

Sample Reading Journal

Chapters 16-25 *The Good Earth*

Through these chapters in the book, we see how the story starts to come together. The author uses different phrases and metaphors like 'now I have harboured an ungrateful nest of snakes and they have bitten me', as he talks about his uncle and his uncle's wife and son. We see a lot more drama start to unfold in this section, as characters such as Wang become rich, and forgets that he used to be a poor country folk, who's silver was precious and sparse. He starts to become obnoxious and disregards the little things, and Wang's nephew starts leading Wang's eldest son on to the wrong path of prostitutes and drinking. The author starts to really unravel his creativity in these chapters, and uses very descriptive words, making me feel as excited as Wang Lung was when he bought more land from the House of Hwang, or when he became prosperous with harvests when the 'gods' rained upon him. Pearl Buck puts a huge amount of depth into his words, and I can feel them jump off the page at me, and keep me hooked on the book. I wonder what is going to happen next when I'm not reading the book, and think that I should be picking it up and reading farther into the story. We see the author's writing change to fit the changing of Wang's character, which he presents so well in the book! He tries to sell you Wang's point of view, and the feelings that exemplify between the other characters, like Lotus and O'lan.

The relationship between Wang and O'lan starts to become distraught. It makes me feel bad for O'lan, because though Wang still loves her, he also begins to see her through the eyes of beauty. He realizes how ugly she is, and is compared to the prostitute Lotus. He begins to yell at her for not keeping her hair done, and criticizes her big feet and hands. He stops thinking about how she has been at his side like a puppy for several years, and how she has borne him sons. As she becomes sick, we see how ignorant Wang Lung really is, and doesn't care for her, or help her in her time of sickness. I think O'lan was more sick than she should have been because Wang Lung didn't care for her, and she felt no reason to hold on to her own life. My judgement on how the story is going to turn out, is that O'lan will die because of 'the fire in her vitals' and Wang Lung will have no help with the household chores, and will suffer because of his ignorance and obnoxiousness towards the gods, and his freeness of spending silver for Cuckoo, Lotus, and his uncle's wife. The author really shows how much Wang's character has changed, and I think he is trying to show us how wealth can make you a bitter, and a selfish person. Wang Lung really disregards his family, and thinks only of his own desires. I hope that Wang will find his way again, and care for O'lan in her sickness, and make things right with his eldest son, who he was having troubles with because of his son's desires for Lotus as well.

If I was O'lan in this book, I would be heartbroken. I feel horrible for the character, and believe that this probably does happen quite often in China with rich men. I hate how Wang Lung treats her, and begins to feel hatred towards her ugliness. She can't help that she's ugly! O'lan has done all that she could for Wang, and she gets nothing in return, other than a few words. This type of action towards a woman makes me want to go to China and see if it really happens, and if it does help these poor slaves. I think this book has a lot of feeling in it, which the author describes well, and I feel what O'lan is feeling. If this was me, I would leave Wang Lung and take all my kids with me! Wang and O'lan had 3 boys, two of which could read and write, and I think they would be able to find jobs quickly to help support their mother. I would take silver from inside the walls and run away from Wang Lung! He has become depreciative and rude, and no one needs to be treated like that. This section has really got me thinking about how women are treated in other countries, and I am so glad I don't live in a place like that. I keep encouraging O'lan in my head, and hoping she gets better. This book has really shook me up, and it has become a lot more exciting and riveting to read. I can't wait to read further!