Henry was a harmless soul. He always washed his hands after killing a fly with a fly swatter. Which was not often because he never registered more than two clean hits out of forty-nine tries. He shined his shoes every morning. In spite of the fact that he was an M. I. T. student he never wore pants that had a shine on the seat. He was amazing. He was unique. He was also dead when the night watchman found him in the Testing Materials Laboratory with his head between the hammer and anvil of the 1,000,000 pound capacity machine, on which the scale arm at the moment read 787,500 pounds.

Henry had never harmed a soul in his life. He came of a long line of brownbaggers, all of them eminently respectable architects and stuff. He was himself well on the way toward being eminently respectable when he was saved from this fate worse than death by death itself that terrible night in the T. M. Lab.

For him, however, there was no longer any terror. He was dead. The terror was all swept up in neat little piles all over the floor of the lab, and behind all the pillars, and in every nook and cranny, just waiting, waiting for the night watchman. And the night watchman knew the terror was there, which made it all the more terrible. However, like a good night watchman, his duty was to report the affair to the police. Which he, like a good night watchman, did.

The cops arrived, and said that Henry was undoubtedly dead, and how the heck could they get him out of the machine? They had to wait till a nine o'clock T. M. class came around before they found anybody who knew anything about the machine. Henry’s body was thereupon removed to a mortuary, the night watchman was removed to a psychiatric ward to have his willies cured, the superintendent of buildings and power went into conference with the president, and The Tech put out an extra.

It was all a great mystery.

For days the Cambridge police searched the lab, looking for clues. They found fingerprints on all the machines in the lab. They took fingerprints of everybody connected with the Institute. And found that every third student and every fifth faculty member and every other one of the graduate students had been present within the day before the murder. This discouraged them.

Henry had not committed suicide. In the first place it was impossible — he would have had to have ten foot arms to reach the controls with his head on the block. Furthermore, he had a straight five rating for three and a half years. Or maybe that is a reason for committing suicide.

It was not until the Sunday Advertiser sent a reporter to Tech to write a feature story on the murder that the murderer was found out.

Somebody (possibly one of the co-eds) told the reporter that the person who probably knew most about Henry was the professor in charge of his thesis work. To the professor he accordingly went, and talked about Henry for several hours, during which the professor went through his records in detail, telling the reporter all about how good a chemist Henry was, and how he could make a Scotch and soda out of an old shoe, a piece of string and a button.

As the reporter was taking his leave the professor said, “Well, Joe, it’s been nice to have you here.”

And Joe said, “Yeah.”

And the professor said, “By the way, what’s the latest theory about the murder?”

And Joe said, “They’ve never had a theory.”

And the professor said, “But it’s really so simple. He was testing creep specimens and his specimens crept up on him.”

And the reporter said, “Oh.”