

SHE WAS BEING POUNDED, BEATEN SENSELESS by brutal, jarring blows. She rolled away and moaned.

"Come on," Gerhard said, shaking her. "Wake up, Jan."

She opened her eyes. The room was dark. Someone was leaning over her.

"Come on, come on, wake up."

She yawned. The movement sent streaks of pain down through her neck. "What is it?"

"Telephone for you. It's Benson."

That jolted her awake faster than she would have thought possible. Gerhard helped her sit up, and she shook her head to clear it. Her neck was a column of pain, and the rest of her body was stiff and aching, but she ignored that.

"Where?"

"Telecomp."

She went outside into the hallway, blinking in the bright light. The cops were still there, but they were tired now, eyes dulled, jaws slack. She followed Gerhard into Telecomp.

Richards held out the phone to her, saying, "Here she is."

She took the receiver. "Hello? Harry?"
Across the room, Anders was listening on an extension.

"I don't feel good," Harry Benson said. "I want it to stop, Dr. Ross."

"What's the matter, Harry?" She could hear the fatigue in his voice, the slow and slightly childlike quality. What would one of those rats say after twenty-four hours of stimulation?

"Things aren't working very well. I'm tired."

"We can help you," she said.

"It's the feelings," Benson said. "They're making me tired now. That's all. Just tired. I want them to stop."

"You'll have to let us help you, Harry."

"I don't believe you will."

"You have to trust us, Harry."

There was a long pause. Anders looked across the room at Ross. She shrugged. "Harry?" she said.

"I wish you never did this to me," Benson said. Anders checked his watch.

"Did what?"

"The operation."

"We can fix it for you, Harry."

"I wanted to fix it myself," he said. His voice was very childlike, almost petulant. "I wanted to pull out the wires."

Ross frowned. "Did you try?"

"No. I tried to pull off the bandages, but it hurt too much. I don't like it when it hurts."

He was really being quite childlike. She wondered if the regression was a specific phenomenon, or the result of fear and fatigue.