

## The Grapes of Wrath in Twenty Minutes or so....

1. Tom Joad returns from prison, where he was serving time for manslaughter, to his family's Oklahoma farm and finds the house abandoned. Muley, his half-crazed neighbor, tells Tom about the recent dispossession of the sharecroppers, who have been driven out by drought and the greedy land companies

**Muley:** *When'd you get out Tommy?*

**Tom:** *Two days ago. Took a little time to hitchhike home. An' look here's what I find. Where's my folks Muley?...What happened here?*

**Muley:** *Well, your folks was gonna stick her out when the bank came to tractorin' off the place. Bumped the hell outa the house, an give her a shake like a dog shakes a rat.*

**Casy:** *Why they kickin' folks off the lan?*

**Muley:** *Bank can't afford to keep no tenants. Them sons-a-bitches. Them dirty sons-a-bitches. I tell ya, man, I'm staying. They aint getting rid of me. Nobody gonna push me off my land! My grandpa took up this land years ago! My pa was born here. We was all born on it! And some of us was killed on it! And some of us... died on it.*

2. Tom finally locates his family as they are about to pack their belongings on a dilapidated truck and head West, lured by promises of work and high wages in California.

**Ma:** *Tom, I hope things is all right in California*

**Tom:** *What makes you think they ain't?*

**MA:** *Well-nothing. Seems too nice, kinda. I seen the han'bills fellas pass out, an how much work they is, an' high wages an' all; an I seen in the paper how they want folks to come and pick grapes an' oranges an' peaches. I'm scared of stuff so nice. I ain't got faith.*

3. Joined by their friend Casy, a former "fire and brimstone" preacher, the Joads begin their long trek west on Route 66.

**Casy:** *I wonder if I kin go along with you folks?...I went over and looked an' the houses is all empty and the lan' is empty, an' this whole country is empty. I can't stay here no more. I – I got to go where the folks is goin'.*

**PA:** *Kin we feed a extra mouth? Kin we Ma?*

**MA:** *(firmly) It ain't kin we! It's will we? As far as 'kin' we can't do nothin', not go to California, or nothing but as far as 'will' I never heard tell of no Joads, neither ever refusin' food an' shelter or a lift on the road to anybody that asked. They's been mean Joads, but never that mean.*

**PA:** *But s'pose there just ain't room? S'pose we jus' can't all get in the truck?*

**MA:** *There ain't room now. There ain't room for more'n six, an twelve is goin' sure. One more ain't gonna hurt.*

4. Going west on Route 66, the Joad family discovers that the road is saturated with other families making the same trek, ensnared by the same promise. In makeshift camps, they hear many stories from others, some coming back from California, and are forced to confront the possibility that their prospects may not be what they hoped. Along the road, Grampa dies and is buried in the camp.

**PA:** *This here is William James Joad. Died of a stroke, old, old man. His folks buried him because they got no money to pay for funerals. Nobody killed him. Just a stroke and he died. Would you say a few words, Casy?*

**Casy:** *I ain't a preacher no more, you know.*

**PA:** *We know, but ain't none of our folks ever been buried without a few words.*

**Casy:** *I'll say 'em, make it short. This here old man just... lived a life and just died out of it. I don't know whether he was good or bad. It don't matter much. Heard a fella say a poem once. And he says, "All that lives is holy." Well, I wouldn't pray just for an old man that's dead, cos he's all right. If I was to pray, I'd pray for folks that's alive and don't know which way to turn. Grandpa here... he ain't got no more trouble like that. He's got his job all cut out for him, so cover him up and let him get to it.*

5. Their hopes for a bright future are dimmed when a man at a roadside camp warns of no work in California, but the family continues on.

**PA:** *But it don't make sense!*

**MAN GOING BACK:** *Not till you see the fella that put out this here bill. ...an if you got nothing lef' to eat. He says, 'wanna job?' An' you'll say, "I sure do mister. I'll sure thank you for a chance to do some work..an' then he'll go on. Maybe he needs two hunderd men, so he talks to five hundred, an they tell other folks and then they's a thousand men. This her fella says: "I'm payin' twenty cents an hour. An' maybe half the men walk off. But they's still five huderd that's so goddam hungry they'll work for nothin' but biscuits.*

**CAMP PROPRIATOR:** *You sure you ain't one of these here troublemakers? You sure you ain't a labour faker? Time's going to come when we string 'em all up, all them troublemakers. We gonna run them out the country.*

6. As the Joads cross the great California desert, Grandma dies, and the remainder of the family emerges from the desert to find no jobs and hoards of starving migrants.

*And the dispossessed, the migrants, flowed into California, two hundred*

*and fifty thousand, and three hundred thousand...*

*And new waves were on the way, new waves of the dispossessed and the homeless, hardened, intent, and dangerous.*

*And a homeless hungry man, driving the roads with his wife beside him and his thin children in the back seat..could know how a fallow field is a sin and the unused land a crime against the thin children.*

*And in the south he saw the golden oranges hanging on the trees, the little golden oranges on the dark green trees; and guards with shotguns patrolling the lines so a man might not pick an orange for a thin child, oranges to be dumped if the price was low.*

7. Poverty and desperation begin to break apart the family as the husband of heavily pregnant daughter Rosasharn leaves her.

**Tom:** *Them peaches got to be picked right now, don't they? Jus' when they're ripe?*

**Floyd:** *Course they do*

**Tom:** *Well, s'pose them people got together and says "let 'em rot" Wouldn't be long before the price went up, by god*

**Floyd:** *Folks figgered that out. An' the folks with the peach orchard figgered her out too. Look, if the folks get together, they's a leader – got to be – fella that does the talkin'. Well, first time this fella opens his mouth they grab 'im and stick 'in in jail....How'd you like to be in an your kids starvin' to death?*

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**Rosasharn:** *You're going to study nights 'bout radios. Ain't you?*

**Connie:** *Yeah, sure. Soon's I get on my feet. Get a little money*

8. Despite rumors of labor violence, the family nonetheless hits the road once again.

*In the morning the tents came down, the canvas was folded, the tent poles tied along the running board, the beds put in place on the cars, the pots in their places.*

*And as the cars moved westward, each member of the family grew into his proper place, grew into his duties; so that each member, old and young, had his place in the car; so that in the weary, hot evenings, when the cars pulled into the camping places, each member had his duty and went to it without instruction:*

*Children to gather wood, to carry water; men to pitch the tents and bring down the beds; women to cook the supper and to watch while the family fed. And this was done without command.*

9. The Joads and the other Okie migrants are hounded by the law and the local citizenry.

*(A MAN appears. On his leather jacket is pinned a star of the Deputy Sheriff. A heavy pistol holster hangs in his belt. He moves through the crowd.)*

**Contractor:** *Ever seen this guy before Joe?... He's talking red, agitating trouble.*

**Deputy:** *Seems like I have. Las' week when that used-car lot was busted into . Seems like I seen this fella hangin' aroun'. Yep! I'd swear it's the same fella. You come on.*

*(He unhooks the strap that covers the butt of his automatic)*

*"How can you frighten a man whose hunger is not only in his own cramped stomach but in the wretched bellies of his children? You can't scare him – he has known a fear beyond every other"*

10. (this section comes after 11 in the film) A gleam of hope is presented at Weedpatch Camp, one of the clean, utility-supplied camps operated by the Resettlement Administration, a New Deal agency that has been established to help the migrants, but there is not enough money and space to care for all of the needy.

**Weedpatch Camp Director:** *The camp site costs a dollar a week, but you can work it out, carrying garbage, keeping the camp clean – stuff like that.*

**TOM:** *Cops?*

**WCD:** *No cops, We got our own cops. Folks here elects a committee that makes the laws. What they say goes.*

**TOM:** *You mean to say fellas that runs the camp is jus' fellas – campin' here?*

**WCD:** *Sure and it works.*

**TOM:** *You mean they ain't no cops?*

**WCD:** *No, sir. No cop come in here without a warrant.*

**TOM:** *God almighty. I can't hardly believe it! Last night them deputies burned the camp over by the river.*

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*PA: We're a-getting' out in the morning. Thought we'd go north a little. Fella came by las' night says there might be work pickin' peaches. We ain't had work. We're outa food. Folks been so nice here, and we had a bath ever' day. Never been so clean in my life. We hate to go, but there ain't no work.*

11. Although the conditions in the camp are good there is no work so the Joads move on with the promise of work on a peach farm where the fruit is ripening. The Joads find work as strikebreakers.

*(The light changes suddenly and the crowd becomes animated, yelling and taunting as men with rifles lead the JOADS into position behind the iron fence)*

**Bookkeeper:** *Want to work?*

**Tom:** *Sure, what is this? All this commotion.*

**Bookkeeper:** *That's not your affair? Want to work?*

**Tom:** *Sure we do*

**Bookkeeper:** *Name?*

**Tom:** *Joad*

**Bookkeeper:** *How many men?*

**Tom:** *Four*

**Bookkeeper:** *Women?*

**Tom:** *Two*

**Bookkeeper:** *Kids?*

**Tom:** *Two.*

**Bookkeeper:** *Can all of you work?*

**Tom:** *Why - I guess so*

**Bookkeeper:** *OK. Find house sixty-three. Wages five cents a box. No bruised fruit. Go to work first thing in the morning*

12. Casy warns Tom that strikebreaking will only drive down wages, and when a deputy murders Casy for his labor organizing, Tom fights back and kills the deputy.

**Casy:** *Look, Tom. We come to work there. They say its gonna be fi' cents. They was a hell of a lot of us. We got there an' they says they're paying two and an' a half cents. A fella can't eat on that..so we says we won't take it. So they druv us off. An' all the cops in the world came down on us. Now they're paying you five. When they bust this here strike – ya think they'll pay five?*

**Tom:** *I dunno. Payin' five now.*

**Casy:** *They druv us like pigs. Scattered us. Beat the hell outa fellas. Druv us like pigs. We can las much longer. Some people ain't et for two days.*

**First man with club:** *Shut up, you red son-of-a-bitch*

**Casy:** *You don' know what you're doin'.*

*(The FIRST MAN swings with the pick handle. The heavy club crashes into the side of his head with a dull crunch of bone.)*

*(TOM is frozen in horror, looking down at CASY A bellow of rage escapes from him as he leaps at the first man and throws him to the ground.)*

13. They leave the orchard for a cotton farm where Tom is at risk of being identified for the murder he committed. He bids farewell to his mother, promising that no matter where he runs, he will be a tireless advocate for the oppressed.

**Ma:** *Tom, what you aimin' to do?*

**Tom:** *What Casy done*

**Ma:** *But they killed him!*

**Tom:** *Ma, I been thinkin' a hell of a lot, thinkin' about our people livin' like pigs, an' the good rich lan' layin' fallow, or maybe one fella with a million acroes, while a hundred thousan' good famrers is starving. An' I been wonderin' if all our folks got together an' yelled....a fella ain't got a soul of his own, but on'y a piece of a big one – an' then-*

**MA:** *Then what, Tom*

**Tom:** *Then I'll be all aroun' in the dark. I'll be everywhere – wherever you look. Whenever they's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there. Whenever they's a cop beatin' up a guy, I'll be there... I'll be in the way guys yell when they're mad an'-I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're hungry an' they know supper's ready. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build - why, I'll be there.*

14. **Film Ending:** As the family leaves the camp for promise of work in Fresno, Ma Joad voices the faith to carry on.

**MA:** *Woman can change better'n a man. Man lives in jerks–baby born, or somebody dies, that's a jerk–gets a farm, or loses one, an' that's a jerk. With a woman it's all one flow, like a stream, little eddies, little waterfalls, but the river it goes right on. Woman looks at it like that.*

**PA:** *Maybe, but we shore takin' a beatin'.*

**MA:** *(chuckling): I know. Maybe that makes us tough. Rich fellas come up an' they die, an' their kids ain't no good, an' they die out. But we keep a-*

*comin'. We're the people that live. Can't nobody wipe us out. Can't nobody lick us. We'll go on forever, Pa.*

*We're the people.*

15. **Novel/Play Ending:** After Tom leaves, the family find work cotton-picking and live in a boxcar by the river. Ma Joad voices the faith to carry on:

**PA:** *We got nothin' now. Comin' a long time – no work, no crops. How we gonna git stuff to eat? An' I tell you Rosasharn ain't so far from due. Git so I hate to think. Go diggin' back to a ol' time to keep from thinking. Seems like our liufe's over and done.*

**MA:** *No irt ain't. It ain't Pa. An' that a thing a woman knows. I noticed that. Man he lives in a jerk – baby born an' a man dies, an' that's a jerk. Women, it's all one flow, like a stream, little eddies, little waterfalls, but the river it goes right on. Women look at it like that. We ain't gonna die out. People is goin' on - changin' a little, maybe, but goin' right on.*

16. The rains come and the boxcar is flooded. Rosasharn's baby is stillborn as the men battle to save the boxcar from flooding.

**PA:** *John, will you take it an' bury it?*

**UNCLE JOHN:** *Sure. I'll do it. Sure, I will. Come on, give it to me. Come on! Give it to me!*

*(holding the box in front of him, , he edges into the swift stream. Thunder. He holds the box against his chest. And then leans over and sets the box in the stream and steadies it with his hand.)*

**UNCLE JOHN:** *(fiercely) Go down' an' tell 'em. Go down in the street and' rot an' tell 'em that way. That's the way you talk. Don' even know if you was a boy or a girl. Ain't gonna find out. Go on down now, an lay in the street. Maybe they'll know then.*

*(He guides the box gently out into the current and lets it go.)*

17. The remaining Joads move to higher ground and find a barn to stay in, where Rosasharn breast feeds a man too sick from starvation to eat solid food.

**BOY:** *Fust he was sick – but now he's starvin'...last night I went an' bust a winda an' stoled some brwad. Made 'im chew 'er down. But he puked it all up, an' then he was weaker. Go to have soup or milk. You folks got money to git milk?*

**MA:** *Hush, Don' worry. We'll figure somepin' out.*

**BOY:** *He's dyin' I tell you!*

**MA:** *Hush*

*(MA looks at PA and UNCLE JOHN. She turns to Rosasharn, now wrapped in the comfort. The two women look deep into each other. The girl's eyes widen)*

**ROSASHARN:** Yes.

**MA:** *I knowed you would. I knowed! Come on , you fellas. You come out in the shed. (The boy opens his mouth to speak.) Hush, hush and git.*

*(MA helps the boy up and leads him to the open door. UNCLE JOHN, PA and the children leave. The boy looks back after his father and then goes out. MA stands in the door for a few seconds, looking back at Rosasharn and then goes....)*

18. The full stage directions for the closing moments of the novel and play for whoever is strong enough.

## **Grapes of Wrath: Props packed on truck**

- **Single mattress**
- **Rolled and tied double mattress**
- **Ma's round backed wooden chair**
- **Four lanterns**
- **Small seat crate**
- **Mason jar crate**
- **Kitchen drawer with mason jar,**
- **kitchen items**
- **Rag doll**
- **Canteen**
- **Quilt**
- **Big blue coffee pot**
- **Red jug**
- **Potato pot with seven potatoes, potato peeler**
- **Large grey washbasin**
- **Metal bucket with rag**
- **Long handled shovel**
- **Coil of rope**
- **Carpetbag**
- **Flowered table cloth**
- **Bible**
- **String bag w/coin purse containing earrings, onion, salt and pepper shakers. Wooden spoon and five assorted rags**
- **Pork pot**
- **Two short shovels**
- **Two tent poles**
- **Two tall peach baskets w/blue blanket inside**
- **Crate packed with clothes**
- **Crate packed with household items**
- **Two kegs with pork and cleaver inside**
- **Can of salt**

## **Grapes of Wrath: When everything that could be sold was sold....**

Still there were piles of possessions; and the women sat among them, turning them over and looking off beyond and back, pictures, square glasses and here's a vase....The women sat among the doomed things, turning them over and looking past them and back. This book. My father had it. He liked a book. He used to read it. Got his name on it. And his pipe – still smells rank. And this picture. Think we could get this china dog in? Aunt Saide brought it from the St. Louis Fair. See? Wrote on it. No, I guess not. Here's a letter my brother wrote the day before he died. Here's an old time hat. These feathers – never got to use them. No, there isn't room.

How can we live without our lives? How will we know it's us without our past? No. Leave it. Burn it. (Novel)

*MA comes out of the house with an old metal box and moves to the fire. MA sits near the fire and opens the box. MA removes some postcards and papers from the box and looks them over. Putting them back in the box, she takes out a pair of gold earrings and holds them up to her ears for a moment. She puts them in her pocket, closes the box, stands and with resignation tosses the box on the fire.(Film/Play)*



And some day the armies of bitterness will all be going the same way. And they'll walk together and there'll be a dread terror from it.

How can we live without our lives? How will we know it's us without our past? No, leave it. Burn it.

Don't roust your faith bird-high an' you won't do no crawlin' with the worms.

Nobody gonna push me off my land! My grandpa took up this land years ago! My pa was born here. We was all born on it! And some of us was killed on it! And some of us... died on it. That's what makes it our'n. Being born on it, and workin' on it...and dying... dying on it! And not no piece of paper with writing on it...

The bank is something more than men, I tell you. It's the monster. Men made it, but they can't control it.

How can you frighten a man whose hunger is not only in his own cramped stomach but in the wretched bellies of his children? You can't scare him – he has known a fear beyond every other.

It ain't that big. The whole United States ain't that big. It ain't that big. It ain't big enough. There ain't room enough for you an' me, for your kind an' my kind, for rich and poor together all in one country, for thieves and honest men. For hunger and fat.

I want to put a tag of shame on the greedy bastards who are responsible for this

In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage.

Fear the time when the strikes stop while the great owners live - for every little beaten strike is proof that the step is being taken ... fear the time when Manself will not suffer and die for a concept, When

Who said the free? Not me?  
Surely not me? The millions on relief today?  
The millions shot down when we strike?  
The millions who have nothing for our pay?  
For all the dreams we've dreamed  
And all the songs we've sung  
And all the hopes we've held  
And all the flags we've hung,  
The millions who have nothing for our pay--  
Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again--  
The land that never has been yet--  
And yet must be--the land where every man is free. (Langston Hughes)