

understand you," said Philip: his voice had the angry bewilderment of a man who recites the formulas of a well-tested role, but keeps getting the wrong cues in answer. "I don't understand why one can't talk to you any more. I don't understand what sort of theory you're propounding and—"

"Oh yes, you do."

As if refusing to believe that the formulas could fail, Philip burst out with: "Since when did you take to abstract philosophy? You're only a businessman, you're not qualified to deal with questions of principle, you ought to leave it to the experts who have conceded for centuries—"

"Cut it, Philip. What's the gimmick?"

"Gimmick?"

"Why the sudden ambition?"

"Well, at a time like this . . ."

"Like what?"

"Well, every man has the right to have some means of support and . . . and not be left to be tossed aside . . . When things are so uncertain, a man's got to have some security . . . some foothold . . . I mean, at a time like this, if anything happened to you, I'd have no—"

"What do you expect to happen to me?"

"Oh, I don't! I don't!" The cry was oddly, incomprehensibly genuine. "I don't expect anything to happen! . . . Do you?"

"Such as what?"

"How do I know? . . . But I've got nothing except the pittance you give me and . . . and you might change your mind any time."

"I might."

"And I haven't any hold on you at all."

"Why did it take you that many years to realize it and start worrying? Why now?"

"Because . . . because you've changed. You . . . you used to have a sense of duty and moral responsibility, but . . . you're losing it. You're losing it, aren't you?"

Rearden stood studying him silently; there was something peculiar in Philip's manner of sliding toward questions, as if his words were accidental, but the too casual, the faintly insistent questions were the key to his purpose.

"Well, I'll be glad to take the burden off your shoulders, if I'm a burden to you!" Philip snapped suddenly. "Just give me a job, and your conscience won't have to bother you about me any longer!"

"It doesn't."

"That's what I mean! You don't care. You don't care what becomes of any of us, do you?"

"Of whom?"

"Why . . . Mother and me and . . . and mankind in general. But I'm not going to appeal to your better self. I know that you're ready to ditch me at a moment's notice, so—"

"You're lying, Philip. That's not what you're worried about. If it were, you'd be angling for a chunk of cash, not for a job, not—"

"No! I want a job!" The cry was immediate and almost frantic. "Don't try to buy me off with cash! I want a job!"

"Pull yourself together, you poor louse. Do you hear what you're saying?"

Philip spit out his answer with impotent hatred: "You can't talk to me that way!"

"Can you?"

"I only—"

"To buy you off? Why should I try to buy you off—instead of kicking you out, as I should have, years ago?"

"Well, after all, I'm your brother!"

"What is that supposed to mean?"

"One's supposed to have some sort of feeling for one's brother."

"Do you?"

Philip's mouth swelled petulantly; he did not answer; he waited; Rearden let him wait. Philip muttered, "You're supposed . . . at least . . . to have some consideration for my feelings . . . but you haven't."

"Have you for mine?"

"Yours? Your *feelings*?" It was not malice in Philip's voice, but worse: it was a genuine, indignant astonishment. "You haven't any feelings. You've never felt anything at all. You've never *suffered*!"

It was as if a sum of years hit Rearden in the face, by means of a sensation and a sight: the exact sensation of what he had felt in the cab of the first train's engine on the John Galt Line—and the sight of Philip's eyes, the pale, half-liquid eyes presenting the uttermost of human degradation: an uncontested pain, and, with the obscene insolence of a skeleton toward a living being, demanding that his pain be held as the highest of values. You've never suffered, the eyes were saying to him accusingly—while he was seeing the night in his office when his ore mines were taken away from him—the moment when he had signed the Gift Certificate surrendering Rearden Metal—the month of days inside a plane that searched for the remains of Dagny's body. You've never suffered, the eyes were saying with self-righteous scorn—while he remembered the sensation of proud chastity with which he had fought through those moments, refusing to surrender to pain, a sensation made of his love, of his loyalty of his knowledge that joy is the goal of existence, and joy is not to be stumbled upon, but to be achieved, and the act of treason is to let its vision drown in the swamp of the moment's torture. You've never suffered, the dead stare of the eyes was saying, you've never felt anything, because only to suffer is to feel—there's no such thing as joy, there's only pain and the absence of pain; only pain and the zero, when one feels nothing—*I suffer*. I'm twisted by suffering, I'm made of undiluted suffering, that's my purity, that's my virtue—and yours, you the untwisted one, you the uncomplaining, yours is to relieve me of my pain—cut your unsuffering body to patch up mine, cut your unfeeling soul to stop mine from feeling—and we'll achieve the ultimate ideal, the triumph over life, the zero! He was seeing the nature of those who, for centuries, had not re-

coiled from the preachers of annihilation—he was seeing the nature of the enemies he had been fighting all his life.

"Philip," he said, "get out of here." His voice was like a ray of sunlight in a morgue, it was the plain, dry, daily voice of a businessman, the sound of health, addressed to an enemy one could not honor by anger, nor even by horror. "And don't ever try to enter these mills again, because there will be orders at every gate to throw you out, if you try it."

"Well, after all," said Philip, in the angry and cautious tone of a tentative threat, "I could have my friends assign me to a job here and *compel* you to accept it!"

Rearden had started to go, but he stopped and turned to look at his brother.

Philip's moment of grasping a sudden revelation was not accomplished by means of thought, but by means of that dark sensation which was his only mode of consciousness: he felt a sensation of terror, squeezing his throat, shivering down into his stomach—he was seeing the spread of the mills, with the roving streamers of flame, with the ladles of molten metal sailing through space on delicate cables, with open pits the color of glowing coal, with cranes coming at his head, pounding past, holding tons of steel by the invisible power of magnets—and he knew that he was afraid of this place, afraid to the death, that he dared not move without the protection and guidance of the man before him—then he looked at the tall, straight figure standing casually still, the figure with the unflinching eyes whose sight had cut through rock and flame to build this place—and then he knew how easily the man he was proposing to compel could let a single bucket of metal tilt over a second ahead of its time or let a single crane drop its load a foot short of its goal, and there would be nothing left of him, of Philip the claimant—and his only protection lay in the fact that his mind would think of such actions, but the mind of Hank Rearden would not.

"But we'd better keep it on a friendly basis," said Philip.

"You'd better," said Rearden and walked away.

Men who worship pain—thought Rearden, staring at the image of the enemies he had never been able to understand—they're men who worship pain. It seemed monstrous, yet peculiarly devoid of importance. He felt nothing. It was like trying to summon emotion toward inanimate objects, toward refuse sliding down a mountainside to crush him. One could flee from the slide or build retaining walls against it or be crushed—but one could not grant any anger, indignation or moral concern to the senseless motions of the unliving; no, worse, he thought—the anti-living.

The same sense of detached unconcern remained with him while he sat in a Philadelphia courtroom and watched men perform the motions which were to grant him his divorce. He watched them utter mechanical generalities, recite vague phrases of fraudulent evidence, play an intricate game of stretching words to convey no facts and no meaning. He had paid them to do it—he whom the law permitted no other way to gain his freedom, no right to state the facts and plead the truth—the law which delivered his fate, not to objective