{Proletariat} Living Conditions under Capitalism C

*The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair

Chapter 16

**Then Jurgis found himself in jail, not a bad place compared to many.“They put him in a place where the snow could not beat in, where the cold could not eat through his bones; they brought him food and drink—why, in the name of heaven, if they must punish him, did they not put his family in jail and leave him outside—why could they find no better way to punish him than to leave three weak women and six helpless children to starve and freeze?”**

Chapter 10

**“When the earnings of Jurgis fell from nine or ten dollars a week to five or six, for no reason, there was no longer any to spare. The spring came, and found them still living thus from hand to mouth, hanging on day by day, with literally nothing between them and starvation. Marija had had to give up all idea of marrying then; the family could not get along without her--although she was likely soon to become a burden upon them.**

**And then again, when they went to pay their January's installment on the house, the agent terrified them by asking them if they had had the insurance paid yet. The agent proceeded to show them a clause in the deed which said that they were to keep the house insured for one thousand dollars (well more than the hideous place was worth), as soon as the first year ran out. Poor Elzbieta, upon whom again fell the blow to find more money, demanded to know the cost. That night Jurgis, grim and determined, requesting that the agent would be good enough to inform him, once for all, as to all the expenses they would owe on the house. The deed was signed now, the agent said, with sarcasm— you’ve signed the deed, and so there isn’t anything to gain by keeping quiet.’”**

Chapter 2

**“They were on a street which seemed to run on forever, each side of it one row of wretched little two-story frame buildings. Down every side street they could see, it was the same-- always the same endless vista of ugly and dirty little wooden buildings. Here and there would be a bridge crossing a filthy creek; here and there would be a great factory, a dingy building with innumerable windows in it, and immense volumes of smoke pouring from the chimneys, darkening the air above and making filthy the earth beneath.**

**There were half a dozen chimneys, touching the very sky--and leaping from them half a dozen columns of smoke, thick, oily, and black as night. It was a perpetual explosion. It was inexhaustible; the smoke spread in vast clouds overhead stretching a black pall as far as the eye could reach.**

**There were mountains and valleys and rivers, gullies and ditches, and great hollows full of stinking green water. In these pools the children played, and rolled about in the mud of the streets. One wondered about this, as also about the swarms of flies which hung about the scene, literally blackening the air like locusts. It impelled the visitor to questions and then the residents would explain, quietly, that all this was "made" land, and that it had been "made" by using it as a garbage dumping ground for the city garbage."**