

AYN RAND

ATLAS SHRUGGED

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"The independent mind is directly responsible for all human progress and prosperity"

--Ayn Rand

AYN RAND - ATLAS SHRUGGED

The world Ayn Rand immersed readers into when Atlas Shrugged was first published back in 1957 was set in a not-too-distant future. Her Heroes live in a United States surrounded by World Nations who are at odds with us; both politically and economically. People City States make up the rest of the world, ruled by Communism and Socialism.

As the last so called "free society", our Nation's economy is failing daily. Once profitable businesses and industries are closing down unable to make profits in the wake of failing markets and rising labor costs. Chapter 11 filings are jeopardizing even the most stable of companies. Workers and Labor are facing unemployment in massive numbers. Government controls and enforcement to insure jobs and stable markets only continue to strangle the country toward a slow and painful death.

Oil has become essential to life. In wake of global piracy, terrorism and political differences, the U.S. has been forced to rely on internal domestic oil in the rich new oil discoveries in the western states and specifically, Colorado.

Rail transportation is the most reliable of the surviving transportation systems and is under siege by government regulators and "Looters".

The last free society is about to implode on itself and sink into chaos and masses of workers with no jobs to go to and no Leaders to lead.

The Leaders, the thinkers and dreamers and doers responsible for advancing progress and creating value in our free society are the ones going on strike. Not the Workers who toil in the plants, or the Looters, who take without contributing, but the free thinkers disappear, en masse, in protest of the imprisonment of the rational mind...

Leaving us a country without Leadership, without progress and full of Users and Looters.

The parallels of Ayn Rand's future world to the conditions we find ourselves in are eerily frightening. As a Nation we are at war with the World, even our staunchest Allies. We are hated and isolated by cultures, nations and religious doctrines around the Globe. Terrorism is the new "ism" replacing Communism from Rand's model.

Grand profitable companies and industries are going belly up or filing for Bankruptcy at an alarming rate and suffering staggering monetary losses causing ripple losses throughout the executive and work forces.

Our Military just fought a 70 billion dollar war to control Oil which has become more valuable than Gold and Water to our Country only to lose the aftermath. There is enormous pressure to find oil inside our own borders as we are increasingly surrounded by Nations who are against us and who control the flow of foreign oil.

Domestic Airlines report unprecedented losses and are an endangered species, many already filing for Chapter 11. Massive unemployment is growing in all industry sectors.

The infrastructure of our cities - the transportation systems, the schools, the communication systems and the technology sectors - are all crumbling. So costly to repair, the Nation cannot afford to maintain any level of security, public utilities, quality of schools, arts, efficient transportation, etc.

Our Government Leaders are trying everything from waging wars to tax cuts. Nothing is working. We continue to spiral out of control toward chaos.

And where are our Heroes in this reality? Where are the Dagny Taggarts and the Hank Reardens? Who is going to navigate this mess and show us the way out? Do we have any heroes that can even compare to those of Ayn Rand?

And where the hell is John Galt when you really need him?

AYN RAND - ATLAS SHRUGGEDPART I: WHO IS JOHN GALT?PROLOGUE: THE LEGEND OF NAT TAGGART

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

Spans of a bridge under construction stretch from the Eastbank of the Big Muddy toward the Western shore a mile in the distance. Wooden scaffolding envelops the steel girders like the bones of a dinosaur resurrected from the deeps.

A construction sign reads: TAGGART TRANSCONTINENTAL RR MISSISSIPPI BRIDGE. RR tracks stop at the entrance to the bridge. A private RR coach is parked at the end of the line.

The SILHOUETTE of an imposing figure stands in the open door of the coach. His hands rugged. Not afraid of hard work. The glow from a draw on his cigar accents his gleaming eyes. NAT TAGGART takes in the view of his dream--the RR bridge that will link the East with the West...

EDDIE (V.O.)

I'm thinking of the night Nat Taggart was told that he had to abandon the bridge he was building. The first railroad bridge ever across the Mississippi--Short of money--long on lawsuits from riverboat shippers--People were scared...and angry--

Nat Taggart hears the Mob coming. Angry Men sweep past his coach carrying torches and axes and sledge hammers storming onto his bridge.

Mob Men douse the scaffolding in kerosene oil and set fire to the bridge. Others chop and beat it to death. A crane is toppled into the river by hundreds of the Destroyers--

NAT TAGGART WATCHES

Clearly visible for the first time in the fiery glow. A self-made man. A visionary. The right stuff...

TIME LAPSE TO: EXT. TAGGART BRIDGE - DAY

Nat Taggart still stands at the door of his coach, his view a blackened ruin, a tangle of smoking wood and twisted steel.

A committee of BANKERS in sober suits have gathered at his rolling office to make an offer Nat Taggart cannot refuse...

EDDIE (V.O.)

All through the next day Nat kept receiving word that his stock underwriters for his railroad were canceling their subscriptions to buy into Taggart's "impractical venture" they called it. His Bankers came to the construction site and offered him loans to finish the railroad...if...IF...he would ferry his passengers and freight across the Mississippi like the other rail lines.

Nat Taggart studies the thick documents presented to him. He regards the Banker's squinch-faced nervous expressions--

UNKNOWN WORKER (V.O.)

What was his answer?

Nat Taggart turns the document in his steady hands, tears it in half and walks out leaving his Bankers dumbfounded.

FOLLOW TAGGART

Striding onto the destroyed bridge, along the spans down to the last girder. He kneels, picks up tools his Workers had abandoned and starts to clear the charred wreckage away from the steel structure. Methodical. Without emotion...

He works alone until the sun sets in the West where his line will go. He works into the night and the next day--

EDDIE (V.O.)

By the next morning Nat had a plan. He would find the right People-- Those of independent judgment--to convince them to give him the money to finish the bridge.

TIME LAPSE TO: NAT TAGGART

Standing in the door of his private coach as the first train steams across the Mississippi heading west. He flicks his cigar ash into the river and leans out looking ahead to the future.

The steam from Taggart's engine morphs to:

THE STEAM FROM A CUP OF COFFEE

INT. TAGGART TERMINAL - DAY - THE PRESENT

EDDIE WILLERS dumps a mound of sugar into his steaming coffee. Eddie's lean features do not mask the kindness in his eyes nor the loyalty in his heart. Across the booth, the UNKNOWN WORKER listens, unseen, except for his intense eyes--

EDDIE

"Ocean to ocean." That was Nat's mantra. Every Taggart to run the line after him has to live by it.

UNKNOWN WORKER

Hell of a story...

The vast cafeteria underneath the TTRR terminal is filled with Workers and Patrons paying no attention to the two men.

UNKNOWN WORKER

But I didn't ask you about Nat Taggart, Mr. Willers.

EDDIE

I know...

UNKNOWN WORKER

I asked you about his great grand daughter--Your boss? What kind of person is she? Dagny Taggart--

Eddie smiles as he gets beeped. He checks his PDA--

EDDIE

And I just told you--

Eddie exits the maze of tables. Before the Unknown Worker's face is revealed, his Newspaper shields him from view.

The headlines are not good. Another Airline declares bankruptcy. Nationalized oil countries have raised the price of oil to an astronomical price...and RAGNAR DANNESKJOLD has sunk another oil tanker en route to America.

EDDIE'S WALK - TAGGART TERMINAL

Eddie wades through the usual suspects of Street Performers and Homeless vying for spare change.

HOMELESS MAN

Who is John Galt?

Eddie ignores the Homeless Man challenging him matching him step for step across a rambling shopping sprawl underneath the streets of New York.

HOMELESS MAN

Who's John Galt?????

Eddie slides the Man some currency dismissing him.

EDDIE

Why are you asking me, friend?

The Homeless Man retreats, muttering to himself, fiddling with his clothes and hair working out his internal conundrum.

The question stays with Eddie as he enters the portico. The question is repeated in a wash of graffiti on the walls.

Eddie takes notes on his PDA of new vacancies and "going out of business" postings. A major airline ticket office has been abandoned with a "for lease" sign on dirty windows. People float by with blank stares.

VENDOR (O.C.)

No one hurries anymore, Mr. Eddie--

The old VENDOR at the kiosk near the entrance to TTRR HQ hands Eddie his paper on the fly--

VENDOR

Look at'em. Been here thirty years. I seen the change. They used to hurry--knowing where they were going and eager to get there. Now they hurry 'cause they're afraid. Headlines--bad'n getting badder. This Ragnar gangsta--he sunk another oil tanker. Why can't they catch this guy? And why're we paying seventeen dollars for a gallon of gas? Had another subway accident coming to work. No terrorists. Just bad brakes. Fifth accident this month. It's a disease, I'm telling you--

EDDIE

Yeah...That's why I walk to the office. At least the sidewalks still work.

The Vendor tosses Eddie a carton of cigarettes wrapped in gold foil.

VENDOR

For Miss "T". Haven't seen her for days. She finally take a vacation?

EDDIE

Dagny? She doesn't even know how to spell vacation--

Eddie heads around the statue of NAT TAGGART rising above the complex. "Ocean to Ocean" emblazoned into the base. Nat's head is raised looking into the future, not the decaying reality below.

INT. TTRR EXEC OFFICES - DAY

JIMMY TAGGART, the young President of TTRR, is on a rampage. -
--A poor substitute for the great Nat.

JIMMY

I just want to know what the hell she's doing in Mexico? Hey, I'm only the President of the railroad. You'd think my own Sister could answer phone calls and emails on the hour for almost a week--

Jimmy throttles Eddie in front of an embarrassed Staff busying themselves before a wall-sized electronic map of the Taggart Transcontinental RR network.

JIMMY

This company has a billion or two at stake in d'Anconia Copper and our San Sebastian line. I don't want her down there screwing everything up.

Eddie remains unflappable which infuriates Jimmy even more.

EDDIE

You know Dagny. She'll call when she has something to say.

JIMMY

(threatening)

Do you work for TTRR? Or my little Sister?

EDDIE

Hey--Who's John Galt?

Eddie ducks into his office not waiting for Jimmy's answer.

Angry, Jimmy glares at the big board and follows the San Sebastian line running south from Colorado through Texas and right into the heart of Mexico.

SHARP CUT TO:

EXT. CIUDAD DURANGO, MEXICO - THE PREVIOUS NIGHT

A vintage Porsche Ghia roadster blares through the crowded night time streets beeping constantly.

THE DRIVER - QUICK CUTS - NIGHT

DAGNY TAGGART--Dark glasses hide her eyes. Neon of the city flashes. Her black fashionable dress is hiked up above her thighs, shifting through gears roaring around slower traffic.

INT. DURANGO MANSE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

A uniformed Officer makes his way to a smoke filled coterie. He speaks quietly to the Governor. Bad news. The Governor snaps sharply at an Hispanic Gentleman, FRANCISCO d'Anconia, who is in the midst of entertaining two beautiful FEMALES.

The Gentleman responds by offering the Governor an unusual golden colored cigarette. The Governor storms away.

EXT. DURANGO TRAIN STATION - SAME TIME

The Porsche Ghia slides to a halt. Dagny is out, shucking her heels on the run racing through People to the platform in stocking feet and that black evening dress hugging her slender nervous body--

RESUME: FRANCISCO

One of his luscious Escorts snakes the golden cigarette and bends to the Francisco's golden lighter bearing a striking logo--

BEAUTIFUL ESCORT[SPANISH]

Aww. No Dagny? Now we have you all
to ourselves, Francisco...

The elegant Francisco runs his hands through his raven black hair in his trademark habit as the two Escorts entwine themselves around him and lead him away.

EXT. DURANGO STATION PLATFORM - SAME TIME

As the "Taggart San Sebastian RR" passenger train is pulling away, Dagny hops on the last car with the grace and ease of a gazelle as if she had been doing this all her life.

The train picks up speed, a strange hybrid blend of steam and modern technology. Sleek, elegant, but retrofitted and fired by coal. The past and the future in one machine--

INT. TRAIN - TRAVELING

DAGNY takes a window seat. Catching her breath, she stretches one leg across the empty seat before her...

..."sculptured by the tight sheen of stocking...to the tip of a foot in a high heeled pump with a feminine elegance that seems out of place in the dusty train car and oddly incongruous with the rest of her."

Outside her window, rows of Diesel Engines glide past abandoned on the sidetracks as they leave the station.

She shucks her minimal jewelry trying to disappear in her seat. She holds her sensual mouth closed with inflexible precision. She checks her cell/PDA, starts to make a call then shuts it off. She checks a familiar gold foil cigarette pack. Empty...

She relaxes, closing her gray eyes, listening to the sound of the train wheels knocking in even rhythm. She lets her taut posture melt as notes of music rise up forming a violent, magnificent composition that sweeps her away--

DAGNY - CLOSER (LATER)

She wakes with a start. Something is wrong. The train is not moving. Outside her window, the train sits on a siding.

Dagny looks at her watch. She hurries to the end of the car to a YOUNG HISPANIC CONDUCTOR futzing with the ventilation system as he whistles--

DAGNY [SPANISH]

Excuse me, how long have we been standing?

YOUNG CONDUCTOR [SPANISH]

About thirty minutes.

DAGNY
(half to herself)
We're still in Mexico--

The young Conductor nods and continues whistling. Dagny heads for the exit then suddenly turns. He is whistling the exact theme of the music she heard as she went to sleep--

DAGNY [SPANISH]
Was that just playing on the PA?
(off his confused look)
What you're whistling? Sounds like
a Halley composition...Richard
Halley? The composer?

The young Man smiles as if sharing a secret with a friend.

YOUNG CONDUCTOR [SPANISH]
Yes, M'am--It's Halley's fifth
concerto. "Strike".

DAGNY [SPANISH]
(puzzled)
Fifth? I thought he quit after
number four. "Strike?" Is this new?

The Conductor's smile vanishes. He heads abruptly away.

YOUNG CONDUCTOR
Right. Sorry. My mistake. Must be
his fourth--

Lost in translation? Dagny hesitates confused, then follows--

EXT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Stopped on the siding. Dagny climbs down and heads for the train crew and a few passengers gathered at the engine. A red signal light hangs in the darkness ahead of them.

DAGNY [SPANISH]
What's the trouble here?

--interrupting a heated discussion. Engineer, Conductors and Crew look at her warily. Her question sounded like an order.

ENGINEER [ENGLISH]
Red light, Lady. Emergency.

DAGNY
What's the emergency?

The Engineer shrugs and does not seem to care. The young Conductor speaks up in perfect English.

YOUNG CONDUCTOR

I don't think the signal's ever going to change. I think it's busted.

ENGINEER

Like everything else on this railroad.

DAGNY

And if everything's busted, how long are you going to wait for someone to fix it?

ENGINEER

Who's John Galt?

The attitude in the Engineer's voice rankles Dagny.

DAGNY

(bristling)

This is a Taggart line. Taggart trains run on time.

PASSENGER

You don't know railroads, Lady--

Wrong. Dagny calmly pushes through climbing aboard the engine. The Engineer and Conductors pursue.

INT. ENGINE CAB - CONTINUING ACTION

Dagny carries her authority right to the System Operator.

DAGNY

Let's go. Get us rolling. Your job is to run this train--

OPERATOR

Not against a red light.

DAGNY

It's a busted signal. And you're giving the Ferrocarriles Nacionales a good chance to catch us before we can get this train across the border.

Lots of reactions in the Cab.

ENGINEER

Hold on, M'am, what's going on here? Who are you?

Dagny drills him with her steel gray direct disturbing eyes.

DAGNY

Taggart...Dagny Taggart.

The Engineer and Conductor are gobsmacked. The cab buzzes.

ENGINEER

Miss Taggart--Nobody told us you were coming.

DAGNY

Short notice for me too. Excuse me.

She squeezes by the Operator and thumps gauges, checking computer readouts as she climbs in the operators's seat taking control.

ENGINEER

If there's any trouble, are you taking responsibility, Miss Taggart?

DAGNY

I always do--That's what vice-president's are good for--

She hits the horn signaling departure and powers up the engine. Everybody mans their posts. The young Conductor pumps a fist as he heads back to the passenger coaches.

EXT. TRAIN - CONTINUING ACTION

Steam releases from the complex valves. Turbines whine as the hybrid train begins to move. Passengers hurry to jump on.

EXT. DURANGO STATION - SAME TIME

A military vehicle slides to a halt. Soldiers spill out pushing through the crowd searching.

STATION PLATFORM - CONTINUING ACTION

One Soldier questions a Dispatcher. The Military Officer reports on his cell phone in a panic.

EXT. R.R. - AERIAL VIEW - NIGHT

The San Sebastian train follows its headlight under a starry sky. Military Helicopters descend into view and give chase.

THE ENGINE CAB - TRAVELING

Dagny at the controls pushing the train faster and faster. No emotion in her face. All business. The Head Conductor hurries from the passenger cars rattling in Spanish.

HEAD CONDUCTOR [SPANISH]
Maybe Miss Taggart can tell us why
two Military helicopters are
tracking us--?

DAGNY [SPANISH]
Maybe because The People's State of
Mexico is about to Nationalize all
the railroads and they don't want
me stealing this train.

Blank looks around. The Head Conductor crosses himself.

ENGINEER
But that is exactly what you are
doing.

DAGNY
Yep. Except it's my train. Take
over--

The Engineer takes the controls. Dagny steers the Operator to the computer terminal. She dictates an email--

'AUTHORIZATION FROM OPERATIONS, ALL ASSETS ON SAN SEBASTIAN
RR ARE TO EFFECT EMERGENCY RUNS TO THE BORDER BY ORDER OF D.
TAGGART. THIS IS AN EMERGENCY. D TAGGART. VP TTRR'

All the Men in the cab look at her like she is crazy.

HEAD CONDUCTOR
Does your brother know about this?

Dagny smiles easily and shakes "no", her sweep of hair grazing her shoulders. The Head Conductor laughs.

HEAD CONDUCTOR [SPANISH]
Send it.

Excitement ripples in the Cab. Dagny takes over the controls.

THE RUN FOR THE BORDER - QUICK CUTS: HALLEY'S "STRIKE" BOOMS

Dagny's message streams on displays in engine cabs and dispatch terminals all over the TTRR system. Engineers respond to the call rerouting trains.

Signals flash. Switches are thrown as beautiful retro-fitted hybrid steam engines roar by changing directions. North!

A freight pulling empty ore cars flies through a switching yard setting off signals. Controllers in dispatch stations are pulling their hair out.

A sleek passenger train blows through a station stop at full speed sending waiting passengers retreating from the platform.

AERIAL VIEW - DAGNY'S TRAIN - NEAR DAWN

Flat out. Heading for the border. Military helicopters bank low across the oncoming engine flashing high density spotlights. Orders echo over external PA's in Spanish.

Dagny barrels ahead forcing the Copters to break off.

THE CAB - TRAVELING

The Crew are holding on for dear life. Dagny is steady at the controls. Maybe even enjoying herself.

ENGINEER

Miss Taggart, I think they want us to stop--

DAGNY

That's one thing I never learned how to do.

The young Conductor hurries in and shows Dagny a printout.

YOUNG CONDUCTOR

Over eighty percent of the Engineers have responded. All heading for the border--

Dagny quietly celebrates. She checks the system controls.

DAGNY

How long to the Rio Grande?

ENGINEER

Less than five minutes--

TO ENGINE WHEELS

Screaming against the rails buckling and warping.

AHEAD - A CANYON

The tracks disappear into a narrow pass. The military helicopters track right alongside the engine. Gunners visible on the sides. Weapons trained--

THE CAB - COPTERS IN VIEW

The Crew is freaking out.

HEAD CONDUCTOR
Miss Taggart!!!

DAGNY
Blow the flu baffles! Blow them!

No one moves. Dagny drills them with those gray eyes. The System Operator leaps to the controls and punches in the computer commands. A rush of energy roars--

EXT. ENGINE - SAME TIME

The labyrinth of pipes that return the smoke back to into the hybrid engine to be re-constituted suddenly vent, blowing smoke and steam into the air--

The helicopters fly right into a wall of smoke and steam and are forced to break off--

Just as the engine screams into the narrow pass. High rock walls protect the train on both sides.

THE PASSENGER CARS - CONTINUING ACTION

Passengers are hugging their seats as the walls of the pass blur by outside at 120 mph.

EXT. THE RIO GRANDE - DAWN

As the engine roars out of the pass crossing the RR bridge spanning the wet border between Mexico and Texas. An American flag waves at the check station on the other side.

Dagny honks and waves to the shocked Border Guards as she blows by in the fantastic machine in her fantastic frock.

THE CAB - TRAVELING

The System Operator races out sick at his stomach. The Engineer smiles and offers Dagny a cigar.

The young Conductor brings up a bottle of champagne from the dining car. Dagny politely waves them off.

DAGNY

I'm good. I'm good. You just helped
save Taggart Trans millions in
assets. My thanks, Gentlemen--

Some drink a toast to her. Others curse her.

Dagny looks ahead at the rails stretching to the vanishing point. First light. She feels the hard exhilarating pleasure of action. She blows the horn like a giddy school girl.

TO THE RAILS - RUSHING BY AT DAWN

The horn sounds again and again--

FLASH TO: EXT. THE HUDSON RIVER - DAY - THE PAST

Train tracks run along the magnificent river. An approaching train blares--

DAGNY TAGGART, age 10, races into view easily outrunning the two boys chasing her. She slides down the bank to the twin RR tracks and runs along the shore toward the approaching horn.

YOUNG DAGNY

C'mon! You'll miss it.

Her brother, Jimmy, and Eddie Willers at age 14 huff and puff to keep up. Somehow Eddie has the same haircut and adult lines in his face even as a 14 year old.

YOUNG JIMMY

Who cares! It's just another train.

YOUNG EDDIE

Ahh. Don't push her buttons, Jimmy.
You know how whacked she gets--

Dagny is standing in the middle of the tracks anxiously waiting for the train to appear around the bend.

YOUNG DAGNY

C'mon, Eddie. Money! Quick!

Eddie joins Dagny digging in his pockets for loose change. The train appears a half mile away. Dagny is pumped. She grabs pennies and dimes laying them out on the rails.

Jimmy hangs on the right of way refusing to join in.

YOUNG JIMMY

Trains and math...Can't you hang at
the mall like normal girls--?

Dagny is too busy grooving on the oncoming train. Eddie pulls her off the tracks watching from the right of way.

The train thunders down on them, horn blowing. Jimmy scrambles up the hill to safety. Dagny grabs Eddie's hand as the train blurs by, both yelling at the top of their lungs--

THEIR POV - THE DIESEL ENGINE

All time slows as the Engineer waves to Dagny and Eddie from the train blurring by--

THE TRAIN WIPES FRAME TO:

THE COINS ON THE RAILS

Dagny peels one off and holds it up for Eddie. A penny, wafer thin and spread to the size of a donut. She proudly presents Eddie his trophy.

The two friends walk down the center of the track. The rails two straight lines of steel, brilliant in the sun, and the black ties like the rungs of a ladder Dagny has to climb.

YOUNG DAGNY

Eddie, I've made a decision about
my life.

YOUNG EDDIE

That's the third one today, Dags.

YOUNG DAGNY

You sound like my brother...You
just wait. I'm going to run Taggart
Trans when we grow up--

YOUNG EDDIE

I hate to be the one to tell you,
but you see, Women don't run
railroads--They run talk shows...

YOUNG DAGNY

Then I'll do both. At the same
time. You want a job?

Eddie looks at her incredulous and busts out laughing.

Dagny aims her finger at the vanishing point where the shiny
rails meet.

YOUNG DAGNY

I'm going to meet the man that's
holding those rails in his hands at
the end of the line someday. You
watch me.

The view rushes from Dagny's pointed finger flying along the
rails toward the vanishing point--

RUSHING TO:

The silhouette of a Man standing at the end of the line. ????

RESUME: DAGNY - THE PRESENT - WHISTLE BLOWS

Hands activate the hydraulic braking system. The Engineer is
slowing the train to an emergency stop. Dagny startles from
her muse--

DAGNY

Albuquerque? Already?

The System Operator shakes his head a grim "no". The Crew are
tense. Dagny sticks her head out the cab window.

HER POV - THE DISASTER

Ahead a terrible train wreck. Oil Tanker cars are spilled all
over the right of way. The twin engines lay on their side
from the derailment smoking in ruins.

EXT. THE DISASTER SIGHT - MORNING

Dagny walks the sight with her Engineer. Relief Workers and
Wrecking Crew are everywhere. A helicopter roars overhead and
lands near the tracks.

Dagny pays no attention, engrossed examining a section of
twisted rail with an expert's eye. She is angry. She stops a
Crew Foreman by the massive engines laying on their side.

DAGNY

You want to tell me what happened here? Those rails are way over the use limits.

The Foreman blows her off until the Engineer bends his ear as to who she is. The Foreman is shocked.

FOREMAN

Sorry, Miss Taggart...It's these rusted out splices.

He holds up a disintegrated rail joiner.

FOREMAN

Running trains at top speed on this ancient stretch and these old tracks'll just come apart.

Dagny looks at the sight, annoyed.

DAGNY

I paid for the steel to start replacing this line three months ago--

The Foreman shakes his head sadly at the disaster.

FOREMAN

Excuse my French, Miss T, but we haven't seen a new goddamn piece of steel on the Rio Norte--It's all going to that goddamn Mexico fiasco you had to go build.

(tips his hat)

...I got a mess to clean up.

He hurries to join the fire team dealing with another outbreak of flames from the derailed engines.

DAGNY

(half to herself)

Something's wrong. Something's really wrong--

She pulls out her PDA phone to make a call as a MAN dressed like a construction worker approaches from the helicopter.
ELLIS WYATT--

WYATT

Good thing those tankers were empty, Dagny.

(MORE)

WYATT(cont'd)
We'd have one super hell damn
mother of a fire now, wouldn't we.

He extends his hand. They shake.

DAGNY
Mr. Wyatt...That's the only good
news, I'm afraid--

She shows him the eroded rail joiners.

DAGNY
These tankers should've been full
of Wyatt crude heading for
refineries.

WYATT
That brother of yours promised to
deliver these cars a week ago. I
got a mountain full of oil the
country needs and is willing to pay
through the nose for--

Dagny takes in the tangle of empty fuel tankers scattered all
over the right of way like toys.

DAGNY
And we need your business. More
than you know. We're not making a
very good impression so far--

Track crew bring in rails from down line laying them as fast
as they can. Dagny helps secure cables to a tanker car.

Wyatt watches her as she takes charge. Winches right the
tanker onto the hastily repaired rails. Workers eye her. Who
is this Woman suddenly doing their job?

WYATT
Figured you'd be the first Taggart
on the scene. You're the only one I
can count on.

DAGNY
Don't give me too much credit.
Jimmy thinks I'm still in Mexico.

Off Wyatt's suspicious look--

DAGNY
Guess you hadn't heard--The Mexican
government is going to nationalize
the San "B" any day now.

WYATT

Then if I were you--I'd worry about
the Rio Norte line all the way to
Wyatt Junction. But I'm...me....

He kicks the rails of the Rio Norte, tips his hat and heads
for his helicopter. He picks up a bad rail joiner and hurls
it into the desert.

DAGNY

Watching Ellis Wyatt take off and head North. Workers swarm
past her lugging scavenged rails to lay new track. Dagny
joins them, her face now smoked and dirty.

EXT. TAGGART TERMINAL - DAY

Dagny stands before the statue of Nat Taggart wearing her
signature; boots, trim slacks, tapered man's shirt--jacket.

OLD VENDOR

Figured out what you want to be
when you grow up, Miss T?

The Old Vendor hands Dagny her newspaper and fav chewing gum.

DAGNY

Yep. To be able to hold my head up
like him--[Nat Taggart].

OLD VENDOR

Why don't you add the weight of the
world on your shoulders too--

DAGNY

Absolutely no profit in it.

Dagny takes one look at the front page and hands it back,
disturbed. Headlines about Mexico, Ragnar hitting another Oil
tanker and the face of an elegant Gentleman, Francisco
d'Anconia with a beautiful Woman.

DAGNY

I'll pass. You got my smokes?

OLD VENDOR

Gave the last carton to Eddie.
Can't get'em anymore. All the
cigarette companies're gone outta
business with the taxes and all--

DAGNY

Maybe now would be a good time to think about quitting.

Dagny pays him for the gum and leaves.

OLD VENDOR

I bet the Mexican Ambassador is waiting in your office right now about them trains you stole--Man-- And two more airlines shut down-- another car company folded, and the Yankees lost a double header--

DAGNY

I'm good. Anything you missed?

He thinks and shrugs--

OLD VENDOR

Who's John Galt?

She stops cold----

DAGNY

Aww, you too? I don't like what people mean when they say it--?

The Old Vendor squirms under her icy stare.

OLD VENDOR

Neither do I, Miss T--

DAGNY

I'm going to change that. 'Who's John Galt'-- Me. I'm John Galt--

The old Vendor peeks up at Nat's statue.

INT. EDDIE'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Dagny blasts Jimmy who paces waiting for an opening. Eddie has the crash news on the broadband.

DAGNY

We'll talk about Mexico later. We've got another full scale disaster in our own country.
(points to the wreck on the monitor)
Where the hell's the steel I ordered for the Rio Norte?

JIMMY

I checked with Orren Boyle this morning. Another two months--

He shoots a glance at Eddie who indicates "four months".

DAGNY

Wyatt's oil sands strike is bigger than the Saudi fields. If we don't give him service he'll get it elsewhere. We have to rebuild the Rio Norte--

JIMMY

Can we not talk about Ellis Wyatt anymore? You want to spend all our money to help one man? I'm trying to help the whole country of Mexico and you turn it into a catastrophe. What am I supposed to say to Ambassador Delgado? You didn't mean to steal twenty two engines and all that rolling stock?

DAGNY

I was there, Jimmy. It's only a matter of days before they Nationalize the San Sebastian.

JIMMY

I won't even consider the possibility of the San Sebastian being taken over.

DAGNY

Then don't. When it goes down, just remember you and your high powered Looter buddies are on the line with Francisco d'Anconia for a billion dollars down there.

JIMMY

Always money. It's never about the human element with you is it?

DAGNY

I'm not interested in helping anybody. I want to make money--

JIMMY

You're so lucky. You have no feelings. None. You've never felt anything at all--

Eddie tries to wave him off. "Don't go there." Dagny shoots her steely glances at her brother.

DAGNY

Do you want to save the Rio Norte line or not, Jimmy? Yes or no?

JIMMY

That's the trouble with you. Always yes or no. Nothing's absolute--

DAGNY

New rails are. And we don't have any. If Orren Boyle can't deliver, I'll get my metal somewhere else.

Jimmy is incensed.

JIMMY

Where are you going to get the rails? Dagny? Answer me--

Dagny snags the carton of gold leaf cigarettes off Eddie's desk and heads out the door.

JIMMY

(to Eddie)

Where is she going to get the iron? She can't do this--

Eddie spins his laptop to Jimmy. "WHO IS JOHN GALT" scrolls across the display screen.

EXT. REARDEN METALS - NIGHT

Fire belches into the sky like volcanoes. A sign on a security fence is illuminated in the glow: REARDEN METALS...

INT. REARDEN METALS - SAME TIME

Red glare slashes the face of HANK REARDEN gliding through the air in the cab of a crane. Tall and gaunt. Too tall. His features cut by steep cheekbones and sharp lines that give him intense character at 45. He regards his fiery metal--

--as the giant ladle tips--200 tons of liquid metal sail through space toward a row of molds waiting to be filled.

THE MOLD LEVEL - MINUTES LATER

Rearden scoops some slag droppings forming a crude bracelet. As it cools the metal emanates with a blue-green color.

A WORKER grins at him from across the glowing molds of metal.

WORKER

It can't be done, Mr. Rearden.

Rearden nods at the man's mocking tone.

REARDEN

That's what they say.

He raises the crude bracelet on a metal rod admiring it.

EXT. REARDEN METALS - NIGHT

Hank Rearden walks through his sprawling facility he built from nothing toward an ostentatious glass and steel contemporary McMansion atop a hill overlooking his world.

INT. REARDEN MANSION - NIGHT

Rearden enters a rear door. He treks through the great halls and rooms appointed with expensive furnishings, the right artwork--all in stark contrast to his gritty plant environs.

He pauses at the dining room doors toying with the blue-green bracelet. He pockets it, takes a breath and enters--

DINING ROOM - CONTINUING ACTION

The size of a tennis court. LILIAN REARDEN, the porcelain austere beauty (30) he built the house for, or because of, interrupts her cold laughter at the long dining table--

LILIAN

Well...I'm impressed. Isn't it too early to come home? Wasn't there some slag to sweep up--

She looks at him with contempt as he passes to his seat. Her MOTHER, a life-time Looter, and her younger brother, PHILLIP, the uptight sponge, avoids any eye contact with Rearden.

MOTHER

Henry--Phillip's come up from D.C. to tell us about his new charity--

Rearden forces a polite smile as he sits.

PHILLIP

You work too hard, Henry. It's not good for you.

REARDEN

I like it. It's how I provide ...for all this...

Mother shoots Lilian disapproving looks.

PHILLIP

You're neurotic about that, you know. The man who buries himself in his work--he's trying to escape something else--

Lilian stares at her husband with lifeless eyes.

LILIAN

We have met before, dear. Remember me. The wifey--

Rearden regards their faces in the moody light.

REARDEN

Lil...today, at the mills we poured the first heat of Rearden metal...

Silence. Mother and Phillip busy themselves eating.

LILIAN

Well...isn't that nice.

REARDEN

It's going to change things. The way we build things. How strong they are....How long they last... I brought you a present--

--extending his arm like a returning war hero offering his trophy to his love--Lilian hooks the crude bracelet on her two fingers and examines the shiny green-blue metal.

REARDEN

First thing ever made from RM-1.

LILIAN

(mocking)

Ohhh, I'll be the rage in New York. Flashing my jewelry made of the same stuff as bridges and car parts and pots and pans and...slag...

MOTHER

I swear you're the most conceited man on the planet, Henry. You make a new piece of tin and expect us to declare a national holiday because you made it?

PHILLIP

I'm sure he's saving the diamonds for your party--

LILIAN

Oh, stop. It's sweet. It's charming. Thank you, darling--

She folds herself around Rearden from behind his chair, kissing him on his head.

LILIAN

I'll wear it to our party we're giving in New York. How's December tenth? Can you squeeze me in?

REARDEN

You know I'm not good at those things. What's the occasion? One of Phillip's funds raisers?

MOTHER

Your tenth anniversary...

She expects a look of guilt. Instead, he smiles, amused. Lilian shucks the shiny bracelet on the table.

LILIAN

How perfect. A chain...

The blue-green metal glows in the candlelight.

RAILS BLUR BY EXTENDING TO THE VANISHING POINT

The crash of Halley's Fourth Concerto cries out rebellious.

INT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - DAY

She stands in the center of her efficient state of the art habitat on rails holding a yoga position. Head back. Eyes closed intently. Halley's rebellion playing in her earpiece.

FLASH TO: A CONCERT HALL - TWO YEARS AGO

Composer Richard Halley conducts his unorthodox electronic and acoustic orchestra with studied passion (think Phillip Glass). The view sweeps and jags through the audience to:

Dagny, completely seduced by the power as the finale brings her to her feet with the mass, clapping and chanting "Halley-Ha-lee."

Onstage, even the Orchestra stands paying tribute to the aloof Composer.

RESUME: DAGNY IN HER PRIVATE COACH - THE PRESENT

She shuts off the music staring into an unseen vanishing point. Outside, the sprawl of Rearden Metals glides by.

Her PDA vibrates. She answers--

DAGNY

You got it?

EDDIE (V.O. PHONE)

It doesn't exist.

INTERCUT: EDDIE - TAGGART CAFETERIA

Hiding in his favorite booth.

EDDIE (ON PHONE)

His publishers say he never composed a fifth concerto. Two years ago the guy sold the rights to all his music and dropped out. Off the radar. Nobody knows how to find him.

A hand slides fresh coffee in front of him. He looks up--

INTERCUT: DAGNY

Getting dressed as she talks on her headset.

DAGNY (PDA HEADSET)

I know that was his music I heard in Mexico. This is weird...You reach Mac about getting his outfit to Colorado to start on the Rio Norte?

EDDIE (V.O. PHONE)
MacNamara's not coming on the job,
Dagny. He's packed in his whole
business.....

Dagny pinches the pain building between her eyes.

DAGNY
He was the best. The most
successful...Let's just hope Hank
Rearden is the real deal--

INTERCUT: EDDIE

The Unknown Worker slips in the booth opposite Eddie, who indicates he is talking to "Dagny".

EDDIE [PDA HEADSET]
Your brother is losing it fast.
Yeah, I'll call you back with some
options--

Eddie clicks off and meets the attentive eyes of the Unknown Worker.

EDDIE
The Rio Norte's our last hope.
Sounds crazy hearing myself say
that. If I told you a meteor was
going to do a flaming head-on with
the Earth, would you believe it--

The Unknown Worker laughs to himself non-committal.

EDDIE
Rearden metal...She's going to do
it with Rearden's new rails and
crazy glue if she has to--

Eddie clinks his mug against the Worker's and drinks.

UNKNOWN WORKER
So--what kind of music does she
like?

Off Eddie's puzzled look--

RESUME: DAGNY'S PRIVATE RAIL CAR

Dagny checks herself in the mirror. She is beautiful without even knowing it. She grabs her satchel as the train slows. She hesitates at her laptop--Something strikes her.

She googles: 'JOHN GALT'. The screen responds; "Sorry no matches were found for your query." then...

"WHO IS JOHN GALT?" fills the display.

EXT. REARDEN METALS - DAY

A line of ore cars snakes along the siding. Rearden catwalks the car roofs with his trusted PLANT MANAGER, who inserts a sampler into portals and draws out ore to test it.

PLANT MANAGER

Another week without this shipment
and we'd have to delay production
on the size order Taggart's talking
about--

He holds up the test vial. Both men are pleased.

PLANT MANAGER

Hope we can maintain this grade.

REARDEN

We've never missed a delivery date.
I don't intend to start with Dagny
Taggart.

(checking his watch)

And I'm late for my first meet with
the female Captain of Industry
herself--

As the train nears the cooling vats, he sees her--

DAGNY

Standing on a flatcar atop a pile of machinery. Her head
lifted (like Nat's statue). Strands of hair stir in the wind.

Her gray suit like a thin coating of metal over her slender
body. A young girl's face with a woman's mouth. Arrogant pure
self-confidence in her posture. A taut instrument ready to
serve any purpose she wished.

She watches transfixed as first green-blue rails roll through
jets of water billowing steam from the open building.

Rearden drops off the slow moving ore train a few feet behind
her and just stares.

The space dissolves between them, around them, above her, in
front of her, extremely close on her, examining her every
feature and shape--those eyes...her mouth..

Her head turns in a slow curve. Her eyes to his. She reads his sexual gaze.

Rearden, looking guilty at his blatant gawk--

REARDEN

Miss Taggart? I'm Henry Rearden.

--trying to hide the sheer pleasure of her sight.

DAGNY

Oh...Nice to meet you, Mr. Rearden--

REARDEN

DAGNY

Hank...

Dagny...

The roll of hot metal through waterjets fills the silence.

REARDEN

This may sound paranoid...but you look like you own the place...

DAGNY

Do I?...Then maybe you should tell me about "our" mystery metal--

He is completely undone. She is pure delight.

INT. POURING AREA - DAY

Dagny and Rearden traverse the area in the overhead crane. Melting pots pour the white-hot lava into an array of molds.

The cooling line. Rearden grabs one end of a green-blue rail, grimaces comically, then raises the end with one hand.

Dagny is astounded. He motions her to the other end. Together they lift the twelve foot long RR rail with marginal effort.

Metal Workers kibitzing from the catwalks and cranes clap and whistle. Dagny raises the rail higher egging them on.

REARDEN(V.O.)

In a year I can build engines that will be lighter--faster and never wear out. We've got an aircraft prototype. It weighs virtually nothing and lifts anything--

THE TESTING AREA - LATER

Dagny and Rearden observe from the safety of a blockhouse as the metal is put through severe punishment. Huge pile drivers smash into thin sheets of the green-blue stuff. The sheets buckle then reform their original shape.

Dagny inspects the surface with Technicians taking sonic readings. Not a mark, not a dent or fracture is visible.

Finished rails pass through blast furnaces with no melt down.

Finished rails sit in a deep freeze. Water sprayed on the rails beads up and runs off. Ice cannot form on the surface.

REARDEN (V.O.)

What kind of speed are you getting
on the Rio Norte?

DAGNY (V.O.)

Average? Forty maybe fifty miles an
hour--

REARDEN (V.O.)

When these rails are laid, you'll
be able to run them at two hundred
and fifty if you want to--

INT. REARDEN'S OFFICE - DAYS END

Jammed with memorabilia of his humble beginnings as well as evidence of his many successes; Rearden Coal, Rearden Limestone, Rearden Energy and Rearden Metals Inc.

Dagny at his window overlooking the plant. Even in the day's end sky, stacks of metal rails glow a mystical greenish blue.

DAGNY

Rearden metal....RM-1...

Spoken as if describing a new phenomenon of nature. Rearden presents her a piece of rail.

DAGNY [ON PHONE]

Think what you can do with this
stuff--

REARDEN

I have...Like chicken wire that can
last two hundred years...

DAGNY
(laughing)
And nobody else knows it.

REARDEN
We do...

DAGNY
Hank, this is great...

Simply, openly. She savors the metal bar in her hands with the reverence of Arthur receiving Excalibur from Merlin. The mystical glow bathes her face.

EXT. REARDEN METALS - SUNDOWN

Rearden drives Dagny in his electric cart to her private RR car. Dagny is silent. Her head back.

DAGNY
Hank...

Rearden dodges a forklift he is so distracted by her. Dagny cocks an eye at him.

REARDEN
Sorry...

DAGNY
You know if I don't get trains and tracks to Ellis Wyatt in nine months--Taggart Trans will crash and burn--

REARDEN
Naa--Not as long as you're running it--

Dagny is relieved. This is all the assurance she needs from this man. His eyes track her legs up her waist--

REARDEN
You're showing too much relief. I might go thinking I've got big old T Rex-Taggart by the--uh--

He cups his hand in the universal squeezing gesture of pain.

DAGNY
You knew that going in. You better--

REARDEN

Yep, and I'm going to make you pay for it.

DAGNY

We've already agreed on your per ton extortion gouger price.

REARDEN

For the first delivery. You'd pay triple that for the second.

She lights up the dusty air with her smile.

DAGNY

I would, but you won't do that.

REARDEN

You don't think I should squeeze every penny of profit I can out of your emergency?

DAGNY

Absolutely. Squeeze me dry. I don't think you're in business for my convenience.

Now he smiles back. Genuine enjoyment.

REARDEN

You don't expect favors. I like that.

DAGNY

I expect you to roll those rails. You need my RR built. It's your showcase for that ugly green concoction of yours.

She got him on that one. He stops at her private coach. The TTRR emblem gleams on the rear railing. Dagny lingers...

REARDEN

Okay...Deep breath...What would you do if I told you I couldn't deliver your rails on time?

Dagny recites by rote. No brainer.

DAGNY

Tear up the sidings, close the trunks and feeder lines and use the rail to get to Wyatt on time.

Rearden lets his rare light hearted comfort zone show.

REARDEN

That's why I'm not worried about Taggart Trans. You won't have to go cannibal on your own rails. Not while I'm in business.

He extends his hand to shake. She folds hers into his. She likes his touch. They linger unable to part company.

REARDEN

Everything you're after is real. Just like me...It's us who move this world and us who'll pull it through--

Dagny. Rearden. Naked in the moment.

GREEN-BLUE RAILS ARE ROLLED FROM THE FIRES

And into the cool vats sending glowing steam to the stars.

BIG CURTAIN

GO TO BLACK

A RADAR SCREEN FILLS THE VIEW

Glows clear for miles.

INT. SUPERTANKER BRIDGE - NIGHT

The Helmsman listens to arabic music, checking the system readouts. Suddenly a power surge--the radar screen blips and winks out. Systems shut down--

Outside the pilot's window, intense beams of green light descend from the dark sky. UFOS? The Helmsman hits the intercom--dead. His door bursts open. A DARK COMMANDO shoots him with a tazer bolt. The electrical charge drops him cold.

EXT. SUPER TANKER DECKS - CONTINUOUS

DARK HELMETED FIGURES DROP FROM THE SKY, lining down from futuristic hovercraft and landing on the decks. RAGNAR'S COMMANDOS quickly fan the ship and take over.

THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - SAME TIME

An explosive charge blows the door. The Captain sits up in his berth. A tazer bolt strikes him in the chest. Electric jolts knock him convulsing to the floor.

BELOW DECKS - STORAGE TANKS

Commandos attach explosive charges to a wall of valves. The Lead Commando, RAGNAR, zeroes in a hand remote, captures a signal and punches in a code. Metal clicks echo as the valves are unlocked. Oil pressure on the readouts begins to drop.

ON DECK - MINUTES LATER

Crewmen watch as oil spews from overflows into the sea. Sleek hovercraft whisper back and forth powered by an unknown source spraying huge quantities of glowing fluids into the expanding oil slick.

Ragnar exits onto the deck with his demo-Team. He addresses a frightened Cargo Officer in perfect Arabic.

RAGNAR (ARABIC)

Your Crew will have one hour to
clear the ship before we scuttle
it. Air-Sea rescue have been
notified of your location.
Bacterias will absorb the oil slick
in a few days. Good luck--

The amazing hovercraft continue flooding the sea with the bacteria that glow as they attack the oil slicks on contact.

A Commando loads the Officer over the side. He shouts back--

CARGO OFFICER (ARABIC)

Why? Why are you wasting our cargo?
Do you know how much it is worth?--

Ragnar clips on to a drop-cable hanging from a Command craft.

RAGNAR

Did your people find the oil? Dig
it out of the ground? Sweat for it?
Your Leaders looted it from free
men who did. Your government will
not profit from stolen property--

Ragnar is lifted into the air and vanishes with his strike team like ghosts. Cloaking devices envelope the fantastic hovercraft that literally shimmer, then disappear.

GO TO: BLACK

FADE IN: ELEGANT MANICURED MEN'S HANDS

Tap a golden brown cigarette on a familiar gold foil packet. The strange logo brightens as the hands flick open the golden lighter. The smoke clears and there he is--

FRANCISCO d'Anconia exits an elevator and runs a red carpet gauntlet of news media and fans. On his arm, with a gown barely containing her assets, the starlet, SABRINA VAIL who is strikingly similar in looks to Dagny.

Reporters squeal probing questions--

REPORTER

Miss Vail! VH-1. Is your divorce final? Have you and Francisco made any wedding plans--

She plants a big one on her handsome guy about to come out of her dress. Francisco remains non-committal behind his shades.

CNN REPORTER

Mr. d'Anconia, the People's State of Mexico has declared a national emergency because your mines at San Sebastian are worthless. Can you refute these claims--

Francisco smiles coolly blowing smoke in the Reporter's face.

FRANCISCO (SPANISH)

There's always something wrong in the world--

Handlers herd Francisco and his Starlet into a Limo. Several Hispanic Protestors hurl bottles and rocks cursing the d'Anconias as the limo speeds away into the night--

INT. WALDORF TOWERS - JIMMY'S SUITE - EARLY MORNING

The place is trashed. Clothes, booze and bodies lying everywhere. Jimmy, tore out, sits in front of the TV listless. His expensive HOOKER is on to room service.

JIMMY

Forget that. We're done here.

HOOKER

Breakfast is supposed to be included, Love. I need my yogurt for my G-spot---

Jimmy, numbed, watches the wall-sized TV as the report shows footage of the oil tanker--

NEWS ANCHOR (TV)

This continued attack on oil tankers bound for the U.S. by the international Terrorist, Ragnar D. was almost overshadowed by the news from Mexico today surrounding the controversial venture between Francisco d'Anconia and the Taggart transportation dynasty---

The view shifts to the Mexican Ambassador gives a fiery statement to the press.

MEXICAN AMBASSADOR (TV)

--worthless--blatantly, hopelessly worthless. There is nothing to justify the five years and the billions spent. Nothing but empty excavations, empty buildings--No great deposits of metals ever existed. Because of this emergency, the Government of the People's state of Mexico has declared all private railroads to be taken over and operated by Ferrocarriles Nacionales immediately...The d'Anconia family is one of the most respected--

The view shifts to riots--Workers in San Sebastian venting their anger burning the town that was built to house them.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - MORNING

Eddie punches a code on a security gate and enters to a private RR siding. He hurries to Dagny's private coach.

INT. DAGNY'S COACH - CONTINUING ACTION

Eddie buzzes. No answer. The door. Unlocked. He enters.

EDDIE

Dags--? Welcome home? Kinda--

--holding up the newspaper. Headlines tell all. Dagny is sitting on the floor, her knees hunched under her chin, her eyes fixed on some distant memory. She does not look at him.

DAGNY

Bad news travels faster on the Internet, Eddie. And you don't have to cut down a tree to do it--

Dagny jumps up avoiding eye contact. Eddie follows her, wary--

DAGNY

The coffee's cold and old. Best I can do on no notice.

She sets the pot down her hand is shaking so badly. Eddie steadies her.

EDDIE

Whatever he is--regardless of his perversion of choice, he could not have made a mistake like this. It's not possible. I don't understand--

A shudder ripples through Dagny.

DAGNY

I do--

Eddie's PDA bleems.

DAGNY

Jimmy--if he hasn't already jumped out a window--

Eddie checks the readout. Not Jimmy. He answers.

EDDIE

Eddie Willers.

His face goes ashen. He offers the phone to Dagny.

EDDIE

It's Francisco....For you....

Dagny stares at the phone. It might as well be a Cobra. She takes it and moves to the windows overlooking the Hudson.

DAGNY

Hi, Frisco...

FRANCISCO (V.O. PHONE)

Hi, Slug...

She releases a girlish smile. Outside the river sparkles.

EXT. TAGGART HUDSON RIVER ESTATE - DAY THE PAST

Dagny, 10, runs down the hill from her big house with young Eddie, heading for the great Oak tree overlooking the Hudson.

14 year old Francisco d'Anconia runs up the hill from the entrance gate as his Driver lugs his bags.

Dagny morphs to 15 as she runs, her body changing from girl to the beginnings of a woman.

Francisco morphs to 19, his handsome good looks in full bloom. He arrives at the tree first as always and feigns boredom. Dagny flies into his arms nearly knocking him over.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Hi, Slug--

YOUNG DAGNY

Hi, Frisco--

Eddie finally arrives completely winded.

YOUNG EDDIE

Do you always have to win?

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Run faster. I won't have to wait for you.

YOUNG DAGNY

Will you wait for me?

Dagny has no idea how beautiful she is in her boyish haircut cargo shorts and tank top.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Always...

He hugs her and Eddie together as they head up the hill to the Taggart Estate.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

You know we are the only real aristocracy left in the world. Us--

Eddie beams. Francisco means the three of them.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - AFTERNOON - THE PAST

Speed boats roar by, fishtails drenching Jimmy's new white cigarette racer as it coughs and sputters through the water.

Jimmy, 17, stews at the wheel soaking wet. Dagny, Eddie and Francisco do a Chinese fire drill all over the boat harassing Jimmy.

YOUNG DAGNY

C'mon, Jimmy. Crank it. Let's go.

YOUNG JIMMY

Do I look like I'm enjoying this?

YOUNG FRANCISCO

I can do it--

--his Mantra. Rather than take the wheel he removes the engine cowlings and begins tracking the problem.

YOUNG JIMMY

I didn't think nobility liked to get their hands dirty.

Francisco drains the air from an oil line getting grimy. Dagny is right in there helping him.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

The reason my family has lasted so long is that none of us have ever been allowed to think he is born a d'Anconia. We have to become one.

Francisco closes the cowlings and takes the controls. He cranks it. The engine bursts to life. Jimmy glares at the trio celebrating Francisco's triumph. Francisco jams it--

Jimmy's boat rears up and rockets ahead splitting the wide Hudson with its wake. Eddie blasts the airhorn. Dagny yells!

EXT. RIVERBANK - SUNSET

Eddie feeds the bonfire on the shore camp up against rock cliffs. Jimmy crushes his beer can and starts another. Dagny and Francisco are going at each other tooth and claw.

YOUNG DAGNY

Just wait til I run Taggart
Trans--

YOUNG FRANCISCO

When I'm running d'Anconia
Copper--

They stop in each other's faces and start to laugh. Francisco takes a hit off his joint. Dagny passes, high on life.

YOUNG JIMMY

You guys need a reality check.
There's more important things in
the world than d'Anconia Copper--

YOUNG FRANCISCO

No...not really...

YOUNG JIMMY

You've got piles of money. What do
you need more for?

He is surly and juiced. Dagny takes the beer out of his hand.

YOUNG DAGNY

C'mon. That's the last one, okay--

Francisco calmly leans back and takes in the first stars.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

When I die, I plan on going to
heaven--whatever the hell that is--
and I want to make sure I can
afford the price of admission.

His smile of radiant mockery, watching them. Dagny studies his adventurous grin, then her brother's smile of contempt.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER CLIFFS - MORNING

Dagny is a third of the way up towing a rope. She is stuck--

YOUNG DAGNY

That's it. Far as I can go--

BELOW - EDDIE AND FRANCISCO

Eddie plays out the rope. Francisco is busy drawing a diagram on the back of Eddie's t-shirt.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Come on down. I can do it--

THE BACK OF EDDIE'S T-SHIRT

Francisco's detailed schematic for a cliffside hoist.

EXT. TTRR ENGINE YARD - DAY

Where Engines come to be repaired or die. The Trio are busy dismantling the carcass of a motor amidst piles of rusting parts, old engines and retired passenger coaches.

YARDMASTER

Miss Taggart--

The lifer YARDMASTER approaches agitated. Dagny waves with an innocent smile. The trio keep right on scrounging.

YARDMASTER

Anything'd happen to you'n Eddie,
and god help us, that d'Anconia,
our insurance just won't cover it.

YOUNG DAGNY

We're going, Sam. Right now--

The Trio load heavy cantilever weights into their pickup truck. Sam, the Yardmaster, literally scratches his head.

YARDMASTER

I just don't understand you, Miss
Taggart. Ever summer you're in here
rummaging around junk. Young people
with your means ought to be out
seeing the world, studying history
and getting cultured--

YOUNG DAGNY

That's just what we are doing Sam.
Ask Frisco. He's been just about
everywhere and seen everything.

YOUNG EDDIE

Yeah, Frisco, what's the most
important thing in the world?

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Right here.

He points to the TTRR emblem on the front of an old engine.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

I wish I could've met Nat Taggart.

The Yardmaster nods in complete understanding. Dagny locks on Francisco. Forever her soulmate from this moment on.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER CLIFFS - AFTERNOON

Francisco and Dagny cling to the side of the cliff driving metal wedges into the rock. Arms pounding together, drops of blood slipping unnoticed from scrapes on elbows and knees.

Jimmy watches from his boat playing music on his boombox.

THE TOP OF THE CLIFF - LATE AFTERNOON

Francisco winches Dagny up on the completed rope elevator and helps her out with operatic flair.

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Top floor. Views of New York, the
Universe--and let's see, Me--

They revel at the magnificent view of the Hudson River. Dagny shucks her blouse top and uses it to bandage his scraped and bleeding knee. He takes her in, the woman she is becoming under her bathing suit.

YOUNG DAGNY

What do you like about me?

Dagny flushes red the moment she says that.

YOUNG DAGNY

Ahhh, that was so bad...

YOUNG FRANCISCO

You're allowed. That's what I like
about you--

He points to the twin sets of shining RR tracks running along the banks of the Hudson. A train heads South to NY City.

YOUNG DAGNY

Sorry, it's not mine.

Francisco cups her chin in his hands as if to kiss her---

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Not now, but it's going to be.

As close to a profession of love as they can make. Eddie yells below breaking the moment, tangled in the rope hoist.

YOUNG EDDIE

How do you make this thing work?

YOUNG FRANCISCO
Let's find out.

Francisco releases the brake. Cantilever weights descend---
raising Eddie on a swift ride to the top yelling all the way.

THE CLIFF - DAYS END

The three inseparables lock hands and take the flying leap--

ON THE WAY DOWN IN SOARING SLOW MOTION WE HEAR:

DAGNY (V.O.)
Why do you like him so much, Eddie?

EDDIE (V.O.)
Because...he always makes me feel
safe...somehow..

DAGNY (V.O.)
All I feel is excited...and
dangerous...

THE TRIO SPLASHES INTO THE RIVER PLUMES WIPING FRAME TO:

INT. D'ANCONIA'S HOTEL - MORNING - THE PRESENT

A waterfall spills down the five story atrium at d'Anconia's
posh midtown hotel. Dagny rides the escalator, all steel.

INT. D'ANCONIA'S PENTHOUSE - CONTINUING ACTION

Dagny enters the d'Anconia suite that has been in his family
for years. A photo gallery lines the walls. Nat Taggart and
Francisco's grandfather, SEBASTIAN d'Anconia, with heads of
state, mountain climbing, deep-sea fishing Eddie, Dagny and
Frisco at the Hudson estate in younger and happier days.
Music echoes in the halls. Definitely a Halley composition---

FRANCISCO (O.C.)
Hi, Sluggggggggg!

His voices reaches her before she enters the room to:

The rakishly handsome 37 year old Francisco is sitting on the
floor running a vintage electric train all around the
furniture. Still a boy playing with his toys....

DAGNY
Hi, Frisco....

His face the same guiltless, mischievous spirit from their youth. He remains on the floor drinking her all in. He motions for her to take off her battered rain coat.

She does standing frozen in her jog-togs.

FRANCISCO

Dressing like a Slug does not hide
the beauty you still can't admit
that your are, Slug.

Francisco toots the whistle as the train clickety-clacks around the room. Dagny does not react.

FRANCISCO

I could tell you what a relief it
is to see a refreshing intelligent
face--given the ground zero I.Q. of
the bimbettes and botoxians I've
been sharing my life with these
past few years...

Dagny puts her foot across the track stopping the train.

FRANCISCO

I almost forgot. You're the boss.

He rises up as though by invisible strings, shirtless and wearing only silk pajama bottoms, he is a genuine hunk.

FRANCISCO

I know you like the music. Drink?

Dagny shakes no never taking her steel gaze off him as he crosses to the bar.

FRANCISCO

But...that is not why you have come
to my hotel practically at dawn.

DAGNY

It's noon. And you called me.

FRANCISCO

That was me?--I know you want to
ask me a question.

Dagny cannot hold back any longer. She spits it out.

DAGNY

Why?

FRANCISCO

That's it? You can't mean my latest distraction. You would never lower yourself to the media's fixation on my love life.

DAGNY

Ohhh, stop...The San Sebastian. The mine, the land--they were worthless from the beginning--I just don't understand...why you did it?

FRANCISCO

My ancestors had a remarkable ability for making the right investments at the right time. I invested 250 million dollars. That "investment" cost Taggart Trans, Jimmy, Orren Boyle, and all his looter friends 2.5 billion. Hundreds of millions more will be lost by the Mexican government, merchants, workers...Not a bad return on my investment--

DAGNY

You took Jimmy down on purpose--our shareholders and...me....

FRANCISCO

Jimmy and his greedy friends presumed that we had the same goal. Their decisions were based on the premise that I wanted to make money, too.

(lets it hang)

What if I didn't?

DAGNY

(incredulous)

"Not" make money? What happened to you? What *do* you want?

Francisco strokes her chin and turns her face to his.

FRANCISCO

I still want you. Us...The truth is, I am not a happy enough Man to enjoy you...You want it too...

Dagny tries to say "no" but the truth is worse.

DAGNY

I put you out of my mind but you
just keep making headlines.

Dagny grabs her coat. Francisco stops her, his angel eyes beg

FRANCISCO

Dagny...My proposition. Listen...

She shucks his arm digging in. Francisco runs his hands
through his shiny black mane choosing his words carefully.

FRANCISCO

I'm asking you to leave Taggart
Trans and let it go to hell on your
brother's watch. It's already
happening. You can't stop what is
already in motion. The impact on
Ellis Wyatt will be fatal. No
railroad--his crude never gets to
market in time to save your
precious country--

DAGNY

Why don't you just ask me to commit
suicide?

FRANCISCO

Or....be reborn...

That scares her. Trembling with fear, she unloads.

DAGNY

"Reborn"? Frisco?--When did you
completely lose touch with reality?

FRANCISCO

There's something wrong in the
world. There always has been. Some-
thing no one has ever explained.

DAGNY

You always said you wanted to meet
Nat Taggart and I loved you for it.
What do you think he would say to
you right now if he was here?

Francisco pops a cigarette from the gold foil box and offers
one to Dagny. She adamantly refuses.

FRANCISCO

Who is John Galt?

Dagny explodes, letting it out, ranting around the room--

DAGNY

Who the hell is John Galt?
Somebody's bad joke? He makes me
nauseous and I don't even know him!
Goddamn Galt all to--

FRANCISCO

Want me to arrange a blind date?

On her way out--

DAGNY

I'm going to build the Rio Norte
and no one is going to stop me. I
even have the perfect name for it.
The John Galt Line--

Francisco flashes concern at the use of the name.

FRISCO

You have a great deal of courage,
Dagny. Someday you'll have enough
of it...I will have a reason for my
actions in the future. You will
damn me. You will hurt. Remember I
told you this...Bye Slug...

She does not answer. He is no longer "Frisco".

INT. TRR BOARDROOM - DAY

Jimmy faces Members of the TTRR Executive Committee; ORREN BOYLE, as slippery and ruthless as his signature hair swoop indicates, and WESLEY MOUCH, a nebbish accountant who appears harmless and boring to hide his dorsal fin. And PAUL LARKIN, a professional lobbyist with no loyalties. Nobody is happy--

ORREN

That goddamned greaseball
womanizing lying bastard stick
buddy of yours just destroyed us.

JIMMY

He was always Dagny's friend. Not
mine--I hate his guts--

LARKIN

This is going to cost us millions--
So much for trying to help "the
needy people of Mexico".

JIMMY

Don't believe any of this. Our shares in d'Anconia Copper are secure. I can assure everyone there is no need for panic. The actions of the Mexican government are regrettable, but I have full confidence--

ORREN

In what? Your Sister? She was against building the San Sebastian anyway. She's ruined us with her stunts down there. If she hadn't--

Doors open. Dagny enters with Eddie in tow.

DAGNY

What, Orren? Tell us. I'll try to fill in the blanks--

Dagny takes a seat in one of the big leather chairs and hikes her leg over the round arm. Eddie follows setting her laptop on the table.

JIMMY

Dagny--

He does not know where to start, vapor locked before her. Orren takes him off the hook.

ORREN

You could start with what you could've possibly been thinking by yanking San Sebastian assets without any authorization--

DAGNY

I was thinking I was saving TTRR's highly exposed Mexican derriere. About nine hundred million by my calculations. How much did you lose?

ORREN

The copper from d'Anconia's mines would have paid for our investment.

MOUCH

Until you turned the entire Mexican government against us--

DAGNY

(laughs with disdain)

Didn't you see the news? There's no
Copper in those mountains.
Francisco has plowed hundreds of
millions of your dollars and
Taggart Trans' into nothing.

Much reaction here.

ORREN

That's just crazy. D'Anconia put up
two hundred and fifty million of
his own money. More to acquire the
mineral rights to over a million
acres from the Mexican government---

DAGNY

Did you see the alloy reports,
Orren? Any of you?

Silence. Orren boils. Guilty looks around the room.

DAGNY

Right. I forgot. Everything
Francisco touches turns to gold. I
saw him. He set you up. He had no
intention of making money.

Voices erupt. Jimmy finds his way into the fray.

JIMMY

He pissed away a quarter of a
billion on purpose? I don't believe
you. You're just angry because
d'Anconia's in town with another
rich bitch besides you? This is
personal--

Rather than rip Jimmy's throat out, Dagny opens a pack of
gold foil cigarettes with the odd logo on them.

DAGNY

He had his way with all of us, if
it makes you feel any better. He
built a concrete and steel depot
that could serve a major city--

She nods to Eddie, who starts a slide show on her laptop--

THE LAPTOP - CLOSER

Views of rugged mountain construction. A massive depot, an entire village being built in remote mountain valleys. RR right of way carved up a mountainside but no rails visible...And no people. None.

DAGNY

Workers and Families and businesses
would move to San Sebastian to
build their lives. And our railroad
would haul the ore out and the
world in--

Mouch moves closer to the laptop and dons reading glasses.

MOUCH

Where are all the people? Workers?

DAGNY

Siesta? Or...not--

FLASH TO: SAN SEBASTIAN

Francisco, Orren, some beautiful Girls in Hard hats and Mine Worker duds by Victoria's Secret, and Mexican Officials at a ribbon cutting ceremony. Everyone moves in dreamy motion. The image freezes on Francisco d'Anconia's sly smiling face.

DAGNY

The construction is so faulty and
done on the cheap, the buildings
won't be livable in two years.

RESUME: TTRR BOARD ROOM

Mouch and Larkin are gobsmacked. Orren pours another drink. Jimmy is about to implode, realizing--

JIMMY

There's no copper...

He slaps the laptop closed removing d'Anconia from sight.

DAGNY

Taggart Trans will go under, Jimmy.
The only way to save it is to fix
the Rio Norte line and haul Wyatt
crude. I could care less what
happens to your personal stake.

Larkin, Mouch and Orren go into a frantic huddle. Jimmy grabs Dagny's leg and forcefully removes it from the chair arm.

JIMMY

Can't you at least sit like you're supposed to in a board meeting? Nobody sits like that--

DAGNY

I do.

Dagny smiles, stands in the chair with her boots, then steps daintily to the floor.--

DAGNY

Okay--Orren, where's my steel? Please---

Orren bristles. He confers again with Mouch and

ORREN

...We had everything mapped to roll those rails--Everything. But nobody can get ore deliveries--

MOUCH

Foreign price cutting--unforseen circumstances--

DAGNY

--beyond your control. Right?

Eddie hands her bag to her. She produces the bar of blue-green RM-1 and tosses it handily to Jimmy. He is stunned by how light it is--

DAGNY

RM-1. Hank Rearden can roll me new rails at half your price and deliver in six months. Made in the U.S.A.--

The broadside blows them completely away. Jimmy hands the bar to Orren who shuns it like a disease.

DAGNY

His new metal is lighter than the cheapest grade steel and ten times stronger.

ORREN

There's no proof. No tested evidence. Using this on a high speed line is begging for disaster. We don't need another one.

LARKIN

The NSI is doing a study on
Rearden's claims. This metal may be
a public hazard--

Dagny retrieves the bar of metal and holds it up to Orren
like a weapon--

DAGNY

Your steel contract's cancelled,
Orren. You've screwed us too many
times. I've already placed the new
order with Rearden.

Eddie packs the laptop and follows her out. Dagny pauses--

DAGNY

If you try to stop me, I'll resign,
buy the Rio Norte when you go
bankrupt and rebuild it myself.
(cold smile)
Nice tie, Jimmy. Matches your
strengths--

Jimmy looks down at his pale yellow tie.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE - LIMBO

The view speeds across a landscape following blue green rails
to the vanishing point where a SILHOUETTE OF A MAN holds the
rails in his hands. His face a mystery--

SHARP CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROCKIES - WYATT'S GORGE - DAY

An explosion brings down the side of a mountain on the steep
grade construction site of the John Galt high in the Rockies.

Dagny snaps from her muse. Her private coach sits at the edge
of an aging steel bridge, its long curve spanning a wide
gorge, 1500 feet down to the Rio Norte river winding below.

Across the gorge green-blue rails (RM-1) rise through the
rocks toward the giant Earth shovels perched precariously on
the rugged slopes digging oil sands from under the surface.

The gleaming plant sits atop the mountain like Oz. Massive
Earth-loaders carry the black oily ore to the Upgrader for
processing synthetic crude. Wyatt Crude.

The first signs of snow cover the ridge. The steady shudder of drills echo below as WORKERS swing on metal cables cutting stone abutments to reinforce the creaky old bridge.

Behind Dagny, rails are being laid toward the plains heading North toward Cheyenne. Odd to see only two men carrying a single RM-1 rail like a stick of lumber.

CHIEF ENGINEER NEALY

It can't be done--

BEN NEALY, her complaining negatory Engineer, interrupts her muse arguing with his Seconds at the edge of the bridge.

CHIEF ENGINEER NEALY

Nobody's ever used the stuff before, and, frankly, if the tracks turn to jello I don't think it should be my responsibility. Know what I'm saying?

DAGNY

It's mine. Know what I'm saying--

Nealy turns from his gaff not knowing she was there. Dagny walks from her coach down the track toward him carrying a roll of tech plans like a Samurai sword. She points it at the steel spikes holding the rails fast--

DAGNY

When the only company that would make these spikes, went bankrupt, I went to Chicago, got three lawyers, a Judge and a Senator out of bed, bribed two of them and threatened the other to get emergency relief so Workers could go back to the plant and make these things. And those drill bits you ordered--they didn't show up because the tool and die had problems getting steel from Orren Boyle--what did I do--?

CHIEF ENGINEER NEALY

I know this story, Miss Taggart. You called Hank Rearden, who else?

Dagny is now in his face with the Samurai roll of plans.

DAGNY

He found a defunct factory, bought it, reopened it and in a week had drill bits here on location in Colorado. It couldn't be done-- right?

She unfurls the plans fanning them around for all to see.

DAGNY

Plans to replace Twelve hundred feet of rusting steel bridge. Yours, Mr. Nealy?

He nods sheepishly.

DAGNY

Too expensive. Too much steel. You didn't account for the strength of Rearden's new alloy--

CHIEF ENGINEER NEALY

Didn't plan on using the stuff. Can't be trusted with that load. Steel's the only way.

That did it. Dagny goes hardeyed. Scary when she is angry.

DAGNY

Steel? What's that? We're not using steel. I want a new bridge design yesterday--

NEALY

How do you know it'll work? The first train across this gorge could end up in the river. It's never been done before. I'm doing my best

Raw meat to a shark.

DAGNY

Your "best"....That's not what I hired you to do.

She lets his plans go carried on the winds into the gorge--

VOICE (O.C.)

Hail, Dagny--

She turns to Ellis Wyatt walking up the tracks. The "salute" in his voice gets a laugh from Dagny.

DAGNY

Ellis. Haven't you got better things to do than check on the hired help?--

WYATT

You're kinda my new hero, Dagny. Not many I ever met actually do what they say they're going to and get it done. Especially Women--

He continues his walk inspecting the tracks. He looks right at Nealy with disdain.

WYATT

Remind Nealy to put up new snow fences on the Granada Pass. The old ones are rotted out. I keep telling him he needs a new rotary plow. The ones he's got wouldn't sweep the back porch. Big snows are coming any day now.

She watches Wyatt cross the aging span of bridge toward his oil fields in the sky. The clouds filling the gorge give a surreal quality to her view.

NEALY

Nosy Bastard. He's always on my case. Thinks he owns the place.

Dagny looks at Nealy with quiet contempt.

DAGNY

Goddammit, Nealy. He does--

Blast horns sound. The explosion follows blowing another hunk of Granada Pass cascading into the gorge like a waterfall.

ELLIS WYATT

Pauses on the old bridge to watch the spectacle then reaching down he picks up a stray green blue spike and continues on.

MOUNTAINSIDE CASCADING DOWN, DOWN WIPES FRAME TO:

EXT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - DAYS END

A brand-new offroad hybrid vehicle is parked beside it. Dagny is surprised to see Hank Rearden standing on the hood taking pictures of the bridge and the gorge.

DAGNY

Hank?--Hey, hello.

REARDEN

Just in the neighborhood. I've got a thing for the middle of nowhere.

He turns his digicam on her. She shies embarrassed.

DAGNY

At least one of us can still afford to buy a new car.

REARDEN

Yeah, but then you have to buy gas. I found some in Denver for under twenty bucks a gallon.

He opens the hood to show her the new hybrid technology.

REARDEN

Sixty-five miles to the gallon.

DAGNY

(checking the guts)

Hydro cell, turbine recharger--This is getting better, but it still needs gas.

REARDEN

I'm working on a way around that. Larry Hammond designed this prototype. Built right here in Colorado. I was thinking about jumping in on his new company--but, well Hammond just disappeared. Shut down--

Dagny gets that unwelcome chill up her spine.

DAGNY

That leaves two car companies in the country and one of them is closing--

(drills him)

Hank--You didn't come all the way out here to buy a new car.

Busted. He stares at the ground for inspiration.

REARDEN

How about I stopped by to--make
sure my customer is satisfied--

Dagny climbs in the driver's seat of the Hammond.

DAGNY

Take me for a ride. I'll show you.

She starts the car. He jumps in just before she takes off.

EXT. GRANADA PASS - DAYS END

Dagny speeds the Hammond up the narrow twisting fire road
blowing around tight corners giving Rearden a scary view of
Wyatt's gorge below--

THE HAMMOND - TRAVELING

Rearden grabs the hand hold trying not to show his fear.
Dagny, ice, nonchalantly spins the wheel off road--heading up
a steep rocky cut to:

THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN - PANORAMA WYATT'S GORGE

She slides to a halt at the very edge of the precipice. They
get out taking in the spectacular view.

DAGNY

There's more crude under these
rocks than in all of Saudi Arabia--

Below, Rail Gangs lay the green blue ribbons of RM-1 up the
rocky pass. Rearden is energized.

REARDEN

Beats Allentown all to hell. What a
state...of mind...

DAGNY

Rarified air. I thought you'd crack
one day--

(off his ??? look)

--and come see this. There's your
metal. Goes down like butter.
Twenty four seven the crews are
cranking, Hank.

REARDEN

You are doing it, Dagny. If you ever decide to quit this railroad business, here's a standing offer from RMI...from me.

She studies him, trying to read him.

DAGNY

I think you'd like that. Me asking you for a job. Me being your employee. Giving me orders to obey.

He meets her eyes and nods affirmative. She hardeyes again--

DAGNY

Don't quit your day job. I won't promise you a gig on my railroad.

She draws her hand across her eyes slowly trying to block the sun. Rearden stands before her in silhouette his hands in front of him like the faceless man in her dream.

DAGNY

A Man I knew once told me there had been something wrong with this world for a long time--but couldn't tell what it was...Do you know--?

REARDEN

This teacher in the third grade scared the hell out of me. All about the sun growing colder each year--I remember staying awake at night thinking about the last days of the world...growing colder and everything stopping...

DAGNY

Don't tell me you believed that nonsense. I never did. I figured by the time the Sun had gone dark we would've found a substitute.

Rearden marvels at her.

REARDEN

You get it, Dagny. You can see the possibilities of what can be done.

DAGNY

I can't tell you all that I see.

She is looking right at him. Another blast interrupts the moment clearing more mountain for the green-blue rails to be laid. They are literally moving mountains together.

EXT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - EVENING

Dagny stops the Hammond. She lingers behind the wheel.

DAGNY

Wyatt and I usually solve the world's problems over fresh brook trout and some eighteen year old single malt. There's room for you.

Silence. The awkward kind.

REARDEN

With all the work I'm doing for you? I've got to get back to the plant. I flew my plane into Ft. Collins.

DAGNY

Hey, can I catch a lift back to New York? Denver's down to half a dozen flights a week.

The moment goes empty...He is suddenly abrupt.

REARDEN

--I've got some business in Minnesota--actually. There's an abandoned car factory I want to check out. I may still get in the auto business--Next trip?

Dagny smiles politely through her disappointment. She extends her hand to shake. Her grip is firm.

PANORAMA - WYATT'S OIL FIELDS - SUNDOWN

Huge conveyor shovels dig the oil sands from deep in the earth. Generators light the way for Workers building the Rio Norte up the steep grades. 24/7--

INT. 24 HOUR AIRPORT COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

The Waiter slams the coffee machine in disgust.

WAITER

Hope you're not planning on flying
tonight? Won't be nothing leaving
'til tomorrow--

Dagny hunches at the counter. The Waiter slides her a mug of
hot water and a pack of instant coffee.

WAITER

Instant will have to do. Thing's
been acting like this for a week--

Dagny glares at it.

DAGNY

Can't get it fixed, huh?

The Waiter looks at her incredulous and laughs.

WAITER

Who's John Galt?

That did it. Dagny loudly addresses the late night Patrons, a
handful of Homeless and Jobless and Travelers.

DAGNY

John Galt? Who is this guy? I mean
has anybody ever even met him? Is
he even real? How did he get to be
so annoyingly popular?

The four Drifters at the other end of the counter laugh.

DRIFTER

Don't believe the shit they pump
you full of--

She stares at the Drifter's gaunt defeated face.

DAGNY

What are you saying?

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.C.)

He likes to hear himself talk. I
know him...

The voice comes from a Man in the last booth, his face in the
shadows, his hat pulled down. Only his eyes are visible--

EYES

John Galt...I know who he is.

The Drifters scoff and chuckle.

EYES

You should be afraid--

He is looking right at Dagny across the Diner. She hikes her leg up on the next stool meeting his gaze. Unafraid...

EYES

He's the Man who found the secret of eternal life. On top of a mountain. He spent years looking for it...

DAGNY

(to Waiter)

How much? I've heard enough--

EYES

Cost him his home, his family, destroyed his body, his name...but he found it and he was healed...

The Drifter cracks up. His Buddies try to shut him up. Dagny palms a bill on the counter and grabs her bag to leave.

EYES

He wanted to bring the secret down to the world and share it, but he didn't--

Dagny lingers unable to break the spell Eyes has on her.

DAGNY

I might as well hear this. Why?

EYES

John Galt decided *your* world's not worth saving. It has to be... destroyed....

A deep rooted chill ripples through Dagny. Eyes tilts his shadowy face down and sips his coffee. Dagny hurries out. The door bangs back open. A surreal wind blows into the Diner.

BIG CURTAIN

GO TO BLACK

INT. "TOP OF THE BOTTOM" - LIMBO

Like a cellar. The Waiter has to duck the low ceiling crossing the dark room to deliver drinks. The most expensive barroom in New York. Not underground--100 floors in the air.

Orren Boyle, Mouch, Larkin and Jimmy Taggart hold court in a round red booth in the back.

ORREN

The only justification for private property is public service.

MOUCH

Jim, I'm sure you agree. There's nothing more destructive to society than a monopoly.

JIMMY

Ask Francisco d'Anconia. We should fire this bartender's ass. Can we talk about that--

LARKIN

Jimmy, this whole Rearden business is a mega swindle if you ask me.

MOUCH

You're inviting disaster.

JIMMY

Not me. My sister is.

ORREN

You know what's wrong with her? She should get married and have a bunch of kids--

Jimmy tries to imagine this and cracks up laughing.

MOUCH

This is serious. How can we compete with a Man who's got a corner on God's resources?

ORREN

We're losing fortunes in Mexico. Our foreign oil is a trickle. The entire transportation system is on the brink. Rearden cannot be allowed to destroy what's left of our steel industry--

MOUCH

We need a national policy that gives everybody a chance and stops this "dog eat dog" competition.

JIMMY

Know what I like about you, Mouch?
You don't talk too much. That's why
Rearden keeps you on his payroll.

Another round of drinks arrives. Jimmy grabs the check.

JIMMY

My party...
(knocking back his drink)
To friends in high places who do
low things.

Jimmy struggles to get up. They watch him totter away.

INT. THE TOWER BALLROOM - NIGHT

A magnificent view of the city at night. A jazz orchestra
swings. Power Brokers, Gliterati, Wives, Ex-wives, Lovers,
and Enemies hang.

Rearden moves unnoticed through the crowd looking extremely
uncomfortable in a tux catching snippets from DR. FERRIS, NSI
honcho, EUBANK, noted Author, SCUDDER, TV Journalist,
Phillip, Lilian's "jobless" brother and an array of young or
surgically shrink wrapped Women of indeterminate age.

SCUDDER

I didn't call him a "money grubbing
greedy megalomaniac" on the air. I
called him a--

Scudder catches sight of Rearden blurring by and chokes.
Phillip, Rearden's brother in law, does not see him.

PHILLIP

He didn't dig that ore all by
himself. He doesn't make the metal.
He's employed hundreds of Workers.
They did it. Not him--

SCUDDER

The wealthy should understand that
if everybody is poor no one can buy
their goods--

Rearden assumes everyone is talking about him. Lilian holds
court. Her ostentatious display of jewelry annoys Rearden.

DR. FERRIS

Once he realizes that he is of no importance in the vast scheme of the universe, that it does not matter if he lives or dies, he will become much more--

LILIAN

(interrupting)

Henry--

Her bare arm stops him, the crude bracelet he made from his metal the sole ornament on her wrist. She makes sure he notices.

LILIAN

So glad you decided to show up. Have you met Dr. Ferris of the National Science Institute--?

The two Men size each other up. Perfunctory handshake.

DR. FERRIS

I've been hoping to speak with you. Your new alloy is causing quite a stir--

REARDEN

So I hear. No business tonight. This is Lilian's night--

She kisses him coldly on the cheek as he makes for the bar. Ferris tracks him while keeping Lilian entertained.

DR. FERRIS

As I was saying, the purpose of philosophy is not to find the meaning of life, but to prove there isn't any--

THE BAR - CONTINUING ACTION

Rearden stares at the choices. The Bartender asks again.

BARTENDER

A nice Merlot? Something stiffer? What is it you want--?

The question twigs Rearden. He smiles like a teenager raiding his parent's liquor cabinet.

REARDEN

An eighteen year old single malt,
neat. And some wild brook trout--

Wesley Mouch, the nebbish accountant from the meeting with Jimmy Taggart appears beside Rearden. Rearden eyes his back.

REARDEN

Where's your dorsal fin, Mouch?

Rearden hands Mouch a red-lined newspaper article. The headlines read: "Anti-Dog-Eat Dog Equal Opportunity Act Imminent".

REARDEN

"Anti-dog-eat dog" bill. I was your next phone call, right?

MOUCH

Take it easy. You're putting other competitors out of business. This bill will bring let's say a balance to the market place. Give everyone a chance.

REARDEN

Like Orren Boyle. Parasites. Looters...Does the bill really say an individual can't own more than one business--I have to share RM-1 with the rest of the whole goddamn steel industry! Do I look like Santa Claus?

MOUCH

Let my D.C. staff handle it. That's what you pay me to do. It won't pass--

Mouch looks up. Rearden has abruptly left. Mouch sees why.

DAGNY ENTERS THE BALLROOM

Her revealing black evening gown turning heads. Besides a delicate diamond bracelet, the only ornament she wears is one bare shoulder. Rearden watches from the sidelines, gobsmacked by her beautiful fragile lines.

Jimmy Taggart is in tow looking very uncomfortable. He brightens as Lilian approaches to make a fuss.

LILIAN
(air kisses)
James...what a wonderful surprise
to see your Sister--Miss Taggart
(fawning over Dagny)
--taking time from your busy
schedule...Am I permitted to be
flattered?

Dagny smiles scanning the room. James kisses Lilian's hand.

LILIAN
Nothing but writers and artists to
feed on. I doubt they'd interest
you--

DAGNY
I think I'll just find Hank and say
hello.

LILIAN
Henry? He's all yours....

Dagny excuses herself. Lilian folds her arm through James'.

LILIAN
I'm used to settling for second
place, Jimmy. Comes with having a
successful husband. How about you?

Rearden watches Dagny head right for him parting the crowd.

DAGNY
Hank. Thanks for inviting me.

REARDEN
Miss Taggart. I have to fess up, I
really didn't know you were.

DAGNY
Parties aren't my thing usually. I
felt like....celebrating.

REARDEN
(curious)
My wedding anniversary?

DAGNY
(unflappable)
Congratulations. How many?

REARDEN

Ten years...Just..what are you celebrating?

DAGNY

...Our railroad--Hank, we've laid 200 miles of track. RM-1.

She snags two glasses of champagne from a passing tray and hands one to him. Rearden lets down his guard finally.

REARDEN

Congratulations. What about that bridge?

DAGNY

I can't get any reputable engineer to build the span with your stuff.

REARDEN

How about a disreputable one? Let me take it on. Half the time at half the price.

He is so close to her. So close--

DAGNY

Then you'd be saving Taggart Trans for a second time. Don't you have enough to do?

REARDEN

Purely mercenary. They're after me in D.C. Trying to have RM-1 declared unsafe. We can give them a hell of a good scare with this bridge.

Dagny smiles laughing like a schoolgirl reveling at the idea.

DAGNY

I'm down to six months with Wyatt. Can you turn that much metal on no notice and get it built--?

REARDEN

If I sleep in the office. I'll get my Team on it. You'll have the specs in forty eight hours--

DAGNY

To our big adventure.

She clinks and drinks. Rearden fixes on her, riveted. A disruption breaks the moment.

Audible reactions and cameras flash at the entrance. Someone important is arriving. Rearden and Dagny turn to:

FRANCISCO D'ANCONIA

Gives the crowd a full-frontal of his arrogant elegant handsome self before entering. He is swarmed.

Rearden angers watching Francisco bow to Lilian kissing her hand before he wades into the sea of flesh. Dagny retreats toward the terrace, wanting nothing to do with him.

Rearden corners Lilian about to blow.

REARDEN

When did he make "your friend" status?

LILIAN

Don't be such a poop. Francisco's the A-list hottie of the week. This is a coup to have him here.

REARDEN

Keep him away from me. You're the A-list hottie hostess, so work it.

Lilian joins Francisco, surrounded by Dr. Ferris, Scudder, beautiful women and Jimmy Taggart.

LILIAN

Let me guess, Doctor Ferris is telling you that nothing is anything--

Ferris sours as he reluctantly shakes Francisco's hand.

FRANCISCO

You know more about that than anybody, don't you Dr. Ferris?

Jimmy finally taps d'Anconia on the shoulder having been ignored during the entire conversation.

FRANCISCO

Ah, James. Good evening--

JIMMY

You know I've tried every way I know to get in touch with you.

FRANCISCO

That may be because I have no desire to see you.

Francisco latches on to Lilian leaving James.

JIMMY

(indignant)

Excuse me--? I'm entitled to an explanation. You owe your stockholders--

FRANCISCO

For what? Why don't you explain it to them, James? I did everything your way....

THE TERRACE - DAGNY'S POV

She watches the encounter through the glass doors as Jimmy loses it rapidly--

JIMMY

What the hell are you talking about?

They are drawing a most interested distinguished crowd.

FRANCISCO

Our Governing principles. The pursuit of profits is evil. The Owner is the parasite. It's the employees who do all the work and create the product. How am I doing so far? I didn't exploit anyone. I didn't make a profit. I lost my entire investment. There was no Copper...And the thousands of employees--the lucky stiffs made more in a week than they could in a lifetime for work they could never do. Ever....

(batting those angel eyes)

James, I thought you'd be proud of me.

Jimmy is boiling. His cell phone chirps breaking the moment. Francisco wags his finger "no no" at an infuriated Jimmy.

JIMMY [ON PHONE]

Taggart--

Jimmy goes red at the voice looking around the ball room. He spots Dagny through the glass on her phone.

DAGNY [ON PHONE]

You're taking me home. Now--

Francisco snaps Jimmy's phone shut for him and laughs mockingly as he guides the Starlet into the crowd.

DAGNY

Grabs another champagne from a passing tray and downs it. She begins making her way to the door. The music from the jazz orchestra stops her cold.

The Halley concerto is being butchered.

REARDEN

Trapped in a conversation with Dr. Ferris, Mouch and Scudder. Stealing glances at Dagny, he sees her leaving and moves to catch her--

At the terrace doors, Rearden is suddenly face to face with--

FRANCISCO

Permit me to introduce myself--
(humbly bows)
My name is d'Anconia.

Francisco's tone of genuine respect startles Rearden.

REARDEN

Of course you are. Who else would
you be?

FRANCISCO

Your wife has avoided presenting me
to you for obvious reasons. Would
you prefer I leave?

Rearden studies Francisco in silence. Direct. To the point.

REARDEN

What do you want to see me for?
Plan to lose me lots of money, too?

FRANCISCO

Yes...eventually. But that is not the purpose of my visit.

REARDEN

If you're not selling, what can I do for you?

Francisco lights one of his gold cigarettes surveying the crowded room filled with opulence and glittery people.

FRANCISCO

You're standing on top of a very impressive mountain. The greatest pride a man can have. You are able to have summer flowers in the winter, half naked women at your wedding anniversary, scientists and government parasites at your beckon call...If it weren't for you all of them would be left helpless. And you don't even notice the burden--

Rearden is nailed.

REARDEN

Right, and I don't give a damn. So, let's see, that makes me conceited, heartless, cruel and...right, almost forgot...evil. Did Lilian put you up to this?

FRANCISCO

I'm just this week's "hottie invitee"...And I would never permit anyone to call you evil.

REARDEN

Excuse me. Someone I should say goodbye to--

Francisco blows smoke across his path.

FRANCISCO

They have a weapon against you. A powerful one. Ask yourself what it is sometime....

Rearden stops and turns back to him, all a bristle--

REARDEN

You're the parasite, Mr. d'Anconia.
And you can go now. I hope you
learned what you needed to know
about me.

FRANCISCO

I knew that before I arrived. Watch
your back, Mr. Rearden. Run from
those who tell you money is the
root of all evil. Money is the root
of all good...but you know that.

The two Men study each other. Francisco puffs. Rearden exits.

DAGNY

Tears herself away from a group of adoring Men and is almost
to Jimmy at the door avoiding Lilian when it happens.

LILIAN

This--hideous thing--

Lilian extends her arm across Dagny's path to some taut
nipped and tucked women. She shakes the green-blue bracelet.

LILIAN

Henry gave it to me. Priceless, he
says. The first thing made from his
oh so important metal. I can't even
give the damn thing away.

The room disappears around Dagny. The music fades. She is
transfixed on the green-blue bracelet on Lilian's wrist.

DAGNY

If you're not the coward I think
you are, you'll exchange it--

Lilian, her Mother, and the other Women look at her shocked.
Dagny dangles her thin diamond bracelet for Lilian.

MOTHER

You're not serious, Miss Taggart?
If you are--you're incredibly silly--

Lilian is looking right at Dagny. She is deadly serious.

DAGNY

Give me that bracelet. You don't
deserve it--

Lilian's mouth shifts to an upturned crescent. Her version of a smile. She snaps the metal bracelet open and drops it in Dagny's hand, taking the diamonds for her own.

LILIAN

Thank you, Dagny. You can have it back when you come to your senses.

Rearden is suddenly beside Lilian. He does not look at Dagny. Lilian laughs gaily indicating for the party to continue and that jaws should be picked up off the floor.

Dagny walks the gauntlet toward the exit feeling empowered. Guests whisper and comment loud enough to hear--

GUESTS/TRADEOFF

Do you believe that bitch? What a disgusting thing to do. I hear she's doing Rearden--Not her. She's the ice queen. A computer in an Armani suit. She's some piece of work--She could at least be ugly--

Jimmy, embarrassed, takes the elevator down ahead of her.

Rearden watches her go marching proudly through the gauntlet wearing his metal like a badge of honor.

THE ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Dagny flattens herself against the wall mercifully alone. The doors open again. Francisco darts inside closing the doors.

She holds her bracelet out for Francisco to admire.

FRANCISCO

Slug...That was so unnecessary and so you--

DAGNY

Why do you keep messing with me?

FRANCISCO

Who's John Galt?

DAGNY

I'm John Galt--

Francisco laughs as they descend.

FRANCISCO

Do you know the legend of Atlantis--

DAGNY

Why don't you enlighten me, since
this whole night is a bust--

FRANCISCO

Ahora...escuchar...Atlantis is a
place where heroes live in
happiness unknown to the rest of
the Earth. The spirits of heroes
enter without dying because they
carry the secret of eternal life
with them....

DAGNY

Let me guess, this John Galt
phantom found Atlantis, right? I've
heard that urban legend already.

FRANCISCO

Went down with his ship and all his
crew to find it.

DAGNY

I bet the girls eat that one up--
right into your bedroom--

She stands as always, unfeminine, head lifted impatient.

FRANCISCO

You know you are the only woman
worth looking at here...Anywhere...
What a magnificent waste....

Dagny closes her eyes fighting her urges. Francisco leans to
kiss her. Elevator stops. Bells ding. Doors open--

HALLEY'S MUSIC "STRIKE" SWELLS AND RUSHES

DAGNY OPENS HER EYES TO:

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - WINTER'S DAY

"STRIKE"

Blinding snow storm. The gleaming blue metal runs further up
the gorge. Dagny is there on the snow plow engine pushing
further up the pass.

Workers fight the elements raising RM-1 girders on the
pilings to the new bridge 1200 feet below.

EXT. WYATT'S OIL FIELDS - GORGE IN VIEW "STRIKE"

A storage tank fire burns out of control. HELL-FIGHTERS move in to cap the inferno. Storage tanks nearby are foamed down to protect them from the heat.

Wyatt gets into his own heatsuit. His Foreman stops him.

FOREMAN

Let it burn. We've got no tanks
left to store the crude anyways.

Wyatt looks down the snowy gorge at the work lights on the Taggart bridge. Hurry--

EXT. REARDEN METALS - NIGHT "STRIKE"

Green blue rails roll through the cooling Vats. Rearden is right there with the Iron Workers testing quality, overseeing the ore refining. His loyal Plant Manager is right with him.

Hopper cars dump copper ore into a huge smelter. Rearden's Plant Manager looks grim.

PLANT MANAGER

That's the last of the ore. We
can't deliver without more tonnage--

Rearden checks tonnage consumption charts.

REARDEN

Get it--No matter what it costs.

PLANT MANAGER

d'Anconia's offering the best price-

REARDEN

Not on my watch--

Rearden disappears in a shower of sparks coming off the RM-1.

EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND - DAWN "STRIKE"

Coast Guard vessels and EVAC helicopters close in to rescue Survivors floating in the sound on rafts.

A Supertanker lists in the distance sinking slowly.

ONBOARD LEAD COAST GUARD CUTTER

Sailors haul the first Survivors onboard. One sputters in South American dialect, then calms long enough for English--

SURVIVOR

...Ragnar...It was him...

The tanker suddenly goes up in a ball of fiery flames.

EXT. MIDWEST GAS STATION - DAY

"STRIKE"

Angry Drivers wait in long lines. Tempers are short. A fight breaks out at one pump. Precious gas spews.

The nervous Attendant posts a price change--\$23.99 per gallon. Infuriated, Drivers chase the Man back into the convenience store. He locks the door.

Drivers hurl bottles and objects at the windows breaking them. More Angry Drivers wrestle over control of the pumps--

One concerned Driver pulls out his cell phone and dials 911.

CONCERNED DRIVER

Can you hear me!? I need to report
an emer---

The cellphone signal sparks a chain reaction causing gas fumes to combust--engulfing the Driver in flames--

INT. WEST WING - WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

Wesley Mouch is into a heated debate with Dr. Ferris of the NSI, Orren Boyle, Jimmy Taggart, Larkin, FRED KINAN, a Union Labor Lobbyist and a number of the Director's Council.

Doors open. MR. THOMPSON, the Director and Head of State, enters with a phalanx of Aides.

MR. THOMPSON

This better be good. I just got
this from our Venezuelan suppliers.

An Aid passes around a long email. Instant alarm and anger.

MOUCH

(reading)

They're cutting us off. Ungrateful
taco heads--After all the billions
in aid and relief we sent them--

MR. THOMPSON

Yes, well, so much for all our good
will. No more petroleum from South
America unless we send military
escorts---

Everyone talks at once. Jimmy gets on top--

JIMMY

Maybe Director Thompson could tell us why our crack army can't seem to stop this Ragnar in site of our own shores. Kids are reading comic books about this terrorist--

MR. THOMPSON

I'm assured he will be brought to justice. The Saudis reaffirmed their global embargo on oil to U.S. interests.

DR. FERRIS

We need domestic sources of energy we can own and control. There's more synthetic crude in Wyatt's oil sands project than in all of Saudi Arabia--

ORREN

If your Sister would build her damn railroad a little faster, Wyatt could at least take some pressure off the market--

JIMMY

When? In a year? Two? This country will come to a complete halt before that happens--

ORREN

But Hank Rearden will be a very wealthy man. He'll have the only product the entire rest of the world will want to buy from us--RM-1. Want me to spell it?--

MOUCH

If it's even worth a damn. People are afraid of it. Stuff's completely untested--

ORREN

But if it works, RM-1 will be the most sought after commodity since oil--

KINAN

Force him to hire. Open new plants.
We lost another ten thousand jobs
last month alone. Union pension
funds are going bone dry--

DR. FERRIS

Speaking for the National Science
Institute, if we controlled the
patent to such an innovation, the
world would have to come to us.

JIMMY

You don't know Hank Rearden. Our
entire company's future rests on
the success of RM-1--

MOUCH

I do know him since I've been in
his employ for the past five years.
If we Pass the "Anti-dog eat dog
equal opportunity act", he has no
say in the matter--

DIRECTOR

Do we have the votes?

Mouch shakes "no".

DIRECTOR

Find another way. He's vulnerable.

Silence. An unspoken verdict is unanimous. The Director
hurries out followed by his entourage. Jimmy sits down,
clearly spooked to the verge of nausea.

EXT. GRANADA PASS - DAWN

Snows melt revealing the old bridge is completely gone.

Dagny hangs on the side of the steam engine making its way up
the pass. She is on her cell admiring the vision before her.
A new RM-1 superstructure is beginning take shape.

DAGNY (HEADSET)

When are you coming out. You've got
to see it.

INTERCUT REARDEN:

He has taken to sleeping in his office completely exhausted.

REARDEN [ON PHONE]

Like I have time. I'm still messing
with the design. And I'm sleeping
at the plant to get your metal
rolled--

DAGNY

The engine hisses to a stop at the edge of the gorge. Dagny
climbs down and walks to the very edge. Gleaming RM-1 girders
rise up from of the abyss.

DAGNY (HEADSET)

Everybody thinks it's going to fall
down. You definitely want to be
here for that--

The sun catches his bracelet flashing across her face. She
softens, savoring--

DAGNY (HEADSET)

Hey...I miss you....

REARDEN

Completely caught off-guard by the intimacy in Dagny's voice.
He paces to think of what to say.

Lilian is standing in his door. Looking sexy and available.

REARDEN

I have to call you back.

Lilian shucks her topcoat revealing even more of herself.

LILIAN

Business? Or pleasure?

He clicks off unnerved by Lilian's presence. She moves about
the tiny sleeping area, tracking her hands along him. Dagny's
diamond bracelet prominent on her wrist--

REARDEN

You haven't been down here since we
were first married.

LILIAN

I didn't know that when you swore
at the altar to forsake all others,
it didn't include blast furnaces.

She folds her arms around him pressing her body against his.

LILIAN

Since you never sleep at the house anymore, I thought I'd come to you...I've never held the illusion that Men are superior to animals--

REARDEN

Why did you marry me? You don't need money. You had that...

LILIAN

Be nice. I need you to give my brother a job...He's tired of your charity...He wants to earn his way--

Rearden withdraws, almost taken in by her come on. Same old same old--

REARDEN

How? He doesn't know anything about the metal business.

LILIAN

So...He needs a job. You hire lots of strangers.

REARDEN

I hire people who produce. What's Phillip got to offer except hating every bone in my body?

LILIAN

He's family. You give him a job, you pay him, you tell him he's good at it even if he isn't.

REARDEN

I'm not running a whore house.

Silence. Lilian slips back into her coat....

LILIAN

My friends are all warning me. The Government is going to stop people like you...and Dagny Taggart... You're too damn greedy....

She is gone. Rearden exits onto his balcony to clear his head. What does she want? Really?

THE BALCONY - RMI IN VIEW

He watches Lilian get into her waiting car. Phillip is driving. He roars away hating the fiery dusty plant.

Rearden fixes on an ornate spider web across one end of his balcony. A large moth struggles to get free and cannot. Light gleams on the intricate web connections.

Intrigued, he turns on a water faucet and sprays a jet of water slamming into the web. It holds, absorbing the force and remains intact. The moth still struggles.

An epiphanous moment for Rearden. He gets inches from the web studying its every junction and network of lines--

INT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - LATE NIGHT

She is curled asleep in her desk chair. Her cell wakes her.

DAGNY [ON PHONE]
Hank--You okay--Calm down--

Her fax machine hums to life. Dagny looks at the pages of the incredible new bridge design Hank has sketched--

REARDEN [ON PHONE]
Your new bridge can carry four
trains at once--

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - MORNING

Dagny shows Wyatt the plans pitching like a Cheerleader at a pep rally as they walk the rails--

DAGNY
It will stand for three hundred
years--

INT. TAGGART TERMINAL CAFETERIA - MORNING

Eddie is dumbfounded at the schematic of the bridge drawing automatically on his laptop. He is on his headset to:

REARDEN [ON PHONE]
--and cost you less than culvert
pipe--

Eddie shakes his head incredulous. The Unknown Worker turns the laptop screen for a glimpse. The schematic makes no sense to the untrained eye--

EDDIE

We can't even afford culvert pipe,
Mr. Rearden--And now this spider
web thing? It all Sounds pretty,
well, flimsy if you ask me.

UNKNOWN WORKER

(excited to himself)
It's brilliant. The man's a genius--

Eddie is thrown by the statement. The Unknown Worker grabs his paper and hurries from the cafeteria--

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - DAY

Workers and Engineers are puzzled and spooked by the huge fan shaped sections of RM-1 formed in thin weblike patterns being lowered onto the pilings by dual cranes.

Riggers are shocked at the sight. The sections appear fragile to the touch. Chief Engineer Nealy is openly doubtful--

RIGGER#1

What's it made of? Bicycle spokes?

CHIEF ENGINEER NEALY

The stuff looks like it won't even
hold me up, much less a hundred
tons of train--

One Rigger takes his heavy-duty eximer-torch trying to cut through a section expecting it to curl like wax. The metal does not even get warm. Amazing--

Wyatt and Dagny survey the raising of the first sections from the field station. She masks her nerves.

WYATT

You know what they're going to say
don't you--

DAGNY

Besides "off with her head"?

Wyatt is not laughing.

TV COVERAGE FILLS THE VIEW

TV COMMENTATOR

It won't stand--

The COMMENTATOR stands before the form of a giant spider web spun from the green-blue metal almost spanning the gorge--

CLICK - ANOTHER CHANNEL

An OLDER RR WORKER points at the bridge crazed.

OLD RR WORKER

When they run the first train over it, the whole thing'll come down on our heads and kill ever one on board--There's a good reason they call it "loco"-motive--Know what I'm saying--

CLICK - ANOTHER CHANNEL

Aerial views of empty tank cars cued up for miles at the foot of the Rockies.

TV COMMENTATOR

These empty tankers are waiting to carry the light of reading lamps, the heat of furnaces, the power of engines--but only if the trains can run safely over the "spider span" as the naysayers are now calling Taggart's highly controversial new railroad--

CLICK - THE SCUDDER REPORT

Bertram Scudder does his weekend financial report. His guest is Orren Boyle.

SCUDDER

You have been brutally critical of the Dagny Taggart controversy--

ORREN

Her irresponsible venture with Henry Rearden and his magic metal clearly outs both as having no social conscience--none for the innocent people who could lose their lives on this bridge fiasco.

SCUDDER

With the beating Taggart Trans stock took in the market this week, is Dagny Taggart the same kind of daredevil her Great-grandfather was? Using human beings as guinea pigs to launch a new product?

BOYLE

Before I answer that, for the record, I never said the bridge would collapse. I just said that if I had children, I wouldn't let them ride the first train to cross it--

CLICK - ANOTHER CHANNEL

The gorge at night. Work continues. Several hundred Demonstrators have massed to protest the bridge.

Wyatt sends in his Security Crew to force the Mob back.

WIDEN TO: D'ANCONCIA'S YACHT - NIGHT

Francisco watches the news in spite of serious sexual advances a young beauty(who looks amazingly like Dagny) and several other beautiful women try on him. He dials a number on his cell moving away from the "harem".

FRANCISCO [PHONE]

Not yet...Dagny's not like any other human. More like a nuclear power plant. No one should question her ability to succeed. Espera... paciencia...

The Starlet and the other Women parade about in designer lingerie. D'Anconia continues to watch for Dagny on TV.

INT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - NIGHT

Dagny watches the protestors stream around her coach heading down the tracks chanting and carrying signs. Wyatt's Security Force surrounds the coach and keep the crowd moving.

Dagny huddles in the shadows on her cell phone.

DAGNY [ON PHONE]

I'm fine, I'm okay. You won't believe what's going on here.
(chanting outside rises)
Are we going to make it, Hank...?

Silence on the other end. She laughs, reading him.

DAGNY [ON PHONE]

The bridge, Rearden? Hello. The world is against us. We tied into Cheyenne last week. We're less than 20 miles of track from the Texas border--Are we going to make it?

REARDEN - IN HIS OFFICE

Laughs at her infectious energy.

REARDEN

Yeah. We are. Definitely. The last load of Copper we need is on its way....And no d'Anconia--

DAGNY

Hugs her knees up to her chest like a schoolgirl. Unsure.

DAGNY

All we ever wanted to do when we were kids was run the family business--

REARDEN (V.O. PHONE)

(static)

What, I'm losing you--Be safe, okay. I don't want anything to happen to you--

DAGNY

(happily startled)

Hank...That's the first time you ever sounded like I wasn't a man. ...I'll be okay...

Suddenly, a rock hits the window next to her shattering the glass. She reels back. Voices shout--

MOB LEADER

Who wants a ride on the John Galt line? You?

CROWD

NOOOO!!!!

The crowd begins to chant "It won't stand". More rocks are thrown. A SECURITY MAN enters the far end of the Coach locking the door behind him. Dagny is instantly engarde--

SECURITY MAN/EYES

It's okay, Miss Taggart. Mr. Wyatt wanted someone inside with you. If it gets worse we have an exit plan.

His eyes are oh so familiar. Like the Man's at the Airport Diner who told her about John Galt and Atlantis. His face remains hidden in the shadows as he moves around the coach checking the windows.

DAGNY

Yeah..Thanks...Have we met....?

Eyes fixes on her from the shadows.

EYES

Everyone knows who you are, Miss Taggart....

He pulls her from the window with firm but gentle force. Voices chant. All she can hear is the beating of her heart.

EXT. REARDEN METALS - DAWN

Rearden jogs up the hill toward his mansion pushing himself. An unmarked helicopter sets down in the road in front of him. He slows. Two military Troopers hop out, faces hidden behind visors. Their weapons scanning the perimeter.

Rearden is completely at a loss. The Lead Trooper hands Rearden a document then indicates he is to climb on board. Rearden reaches for his cell phone on his waist. The Trooper indicates that is not a good idea, and to please cooperate.

INT. USAMRIID/NSI CONF. ROOM - DAY

Rearden faces Dr. Ferris and several other furtive faces. Wesley Mouch sits beside Rearden, "in his corner".

REARDEN

I'm still waiting for an answer.

MOUCH

Hank, the NSI wants you to take your metal off the market.

Rearden laughs incredulous.

DR. FERRIS

Just a temporary delay. A year or two. Until the NSI can--

REARDEN

Why? Did your Scientists decide my metal is not what I claim it is?

DR. FERRIS

We don't have enough test data to say one way or another.

REARDEN

You've seen the results of our research. Is it good or not?

DR. FERRIS

It's the social impact that has to be considered. Think in terms of the country as a whole. The public welfare and the terrible crisis we face--

MOUCH

If RM-1 is no good, it's a danger to the public. If it is good, it's a danger to our social welfare--

REARDEN

There's no physical danger. And you know it. You can drop the social welfare crap. I don't speak that language.

DR. FERRIS

You're a difficult man, Mr. Rearden.

REARDEN

Because I want to make a profit on a product I developed, paid for and risked everything for?

Rearden stands, completely fed up with this whole proceeding.

REARDEN

There's a global market for RM-1. It can revolutionize the way we build things. More energy efficient--cheaper and it lasts....forever--

DR. FERRIS

Excuse me. You've only had one order from Taggart Trans. The public is afraid of your product.

REARDEN

Then you don't have a damn thing to worry about. If they don't like it they won't buy it.

Rearden is ready to throttle the lot of them.

DR. FERRIS

How much has it cost you? Your precious metal--?

REARDEN

You've had access to all the R&D information--

DR. FERRIS

Name your price.

Silence. Ferris has finally showed his cards.

DR. FERRIS

Don't look so surprised. I'm offering you an open checkbook for the patent to RM-1. All rights--

REARDEN

It's not for sale.

DR. FERRIS

You're a business man. You want to make profits, right? As big as possible--

REARDEN

Yep. That's the plan.

DR. FERRIS

Then why risk an unfavorable opinion from the NSI which could sink all your years of sweat and toil and risk--rather than accept a well earned fortune?

REARDEN

Because its *mine*. Can you possibly understand the concept? Any of you?

Dead silence. No takers. No comprehension.

MOUCH

Hank, you need to think about this.
You need friends. You're not a
popular Man right now--

REARDEN

Is this how you fixed that dog
eating load of garbage act?--Good
job, Mouch. Guess I got what I paid
for--

DR. FERRIS

I'm sure Mr. Rearden will
understand when the NSI issues a
negative opinion on the properties
of RM-1--This is an offer you
cannot afford to refuse, Mr.
Rearden--

REARDEN

I just did.

Rearden smiles at the gathering. All tension leaves his face.
The meeting is over.

EXT. KANSAS RR STRETCH - NIGHT

A signal showing red flickers and shorts out, then flashes to
green as--

--a Taggart eastbound freight train pulling 100 hopper cars
filled with copper ore bound for Rearden's mills passes by--

--the signal shorts again and returns to red.

INT. EASTBOUND ENGINE - CONTINUING ACTION

The Systems Engineer catches the glitch on his readout. A
Westbound train is on the same track heading right for them.
He hits the alarm--

The Engineer sees the approaching lights ahead and shuts down
throwing the engine into reverse.

AHEAD - THE WESTBOUND

Rushes into view and collides with the Eastbound in a
spectacular crash sending hopper cars all over the slopes,
buckling into the air cascading ore everywhere.

A FLOOD OF ORE WIPES FRAME TO:

INT. REARDEN METALS PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY

Rearden, his bleary eyed Foremans and Plant Manager crowd around a squawk box.

REARDEN

So in theory how screwed are we?

VOICE ON THE BOX

Rolling stock scattered over a square mile. Ore everywhere...At least a week to clear the tracks, another to repair them--

INTERCUT: WYATT'S HQ - SAME TIME

Wyatt is there with Dagny, her Foremans and Nealy, her nervous Chief Engineer. She is smoking up a storm.

DAGNY

I can get extra crew to the site today, latest tomorrow--

REARDEN (ON THE BOX)

That's five thousand tons of copper ore we needed yesterday.

CHIEF ENGINEER NEALY

We're down to the last sections of rail and bridge. After tomorrow we might as well shut down--

Dagny shoots daggers at the jittery Nealy.

DAGNY

I'll forget you said that. I take it back, I'll make a point not to.
(to Wyatt)

Ellis...there's got to be way to get the ore to Rearden. Trucks? Can we get enough together for a run?

The former Wildcatter now billionaire chews on his toothpick and traces a route along the topo map on the table.

WYATT

Most every Trucker from Cheyenne to Denver to Kansas City are sitting on their asses. They can't afford the go juice to make any hauls. Put'em to work--

Dagny marvels at the simplicity of the solution.

DAGNY
I'm good. Hank--?

Everybody stares at the squawk box.

REARDEN (ON THE BOX)
I'm buying--

Dagny grins and hoots. The crew goes to work making phone calls, sending emails, calling for assistance.

THE GREAT CONVOY - QUICK CUTS

Trucker hands, palms up, as hundred dollar bills, ten each, are counted out by Dagny's Foremen and Wyatt's Crew Bosses.

Truckers eagerly fire up their engines--wait in lines at truck stops while \$27 a gallon diesel fuel is pumped--A Wyatt fuel truck gasses up trucks in a mall parking lot--

AT RMI - THE GREAT CONVOY - CONTINUED

Rearden has set up a command center with his Plant Manager and Office Staff who plot truck routes on a large map of Kansas, sending mapquest directions to:

TRUCKERS ON THE ROAD

Getting coords on their cab computers. Every kind of rig, dump trucks, moving vans, anything with room for ore.

AT WYATT'S GORGE - THE GREAT CONVOY - CONTINUED

Dagny spiels from the hood of an earthmover to scores of RR Workers idled by the stoppage on the bridge.

AT TAGGART TRANS HQ IN NEW YORK - SAME TIME

Eddie Willers juggles the chaos talking to Dagny on a laplink as she pans her phonecam along an impressive line of trucks leaving Wyatt's Gorge--

On another laplink, Eddie views convoy trucks arriving at the crash site--

EDDIE (HEADSET)
We've got first arrivals. On-site
and ready to load!

AT RMI - SAME TIME

A cheer goes up around the images of the first trucks arriving. Rearden holds up cell to the noise--

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - SAME TIME

Dagny listens to the noise on her cell as she runs to her 4X.

INSIDE 4X - CONTINUOUS

Dagny climbs in riding shotgun. She does a take on her driver. Eyes smiles, tips his hat--

DAGNY

You still worried about me?

EYES

Twenty-four seven, Miss Taggart.

OUTSIDE - WYATT ENTRANCE

Tired Protestors fall away in the wake of the convoy exiting through the gates. Dagny yells out her cab window--

DAGNY

Five hundred dollars a day for
anyone who wants a job! Five
hundred!

Several Protestors drop their signs and run after her.

DEFECTOR/PROTESTOR

I'll go. What do I have to do?

DAGNY

An honest day's work--

Now more Protestors break ranks and hurry to the crew bus following behind.

INSIDE 4X - CONTINUING ACTION

Dagny slaps the dash in triumph and lights one of her gold wrapped cigarettes. Eyes surveys her--

EYES

You enjoy this don't you? Running
this ugly little war single handed
and winning...

Dagny fixes on the unknown worker.

DAGNY

Glad somebody thinks I'm winning.

EYES

Yeah, well things aren't always
what they seem are they?

Dagny studies him. Eyes shifts gears picking up speed.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Dagny and Eyes lead the convoy down the mountain to save the world.

EXT. CRASH SITE - DAY TO NIGHT TO DAY

As masses of trucks arrive and depart after being stuffed with copper ore scooped from the wreckage by front loaders, bulldozers--

--and TEAMS OF WORKERS armed with picks and shovels transferring the ore, by hand if necessary, into, vans, pickups, anything on wheels that will hold the stuff--

Dagny watches the progress from a makeshift command tent. She is on the phone or checking with Driver's on her two-way radio. Eyes is always nearby, protective. Hovering.

Workers let down, weary, exhausted. Many completely stop, near collapse.

Dagny shucks her headset and heads from the tent. Eyes is right on her six.

EYES

Miss Taggart--

She grabs a shovel from an exhausted Worker and starts to dig. Eyes places his hand on the handle.

EYES

You don't have to do this kind of
work--

Dagny looks at Eyes determined, then at the Men exhausted around her.

DAGNY

Yes, I do.

She digs in right there shoveling, her hands bruised and blistered--Around her Workers pick up their tools and return to their labors. She sets a pace leading the effort.

And Eyes works right along side, never letting her out of his sight. A strange mix of admiration and pity in his look.

EXT./INT. REARDEN METALS - DAY TO NIGHT TO DAY

Rearden, sleepless for days, watches the lines of random trucks wheeling into his plant offloading salvaged ore--

He crosses the vat room catwalk as new metal is being poured.

REARDEN [ON PHONE]

I'm looking at it right now. If you were here--I'd probably say a bunch of things and do a bunch of things--that I would not regret.

THE CRASH SITE - DAGNY'S VEHICLE - SAME TIME

Her hand with Rearden's bracelet holding her phone sags slowly into her lap. Her head nods back, she drops off completely exhausted, in the front seat of her 4X...

Eyes tilts her back in her seat and gently removes her cell phone. He listens to Rearden's voice--

REARDEN [V.O. PHONE]

Dagny...I lost you. Dagny? Hello? If you can hear me--when this is over...we have to find some time together. I have to see you--

EYES [ON PHONE]

Miss Taggart is asleep, Mr. Rearden...

REARDEN [V.O. PHONE]

Who is this? Hello. Who is this?

Eyes stares at the phone and clicks off. He spreads a blanket over her and slides out locking the door behind.

OUTSIDE HER VEHICLE - LATER

Done in Workers pass by as another shift changes.

WORKER

Chump change, that's what we're working for.

(MORE)

WORKER(cont'd)
 You're just too dumb to know you're
 nothing but a Taggart slave--

WORKER 2
 Hey, don't be talking that kinda
 shit about Boss Taggart. Wouldn't
 be no railroads running, no jobs,
 nothing if she hadn't put her money
 and her cred on the line. You see
 her out there today? Shoveling that
 shit. I'd follow her to hell and
 back--

WORKER
 She's just a rich bitch with high-
 rent hips you just want to f--

The Worker decks Dagny's defiler and keeps on walking. Eyes,
 watching from the shadows, checks the vehicle to make sure
 Dagny is alright. She is sleeping like a baby.

SHARP CUT TO:

INT. PRESS ROOM - NATIONAL SCIENCE INSTITUTE - DAY

An outburst of questions to Wesley Mouch. Dr. Ferris and a
 group of NSI Scientists stand on either side of him--

MOUCH
 --As the newly appointed Head of
 Economic Planning and Natural
 Resources, I think the statement by
 the NSI warning about the potential
 dangers of the use of the metal
 alloy known as RM-1 is perfectly
 clear--

He exits with Ferris refusing to take any more questions.

INT. TAGGART TERMINAL - MORNING

Eddie is white over the headlines as he reads his paper from
 the old vendor.

VENDOR
 They didn't really say nothing did
 they, Mister Willers?

EDDIE
 They did and they didn't...That's
 what's so criminal about the whole
 damn business--

VENDOR

No offense to Miss T, but I'm sure
glad I don't own no Taggart stocks--

Eddie is hurrying across the terminal past Nat's statue. He
looks up in fear instead of awe and reverence--

DAGNY (V.O.)

"It may be possible after a period
of heavy usage a sudden fissure may
appear--"

EXT. REARDEN METALS - MORNING

Rearden excuses himself from having coffee with Lilian and
makes the long walk from his house on the hill toward his
plant. Masses of Workers are gathering at the Smelter. He
carries the NSI statement in his hands.

DAGNY (V.O.)

"The possibility of molecular
reaction, at present is unknown and
cannot be entirely discounted..."

Lilian watches him go with a strange smile of satisfaction--

INT. NY STOCK EXCHANGE - SAME TIME'

Sell orders for Taggart Transportation flood the trading
floor. The Big Board shows the stock plummeting--

TO JIMMY TAGGART

Suicidal in the glow of his quotron.

EXT. D'ANCONIA'S YACHT - MORNING

A helicopter lands on the helipad. Francisco hurries on deck
playing little attention to the pouting pleas of the vixen of
the moment and boards. The helicopter takes to the air--

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - MORNING

Rearden's spider span stands inches from completion. The web
of metal spectacular in the sun's rays.

DAGNY (V.O.)

"While the NSI acknowledges that the tensile strength of RM-1 is clearly demonstrable, certain questions regarding the metal's behavior under unusual stress cannot be ruled out..."

EXT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - MORNING

Chief Engineer Nealy exits the Coach through the mass of Workers. Eyes escorts him to his vehicle. Nealy's only sign, the kill gesture across his throat--

DAGNY (V.O.)

"Although there is no evidence to support the position that the use of the metal should be prohibited, a further study of its properties would be of value..."

Nealy heads away. Eyes surveys the Workers with pity as he retreats to Dagny's coach.

INT. COACH - MORNING

Dagny wears the floor out pacing reading the NSI statement.

DAGNY

"A further study of its properties would be of value"--! Where's the science? Are these liars and con artists? Or the National Science Institute--Whoops, forgot--both.

INTERCUT: REARDEN - AT HIS PLANT

Government Officials, along with Mouch arrive with court orders. Rearden watches them from his office windows--

REARDEN (V.O.)

You should have heard what Ferris said when I asked him for his personal verdict--

INT. NSI USAMRIID - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Where Rearden was third degreed by Mouch and Ferris.

DR. FERRIS

Whether I approve or disapprove is irrelevant.

(MORE)

DR. FERRIS (cont'd)
 The value of your metal is beside
 the point. There are other issues
 besides scientific fact--

REARDEN

--Then you won't state the truth
 publicly?

Dr. Ferris shrugs refusing to answer.

DR. FERRIS

People are not open to truth and
 reason. They're for the most part
 greedy, self indulgent, predatory
 dollar chasers--

REARDEN

Yes, well, you're looking at one of
 those dollar chasers, Dr. Ferris.
 Your own metallurgy research has
 spent hundreds of millions and come
 up with nothing--I'm an embarrass-
 ment to you--RM-1 is an embarrass-
 ment to you--

RESUME: REARDEN AT HIS OFFICE - THE PRESENT

The spider web on his deck is full of dead moths. A Janitor
 starts to sweep it down. Rearden politely stops him--

REARDEN (V.O.)

--We all are. They can't afford for
 us to be successful--

INTERCUT: TAGGART TERMINAL CAFETERIA

Eddie sits at his regular booth alone. Distraught, he looks
 around for his Unknown Worker. He is nowhere to be seen.

EDDIE (V.O.)

We can't fight it. They haven't
 said anything that can be refuted-
 What is happening to people? Why
 are they believing all this?--

INTERCUT: REARDEN

Watching with his Plant Manager as rows of RM-1 rails sit
 waiting to be loaded.

REARDEN (V.O.)

I'm suing the NSI. I'll force
 Ferris and Mouch to tell the truth--

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - DAY

Wyatt and Dagny stand on the roof of her private RR car observing the fast and furious construction as Workers swarm over the bridge racing to completion.

DAGNY (V.O.)

Don't worry, Eddie. You remember what Nat Taggart said about building the Mississippi bridge?-- That he envied only one of his competitors--

EDDIE (V.O.)

The one who said 'to hell with the government'. Nat wished he'd said it--

DAGNY (V.O.)

Yep...Save your money on lawyers, Hank. We're going to run the first train on the John Galt--right over the new Taggart bridge--

Dagny squints, shading her eyes.

She sees Eyes standing on the bridge in the middle of the blue rails. His face in silhouette--

EXT. TAGGART HUDSON RIVER ESTATE - DARK DAY

Dagny climbs the hill to the old oak tree where she ritually met Francisco every summer as kids. Lightning struck the tree years ago. It is now a gnarled fallen ruin.

INT. MAIN HOUSE - DARK DAY

Portraits of the Taggart dynasty line the walls. Jimmy is curled on the library couch looking like death. He has not shaved for days. His eyes are dead.

JIMMY

We should've waited for Orren Boyle. We wouldn't be in this mess.

Dagny is in the room, disgusted by her brother.

DAGNY

We'd still be waiting for his steel and have no railroad to show for it-

JIMMY

We can't go on. We've got no operating capital, thanks to you--I hope Rearden's a good lay because his goddamned metal has ruined us--

Jimmy searches a filled ashtray for a butt to smoke. Dagny throws her gold foil pack at him as he rants.

DAGNY

Through, Jimmy--? Because I'll tell you what you're going to do. This is not a proposal...

Jimmy remains sullen looking at her under heavy eyelids.

DAGNY

I'm resigning. Now. Immediately.

She hands a shocked Jimmy her resignation.

DAGNY

Our stock will rebound on this news alone. Get the board to sign the Rio Norte over to me--The John Galt line--I'll get my own financing--

JIMMY

From who? There are no Midas Mulligans around anymore to front you that kind of capital. Retired gone...vanished....

DAGNY

Funny how all the great minds in the world keep disappearing...I'll get the money.

JIMMY

You'll take all the risk--

DAGNY

Yep--When the Galt line is up and going, I'll transfer it back to you--at cost--No profit. No loss--

JIMMY

You're out of your goddamned mind.

DAGNY

Runs in the family.

She wipes out a glass and pours him a shot of flat champagne.

DAGNY

I'd wipe that look of hope off my face if I were you, big brother. It's really ugly on you--

JIMMY

You're going down, Dags.

DAGNY

Just stay out of my way. Get married. Have some kids. Carry on our dysfunctional family tradition--

She clinks his glass with the champagne bottle. Then raises a toast to Nat Taggart's portrait. Jimmy does not join her.

EXT. LOWER HUDSON RIVER - DAY'S END

Francisco's sleek cigarette speed boat runs the Hudson to his yacht. The femme beside him is no new Dagny look alike, but the real Dagny!

EXT. FRANCISCO'S YACHT - NIGHT

Dagny takes in the view of Manhattan. Dimmer than usual. Francisco watches her intently.

DAGNY

You have those one-way glass eyes on, Frisco. You let the light in but no rays out.

FRANCISCO

(struggling)

For your own sake, Slug...don't ask me what you came here to ask.

He takes her hand in his fixing on the blue-green bracelet.

FRANCISCO

Because you know I am going to refuse.

DAGNY

I have to try...I'm begging you for money. If our memory has any meaning to you, back me...Like putting flowers on a grave...

Silence. Francisco is in torment. He traces her chin.

DAGNY

Money means nothing to you now--
You've blown so much more on the
San Sebastian and all those....

He suddenly looks at her his eyes flashing--with pride.

DAGNY

That's better...You can laugh at me
and despise me and ruin me like you
did Jimmy. Don't you want to see me
crawling--?

She starts to lower herself. He grabs her up violently
squeezing her jaw in his hand pulling her to him--

DAGNY

Tell me what you want---I'll do it--
Anything--

FLASH TO: THE TAGGART ESTATE - SUNSET - THE PAST

Dagny, age 16, wins a brutal tennis point against Francisco,
smashing the ball with such force it might burst. He hurls
his racquet across the net at her feet and staggers to the
lawn where he collapses on his back laughing, exhausted.

Dagny stands over him, his body stretched at her feet, his
sweat drenched shirt, his dark mane spilled over his arm. His
eyes move up the her legs, where they enter her shorts--up
her chest swelling to catch her breath--to her eyes.

And then he seizes her pulling her down, his mouth on hers.
She grasps him in violent answer. His hands move under her
top exploring her breasts like a prospector. She shoves him
back at the shocking intimacy that needs no consent. No
permission. She pulls herself away resisting--just long
enough to see his pleasing smile. Instead of escaping, she
grips his hair and yanks his mouth up to find hers--

FLASH TO: THEIR BODIES

Entangled like two animals thrusting and pressing against
each other. A strange mix of fear and ecstasy in their faces
as they ride each other--

Rain pelts their naked bodies. Drops turning instantly to
steam as they strike their bare skin hissing into vapor---

FLASH TO: DAGNY

Sated, laying on the wet grass gazing up at him, her lips still swollen with their passion. She laughs giddy--

YOUNG DAGNY

Now I know why nobody likes me at school. I should make shitty grades and do this with all the--

Francisco goes red and slaps her hard across the face. She feels the blood on her lip and tastes it. With pleasure...

YOUNG DAGNY

Did I hurt you that much?

YOUNG FRANCISCO

Don't ever make jokes like that again. Ever---

She pulls him for a tender kiss on her blood speckled lips.

YOUNG DAGNY

I like it. I hope it swells up like a bee sting--

His eyes. Her eyes.

HIS EYES - HER EYES - THE PRESENT

FRANCISCO

I warned you...

DAGNY

I needed to know which side you're on.

FRANCISCO

I'll remind you one day which side you thought I was on.

He faces the dim skyline of Manhattan and lights a smoke.

FRANCISCO

The lights will go out on Broadway ...sometime...soon...

DAGNY

You sound like you're looking forward to it--

From his expression, he clearly is.

FRANCISCO

Good luck on the John Galt---

DAGNY

I built a railroad for him. Let him
come and claim it--

Francisco smiles sadly and shakes her hand. Rearden's
bracelet jangles.

FRANCISCO

He will...

Francisco obliterates their view of Manhattan with a single
puff of smoke.

SMOKE WIPES FRAME TO:

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - TWILIGHT

Eyes walks the near completed bridge. He inspects every spike
in every rail. Dagny approaches from the opposite end.

DAGNY

So--you think it's going to fall
down, too--?

Eyes takes a long look surveying her and her bridge.

EYES

Not hardly. I give it about as long
as the pyramids. Maybe longer.

Dagny smiles, the first relief she has felt in weeks.

DAGNY

I wish my "loyal" Engineers felt
the same way.

EYES

Well--see--in another life I was a
hell of a frustrated Engineer.

DAGNY

Oh, okay then. We're good to go.

EYES

Nat Taggart would be proud, Miss
Taggart--

She eyes him curiously. Who is this Man? Really?

DAGNY

Thank you. I'd've really liked him to see this too--Hey, I'd've like to even have met him--

They walk in silence across the bridge.

EYES

Something I've been meaning to ask you.

DAGNY

Make it good. I'm feeling pretty exposed right now--

EYES

The name of your railroad. What's up with that?

DAGNY

The John Galt? I don't know. A challenge I think. I don't know who to. Nat? Myself? I don't know ... Galt found Atlantis so they say--

EYES

I heard the same tall tale...
(he darkens, spooked)
There's something else...A force out there...trying to destroy us...to take the best of us...

She loses her conviction in his mesmeric gaze.

DAGNY

It doesn't matter anyway. There is no John Galt. Should I have called it something else? Do you like it?

Eyes mumbles nodding his head.

DAGNY

Is that a yes? Not very convincing.

In the backlight of the setting sun, Dagny sees Eyes is smiling. He spits over the side of the bridge.

EYES

You might want to do the same--for good luck.

DAGNY

You don't strike me as a man who believes in things like "luck".

EYES

I don't. You have to make your own.

Dagny considers...then spits over the side.

INT. DAGNY'S RR CAR - DAYS END

"John Galt Transportation - Executive Office" has been hastily printed on computer paper and stuck on the aged and distressed door. Angry voices rage inside--

Kinan, the Union Leader in league with Jimmy, Orren Boyle, Mouch and the Looters is going tooth and claw with Dagny--

KINAN

Let me put it to you bluntly, Miss Taggart--I don't think we're going to let you run that train--

Dagny leans over her battered metal desk right in his face.

DAGNY

Get out of here--

Kinan looks at her incredulous. He starts to speak. Dagny points to the door.

DAGNY

Now! Don't tell me what you are going to allow *me* to do. If you have something else to say, start over--

Kinan regroups, sipping coffee from a plastic cup.

KINAN

What I meant to say is that we're not going to allow our Engineers to run your trains--

DAGNY

That's different. Who decided? The Engineers?

KINAN

That's not your concern. What you're doing is a violation of human rights--You can't expect people to go out and get killed so you can make money--

Dagny slides a blank piece of paper across the desk to him.

DAGNY

Fine. Put it in writing. We'll sign a contract that says it plain and simple--

Kinan hesitates, trapped.

DAGNY

Write it down. That no member of your Union will ever be employed on the John Galt line.

KINAN

I didn't come here to negotiate--

DAGNY

You know that bridge is going to collapse. What's the problem--?

KINAN

You know what the problem is--

DAGNY

Yes, I do. I'm being stopped in the name of public safety. The existence of my company and maybe even the country is at risk if my trains don't run, Mr. Kinan....

(letting it hang)

This one will if I have to drive it myself. If the bridge collapses there won't be a railroad anyway. If it doesn't, no member of your Union will ever have a job on my line--ever. If you think I need your Men and Women more than they need the jobs I can give them, which you are forbidding me to give them, then this meeting is over.

KINAN

I didn't say we'd forbid it. You can't force people to--

DAGNY

You're the one doing all the forcing with this stranglehold you have on your members. You're killing them. Not me. I just asked for a volunteer to take that run--

Dagny offers a pen and turns the blank paper around for him to sign. Kinan defers to his coffee considering.

KINAN

Okay...What if no one volunteers?

DAGNY

Then it's my problem, not yours.

Kinan hesitates, then extends his hand to shake. Dagny points to the door refusing--

DAGNY

Shake the nice Union Boss' hand on his way out Eddie--

Eddie, witnessing the confrontation, hurries to shake Kinan's hand--and removes Kinan's coffee cup.

EDDIE

That's two dollars for the coffee.

DAGNY

And get a notice out. I need volunteers to run the first train on the John Galt--

Eddie signals with a clenched fist and leads the ruffled Union Leader out protesting.

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - DAY

"JOHNNY B GOOD"

Media and the Public have flocked to the site of the fantastic bridge and set up camp like a rock festival. Cameras and sat dishes line the cliffs.

The "Who is John Galt X-treme Sports Club" peels off in a stunning bungee jump off the bridge dropping into the gorge.

A couple in tuxedo and wedding dress bungee after them.

"Spider Men" scale the weblike bridge in colorful costumes.

Below, along the river, RVs and tents, jammed with people have arrived to witness the "big crash".

John Galt impersonators are on hand. Elvis Galt and the ????? rock out echoing music off the canyon walls. "Johnny B Good!"

It is the media event of the decade. Security is high. Troopers with Dogs check rails leading to the Bridge.

In the gorge below, vehicles are searched. Drivers, Campers and Hikers are wanded at checkpoints.

A TV helicopter takes in a stunning bird's eye view of the span that will carry Dagny's hopes and the country's dreams

Priests pray on cliffsides begging God's forgiveness.

Zealots are baptized in the river. A Fundamentalist points to the bridge calling it the "the work of Devil, Dagny"--

EXT. CHEYENNE FREIGHT YARD - DAY

Jammed with tanker cars, more media and scores of RR Workers. Police part Demonstrators as a motorcade of hybrid SUVs wheels up.

Ellis Wyatt exits his vehicle with Eyes and makes his way behind security fences toward the Engine house. Media call out. Cameras flash--

TV JOURNALIST

Mr. Wyatt--over here! Is the John Galt really going to run?

WYATT

Better ask Dagny Taggart. I'll say this, the statement trashing RM-1 by the NSF got me so ticked off, I put up a major financial commitment to the Galt line to make damn sure it does.

Eyes steers Wyatt into the Engine house where Dagny's private coach is staged. Eyes locks on a bunch of skin-heads who burn John Galt in effigy. "John Galt for President" Supporters attack the Skin Heads--

INT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - DAY

Dagny is finishing a press conference, annoyed but confident.

DAGNY

That's right--This is not about social conscience or charity.

(MORE)

DAGNY (cont'd)
There's over two million barrels a day of Wyatt crude waiting to be delivered. I absolutely intend to make a pile of money for myself and my backers and my shareholders who have come to my aid--Wyatt Oil, Stockton foundry--Dannager Coal... And I just received another generous commitment from Rearden Metals for operating funds--I wish Hank Rearden was here so I could thank him in person--

She searches the room hoping to see him there.

DAGNY
If I am successful, I deserve it--

REPORTER
Then just what is holding up a twenty thousand ton bridge? Greed?--

DAGNY
Nope. RM-1...and my judgment--

REPORTER#2
Shouldn't there be some protection to the public if your railroad's dangerous---

DAGNY
Don't ride on it.

More questions--Dagney stands indicating the junket is over--

INT. DINGY OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Dagney enters to Wyatt who is lounging his feet up on her old desk. He has been watching her conference on TV.

WYATT
Hail, Dagney. Ready to ride?

DAGNY
(pensive)
I'd feel better if Hank was here.

Eddie enters. Things are buzzing outside.

EDDIE
His plane's late...Lots of weather in Kansas.
(off her worried look)
(MORE)

EDDIE (cont'd)
Dags, we've got a railroad to run.
You need to do this--

Dagny takes a deep breath, makes a goofy face and indicates to Eddie that she is ready.

INT. ENGINE HOUSE - DAY

Engineers, Brakemen, Mechanics, Conductors, all assemble around the shiny new hybrid engine of the John Galt RR.

Dagny enters the great warehouse. The room suddenly goes silent. Those sitting, stand. In a wave of respect, their hats come off to a Man.

Dagny is overwhelmed as she wades into the sea of loyal workers, who part letting her pass reverently acknowledging their "boss". She shakes hands with many, speaking and smiling as more hands reach out to make contact.

Eyes enters the Engine House escorting Hank Rearden. He makes sure Rearden has a privileged view of Dagny as she walks this gauntlet of respect unaware of his presence.

An older Engineer writes his name and folds the ballot into a glass bowl full of names sitting on a table by the Engine. He shyly tips his hat astonished at her--

OLD ENGINEER
Sorry I'm late, Miss Taggart. Had I
known what a looker you were--

Men around him crack up. Embarrassed, the old Engineer trails off. Dagny shakes his hand warmly--

DAGNY
Thanks for coming---

--head bowed a moment, reflecting, then she looks up facing the gathered.

DAGNY
Thank you all...Eddie tells me
every employee in the entire system
responded to our ask for volunteers
to take a ride on the John Galt!!

Huge reactions erupt throughout the gathering. Dagny ceremonially reaches in and draws out the first name--

DAGNY
Our first engineer is, Pat Logan--

Several muffled laughs ripple. Eddie whispers to Dagny. She tears up the ballot--

DAGNY

He's one of the best Men in the system and he's stuck in Memphis.
(to Eddie, joking)
Email Pat and tell him he just lost his pension--

Lots of good-natured ribbing her. A red haired familiar looking Engineer pushes through. The Engineer who ran with Dagny out of Mexico--

PAT LOGAN

I'm here. Hold on. I wouldn't miss this for nothing--

Dagny shakes his hand--

DAGNY

I'd kinda like to ride in the cab with you. I don't want to miss this either.

PAT LOGAN

(grinning)
Kinda figured you might want to.
It'd be an honor--

Dagny raises Pat's hand in hers for a photo op. Cheers go up. From the back someone yells--

VOICE IN THE CROWD

Who's John Galt?--

Dagny answers without missing a beat.

DAGNY

I'm John Galt!

Then another voice echoes the same. It is Ellis Wyatt adding his vote. The phrase pings around the room "I'm John Galt."
"I'm John Galt!"

Eddie watches the demonstration overwhelmed with Dagny as the Men step forward and answer--

THE MEN

I'm John Galt--I'm John Galt!

Hank Rearden is blown away by the power in the room. He makes his way through the press to Dagny who is gobsmacked--

DAGNY
Can't be done--?

--then throws her arms around him squeezing him tight---

REARDEN
I hear that--

VOICES
I'M JOHN GALT!!!!!!

The reactions ripple right toward Eyes who lets it flow right over him and smiles satisfied.

EYES
Go, Johnny, go....

For one brief shining moment, Dagny Taggart is surrounded by Free Men making a free choice.

She faces a firing squad of photographers in front of the engine with Wyatt, Eddie, Rearden, Pat Logan and other local dignitaries. Every obstacle she has faced has been surmounted. Only one remains--

THE JOHN GALT ENGINE - ALL ABOARD

Pat Logan blows steam out the side baffles. The whine of steam turbines revs up like a jet engine. Workers surge forward moving down the track with the train chanting--

STEAM WIPES FRAME TO:

EXT. THE JOHN GALT RR - DAY "JOHNNY B GOOD"

This is no dream. "...green blue rails run to meet them, like two jets shot out of a single point beyond the curve of the earth...Crossties melt into a smooth stream rolling down under the wheels. A blurred streak clings to the side of the engine, running low over the ground..."

Trees and telephone poles spring into sight and fly by as if jerked backwards by a powerful force of nature...

At once an entire town and its inhabitants flash by. All the People out waving their arms. A banner rushes by reading "Hello John Galt Welcome to Colorado". A school band blaring and then gone--

A flicker of hats being tossed in the air. Then something flung against the side of the train--a bouquet of flowers scattered on impact--

At the edge of the sky, a long wave of mountains reverse the movement and seems to follow the train..."

Along the right of way, policeman, local people, hunters, National Guardsman, are spread out at intervals carrying all manner of, rifle, shot gun...

Passing the random Militia one by one they snap to salute.

INT. ENGINE CAB - TRAVELING

Jammed with Engineer "wannabees". Watching the amazing site unfold outside. Anticipation is high--

DAGNY

Did we hire them? Why're they here?

WYATT

Look at that. Folks just making sure you get through safely--

Sparks fly between Dagny and Rearden. He looks at her. She meets his glance. They look away, then back again.

DAGNY

They like it, Hank. It works.

He looks at her and does not turn away. Dagny finds pleasure in being self conscious of his intensity. When she crosses her legs, when she wipes her hair from her head, every move she makes she checks to see if he is seeing it--

DAGNY

I can't feel the wheels. It's like we're running just above the rails. Riding on air--

She closes her eyes, ecstasy. When she grasps the pleasure running through her she bursts out laughing, a giddy girl--

EXT. THE JOHN GALT RR - AERIAL VIEW

The sleek engine heads into the mountains pulling fifty empty tank cars with no effort. None!

THE CAB - TRAVELING

Eddie pours a glass of champagne and balances it on his head to demonstrate how smooth the ride is. No vibrations!

REARDEN

Does that mean I can stay?

Wyatt liberates the glass and downs it. Rearden hands Dagny an envelope--

REARDEN

You better take this, now. Cash it before the Fed Heads find something else to take away from me--

DAGNY

Or we end up at the bottom of the canyon--

She reacts to the huge amount of the draft.

REARDEN

Hank...You've done so much. I don't know what to say--

REARDEN

You trusted me didn't you? To recognize your greatness. You're the best businessman I know. Make me an obscene embarrassing shitload of money--and we'll be even--almost--

DAGNY

So I'm back to being a man again?

They lock eyes. The beating inside her is one with the beating of the engines. She feels both are coming from him.

Pat Logan blows the whistle breaking the moment.

PAT LOGAN

Two minutes to the gorge.

Lots of anxious yells ripple about. Dagny's entire body quivers with adrenaline. The hand she is holding is Rearden's

EXT. WYATT'S GORGE - SAME TIME

The Crowds lining the Gorge and the River below react to the whistle echoing through the mountains. Police and Troopers force People back away from the area as best they can.

AT WYATT'S JUNCTION

Workers, Investors and Media wait with anticipation under banners. Champagne at the ready. The whistle sounds again--

Media Crews shout up and down the gorge on headsets. Radios crackle. Cameras turn--

TV CREW - HOVER IN HELICOPTER

Right over the bridge. Camera positions report in--

TV DIRECTOR (HEADSET)

If this thing ends up in the bottom
of the gorge I want every second on
tape--Roll cameras--

THE GORGE - BRIDGE APPROACH

The shiny new Galt engine roars around the bend making incredible speed up the grade.

INT. JOHN GALT ENGINE - SAME TIME

The bridge in view ahead.

PAT LOGAN

We're doing a hundred up the grade.
Never run on anything like this.
It's like there's no gravity. Miss
Taggart--you want me to throttle
down before we hit the bridge--?

Dagny looks to Eddie who is sitting beside the Engineer looking extremely worried.

FLASH TO: YOUNG EDDIE AND DAGNY - THE PAST

Riding in an engine cab along the Hudson River. Dagny is at the controls with Young Francisco. The Sun tracks them doppling off the water. Young Jimmy holds on, petrified--

YOUNG JIMMY

We're going too fast. Slow down--

YOUNG FRANCISCO

What would Nat Taggart do?

Dagny looks to Francisco, fear and ecstasy on her face. His too. Eddie blows the whistle. She cranks the throttle--

RESUME: EDDIE AND DAGNY - ON THE JOHN GALT

The same look of fear and ecstasy in their faces. Dagny answers Young Francisco's question--

DAGNY

He'd bury the needle and blow all
the whistles to let the world know
we're coming--

Pat Logan buries the needle. Eddie gladly blows the whistle. Dagny pulls Rearden close to her to look ahead--

THEIR POV - THE GORGE

Across the dark crack of the gorge the 'bridge of Rearden Metal...growing to meet them--"

THE SPIDER SPAN BRIDGE - AS THE TRAIN ROARS ONTO IT

Wheels suddenly whisper rather than clatter as they hit the bridge. The spidery metal does not rattle and clank. Instead, the web span network absorbs the vibrations of the heavy train and emits a harmonic hummmmm--

UP AND DOWN THE GORGE

Onlookers waiting for the disaster react in awe to the harmonic sounds echoing off the bridge like a giant harp--

The John Galt arcs around the sweep of the long span glowing green blue in the afternoon sun--

THE CAB - TRAVELING

The chord swells like an orchestra in the cab. Dagny is so exhilarated she is crying. She clings tightly to Rearden as the bridge rushes by.

Wyatt calmly chews his toothpick taking it all in with Eyes who is ever present. Eddie blows the whistle like the kid he was.

The music coming from the wheels that bursts in the cab is Richard Halley's Fifth Concerto. "Strike" accompanies this stirring run across Rearden's fantastic web thin span.

THE GALT - AERIAL VIEW

The news copter follows the Engine over the bridge. The sweep of the span disappears and suddenly the rails carry the train up a steep grade, the storage tanks and Upgrader facility of Wyatt Oil rising up before them--

INT. TV COPTER - TRAIN IN VIEW

The TV Director slams his headsets in disgust.

DIRECTOR (HEADSET)

Cut! Cut...dammit! They made it.

EXT. WYATT JUNCTION - DAYS END

As the John Galt engine slows to a stop and is swarmed by Workers and Friends. Oil Crew climb on the tanker cars celebrating as if greeting Liberators in war time.

THE CAB - SAME TIME

Dagny stares at the sign out the cab window that does not blow by but remains still. "Wyatt Junction". She gasps realizing they have stopped.

The first person she focuses on in the cab is Eyes. He tips his hat and opens the cab door--

EYES

I think you just got Nat Taggart's attention. You sure got mine.

The Engineer shuts down with the hint of a smile--

PAT LOGAN

Welp...that's about the most fun I ever had with my clothes on---

OUTSIDE THE ENGINE - DAYS END

Wyatt leaps onto the platform full of people, dousing him with champagne, pounding him with joy.

Dagny poises at the doorway, her hand clenched tightly in Rearden's. She knows she has to descend. A roar goes up at her appearance. Cameras flash. A sea of faces swarm--

All sound leaves Dagny. She is in an altered state. Only the hum of the bridge. That and her hand clenching Rearden's. His intent eyes riveted on her--

--then he lets go. She looks back to him as her slender body is lifted off the steps like a feather by Eyes and spun around into the powerful hands of Ellis Wyatt--

Dagny is hoisted in the air on shoulders. A conquering hero. And Eyes is there to steady her and keep her from falling with his ever mysterious presence.

Dagny sees her Investors who backed her all cheering her success. A band plays. A Champagne bottle spritzes her--

INT. WAR ROOM - D.C. - SAME TIME

The nerve center of the Looters. The Director, Wesley Mouch and Orren Boyle watch Dagny on every possible station on the air being adored by hundreds at Wyatt Junction--

EXT. REARDEN MANSION - SAME TIME

Lilian, on the arm of her brother Phillip, faces a lawn full of media asking embarrassing questions--

LILIAN

Miss Taggart has done the impossible--with the help of my husband and his revolutionary metal. I've always had faith in him. Maybe now we'll get to see more of him--

REPORTER

Have you spoken to him? What did he say--

LILIAN

(faltering)

Not yet. He's too busy celebrating-

Workers from the plant arrive chanting Rearden's name. Lilian immediately retreats inside with her Brother.

EXT. ELECTRONICS SHOP - TAGGART TERMINAL - SAME TIME

Pouring rain. A wall of TVs play the historic run over the gorge. Jimmy is standing outside with no umbrella riveted.

A pretty SALES GIRL suddenly appears at the window looking at him. She opens the door and urges him to come inside.

Jimmy, defeated, takes her hand and follows her inside.

RESUME: WYATT JUNCTION - DAYS END

A News Woman manages to get her mic and camera through--

NEWS WOMAN

Miss Taggart--Tell us--how does it
feel? Do you have a message to
deliver to the world--?

Dagny is speechless and overwhelmed. Rearden watches her
proudly--

REARDEN

She just did.

DAGNY FILLS THE VIEW ON TV

She is literally on top of the mountain. Francisco leans into
view inches from Dagny's image. He places his finger to his
lips and presses it to hers onscreen.

Then clicks the remote and turns her off--

THE TV SCREEN GOES DARK

FADE IN: INT. WYATT'S PAVILION - NIGHT

Wyatt is feeling no pain as he performs uncharacteristically
a down and dirty jig to the infectious beat of a country
band. The celebration is loud and rowdy. He grabs Dagny away
from Rearden and pulls her into his mad reverie--

DAGNY

Ohhh--I can't dance--

WYATT

Neither can I.

Rearden watches the two wheel around the hall envious.

WYATT

You think you got your hands full
now--You better gear up. I can fill
six tanker trains a day. There's
more if you need it--A lot more--

DAGNY

More oil--Ellis? You're toasted--

WYATT

West of us. Another field. The
Esparanza pass. Twice as much crude
as there is here--

He whoops and swirls Dagny around.

WYATT

Ocean to ocean, Dagny. That's what you promised.

Wyatt reaches out with his other big arm and pulls Rearden into this three-way dancing bear hug.

WYATT

Now, Hank, I've been thinking--

REARDEN

Is that what we're doing--

The trio wobble by the band. Rearden and Dagny prop Wyatt up.

WYATT

Whoaaa. I think you ought to move to Colorado. We're never going to let Dagny leave--She's ours now--

DAGNY

There's this railroad I have to run-

WYATT

To hell with New York and California--This--right here--is the capital of the new Renaissance!

He raises a champagne bottle into the air rousing the crowd.

WYATT

And you're the King, Hank. We had the stone age--the iron age. This is your age. The Rearden Renaissance--

Rearden is embarrassed as Wyatt spews him with champagne--

WYATT

To the world. Ours--and what we can make of it--

--then passes the bottle to each for a ceremonial swig. Wyatt kills what is left. Suddenly consumed by a rush of anger, Wyatt hurls the bottle violently--

--exploding it against the stone fireplace. The music stops. People react. Wyatt faces Dagny with a frightening smile.

DAGNY
(whispering)
Ellis---? What's the matter?

WYATT
...They have the power to destroy
me now. All of us. If I go down,
I'm taking everybody with me.

DAGNY
Who, Wyatt? What are you talking
about? You know something...

Wyatt straightens himself up and pushes his way out through
the puzzled crowd. The Music starts again. Dagny looks to
Rearden. He offers a hand. She takes it with her bracelet
hand--He pulls her close for a slow dance...

EXT. WYATT JUNCTION - NIGHT

A short passenger train leaves carrying Party Guests and
media back to civilization. Eddie waves from the last car to--

Dagny and Rearden watch in silence as the train fades away.
Orange fires of the crude oil Upgrader bathe the gorge in an
fiery glow as they walk to her private coach.

Beyond them the webbed bridge curves into space.

DAGNY
So...you did it.

REARDEN
We did it.

DAGNY
What Ellis said...I hope he's
wrong. I hope it lasts. I hope we
last...

She gets that sudden chill that haunts her. A flashlight
beams across them from the darkness.

EYES
Everything okay here, Miss Taggart?

Eyes steps from the shadows making his rounds. He tips his
hat to her and Rearden.

EYES

Looks like you're in good hands.
Night--Oh, and congratulations to
you both. The world doesn't deserve
your kind far as I'm concerned--

Rearden and Dagny offer muffled responses as Eyes vanishes into the night. She does not turn to the door of her coach but remains facing Rearden. The lines of his face are pulled tight, giving it a strange purity.

DAGNY

...Even him. Even He knows...We're
part of the same battle, Hank. I
don't know...our beings, us,
against theirs--because we want
...this. The whole nine yards...

He starts to say something--his arms lash out grabbing her to him like an act of hatred, her body pinned against the door, her chest bent back under the pressure of his mouth on hers--

Her hands move from his shoulders down his chest to his waist to his loins releasing her every unconfessed desire. She tears her mouth away and laughs--freely--

She feels him trembling, his face tight, the look of the enemy. He jerks his head back and catches her mouth again as if an animal inflicting a wound--

INT. DAGNY'S PRIVATE COACH - CONTINUOUS

The door bangs open. Two bodies in motion explode in. He takes her by the wrist and spins her onto the bed needing no sign of consent. He locks the door never looking away from her--

She reaches for him pulling him to her. He refuses, standing over her. He turns on the light to see her clearly. Finally he smiles, slow, mocking, sensual...

He stretches her arms out pinning her to the bed, then removes her clothes with his teeth, his hands, her hands, like two animals pawing teasing each other--

--her face presses against him, her mouth moving down his neck, his chest, every gesture of her desire for him strikes him like a blow from a boxer--touching an incredible anger within him--

Her rears back taking in her bare skin spread before him. His voice guttural and tortured--

REARDEN

I swore I would never need anyone
 ...I need you. I thought it since
 the first time I saw you. I've
 thought of nothing else..Nothing
 but that mouth of yours, and the
 way your eyes look at me...I'd give
 up everything I own for this...My
 self esteem means nothing. The
 lowest of all desires--my answer to
 the highest I've met...And I want
 you to know this...I want no
 pretense about love...or respect
 ...I want you...I'll take the
 consequences--

Dagny stares at him, letting him bask in her flesh. She
 laughs. Not with sarcasm or anger but with relief and
 joy...She throws herself off the bed with a deliberate sweep
 of her arm and stands naked before him.

DAGNY

I'm much more of an animal than you
 think, Hank. I want you in my bed--
 You're free of me the rest of your
 time. Don't think of me--don't
 feel, don't care--I do not want
 your mind, your will, or your soul,
 so long it is me you come to for
 the lowest of your desires. I want
 nothing but that sensation of
 pleasure you despise--but I want it
from you...

The moan of her breath. The shudder of his body as he
 releases himself to her in a single sensation of such
 intensity, no other sanction of one's existence is necessary.

EVERYTHING GOES WHITE

EXT. TOP OF WYATT'S GORGE - NIGHT

The glow of the Ugrader burnoff flames eternal. Worklights
 frame the now infamous bridge.

REVEAL: EYES - STANDING ON THE RIDGE OVERLOOKING THE GORGE

Like a wraith, his eyes reflect the flames from Wyatt oil. He
 raises his hands lording over his domain and yells--

EYES'

Who is John Galtttttttt--

The echo rebounds: "Galt--Who isssss--Galtttt--Who isss--Galt-Galt-Galt--"

INTERCUT: DAGNY AND REARDEN

Tangled bodies melting into each other climaxing--

INTERCUT: BOYLE, MOUCH, JIMMY AND LARKIN

Raising sullen drinks at the dark bar--"bottom of the top".

MOUCH

Gentlemen, I think an emergency powers act is in order. We don't need the votes...

BOYLE

Regulate his mills. Force Rearden to supply a fair share of his metal to any consumer who wants it.

LARKIN

Take his patents. It's quicker.

BOYLE

As long we get our share.

MOUCH

I'm sure we can sell Mr. Thompson on a new domestic oil tax to help the economy recover....

JIMMY

To victory against the greedy.

THE TOAST

Dog eat dog--

The Looters seal the deal.

INTERCUT: EDDIE

Riding in the cab of the first tanker train full of Wyatt crude heading east across Kansas. Hope and exhilaration in his face.

INTERCUT: CHESAPEAKE BAY

Francisco watches the horizon. The Woman beside him enjoying his champagne laughs giddy. He turns to her--and covers her mouth to shush her--

On the horizon, a ball of orange flame erupts--

INTERCUT: AN OIL TANKER SINKS

As Ragnar zooms away into the sky--

INTERCUT: DAGNY AND REARDEN

The sound their bodies make hitting the bed; his surrendering moan and her wanton laughter is heightened by lightning and the sounds of thunder outside...

THE VIEW RUSHES UP THE GORGE

Following the blue-green rails as thunder rolls over mountains and lightning silhouettes the peaks right up:

TO EYES - STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TRACKS

He lights a familiar gold foiled cigarette embracing the coming storm--

EYES

Get ready for the end of the world.

The view rushes headlong into those eyes!

TO BLACK--

END PART I

ATLAS SHRUGGED - WHO IS JOHN GALT...

AYN RAND - ATLAS SHRUGGEDPART II: ATLANTISSYNOPSIS

In the wake of Dagny's triumphant crossing of Wyatt's Gorge Taggart Transcontinental is flying high. Tanker trains flock to Ellis Wyatt's refineries and traffic on the John Galt Line soars. Jimmy Taggart leaks the news that he has reacquired the John Galt line, and Taggart stock quickly climbs.

Dagny uses the momentary lull to accept Rearden's invitation to take a cross country road trip from Colorado to Minnesota. Rearden proposes the trip as a vacation, but quickly reveals his true intention: to locate the prototype for a motor that runs without any fuel at all. The motor was developed by an innovative car company that went out of business. With the oil crisis driving the national economy to the brink of collapse, this motor could change the course of the world. No one appreciates the importance of this invention more than Dagny, and no one gets more excited when they stumble onto the prototype in an abandoned car factory. Now, they must figure out how to make the motor run. The only way to do that is to find the brilliant, young engineer who disappeared as soon as he invented it.

Dagny's quest to find the motor's inventor drives most of her actions in the second part of ATLAS SHRUGGED. Finding the motor's inventor becomes more and more urgent as Ragnar continues to attack incoming oil tankers and the government enacts regulations that strangle oil production in America. Eventually, the regulations threaten to put Ellis Wyatt out of business. Rather than cave to government pressure, Wyatt destroys his oil fields and refineries and disappears.

With Wyatt's disappearance, Dagny begins to discern a terrifying pattern. All of the great innovators--Wyatt, Halley, the motor's young inventor--have disappeared from the world. She suspects the work of a destroyer, and she worries the destroyer will soon come for Hank Rearden.

For the moment, Hank has his own worries. The same restrictions that drove Wyatt out of business are strangling him as well. Moreover, the government wants to buy enough Rearden Metal to construct a new weapon of mass destruction. It will use the weapon to coerce oil-supplying nations. When Rearden refuses, the government puts him on trial. The entire nation tunes in for the trial, and Rearden proves a charismatic and convincing defendant who frustrates the government at every turn.

Unfortunately, Dagny cannot stay in New York City for the end of the trial. With Wyatt out of business and Rearden under siege, Dagny must cannibalize the John Galt line to keep her railroad functioning. While out west, Dagny checks in on the team of scientists working to understand the motor prototype. She arrives to learn that her lead engineer has just quit the project for no reason. It is a familiar pattern that Dagny can no longer afford to stomach. Dagny tracks the engineer to the airport where she watches him depart in a chartered plane. Dagny charts her own plane and gives chase. Following the chartered plane into the Rocky Mountains, Dagny loses control. Her plane crashes, and she loses consciousness.

When she comes to, Dagny finds herself staring into a familiar face. It is the face of the security guard that has been looking after her through so many events. It is the face of John Galt. It is the face, in fact, of the young engineer who first created the motor. Galt reveals that Dagny has landed in Atlantis--a remote valley in the Rocky Mountains. Here Galt has lured all of the most innovative and productive minds of the day. Here, they are all on strike. Dagny finds the great composer Halley, the financial genius Midas Milligan, Ellis Wyatt, Ragnar, and, surprisingly, Francisco D'Anconia. It turns out Francisco is not just a dilettante playboy but a key player in John Galt's plot. Francisco has sacrificed everything--his fortune and his love of Dagny--to demonstrate the failed policies of the looters. Galt, Francisco and Ragnar believe that if the productive minds refuse to participate in the system that the looters have created, in other words, if they "shrug", the system will collapse on itself. Once the looters' system has collapsed, Galt will end the strike, the men of the mind will return to the world, and they will build a new and better society on the ruins of the old. Galt and Francisco try to convince Dagny to stay in Atlantis. They argue that the looters will get her railroad eventually. The sooner they destroy it, the sooner it can be rebuilt with Rearden Metal and engines that run on the physics of John Galt's motor.

As Dagny struggles to determine her future, Rearden worries that she may be dead. Eddie Willers now struggles to run Taggart as he believes Dagny would have. Media reports indicate that Dagny may have died in an enormous train wreck in the Rocky Mountains. Eye-witness accounts indicate she may have gone down in a plane crash. With nothing to live for, Rearden caves to the pressures of the government. He signs away his patents and devotes himself to finding Dagny Taggart.

Of course, Dagny Taggart is alive and well in Atlantis. While she sympathizes with John Galt and, more importantly, begins to fall in love with John Galt, she knows she cannot stay in Atlantis. If there is a chance that she can save Taggart, it is a chance Dagny is willing to take.

Dagny returns to a world on the brink. The nation's entire transportation system has nearly collapsed. Workers riot as unemployment soars and shortages abound. With control of Rearden's patents, the government has completed construction of its new weapon of mass destruction. The SDI-type weapon creates violent sound waves capable of demolishing buildings and destroying cells. No one is safe.

Dagny uses her very public return to speak out on behalf of Hank Rearden. Hank watches the broadcast and realizes that Dagny no longer loves him as she refers to their love in the past tense. Rearden is right--Dagny has fallen for Galt.

Her support does little to stabilize Rearden's situation. His workers rise up against him. Rumors abound that Rearden dies in the riot. In truth, Francisco D'Anconia saves Rearden. Rearden is too valuable to the future for the strikers to risk his life.

In the wake of the riots, President Thompson broadcasts a public address in an attempt to quell public unrest. John Galt preempts the broadcast. He uses the forum to announce the strike by the Men of The Mind. "Our minds or your guns," he declares. "You can't have both." Galt's message inspires an immediate following, and the government identifies Galt as an enemy. The government kidnaps Galt.

Dagny, Rearden, Francisco and Ragnar mount an operation to rescue Galt and succeed. Unfortunately, the real battle is unfolding in Kansas. There the various factions of the government vie for control of the weapon and inadvertently set it to go off. Dagny, Rearden, Ragnar, Francisco and Galt rush to prevent destruction, but they are too late.

The weapon is activated and a massive swathe of the mid-west is instantly destroyed. Railroad bridges are peeled back like onions and city skylines drip like burning candles. Francisco dies saving the lives of Dagny and Galt. The remaining strikers return to Atlantis to regroup.

With the entire world reeling in hopeless despair, Eddie Willers sets out to restore transportation from coast to coast. He pilots the Taggart Comet out of San Francisco, but breaks down in the middle of the desert. All seems lost. But Dagny and Galt arrive in one of Ragnar's hovercrafts and save Eddie and his crew.

Powered by Galt's motor, the hovercraft hurtles our heroes into a future that finally seems ready for them.