

“It is a sin to write this. It is a sin to think words no others think” think...”

A youth named Equality 7-2521, who has found a hidden tunnel and hides in it to write, knows his solitude violates all the laws of his society. Even though he does not feel guilt for his actions, he begs the forgiveness of the ruling Council. As he spends more time alone, he realizes that solitude suits him, and he begins to crave more and more time by himself. From his tunnel, Equality 7-2521 records episodes from his childhood. As a child, Equality 7-2521 wanted more than anything to be a scholar. He believed he was cursed with a terrific curiosity, which made him prefer some things to others and to prefer some people to others. He often fought with the boys at the Home of Students, and he was reprimanded by his teachers for being too smart and too tall. He tried to conform to the standard the others set, but no matter how hard he tried, he was smarter and quicker than they were. When the Council of Vocations assigned him to be a street sweeper instead of a scholar, he was pleased because it meant he could atone for the sins he had committed.



Born and educated in Russia, Ayn Rand moved to the United States in 1926, moving to Hollywood to begin a career as a screenwriter. In 1932 she sold her first screenplay, but soon turned to writing novels. Her novel *The Fountainhead* was published in 1943 and eventually became a bestseller. Still occasionally working as a screenwriter, Rand moved to New York City in 1951 and published *Atlas Shrugged* in 1957. Her novels espoused what came to be called Objectivism, a philosophy that champions capitalism and the preeminence of the individual.

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