tone of a person stunned by a shock, cut off from reality. "What does it look like?"

"Are you hurt? What happened?"

"No! . . . Oh, never mind, don't look at me! I'm all right. Look at this. Do you know what that is?"

"What did you do to yourself?"

"I had to dig it out of there. I'm all right."

"You're shaking."

"You will, too, in a moment. Hank! Look at it. Just look and tell me what you think it is."

He glanced down, then looked attentively—then he was sitting on the floor, studying the object intently. "It's a queer way to put a motor together," he said, frowning.

"Read this," she said, extending the pages.

He read, looked up and said, "Good God!"

She was sitting on the floor beside him, and for a moment they could say nothing else.

"It was the coil," she said. She felt as if her mind were racing, she could not keep up with all the things which a sudden blast had opened to her vision, and her words came hurtling against one another. "It was the coil that I noticed first—because I had seen drawings like it, not quite, but something like it, years ago, when I was in school—it was in an old book, it was given up as impossible long, long ago—but I liked to read everything I could find about railroad motors. That book said that there was a time when men were thinking of it—they worked on it, they spent years on experiments, but they couldn't solve it and they gave it up. It was forgotten for generations. I didn't think that any living scientist ever thought of it now. But someone did. Someone has solved it, now, today! . . Hank, do you understand? Those men, long ago, tried to invent a motor that would draw static electricity from the atmosphere, convert it and create its own power as it went along. They couldn't do it. They gave it up." She pointed at the broken shape. "But there it is."

He nodded. He was not smiling. He sat looking at the remnant, intent on some thought of his own; it did not seem to be a happy thought.

"Hank! Don't you understand what this means? It's the greatest revolution in power motors since the internal-combustion engine—greater than that! It wipes everything out—and makes everything possible. To hell with Dwight Sanders and all of them! Who'll want to look at a Diesel? Who'll want to worry about oil, coal or refueling stations? Do you see what I see? A brand-new locomotive half the size of a single Diesel unit, and with ten times the power. A self-generator, working on a few drops of fuel, with no limits to its energy. The cleanest, swiftest, cheapest means of motion ever devised. Do you see what this will do to our transportation systems and to the country—in about one year?"

There was no spark of excitement in his face. He said slowly, "Who designed it? Why was it left here?"

"We'll find out."

He weighed the pages in his hand reflectively. "Dagny," he asked,

"if you don't find the man who made it, will you be able to reconstruct that motor from what is left?"

She took a long moment, then the word fell with a sinking sound: "No."

"Nobody will. He had it all right. It worked—judging by what he writes here. It is the greatest thing I've ever laid eyes on. It was. We can't make it work again. To supply what's missing would take a mind as great as his."

"I'll find him—if I have to drop every other thing I'm doing."

"—and if he's still alive."

She heard the unstated guess in the tone of his voice. "Why do you say it like that?"

"I don't think he is. If he were, would he leave an invention of this kind to rot on a junk pile? Would he abandon an achievement of this size? If he were still alive, you would have had the locomotives with the self-generators years ago. And you wouldn't have had to look for him, because the whole world would know his name by now."

"I don't think this model was made so very long ago."

He looked at the paper of the manuscript and at the rusty tarnish of the motor. "About ten years ago, I'd guess. Maybe a little longer."

"We've got to find him or somebody who knew him. This is more important—"

"—than anything owned or manufactured by anyone today. I don't think we'll find him. And if we don't, nobody will be able to repeat his performance. Nobody will rebuild his motor. There's not enough of it left. It's only a lead, an invaluable lead, but it would take the sort of mind that's born once in a century, to complete it. Do you see our present-day motor designers attempting it?"

"No."

"There's not a first-rate designer left. There hasn't been a new idea in motors for years. That's one profession that seems to be dying—or dead."

"Hank, do you know what that motor would have meant, if built?"

He chuckled briefly. "I'd say: about ten years added to the life of every person in this country—if you consider how many things it would have made easier and cheaper to produce, how many hours of human labor it would have released for other work, and how much more anyone's work would have brought him. Locomotives? What about automobiles and ships and airplanes with a motor of this kind? And tractors. And power plants. All hooked to an unlimited supply of energy, with no fuel to pay for, except a few pennies' worth to keep the converter going. That motor could have set the whole country in motion and on fire. It would have brought an electric light bulb into every home, even into the homes of those people we saw down in the valley."

"It would have? It will. I'm going to find the man who made it."

"We'll try."

He rose abruptly, but stopped to glance down at the broken remnant and said, with a chuckle that was not gay, "*There* was the motor for the John Galt Line."