

ANALYSIS BY CHAPTER

The Sun Also Rises (1926)



Ernest Hemingway

(1899-1961)

I

Robert Cohn dominates the opening of the novel much as a bull charges in and dominates a bullring, because as a Romantic he represents bull. Robert comes from “one of the richest Jewish families in New York” and is a graduate of *Prince-ton*, a name connoting aristocracy and gentile privilege. Hemingway risked alienating influential Jewish reviewers and injuring his career by criticizing a Jew in his first novel. Calling him anti-Semitic is bull. He had many Jewish friends including the Godmother of his first son and his publisher at *Esquire*. He nicknamed himself “Hemingstein.” Hemingway judged people as individuals, transcending groups. Unlike hypocritical liberals, he was truly multicultural. His most autobiographical character is Santiago, a Cuban. He kills the bull about anti-Semitism by portraying criticism of Robert’s behavior, not his ethnicity. Jake Barnes treats him as a friend. Robert gores himself.

Robert is introduced sympathetically as once having been “very shy and a thoroughly nice boy.” He is sensitive enough to dislike boxing yet became a boxing champion at Princeton “to counteract the feeling of inferiority and shyness he had felt on being treated as a Jew at Princeton.” Hemingway acknowledges the injurious force of anti-Semitism and he writes against stereotype by making Robert feel inferior and by getting his nose flattened (like Harold Loeb, the model for Robert) by his boxing coach. Robert’s stature is enhanced by enduring pain, standing up for himself and fighting back. Boxing is a metaphor of basic self-defense. Gertrude Stein took boxing lessons as a student. Hemingway enjoyed boxing and gave lessons. Robert’s having read “too much” at Princeton to the point of needing spectacles offsets his boxing and implies a weakness of perception. Otherwise the only criticism of Robert in the first paragraph is his inflated estimation of his title. Several characters in the book have meaningless titles.

In the second paragraph the narrator is frank (and ironic) in confessing that he mistrusts all frank and simple people. He goes on at length about Robert before he introduces himself, setting up the contrasts between Robert and Jake that ultimately spoil their friendship. In a confidential tone, Jake suspects that Robert may be a fraud, until he gets a verification from his former boxing coach. Robert had never faced anti-Semitism—another form of bull—until he reached Princeton. “It made him bitter.” He graduated with “painful self-consciousness and the flattened nose, and was married by the first girl who was nice to him.” Robert proceeded to lose most of his inheritance, then his rich wife, establishing the pattern of a loser. He is “taken in hand” like a child by an ambitious lady named Frances and moves to Europe to become a writer. In Paris he has only one other friend besides Jake. Robert is restless and wants to get out of the City but Frances is so jealous she kicks Jake under the table when he suggests, “I know a girl in Strasbourg who can show us the town.”

Robert and Jake play tennis and banter back and forth about where to get out of the City and what Frances will allow Robert to do and whether Jake is sore. Their dialogue conveys the restless insecurity of Robert, his unhappiness with Frances and the sympathy of Jake: “I rather liked him and evidently she led him quite a life.” The jealous Frances sets up a contrast with Brett, who leads Jake quite a life. When Robert cautions Jake not to mention “any girl at all” around Frances, the contrast between the two men is dramatic: “If I know an American girl that lives in Strasbourg what the hell is it to Frances?” Though he has a strong independent character, Jake never does introduce himself. He is an objective reporter by profession and suppresses his ego. We learn his first name from Robert.

II

Robert has a bullish ego. He gets his novel accepted “and it rather went to his head.” Feeling like a champion again, he finds his success makes him attractive to women and this “changed him so that he was not so pleasant to have around.” After all, as we are to learn Jake is impotent. He cannot enjoy the company of a man who is always boasting about his sex appeal. On top of that, Robert boasts about his “bridge game”—an ironic metaphor, since he is so inept at human bridges. Most sinister of all, Robert had read and reread *The Purple Land* by W. H. Hudson, set in an “intensely romantic land.” Robert takes this amorous romance “as a guide-book to what life holds...as literally as though it had been an R. G. Dun report...on the whole the book to him was sound.” This is explicit ridicule of Romance, the ongoing project of the Realist movement since the late 19th century. Robert’s spectacled perception is superficial. He accepts appearance as reality in the form of the fake South Americans in Paris, even after Jake the objective reporter informs him they are not real: “They look awfully real to me.”

Robert is like one of the rootless and aimless rich hedonists in the opening of T. S. Eliot’s “The Waste Land” (1922), the most influential poem of the 20th century. *The Sun Also Rises* is Hemingway’s rebuttal to Eliot, just as his epigraph from the Bible is a rebuttal to Gertrude Stein’s reductive generalization that he and others after World War I were all part of a “lost generation.” His story “Big Two-Hearted River” (1925) also is a rejoinder to “The Waste Land.” Robert wants to run away from Frances to the romantic South America he imagines—for “more fun”—but he is too insecure to go alone. Jake again is the voice of Realism: “Don’t be a fool.” Ironically, Robert feels desperate to “really” live before it is too late, like a character in Henry James. “But I felt sorry for him.”

Jake would go to Africa with Robert, the dark continent—the primal Wilderness. But the sensitive Robert is not interested in challenging activities like hunting or bullfighting. “That’s because you never read a book about it.” Jake has learned that “You can’t get away from yourself by moving from one place to another.” When he says “I’ve tried that,” his own unhappiness is evident, giving him something in common with Robert besides tennis. Different though they are, Robert represents to Jake the romantic bull he feels in himself, his own attraction to Brett Ashley. At the end of the chapter Jake awakens Robert from a nightmare—probably that he married Frances.

III

At his café table Jake invites the prostitute Georgette to have a drink with him. He has not yet revealed to the reader that he is impotent, but it becomes increasingly evident that something is wrong with him.

The first hint is his ordering Pernod, or “imitation absinthe.” Like an impotent man consorting with a prostitute, Pernod “has a good uplift, but it drops you just as far.” Jake is imitating a man who wants a prostitute for the usual reason, but taking her for a ride in a romantic horse-cab through the Tuileries Gardens suggests that what he really wants is more than sex. “I had picked her up because of a vague sentimental idea that it would be nice to eat with some one.” But then, “She touched me with one hand and I put her hand away.” Jake speaks for all those who were sickened and wounded by the war: “Everybody’s sick. I’m sick, too.” As he faces his sentimental bull, “We came out of the Tuileries into the light.” In the light he confesses to his impotence: “I got hurt in the war.”

In the Left Bank restaurant his friend Braddocks (modeled on the novelist Ford Madox Ford) calls him Jake Barnes. Barnes evoke the pastoralism of the country and the traditional values of the heart Jake has lost, but later recovers when he goes fishing at Burguete. He comes from Kansas City, from the heartland like Harold Krebs in “Soldier’s Home” (1925). Both are veterans of WWI, but Jake is older and too alienated to return home. In the cafes on the Left Bank in Paris, the name Barnes was identified with the lesbians Djuna Barnes and Natalie Barney. Having lost his potency as a man, Barnes’s frustration in relation to Brett is comparable to that of a lesbian in love with a heterosexual. He is an “androgynous” figure in a sense. In his very first novel Hemingway transcended his masculinity and identified his male protagonist with lesbians, and though he continued to contradict the simplistic popular impression of himself in his writing, he was stereotyped as a macho man nevertheless.

Jake and Georgette join the Braddocks and their party and Jake introduces her as his fiancée, a cynical joke. He even gives her the last name of a popular singer, but nobody gets the joke. Mrs. Braddocks and Frances are so self-absorbed and unperceptive they accept appearance for reality like Robert Cohn and think Georgette is really Jake’s fiancée. The scene conveys how superficial the relationships are among these people. Georgette is more perceptive and honest than the “nice” women. Her smile exposes her bad teeth, but she is right in her sarcasm when she says to Jake, “You have nice friends.”

At the dance club Georgette is dancing with someone else and Jake is standing in the doorway when Lady Brett Ashley (modeled on Lady Duff Twysden) comes in with a crowd of homosexuals, clearly not a lady. “She looked very lovely and she was very much with them.” Jake is angered at them because they have in a sense possessed Brett. She has cut her hair short “like a boy’s,” adding to his sense of loss. “She started all that.” Brett is a role model for the liberated New Woman both in the novel and among readers. However, she is an independent woman who “can’t go anywhere alone.”

When Jake is introduced to another “rising new novelist” named Robert who is “still only a child,” the similarities make Robert Cohn seem redundant. This second Robert is named Prentiss, as in *apprentice*, suggesting that both Roberts lack maturity and art. Prentiss is not impressed by Paris and Cohn wants to escape it. As in Henry James, responses to Paris define character in this novel. The prostitute dislikes Paris because it is expensive and her life there is “dirty.” The privileged and self-absorbed Frances sees it only as clean. Paris to Jake stands for the enduring values of great art and high culture, in contrast to the postwar culture of the Left Bank, which is pretentious, decadent, and transitory.

Brett is characterized by her ironic first remark, “Never going to get tight anymore.” She is what used to be called loose and her vow to stop getting drunk is clearly bull: “I say, give a chap a brandy and soda.” The naïve Cohn looks at her like Moses looked upon “the promised land.” He is unaware of how much times have changed when, as if living out a medieval romance, he calls her Lady. Her banter with Jake is insincere in being ironic and flippant. She brushes off Cohn when he asks her to dance, contradicting his expectation as if the promised land had brushed off Moses: “I’ve promised to dance this with Jacob.” The name Jacob evokes the familiar image of climbing a ladder to Heaven, which for Brett would be merely romantic gratification. “You’ve a hell of a biblical name, Jake.” Throughout the novel Brett puts men through hell and profanes the sacred, until in the end she gives up Romero.

“I suppose you like to add them up,” Jake accuses her. Brett replies like a man out for conquests: “Oh, well. What if I do?” Though flippant, she knows she will pay for it. When she asks him why he brought a prostitute to the club, Jake claims he doesn’t know. She is a picador to his bull—sticking it to him: “You’re getting damned romantic.” In their circle, to be romantic is to be damned. Love is hell. They live

by a code of fashionable cynicism, generating a tension between the way they pose and talk and the way they really feel. Until in the taxi, Brett closes her eyes and breaks down: “Oh darling, I’ve been so miserable.” This desperate burst of sincerity—or is it bull?—defines the plot of the novel.

IV

When he kisses her in the taxi, Brett reacts to Jake just as he reacted to Georgette in their taxicab scene in the previous chapter: “Don’t touch me.... I can’t stand it.” Then she states one of the moral themes of the novel: “Don’t we pay for all the things we do, though?... When I think of the hell I’ve put chaps through. I’m paying for it all now.” Jake denies this truth—“Don’t be a fool”—evidence that at this point Brett is actually more honest with herself than he is.

Throughout the Paris section of the novel Jake is running away from his bull, as when he says of his impotence, “I don’t think about it.” He begins to face it down in Pamplona, where running away from the bulls precedes the bullfights. At the same time, Jake is a step up on the spiritual ladder above Brett in being able to transcend sex—the physical—enough to enjoy the feeling of love. What Brett feels is pure “hell on earth,” suggesting that she never feels *true* love. As Jake says, “I suppose she only wanted what she couldn’t have.” There is no true emotional nourishment between them: The restaurant in the park, the garden space of the heart, is closed and dark. “We were sitting now like two strangers.”

In her man’s hat, when Brett asks if she looks “too much of a mess,” it is characteristic of her to be preoccupied with appearance. It is her life, not her beautiful face, that is too much of a mess. It gets confusing when everybody dances with everybody. Brett still calls herself Lady, having it both ways—a New Woman clinging to the old gender paradigm. She expresses an aversion to work by replying to Jake’s invitation to meet him at his office: “Hardly.” She does not get out of bed until late afternoon. When she says “I’ve never let you down, have I?” Jake cites an example: “Heard from Mike?” And later he says to himself, “To hell with you, Lady Ashley.” The last name *Ash-ley* recalls the valley of ashes in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) by Fitzgerald and “The Waste Land” (1922) by Eliot.

Jake returns to his flat, undresses and looks at himself in the mirror. We learn that he was a pilot wounded on the Italian front. He tries to transcend his condition by seeing it as funny, then he breaks down and cries. Day to day, he tries to “play it along and just not make trouble for people”—in contrast to Cohn. When he hears a voice outside at past four in the morning, he mistakes Brett for Georgette the prostitute, subconsciously equating them. The concierge calls her “a species of woman,” as if she is no longer human. Brett is drunk of course, yet says, “Don’t try and make me drunk.” She tells Jake that the fat Count Mippipopolous (resembles hippopotamus) offered her a lot of money to go with him to Biarritz or Cannes or Monte Carlo and she turned him down, but only because she knows “too many people everywhere.” Brett is notorious for being known in the carnal sense. This does nothing to cheer up Jake. Naturally when she claims to be in love with him he does not believe her: “Don’t look like that,” she says. This time it is he who says, “Don’t be sentimental.”

V

On his way to his office in the morning Jake passes a vendor with a girl assistant who manipulates toy boxers while “looking away”—like Brett will manipulate Robert the boxer. Having lunch with Robert, Jake advises him to tell his girlfriend Frances to go to hell, though he himself is not able to tell Brett the same. When Robert asks him for information about Brett, Jake first calls her a “nice girl.” But he refers bitterly to her “true love” who died in the war, as if he does not believe in true love, returning to his defensive pose of cynicism. Like Brett, Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms* is an English girl who loses her fiancé in the war, but unlike Brett she does not cut her hair like a boy’s and become promiscuous. Catherine retains her femininity, helps the wounded as a nurse, and is brave enough to fall in love again, becoming an exemplar of true love and grace under pressure.

When he sees that Robert is infatuated with Brett and thinks that she is truly “nice” and “absolutely fine and straight,” Jake tries to kill the bull: “She’s a drunk.” She’s also an adulteress who marries for money. Robert refuses to face it: “I don’t believe she would marry anybody she didn’t love.” Jake thrusts again as deep as the sword will go: “Well, I said. ‘She’s done it twice.’” Robert angrily defends her honor as if

she had any: “He stood up from the table his face white, and stood there white and angry behind the little plates of hors d’oeuvres.”

Hors d’oeuvres are a little preliminary to more and Robert will soon have a lot to swallow. When he stands up and menaces Jake, demanding that he take back the facts about Brett, he is charging full of bull. Jake sidesteps the bull and tells him to “cut out the prep-school stuff.” Grow up. This scene dramatizes Robert’s immaturity and prepares for his more aggressive behavior later down in Pamplona. In his most widely read novel Hemingway ridicules the man who resorts to his fists, yet his detractors identified him with that man rather than with the hero. Robert demands that Jake take back telling him to go to hell, though that is where he is headed with Brett. Jake pacifies the bull like the steers do in Pamplona: “‘Oh, don’t go to hell,’ I said. ‘Stick around. We’re just starting lunch.’”

Jake tries to be a true friend by apologizing to Robert twice. He tells him to forget what he said. They go off and have coffee together at the Café of Peace. Jake “holds off” Robert from the topic of Brett like a matador holding off a bull with a cape while he studies its movements.

VI

Brett confirms Jake’s warning to Robert that she is unreliable by failing to show up for her meeting with him. Jake is consoled by the beauty of Paris, a city with integrity that synthesizes art and Nature. “The river looked nice. It was always pleasant crossing bridges in Paris.” As a rule Hemingway tries to evoke feelings in a reader without stating them. Sometimes, as here, he states feelings that are common to everyone, as Hawthorne did—such as “nice” and “pleasant.” They are vague words expressing general feelings because everyone experiences different specifics as nice or pleasant. In the tradition of Realism, Hemingway tries to represent what is common to humanity—to be as universal as possible. That is why his characters are not described much physically but are outlined with a minimum of specifics to allow readers to project themselves into them vicariously. At the same time he particularizes their environments in authentic detail, such as the names of real streets and cafes, and brings characters to life through their actions and their realistic dialogue.

Jake wonders why Robert does not enjoy Paris and blames his reading of H. L. Mencken, the popular iconoclast: “Mencken hates Paris, I believe.” Identifying Mencken with Cohn implies that both are pugnacious fools with poor taste. Again Hemingway risked his career by standing close to the bull, in this case provoked by Mencken’s insulting review of *in our time* (1924). He waved a red muleta in the face of the most influential American literary critic of the 1920s, parodying him in *The Torrents of Spring* (1926) and mocking him here in *The Sun Also Rises*. He has Harvey Stone declare that Mencken is “through now... He’s written about all the things he knows, and now he’s on all the things he doesn’t know... Nobody reads him now.” Later when Jake and Bill Gorton are fishing and eating a lunch, the famous critic is identified with a chicken rump—both a chicken and an ass: “Don’t eat that, Lady—that’s Mencken.” Hemingway baits Mencken just as Harvey Stone baits Cohn like a bull.

Harvey’s insults resemble banderilleros stuck into a bull to provoke it. He asks Robert what he would do if he could do anything he wanted and Robert says play football again—more prep-school stuff. “‘I misjudged you,’ Harvey said. ‘You’re not a moron. You’re only a case of arrested development.’” Jake intervenes to prevent a fight. Falling in love with Brett had detached Robert “from other people,” like a steer running loose from the herd in Pamplona. He loses control of his emotions and his tennis game “went all to pieces.” His fiancée Frances takes Jake aside and confides that after three years together Robert is not going to marry her after all and intends to drop her. She kills Jake’s bull that she “could marry anybody” with a single thrust: “No, I don’t believe it.” Then she goes after Robert: “We that live by the sword shall perish by the sword.”

Frances attacks Robert like a matador who does not kill the bull in one merciful thrust of the sword but stabs it again and again and again, disgusting everyone—except that a matador wants very much to kill in one thrust whereas Frances wants to prolong Robert’s humiliation out of revenge. She mocks him for self-pity and crying and strips him naked of pretensions. “If he marries me, like he’s always promised he would, that would be the end of all the romance.” Jake wonders why Robert kept on “taking it like that.”

Perhaps out of self-pity Robert takes on the traditional Jewish role of scapegoat, except that in his case the reader may feel with Frances that Robert deserves it.

VII

Brett drops by to see Jake with Count Mippipopolous, her latest consort. She really knows how to stick it to a guy. One might ask Jake why *he* keeps “taking it” like that. He reminds her that she missed her date with him and she does not even remember it. Waiting on her, Jake is comparable to the count’s chauffeur. This chapter is relatively long in order to fully dramatize and intensify sexual frustration. All the repetition in the dialogue conveys their other repetitive behavior: getting drunk, going to clubs, kissing in taxicabs, professing love and misery—compulsive approach/avoidance. Jake is tortured by Brett’s repetition of lovers: “I had the feeling as in a nightmare of it all being something repeated, something I had been through and that now I must go through again.”

Greeks are featured in the first story and the concluding vignette of *In Our Time*, evoking the origin of western civilization and its present disruptions. Count Mippipopolous similarly represents the international scope of the postwar malaise and the diversity of the “lost generation,” except that he is older, indicating that such disillusionment is recurrent in history and not unique to any generation. Furthermore, the count is not lost, he knows very well who and where he is and tries simply to enjoy life to the fullest. In contrast to the young cynics of the “lost generation,” the count is “always in love.” He explains, “It is because I have lived very much that now I can enjoy everything so well.” Count Mippipopolous is the archetypal “wise old man” as an Existential hedonist, in contrast to the spiritual Count Greffi in *A Farewell to Arms*. To Brett the count is “one of us” because “We’ve all been around.”

Hemingway emphasizes the brutal reality of “our time” and all time in response to criticism that *In Our Time* was too violent. “I have been in seven wars and four revolutions,” said the count.” He even has arrow scars, a detail ironically evoking cupid in a thematic anticipation of Cohn running off with Brett to San Sebastian, a martyr shot full of arrows. There is more bull when the count asks Jake and Brett why they are not married: “We want to lead our own lives” is pathetic juxtaposed to Jake begging her to live with him. Her claim that “We have our careers” is a joke, since her career is staying drunk all the time and sleeping around and around. Brett tells Jake she is going to marry Michael Campbell, who has “loads of money,” but “I haven’t thought about him for a week.”

In the Montmartre club the drummer is called a “nigger” because that is how people talked in the 1920s and Hemingway is a Realist recording his times, like Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*. He could not say African-American because people did not talk like that, politically correct terms had not been invented yet and anyway this is France. The drummer is a friend of Brett but contrasts with her in shouting “You can’t two time--” He demands loyalty in love. Though he is black and she is a rich white woman, he seems to be happier than she is, transcending the misery of racial discrimination while she professes repeatedly, “I’m so miserable.” In the next chapter Hemingway portrays racial discrimination with the episode of the black boxer in Vienna who is attacked by a mob because he won: “Injustice everywhere.” Robert Cohn the boxer implicitly contrasts to this black boxer in that Robert himself is to blame for his victimization, especially in attacking Romero because he won Brett.

Book I concludes with Brett pushing Jake away as if forever and declaring “I won’t see you again”--another step in their approach-avoidance dance and more bull.

Book II

VIII

Bill Gorton arrives, an American writer [modeled on friend Bill Smith] who is successful, happy, natural and upbeat in contrast to the “lost generation.” He is contrasted to fellow writer Cohn in his values, perspective, and behavior. He is goodhumored and joking, stimulated by drink, so positive that everything to him is “wonderful.” He uses the word 7 times in the first two pages.

Gorton is the reliable good guy. He has just come from befriending a black boxer in Vienna, Austria (where Adolph Hitler would soon rise to power). Ominously, as it soon turned out, the black man lives in Germany. Despite using the word “nigger” repeatedly, Gorton admires the boxer greatly, calling him “wonderful,” “noble-looking,” and “splendid.” Hemingway insists upon the negative term in order to emphasize the reality of racial prejudice, like Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*. The term was in common usage even by people like Bill and Jake who did not intend to be demeaning. Also in common usage were such ethnic slurs as wop, bohunk, wetback, kike, mick, spic, and so on. Hemingway used such terms himself on occasion. In his fiction male friends sometimes tease each other with ethnic slurs, toughening their bond. Americans had more free speech in the 1920s.

Bill Gorton saves the boxer from the mob, gives him his coat off his back, loans him clothes and money, and tries to help him collect money owed him. Bill pays the bill for discrimination against the black man. Nevertheless, most readers today have been conditioned to see only his use of the N word. For awhile Hemingway was a prizefight manager with a stable of boxers that included Larry Gaines, a black heavyweight who later beat Max Schmeling in one of Schmeling’s early fights. Once he jumped into the ring and saved a boxer from being killed in a fixed fight and knocked out Francis Charles the middleweight champion of France with a water bottle.

Gorton uses abbreviated language, dropping parts of speech and simplifying as Hemingway did in letters and conversation, like the patois of an Indian—“close to the soil.” Bill jokes that Jake should buy a stuffed dog from a taxidermist’s, implying that his life is artificial. Later on their fishing excursion his teasing eases into constructive criticism of his friend as an expatriate: “You’ve lost touch with the soil”—with his country and Nature. A stuffed dog is grotesquely unnatural.

Knowing his condition, Gorton goes on lightheartedly to encourage Jake not to be “daunted,” parodying the pompous rhetoric of inspirational speakers and repeating the word for humorous effects. When Brett joins them Jake responds to the stuffed dog joke by introducing Bill to her as a taxidermist. Bill replies with a quotation from Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* that Hemingway used again in his title “In Another Country”: “That was in another country, / And, besides, the wench is dead.” Bill substitutes “all the animals” for “wench”—referring to all the cynical expatriates rather than to Brett. He does not know her yet and would not insult her like that if he did. That his *taxidermist* joke applies to her nevertheless is suggested by the fact that Brett follows his quotation by asking for a *taxi*.

One of the other “dead animals” arrives and Brett introduces him as the man she intends to marry: “This drunkard is Mike Campbell. Mr. Campbell is an undischarged bankrupt.” Appearances deceive. Campbell is “tanned and healthy-looking” [modeled on Pat Swazey]. Like Cohn he has lost his own money through bad investment and is about to make another bad one by marrying Brett. But his family has “loads of money” and he has never had to pay for his bad judgment. His more significant bankruptcy is moral. As a man he is worthless. Campbell the gentile is much worse than Cohn the Jew. Campbell’s stud-bull crudity is evident in his referring to Brett as a “lovely piece” five times in a few minutes. He also calls her “this thing here.” His main preoccupation besides getting her into bed as quickly as possible is her “dreadful hat.” This judgment on her hat calls attention to the fact that Lady Duff Twysden was legendary, having already been the model for the heroine of *The Green Hat* (1924), a bestselling novel by Michael Arlen, so popular that just the year before *The Sun Also Rises* was published Arlen got mobbed at the dock in New York by fans who tore at his clothes and ripped the buttons off his fly.

IX

Jake, Bill, Mike, Brett, and Robert Cohn plan to meet in Bayonne, take a bus over the mountains to Pamplona and go fishing in Burguete. Fishing becomes a spiritual ritual in the novel, especially in the mountains, and Brett says, “I won’t fish.” She just wants to “have fun.” Hubert the dull tourist boasts about the fishing in his home state of Montana (mountain) “but I never cared for it any.” Characters define themselves by their attitudes toward fishing (spirit and Nature) as well as toward Paris (culture and art), differentiating Hemingway from Henry James.

Brett is callously flip in revealing to Jake that she has slept with Cohn. “Who did you think I went down to San Sebastian with?” But she did not have much fun. “He gets a little dull.” San Sebastian was a saint. Brett sleeping with Cohn is the opposite of saintly. T. S. Eliot had used this device of juxtaposing faith in the past to decadence in the present in “The Waste Land” (1922) and so had Willa Cather in *The Professor’s House* (1925). The whole first Book of *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) juxtaposes the eternal beauties of old Paris to the current decadence on the Left Bank.

Naturally, Jake is hurt to hear that Brett has slept with Cohn. He turns the upbeat attitude of Bill Gorton into downbeat sarcasm by calling Cohn “wonderful.” Brett and Mike stay behind to wait for more money to arrive and never make it to the meeting nor to the fishing place. Ironically, Jake and Bill are retreating from the mechanistic modern world by riding a train, as Nick does in “Big Two-Hearted River.” The commercialism, fraud and greed that corrupt social life is exemplified by the dining-car conductor who pockets their bribe and then declares that he can do nothing for them.

The dining cars are monopolized for hours by a Catholic tour group from Ohio. Bill Gorton calls them “Goddam Puritans”—a surprising outburst from the reliable good guy. Like all serious writers, Bill values freedom. As a Protestant and a drinker he protests against Catholics for supporting Prohibition of alcohol in the land of the free. Ironically, here in the Catholic country of Spain they are free to drink and do so in abundance especially at Fiestas. Prohibition was one of the main incentives to expatriates in moving out of the United States. Bill still lives in New York. To him this big group depriving him by taking over all the dining cars is a metaphor of those back home who were imposing themselves on him by law, displacing him and turning him into a secret drinker and a criminal. Jake offsets Bill’s criticism of Catholics by declaring that he is one. Bill goes on to fume that “It’s enough to make a man join the Klan,” the criminal organization that was increasing its influence during the 1920s. We have seen that Bill is not racist like the Ku Klux Klan. What he means is that Prohibition has greatly increased serious crime and violent alienation from the government. The excessive drinking in *The Sun Also Rises* is in part a reaction to Prohibition back home, like taking drugs would be in the countercultural 1960s.

X

Bayonne is contrasted to dirty Paris as represented by Georgette the prostitute—“a very clean Spanish town.” The three men stay in “really an awfully clean hotel.” The driver of their rented car on the trip up to Pamplona wears a white duster and the villages in the countryside look clean. The syntax and sentence rhythms evoke the sensations of riding into the hills and through the countryside. Spain is geographically south, psychologically deeper, and hence spiritually higher than France, as symbolized by the mountains where they go fishing. They cross a frontier and “started up the white dusty road into Spain.” White cattle graze, streams are clear and donkeys sleep in the road. The road went on “very white and straight.” The simplicity of pastoral nature and the motif of white imply a purity of life in contrast to the Left Bank. Ahead “the road stretched out white across the plain going toward Pamplona.” When they roll into town they pass the bullring “high and white.”

At lunch in the Hotel Montoya “we would not interpret for” Robert Cohn, who does not know Spanish and makes no effort to learn. It is polite to make an effort to learn the native language and Robert is rude in his self-absorption. Jake and Bill are losing their tolerance. Robert makes the situation worse by lying to Jake about why he stays behind to wait for Brett. Naturally, Jake cannot help but hope that Brett is on the train so that Robert will be forced to face his own bull. “It was lousy to enjoy it, but I felt lousy. Cohn had a wonderful way of bringing out the worst in anybody.”

Under all the circumstances, when Jake expresses the worst in himself his feelings are natural: “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. I certainly did hate him. I do not think I ever really hated him until he had that little spell of superiority at lunch—that and when he went through all that barbering.” And yet Jake goes into the cathedral and prays “for everybody I thought of” including “Robert Cohn”—before himself! His prayer is a sentence much longer than the stereotype of Hemingway’s style. It is followed by an even longer sentence—over half a page long—that is stream of consciousness, differing from Joyce’s and Faulkner’s in retaining conventional grammar and punctuation. Jake affirms religious faith and laments that, in his

condition he does not feel religious himself and is a “rotten Catholic.” The reviewers who called the novel “nihilistic” missed this passage. Throughout his fiction, Hemingway creates a tension between religious faith and *nada* that gives his novels a theological suspense, cosmic scope, metaphysical interest, spiritual sensibility and psychological drama missing in fiction by atheistic Postmodernists. Whether or not God exists, respect for religion contributes to Jake’s strong moral character.

Robert almost provokes Jake and Bill into anti-Semitism, but they remind themselves that they both have Jewish friends who do not act superior like Cohn. Bill adds, “The funny thing is he’s nice, too. I like him. But he’s just so awful.” At the end of the chapter while he shaves Bill satirizes Robert by boasting as he looks at his face in the mirror: “All women should see it. It’s a face that ought to be thrown on every screen in the country. Every woman ought to be given a copy of this face as she leaves the altar.” Then he laughs at himself: “‘My God,’ he said, ‘isn’t it an awful face?’” Calling himself awful repeats what he said about Robert. But the scene dramatizes more differences between Bill and Robert, who, unlike most Jews, has no capacity for self-criticism and no sense of humor.

XI

Jake and Bill ride in the breeze on top of the hot crowded bus from Pamplona up to Burguete in the mountains. Robert Cohn waves goodbye to them and the Basque peasants on board wave goodbye to Robert—like an omen of his future. “As soon as we started out on the road outside of town it was cool.” The heat in Pamplona where the bullfights and human fights will take place contrasts to the cool outside of town in the pastoral countryside and to the cold up in the mountains at Burguete. Hemingway associated cold with spiritual elevation here, in his next novel *A Farewell to Arms* where it is identified with belief in God, and again in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” where it represents immortality.

The peasants embody pastoral values of simplicity, honesty, generosity, fellowship and good humor, sharing their wine. They are the opposite of the decadent urbanites on the Left Bank. They are natural and brown like the earth and drink wine from goatskin bags. “‘These Basques are swell people,’ Bill said.” After the publication of *The Sun Also Rises* there was a boom in cheap winebag sales in the United States especially on campuses. The descriptions of Paris were mainly of streets and cafes and man-made structures, whereas now the descriptions are of natural landscape that elevates the spirit to a greater height, culminating in mountains: “Outside of town the road commenced to mount.”

In the paragraph beginning “The bus climbed steadily up the road,” the description of landscape seems most clearly to be influenced by the paintings of Cézanne the Cubist, which Hemingway studied in Paris. His most extended application of Cézanne to objective landscape description, as Gertrude Stein had applied Picasso to her abstract prose, is in “Big Two-Hearted River.” The motif of white continues as the road up to the mountains is white, and hayforks and garlics and beards and the fast water they fish in are white. The houses in the mountain village of Burguete are white, with a monastery in the near background.

At a stop they made in the pastoral countryside a woman who served them drinks gave back their tip, but commercialism has reached even the village of Burguete and the innkeeper overcharges them saying, “Now is the big season.” Nevertheless, it is so cold in the inn that Bill exclaims “My God!” In identifying cold with spirituality Hemingway intuitively preceded all the paranormal investigators of the next century who use scientific instruments to locate spirits and identify them with cold spaces.

XII

The pace of pastoral life is much slower than in Paris, or in New York where Bill lives. People here have time to synchronize their lives with the rhythms of Nature. The countryside is a quiet and peaceful retreat. Bill is so relaxed he does not want to get out of bed. He teases Jake to cheer him up and makes fun of the current intellectual fashions in New York, first pretending to affirm Marxism—“work for the good of all”—while letting Jake do all the work.

Bill then satirizes the current trend in literary criticism that calls for “irony and pity” in the tradition of Henry James, who set the aesthetic standards for the novel that prevailed among elite critics until the 1930s,

as distinct from the hardboiled H. L. Mencken who championed the lowbrow novelists Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis. In his review of *In Our Time* Conrad Aiken had criticized Hemingway for not writing dialogue in the manner of James. By repeating the phrase “irony and pity” Hemingway calls attention to his own irony and pity in *The Sun Also Rises* and contrasts himself to James in style, action, and vision as well as dialogue. To console Jake, Bill refers to the apparent impotence of Henry James, at which point the title *The Sun Also Rises* becomes a sexual pun celebrating potency.

Gorton elides from laughing at the fashions in New York to a sincere criticism of Jake in a teasing manner that is gentle because he is always exaggerating in good humor: “Fake European standards have ruined you. You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed by sex.... You hang around cafes.” Bill is giving Jake a bill, so to speak, pointing out what he will have to pay for. He is helping his friend rise out of his rut in Paris and encouraging him to face his bull.

Bill balances his irony with pity: “I’m fonder of you than anybody on earth. I couldn’t tell you that in New York. It’d mean I was a faggot.” Bill expresses resentment with the slur “faggot” because, as the whole passage shows, (1) the inclination of many homosexuals to reduce everything to sex was juvenile and reduced people like Jake to nonentities; (2) claims that Abraham Lincoln or virtually anybody was actually homosexual were obnoxious; (3) such exaggeration increased the inhibition of heterosexual males about expressing affection to another man, so as not to be misidentified. Again Hemingway is fighting the bull of a group that could injure his career, especially in New York.

To our surprise, Jake reads Romantic fiction like Robert Cohn, showing that he has traits of Robert in himself. Jake longs for romance, but he knows he cannot have it and does not take it seriously. The bride of a man who falls into a glacier and waits 24 years for her “true love” to come out in the moraine is the opposite of Brett Ashley. Jake is out in the cold like the frozen lover who can never come to life yet goes on “waiting.” He fishes passively, waiting at the dam—a blockage--and then reads his romance while Bill wades searching around in the fast water and catches bigger fish. Fishing expresses the feminine side in being relatively passive, receptive, and depending on bait and patience and sensitivity, whereas bullfighting is masculine in being a physical fight ending in the thrust of a sword. Fishing in Hemingway represents a movement from the masculine into the feminine side, a phase in the individuation of a man, often in the company of male friends. Male individuation into the feminine more often happens through relationships with females, as with Nick and Marjorie in “The End of Something,” and in romantic love of women such as Catherine Barkley, who educates Frederick Henry in *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway’s own individuation culminates in the integrated, balanced, holistic consciousness of Santiago, whose fishing is also compared to bullfighting in *The Old Man and the Sea*.

For bait Jake uses worms dug from the earth while Bill casts flies through the air, consistent with their differing psychological situations, personalities and moods. Jake is incomplete, Bill is whole. In “Big Two-Hearted River” Nick is not yet ready to fish the swamp, which is psychologically analogous to Jake, who is not yet ready to fight the bull. In the greatest of all fishing stories, *Moby-Dick*, “watergazing” is meditation on what is under the surface—especially the whale, representing Truth. In Hemingway’s fishing episodes, when Nick or Jake or Bill look down into water, they do not meditate like Melville or Thoreau. They look at the trout. They feel the trout, transcending themselves. Thinking interferes with transcendence. Ishmael individuates into a pantheistic union with Nature and becomes a “whaleman” like Queequeg. Melville was like Ishmael overcoming the Ahab in himself, much as Jake overcomes the Cohn in himself. Hemingway is already a “whaleman” like Queequeg. Melville dives, Hemingway rises from the depths in his writing like the whale and the marlin. In “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” Hemingway becomes a lion and narrates from his point of view. The wholeness attained by Santiago is manifest in his ability to both think and identify spiritually with the marlin, his “brother.”

While they eat lunch Bill fights bull with ridicule, parodying a leader of the Prohibition movement (a Protestant, not a Catholic), the politician and orator William Jennings Bryan, three times unsuccessful candidate for President of the United States. Bryan is remembered today for his prosecution of a schoolteacher for teaching evolution in the sensational Scopes “Monkey Trial” of 1925, while Hemingway was writing *The Sun Also Rises*: “Let us not pry into the hencoop with simian fingers,” Bill pontificates. H. L. Mencken covered the trial as a journalist. Bryan personifies the traditional Puritanism against which the

Modernists rebelled—literal-minded fundamentalist religion, gentility and intolerance. Repeating the word “utilize” when “use” would serve as well, Bill mocks the pretensions, rhetorical complications, pedantry, and authoritarianism of Bryan: “on your knees, brother.” He and Jake revel in their freedom to drink wine and mock the pompous Prohibitionist. The artificial rituals of Bryan’s conventional religion have worn out and are contrasted to the natural ritual of fishing.

After calling Mencken a chicken’s ass, Bill jokes that Bryan and “Mencken and I all went to Holy Cross together.” Bryant was a Protestant, Mencken an atheist, and Holy Cross a Catholic school. In contrast to social institutions, the chapter ends with spiritual regeneration by immersion in Nature—good fishing, pleasant sensations, wading in a cold stream, and swimming in a deep pool.

XIII

Harris the Englishman is a British parallel to Bill. The three men climb the mountain (actually a gradual slope of road up a wooded hillside) and visit the old monastery at Roncevalles. This monastery is famous as marking the place where the heroic knight Roland sacrificed his life in the year 778 as the rear guard for Charlemagne in his retreat from the Saracens who had invaded Spain, as celebrated in the French epic *The Song of Roland*. Here again the faith and glory of the past are contrasted to the modern age, as in Eliot’s “The Waste Land,” published four years before *The Sun Also Rises*. This novel is Hemingway’s rebuttal to Eliot, beginning with the epigraph from *Ecclesiastes*, which reminds us that, no matter how bad human society gets, “the earth abideth forever.” The sun sets, but the sun also rises. Salvation may be found in Nature. Jake is the impotent Fisher King, who leaves the spiritual wasteland of postwar modern life, goes on a quest, achieves a healing of his heart in the fishing place, and then goes on to attain transcendence through a code to live by in the aesthetics of fighting the bull.

Bill and Harris both admire the religious shrine, “But you know I’m not much on those sort of places,” Harris said. “Me either,” Bill said. They agree that “It isn’t the same as fishing.” Fishing gives them an immediate spiritual fulfillment, shared values and mutual experience as the basis for friendship and even for expressing affection. Of course, the wine helps too. Englishmen are known for being emotionally constipated, but here in the fishing place, explicitly identified with the heart in “Big Two-Hearted River,” Harris is able to convey his fondness for Jake and Bill: “I say, Barnes. You don’t know what this all means to me.” He is deeply moved and it is not necessary for him to put his feelings into words. The three men bond through humor by all using Bill’s parody word “utilize”: “‘I say. You know this does utilize well.’ Bill slapped him on the back. ‘Good old Harris.’” This happy “utilizing” of wine contrasts with the sacrament of drinking wine in church. “‘Come on and utilize another glass,’ I said.” Bill and Harris generously contend for the pleasure of paying for their drinks. When they leave Harris behind in the mountains to go on down to Pamplona, he gives them flies he has tied himself. Casting a fly through the air gives a sensation of flying toward the Sky, the archetypal space of transcendence. The disciples of Christ were fishermen, Christ associated fishing with salvation—“I will make you fishers of men”—and a fish was an early recognition symbol in the history of Christianity.

Brett, Mike and Robert Cohn never make it up to the mountains. Jake and Bill are closer to Nature like the brown peasants: “You chaps are brown. Look at Bill.” In Pamplona, it is ironic that Jake has so much passion for bullfighting, since he has yet to face his own bull. His *aficion* is said to be “spiritual” and it brings him together with Montoya in an affectionate bond, as fishing brought him together with Harris, transcending ethnicity and culture: “putting the hand on the shoulder”—“Buen hombre.” Montoya “forgave me all my friends. Without his ever saying anything.”

Jake generously transcends his jealousy by arranging for Mike and Brett to have a choice room in the hotel Montoya overlooking the plaza. Mike Campbell was in the war but unlike Jake he did not suffer or get wounded. He never had to pay. In fact he enjoyed himself: “How I wish those dear days were back.” Brett calls him an ass, having lost her fiancé in the war. Campbell berates Cohn for following Brett around like a steer, while behaving like an ass himself: “Haven’t you any manners? How do you think it makes *me* feel?” Campbell earned no medals in the war and had to borrow some for the sake of appearances. Then he gave them away to strangers for fun. They meant nothing to him, just as the bull’s ear means nothing to Brett later. How do you think Mike made veterans feel who had earned their medals, or those who lost

loved ones in the war like Brett? Campbell's remark about how he went bankrupt has often been quoted: "Two ways," Mike said. "Gradually and then suddenly."

In explaining the activities preliminary to the bullfights, Jake tells Bill that the castrated steers are trying to make friends and their purpose is to quiet down the bulls and keep them from goring each other, as Jake does with his friends. "Must be swell being a steer," Bill says as if in sympathy with Jake. One steer "picked the new bull up, quieted him down, and made him one of the herd," as Jake did with Bill but could not do with Robert. Jake points out to Brett how the bull uses his horns: "He's got a left and a right just like a boxer"—like Robert Cohn. An interviewer from the *Paris Review* asked Hemingway whether he intended "to inform the novel with the tragic structure of the bullfight ritual." Hemingway sidestepped the question, refused to interpret the symbolism of his novel and addressed only the facts: "Who ever said Jake was 'emasculated precisely as is a steer'? Actually he had been wounded in quite a different way and his testicles were intact and not damaged. Thus he was capable of all normal feelings as a man but incapable of consummating them. The important distinction is that his wound was physical and not psychological and that he was not emasculated."

Figuratively speaking, Jake is a steer with the suppressed feelings of a bull, while Robert is a bull now behaving like a steer. "It's no life being a steer," Robert said. This episode makes the bullfight metaphor explicit, bringing all the submerged metaphors of bullfighting in Book I to the surface of awareness. When he gets "detached from the herd," Robert gets violent: "They only want to kill when they're alone." Mike Campbell detaches Robert from the herd by goring him repeatedly: "Is Robert Cohn going to follow Brett around like a steer all the time?" Three times Campbell calls Cohn a steer. Then he makes an unqualified anti-Semitic remark, further differentiating him from Jake and Bill. Cohn is right in comparing Brett to Circe turning men into swine—Cohn, Campbell, Jake, and almost Pedro Romero. Jake's earlier subconscious moral equation of Brett to the prostitute Georgette is expressed in a motif of being dirty like swine, as Brett keeps saying throughout the novel that she needs to go bathe, whereas Jake and Bill have just been swimming in pure mountain water. Bill says Campbell is worse than Cohn: "I don't like Cohn, God knows, and I think it was a silly trick for him to go down to San Sebastian, but nobody has any business to talk like Mike." Nevertheless, Bill gets along with both of them. Jake does too, with irony and pity and no illusions: "Under the wine I lost the disgusted feeling and was happy. It seemed they were all such nice people."

XIV

Jake is brown from the sun that also rises. He has come down to earth and is no longer reading romances. He is reading Turgenieff, a sportsman and lover of nature like Hemingway, who said elsewhere, "Turgenieff to me is the greatest writer there ever was." Jake's improved taste evinces growth in character, realism and the possibility of transcendence through art and Nature. Consider that he has arranged to occupy the room right next to Brett and Mike the drunken stud. "I heard them laugh." He is moving ever closer to his bull. Meanwhile Robert Cohn is trying to learn Spanish, too late.

Finally Jake faces it: "I had been having Brett for a friend. I had not been thinking about her side of it. I had been getting something for nothing. That only delayed the presentation of the bill. The bill always came. That was one of the swell things you could count on. I thought I had paid for everything. Not like the woman pays and pays and pays.... You paid some way for everything that was any good.... Enjoying living was learning to get your money's worth and knowing when you had it.... I did not care what it was all about. All I wanted to know was how to live in it."

Although he says he does not care what life is all about, Jake goes to church again "a couple of times, once with Brett." She wants to hear his confession, as if to substitute her paganism for his Christianity. "I told her that not only was it impossible but it was not as interesting as it sounded [because he is impotent] and, besides, it would be in a language she did not know." Brett does not know Spanish and she does not understand the spiritual language of religion. Coming out of church Jake feels better, evidence that for him religion is part of "how to live." The chapter ends with "It was a good morning" and the elevating spiritual motifs of high, mountains, and white clouds in the Sky.

On Sunday Jake goes to church *again*—secular critics do not notice all this churchgoing—then the fiesta “exploded.” He is reminded of the war: There is a “guard of soldiers”; “All the time rockets were going up”; “The café was like a battleship stripped for action”; “smoke hung in the sky like a shrapnel burst.” Hemingway as a rule avoids similes as too “literary” and unrealistic, but during the fiesta “Everything became quite unreal finally.” His use of repetition for emphasis is effective in the paragraph that begins and ends with the fact that “it went on for seven days.” He attains Impressionistic effects without similes by simply describing what Jake sees: “The dancers were in a crowd, so you did not see the intricate play of the feet. All you saw was the heads and shoulders going up and down, up and down.”

The brown peasants come into town from the countryside and the mountains and mingle with the foreigners, generously sharing their wine. They are so accepting that Robert Cohn does not realize that “We’re the foreigners,” as Bill says. The fiesta also transcends differences in combining the Christianity of Jake with the paganism of Brett. “Some dancers formed a circle around Brett and started to dance.... They wanted her as an image to dance around.” Robert Cohn hangs around her without knowing how to dance. Just as he missed the fishing, Robert misses the religious procession, having “passed out on Anis del Mono.” A “mono” is a silly fool or monkey and “anis” is a drink, but the English pronunciation sounds like anus. Mencken is a chicken’s ass and Cohn is a monkey’s anus—but so is Jake, who tastes the same drink before going to look for Robert in the dark. Having not yet killed his bull, Jake still resembles Cohn to a degree, as suggested when he sleeps in Cohn’s room and puts on one of Cohn’s coats while he watches the men running away from the bulls—as he and Robert both are doing, figuratively. Later, in the story “Hills Like White Elephants,” the selfish man insensitive to the woman he has gotten pregnant drinks Anis del Toro while she kills his bull.

Robert Cohn detaches himself from the herd again, as Bill says: “He’s got this Jewish superiority so strong that he thinks the only emotion he’ll get out of the fight will be being bored.” In contrast, Bill is so appreciative of the fiesta he notices that the dancers “dance differently to all the different tunes.” Jake is unnecessarily concerned that Brett will be disgusted by the sight of the bulls goring the horses of the picadors, spilling their guts. It turns out that Brett is entertained by spilling guts: “She couldn’t take her eyes off them.” In later years, largely in response to criticism from foreign tourists, the picador horses were protected by padding as thick as mattresses that absorb the charges and horn thrusts of the bulls, although a bull sometimes overturns both horse and rider.

Just as characters defined themselves by their responses to Paris, they define themselves now by their responses to bullfighting. “Bill and I were very excited by Pedro Romero,” Jake says. Pedro Romero is named after a real matador from the high mountain village of Ronda, location of the oldest bullring in Spain. He was an originator of the modern bullfight in the 18th century. His portrait hangs in the museum at the bullring of Madrid. Hemingway personifies the history of bullfighting in Romero. He uses his friend the contemporary veteran matador Juan Belmonte as a foil to Romero, who is also modeled on the real contemporary matador Cayetano Ordóñez, also known as Nino de la Palma. Mike Campbell is impressed by Romero’s reputation but does not pay enough attention to remember his full name and spends most of his time watching Brett. As always, Brett is preoccupied with looks, especially with the matador in his tight pants: “Oh, isn’t he lovely.... And those green trousers.” Even after she watches him perform and Jake explains his greatness in detail, Brett says, “And God, what looks.”

Robert is the only one in the group who is sickened by bullfighting: “He was positively green.” Robert is like many American tourists in feeling superior to the peasants, lacking knowledge of the native language and culture, disinterest in many local customs, dislike of the bullfights, and wishing “they didn’t have the horse part.” Mike taunts him: “You mustn’t ever get bored at your first bullfight, Robert.... It might make such a mess.” It is ironic that Cohn cannot stomach the sight of spilled guts, since he is the one who makes himself obnoxious by spilling his own guts.

BULLFIGHTING

Montoya honors Jake and Bill by introducing them to the dignified young matador Pedro Romero, a boy of nineteen. Bullfighting originated over 3,000 years ago on the island of Crete, where the Minoans captured wild bulls in the forests and brought them into courtyards of their palaces, where priests and priestesses performed acrobatic feats with them. Paintings on the walls at Knossus illustrated barebreasted women running at bulls and doing handspring flips off their backs and taking a frontal charge by grabbing a bull's horns and somersaulting over the bull to the ground behind it. Minoans worshipped bulls, made sacrifices to them, and decorated their palaces with stylized bulls' horns along the tops of walls and parapets. They associated the roar of a bull with the sound of earthquakes, one of which eventually caused a huge wave that destroyed much of Minoan civilization. The ruins of the underground plumbing at Knossus was mistaken by Greeks for a labyrinth, inspiring the myth of the Minotaur--half bull, half man. The Romans forced gladiators to fight bulls in their arenas and knights fought bulls with their lances during the Middle Ages, establishing the tradition of the picadors.

The bullfight is not a sport, it is a tragedy in 5 acts. It evolved to its present form beginning in the 1700s particularly in the southern mountain town of Ronda, the location of the oldest bullring in Spain. Pedro Romero was born in Ronda, hence he embodies the tradition. The bull represents divine Nature, a pagan vestige of animism. Tragically, wildness must be killed in order to establish civilization. Otherwise humans would be running away from beasts forever. The running of the bulls in Pamplona to the bullring is an allegory of human progress from vulnerability to dominance, barbarism to civilization. The bulls have names and the best are revered, unlike the cattle herded into the stockyards of Chicago. In Spain the bulls are given an opportunity to kill their killers. Americans buy meat wrapped in cellophane and do not think about the stockyards. Spaniards face the reality and honor their animals. They give them a chance for salvation. There are more bulls' heads mounted in the bullfighting museums of Spain than there are pictures of matadors because the bulls are usually braver than men. Bulls are bred to be killers. They are so smart they are never allowed to fight or even to see a fight until the first time they are let out into an arena for their first and only fight. Otherwise they would be too smart for matadors to control. It takes a team of men to kill a bull. Sometimes a bull will jump over a barrier wall into the crowd. During the typical bullfight the bull is cheered by the crowd and the matador gets hooted and maybe even cushions thrown at him, even if he fights with great courage like Manuel in "The Undefeated."

The matador represents the ideals of civilization that justify killing a magnificent divine animal. The honor of the community is at stake in his performance. The more honorably the matador performs, the more he proves that human civilization is worth the sacrifice of the bull. Usually he does not. Most bullfights are poor. Typically a matador draws three bulls to fight. Usually he selects the most aggressive, brave, and predictable bull and does his best in fighting that one, while taking no chances and killing the other two in the easiest way. In killing the easy way, the average matador keeps his distance from the bull as it passes while bending and contorting himself to make it appear that he is in danger. Closeness to the bull is the measure of the matador. He should stand so close to the bull as it passes him that blood comes off the back of the bull onto his costume—a "suit of lights" that glorifies him in his role of saving the community from disgrace and giving it honor. Occasionally, especially brave bulls are allowed to live on and breed. The meat of dead bulls is given to the poor. The picador horses used to be so old at the start that they were on the way to a glue factory and the bullring gave them an honored finale. Today they are so well protected by padding that some have extended careers.

The tragedy of the bullfight culminates in the kill. The focal point is a large hump of muscle just behind the head of the bull. The matador will have no chance unless that muscle is injured, discouraging the bull from tossing his horns upward. The two picadors on horseback spear the hump of the charging bull with their lances like medieval knights, leaning forward on their lances when the bull pushes its horns into the sides of their horses. Then one after another, agile banderilleros come running fast at the bull and quickly reaching over the horns with a dart in each hand they stick them into the hump and spin leaping away before the bull has time to gore them. By now the bull is very pissed off. His anger will make him charge predictably. Now the matador strides into the ring to face the bull alone.

While performing gracefully with the cape, he studies how this bull uses his horns. Then in the last act of the tragedy, he takes up the red muleta concealing his sword. He wears the bull down by taunting him into pass after pass, controlling him, standing closer and closer, manipulating the bull into a futile circling around his body—then again, and again, and *again!* This is the graceful mastery required to elicit from the crowd “*Ole!*” with each circling of the bull around the matador—“*Ole! Ole! Ole!*” This word is believed to derive from a Moorish word for God. The most spectacular way the bull may be killed is when it is charging past the matador. Usually the matador waits until the bull is exhausted and dazed, facing him and panting with his head low. Now the matador risks leaning in over the horns—if the bull jerks his head up the matador gets gored in the gut. He must hit a spot on the hump about the size of a silver dollar. He aims his sword, lining up the thrust.

Then he drives his sword over the horns and in between the shoulders all the way up to the hilt! He hopes. The sword might hit bone and go jerking out of his hand—the worst humiliation. No matter how well the matador has performed, if he does not kill the bull in one clean merciful thrust, his whole performance is spoiled. Typically it takes about three tries. If it is done perfectly with *grace* the first time the bull crumples, and falls over—and the crowd *erupts!* The moment is mystical, uniting the community in a kind of ecstasy. The most moving moment is when a dying bull struggles up all bloody and regains his feet. He stands there dazed with bloody spittle drooling from his muzzle. The crowd gasps in awe at his great spirit—until finally he crumples and falls over on his side.

AESTHETICS

The bullfighting of Romero is a metaphor of Hemingway’s writing in *The Sun Also Rises*. Both styles express the aesthetic values of Neoclassicism—economy, restraint, simplicity, purity, honesty, morality, courage, understatement, formal beauty—in contrast to the Baroque style: “She saw how close Romero always worked to the bull, and I pointed out to her the tricks the other bull-fighters used to make it look as though they were working closely... Romero never made any contortions, always it was straight and pure and natural in line. The others twisted themselves like corkscrews, their elbows raised, and leaned against the flanks of the bull after his horns had passed, to give a faked look of danger.... Romero’s bull-fighting gave real emotion, because he kept the absolute purity of line in his movements and always quietly and calmly let the horns pass him close each time... Romero had the old thing, the holding of his purity of line through the maximum of exposure, while dominating the bull.” Hemingway said elsewhere that what the experienced spectators seek in the bullfight is “honesty and true, not tricked, emotion and always classicism and the purity of execution of all the [movements]...” Since the performance is a matter of the matador’s honor, bullfighting is a moral art, and style a moral issue.

Hemingway’s prose style in *The Sun Also Rises* is not the compressed evocative poetic style of his short stories. The texture is not as dense. Jake Barnes is not an artist but a reporter and he tells his story in the straightforward prose of a journalist confiding in a friend or a priest. He is clearly trying to be honest: “straight and pure and natural in line.” His narrative seems aimless like the lives of his friends on the Left Bank, ironically, since Hemingway is all along giving it significant form. “Romero never made any contortions” and Hemingway gives Jake a simple plain style pure of any literary “contortions” such as explicit metaphor or complicated syntax or exaggeration. He gives formal beauty to the narrative mainly through the central branching metaphor of the bullfight, working close to the bull in Book I without making the metaphor explicit. Suppressing the metaphor is consistent with Jake repressing his thoughts and not facing his bull. Like Romero, Hemingway “avoided every brusque movement and saved his bulls for the last when he wanted them”—in Book II, where the metaphor finally becomes explicit. He evokes “real emotion” because he understates and relies upon “objective correlatives” rather than stating emotions—holding his “purity of line.” Statements of feeling or valuation are usually limited to generalities such as “nice,” “fine,” “pleasant,” “liked” and so on—sometimes used ironically

In later years a real matador appeared with the Neoclassical style of Hemingway and Romero. Manolete was an intellectual with a sad face who always stood tall and straight and dignified without bending or flinching as the bull passed. He is a legend. There are photos of him in the ticket booths of Spain not even looking down at the bull as it charges under his muleta smearing blood on his chest—looking aside as if in contemplation. It is permitted to make a safe kill of a bad bull, one cowardly and unpredictable. Manolete

had so much integrity that he refused to make safe kills. He always stood his ground tall and straight and unflinching until finally in 1947 he was gored by a bad bull and bled to death. Hemingway's dissertation on bullfighting *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) is a guidebook including discussions of aesthetics, styles, technicalities, history, morality, and psychology, with pictures and a glossary of terms.

XVI

The weather is a metaphor of the elevated spiritual vision Jake loses in this chapter: "A fog had come in over the mountains from the sea. You could not see the tops of the mountains." It rains hard. Montoya the hotel owner visits Jake in his room. There is an unusually close friendship for Montoya to have with a foreigner, but Jake is an aficionado. Montoya trusts him enough to come and ask his advice, saying of young Romero, "People take a boy like that. They don't know what he's worth. They don't know what he means. Any foreigner can flatter him." Romero is still only a boy, an innocent protected by those close to him and without experience of flattery. The bullfight critic Romero is drinking with his friend and yet holds him to such high standards Romero thinks, "He doesn't like my work much."

Romero is the opposite of the urbane hedonists on the Left Bank. "Romero's face was very brown. He had very nice manners." His brown face identifies him with the peasants, the earth and the sun as it rises. He is a true artist capable of discipline, objectivity and self-criticism. Unlike Robert, "He talked of his work as something altogether apart from himself." Montoya is worried about foreigners like the American woman who "collects bull-fighters" and implicitly about the loose Englishwoman Brett Ashley. Romero is so vulnerable, "He ought to stay with his own people."

Jake joins his own people in the hotel dining room, where Bill is amusing himself by paying a succession of bootblacks to shine Mike Campbell's shoes, again and again: "This is the eleventh time my boots have been polished." Mike never pays and lacks polish. Jake betrays the trust of his good friend Montoya by introducing Brett to Romero, just because she asks him to. Then he asks Romero to join Brett and their group, just what Montoya by implication asked him *not* to do. Mike is so drunk he displays his lack of polish by calling out that bulls have no balls, insulting Romero. He calls out that Brett wants to see Romero get into his pants, meaning that *she* wants to get into his pants. Montoya comes into the room and sees the vulnerable young matador at the table drinking "between me and a woman with bare shoulders, at a table full of drunks. He did not even nod."

Now the drunken Mike Campbell is as angry as a bull with darts stuck in his hump--at both Romero and Robert: "Go away, for God's sake. Take that sad Jewish face away." Robert withstands the abuse and "somehow he seemed to be enjoying it. The childish, drunken heroics of it. It was his affair with a lady of title." Almost crying, Mike charges at Robert like a crazed bull. Robert stood "ready to do battle for his lady love," living out his medieval romantic fantasy. Jake stops the fight like a steer coming between two bulls. The group then goes outside and moves on to a "small, tough bar." Brett wants to be alone with Jake to talk, but Cohn refuses to leave until she gets tough and orders him to go to bed. "My God! I'm so sick of him!... He can't believe it didn't mean anything." She criticizes Mike as well, calling him a swine, confirming Robert's point that she is a Circe—to Robert, Mike, Jake, and now Romero.

Jake blames himself rather than Brett. If he was not impotent: "I'd be as big an ass as Cohn." They take a walk in the dark, into the park—the heart—where "we could see the mountains." Brett asks Jake if he still loves her. When he says Yes, she tells him she's in love with Romero. Ouch. While criticizing Robert and Mike for behaving like the swine she has turned them into, Brett ignores Jake's feelings consistently: "I can't help it. I've never been able to help anything." That is, she has no self-control whatsoever and she never helps anybody. "I've lost my self-respect," she confesses. Now she makes anti-Semitic slurs like Mike and repeatedly calls herself a bitch: "I've always done just what I wanted." She wants Jake to help her connect with Romero--and he *does*, even after he sees how deeply he has offended Montoya. Jake follows her direction like Robert did with Frances, only this is much more humiliating. By facilitating an affair between Brett and Romero he has insulted and alienated those he most respects: "The hard-eyed people at the bull-fighter table watched me go. It was not pleasant."

XVII

Jake's betrayal of his friend Montoya, a man of great virtue, is contrasted to Bill's loyalty to his friend Mike Campbell, a man of no virtue: "They can't insult Mike. I won't stand it. Who cares if he is a damn bankrupt?" His voice broke." Well, all the people he owes money to, Bill. The fiesta is like a Spanish Woodstock where revelers get so high they lose their judgment, even Bill.

At a café Robert confronts Jake and bullies him to tell him where Brett is. Mike calls from another table, "Brett's gone off with the bull-fighter chap. They're on their honeymoon." Robert calls Jake a pimp, and he is right. Jake swings at him and misses. Robert knocks him down, then hits him twice more without giving him a chance to regain his feet. Robert knocks Mike down too but Mike does not want to pay any more: "I just lay there."

Mike says he "borrowed" money from Montoya that night, but it is more likely that Montoya bribed Mike to take Brett away and leave Pamplona before she ruins Romero. Getting knocked out by Robert leaves Jake feeling like "I had been kicked in the head." He feels like a high school kid coming home from a football game with a concussion, carrying a suitcase. This recalls Robert saying if he could do anything he wanted he would play football again. Jake is still carrying adolescent baggage. It is immature to hang around Brett like Robert, to have introduced her to Romero, and to have taken a swing at Robert—what he called "prep-school stuff" when he criticized Robert for getting aggressive toward him in Paris.

Bill transcends the others by not getting turned into a swine, by not fighting and by doing what he can for Robert Cohn. He persuades an angry Jake to go and see Robert in his room, like a steer calming bulls. Robert is crying face down on the bed wearing a white polo shirt, "the kind he'd worn at Princeton," as if he wishes he was still there, an innocent white knight and a champion. He begs Jake to forgive him. Jake is most upset by the truth: "You called me a pimp." Nevertheless he forgives Robert and shakes his hand while making it clear that he never wants to see Robert again. He confirms the truth of Robert's insult when he says, "I'm going to take a bath," paralleling him to Brett who always feels dirty.

One Spanish waiter condemns the running of the bulls as foolish barbarism and laments the death of a young father who chose to run through the streets that day. In him Hemingway gives voice to those who do not share his vision of the value of the ritual. This is an example of multiple points of view, one of the characteristics of Modernist fiction. The chapter ends by making the point of the fiesta allegory: a man is killed outside the bullring running away from the bulls, whereas no one is killed inside the protective ring of civilization, where the wild is controlled and bulls are slain. There is justice in that the bull that killed the man in the street is himself killed in the arena by Pedro Romero, who performs so admirably that he is awarded the bull's ear by the crowd. Romero honors Brett by giving her the ear, which means so little to her that she stuffs it into a drawer with cigarette-stubs and forgets about it.

Jake thinks Robert "should have hit somebody the first time he was insulted, and then gone away." In his blind romanticism Robert felt that "true love would conquer all." He could not see the real Brett. Mike tells Jake that Robert barged into Romero's room, found him in bed with Brett and then "massacred the poor, bloody bull-fighter." Robert knocked down Romero "about fifteen times." The boy's refusal to stay down like Mike Campbell makes him heroic and humiliates Robert. "He ruined Cohn." Yet Robert still "wanted to take Brett away. Wanted to make an honest woman of her, I imagine. Damn touching scene." Despite taking such a beating, Romero wins a moral victory by refusing to quit—a major theme in Hemingway, especially in "The Undeclared" and *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Brett told him off and Robert broke down and cried and she called him a ruddy ass. She also tells off Mike: "I gave her a fearful hiding about Jews and bullfighters, and all those sorts of people, and do you know what she said: 'Yes. I've had such a hell of a happy life with the British aristocracy'." Mike's grouping of Jews with bullfighters as "those sorts of people" unites the two. Hemingway is implying that Jews as a group are like bullfighters in having to fight bull all the time. Bullfighters are exemplars in *The Sun Also Rises* and Robert is an exception among Jews.

XVIII

Throughout this chapter a feeling of finality is elicited by repetition of “It was the last day of the fiesta.” They are sleeping off hangovers. Robert Cohn is gone, reducing the tension. The peasants are contrasted to the tourists in sight-seeing buses from Biarritz and San Sebastian, including one car occupied by twenty-five Englishwomen—25 potential Bretts. At the café Mike is so jealous over Brett that he tips over their table spilling their beers and shrimp with a crash. He has no grace under pressure.

Romero’s people are “very angry about me,” Brett tells Jake. Surprisingly, under Romero’s influence, she wants to pray for him “or something.” Back to church we go. However, Brett Ashley is damned: “I’m damned bad for a religious atmosphere.” She has to get out of there. Jake says that her praying “had not been much of a success.” She says she has never gotten anything she wanted by praying and asks Jake if he has: “Oh, yes.” Brett’s preoccupation with looks is a motif in the novel. She says she is bad for a religious atmosphere because “I’ve got the wrong type of face” and “You don’t look very religious, Jake.” Secular critics disregard Jake’s reply: “I’m pretty religious.”

Back in the hotel they pass Montoya and Jake is reminded of his guilt when Montoya bows without smiling. They go on to the bullring. Hemingway dramatizes the bullfight at greater length in detail, contrasting the battered old master Belmonte (a real matador and a friend of Hemingway’s) with young Romero. Belmonte is known for standing close to the bull and has come out of retirement to compete against “stars of the decadence of bull-fighting, and he knew that the sincerity of his own bull-fighting would be so set off by the false aesthetics of the bull-fighters of the decadent period that he would only have to be in the ring.” Hemingway is again making an analogy to his own writing.

The final performance of Romero dramatizes moral ideals: “I think he loved the bulls, and I think he loved Brett. Everything of which he could control the locality he did in front of her all that afternoon. Never once did he look up. He made it stronger that way, and did it for himself, too, as well as for her. Because he did not look up to ask if it pleased he did it all for himself inside, and it strengthened him, and yet he did it for her, too. But he did not do it for her at any loss to himself. He gained by it all through the afternoon.” In contrast, Jake has done things for Brett at great loss to himself.

Romero stands so close to the bull they were “all one.” They form an aesthetic and spiritual whole, in contrast to the decadent bullfighters who stand apart from the bull out of fear. “The fight with Cohn had not touched his spirit but his face had been smashed and his body hurt. He was wiping all that out now.” His art is transcendence, as writing was for Hemingway, who said elsewhere, “If he wrote it he could get rid of it. He had gotten rid of many things by writing them.” In making the kill, Romero “became one with the bull.” Immanent death gives intense meaning to life in the fiction of Hemingway. In the moment of killing the bull, life and death become one.

Romero is triumphant and Jake feels like a pimp in hell, “drunker than I ever remembered having been.” Bill feels sorry for Robert Cohn. “‘Oh, to hell with Cohn,’ I said.” At the end of the chapter both Mike and Jake, having sunk to Mike’s level, are bemoaning Brett’s going off with the bullfighter. Mike is finally paying. He finally makes a judgment of Brett: “She shouldn’t have done it.” The fiesta has ended not with a bang but a whimper. “‘Eat some soup,’ Bill said.”

Book III

XIX

The atmosphere of finality extends into the last chapter: “The fiesta was finished.” In the morning Jake resumes the life he led before, enjoying simple pleasures. Bill joins him at his café table. “We had lunch and paid the bill. Montoya did not come near us.” Losing the respect of his old friend Montoya and the other aficionados is a lot to pay.

Mike Campbell joins them for the ride to ritzy Biarritz and Bill refers with goodhumored irony to “Old Mike the spender.” Mike seems to have changed for the better when he offers to pay for their drinks, but he quickly runs out of money. “Bill’s face sort of changed.” Nevertheless, now Bill buys the drinks. Campbell is full of bull every time he cons somebody into giving him credit. Throughout the novel he is running away from his bills—bulls. Campbell is obviously a bankrupt due to his own irresponsibility, yet in reference to Brett’s income he blames Jews for usury. Then he admits, “They’re not really Jews. We just call them Jews. They’re Scotsmen, I believe.” Campbell is a Scotsman *himself!* In this ironic exchange, Hemingway implies again that anti-Semitism is a lot of bull.

The three friends part ways and Jake is left in solitude. He declines to return to Paris because “Paris would have meant more fiesta-ing. I was though with fiestas for awhile.” Life in France is “safe, suburban” and “simple,” with everything on “a clear financial basis.” Spain is an adventure. “I felt like a fool going back into Spain. In Spain you could not tell about anything.” Life in Spain is more natural, unpredictable and risky—“close to the soil.” Also more religious. In San Sebastian on the coast, Jake immerses himself literally in Nature, more deeply than when fishing up in the mountains. The swimmers there are brown like the peasants, like Romero and like Jake now. “I dove deep once, swimming down to the bottom. I swam with my eyes open.” The water is “buoyant and cold” like the mountains.

When the telegrams arrive from Brett begging him to come and help her out of trouble again, he cannot refuse her. “Well, that meant San Sebastian all shot to hell.” The ironic cupid motif originating with Count Mippipopolous now applies to Jake, who accepts his martyrdom, though instead of going to heaven like the saint Sebastian, Jake is “shot to hell”—having to go through more hell for Brett: “Send a girl off with one man. Introduce her to another to go off with him. Now go and bring her back. And sign the wire with love. That was it all right.” He is facing his bull. To kill it he must go and see Brett one last time.

He has come to the end of the line: “The Norte station in Madrid is the end of the line. All trains finish there.” His spiritual growth is imaged in “the unfinished church” he passes in the taxi. The woman running the Hotel Montana is fat and sullen but she is also disciplined and honest. Appearances do not matter as much as Brett makes out. Jake feels absurd to come running to help her again, as expressed in his use of an absurd invented word: “I would welcome the upbringing of my bags.” Brett confirms his sense of absurdity: “when she kissed me I could feel she was thinking of something else.”

Brett has broken off with the boy bullfighter out of shame. He was “ashamed of me... They ragged him about me at the café, I guess.” The masculine New Woman is not yet accepted in traditional Spain, making this a capsulation of gender conflict in the 20th century. Brett still gives the highest priority to how she looks—to herself. “He wanted me to grow my hair out. Me, with long hair. I’d so look like hell.... He said it would make me more womanly. I’d look a fright.... He really wanted to marry me.... After I’d gotten more womanly, of course.” It seems a small matter, just letting her hair grow out. That she is unable to make even this small sacrifice is evidence that Brett is incapable of “true love,” which is the feeling that you wish to sacrifice for someone, as Hemingway says in *A Farewell to Arms*. To Romero, of course, her hair is a very significant matter. If Brett had married Romero, under pressure from his culture he would never have stopped pressuring her to be “more womanly.”

Brett says 5 times, “Let’s not talk about it.” She is ashamed for the first time in the novel. She is running away from her bull that by sleeping with men she is helping them. After all, she seduced a teenage boy—a revered symbol of purity and honor to the people of Spain. Furthermore, she could not accept any money from Romero without feeling even more like a prostitute. They go to a bar. Throughout the book Brett is always asking for a drink. “Isn’t this a nice bar?” Jake’s reply indicates that he feels this is the end of the line for him: “They’re all nice bars.” That she was staying at the Hotel Montana (mountain) implies that Brett attains some elevation in the end—though not as high as on a real mountain: “You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch.... It’s sort of what we have instead of God’.” “Some people have God,’ I said. ‘Quite a lot’.” Despite her redemptive gesture in giving up Romero, Brett’s damnation is implied by her reference to God in the past tense: “He never worked very well with me.” Her damnation is also implicit in her decision to go back to the bankrupt Mike Campbell: “He’s so damned nice and he’s so awful. He’s my sort of thing.”

Jake is fortified by religion, by fishing in the mountains, by a moral code from bullfighting, by his purification swimming at San Sebastian, and by his decision that this is “the end of the line.” He is transcending his sexual deprivation: “I like to do a lot of things.” The epigraph from *Ecclesiastes* evokes the cycles of Nature and Jake transcending the present. Nevertheless, unlike the exemplar Romero, Jake still needs to get drunk. Ironically, the exemplar in the novel is the youngest character. Jake is close to the bull in the taxicab scene at the end, which contrasts to the taxicab scene at the beginning of the novel when he could not keep from touching Brett: “We sat close against each other,” like a matador as the bull passes. The houses “looked sharply white,” reviving the motif of purity from his fishing trip into the mountains. Now, at last, here comes the bull: “Oh, Jake,” Brett said, ‘we could have had such a damned good time together’”—a “damned” *good time*, not a good life. Rather than say “Bullshit,” Jake responds with grace, irony and pity for Brett.

The “mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic” is a reminder of what he lost while wearing a khaki uniform in the war—of the wound that has been directing his life ever since. He will never be able to mount or raise his baton. The phallic image evokes again the pun of the title, *The Sun Also Rises*. “The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me. “‘Yes,’ I said. ‘Isn’t it pretty to think so?’” The word “pretty” in this context is romantic and used ironically. Hemingway has saved the bull “for the last when he wanted” it—as Jake kills the bull of Brett in the very last sentence of the novel.

The Sun Also Rises has two coinciding structures: (1) the first is the southward movement of the action from Paris down to Burguete in the mountains and then further on down to Pamplona. These major settings correspond to *vertical* ordinary consciousness. Jake Barnes retreats from the decadent “Unreal City” (the dominant head where he thinks too much and feels dissociated from Nature) down into the elevated Garden of the heart where fishing is atonement with Nature, then further down into Pamplona for the bullfights (Wilderness). His geographical movement downward is an individuating journey into the depths of himself that corresponds to the archetypal journey of the hero in mythology. (2) The second structure emerges when Jake is inspired by Romero fighting the bull with grace in the *circular* arena.

At the end, with the taxicab scene the plot becomes circular like a bullring. Jake is not where he was at the beginning, however, literally or spiritually. Life was loose up in Paris, a vicious circle of going around drinking in clubs. Now Jake’s life is disciplined and under control as imaged in the policeman directing traffic. He finally attains transcendence when he kills the bull of Brett with irony and pity in the last sentence of the novel. The bullfight metaphor in the last sentence connects to the first sentence of the novel introducing Robert Cohn as a fighter full of bull. Cohn is the immature romanticism in Jake that keeps him hanging around Brett like Cohn does. Jake can only kill the bull of Brett when Cohn is gone. *The Sun Also Rises* is an allegory of Jake’s inner bullfight. In Jake the circularity of the plot spirals upward like the cape of a matador controlling a bull and his spiritual rise is evoked by his biblical name, Jacob. This synthesizes the spiral with the vertical mode of Jacob’s ladder, expressing holistic consciousness.

Michael Hollister (2012)

“When I was in the Italian army I had been nicked in the scrotum by a piece of shrapnel and had spent some time in the genito-urinary ward and saw all those poor bastards who had everything blown off. Most of them from anti-personnel mines that were rigged to hit between the legs.... Brett died in Taxco, Mexico. Call her Lady Duff Twysden, if you like, but I can only think of her as Brett. Tuberculosis. She was forty-three. Her pall-bearers had all been her lovers. On leaving the church, where she had had a proper service, one of the grieving pall-bearers slipped on the church steps and the casket dropped and split open. Those days with Lady Duff Twysden ruined poor Loeb for the rest of his life.”

Ernest Hemingway
quoted in *Papa Hemingway*, A. E. Hotchner
(Random House/Bantam 1966) 52-53

Michael Hollister (2015)