A cunning scholar had a devoted wife, whose intellect he admired fiercely, and whose company he sought whenever possible. One day, when urgent research compelled him to depart, he visited a market where mystical creatures were traded and purchased a chameleon. This chameleon not only shifted colors with uncanny precision but possessed the ability to foresee events yet to unfold. He placed it in a terrarium, instructed his wife to keep it near her study, and begged her to safeguard it during his absence. Then he left. Upon his return, he inquired of the chameleon what visions it had witnessed, and the creature revealed glimpses that unsettled him deeply.

She suspected one of her apprentices had sabotaged her experiments but learned it was the chameleon, and vowed to discredit it.

When her husband next departed for a fortnight, she ordered one apprentice to spin a pendulum before the terrarium; another to extinguish candles in rhythmic bursts above it, and a third to wave a prism that fractured light into blinding rainbows across its eyes. The apprentices performed this ritual nightly, with eerie precision.

The following week, when the scholar returned, he pressed the chameleon for its prophecies. The reptile replied, "My learned master, the celestial dance of comets and eclipses has so dazzled my sight that I cannot discern the shadows of our own home."

The scholar, knowing no such celestial events had occurred, concluded the chameleon was delirious, so he lifted it from the terrarium and, in a fit of frustration, dropped it onto the laboratory floor, crushing it. Yet he later mourned, for he discovered the chameleon’s visions had been true—it had foreseen not cosmic events, but the wife’s manipulations, which had blinded it to earthly truths.