

STEINBECK, John.

East of Eden.

Reference: YTB-97

New York: The Viking Press, 1952.

In-8 de (3) ff., 602 pp.

Toile vert pomme de l'éditeur, jaquette illustrée conservée.

212 x 144 mm.

First edition, first issue with "First published by The Viking Press in September 1952" printed on the copyright page, and "bite" instead of "bight" on page 281, three lines up from the bottom.

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A masterpiece of Biblical scope, and the magnum opus of one of America's most enduring authors.

In his journal, Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck called *East of Eden* "the first book," and indeed it has the primordial power and simplicity of myth. Set in the rich farmland of California's Salinas Valley, this sprawling and often brutal novel follows the intertwined destinies of two families—the Trasks and the Hamiltons—whose generations helplessly reenact the fall of Adam and Eve and the poisonous rivalry of Cain and Abel.

East of Eden is a work in which Steinbeck created his most mesmerizing characters and explored his most enduring themes: the mystery of identity, the inexplicability of love, and the murderous consequences of love's absence.

Steinbeck began writing "*East of Eden*" in 1951, intending the novel to be the "big work" of his career.

As he explained to his editor, Steinbeck wrote the book for his sons, to share the direct truth of where he came from and how it was for people in growing up in his place and time. In doing so, Steinbeck planned to share, "one of the greatest, perhaps the greatest story of all—the story of good and evil, of strength and weakness, of love and hate, of beauty and ugliness... this story against the background of the county I grew up in." In this masterful retelling of the biblical tale of Cain and Abel, Steinbeck captures the history of Salinas Valley, Ca. while grappling with the pain of his divorce. After "*East of Eden*," was published in 1952, Elia Kazan directed the film adaptation of the final portion of the novel, in which James Dean made his debut performance.

John Steinbeck decided to become a writer at the age of fourteen. In 1919, he enrolled at Stanford University, but drifted in and out of school and finally dropping out in 1925. After Stanford, he took a job as a caretaker in Lake Tahoe where he wrote his first novel "*Cup of Gold*" (1929). Over the next few years, Steinbeck wrote a couple follow-up novels but did not achieve real success until 1935 with "*Tortilla Flat*." He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962.

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