

The lives of the post
war generation in "the
sun also rises"



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Earnest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* details the lives of the post war generation, otherwise known as the lost generation. The post war generation has suffered a lot during the war, and it has affected the way that they go through life, and the way they handle their relationships. Two of the characters from the lost generation, Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley, have a very complicated relationship. Their relationship has become a sort of fixture in their life. For this reason, not much in their life will ever change.

When Brett shows up at Jake's home in Paris with Count Mippipopolous, Jake asks her, "Couldn't we live together, Brett? Couldn't we just live together?" (Hemingway 55). Jake asks her to be with him, but Brett replies that she would always tromper him, which means that she would commit adultery if they were married. Jake had received a wound during the war so he's not able to have sex. Brett doesn't want to be with him if she can't have sex. In her eyes, even though she loves him, her desire for sex is so important that she would sleep with other men if they were married and that was never going to change.

Jake isn't perfect either. When he isn't with Brett, Jake picks up women and makes them fall in love with him. He promises to give them something that he is physically incapable of giving, and he always leaves them. Jake says that he does this because he is bored (Hemingway 23) when Brett had called him a romantic. Relationships have become something to just pass the time with. He is hurting himself and others by doing this.

Nevertheless, it is clear that Jake really does love Brett. Jake is ready to do anything for her. He gets into fights for her. He helps her out when she calls

for him. He even arranges some of her affairs like the bullfighter, Romero (Hemingway 185). Brett is similar in the way she interacts with Jake. Brett continuously looks to Jake for support. Despite her love affairs with other men, she drags him along with her or follows wherever he goes. If she needed help, Brett seems to know that no matter what, if she were to ask Jake for help, he would help her. Could you come? Hotel Montana, Madrid. Am rather in trouble. Brett. (Hemingway 238-239). Jake had planned to be done with Brett and to go relax in San Sebastian, but the second she sends word for help, he changes his route for Madrid.

Life for Brett and Jake will never change. They have a bond of understanding and longing with each other. It doesn't matter if Brett sleeps around with other men, Jake still wants to be with her. Brett feels awful about it though, and believes that he too will feel bad if she sleeps around when they are together. Even though they have relations with other people they find themselves drawn back to each other. Jake will do anything for Brett. Brett relies on that fact and her need for his support. They are constantly putting themselves in each other's lives because they simply cannot be without each other even if they are not together. They are hurting each other but they do not care. They do not know what to do with their lives or how to live them, so it will never change for them.