

The Sun Also Rises Study Guide

The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway

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Plot Summary

The Sun Also Rises is Ernest Hemingway's classic novel about expatriates living in Paris during the years following World War I. It follows a group of friends who travel from Paris to the festival of San Fermin in Pamplona, Spain, where their interactions expose much about their true characters.

The story opens in Paris, where American journalist Jake Barnes is spending time with his friend Robert Cohn, an American Jewish writer who has published one book. During a night on the town, they run into Lady Brett Ashley, a twice-divorced English woman with whom Jake is in love. The relationship is doomed, however, because a war injury has left Jake impotent. Brett has made it clear that although she loves him, she has sexual needs that he cannot fulfill.

Brett's fiancé, Englishman Mike Campbell, arrives in Paris, as does Jake's friend Bill Gorton, a writer from Chicago. Bill and Jake have planned a fishing trip, followed by a trip to the festival of San Fermin in Pamplona, Spain. Mike invites Brett and himself to go along. It is feared that this might be awkward because Robert Cohn is also going, and Jake learns that he has recently had an affair with Brett. However, in the end, it is agreed that everyone will go.

After a few days of fishing, Jake and Bill join the others in Pamplona, and they enjoy eating and drinking in the days leading up to the festival. However, tensions begin to develop as a result of the affair, predominantly because Robert has clear feelings for Brett that she does not return and Mike finds him offensive.

As the festival progresses, Jake teaches Brett about bullfighting, and she continues to lean on him as a friend. Mike's drinking gets increasingly heavy. When a young bullfighter named Pedro Romero checks into their hotel, Brett is immediately drawn to him and begins sleeping with him, with Mike's knowledge and tacit permission. However, Robert becomes incensed when he learns of the affair, and he beats the matador badly before leaving Pamplona to return to Paris. As the festival ends, Brett leaves with Romero and the others split up, with Jake going to San Sebastian for a few days of rest. On the second day, he receives a telegram from Brett, saying she is in trouble and asking him to meet her in Madrid. He arrives to find that she has sent the bullfighter away and plans to return to Mike. When she says they could have had a good time together, Jake replies, "Isn't it pretty to think so?"



Chapters 1 through 7

Summary

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 of *The Sun Also Rises* introduces narrator Jake Barnes and his friend Robert Cohn, two expatriates living in Paris. Cohn is described as a former middleweight boxing champion at Princeton who is a member of a wealthy, Jewish family in New York. After an early marriage and divorce, he started a literary magazine that soon failed, then went with his current girlfriend, Frances, to Europe, eventually settling in Paris, where he wrote a bad novel. He now plays bridge and tennis while living off an allowance sent by his mother. When Robert suggests they go out of town to hike, Jake suggests Strasbourg, where he knows an American girl who could show them around, but Robert kicks him under the table and later explains that Frances would not allow that.

Chapter 2

In Chapter 2, Jake reflects that although he has been married twice, Robert has never been in love and that Frances is very possessive of him. Robert has read a book called *The Purple Land* that has given him romantic ideas. He soon tries to talk Jake into going to South America with him, but Jake insists that going to another country will not enable him to get away from himself. When Jake, who is a journalist, tries to excuse himself to work, Robert tags along and falls asleep, then later reveals that he did not sleep the previous night because he and his wife were talking.

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, Jake picks up a girl named Georgette Hobin and takes her to dinner, where he reveals that he was injured in the war. At the restaurant, they run into a group of his friends, including Robert, Frances, and the Braddocks. All of them go to a dance club. Georgette is dancing with someone else when a woman named Brett enters with a group of young, gay men, which makes Jake angry. After briefly meeting rising novelist Robert Prentiss, Jake and Brett talk. He points out that Robert Cohn is watching her with interest. Jake and Brett leave in a taxi. She tells him that she has been miserable.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 finds Jake and Brett in the taxi, where they kiss, but she is upset and a little remote. They talk in vague terms about the fact that his war injury has rendered him impotent, although she says she is in love with him. They go to a bar where they meet Count Mippipopolous. When Jake leaves, Brett stays behind. Back in his apartment, Jake thinks about his injury, which he thinks he should find funny, and begins to cry. Later he is awakened by a row downstairs and finds that a very drunk Brett is there. They talk for a few minutes. Then she leaves and rejoins the count in his car, and Jake



watches them drive away, musing that it is easy to be hard-boiled during the day, but nights are harder.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 opens the following morning. Jake works for a few hours, then goes to a business meeting and later runs into Robert, who questions him about Brett. Jake says she is getting a divorce. She will then marry Mike Campbell. Robert is in love with her anyway and says she will not marry Campbell, but Jake insists she will.

Chapter 6

In Chapter 6, Brett does not meet Jake as scheduled. So, he goes out alone and runs into Harvey Stone, then Robert again. Frances arrives and takes Jake across the street, where she tells him that after three years together, Robert now refuses to marry her so she is going to England. They return to Robert's table, and Frances has a bitter conversation with him until Jake becomes uncomfortable and leaves.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 finds Jake back at his apartment, where Brett arrives with the count. She sends the count out to get champagne. Then, Jake asks her to live with him, but she says it would not work and that she is leaving the following day for San Sebastian. When the count returns, all three go to dinner. Brett and Jake dance and talk about her upcoming marriage. Eventually, Jake and Brett leave. When he drops her at her hotel, they kiss. She says that she is leaving tomorrow and they will not see each other again.

Analysis

The book's first chapters introduce major characters including Jake, Robert, and Brett. It is shortly after the end of World War I when many Americans, especially writers and artists, flocked to Paris because of the city's glitter and the favorable exchange rate. The book's main characters are among those Americans. While Robert and Jake work as writers, they also spend a great deal of time enjoying themselves in the city's cafes, bars, and nightclubs. They can be seen as a somewhat dissipated group -- often called the Lost Generation -- who focus more on drinking and fun than on making a meaningful contribution.

Jake's life has been shaped predominately by three things -- his war experiences, the injury that has left him impotent, and his love for Brett Ashley. The author paints Brett as a member of a new generation of modern women who marry and divorce multiple times, drink copiously, and are open about their sexual needs. Although Brett claims to love Jake and wants to share a life with him, she also makes clear that his impotence makes that impossible because she would be unable to be faithful to him.

The book's first section also begins to introduce the theme of the effects of war. The most obvious example of this is Jake's wound that has rendered him impotent, but he



and other characters have been affected in other ways as well, as Hemingway depicts throughout the novel.

Discussion Question 1

Why do you think Brett and Jake realize they do not belong together? Is it more than the wound that has left him impotent?

Discussion Question 2

In what ways does Brett exemplify the "new woman" who emerged at the beginning of the 20th century? How is she different from Frances and Georgette? What about these qualities makes her so attractive to men?

Discussion Question 3

Describe the daily lives of the people depicted in Book 1 of *The Sun Also Rises*. How are they different from people in other books you have read and/or from people in your own life?

Vocabulary

Counteract, inferiority, overmatch, verify, commence, editorial, sole, exploitation, kiosque, evidently, horizon, rebound, divine, vain, sinister, exalted, ethics, sullen, calamity, tolerant, compatriot, restraint, liaison, illuminate, obligation, arrested, conceit, inconsequential, impulse, platonic, perish, mystic, eccentric, siphon, bilge, obstinate, ostentatious, antiquity.



Chapters 8 through 11

Summary

Chapter 8

Chapter 8, which begins Book 2 of the novel, opens with Jake reflecting that he did not see Brett again until she returned from San Sebastian, although she sent him a postcard. He also did not see Robert Cohn again but heard that Frances left for England. His friend Bill Gorton arrives from New York after spending time in other parts of Europe. As they are going to dinner, they run into Brett, who has just arrived back in Paris. Later they are in a bar when Mike Campbell, who is Brett's fiancée, arrives and is introduced to Bill. Mike is quite drunk and keeps telling Brett what a "lovely piece" she is. They stay behind when Jake and Bill leave to attend a fight.

Chapter 9

In Chapter 9, Mike asks if he and Brett can join Jake and Bill on their upcoming fishing trip to Pamplona, and Jake agrees. Asking Jake to walk her back to her hotel, Brett asks whether Robert Cohn is going on the trip because it might be awkward. When Jake says yes, she is surprised to find out that he did not realize she had gone to San Sebastian with Robert. When Jake sees Brett again several days later, he says he has told Robert she is coming on the trip. Robert is very happy about it. A few days later, Bill and Jake take the train to Bayonne, where they are met by Robert and taken to the hotel where each of them is given a small room.

Chapter 10

In Chapter 10, Jake, Robert, and Bill rent a car and driver and head for Pamplona, where they have rooms at the Hotel Montoya. During lunch, they make bets on whether Brett and Mike will arrive on time that night. Then, Robert goes to a barber shop for a fresh shave and haircut while Jake goes to a local cathedral and prays. Later, Robert leaves dinner to meet Brett and Mike's train. Jake insists on going with him. Brett and Mike are not on the train, and Jake gets a telegram saying they are staying overnight in San Sebastian. Jake enjoys toying with Robert because he is jealous about his trip with Brett. The next morning, Jake and Bill prepare to leave for their fishing trip, but Robert says he will go to San Sebastian instead.

Chapter 11

Chapter 11 finds Bill and Jake preparing to leave for their fishing trip as Robert stays behind. Their bus is crowded with friendly Basques who insist on sharing their wine skins with the two Americans. Although the weather has been very hot, by the time they climb into the mountains and arrive in Burguete it is quite cold. Jake complains to the innkeeper that the price is too high, but he agrees to pay it when she says wine is



included. The two men eat dinner and drink. Afterward, they go to their room, and Jake is grateful to be warm and in bed.

Analysis

This section further highlights the book's anti-Semitic theme as the fact that Robert's Jewish faith is mentioned with increasing frequency. A good example comes at the end of Chapter 10 when Bill sarcastically asks Jake if he has more Jewish friends that he could bring along. Jake replies that Bill has some fine ones himself. The idea that Robert's Jewish faith sets him apart from the others and makes him less desirable as a friend continues throughout the book.

Hemingway also begins his theme of geographical contrasts here as Bill and Jake leave the glamorous Paris cafes and nightspots for hot and dusty rural Spain. In contrast to the waiters they have encountered in Paris, when they leave the bus to get a drink in a posada, the woman who waits on them returns some of Jake's money, not realizing he has meant it as a tip.

Additional light is shed on the relationship between Jake and Brett. Although she claims to love him and be miserable without him, Brett is a modern woman who does not hesitate to let him know about her trip to San Sebastian with Robert, which hurts him deeply even though he understands her needs. While he has been ambivalent toward Robert up to this point, the knowledge that he has been with Brett changes his feelings, causing him to resent Robert and behave pettily toward him by refusing to show him the telegram he receives. It does not help that Robert fixes himself up in anticipation of Brett's arrival and makes it clear that he has a relationship with her.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the relationship between Jake and Robert. How did Jake feel about Robert in the beginning of the novel? How does his attitude toward him change in this section? What is the reason for the change?

Discussion Question 2

Examine Jake's visit to the cathedral. What does he pray about? Does he seem sincere in his prayers? How does he seem to feel about religion?

Discussion Question 3

Compare and contrast the people Jake and the others spend time with in Paris with those they meet on the trip to Burguete. Include not just a physical description, but their attitudes and behavior as well.



Vocabulary

Injustice, rupture, violate, daunt, pestilential, quaint, armistice, rigid, gesture, bankrupt, indecent, nuisance, brothel, itinerary, compartment, pilgrimage, prohibition, steward, corridor, successive, drygoods, furrow, plateau, interpret, cinch, archives, facade, economic, confidential, trajectory, commence, barren.



Chapters 12 through 14

Summary

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 takes place the following day as Bill and Jake engage in some witty banter before hiking a great distance to the stream, where each of them catches several trout. They eat a lunch they brought with them and drink two bottles of wine. Before taking a nap, Bill asks Jake if he ever loved Brett. He says yes, for a very long time. After a nap, they return to the inn and spend four more days, not hearing from Robert or Brett and Mike during that time.

Chapter 13

In Chapter 13, Jake is eating breakfast with a new friend, an Englishman named Wilson-Harris (although Jake and Bill call him simply Harris), when he receives a letter from Mike saying he and Brett will arrive in Pamplona on Tuesday, which was the day before. Jake says he and Bill must leave that afternoon. Harris wishes they could stay because he has not had so much fun since before the war. Jake and Bill invite him to join them in Pamplona, but he declines. Arriving back in Pamplona, Jake spends time talking with Montoya about bulls and bullfighting. Then, he and Bill find Brett, Mike, and Robert at an outdoor cafe. Robert asks Mike if he was in the war. At Brett's insistence, he tells a story about borrowing some medals for a formal dinner, then giving them away to women in a nightclub, not realizing that they belonged to someone. The tailor who gave them to him needed them back. He also talks about his bankruptcy and reveals that both he and his lawyer were drunk during his court hearing. Brett, Jake, and Robert go to the bull ring, where they watch a bull gore a steer. Jake explains things to Brett, who is fascinated. Afterward they meet Bill and Mike, who have been drinking, and Mike begins to insult Robert, saying he followed them to San Sebastian and followed Brett around the entire time they were there. He says that Brett has had other affairs and tells him everything, and Bill takes Robert away. Later everyone goes to dinner together, which is not as uncomfortable as Jake and Bill feared, and Jake reflects that they are all nice people.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 finds Jake reading in his room because he is too drunk to sleep. He reflects on his philosophy that one pays for everything in some way, but he thinks that in five years this might seem silly. He wishes Mike would not behave so badly to Robert because even though he likes to see Cohn hurt, it makes him disgusted with himself afterward. Over the next few days, he and the others engage in their own activities while watching the town prepare for the fiesta.



Analysis

The novel's anti-Semitic theme continues in this section with several derogatory references to the fact that Robert is Jewish. The author continues to refer to him by both his first and last names, a practice he uses with no other characters. Robert does nothing to help his cause when he follows Mike and Brett to San Sebastian and angers Mike by staring at Brett constantly. This leads to a confrontation at the end of Chapter 12 that threatens to ruin the entire trip when a very drunk Mike accosts Robert in public about his behavior. The conversation also sheds additional light on Brett as a "new woman" when Mike reveals that she has had numerous affairs in the past and has never bothered to hide them from him. He is less bothered by Brett's affair with Robert than by Robert's continued infatuation with Brett and the fact that he does not bother to hide his interest in her.

The author provides the first taste of bullfighting in this section as well, providing some background through Jake's narrative about his conversations with Montoya. The scene in which the bulls are unloaded and one of them gores a steer is depicted very matter of factly with little concern among the characters for the garishness of the practice.

In Chapter 14, Jake engages in some late night, drunken self-reflection in which he muses about a system of payment and rewards. He also reveals his mixed feelings about Robert, as he revels in seeing Mike hurt him, but feels badly about himself afterward. While some critics have said that Hemingway wants to reveal the shallowness of the so called Lost Generation in this novel, this is an example of Jake's introspection and the fact that despite the way he often spends his time, he is a worthwhile human who truly cares about the world around him. The chapter ends on a somewhat ominous note as he reflects on how healthy and good everyone felt on that day. Then, he says that it was the last day before the fiesta, foreshadowing more dire things to come.

Discussion Question 1

Much of Chapter 12 consists of banter between Jake and Bill. What do they talk about and what does it reveal about these characters?

Discussion Question 2

Discuss the scene in which Brett, Jake, and Robert watch the bulls being unloaded. How does Brett react to what she sees? How does the author draw a parallel between the bulls and the group (Jake, Brett, Mike, Bill and Robert)?



Discussion Question 3

What does Jake say about his personal philosophy? Does it seem to fit with what they know about him at this point? How does it relate to his relationships with the book's other characters?

Vocabulary

Irony, rucksack, ford, timber, glacier, parcel, utilize, humidity, saloon, intend, lewd, aficionado, inscription, lapse, gore, intensity, discredit, extraordinary, rampart, fortification, latter, crest, detach, splendid, reserved, taut, sallow, retribution, morality, inflected.



Chapters 15 through 17

Summary

Chapter 15

The fiesta begins in Chapter 15 and at the end of the parade. The group is swept into a wine shop where they drink heavily with other patrons. Jake buys some leather wine bags for Bill and himself, but Robert misses much of the excitement because he has passed out. The others stay up all night, but Jake goes to sleep and is awakened early in the morning by the horn that starts the running of the bulls, which he watches from the hotel balcony while the others go to the bullring. Later, after everyone has slept a bit, Montoya takes Bill and Jake to meet young matador Pedro Romero. When the bullfights start, Romero proves to be an excellent matador and Brett, in particular, is fascinated by him, causing Mike to jokingly remark that she is falling in love with him. Everyone enjoys the fights, but Mike goads Robert because he was a bit bothered by the gore.

Chapter 16

In Chapter 16, the bullfights are postponed because of heavy rain, but the festival goes on. Jake arrives late for dinner that night and is a little uncomfortable because everyone is already very drunk. Romero is at the next table with a bullfighting critic, and he invites Jake to join them. Then, Jake introduces the matador to his friends. After Romero leaves, a very drunk Mike begins berating Robert. After a near fight, everyone walks through the fiesta, and Mike goes off with Bill and a female friend of his. Brett sends Robert away so she can talk with Jake. She tells him that she thinks she is in love with Romero and cannot help herself. They return to the hotel restaurant, and Romero joins them at a table. After a few minutes Jake excuses himself. When he returns a short time later, Brett and Romero are gone.

In Chapter 17, Jake finds Bill, Mike, and Bill's friend, whose name is Edna, outside a bar they have been thrown out of because the men are so drunk. They have just sat down at another cafe when Robert approaches and angrily demands to know where Brett has gone. Mike says she is with the bullfighter. A furious Robert hits both Mike and Jake. Jake returns to the hotel and learns that Robert wants to see him, so he reluctantly goes to his room and finds him lying on the bed, crying. Robert begs for Jake's forgiveness, cries about how much he loves Brett, and says he is leaving in the morning. The next morning, after a man is gored to death during the running of the bulls, Mike tells Jake what happened the night before. He says that Robert found Brett in Romero's room and beat him badly. Then, he says that Brett has had a difficult life because when her former husband came home from the war, he was violent and slept with a loaded gun.



Analysis

A new character, matador Pedro Romero is introduced in this section. His presence changes the group's dynamics because of Brett's immediate attraction to him. Her character is further fleshed out in her conversation with Jake in Chapter 16 when she tells him that although she knows what she does is wrong, she feels unable to stop herself. She indicates that this has always been the case for her. Even though she knows Jake is still in love with her -- in fact, she asks him and he confirms it -- she nevertheless allows him to help her get together with Romero. This becomes a pivotal event because although Mike, her fiance, seems to take her infidelities in stride, Robert Cohn has deluded himself into believing he and Brett have a future. He is enraged when he learns she is with Romero. One can assume, however, that Mike's increasingly violent drunken outbursts are his way of dealing with Brett's behavior.

The theme of anti-Semitism continues in this section with several derogatory references to the fact that Robert is Jewish and therefore undesirable as a man. In fact, at one point he is referred to as a kike, which is an extremely derogatory term. The effects of war theme also comes up again at the end of Chapter 17 when Mike tells Bill and Jake that Brett's former husband was badly changed by his experiences.

Discussion Question 1

In Chapter 16, Mike again demands for Robert to go away. Although he has never responded to Mike's outbursts before, this time Cohn becomes openly angry and prepares for a fight. Why is his reaction different this time? What has transpired that explains this?

Discussion Question 2

At the end of Chapter 17, Mike tells Bill and Jake about Brett's past. What does he tell them? Does this information change your perception of Brett in any way? If so, how?

Discussion Question 3

Jake, Mike, and Robert all claim to be in love with Brett. How does each one approach his feelings for her? How do they react to her behavior? What does this say about each man?

Vocabulary

Assimilated, outlying, pockmarked, procession, dignitary, amphitheatre, partition, elation, intricate, gentry, sadist, brusque, contortion, purity, dominate, unattainable, concourse, critic, conceited, authority, mimic, languid, phantom, acclamation.



Chapters 18 and 19

Summary

Chapter 18

In Chapter 18 Bill, Mike, and Jake are sitting at a cafe when Brett arrives and tells them that Romero was badly hurt but will still fight the bulls today. Mike keeps asking how her boyfriend is, so Brett and Jake go for a walk. She worries that the wind will hurt Romero's performance, but when the fights begin, he is spectacular. Afterward, Brett goes with Romero to his hotel room. Later, Mike says that she has left town with him. As Bill, Jake, and Mike sit at a cafe table, Jake feels that about six people are missing.

Chapter 19

The following morning the fiesta has ended and Bill, Mike, and Jake take a car to Bayonne. After Mike gambles away a lot of money, Bill is shocked to learn that he is completely broke. He is optimistic that something will turn up. They take Mike to a hotel in Saint Jean. Then, Jake puts Bill on the train back to Paris and goes to San Sebastian for a few days of rest. However, on the second day, he receives a telegram from Brett saying that she is in trouble. She asks him to come to Madrid. When he arrives, he learns that she has sent Romero away even though he wanted to marry her. She has plans to return to Mike. After they have lunch, they are in a taxi when Brett laments that they could have had a good time together. Jake replies, "Yes, isn't it pretty to think so?"

Analysis

The casual carelessness of many of the book's characters is again highlighted in this final section. Mike continues to gamble and tip freely until he is completely out of money, yet he is optimistic that more will appear or he can live on credit for a while. Brett leaves with the young matador with whom she has become infatuated without bothering to say goodbye to Jake. Yet, he is the one she calls when she finds herself alone in Madrid with no money. Jake continues to be held up as the responsible member of the group and the one who is willing and able to fix the problems others create for themselves.

The author spends a good deal of time describing the bullfights in detail, but he seems determined to paint them as something poetic rather than simply gory and cruel. He also spends time drawing a contrast between the outlandishness of the fiesta and the quiet, peaceful world he finds in San Sebastian.

The love story between Jake and Brett closes the book, but the author seems to imply that their relationship will continue even though it is not satisfying for either of them. The ending has a decidedly bittersweet quality and makes it clear that despite all the



occurrences of the past few weeks, everything will go back to exactly the way it was when the story opened.

Discussion Question 1

Why do you think Brett sends Romero away? Do you think this shows growth in her character or simply another case of acting on a whim?

Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast the atmosphere in Pamplona with the one in San Sebastian. What does Jake enjoy about each one?

Discussion Question 3

The book ends with Brett saying that she and Jake could have had a good time together and Jake replying, "Yes, isn't it pretty to think so?" What do you think he means by this? What does the exchange say about each of their characters?

Vocabulary

Absorb, radiant, proselyte, defraud, sneer, volley, decadence, aesthetics, discount (verb), pivot, impaired, concentration, delicate, apportion, obscure, undulation, vulgar.



Characters

Jake Barnes

Jake Barnes is an American journalist living as an expatriate in post-World War I Paris. He has a large number of friends and casual acquaintances there, many of them fellow writers and expatriates, and he is a member of the so-called "cafe society," spending a great deal of time in the city's cafes and bars.

Jake is in love with Lady Brett Ashley, an English nurse he met while recuperating from injuries suffered during the war. However, his injuries have left him impotent so their relationship is now simply a friendship although both wish it could be more.

Although he lives in a modern urban area, Jake's passions are fishing and bullfighting, and he indulges in them as often as possible. He also is a keen observer of the world and people around him. Despite his grief over his love for Brett and the injury that keeps them apart, he is a steadying force among his group of hard-drinking, emotionally charged friends.

The character is based on Hemingway himself.

Lady Brett Ashley

Brett Ashley is portrayed as an example of a modern woman. Having been divorced twice -- once from an English nobleman who provided her with her title -- she smokes, drinks heavily, is promiscuous, and does as she pleases. She is currently engaged to fellow Englishman Michael Campbell, but during the course of the book has affairs with two other men and has done so before.

Brett professes to be in love with Jake Barnes, a journalist she met while working as a nurse during World War I. However, he is impotent, and she insists that her sexual needs be filled. She continues to lean on him as a friend.

Despite her title, Brett is not a wealthy woman and is financially dependent on men. Although she is fiercely independent, she seems to have a low opinion of herself in many respects, telling Jake that she knows some of the things she does are wrong, but she cannot help herself.

Robert Cohn

Robert Cohn is a Jewish American writer living in Paris. Although he lives among the expatriates, he is more idealistic and romantic than the book's other characters, and he drinks less and shows his emotions more as well. Robert was a boxing champion at Princeton. He married young, but he is now divorced. When the novel opens, he is in a



relationship with Frances Clyne, but he refuses to marry her. He has a brief affair with Brett Ashley, a situation that eventually explodes and causes dissension during the trip to Pamplona.

Bill Gorton

Bill Gorton is a Chicago writer who comes to Europe to fish and attend the festival of San Fermin with his close friend Jake. Their witty banter provides a source of humor for the book.

Michael Campbell

Mike Campbell is a British financier who is now bankrupt, but he remains optimistic that funds will always appear. He is engaged to Brett Ashley.

Pedro Romero

Pedro Romero is a 19-year-old bullfighter who attracts the attention of and has an affair with Brett.

Frances Clyne

Frances Clyne is the live-in girlfriend of Robert Cohn when the novel begins. She soon leaves him when he refuses to marry her.

Juanito Montoya

Juanito Montoya owns the hotel where the friends stay in Pamplona. He is a fan of bullfighting, a subject he discusses at length with Jake during the festival each year.

Wilson-Harris

Wilson-Harris, whose first name is never given, is an Englishman who befriends Jake and Bill on a fishing trip.

Edna

Edna is a friend of Bill who briefly spends time with the group in Pamplona.



Symbols and Symbolism

Festival of San Fermin

The Festival of San Fermin is an event that takes place each summer in Pamplona, Spain. In addition to bullfights and other activities, it is also a religious festival.

Bullfights

Bullfights are the central event of the Spanish festival during which much of the novel takes place.

Wine

Wine and other alcoholic beverages are consumed in mass quantities by the book's characters, often leading to revelations and glimpses into the true character of individuals.

Cafes

Much of the story takes place in cafes in both Paris and Pamplona. These are more than simply places to get a meal. They are the center of social life and friendships. They also symbolize the somewhat shiftless existence of the characters.

Paris

Paris is the city in which Jake and some of the other characters live. It stands as a symbol of the modern post-war world that attracts writers, artists, and members of the wealthy elite.

The Purple Land

The Purple Land is a book Robert Cohn reads early in the novel. It represents a side of his personality that makes him more romantic and emotional than the book's other characters.

Hotel Montoya

The Hotel Montoya is the inn where the characters stay during their trip to Pamplona. It is also the temporary home of many of the bullfighters who come for the festival and where Brett meets Romero.



Fishing

One of Jake's favorite pastimes is fishing, something he and Bill enjoy together early in the trip to Spain. It is a means for him to enjoy nature and escape from his feelings of inadequacy caused by his impotence.

Cathedral

Several times during the novel, Jake goes to a cathedral to pray and reflect. He is a little uncertain of his religious side, although it is clearly important to him.

Bull's Ear

After a bullfight, it is customary for the matador to cut off the bull's ear and give it to someone. After his victory on the last day of the festival, Romero gives the ear to Brett as a symbol of his feelings for her.



Settings

Paris

The novel opens in Paris, France, which is home to Jake and several of the other characters. The city is bustling and modern, filled with cafes, bars, and dancing clubs where the expatriates spend a great deal of their time. It serves as a sharp contrast to the earthiness of Pamplona and the book's other settings.

Pamplona

Much of the novel takes place in Pamplona, Spain, where the characters travel for the annual festival of San Fermin. The town is small, yet filled with people and color during the fiesta. The town's centerpiece is the bullring where the fiesta's main events take place.

San Sebastian

San Sebastian is a small town in Spain where Jake goes after the fiesta. It is a peaceful oasis after the excitement and crowds of the festival.

Bayonne

Bayonne is a small city in France in which Jake spends a bit of time before and after the fiesta.

Burguete

Burguete is a small town in Spain where Jake and Bill go fishing.

Themes and Motifs

The Lost Generation

The Lost Generation is a term attributed to American writer Gertrude Stein, a fellow expatriate and friend of Ernest Hemingway at the time he wrote *The Sun Also Rises*. Hemingway uses it as an epigraph at the beginning of the novel.

In the years following World War I -- the time in which the book is set -- many Americans were drawn to Paris as a modern city with a favorable exchange rate. In particular, writers including Hemingway flocked to Paris because they found greater artistic freedom there. They also found a large circle of like-minded people who carried wounds, visible and invisible, from the brutal war that had recently ended.

The term is often thought to refer to the personal habits of people like some of those depicted in the novel, taking advantage of opportunities to eat and drink too much to compensate for the losses they have suffered.

The New Woman

Brett Ashley is a shining example of the "New Woman" who emerged during the 1920s. Freed from constricting clothing and expectations, Brett dresses in a modern fashion and sports a short haircut, which was unheard of in earlier times. In fact, it is one of the criticisms Pedro Romero levies against her, stating that he would prefer for her to be more feminine.

Beyond just her physical appearance, Brett exhibits personal habits and qualities that were new in her time. She smokes, drinks heavily, and is openly promiscuous. She has been divorced twice and is already engaged to prospective husband number three. Even though she is financially dependent on men, she makes it clear that no one owns her or tells her what to do. She loves Jake, but she refuses to commit to a relationship with him because he cannot satisfy her sexual desires. She has an innate vulnerability beneath her independent veneer.

Contrasts

The Sun Also Rises is a book replete with contrasts. The lively, modern city of Paris is contrasted with the bucolic town of Burguete where Jake and Bill go to fish. The author contrasts Spain and France, writing at length about the very different attributes of each.

When Bill and Jake begin their fishing trip, they travel from the very hot lowlands to the very cold mountains. Pamplona is loud and full of color and activity during the fiesta, than quiet and sleepy just hours after it ends.



Jake's Catholic faith is contrasted with Robert Cohn's Jewish faith, while Jake's impotence stands in contrast to the virility of Pedro Romero. Throughout the novel, characters are variously drunk and sober, angry and calm, rich and poor, happy and distraught.

Anti-Semitism

The author never lets the reader forget that Robert Cohn is Jewish. His faith is often a topic of derision. Mike Campbell, in particular, is disgusted with Brett's affair with Robert not because she was unfaithful to him -- he had tolerated that many times before -- but because she slept with a Jewish man. At one point, he even uses the word "kike," which is an extremely derogatory term.

In addition to Mike, Bill Gorton also makes it clear that he looks down on Jews and sees it as the quality that defines Robert. Throughout the book, Cohn is depicted as different and less likeable than the other characters, incapable of fully taking part in their activities and always set apart by his Jewishness.

Styles

Point of View

The Sun Also Rises is told from a first person point of view by narrator and protagonist Jake Barnes. This is particularly important because the book is based on real experiences and people, with Hemingway basing the character of Jake on himself.

Using a first person narrator has the advantage of allowing the reader to see everything and everyone through Jake's eyes, but we can only surmise what other characters are thinking and feeling based on what Jake tells us. The narration is reliable only when it comes to Jake, who might not be correct in assumptions he makes about the behavior and motivations of others.

Language and Meaning

The Sun Also Rises was written and set in the post-World War I era, and the language reflects that. It is slightly more stiff in some ways than current novels, and the characters use slang words like "swell" and "sore" that were popular at the time but sound old fashioned now. The word "nigger" is also used casually at one point, which was more acceptable then than now.

Since the story takes place in France and Spain, the text includes a large number of French and Spanish words and terms. They are not explained or translated, but their meanings are usually fairly clear because of the context in which they are used.

Structure

The novel is divided into three books. The books are subdivided into eighteen chapters of varying lengths. The chapters and books are numbered but untitled. Prior to the first book, the author includes two epigraphs. One is the quote, "You are all a lost generation," which he attributes to Gertrude Stein. The second is a lengthy passage from Ecclesiastes that begins, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever . . . The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down . . ." This passage is the inspiration for the book's title.



Quotes

I never met any one of his class who remembered him. They did not even remember that he was middleweight boxing champion.

-- Narrator/Jake (Chapter 1 paragraph 1)

Importance: This paints Robert Cohn as a person of little importance who does not fit in, a characterization that will continue throughout the novel.

He was fairly happy, except that, like many people living in Europe, he would rather have been in America, and he had discovered writing.

-- Narrator/Jake (Chapter 1 paragraph 1)

Importance: This presents the attitude held by some of the expatriates who were torn between America and Paris. It also introduces the idea that writing is something to be both loved and dreaded.

Brett was damned good looking. She wore a slip over jersey sweater and a tweed skirt, and her hair was brushed back like a boy's. She started all that.

-- Narrator/Jake (Chapter 3 paragraph 2)

Importance: This establishes right away that Brett is a new breed of woman who is independent and free spirited.

Don't we pay for all the things we do, though?

-- Brett (Chapter 4 paragraph 10)

Importance: This relates to the idea of responsibility and comes back around later when Jake muses about his current philosophy of life.

Who did you think I went down to San Sebastian with?

-- Brett (Chapter 9 paragraph 14)

Importance: This comment establishes both Brett's promiscuity and the relationship between Brett and Robert that will become a major factor later in the novel.

Why I felt that impulse to devil him I do not know. Of course I do know. I was blind, unforgivingly jealous of what had happened to him. The fact that I took it as a matter of course did not alter that any.

-- Narrator/Jake (Chapter 10 paragraph 1)

Importance: This establishes the fact that although Jake knows he can never have Brett because of his impotence, he cannot help his feelings for her and his jealousy of any other man who has her.



But he's not aficionado like you are.
-- Montoya (Chapter 13 paragraph 4)

Importance: This establishes not only Jake's expertise in and love for bullfighting, but also the relationship of respect he enjoys with Montoya, which will later be threatened by his role in facilitating Brett's relationship with Romero.

No, listen, Jake. Brett's gone off with men. But they weren't ever Jews, and they didn't come and hang about afterward.
-- Mike (Chapter 13 paragraph 2)

Importance: This quote serves a few purposes. It establishes the nature of Mike's relationship with Brett and the fact that he condones her infidelities. It is also a good example of the anti-Semitism that is scattered throughout the novel, the attitude with which Robert is treated, and the reasons Mike saw Brett's affair with Robert differently than previous ones.

I believe, you know, that she's falling in love with this bullfighter chap,
-- Mike (Chapter 15 paragraph 6)

Importance: This is the first open acknowledgement of Brett's interest in Romero and an indication that Mike thinks this situation might be different than previous affairs.

I've got to do something. I've got to do something I really want to do. I've lost my self-respect.
-- Brett (Chapter 16 paragraph 25)

Importance: Here we see Brett's vulnerability and conflicting feelings. She knows an affair with Romero would be wrong for many reasons, but even though it will damage her self respect even further, she feels unable to stop herself from going after what she wants.

You wouldn't believe it. It's like a wonderful nightmare.
-- Bill (Chapter 18 paragraph 13)

Importance: This is an excellent way to describe the multifaceted fiesta, which has brought a wide variety of good and bad experiences to the group.

COULD YOU COME HOTEL MONTANA MADRID AM RATHER IN TROUBLE BRETT.
-- Narrator (Chapter 18 paragraph 3)

Importance: This telegram demonstrates that under her independent exterior, Brett is still vulnerable and her relationship with Jake will endure.