Olivia Ernst

Ms. Kibbey

English 1H

9 January 2015

Reading Letter #1 Quarter 2 Independent Reading Project

Dear Ms. Kibbey,

I’ve read the entire book *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway consisting of 247 pages. In the book, the main characters Jake, Brett, Mike, Robert, and Bill are all in Pamplona to watch the bull fights and go to the seven day fiesta involved with the fights. During this time, Robert goes off traveling somewhere else because he loves Brett but she does not love him back. Also, Brett falls in love with a young bull fighter named Pedro Romero and Mike, who she was supposed to marry, had a bad time dealing with it. After the fights are over, Brett goes off with Pedro, and Jake goes to San Sebastian to relax. He gets a telegram from Brett a few days after saying she is in trouble, so Jake travels to Hotel Madrid to see what is happening. Brett made Pedro leave her and she wanted comfort from Jake.

Analysis Paragraph #1: Theme

One of the main themes in the book is “There are many drawbacks to excessive drinking.” Jake and his friends drink all the time and their drunkenness does not let them live a meaningful life. In the book, Brett is nervous because she is in love with Pedro and does not know what to do about Mike, and she feels bad about rejecting Robert. After drinking multiple times, she says, “Let’s have one more drink of that. My nerves are rotten.” (Hemingway 182). This shows the readers that Brett is using alcohol to get drunk and try to forget her problems. As a result, Brett is only running away from her problems and is trying to escape reality. Also in the book, Jake and Robert get into a drunken fistfight because Jake would not tell Robert where Brett is. The text states, “He [Robert] hit me and I sat down on the pavement. As I started to get on my feet he hit me twice. I went down backward under a table.” (Hemingway 191). In this example, the readers learn how violent Robert can get when he is drunk and acting crazy. Consequently, Robert felt so badly about Brett not loving him, and what he did in the fight, that he moved away from his only friend, Jake. Finally, the excessive drinking that takes place in this book only brings out the worst in the characters and allows them to avoid their real problems.

Analysis Paragraph #2: Character Analysis

Lady Brett Ashley, the main female character, is quite an independent, miserable, aimless woman. Brett can be seen as an independent but aimless woman when Mike, the man she was supposed to marry, says, “Brett’s got a bull fighter. She had a Jew named Cohn, but he turned out badly.” (Hemingway 206). Clearly, Brett goes from relationship to relationship aimlessly without any real commitment. This could be because her true love died of dysentery in World War I and she is searching for this original love. Lady Ashley can also be viewed as miserable as she is often complaining to Jake about her life. During one of the many times Brett is complaining to Jake, she tells how she loves Pedro and says, “Oh, darling, please stay by me. Please stay by me and see me through this.” (Hemingway 184). This means that Brett is unsatisfied with the life she has because she does not make any commitments and is totally independent. As a result, she is unhappy and comes off as a whiny person. Brett is not a woman that one would not want to be like as she is not committed to any one man, and she is miserable with her life. This book was quite interesting and not a book that one would normally read, but one thoroughly enjoyed it.

Sincerely,

Olivia Ernst