



## Das gelobte Land

*Erich Maria Remarque*

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Zum ersten Mal als Taschenbuch: der letzte Roman Erich Maria Remarques – ein Vermächtnis!

Er blieb Fragment und fasziniert dennoch nachhaltig: Der Roman »Das gelobte Land«, an dem Remarque bis zu seinem Tod im September 1970 arbeitete, bietet ein schillerndes Bild des New York der Vierzigerjahre, der Weltmetropole, Kunststadt und Emigrantenhochburg.

Ludwig Sommer hat es geschafft: Er ist als deutscher Flüchtling dem Naziregime entkommen und mit jüdischem Pass auf Umwegen nach New York gelangt. Er findet Anschluss an die Emigrantenszene und Anstellung bei einem Kunsthändler. Binnen Kurzem steht ihm das gesellschaftliche Leben der Stadt offen, er bewegt sich zwischen rauschenden Festen, teuren Restaurants und exklusiven Appartements – und doch kann er die Unbeschwertheit nicht zurückgewinnen.

Erinnerungen an die Flucht suchen ihn heim, an die Monate in einem Versteck unter einem belgischen Museum und die Gefangenschaft in einem deutschen Konzentrationslager, wo er Zeuge der Ermordung seines Vaters wurde. Während er aufgrund seines Kunstverstands und seines kaufmännischen Geschicks immer erfolgreicher wird, quält ihn die Frage, ob ein Leben im Angesicht des Holocaust moralisch überhaupt vertretbar ist.

Die Nachricht von der Befreiung Paris' weckt Hoffnung auf eine Rückkehr und die Aussicht auf Rache, doch als kurz darauf Jessie Stein, eine selbstlose Unterstützerin der Emigranten, schwer erkrankt, entschließt sich Sommer zu bleiben. Und dann eröffnet sich die Möglichkeit, seiner Geliebten Maria Fiola nach Hollywood zu folgen.

Das Ende bleibt offen, mehrere Skizzen Remarques sind überliefert, aber das Nachwort von Tilmann Westphalen liefert Aufschluss über die Entstehungsgeschichte und das mögliche Ende.

## Das gelobte Land Details

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## From Reader Review Das gelobte Land for online ebook

### Hamish Davidson says

I really liked this story about 'Ludwig Sommer' and his fellow emigrants in New York. Free, but trapped within the red tape which applies to emigrants. Liberated, but imprisoned by the memories of the recent past.

There are some great characters in the book, from many different European cultures, and Ludwig takes a while to feel out his crowd. He has fresh memories of Nazi Germany's concentration camps and is hesitant to trust new people. When escaping Europe, Ludwig and his fellow refugees lived by a code to ensure their survival, but in New York they must live by a new set of rules.

Although Remarque didn't complete this novel personally, the story is well constructed and it is an intriguing read.

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### BlackOxford says

#### Promises Lost

A very different kind of emigrant fiction. Educated, sophisticated, cosmopolitan, the protagonist, Ludwig, whose real name might well be Remarque, arrives in New York City with false papers as a pseudo-Jew refugee from Hitler's persecution. What he encounters is entirely unexpected: a country populated by immigrants and descendants of immigrants who do not pursue the promise of America, but rather **are** that promise. From them Remarque constructs a narrative of sustained comic irony that is as entertaining and as significant today as when it was written.

There is no Gestapo in America. But there are dreams and memories of a recent European past which can never be entirely escaped. *'We were saved,'* Ludwig muses, *"but not from ourselves."*

What beckons is *"the adventure of an orderly life and a settled future."* But that adventure implies risks: in speculatively investing half his meager capital in the purchase of a Chinese bronze; in forking out a good portion of the profit for a new suit; in negotiating for a great job at 50% higher wage than offered. Ludwig is savvy and therefore prospers, largely because of his emigre friends.

The seedy Hotel Rausch is where 'Americanisation', if one dare call it that, takes place; for *"Here in the hotel the accents fly around like typhoid germs."* Ludwig's friends are a Pickwickian bunch. From Hirsch, the Jewish Scarlet Pimpernel of WWII, who suffers from PTSD and combines his fear and feelings of dislocation with a longing for the adventure and exhilaration of outsmarting his pursuers. To Lachmann, the Jewish dealer in rosaries and Christian relics, an emotional storm drain who is in love with a crippled Puerto Rican woman.

It is from these characters that Ludwig gets unstinting support: legal assistance from the firm of Levin & Watson, Levin to get clients, Watson to front with the authorities; a job from the Silver twins, disillusioned lawyers turned to Third Avenue antiques; Jessie Stein, the organizer and philanthropic heart of the emigre network. They are his American promise.

*"Only Jews are homesick for Germany"* says one of Ludwig's fellow-refugees. Not really Jewish, Ludwig is anything but homesick. He dislikes speaking German. He can't wait to escape from the German

neighbourhood of Manhattan's Yorkville. Even German art is painful to see and hear as the war drags on to its dismal conclusion.

It is this feeling of disgust for one's homeland that is most significant in my reading. As an American emigre to Europe, I have similar feelings about today's Trumpist America. The fascists of mid-century Germany were more articulate than the fascists currently in charge of the United States. But the mean-spirited hatred and xenophobia are exactly the same. I am as embarrassed, angry, and mournful as Ludwig.

As Ludwig himself notes, "*Xenophobia is the surest sign of primitiveness in people.*" And certainly the primitiveness of American Red State Republicans and Evangelicals cannot be gainsaid. When a society goes mad, one can only be glad to escape it, despite the memories and dreams that it leaves as a permanent residue. At one point Hirsch says, "*My dear Ludwig, don't you understand that we are living in the age of anxiety? The age of real and imaginary fear? Fear of life, fear of the future, fear of fear?*" How sad that it persists still..

Postscript: The dust jacket of my edition has a picture of one of the enormous alloy gargoyles near the top of the Chrysler Building. It is looking out over midtown Manhattan as if contemplating or perhaps threatening the city. The monster was of course fabricated by Krupp in its Rhineland factories. The visual irony by the jacket designer is superb.

And one other note: <https://www.6sqft.com/where-i-work-gl...>

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### **Daphne says**

A beautiful book. It is profound, with a subtle mix of the painful and hopeful, well written and translated.

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### **Maryna says**

The struggle of war immigrants in search of a better life in America evokes numerous feelings like sincere empathy and admiration of their ability to stick together with companions in distress. The glimpse of a new life is such a promising thing!

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### **?????? ??????? says**

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### **Iana Zlatanova says**

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### Artem says

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### Katya says

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### Kamil says

Why is The promised land (TPR) so similar to Shadows in paradise (SiP), and what is the difference?  
First, TPL is an unfinished book, which, after Remarque's death, was finished by his agent, his spouse Paulette Goddard and the publishing house as SiP.

TPR is about a New York immigrant Ludwig Sommer, real name unknown, and his experiences with other people that had managed to get out of Europe during WW2, and how the darkness of their past remains to haunt them, as Shadows in paradise.

Cameo appearances from Remarque's other works take place; for example, you have Ravic from Arch of Triumph, then a flashback to a menacing character standing in front of a shining window from Spark of Life, and even Paulette Goddard is mentioned.

I was glad TPL missed the strange rape scene that was in SiP. When I first read it, I thought - this can't be Remarque! Instead, we have a sensitive love story about a model and Ludwig, who illegally works as an assistant to a arts merchant. TPL takes place at the end of the war, and as the love story continues, an important question hangs in the air: what will happen with the two of them after the war?

There isn't much of a tension in the book and little in the way of dramatic story; instead, we get interesting side plots, such as the one with Reginald Black, a professional arts trader that Ludwig assists, and his various clients - a war manufacturer, an old man named Durant, who surrounds himself with happy pictures in an otherwise sad and bleak house.

Interesting motives appear here and there; in one of the dialogues, it's said that life periodically contains caesuras, and if too many appear at one time, it can lead one to suicide. Another one is about a lobster pinned alive by knives inside a shopwindow of a restaurant and a parallel with real prisoners.



