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<th>Auteur</th>
<th>Ernest Hemingway</th>
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<td>Genre</td>
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A. General Information

Title: For Whom the Bell Tolls, 1th 1941
Used edition: Arrow Books 1994
Number of pages: 504

Author:
The author of this book is Ernest Hemingway. Ernest Hemingway is an American author born in 1899 near Illinois. During his youth he liked boxing, his first piece he wrote was about boxing in the school magazine. When he left school he worked as a reporter. Due to his curiosity for war, and his will to write books about it he joint the Red Cross Ambulance Drivers in Italy, but soon got injured and was taken to a hospital in Milan. In 1920 he went to Chicago where he met his wife, in 1922 he moved to Paris, and a year later he made a trip through Spain. He wrote ‘A farewell To Arms’ in 1927, and as a war correspondent during the Spanish Civil War he found material to write 'For Whom the Bell Tolls'. In 1952 he won the Pullitzer Prize for ‘The Old Man and the Sea’. In 1962 he killed himself with a gun.

Setting:
The story begins in the end of 1930. It takes place during the Spanish Civil War. The place where it takes place is in the mountains in the north of Madrid.

Plot:
The book is about the Spanish civil war in which a group of guerrilla’s tries to keep of the fascists by blowing up a bridge, but when the war is about to end, the men start to get less eager to put there lives in danger.

Characters:
Robert Jordan: is an American Spanish professor who has volunteered to fight for the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. He is a demolition expert, and the plot revolves around his mission to destroy a bridge in Fascist territory.
General Golz: is the Russian general, practicing his war tactics as a Loyalist volunteer, who orders Jordan to blow the bridge.

Anselmo: is Jordan’s elderly guide and trusted friend and a good man. He truly believes in the Loyalist cause, however, and thus is a brave and loyal soldier.

Pablo: is the leader of the guerillas who help Jordan blow the bridge. Once a ruthless leader, Pablo is now afflicted by cowardice and cynicism. As he no longer wants to fight for the Cause, he makes difficulties for Jordan and threatens the completion of his mission.

Pilar: is Pablo’s "woman." She is as bold as she is broad, and she keeps the band united through her personal example of patriotism. She is also superstitious, and early in the novel foresees Jordan's death in his palm reading.

Maria: is the young girl the guerilla’s rescued from a prison train. Her father was a loyalist mayor, and the battered Maria has been left an orphan. Maria and Jordan fall immediately in love.

El Sordo: is the deaf guerilla leader who Jordan and Pilar enlist in helping with the bride mission.

Rafael: is a member of Pablo’s band. He is referred to frequently as "the gypsy" and characterized as lazy but well-intentioned.

Agustin: is another member of the band; he is a devoted soldier.

Fernando: is another guerilla, and Jordan trusts him the most next to Anselmo.

Andres: is the guerilla Jordan sends with the message to Golz to cancel the attack.

Kashkin: is Jordan's friend and a famous Russian journalist.

**Theme:**

I think that the theme of this book is the love during the war.

**B. My personal opinion**

From all the characters, I like Jordan the most. It is a man with principals and a great deal of courage, he is willing to die for what he believes is right. His will and efforts to bring the mission to a success are rather moving.

He said for example this: ‘Once you accept the idea of demolition as a problem it is only a problem. But there was plenty that was not so good that went with it although God knows you took it easily enough. There was the constant attempt to approximate the conditions of successful assassination that accompanied the demolition. Did big words make it more defensible? Did they make killing any more palatable? You took to it a little too readily if you ask me, he told himself. And what you will be like or just exactly what you will be suited for when you leave the service of the Republic is, to me, he thought, extremely doubtful. But my guess is you will get rid of all that by writing about it, he said. Once you write it down it is all gone. It will be a good book if you can write it. Much better than the other.’ (Page 178)

I really like this part of the book, Jordan is thinking, in this chapter, about what is going to happen after the war, and if his ideals actually justified the killing. In this part you see that he decides to think simple, to put his mind at ‘zero’ because it is to difficult, as he says when I’ve written it down it will be over, so lets not be to hard on myself. I like this piece a lot, because it’s shows a great deal of his insides. Funny is the prediction he makes; ‘It will be a good book if you can write it’, it think it also refers to the writer’s own life in which, he decided to take part in the war, so later on he could write about it.
I liked Pablo less, although his ‘good’ work for the Republicans, I think it’s a man with low moral and a bad attitude not always been but has become though the war, for example his killing of others for material stuff like horses which he likes a lot. He also is a drinker, and a coward towards the end, he becomes more afraid to die in the war, which is almost over. I will quote a piece, which gives an good image of Pablo’s state of mind, it is said by Agustin. Quote; ‘Clearly, he is only a garbage of what he once was. But it is not for nothing hat he is alive and comfortable in these hills an able to drink himself to death whil there are so many others that have died against a wall. Is he as smart as they say? He is much smarter. You can see he’s respected but that, he’s ruined by the war, but is a very intelligent man, but just lost, in a way, the will to fight.

I have not find any humour in this book. Sometimes there where passages who are meant to be funny, but it’s absolutely not my taste of humour. Maybe that’s why I haven’t understand the humour.

I don’t like the languages in this book. It’s written in old English with a lot of thou and thyself is used, it strucks me because it makes the story so heavy to read. The writer uses also Spanish/English because he wants to make sure you place the story in Spain, his use of accent by some characters helps by that. I must say it occurs more in the end of the book. For example:
Qué tío! The gypsy aid in open flattery. Thou art a veritable phenomenon. Thy mother! Robert Jordan said. He could not help grinning at the gypsy. Take thy hares to camp and bring us up some breakfast.’ (page 294)

I especially liked the end, because it’s very ‘beautiful’ Jordan stuck under his horse, keeping the fascist with a gun, but soon he will die. It’s beautiful because you know soon he will be freed from his misery, but at the other side he will die, and were his ideals worth the sacrifice?

That even though it’s war people continue with their normal lives, they still get hungry thirsty tired, is really interesting, because mostly books about a war are just the fighting this is the entire day to day life during the war. The book is written very different of what I’ve read before.

I choose this song Freedom Fighter, it goes about people who are fighting for their freedom, just like the people in the book.

The mouths of envious
Always find another door
While at the gates of paradise they
beat us down some more
But our mission’s set in stone
Â¢â€œCause the writing’s on the wall
I’ll scream it from the mountain tops
pride comes before a fall

So many thoughts to share
All this energy to give
Unlike those who hide the truth
I tell it like it is
If the truth will set you free
I feel sorry for your soul
Can’t you hear the ringing cause
for you the bell tolls

I’m just a freedom fighter
No remorse
Raging on in holy war
Soon there’ll come a day
When you’re face to face with me
Face to face with me

Can’t you hear us coming?
People marching all around
Can’t you see we’re coming?
Close your eyes it’s over now
Can’t you hear us coming?
The fight has only just begun
Can’t you see we’re coming?

I’m just a freedom fighter
No remorse
Raging on in holy war
Soon there’ll come a day
When you’re face to face with me
Face to face with me

www.songteksten.nl

C. The Summary

It is the late 1930’s in Spain, during the Spanish Civil War, and a guerrilla group is in the mountains behind enemy lines. Robert Jordan plans to blow up a bridge, which the enemy uses to move trucks, tanks, and artillery. Pablo, the leader, objects to blowing up the bridge, for it puts them in danger. Robert Jordan worries Pablo will betray them. They arrive at the camp. A beautiful girl, Maria, brings stew. She and Robert Jordan fall in love at first sight. Robert Jordan meets Pablo’s woman, a large and heavy peasant with gypsy blood.

One of the guerrillas, Anselmo, tells Robert Jordan that he is a hunter and not a killer of men. They meet Agustín, who speaks in a filthy manner, but is a loyal man. The gypsy Rafael says they want him to kill Pablo. Robert Jordan does not want to. That night, Robert and Maria make love. She confides that she
has been raped, and he says that if she is with him, all her pain will go away. Pilar tells about how Pablo arranged for the massacre of over thirty fascists. She tells Robert Jordan she is jealous of he and Maria and feels old. Robert Jordan thinks about how one can live as fully in seventy hours as in seventy years.

A bad snowstorm starts. Pablo is very drunk, and things get tense as they try to provoke him. He leaves, then announces that he is back with them. Robert Jordan resents the situation. He thinks of the Hotel Gaylord in Madrid, where he used to talk to his friend Karkov about wartime politics.

Robert Jordan shoots an enemy soldier who comes to the camp. They take his horse. El Sordo goes to look for more horses and he and his men are massacred. The others can do nothing. Robert Jordan sends Andrés with a dispatch for Golz asking him to cancel the attack. He tells Maria of a fantasy that they will live in Madrid. She tells him about her rape when Falangists took her town and shot her parents. Pablo steals dynamite and equipment and disappears. He returns with five men, and they are shocked. Robert Jordan feels optimistic again. Andrés reaches brigade headquarters. Commander André Marty is crazy and locks him up and confiscates the dispatch. Karkov arrives and gets it back. They are able to reach Golz, who says they are all screwed.

At dawn, Robert Jordan and Anselmo shoot the sentries and blow the bridge. The impact kills Anselmo. While escaping, Robert Jordan's horse falls on his leg, breaking it. Maria is grief-stricken and he says she must leave, but she will carry him with her always. They leave, and Robert Jordan knows he must keep himself conscious so that he can kill one of the approaching enemy officers to delay them on the trail of his friends.

D. The Review:

Set during the Spanish Civil War, Ernest Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls" tells the story of Robert Jordan, a young American who is serving as a demolitions expert for the Republican cause. The novel follows his experiences with a band of guerrilla fighters as he undertakes a mission to blow up a strategic bridge. The whole novel, except for some flashbacks and reminiscences of various characters, covers just a few days.

Although the novel focuses on a small number of characters in a fairly compressed time period, Hemingway attains a real epic feel with this book. The novel is fairly lengthy (471 pages in the 2003 Scribner edition), but I found it to be a swift read—indeed, often difficult to put down. There is much that is noteworthy about this novel. It offers a compelling perspective on war from the viewpoint of guerrilla forces, rather than conventional forces (interested readers might want to check out Mao Tse-Tung's "On Guerrilla Warfare" for some theoretical and historical perspective). The novel also deals with the phenomenon of ideologically committed foreign forces in Spain's Fascist-versus-Republican conflict.

Hemingway deals with the issues of love and sex in a combat zone, as well as with the roles of women in a guerrilla force. Other significant issues include loyalty, leadership, communications, military hardware, the impact of weather and terrain, and the connection between guerrilla and conventional forces. Particularly interesting is Hemingway's portrait of Robert Jordan as a technically and tactically skilled guerrilla fighter, and as a leader of guerrilla fighters. Thus the book should interest not just lovers of
Hemingway offers a grim and graphic look at the brutality of 20th century warfare. War is not glamorized or sanitized, and atrocities are described in unflinching detail. The characters explore the ethics of killing in war. As the story progresses, Hemingway skillfully peels back the layers of Jordan and other characters to reveal their psychological wounds. But the book is not all about pain and violence. In the midst of war Hemingway finds the joy and beauty that keep his characters going. He also incorporates storytelling as a powerful motif in the book; his characters share stories with each other, recall missing untold stories, or resist a story too hard to bear. In Hemingway's world storytelling is as essential a human activity as eating, fighting, and lovemaking.

Hemingway's writing appeals to all the senses as he creates some vivid scenes. He demonstrates his mastery of the art of fiction; he continually makes interesting choices and creates some really striking and beautiful passages. "For Whom the Bell Tolls" is an exceptionally haunting work of literature; I consider this rich and rewarding text to be an essential volume in the canon of war fiction. For intriguing companion texts that also deal with the Spanish Civil War, I recommend "Spain's Cause Was Mine: A Memoir of an American Medic in the Spanish Civil War," by Hank Rubin, and "The Confessions of Senora Francesca Navarro and Other Stories," by Natalie L. M. Petesch.

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http://www.classic-literature.co.uk/book-store/0684803356/For-Whom-the-Bell-Tolls.html