

# THE TIDE OF LIFE

*by* J. Eric Laing

It was an autumn day, late in the afternoon, a Tuesday, when the last murderer died. There was no official announcement. Indeed, she and her crime had been forgotten. Pancreatitis, her cause of death. Quite treatable, the cancer. Nothing could be done for the gene that predisposed her to the ugly actions of her life. She was forty-seven. In six days she would have been forty-eight. Would have.

And so she was gone. Good riddance. Yes, there would be other deaths...but no more murder. That sick twist of the primate mind had been rooted out. Like a weed it was pulled and left to dry in the sun. The weeds, some seven hundred and sixty-nine million of them, by modest estimates, were culled.

Evolution had stepped in. Humankind had evolved. From fire to wheel to electricity to nanotech, intelligence had marched on and won the day.

Her name, that last one, was Elizabeth Holt. She'd meant to kill herself after what she succeeded to do to her children and husband. Her conviction had not waned but her trembling hand and the talents of the emergency room medical staff conspired against her and her self-inflicted gunshot.

And so, as part of her sentence, her nanotech was removed. The legion of microscopic physicians were gone. There would be no more scrubbing of toxins and deep cell repair. No more close attendance to glucose levels and monitoring of the endocrine. Aging would commence again. The decay of life, the ticking clock once paused would resume. She, sick and wrong, would be gone. Tossed from the raft of humanity. And so she was.

Meanwhile, a passionless race moves and pushes things about and forward, forever unquestioning. Immortal.

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