me much. But the concerto I dedicated to him is called the Concerto of Deliverance."

She looked at the others. "Please tell me your reasons," she said, with a faint stress of firmness in her voice, as if she were taking a beating, but wished to take it to the end.

"I quit when medicine was placed under State control, some years ago," said Dr. Hendricks. "Do you know what it takes to perform a brain operation? Do you know the kind of skill it demands, and the years of passionate, merciless, excruciating devotion that go to acquire that skill? *That* was what I would not place at the disposal of men whose sole qualification to rule me was their capacity to spout the fraudulent generalities that got them elected to the privilege of enforcing their wishes at the point of a gun. I would not let them dictate the purpose for which my years of study had been spent, or the conditions of my work, or my choice of patients, or the amount of my reward. I observed that in all the discussions that preceded the enslavement of medicine, men discussed everything—except the desires of the doctors. Men considered only the 'welfare' of the patients, with no thought for those who were to provide it. That a doctor should have any right, desire or choice in the matter, was regarded as irrelevant selfishness; his is not to choose, they said, only 'to serve.' That a man who's willing to work under compulsion is too dangerous a brute to entrust with a job in the stockyards—never occurred to those who proposed to help the sick by making life impossible for the healthy. I have often wondered at the smugness with which people assert their right to enslave me, to control my work, to force my will, to violate my conscience, to stifle my mind—yet what is it that they expect to depend on, when they lie on an operating table under my hands? Their moral code has taught them to believe that it is safe to rely on the virtue of their victims. Well, that is the virtue I have withdrawn. Let them discover the kind of doctors that their system will now produce. Let them discover, in their operating rooms and hospital wards, that it is not safe to place their lives in the hands of a man whose life they have throttled. It is not safe, if he is the sort of man who resents it—and still less safe, if he is the sort who doesn't."

"I quit," said Ellis Wyatt, "because I didn't wish to serve as the cannibals' meal and to do the cooking, besides."

"I discovered," said Ken Danagger, "that the men I was fighting were impotent. The shiftless, the purposeless, the irresponsible, the irrational—it was not I who needed them, it was not theirs to dictate terms to me, it was not mine to obey demands. I quit, to let them discover it, too."

"I quit," said Quentin Daniels, "because, if there are degrees of damnation, the scientist who places his mind in the service of brute force is the longest-range murderer on earth."

They were silent. She turned to Galt. "And you?" she asked. "You were first. What made you come to it?"

He chuckled. "My refusal to be born with any original sin."

"What do you mean?"

"I have never felt guilty of my ability. I have never felt guilty of

my mind. I have never felt guilty of being a man, I accepted no unearned guilt, and thus was free to earn and to know my own value. Ever since I can remember, I had felt that I would kill the man who'd claim that I exist for the sake of his need—and I had known that *this* was the highest moral feeling. That night, at the Twentieth Century meeting, when I heard an unspeakable evil being spoken in a tone of moral righteousness, I saw the root of the world's tragedy, the key to it and the solution. I saw what had to be done. I went out to do it."

"And the motor?" she asked. "Why did you abandon it? Why did you leave it to the Starnes heirs?"

"It was their father's property. He paid me for it. It was made on his time. But I knew that it would be of no benefit to them and that no one would ever hear of it again. It was my first experimental model. Nobody but me or my equivalent could have been able to complete it or even to grasp what it was. And I knew that no equivalent of mine would come near that factory from then on."

"You knew the kind of achievement your motor represented?"

"Yes."

"And you knew you were leaving it to perish?"

"Yes." He looked off into the darkness beyond the windows and chuckled softly, but it was not a sound of amusement. "I looked at my motor for the last time, before I left. I thought of the men who claim that wealth is a matter of natural resources—and of the men who claim that wealth is a matter of seizing the factories—and of the men who claim that machines condition their brains. Well, *there* was the motor to condition them, and there it remained as just exactly what it is without man's mind—as a pile of metal scraps and wires, going to rust. You have been thinking of the great service which that motor could have rendered to mankind, if it had been put into production. I think that on the day when men understand the meaning of its fate in that factory's junk heap—it will have rendered a greater one."

"Did you expect to see that day, when you left it?"

"No."

"Did you expect a chance to rebuild it elsewhere?"

"No."

"And you were willing to let it remain in a junk heap?"

"For the sake of what that motor meant to me," he said slowly, "I had to be willing to let it crumble and vanish forever"—he looked straight at her and she heard the steady, unhesitant, uninflected ruthlessness of his voice—"just as you will have to be willing to let the rail of Taggart Transcontinental crumble and vanish."

She held his eyes, her head was lifted, and she said softly, in the tone of a proudly open plea, "Don't make me answer you now."

"I won't. We'll tell you whatever you wish to know. We won't urge you to make a decision." He added, and she was shocked by the sudden gentleness of his voice, "I said that that kind of indifference toward a world which should have been ours was the hardest thing to attain. I know. We've all gone through it."

She looked at the quiet, impregnable room, and at the light—the light that came from his motor—on the faces of men who were the most serene and confident gathering she had ever attended.