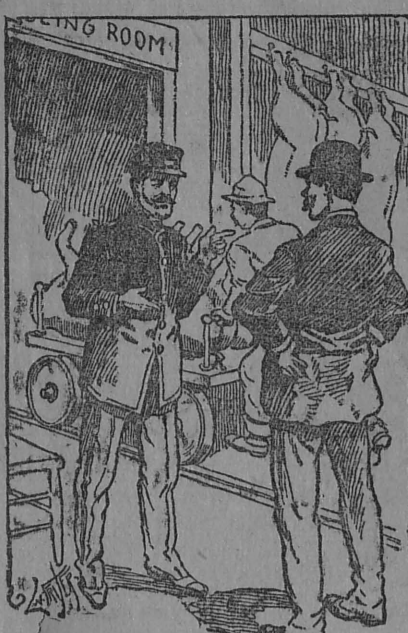


THE JUNGLE A STORY OF CHICAGO BY UPTON SINCLAIR



ance there was heard again the lowing of the cattle, a sound as of a far-off ocean calling. They followed it, this time, as eager as children in sight of a circus menagerie—

CHAPTER III

his capacity as defecatesen vendor, Jukubas Szadwilas had many acquaintances. Among these was one of the special policemen employed by Anderson, whose duty it frequently was to pick out men for employment.

As we have said before, in this he was not mistaken. He had gone to Smith's and stood there not more than half an hour before one of the bosses noticed his form towering above the rest and signalled to him.

Signals and gesticulations on the part of the boss. Vigorous shakes of the head by Jurgis.

They passed down the busy street that led to the yards. It was still early morning, and everything at its high tide of activity. A steady stream of employees was pouring through the gate—employees of the higher sort, at this hour, clerks and stenographers and such.

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There is over a square mile of space in the yards, and more than half of it is occupied by cattle-pens; north and south as far as the eye could reach there stretched before it a sea of pens. And they were all filled—so many cattle no one had ever dreamed existed in the world.

Here and there about the alleys galloped men upon horseback, booted and carrying long whips; they were very busy, calling to each other, and to men who were driving the cattle. They were drovers and stock raisers, who had come from far states, and brokers and commission merchants.

And what will become of all these creatures? cried Teta Elzbieta. "By to-night," Jukubas answered, "they will all be killed and cut up; and over there on the other side of the packing-houses are more railroad tracks, where the cars come to take the products away."

There were two hundred and fifty miles of track within the yards, their guide went on to inform them. They brought about ten thousand head of cattle every day, and as many hogs, and half as many sheep—which meant some eight or ten million live creatures turned into food every year.

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and added a witticism, which he was pleased that his unsophisticated friends should take to be his own: "They use everything about the pig except the squeal!"

After they had seen enough of the pens, the party went up the street, to the mass of buildings which occupy the center of the yards. These buildings, made of brick, and stained with innumerable layers of packingtown smog, were painted all over with advertising signs.

One could not stand and watch very long without becoming philosophical, without beginning to deal in symbols and similes, and to hear the pig-squeal of the universe.

Entering one of the Anderson buildings, they found a number of other visitors waiting; and before long there came a guide, to escort them through the place.

It was a long, narrow room, with a gallery along it for visitors. At the head there was a great iron wheel, about twenty feet in circumference, with rings here and there along its edge.

At the same instant the ear was assailed by a most terrifying shriek; the visitors started in alarm, the women turned pale and shrank back. The shriek was followed by another, louder and yet more agonizing—for once started upon that journey, the pig never came back; at the top of the wheel he was shunted off upon a trolley, and went sailing down the room.

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Meantime, heedless of all these things, the men upon the floor were going about their work. Neither animals up nor down of visitors made any difference to them; but one by one they hooked up the pigs, and one by one with a swift stroke they slit their throats.

It was all so very business-like that one watched it fascinated. It was pork-making by machinery, pork-making reduced to mathematics.

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even a boss might break this rule, not even one of the mighty superintendents; many a poor working-man had been caught taking home a link of sausage in his dinner-pail, and been sent to the county jail for thirty days and never after been employed by any firm in Packingtown.

These were things that Jurgis was to learn in time; at present he was as innocent as a child, and went down the line with the rest of the visitors, staring open-mouthed, lost in wonder.

The party descended to the next floor, where the various waste materials were treated. Here came the entrails, to be scraped and washed clean for sausage casing; and women worked here in the midst of a sickening stench, which caused the visitors to hasten by, gasping.

Then the party went across the street to where they did the killing of beef—five hundred cattle into meat. Unlike the place they had left, all this work was done on one floor; and instead of there being one line of carcasses which moved to the workmen, there were fifteen or twenty lines, and the men moved from one to another of these.

Along one side of the room ran a narrow gallery, a few feet from the floor; into this gallery the cattle were driven by men with goads which gave them electric shocks.

The way in which they did this was a sight to be seen and never forgotten; they worked with furious intensity, lacerating upon the run—a pace with which there is nothing to be compared except a football game.

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to Jurgis it seemed almost profanity to speak about the place as did Jukubas, skeptically; it was a thing as tremendous as the universe—the laws and ways of its working no more than the universe.

The visitors were taken there and shown them, all neatly hung in rows, labeled conspicuously with the tags of the government inspectors—and some, which had been killed by a special process, marked with the sign of the "kosher" rabbi, certifying that it was fit for sale to the orthodox.

Of course, Commissioner Garfield didn't go into the question of "by products," which would give the best trust some thing to cheer up over even if it didn't make more than ninety cents or a dollar on each steer slaughtered.

The people will now be satisfied. The administration has probed the beef trust and found that it was all a mistake. The farmers have been getting top prices for their cattle and the working class has been buying beef at ridiculous low prices.

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