

presume he wanted the bigger salary he could hope to obtain from a private employer."

He turned away, not to see the look that was fading from her face, not to let himself know its meaning. "Yes," she said, her voice hard, "he is probably the kind of man I want."

"He's a young physicist from the Utah Institute of Technology," he said dryly. "His name is Quentin Daniels. A friend of mine sent him to me a few months ago. He came to see me, but he would not take the job I offered. I wanted him on my staff. He had the mind of a scientist. I don't know whether he can succeed with your motor, but at least he has the ability to attempt it. I believe you can still reach him at the Utah Institute of Technology. I don't know what he's doing there now—they closed the Institute a year ago."

"Thank you, Dr. Stadler. I shall get in touch with him."

"If . . . if you want me to, I'll be glad to help him with the theoretical part of it. I'm going to do some work myself, starting from the leads of that manuscript. I'd like to find the cardinal secret of energy that its author had found. It's his basic principle that we must discover. If we succeed, Mr. Daniels may finish the job, as far as your motor is concerned."

"I will appreciate any help you may care to give me, Dr. Stadler."

They walked silently through the dead tunnels of the Terminal, down the ties of a rusted track under a string of blue lights, to the distant glow of the platforms.

At the mouth of the tunnel, they saw a man kneeling on the track, hammering at a switch with the unrhythmic exasperation of uncertainty. Another man stood watching him impatiently.

"Well, what's the matter with the damn thing?" asked the watcher.

"Don't know."

"You've been at it for an hour."

"Yeah."

"How long is it going to take?"

"Who is John Galt?"

Dr. Stadler winced. They had gone past the men, when he said, "I don't like that expression."

"I don't, either," she answered.

"Where did it come from?"

"Nobody knows."

They were silent, then he said, "I knew a John Galt once. Only he died long ago."

"Who was he?"

"I used to think that he was still alive. But now I'm certain that he must have died. He had such a mind that, had he lived, the whole world would have been talking of him by now."

"But the whole world is talking of him."

He stopped still. "Yes . . ." he said slowly, staring at a thought that had never struck him before. "yes . . . Why?" The word was heavy with the sound of terror.

"Who was he, Dr. Stadler?"

"Why are they talking of him?"

"Who was he?"

He shook his head with a shudder and said sharply, "It's just a coincidence. The name is not uncommon at all. It's a meaningless coincidence. It has no connection with the man I knew. That man is dead."

He did not permit himself to know the full meaning of the words he added:

"He has to be dead."

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The order that lay on his desk was marked "Confidential . . . Emergency . . . Priority . . . Essential need certified by office of Top Co-ordinator . . . for the account of Project X"—and demanded that he sell ten thousand tons of Rearden Metal to the State Science Institute.

Rearden read it and glanced up at the superintendent of his mills who stood before him without moving. The superintendent had come in and put the order down on his desk without a word.

"I thought you'd want to see it," he said, in answer to Rearden's glance.

Rearden pressed a button, summoning Miss Ives. He handed the order to her and said, "Send this back to wherever it came from. Tell them that I will not sell any Rearden Metal to the State Science Institute."

Gwen Ives and the superintendent looked at him, at each other and back at him again, what he saw in their eyes was congratulation.

"Yes, Mr. Rearden," Gwen Ives said formally, taking the slip as if it were any other kind of business paper. She bowed and left the room. The superintendent followed.

Rearden smiled faintly, in greeting to what they felt. He felt nothing about that paper or its possible consequences.

By a sort of inner convulsion—which had been like tearing a plug out to cut off the current of his emotions—he had told himself six months ago. Act first, keep the mills going, feel later. It had made him able to watch dispassionately the working of the Fair Share Law.

Nobody had known how that law was to be observed. First, he had been told that he could not produce Rearden Metal in an amount greater than the tonnage of the best special alloy, other than steel, produced by Orren Boyle. But Orren Boyle's best special alloy was some cracking mixture that no one cared to buy. Then he had been told that he could produce Rearden Metal in the amount that Orren Boyle *could have* produced, if he could have produced it. Nobody had known how this was to be determined. Somebody in Washington had announced a figure, naming a number of tons per year, giving no reasons. Everybody had let it go at that.

He had not known how to give every consumer who demanded it an equal share of Rearden Metal. The waiting list of orders could not be filled in three years, even had he been permitted to work at full capacity. New orders were coming in daily. They were not orders any longer, in the old, honorable sense of trade; they were demands. The law provided that he could be sued by any consumer who failed to receive his fair share of Rearden Metal.

Nobody had known how to determine what constituted a fair share