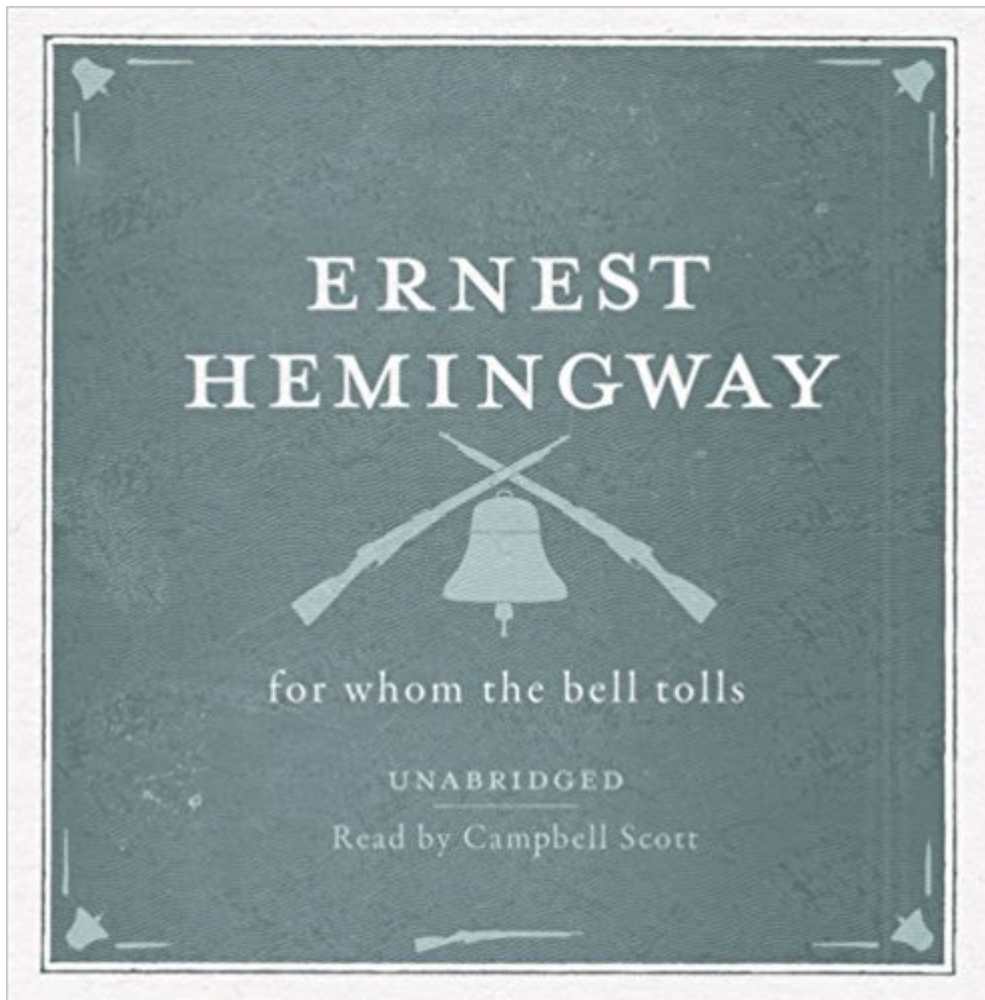




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# For Whom The Bell Tolls Unabridged Audio CD



## Synopsis

In 1937 Ernest Hemingway traveled to Spain to cover the civil war; three years later he completed the greatest novel to emerge from "the good fight," *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. The story of Robert Jordan, a young American in the International Brigades, it tells of loyalty and courage, love and defeat, and the tragic death of an ideal. Surpassing his achievement in *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway creates a work at once rare and beautiful, strong and brutal, compassionate, moving and wise. "If the function of a writer is to reveal reality," Maxwell Perkins wrote to Hemingway after reading the manuscript, "no one ever so completely performed it." *For Whom the Bell Tolls* stands as one of the best war novels of all time.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*For Whom the Bell Tolls* begins and ends in a pine-scented forest, somewhere in Spain. The year is 1937 and the Spanish Civil War is in full swing. Robert Jordan, a demolitions expert attached to the International Brigades, lies "flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the pine trees." The sylvan setting, however, is at sharp odds with the reason Jordan is there: he has come to blow up a bridge on behalf of the antifascist guerrilla forces. He hopes he'll be able to rely on their local leader, Pablo, to help carry out the mission, but upon meeting him, Jordan has his doubts: "I don't like that sadness, he thought. That sadness is bad. That's the sadness they get before they quit or before they betray. That is the sadness that comes before the sell-out." For Pablo, it seems, has had enough of the war. He has amassed for himself a small herd of horses and wants only to stay quietly in the hills and attract as

little attention as possible. Jordan's arrival--and his mission--have seriously alarmed him. "I am tired of being hunted. Here we are all right. Now if you blow a bridge here, we will be hunted. If they know we are here and hunt for us with planes, they will find us. If they send Moors to hunt us out, they will find us and we must go. I am tired of all this. You hear?" He turned to Robert Jordan. "What right have you, a foreigner, to come to me and tell me what I must do?" In one short chapter Hemingway lays out the blueprint for what is to come: Jordan's sense of duty versus Pablo's dangerous self-interest and weariness with the war. Complicating matters even more are two members of the guerrilla leader's small band: his "woman" Pilar, and Maria, a young woman whom Pablo rescued from a Republican prison train. Unlike her man, Pilar is still fiercely devoted to the cause and as Pablo's loyalty wanes, she becomes the moral center of the group. Soon Jordan finds himself caught between the two, even as his own resolve is tested by his growing feelings for Maria. For *Whom the Bell Tolls* combines two of the author's recurring obsessions: war and personal honor. The pivotal battle scene involving El Sordo's last stand is a showcase for Hemingway's narrative powers, but the quieter, ongoing conflict within Robert Jordan as he struggles to fulfill his mission perhaps at the cost of his own life is a testament to his creator's psychological acuity. By turns brutal and compassionate, it is arguably Hemingway's most mature work and one of the best war novels of the 20th century. --Alix Wilber --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"The best book Hemingway has written' New York Times" --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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With the exception of a few scenes, I found this a tedious read. Scholars please don't jump me on this review. Yes, Hemingway can turn a pretty phrase now and then in this barren desert of a book.

The Kindle version of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" is not very good. I don't know if that is because it is an abridged version like other reviewers claim or whether it's just not a good story. If the Kindle version is indeed abridged, I would have expected Amazon to alert buyers that it was so. Basically, "For Whom the Bell Tolls" is the story of a critical mission by a band of rebels accompanied by an American sympathizer fighting for the Republic against the Fascists in Spain during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). The rebels' mission was to blow up a bridge, but the interplay among the characters leading up to the attack dominates the story.

No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every manis a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends or of thine owne were; any mans death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.

JOHN DONNE

If you haven't noticed, I read a lot of Hemingway. The reason for this is that I enjoy (even more) a textbook about him that was written by a Princeton Professor, Carlos Baker. He understands Hemingway and shares that knowledge in a way that shows the artfulness of the writer. He diagrams the novels in the same way that my grade school teachers taught me to diagram sentences (noun, verb, adverb and subject, object of the preposition, adjectives and compound sentences, etc.). Using this textbook I am learning how a writer approaches a novel (as an artist would); hence the title, "HEMINGWAY, the writer as artist". It is one of my favorite books and has been for more than ten years.

"For Whom the Bell Tolls" (FWBT) was published in 1940, but the notes for it were taken during '37, '38 '39. It speaks of the loyalist fighting against fascism in Spain. His detractors called Hemingway a 'Stalinist' or a 'Fascist' at the extremes, but he was neither. He was simply anti-fascist. He thought that fascism killed art and literature. It was just that easy for him to pick a side. His novel is broad in scope and speaks garishly of the cruel killings by both sides. He goes into great detail of an incident in which the 'loyalists' torture and kill local fascist shop owners, blowhards, idiots, city officials and priests in a way that is foreign to any experience of my sheltered life. Hemingway shocks the reader by writing the details of killing in a way that reminds us of a bull fight, or the running of the bulls at Pamplona. This chapter is hard to read. It is so cruel. I can only image what it was like with his expletives at full volume. Artistically it compares with Picasso's 'Guernica' which reminds the world of the insane bombing of that Spanish market town by NAZI fascists. (with loss of life estimated at 1,650)

This is one of Hemingway's longer novels and as others mentioned, perhaps it could have been shorter. The novel drags at times. Perhaps typical of the author's style, he adds a lot of detail to events to make it seem to the reader like they are there alongside the characters. Although the author is incredible at this, it works better in his shorter novels like Farewell to Arms or The Sun Also Rises. Still, it is a great work and gives a glimpse into the people and issues surrounding the Spanish Civil War. Hemingway's novels seem to have a way of evoking emotion from me and this one was no exception.

This 1939 novel is set during the Spanish Civil War, a war that most Americans know little about. The hero of this book is Robert Jordan, an American volunteer hoping that this rebellion would make a better world. He wants to do good and be a hero but whether or not this happens is basically left for the reader to decide. The book is about his mission to blow up a bridge and the people he meets along the way - Spaniards hoping for a better life and getting caught up in warfare. Naturally there is a love interest between Robert and Maria, a young woman who had been very mistreated by bad guys and is now seeking refuge with the cave-dwelling freedom fighters of the revolution. The writing is sparse and meaningful. The setting is depressing. People struggle. People die. The future looks bleak. This is a fine story, well told. However I was annoyed by some of the narrative. Hemingway doesn't use curses and so the word "obscenity" is used where a curse would logically go. I don't know if this was in only the edition I was reading but I found it very annoying and it broke my concentration. This is the only Hemingway book I have ever read and I did like the writing. I found the plot easy to follow and I identified with and pitied all the characters. It is a classic of a time and a place and a writer who will long be remembered.

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