

The Moon Is Down

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Today, nearly forty years after his death, Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck remains one of America's greatest writers and cultural figures. We have begun publishing his many works for the first time as blackspine Penguin Classics featuring eye-catching, newly commissioned art. This season we continue with the seven spectacular and influential books *East of Eden*, *Cannery Row*, *In Dubious Battle*, *The Long Valley*, *The Moon Is Down*, *The Pastures of Heaven*, and *Tortilla Flat*. Penguin Classics is proud to present these seminal works to a new generation of readers—and to the many who revisit them again and again."

John Steinbeck, born in Salinas, California, in 1902, grew up in a fertile agricultural valley, about twenty-five miles from the Pacific Coast. Both the valley and the coast would serve as settings for some of his best fiction. In 1919 he went to Stanford University, where he intermittently enrolled in literature and writing courses until he left in 1925 without taking a degree. During the next five years he supported himself as a laborer and journalist in New York City, all the time working on his first novel, *Cup of Gold* (1929).

After marriage and a move to Pacific Grove, he published two California books, *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932) and *To a God Unknown* (1933), and worked on short stories later collected in *The Long Valley* (1938). Popular success and financial security came only with *Tortilla Flat* (1935), stories about Monterey's paisanos. A ceaseless experimenter throughout his career, Steinbeck changed courses regularly. Three powerful novels of the late 1930s focused on the California laboring class: *In Dubious Battle* (1936), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), and the book considered by many his finest, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). *The Grapes of Wrath* won both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize in 1939.

Early in the 1940s, Steinbeck became a filmmaker with *The Forgotten Village* (1941) and a serious student of marine biology with *Sea of Cortez* (1941). He devoted his services to the war, writing *Bombs Away* (1942) and the controversial play-novelette *The Moon is Down* (1942). *Cannery Row* (1945), *The Wayward Bus* (1948), another experimental drama, *Burning Bright* (1950), and *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* (1951) preceded publication of the monumental *East of Eden* (1952), an ambitious saga of the Salinas Valley and his own family's history.

The last decades of his life were spent in New York City and Sag Harbor with his third wife, with whom he traveled widely. Later books include *Sweet Thursday* (1954), *The Short Reign of Pippin IV: A Fabrication* (1957), *Once There Was a War* (1958), *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961), *Travels with Charley in Search of America* (1962), *America and Americans* (1966), and the posthumously published *Journal of a Novel: The East of Eden Letters* (1969), *Viva Zapata!* (1975), *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976), and *Working Days: The Journals of The Grapes of Wrath* (1989).

Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962, and, in 1964, he was presented with the United States Medal of Freedom by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Steinbeck died in New York in 1968. Today, more than thirty years after his death, he remains one of America's greatest writers and cultural figures.

John Steinbeck knew and understood America and Americans better than any other writer of the twentieth century. (The Dallas Morning News) A man whose work was equal to the vast social themes that drove him. (Don DeLillo)"

Other Books

The Grapes of Wrath, The Pulitzer Prize-winning epic of the Great Depression, a book that galvanized—and sometimes outraged—millions of readers. First published in 1939,

Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning epic of the Great Depression chronicles the Dust Bowl migration of the 1930s and tells the story of one Oklahoma farm family, the Joads—driven from their homestead and forced to travel west to the promised land of California. Out of their trials and their repeated collisions against the hard realities of an America divided into Haves and Have-Nots evolves a drama that is intensely human yet majestic in its scale and moral vision, elemental yet plainspoken, tragic but ultimately stirring in its human dignity. A portrait of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless, of one man's fierce reaction to injustice, and of one woman's stoical strength, the novel captures the horrors of the Great Depression and probes into the very nature of equality and justice in America.

At once a naturalistic epic, captivity narrative, road novel, and transcendental gospel,

Steinbeck's powerful landmark novel is perhaps the most American of American Classics.

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works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to

provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning

translators.

THE GRAPES OF WRATH Born in Salinas , California , in 1902 , JOHN STEINBECK grew up in a fertile agricultural valley about ... America and Americans (1966) , and the posthumously published Journal of a Novel : The East of Eden Letters ..."