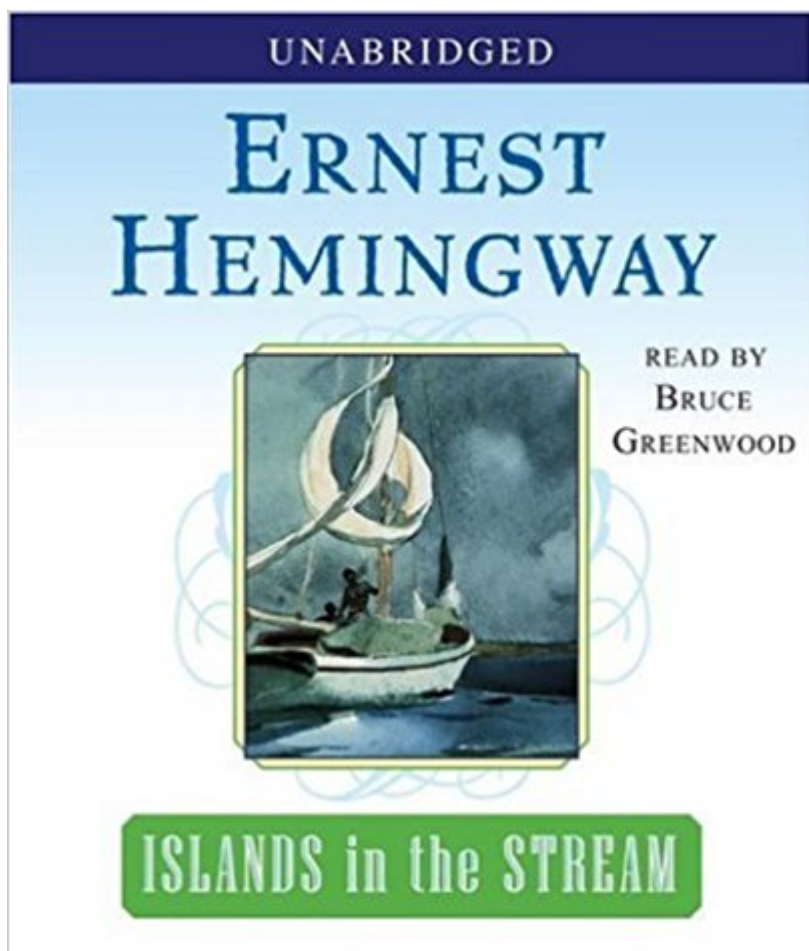


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Islands In The Stream



Synopsis

A LATER CLASSIC FROM AMERICA'S PREMIER FICTION WRITER First published in 1970, nine years after Hemingway's death, this is the story of an artist and adventurer -- a man much like Hemingway himself. Beginning in the 1930s, *Islands in the Stream* follows the fortunes of Thomas Hudson, from his experiences as a painter on the Gulf Stream island of Bimini through his antisubmarine activities off the coast of Cuba during World War II. Hemingway is at his mature best in this beguiling tale. Ernest Hemingway did more to change the style of English prose than any other writer in the twentieth century, and for his efforts he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954. Hemingway wrote in short, declarative sentences and was known for his tough, terse prose. Publication of *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* immediately established Ernest Hemingway as one of the greatest literary lights of the twentieth century. As part of the expatriate community in 1920s Paris, the former journalist and World War I ambulance driver began a career that led to international fame. Hemingway was an aficionado of bullfighting and big-game hunting, and his main protagonists were always men and women of courage and conviction, who suffered unseen scars, both physical and emotional. He covered the Spanish Civil War, portraying it in fiction in his brilliant novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and he subsequently covered World War II. His classic novella *The Old Man and the Sea* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1953. He died in 1961.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

9 1.5-hour cassettes --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Ernest Hemingway did more to influence the style of English prose than any other writer of his time. Publication of *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* immediately established him as one of the greatest literary lights of the 20th century. His classic novella *The Old Man and the Sea* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1953. Hemingway was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954. He died in 1961.

Not Hemingway's best, but still Hemingway. I highly recommend reading along with Bruce Greenwood on the audio version. And finally, read "The Old Man and the Sea" immediately after you finish. It really is the last chapter of this book that was split off as a novella and won the Nobel prize. Once you realize that the "old man" IS Thomas Hudson, both books take on an entirely new meaning. Especially with the chapter about Hudson's son reeling in the lost fish in "Islands" as compared to Hudson's fight with the Marlin in "Old Man". It may ramble a bit in parts, but there is some true genius within. Trust me on this.

The only other Hemingway book I own is *The Old Man And The Sea* which I enjoyed like this one. This book gives one a variety of emotions as you read it as it portrays a set of things that on one hand seem contradictory but in the end blend together to paint a chaotic view of the life of the main character and those he is around. Sometimes the dialogue gets a bit tedious as some conversations go on and on but that is my only major detraction albeit a recurring one in the text. There is a wide array of quiet moments, crazy if not deadly adventures, time with friends and family, meals and drinks, and of course the life by the sea which is the canvass the picture of the plot is painted upon. If one wishes a visual summary one can buy the 1970 movie adaptation of the book starring George C Scott which captures the overall feel of the book I think. In summary I am glad I bought the book, If you like a setting in the Caribbean and a story with a haunted and yet sympathetic character surround by a crew of people also so plagued or tormented but who also still live life then this book may be for you too.

My favorite Hemmingway book. His way of drawing you in by simple descriptions and dialogue of characters paints a picture like an artist of the feel, the sounds and the smell of that place and time period. He draws you in with the simple interactions of the main character with his kids, their summer vacation and fishing trips. He makes you care deeply for them and his situation and then pulls the rug out from under you right when he had woven a warm tapestry of love and longing for his boys. Then the book changes tone and he is a Nazi U Boat chaser off of Cuba and his life has

changed because of lost loves and lives in his family. He is a different man with a mission and he is a force to be reckoned with. I got the feeling that underneath this story was the actual Hemingway doing an autobiography, but I looked up his life and what happened to the main character didn't happen to him, except maybe the Sub chasing in Cuba. I would recommend this book to everyone, but be ready to not be able to put it down.

Those who read this book deserve to know that it's not a finished work. It was published posthumously from Hemingway's manuscripts, meaning it's not in the form he would have chosen and doesn't have the credibility as a Hemingway work that the novels published during his lifetime did. None of us can say what Hemingway would have kept or eventually cut from this work before he let it go to publication. Indeed, any careful reading reveals all sorts of passages or ideas he obviously lifted and used in *A Moveable Feast*. The fact that they remain here only shows that he hadn't yet gotten back to turning this manuscript into a finished form. That said, this is a wonderful book and I feel great fondness for it. Yes, it's uneven as a novel, but that is to be expected in an unfinished work that the author has not had a chance to edit. More importantly, for me, is it offers some writing that is simply among Hemingway's best. The first few pages are practically an object lesson on how to drag readers into your fictional world. (Note to teachers of creative writing.) Over and over in the book are examples of how Hemingway learned about how to use concrete images from his friend the poet Ezra Pound, from the "needles" of the water in his shower, to the case of Coca-Cola he obtains for his boys' visit, to his gin and tonic at the bar "opening the pores" of his stomach. TS Eliot's objective correlative (which he also learned from Pound) on display in a novel. Does it work as a novel? No. The story is uneven. The fundamental concept is the story of a man with three sons who loses all of them, and how he copes. Personally, it doesn't work for me. As a father I believe his experience would have been more traumatic than could be coped with by the old Hemingway stoicism. But again, this isn't a finished work. Hemingway didn't have a chance to go back and make the plot work. So the book can't be judged on that basis, I don't believe. All it can be judged on is the quality of the writing. And I think a person wishing to learn how to write English prose can do a lot worse than study this book. There are wonderful things here from a writer's perspective. And on how it makes you feel about the protagonist. Even when he's thinking or feeling or acting in a way that I think totally unrealistic, I still believe Tom Hudson is totally real. THAT is why Hemingway was so good.

Love to read Hemingway. I think there are few authors that are so candid about their afflictions,

desires, and internal struggles. Interesting considering the macho outward appearance so common back in the day. This book reminds me very much of For Whom the Bell Tolls- one of my all-times favorites. The vivid imagery and feel of the Caribbean sea bring you into the surroundings of Thomas Hudson, much of what drives him throughout the novel. Engaging and 'straight' conversations take place between Hudson and his children, allies, and illicit partners. Great read.

I've read this book four times. It's my favorite of Hemingway's and I think his best. It's said to be the closest to his autobiography and it speaks to me as the man I imagine he was or at least wanted to be. He's such a descriptive writer; I would aspire to write like he did. An excellent choice and one I enjoyed over several late in the day times with a good bottle of rum and cold Coke. I think he would have liked that.

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