

THE GRAPES OF WRATH CHAPTER 16 SUMMARY

- The Joads and the Wilsons caravan their way down Highway 66.
- Rose of Sharon tells her mother about all of the fun things she and Connie are going to do when they get to California—they're going to go to the movies, have a pretty little house, and buy new clothes for the baby.
- The Wilsons' touring car is feeling sick and sounds kind of creaky.
- Al and Tom know that something's pretty jacked up. They think it's the "con-rod bearing".
- It's Saturday afternoon, and they're several miles from the nearest mechanic/wrecking yard. They know the wrecking yard will be closed on Sunday, so they either have to act fast or wait until Monday to fix the car and press on.
- Tom tells the families to go ahead without him and the preacher, and that they will get the touring car fixed and then catch up with them later. The touring car is faster than the Joad truck, and so the chances of catching up to them are good.
- Ma Joad throws a hissy fit and grabs a jack handle from the back of the car. She says there is not a snowball's chance in hell that she will allow Tom to be separated from his family again.
- Pa Joad tries to calm her down, but Ma Joad just threatens him with the jack handle.
- Everyone realizes that Ma Joad has won the argument, and so the Joads and Wilsons pile into the truck and head up the road to find a campsite. Tom and the preacher stay behind with the touring car.
- After depositing the family in the campsite, Al drives back and picks up Tom. The two drive to the nearest wrecking yard, hoping it will still be open on a Saturday afternoon.
- After a little digging around, Tom and Al find the part they need to fix the touring car.
- The wrecking yard is managed by a one-eyed, smelly man. The smelly man doesn't wear an eye patch. Let's take a moment to consider that.
- The one-eyed man moans about how mean his boss is and about how he never gets to go on dates. Tom tells him to wake up and smell the

roses. He advises the one-eyed man to get an eye-patch, take a shower, fix up one of the broken-down cars, and go seek his fortune. Seize the day!

- The boys bring the materials back to the touring car (which is being dutifully guarded by the preacher), and it doesn't take them long to get the car in ship shape again.
- The boys drive to the campsite where the rest of the Joads and the Wilsons have set up camp. It's an expensive campsite, costing the families one half dollar per day. They would have kept on truckin' in search of another campsite, but Granma Joad is really under the weather.
- No one knows why Granma is not feeling very well. Um, maybe it's because her husband just died? Just a shot in the dark.
- All kinds of men are gathered on the porch steps of the camp owner's house, including Pa and Tom. They are shooting the breeze.
- One man talks about how terrible conditions are in California, telling the group that there are no jobs and that everyone is miserable there. He tells them both of his kids and his wife died of starvation (see middle of pg. 258-260)
- Ruh-roh.
- The Joad men decide to shake it off and turn in for the night.
- Tom Joad leaves the campsite, because he doesn't want to pay another half-dollar to stay there, and the side of the road will do just fine as a bed, thank you very much.
- On his way out, Tom throws a clod of dirt at the camp owner's house. Take that!