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TOPIC

THE SNOW OF KILIMANJARO

BY

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A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

- ❑ Hemingway served as a war journalist, reporting on the bitter happenings during World War I.
- ❑ While he was on the Italian front, he was seriously wounded. The violence and death that he had eye-witnessed in the battles formed the subject of his short stories and novels.
- ❑ The Hemingway hero is mostly shown destroyed. But the novelist conveys the point the hero, though destroyed, is not defeated.
- ❑ The Snow of Kilimanjaro is also personal, the writer in this novella being partly autobiographical.

THE SNOW OF KILIMANJARO

POINTS TO PONDER

- ▶ The Snows of Kilimanjaro is about the death of a writer by name Harry whose right leg has been fractured while travelling by truck up the hill of Kilimanjaro.
- ▶ He tells his woman companion that his injury is painless but bad-smelling.
- ▶ He is lying on a cot under a shady mimosa tree and some big birds-probably they are vultures-have scented his imminent death and are hovering around. A few of the birds have alighted not far from cot.
- ▶ The woman has arranged for a plane to come and take Harry to a hospital. But Harry is skeptical. He thinks that he may die soon as the hovering of the vultures indicates.
- ▶ The woman advises Harry not to give up hopes of surviving.
- ▶ Harry wants to drink whiskey. But the woman says that he must not drink, as it is bad for his health.

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- ▶ Harry says that ever since gangrene started in his right leg, he has no pain. Along with the disappearance of pain, the horror of death has also disappeared.
- ▶ He feels only tired and angry. He decides to stop writing. The woman says that they should not have come to Kilimanjaro. They should have settled in Paris or Budapest and spent the time joyfully, shooting.
- ▶ Harry blames himself for having developed gangrene. He forgot to put iodine on the fractured leg. The carbolic acid that he applied later was too weak to have any effect. Another blunder they committed was that they employed an inexperienced Kikuyu driver to drive the truck. He did not check the oil and so the bearing in the truck got burnt out.
- ▶ Harry blames the woman for having deserted her rich, near and dear ones in Old Westbury, Saratoga and Palm Beach and clung to him.
- ▶ The woman replies that it was because of her boundless love for him. She says: 'I love you now. I'll always love you'.

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- ▶ Harry remembers the many battles that he had eye-witnessed or fought, his gambling, the snowing and their talking about the snowing, etc.
- ▶ He remembers his experience in Paris. He says that he likes his present staying in Africa.
- ▶ The woman loves him sincerely but he lies to her that he also loves her.
- ▶ He realizes that he has destroyed his ability to write by excessive drinking and sloth and also by betraying the woman who loves him sincerely.
- ▶ The woman's husband died when she was comparatively young. Thereafter she had innumerable lovers and also developed the habit of drinking. One of her two sons died in a plane crash.
- ▶ She craved for a man whom she could respect. It was during this time that she fell in love with Harry whose writing ability she admired.

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- ▶ Harry likes the woman because she has brought him security and is also nice in bed.
- ▶ She shoots down a tommy ram and promises to make him broth with it.
- ▶ She is happy when she hears that he is getting better. She appeals to him not to destroy her with his negative approach. She has already had many bitter experiences.
- ▶ In the evening a hyena (a kind of wild dog) crosses the open on its way around the hill. Harry says that he feels 'wobbly'.
- ▶ Harry thinks of his several sexual adventures. The woman who is with him at the present time is named Helen.
- ▶ There is a description of a plane arriving and lifting up Harry and placing him inside it. This appears only to be a dream.
- ▶ What really happens is that Harry is taken into the tent.
- ▶ Early the next morning he is found dead.

THANK YOU