

*The Pearl is a novella by American author John Steinbeck, first published in 1947. This story is about a poor family which are more likely described as native americans, who discovers an enormous and valuable pearl.*

First, there is, as was just suggested, the beauty and power of the narrative itself. One need go no further than simply noting the power, the restraint, and the beauty with which Steinbeck narrates this simple story. The entire book rings with authenticity. As noted above, Steinbeck was thoroughly familiar with his material, and thus the novel, through its narrative and characterization, conveys a sense of the very essence of primitive life with all of its trials and rewards. Second, some critics consider the novel from an ecological point of view. Just before writing this novel, John Steinbeck and his friend Ed Ricketts were exploring the seacoast in terms of the ecological functions of the various organisms that existed there. It was during this exploration that Steinbeck first heard of the story of the "Pearl of the World," a large pearl which was eventually tossed back into the sea from where it was originally taken. When one takes a great pearl from its natural setting, then one is destroying a part of the natural order of things, which could result in some type of disaster. Third, there is the obvious sociological interpretation. In many of his previous novels, Steinbeck was interested in the relationship between the worker and capital. In *Dubious Battle* and *The Grapes of Wrath* both show the plight of the working man at the hands of unscrupulous and evil landowners. Also in this novel, we have a conflict between the simple and naive pearl fishers and the pearl buyers, who use their position to exploit the powerless natives. Likewise, there is the doctor and the priest who have shown no particular concern for the dreadful plight of the natives until there is the rumor about the Pearl of the World. Immediately upon hearing about the pearl, however, the priest begins to think about the repairs in the church that could be attended to with the price of the great pearl. Then, too, there is the obvious level of the parable, or the allegorical or symbolic level of interpretation. The pearl is a pearl of great price. It represents the vanity of human wishes. With the pearl, Kino can do all the things that he has never dared to do before. But then, as Steinbeck writes in the introduction: Yet, Steinbeck reverses this symbol here because his pearl represents evil, and only by casting it away can Kino regain a spiritual sense of well-being. Philosophically, the novel is concerned with life and death and the meaning of both. During the course of the story, a simple family, through no particular fault, is brought to a tragic end. Their pearl is supposed to be used to bring their child out of darkness and into the world of light; he will be able to learn to read and write, and he will then be able to help all of the natives. In conclusion, while reading the novel one can find aspects of the story which will support any of the above interpretations. The greatness of this novel is that at any level, or at all of them, it is a beautiful tale told with wonderful precision and perfect simplicity.

**Chapter 2 : The Pearl: A Journal of Facetiae and Voluptuous Reading.**

*The Pearl, short story by John Steinbeck, published in It is a parable about a Mexican Indian pearl diver named Kino who finds a valuable pearl and is transformed by the evil it attracts.*

Kino awakened in the near dark. The stars still shone and the day had drawn only a pale wash of light in the lower sky to the east. The roosters had been crowing for some time, and the early pigs were already beginning their ceaseless turning of twigs and bits of wood to see whether anything to eat had been overlooked. Outside the brush house in the tuna clump, a covey of little birds chattered and flurried with their wings. And last he turned his head to Juana, his wife, who lay beside him on the mat, her blue head shawl over her nose and over her breasts and around the small of her back. Kino could never remember seeing them closed when he awakened. Her dark eyes made little reflected stars. She was looking at him as she was always looking at him when he awakened. Kino heard the little splash of morning waves on the beach. It was very good- Kino closed his eyes again to listen to his music. Perhaps he alone did this and perhaps all of his people did it. His people had once been great makers of songs so that everything they saw or thought or did or heard became a song. That was very long ago. The songs remained; Kino knew them, but no new songs were added. That does not mean that there were no personal songs. His blanket was over his nose to protect him from the dank air. His eyes flicked to a rustle beside him. It was Juana arising, almost soundlessly. On her hard bare feet she went to the hanging box where Coyotito slept, and she leaned over and said a little reassuring word. Coyotito looked up for a moment and closed his eyes and slept again. Juana went to the fire pit and uncovered a coal and fanned it alive while she broke little pieces over it. Now Kino got up and wrapped his blanket about his head and nose and shoulders. He slipped his feet into his sandals and went outside to watch the dawn. Outside the door he squatted down and gathered the blanket ends about his knees. He saw the specks of Gulf clouds flame high in the air. And a goat came near and sniffed at him and stared with its cold yellow eyes. A late moth blustered in to find the fire. The Song of the Family came now from behind Kino. And the rhythm of the family song was the grinding stone where Juana worked the corn for the morning cakes. The dawn came quickly now, a wash, a glow, a lightness, and then an explosion of fire as the sun arose out of the Gulf. Kino looked down to cover his eyes from the glare. He could hear the pat of the corncakes in the house and the rich smell of them on the cooking plate. The ants were busy on the ground, big black ones with shiny bodies, and little dusty quick ants. Kino watched with the detachment of God while a dusty ant frantically tried to escape the sand trap an ant lion had dug for him. A thin, timid dog came close and, at a soft word from Kino, curled up, arranged its tail neatly over its feet, and laid its chin delicately on the pile. It was a black dog with yellow-gold spots where its eyebrows should have been. It was a morning like other mornings and yet perfect among mornings. Kino heard the creak of the rope when Juana took Coyotito out of his hanging box and cleaned him and hammocked him in her shawl in a loop that placed him close to her breast. Kino could see these things without looking at them. Juana sang softly an ancient song that had only three notes and yet endless variety of interval. And this was part of the family song too. It was all part. Sometimes it rose to an aching chord that caught the throat, saying this is safety, this is warmth, this is the Whole. Across the brush fence were other brush houses, and the smoke came from them too, and the sound of breakfast, but those were other songs, their pigs were other pigs, their wives were not Juana. Kino was young and strong and his black hair hung over his brown forehead. His eyes were warm and fierce and bright and his mustache was thin and coarse. He lowered his blanket from his nose now, for the dark poisonous air was gone and the yellow sunlight fell on the house. Near the brush fence two roosters bowed and fainted at each other with squared wings and neck feathers ruffed out. It would be a clumsy fight. They were not game chickens. Kino watched them for a moment, and then his eyes went up to a flight of wild doves twinkling inland to the hills. The world was awake now, and Kino arose and went into his brush house. As he came through the door Juana stood up from the glowing fire pit. She put Coyotito back in his hanging box and then she combed her black hair and braided it in two braids and tied the ends with thin green ribbon. Kino squatted by the fire pit and rolled a hot corncake and dipped it in sauce and ate it. And he drank a little pulque and that was breakfast. That was the only

breakfast he had ever known outside of feast days and one incredible fiesta on cookies that had nearly killed him. When Kino had finished, Juana came back to the fire and ate her breakfast. They had spoken once, but there is not need for speech if it is only a habit anyway. Kino sighed with satisfaction- and that was conversation. The sun was warming the brush house, breaking through its crevices in long streaks. And one of the streaks fell on the hanging box where Coyotito lay, and on the ropes that held it. It was a tiny movement that drew their eyes to the hanging box. Kino and Juana froze in their positions. His stinging tail was straight out behind him, but he could whip it up in a flash of time. And then the startled look was gone from him and the rigidity from his body. In his mind a new song had come, the Song of Evil, the music of the enemy, of any foe of the family, a savage, secret, dangerous melody, and underneath, the Song of the Family cried plaintively. The scorpion moved delicately down the rope toward the box. Under her breath Juana repeated an ancient magic to guard against such evil, and on top of that she muttered a Hail Mary between clenched teeth. But Kino was in motion. His body glided quietly across the room, noiselessly and smoothly. His hands were in front of him, palms down, and his eyes were on the scorpion. Beneath it in the hanging box Coyotito laughed and reached up his hand toward it. It sensed danger when Kino was almost within reach of it. Kino stood perfectly still. He could hear Juana whispering the old magic again, and he could hear the evil music of the enemy. He could not move until the scorpion moved, and it felt for the source of the death that was coming to it. The thorned tail jerked upright. And at that moment the laughing Coyotito shook the rope and the scorpion fell. Then, snarling, Kino had it, had it in his fingers, rubbing it to a paste in his hands. He threw it down and beat it into the earth floor with his fist, and Coyotito screamed with pain in his box. But Kino beat and stamped the enemy until it was only a fragment and a moist place in the dirt. His teeth were bared and fury flared in his eyes and the Song of the Enemy roared in his ears. But Juana had the baby in her arms now. She found the puncture with redness starting from it already. She put her lips down over the puncture and sucked hard and spat and sucked again while Coyotito screamed. Kino hovered; he was helpless, he was in the way. The screams of the baby brought the neighbors. And those in front passed the word back to those behind- "Scorpion. The baby has been stung. The little hole was slightly enlarged and its edges whitened from the sucking, but the red swelling extended farther around it in a hard lymphatic mound. And all of these people knew about the scorpion. An adult might be very ill from the sting, but a baby could easily die from the poison. First, they knew, would come swelling and fever and tightened throat, and then cramps in the stomach, and then Coyotito might die if enough of the poison had gone in. But the stinging pain of the bite was going away. Kino had wondered often at the iron in his patient, fragile wife. She, who was obedient and respectful and cheerful and patient, she could arch her back in child pain with hardly a cry. She could stand fatigue and hunger almost better than Kino himself. In the canoe she was like a strong man.

### Chapter 3 : The Pearl (Audiobook) by John Steinbeck | [blog.quintoapp.com](http://blog.quintoapp.com)

*The Pearl Story Book: Stories & Legends of Winter, Christmas & New Year's day [Ada Maria Skinner, Eleanor Louise Skinner] on [blog.quintoapp.com](http://blog.quintoapp.com) \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. This is a pre historical reproduction that was curated for quality.*

He has been characterized variously as an advocate of socialist-style solutions to the depredations of capitalism, a champion of individualism, a dabbler in sociobiology, and a naturalist. But in this epic novel, as well as in *Of Mice and Men* and *The Pearl*, Steinbeck seems to question whether the mysteries of human existence can ever be fully explained. In these works that span the grim decade from to , Steinbeck urges the dispossessed to challenge a system that denies them both sustenance and dignity, and to seek the spiritual belonging that enables individuals to achieve their full humanity. So we have the paradox of the author apparently denouncing injustice while also exalting acceptance of the sorrows visited on humanity, whether those sorrows are wrought by nature or by humans themselves. All three books examine the morality and necessity of actions the characters choose as they pursue their dreams. The poor fisherman Kino in *The Pearl* dreams of education for his son and salvation for his people. We first meet him in the dimness before dawn, listening to the sounds of his wife, Juana, at her chores, which merge in his mind with the ancestral Song of the Family. As the dream turns dark, Kino descends into violence, bringing death to four men and ultimately to his own son. What other choices might he have made? This parable raises questions about our relationship to nature, the human need for spiritual connection, and the cost of resisting injustice. On their journey to the promised land, the characters in *The Grapes of Wrath* confront enigmatic natural forces and dehumanizing social institutions. Casy is martyred as he takes a stand for farmers who have lost their land to drought and are brutally exploited as migrant laborers. *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Pearl* are also linked by their female characters and the questions they raise about gender roles and family identity. Is this quality most responsible for the return of the pearl to the sea at the end of the novel? This final scene of female nurturing offers a resolution while also disturbing our long-held ideas about family. Steinbeck departs from this depiction of women in *Of Mice and Men*. *Of Mice and Men* tells a tightly compressed story set during the Great Depression. Lennie has a massive body and limited intelligence, and his unpredictable behavior casts George as his protector. The novel is peopled with outcasts—a black man, a cripple, a lonely woman. Nearly all the characters share in some version of the dream, recited almost ritualistically, and in their narrow world it is pitifully small: In *Of Mice and Men*, he seems to appeal to a higher form of wisdom in the character of Slim, who does not aspire to anything beyond the sphere he occupies. From the questions his characters pose about what it means to be fully human, Steinbeck may be understood to charge literature with serving not only as a call to action, but as an expression and acceptance of paradox in our world. In addition to his novels, Steinbeck produced newspaper and travel articles, short stories, plays, and film scripts. Born in in Salinas, California, Steinbeck spent much of his life in surrounding Monterey county, the setting for some of his books. His experience as a young man working menial jobs, including as a farm laborer, ranch hand, and factory worker, was transformed into descriptions of the lives of his working-class characters. After attending Stanford University intermittently for six years, Steinbeck traveled by freighter to New York, where he worked briefly as a journalist before returning to California. *Of Mice and Men* was also well received. *The Grapes of Wrath* , a book many claim is his masterpiece, was both critically acclaimed and denounced for its strong language and apparent leftist politics. Always shunning publicity, Steinbeck headed for Mexico in , where he made *The Forgotten Village*, a documentary film about conditions in rural Mexico. He also wrote a memoir of a cross-country trip with his poodle, *Travels with Charley in Search of America* Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize for Literature in He died in New York in Why could Kino kill the doctor more easily than talk to him? Why is it important to Juana that Kino be the one to throw the pearl back into the sea? Why does Kino think the killing of a man is not as evil as the killing of a boat? Why does the music of the pearl change? Why does Kino come to feel that he will lose his soul if he gives up the pearl? Why does Steinbeck choose the parable as the form for this story?

## Chapter 4 : The Pearl Book Review

*The Pearl Story Book Stories and Legends of Winter, Christmas, and New Year's Day by Ada M. Skinner Stories and Legends of Winter, Christmas, and New Year's Day by Ada M. Skinner and Eleanor L. Skinner.*

Pearls, by contrast, are a consequence of imperfection - possibly of pain or discomfort. But from the irritation caused by stray sand, rare transfixing beauty can occur. Unlike gold and diamonds, a pearl needs no finishing, and yet its allure arises from its imperfections: But wherein lies the greater danger: Wealth brings power, and power tends to corrupt. The possession possesses him. Ultimately, this is a story of sacrifice - specifically, of choosing what and when to surrender. Make the wrong choice, and you risk losing everything. Story in Song The people of the Gulf of California had songs for everything, though maybe only Kino hears them now. The story is encapsulated in the evolving sequence of songs minor spoilers implied: Kino and Juana blend belief systems: Transfiguration is not always for the better. And the Moral Is Unlike a traditional parable or morality tale, there is no explicit teaching point, not even a clear ending. Just a new, stark, and very uncertain beginning. Licensed under CC By 2. The Bible was certainly part of his heritage, but broader, non-sectarian social justice permeates his works. Of particular relevance to this novella: Its warm luence promised a poultice against illness and a wall against insult. It closed a door on hunger. This is how we walk and talk and function

**Chapter 5 : The Pearl (novel) - Wikipedia**

*The Pearl by John Steinbeck "In the town they tell the story of the great pearl - how it was found and how it was lost again. They tell of Kino, the fisherman, and of his wife, Juana, and of the baby, Coyotito.*

Please use the follow button to get notification about the latest chapter next time when you visit LightNovelFree. Use F11 button to read novel in full-screen PC only. Drop by anytime you want to read free "fast" latest novel. Part 28 But before he had opened his wings a third drop fell, and he looked up, and saw--Ah! The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears, and tears were running down his golden cheeks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little Swallow was filled with pity. In the daytime I played with my companions in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden ran a very lofty wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it, everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and happy, indeed, I was, if pleasure be happiness. So I lived, and so I died. And now that I am dead they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead, yet I cannot choose but weep. He was too polite to make any personal remarks out loud. One of the windows is open, and through it I can see a woman seated at a table. Her face is thin and worn, and she has coa. She is embroidering pa. In a bed in the corner of the room her little boy is lying ill. He has a fever, and is asking for oranges. His mother has nothing to give him but water, so he is crying. Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not bring her the ruby out of my sword-hilt? My feet are fastened to this pedestal and I cannot move. Soon they will go to sleep in the tomb of the great King. The King is there himself in his painted coffin. He is wrapped in yellow linen and embalmed with spices. Round his neck is a chain of pale green jade, and his hands are like withered leaves. The boy is so thirsty and the mother so sad. They never hit me, of course; we swallows fly far too well for that, and, besides, I come of a family famous for its agility; but still, it was a mark of disrespect. A beautiful girl came out on the balcony with her lover. At last he came to the poor house and looked in. The boy was tossing feverishly on his bed, and the mother had fallen asleep, she was so tired. Then the Swallow flew back to the Happy Prince, and told him what he had done. And the little Swallow began to think, and then he fell asleep. Thinking always made him sleepy. When day broke he flew down to the river and had a bath. Everyone quoted it; it was full of so many words that they could not understand. He visited all the public monuments, and sat a long time on top of the church steeple. Wherever he went, Sparrows chirruped, and said to each other, "What a distinguished stranger! When the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince. The river-horse couches there among the bulrushes, and on a great granite throne sits the G. All night long he watches the stars, and when the morning star s. They have eyes like green beryls, and their roar is louder than the roar of the cataract. He is leaning over a desk covered with papers, and in a tumbler by his side there is a bunch of withered violets. His hair is brown and crisp, and his lips are red as pomegranate, and he has large and dreamy eyes. He is trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theater, but he is too cold to write any more. There is no fire in the grate, and hunger has made him faint. I have no ruby now," said the Prince; "my eyes are all that I have left. They are made of rare sapphires, which were brought out of India a thousand years ago. He will sell it to the jeweller, and buy food and firewood, and finish his play. It was easy enough to get in, as there was a hole in the roof. Through this he darted, and came into the room. Now I can finish my play," and he looked quite happy. The next day the Swallow flew down to the harbour. He sat on the mast of a large vessel and watched the sailors hauling big chests out of the hold with ropes. In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palm-trees, and the crocodiles lie in the mud and look lazily about them. My companions are building a nest in the Temple of Baalbec, and the pink and white doves are watching them, and cooing to each other. Dear Prince, I must leave you, but I will never forget you, and next spring I will bring you back two beautiful jewels in place of those you have given away. The ruby shall be redder than a rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea. She has let her matches fall in the gutter, and they are all spoiled. Her father will beat her if she does not bring home some money, and she is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare. Pluck out my other eye, and give it to her, and her father will not beat her. You would be quite blind then. He swooped past the

match-girl, and slipped the jewel into the palm of her hand. Then the Swallow came back to the Prince. He told him of the red ibises, who stand in long rows on the banks of the Nile and catch gold-fish in their beaks; of the Sphinx, who is as old as the world itself, and lives in the desert, and knows everything; of the merchants, who walk slowly by the side of their camels, and carry amber beads in their hands; of the King of the Mountains of the moon, who is as black as ebony, and wors. There is no Mystery so great as Misery. Fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there. He flew into the dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out listlessly at the black streets. Then he flew back and told the Prince what he had seen.

*THE PEARL STORY BOOK (non illustrated) and millions of other books are available for Amazon Kindle. Learn more Enter your mobile number or email address below and we'll send you a link to download the free Kindle App.*

Their lives seem rather peaceful, but their tranquility is threatened when a scorpion bites Coyotito. Juana tells Kino to go to town and get the doctor, but Kino and their neighbors tell Juana that the doctor will never come to where they live, so Juana decides to take matters into her own hands and sets off with Coyotito to the doctor. Kino accompanies Juana, and many members of the village follow them to see what will happen. As Kino is collecting oysters on the ocean bottom, he spots a larger-than-usual oyster, collects it, and returns to the canoe. Kino is immensely happy about both the pearl and Coyotito and yells loudly enough that he attracts the attention of the other oyster divers, who race toward his canoe. Before Kino reaches home with his great pearl, the news of his discovery has already reached his village and the town. Everyone fantasizes what he or she would do with the wealth that the pearl represents, including the doctor, who previously refused to help Coyotito but now says that the baby is a patient of his. The doctor visits Kino and Juana and tricks them into allowing him to treat Coyotito even though Kino knows that Coyotito is already cured; in fact what the doctor has done is to make Coyotito sick so that the doctor can then cure the baby and get paid more. Coyotito indeed does get sick, and the doctor returns and gives the baby a different medicine that "cures" the baby. When the doctor asks Kino for payment, Kino says that his plan is to sell the pearl the next day. The doctor offers to keep the pearl for Kino, and Kino refuses the request, but the doctor tricks Kino into revealing where Kino has hidden the pearl. That night, Kino hears someone in the hut, draws his knife and strikes out at the figure and draws blood, but is hit over the head with a heavy object. Juana senses that the pearl is evil and begs Kino to throw the pearl back into the sea, but Kino refuses, believing still that the pearl will give them better lives than they have. On the day that Kino is to sell the pearl, the other divers do not go diving. Kino and Juana begin the trip to the pearl buyers, followed by the entire village. The first pearl buyer to whom Kino offers to sell the pearl offers Kino a small amount of money for the pearl, saying that the pearl is too big and no one else will buy it. He sends word to the other pearl buyers in town to come to his office and appraise the pearl. Kino, realizing that the pearl buyers are working together to get the pearl for the least amount of money, says that he will go to the capital to sell his pearl. The first pearl buyer raises his offer to buy the pearl, but it is too late; Kino leaves. That night, Kino hears noises outside the hut and goes outside to check on what is making the noise. He resolves to sell the pearl in the capital. Later, Juana rises in the dark, takes the pearl from the hut, and goes to the beach. Kino follows her and catches up with her at the beach just as she is ready to throw the pearl into the water. He hits her and saves the pearl from going into the water, but he is then attacked by some figures he cannot identify. The pearl is knocked from his hands, but he is able to stab one of his assailants before he is knocked unconscious. Juana regains consciousness and finds Kino lying unconscious, a dead stranger next to him. When Kino regains consciousness, Juana returns the pearl to him from where she found it lying behind a rock and tells him that they must flee the village because he has killed a man. Juana leaves to gather their belongings; Kino goes to check on their canoe and finds that a large hole has been smashed into its bottom. As they approach their hut, they see it burning in flames. Kino continues to believe that the pearl is not something evil but instead offers a more promising future for him and his family. Kino, Juana, and Coyotito leave their village and head toward Loreto. Because they are traveling at night, the next dawn they conceal themselves and settle down for the day. Juana and Coyotito fall asleep, and soon Kino does too. He is suddenly awakened by noises, creeps out from where they are hiding, and sees trackers who are following them. Once the trackers pass by the hiding place, Kino and his family head toward high mountains. When they reach the first rise of the mountains, Kino tries to convince Juana to hide with Coyotito while he leads the trackers away, but she refuses so they head higher up the mountains to where Kino finds a stream. There, Kino hides Juana and Coyotito in a small cave and makes false tracks up the side of the mountain, hoping to mislead the trackers; he then hides in the cave with his family. The trackers arrive at the spring and make camp for the night. Kino, realizing that the trackers will discover them in the morning, vows to attack the

trackers before the trackers attack he and his family. The third tracker scrambles away from Kino, but Kino shoots and kills this tracker as well. He then notices how quiet the night is. Later that day late in the afternoon, Kino and Juana walk side by side into town, with Juana carrying a bundle that contains the dead Coyotito. People watch in silence as the two walk silently, as in a trance. Kino and Juana reach the beach, where Kino offers the pearl to Juana to throw it in the sea. She refuses, telling Kino that he should be the one. He cocks his arm and throws the pearl as far out into the sea as he can; it sinks to the sandy bottom among the water plants.

### Chapter 7 : The Pearl by John Steinbeck

*A story of classic simplicity, based on a Mexican folk tale, The Pearl explores the secrets of man's nature, the darkest depths of evil, and the luminous possibilities of love. Preview this book » What people are saying - Write a review.*

His sufferings begin when he witnesses a scorpion sting his beloved son, Coyotito, as the child lies happily in his cradle. Though she has made a better poultice of seaweed than the doctor could, she still feels the need for his magic and wants the wherewithal to force him to attend her baby. He imagines being married now that they can pay for the service. He pictures a new harpoon and then dares imagine possessing a rifle. That last image is so defiant that he goes even further: Even the priest comes to express his hope that Kino will not forget the Church. The doctor also tricks Kino into revealing the place where he has hidden the pearl, and that night either he or his henchman returns to steal it. In defending his home, Kino draws his first blood. The pearl brokers, acting together because they actually are agents for a single dealer, offer him a pittance. Kino refuses to sell and announces that he will take the pearl to Mexico City instead. His family—his brother, his sister-in-law, and his wife—stick by him, but they are worried. He does not yet recognize the reversal his fortunes have taken. The third day begins with Juana stealing the pearl and trying to throw it back into the gulf in order to avert the evil she senses is bearing down on her family. Kino stops her, but as he returns from the shore, he is attacked. Dropping the pearl, he slays his assailant. Juana finds the gem and submissively returns it to her man; she also urges him to flee to save himself from certain arrest. They go to get their canoe and find that someone has knocked a hole in its bottom. That night, the three head into the Sierra de la Giganta, planning to go to Loreto, a gulf town to the north, but trackers quickly find their trail. By the evening of the fourth day, Kino and his family are holed up in a cave while the trackers camp in the mountain cleft below them. Kino leaps too late. Late in the afternoon of the fifth day, the two return to La Paz, carrying their dead child. They walk straight through the town to the gulf shore. There Kino pulls out the great pearl and offers it to Juana, but she declines, and it is he who returns the pearl to the sea.

**Chapter 8 : About The Pearl**

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The town lay on a broad estuary, its old yellow plastered buildings hugging the beach. And on the beach the white and blue canoes that came from Nayarit were drawn up, canoes preserved for generations by a hard shell-like waterproof plaster whose making was a secret of the fishing people. They were high and graceful canoes with curving bow and stern and a braced section midships where a mast could be stepped to carry a small lateen sail. Fiddler crabs bubbled and sputtered in their holes in the sand, and in the shallows little lobsters popped in and out of their tiny homes in the rubble and sand. The sea bottom was rich with crawling and swimming and growing things. The brown algae waved in the gentle currents and the green eel grass swayed and little sea horses clung to its stems. Spotted botete, the poison fish, lay on the bottom in the eel-grass beds, and the bright-colored swimming crabs scampered over them. On the beach the hungry dogs and the hungry pigs of the town searched endlessly for any dead fish or sea bird that might have floated in on a rising tide. Although the morning was young, the hazy mirage was up. The uncertain air that magnified some things and blotted out others hung over the whole Gulf so that all sights were unreal and vision could not be trusted; so that sea and land had the sharp clarities and the vagueness of a dream. Thus it might be that the people of the Gulf trust things of the spirit and things of the imagination, but they do not trust their eyes to show them distance or clear outline or any optical exactness. Across the estuary from the town one section of mangroves stood clear and telescopically defined, while another mangrove clump was a hazy black-green blob. Part of the far shore disappeared into a shimmer that looked like water. There was no certainty in seeing, no proof that what you saw was there or was not there. And the people of the Gulf expected all places were that way, and it was not strange to them. A copper haze hung over the water, and the hot morning sun beat on it and made it vibrate blindingly. The brush houses of the fishing people were back from the beach on the right-hand side of the town, and the canoes were drawn up in front of this area. It was very old. It was at once property and source of food, for a man with a boat can guarantee a woman that she will eat something. It is the bulwark against starvation. And every year Kino refinished his canoe with the hard shell-like plaster by the secret method that had also come to him from his father. Now he came to the canoe and touched the bow tenderly as he always did. He laid his diving rock and his basket and the two ropes in the sand by the canoe. And he folded his blanket and laid it in the bow. Juana laid Coyotito on the blanket, and she placed her shawl over him so that the hot sun could not shine on him. He was quiet now, but the swelling on his shoulder had continued up his neck and under his ear and his face was puffed and feverish. Juana went to the water and waded in. The stomach cramps had not come to Coyotito. Perhaps Juana had sucked out the poison in time, but she had not sucked out her worry over her first-born. She had not prayed directly for the recovery of the baby- she had prayed that they might find a pearl with which to hire the doctor to cure the baby, for the minds of people are as unsubstantial as the mirage of the Gulf. Now Kino and Juana slid the canoe down the beach to the water, and when the bow floated, Juana climbed in, while Kino pushed the stern in and waded beside it until it floated lightly and trembled on the little breaking waves. Then in coordination Juana and Kino drove their double-bladed paddles into the sea, and the canoe creased the water and hissed with speed. The other pearl-ers were gone out long since. In a few moments Kino could see them clustered in the haze, riding over the oyster bed. Light filtered down through the water to the bed where the frilly pearl oysters lay fastened to the rubbly bottom, a bottom strewn with shells of broken, opened oysters. The gray oysters with ruffles like skirts on the shells, the barnacle-crust-ed oysters with little bits of weed clinging to the skirts and small crabs climbing over them. An accident could happen to these oysters, a grain of sand could lie in the folds of muscle and irritate the flesh until in self-protection the flesh coated the grain with a layer of smooth cement. But once started, the flesh continued to coat the foreign body until it fell free in some tidal flurry or until the oyster was destroyed. For centuries men had dived down and torn the oysters from the beds and ripped them open, looking for the coated grains of sand. Swarms of fish lived near the bed to live near the oysters thrown back by

the searching men and to nibble at the shining inner shells. But the pearls were accidents, and the finding of one was luck, a little pat on the back by God or the gods or both. Kino had two ropes, one tied to a heavy stone and one to a basket. He stripped off his shirt and trousers and laid his hat in the bottom of the canoe. The water was oily smooth. He took his rock in one hand and his basket in the other, and he slipped feet first over the side and the rock carried him to the bottom. The bubbles rose behind him until the water cleared and he could see. Above, the surface of the water was an undulating mirror of brightness, and he could see the bottoms of the canoes sticking through it. Kino moved cautiously so that the water would not be obscured with mud or sand. He hooked his foot in the loop on his rock and his hands worked quickly, tearing the oysters loose, some singly, others in clusters. He laid them in his basket. In some places the oysters clung to one another so that they came free in lumps. They had made songs to the fishes, to the sea in anger and to the sea in calm, to the light and the dark and the sun and the moon, and the songs were all in Kino and in his people- every song that had ever been made, even the ones forgotten. And as he filled his basket the song was in Kino, and the beat of the song was his pounding heart as it ate the oxygen from his held breath, and the melody of the song was the gray- green water and the little scuttling animals and the clouds of fish that flitted by and were gone. But in the song there was a secret little inner song, hardly perceptible, but always there, sweet and secret and clinging, almost hiding in the counter-melody, and this was the Song of the Pearl That Might Be, for every shell thrown in the basket might contain a pearl. Chance was against it, but luck and the gods might be for it. And because the need was great and the desire was great, the little secret melody of the pearl that might be was stronger this morning. Whole phrases of it came clearly and softly into the Song of the Undersea. Kino, in his pride and youth and strength, could remain down over two minutes without strain, so that he worked deliberately, selecting the largest shells. Because they were disturbed, the oyster shells were tightly closed. A little to his right a hummock of rubbly rock stuck up, covered with young oysters not ready to take. Kino moved next to the hummock, and then, beside it, under a little overhang, he saw a very large oyster lying by itself, not covered with its clinging brothers. The shell was partly open, for the overhang protected this ancient oyster, and in the lip-like muscle Kino saw a ghostly gleam, and then the shell closed down. His heart beat out a heavy rhythm and the melody of the maybe pearl shrilled in his ears. Slowly he forced the oyster loose and held it tightly against his breast. He kicked his foot free from the rock loop, and his body rose to the surface and his black hair gleamed in the sunlight. He reached over the side of the canoe and laid the oyster in the bottom. Then Juana steadied the boat while he climbed in. His eyes were shining with excitement, but in decency he pulled up his rock, and then he pulled up his basket of oysters and lifted them in. Juana sensed his excitement, and she pretended to look away. It is not good to want a thing too much. It sometimes drives the luck away. You must want it just enough, and you must be very tactful with God or the gods. But Juana stopped breathing. Very deliberately Kino opened his short strong knife. He looked speculatively at the basket. Perhaps it would be better to open the oyster last. He took a small oyster from the basket, cut the muscle, searched the folds of flesh, and threw it in the water. Then he seemed to see the great oyster for the first time. He squatted in the bottom of the canoe, picked up the shell and examined it. The flutes were shining black to brown, and only a few small barnacles adhered to the shell. Now Kino was reluctant to open it. What he had seen, he knew, might be a reflection, a piece of flat shell accidentally drifted in or a complete illusion. In this Gulf of uncertain light there were more illusions than realities. Kino deftly slipped his knife into the edge of the shell. Through the knife he could feel the muscle tighten hard. He worked the blade lever- wise and the closing muscle parted and the shell fell apart. The lip- like flesh writhed up and then subsided. Kino lifted the flesh, and there it lay, the great pearl, perfect as the moon. It captured the light and refined it and gave it back in silver incandescence. It was the greatest pearl in the world. Juana caught her breath and moaned a little. And to Kino the secret melody of the maybe pearl broke clear and beautiful, rich and warm and lovely, glowing and gloating and triumphant. In the surface of the great pearl he could see dream forms. He picked the pearl from the dying flesh and held it in his palm, and he turned it over and saw that its curve was perfect. She lifted the poultice of seaweed and looked at the shoulder. He put back his head and howled. His eyes rolled up and he screamed and his body was rigid.

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*"In the town they tell the story of the great pearl- how it was found and how it was lost again. They tell of Kino, the fisherman, and of his wife, Juana, and of the baby, Coyotito.*

One morning, calamity strikes when a scorpion stings Coyotito. Hoping to protect their son, Kino and Juana rush him to the doctor in town. Later that same morning, Kino and Juana take their family canoe, an heirloom, out to the estuary to go diving for pearls. Kino lets out a triumphant yell at his good fortune, prompting the surrounding boats to circle in and examine the treasure. Kino names a list of things that he will secure for his family with his newfound wealth, including a church wedding and an education for his son. Toward evening, the local priest visits Kino to bless him in his good fortune and to remind him of his place within the church. Shortly thereafter, the doctor arrives, explaining that he was out in the morning but has come now to cure Coyotito. He administers a powdered capsule and promises to return in an hour. In the intervening period, Coyotito grows violently ill, and Kino decides to bury the pearl under the floor in a corner of the brush house. The doctor returns and feeds Coyotito a potion to quiet his spasms. When the doctor inquires about payment, Kino explains that soon he will sell his large pearl and inadvertently glances toward the corner where he has hidden the pearl. This mention of the pearl greatly intrigues the doctor, and Kino is left with an uneasy feeling. Before going to bed, Kino reburies the pearl under his sleeping mat. That night, he is roused by an intruder digging around in the corner. Terribly upset by this turn of events, Juana proposes that they abandon the pearl, which she considers an agent of evil. The next morning, Kino and Juana make their way to town to sell the pearl. Indeed, all of the dealers conspire to bid low on the pearl. Kino indignantly refuses to accept their offers, resolving instead to take his pearl to the capital. Kino silences her, explaining that he is a man and will take care of things. In the middle of the night, Juana steals away with the pearl. Kino wakes as she leaves and pursues her, apprehending her just as she is poised to throw the pearl into the sea. He tackles her, takes the pearl back, and beats her violently, leaving her in a crumpled heap on the beach. As he returns to the brush house, a group of hostile men confronts him and tries to take the pearl from him. He fights the men off, killing one and causing the rest to flee, but drops the pearl in the process. As Juana ascends from the shore to the brush house, she finds the pearl lying in the path. Just beyond, she sees Kino on the ground, next to the dead man. He bemoans the loss of the pearl, which she presents to him. Though Kino explains that he had no intention to kill, Juana insists that he will be labeled a murderer. They resolve to flee at once. Kino rushes back to the shore to prepare the canoe, while Juana returns home to gather Coyotito and their belongings. Kino arrives at the shore and finds his canoe destroyed by vandals. When he climbs the hill, he sees a fire blazing, and realizes that his house has burned down. At nightfall, Kino, Juana, and Coyotito set out for the capital. Skirting the town, they travel north until sunrise and then take covert shelter by the roadside. They sleep for most of the day and are preparing to set out again when Kino discovers that three trackers are following them. After hesitating briefly, Kino decides that they must hurry up the mountain, in hopes of eluding the trackers. A breathless ascent brings them to a water source, where they rest and take shelter in a nearby cave. Kino attempts to mislead the trackers by creating a false trail up the mountain. Kino, Juana, and Coyotito then hide in the cave and wait for an opportunity to escape back down the mountain. The trackers are slow in their pursuit and finally arrive at the watering hole at dusk. They make camp nearby, and two of the trackers sleep while the third stands watch. Kino decides that he must attempt to attack them before the late moon rises. He strips naked to avoid being seen and sneaks up to striking distance. Just as Kino prepares to attack, Coyotito lets out a cry, waking the sleepers. When one of them fires his rifle in the direction of the cry, Kino makes his move, killing the trackers in a violent fury. In the aftermath, Kino slowly realizes that the rifle shot struck and killed his son in the cave. The next day, Kino and Juana make their way back through town and the outlying brush houses. Juana carries her dead son slung over her shoulder. They walk all the way to the sea, as onlookers watch in silent fascination. At the shore, Kino pulls the pearl out of his clothing and takes one last, hard look at it. Then, with all his might, under a setting sun, he flings the pearl back into the sea.