

# For Whom the Bell Tolls Study Guide

## For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway

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# Contents

|                                                          |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <a href="#">For Whom the Bell Tolls Study Guide.....</a> | <a href="#">1</a>  |
| <a href="#">Contents.....</a>                            | <a href="#">2</a>  |
| <a href="#">Introduction.....</a>                        | <a href="#">5</a>  |
| <a href="#">Author Biography.....</a>                    | <a href="#">6</a>  |
| <a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>                        | <a href="#">8</a>  |
| <a href="#">Chapter 1.....</a>                           | <a href="#">10</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 2.....</a>                           | <a href="#">12</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 3.....</a>                           | <a href="#">14</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 4.....</a>                           | <a href="#">16</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 5.....</a>                           | <a href="#">18</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 6.....</a>                           | <a href="#">19</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 7.....</a>                           | <a href="#">20</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 8.....</a>                           | <a href="#">21</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 9.....</a>                           | <a href="#">23</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 10.....</a>                          | <a href="#">24</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 11.....</a>                          | <a href="#">25</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 12.....</a>                          | <a href="#">27</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 13.....</a>                          | <a href="#">28</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 14.....</a>                          | <a href="#">30</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 15.....</a>                          | <a href="#">32</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 16.....</a>                          | <a href="#">34</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 17.....</a>                          | <a href="#">36</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 18.....</a>                          | <a href="#">37</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 19.....</a>                          | <a href="#">39</a> |
| <a href="#">Chapter 20.....</a>                          | <a href="#">40</a> |



[Chapter 21..... 41](#)

[Chapter 22..... 42](#)

[Chapter 23..... 43](#)

[Chapter 24..... 44](#)

[Chapter 25..... 46](#)

[Chapter 26..... 47](#)

[Chapter 27..... 48](#)

[Chapter 28..... 49](#)

[Chapter 29..... 50](#)

[Chapter 30..... 51](#)

[Chapter 31..... 52](#)

[Chapter 32..... 53](#)

[Chapter 33..... 54](#)

[Chapter 34..... 55](#)

[Chapter 35..... 56](#)

[Chapter 36..... 57](#)

[Chapter 37..... 58](#)

[Chapter 38..... 59](#)

[Chapter 39..... 60](#)

[Chapter 40..... 61](#)

[Chapter 41..... 62](#)

[Chapter 42..... 63](#)

[Chapter 43..... 64](#)

[Characters..... 66](#)

[Themes..... 70](#)

[Style..... 71](#)



[Historical Context..... 72](#)

[Critical Overview..... 74](#)

[Criticism..... 75](#)

[Critical Essay #1..... 76](#)

[Critical Essay #2..... 78](#)

[Critical Essay #3..... 84](#)

[Adaptations..... 88](#)

[Topics for Further Study..... 89](#)

[Compare and Contrast..... 90](#)

[What Do I Read Next?..... 91](#)

[Further Study..... 92](#)

[Bibliography..... 93](#)

[Copyright Information..... 94](#)



# Introduction

When *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was published in 1940, it immediately became a resounding critical and popular success and helped cement Ernest Hemingway's reputation as one of America's foremost writers. Readers praised its realistic portrait of not only the political tensions in Europe that would soon erupt into World War II but also the complexities of the entire experience of war for the individual who found him or herself fighting for a cause. Hemingway had previously explored this theme, most notably in his short story collection, *In Our Time* (1924), and in his novels *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). Yet his attitude toward his subject in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* reveals a subtle shift. While his previous works focused more on the meaninglessness of war, this novel ends with a reaffirmation of community.

*For Whom the Bell Tolls* chronicles the experiences of American college professor Robert Jordan, who has volunteered to fight for the Loyalist cause in the Spanish Civil War. His initial idealism is quickly tempered by the realities of war. Yet his courage enables him to remain devoted to the cause, even as he faces death. Hemingway's compassionate and authentic portrait of his characters as they struggle to retain their idealistic beliefs has helped earn the novel its reputation as one of Hemingway's finest.



## Author Biography

Ernest Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899, in Oak Park, Illinois, to Clarence Edmunds (physician) and Grace (music teacher) Hemingway, both strict Congregationalists. He started writing when he was a teenager, penning a weekly column for his high school newspaper. During this period, he also began to write poems and stories, some of which were published in his school's literary magazine. After graduating high school in 1917, Hemingway started his career as a reporter for the *Kansas City Star*, covering city crime and writing feature stories. The position helped him develop a journalistic style, which would later become one of the most identifiable characteristics of his fiction.

When World War I broke out, he volunteered as a Red Cross ambulance driver in Italy. After suffering severe leg injuries, Hemingway met and fell in love with a nurse who would eventually break off their relationship. Disillusioned with the war and with romantic relationships, Hemingway returned home and turned his attention to fiction writing. To support himself, however, he returned to reporting, accepting a position at the *Toronto Star*.

Like many of his compatriots of the Lost Generation, Hemingway left America for Europe, where he joined the group of literary expatriates in Paris, including Gertrude Stein and F. Scott Fitzgerald. He lived in Paris for the next seven years, working on his fiction and serving as a European correspondent for American newspapers. From 1937 to 1938, he covered the Spanish Civil War, and from 1944 to 1945, he reported on the battles of World War II.

Edward J. O'Brien named Hemingway's short story "My Old Man," which appeared in his first publication, *Three Stories and Ten Poems*, in his list of the best stories of 1923. Hemingway's next publication, a series of short stories interspersed with vignettes, entitled *In Our Time* (1924), was well received, and he began to earn a reputation as an astute chronicler of the Lost Generation. This reputation was solidified after the publication of his next story collection, *Men Without Women* (1927), and the novels *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). When *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was published in 1940, it was regarded by the public and the critics as one of his best works.

Along with his growing reputation as one of the most important contemporary American writers, Hemingway developed a mythic persona that he helped perpetuate. During the middle of the century, the public began to envision Hemingway as the personification of his heroes—a hard drinking, forceful American, who could stand his ground on the battlefield, in the boxing ring, and on safari. Several American magazines, such as *Life* and *Esquire*, chronicled his adventures. Yet, during this period, he also devoted himself to his craft, which he considered of paramount importance in his life and his time.

During the 1950s, a life of alcohol abuse and rough living took a toll on his health. His health problems, compounded by his three failed marriages and periods of creative

stagnation, resulted in a mental breakdown in 1960, and the following year on July 2, Hemingway committed suicide in Ketchum, Idaho.

Hemingway has retained his reputation as one of America's most significant and influential writers. During his long literary career, he earned several accolades, including the Pulitzer Prize in 1953 for *The Old Man and the Sea*, the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954, and the Award of Merit from the American Academy of Arts & Letters in 1954.



# Plot Summary

The novel chronicles the experiences of American professor Robert Jordan from Saturday afternoon to Tuesday noon during the last week of May 1937. Jordan has volunteered to fight with the Loyalist guerrilla army in the Spanish Civil War. His mission is to blow up a bridge near Segovia prior to a Loyalist offensive in that area, scheduled to occur in three days. When the novel opens, he is behind enemy lines, ready to meet up with Pablo and his wife Pilar, his contacts, and the leaders of one of the guerrilla factions.

Jordan studies the bridge as he determines how he will blow it up at the necessary moment. He has previously blown up bridges and trains, but he never has had to time a demolition so carefully. Pablo and Pilar have been set to help Jordan plan and execute the mission, gathering together other guerrilla bands if necessary.

Jordan finds Pablo and Pilar and travels with them to their hideout in a mountain cave where he meets Maria, a beautiful young woman. Maria has escaped the Fascists after being tortured and raped. Jordan also meets Anselmo at the hideout, an elderly guerrilla fighter who is determined to die, if need be, for the Loyalist cause. Even though he recognizes that the Loyalists have committed atrocities during the war, Jordan has aligned himself with them, blaming their poverty and oppression for their cruel actions. He hates the Fascists as much as the others do, noting that their cruelty stems not from a desire for freedom but from naked ambition and a lust for power. After hearing Maria's shocking tales of abuse, Jordan redoubles his determination to kill as many Fascists as he can, even if he sacrifices his own life as a result.

That evening, however, he begins to fall in love with Maria, after spending most of the night with her, and considers a future with her. As a result, for the first time, Jordan becomes fearful about the mission since he now has something to live for other than stopping the Fascist occupation. He knows, though, that fear will prevent him from keeping a cool head as he plans his operation.

Jordan is able to suppress his fears, and he carefully plans the destruction of the bridge, drawing several sketches to familiarize himself and the other guerrillas with the area and to determine the best course of action. The operation, however, is almost destroyed by Pablo, who, fearing for his safety, deserts the camp after stealing the explosives.

Pablo returns on the third morning after having a change of heart, accompanied by more Loyalists with horses. The explosives and detonators, however, have been damaged so severely that Jordan has no other choice than to try to blow up the bridge with hand grenades, which would be a much more dangerous task.

The group begins to carry out their mission, unaware that the anticipated Loyalist advance has failed. First, Jordan and Anselmo kill the guards while Pablo and the others attack the Fascists who are approaching the bridge, in order to slow their movement. After Jordan blows up the bridge, he scrambles to safety. Anselmo,





however, has been hit by falling debris and dies. Jordan blames Pablo for the death of the old man, determining that if they had used the explosives, they all would have been safe.

Jordan reunites with Pablo, Pilar, Maria, and two of the men Pablo had brought with him. Pablo insists that the others had been killed in the battle, but Jordan determines that Pablo had killed them for their horses. Pablo acknowledges the murders with a shrug, noting that the men had not been part of his group.

Jordan plans their escape away from the front. He insists that Pablo should go first, since he knows the territory, accompanied by Maria. Jordan knows that those in front will have the best chance of reaching safety before the Fascists discover them. He then sends Pilar and the two guerillas on and follows them. The others make it safely across the open road, but Jordan is injured when his horse, wounded by the Fascists' bullets, falls on him. The others pull him out of the line of fire, but he insists that they go on ahead and leave him there, knowing that his injuries would slow them down and place them all in danger. Despondent, Maria tries to convince him to allow her to stay with him, but he refuses, insisting that he will live through her. The others have to carry her away.

After the others leave, Jordan sits against a tree with his gun propped up in his lap and waits for the Fascists, hoping to slow them down as the others escape. As he waits, he thinks about what has brought him to this point and determines that he has done the best that he could and thus his death will not be in vain. The novel ends as Jordan sees a Fascist lieutenant coming into view and prepares to fire.



# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1 Summary

Hemingway begins the book with Robert Jordan and an elderly peasant man named Anselmo in the mountains of Spain during the Spanish Civil War. Jordan is on a mission from General Golz to blow up an enemy bridge and Anselmo has been his guide. Jordan thinks forgetting Anselmo's name is a bad omen. They discuss where to hide the explosives and the distance to the bridge.

Robert Jordan and General Golz discuss the coming attack. They arrive at a plan as to when Jordan will blow the bridge, as it cannot happen too far in advance of the attack. Golz tells him to blow the bridge when the attack begins. It is very important that the bridge be blown to cut off the enemy's supply lines. Golz asks Jordan if he likes "partizan work" which is a Russian term for guerilla work. Jordan replies that he likes working in the open air.

Robert Jordan was drinking from a stream when he saw Anselmo approaching with another man, also dressed like a peasant. Anselmo introduces Pablo and tells Jordan that he is the boss in the area. Pablo asks for proof of Jordan's identity, but he cannot read the document. Anselmo points out the seals at the bottom of the document. Jordan tells Pablo he has heard that Pablo is an excellent guerilla leader. Pablo is suspicious and asks where he heard that. He is upset further when Jordan refuses to tell him which bridge will be blown.

Anselmo speaks in Spanish, telling Pablo to pick up the explosives for the sake of his people. Pablo carries the bag and leads them to his horses. He asks Jordan if he sees any defects and Jordan realizes Pablo is using this as a test. Jordan points out defects in a few of the horses. Pablo talks about civilian guards killed by his group and asks about Kashkin, who blew up a train with Pablo. Jordan tells him that Kashkin died last April.

Jordan and Pablo discuss the mission and Pablo is concerned for his people and the repercussions that will follow the attack. Jordan tells him that he is there for duty and will find others to help him if Pablo refuses. Anselmo and Pablo exchange barbs about duty and in the end, Pablo picks up the pack and they start walking. Jordan takes this as a good sign. As they walk, Jordan thinks the gay ones are better off. The job was overwhelming and it was difficult to be gay. There were not many happy men left.

## Chapter 1 Analysis

Superstition is a recurring theme in this book. Men look for signs or omens throughout the story starting with this chapter. Robert Jordan forgets Anselmo's name and thinks this is a bad omen. At the end of the chapter, he believes Pablo carrying the pack of



explosives is a good sign. People facing uncertainty often resort to superstition to explain the world around them and for help in getting through a difficult situation.

The hardship faced by the native populace during war is shown in this chapter. Pablo knows the attack is necessary for the good of his people, but he also understands the difficulties they will face because of the attack. Right now, they are left alone. This will change after the attack.

The disillusionment felt by those fighting war for a cause is shown here. Jordan remembers more happiness in the men at the beginning of the war. That happiness is missing from most men now. The idealistic feelings faded as they were faced with the realities of war. The overwhelming difficulties and death the men faced has taken away their gaiety and left many disillusioned.



# Chapter 2

## Chapter 2 Summary

Robert Jordan, Anselmo and Pablo arrive at a well-hidden camp. The camp cannot be seen from the ground or the air. They come upon a man outside a large cave. He warns them not to put the bags too close to the cave because there is a fire burning inside. Pablo goes off and Robert Jordan and Anselmo talk to the gypsy, who brags of the ability to get a tank. Robert Jordan offers to show him how to set a trap to get one. Pablo came back and told them there would be food soon.

Pablo and Robert Jordan drink wine and talk about Kashkin. Pablo asks how he died and Robert tells him Kashkin was taken prisoner and committed suicide. Pablo tells Robert when they blew-up the train, Kashkin asked the men to kill him if they were unable to get away. He had also told the men he was afraid of torture and unable to kill himself. Robert Jordan thinks Kashkin did the men more harm than good in telling them these things and he tells Pablo that Kashkin was crazy.

A woman named Maria brings a large platter of food, which the men share. She tells Robert Jordan her head was shaved when she was held prisoner at Valladolid until three months ago. She escaped during the train incident and joined this group. As they speak, Robert Jordan realizes he is attracted to her and he is breaking one of two rules of dealing with Spanish speaking people: give the men tobacco and leave the women alone. He finds out she is unattached. When the gypsy sends her away, Robert Jordan is relieved and thanked him.

Robert Jordan inquires as to the number in the group and is told there is another woman, Pablo's wife. The gypsy tells him Pablo's wife is barbarous and is much braver than her husband is. Pablo was brave in the beginning, but is now afraid to die. The woman does not like gypsies, although she has gypsy blood. She likes Maria, and was responsible for the group who brought the girl with them after the train incident.

The men relay the story of the train bombing. When the train crashed, the troops escaping the train were met with machine gun fire. Pablo's woman was brave and helped hold the men together during the attack. The troops that escaped the train accident and gunfire hunted the group of guerillas later that night. As they were talking, Pablo's woman emerged from the cave and sent the gypsy to relieve another guard. She wants to blow another train, but Robert Jordan tells her the bridge is more important right now. She sees Pablo and calls him a drunk, telling Robert the guerilla life is killing her man. She tells Robert Johnson she is glad he has come and expresses sadness at the fate of Kashkin.

Pablo's woman tells Robert Jordan to be careful with Maria because she has been through a lot. She thinks Maria should be taken away after the bridge is blown. Robert Jordan tells her there are homes that will take her in and she will work with children. He



promises to take her if he lives. Pablo's woman admonishes him not to say things like that because it will not bring luck. She asks to see his hand and he tells her he does not believe in that, but asks what she saw. She tells him she saw nothing and changes the subject to trust. She trusts him and five of the men with the group. She does not trust Pablo anymore. There are eight good men coming from El Sordo. Robert Jordan and Anselmo will go check out the bridge and she will watch the explosives.

## Chapter 2 Analysis

The superstitious nature of the people is seen again in this chapter. Pablo's woman subscribes to the superstitious belief that by speaking about not making it out alive, Robert Jordan is bringing bad luck. This is a common superstition, even today people will avoid saying they never had a car accident for fear they will have one after making the statement. Her belief in the supernatural is shown in her work of palm readings. Robert Jordan pretends not to believe, but is very curious about what she sees in his hand.

The theme of men changed by war is seen in the conversations regarding Pablo. According to the men, he started out brave and killed many men. Now, he is afraid to die. Kashkin shared similar fears and communicated these fears to the men.

The theme of salvation through love is introduced in this chapter. Robert Jordan and Maria feel a mutual instant attraction, despite the appearance of her shaved head. He feels the attraction strongly enough to disregard his rule about leaving the women alone and does not care about the repercussions. The attraction is strong enough for Pablo's woman to take notice and be concerned about Maria being hurt. Robert Jordan agrees very quickly to the request that he take Maria with him when he leaves.



# Chapter 3

## Chapter 3 Summary

Robert Jordan studies the bridge from a distance of about fifty yards. He sketches the bridge in a notebook and notes where the charges should be placed to blow out the middle section of the bridge and drop it into the gorge below. As he sketches, Anselmo worries they have gone too close to the bridge. Robert Jordan then studies the sentry box with a pair of field glasses. He assesses the situation and sees no telephone wires coming from the sentry box. He is too far away to see the box on the opposite side of the bridge. He watches the sentry closely. The men hide when the sentry walks from the box onto the bridge.

Robert Jordan asks Anselmo about the other box and learns it is about five hundred meters away. There are seven men and a corporal at this post, which is located in the road mender's hut. As they prepare to leave, three planes flying in V formation pass overhead. Anselmo thinks the planes belong to their side. As they pass, Robert Jordan realizes it is a fascist patrol.

They discuss the possibility of battle and Anselmo asks questions because he has never been in battle before. The one time they were faced with a battle, the group ran. As they are walking toward the other camp, they hear a gun cocked. A guard named Agustin asks the password, which they do not know. He is expecting them and asks about the bridge, but Robert Jordan does not give any details. Agustin warns Robert Jordan to keep a close watch on the explosives. The two men head for the camp and promise to send someone to relieve Agustin.

As they approach the camp, Anselmo tells Robert Jordan this Pablo is bad. The other man El Sordo is good. They agree there is much to be cautious about and agree to take turns watching the explosives throughout the night. Robert Jordan wonders if they should leave and seek men from another camp. Anselmo tells him they must use these men because it is there country.

## Chapter 3 Analysis

The theme of the loss of innocence is seen in Anselmo's feelings about killing humans. He believes killing a person is a sin and hopes to be forgiven later. He does not seek forgiveness from God because he does not believe in God after what he witnessed in war. He is innocent about the nature of battle, as he has never fought in one before. Robert Jordan offers to guide him, although he is much younger than Anselmo.

Both Robert Jordan and Anselmo are fighting for a cause. Anselmo tells Robert Jordan the gypsies do not understand the reason for their fighting. This explains why they ran so quickly when faced with a battle. Fighting for a cause gives men the courage to fight in battle. If men do not know why they are fighting, they are more likely to run.

Anselmo and Robert Jordan both understand the value of human life. Killing is sometimes necessary in war, but should not be enjoyed. Robert Jordan expresses this idea when he tells Anselmo that no sane man likes to kill human beings.



# Chapter 4

## Chapter 4 Summary

They arrive at the mouth of the cave and Robert Jordan finds his packs under canvas outside the cave. He unlocks the packs and feels in the darkness. Everything appears to be there. He goes inside and sees Pablo, Maria, Pablo's wife and three men he does not know. The joking mood of earlier is gone and he knows they have been talking about him. Robert Jordan puts the pack of cigarettes on the table and speaks to Pablo. He does not look at the other men, but notices only one takes a cigarette. He takes out the flask and pours some into the water remaining in his cup. One of the gypsies shows interest in the drink and Robert Jordan tells him it is a cure for everything. The gypsy tries it and complains that it has a bitter taste. Robert Jordan tells him there is wormwood in real absinthe.

Robert Jordan speaks to the men and the conversation turned to the bridge. Pablo is angry and tells Robert he and his men were against the bridge. Robert Jordan tells Pablo that he and Anselmo would blow the bridge alone, but Pablo tells him there would be no bridge blown in the area. Pablo's wife speaks up and tells Pablo that she is for the bridge because the Republic is for the bridge. One by one, the other men say they are for the bridge being blown. Pablo and his wife argue and Pablo states the repercussions of blowing up the bridge. Anselmo calls him a coward.

Pablo denies cowardice and states that he is concerned with the safety of all. He asserts that he is still the leader and his wife argues that she commands here. She calls him a drunkard and a coward and reiterates that she is the leader. He threatens to shoot her and the foreigner. As they argue, Robert Jordan slowly removes his pistol from the holster and places it in his lap under the table. Pablo's wife insists that she leads and he relents.

The gypsy and other men ask about the bridge. Robert Jordan pulls the notebook from his pocket and they discuss how they will place the charges. Maria rests her hand on Robert Jordan as she looks at the drawing. Pablo is not watching, but when Maria says she hopes to see it, he tells her she will see it. Pablo's wife becomes enraged and screams at him, calling him a coward and a murderer. As she screamed, she could feel her rage turning to sorrow and a feeling of her hope and promise being thwarted. She remembers this feeling from her childhood and pushes it down. She silently vows that neither she nor the Republic will feel it again.

## Chapter 4 Analysis

Anselmo and Pilar are idealistic about their cause. Pablo used to feel the same, but he has been changed by war. He has forgotten the ideals he fought for and is now more





concerned with safety. He does not see any benefit to himself in blowing the bridge, and only sees the dangers and repercussions associated with the act.

Pilar fell in love with Pablo when he was the strong leader of a new movement. She was swept up in the movement, but now she feels disillusioned by the changes in Pablo. His cowardice infuriates her because she still holds the ideals they both fought for in the beginning. She gains hope for her cause by participating in the bridge with Robert Jordan. Pilar feels strongly enough about her cause that she challenges her husband's power.

Robert Jordan's feelings lie somewhere between Pilar and Pablo. He is committed to seeing the job through and believes in what he does, but not with the same idealism as Pilar. He watches the scene between the couple and is not sure if he will need to kill Pablo. He takes out his gun when Pablo threatens to shoot him and Pilar. Robert Jordan does not want to kill Pablo, but will if he must.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter 5 Summary

Robert Jordan walks outside the cave to enjoy the night air. He can hear the gypsy playing the guitar and singing. Pablo tells him to stop because he is too loud and Pablo's wife, Pilar agrees. The gypsy comes outside and talks to Robert Jordan. The gypsy and the others were waiting for Robert Jordan to kill Pablo and were disappointed when he did not do it. He tells Robert Jordan to kill Pablo now.

Pablo comes outside and tells Robert Jordan he is welcome, and not to pay attention to the argument between him and Pilar. Pablo goes to check on the horses and the gypsy complains that now the moment has passed. The gypsy still wants him dead and speaks to the guard, Agustin, about killing Pablo.

Robert Jordan walks down to watch Pablo with the horses. He is contemplating this turn of events. He had thought killing Pablo would be a bad idea because he did not know how the men or Pilar would react. As he watches Pablo, he decides he will not have to kill him and returns to the cave.

## Chapter 5 Analysis

The gypsy and the others expected Robert Jordan to kill Pablo. Robert Jordan values human life and will not kill if he can help it. He was prepared to shoot Pablo during the argument, but was not sure how Pilar and the men would react. The gypsy wants him to kill Pablo now, but the moment has passed. Robert Jordan believes in killing when necessary, but decides it is not necessary to kill Pablo.



# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6 Summary

Robert Jordan sits in the cave watching Maria wash dishes and listening to Pilar. Pilar wonders why El Sordo has not come; he comes to the cave every night. Pilar asks Robert Jordan what he thinks of Maria, and he replies that she is beautiful.

The conversation turns to politics and Maria asks if Robert Jordan is a communist. He replies that he is an anti Fascist and has been since he came to understand Fascism. Maria and Pilar come from Republican families and Maria's father was killed for being a Republican. Robert Jordan tells them his father was head of the Republican National Committee in America and Maria asks if that is why he was killed. Pilar tells her people are not killed in the United States for being Republican. Maria thinks they have something in common.

Pilar asks Robert Jordan where he will sleep and he tells her outside. Robert Jordan asks Maria to leave them for a moment so he can speak to Pilar. He brings up the subject of killing Pablo. Pilar does not think it will be necessary now. She had seen him prepare to do it, but she thinks he showed good judgment in not killing Pablo.

## Chapter 6 Analysis

Maria feels closer to Robert Jordan when she learns that his family is also Republican. This enhances the attraction she feels toward Robert Johnson. She does not understand the political system of the United States and asks if his father was killed for being Republican. She understands the concept only through her own experience of the battle between the Fascists and the Republicans in Spain.

The subject of killing Pablo comes up again here. Pilar would have allowed Robert Jordan to kill Pablo during the argument, if necessary. However, she has the same feeling as Robert Jordan that it is not necessary now. She respects Jordan's decision not to kill him. Pilar remembers when Pablo was brave and fought for their cause and although he has changed significantly, she does not want to kill him.



# Chapter 7

## Chapter 7 Summary

Robert Jordan is sleeping outside in the robe and he awakens to someone touching him. He raises his gun, but sees it is Maria. She gets in and tells him she is frightened. Robert Jordan tells her that he loves her. She tells him she does not know how to kiss. She has never been with a man willingly, but has been raped. She thinks he will not love her now that he knows this. He assures her that he does love her.

They kiss and Maria asks if she can be his woman. She does not want to go to a home, but wants to stay with him. Robert Jordan tells her the work he does prevents him from having a woman, but she can be his woman now. Pilar told her the pain of rape would go away when a man loved her. She wants to make love quickly to make the memories of rape disappear.

## Chapter 7 Analysis

The theme of salvation through love is seen in this chapter. Maria believes she will be healed of the trauma of being raped if she makes love with Robert Jordan. Pilar believes in the healing power of love, and so she told the girl she would be healed when a man loved her. Maria desperately wants to regain the innocence lost in the rape. Robert Jordan finds salvation through his feelings for Maria as well. He doesn't think the feeling can last in his line of work, but needs to feel the healing effects of love, if only temporarily.



# Chapter 8

## Chapter 8 Summary

Robert Jordan wakes in the morning to the sound of airplanes. Maria had left in the night. He watches three planes pass, and then nine more. A few minutes later, three more bombers pass overhead. As he is getting dressed, three more pass by. He walks into the cave and asks if they have ever seen this many planes, but no one has. Robert Jordan begins to worry about the number of planes. He looks at his watch to determine where they are going.

Robert Jordan asks Anselmo to go watch the road and note everything that passes, but Anselmo cannot write. Robert Jordan shows him how to draw symbols for different vehicles and make tally marks to keep track of what passes. He tells Anselmo to watch the road until the gypsy relieves him. Rafael is sent to check the activity around the sawmill and then go watch the bridge. Robert Jordan wants to know at what intervals the guards are relieved at the bridge. The gypsy complains that it is too much work.

Robert Jordan tells the gypsy and Pilar he thinks the planes have gone to bomb an airfield. They ask Fernando about movement in La Ganja last night. At first, he tells them there was none, but then remembers rumors of an offensive being planned by the Republic. He also heard that they would try to blow up bridges. Fernando dismisses these statements as rumors.

They sit down to eat and Fernando mentions that he does not like Valencia. Pilar becomes upset and begins to talk about the wonderful trip she took to Valencia with Finito, who was there for a bullfight. She talks about the food and the beach and of making love with Finito. She tells Pablo he was more man than Finito in his time, but they never went to Valencia. Pablo reminds her that she never blew up a train with Finito and Pilar tells him that is what is left of them. The memories of the train are all that are left of past failures and the cowardice of this moment. As she is speaking, they hear the planes returning.

## Chapter 8 Analysis

Airplanes are seen throughout the book and are symbolic of the threat of the Fascists. The sight and sounds of the planes evokes fear in the peasants. Robert Jordan fears the planes are a sign that the Fascists are aware of the impending attack. The rumors Fernando heard in town increase this fear.

Robert Jordan gives orders to Pablo's men to watch the road and the bridge. Pablo is no longer in charge at all. His reaction to the planes shows his cowardice. Pablo realizes he has lost his courage and reminds his wife about the train when she talks about Finito. Both Pablo and Pilar remember the man he was, and these memories are all that hold them together now.



Pilar once felt the saving power of love with Finito. She holds onto these memories and defends the town in which they took place. Pablo is no longer the man she once loved and her memories of love revolve around another man. Her willingness to speak of another lover in his presence demonstrates her low opinion of Pablo.



# Chapter 9

## Chapter 9 Summary

They stood at the mouth of the cave and watched the planes pass. Maria thinks they look like death, but Pilar tells her they look like planes. They go back into the cave to wait for the planes to pass. Pilar asks if Robert Jordan slept well and asks if he and Maria made love. When he refuses to answer, she knows they did and tells him to be careful with the girl. Pilar talks of Maria going with Robert Jordan, but he says he cannot have a woman where he goes.

Robert Jordan asks Pilar how she ended up with Pablo. She tells him it happened at the start of the movement. Pablo was something then, but now he is finished. The night before she and Pablo spoke of Robert Jordan and the bridge. Pablo cried and told Pilar he is afraid to die. She tells Robert Jordan she feels fear at intervals, but does not allow it to destroy her resolve. Pilar has faith in the movement and the Republic and asks Robert Jordan if he has the same faith. He tells her he does and he does not fear death, only not doing his duty.

Robert Jordan kisses Maria and Fernando tells him to be careful. Pilar tells Fernando they are engaged. Agustin speaks to Pilar about the planes and wonders what they are preparing. They talk about Pablo and Agustin tells Pilar that he is smart. Agustin has faith in Pablo and reminds Pilar that he organized the train. Pilar tells him that Pablo is ruined by his fear. She tells Agustin she will think about what he said and calls Robert Jordan to leave for El Sordo's.

## Chapter 9 Analysis

Robert Jordan shows his affection for Maria in front of Fernando. Initially, he tried to hide his feelings for her because leaving the women alone was an unwritten rule when dealing with the Spaniards. The events of the night before changed this, but Pilar tells Fernando they are engaged to avoid bad feelings between the men.

The planes scare Maria and Agustin. The sound of the planes causes fear in the peasants living in the mountains. They have heard rumors that the Fascists are planning to clear the mountains of peasants. Fear is a common emotion in people living through war, as these people are.

Pilar and Agustin disagree on the subject of Pablo. Both remember his bravery in the early days of the movement, but only Pilar sees how he has changed. Agustin hopes to rely again on Pablo's intelligence in this situation, but Pilar knows he can no longer be counted on to lead the group.



# Chapter 10

## Chapter 10 Summary

On the way to El Sordo's, Pilar wants to stop and rest. Robert Jordan wants to keep going, but they stop. Pilar talks about being ugly, and Robert and Maria tell her she is not ugly. Robert Jordan asks about the beginning of the movement, but Pilar worries about upsetting Maria with the story. Maria asks her to tell it, and she will not listen if it is upsetting.

Pilar tells them the barracks were attacked in the early morning. The civiles either surrendered, or were killed. Pablo shot four in the head and had the rest of the Fascists taken to the Ayuntamiento. The townspeople lined up on either side and the Fascists were brought out one at a time as the crowd clubbed and beat them to death. There were many drunkards and the crowd was becoming disorderly, and they mocked Don Guillermo while they were killing him. Pilar went to sit under a tree.

After a time, she went back to find Pablo. The orderly lines were gone and the mob tried to storm the Ayuntamiento to get at the rest of the Fascists. Pilar stood on a chair and watched a priest praying with the men. Pablo was nearby, rolling a cigarette and pretending not to her the crowd. He gets up and speaks to the priest, who pretends not to hear. Pablo throws the keys to the guard, who opens the door and lets in the crowd.

Pilar sees a man with a red and black scarf set fire to one of the Fascists. The bodies were thrown from the cliff and Pilar tells Robert Jordan they should have thrown the ones with the scarves over as well. Pilar told Pablo this was wrong, and bad things would come. The bad came three days later. Three days later the Fascists came and took over the town. Maria does not want to hear anymore, so Pilar tells Robert Jordan she will finish the story later.

## Chapter 10 Analysis

More is revealed about Pablo's actions in the early days of the movement in this chapter. This man is very different from the man portrayed in the book. He was brave and not afraid to kill or die. It is the memories of this man that cause Pilar to want him to live, and these memories evoke her anger toward Pablo. She wants this Pablo back and is angry at the change in him.

The reality of war is seen in this chapter. Normal citizens became savage when dealing with the Fascists. The people became frenzied and stormed the building looking for blood. The men began to enjoy the killing, carried away in a loss of innocence. There would be consequences for their actions, when the Fascists invaded the town three days later.





# Chapter 11

## Chapter 11 Summary

Robert Jordan, Pilar and Maria arrive at El Sordo's and speaks to Joaquin, who is on guard duty. He tells them El Sordo heard news in Segovia last night, and Joaquin thinks the news was bad. Joaquin speaks of carrying Maria on the night of the train incident. They joke and the conversation turns serious when Pilar asks Joaquin about before the movement. Pilar tells Robert Jordan that Joaquin wanted to be a bullfighter, but was afraid. Joaquin tells her that after all he has seen, he is no longer afraid of the bulls.

Joaquin tells Robert Jordan that the Fascists in Valladolid killed his parents, brother and sister. Robert Jordan thinks about all the villages he has visited and the villagers who helped him. He realizes that he moved on and the peasants stayed behind to face the consequences of his actions. On many occasions, he returned to villages to find those who helped him had been shot and killed. Pilar had made him feel the effects with her story.

Joaquin begins to cry and Maria kisses him as a sister. She tells him she and Pilar are his sisters and Robert Jordan is his brother. Joaquin cries and is ashamed at speaking of his misfortune. Pilar tells him she will kiss him with Maria. He apologizes and she tells him he is tender for a bullfighter. Maria tells Pilar she is being barbarous and Pilar tells her she is tired of forty-eight years and an ugly face.

Pilar speaks to El Sordo, who sends Maria away and offers Pilar and Robert Jordan a drink. He asks Robert Jordan when the bridge will be blown, and is told the day after tomorrow. El Sordo tells Robert Jordan there is much troop movement and they should blow the bridge now. Robert Jordan tells him the General Staff told him to wait. They discuss the plan and Robert Jordan asks if El Sordo can steal some horses from his neighbors, as he is leaving and does not have to be careful. They talk about guns and ammunition and take inventory of what they have.

El Sordo tells Robert Jordan he can only get four men, but Robert Jordan needs ten. El Sordo tells him the others are undependable. Pilar asks Sordo where they will go when the job is finished. He tells her they will go to Gredos, but Pilar thinks it will be difficult to get there. Pilar wants to go to the Republic and asks if Sordo's men will go. She thinks Pablo will feel safer there, although he will not have to go. She is not sure about the others.

Robert Jordan tells them they would be more useful in Gredos and could run raids against the railroad. Sordo is surprised that Robert Jordan knows the area and asks him where he would go in Gredos. Pilar becomes upset at the discussion and begins cursing at Robert Jordan, which he compares to a geyser erupting. She later apologizes, explaining that she has a deep desire to go to the Republic. Robert Jordan tells her it is her choice.



El Sordo and Robert Jordan discuss the bridge. Sordo thinks it is difficult to do it in the morning. Retreating is a problem in the daylight. Robert Jordan agrees, but these are his orders. El Sordo will work out a plan for a daytime retreat, but it is much more difficult.

## Chapter 11 Analysis

Joaquin's story about his the death of his family shows the effect of war on the population. Robert Jordan does his job and leaves, while the population pays the price. This symbolizes what happens in many countries when America intervenes in foreign affairs. Little effect is felt by Americans, but the citizens of the countries where we wage war or support wars pay a high price.

Pilar becomes upset when Robert Jordan suggests they go to Gredos. She is fighting for the Republic, and wants to return home. She resents an outsider telling them what they should do. Robert Jordan and the bridge are causing them to have to flee the mountains, but they will decide where to go from there. El Sordo and Pilar understand the consequences of what they are doing, and worry about escaping after the bridge is blown. Unlike Robert Jordan, they have seen the effects of the war on their fellow citizens: they know enough to fear the consequences.



# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

After eating, Pilar, Robert Jordan and Maria leave El Sordo's. He will come to the camp tonight. During lunch, he had given Robert Jordan the impression that he wanted to be rid of them. Sordo had returned to speaking broken Spanish and waves abruptly as they depart. When Pilar questioned his mood, he told her he is just thinking.

As they walked, Robert Jordan notices Pilar looking pallid and suggests they stop to rest, but she insists upon going on. She begins to look worse and they insist on stopping. When they are stopped, Pilar speaks of feelings of jealousy toward Maria and Robert Jordan. After she has spoken, Pilar tells them this silliness is over and she will not speak of jealousy again. She saw her ugliness in Joaquin's eyes and that caused her mood. Pilar tells them to stay behind to make love while she goes on to the camp. Robert Jordan resists, but Pilar leaves and Maria tells him to stay.

## Chapter 12 Analysis

The saving power of love is seen in this chapter. Although Robert Jordan resists, time alone with Maria is exactly what he needs. Pilar once knew the saving power of love, but that has faded for her. This is the reason for her jealousy. She remembers being young and in love, as she sees in Robert Jordan and Maria.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

They walk through the heather and Robert Jordan kisses Maria. They make love and both feel the earth move. Later, they walk hand in hand. They talk about the earth moving and Maria asks if the earth ever moved with anyone else. Robert Jordan assures Maria that he has never felt that with anyone else. As they walk, he thinks about the bridge.

Robert Jordan imagines the bridge and sees movement on the road. He imagines where the charges will be placed. He finds himself worrying and tells himself to stop. His mind is clear since making love and he cannot worry. He thinks about their chances of winning, which are slim. Pablo knows this, as does El Sordo, but Sordo is willing to do what needs to be done. Pilar has become increasingly aware of the danger and risk involved. Although it may seem impossible, he knows it must be done. Nothing good came of past groups, failing to advance because it was deemed impossible.

He thinks about politics and his own political beliefs. He thinks he would like to talk politics with Pablo and wonders how his political beliefs have changed. Robert Jordan began fighting in the war because he was in Spain and believed in the Republic. He felt the Republic had to get rid of the horse thieves in the party, who were responsible for the current situation. Those leaders were enemies of their people. He thinks about the group he is working with, and regrets what may happen during the mission. He realizes they would not be better off if he had not come; their lives were endangered anyway. He will complete his duty.

Robert Jordan begins to think about what he will do after the war. He loves Maria and wants her to be with him. He thinks of marrying her and returning to the United States to teach Spanish. He is on a leave and has until fall to return. He imagines returning to teaching and Maria being a teacher's wife. She will be a good wife, all Spanish girls are.

They near the camp and see Pilar sitting with her head in her hands. She has been asleep and is surprised they have come so soon. Pilar presses Maria for details, and Robert Jordan tells her to leave the girl alone. Maria tells her the earth moved, and Pilar tells them it moves only three times in a lifetime. They ask about her three times, but she has only had two and expects no more. Robert Jordan tells her to stop with the mystery and witchcraft because he does not believe in it. She laughs and he becomes angry. They look at the clouds and Pilar thinks it will snow, but it is nearly June.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

The healing power of love is seen again in this chapter. Robert Jordan admits to himself how much he needs Maria. Pilar knew they needed each other, which is why she sent Maria to him that first night. Initially, he told Maria that she could not go with him, but



those feelings have changed. He begins to imagine a normal life and marriage after the war.

Robert Jordan thinks about the consequences the people of Spain face due to his work. He worries that his new friends will suffer the same fate, but realizes they are in danger anyway. Their own government corruption is the ultimate cause of their suffering. Robert Jordan has become close to them and now must think of them as soldiers.

They are all fighting for a cause. They know what must do and understand the risks. El Sordo and Pablo understand more than Pilar, but the knowledge has been creeping up on her as well. El Sordo understands the risks, but knows the cause is worth the risk. Pablo has forgotten the cause and cannot see the benefit, only the risks.



# Chapter 14

## Chapter 14 Summary

It was snowing when they reached the camp. Pablo was drunk and told Robert Jordan there would be no bridge, just much snow. The gypsy and Anselmo had not returned and Pablo refused to show Robert Jordan the way. Robert Jordan considered going on his own, but decided to wait or he might miss them on the way. Pablo laughs and tells him there goes the offensive. Robert Jordan is angry with Pablo, but manages to control the anger. Pablo suggests he sleep inside due to the snow, but Robert Jordan plans to sleep outside. He has slept in the robe many times in the snow.

Robert Jordan begins speaking in English and Pilar tells him to speak Spanish because it is easier. Robert Jordan tells her it is, but secretly thinks that it grows tiresome. He drinks a cup of wine and talks to Pablo about the storm. He asks Pablo what he did before the movement. Pablo tells Robert Jordan he worked for a horse contractor, who furnished horses for the bullfighters. This is how he met Pilar when she was with Finito. One of the men tells Robert Jordan that Finito was not much of a matador.

Pilar remembers Finito killing his last bull and insists that he was. Pablo tells Robert Jordan he was a good matador, but he was short and that was a disadvantage. Pilar talks about the banquet after the last bull was killed. The club was named in honor of Finito and he attended the banquet, though he was badly injured from a blow received by the side of the bull's horn. He was spitting up blood into handkerchiefs and napkins, while drinking to dull the pain. Finito stayed for most of the banquet, until the pain became too much. He never did recover and died that winter. Pilar told Robert Jordan he had received that injury many times, because of his short stature. She cared for Finito until he died, and after the funeral ended up with Pablo.

As she finishes her story, the gypsy comes in the door. He tells Robert Jordan there are two men at a time on six-hour watches on the bridge. There are eight men and a corporal stationed at the road mender's hut. No unusual movement was seen on the road, just some motorcars. Robert Jordan asks him to take him to the old man, but the gypsy refuses. Fernando asks where it is and he will go with Robert Jordan.

## Chapter 14 Analysis

Pablo is drunk, as usual. He is happy to see the snow because he thinks this will stop the bridge from being blown. He understands the difficulty the people will face after it is done, and fears facing it. He hopes that the snow will put an end to the mission and he can return to living as he has.

More details about Pilar and Finito are revealed in this chapter. Love healed Finito through many injuries, but he ultimately died from his last injury. Pilar cared for him until he died. Finito had a sense of duty, which he showed by staying at the banquet even

though he was gravely injured. Pablo had that sense of duty when Pilar first met him, but it is gone now. She is left with her memories of Finito.



# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Summary

Anselmo is waiting at his post to be relieved. He considers leaving, as there has been nothing unusual and it is cold, but decides to wait a little longer for Robert Jordan. He sees a Rolls Royce drive past, but does not know it belongs to the General Staff. He takes out his paper and makes a mark next to motor vehicles. The narrator states that if Robert Jordan had made that distinction between the vehicles, then he would have received more valuable information.

Anselmo sees the men in the sawmill and realizes they are warm. He does not consider these men to be Fascists and knows they are there to keep their families from being harmed. Anselmo will kill them if he has to, but regrets what will happen. He thinks about past action taken by the men and Pablo. Pablo was great then and no Fascist post was safe at night. Pablo has changed and is no longer that man, Anselmo thinks. He wishes he were home, but knows he cannot return to his house until the war is over.

The soldiers in the sawmill are talking about the storm. They talk about the weather and one soldier mentions being from Noya, which is by the sea. The other men question why he was not taken into the Navy, but the man was not born in Noya. Soldiers are assigned by the town of birth to the army or navy. The corporal tells the men the army is the worst in terms of safety, but it has been safe where they are stationed. One man tells the corporal six-hour watches are too long and the corporal tells them they will switch every three hours as long as the storm holds. They talk about the staff cars and thinks this is an evil omen.

Anselmo stands in the cold and hopes he will not have to kill. He knows the killing is necessary, but thinks they will all need to do penance when the war is over. He feels lonely often. His wife died before the movement and he has no children. He is thinking about the movement and the sin of killing when Robert Jordan comes up to him. Robert Jordan hands Anselmo his flask and they start walking. Robert Jordan is happy to see him at his post, and tells him it is rare to find someone where you left him in Spain. Anselmo is glad he waited.

## Chapter 15 Analysis

Anselmo is a reliable man. Although he is cold and feels leaving would be justified, he stays until Robert Jordan arrives. Robert Jordan knows how hard it is to find men bound to their duty and is relieved to find Anselmo still at his post. He knows he can count on the old man, when needed.

Hemingway gives the first glimpse of the Fascist patrol in this chapter. They are men having a conversation about the weather and their duty. They do not seem as committed to their cause as the Republican men. This is because they have been





pressured into service. They hope to ride out the war in quiet on their current assignment and not have to see battle. An important fact is learned in the conversation; the patrols have been changed to every three hours. Robert Jordan and his group do not know this and it foreshadows a possible problem in the plan for the bridge.



# Chapter 16

## Chapter 16 Summary

When they get back to the cave, Pilar tells Robert Jordan that El Sordo was there and went to look for horses. Robert Jordan is wet and Maria fetches him dry socks and fusses over him. She brings him the whisky he drank with El Sordo, who brought it with him for Robert Jordan. Pablo calls him "Don Roberto" and is obviously drunk. Robert Jordan thinks it is admirable that El Sordo brought the scotch and offers some to Anselmo. Maria tells the men to eat, and Robert Jordan asks her to eat with them. She wants to eat later, with Pilar. Robert Jordan tells her that in his country, men do not eat before the women, but she tells him they do in Spain.

Pablo begins to mock the United States and asks what the men wear under their skirts. Three times, Robert Jordan tells him that men in America do not wear skirts. In frustration, he answers "Los cojones" after the third time. Primivito asks Robert Jordan what they raise in the United States and if there are mountains. They ask him about the process of homesteading and he explains that men can get a deed for up to 150 hectares if they farm the land. They are amazed and think it is a good agrarian reform.

The men ask Robert Jordan if there are fascists in his country, and he tells them there are men who do not know yet that they are fascists. Robert Jordan tells them they cannot kill these men, but try to educate people to recognize fascism and combat it when it appears. Andres tells him that there is one place where there are no fascists: in Pablo's town. He tells Robert Jordan that Pilar could not have told him the whole story. Pilar tells Pablo to tell them the story, but he refuses. He is drunk and begins to speak of regret for the killing he has done. He wished he could bring them all back.

The men turn Robert Jordan's attention away from Pablo and ask him about his life in America. He tells them he taught Spanish at a University in America. Fernando and Andres question why he would teach Spanish when he is not Spanish. Pilar reminds them that he speaks Spanish and he teaches Americans, not Spaniards. Pablo calls him a false professor several times because he does not have a beard.

Robert Jordan begins to doubt Pablo is as drunk as he claims. He tries to provoke Pablo into an argument, but Pablo says he cannot be provoked and tells Pilar she cannot get rid of him this way. During the argument, Pablo calls Agustin a Negro and Agustin is ready for a fight. He punches Pablo in the face several times, but Pablo refuses to respond. Pablo goes to check the horses.

## Chapter 16 Analysis

Pablo is becoming more dangerous and more difficult to trust. Robert Jordan regrets not killing him the night before. He sees Pablo as being potentially dangerous to the



outcome of the mission. Pablo has so completely lost sight of the cause that he can no longer relate to those still fighting for the cause.

Pablo senses that they are provoking him for an excuse to kill him. Pablo is only interested in saving his own neck at this point. He refuses to allow them to provoke him, even when Agustin punches him. This does not show bravery or toughness, but is done out of fear for his own life.



# Chapter 17

## Chapter 17 Summary

When Pablo is gone, the gypsy tells them that it was stupid for Robert Jordan not to have killed Pablo last night. Pilar tells Robert Jordan to kill Pablo. She is for it now. The other men agree. The only one to hesitate is Fernando, who wonders if they could take him prisoner. This would be impossible because two men would be needed to watch him. The gypsy suggests blinding him as he blinded some of the guardia civil. Pilar becomes upset and tells him to shut up. Fernando agrees to have him killed.

They begin to talk about how to do it. Robert Jordan offers to do the job for them. He tells them he will do it tonight. Pablo puts his head in the tent and asks if they are speaking about him. Robert Jordan calls Agustin to the side and reminds him that there is dynamite in the packs. He is afraid there may be a shoot out in the cave. Pablo tells them he thinks the snow will stop and they will be ready to do the bridge in the morning. They question his change of heart and why he is for the train now. He tells them he was drunk, and now he has changed his mind. They ask if he was listening at the door, but he tells them he could not hear. Pablo tells him that they need him to help them get to Gredos. It is the only place to go after the bridge.

## Chapter 17 Analysis

The entire group can see that Pablo is completely lost. They understand that he is now a threat to the success of their operation. Pilar was against the idea of killing Pablo just this morning, but now she realizes it is the only way to ensure their success. He could do anything and they do not want to take the risk. Robert Jordan does not offer an opinion because it is not his place, as an outsider.

Pablo enters the cave a changed man. All of a sudden, he is willing to participate in the bridge. He denies having heard them plotting his death, but did he hear? Pablo has been consistent in looking out for his own best interest. It is possible he is just trying to save his neck now. He knows he has lost the loyalty of his men, who no longer respect him as a leader.



# Chapter 18

## Chapter 18 Summary

Robert Jordan felt like he was on a merry go round or watching a wheel of fortune in a carnival. The wheel had gone around twice, but nothing had been resolved. He sits in the cave drawing out his plans and writing the orders for the bridge. Pablo asks what he has been doing and tells Robert Jordan he has been working on the retreat. Agustin asks if Pablo found the plan in the wine bowl, and Pablo says he did. Robert Jordan notices Pablo is trying to stay off the wheel.

Robert Jordan thinks of his plan for after the bridge. He had planned to ask for a three-day leave in Madrid. He had planned to read books and eat at Gaylord's. He wonders if he can take Maria to Gaylord's, then decides to leave her in the hotel. Gaylord's is the place to meet the peasant Spanish commanders. When he first joined the movement, he had been surprised to discover most of them spoke Russian and had received military training in Russia. Robert Jordan learned the inner workings and deception involved in running the war. He believes he received his best education at Gaylord's, and wants to return to see Karkov. Robert Jordan likes Karkov, his wife and his mistress. He wants to introduce him to Maria, but needs to wait to see how he is received after this campaign.

Robert Jordan dips another cup of wine and watches Pablo. He wonders what kind of leader Pablo would have been in the American Civil War. He remembers hearing from his grandfather that Grant was often drunk during the war. Robert Jordan had not seen any great leaders or military geniuses in this war. He wishes he had seen the fighting against the Italians at Guadalajara. Hans had told him of the battle and shown him the maps.

Lister, Campesino and Modesto were communists and harsh disciplinarians. Lister had the typical Spanish disregard for human life. He thinks about Velazquez 63 and the headquarters of the Fifth Regiment, which has been absorbed into a new army. In those places, he had the feeling that he was part of a crusade. He first felt this feeling when defending the Sierras. The men had the true brotherhood of a revolution. When the men ran from the shelling, they had been shot and left by the side of the road. He understood that and agreed it was necessary.

Robert Jordan thinks of the fear he felt in those times. Karkov told him of the days when the Russians lived in the Palace Hotel. At that time, Robert Jordan had not met the rest of his group. He fought in Carabanchel and Usera, when they had stopped the fascists' attack on Madrid. Karkov had followed orders and killed three Russians in Madrid, when the city was being abandoned. Unidentified naked men had no nationality and it was imperative that the fascists not learn of the Russian involvement. In this environment, Robert Jordan thinks it is easy to be corrupted. He is not sure if it is corruption, or just a loss of naiveté.



At the beginning of the attack at Carabanchel, he had been sitting in a bullring waiting for the attack. The tank had not yet arrived and Robert Jordan had gone to look for it. He found the armored car; the driver had been too scared to approach the bullring. Robert Jordan forced him to move the car at gunpoint. He met the English economist that Karkov had later mentioned. Karkov was a journalist and discussed political assassination with Robert Jordan. Although he does not believe in assassination, Karkov tells Robert Jordan it is practiced extensively. Karkov explains the difference between assassination and destroying a commander who is unfaithful to their position as leaders.

Karkov told Robert Jordan they are getting rid of the worst men, but to win, all who fight must know why they fight. They must believe in the cause and accept discipline. In Madrid, the feeling of winning is pervasive. However, in Valencia, the cowards who fled Madrid are ruling and the mood is much different. Robert Jordan prefers the people at the front: they are better people. Karkov had read the only book Robert Jordan had published. It was a two-hundred-page book about what he had learned about Spain in the ten years he had traveled the country. He plans to write another when he gets through with the bridge. He knows he needs to become a better writer to describe the complicated matters of this war.

## Chapter 18 Analysis

More is learned about Robert Jordan's involvement in the war in this chapter. The more involved he becomes, the more he feels he is being corrupted. He thinks it may be the loss of innocence. This is common in war. Men start idealistic about the cause and then are faced with the realities of war. Robert Jordan experiences these feelings several times in the chapter. He quickly accepts the execution of the soldiers who tried to run in the early days. He disagreed with political assassination, but Karkov tells him it is routinely done and often necessary.

Bravery is a theme of this chapter. The soldiers who ran were not brave, and were killed. Robert Jordan threatened to kill the driver of the armored car, if he did not drive. The penalty for cowardice was death in these cases. This thinking would justify killing Pablo. His comparison of Pablo to Grant, in terms of drunkenness.

For men to succeed in war, they must believe in the cause for which they are fighting. The worst men Karkov refers to are those who do not know why they fight. Robert Jordan remembers the camaraderie he felt with the men in the early days of the war. This feeling of brotherhood results from being united for a common cause.



# Chapter 19

## Chapter 19 Summary

Robert Jordan's thoughts are interrupted when Maria asks what he is thinking. He tells her he is thinking of her and a hotel in Madrid. Maria has read in fascist newspapers that Madrid has hundreds of thousands of Russians, but Robert Jordan tells her this is a lie, there are very few. Pilar comments that Kashkin was a Russian and Robert Jordan's friend. She reveals that Robert Jordan killed the Russian. He explains that the man was wounded and requested to be shot.

Andres asks if Robert Jordan thinks men can see their fate. He thinks so because Kashkin often mentioned the possibility of needing to be shot. Robert Jordan tells them Kashkin's problem was bad nerves caused by too much time spent on the front lines. Pilar tells them she saw death in Kashkin's face and smelled death on the man. Robert Jordan tells her she saw fear and fear has a definite scent. Pilar speaks of several incidents with bullfighters where others had smelled death on them shortly before they were killed. Pablo does not believe in superstition, but does believe in Pilar's ability to read palms.

Robert Jordan replies that such stories are made up after the death. Pilar tells him this fact is well known among gypsies and Rafael agrees. Fernando asks about the smell and Pilar describes it as a combination of the smell of the closed portholes on a ship in a storm and the breath of a kiss from the old women who drink the blood of slaughtered animals. Robert Jordan said if the smell was that bad, it is good that he killed the man. They laugh and Robert Jordan notices the storm is over.

## Chapter 19 Analysis

The use of propaganda is common in any war. The fascists use the fear and distrust of Russians to their advantage in the war. They spread the word that the Russians are in Madrid to discredit the other side by equating the republic with Russia. Although Maria does not trust the fascists, she is susceptible to the propaganda and believes what she has read.

Superstition is a common element in this book. Because Kashkin often asked others to kill him rather than allowing him to be captured, they think he could see his destiny. Robert Jordan does not share the same beliefs and thinks the war caused Kashkin's nerves to be bad. He and Pilar argue, but neither will see the other's point of view. He thinks she is eccentric; she thinks he is deaf to the truth.



# Chapter 20

## Chapter 20 Summary

Robert Jordan lay in his robe waiting for Maria. He cut down a small pine tree and used the boughs to make a bed. He lay there watching the entrance to the cave. He likes the smell of the pine needles; they remind him of fall in Missoula. He begins to worry that Maria will not come, but she does come.

Robert Jordan tells Maria he loves her. She replies that she loves him too, and she is his wife. He asks if the others are asleep. They are not, but Maria was tired of waiting and feels it does not matter anyway. They declare their love for each other, and their feeling that they are one person. They make love and although it is not as earth shattering as earlier in the day, they decide it was better. They fall asleep, but Robert Jordan wakes in the night with a feeling that she is being taken from him. He spends the rest of the night lying in the robe and thinking.

## Chapter 20 Analysis

The theme of salvation through love is seen again in this chapter. Robert Jordan loves Maria and fears losing her. This fear may be a normal part of new love, or could be Robert Jordan seeing his future, as the gypsies believe.





# Chapter 21

## Chapter 21 Summary

In the morning, there is a warm wind and Robert Jordan can hear the snow melting off the trees. He thinks the snow will be gone by noon. He hears a horse coming and sees the horseman. While Maria hides in the robe, Robert Jordan shoots the horseman. The horse takes off with the dead man into the trees. Robert Jordan tells Primitivo to catch the horse and asks who is on patrol. Pilar tells him Rafael is on patrol.

Robert Jordan tells them the cavalry is on patrol and send Agustin and Anselmo to take the big gun and get up there with them. He asks Pablo if Agustin can shoot the gun, and Robert Jordan is told he can. Pablo offers to take the horse with the others, but Robert Jordan thinks his tracks need to lead away from the cave. Pablo will ride him out and hide until the snow melts. Maria and Pilar will get everything ready to leave.

Robert Jordan tells Andres to saddle the horses and if he hears gunfire, he should bring them up through the woods behind the gap. The women will then stay with the horses, while Andres joins the men. As he is leaving, Maria asks to go with him. He has decided she now holds no place in his life. He refuses to say he loves her, but she tells him she loves enough for both of them. As they leave, Primitivo asks if she is good in bed, and Robert Jordan tells him to leave it alone.

## Chapter 21 Analysis

Robert Jordan's fear of losing Maria nearly came true. He woke just before the horseman arrived, or the outcome could have been very different. He now feels he needs to distance himself from Maria. The situation is dangerous and he could very well lose her. The change in him is seen in his refusal to tell Maria he loves her.



# Chapter 22

## Chapter 22 Summary

Robert Jordan tells Primitivo to cut pine branches, which he uses to camouflage the gun. He shows them how to position the gun, and repositions it correctly. Agustin tells him two porters dropped the gun off, so they have never been trained in how to use it. Robert Jordan hopes Pablo does not run into the cavalry, but is sure he can handle himself.

Robert Jordan hopes they do not have to fight today. They have no choice, but to stay where they are because they will only leave tracks if they move. He hopes the cavalry will follow Pablo's tracks and fighting will not be necessary. The gypsy returns and shows Robert Jordan the two rabbits he hunted. Robert Jordan tells him about the cavalryman that wandered into the camp this morning. He reprimands the gypsy for leaving his post, and threatens to shoot him if he ever leaves a post again.

Robert Jordan speaks to Agustin and Primitivo about signals that will be used if the cavalry should approach. He tells them not to shoot or throw a grenade unless they hear shooting from the maquina, or large gun. Agustin hopes for a massacre, but Robert Jordan tells him that without the bridge, it would mean nothing. The bridge is what can win the war. Robert Jordan tells Agustin that he will have his chance at either the sawmill or the road mender's hut tonight. Agustin tells Robert Jordan he is ready for either one; he wants to contribute to the effort , as Pablo has kept him inactive.

## Chapter 22 Analysis

Robert Jordan and the other men prepare for a possible battle in this chapter. He and Agustin feel differently about the possibility of a fight. Agustin wants to fight. He has been with Pablo since the days when they fought. This band has not been active and most are ready to contribute to the war effort.

Robert Jordan is looking at the big picture, which shows he is a true leader. He understands the bridge is their main contribution to the coming offensive. Battling with the cavalry before the bridge would be counter-productive to their mission.



# Chapter 23

## Chapter 23 Summary

Robert Jordan sees Primitivo's signal and tells the others to get down. Anselmo drops a small tree he is carrying and hides behind the rocks. Four horsemen ride out of the woods. They stop at the trail where Pablo had circled and stopped. Robert Jordan has rarely seen them this close before. He hears Agustin stop himself from coughing. They pass and Agustin tells Robert Jordan they could have killed all four easily. Robert Jordan tells him the gunfire would have brought more men. Primitivo signals to indicate that many more are coming. They see twenty mounted horsemen come up the way the four just passed.

Robert Jordan tells Anselmo to go to the post where he watched yesterday and watch the road. Anselmo suggests he go to La Granja to try to get some information and someone else could watch the road. Robert Jordan agrees to the plan. Agustin thinks Pablo is too smart to be caught. He may be a shell of his former self, but can still think on his feet. Robert Jordan replies that he has not seen much ability in Pablo. Agustin tells him if he were not smart, Pablo would have been dead last night.

Agustin wishes he could have killed the cavalry, but understands why it was not wise. Agustin explains the desire he felt to kill the men and Robert Jordan thought he smelled fear. Agustin tells him it was fear and the smell of death. Robert Jordan thinks killing is sacramental to Spaniards.

## Chapter 23 Analysis

If Agustin had not controlled his urge to kill the first four cavalrymen, their mission would have been over. The twenty that followed would have killed all of them. He understands this would have been a mistake. Again, this demonstrates Agustin's impulsive nature contrasted with Robert Jordan's controlled leadership.

The cavalry follows Pablo's tracks. Agustin thinks Pablo will not be caught because he is smart. Pablo cares more about saving his own neck than about the Republic. He once used his intelligence for the benefit of the movement and his men. Now, he uses it to escape the fascist cavalry.



# Chapter 24

## Chapter 24 Summary

Robert Jordan and Agustin are eating sandwiches for breakfast. Agustin tells Robert Jordan the fascists will smell the onion on his breath through the forest. Robert Jordan jokes and Agustin says he is much different from Kashkin. Robert Jordan thinks Kashkin suffered greatly. Agustin and Robert Jordan are men who suffer very little. The conversation turns to Maria and Agustin tells him that many of the men wanted Maria, but Pilar would not let them near her.

Robert Jordan tells Agustin that Pilar has placed Maria in his care. He loves her and plans to marry her. Agustin asks if he has been with many women and he tells him that he has not. The reason things moved as quickly as they have, is the lack of time. Agustin seems satisfied and tells Robert Jordan if there is anything they need, he is there. Robert Jordan tells Agustin he needs him to follow orders tomorrow, even if they sound wrong. Agustin has confidence in Robert Jordan and agrees, saying he is willing to die for the cause.

Agustin tells Robert Jordan that Primivito is dependable. Pilar is much more reliable than Robert Jordan could imagine. Anselmo, Andres and Eladio are dependable as well. Agustin tells him that Fernando may seem bored, but will fight and follow orders. The only weak links are Pablo and the gypsy. Agustin tells Robert Jordan that Sordo's men are even better than theirs are.

As they are speaking, they hear the sound of gunfire. Primivito motions toward El Sordo's camp, in the highest part of the mountains. The fighting is happening there. Agustin wants to go to their aid, but Robert Jordan tells him they will stay where they are.

## Chapter 24 Analysis

Robert Jordan knew he was breaking an unwritten rule against becoming involved with Spanish women. Agustin and the other men care for Maria, so he is naturally concerned about her being hurt. Pilar is the matriarch of the group and since she has given Maria to Robert Jordan, Agustin is reassured.

Robert Jordan trusts Agustin and seeks his opinion about the others. The men and Pilar are all dependable, and they will fight for the cause. Agustin has accepted Robert Jordan as the leader of the group. He is fighting for the cause and is not afraid to die. Pablo used to have the idealism of Agustin, but he is now afraid of death. This is why he and the gypsy are considered the weak links in the group.

They hear the fighting at El Sordo's. This foreshadows the fighting they will soon face. El Sordo's men are not doing well in battle. Sordo's men are better than Pablo's band,

yet they are being beaten. Agustin wants to run to the aid of his countrymen. This would be unwise, resulting in a battle that would end the plot to blow the bridge. As difficult as it was, Agustin and the others had to listen to the sounds of the battle without responding.



# Chapter 25

## Chapter 25 Summary

Robert Jordan tells Agustin to stay with the gun; he is going to speak to Primivito. Anselmo is to stay with Agustin to hold the gun, if needed. Primivito asks what they will do about the attack on Sordo. Robert Jordan tells him they will do nothing. There is nothing they can do, and Robert Jordan expected this to happen. The cavalry followed the tracks of the horses Sordo stole last night. Primivito is visibly upset, but Robert Jordan assures him there is nothing they could do and going would be useless.

Pilar comes up the hill; she has heard the gunfire coming from Sordo's too. She asks Robert Jordan if the battle sounds bad, and he tells her it does. Pilar asks if they have heard from Pablo and Robert Jordan tells her Pablo has a forty-five minute head start on the cavalry. She tells them the cavalry will never find Pablo.

Robert Jordan tells her that Primivito wants to go to Sordo's aid. Pilar tells him it would be crazy. They hear a plane overhead, and Pilar expresses her fear of the planes. She thinks it is a bad omen. The firing from Sordo's has died down. Robert Jordan thinks the cavalry, having been beaten back, is surrounding the camp. Pilar will return to the cave and send Maria with food, wine and the dead cavalryman's papers.

## Chapter 25 Analysis

Pilar acknowledges her fear of the planes. The planes represent the fascists and show the fear the people feel toward the fascists. They have seen what the fascists can do and have good reason to be afraid. Pilar thinks this is a bad omen, which is another example of the superstitious nature of these people.

They talk about the fighting at Sordo's. The cavalry followed the tracks of the stolen horses. Without the snow, they would not have found Sordo. Primitivo is upset. Like Agustin, he wants to help. Robert Jordan assures him there is nothing they can do for Sordo and his men. The men accept Robert Jordan's leadership and they do not try to intervene for Sordo.

Pablo was once very agile and intelligent. Like Agustin, Pilar remembers the old Pablo and thinks he will not be caught.



# Chapter 26

## Chapter 26 Summary

The planes came at three o'clock in the afternoon. There was little firing at long intervals coming from the direction of Sordo's. Robert Jordan examines the cavalryman's papers and learns he is from Tafalla. The regiment he is with was supposed to be in the North, and this surprises Robert Jordan. The man carried letters from his family and his fiancé. The letters expressed the fear his family felt for his safety.

Primivito asks him about the letters, and Robert Jordan tells him. Robert Jordan begins to think of the people he has killed. He still believes that killing is wrong, but justifies a certain amount of killing as necessary to the cause. He believes in the right of people to govern their selves. He tells himself to stop thinking about these things because it is bad for the job he is doing.

He begins to think about Maria. He has never had love before, but has it now. He does not know how long he will have it, but if he dies tomorrow, at least he did have it. Robert Jordan tells himself to stop thinking of dying. This is not the way they think. He wonders what is happening at Sordo's. As he is thinking of Sordo, he hears the sound of the approaching planes.

## Chapter 26 Analysis

Hemingway gives the reader a look at a fascist cavalry member in this chapter. The cavalryman is like any other Spanish young man. The letters from his family suggest they fear for his safety. This man was probably pressed into service, like most of the fascist troops. He is not fighting for a cause, like the Republicans. Robert Jordan is surprised to learn the regimen of the man. His group was reportedly in the north.

Robert Jordan thinks of the killing that has taken place. He is against murder, but feels killing for the cause is justified. The planes reappear as a symbol of the strength of the fascists, as Robert Jordan wonders what is happening with Sordo.



# Chapter 27

## Chapter 27 Summary

El Sordo and his men make their last stand on a hilltop. Joaquin and Ignacio fire to give Sordo a chance to get the gun in place. Three of the five men on the hilltop are wounded. Sordo is wounded in a leg and his left arm. The men dig mounds and link the mounds with dirt and stones. Joaquin has not been hit and repeats communist slogans.

Sordo thinks of the slim possibility he could get his men out. He wonders if the planes will come and thinks they will. One of his men begins to curse Pilar for leaving them there. Sordo defends Pilar, saying there is nothing they could do. Another man curses the Russians and thinks they should offer assistance. A man asks when the planes will come, and Sordo tells him they will arrive at any time.

Sordo is not afraid to die. However, the reality of one's own death is always difficult to accept. Dying on the hilltop is not the kind of death Sordo would prefer. Sordo lies in pain and speaks to his men. He tells them to reload, but not to shoot. He wants to try to draw them closer and take out some fascists before the planes arrive. The men lie quietly and the plan works. The only man they get is the captain, because the others were afraid and realized it may be a trick.

El Sordo was trying to get another officer when they heard the planes. He and Joaquin lie on their backs and prepare to fire at the planes. The planes bomb the hill heavily. After the planes have passed, the cavalry shoots and throws grenades. Joaquin is the only man not completely dead, so Lieutenant Berrendo shoots him in the back of the head. The men decapitate the bodies for evidence and identification.

## Chapter 27 Analysis

The reader learns the fate of El Sordo and his men. Three of the five men are wounded, including Sordo. They are holding out, but know the planes are coming. The troops and planes are too powerful for this small group of men. Sordo shows he is smarter than the fascist captain, who walks into the trap and is shot.

Sordo is willing to die for his cause, but really does not want to die. He does not give up easily and continues to try to find a way out for his men. He is a much different man than Pablo. Sordo has remained faithful to the Republic and to his band of men until the end. Even when he has accepted that there is no escape, he orders his men to remain still. He will try to take out a few more before he dies.





# Chapter 28

## Chapter 28 Summary

Robert Jordan hopes the planes have missed Sordo; he thinks the planes hardly kill anyone. When everything stays quiet, he knows it is over. Maria comes with food and asks about the fighting at Sordo's. Robert Jordan tells her it is over. He asks her to stay, but she is going to receive instruction from Pilar.

Primitivo is upset and can barely eat. He is upset that they left them alone to fight the cavalry. Robert Jordan reminds him that there was nothing they could do to help. They watch the cavalry returning from Sordo's. Robert Jordan sees Sordo's rifle on one of the saddles. Lieutenant Berrendo has the gun. He is thinking about the attack and feels taking the heads was barbarous. He thinks of Julian dead on the hill and begins to pray. As he prays, he passes Anselmo.

Anselmo walks back toward Pablo's camp and is praying. When he reaches the post, Fernando speaks to him. Pablo has told the men of the attack on Sordo. Anselmo goes to the cave.

## Chapter 28 Analysis

Primitivo is upset because he feels they should have helped Sordo. Robert Jordan reminds them that they could not have helped Sordo. They see the cavalry pass with the heads of Sordo's men. This shows the barbarous nature of the fascists. Each man deals differently with the fighting at Sordo's. Primitivo is angry; Robert Jordan is practical in realizing they could not have helped the men, but he is sickened by the taking of the men's heads. Anselmo passes Anselmo on the path, both men are praying.



# Chapter 29

## Chapter 29 Summary

Anselmo finds Robert Jordan writing in his notebook. He is sitting with Pablo, and the girls are in the back of the cave. Pilar is keeping Maria away from the conversation. Anselmo tells Robert Jordan what he saw on the hill. The story is the same as he heard from Pablo. Robert Jordan gives Anselmo two glasses of whiskey, and tells him the rest is for tomorrow.

Robert Jordan asks about movement on the road. Anselmo tells him there has been a lot of movement, including four anti tank guns. Anselmo tells him about the rest of the vehicles and the cavalry he saw returning from El Sordo's. Robert Jordan decides to send Andres to Navacerrada to carry a dispatch to General Golz. He explains how to find the General. Robert Jordan wants to warn the general of the events of the day, so the attack on the bridge may possibly be postponed. Pablo tells Robert Jordan he has confidence in him.

## Chapter 29 Analysis

Anselmo tells Robert Jordan about movement on the road. There are weapons and troops being moved and Robert Jordan worries that the movement is a bad sign. He hopes Golz will cancel the attack because the movement may be a sign the fascists are aware of the impending attack. Pablo expresses his confidence in Robert Jordan. Robert Jordan has shown himself to be a leader and the men trust his judgment. Pablo used to inspire this confidence in men, but that time has passed.



# Chapter 30

## Chapter 30 Summary

Robert Jordan is walking down to the post to speak to Primivito. He realizes Golz has the power to plan the attack, but not to postpone the operation. He thinks he should have sent the dispatch sooner. Golz will not be able to get anyone to stop the plans this late. He thinks the planes may have warned his side, but is not sure.

The orders for the bridge are very clear. Robert Jordan knows he cannot be afraid or worry. He thinks he does very well, for a Spanish teacher. He thinks of his grandfather and the stories of the American Civil War. His grandfather never wanted to speak about the killings in the war. He remembers his grandfather's weapons very clearly.

Robert Jordan remembers his father killing himself with one of his grandfather's guns. The coroner had returned it to him, thinking he may want to keep it. Robert Jordan had thrown it into the lake. The only weapon he still kept was the saber that belonged to his grandfather. He remembers his father often, when he thinks of his grandfather. He thinks his father was a coward, and he is ashamed of the man. He thinks of his father's wife and how she would bully her husband.

He wonders what his grandfather would think of this war. He thinks his grandfather would speak of war with him now. Before this experience, Robert Jordan realizes he had no right to ask about the war. He would like to speak to his grandfather and get his advice. He realizes the bridge must be blown if they are to win the war. He was suddenly sure it would not be cancelled and feels better with this certainty.

## Chapter 30 Analysis

Robert Jordan feels a connection to his grandfather after his experiences in this war. His grandfather would not speak to him about killing in war when he was a boy. Now that they have both served as soldiers, Robert Jordan thinks his grandfather would be willing to talk. He thinks his father is weak for committing suicide. This weakness is seen in Pablo, which explains the bitter feelings Robert Jordan has for Pablo. Like his grandfather, Robert Jordan will be strong and will fulfill his duty.

When Robert Jordan realizes the bridge mission will continue, he feels relieved. Knowing what he must do is better than the uncertainty of not knowing. Even though the mission is difficult, if not impossible, the knowledge of his orders makes it possible to continue.



# Chapter 31

## Chapter 31 Summary

Maria and Robert Jordan are lying in the robe and Maria is apologizing for being unable to make love. She thinks the soreness is caused by the things that were done to her by the Fascist men and not by Robert. Robert Jordan tells her there is no problem, but thinks it is bad luck for the last night. He tells Maria they should talk because they have not spoken much. She asks if he wants to talk about his work, but he wants to talk about Madrid.

Robert Jordan tells Maria he will care for her in Madrid. He speaks of the Plaza del Callao, where they will stay. She tells him she will clean for him and make love to him, if she can. He tells her there are good doctors in Madrid, who can help her. He will marry her in the United States, because the Church still exists there. Maria asks if he will run around with other women, but Robert Jordan assures her that he does not run around. Maria begins to tell him that Pilar said they would all die tomorrow. Robert Jordan calls Pilar a "superstitious bitch" and tells Maria to talk of Madrid. They talk of the city and the things they will do there.

Maria tells Robert Jordan about the death of her parents. When her father was shot for being a Republican he yelled, "Viva la Republica" as he was shot. Her mother was not a Republican, so she yelled "Viva my husband who was Mayor of this village," when she was shot. Robert thinks he would have liked her parents. After her parents were killed, the girls were lined up and had their heads shaved. They shaved Maria first because she was the Mayor's daughter. Several Fascists in her father's office raped her after her head had been shaved. Maria fears she will not be able to bear children for Robert Jordan, but he tells her that is for a doctor to decide. When she falls asleep, he whispers in her ear, "I am proud of your family."

## Chapter 31 Analysis

The brutality of the fascists is seen again in this chapter. They not only killed her parents, but also humiliated the daughters by shaving their heads and finally raping many of the girls. The abuse resulted in pain with normal sexual relations. This demonstrates the brutality with which she was treated.

Robert Jordan is proud of the way her parents died. They were brave and stood up for what they believed in until the end. Her father yelled for the Republic and her mother yelled allegiance to her husband as she was shot. Robert Jordan wants to talk about Madrid. He loves the city and wants to share it with Maria. He knows this may not be possible, so he lives the experience through words. This helps calm his nerves and keeps them thinking positively about the future.



# Chapter 32

## Chapter 32 Summary

On the same night, Karkov arrives at his apartment in the Hotel Gaylord in Madrid. The apartment is crowded and several men in uniform were present. Karkov walks over to one woman in uniform and shakes her hand; she is his wife. He then walks over to his mistress in a way that seemed to mimic the greeting he gave his wife. His wife paid no attention; she was speaking to a good-looking Spanish officer. She asks about the offensive and he tells her there is no offensive planned.

Karkov walks over to a man with puffy eyes, who tells Karkov the Fascists have been fighting each other and have bombed their own troops in Segovia. Karkov confirms the story with another man, a General. Karkov mentions Robert Jordan, who is working with Golz. The general tells Karkov they should receive a report from Robert Jordan tonight. Karkov goes to bed, but does not undress because he plans to drive to the front at two o'clock in the morning.

## Chapter 32 Analysis

Karkov is gathering information about the fighting between the fascists. He hears the same story from different people, making it more credible. Karkov knows of Robert Jordan's mission and inquires as to the progress. Karkov obviously knows about the offensive, but denies knowledge to his mistress. He is aware of the danger of the situation and does not trust anyone with the information. He plans to drive to the front in the early morning hours before the offensive.



# Chapter 33

## Chapter 33 Summary

Pilar wakes Robert Jordan at two o'clock. She tells Robert Jordan that Pablo is gone and has taken things that belong to Robert Jordan. He checks his sacks and finds the exploder and detonators gone. Pilar thinks Pablo left about an hour before. She had awakened to find him leaving the cave, telling her he had to go to the bathroom.

Robert Jordan tells her to go back to sleep, he will come up with an alternate plan for detonating the bridge. She offers to watch the sack, but he refuses. Pilar thinks she has failed the Republic. Robert Jordan tells her they are better off without Pablo and she should get some sleep.

## Chapter 33 Analysis

Robert Jordan is angry at both Pilar and himself when Pablo steals the materials. Robert Jordan knew Pablo could not be trusted, which is why he nearly killed him. Pablo is afraid of the repercussions that will follow the bridge being blown.

Pilar blames herself, believing she failed the Republic. Pablo has failed the Republic. Pilar still holds the same belief in their cause, but Pablo has allowed his fear to take over. He pretended to be for the bridge to prevent the men from killing him. Now that the time has come, he shows his weakness by trying to stop the bridge.



# Chapter 34

## Chapter 34 Summary

Andres is on his way to Golz, carrying a message from Robert Jordan. He thinks they will give the fascists something from Sordo in the morning. As he walks, he thinks of bull baiting as a young man. He was brave with the bulls; he remembers once when he had held the bull's tail to help an injured man. After the bull had been killed, Andres would feel ashamed, empty and proud all at once. He thinks about living without war and raising partridges in the front yard. Andres sees a government position ahead and knows it will be challenging.

## Chapter 34 Analysis

The mixture of feelings Andres experienced during the bull baiting in his hometown parallels the feelings soldiers experience when killing in war. They are proud for fighting well for the cause. However, most of the men find killing to be wrong. Killing another soldier, even an enemy, can bring feelings of emptiness and shame.

The theme of the reality of war is seen in this chapter. Andres daydreams about raising partridges in his front yard, but he has no home and will not until the war is finished. Andres and the other men have seen the reality of their situation with the attack on Sordo. Andres thinks about revenge for his fallen countrymen in the coming battle.



# Chapter 35

## Chapter 35 Summary

Robert Jordan lay in the robe thinking about Pablo. He had known Pablo would be friendly when he became treacherous. He feels foolish and berates himself for leaving the sack with Pilar. Robert Jordan feels himself becoming enraged and begins to feel anger toward all Spanish people. He calms himself and begins to think of how he will blow the bridge. He begins to think they will all be killed, but the bridge will be blown.

## Chapter 35 Analysis

The more Robert Jordan thinks about Pablo, the angrier he becomes. It is typical for one to second-guess himself in a situation like this. Robert Jordan had known Pablo could not be trusted and he feels foolish for allowing Pablo the chance to steal the detonators. Robert Jordan turns the rage he feels toward Pablo to the entire Spanish population. When things go wrong in war, it can be common for the soldiers to blame their allies.

Robert Jordan likes planning and feels uncomfortable with sudden developments. This was seen with the increased movement on the road and with the cavalry. Robert Jordan claims that he is not superstitious, but he views the planes and increased fascist activity as bad omens.





# Chapter 36

## Chapter 36 Summary

Andres arrives at the government position and states his business. The guards threaten to drop a bomb on him. He tells them he is with the band of Pablo and tells them about Robert Jordan and the bridge. Andres is able to convince them he is not a fascist and they let him in. He shows the papers he has brought and tells them about the attack on Sordo. The men do not know about Sordo or the attack planned for the next day. One officer agrees to show Andres the way, but insists on carrying Andres' gun.

## Chapter 36 Analysis

The guards at the government post do not trust Andres at first. Civil war makes trusting difficult because both sides are largely made up of Spanish people, so knowing your enemy can be nearly impossible. The bands of Pablo and Sordo are small and the men have never heard of them. The plan for the attack has been a closely guarded secret and these men have not been told of the plan. Andres is a stranger who has knowledge they do not; this makes them suspicious.



# Chapter 37

## Chapter 37 Summary

Maria wakes and they make love. She tells him there is no pain. Robert Jordan thanks her and says he loves her. She tells him they have had good fortune and Robert Jordan agrees. He silently wishes he were not going to die today. Robert Jordan thinks of Anselmo and Agustin and how much they have become like family in such a short time. Maria asks if he will come fast when the bridge is blown and he tells her he will. Maria rolls up the robe, while Robert Jordan enters the cave.

## Chapter 37 Analysis

The theme of the saving power of love is seen in this chapter. Robert Jordan has grown to love not only Maria, but Anselmo and Agustin as well. It has only been a few days, but these people feel like family to Robert Jordan. In war, there is always a possibility of death. The uncertainty and feeling of the shortness of time makes people connect faster than they would normally.

The superstitious nature of the Spanish people is seen here again. Maria believes the love she shares with Robert Jordan is a sign of good fortune. Robert Jordan agrees, but is more realistic. He understands that they may not make it out alive. The development with Pablo has made him doubt the success of the mission.



# Chapter 38

## Chapter 38 Summary

Inside the cave, Pilar tells Fernando to eat because there is no doctor around if he should be gored. Agustin tells her not to talk that way and they argue. Robert Jordan asks Eladio about the grenades and learns they are from the Republic. Robert Jordan asks if they have always exploded, and Eladio insists they have. Robert Jordan decides to use two on each set, just to be sure.

As he works, Robert Jordan thinks how impossible the plan seems. Pablo knew it and that is why he ran. He wonders if Golz will stop the attack when he receives the message from Andres. Maria smiles at Robert Jordan and he begins to think of ways out. Pilar tells him not to worry: everything is fine. She begins to speak of what she saw in his palm and tells him it is all gypsy nonsense. Robert Jordan tells her that he is not worried, but she can see he is worried.

Pablo appears at the entrance to the cave. He tells Robert Jordan he has five men from other bands waiting. Pablo tells Robert Jordan he threw the materials into the gorge. He tells them he had a moment of weakness, but has returned to fight. Robert Jordan says he is glad to see Pablo. Pilar mocks him, comparing him to Judas Iscariot, but then says he is welcome. She figures if a man was something once, maybe something remains of the man he was. She tells him she believes he is back, but he was really gone.

## Chapter 38 Analysis

Robert Jordan is working on a new plan for blowing the bridge. As leader of the group, it is his responsibility to keep up morale in his men. He pretends he is not worried about the attack, but Pilar sees through it. Robert Jordan hopes Golz will postpone the attack and he will not have to blow the bridge yet. He knows this will not happen, so he gathers grenades to complete the job.

Pablo shows up at the cave and appears to reconsider. He has brought men with him to help in the attack on the posts. Pilar compares him to Judas Iscariot, the ultimate betrayer. Pablo's fear has resulted in his abandoning the cause. More than death, Pablo fears loneliness. It is this fear that brings him back to his people.



## Chapter 39

### Chapter 39 Summary

The group loads the horses and prepares to leave. Robert Jordan and Pablo talk about the plan and the men Pablo has brought. They will take care of the lower post and Pablo speaks of going to Gredos. Robert Jordan thinks his luck has turned since Pablo returned, but he does not believe in luck. Pablo introduces Robert Jordan as the dynamiter to the men. Pilar recognizes Pepe and Elicio. Pablo leads the group to the spot where the horses will be left.

### Chapter 39 Analysis

Again, the belief in luck or superstition is seen. Robert Jordan viewed Pablo leaving as bad luck. He thinks Pablo's return is a sign that their luck may be returning.



# Chapter 40

## Chapter 40 Summary

Andres makes slow progress in getting the message through to Golz. A commander named Gomez finally listened and believed his story. Gomez takes Andres on his motorcycle. Gomez asks to speak to the Lieutenant Colonel, but the guard does not want to wake him. Gomez insists and threatens the man. Lieutenant Colonel Miranda listens to Andres and tells Gomez to take him on the motorcycle with orders from Miranda. Miranda asks Andres about movement, but Andres tells him the roads are quiet. On the motorcycle behind Gomez, Andres sees empty trucks coming down from the mountains.

## Chapter 40 Analysis

Andres finally finds someone to believe his story, Commander Gomez. Gomez understands the gravity of the situation and takes Andres to Miranda. Miranda writes orders to help them get to Golz. Andres still hopes to get the dispatch through in time, but it is beginning to look unlikely that he will be able to stop the attack.



# Chapter 41

## Chapter 41 Summary

Robert Jordan reminds Pilar there is to be no attack until they hear bombs falling. She remembers and he then speaks to Pablo about the plan. Robert Jordan tells Pablo he will handle the maquina, or machine gun. Pablo asks if he has experience, and Robert Jordan assures Pablo that he has a lot of experience with machine guns. Robert Jordan wonders what Pablo has planned and is glad he does not know the new men. He says his good bye to Maria and promises to return quickly.

Robert Jordan feels young and compares the feeling to going away to school for the first time. He heads down the hill with Agustin and Anselmo. Robert Jordan shows Agustin where he is to lie and wait. He and Anselmo will take out the guards, but if they do not Agustin should shoot them through the window of the post. He leaves cigarettes, but warns Agustin not to smoke because they are too close to the post. Robert Jordan goes over Anselmo's orders then finds a place to lie in the grass and wait for daylight.

## Chapter 41 Analysis

Robert Jordan goes over the plan again with Pilar and Pablo. He still does not trust Pablo and wonders what he has planned. Robert Jordan truly cares about the men he is leading. He doubts the safety of the men under Pablo, which is why he is glad he does not know them.

Pablo told Robert Jordan the new men think Pablo is the leader. This is obviously not the case. He was their leader once, but that time has passed. The men willingly accept and follow orders from Robert Jordan. Everyone takes their places and they wait for the attack to begin.



# Chapter 42

## Chapter 42 Summary

Andres and Gomez travel fast on the motorcycle and approach Golz's headquarters. Andres watches the troops and passing trucks. He is impressed with the army built by the Republic. They reach the sentry and ask where to find the headquarters and General Golz. The sentry acts as if he does not know what they are talking about. Just then, a staff car pulls up with a man in a French army uniform by the name of Andre Marty. Andres has read his work and was impressed with what he read.

Gomez speaks to Andre Marty, who orders both Gomez and Andres arrested. Gomez speaks to one of the guards and learns that Andre Marty is crazy. Gomez asks the man to let them go to Golz, but the guard refuses. He does agree to get word of the dispatch to the right people. Marty orders the men brought to him. Andre Marty listens to their story and thinks they and Golz are in league with the fascists. He thinks Golz is a traitor. Andres Marty tells the guards to take them away and Gomez yells at him, calling him crazy.

Karkov arrives at headquarters and asks Andre Marty about the dispatch. At first, Andre Marty denies the dispatch, but then puts it on the table. Karkov orders a corporal to take the dispatch and the men to Golz. Karkov lies and tells Andre Marty he learned about the dispatch from Andres and Gomez, not the corporal. The men arrive at Golz's headquarters and Duval, the chief of staff signs for the dispatch. Andres is relieved because Duval was one of three names Robert Jordan authorized to take the message.

Duval makes several phone calls and finally reaches Golz. The message has come too late. Golz watches the planes take off and feels sick knowing the two ridges would not be covered. Golz watches the planes and realizes how things could be. The rest of the phone conversation is drowned out by the noise of the planes.

## Chapter 42 Analysis

Andre Marty is insane. He thinks Andres and Gomez are fascists; therefore, Golz must be in league with the fascists. Marty hides the dispatch and sends for the men. He refuses to listen to the story

Karkov is one of the most important men in Spain at this time. Marty tries to hide the dispatch, but he does hand it over. Karkov knows Andre Marty is unreasonable and worries about the repercussions of his actions on the corporal. The corporal told Karkov about Robert Jordan's message. To protect the corporal, Karkov lies about how he learned of the dispatch.



# Chapter 43

## Chapter 43 Summary

Robert Jordan lies behind a pine tree and watches the sentry in the box. He wonders if they would call it off after receiving his dispatch. He does not think about how it would be to win. Robert Jordan understands that by keeping the fascists tied up, they are preventing them from attacking other countries. The Spanish people will fight forever, as long as they have arms. He watches the guards spit in the gorge and thinks he will do it too, after he wires the bridge.

Robert Jordan hears the bombs and sees one of the sentries reaching for his gun. Robert Jordan shoots the man and Anselmo kills the other sentry. Anselmo approaches Robert Jordan with tears running down his cheeks. Robert Jordan climbs down the framework and begins wiring the bridge. As he works, he hears shooting from the upper post and thinks it is too much shooting. He thinks Pilar's group is having trouble. Robert Jordan tells Anselmo to blow the bridge if tanks come, even if he is not finished. Anselmo tells Robert Jordan he will not do it if Robert Jordan is still down there. Robert Jordan orders him to do it, if necessary.

Pilar's group returns and Robert Jordan learns that Eladio has been killed and Fernando seriously wounded. Fernando asks them to leave him near the bridge, as he will not make it out of there alive. Robert Jordan finishes wiring the bridge as he hears a truck coming down the road. He yells for Anselmo to blow the bridge. When the metal stops falling, Robert Jordan looks up to see the middle of the bridge is gone. Anselmo is dead. Robert Jordan tells Pilar she is too high and cannot see the truck. He tells her Anselmo is dead and asks Pilar to tell Maria that he is fine. Robert Jordan feels the despair in himself that soldiers turn to hatred. This emotion allows them to continue as soldiers.

Maria is below with the horses, praying for Robert Jordan. Pilar tells her that he is fine and she cries tears of relief. Robert Jordan sees Pablo approaching and shooting behind him as he comes. Nothing comes around the bend at first. Then he sees a small tank firing down the road. Pablo finally returns, telling them all his men have been killed. Agustin asks Pablo if he shot them all and if he plans to shoot the rest of the band. Pablo explains that the other men were not with their band. They mount the horses and plan how they will escape. They must cross the road and Pablo tells Robert Jordan he can come at the end. They should be out of range of the maquina.

Robert Jordan sees men out on the bridge and hears gunfire. He hears the tank fire and ends up under the horse. He can move some, but his leg is stuck and has been broken. Primitivo and Agustin pull him out and Maria runs to him. Pilar thinks they can bind the leg, but Pablo shakes his head. Robert Jordan tells Pablo to take Maria after he has explained that he will not be leaving with them. In a tearful good bye, Robert Jordan tells Maria they are one, so he will always be with her. She wants to stay, but he tells her





they cannot die together. Robert Jordan says good-bye to Agustin and decides he will keep the machine gun with little ammunition.

Robert Jordan is alone, waiting for the fascists to come. He does not want to kill himself because he does not believe in suicide. He thinks of Madrid and Maria, but is not afraid to die. He is afraid of passing out and being taken prisoner. Robert Jordan hopes they come before he passes out. He thinks he can help the others if he can hold off the fascists and kill an officer. He sees the cavalry ride out of the woods and they recognize the horse as the one taken from the missing officer. Robert Jordan lay against a tree waiting for the officer to get closer. He feels his heart beating against the forest floor.

## Chapter 43 Analysis

Maria cannot bear to leave Robert Jordan, but he will not let her stay. Robert Jordan tells Maria they are one and he will be wherever she goes. He knew it was possible he would not survive the mission, but he remains concerned about her safety and convinces her to leave. Robert Jordan pushed away his feelings for Maria earlier in the book. Now, he embraces her and accepts the healing power of love. Their time has been brief, but he has experienced great love.

Throughout the book, Robert Jordan has claimed not to believe in signs or superstition. Pilar read something in his hand when they first met. Now that he knows he will not survive, Robert Jordan thinks there may be something to these abilities after all.

Several men are lost in the battle, but the bridge is successfully blown. Anselmo hated killing until the end. He has tears in his eyes after shooting the guard at the bridge. Robert Jordan was right to be concerned about the men with Pablo; none of the men makes it out alive. Robert Jordan

Robert Jordan remains a faithful soldier to his end. He will stay and fight the fascists to hold them off while the rest of his group escapes. Showing true leadership, he will not allow them to risk themselves to save him. Robert Jordan knows the end is coming, but will go out with a fight.



# Characters

## Anselmo

Anselmo is an elderly member of Pablo's band. Anselmo lacks education but reveals a moral and compassionate nature. He supplies the human element to the struggle that Jordan and Pablo so often ignore, as he embodies the Loyalist ideals to which the two men had originally devoted their lives. Each time he witnesses or participates in a killing, the event profoundly troubles him. He is killed as he helps Jordan blow up the bridge.

## General Golz

General Golz is one of the Russians who have been sent to help the Loyalist army. He oversees the upcoming planned attack against the Fascists.

## Robert Jordan

Before the Spanish Civil War, Robert Jordan had been a college Spanish instructor with a deep love of Spain and its people. His liberal political leanings prompted him to join the Loyalists in their fight against the Fascists. Initially, he idealized the Loyalist cause and the character of its devotees, but as the novel begins, with Jordan embroiled in the realities of war, he experiences a profound disillusionment. He notes that his devotion to the cause had been almost like a religious experience, likening it to "the feeling you expected to have but did not have when you made your first communion." That "purity of feeling," however, soon dissipated. He has observed atrocities on both sides of the conflict and has been chided for his naivete and "slight political development." At Gaylord's Hotel in Madrid, where he heard the callousness of the Russian officers, he concluded that they could "corrupt very easily" but then wondered "was it corruption or was it merely that you lost the naivete that you started with?"

He has come to the realization that most of the people of Spain have, like him, become disillusioned about their noble cause and so are not as willing to sacrifice themselves to it. As a result, he no longer defines himself as a communist; now he insists instead that he is an "anti-fascist," not a firm supporter of a cause but at least a dissenter to a movement he finds abhorrent.

His sense of duty compels him to complete the task he has taken on—the blowing up of a bridge in Fascist territory in an effort to aid the Loyalists' advance—even when he understands the probability of failure and the danger to himself and others. His courage, evident throughout the novel as he carries out his perilous mission, faces its greatest test after the mission fails to impede the Fascist movements and he suffers a severe injury when his horse stumbles. Understanding that his injuries will slow the others' escape, he convinces them to go on ahead to safety without him. He quickly overcomes



his desire to kill himself and determines to face the oncoming Fascist forces in a last effort to help his comrades escape.

## Maria

Jordan meets the young and beautiful Maria at Pablo's hideout. She has been brutalized by the Fascists after they murdered her father, a Loyalist mayor. Fascist sympathizers shaved her head as punishment for her association with the enemy, and, as a result, she is tagged with the nickname "Rabbit," which also suggests her timid demeanor. She gains strength, however, through her intense and short-lived love affair with Jordan.

Several critics, including Leslie Fiedler, have noted that Maria, like many of Hemingway's women, lacks development. She appears in the novel as an idealized image of a devoted woman who enjoys extreme sexual pleasure in her relationship with the protagonist. She seems to exist in the novel as tool to help reveal Jordan's character and to provide him with a sense of meaning. By the end of the novel, he must decide between his love for her and his duty to his compatriots.

Maria's immediate sexual attraction to Jordan seems unlikely given the sexual abuse she has repeatedly experienced at the hands of the Fascists. Yet her romantic insistence on staying with the injured Jordan at the end of the novel inspires readers' sympathy.

## Pablo

Pablo serves as a foil to Jordan. He is the leader of the central guerrilla band and Pilar's husband. Prior to Jordan's appearance, he had earned the group's fearful respect. Yet, when Jordan challenges his authority and outlines the dangerous plan to blow up the bridge, Pablo's cowardice and self-absorption emerge. He tries to cover his fear by insisting that the mission is too dangerous, claiming that the lives of his men would be put at risk and their headquarters would most likely be discovered, since it is close to the bridge. His men, however, determine that they will follow Jordan's plan of action in an effort to ensure a Loyalist victory.

Pablo's vicious battle with Jordan for supremacy over the group, coupled with the fear that he will endanger the mission, prompts the band to consider killing him, but Pablo escapes with the explosives before they can act. Pablo's return to the group the next morning appears to be generated by his feelings of remorse over his actions; yet his primary motive may be his jealousy over Maria's love for Jordan. When he returns, he insists that he now wholeheartedly supports the mission.

Hemingway suggests that, like Jordan, Pablo has lost his idealism by witnessing the brutalities of war on both sides. His acknowledgment of these atrocities has weakened his resolve to fight for the cause and has made him fearful for his own safety. Yet, though Jordan also at some points in the story becomes afraid for his life, he eventually



exhibits the strength of character necessary to help ensure the safety of the others in the group. Pablo too often gives in to fears for his own safety and to jealousy over Jordan's power and his relationship with Maria.

Yet his character is contradictory. When Pilar asks him why he did not kill Jordan when he had the opportunity, Pablo replies that Jordan is "a good boy." Pablo appears to redeem himself at the end of the novel when he admits that he returned to the camp because, as he describes his desertion, "having done such a thing, there is a loneliness that cannot be borne." Ironically, Jordan must depend on Pablo for the group's survival. After Jordan is severely wounded, Pablo leads the rest of them to safety.

## Pilar

Pilar is married to Pablo, the leader of the central guerrilla band. Unlike many of Hemingway's other women, Pilar is a complex, strong woman who does not allow her husband to dominate her. When Pablo's actions threaten to subvert their mission, Pilar promptly takes over as leader of the guerrillas. Hemingway suggests that Jordan could not have carried out his mission without her. She comes to represent in the novel the ideals and dedication of the Spanish Loyalists.

She also helps engineer Jordan and Maria's relationship, giving her as a gift to him. Pilar tells Maria that she supports and encourages her union with Jordan but admits that their relationship will make her jealous. Pilar insists that she is "no *tortillera* (lesbian) but a woman made for men": "I do not make perversions," she claims, yet she refuses to explain her jealousy.

Michael Reynolds, in his article "Ring the Changes: Hemingway's 'Bell' Tolls Fifty," writes that this scene, more than any other, reveals her complexity. Hemingway, he notes, "who would become increasingly fascinated with such triangles, realized the androgynous side of men and women earlier than most have given him credit." Pilar has insisted elsewhere, "I would have made a good man, but I am all woman and ugly. Yet many men have loved me and I have loved many men." However, as Reynolds notes, Hemingway has characterized her as androgynous, juxtaposing her insistence of her attraction to men with her tenderly holding Maria at the end of the novel, as the band leaves Jordan behind, waiting to die.

Her strength of character also emerges in her supernatural powers. When she reads Jordan's palm, she foresees his death, yet she stays devoted to the mission even at the risk of her own life. Her powers of perception allow her to recognize the depths of Jordan's and Maria's suffering, which prompts her to help them come together.

Pilar serves as the group's storyteller, spinning her stories as appropriate thematic backdrops to the action. As the group prepares for their mission, she tells the story of Finito, a bullfighter overcome by fear in the bullring, and of Pablo and his men murdering Fascist sympathizers by throwing them over a cliff.

## **El Sordo**

El Sordo is the leader of a neighboring guerrilla band. Jordan asks him and his men to join Pablo's band to help blow up the bridge.

# Themes

## Idealism

The elderly peasant Anselmo most fully represents the Loyalist ideals in the novel. Hemingway suggests that his lack of education and his compassionate nature allow him to believe in the cause and to fight for it to the end of his life. Through his idealism, he supplies the human element to the struggle that Jordan and Pablo so often ignore.

Pablo has largely forgotten the ideals of the cause to which he had originally devoted his life. He has seen too much of the reality of war and so participates now more out of self-interest than out of patriotism. As a result, he can take pleasure in his brutal murder of the Fascists. And when he considers the plan to blow up the bridge too dangerous, he flees with the explosives. Yet he appears to retain some of the ideals to which he once dedicated himself. When Pilar asks him why he did not kill Jordan when he had the opportunity, Pablo replies that Jordan is "a good boy," since his motives are noble. He also notes the camaraderie that results from devotion to the cause when, as he describes his desertion, he notes, "having done such a thing, there is a loneliness that cannot be borne."

Jordan struggles to retain his sense of idealism throughout the novel. Initially, he volunteers to serve with the Loyalists because of his liberal attitudes toward politics and his deep love of the Spanish people. However, he quickly gets a taste of the reality of war when he sees atrocities committed on both sides. He notes that his education on the true politics of war came as he listened to the cynical attitude of the Russian officers at Gaylord's in Madrid as they discussed their intentions to pervert the Loyalists' devotion to their cause for their own ends. This attitude is reflected in the opening chapter as Jordan discusses the mission with Golz, who focuses only on the military aspect of the plan.

## Courage

Jordan's courage emerges in the face of his growing disillusionment. James Nagel, in his article on Hemingway for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, notes that Jordan "has a realistic skepticism about what the war will actually accomplish, but he dedicates himself fully to the cause nonetheless." Even though he suspects the mission will fail, he carefully plans and executes it, accepting the fact that failure most likely will result in death. His relationship with Maria helps provide him with the strength to continue as he allows himself to envision a future with her. His final act of courage appears at the end of the novel, as he faces imminent death at the hands of the Fascists. His fear initially prompts him to consider suicide. However, his strength of character returns when he recognizes that he can help ensure the safety of the rest of the group by staying alive to delay the advance of the Fascists.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel presents the narrative through an omniscient point of view that continually shifts back and forth between the characters. In this way, Hemingway can effectively chronicle the effect of the war on the men and women involved. The narrator shifts from Anselmo's struggles in the snow during his watch to Pilar's story about Pablo's execution of Fascists and El Sordo's lonely death to help readers more clearly visualize their experiences.

In "Ring the Changes: Hemingway's 'Bell' Tolls Fifty," Michael Reynolds writes, "Without drawing undue attention to his artistry, Hemingway has written a collection of short stories embedded in a framing novel." Against the backdrop of the group's attempt to blow up the bridge, each character tells his or her own story: Maria tells of her parents' murder and her rape; Jordan shares what he learned about the true politics of war at Gaylord's in Madrid. Pilar provides the most compelling and comprehensive stories of Finito's fears in the bullfighting ring and of Pablo and his men as they beat the Fascists to death in a drunken rage.

Hemingway employs flashbacks and flashforwards to enhance thematic focus. Pilar's stories of struggle and heroism make their mission all the more poignant and place it in an historical context. Jordan's flashbacks to a time when his ideals were not tempered by the reality of war highlight his growing sense of disillusionment. His dreams of a future with Maria in Madrid add a bittersweet touch to his present predicament and his final death scene.

## Style

One of Hemingway's most distinct and celebrated characteristics is his deliberate writing style. Trained as a newspaper reporter, Hemingway used a journalistic style in his fiction, honed down to economical, abrupt descriptions of characters and events. His goal was to ensure that his words accurately described reality. The best example of his economical style comes at the end of the novel, as Jordan faces death. Hemingway's spare, direct description of Jordan's final moments as he considers suicide and then determines to survive long enough to help the group escape reflects Jordan's stoicism and his acceptance of the inevitable.



# Historical Context

## The Spanish Civil War

Civil war broke out in Spain in 1936, but the underlying causes can be traced back several years prior to that date. In the 1930s Spain experienced continuous political upheavals. In 1931, after years of civil conflict in the country, King Alfonso XIII voluntarily placed himself in exile, and on April 13 of that year, a new republic emerged. The Leftist government, however, faced similar civil unrest, and by 1933, the conservatives regained control. By 1936 the people voted the leftists back in.

After the assassination of Jose Calvas Otelo, an influential Monarchist, the army led a revolt against the government and sponsored the return of General Francisco Franco, who had been exiled because of his politics.

As a result, civil war broke out across the country between the Loyalist-leftists and the Monarchist- rightists. Russia backed the leftists while Germany and Italy supported the rightists. The war continued until 1939 with each side committing atrocities: the leftists slaughtered religious and political figures while the rightists bombed civilian targets. At the beginning of 1936, the Loyalists were suffering from an effective blockade as Franco's troops gained control. On March 28, the war ended as the rightists took the city of Madrid.

Hemingway, siding with the Loyalists, first lent his support to their cause by raising money for ambulances and medical supplies. In 1937, he ran the Ambulances Committee of the American Friends of Spanish Democracy. During the war, he often returned to Spain as a journalist, penning articles for the *North American Newspaper Alliance* and *Esquire*. When the Fascist army won control of Spain in 1939, Hemingway had just started writing *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

## The Lost Generation

This term became associated with a group of American writers in the 1920s who felt a growing sense of disillusionment after World War I. As a result, many left America for Europe. T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound initially relocated to London, while F. Scott Fitzgerald and Hemingway traveled to Paris, which appeared to offer them a much freer society than America or England did. During this period, Paris became a mecca for these expatriates, who congregated in literary salons, restaurants, and bars to discuss their work in the context of the new age. One such salon was dominated by Gertrude Stein, who at one gathering insisted "you are all a lost generation," a quote immortalized by Hemingway in the preface to *The Sun Also Rises*. That novel, like *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, presents a penetrating portrait of this Lost Generation.





The characters in works by these authors reflected the authors' growing sense of disillusionment along with the new ideas in psychology, anthropology, and philosophy that had become popular in the early part of the century. Freudianism, for example, which had caused a loosening of sexual morality during the Jazz Age, began to be studied by these writers as they explored the psyches of their characters and recorded their often subjective points of view of themselves and their world. Hemingway's men and women faced a meaningless world with courage and dignity, exhibiting "grace under pressure," while Fitzgerald's sought the redemptive power of love in a world driven by materialism.

This age of confusion, redefinition, and experimentation produced one of the most fruitful periods in American letters. These writers helped create a new form of literature, later called modernism, which repudiated traditional literary conventions. Prior to the twentieth century, writers structured their works to reflect their belief in the stability of character and the intelligibility of experience. Traditionally, novels and stories ended with a clear sense of closure, as conflicts were resolved and characters gained knowledge about themselves and their world. The authors of the Lost Generation challenged these assumptions as they expanded the genre's traditional form to accommodate their characters' questions about the individual's place in the world.

## Critical Overview

When *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was published in 1940, Hemingway's reputation as one of America's most important writers was already well established. The new novel received overwhelmingly positive reviews from critics and the public alike, with many insisting that it was Hemingway's best novel to date. It quickly became a bestseller, as the first printing's 210,000 copies immediately sold out. In less than six months, that figure jumped to over 491,000. Michael Reynolds, in his assessment of the novel for the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, notes that a reviewer in the *New York Times* insisted that it was "the best book Ernest Hemingway has written, the fullest, the deepest, the truest. It will be one of the major novels in American literature." Reynolds adds that Dorothy Parker claimed that it was "beyond all comparison, Ernest Hemingway's finest book," and an article in the *Nation* proclaimed that it set "a new standard for Hemingway in characterization, dialogue, suspense and compassion."

These and other critics praised Hemingway's thematic focus on idealism and responsibility, especially as a reflection of the mood of the times, as the world braced for the devastation of the impending world war. Reynolds writes, though, that the novel "transcends the historical context that bore it, becoming a parable rather than a paradigm."

Later, however, some critics found fault with the novel's politics. Hemingway's inclusion of Loyalist as well as Fascist atrocities drew criticism from liberal sympathizers. Other critics have complained about the idealized relationship between Jordan and Maria. Leslie A. Fiedler, for example, in his *Love and Death in the American Novel*, finds fault in all of Hemingway's characterizations of love. He comments that if, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway "has written the most absurd love scene in the history of the American novel, this is not because he lost momentarily his skill and authority." Fiedler suggests that the love affair between Jordan and Maria "illuminates the whole erotic content of his fiction."

While the novel has never regained the critical status it enjoyed when it was first published, the novel is currently regarded, as James Nagel notes in his article on Hemingway for *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, as "nearly perfect." Philip Young in *American Writers* comments, "none of his books had evoked more richly the life of the senses, had shown a surer sense of plotting, or provided more fully living secondary characters, or livelier dialogue." Reynolds concludes his review with the following assessment: "And thus, softly, across time, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* continues in muted tones to toll for us."

# Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3



# Critical Essay #1

*Perkins is an associate professor of English and American literature and film at Prince George's Community College and has published several articles on British and American authors. In this essay, she defines Robert Jordan as one of Hemingway's "code heroes."*

Several of Hemingway's protagonists share qualities that define them as a specific type of character that has come to be known as Hemingway's "code hero." The world in which Hemingway's code heroes find themselves helps to define them. Often the setting is war or some other dangerous arena, like the plains of Africa or a boxing ring, where the hero faces the ultimate test of courage. The protagonist must face fear along with a growing sense of despair over the meaninglessness of experience. Fear results not only from physical danger and impending death but also from the gradual disintegration of the self in a world of "nothingness," a world stripped of consoling ideals. He reveals his courage as he stoically faces his inevitable defeat and accepts it with dignity.

In his early work, Hemingway's heroes find dignity through purely personal moments of fulfillment. For example, the protagonist in his short story "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" becomes a code hero when he stands his ground as a buffalo charges at him on an open plain in Africa. Previously, he had shown himself to be a coward when he had run from a lion, an action his wife uses to humiliate him and thus gain power over him. Yet, by the end of the story, Macomber has found his courage and so experiences a perfect moment of transcendence when he faces the buffalo without fear. His perfect moment is a purely personal one, based on his own desperate need to prove himself a man. Robert Jordan, the protagonist in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, presents another example of Hemingway's code hero. However, Hemingway alters his traditional type in his characterization of Jordan. Instead of defining him as a hero through a personal moment of dignity, as he does with Macomber, Hemingway presents a man who becomes a hero through an expression of communal responsibility.

Robert Jordan volunteers to help the Loyalists in their war with the Fascists during the Spanish Civil War because of his liberal politics and his great love for the Spanish people. Initially, he is devoted to their cause; however, he soon becomes disillusioned about the reality of war. He sees atrocities committed on both sides and listens to Loyalist sympathizers plot, not for the good of the cause, but for their own personal gain. During his frequent internal debates, Jordan comes to the conclusion that he distrusts the politics and practices of those he has sworn to support. He has heard Russian officers, who in theory have come to aid the Loyalists, discuss their intentions to gain personal advantages during the war. He has also heard of how the Spanish people, for whom he is ultimately fighting, can take enjoyment from the brutal slaughter of the enemy.

The world of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* appears to lack meaning like the God-abandoned world of Macomber on an African safari or of Frederick Henry on the battlefield of *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). Both Macomber and Henry eventually exhibit a strong sense



of dignity in the face of their meaningless existence in very personal moments. Both men are alone at the end of their stories, revealing a certain "grace under pressure," a courageous standing of their ground as they confront their fear of the unknown. Jordan, however, stands his ground not for a purely personal sense of dignity and self-worth but for the common good. Even though he suspects that their plan to blow up the bridge and thus check the Fascist advance will fail and even though he recognizes that many of his compatriots have lost their belief in the cause, he refuses to turn his back on them.

In *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway expressed one of the tenets of his code heroes: "What is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after." As Pablo notes, Jordan is a "good boy" whose sense of morality is tied to the protection of his community. This moral code frames the novel. On the first page, Hemingway quotes from a poem by John Donne. The poem opens with the statement "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent" and closes with an insistence that, as a result, "never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." This opening suggests that Jordan's experience will inevitably be a common one—that his test will be to find the courage to work toward the good of the community. He can only fulfill his personal destiny if he fulfills that of the group.

Jordan struggles with this philosophy throughout the novel as he plans the destruction of the bridge, assuming that the mission will fail, and as he considers suicide while facing death at the hands of the Fascists. At one point, near the end of the novel, he tries to convince himself, "why wouldn't it be all right to just do it now and then the whole thing would be over with?" Yet, finally, he recognizes that he must resist the urge to end his suffering and must, instead, stand his ground, because, he notes, "there is something you can do yet." He forces himself to retain consciousness so that he can stall the Fascists and so give the others a few more minutes to get to safety.

Thus while Jordan is certainly a member of the Lost Generation, facing a world bereft of meaning and sense, he ends his life in a community of the lost, insisting to his comrades that he will remain with them, even after death. One of his final images is of the group making their way to safety, to a place where they can continue to fight for the cause. The ultimate dignity that Jordan achieves in the novel is through his determination not to give up his hope for the future, even though he knows that he cannot be a part of it. Thus he achieves the status of a true hero, one who not only honors his own sense of responsibility but also, ultimately, that of his community.

**Source:** Wendy Perkins, Critical Essay on *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, in *Novels for Students*, The Gale Group, 2002.



## Critical Essay #2

In the following essay, Buckley examines the historical background of Ronda in order to understand Hemingway's fictional depiction of revolution staged there in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

Ronda sits perched in the hills of southern Spain, halfway between Seville and Malaga. Its dramatic setting, hanging on the cliffs above a river splitting the town in two, has inspired poets and artists for generations, most notably Rainier Maria Rilke. It is therefore not surprising that Hemingway should have chosen Ronda as a destination during his first visit to Spain in 1923. Carlos Baker tells the story:

The night life of Seville was boring to Hemingway. They watched a few flamenco dances, where broadbeamed women snapped their fingers to the music of guitars. . . "Oh for Christ's sake" he kept saying, "more flamingos!" He could not rest until Bird and McAlmon agreed to go on to Ronda. It was even better than Mike had predicted—a spectacular village with an ancient bullring, high in the mountains above Malaga.

His love affair with Ronda did not diminish. In *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) Hemingway wrote:

There is one town that would be better than Aranjuez to see your first bullfight in if you are only going to see one and that is Ronda. That is where you should go if you ever go to Spain on a honeymoon or if you ever bolt with anyone. The entire town and as far as you can see in any direction is romantic background. . . if a honeymoon or an elopement is not a success in Ronda, it would be as well to start for Paris and commence making your own friends.

Later on in his life, when Hemingway returned to Spain in the mid-1950s, Ronda again became a favorite destination, especially when he befriended bullfighter Antonio Ordóñez, who is from Ronda. Like fellow expatriate Orson Welles, Hemingway spent long sojourns at Ordóñez's "cortijo" (country house) near Ronda.

When Hemingway arrived in Spain in February 1937 to cover the Spanish Civil War, most of the south, including Ronda, had already fallen to Franco. He was therefore unable to go to Andalusia during the war, but there is little doubt that, even before reaching Spain, he had heard innumerable stories about the peasant uprisings that took place in the south following the July 1936 military coup. Chapter 10 of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is Pilar's painfully graphic account of one such uprising. More than any other



chapter in the novel, it has stirred readers' imaginations with its gruesome realism, sparing no detail in recounting the massacre of fascist landlords by Andalusian peasants.

Although Hemingway does not mention the location of the massacre in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, scholars have traditionally assumed that Ronda was the site of the peasant uprising. This assumption, however, has not gone uncontested. Angel Capellán has argued that because both Pilar and Pablo (the peasant leaders) say they come from Castilla (central Spain) we should look for an appropriate town in this area. Capellán suggests Cuenca, like Ronda dramatically perched on the ledge of a cliff. Hemingway himself, however, put the matter to rest when he told Hotchner: "When Pilar remembers back to what happened in their village when the fascists came, that's Ronda, and the details of the town are exact."

The details of the town may be "exact" in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, but not necessarily the details of the events that took place in Ronda in 1936. Writing to Bernard Berenson in 1954, Hemingway stated that the fascist massacre in the novel was a thing that he had "invented completely." However, he hastened to add that a writer has "the obligation to invent truer than things can be true." This would seem to indicate that Hemingway was trying to reach beyond actual events in a small Spanish town to a "higher reality," a description of the July peasant revolution which would reveal its "inner truth," to paraphrase Hemingway himself.

Because Pilar's description of the massacre is generally considered a highlight of the novel, Chapter 10 has attracted a fair amount of critical attention. Robert Gajdusek analyzes the revolution in terms of Jungian archetypes and points to the myth of Dionysus to explain the peasant revolution. Gajdusek also points out that when Hemingway compares Pilar's skill as a narrator to that of the Spanish writer Francisco de Quevedo, he is shining his own boots, so to speak, for all to see.

As if to balance Gajdusek's approach to the chapter through pagan myth, H. R. Stoneback has argued that it possesses an undercurrent of Catholic doctrine which he claims runs throughout the novel as a whole. Stoneback argues that the priest who is finally slaughtered is the real protagonist of Pilar's tale, and that the priest points to one of the novel's central themes, the need for atonement.

As engaging as these two readings of Chapter 10 may be, it seems to me that there is a need to examine the real history of Ronda—the actual events that took place in this town in July 1936—in order to understand Hemingway's fictional rendering. In 1996 I was invited to Ronda for a conference on Hemingway and Orson Welles, a perfect opportunity to do research in the local archives and to browse through the records of the Town Hall, and above all, to talk with senior citizens who could still remember those days of passion and death. Oddly enough, no book has been written on the subject, and those books that mention the massacre of Ronda do so from a partisan perspective. This, then, is a brief—and certainly incomplete—narration, pieced together from different written and oral accounts of the revolution.



On 19 July 1936 the commander of the small army garrison in Ronda, upon reports of a military uprising in Morocco, went to the Town Hall with a small platoon and demanded that the mayor submit to his authority and publicly announce that the city was under martial law and the army was taking control. The mayor belonged to the left-wing coalition known as the Popular Front. He refused to follow the commander's orders and swiftly disarmed him and his small band of soldiers, heavily outnumbered by the peasant groups beginning to assemble on the plaza outside the town hall. Thus, Ronda remained loyal to the Republican government of Madrid, and did not fall to the fascists until 18 September 1936.

However, it would be wrong to assume that during these two months the Republican government in Madrid had any control over the town or its inhabitants. As soon as the reports of a military rising in Africa began to spread, the peasants from neighboring villages poured into Ronda and in effect took control. Although the mayor was nominally in charge, the real power belonged to a "Comité" formed by the peasants themselves, most of whom belonged to CNT (*Confederación Nacional del Trabajo*), the Anarchist Labor Union.

The task of this committee was three-fold: first, to arrest all persons suspected of having fascist sympathies; second, to insure that food was evenly distributed to all inhabitants (money was outlawed and vouchers with the CNT rubber-stamp were issued); third, to prepare to defend Ronda from a probable attack by fascist troops stationed in Seville.

The word "revolution" immediately comes to mind when we attempt to describe the situation in Ronda in summer 1936. The Secretary's "Record of Proceedings" for 28 July 1936, preserved in Ronda's Town Hall, displays revolutionary rhetoric: "[W]e are living through a moment of historic transcendence . . . the fascist coup has spurred the populace to rise to the last man and to demand social justice . . . a new society is being born, based upon liberty, justice and equality . . . justice has now become 'revolutionary justice' designed to cleanse the state of all fascist elements as well as to establish the basis for a new social order etc."

Ronda—like so many other towns and villages in Andalusia—was living through a revolution characterized, according to Pitt-Rivers, by "its moralism, its naturalism, its millenarian belief, its insistence upon justice and order in the organization of social relations, its refusal to tolerate authority not vested in the community, to admit any social organization other than the pueblo." The Andalusian anarchists had been waiting for generations for the right moment to strike. In July 1936 a weak government in Madrid, together with a coup by the fascist generals in Morocco produced the ideal situation for such a rising. The Anarchists realized the vacuum of power affecting great parts of Spain and moved quickly to take control.

There is no official record of how many people were killed during the summer 1936 peasant revolution of Ronda. Estimates range from 200 to 600. Hugh Thomas remarks: "Hemingway's account is near to reality of what happened in the Andalusian town of Ronda. . . 512 were murdered in the first month of the war." Thomas took this figure from the Catholic writer José María de Peman, so he is not necessarily accurate. Still,





the figure is staggering considering that the town's population in 1935 was 15,000 people.

The summer 1936 massacre in Ronda did not take place quite in the way Hemingway described it. Normal procedure would be for the Anarchists' Committee to draw up a list of people who were either fascist or had fascist sympathies and to order their arrest. Some were arrested, but others were taken to a lonely location out of town (sometimes the cemetery itself) and shot dead. I was told that the truck which carried this doomed cargo came to be known as "Dracula," and that the sight of this truck entering a neighborhood, usually at night, was not a welcome one for those fearing arrest.

No mass carnage occurred in front of the Town Hall—as Hemingway describes—but several massacres did occur, the most notorious involving the killing of a number of local priests: "On the twentythird of July two hundred armed peasants entered the castle, where the local Salesian priests have their residence, in order to search for machine guns, which, they said were stored secretly in the basement. . . . On the following day, they returned and took the priests under arrest. . . . In the evening, a number of these priests were taken from the prison where they were being kept and driven to an outof- town location known as El Tajo, where they were shot dead . . . They were the first victims of the red terror in Ronda."

No fascists were thrown over the cliff, as Hemingway would have it. One person did commit suicide by throwing himself over the cliff, according to an eyewitness report. Edward Stanton has drawn my attention to a passage in *Death in the Afternoon* that seems to foreshadow the fascist massacre in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*:

The bull ring at Ronda was built at the end of the eighteenth century and is of wood. It stands at the edge of the cliff and after the bullfight when the bulls have been skinned and dressed and their meat sent out for sale on carts they drag the dead horses over the edge of the cliff and the buzzards that have circled over the edge of the town and high in the air over the ring all day, drop to feed on the rocks below the town.

It is hardly surprising that the dramatic cliffs of Hemingway's beloved Ronda should come to mind as a setting for the portrayal of revolution in a small Spanish town.

One key element in Hemingway's description was apparently absent in the Ronda revolution of 1936: the practice of ritual. There is nothing haphazard or disorganized—as one would expect in a mob action—in Hemingway's fictional massacre. Everything follows Pablo's carefully established plan and unfolds in three stages. First, the fascists are arrested in their homes, taken to the Town Hall, and imprisoned. Second, Pablo's men besiege the small local garrison of the Guardia Civil until it is finally conquered and its defenders shot. The final stage of Pablo's plan is the most surprising and (for some critics) the most shocking: "While the priest was [hearing confession,] Pablo organized



those in the plaza into two lines. He placed them in two lines as you would place men in a rope pulling contest, or as they stand in a city to watch the ending of a bicycle road race with just enough room for the cyclists to pass between or as men stood to allow the passage of a holy image in a procession." The ritual of death is about to begin.

According to Blackey and Paynton, ritual in a revolutionary process serves two important functions: it reaffirms individual loyalties and brings mob violence under control by curbing the destructive instincts which any revolutionary process inevitably arouses. There is therefore nothing "morbid" or "gruesome" about the organized lynching of the fascist prisoners. Only by so doing □Blackey and Paynton would argue□does the peasant community become truly "revolutionary." Only through this "communion of blood" are revolutionary loyalties firmly established.

The ritual of death□the sacrifice of the landlords □will bring about the regeneration of the peasant community. "'We thresh fascists today' said one [peasant], 'and out of this chaff comes the freedom of this pueblo'." The peasants themselves understand that the revolution□like other rituals they have participated in (harvest fiestas, bullfights, the Catholic mass)□should bring about a catharsis, a spiritual cleansing.

Pilar explains both the nature of revolutionary ritual and the reasons for its failure: "Certainly if the fascists were to be executed by the people, it was better for all the people to have a part in it, and I wished to share the guilt as much as any, just as I hoped to share in the benefits when the town should be ours. But after Don Guillermo [s death] I felt a feeling of shame and distaste, and with the coming of the drunkards and the worthless ones into the lines . . . I wished I might disassociate myself altogether. . ." The exemplary punishment of a few fascist landlords became a bloodbath by a mob totally out of control, as Hemingway so vividly portrays in his novel.

He does not, however, condemn the revolution itself, but rather the way it is mishandled when the drunkards take over. Pilar puts the blame squarely on the CNT for the bloodbath: "It would have been better for the town if they had thrown over [the cliff] twenty or thirty of the drunkards, especially those of the red-and-black scarves, and if we ever have another revolution, I believe they should be destroyed at the start." While it is true that CNT members ("red and black scarves") got out of hand and turned "revolution" into "bloodbath," it is also true that without the CNT there would hardly have been a revolution in Spain at all. The Anarchists in general should be credited both for the early success of the revolution in most of Andalusia as well as for their failure to control it. As we noted earlier, it was precisely through "ritual" that Pablo□ a true anarchist□attempted to control his own revolutionary coup. The fact that he failed in no way discredits the ritual he engaged in.

But was this "ritual-of-death" a Hemingway invention or a common practice amongst Anarchists? Although I found no evidence of such ritual in the massacre at Ronda, I did locate several instances in the records of neighboring towns and villages. Here are but a few examples□In Almeria, a bullfight took place in which six fascists were shot dead for each of the six bulls in the fight. In Huercanal (Cordoba), the whole village lined the streets to stab, with their own kitchen knives, a sexton reported to have received as



many as two hundred wounds before he was finally put to death (the report is strikingly similar to Hemingway's own story). In the village of Grazalema, close to Ronda, a local peasant being questioned about the fascists he murdered during the uprising first refused to answer, and then finally stated that "he" did nothing . . . that "Grazalema" did it (this recalls the medieval story of Fuenteovejuna—a town that rose in arms against its Governor and then refused to apportion individual responsibility for the deed— "Fuenteovejuna did it").

Stories such as these—which Hemingway must have heard in plenty as soon as he arrived in Spain in February 1937—ultimately inspired him to write his own account of the July 1936 peasants' uprising. Pilar's long and detailed story of this revolt becomes the cornerstone of the whole novel. The revolution failed not simply because "three days . . . later the fascists took the town", but because, the peasant revolt of Andalusia drowned in its own blood. The failure of the Anarchist revolution of July was the perfect justification—nine months later—for the May 1937 Communist takeover of the Republican government. It is no idle coincidence that Hemingway begins the narration of his story at precisely this moment. Robert Jordan receives his orders from a Soviet commander, General Golz, and although Jordan is not affiliated with the Communist Party, he strongly believes (as did Hemingway himself) that only the Communists could win the war for the Republic.

Thus Hemingway takes us from the beginnings of the war (the Anarchist revolution of July 1936), to its midpoint (the Communist takeover in May 1937) and then points to the end of the war with the death of Robert Jordan and his reflections on what the war has meant for him and his reasons for fighting "the good fight." Although the main action of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* takes place in May 1937, the novel should be read as a "total" commentary on the war, spanning its commencement and its final moments.

Much has been written about Hemingway's political position during the Spanish Civil War. William Watson has shown the close ties, mediated by Joris Ivens, between Hemingway and the Communist Party. It was Hemingway's deep conviction—that only the Communist Party could possibly bring final victory to the Republic. But as soon as the war was over and Hemingway began to write *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, he "detached himself politically," as Allen Josephs puts it, and contemplated the war from a broader perspective. It is from this politically detached position that Hemingway narrates, through Pilar, the Anarchist rising of 1936. It is no accident that he chose Pilar to tell the tale of revolution, for only Pilar, as Stanton has suggested, has the epic grandeur, the tragic feeling, and the *duende* to tell such a story. Her tale echoes Yeats' of the Irish Easter Rising: "a terrible beauty is born!".

**Source:** Ramón Buckley, "Revolution in Ronda: The Facts in Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*," in *Hemingway Review*, Vol. 17, No. 1, Fall 1997, pp. 49-56.



## Critical Essay #3

*In the following essay, Rudat briefly explores Hemingway's satirization of macho posturing in For Whom the Bell Tolls.*

In *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway presents us with a strange dialogue between Fernando and the gypsy woman Pilar, whose praise of melons from the Valencia region draws this reply:

"The melon of Castile is better," Fernando said. "*Qué va,*" said [Pilar]. "*The melon of Castile is for self abuse.* The melon of Valencia is for eating." (85, italics, except for the Spanish, added)

Why does Hemingway have Pilar recommend the melon of Castile as an object for self abuse for the male Fernando and thus as an object of vaginal signification? Is this one of the numerous seemingly meaningless obscenities in Hemingway's Spanish Civil War novel, some of which appear to serve no other purpose than providing comic relief? Hemingway offered an explanation when he remarked in his famous interview with the *Paris Review* in 1958 that

it is very bad for a writer to talk about how he writes. He writes to be read by the eye and no explanations or dissertations should be necessary. *You can be sure that there is much more than will be read at any first reading* and having made this it is not the writer's province to explain it or run guided tours through the more difficult country of his work. (Plimpton 29-30, italics added)

I approach *For Whom the Bell Tolls* as a text where not only do earlier parts determine the meanings of later parts as is customary, but where the meanings of earlier parts are retroactively informed by later passages: phrases, passages, or scenes *palimpsestically* interact with those that come later in the novel. How, then, does Hemingway retroactively endow with thematic significance the foulmouthed Pilar's remark about certain melons being vaginal objects? In a novel that seems to celebrate the bravery of a few good men. "Andrés Lopez of Villaconejos," as he identifies himself to guards he encounters while trying to deliver a message from Robert Jordan to a Loyalist headquarters, replies, when asked where he was born:

"Villaconejos," Andrés said. "And what do they raise there?" "*Melons,*" Andrés said. "*As all the world knows.*" (375, italics added)

What the ironist Hemingway wants to communicate to the reader is that, according to Pilar's and even Andrés's own pronouncement, in Señor Lopez's home town they raise



something which males can employ for the purpose of "self abuse" "As all the world knows."

That Hemingway could expect the reader to discover a palimpsestic intertextuality between Andrés's mention of melons from Villaconejos on page 375 and Pilar's obscene pronouncement almost 300 pages earlier concerning the proper use of the "melon of Castile" results from his writing a linguistic- game novel that centers around the nickname the protagonist gives to his lover "Rabbit" the Spanish word for which is *conejo*. Andrés Lopez comes from a place named "Village of Rabbits." But then, *conejo* is also a slang term for the female pudendum, comparable to English "[p□□]." Therefore an association between Pilar's "melon of Castile" and the melons of "Villaconejos" indeed makes sense "if Hemingway is presenting Andrés's home town as a "Village of [P□□s]." But is this what Hemingway is doing?

Señor Lopez had gained quite a reputation among the men in the village he grew up in when, during a bullbaiting, he had the animal's "ear clenched tight in his teeth" as he was driving "his knife again and again and again" into the bull's neck. "And every year after that he had to repeat it. They called him the bulldog of Villaconejos and joked about him eating cattle raw." "Or they would say. 'That's what it is to have at pair of *cojones*! Year after year!'"

But Andrés isn't happy about having to live up to his reputation, and he feels relieved every time he doesn't have to go through with it:

Surely. He was the Bulldog of Villaconejos and not for anything would he have missed doing it each year in his village. But he knew there was no better feeling than the one the sound of the rain gave when he knew he would not have to do it.

The reader perceives the irony that, whereas Andrés is afraid of repeating his performance, his fellow villagers extol his courage. However, Hemingway also may be satirizing the concept that underlies the use of the word *cojones* in the meaning of courage: he ridicules and perhaps even questions the appropriateness of such a male-sexist concept by presenting Andrés's hometown as a "Village of Pussies."

Hemingway thus poetically transmogrifies those men who would restrict a universal character trait, courage, to those humans who possess male genitalia into *conejos* / "pussies" / "wimps" / cowards. The change in my word selection suggests my belief that Hemingway was more interested in exposing macho posturing by "wimps" than actually "vaginifying" those men. But then we must not forget that the palimpsestic interaction of the novel does transform a paragon of "what it is to have a pair of *cojones*" into what Pilar views as sexually symbolized by a melon. A middle ground would be that without necessarily meaning any physiological references, Hemingway *spiritually* unmans or "melonifies" the would-be bullfighters of Villaconejos.



It is important to note that Hemingway does not tell us of Andrés's boyhood adventures and adolescent fears until his cowardice *as a soldier* has been revealed. Andrés is ordered to deliver a message that might prevent his returning for the dangerous bridge-blowing, and it is that order that prompts Andrés to remember his bullbaiting days:

[Andrés] wanted to get this message-taking over and be back for the attack on the posts in the morning. *Did he really want to get back though or did he only pretend he wanted to be back?* He knew the reprieved feeling he had felt when the *Inglés* had told him he was to go with the message . . . when the *Inglés* had spoken to him of the message he had felt the way he used to feel when he was a boy and he had wakened in the morning of the festival of his village and heard it raining hard so that he knew that it would be too wet and that the bullbaiting in the square would be cancelled. (363-64, italics added)

Hemingway carefully sets Andrés up for his eventual exposure during adulthood. We know from pages 363-64 that Andrés has the "reprieved feeling": that having been given an opportunity to escape the dangers of the bridge-blowing mission he is reminded of the reprieve rain afforded him when bullbaitings in his boyhood village were cancelled. It is therefore appropriate that Hemingway has Andrés mention the melons of Villaconejos when he is on a journey that he knows will grant him a "reprieve" from the deadly fighting at the bridge.

It is through having Andrés relive his adolescent bullbaiting reprieves during his military reprieve that Hemingway performs a "melonification" of this extolled paragon of manhood. When the guerilla group meets on the morning of the bridge-blowing mission, Agustin makes a seemingly strange remark to Andrés's brother about his brother's absence: "And thy brother? . . . Thy famous brother has mucked off?" Why does Hemingway have Agustin refer to Andrés as a "famous" brother, and why is that famous brother's name conspicuously absent from this context? While Agustin presumably is referring to the "Bulldog of Villaconejos" and his famous "pair of *cojones*," the author actually is calling on the reader to take a closer look at the absentee's name. Hemingway is making a hilarious pun in his satiric portrayal of the cowardly Señor Lopez: the name of Andrés's Biblical predecessor, Andrew, literally means "manly."

Once we discover that Hemingway actually uses Señor Lopez's first name for a linguistic pun, we see how Pilar's pronouncement on the usefulness of melons fits into the linguistic games the author plays in the "Andrés Lopez of Villaconejos" context: Hemingway poetically un-Andrews Señor Lopez not only into a *conejo*, but also into a "melon"□into something that "All the world knows . . . they raise in Villaconejos." And we as readers might do well to consider the possibility that Hemingway actually may have used *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to satirize, however subtly, macho posturing□including the macho posturing that he himself had been guilty of in his own writings.

**Source:** Wolfgang E. H. Rudat, "Macho Posturing in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*: The Role of Andrés of Villaconejos," in *ANQ*, Vol. 94, No. 1, Winter 1996, pp. 27-30.

# Adaptations

*For Whom the Bell Tolls* was adapted as a film by Sam Wood, with a screenplay by Dudley Nichols, starring Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman, from Paramount, 1943. It is available on video and DVD.

An audio version, read by Alexander Adams, has been published by Books on Tape.





## Topics for Further Study

Watch the film version of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Do you think the film is dated? What scenes would you update for today's audience?

Compare the portrait of war in *A Farewell to Arms* to that of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. How are they similar? What differences do you see? Which resonates the most for you as the reader, and why?

Research the Loyalist sympathizers during the Spanish Civil War. Do Hemingway's guerrilla bands in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* represent an accurate portrayal of the Loyalist faction during this war? Explain your answer.

Some critics find the relationship between Jordan and Maria to be overly romantic and unrealistic. Support or refute this conclusion.



## Compare and Contrast

**1930s-1940s:** The world experiences a decade of aggression in the 1930s that culminates in World War II. This second world war results from the rise of totalitarian regimes in Germany, Italy, and Japan. One week after Nazi Germany and the USSR sign the Treaty of Nonaggression, Germany invades Poland, and World War II begins.

**Today:** The world is threatened by Islamic fundamentalist groups who have declared a holy war against the West. These radical groups have committed terrorist acts in several countries including the United States. On September 11, 2001, the most devastating acts of terror to date worldwide are delivered as terrorists fly planes into the World Trade Center Towers in New York City and into the Pentagon and are responsible for the crash of another plane in Pennsylvania.

**1930s-1940s:** Civil war breaks out in Spain in 1936 between the Fascists, backed by Germany and Italy, and the Loyalists, backed by the USSR.

**Today:** Spain has been established as a social and democratic country that is governed by a parliamentary monarchy. National sovereignty is vested in the Spanish people.

**1930s-1940s:** American women gain a measure of independence in the workplace as they labor in the factories, replacing men who have gone to war. By 1945, the peak of the war production, approximately 19 million women hold jobs. Independence is difficult to relinquish when, at the end of the war, the men come home and demand their jobs back, and their wives return to their traditional roles in the home.

**Today:** American women have made major gains in their fight for equality even without the 1972 Equal Rights Amendment Bill. Discrimination against women is now against the law.

## What Do I Read Next?

Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) chronicles a doomed love affair between an American lieutenant and a British nurse during World War I.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) is considered, along with *The Sun Also Rises*, to be one of the seminal works of the Lost Generation.

Antony Beevor's *The Spanish Civil War*, published in 2001, presents a comprehensive account of the conflict that served as a bloody precursor to World War II.

Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) focuses on the aftermath of World War I, especially on how the war affected the lives of displaced Americans.



## Further Study

Buckley, Ramon, "Revolution in Ronda: The Facts in Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*," in *Hemingway Review*, Vol. 17, No 1, Fall 1997, pp. 49-57.

Buckley places the novel in its historical context.

Martin, Robert A., "Robert Jordan and the Spanish Country: Learning to Live in It 'Truly and Well,'" in *Hemingway Review*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Fall 1996, pp. 56-64.

Martin presents a close analysis of the character of Robert Jordan and his relationship to Spanish culture.

Meyers, Jeffrey, "*For Whom the Bell Tolls* as Contemporary History," in *The Spanish Civil War in Literature*, edited by Janet Perez and Wendell Aycock, Texas Tech University Press, 1990, pp. 85-107.

This essay explores the political implications of the novel.

Wylder, Delbert E., "*For Whom the Bell Tolls*: The Mythic Hero in the Contemporary World," in *Hemingway's Heroes*, University of New Mexico Press, 1969, pp. 127-64.

Wylder presents an analysis of Robert Jordan who, he writes, "follows the mythical journey of the hero in a modern setting."

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## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of the Book**

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's □For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels



frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

### Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel; and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of "classic" novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members—educational professionals—helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

### How Each Entry Is Organized





Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- **Introduction:** a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- **Author Biography:** this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- **Plot Summary:** a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- **Characters:** an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed—for instance, the narrator in *Invisible Man*—the character is listed as "The Narrator" and alphabetized as "Narrator." If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name "Jean Louise Finch" would head the listing for the narrator of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname "Scout Finch."
- **Themes:** a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- **Style:** this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- **Historical Context:** This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- **Critical Overview:** this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- **Criticism:** an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).



- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an "at-a-glance" comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

### Other Features

NfS includes "The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature," a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.



Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

### Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

### We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: [ForStudentsEditors@gale.com](mailto:ForStudentsEditors@gale.com). Or write to the editor at:

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