

# Lovers

*by* Jake Barnes

We skip the funeral, but we join the others at the grave site. We stand far back and watch while they plant him. I scan the mourners and wonder which one was his wife.

A man detaches himself from the group and approaches. He grins and opens his arms, and my friend hugs him. She introduces us. The fellow is her former lover's lawyer. He looks like a lawyer. Under his dark topcoat, I can see he is wearing a bow tie and red suspenders.

I tune out the chit chat. I search the sky for an omen. There is just a bleak overcast. The wind gusts from time to time ruffling my friend's blonde hair. Her cheeks are rosy. She and the lawyer chat like old pals.

I don't know her very well. We just met. She is in her early thirties. She looks guileless, but she is nobody's fool; when you look into her eyes you can see her think.

The lawyer is having a party the next weekend. We are invited. There will be a band and everything, he says. He's celebrating because he won a court case to have his alimony reduced.

That night, after pizza and beer at a Round Table in Menlo Park, we go back to our apartment building. We take the elevator to the second floor. She unlocks the door to her apartment, and we step inside. She doesn't turn on the lights. We kiss. "Fuck me," she whispers.

