



Science

and Nature

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Think of your favourite science-fiction story. What would you think if I told you that your fictional story could become a reality? On 22nd May 1934, Doctor Robert E. Cornish successfully revived two dogs, Lazarus 4th and Lazarus 5th, after they had been declared clinically dead. No, it is not a science-fiction story plotline; it was a real-life experiment. You see, science can now defy the once-rigid nature of life, death and the known world in insidious, exhilarating and previously undreamt of ways.

Why is science and nature worth our discussion? We know science is the pursuit of nature, and nature is the state of everything around us. It is the most relevant topic we could ever discuss in our lifetime. We live in a miraculous time of extreme, exponential change; changes characterized by discoveries and innovation all rooted in science; changes with the power to alter nature.

How does science catalyze change? Allow me to present the possible genesis of a "Brave New World". Every year millions of babies are born with life-altering genetic diseases. Scientists have recently discovered CRISPR

CAS-9, a technology that can be used to modify genes, thus giving babies the lives they deserve. This is, of course, met with no small amount of excitement. But what is it that can stop people from wanting more than is necessary? Good looks? Intelligence? Immortality? The possibilities are endless. The nature of human beings as we know it will change forever.

We can't really answer those generic, albeit significant, questions now but we may suspect that science wields a bone-chillingly dangerous, perhaps harmful, power to change nature. Perhaps not really. You see, science doesn't destroy or protect nature. Humans do. And that is, in fact, my standpoint here. It is our responsibility to use our knowledge wisely.

Finally, and on a positive note, I want to return to my first story. Remember the Lazarus experiment? Well, I was relieved to learn that the United States government denied Doctor Cornish the right to experiment on humans. This decision proves that we do possess the integrity and the wisdom to respect nature's boundaries.