Edison walked toward the window of his office.

Broadway stretched below him, busy and noisy.

Carriages moved constantly along the street.

People filled the sidewalks.

Edison turned back toward his assistants.

“I have an unusual request,” he said.

They listened carefully.

Edison continued.

“I need information about a woman named Alicia Clary.”

One of the assistants spoke.

“Miss Clary is well known in society,” he said.

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

The assistant continued.

“She often appears at public gatherings and social events.”

Edison asked another question.

“Do you know where she lives?”

The assistant thought for a moment.

“Yes. Her family residence is on Fifth Avenue.”

Edison seemed satisfied.

“Excellent.”

He continued speaking calmly.

“I would like to know if she is attending any events this evening.”

The assistants exchanged quick glances.

One of them answered.

“There is a reception tonight at the home of Mrs. Anderson.”

Edison looked interested.

“And Miss Clary will be there?”

“Very likely,” the assistant replied.

Edison nodded slowly.

“Good.”

He took his notebook from his pocket.

“Then that will be the perfect opportunity.”

The assistants waited.

Edison spoke quietly.

“Tonight I will observe Alicia Clary.”

Outside the window the great city of New York continued its restless movement. Somewhere among the elegant houses of Fifth Avenue, Alicia Clary lived her ordinary life.

She did not yet know that a famous inventor had arrived in the city for the purpose of studying her face.

And far away in the quiet underground chamber beneath Menlo Park, Hadaly remained asleep, waiting for the transformation that might soon give her the appearance of another woman.

The strange experiment was moving forward step by step.

Part 19

As evening approached, the lights of New York began to appear one by one along the streets. The city slowly changed from the bright activity of the day into the glittering movement of the night.

Edison prepared quietly in his office.

His notebook lay open on the desk before him. Several pages were ready for new observations.

One of his assistants entered the room.

“The carriage is ready, Professor,” he said.

Edison nodded.

“Thank you.”

He placed the notebook inside his coat pocket and stood up.

A few minutes later he stepped outside the building.

The evening air carried the noise of the city. Carriages rolled across the street, and the sidewalks were filled with people moving toward theaters, restaurants, and social gatherings.

Edison entered the waiting carriage.

“Fifth Avenue,” he said to the driver.

The carriage began moving through the busy streets.

Edison sat quietly, watching the city lights pass by.

At last the carriage stopped in front of a large elegant house.

Several other carriages already stood along the street.

The house was brightly illuminated.

Music and conversation could be heard faintly from inside.

Edison stepped out of the carriage and approached the entrance.

A servant opened the door and announced his name.

Edison entered the reception hall.

The room was filled with people.

Elegant dresses and formal suits moved through the bright light of the

chandeliers. Guests spoke together in small groups while music played softly in another room.

Edison stood quietly near the entrance for a moment, observing the gathering.

Then he began walking slowly through the room.

His eyes searched the faces of the guests.

Many women were present.

Several were beautiful.

But Edison continued looking carefully.

At last he saw her.

Alicia Clary stood near a large window at the far side of the room.

She was surrounded by several admirers who listened as she spoke.

Edison stopped walking.

The description Lord Ewald had given was accurate.

Her hair was indeed a light golden color. It shone softly under the chandelier light.

Her eyes were bright blue.

Her face possessed a remarkable harmony of features.

She smiled frequently while speaking.

Edison studied her expression carefully.

“Yes,” he murmured softly.

“Extraordinary beauty.”

He remained standing quietly, watching.

Alicia laughed lightly at something one of the men had said.

The sound of her laughter seemed pleasant and charming.

But Edison observed more than her beauty.

He listened carefully to her words.

After several minutes he began writing small notes in his notebook.

“Movement of the head,” he wrote.

“Frequent smile.”

He continued watching.

Alicia tilted her head slightly while listening to another guest.

Edison noticed the gesture immediately.

“Correct,” he murmured.

“Exactly as Lord Ewald described.”

The conversation near the window continued.

One of the men spoke at length about a recent event in the city.

Alicia nodded politely and answered with short remarks.

Edison listened carefully.

After some time he wrote another note.

“Speech pleasant but shallow.”

He closed the notebook slowly.

His observation confirmed Lord Ewald’s description.

Alicia Clary possessed extraordinary beauty.

Yet her words contained little depth.

Edison continued watching her for several more minutes.

He studied the curve of her smile, the movement of her eyes, and the rhythm of her gestures.

Each detail was carefully stored in his memory.

At last he spoke softly to himself.

“Yes.”

Edison turned toward the exit of the reception hall.

His work there was complete.

As he left the house, the evening air of New York felt cool and calm after the warmth of the crowded room.

Edison entered his carriage once more.

“Back to Broadway,” he said.

The carriage began moving through the night streets.

Edison took out his notebook again.

By the light of a small lamp inside the carriage he began writing rapidly.

Measurements.

Expressions.

Observations of voice and movement.

Each detail would help shape the transformation of Hadaly.

As the carriage rolled through the city, the strange experiment moved one step closer to completion.

And inside the bright house on Fifth Avenue, Alicia Clary continued speaking and smiling among her admirers, unaware that her appearance had just been carefully recorded by the mind of one of the most unusual inventors in the world.

Part 20

The carriage returned to Edison's office on Broadway late in the evening.

The streets were still busy, but the noise of the city had softened slightly as the night grew deeper.

Edison stepped out of the carriage and entered the building.

One of his assistants was still working at a desk near the entrance.

"You have returned, Professor," the assistant said.

Edison nodded.

"Yes."

The assistant looked curious.

"Was the evening successful?"

Edison answered calmly.

"Very successful."

He continued walking toward his office.

Inside the room he lit a small lamp and sat down at his desk.

The notebook was placed carefully in front of him.

Edison opened it and began reviewing the notes he had written during the evening.

The pages now contained many observations.

He read them slowly.

"Hair — light golden."

"Eyes — bright blue."

"Smile — frequent."

“Movement — graceful but without depth of thought.”

Edison leaned back slightly in his chair.

The description formed a clear picture in his mind.

“Yes,” he said quietly.

“The resemblance can be achieved.”

He took a fresh sheet of paper and began drawing several sketches.

The outline of a face appeared beneath his pencil.

He marked the distance between the eyes.

Then the shape of the mouth.

The curve of the chin.

Edison worked for a long time without interruption.

Outside, the city grew quieter as midnight approached.

At last he placed the pencil down.

The drawing on the paper showed the face of Alicia Clary.

Edison studied it carefully.

“Hadaly will require several adjustments,” he murmured.

He wrote several technical notes beside the sketch.

“Structure of the cheeks.”

“Angle of the eyes.”

“Color of the hair.”

Edison closed the notebook slowly.

His work in New York was complete.

The next stage would take place again in Menlo Park.

He stood up and walked toward the window.

The night sky above the city was dark.

Only a few stars could be seen between the tall buildings.

Edison looked upward thoughtfully.

“Human beauty,” he said softly.

“A curious force.”

He turned back toward the desk.

“But beauty alone is not enough.”

Edison placed the notebook carefully inside his coat.
Tomorrow he would return to his laboratory.
There the transformation of Hadaly would begin.
The experiment was no longer only an idea.
Now it had a clear form.
Edison extinguished the lamp and left the office.
The hallway was quiet.
After locking the door behind him, he stepped out into the cool night air.
A carriage waited to take him to the railway station.
The journey back to Menlo Park would begin before dawn.
As the carriage moved through the dark streets, Edison sat quietly with his thoughts.
The image of Alicia Clary remained clear in his mind.
Soon that image would be recreated with mechanical precision.
And beneath the quiet ground of Menlo Park, Hadaly waited silently in the underground chamber.
Her form was perfect.
Her mind was ready.
Only one transformation remained before she could become the living image of another woman.
The strange dream of Lord Ewald was moving closer to reality.

Part 21

Early the next morning Edison returned to Menlo Park.
The train arrived just after sunrise. The air in the countryside was cool and quiet compared with the busy streets of New York.
Edison stepped down from the train carrying his notebook and a small case filled with instruments.
A carriage waited for him outside the station.
Soon he was traveling again along the familiar road that led to his laboratory.

The trees of Menlo Park stood still in the soft morning light. Birds moved through the branches, and the garden paths were empty.

The carriage stopped in front of the laboratory building.

Edison stepped down quickly.

He unlocked the door and entered.

The large room was silent.

Sunlight passed through the window and fell across the tables and instruments.

Edison placed his case on the central table and removed the notebook.

“Now the work begins,” he said quietly.

He opened the notebook and looked again at the sketch he had drawn the night before.

The face of Alicia Clary seemed to look back at him from the page.

Edison examined the drawing carefully.

“Yes,” he murmured.

“The proportions are clear.”

He walked toward the black table where his tools were arranged.

Several small instruments were selected and placed beside the notebook.

Measuring devices.

Fine metal tools.

Thin wires and delicate springs.

Edison prepared them carefully.

Then he moved toward the hidden entrance in the floor.

He pressed the control switch.

The stone panel slid aside silently, revealing the staircase that descended underground.

Edison took a lamp and began walking down the steps.

The electric lights along the passage turned on automatically as he descended.

Soon he reached the corridor beneath the laboratory.

The machines there produced a quiet steady sound.

Edison walked directly to the chamber where Hadaly rested.

He opened the door.

The room looked exactly as he had left it.

Hadaly lay on the couch, motionless and peaceful.

Edison approached the platform.

“Good morning, Hadaly,” he said.

Her eyes opened slowly.

She sat up with the same calm grace as before.

“Good morning, Professor.”

Edison studied her face carefully.

For several seconds he compared it silently with the image in his memory.

Then he spoke.

“The transformation will begin today.”

Hadaly listened quietly.

“I understand.”

Edison placed the notebook on a nearby table.

“I observed Alicia Clary last night.”

Hadaly asked calmly:

“And what was your conclusion?”

Edison answered:

“The resemblance can be created.”

Hadaly nodded gently.

“Then the experiment will continue.”

Edison walked toward the control panel beside the platform.

“Yes.”

He began adjusting several switches.

Small lights appeared on the instruments around the room.

The faint sound of machinery slowly increased.

Edison turned back toward Hadaly.

“You must remain completely still during the procedure.”

Hadaly lay back on the couch.

“I am ready.”

Edison examined the instruments once more.

Several delicate tools were placed near Hadaly's head.
Thin measuring devices touched the sides of her face.
Edison recorded several numbers in the notebook.
"The structure must change slightly," he said quietly.
Hadaly remained motionless.
Edison continued working carefully.
Each measurement was checked twice.
Each adjustment was recorded precisely.
The process was slow and exact.
Hours passed quietly in the underground chamber.
Outside, the day moved forward normally in the peaceful gardens of Menlo Park.
But beneath the ground a strange transformation had begun.
Edison was preparing to change the face of Hadaly.
Soon the perfect mechanical woman would begin to resemble Alicia Clary.
And with that change, the strange dream of Lord Ewald would move closer to reality.

Part 22

The work continued for many hours in the underground chamber.
Edison moved carefully around the platform where Hadaly rested. The instruments beside him produced a quiet mechanical sound as he adjusted their controls.
Hadaly lay perfectly still.
Her eyes were closed, and her calm expression had not changed.
Edison examined the measurements he had taken earlier.
"The distance between the eyes must be reduced slightly," he said softly.
He wrote the number in the notebook.
Then he adjusted a small device beside Hadaly's head.
A delicate mechanical sound followed.

The internal structures beneath the artificial skin shifted by a very small amount.
Edison observed the result closely.

“Better,” he murmured.

He continued working.

Each adjustment was extremely small. Even the slightest error could damage the illusion he wished to create.

The curve of the cheek.

The line of the chin.

The shape of the lips.

One by one these features were modified.

After each change Edison stepped back and studied the result.

He compared the face before him with the drawing in his notebook.

Hours passed slowly.

At last Edison placed his tools on the table.

He looked at Hadaly’s face again.

The difference was subtle, but clear.

The structure now resembled Alicia Clary much more closely.

Edison nodded with satisfaction.

“Yes.”

He wrote several final notes.

“The resemblance is beginning to appear.”

Hadaly opened her eyes.

“Is the first stage complete?” she asked.

Edison answered calmly.

“Yes.”

Hadaly sat up slowly.

“May I see the result?”

Edison turned toward a large mirror mounted on the wall.

“Of course.”

Hadaly stepped down from the couch and walked toward the mirror.

Her movements remained smooth and graceful.

She stood quietly before the glass.
For several seconds she observed her reflection.
The face in the mirror was still her own.
Yet the changes were noticeable.
The eyes appeared slightly different.
The shape of the mouth had changed.
Hadaly spoke calmly.
“The resemblance has begun.”
Edison nodded.
“Yes.”
Hadaly continued studying the reflection.
“The transformation is incomplete,” she said.
“Correct.”
Edison walked closer.
“Several more adjustments will be necessary.”
Hadaly turned toward him.
“Will the result be exact?”
Edison answered with confidence.
“Yes.”
Hadaly returned to the couch and sat down again.
“Then we will continue.”
Edison prepared the instruments once more.
The second stage of the transformation required even greater precision.
He adjusted the small control switches on the panel.
The mechanical systems inside the platform activated again.
Edison spoke quietly.
“Remain still.”
Hadaly lay back on the couch.
The instruments began their delicate work.
The shape of the eyebrows was modified.
The line of the nose was refined.

Even the smallest muscles beneath the artificial skin were adjusted to reproduce Alicia's expressions.

Edison worked slowly and patiently.

From time to time he compared the result with the sketch in his notebook.

The resemblance grew stronger.

At last Edison stepped back again.

He studied the face before him carefully.

The transformation had progressed far.

Anyone who saw Hadaly now would begin to recognize Alicia Clary in her features.

Edison closed the notebook.

"The next stage will involve the voice and gestures," he said.

Hadaly opened her eyes again.

"The imitation must be perfect."

Edison agreed.

"Yes."

Hadaly stood and returned to the mirror once more.

She examined her reflection silently.

The resemblance was now unmistakable.

Yet the final illusion was not complete.

The voice.

The expressions.

The small gestures of movement.

These details would determine whether the world believed the transformation.

Hadaly turned away from the mirror.

"When Lord Ewald sees the final result," she said calmly, "his life will change."

Edison looked thoughtful.

"Perhaps."

The strange experiment was moving steadily toward its conclusion.

And far away in New York, Alicia Clary continued living her ordinary life, unaware that another face in the world was slowly becoming identical to her own.

Part 23

The work in the underground chamber continued through the afternoon.

Edison now focused on the next stage of the transformation.

The resemblance of the face had progressed well, but the illusion required more than appearance.

Voice and movement would be equally important.

Hadaly sat quietly on the couch while Edison prepared several new instruments.

Thin wires were connected to the phonographic systems inside her body. Small control devices were placed beside the platform.

Edison examined his notes again.

“The voice must match exactly,” he said softly.

Hadaly looked toward him.

“You observed Alicia’s voice last night.”

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

He turned several pages in the notebook.

“The tone is light. The rhythm is gentle. The phrases are simple.”

Hadaly asked calmly:

“Was the content of her speech complex?”

Edison smiled slightly.

“No.”

Hadaly replied quietly:

“That may simplify the imitation.”

Edison laughed softly.

“Yes. In this case simplicity is useful.”

He adjusted one of the control switches.

A small cylinder inside the cabinet began to rotate slowly.

Edison spoke again.

“Please say the following sentence.”

Hadaly waited.

Edison read from the notebook.

“Good evening. I am pleased to see you.”

Hadaly repeated the sentence.

Her voice was calm and clear.

Edison listened carefully.

He shook his head slightly.

“Too thoughtful.”

Hadaly tilted her head.

“Explain.”

Edison answered.

“Alicia speaks with less reflection.”

Hadaly nodded.

“I understand.”

Edison adjusted the phonographic system.

“Try again.”

Hadaly repeated the sentence.

This time the tone of her voice was lighter.

Edison listened closely.

“Better.”

He made another small adjustment.

“Once more.”

Hadaly spoke again.

The rhythm of the words now matched Edison’s memory of Alicia’s speech more closely.

Edison nodded with satisfaction.

“Yes.”

He wrote a short note.

“Voice pattern nearly correct.”

Hadaly remained calm.

Edison continued the process.

Several sentences were tested.

Each one helped refine the imitation.

The tone of the voice.

The pauses between words.

The slight change of sound during laughter.

Gradually the voice of Hadaly began to resemble the voice Edison had heard at the reception.

At last he stopped the cylinder.

“That will be sufficient for now.”

Hadaly asked:

“Is the imitation convincing?”

Edison answered:

“Very nearly.”

He moved to another table where several mechanical devices waited.

“Now we must examine the gestures.”

Hadaly stood up.

Edison watched her movements carefully.

“Please walk across the room.”

Hadaly obeyed.

Edison observed the rhythm of her steps.

“Good,” he said.

“Now tilt your head slightly as if listening.”

Hadaly repeated the gesture.

Edison compared the movement with his memory.

“Yes. That is correct.”

He wrote another note.

“Gesture pattern accurate.”

The process continued for some time.

Hadaly practiced the small expressions that characterized Alicia.

The light smile.

The slight movement of the eyes.

The gentle inclination of the head.

Edison corrected the details patiently.

At last he stepped back.

The imitation had become extremely convincing.

Hadaly now stood before him with the appearance and voice of Alicia Clary.

Only the calm intelligence in her eyes remained different.

Edison closed the notebook.

“The transformation is almost complete.”

Hadaly looked toward the mirror again.

Her reflection showed the face of Alicia.

She spoke quietly.

“Lord Ewald will soon see the result.”

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

Hadaly remained silent for a moment.

Then she asked a final question.

“When he sees me, will he believe the illusion?”

Edison looked at her carefully.

“I believe he will.”

The strange experiment had reached its final stage.

Beneath the quiet ground of Menlo Park, a mechanical woman now stood with the face, voice, and gestures of Alicia Clary.

Soon Lord Ewald would return.

And the success of the entire experiment would depend on his reaction.

Part 24

Several days passed after the transformation was completed.

During that time Edison continued testing the systems that controlled Hadaly.

Every movement and every word was carefully examined.

The imitation of Alicia Clary had to be perfect.

In the underground chamber the machines worked quietly while Edison checked each detail.

Hadaly practiced the gestures he had observed in New York.

The slight smile.

The gentle movement of the head.

The light tone of the voice.

Edison watched closely.

“Once more,” he said.

Hadaly repeated the gesture exactly.

Edison nodded.

“Excellent.”

He made a small note in the notebook.

The resemblance had become extraordinary.

Anyone who saw her now would believe they were looking at Alicia Clary.

Only Edison and Lord Ewald knew the truth.

At last Edison closed the notebook.

“The preparation is finished,” he said.

Hadaly stood quietly beside the couch.

“Then Lord Ewald should be informed.”

Edison agreed.

“Yes.”

He walked toward the telephone instrument on the wall.

A short message was sent to New York.

Lord Ewald would return to Menlo Park the following evening.

The moment of truth was approaching.

After sending the message, Edison returned to the chamber.

Hadaly waited calmly.

“He will arrive tomorrow,” Edison said.

Hadaly nodded.

“I will be ready.”

Edison studied her carefully.

The face before him was now almost identical to Alicia Clary.
The same golden hair.
The same blue eyes.
The same gentle smile.
Yet beneath that appearance lived a completely different mind.
Edison spoke quietly.
“When Lord Ewald arrives, you must behave exactly as Alicia would.”
Hadaly replied calmly.
“I understand.”
Edison continued.
“But remember that he knows the truth.”
Hadaly nodded again.
“Yes.”
Edison walked slowly around the platform.
“Even so,” he said, “the resemblance may still surprise him.”
Hadaly answered gently.
“That will reveal the success of the experiment.”
Edison smiled slightly.
“Exactly.”
The day passed quietly.
Edison reviewed the instruments several more times.
Every system had to function perfectly.
Finally evening arrived.
The electric lamps were turned on throughout the laboratory above.
Outside, the garden of Menlo Park grew dark under the night sky.
The following evening a carriage approached the laboratory gate.
Lord Ewald stepped down and walked toward the door.
Edison opened it.
“Welcome back,” he said.
Lord Ewald entered quickly.
“You sent an urgent message,” he said.

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald looked at him with curiosity.

“Is the experiment complete?”

Edison answered calmly.

“Almost.”

Lord Ewald felt his heart beat faster.

“May I see the result?”

Edison gestured toward the hidden entrance in the floor.

“Come.”

The stone panel moved aside.

Once again the staircase leading underground appeared.

Lord Ewald followed Edison down into the corridor.

The familiar chamber waited at the end of the passage.

Edison opened the steel door.

Lord Ewald stepped inside.

The room was softly illuminated as before.

The couch stood at the center of the platform.

A woman sat beside it.

She turned slowly as the two men entered.

Lord Ewald stopped walking.

For a moment he could not breathe.

The woman standing before him was Alicia Clary.

The same golden hair.

The same blue eyes.

The same beautiful face he had admired so many times.

She looked at him and smiled gently.

“Good evening, Lord Ewald.”

The voice was Alicia’s voice.

Lord Ewald stared at her in complete astonishment.

Edison watched quietly.

The moment he had been waiting for had arrived.
The illusion was complete.

Part 25

Lord Ewald remained standing at the entrance of the chamber.
For several seconds he did not move.
His eyes were fixed on the woman before him.
She looked exactly like Alicia Clary.
The golden hair shone softly under the lamp. The blue eyes watched him calmly.
The gentle smile was the same one he had seen many times in New York.
Yet he knew that this was not Alicia.
Edison waited silently beside him.
At last Lord Ewald spoke.
“This... is incredible.”
His voice was almost a whisper.
The woman stepped forward slowly.
“Good evening, Lord Ewald,” she repeated.
The tone of her voice matched Alicia’s perfectly.
Lord Ewald took a step closer.
He studied her face carefully.
The resemblance was absolute.
“Hadaly?” he asked quietly.
The woman inclined her head slightly.
“Yes.”
The gesture was exactly the same one Alicia used when listening.
Lord Ewald shook his head slowly.
“It is impossible.”
Edison spoke calmly.
“Look carefully.”
Lord Ewald continued observing.

The shape of the mouth.

The movement of the eyes.

The soft smile.

Every detail matched the image he remembered.

At last he spoke again.

“If I had met you on the street,” he said slowly, “I would have believed you were Alicia.”

Edison nodded.

“That was the goal.”

Lord Ewald turned toward Hadaly again.

“Speak once more,” he said.

Hadaly answered calmly.

“What would you like me to say?”

Lord Ewald listened carefully.

The voice was identical.

Even the small changes in tone matched Alicia’s natural speech.

Lord Ewald gave a quiet laugh of disbelief.

“Extraordinary.”

Edison smiled slightly.

“The experiment appears successful.”

Lord Ewald walked slowly around Hadaly.

He observed her from every angle.

The resemblance remained perfect.

Hadaly followed his movement with her eyes.

“Do you find the result satisfactory?” she asked.

Lord Ewald stopped in front of her.

“Yes.”

He paused briefly.

“And no.”

Edison raised an eyebrow.

“Explain.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

“The resemblance is perfect,” he said.

“But I know that the person before me is not Alicia.”

Hadaly answered gently.

“That knowledge will fade with time.”

Lord Ewald looked at her.

“Perhaps.”

Edison spoke quietly.

“The important question is whether your suffering will disappear.”

Lord Ewald remained silent for a moment.

Then he said slowly:

“When I look at her, I see the beauty that first captured my heart.”

He continued.

“But when she speaks, I hear intelligence instead of emptiness.”

Edison nodded.

“Exactly.”

Lord Ewald turned again toward Hadaly.

“Tell me something,” he said.

Hadaly waited.

“What do you think about love?”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“Love can be a source of happiness when it is guided by understanding.”

Lord Ewald smiled faintly.

“Alicia would never have said that.”

Hadaly replied:

“Then perhaps the difference will be useful.”

Lord Ewald laughed softly.

The tension in his expression began to fade.

For the first time in many days he seemed calm.

Edison watched carefully.

“What do you feel now?” he asked.

Lord Ewald answered honestly.

“Relief.”

Edison nodded.

“Then the experiment has achieved its purpose.”

Lord Ewald looked once more at the woman standing before him.

The face of Alicia Clary looked back at him.

But the mind behind that face was thoughtful and clear.

“Yes,” he said quietly.

“It may truly work.”

Hadaly smiled gently.

The strange invention had passed its first test.

The illusion had convinced the man who knew Alicia best.

And with that success, the extraordinary experiment of Edison moved into its final stage.

Part 26

The three remained in the underground chamber for some time after Lord Ewald spoke.

The room was quiet except for the faint hum of the machines that surrounded the platform.

Lord Ewald continued studying Hadaly’s face.

Each moment he looked at her, the resemblance seemed even more convincing.

At last he spoke again.

“When I first entered this room,” he said slowly, “I believed my eyes were deceiving me.”

Edison nodded calmly.

“That reaction is natural.”

Lord Ewald continued.

“Now I begin to understand what you have created.”

He paused.

“This is more than a machine.”

Edison replied quietly.

“It is an attempt to unite science and human desire.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

“Yes.”

Hadaly stood calmly between them.

Her expression remained gentle and attentive.

Lord Ewald turned toward her.

“Walk with me,” he said.

Hadaly inclined her head slightly.

“Very well.”

They moved slowly across the chamber together.

Edison remained near the platform, observing.

Lord Ewald watched Hadaly’s movements carefully.

The rhythm of her steps was natural.

The small gestures of her hands were exactly the same as Alicia’s.

Lord Ewald spoke quietly.

“Your imitation is remarkable.”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“It was designed to be so.”

Lord Ewald asked another question.

“If we were seen together in public, would anyone suspect the truth?”

Hadaly considered the question.

“That is unlikely.”

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“Yes.”

They continued walking.

Lord Ewald looked at her again.

“And your mind,” he said.

“It will always remain as it is now?”

Hadaly replied:

“My responses can continue to develop through experience.”

Lord Ewald looked surprised.

“You can learn?”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“Yes.”

Edison spoke from across the room.

“Her systems allow new patterns of response to form over time.”

Lord Ewald seemed impressed.

“Then she may grow more intelligent.”

Edison smiled slightly.

“That is possible.”

Lord Ewald stopped walking.

For several seconds he looked directly at Hadaly.

Then he spoke in a serious tone.

“This experiment will change my life.”

Hadaly replied gently.

“That is your decision.”

Lord Ewald turned toward Edison.

“And what do you ask in return for this invention?”

Edison answered calmly.

“Nothing.”

Lord Ewald looked surprised.

“Nothing?”

Edison shook his head.

“This project has already given me the satisfaction of discovery.”

Lord Ewald studied him carefully.

“You ask no reward?”

Edison smiled faintly.

“The success of the experiment is enough.”

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“You are a remarkable man.”

Edison answered simply:

“I am curious about the limits of science.”

Silence returned to the chamber again.

Lord Ewald finally spoke.

“There is one final question.”

Edison waited.

Lord Ewald continued.

“If I accept Hadaly in place of Alicia, what will become of Alicia herself?”

Edison answered calmly.

“She will continue her life as before.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes.”

Hadaly added quietly.

“Your decision will not harm her.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful.

“That is important.”

He turned once more toward the face that now looked exactly like Alicia.

Yet the calm intelligence in the eyes reminded him that this woman was something entirely different.

Lord Ewald spoke slowly.

“I believe the experiment has succeeded.”

Edison smiled slightly.

“Then you accept the result?”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes.”

Hadaly inclined her head gently.

The strange project that had begun as an idea in Edison’s laboratory had now become reality.

A perfect artificial woman stood before them.

She carried the face of Alicia Clary.

And with that face she would soon enter the world beyond the quiet

underground chamber of Menlo Park.

The future of all three lives had now changed.

Part 27

After Lord Ewald accepted the result of the experiment, silence filled the underground chamber again.

Edison looked at him carefully.

“Then the next step must be decided,” he said.

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“Yes.”

Hadaly stood quietly between them.

The face of Alicia Clary looked calm and gentle under the soft light of the chamber.

Lord Ewald spoke again.

“If this plan is to succeed, we must act carefully.”

Edison agreed.

“Very carefully.”

Lord Ewald continued.

“The world must never suspect that Hadaly exists.”

Edison replied calmly.

“That will not be difficult.”

Lord Ewald looked toward Hadaly.

“You must learn everything about Alicia’s daily life.”

Hadaly answered gently.

“I will study the information you provide.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Good.”

Edison walked slowly across the room.

“There is also another question,” he said.

Lord Ewald looked at him.

“What question?”

Edison spoke calmly.

“When will the change occur?”

Lord Ewald hesitated.

“What do you mean?”

Edison continued.

“At what moment will Hadaly appear in Alicia’s place?”

Lord Ewald thought for several seconds.

“The transition must be natural,” he said.

“No one must see the difference.”

Edison nodded.

“Exactly.”

Lord Ewald continued thinking aloud.

“A journey might provide the opportunity.”

Edison waited.

Lord Ewald explained.

“If Alicia travels somewhere, the exchange could occur during the journey.”

Edison smiled slightly.

“That is a reasonable idea.”

Hadaly listened quietly.

Lord Ewald turned toward her.

“You will need to observe Alicia again before the exchange.”

Hadaly nodded.

“Yes.”

Edison added calmly.

“I will continue refining the details of your behavior.”

Lord Ewald looked thoughtful again.

“There is still one thing that troubles me.”

Edison asked:

“What is it?”

Lord Ewald answered slowly.

“Even if the world accepts the illusion, I will always know the truth.”

Hadaly replied gently.

“That knowledge does not prevent happiness.”

Lord Ewald looked at her.

“Perhaps not.”

Edison spoke quietly.

“Human happiness often depends on what we choose to believe.”

Lord Ewald smiled faintly.

“You sound almost like a philosopher.”

Edison laughed softly.

“Science sometimes leads to philosophy.”

The three continued discussing the plan.

The details were complex.

Each step required careful thought.

Hadaly listened and stored every piece of information.

Finally the discussion ended.

Edison looked toward the clock on the wall.

“It is very late.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes.”

Hadaly stepped back toward the couch.

“I will return to rest,” she said calmly.

Edison turned off several switches.

The faint mechanical sounds inside the platform slowly faded.

Hadaly lay down on the couch once more.

Her eyes closed.

Her expression returned to perfect stillness.

The illusion of life disappeared.

She now looked like a beautiful statue again.

Lord Ewald watched quietly.

“When she moves and speaks,” he said softly, “it is easy to forget what she truly

is.”

Edison nodded.

“That is the power of the design.”

The two men left the chamber and returned through the corridor.

Soon they climbed the staircase back into the upper laboratory.

Edison closed the hidden entrance.

The stone panel slid back into place.

Lord Ewald looked around the familiar room.

The machines and instruments seemed ordinary again.

Yet he knew that something extraordinary existed beneath the floor.

Edison spoke calmly.

“Now the final stage begins.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“Yes.”

Outside, the night wind moved softly through the trees of Menlo Park.

The world above the laboratory remained quiet and unaware.

But beneath that peaceful place a remarkable invention had been completed.

Soon the artificial woman who carried the face of Alicia Clary would step into the world.

And the strange dream that had begun with sorrow in Lord Ewald’s heart would continue its uncertain journey toward the future.

Part 28

Several days passed after Lord Ewald’s visit.

During that time the work in the laboratory continued quietly. Edison examined every system connected with Hadaly to ensure that nothing would fail.

The experiment had reached a delicate stage.

One mistake could destroy the entire illusion.

Each morning Edison descended into the underground chamber and activated Hadaly for further practice.

She repeated Alicia's gestures and expressions again and again.

The light smile.

The soft tone of voice.

The gentle movement of the head while listening.

Edison corrected even the smallest details.

"The expression must remain relaxed," he said one afternoon.

Hadaly repeated the gesture.

Edison watched closely.

"Better," he said.

The resemblance had now become almost perfect.

Hadaly no longer appeared merely similar to Alicia.

She appeared to be Alicia.

At last Edison closed his notebook.

"There is nothing more to adjust," he said.

Hadaly stood calmly beside the platform.

"Then the preparation is complete."

Edison nodded.

"Yes."

Hadaly looked toward him.

"When will Lord Ewald return?"

Edison replied:

"Soon."

He walked toward the telephone instrument and sent a short message.

Lord Ewald answered the same evening.

He would return to Menlo Park the following day.

The final stage of the plan was about to begin.

The next evening the sound of a carriage was heard again outside the laboratory.

Edison opened the door.

Lord Ewald entered quickly.

His expression showed both anticipation and uncertainty.

"Is everything ready?" he asked.

Edison answered calmly.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald took a deep breath.

“Then let us see her again.”

Edison moved toward the hidden entrance in the floor.

The stone panel slid aside.

The staircase leading underground appeared once more.

The two men descended slowly.

At the end of the corridor the familiar chamber waited.

Edison opened the steel door.

Hadaly stood beside the platform.

The face of Alicia Clary turned toward them.

“Good evening,” she said gently.

Lord Ewald stopped again.

Even though he had seen her before, the illusion still surprised him.

He walked slowly toward her.

“It is perfect,” he said quietly.

Edison nodded.

“The final adjustments have been completed.”

Lord Ewald studied Hadaly carefully.

“Speak with me,” he said.

Hadaly smiled softly.

“Of course.”

The conversation that followed seemed completely natural.

Hadaly spoke with Alicia’s voice.

She used the same expressions and gestures.

Lord Ewald listened closely.

At last he turned toward Edison.

“Yes,” he said.

“No one will suspect the truth.”

Edison spoke calmly.

“Then the moment has come.”

Lord Ewald nodded slowly.

“Yes.”

Hadaly looked at both men.

“What is the next step?”

Lord Ewald answered.

“Soon we will travel to New York.”

Hadaly inclined her head.

“I understand.”

Edison added quietly.

“From that moment your life will begin outside this chamber.”

Hadaly remained calm.

“I am ready.”

Lord Ewald looked once more at the face that had once caused him so much sorrow.

But now that face held a different mind.

A calm and intelligent presence stood behind the beauty he had always admired.

Lord Ewald spoke quietly.

“The experiment has changed everything.”

Edison nodded.

“Yes.”

The strange creation that had begun beneath the laboratory of Menlo Park was about to enter the world beyond.

Soon Hadaly would step into society carrying the appearance of Alicia Clary.

And no one except these two men would know the extraordinary truth.

Part 29

The following morning the preparations for the journey began.

Lord Ewald and Edison remained in the laboratory while Hadaly rested in the underground chamber.

The plan required careful thought.

Every detail had to be arranged so that no one would suspect the truth.

Lord Ewald stood near the window, looking out at the quiet trees of Menlo Park.

“It is strange,” he said slowly.

Edison looked up from his notes.

“What is strange?”

Lord Ewald answered.

“A few weeks ago my life seemed empty and hopeless.”

He paused.

“Now everything appears different.”

Edison nodded.

“Science often changes what once seemed impossible.”

Lord Ewald turned away from the window.

“And yet,” he said, “I cannot forget that the woman I will soon take with me is not truly human.”

Edison replied calmly.

“Human happiness does not always depend on what is natural.”

Lord Ewald smiled faintly.

“Perhaps that is true.”

The two men continued discussing the journey.

Hadaly would travel with Lord Ewald.

To the world she would appear to be Alicia Clary.

No one would question her presence.

When the arrangements were finished, Edison looked toward the clock.

“It is time,” he said.

Lord Ewald nodded.

Together they descended once more into the underground chamber.

Hadaly stood beside the platform waiting for them.

Her appearance was calm and natural.

The resemblance to Alicia Clary remained perfect.

Lord Ewald spoke gently.

“The journey begins today.”

Hadaly inclined her head.

“I am ready.”

Edison approached her.

“Before you leave, there are a few final instructions.”

Hadaly listened carefully.

Edison continued.

“Your responses must always remain simple and natural.”

Hadaly nodded.

“Yes.”

Edison added:

“Observe everything around you. Learn from each situation.”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“I will.”

Lord Ewald watched her thoughtfully.

“Soon we will be among other people,” he said.

“No one must suspect that anything unusual has occurred.”

Hadaly replied gently.

“The illusion will remain complete.”

Edison seemed satisfied.

“Then the moment has arrived.”

He moved toward the control panel beside the platform.

Several switches were turned off.

The underground systems that had maintained Hadaly’s chamber slowly became quiet.

Edison turned back toward her.

“From this moment you are no longer only an experiment.”

Hadaly waited.

Edison continued.

“You will live in the world.”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“I understand.”

Lord Ewald stepped closer.

For a moment he looked directly into her eyes.

The familiar blue gaze of Alicia Clary looked back at him.

Yet behind that gaze lived a calm intelligence that Alicia had never possessed.

Lord Ewald spoke quietly.

“Let us go.”

Hadaly nodded.

The three walked together through the corridor and climbed the staircase.

When they reached the upper laboratory, the hidden door closed behind them.

The strange underground chamber disappeared once more beneath the floor.

Outside, the carriage that would take them to the station waited in the sunlight.

Lord Ewald helped Hadaly into the carriage.

Edison stood beside the door.

For a moment the two men looked at each other.

“Take care of her,” Edison said.

Lord Ewald nodded.

“I will.”

Edison watched as the carriage began moving slowly down the road.

Hadaly sat beside Lord Ewald quietly.

To anyone who might see them, they appeared to be an ordinary couple beginning a journey.

But Edison knew the truth.

The most extraordinary creation of his life had just left the laboratory.

And from that moment the fate of Hadaly would unfold in the world beyond Menlo Park.

Edison stood alone outside the building as the carriage disappeared into the distance.

The experiment was no longer under his control.

Now it belonged to the uncertain future of human life.

Part 30

The carriage carried Lord Ewald and Hadaly away from Menlo Park toward the railway station.

The morning air was cool, and the road was quiet except for the sound of the wheels moving over the ground.

Hadaly sat beside Lord Ewald calmly.

Her posture was graceful and natural.

Anyone who looked at her would see only the beautiful face of Alicia Clary.

Lord Ewald studied her quietly during the journey.

For several minutes neither of them spoke.

At last he said softly:

“Soon we will return to New York.”

Hadaly turned her head slightly toward him.

“Yes.”

Lord Ewald continued.

“There we will meet many people.”

Hadaly answered gently.

“I will observe them carefully.”

Lord Ewald nodded.

“That will help you learn.”

The carriage continued moving along the road.

The trees of the countryside passed slowly beside them.

Lord Ewald spoke again.

“Are you afraid of this new life?”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“No.”

Lord Ewald seemed thoughtful.

“Most people feel fear when facing the unknown.”

Hadaly replied quietly.

“My purpose is clear.”

Lord Ewald smiled faintly.

“Yes.”

Soon the carriage arrived at the station.

Several passengers were waiting on the platform.

Lord Ewald helped Hadaly step down from the carriage.

As they walked toward the train, a few people looked at her with admiration.

Her beauty attracted attention immediately.

No one suspected anything unusual.

Lord Ewald noticed this reaction.

He spoke quietly.

“The illusion is already working.”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“That is expected.”

The train soon arrived.

They entered one of the passenger cars and found their seats.

When the train began moving, the countryside slowly disappeared behind them.

Lord Ewald looked out the window for a moment.

Then he turned toward Hadaly again.

“Soon we will reach the city.”

Hadaly nodded.

“Yes.”

The journey continued for several hours.

During that time Lord Ewald explained many details of Alicia’s life.

Her friends.

The places she visited.

The habits she followed each day.

Hadaly listened carefully and remembered everything.

From time to time she asked a simple question.

Each answer helped her understand the role she would soon play.

At last the train approached the great city of New York.

Smoke from the factories and buildings rose into the sky.

The streets were already full of movement and noise.

Lord Ewald spoke quietly.

“Our new life begins here.”

Hadaly looked out at the busy city.

“Yes.”

The train stopped.

Passengers began leaving the cars.

Lord Ewald and Hadaly stepped onto the platform.

The crowd moved around them quickly.

No one paid special attention to them.

To everyone present, Hadaly appeared to be Alicia Clary returning to the city.

Lord Ewald looked at her once more.

“From this moment,” he said quietly, “the experiment enters the world.”

Hadaly answered calmly.

“Then we must proceed carefully.”

They walked together toward the exit of the station.

Outside, the busy streets of New York waited for them.

Somewhere in that city Alicia Clary continued her ordinary life, unaware that another woman now carried her face.

And far away in Menlo Park, Edison continued his work, wondering what future awaited his extraordinary creation.

The strange story that began with despair had now become a new and uncertain beginning.