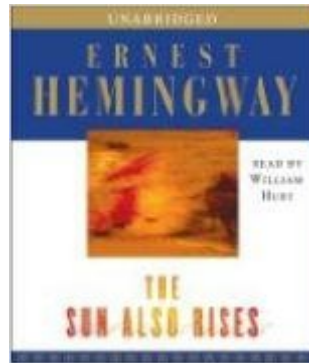


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The Sun Also Rises



Synopsis

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NARRATIVE OF THE LOST GENERATION The Sun Also Rises is one of Ernest Hemingway's masterpieces and a classic example of his spare but powerful style. A poignant look at the disillusionment and angst of the post-World War I generation, the story introduces two of Hemingway's most unforgettable characters: Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley. Follow the flamboyant Brett and the hapless Jake as they journey from the wild nightlife of 1920s Paris to the brutal bullfighting rings of Spain with a motley group of expatriates. It is an age of moral bankruptcy, spiritual dissolution, unrealized love and vanishing illusions. First published in 1926, The Sun Also Rises helped to establish Hemingway as one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This, friends, was the single book that so fatefully launched Ernest Hemingway's amazing and long-lived literary career. As such it is as close to being a legendary book as they come, yet some seventy five years after its initial publication, it still offers a story that is also surprisingly fresh, personal, and memorable. For all of his obvious excesses, Hemingway was an artist compelled to delve deliberately into painful truths, and he attempted to do so with a style of writing that cut away all of the frills and artifice, so that at its heart this novel is meant as an exploration into what it means to be adult and alive. Thus we are introduced to Jake Barnes, a veteran of World War One, now forced by his wounds to live as a man without the ability to act like one, forced by impotence to forgo all of life's usual intimacies, and all of its associated life connections for which he so yearns. At the

same time, Jake attempts to live a life of meaning and purpose, one crammed full with activity, work, and friendships. Yet it is within this network of friendships and connections that he must confront his painful circumstances. Enter his true love, the feckless Lady Ashley, and indeed the plot thickens, for we soon see how Jake's physical affliction has painfully affected several others. Ashley loves him, but needs a virile man who can give her the physical love she needs. While Ashley is a woman of uncommon beauty, she is also virtuous enough in her own way to want the one man she truly loves to be her lover. Like all of us, she wants most that which she can never have, and so she returns to the source of her own dilemma time after time to Jake, her emotional match, the one man who cannot give her the mature emotional love she craves.

The Sun Also Rises is one of the few works of literature that shook me to the core, along with Remarque's Three Comrades, Gorky's autobiography, and Chekhov's The Lady With The Dog. I read a page and I was hooked. Bam, just like that. I read the thing in a day. In several hours, actually. And then I went and devoured the rest of the man's literary oeuvre. It's just that great. All the greater because when you really look at it, there's no dramatic action going on here - just some people talking, then going to Spain to see the bullfights. But don't let that fool you - boring this book ain't. Jake Barnes, like most of the characters, is a veteran of World War I. A very unfortunate wound left physical love a complete impossibility for him, and thus he is left gnashing his teeth watching the woman he loves run around with all sorts of men. The Jewish Robert Cohn, who learned boxing in college in order to conquer his feelings of inferiority, happens to become smitten with her as well. Somehow, they and some of their friends and acquaintances end up going to Spain to experience the Fiesta, and while their experience starts the same giddy, frenzied, hedonistic way as for most people, it ends quite differently, when the book's darker undercurrents come to light. Insert scenes of cafe life, fishing, reminiscences, conversations with friends, watching the bullfights, some absolutely brutal humor, and lots and lots of liquor, and you've got yourself Hemingway's first masterpiece. Every element of every great Hemingway book can be seen here - plenty of vivid descriptions; moments of strange, elegiac melancholy; the human spirit fighting against the world; loneliness, isolation, and endurance. They're all here. For some reason, this book seems to draw accusations of anti-Semitism.

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