

franz kafka metamorphosis book

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The *Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka is one of the most profound and influential works of 20th-century literature. Published in 1915, this novella explores themes of alienation, identity, and the absurdity of human existence through the surreal transformation of its protagonist, Gregor Samsa. Kafka's unique narrative style, combined with his mastery of depicting psychological and societal alienation, has cemented *The Metamorphosis* as a seminal text that continues to resonate with readers and scholars alike. In this article, we will delve into the origins of the book, its plot and characters, thematic elements, stylistic choices, and its enduring legacy.

Background and Context

Franz Kafka: The Author

Franz Kafka (1883–1924) was a German-speaking Bohemian novelist and short-story writer born in Prague. His works are characterized by their exploration of complex themes such as guilt, anxiety, and the alienation of modern life. Kafka's own life, marked by feelings of isolation and a struggling relationship with authority figures, heavily influenced his writing. Despite his relatively small oeuvre, Kafka's influence on literature and existential philosophy remains vast.

Literary Environment of the Early 20th Century

Kafka's *Metamorphosis* was written during a period of rapid social change, industrialization, and upheaval. The early 20th century was marked by a sense of disillusionment and questioning of traditional values. Modernist literature emerged as a response, emphasizing subjective experience, fragmentation, and experimental narrative techniques. Kafka's work fits squarely within this milieu, often reflecting the anxieties of modern life.

Plot Summary

The Transformation of Gregor Samsa

The core of *The Metamorphosis* revolves around Gregor Samsa, a traveling salesman who wakes up one morning to find himself transformed into a gigantic insect—often interpreted as a cockroach or vermin. The story begins with this surreal event, which Kafka describes with clinical detachment, emphasizing the absurdity and horror of the situation.

Gregor's Struggles and Family Dynamics

As Gregor grapples with his new form, he becomes increasingly isolated from his family and society. His primary concern shifts from his physical condition to the inconvenience his transformation causes his family—particularly their financial dependence on him. Despite his suffering, Gregor continues to internalize feelings of guilt and shame.

Decline and Tragedy

Over time, Gregor's condition deteriorates physically and emotionally. His family's initial shock turns

to resentment and neglect. They confine him to a small room, treating him as a burden. The narrative culminates in Gregor's death, which is accepted with a mixture of relief and sorrow by his family.

Major Themes and Symbolism

Alienation and Isolation

One of the central themes of *The Metamorphosis* is the profound sense of alienation. Gregor's metamorphosis symbolizes the feeling of being estranged from oneself, others, and society. Kafka explores how societal and familial expectations can conspire to dehumanize individuals.

Identity and Self-Perception

Gregor's transformation forces both him and his family to confront questions about identity. Is Gregor still the same person after his physical change? Kafka examines how external appearances influence perceptions of self and worth.

The Absurdity of Existence

Kafka's work vividly captures the absurdity of modern life. Gregor's inexplicable transformation and the indifferent reactions of those around him reflect existential themes, emphasizing the randomness and meaninglessness that can pervade human existence.

Family and Duty

The story also delves into familial obligations and the burden of responsibility. Gregor's role as the breadwinner and his subsequent marginalization reveal the tension between individual needs and societal roles.

Symbolism in the Book

- Gregor's Insect Form: Represents dehumanization, guilt, and societal rejection.
- The Locked Door: Symbolizes confinement and the barriers between the individual and society.
- The Family's Reaction: Reflects societal attitudes towards those who are different or vulnerable.
- Gregor's Room: Embodies isolation and the loss of personal identity.

Stylistic Elements

Narrative Style

Kafka employs a straightforward, almost clinical narrative tone, which heightens the surreal and disturbing nature of Gregor's transformation. The detailed descriptions of Gregor's physical state contrast with the emotional detachment of the narration, emphasizing the absurdity.

Structure and Pacing

The novella is structured in a linear fashion, focusing on Gregor's evolving condition. Kafka's economical prose and precise pacing allow the reader to immerse in the protagonist's psychological state without extraneous detail.

Use of Symbolism and Allegory

Kafka's *Metamorphosis* functions on multiple levels—literal, psychological, and social—making it a rich text for interpretation. Its allegorical nature invites readers to reflect on broader human concerns beyond the literal story.

Critical Reception and Interpretations

Initial Reception

Upon publication, *The Metamorphosis* received mixed reviews, with some critics puzzled by its bizarre premise, while others recognized its innovative narrative. Over time, it gained recognition as a masterpiece of existential literature.

Thematic Interpretations

Scholars have offered various interpretations:

- Existentialist View: Gregor's transformation symbolizes the absurdity and meaninglessness of life.
- Psychological Perspective: The story reflects Kafka's own feelings of guilt, alienation, and depression.
- Social Critique: It highlights the dehumanizing effects of capitalism and societal expectations.

Influence on Literature and Culture

Kafka's work has profoundly influenced modern literature, inspiring writers like Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Gabriel García Márquez. The novella's themes remain relevant in contemporary discussions of mental health, social alienation, and identity.

Legacy and Adaptations

Literary Legacy

The Metamorphosis continues to be studied in academic settings, appreciated for its depth and ambiguity. Its influence extends into philosophy, psychology, and the arts.

Adaptations

The story has been adapted into various media:

- Theatre: Stage adaptations emphasizing its symbolic nature.
- Film and Television: Visual interpretations capturing Kafka's surreal atmosphere.
- Opera and Ballet: Artistic reimaginings of the narrative.

Cultural Impact

The phrase "Kafkaesque" has entered common usage to describe situations that are surreal, oppressive, or illogical—directly inspired by Kafka's themes.

Conclusion

Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* remains a towering work that challenges readers to confront the complexities of human existence, societal expectations, and personal identity. Its vivid portrayal of transformation and alienation encapsulates the anxieties of modern life and continues to inspire countless interpretations across disciplines. Kafka's mastery lies in his ability to depict the absurdity inherent in human conditions with clarity and emotional depth, making *The Metamorphosis* an enduring literary masterpiece that beckons readers to reflect on their own place within society and the universe.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of Franz Kafka's 'The Metamorphosis'?

The main theme revolves around alienation and the individual's sense of guilt and guiltlessness, exploring how Gregor Samsa's transformation impacts his identity, family relationships, and societal roles.

How does Kafka depict Gregor Samsa's transformation in 'The Metamorphosis'?

Kafka describes Gregor's transformation into a giant insect in vivid, unsettling detail, emphasizing his physical alienation and the subsequent emotional and social isolation he experiences.

What is the significance of the title 'The Metamorphosis'?

The title signifies Gregor's sudden and inexplicable physical change, symbolizing broader themes of personal transformation, identity crisis, and the dehumanizing effects of modern life.

How has 'The Metamorphosis' influenced modern literature and culture?

The novella has inspired countless adaptations, references, and interpretations across literature, theater, film, and psychology, highlighting themes of alienation, existential angst, and the absurdity of human condition.

What are some common interpretations of Gregor's transformation in 'The Metamorphosis'?

Many interpret Gregor's transformation as a metaphor for feelings of worthlessness, societal rejection, or mental health struggles, while others see it as a critique of dehumanizing bureaucratic systems.

Is 'The Metamorphosis' considered a symbolist or

existentialist work, and why?

It is often regarded as an existentialist work because it explores themes of absurdity, individual alienation, and the search for meaning in a seemingly indifferent world, aligning with existentialist philosophy.

Additional Resources

Franz Kafka Metamorphosis Book: An In-Depth Investigation into Its Themes, Symbolism, and Literary Significance

The literary world has long been captivated by Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, a novella that continues to evoke profound interpretations and scholarly debates over a century after its publication. Renowned for its surreal narrative, existential themes, and haunting symbolism, Kafka's *Metamorphosis* remains a quintessential work in modernist literature. This investigative article aims to explore the depths of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, dissecting its thematic layers, historical context, symbolism, and enduring influence on literature and culture.

Introduction to Franz Kafka and Metamorphosis

Who Was Franz Kafka?

Born in Prague in 1883, Franz Kafka was a German-speaking Bohemian novelist and short-story writer. His works, characterized by themes of alienation, guilt, and bureaucracy, have cemented his reputation as one of the most influential writers of the 20th century. Kafka's writing style is often described as "Kafkaesque," a term that denotes surreal, oppressive, and nightmarish qualities.

Overview of Metamorphosis

Published in 1915, *Metamorphosis* tells the story of Gregor Samsa, a traveling salesman who one morning awakens to find himself transformed into a gigantic insect—or vermin, as some translations suggest. The novella chronicles Gregor's physical transformation and the subsequent emotional, familial, and societal repercussions. This seemingly fantastical premise serves as a vehicle for exploring profound questions about identity, human existence, and societal alienation.

Historical and Cultural Context

Literary Modernism and Kafka's Place

Metamorphosis emerged during a time of rapid societal change—industrialization, urbanization, and shifting social norms. Modernist literature, characterized by experimental narrative techniques and a focus on individual consciousness, provided the backdrop for Kafka's innovative storytelling. Kafka's work reflects the anxieties and ambiguities of his era, especially the sense of disconnection and the oppressive structures of modern society.

Biographical Influences

Kafka's personal life—his strained relationship with his family, his Jewish identity, his feelings of guilt and inadequacy—deeply inform the themes of Metamorphosis. His experiences of alienation and the bureaucratic nature of his environment are mirrored in Gregor's sense of entrapment and helplessness.

Thematic Analysis of Metamorphosis

Alienation and Isolation

One of the central themes of Metamorphosis is the profound sense of alienation. Gregor's transformation into an insect symbolizes his emotional and societal estrangement. Despite his initial concern for his family and his job, his metamorphosis renders him physically and psychologically isolated, revealing the fragile and often superficial nature of human relationships.

Identity and Humanity

Kafka explores what it means to be human through Gregor's metamorphosis. As he becomes more insect-like, questions arise: Does his internal consciousness remain intact? Is his humanity defined by his physical form or his consciousness? The novella challenges readers to reconsider notions of identity, emphasizing that external appearances can obscure inner human essence.

Family Dynamics and Guilt

Gregor's family initially relies on him financially but quickly shifts to resentment and neglect as his condition worsens. Kafka examines themes of familial responsibility, guilt, and the transactional nature of relationships. The family's treatment of Gregor underscores societal and familial expectations, revealing the often self-centered nature of human bonds.

Absurdity and Bureaucracy

Kafka's portrayal of Gregor's futile attempts to communicate and adapt reflects the absurdity of modern bureaucratic systems. Gregor's sense of helplessness mirrors the alienation individuals feel within impersonal institutions, emphasizing themes of powerlessness and the nonsensical nature of societal structures.

Symbolism in Metamorphosis

The Transformation: A Multifaceted Symbol

Gregor's sudden transformation into an insect functions on multiple symbolic levels:

- Existential Angst: The metamorphosis embodies feelings of insignificance and the absurdity of life.
- Social Alienation: The insect form signifies societal rejection and marginalization.
- Family and Identity: The transformation exposes familial hypocrisy and the fragility of perceived identity.

Gregor's Room and Space

Gregor's room becomes a prison and a symbol of confinement. Its cramped, oppressive atmosphere reflects his mental state and societal imprisonment. The physical space underscores themes of isolation and the loss of agency.

The Insect as a Cultural Motif

In various cultures, insects symbolize decay, vulnerability, or transformation. Kafka's choice of an insect—particularly a vermin—evokes feelings of disgust, dehumanization, and societal repulsion, reinforcing the novella's critique of social hierarchies.

Critical Interpretations and Scholarly Debates

Existentialist Readings

Many scholars interpret *Metamorphosis* as an existentialist allegory. Gregor's transformation and subsequent rejection mirror the absurdity of human existence and the search for meaning within an indifferent universe.

Psychological Perspectives

From a psychoanalytic standpoint, Gregor's metamorphosis can be seen as a manifestation of subconscious guilt, repression, or a desire to escape responsibility. Some interpret the insect as a symbol of suppressed desires or latent fears.

Political and Social Critiques

Kafka's work has been read as a critique of bureaucratic oppression and societal indifference. The dehumanization of Gregor reflects the alienating effects of modern capitalism and the loss of individuality.

Controversies and Divergent Views

While some view the novella as a straightforward allegory, others argue its ambiguity resists definitive interpretation. Kafka himself preferred to leave *Metamorphosis* open to multiple readings, emphasizing its universality and depth.

Literary Style and Narrative Techniques

Surrealism and Absurdism

Kafka employs surreal imagery—Gregor's metamorphosis as an impossible event—creating a dream-like atmosphere that blurs the line between reality and fantasy.

Minimalist Prose

The novella's straightforward, unadorned style enhances the sense of realism, making the surreal elements more impactful and unsettling.

Point of View

Narrated from Gregor's perspective, the story immerses readers in his internal world, fostering empathy and complicating moral judgments.

Enduring Cultural Impact and Adaptations

Influence on Literature and Art

Metamorphosis has inspired countless writers, artists, and filmmakers. Its themes resonate across genres, influencing existentialist philosophy, absurdist theater, and contemporary literature.

Adaptations

The novella has been adapted into plays, films, operas, and visual arts. Notable adaptations include:

- The 1975 film *The Metamorphosis* directed by Jan Švankmajer.
- Stage adaptations by numerous theater companies worldwide.
- Artistic interpretations exploring Gregor's inner world.

Continued Relevance

In an era marked by rapid technological change and social upheaval, Kafka's exploration of alienation remains pertinent. His work prompts reflection on human dignity, societal pressures, and the nature of selfhood.

Conclusion: The Lasting Significance of Kafka's Metamorphosis

Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* stands as a monumental exploration of the human condition. Its rich symbolism, profound themes, and innovative narrative technique have secured its place in the pantheon of world literature. The novella's enduring relevance lies in its ability to articulate the alienation and absurdity of modern life, inviting readers to confront uncomfortable truths about identity, societal expectations, and the nature of existence.

Through meticulous examination of its themes, symbolism, and historical context, this investigation underscores Kafka's genius in crafting a story that is both deeply personal and universally resonant. As readers continue to grapple with its ambiguities and layered meanings, *Metamorphosis* remains a powerful mirror reflecting the complexities—and contradictions—of the human soul.

References and Further Reading

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- Spector, Scott. *Kafka's Other Trial: The Case of a Literary Genius*. Northwestern University Press, 1998.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, and Practice*. Routledge, 1988.
- Camus, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*. Vintage International, 1991.

Note: This article aims to provide a comprehensive and scholarly overview of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. For a deeper understanding, readers are encouraged to explore the primary text and scholarly commentaries.

[Franz Kafka Metamorphosis Book](#)

franz kafka metamorphosis book: The Metamorphosis Franz Kafka, 2025-04-25 This fine version, with David Cronenberg's inspired introduction and the new translator's beguiling afterword, is, I suspect, the most disturbing though the most comforting of all so far; others will follow, but don't hesitate: this is the transforming text for you.—Richard Howard Franz Kafka's 1915 novella of unexplained horror and nightmarish transformation became a worldwide classic and remains a century later one of the most widely read works of fiction in the world. It is the story of traveling salesman Gregor Samsa, who wakes one morning to find himself transformed into a monstrous insect. This hugely influential work inspired George Orwell, Albert Camus, Jorge Louis Borges, and Ray Bradbury, while continuing to unsettle millions of readers. In her new translation of Kafka's masterpiece, Susan Bernofsky strives to capture both the humor and the humanity in this macabre tale, underscoring the ways in which Gregor Samsa's grotesque metamorphosis is just the physical manifestation of his longstanding spiritual impoverishment.

franz kafka metamorphosis book: Metamorphosis Frank Kafka, 2020-12-02 The *Metamorphosis* is a novella written by Franz Kafka which was first published in 1915. One of Kafka's best-known works, *The Metamorphosis* tells the story of salesman Gregor Samsa who wakes one morning to find himself inexplicably transformed into a huge insect (German *ungeheures Ungeziefer*, literally monstrous vermin), subsequently struggling to adjust to this new condition. The novella has been widely discussed among literary critics, with differing interpretations being offered. Franz Kafka (3 July 1883 – 3 June 1924) a German-speaking Bohemian novelist and short-story writer, widely regarded as one of the major figures of 20th-century literature. His work fuses elements of realism and the fantastic. It typically features isolated protagonists facing bizarre or surrealistic predicaments and incomprehensible socio-bureaucratic powers. It has been interpreted as exploring themes of alienation, existential anxiety, guilt, and absurdity. His best known works include *Die Verwandlung* (*The Metamorphosis*), *Der Process* (*The Trial*), and *Das Schloss* (*The Castle*). The term *Kafkaesque* has entered the English language to describe situations like those found in his writing. Kafka was born into a middle-class German-Jewish family in Prague,

the capital of the Kingdom of Bohemia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, today the capital of the Czech Republic. He trained as a lawyer and after completing his legal education was employed full-time by an insurance company, forcing him to relegate writing to his spare time. Over the course of his life, Kafka wrote hundreds of letters to family and close friends, including his father, with whom he had a strained and formal relationship. He became engaged to several women but never married. He died in 1924 at the age of 40 from tuberculosis. Few of Kafka's works were published during his lifetime: the story collections *Betrachtung* (Contemplation) and *Ein Landarzt* (A Country Doctor), and individual stories (such as *Die Verwandlung*) were published in literary magazines but received little public attention. In his will, Kafka instructed his executor and friend Max Brod to destroy his unfinished works, including his novels *Der Prozess*, *Das Schloss* and *Der Verschollene* (translated as both *Amerika* and *The Man Who Disappeared*), but Brod ignored these instructions. His work has influenced a vast range of writers, critics, artists, and philosophers during the 20th and 21st centuries. Translated by Ian Johnston.

franz kafka metamorphosis book: The Metamorphosis Franz Kafka, 1996-02-17 For use in schools and libraries only. Writings by and about Kafka and textual notes accompany this translation of his early 20th-century work.

franz kafka metamorphosis book: Metamorphosis Franz Kafka, 2024-02-02 *Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka is a haunting and surreal exploration of existentialism and the human condition. This novella introduces readers to Gregor Samsa, a diligent traveling salesman who wakes up one morning to find himself transformed into a gigantic insect. Kafka's narrative delves into the isolation, alienation, and absurdity that Gregor experiences as he grapples with his new identity. The novella is a profound examination of the individual's struggle to maintain a sense of self and belonging in a world that often feels incomprehensible. Kafka's writing is characterized by its dreamlike quality and a sense of impending doom. As Gregor's physical and emotional transformation unfolds, readers are drawn into a nightmarish world that blurs the lines between reality and illusion. *Metamorphosis* is a timeless work that continues to captivate readers with its exploration of themes such as identity, family, and the dehumanizing effects of modern society. Kafka's unique style and ability to evoke a sense of existential unease make this novella a literary classic. Step into the surreal and unsettling world of *Metamorphosis* and embark on a journey of self-discovery and existential reflection. Kafka's masterpiece challenges readers to confront the complexities of the human psyche and the enigmatic nature of existence. ABOUT THE AUTHOR Franz Kafka (1883-1924) was a Czech-born German-speaking novelist and short story writer whose works have had a profound influence on modern literature. Born in Prague, which was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Kafka's writing is characterized by its exploration of existentialism, alienation, and the absurdity of human existence. Kafka's most famous works include *Metamorphosis*, where the protagonist wakes up one morning transformed into a giant insect, and *The Trial*, a nightmarish tale of a man arrested and tried by an inscrutable and oppressive bureaucracy. His writing often delves into the themes of isolation and the struggle to find meaning in an indifferent world. Despite his relatively small body of work, Kafka's impact on literature and philosophy has been immense. His writings have been interpreted in various ways, and the term *Kafkaesque* is often used to describe situations characterized by surreal complexity and absurdity. Kafka's legacy as a literary innovator and his exploration of the human psyche continue to captivate readers and scholars alike, making him a central figure in the world of modern literature.

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franz kafka metamorphosis book: The Metamorphosis (Legend Classics) Franz Kafka, 2017-06-01 One of the seminal works of fiction of the 20th century, *The Metamorphosis* finds traveling salesman, Gregor Samsa, inexplicably transformed into a large, monstrous insect-like creature.

franz kafka metamorphosis book: The Metamorphosis Ae4qs Publication, Franz Kafka,

2021-04-16 The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka is a real classic. You should grab it and read it to experience it yourself. Here's a simple plot to The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka Gregor Samsa wakes up one morning to find himself transformed into a monstrous vermin. He initially considers the transformation to be temporary and slowly ponders the consequences of this metamorphosis. Unable to get up and leave the bed, Gregor reflects on his job as a traveling salesman and cloth merchant, which he characterizes as an exhausting and never-ending traffic. He sees his employer as a despot and would quickly quit his job were he not his family's sole breadwinner and working off his bankrupt father's debts. While trying to move, Gregor finds that his office manager, the chief clerk, has shown up to check on him, indignant about Gregor's unexcused absence. Gregor attempts to communicate with both the manager and his family, but all they can hear from behind the door is incomprehensible vocalizations. Gregor laboriously drags himself across the floor and opens the door. The manager, upon seeing the transformed Gregor, flees the apartment. Gregor's family is horrified, and his father drives him back into his room under the threat of violence. With Gregor's unexpected incapacitation, the family is deprived of their financial stability. Although Gregor's sister Grete now shies away from the sight of him, she takes to supplying him with food, which they find he can only eat rotten. Gregor begins to accept his new identity and begins crawling on the floor, walls and ceiling. Discovering Gregor's new pastime, Grete decides to remove some of the furniture to give Gregor more space. She and her mother begin taking furniture away, but Gregor finds their actions deeply distressing. He desperately tries to save a particularly-loved portrait on the wall of a woman clad in fur. His mother loses consciousness at the sight of Gregor clinging to the image to protect it. As Grete rushes to assist her mother, Gregor follows her and is hurt by a medicine bottle falling on his face. His father returns home from work and angrily tosses apples at Gregor. One of them is lodged into a sensitive spot in his back and severely wounds him. Gregor suffers from his injuries for several weeks and takes very little food. He is increasingly neglected by his family and his room becomes used for storage. To secure their livelihood, the family takes three tenants into their apartment. The cleaning lady alleviates Gregor's isolation by leaving his door open for him on the evenings that the tenants eat out. One day, his door is left open despite the presence of the tenants. Gregor, attracted by Grete's violin-playing in the living room, crawls out of his room and is spotted by the unsuspecting tenants, who complain about the apartment's unhygienic conditions and cancel their tenancy. Grete, who has by now become tired of taking care of Gregor and is realizing the burden his existence puts on each one in the family, tells her parents they must get rid of it, or they will all be ruined. Gregor, understanding that he is no longer wanted, dies of starvation before the next sunrise. The relieved and optimistic family take a tram ride out to the countryside, and decide to move to a smaller apartment to further save money. During this short trip, Mr. and Mrs. Samsa realize that, in spite of going through hardships which have brought an amount of paleness to her face, Grete appears to have grown up into a pretty and well-figured lady, which leads her parents to think about finding her a husband. The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka

franz kafka metamorphosis book: The Metamorphosis - Franz Kafka Franz Kafka, 2021-06-10 As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect. He was laying on his hard, as it were armor-plated, back and when he lifted his head a little he could see his domelike brown belly divided into stiff arched segments on top of which the bed quilt could hardly keep in position and was about to slide off completely. His numerous legs, which were pitifully thin compared to the rest of his bulk, waved helplessly before his eyes. With it's startling, bizarre, yet surprisingly funny first opening, Kafka begins his masterpiece, The Metamorphosis. It is the story of a young man who, transformed overnight into a giant beetle-like insect, becomes an object of disgrace to his family, an outsider in his own home, a quintessentially alienated man. A harrowing though absurdly comic meditation on human feelings of inadequacy, guilt, and isolation, The Metamorphosis has taken its place as one of the most widely read and influential works of twentieth-century fiction. As W.H. Auden wrote, Kafka is important to us because his predicament is the predicament of modern man.

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2019-01-09 The Squashed edition of Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka. Abridged from the original text to read in an hour or so. Squashed editions are precise abridgements - the original ideas, in their own words, the full beam of the book, the quotable quotes and all the famous lines, but neatly honed down to the length of a readable short story. Like reading the bible without all the begats - Prof. Jim Curtis

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franz kafka metamorphosis book: *The Metamorphosis* Franz Kafka, 2009-05-14 From one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century, the author of *The Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*: A collection that brings together the stories he allowed to be published during his lifetime, including his best-known tale of a man who wakes up transformed into an insect. To Max Brod, his literary executor, Kafka wrote: "Of all my writings the only books that can stand are these." "Kafka's survey of the insectile situation of young Jews in inner Bohemia can hardly be improved upon: 'With their posterior legs they were still glued to their father's Jewishness and with their wavering anterior legs they found no new ground.' There is a sense in which Kafka's Jewish question ('What have I in common with Jews?') has become everybody's question, Jewish alienation the template for all our doubts. What is Muslimness? What is femaleness? What is Polishness? These days we all find our anterior legs flailing before us. We're all insects, all Ungeziefer, now." —Zadie Smith, bestselling author of *White Teeth* and *On Beauty*

franz kafka metamorphosis book: *The Metamorphosis* Franz Kafka, 2019-12-22 *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka is a real classic. You should grab it and read it to experience it yourself. Here's a simple plot to *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka Gregor Samsa wakes up one morning to find himself transformed into a monstrous vermin. He initially considers the transformation to be temporary and slowly ponders the consequences of this metamorphosis. Unable to get up and leave the bed, Gregor reflects on his job as a traveling salesman and cloth merchant, which he characterizes as an exhausting and never-ending traffic. He sees his employer as a despot and would quickly quit his job were he not his family's sole breadwinner and working off his bankrupt father's debts. While trying to move, Gregor finds that his office manager, the chief clerk, has shown up to check on him, indignant about Gregor's unexcused absence. Gregor attempts to communicate with both the manager and his family, but all they can hear from behind the door is incomprehensible vocalizations. Gregor laboriously drags himself across the floor and opens the door. The manager, upon seeing the transformed Gregor, flees the apartment. Gregor's family is horrified, and his father drives him back into his room under the threat of violence. With Gregor's unexpected incapacitation, the family is deprived of their financial stability. Although Gregor's sister Grete now shies away from the sight of him, she takes to supplying him with food, which they find he can only eat rotten. Gregor begins to accept his new identity and begins crawling on the floor, walls and ceiling. Discovering Gregor's new pastime, Grete decides to remove some of the furniture to give Gregor more space. She and her mother begin taking furniture away, but Gregor finds their

actions deeply distressing. He desperately tries to save a particularly-loved portrait on the wall of a woman clad in fur. His mother loses consciousness at the sight of Gregor clinging to the image to protect it. As Grete rushes to assist her mother, Gregor follows her and is hurt by a medicine bottle falling on his face. His father returns home from work and angrily tosses apples at Gregor. One of them is lodged into a sensitive spot in his back and severely wounds him. Gregor suffers from his injuries for several weeks and takes very little food. He is increasingly neglected by his family and his room becomes used for storage. To secure their livelihood, the family takes three tenants into their apartment. The cleaning lady alleviates Gregor's isolation by leaving his door open for him on the evenings that the tenants eat out. One day, his door is left open despite the presence of the tenants. Gregor, attracted by Grete's violin-playing in the living room, crawls out of his room and is spotted by the unsuspecting tenants, who complain about the apartment's unhygienic conditions and cancel their tenancy. Grete, who has by now become tired of taking care of Gregor and is realizing the burden his existence puts on each one in the family, tells her parents they must get rid of it, or they will all be ruined. Gregor, understanding that he is no longer wanted, dies of starvation before the next sunrise. The relieved and optimistic family take a tram ride out to the countryside, and decide to move to a smaller apartment to further save money. During this short trip, Mr. and Mrs. Samsa realize that, in spite of going through hardships which have brought an amount of paleness to her face, Grete appears to have grown up into a pretty and well-figured lady, which leads her parents to think about finding her a husband. The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka

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