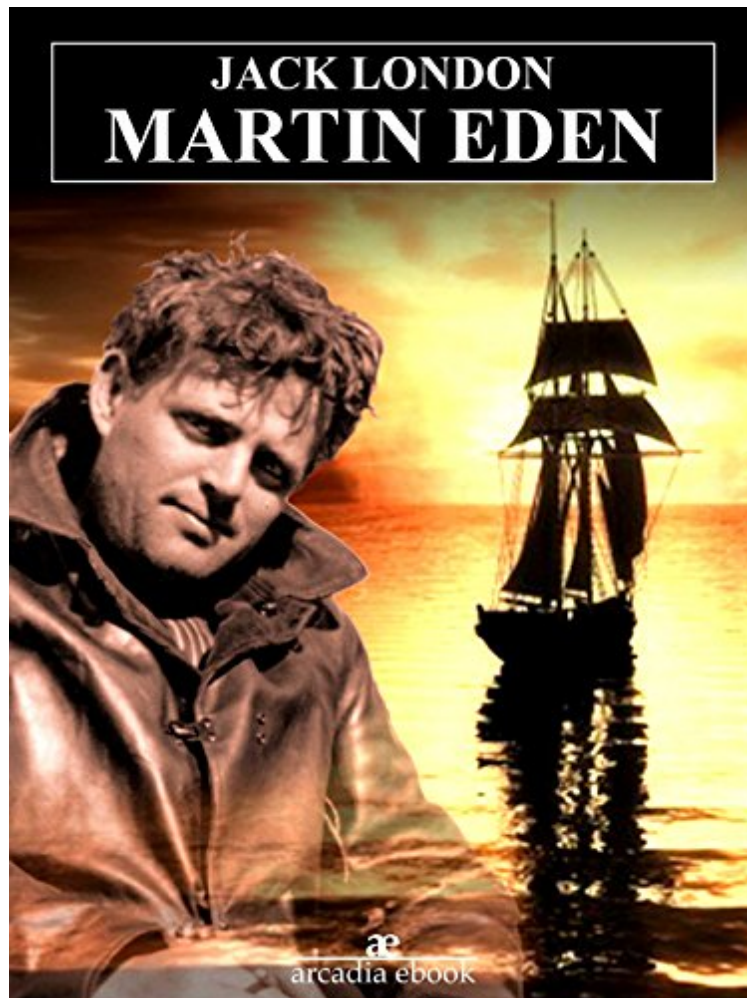


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## Martin Eden

Von Jack London

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**Von Jack London : Martin Eden** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Martin Eden:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. One of my favourite booksVon Lorenzo C.great book, i really enjoyed the reading!!3 von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Jack London's "Allegory of the Cave"Von Ein KundeI think that every book falls into one of a few different catagories. It either sucks, is entertaining, or changes your perspective. "Martin Eden" ranks in the highest of all possible catagories for changing my perspective. I tried to read Jack London on a number of occasions and just couldn't get into him. His stories would rate as entertaining at best. I don't know why I picked up Martin Eden, but will forever be grateful to the forgotten soul who recommended it. Martin Eden is different because of what is barely under the surface. In my opinion, it's less a story than a philosophy. After I read it for the first time, I was struck

by the parallel to Plato's "Allegory of the Cave." In it, Plato warns of the price of enlightenment. Once you have seen the light, you can never go back to seeing things the way you did before. You will isolate yourself from everyone. Plato seems to say that ignorance is bliss, and London seems to agree. In the novel, Martin is stricken with the desire to ascend in class stature after meeting a high-class, late 19th Century San Francisco family. He is enamored with the ease with which they debate social politics and wants to attain what he first sees as their level of intelligence. His vehicle for attaining their acceptance is to become a writer. To enrich his meager knowledge of these subjects he becomes an arduous reader of everything that he can get his hands on. In the process, he comes to realize that he has gained a true understanding of literature and social philosophy, whereas everyone else merely talks with a false air of understanding. At one point he realizes that, in his quest to become an intellectual equal, he has surpassed them. It is after his meteoric climb in intellect that he realizes that he is alone. He also realizes that the people he so eagerly sought to emulate did not shun him because of his lack of intellect (for their own intellect was merely a thin veneer), but because of his lack of money. In his separate but related quest to become a successful writer, he is frustrated by every publisher's inability to "get" his ideas. His inability to publish, despite his hard work, leads his love interest, high-born and condescending, to abandon him. She has no faith in his ability to achieve fame as a writer and he has no desire to settle down into a 9 to 5 job to placate her socialite parents. After some time apart, he does succeed in getting published, and not unlike the breaking of a dam, fame and fortune follow soon after. Upon learning of his fame, she comes running back, ready to make him the centerpiece for conversation at her family's socialite dinner parties. He rejects her and tries to return to the companionship of his earlier days as a sailor. Like in Plato's story, he finds that he cannot rekindle the bond that he once had with old friends, and is alone. While the story is an interesting case study into the nature of intellect and society, it is also a looking glass into the social scene in a major city during the turn of the century. The reader learns that the beat poets were around long before Kerouac and Ginsburg. This story is full of information -- social, political, historical, and intellectual. Read it.

3 von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Neglected American Classic of Weight and Depth  
Von oh\_pete  
MARTIN EDEN follows the rise and fall of a young sailor who by sheer force of will educates himself and succeeds in becoming a famous writer (this is London's autobiographical novel, published in 1909, when he was thirty-three and the most popular living writer in the world). Few readers liked it then, they found it dark and depressing after a certain point; they wanted the entertainment they were used to from London ("Come on, Jack, give us another story with dogs and snow in it!"). Not as many read it now as should, and London himself disdained the fact that it inspired many young writers without talent to follow Martin Eden's example. But it is also a valuable story about a young man maturing in his conception of love as regards the opposite sex: "Ambition soared on mad wings, and he saw himself climbing the heights with her, pleasuring in beautiful and noble things with her. It was a soul-possession he dreamed, refined beyond any grossness, a free comradeship of spirit that he could not put into definite thought." -- The youth becomes a man. London's prose is straightforward and vibrant, much like the author at his best. Martin Eden falls victim to the vicissitudes of his fame and fortune, much like the author at his worst (too much hard living is often given as the reason for London's death at forty). London spends a lot of time in this book criticizing American materialism in the way that materialism ought to be criticized. He also displays a certain kind of American work ethic (five hours of sleep a night, perseverance through failure, etc.) that sometimes doesn't know what to do with itself once it achieves success. We should all have that problem--just hope that we deal with it better than young Martin Eden does. A very worthwhile read.

Kurzbeschreibung  
Living in Oakland at the beginning of the 20th century, Martin Eden struggles to rise above his destitute, proletarian circumstances through an intense and passionate pursuit of self-education, hoping to achieve a place among the literary elite. His principal motivation is his love for Ruth Morse. Because Eden is a rough, uneducated sailor from a working-class background and the Morses are a bourgeois family, a union between them would be impossible unless and until he reached their level of wealth and refinement. Eden represents writers' frustration with publishers by speculating that when he mails off a manuscript, a "cunning arrangement of cogs" immediately puts it in a new envelope and returns it automatically with a rejection slip. The central theme of Eden's developing artistic sensibilities places the novel in the tradition of the Knstlerroman, in which is narrated the formation and development of an artist.

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Martin Eden is assuredly one of Jack London's greatest works.

Upton Sinclair  
Kurzbeschreibung  
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