

## **APPENDICES**

### **SYNOPSIS OF IN AMERICA**

The novel was inspired by the emigration to America in 1876 of Helena Modrzejewska, Poland's most celebrated actress. This novel begins in "Chapter Zero" being the first person narrative who finds herself into a party in the private dining room of a hotel.

The story is about Maryna Zalezowska, a much beloved Polish actress. While at the peak of her career, together with her husband Bogdan, her son Piotr, and an entourage of friends and followers, she emigrate to America in 1876 to find a "utopian" commune. She is not sure if she can explain why she feels so strongly about this, as an actress she just wants to renew her life in America.

Landing in New York, the group spends a brief period living in Hoboken, visiting the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia and exploring New York City before embarking on a voyage to the West. After a brief sojourn in San Francisco, they move down the coast to Southern California, where they establish a small settlement in Anaheim. Maryna, the leader of her group, build vineyard and farm in Anaheim, a little Brook Farm of Polish emigrants in the Wild West.

Life is hard, however, and the utopian dream soon fails. Her friends, one by one start to leave her and come back to Poland. Because of this, she is very sad and desperate but she has determination and still struggles to sustain her life in America,

no matter how big the problem that she will face. At one time in her life, she feels that her hard work is useless because her vineyard does not give satisfying result. Eventually, her friend, Ryszard advises her to return to the theatre again. In the beginning, she refuses it; in America she wants to renew her life, and to forget her past life as an actress. But the money condition forces her to do something else and she knows that her great ability is in the theatre world. Thus, she goes to San Francisco and begins prepare herself to join an audition in Booth's Theatre by hiring a tutor named Miss Collingridge to improve her English language. Her husband, Bogdan, remains at the Anaheim settlement until it can be sold. Then, Maryna succeeds in the first performance, and she tells her family to rejoin with her in San Francisco, where she becomes an overnight theatrical sensation, her Polish stardom now is burning brightly in America.

She changes her name to Marina Zalenska. Then, she travels to Virginia City, eventually, New York City and attracts fans and admirers wherever she goes. Her life becomes a super star, exhaustive tour around the world, performing with her own repertory company and making stage appearances with the Edwin Booth, the most renowned actor of that time.

## **BIOGRAPHY OF SUSAN SONTAG**

**Susan Sontag** was a highly respected American essayist, novelist, intellectual, and activist, known for her brilliant thinking in her analyses of contemporary culture. Susan, originally named Susan Rosenblatt, was born in New York City in January 16, 1933. Sontag's father is Jack Rosenblatt. Her mother, Mildred Jacobsen, married Nathan Sontag seven years later. Sontag grew up in Arizona and, later, in Los Angeles, where she graduated from North Hollywood High

School at the age of 15. She began her undergraduate studies at University of Chicago, where she graduated with a B.A. At 17, Sontag married Philip Rieff, they divorced in 1958. The couple had a son, David Rieff. Then, Sontag moved to Boston and continued her studies at Harvard, where she got a Ph.D. In 1957, Sontag studied at the University of Paris. She worked as a lecturer in philosophy at the City College of New York and Sarah Lawrence. In 1960 she was a writer-in-residence for one year at Rutgers. In the 1960s Sontag's connection with the Partisan Review brought her in close contact with the 'New York intellectuals'.

*On Photography*, she received the National Book Critic's Award for Criticism in 1977. She has also won the George Polk Memorial Award, National Institutes and America Academy Award for Literature and the Brandeis Creative Arts Award. Sontag's *In America* received the National Book Award in 2000. Sontag died in New York City on December 28, 2004, aged 71, from complication of myelodysplastic syndrome evolving into acute myelogenous leukemia. She is buried in Montparnasse cemetery, France.

Source: "Susan Sontag". Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 26 March 2007.  
<[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susan\\_Sontag](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susan_Sontag)>