**Steinbeck, John. The Pearl**

**The Plot:**

The parable “The Pearl” deals with a drasticincident in the life of Kino, a poor Indian fisherman, and his wife. The storyis set in the little village “La Paz”, which is situated on thecoast of the Gulf on California.

A new day begins and Kino awakens next to his wife Juana intheir simple hut which is made of brush. The couple sleeps on mats on the dirtяoor and their little son Coyotito sleeps in a hanging box. Kino is happy andcontent with his life despite the family is very poor. He watches the sunriseand listens to the sounds of the morning. During he watches the sunrise hehearsthe Song of the Family in his mind. When Kino hears the Song of the Family playing in his mind,it’s an indication, that all is well. The Song of the Family or the Songof Evil, which occurs later in the play, are songs who play in the mindsof theIndian people in this story. These ancient songs have been passed fromgeneration to generation and they start to play in the minds of the Indianpeople when good or evil things happen. But suddenly a disaster happens, because apoisonousscorpion stings Coyotito. Juana takes her child immediately and sucks out thepoison. Because of the screaming of Coyotito the whole neighbourhood comes tothe hut of the family, including Kino’s brother Juan Thomasand his wifeApolonia. Juana tells Kino to get the doctor, but this is impossible, because ofthe class distinction between Indian people and Spanish people. Kino also has nomoney, to pay the doctor for his treatment. But Juana isn’t impressed bythat and decides to go to the doctor, because she wants to do everything for herchild. When the neighbourhood gets to know about their plan, they join Kino andJuana walking to the doctor. But as supposed, the doctor denies to examineCoyotito, because he family owns no money. Therefore Kino is in rage and heangrily punches the door. The next morning, when Kino and Juana come down to thebeach, she makes a poultice of seaweed and put it on Coyotito’s shoulder.This remedy is probably as good as the treatment of the doctor, but the remedylacks his authority, because it is simple and doesn’t cost anything. Thenthey push the canoe into the water and paddle together to the oyster bed whereKino fishes and searches for pearls. Kino knows, that a great pearl will bringhim a lot of money, but he doesn’t dare to hope for such a great pearl,because it isn’t good to want too much. A short time after Kino started todive, he finds a large oyster in which is a great and perfect pearl. NowKino’s troubles seem to be over and he believes thatthe pearl will makehim rich and that his son Coyotito can be cured and go to school some day. WhileKino he holds the pearls in his hand, the swelling of Coyotito’s shoulderhas gone down. It seems, that the poisonis leaving the body of the child. Kinois screams very loud, because he is so happy now, and this loud screamingattracts the other fishers and divers and they come to his canoe to look whathas happened. Because Kino is a rich man now, the other people are enviousof him and he becomes an outsider. In the following night he is even attacked bya thief, who wants to steal the great pearl. And the people become interested inKino, because they want his money. The priest comes, because he needs money forsome repairs of the church and even the doctor claims now, that the son of thefamily, Coyotito, is a patient of him. When the doctor comes to Kino`s hut, Kinois filled with fear and rage, but he lets the doctor in when he claims, thatthere can be a delayed reaction to the scorpion sting. The doctor makes a greatshow and uses different remedies to “heal” Coyotito, who alreadyseems very healthy. He even visits Coyotito a second time and claims then, thathe won the fight against the death.

Later in the night Kino is attacked a second time by a thiefin their hut. Kino is wounded in the fight and Juana begs Kino now to throw thepearl away, because she feels it is evil and it will destroy the family. ButKino refuses, because he wants to realise his dreams.

The next day Kino tries to sell the pearl to pearl buyers inthetown, but they only offer him a very small amount of money. They know, thatthe pearl is worth a lot, but they want to buy it very cheap and pretend that itis no good. Kino is very angry about this and says that he willsell his pearlin the capital, because he wants to get a fair price. In the evening, Kino is attacked again, but he can chaseaway the attacker. Juana believes, that the pearl is evil and wants Kino oncemore to throw it away. Later inthe night, Juana removes quietly from hersleeping place and goes out of the hut with something in her hand. She wants tothrow the pearl away, but Kino stops her and beats her for this attempt. When hereturns to his hut,Kino is attacked again, but this time by two men. He killsone of them and the other one escapes. Kino knows that he must go away now,because he killed someone. Before they can escape, their canoe is destroyed andtheirhut is burned. They hide until the next night in the hut of Kino’sbrother, Juan Thomas. In the following night the family start their journey to thecapital, but soon they realise, that they are chased by a group of three people.The family яee up the mountain and hide in a small cave and their pursuerspitch their camp not far away from them. Kino knows that the only possibility tosurvive is, to kill one person of the group, to take his riяe, and to kill theother two, who are sleeping. When Kino starts to attack the man with the riяe, suddenlyhis son Coyotito begins to cry and the man with the riяe shoots in thisdirection. But then Kino overpowers the man and he also kills the other two man.When Kino returns to the cave, he sees that his son Coyotito was killed beforeby the shot of the man.

On the next day Kino and Juana return to their town carryingtheir dead child and the riяe. They walk through the town to the coast withoutspeaking to anyone and throw the pearl into the sea.

**Main Characters:**

Kino: He is an honest and responsible man, who divesfor pearls to support his family. He works very hard, but nevertheless he isvery poor. When his son Coyotito gets ill, he hopes to find a pearl to able topay for his cure. He also hopes, that such a pearl provides him and his familypeace and wealth in the future. Like most human beings, he wants to getahead. But Kino is also very intelligent, because he knows that heand the other Indians have been exploited by rich and powerful man. He alsorealises, that he has become a new victim for the exploitation by powerful menafter he had found the pearl. The doctor or the pearl buyers are the bestexample for such men. But Kino becomes aware of this and in the end of the storyhe sees, that the powerful and rich man would even kill him and his family, toget more power and money. Juana: She is a very intelligent and responsiblepersonality, but also a loving and devoted wife. At first it seems, that she iscompletely servile and that she would do anything what Kino wants. But in courseof the play we see that she has a great inner strength and will. For example atthe beginning, whenher son is bitten by a scorpion, she acts in the right wayand tries to suck out the poison out of Coyotito’s body. She also insiststhat they go to the doctor, although the other people mean, that the doctorwon’t cure Coyotito. Juana has also a strong instinct to save the life of herbaby. When the doctor refuses to cure Coyotito, Kino punches angrily on the doorof the doctor, but his wife acts in the right way and tries to heal Coyotito byputting a poultice of seaweed on the shoulder of her son.

She also acts with the same strength when she wants to throwthe pearl away, because she believes that this pearl threatens her family, butin this case Kino has his way and is able to stop her.

The doctor:He is the typical rich and powerfulinhabitant of “La Paz”. For him, money counts more than a humanlife. Even when Kino and Juana comes to his house with their ill son Coyotito,he refuses to cure him, becausehe wouldn’t get any money for thetreatment. But when he hears that Kino found a pearl and is now a rich man, heclaims that Coyotito is his patient and pretends to worry about the ill baby.Therefore the doctor isa very materialistic character, who symbolises thearrogance of powerful people towards poor people.