

TIME FINITE

They had been working the whole night, for now they were close to the solution.

"Maybe we will be able to finish it before the meeting after all. This is progressing just too smooth!"

The work silently progressed a few more hours, and none of the two noticed that the morning sun now shone through the lone window.

"We will receive the Nobel price for this, that much is certain. Have you thought about what to do with the money?"

"No... not really..." He didn't quite want to admit pondering along such lines of thought.

"The best thing would most probably be to invest the larger part in the company. Do you realize just how much the stock will rise when our work is known!?"

"Well, yes, that is probably true. Could you please hand me the spectralmeganeedle? There..."

"Here."

"Thanks."

They continued fine adjusting their new machine and skipped breakfast like so many times before. But they had never been as close a final solution as now. The last two weeks of work had brought them from doubt to certain assurance. They now knew it would work.

It's not every day a couple of dubious scientists working for a fishy company manage to patch together a time machine.

"There! Put your finger there."

"Mhm, okay, like that?"

"Yes, well, there it is."

The piece of tape was placed as it should; the machine was finished!

They stood solemnly for a moment, looking at their creation. It was not beautiful. But this was not a work in aesthetics; if it worked it would mean a scientific revolution. It would come to begin a whole new age. They would be legends in an instance!

With a shrewd little smile he looked at his colleague, who met his glance and smiled back.

"Should we...?"

"I do think so."

"But, shouldn't we really wait?"

"I don't think so."

Certainly, they both knew that they could never resist the temptation. They had been working on this for several years, and the last few weeks like never before. If they didn't try the machine now, they would have to

wait over the weekend, after which they would have a meeting with the board. They hesitated no more...

"What do you think?"

"We should probably go carefully... to begin with. Set it for minus three hours."

He pushed some controls on the display, and quickly configured the machine for their requirements.

"Would you like the honor?"

"No no, I know how you ache for it. I can hold myself."

"Okay, are you ready? I'm pushing. Now!"

"Here."

"Thanks."

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Written and translated from Swedish by Ola Magnusson, February 25, 1998.