

The Sun Also Rises Summary

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Introduction

Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* was published in 1926, and was the first of Hemingway's novels to be well-known. The plot focuses on a group of expatriates living in France following World War I, and follows them as they vacation in Pamplona to see a bullfight.

Plot Summary

The novel opens in Paris, where a group of expatriates, including Jake Barnes (the novel's narrator), Lady Brett Ashley (Jake's love, who will not commit to Jake due to his war wound), and Robert Cohn (a Jewish boxer) live. These three are joined in a trip to Pamplona by Mike Campbell (Brett's fiancé) and Bill Gorton (another war veteran). There, the five see the bullfights, and Lady Ashley falls in love with Pedro Romero, a famous bull-fighter. During their stay in Spain, Cohn (who had vacationed in San Sebastian with Brett earlier in the novel) fights Jake, Mike, and Romero. However, by the end of the novel, Lady Ashley has left Romero, and returned to her independent lifestyle.

Representative Quote

"Oh, Jake," Brett said, "we could have had such a damned good time together."

Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.

"Yes," I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?"

This quote, which ends the novel, is a good representative of the book as a whole. Much of the plot revolves around Lady Ashley's independent nature, and by the end of the novel, Jake has realized that any relationship between himself and Brett could never realistically work, no matter how perfect it might seem.

Discussion Questions

1. Lady Ashley is consistently unable to remain committed to a relationship. What does Hemingway reveal about the Lost Generation through this characterization?
2. Bill Gorton spends much of the novel content to enjoy life as long as he could, especially during the time he and Jake spend camping in Spain. How does Hemingway use this character to describe the Lost Generation as a whole?
3. Near the end of the novel, Robert Cohn becomes the subject of much abuse by the other characters, especially when they are drunk, and his religion is often brought into play. How does Hemingway's use of anti-Semitism allow the reader to gain insight into the society of Hemingway's time?