

The Sun Also Rises

Discussion Questions

1. When Jake Barnes rebuffs the prostitute Georgette because he is "sick," she says, "Everybody's sick. I'm sick, too". Is Georgette's observation an appropriate description of the people in the novel? Why is Jake's emasculating wound such an effective symbol?

2. When Jake and Bill walk during the Paris evening looking at Notre Dame, watching young lovers, and savoring cooking smells, Jake asks whether Bill would like a drink. Why does Bill respond, "No...I don't need it"? Why does Jake say that for Cohn the Bayonne cathedral was "a very good example of something or other" ?

3. Is Jake and Bill's fishing trip to Burguete relevant to the epigraph from Ecclesiastes? How do their conversations in Burguete differ from those they have back in Pamplona? How do Robert's, Mike's, and Brett's absences from the fishing trip set them apart from Jake and Bill? Why is the Englishman Harris included in the Burguete scene?

4. How would you describe Jake Barnes's relationship with Brett? Does he love her; understand her? Is his view of Brett constant? How does he see her at the close of the novel? What does he mean when he says, "Isn't it pretty to think so," when Brett tells him that they "could have had such a damned good time together"?

5. If Hemingway's novel is about "the lost generation," do we conclude that all five of the persons who have gone to Pamplona are lost? Is there evidence that moral or spiritual cleansing ever takes place in the novel?

