He got up, went to the telephone and dialed a number, "Hello, Midas? . . . Yes . . . He did? Yes, she's all right. . . . Will you rent me your car for the day? . . . Thanks. At the usual rate—twenty-five cents. . . . Can you send it over? . . . Do you happen to have some sort of cane? She'll need it. . . . Tonight? Yes, I think so. We will. Thanks."

He hung up. She was staring at him incredulously.

"Did I understand you to say that Mr. Mulligan—who's worth about two hundred million dollars, I believe—is going to charge you twenty-five cents for the use of his car?"

"That's right."

"Good heavens, couldn't he give it to you as a courtesy?"

He sat looking at her for a moment, studying her face, as if deliberately letting her see the amusement in his. "Miss Taggart," he said, "we have no laws in this valley, no rules, no formal organization of any kind. We come here because we want to rest. But we have certain customs, which we all observe, because they pertain to the things we need to rest from. So I'll warn you now that there is one word which is forbidden in this valley: the word *'give.'* "

"I'm sorry," she said. "You're right."

He refilled her cup of coffee and extended a package of cigarettes. She smiled, as she took a cigarette: it bore the sign of the dollar.

"If you're not too tired by evening," he said, "Mulligan has invited us for dinner. He'll have some guests there whom, I think, you'll want to meet."

"Oh, of course! I won't be too tired. I don't think I'll ever feel tired again."

They were finishing breakfast when she saw Mulligan's car stopping in front of the house. The driver leaped out, raced up the path and rushed into the room, not pausing to ring or knock. It took her a moment to realize that the eager, breathless, disheveled young man was Quentin Daniels.

"Miss Taggart," he gasped, "I'm sorry!" The desperate guilt in his voice clashed with the joyous excitement in his face. "I've never broken my word before! There's no excuse for it, I can't ask you to forgive me, and I know that you won't believe it, but the truth is that I—I forgot!"

She glanced at Galt. "I believe you."

"I forgot that I promised to wait, I forgot everything—until a few minutes ago, when Mr. Mulligan told me that you'd crashed here in a plane, and then I knew it was my fault, and if anything had happened to you—oh God, are you all right?"

"Yes. Don't worry. Sit down."

"I don't know how one can forget one's word of honor. I don't know what happened to me."

"I do."

"Miss Taggart, I had been working on it for months, on that one particular hypothesis, and the more I worked, the more hopeless it seemed to become. I'd been in my laboratory for the last two days, trying to solve a mathematical equation that looked impossible. I felt I'd die at that blackboard, but wouldn't give up. It was late at

night when he came in. I don't think I even noticed him, not really. He said he wanted to speak to me and I asked him to wait and went right on. I think I forgot his presence. I don't know how long he stood there, watching me, but what I remember is that suddenly his hand reached over, swept all my figures off the blackboard and wrote one brief equation. And then I noticed him! Then I screamed—because it wasn't the full answer to the motor, but it was the way to it, a way I hadn't seen, hadn't suspected, but I knew where it led! I remember I cried, 'How could you know it?'—and he answered, pointing at a photograph of your motor, 'I'm the man who made it in the first place.' And that's the last I remember, Miss Taggart—I mean, the last I remember of my own existence, because after that we talked about static electricity and the conversion of energy and the motor."

"We talked physics all the way down here," said Galt.

"Oh, I remember when you asked me whether I'd go with you," said Daniels, "whether I'd be willing to go and never come back and give up everything . . . Everything? Give up a dead Institute that's crumbling back into the jungle, give up my future as a janitor-slave-by-law, give up Wesley Mouch and Directive 10-289 and sub-animal creatures who crawl on their bellies, grunting that there is no mind! . . . Miss Taggart"—he laughed exultantly—"he was asking me whether I'd give *that* up to go with *him*! He had to ask me twice, I couldn't believe it at first, I couldn't believe that any human being would need to be asked or would think of it as a choice. To go? I would have leaped off a skyscraper just to follow him—and to hear his formula before we hit the pavement!"

"I don't blame you," she said; she looked at him with a tinge of wistfulness that was almost envy. "Besides, you've fulfilled your contract. You've led me to the secret of the motor."

"I'm going to be a janitor here, too," said Daniels, grinning happily. "Mr. Mulligan said he'd give me the job of janitor—*at the power plant.* And when I learn, I'll rise to electrician. Isn't he great—Midas Mulligan? That's what I want to be when I reach his age. I want to make money. I want to make millions. I want to make as much as he did!"

"Daniels!" She laughed, remembering the quiet self-control, the strict precision, the stern logic of the young scientist she had known. "What's the matter with you? Where are you? Do you know what you're saying?"

"I'm *here*, Miss Taggart—and there's no limit to what's possible here! I'm going to be the greatest electrician in the world and the richest! I'm going to—"

"You're going to go back to Mulligan's house," said Galt, "and sleep for twenty-four hours—or I won't let you near the power plant."

"Yes, sir," said Daniels meekly.

The sun had trickled down the peaks and drawn a circle of shining granite and glittering snow to enclose the valley—when they stepped out of the house. She felt suddenly as if nothing existed beyond that circle, and she wondered at the joyous, proud comfort to be found

in a sense of the finite, in the knowledge that the field of one's concern lay within the realm of one's sight. She wanted to stretch out her arms over the roofs of the town below, feeling that her fingertips would touch the peaks across. But she could not raise her arms; leaning on a cane with one hand and on Galt's arm with the other, moving her feet by a slow, conscientious effort, she walked down to the car like a child learning to walk for the first time.

She sat by Galt's side as he drove, skirting the town, to Midas Mulligan's house. It stood on a ridge, the largest house of the valley, the only one built two stories high, an odd combination of fortress and pleasure resort, with stout granite walls and broad, open terraces. He stopped to let Daniels off, then drove on up a winding road rising slowly into the mountains.

It was the thought of Mulligan's wealth, the luxurious car and the sight of Galt's hands on the wheel that made her wonder for the first time whether Galt, too, was wealthy. She glanced at his clothes: the gray slacks and white shirt seemed of a quality intended for long wear; the leather of the narrow belt about his waistline was cracked; the watch on his wrist was a precision instrument, but made of plain stainless steel. The sole suggestion of luxury was the color of his hair—the strands stirring in the wind like liquid gold and copper

Abruptly, behind a turn of the road, she saw the green acres of pastures stretching to a distant farmhouse. There were herds of sheep, some horses, the fenced squares of pigpens under the sprawling shapes of wooden barns and, farther away, a metal hangar of a type that did not belong on a farm

A man in a bright cowboy shirt was hurrying toward them. Galt stopped the car and waved to him, but said nothing in answer to her questioning glance. He let her discover for herself, when the man came closer, that it was Dwight Sanders.

"Hello, Miss Taggart," he said, smiling.

She looked silently at his rolled shirt sleeves, at his heavy boots, at the herds of cattle. "So that's all that's left of Sanders Aircraft," she said.

"Why, no. There's that excellent monoplane, my best model, which you flattened up in the foothills."

"Oh, you know about that? Yes, it was one of yours. It was a wonderful ship But I'm afraid I've damaged it pretty badly."

"You ought to have it fixed."

"I think I've ripped the bottom. Nobody can fix it."

"I can."

These were the words and the tone of confidence that she had not heard for years, this was the manner she had given up expecting--but the start of her smile ended in a bitter chuckle. "How?" she asked. "On a hog farm?"

"Why, no. At Sanders Aircraft."

"Where is it?"

"Where did you think it was? In that building in New Jersey, which Tinky Holloway's cousin bought from my bankrupt successors by means of a government loan and a tax suspension? In that build-