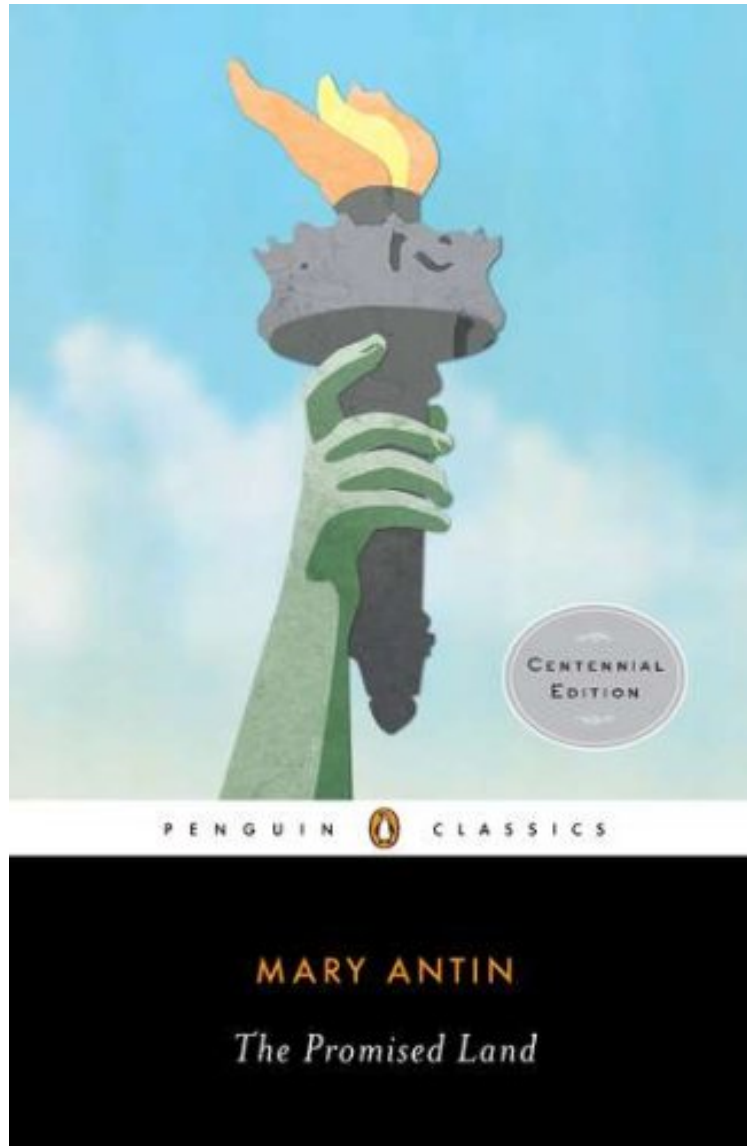


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The Promised Land (Penguin Classics)

Mary Antin

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#104408 in Books Penguin Classic 2012-06-26 2012-06-26 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.90 x .90 x 5.201, .60 #File Name: 0143106775416 pages | File size: 29.Mb

Mary Antin : The Promised Land (Penguin Classics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Promised Land (Penguin Classics):

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Promised Land By DI bought this book for a course that I will be taking net month. The delivery and condition of the book were as advertised. Thanks 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed both voices By James Hercules Sutton There are two voices in this book; one is that of a brash, opinionated, precocious, ambitious, egotistical, social climbing teenager growing up Jewish in Czarist Russia

and coming of age as an immigrant in Boston. The other is the voice of an adult exulting in the spirit of America and dedicating herself to helping others. The first voice may have been reprised from a diary, because of its tone and detail. The second belongs to the author's present, because it's richer and wiser. Both are true, and both are self-aware manifestations of a self performing for itself, greedy for praise, aching to justify sacrifices made on her behalf by immigrant parents--the story of America at the end of the Nineteenth Century. I enjoyed both voices. Her neighborhood was mine, Ward 8 of the South End, before it was destroyed by urban renewal. She repaired for solace and inspiration to the same bridge where kids in my set jumped into Ft. Point Channel, before it was polluted beyond use; she visited the same settlement houses. I knew where she lived, shared the view of the lumberyard from her window, heard the same streetcars she heard on the way to the trolley barn, heard the same sounds across air shafts, labored to justify parents like hers. My house and street also no longer exist. Her story is my story and that of all urchins who rose from the slums or perished in it. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I loved this book. By Girl Empowered Can't believe this book has never been reviewed. I was just looking it up to buy a copy for a friend. I loved this book. It's a charming story written through a young girl's eyes (the author's) about her journey coming to America. So refreshing and charming with wonderful vocabulary. It's a classic American immigrant story.

For the centennial of its first publication: a new edition of a seminal work on the American immigrant experience Weaving introspection with political commentary, biography with history, *The Promised Land*, first published in 1912, brings to life the transformation of an Eastern European Jewish immigrant into an American citizen. Mary Antin recounts "the process of uprooting, transportation, replanting, acclimatization, and development that took place in [her] own soul" and reveals the impact of a new culture and new standards of behavior on her family. A feeling of division between Russia and America, Jews and Gentiles, Yiddish and English ever-present in her narrative is balanced by insights, amusing and serious, into ways to overcome it. In telling the story of one person, *The Promised Land* illuminates the lives of hundreds of thousands. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

About the Author Mary Antin was born on June 13, 1881, in Polotzk, Russia, the daughter of Israel and Esther Weltman Antin. Her father emigrated to the United States in 1891, and three years later the mother followed with the four children, arriving in Boston on the *Polynesia* on May 8, 1894. The Antin family eventually settled on Arlington Street in Chelsea, where Mary and the younger siblings started to go to public school; her older sister had to work as a seamstress. Mary Antin's teacher brought about her first published work, the composition "Snow," in the journal *Primary Education*. Shortly after the transatlantic voyage, Mary wrote a long and detailed account of it in Yiddish for her uncle. Later, the philanthropist Hattie Hecht introduced Antin to Philip Cowen and Israel Zangwill, and the result was the publication of an English adaptation of the letter in the *American Hebrew*. In 1899, it appeared as a book that misspelled the name of her hometown, *From Plotzk to Boston*, with a glowing introduction by Zangwill. The essayist Josephine Lazarus Emma Lazarus' sister reviewed the volume for the *Critic* and became friends with Antin, who had been admitted to the prestigious Boston Latin School for girls. The family now lived in the Dover Street slum, and Mary associated with the South End Settlement House of Edward Everett Hale. She sat as a model for his daughter Ellen Day Hale, and became a member of the Natural History Club. There she met Amadeus William Grabau (1870-1946), who was finishing his doctoral work in geology and paleontology at Harvard. They were married in Boston on October 5, 1901, and soon took up residence in New York, where Grabau became a professor at Columbia University. Antin never finished Latin School, and therefore could only take a few college courses as a special student. Their daughter, Josephine Esther Grabau, Antin's only child, was born on November 21, 1907. Antin published short stories, essays, and her books *The Promised Land* (1912) and *They Who Knock at Our Gates* (1914), which together sold more than one hundred thousand copies. After some successful years as a writer and Progressive lecturer, Antin suffered a nervous breakdown, and she and Grabau separated. She lived in poorer circumstances in later years, publishing little, and died on May 15, 1949. Werner Sollors is a professor of Afro-American Studies and English at Harvard University. His most recent book is *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature*. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. CHAPTER I Within the Pale When I was a little girl, the world was divided into two parts; namely, Polotzk, the place where I lived, and a strange land called Russia. All the little girls I knew lived in Polotzk, with their fathers and mothers and friends. Russia was the place where one's father went on business. It was so far off, and so many bad things happened there, that one's mother and grandmother and grown-up aunts cried at the railroad station, and one was expected to be sad and quiet for the rest of the day, when the father departed for Russia. After a while there came to my knowledge the existence of another division, a region intermediate between Polotzk and Russia. It seemed there was a place called Vitebsk, and one called Vilna, and Riga, and some others. From those places came photographs of uncles and cousins one had never seen, and letters, and

sometimes the uncles themselves. These uncles were just like people in Polotzk; the people in Russia, one understood, were very different. In answer to ones questions, the visiting uncles said all sorts of silly things, to make everybody laugh; and so one never found out why Vitebsk and Vilna, since they were not Polotzk, were not as sad as Russia. Mother hardly cried at all when the uncles went away. One time, when I was about eight years old, one of my grown-up cousins went to Vitebsk. Everybody went to see her off, but I didnt. I went with her. I was put on the train, with my best dress tied up in a bandana, and I stayed on the train for hours and hours, and came to Vitebsk. I could not tell, as we rushed along, where the end of Polotzk was. There were a great many places on the way, with strange names, but it was very plain when we got to Vitebsk. The railroad station was a big place, much bigger than the one in Polotzk. Several trains came in at once, instead of only one. There was an immense buffet, with fruits and confections, and a place where books were sold. My cousin never let go my hand, on account of the crowd. Then we rode in a cab for ever so long, and I saw the most beautiful streets and shops and houses, much bigger and finer than any in Polotzk. We remained in Vitebsk several days, and I saw many wonderful things, but what gave me my one great surprise was something that wasnt new at all. It was the river the river Dvina. Now the Dvina is in Polotzk. All my life I had seen the Dvina. How, then, could the Dvina be in Vitebsk? My cousin and I had come on the train, but everybody knew that a train could go everywhere, even to Russia. It became clear to me that the Dvina went on and on, like a railroad track, whereas I had always supposed that it stopped where Polotzk stopped. I had never seen the end of Polotzk; I meant to, when I was bigger. But how could there be an end to Polotzk now? Polotzk was everything on both sides of the Dvina, as all my life I had known; and the Dvina, it now turned out, never broke off at all. It was very curious that the Dvina should remain the same, while Polotzk changed into Vitebsk!