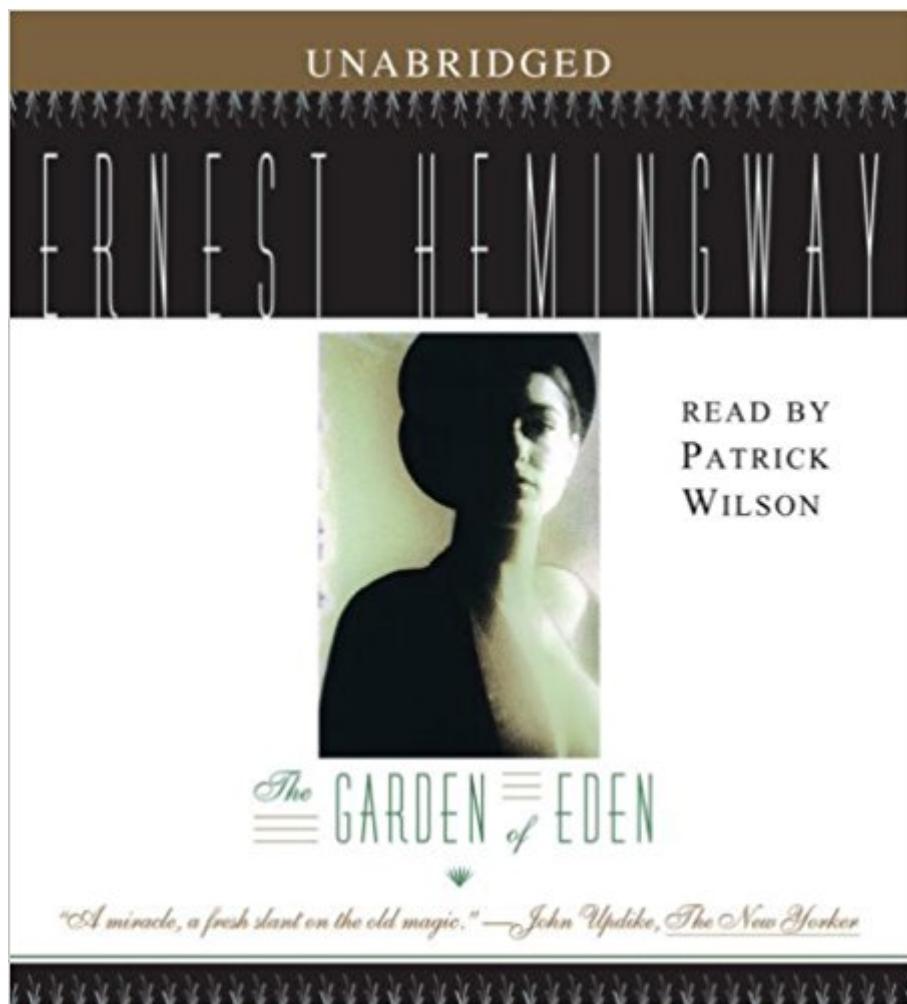


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# The Garden Of Eden



## Synopsis

A sensational bestseller when it appeared in 1986, *The Garden of Eden* is the uncompleted final novel of Ernest Hemingway, which he worked on intermittently from 1946 until his death in 1961. Set on the Côte d'Azur in the 1920s, it is the story of a young American writer, David Bourne, his glamorous wife, Catherine, and the dangerous, erotic game they play when they fall in love with the same woman.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars 182 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

An edited version of a narrative abandoned by the Nobel laureate, *The Garden of Eden* is about a young American couple in Europe on an extended honeymoon. PW stated that while the manuscript is of scholarly interest, it does not hold up as a "bona fide Hemingway novel." Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A few shards survive in the sandy ruins of Hemingway's garden of Eden: the pastoral and sensual delights of loving and swimming in Provence and Spain; the pleasure the hero, a novelist, feels when he writes "truly" about his father and hunting in Africa. The rest is madness, cruelty, and corruption. Unfortunately, neither the joy nor the terror profoundly engages the reader. The bisexual grotesqueries that bind David Bourne, his antic wife, and their complaisant woman lover are for the most part silly or banal, not even sufficiently bizarre to shock. What we have here is juiceless gossip. As fiction, the book utterly fails clumsily plotted, thematically vague and indecisive, the characters unfleshed caricatures. Even Hemingway's lyrical eloquence is stripped to frayed cliches.

How then to justify publishing an edited version of a manuscript Hemingway labored over unsuccessfully for 15 years? Arthur Waldhorn, English Dept., City Coll., CUNYCopyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I must admit to having approached Garden of Eden with a certain skepticism. As a posthumous release, having been started in the 30s, edited after his death and dealing with Hemingway's convoluted views on women and sex, there was a lot that could go wrong. I was most pleasantly surprised to become immersed in one of my favourite Hemingway novels. His sparse, Zen-like descriptions are as evocative as ever, and the main characters invite investigation, sympathy and emotional involvement. The dual storylines work so well together that moving between was as as effortless as it was rewarding. This is a fully realised novel filled with the internal insights and external descriptions that Hemingway so masterfully presents. It reminds us what real literature is, and that writing was once, first and foremost, an art form that engages and rewards the audience with offering profound insights into the human condition. A wonderful and rewarding read.

This is a real treat for Hemingway fans but the reader should keep in mind it was a work in progress. It is obvious that , if he had lived to finish it, much of the writing would have received that famous Hemingway polish and editing. The subject matter is certainly unique and the female characters are uniquely for Hemingway more interesting than the men. Not since Brett of "The Sun Also Rises" have female characters held the reader's attention with this strength. All in all a great experience for what might have been.

THIS KINDLE VERSION IS HEINOUS. From what I can tell, they used pdf to text software to create this. That's the only way I can explain why I have to try and decipher blurbs like "Not, he told h~:s~,~:~.~;must try to grow up again and face what you have to f~ being irritable or hurt t6at someone did not under~ and appreciate when you wrote" or "p;;~l::~;~:~:~~~~~:~~~ tusks that they had killed him for." or ", ""ndin!! O" the' heroes' favorite rooster" or see "C, nilmJr

"What had made the last book good was the people who were in it and the accuracy of the detail which made it believable." This is a quote from deep in the story. The main character, David, is writing a novel about when he was a child hunting elephants, with his father, for their ivory, and he is comparing that story to his last book. Sadly, what makes this book so bad is "the people who were in it and the accuracy of the detail" which actually make it unbelievable. Ok, so maybe the Africa

story David is writing is really Hemingway looking back with remorse on the many exotic animals he killed in his lifetime. Maybe the fictional relationship with his wife Catherine and their new friend Marita is an account of this real life with first wife Hadley and their friend and his second wife, Pauline. The dialogue is stilted, difficult to follow, and unrealistic. The wife Catherine has sexual identity issues that she reveals on her honeymoon and throughout the story demonstrates characteristics that today would be labeled as bipolar. She is portrayed in a very unsympathetic manner. As a reader, you just don't like her. David's character is nearly as unbalanced as Catherine's but in a different way. He loves Catherine, wants to be the strong man and dominate in the relationship, but proves pliant to her every whim, including having his hair cut and dyed like hers. When Catherine draws Marita into the relationship he again waffles at every turn. He frequently displays outbursts of anger for no apparent reason, which does nothing but confuse the reader. Far from Papa's best...maybe that's why he worked on it for 15 years without publishing.

Hemingway's work is always about Hemingway himself on some level, this time using as protagonist his idealized avatar, David Bourne, and revealing some interesting character points (gender issues). These people like so many others in Hemingway's writing drank constantly. Probably it had a lot to do with the times, overall. No judgement intended here; just an observation. Also, none of them that I can recall worked at "regular jobs," so guess they didn't have to be focused for the most part. For the most part he avoided he avoided working people (maybe too boring?). Reading Hemingway always makes me want a martini. Bourne's wife is portrayed as totally narcissistic; thereby annoying and unlikeable, as were many of H's other important females. The prime exception that I know of was his first wife, Hadley, whom he canonized in his head. My favorite by Hemingway is his memoir, *A Moveable Feast*. And I plan to retrace his steps this October in Paris.

I'm only a quarter into the book but man am I hooked. It's an excellent psychological novel that seldomly goes into any of the characters minds.

Most fascinating of all Hemingway's works.

Great book. One of my all time favorites.

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