The pale yellow moon bathed the castle in a soft glow of eerie brightness. It was on this cold, dreary night that the evil deeds began.

Dr. Ronson stepped back to admire his invention, a gleaming silver sphere which radiated a soft, green glow of varying brilliance. After five long years of unbearable defeat and dismay the device was finished; completed with the perfection of a master's hand. But the hardest part was yet to come, for he had to find a "human tester", a man who would risk his life for the interest of science. Yes, the most difficult part was certainly yet to come.

Ron Jenkins was an outcast of society; shunned by his fellow men. He was forced to live alone, with only his thoughts for company. It was for these reasons that he accepted the doctor's offer.

The machine hummed softly as Dr. Ronson placed his "victim" in the sphere. At last it was a reality; the final dial turned; the last circuit completed. "I will be rich beyond all dreams," he thought. "For my machine decomposes the human structure into atoms, and assembles it into other forms; minerals, jewels, money!"

A surge of power overcame him as he increased the voltage. The sphere shone brightly with each increase of power. As maximum voltage was reached, a faint scream pierced the shell of the "demon machine." But Ronson paid no attention, because he was concentrating on the riches he would soon possess. He turned the control dials a little farther—into the danger zone, but he didn't notice this for his mind was occupied with thoughts of power and wealth.

The explosion could be seen for miles around. Dr. Ronson had made one small mistake, one infinitesimal error which had cost him his life. For as a wise man once said, "He who destroys another shall surely destroy himself."

John Panitz, 9-324