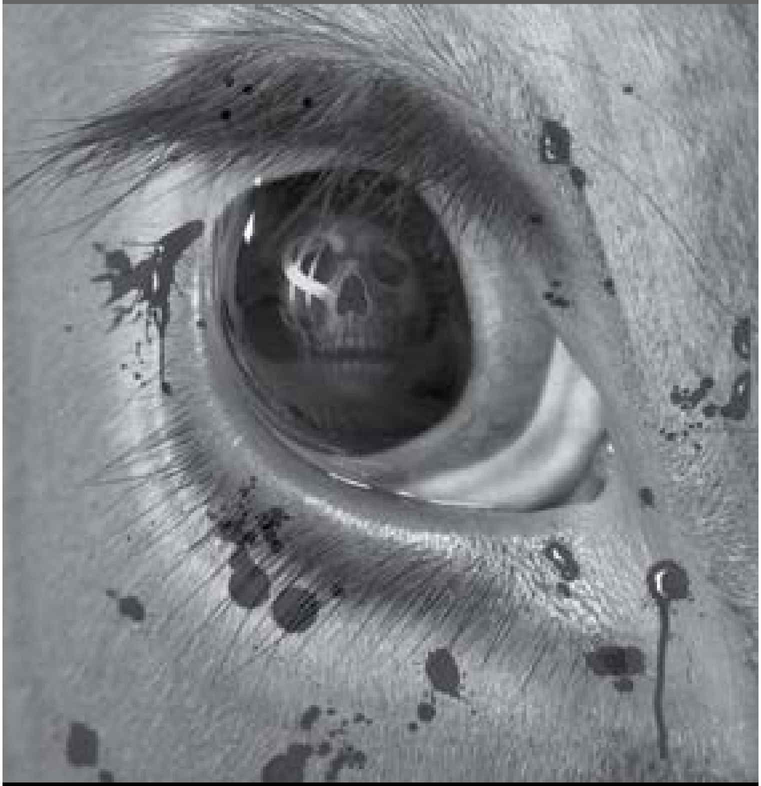
PRESTWICK HOUSE LITERARY TOUCHSTONE CLASSICS

THE JUNGLE

by Upton Sinclair

UNABRIDGED WITH GLOSSARY AND NOTES

THE JUNGLE



Upton Sinclair

Prestwick House

LITERARY TOUCHSTONE CLASSICS

P.O. Box 658 Clayton, Delaware 19938 • www.prestwickhouse.com

Senior Editor: Paul Moliken

Editor: Amber Reed

Cover Design: Larry Knox

Production: Jerry Clark

Prestwick House
LITERARY TOUCHSTONE CLASSICS™

P.O. Box 658 • Clayton, Delaware 19938
Tel: 1.800.932.4593
Fax: 1.888.718.9333
Web: www.prestwickhouse.com

Prestwick House Teaching Units™, Activity Packs™, and Response Journals™ are the perfect complement for these editions. To purchase teaching resources for this book, visit www.prestwickhouse.com

This Prestwick House edition is an unabridged republication of *The Jungle,* published in 1906 by Doubleday, Page and Company, New York.

©2005 All new material is copyrighted by Prestwick House, Inc. All rights reserved. No portion may be reproduced without permission in writing from the publisher. Printed in the United States of America. *Revised October, 2014*

ISBN 978-1-58049-395-6

THE JUNGLE

By Upton Sinclair

CONTENTS

7 Notes
8 Reading Pointers for Sharper Insights

13 **Chapter I**
29 **Chapter II**
37 **Chapter III**
47 **Chapter IV**
57 **Chapter V**
67 **Chapter VI**
75 **Chapter VII**
85 **Chapter VIII**
93 **Chapter VIX**
101 **Chapter X**
109 **Chapter XI**
117 **Chapter XII**
123 **Chapter XIII**
131 **Chapter XIV**
137 **Chapter XV**
149 **Chapter XVI**
157 **Chapter XVII**
167 **Chapter XVIII**
177 **Chapter XIX**
185 **Chapter XX**
193 **Chapter XXI**
201 **Chapter XXII**

211 Chapter XXIII
219 Chapter XXIV
231 Chapter XXV
249 Chapter XXVI
263 Chapter XXVII
275 Chapter XXVIII
287 Chapter XXIX
295 Chapter XXX
307 Chapter XXXI

321 Glossary
328 Vocabulary

NOTES

What are literary classics, and why are they important?

A literary classic is a work of the highest excellence that says something important about life and the human condition—and says it with great artistry. It has withstood the test of time and is not bound by any specific time, place, or culture. For this reason, a classic is considered to have universal appeal and significance. It speaks to us today as forcefully as it spoke to readers when it was first written, and its power will continue to give future generations new perspectives on life.

Upton Sinclair (1878-1968) was born in Baltimore, Maryland. At age ten, he moved to New York City, where, at age fourteen, he attended City College. Sinclair supported himself through journalism and pulp fiction writing, while continuing his education with graduate work at Columbia University.

Sinclair's socialist convictions led him to write *The Jungle* (1906), his sixth novel and first successful work. With part of his profits, he founded a Socialist cooperative in Englewood, New Jersey. In 1915, Sinclair moved to California, where he began End Poverty in California, a Socialist reform movement.

Sinclair's passion for Socialism is apparent in his abundant written material, which includes books, pamphlets, plays, articles, and speeches on social conditions and reform. Some of his works include *King Coal* (1917), about a Colorado miners' strike; *Oil!* (1927), about the corruption of southern California society; and the Lanny Budd series, a Marxist analysis of the years between the two world wars, which includes *World's End* (1940), *Between Two Worlds* (1941), and *Dragon's Teeth* (1942),

In 1943, he received the Pulitzer Prize for fiction for *Dragon's Teeth*, an anti-fascist novel set in pre-Nazi Germany. By the time of his death in 1968, Sinclair had published over ninety books, which have been translated into at least forty-seven languages; however, *The Jungle* is his most powerful and most influential book.

READING POINTERS

Reading Pointers for Sharper Insights

1. As you read *The Jungle*, note Sinclair's use of metaphors for the following items:

    A. *Capitalism.* Capitalism is compared to a beast that preys upon the innocence and helplessness of the common man. This message is directly and indirectly repeated throughout the novel.

    B. *Animals.* Hogs and cattle, especially the ease with which they are used up and disposed of, serve as a metaphor for humanity. Sinclair portrays their helplessness throughout the novel: Animals used for food and humans used to process those animals both need protection from the excesses of Capitalism, which is riddled with flaws.

    C. *Industry.* The mechanical industrial system that is constructed of thousands of people is referred to as "the machine." Machinery and materialism are worth more than human life, which is valued only so long as it contributes to the output of a saleable product.

    D. *Workers.* Stockyard employees are compared to animals; people are treated as cruelly and are as expendable as the animals. Just as animals would be fed less if cost for food increased, workers are paid less and less; as long as men and women are available to work for meager earnings, the food industry, as portrayed in *The Jungle*, will pay them less.

    E. *Society.* Society is similar to a jungle because people are forced to work against each other for survival. On a daily basis, Chicago's lower class struggles to obtain food, shelter, work, and protection from more powerful citizens, as exemplified by devious real estate agents, politicians, and the police. Consequently, the poor can never escape their situation. Sinclair emphasizes this as a major flaw of capitalism.

2. Be aware of the following concepts Sinclair uses:

   A. The Jungle

      As the title suggests, Packingtown is a jungle, from which there is no escape. The business owners and politicians are the predators, and working-class citizens are the prey. The stronger among the poor are made weak, and the weak are used and preyed upon until they can no longer serve the needs of the strong. Then they are discarded. Jurgis, at the beginning of the novel, is a strong and powerful man; he becomes weak and pitiful through the actions of the powerful.

   B. The role of women

      Throughout the novel, women lack control over their situations. Marija sacrifices a bright future with her fiancé to help the family survive, and she ultimately becomes a prostitute to avoid starvation. Ona, who is young and naïve, is forced to sleep with her employer to save her family, but loses her husband in the process. Teta Elzbieta struggles to maintain a dignified life, but must frequently beg for money.

   C. The dualistic nature of humankind

      Several characters exhibit both virtuous and immoral actions throughout *The Jungle*. Jurgis struggles to support his family, only to become an enforcer and a thief. Marija and Ona perform immoral acts in their futile attempts to save the family. This dualism fails, though, at the end, when Socialism is portrayed as a panacea, and anyone who follows its tenets is deemed nearly flawless.

   D. Man's inhumanity to man

      Cruelty to one another is pervasive in *The Jungle*. Packers, police, and politicians attain money and power by abusing members of the working class. A crooked businessman deceives Jurgis' family. The stockyards have deplorable work conditions. Money and a lack of simple humanity seem to be the norm.

   E. Exploitation of immigrants

      Immigrants in Packingtown are exploited until they are deemed useless, and then they are discarded. Politicians tell the people how to vote, and owners work their employees until the immigrants are unreliable, injured, or dead. Immigrants must fight for dangerous, low-paying jobs and live in squalid conditions.

CHAPTER I

IT WAS FOUR O'CLOCK when the ceremony was over and the carriages began to arrive. There had been a crowd following all the way, owing to the exuberance of Marija Berczynskas. The occasion rested heavily upon Marija's broad shoulders—it was her task to see that all things went in due form, and after the best home traditions; and, flying wildly hither and thither, bowling every one out of the way, and scolding and exhorting all day with her tremendous voice, Marija was too eager to see that others conformed to the proprieties to consider them herself. She had left the church last of all, and, desiring to arrive first at the hall, had issued orders to the coachman to drive faster. When that personage had developed a will of his own in the matter, Marija had flung up the window of the carriage, and, leaning out, proceeded to tell him her opinion of him, first in Lithuanian, which he did not understand, and then in Polish, which he did. Having the advantage of her in altitude, the driver had stood his ground and even ventured to attempt to speak; and the result had been a furious altercation, which, continuing all the way down Ashland Avenue, had added a new swarm of urchins to the cortège at each side street for half a mile.

This was unfortunate, for already there was a throng before the door. The music had started up, and half a block away you could hear the dull "broom, broom" of a 'cello, with the squeaking of two fiddles which vied with each other in intricate and altitudinous gymnastics. Seeing the throng, Marija abandoned precipitately the debate concerning the ancestors of her coachman, and, springing from the moving carriage, plunged in and proceeded to clear a way to the hall. Once within, she turned and began to push the other way, roaring, meantime, "*Eik! Eik! Uzdaryk-duris!*" in tones which made the orchestral uproar sound like fairy music.

"Z. Graiczunas, Pasilinksminimams darzas. Vynas. Sznapsas. Wines and Liquors. Union Headquarters"—that was the way the signs ran. The reader, who perhaps has never held much converse in the language of far-off Lithuania,[†] will be glad of the explanation that the place was the rear-room of a saloon in that part of Chicago known as "back of the yards." This information is definite and suited to the matter of fact; but how pitifully inadequate it would have seemed to one who understood that it was also the supreme hour of ecstasy in the life of one of God's gentlest creatures, the scene of the wedding-feast and the joy-transfiguration of little Ona Lukoszaite!

She stood in the doorway, shepherded by Cousin Marija, breathless from pushing through the crowd, and in her happiness painful to look upon. There was a light of wonder in her eyes and her lids trembled, and her otherwise wan little face was flushed. She wore a muslin dress, conspicuously white, and a stiff little veil coming to her shoulders. There were five pink paper-roses twisted in the veil, and eleven bright green rose-leaves. There were new white cotton gloves upon her hands, and as she stood staring about her she twisted them together feverishly. It was almost too much for her—you could see the pain of too great emotion in her face, and all the tremor of her form. She was so young—not quite sixteen—and small for her age, a mere child; and she had just been married—and married to Jurgis, of all men, to Jurgis Rudkus, he with the white flower in the buttonhole of his new black suit, he with the mighty shoulders and the giant hands.

Ona was blue-eyed and fair, while Jurgis had great black eyes with beetling brows, and thick black hair that curled in waves about his ears—in short, they were one of those incongruous and impossible married couples with which Mother Nature so often wills to confound all prophets, before and after. Jurgis could take up a two-hundred-and-fifty-pound quarter of beef and carry it into a car without a stagger, or even a thought; and now he stood in a far corner, frightened as a hunted animal, and obliged to moisten his lips with his tongue each time before he could answer the congratulations of his friends.

Gradually there was effected a separation between the spectators and the guests—a separation at least sufficiently complete for working purposes. There was no time during the festivities which ensued when there were not groups of onlookers in the doorways and the corners; and if any one of these onlookers came sufficiently close, or looked sufficiently hungry, a chair was offered him, and he was invited to the feast. It was one of the laws of the *veselija* that no one goes hungry; and, while a rule made in the forests of Lithuania is hard to apply in the stock-yards district of Chicago, with its quarter of a million inhabitants, still they did their best, and the children who ran in from the street, and even the dogs, went out again happier. A charming informality was one of the characteristics of this celebration. The men wore their hats, or, if they wished, they took them off, and their coats with them; they ate when and where they pleased, and moved as often as they pleased. There were to be speeches and singing, but no one had to listen who did not care to; if he wished, meantime, to speak or sing himself, he was perfectly free. The resulting medley of sound distracted no one, save possibly alone the babies, of which there were present a number equal to the total possessed by all the guests invited. There was no other place for the babies to be, and so part of the preparations for the evening consisted of a collection of cribs and carriages in one corner. In these the babies slept, three or four together, or wakened together, as the case might be. Those who were still older, and could reach the tables, marched about munching contentedly at meat-bones and bologna sausages.

[†] Terms marked in the text with (†) can be looked up in the Glossary for additional information.

The room is about thirty feet square, with whitewashed walls, bare save for a calendar, a picture of a race-horse, and a family tree in a gilded frame. To the right there is a door from the saloon, with a few loafers in the doorway, and in the corner beyond it a bar, with a presiding genius clad in soiled white, with waxed black mustaches and a carefully oiled curl plastered against one side of his forehead. In the opposite corner are two tables, filling a third of the room and laden with dishes and cold viands, which a few of the hungrier guests are already munching. At the head, where sits the bride, is a snow-white cake, with an Eiffel tower† of constructed decoration, with sugar roses and two angels upon it, and a generous sprinkling of pink and green and yellow candies. Beyond opens a door into the kitchen, where there is a glimpse to be had of a range with much steam ascending from it, and many women, old and young, rushing hither and thither. In the corner to the left are the three musicians, upon a little platform, toiling heroically to make some impression upon the hubbub; also the babies, similarly occupied, and an open window whence the populace imbibes the sights and sounds and odors.

Suddenly some of the steam begins to advance, and, peering through it, you discern Aunt Elizabeth, Ona's step-mother—Teta Elzbieta, as they call her—bearing aloft a great platter of stewed duck. Behind her is Kotrina, making her way cautiously, staggering beneath a similar burden; and half a minute later there appears old Grandmother Majauszkiene, with a big yellow bowl of smoking potatoes, nearly as big as herself. So, bit by bit, the feast takes form—there is a ham and a dish of sauerkraut, boiled rice, macaroni, bologna sausages, great piles of penny buns, bowls of milk, and foaming pitchers of beer. There is also, not six feet from your back, the bar, where you may order all you please and do not have to pay for it. "*Eiksz! Graicziau!*" screams Marija Berczynskas, and falls to work herself—for there is more upon the stove inside that will be spoiled if it be not eaten.

So, with laughter and shouts and endless badinage and merriment, the guests take their places. The young men, who for the most part have been huddled near the door, summon their resolution and advance; and the shrinking Jurgis is poked and scolded by the old folks until he consents to seat himself at the right hand of the bride. The two bridesmaids, whose insignia of office are paper wreaths, come next, and after them the rest of the guests, old and young, boys and girls. The spirit of the occasion takes hold of the stately bartender, who condescends to a plate of stewed duck; even the fat policeman—whose duty it will be, later in the evening, to break up the fights—draws up a chair to the foot of the table. And the children shout and the babies yell, and every one laughs and sings and chatters—while above all the deafening clamor Cousin Marija shouts orders to the musicians.

The musicians—how shall one begin to describe them? All this time they have been there, playing in a mad frenzy—all of this scene must be read, or said, or sung, to music. It is the music which makes it what it is; it is the music which changes the place from the rear-room of a saloon in back of the yards to a fairy place, a wonderland, a little comer of the high mansions of the sky.

The little person who leads this trio is an inspired man. His fiddle is out of tune, and there is no rosin on his bow, but still he is an inspired man—the hands of the muses have been laid upon him. He plays like one possessed by a demon, by a whole horde of demons. You can feel them in the air round about him, capering frenetically; with their invisible feet they set the pace, and the hair of the leader of the orchestra rises on end, and his eyeballs start from their sockets, as he toils to keep up with them.

Tamoszius Kuszleika is his name, and he has taught himself to play the violin by practising all night, after working all day on the "killing beds." He is in his shirt-sleeves, with a vest figured with faded gold horseshoes, and a pink-striped shirt, suggestive of peppermint candy. A pair of military trousers, light blue with a yellow stripe, serve to give that suggestion of authority proper to the leader of a band. He is only about five feet high, but even so these trousers are about eight inches short of the ground. You wonder where he can have gotten them—or rather you would wonder, if the excitement of being in his presence left you time to think of such things.

For he is an inspired man. Every inch of him is inspired—you might almost say inspired separately. He stamps with his feet, he tosses his head, he sways and swings to and fro; he has a wizened-up little face, irresistibly comical; and, when he executes a turn or a flourish, his brows knit and his lips work and his eyelids wink—the very ends of his necktie bristle out. And every now and then he turns upon his companions, nodding, signalling, beckoning frantically—with every inch of him appealing, imploring, in behalf of the muses and their call.

For they are hardly worthy of Tamoszius, the other two members of the orchestra. The second violin is a Slovak, a tall, gaunt man with black-rimmed

Glossary

Chapter I

brass check – an indication of employment, which showed that a worker was present if the brass check or tag with the man's name or number was visible; if not, the worker was no longer employed. In addition, a "brass check" is the coin used in a brothel, which the patron purchased and used to pay for a prostitute. In 1920, fourteen years after writing *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair wrote *The Brass Check*, in which he compared American journalists to prostitutes.

Lithuania – a country in northeast Europe on the Baltic Sea; in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, an estimated 300,000 Lithuanians emigrated to the United States, especially during a severe famine in the 1860s. By 1910, a large Lithuanian community had settled in Chicago.

Eiffel Tower – an iron tower located in Paris, France; it measures 984 feet in height and is named after A.G. Eiffel (1832-1923), the engineer. Sinclair uses the comparison to describe the size and grandeur of a cake and to contrast it with the horrid conditions depicted later in the book.

Chapter II

—

Chapter III

stockyard – an area with pens or other enclosures for temporarily holding cattle, pigs, sheep, and horses before they are slaughtered or shipped; designed by civil engineer Octave Chanute, Chicago's Union Stock Yard and Transit Company opened on Christmas Day in 1865 and contained fifteen miles of railroad track to deliver livestock from the main rail lines to the stockyards. Five hundred thousand gallons of fresh water were pumped daily from the Chicago River into the yards, and waste was drained into a fork of the river called "Bubbly Creek." By 1900, the stockyard had grown to 475 acres and contained 50 miles of road and 130 miles of track.

Chapter IV

—

Vocabulary

absinthe – a strong liquor made from wormwood, which is similar to opium
abstract – theoretical
adulterant – an additive to make something inferior or impure
aggregation – a group; collection
albumen – a protein substance found certain foods
alderman – a member of the municipal council, usually for a particular district or area
altercation – a heated argument
amphitheater – a round or oval building that consists of an arena surrounded by rising rows of seat
aniline dye – a dye made synthetically from coal-tar products
arbitration – the settlement of a dispute by an unbiased person or group chosen to hear both sides of the argument and make a decision
auxiliary – supplementary
axiom –a statement that is universally accepted as true; maxim
badinage – playful talk; banter
balustrade – a railing, such as on a staircase
beef-boner – a worker whose job is to shave meat from a bone with a large knife
beetling – bushy and overhanging
besom – a broom made of twigs tied to a stick
bigamist – a person who has more than one spouse
billet – a small, unfinished piece of steel or iron
bruiser – a boxer; a strong, quarrelsome man
burly – muscular; rough in manner
camaraderie – a feeling of friendship and loyalty between companions
capitalist – a person who supports capitalism; the economic system in which most means of production and distribution are privately owned
caste – a restrictive social class system, usually based on birth or wealth
catechism – a handbook used for teaching religious fundamentals containing a series of questions and answers
charnel house – a building where bodies are deposited, similar to a morgue
cog – a person who is regarded as an unimportant part of the entire machinery of an operation, such as in an industry or business
colloquy – a formal conversation; conference
confederate – a partner; a person involved in an unlawful act or scheme
conspicuous – easy to see; obvious
consumption – a disease that causes the body to waste away, usually tuberculosis