



Jonah: Text Classics

Louis Stone

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One of the first great novels about Sydney, *Jonah* is the story of two larrikins: the unforgettable Jonah and Chook.

Jonah, born a hunchback, is feared and revered in equal measure as the ruthless leader of the Push, a violent gang that terrorises the slums of Waterloo. Chook, a fellow member of the Push, is Jonah's loyal best friend.

But after a chance encounter with his son, the result of a casual affair, Jonah decides to abandon the larrikin life and settle down. He marries Ada, the mother of his child, and takes advantage of an opportunity to open his own business.

Chook, too, leaves the Push and finds love in the arms of factory worker, Pinkey. But can either man escape his awful past?

Contrasting the sordid streets of the inner suburbs with the glittering lights of the harbour city, *Jonah* is a brilliant evocation of Sydney life at the turn of the century.

This edition comes with a new introduction by Frank Moorhouse.

Louis Stone was born in Leicester, England, in 1871. In 1884 he and his family migrated to Brisbane, and soon after moved to the inner-Sydney suburb of Waterloo. Stone attended the University of Sydney before becoming a primary school teacher. His novel *Jonah*, based on his memories of life in Waterloo, was published in 1911, and garnered praise from John Galsworthy and Norman Lindsay. He later wrote *Betty Wayside* (1915), a novel, and *The Lap of the Gods* (1923), a play. Stone died in 1935.

'With one book...Stone has put himself in the front rank of Australian authorship.' A. G. Stephens

'Jonah is a book in which every page, as a novelist said to me lately, "feels written." What that means is, I think, that the words are not slammed down in a hit-or-miss fashion. The author has felt aware that he has only, let us say, about ninety thousand words to use, and that there must be no waste pages, no dead paragraphs, no words that a mere counters...[Jonah is] a book extraordinarily well written.' Nettie Palmer, *Brisbane Mail*

'An excellent novel...Jonah, the deformed hero, is a sort of Napoleon of the gutter...[Stone's book is] a valuable and original contribution to Australian fiction.' *Sydney Morning Herald*

'Recognizable at once as a classic...Mrs Yabsley...is one of the most real and memorable characters in Australian fiction.' H. M. Green, *A History of Australian Literature*

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