

## Dr. Gerald Forbes

“Prove something? Oh, no, I’m not trying to prove anything.  
It’s just that there are certain things I’m not sane about.”  
- Harry (Leslie Nielsen) in *Creepshow*

Good. Life had been good. So good. So well. You never thought that these days would descend upon you, like vultures after carrion. Days where getting up and facing that horrible, horrible entity called *life* seemed far, far, too much to take.

Things had been better before. So much better. You felt so *young*, then. So young. So ready to change the world. A twinkle in your eye. A bounce in your step. A desire to make the world a better place. But, then, what did you expect? She was by your side. And since she left, you feel so much *older*. Before, you expected that when you felt this much older, you’d feel wiser, too. Sometimes, thinking back upon that, you laugh. A small, pathetic laugh that comes out like a death rattle; not yours, but hers.

Sheriff Barnes said it was an accident. The sort of thing that could happen to anyone, at any time. The hand of God, choosing a victim from the prime of life. An accident. But it happened to her, and that makes all of the difference.

You were so much happier then. You had your Ph.D. in Biology from CalTech, the product of eight years of dissection and analysis. It was while you were working upon your dissertation that you met her. Rachel Winters. She was working as a secretary for one of the deans, and when you saw her, you knew that she was the woman you wanted by your side. For the rest of your life. How ironic.

After a few months of romance (and oh, the bliss of those times, when the love hung in the air heavily betwixt you, as opposed to the death that so solemnly separates you now), she agreed to marry you. Never was there a happier man on the face of the planet.

And so you were wed. You had your doctorate now, and you set out into the real world, comforted and buffered by the fact that she was always by your side.

You found a job at the Ft. Lucas Rita Research Labs in San Inguon, Arizona. A far distance to move, but she was willing, and that was all that mattered. Soon you were a drudge in the Labs, doing drudge work for your drudge bosses. It would have been a horrible existence, if not leavened by her presence when you came home from work every night. You found peace and laughter together, and never an unhappy thought came when the two of you were by each other’s side.

After a few years, your excellence at the drudgery was noticed by Dr. Peters, the head of the Biology department at the Labs. When he retired, he recommended that you replace him. It was unusual, someone so young and unestablished coming to the forefront

so quickly, but a word from Dr. Peters went a long way, and he had a great deal of words to say about you. And so, less than a year ago, you became Dr. Gerald Forbes, Head Scientist, Biology Division, Ft. Lucas Rita Research Labs. Quite an honor. And she was so happy about it. Now, perhaps, you could start a family. That was a thought you cherished. But it was not fated to be.

You enjoyed your job as Head Scientist. Now you could assign the drudge work to others, while you experimented with the projects that had always fascinated you. You worked on several projects, but the one that consumed most of your time was the Prometheus project.

You had begun experimenting with certain types of formaldehyde combined with hemoglobin, and found that they had the ability, when properly mixed, to revitalize dead tissue strains for a short period of time. If you could figure out how to make the effect more permanent, you could actually bring the dead back to life! And so you put long hours in at the labs, trying desperately to figure out a combination of chemicals that would allow your Prometheus Formula to work permanently.

Three weeks ago, you had a breakthrough. You had been working the problem frontwards; that is, taking various chemicals, mixing them together, and recording the results. You decided to leave off the experiments and work the problem backwards; that is, deciding what the optimal result would be, and working the process backwards from the result to determine what the elements were. It was a tough job, but you finally made the ingenious breakthrough needed to solve the problem. What you need to add to your formula is a dehydrated mono-nuclear hydro-oxium chain and a large jolt of electricity. Electricity is easy enough to come by in the Labs, but you have no idea where you could find a dehydrated mono-nuclear hydro-oxium chain. Your attempts to manufacture one all failed, and even Dr. Fields, Head Scientist, Chemistry Department, had no idea what you were talking about.

It was while you were rejoicing this breakthrough that it happened. You were rejoicing with Rachel; rejoicing a bit too hard, as the hangover the next morning proved. You felt too bad to go into work, so Rachel called the Labs and said you were sick, and drove off to the grocery store to buy some more orange juice. She was such a saint. You were so happy when she was with you. So happy.

A few hours later, the phone rang. Sheriff Barnes gave you the news. There had been an accident. Rachel had slipped across the lanes on I-42 and been hit by an oncoming truck. Killed instantly. An accident. So sorry. So sorry.

The sheriff picked you up an hour later to go and identify the body. And you looked down upon your poor, sweet Rachel. Dead. You had been so happy together. So happy. You loved her so much. You needed her. You began crying. The sheriff, considering the situation awkward, decided to leave you alone with her. You told him to go on back without you. You needed the walk to think. You needed time to think.

But you didn't need time to think. You had thought of it already. The Prometheus Formula. You had gotten to her just in time. She was dead, but not embalmed. Seeing that no one was in the room with you, you picked her up (the same way you held her when you crossed the threshold of your honeymoon suite) and lay her down on a gurney. Calmly, deliberately, you wheeled her out of the morgue. You had your Labs credentials on, so no one stopped you. Not even when you wheeled her out the side door and out through the desert. You were quite the sight, walking through the hot desert, wheeling a dead body on a gurney. If you could laugh, you would. But you can't laugh. Not about this.

The guards at Ft. Rita were used to you wheeling in the latest subjects for your experiments, so no one raised an eyebrow when you wheeled Rachel into the Labs. Of course, no one knew it was Rachel; she still had a sheet covering her. Once you reached the Biology Lab, you went to your Research room. The other scientists gave you a surprised look, asked you if you were feeling all right. You almost thought that you had been discovered, that the crazed, determined look in your eyes had given it all away. But then you remembered that you had called in sick that morning. Your hangover was gone now, your head cleared by the incredible presence of What You Needed To Do. So you smiled, a crazed half-smile that would have scared them had they been paying attention, and said that it had just been a four-hour flu. And you strolled into your lab, Rachel still unnoticed on the gurney before you.

Once the door to your lab was locked, you went immediately to work. Rigor mortis would set in soon, so time was of the essence. All organs were removed and jarred in chloro-formaldehyde to prevent rot and so you could examine them at leisure to determine damage. The remaining body parts were dismembered, catalogued, and stored within the cryogenic freezer, for storing remains without damage. Your wife, cut apart like a frog upon an eighth-grader's mat in biology class. If you were not fully, oh so fully, so completely aware of what end she was going to come to, men might think you a lunatic. A deranged man. But you are not insane. When one is insane, one loses control. One loses his facilities. And you have complete control. Absolute and complete control. Utter control. And your facilities are sharper now than they ever have been. You are aware of *everything*.

Over the last two weeks, you have begun preparing Rachel for the Prometheus Formula. Most of her body parts were serviceable, easily repaired by minor surgery (which would have been a major undertaking had her body parts not already been separated from each other). There were just three problems. Her right leg had been mangled beyond repair. Her left lung had been ripped open upon one side beyond easy repair. And her heart (which one felt so much for you, which once STOP IT) her heart was punctured. All three needed to be replaced.

You had brazenly passed the hospital before. You decided to try it again. Wearing your best lab coat and an assortment of credentials, you drove up to the hospital (the

insurance company had sent you a check a week before, and you bought the first car you could afford with it) and walked in. Past the guards. Past the orderlies. Past the nurses.

Into the morgue.

You must have spent hours there, cataloguing. Looking for women of Rachel's build, her height, her skin color. Finally, you came upon a subject. Quickly you unpacked your bag, and took out the scalpel and the bone saw. The leg went first; soon the left lung and the heart were carefully residing within your bag. Neatly sewing her up, you placed the subject back in her cubicle, and left. No one the wiser.

The leg fit perfectly. Almost indiscernible, except for the mole on the ankle which Rachel never had. The lung was workable. But the heart- the heart would not work. Too old. The heart deteriorates quickly if not pumping blood. It only takes an hour for a perfectly normal heart to become one immune to the workings of the Prometheus Formula. So you stored it, just in case, and began to work upon your other problems.

You now only have a few hurdles to go. And then Rachel will be back by your side. Forever.

**Stock quote:** "Huh? Oh, yes. I suppose so."

**Mannerisms:** Find it hard to pay attention to things. Look off into space, ruminating, until people ask you if you're all right. Occasionally snap into a much more sane, lucid version of yourself, so forcefully sane that it should scare the dickens out of everyone.

#### **People You Know:**

**Timmy Carroll:** The young all-around assistant at the Labs. A nice young boy. Full of energy and life. You were like that. Before she left.

**General Hiram Cork:** In charge of the Research Labs. You must at least nominally pay attention to him, or else you could lose your job. And you can't afford to lose your job until you bring her back. And even then, you can't lose your job. Not if you want to start a family.

**Dr. Marshall Fields:** Head Scientist, Chemistry Division. A nice man, full of ideas. He keeps to himself in his lab most of the time. You shouldn't disturb him. If he doesn't know what a dehydrated mono-nuclear hydro-oxium chain is, then he can't be too good at what he does. Maybe you should keep an eye upon him. Maybe he knows what you're up to. Maybe he's trying to do the same thing and steal your glory. Maybe he'll try to stop you, claiming it's something man was Not Meant To Do. Watch him. Watch him carefully. He probably does know what a dehydrated mono-nuclear hydro-oxium chain is.

**Dr. Lawrence Bates:** A nice man, if thoroughly confused. Seminally in charge of the Physics Division, but if he were really in charge, he would have misplaced

the labs years ago. Still, a nice, caring man. He's also theoretically the Head Scientist, in charge of all of the Labs. Luckily, he doesn't really bother anyone with that.

**Sheriff Barnes:** Kind. Decent. Would arrest you if he knew you had stolen body parts from the morgue. Keep quiet around him.

**Dr. Randall Rourke:** The town's doctor. As a man your age and someone interested in anatomy, you and he had forged a friendship over the years. He wants you to help him out with some strange deaths he's investigating. You'll have to help; otherwise, he'll wonder what's up. Pretend to care about your friendship with him. You don't. All you care about is Rachel.

**Dr. Sarah Carroll:** A nice woman, but compares in no way to Rachel. Sarah is in charge of the Astronomy Division of the Labs, and it took Dr. Bates constantly pressuring General Cork before Cork agreed to make a woman in charge of any part of the Labs. You used to care about people's rights and equalities. But that was before Rachel left. Now all you care about is bringing Rachel back.

**Col. Fred Daniels:** General Cork's assistant. He runs the military end of things, so you don't see him much.

### **Goals:**

1. Bring Rachel back. To do this, you must:
  - a). Find a dehydrated mononuclear hydro-oxium chain.
  - b). Find a female heart, only recently deceased [**Metanote:** This means a female character must die. Innocent bystanders do not count.] You are not yet at the point of killing someone else just to bring Rachel back. Yet.

2. Maintain appearances. Deny that anything is wrong. If people found out about stealing Rachel's body, or extra body parts, or trying to bring her back to life, well, they might not approve. They might go for the torches and pitchforks, in fact. Therefore, make sure this stays secret, and make sure that no one tries to uncover the truth. At least, not until you've done it. Then it becomes a scientific breakthrough, and you should tell everyone about it.