

Reread the description of Oran at the beginning of Part 3. What is the significance?

The section on burials Camus lifts essentially from Boccaccio—the material is timeless: these descriptions fit 14th-century Italy, 15<sup>th</sup>-century England, 20<sup>th</sup>-century Germany, 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century Africa. Do they fit 21<sup>st</sup>-century America? What do these descriptions suggest about the value of human life, of human death, about the rituals and ceremonies typically accompanying death, our pretensions that death is not what it is?

Why does the narrator stress loss of memory, loss of hope, presence of the habit of despair, the nature of existence as moment-to-moment only?

What has happened to individuality and uniqueness?

Describe the tone of Part 3. How does the tone suit the content?

Can we identify the source of Rieux's guilt? Has he loved properly?

What do we know of Tarrou that renders his friendship with, his acceptance of Cottard credible? How is Cottard a supreme representative of humanity? What does he value? How is he like all of us? Why do we find his similarity to us so repugnant?

What is the symbolic significance of the operatic performance of *Orpheus*?

Consider Rambert's conversation with Marcel and Louis's mother. "Don't you believe in God?" she asks. When he says *no*, she remarks that then he must get back to the woman he loves: "Or else—what would be left you?" What does that mean?

Near the end of our reading for this week, Tarrou tells Rambert about Rieux, "I know. He's more human than I." Is Rieux more human than Tarrou? Why or why not?

Why does Rambert decide to stay in Oran—on the very day when he could escape and return to Paris and his beloved?

Note: the next section we read, Part 4, chapter 3, constitutes the crisis of the book so read carefully, more than once.