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COLLECTIONS Portable Steinbeck Short novels by John Steinbeck Steinbeck : Life in letters OTHER WORKS Forgotten village (documentary) Viva Zapata! (scenario) CRITICAL LIBRARY EDITION Grapes of Wrath (edited by Peter Lisca) PENGUIN BOOKS Published by Penguin Group Penguin Group (U.S.) Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014. USA Penguin Group (Canada), 90 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 700, Toronto, Ontario M4P 2Y3, Canada (Pearson Penguin Canada Inc.) division Penguin Books Ltd, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England Penguin Ireland, 25 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland (Division Penguin Books Ltd.) Penguin Group (Australia), 250 Camberwell Road, Camberwell, Victoria 3124, Australia (Pearson Australia Group Pty Ltd division) Penguin Books India Pvt Ltd, 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi - 110 017, India Penguin Group (NZ), 67 Apollo Drive, North Shore 0632, New Zealand (Pearson New Zealand Ltd division) Penguin Books (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd, 24 Sturdee Avenue, Rosebank, Johannesburg 2196, South Africa Penguin Books Ltd, Registered offices: 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England Copyright John Steinbeck, 1935 Copyright restored by John Steinbeck, 1963 All Rights Reserved LIBRARY CONGRESS CATALOGUING PUBLICATION IN DATA PUBLICATION Steinbeck, John, 1902-1968. Tortilla flat. I. Title. The PS3537. T3234T65 1968b 813 :52 86-2349 eISBN : 978-1-4406-3884-8 Scanning, uploading and distributing this book over the Internet or by any other means without the publisher's permission is illegal and punishable by law. Please purchase only authorized electronic editions and do not participate in or encourage electronic piracy of copyrighted materials. Your support for the author's rights is appreciated. by Susan GREGORY of Monterey Preface This is the story of Danny and Danny's friends and Danny's house. It's the story of how these three became one thing, so that in Tortilla Flat, if you're talking about Danny's house, you don't think about the structure of a tree peeled with old whitewash, overgrowing with the ancient undecrly-like rose of Castile. No, when you talk about Danny's house, you realize that you mean a unit whose parts are re men, from which came sweetness and joy, philanthropy and, ultimately, mystical sadness. Because Danny's house wasn't at the Round Table, and Danny's friends weren't like knights of it. And this is the story of how this group came into being, how it flourished and grew into an organization beautiful and wise. This story deals with the adventurous arrival of Danny's friends, with the good they've done, with their thoughts and their endeavors. In the end, this story tells how the talisman was lost and how the group fell apart. In Monterey, that old town on the California coast, these things are well known, and they are repeated and sometimes worked out. It's good to put this cycle on paper so that in the future scholars, listening to legends, can't say how they say about Arthur and Roland and Robin Hood - There was no Danny or any group of Danny's friends, or any house. Danny is the god of nature and his friends primitive symbols of wind, sky, sun. This history is designed now and always to make a derision with the lips of acidic scientists. Monterey sits on a hillside, with a blue bay beneath him and a forest of tall dark pine trees on his back. In the lower reaches of the city live Americans, Italians, catchers and canaries of fish. But on the hill where the forest and the city intertwine, where the streets are innocent of asphalt and corners without street lights, the old inhabitants of Monterey are as disgraced as the ancient British. in Wales. These are paisanos. They live in old wooden houses located in yards of receding, and pine trees from the forest are about houses. The Paisanos are pure of commercialism, free of the complicated systems of American business, and, having nothing to steal, exploit or mortgage, that system has not attacked them very vigorously. What's paisano? He is a mixture of Spanish, Indian, Mexican and various Caucasian blood. His ancestors live in California for 12-2 years. She speaks English with a paisano accent and Spanish with a paisano accent. When asked about his race, he bitterly claims pure Spanish blood and rolls up his sleeve to show that the soft inside of his hand is almost white. Its color, like the color of a well-brown meerscham tube, is attributed to sunburn. He's paisano, and he lives uphill above the town of Monterey called Tortilla Flat, even though it's not an apartment at all. Danny was paissano, and he grew up in Tortilla Flat and everybody liked him, but he didn't particularly stand out from tortilla Flat's creasing children. He was related to almost everyone in Stan with blood or romance. His grandfather was an important man who owned two small houses in Tortilla Flat and was respected for his wealth. If growing Danny preferred to sleep in the woods, work on ranches and wrestle food and wine from an unprepared world, it wasn't because he didn't have influential relatives. Danny was small, dark and deliberate. At 25, his legs were bent according to the exact curves of the horse sides. When Danny was 25, the war with Germany was announced. Danny and his friend Pilon (Pilon, by the way, is something thrown away when the shop is being conducted - the boot) had two gallons of wine when they heard about the war. The great Joe Portagee saw sequins among the pine trees and joined Danny and Pilon. As wine descended in bottles, patriotism arose in the three men. And when the wine ran out, they went down the hill hand in hand for fellowship and safety, and they walked into Monterey. In front of recruitment, they cheered loudly for America and challenged Germany to do its worst. They howled threats against the German empire until the sergeant woke up and put on his uniform and took to the street to silence them. He stayed to enroll them. The sergeant lined them up in front of his desk. They passed everything except the sobriety test and then the sergeant began his questions with Pylon. What branch do you want to go to? I don't give a god-curse, said Pilon jauntily. I guess we need people like you in the infantry. And The Pylon is written that way. He turned to Big Joe then, and Portagee sobered up. Where do you want to go? I want to go home, Big Joe said miserly. Sergeant. and him in the infantry. Eventually, he confronted Danny, who was sleeping on his feet. Where do you want to go? Huh? I say, which branch? What do you mean, 'branch'? What can you do? I? I can do anything. What did you do before? Me? I'm a mule skinner. Oh, have you? How many mals can you drive? Danny leaned forward, vaguely and professionally. How many do you have? About 30,000, the sergeant said. Danny was waving his hand. String 'em up! He said. So Danny went to Texas and smashed the meds during the war. And Pilon marched around Oregon with the infantry, and Big Joe, as will later be clear, ended up in jail. 1 HOW DANNY, HOME FROM THE WARS, FOUND HIMSELF HEIR AND HOW HE SWORE TO PROTECT THE HELPLESS. When Danny got back from the army, he found out he was the heir and owner of the property. Viejo, that is, grandpa, died, leaving Danny two small houses in Tortilla Flat. When Danny heard about it, he was a little burdened by the responsibility of ownership. Before he went to look at his estate he bought a gallon of red wine and I drank most of it. The weight of responsibility left him then, and his worst nature came to the surface. He shouted; he smashed several chairs in a billiard room on Alvarado Street; He had two short but magnificent fights. Nobody paid any attention to Danny. Finally, his wavering bowlegs led him to the pier where, in the early hours of the morning, Italian fishermen walked in rubber boots to go out to sea. Racial antipathy overcame Danny's common sense. He threatened fishermen. Sicilian bastards, he called them, and Scum from prison island, and Dog Dogs. He cried, Chinga tu madre, Piojo. Thumb your nose and made obscene gestures below the waist. The fishermen just grinned and moved their ox and said, Hello, Danny. When did you get home? Come tonight. We got a new wine. Danny was bitter. He was yelling, Pon un condo a la cabeza. They called, Come, Danny. I'll see you tonight. And they climbed into their little boats and went from paddle to lantern launch and started their engines and chugged away. Danny was offended. He returned to Alvarado Street, smashing windows as he went, and in another block a police officer took him in his hands. Danny's great respect for the law caused him to go quietly. If he hadn't been discharged from the army after defeating Germany, he would have been sentenced to six months. As it was, the judge only gave him 30 days. And so for a month Danny sat on his crib in monterey city jail. Sometimes he drew obscene paintings on walls, and sometimes he thought about his military career. The weather was Danny's hands in his cell in the city jail. Every now and then, the drunk was put in for the night, but. The biggest crime in Monterey was stagnating, and Danny was lonely. The bedbug bothered him a little at first, but as they got used to his taste and he got used to their bites, they calmly got along. He started playing a satirical game. He caught a bed bug, squashed it against a wall, penciled a circle around it and named it Mayor Clough. That's when he caught the others and named them after the City Council. At some time it had one wall decorated with crushed walls, each named after a local dignitary. He drew ears and tails on them, gave them big noses and a mustache. Ralph, the jailer, was scandalized; But he didn't complain because Danny didn't include the justice of peace that convicted him or any police. He had great respect for the law. One night when the prison was lonely, Tito Ralph came to Danny's cell carrying two bottles of wine. An hour later, he went out to get more wine, and Danny left with him. It was cheerful in prison. They stayed at Torrelli's, where they bought wine, until Torrelli kicked them out. After that Danny went among the pine trees and fell asleep, while Tito Ralph staggered and reported his escape. When the bright sun woke Danny up around noon, he decided to hide all day to avoid a chase. He ran and dodged behind the bushes. He was peeking out of the bushes like a hunted fox. And, in the evening, the rules that were met, he went out and went about his business. Danny's job was pretty direct. He went to the back door of the restaurant. Do I have any old bread I can give my dog? He asked the chef. And while this gulliver man was finishing his food, Danny stole two slices of ham, four eggs, a lamb chop and a fly. I'll pay you sometime, he said. There's no need to pay for leftovers. I throw them away if you don't take them. Danny felt better about stealing at the time. If that's how they felt, he was on the surface guilt-free. He returned to Torrelli's, swapped four eggs, a lamb chop and a fly for a glass of brandy and retreated to the woods to cook his dinner. The night was dark and damp. The fog hung like limp gauze among the black pine trees guarding monterey's land borders. Danny put his head down and rushed to a shelter in the woods. He brought out another rushing figure in front of him; and as he narrowed the distance, he recognized his old friend Pylon's walk. Danny was a generous man, but he recalled selling all his food except two slices of ham and a bag of stale bread. I'll get past Pylon, he decided. He walks like a man full of roast turkey and stuff like that. Then all of a sudden Danny noticed that Pilon had lovingly squeezed his coat over his chest. Ai, Pylon, amigo! Danny cried. The pylon hit on it faster. Danny broke into the register. my little friend! Where are you so fast guest? Pilon came to terms with the inevitable and waited. Danny approached cautiously, but his tone was enthusiastic. I've been looking for you, my dearest little angel friends, to see, I've got two big steaks here from a pig of God, and a bag of sweet white bread. Share my prize, Pylon, little dumplings. The pylon shrugged. Like you say, he muttered wildly. They walked into the woods together. The pylon was confused. He stopped for a long time and confronted his friend. Danny, he asked sadly, how did you know I had a bottle of brandy under my coat? Tortilla Flat by John Steinbeck / History & Fiction have a score of 4 out of 5 / Based on 32 votes

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