

# **Some Like It Hot Film Summary**

## **Some Like It Hot by Billy Wilder**

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# Contents

<a href="#">Some Like It Hot Film Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Context.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Summary and Analysis.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Themes.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Style and Cinematography.....</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">Motifs.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Symbols.....</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Essay Questions.....</a>	<a href="#">18</a>

## Context

*Some Like It Hot* is a hilarious comedy about two men who witness a murder and are chased by the mob. In order to get away, the two musicians are forced to dress up as women and join a singing group so that they can get out of the city. While dressed as women, one falls in love with one of their friends while the other is chased by a wealthy man. They try to keep their secrets while still carrying on these relationships. As they try to avoid the gangsters who show up at their hotel, the fugitives discover important lessons about life and love in the funniest possible ways. They both find love finally, although one finds it in the completely wrong place.

Billy Wilder grew up in Germany and wrote films there until Hitler came to power. At that time, the Jewish writer fled the country and came to America. In 1938, Wilder partnered with Charles Brackett to begin producing such films as *Ball of Fire* (1941), *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Five Graves to Cairo* (1943) and *The Lost Weekend* (1945). Billy Wilder also created *Sunset Boulevard*, one of the greatest films of all time. After this, Brackett and Wilder stopped working together, and many of Wilder's later films were harsh and caustic unlike the funny *Some Like It Hot*.

Marilyn Monroe was the epitome of beauty during her lifetime. She was cast in a small part in *All About Eve* (1950), which helped her get larger roles in the future. With both *Niagara* and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, she became a sex symbol for a generation. Although Monroe tried to get away from her typecast sex-symbol roles for years and had a brilliant performance in *Bus Stop* (1956), her dependency on drugs and alcohol led to her suicide in 1961.

*The Prince Who Was a Thief* (1951) helped Tony Curtis get a real start in his acting career. He went on to perform in *Son of Ali Baba* (1952), *Flesh and Fury* (1952), *Houdini* (1953), *Trapeze* (1956), *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957) and *The Defiant Ones* (1958) before this film. Jack Lemmon is most commonly known by the younger generation for his hilarious work in the *Grumpy Old Men* films. His comedies as a younger man also won him popularity. Before this film Lemmon appeared in *It Could Happen to You* (1952) and *Mister Roberts* (1955). Later he also won praise for films such as *The Apartment* (1960), *Days of Wine and Roses* (1962), *The China Syndrome* (1979), *Tribute* (1980) and *Missing* (1982).

*Some Like It Hot* won the praise of the public and the attention of critics. The film was nominated for numerous Academy Awards: Best Actor in a Leading Role for Jack Lemmon; Best Art Direction-Set Decoration, Black-and-White for Ted Haworth and Edward G. Boyle; Best Cinematography, Black-and-White for Charles Lang; Best Director for Billy Wilder; and Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium for Billy Wilder and I.A.L. Diamond.

*Some Like It Hot* did win the Oscar for Best Costume Design, Black-and-White for Orry-Kelly. The film also won Golden Globes for Best Motion Picture - Comedy; Best Motion

Picture Actor - Musical/Comedy for Jack Lemmon; and Best Motion Picture Actress - Musical/Comedy for Marilyn Monroe.

## Summary and Analysis

*Some Like It Hot* begins as the audience sees two men riding in the back of a hearse sitting beside the casket. Two men drive the car, and they all look concerned when they see a cop car with sirens blaring following them. As they continue driving, the police begin shooting, and the guys in the back of the car shoot back. The casket begins leaking after being shot, and the audience sees that it's full of alcohol, which begins to pour out of the car.

On the screen comes a posting: Chicago, 1929, the setting of the film. Since the film is set in the middle of prohibition, the mob is extremely involved in trying to make money by selling alcohol and throwing huge drinking parties. The men lose the police and finally arrive at a large mansion. They take the casket inside. Soon after, the police meet outside a funeral parlor run by Spats Columbo. One of the men finds out the password, and they prepare to raid the funeral parlor.

The audience learns quickly that the funeral parlor is no normal parlor. As one of the investigators is greeted by the "director" of the funeral home, he is led inside to the party by walking past a man playing the organ into a back room that is soundproofed. The investigator takes a seat at his table. He watches as the mob family comes in. A man spills wine on the boss's sock and is carried away. Everything seems to be under control, but this event helps the audience realize how dangerous the business can be.

After a few more minutes, the police raid the party and arrest Spats. As most people are arrested, two of the musicians, Joe and Jerry, hurry out the backdoor with their instruments. The two men stop in to see Nellie, a secretary, so that they can try to get new jobs. The secretary is annoyed with them and points out that they do not have the best reputation. She sends them to talk to the boss about a job in Florida. Inside the office, the boss yells at someone on the phone and says that he needs two more women for a job. A beautiful woman rails about how her show will be ruined without the girls, but the man isn't sure he can get them.

Jerry and Joe run in and beg for the Florida job, but the boss tells them to go away. Little Bonaparte tries to convince the two musicians that they can't do the job unless they're girls, but he does give them a different job for the night. Later that evening, Joe and Jerry tramp through the snow for their job. Jerry complains about the trip they could have had to Florida. When they go into the job, the men playing cards pull guns on them. A moment later, another car with Spats inside drives in, and three men hold everyone else at gunpoint while Joe and Jerry hide.

Spats has Charlie, one of the men playing poker, murdered for tipping off the police. After seeing the murder, Jerry gets sick and accidentally knocks the gas nozzle out of the car. Spats realizes that Jerry and Joe are there, stops them and threatens to kill them for seeing the murder. Although they are scared, there is another man who witnesses the murder as well. He reaches for the phone, but he misses and distracts



Spats. Spats kills the man as Joe and Jerry run away while police sirens begin blaring in the street.

The two men run through the streets, trying to hide from both Spats and the police. Jerry and Joe realize that they can't stay in Chicago any longer. They call Little Bonaparte and get the job for the show in Florida. After dressing up as women, they run through the train station to catch their train. Jerry, now Daphne, can't understand how women walk in heels and doesn't believe they can get away with their plan.

As Jerry tries to convince Joe, now Josephine, to turn back, a beautiful woman walks past, and the two men stare, speechless. At that moment, a paperboy comes by with the news about the killing. Daphne/Jerry and Josephine/Joe meet the head woman, Sweet Sue, and the manager, Mr. Beinstock. They are escorted into an area full of beautiful women. Daphne/Jerry is extremely excited to be surrounded by so many beautiful women. While the two men try to hide to fix their outfits, they meet Sugar Kane Kowalczyk. She is not impressed with the band but talks to them and offers them something to drink. Josephine/Joe has to remind Daphne/Jerry to calm down once Sugar Kane leaves.

Later in the train car, the band practices, and the men get in trouble for not being lively enough. When practice resumes, though, they are the most fired up of them all, especially when they realize that they are surrounded by beautiful women. Sugar Kane then begins to sing and dance as part of the show. Daphne/Jerry and Josephine/Joe can't help but stare as they watch her. As she finishes her number, the flask of alcohol falls from her garter. Beinstock comes up and asks whose flask he found. He begins to yell at Sugar Kane, but Daphne/Jerry claims that the flask is "hers."

That night, the girls get ready for bed, and the men watch with excitement as the girls change. The conductor is still skeptical about the two new women, but she can't figure out what's wrong. After everyone is in bed, Sugar Kane gets up to thank Daphne/Jerry for helping her earlier. When Sweet Sue walks by, Sugar Kane jumps in Daphne's bed, and he becomes extremely excited. Daphne steals some whiskey for them from Josephine and falls out of bed in the process. All the other girls end up waking up and joining in on the party. Josephine and Daphne both try to get rid of the women, but the only one who leaves is Sugar Kane, who goes to get ice.

Sugar Kane explains that being in a male band is too expensive. She is obsessed with tenor sax players. The men she dates are bums who spend her money on gambling and other girls. She wants to find a man who is rich and handsome. Meanwhile, Daphne/Jerry is having a great time in the bunk with the other women. When the train suddenly stops, everyone falls to the floor. They have finally arrived in Florida, and the two fugitives believe that they are finally safe.

At the hotel, Daphne/Jerry offers to help Sugar Kane with her instrument, but Josephine/Joe throws his on the pile as well. One of the older men there, Osgood Fielding III, quickly takes a liking to Daphne/Jerry and offers to carry the instruments. He admits to investing in showgirls and losing a lot of money off divorces and breakups



caused by his mother. Fielding gets them in the elevator and has the elevator conductor take things slow. When they come back to the first floor, Daphne/Jerry yells at Fielding, slaps him and runs upstairs.

The bellhop starts hitting on Josephine/Joe when he enters the room, but he tries to get rid of him. Daphne/Jerry finally gets upstairs and complains about the dirty old man he met on the way up. Daphne/Jerry wants to find a male band so that they can be men again. Joe tries to convince him that everything is going well, but Jerry realizes that Joe only wants to stay because of Sugar Kane. Mr. Beinstock has lost his bag, and Daphne/Jerry can return Sugar's ukulele to her. Sugar invites both "women" to go swimming, but Josephine/Joe refuses to go, saying that he will take a bath.

After Sugar and Daphne/Jerry are gone, Joe searches his suitcase for pants. On the beach, the women frolic in the waves as Daphne/Jerry joins them. Joe appears on the beach all decked out in a nice outfit, and he watches the girls and Jerry. Sugar Kane is jealous that Daphne/Jerry has such a flat chest since clothes hang better.

Joe scares a little kid away so that he can get a chair and watch the women, but he is mostly interested in Sugar. The ball they are playing with rolls toward Joe, and he trips Sugar on her way to catch the ball. He apologizes and complains that people usually sue him for millions. Sugar throws the ball back to Daphne and stays to talk to Joe. Joe tells her about his yacht, and she begins to ask about his wife. He finally tells her that he's not married, even though she professes to be uninterested. She talks about the show and pretends to be a society girl who is doing this for a lark.

Sugar then begins talking about how hot the music is, and Joe says, "Some like it hot, but I prefer classical." They both complain about the difficulties of society. He asks her to call him Junior and alludes to the fact that his family owns Shell Oil.

Daphne recognizes Joe and is surprised to hear about Junior's new fortune. Junior promises to come hear them play if it's possible. Daphne/Jerry warns Sugar about the new man, and they rush back to tell Josephine. When they arrive, Josephine/Joe is, of course, not there, and Daphne/Jerry convinces Sugar to stay in the room to wait for him so that she will catch him in his impersonation. They suddenly hear singing from the bathroom, though, and see Josephine/Joe relaxing in a bubble bath. Sugar runs in to tell "her" all about the man she met, and Josephine encourages Sugar to go after him.

Sugar goes back to her room, and Jerry rails against Joe for his actions. Joe stands up and comes out of the tub fully dressed in his millionaire's outfit and dripping. Joe takes Jerry by the throat as the phone begins to ring. Joe answers the phone and talks to Fielding. He wants Daphne/Jerry to have dinner after the show, and Joe promises to relay the message. Fielding has it taken care of so that he and Daphne will be completely alone. Jerry is angry about the plans, but Joe makes a plan so that he can be on the yacht with Sugar while Fielding and Daphne/Jerry are ashore.

That night, the band plays while Sugar sings for the audience. Daphne/Jerry is disturbed when Fielding waves, and Joe tells him to be more loving so that Joe can be



with Sugar. Fielding sends a huge beautiful bouquet of flowers, and the bellhop also gives a flower to Josephine/Joe. Joe then puts a new card on the flowers so that he can give them to Sugar as if they are from Junior.

After Sugar's song, she goes to talk to the girls, and she is thrilled with the flowers and the dinner invitation. The girls wish Sugar luck, and Joe hurries off to change. In a few moments, he gets completely ready - except for forgetting to remove his earrings and makeup, that is. "Junior" steals a bicycle, and Daphne/Jerry convinces Fielding to go out to a restaurant.

Junior barely makes it to the ship before Sugar arrives, and he realizes to take off the earrings just in the nick of time. Junior finally gets the boat started, but he can only get it to work in reverse. They finally get to the yacht, and Sugar is thrilled with the boat. She asks a lot of questions about the boat, and Junior tries to ignore them, since he doesn't know anything. They finally find where everything is, and Junior tries to keep hiding his ignorance.

When Sugar finds out that they're alone on the boat, she begins to act nervous about the possibility that he could take advantage of her. He admits that he has a mental block around girls. She asks if he's tried to fix it, and he kisses her, claiming to feel nothing. She apologizes for not being able to help him, but he admits that he can't fall in love again. Joe then tells her a story that when his last girlfriend tried to kiss him, she fell into the Grand Canyon. Sugar is convinced that if he tries an American girl, he'll be cured, but she can't seem to help him. He tells her that if he could ever find a girl to cure him, he'd marry her in a minute. She asks to take a try at curing him, and he happily gives her permission.

Sugar gets herself and Junior some more champagne, as Junior continues to insist that nothing will help. While Daphne is out dancing with Fielding, Junior and Sugar are having a hot and heavy make out session on the yacht. Junior is amazed by the way things can be with a woman, and Sugar is happy to know she solved the problem. After their wonderful evening, they return to shore just as Fielding is returning to his yacht.

When Joe gets to the room, Daphne/Jerry announces that he is engaged to Fielding. Jerry is excited, while Joe is appalled. Jerry believes that he can trick everyone so that he can get a settlement from an annulment. Joe wants Jerry to keep remembering that he's a man. The bracelet Jerry got as an engagement present is made of real diamonds, and he is absolutely thrilled with the jewels. Joe begins to rethink the option. Sugar then comes in to tell them about her new beau. She wishes Josephine/Joe had someone, and then the bellhop walks in.

The next morning, Spats and his men come into the hotel and register. Other men are standing around watching as well. All the other thugs and some policemen are there, and they confront Spats about the witnesses they're looking for. Then Josephine/Joe and Daphne/Jerry walk downstairs and see Spats. The men (dressed as their female counterparts) run to the elevator, but Spats and the others get on at the same time. They surround the women and think they look familiar. The guys hit on them before





getting off the elevator. In their room, the girls throw everything into their bags. They plan to sell the bracelet so that they can live happily in South America.

Joe, as Junior, calls Sugar so that he won't have to leave without saying goodbye. She tells him that she dreamed about him, and he has to tell her that he has to leave for good. He's being forced into a marriage so that it will help his business investments. He slips orchids across the hall, and she finds the diamond bracelet inside. Finally, Junior wishes Sugar goodbye, and Jerry and Joe get ready to leave. Jerry is worried that the bracelet is gone, and Joe explains that he gave Sugar the bracelet. She comes over for bourbon, and the two men sneak out of the window after she's gone.

Downstairs, Spats and the boys talk. Apparently Little Bonaparte is upset about Charlie's death, and the gangsters think he needs to retire. They look out the window and see the girls climbing down. They recognize the instrument cases with bullet holes and figure out that the girls are really the guys they've been chasing.

After the men run out, Jerry and Joe climb back up to the room and go to find some new clothes. They see a man come up in a wheelchair and go into his room to take his place. They finally get downstairs and hide beneath a table, but then the gangsters sit down around them so that there is nowhere to go. As Jerry and Joe try to stay hidden, the head boss begins to give a speech to the mobsters, and they have a moment of silence for those who were killed. Spats doesn't get up at first, but the boss forces him up.

In another room, a man with a gun hides in a cake. The head boss is angry that Spats let both the suspects get away twice. He tells Spats that he put a birthday cake together, but Spats points out that his birthday isn't for another four months. As the men begin to sing to Spats, he realizes he's about to die. The guy jumps out of the cake and shoots Spats and his men. Joe and Jerry jump out from under the table and run out. A policeman then comes in to check out the scene.

After Joe and Jerry find new clothes, they decide that they have to elope with Fielding. Josephine/Joe goes to make the call while Daphne/Jerry stops to watch Sugar perform. Josephine then goes down and kisses Sugar, and she screams that a girl is kissing her. The mob recognizes Joe and chases the fugitives through the hotel. Both the boys and Sugar jump in Fielding's car and drive quickly away. Fielding asks few questions, and the men escape safely.

As the group drives, Joe, his identity revealed, apologizes for lying to Sugar. She forgives him, and they begin making out in the back seat. Daphne/Jerry tries to convince Fielding not to marry him as they drive. Finally, he reveals that he is a man in an effort to get out of the marriage, and Fielding just says, "Well, nobody's perfect."



# Characters

## Sugar Kane Kowalczyk, played by Marilyn Monroe

### Description

Sugar Kane Kowalczyk is a beautiful singer who has a problem with men and alcohol. She is always choosing the wrong man, and she gets in trouble with Sweet Sue for drinking too much. When Sugar meets "Josephine" and "Daphne," she feels like she's finally met two really honest friends. As Joe falls in love with her, he dresses up as a rich man named Junior so that she will fall for him too. When Sugar finally learns his true identity, she loves him even though he is poor. Sugar is a kind woman who believes that she will eventually be able to make all her dreams come true. She wants to be happy and satisfied as well as rich. These are her goals, but she learns that love doesn't always follow the rules.

### Analysis

Sugar is mostly interested in men and drink. She wants to find a rich man so that she will have security and never have to work again. Her bad taste in men keeps her from finding this type of man, though. When she finally meets Junior, she is thrilled. Sugar shows true character when she still loves Joe even though he is poor.

## Joe/Josephine/Junior, played by Tony Curtis

### Description

Joe is a saxophone player who works hard to make a living. He and Jerry are best friends. After they witness a murder, Joe and Jerry must flee. They come up with a hair-brained scheme to dress as women and join a traveling women's band. When Joe meets Sugar, he falls crazy in love with her. He is willing to do anything to get her, so he dresses up as a millionaire named Junior so that he can win her heart. They fall in love, and he finally tells her the truth about his situation. She still loves him, and they spend the car ride getting to know each other better.

### Analysis

Joe is a persistent young man. He is unwilling to give up on anything. He wants to save his life, so he is willing to embarrass himself by dressing up as a woman. He also wants Sugar, so he does what it takes to get her, even though he has to be dishonest in the process.



## **Jerry/Daphne, played by Jack Lemmon**

### **Description**

Jerry is a musician and best friends with Joe. They are playing one night when they see a murder. After being chased around the city, they join a traveling women's band and go with them to their next show. All the women are fooled by their disguises and so are men. A rich man named Fielding spots Jerry, now known as Daphne, and decides he wants "her." They carry on for a little while, and Fielding even proposes to Daphne/Jerry. Jerry accepts at first but finally realizes the consequences. Fielding doesn't seem to care, though.

### **Analysis**

Jerry is a fun-loving guy who is excited about the possibility of becoming rich while engaged to Fielding. He is willing to risk the consequences, since he expects to get a settlement from Fielding's rich family. Jerry knows how to take the opportunity to make a quick buck when he has the chance. Of the pair of fugitives, Jerry is the most uncertain, the most frightened and the most comic.

## **Spats Colombo, played by George Raft**

### **Description**

Spats Colombo is the head of a gang in the city. He has a man killed, and Joe and Jerry witness it. When Spats realizes this, he chases them and tries to kill them as well. They are able to get away, but Spats keeps trying to find them. He finally does locate the fugitives, but he and his group are killed by another gang family.

### **Analysis**

Spats is a criminal who is terrifying the city. He scares Joe and Jerry enough that they must dress as women so that they can escape death.

## **Osgood Fielding III, played by Joe E. Brown**

### **Description**

Osgood Fielding III is a rich man who is vacationing in a yacht near the hotel. When he sees Jerry dressed up as Daphne, he quickly falls in love. He decides to take out this beautiful woman and offers "her" everything a woman could want. For a while, Jerry goes along with the amusement, since he believes that he can get some valuable jewels from Fielding, but eventually they get engaged. Jerry finally explains the situation, but Fielding doesn't even care about that. He is in love with Jerry anyway.



## **Analysis**

Fielding is a rich spoiled man who is accustomed to getting anything he wants because of his money. When he sets his sights on Daphne, he plans to get "her." Since Joe encourages the relationship so that he can get Sugar, Fielding almost succeeds. Even when he finds out that Daphne is a man, Fielding just doesn't care, providing a comic ending to the story but also fulfilling his steadfast, determined nature.

## **Sweet Sue, played by Joan Shawlee**

### **Description**

Sweet Sue is the conductor of the band. She has been doing the job for many years and keeps very strict rules so that the girls do not get into trouble. Sweet Sue seems to have it out for Sugar because Sugar has been in trouble both with men and drinking many times during her time with the group.

### **Analysis**

Sweet Sue is very strict and keeps the girls in line as best she can. Although she tries to be understanding to some extent, she does not want them out with men late or drinking because it makes the whole band look bad and because she wants to protect the girls.

## **Beinstock, played by Dave Barry**

### **Description**

Beinstock is the manager of the traveling group of performers. He simply helps keep everyone in line and calms down Sweet Sue when she gets angry.

### **Analysis**

Although Beinstock has little action in the film, he does help fill out the characters so that the idea of a traveling performing troupe is believable.



# Themes

## Friendship

Joe and Jerry have been friends for a long time, and after they witness a murder they start on yet another adventure together. They are forced to run away from the city and even join a women's band so that they are not murdered as well. Along the way, these men learn that not only is their friendship strengthening, but also they are honestly becoming friends with women. Joe does fall in love with Sugar, but both Jerry and Joe learn to spend time with women without any sexual connotations. As they travel, they learn to enhance their friendships. Joe and Jerry become better friends as they try to escape death. Their friendship keeps them sane and helps them to have even more fun as they travel and try to avoid the dangerous criminals.

## Many Faces of Love

Love can come in so many forms and fashions. While the men are dressed as women, they both begin relationships. Although these relationships are very different, they are both hysterically funny and help viewers see how falling in love isn't always something you can control.

The more Joe gets to know Sugar, the deeper in love he falls with her. She is very interested in marrying a rich man, and since Joe is dressed up as a woman, Sugar has no idea that Joe could love her. Joe then decides to impersonate a rich man named Junior so that he can win Sugar's love. When he finally reveals himself, Sugar happily accepts his proposition of love.

At the same time, while Jerry is dressed up as a woman named Daphne, a rich man named Fielding falls in love with him. At first, Jerry is just concerned with the money, but he becomes disturbed by Fielding's growing interest. After Fielding falls in love, though, there is no stopping him, even when he does find out that Jerry is a man. Love has passed all boundaries.

## Power of Fate and Chance

Joe and Jerry are living their lives happily alone, enjoying the freedom of bachelorhood, when they suddenly have to flee the city. They just happen to be there when the murder occurs, and then it serves as a catalyst to change their lives. Moments that happen by chance can completely change lives, like they change the lives of Jerry and Joe. Joe ends up falling in love with Sugar, while Jerry has a man fall in love with him during their travels. Their lives are completely changed by the end, with Fielding offering to take care of them all. The events that happen simply by chance seem to have some of the most life-changing impacts not only on the characters in this film but also on people in the real world.

## Style and Cinematography

*Some Like It Hot* is a hilarious farce where men dress as women in order to hide from the mob. The historical setting helps make the story seem realistic. During prohibition, a primary business of the mob was to sell alcohol, no matter what they had to steal or who they had to kill.

The film is shot in black and white, which makes it even more interesting. The filming gives it a somewhat timeless quality. Viewers are amused to see how little some things have changed over the years. Even though many believe that cross-dressing is only common in modern times, they see it portrayed in past decades. Humor and fun abound in director Billy Wilder's hilarious film. For the time period, this film is filled with sexual connotations that keep viewers interested and laughing for hours.



# Motifs

## Cross-dressing

For all those who thought cross-dressing was a thing of the eighties and nineties, *Some Like It Hot* proves that it's been going on for decades (or centuries, to be exact). After Jerry and Joe see the murder, they are forced to escape in any way possible. Once they see the girl's band, they decide to join.

Although the men are not excited about dressing as women, they quickly realize that there are some advantages to their situation. They are suddenly completely surrounded by women and get to see them at their most vulnerable. They experience the tribulations of the opposite sex. When Jerry is suddenly courted by Fielding, he begins to forget his own identity. He is excited about the possibility of expensive jewelry and an expensive settlement in the future. When he finally comes to his senses, it is already too late, as Fielding is completely taken with him. Although both men struggle with the problems caused by dressing as women, they are able to learn more about the opposite sex and themselves through their experience. They also find love and longing when they meet women they never would have met otherwise.

## Light and Darkness

In this film, light and darkness represent the difference between the truth and pretend. When all the lights are out or at night, suddenly the characters are able to let go of their inhibitions and create who they wish to be. Jerry becomes a woman in the night when with Fielding. He is appalled at the setup at first, but then he realizes all the advantages possible with Fielding's money. Joe, on the other hand, uses the night to seduce Sugar, as he becomes a rich millionaire with a yacht in order to win her heart. The light also helps to bring out the truth. Only inside or during the day does the truth about the men and the entire situation come out. Viewers laugh since they know the difference, but the truth about the situation is actually heartbreaking when love is almost lost because of money.

## Journey

Jerry and Joe take a huge journey. When the audience first meets them, they are completely focused on themselves and their own lives. They care little for romance and are just looking for a good time. When they witness the murder and are forced to join a woman's band, though, their lives are suddenly turned upside down.

Once Jerry meets Fielding, he sees a way to fortune without having to deal with a lot of problems on his own. After he hears about Fielding's mother's disapproval of most women and the settlements offered, he begins to milk the situation for all it is worth to ensure a life of ease. Unlike Jerry's mercenary goals, Joe truly falls in love with Sugar.

He knows that he can't win her as he is, so he pretends to be a millionaire to win her heart. Joe succeeds, but as he grows over the course of his journey, he realizes that he can't live a lie. Joe finally tells Sugar the truth, and she loves him for who he truly is.





# Symbols

## The Yacht

Fielding's yacht is the symbol of riches and power. He has everything that the others want in life, but he hasn't had to work for it all. Over the years, Fielding has received everything he wants thanks to his family, and his mother controls everything he has including his choice in women.

Jerry, Joe and Sugar all want to become rich without working, too. Since they don't have any money, they all want to marry rich. Sugar has a better chance than the guys do, but she ends up falling for Joe. Instead, Jerry ends up finding a rich man, and Fielding refuses to let him go.

The yacht also represents love for the couples. Joe uses the yacht to take Sugar somewhere private so that he can prove that he's wealthy and get her to fall in love with him. His plan succeeds, and she is not even disappointed that he isn't rich. Instead, she discovers that she's falling in love with the same kind of man as always.

## The Cake

When Joe and Jerry see that Spats and the others have arrived at the hotel, they try to hide in a banquet hall. After jumping under the tables, they discover that they are surrounded by Spats and his men, with no way to get out. They hear the boss begin to give a speech as he sends out a cake for Spats. A man then jumps out of the cake and kills Spats and his men.

The cake represents the terrible underworld of the mob. Usually a birthday cake is considered a wonderful way to celebrate, but on this occasion it is a dangerous gift. When the man jumps out of the cake, suddenly life is over for Spats and his men, and the situation has come full circle.

## The Bracelet

When Jerry is dating Fielding, he gets an expensive diamond bracelet. He is thrilled with the gift, as he believes they can pawn it for a fortune. While he is in the bathroom though, Joe calls to tell Sugar goodbye and sends a flower and the bracelet across the hall to her as a goodbye gift.

The bracelet is symbolic of true love. Joe isn't leaving Sugar because he doesn't care for her, but rather because he cares so much for her well being. He realizes that she could have any man she wants, so he doesn't want to hold her back. In addition, he's not sure how long he will survive with Spats and his men around.



## Essay Questions

What do Jerry and Joe witness?

Why do Jerry and Joe run away from their old lives?

What group do Jerry and Joe join, and why do they choose this group?

Describe Sugar. What motivates her? What are her problems?

How does Joe deal with his feelings for Sugar?

Who falls in love with Jerry and why?

How do Jerry and Joe meet the people they are running from again?

How do Jerry and Joe end up escaping?

How does Joe reveal his true identity?

How do Sugar and Fielding respond to learning Jerry and Joe's true identities? Why?