Ernest Hemingway

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[In the following essay, Nagel provides an overview of Hemingway's life and work.]

Ernest Hemingway is one of the most celebrated and most controversial of American writers. He is seen variously as a sensitive and dedicated artist and as a hedonistic adventurer, as a literary poseur and as the stylistic genius of the century. His personal life has become so involved with his work that the two are virtually inseparable in scholarly inquiry: critics persist, with some justification, in reading characters in his works as "real" people and in assuming that events and attitudes in the fiction directly correspond with those in Hemingway's personal life. Hemingway was a strong man of definite opinion, who lived a vigorous life devoted to artistic creation and to active participation in the world. He was said to fill a room the moment he walked into it, and in those around him he inspired something close to hero worship. As Carlos Baker has said in *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (1969), the standard biography, at an early age Hemingway developed the "willed determination to be a free soul, untrapped by tradition, living his life in accordance with pragmatic principles." His behavior inspired admiration in some people and astonishment and dismay in others, including his parents, but no matter what his stature as a person, his position as a writer of enormous talent and influence is well established.

Ernest Miller Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, the second child of Dr. Clarence Hemingway, a general practitioner, and Grace Hall Hemingway, who had once aspired to an operatic career. In his youth his mother cultivated his interest in the arts, particularly in music and painting, and his father developed his natural love of sport and outdoor life. His father was a stern disciplinarian who insisted that his children adhere to Christian principles and decorum, and he demanded that things be done "properly." As a boy Ernest led an active life participating, without great distinction, in swimming, football, and boxing despite some limitations in coordination and in the sight of his left eye. While still in high school he began writing short stories based on his experiences. At other times he camped and fished in northern Michigan where his family had a cottage and where he had spent a good portion of his youth. Eventually, however, Hemingway was forced by his parents to seek remunerative employment. By chance he was offered a position in Toronto in 1920 as companion to a lame boy of eighteen, a situation which led to his introduction to the *Toronto Star*. Although he was not given a job as a reporter, he was allowed to write articles at space rates, and after his marriage in 1921 to Hadley Richardson he was able to arrange a correspondent post with the newspaper, filing stories from Paris and other points in Europe. Paris was a highly artistic and inspiring environment for a beginning writer, for living on the Left Bank were many of the best writers in English, among them James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and Ford Madox Ford.
Since he was writing only occasional pieces for the Star, Hemingway had time to devote to his own literary development, and he filled his notebooks with poems and impressionistic vignettes, working always for concentration and sharp, evocative descriptions. Unfortunately for literary historians, most of these early efforts were lost when his valise was stolen from a train compartment, but what remains indicates clearly the development of his basic principles of narration: leaving key elements of plot out of a story but contriving to have them affect the reader nonetheless; developing a plot on two levels simultaneously, one explicit and one implicit; restricting the narrative perspective to objective descriptions and matters of fact that a sensitive reader could use to infer the psychological conflicts at the heart of the story. In these years Hemingway had difficulties in getting his fiction published, but he had early success with "My Old Man," a story heavily influenced by Sherwood Anderson's work, and with "Out of Season" and "Up in Michigan," stories more uniquely his own. These stories appeared along with a selection of his poetry in Three Stories & Ten Poems, published by Robert McAlmon's Contact Publishing Company in Paris in 1923, in an edition of 300 copies. In the following year William Bird's Three Mountain Press published in our time in Paris in a limited edition of only 170 copies. The volume is made up of eighteen brief, impressionistic prose vignettes that vividly portray dramatic episodes. In 1925 this volume was enlarged and was published in New York by Boni & Liveright as In Our Time, which contained not only the brief sketches of the earlier volume but fifteen of Hemingway's finest stories, including "Indian Camp," "Soldier's Home," and "Big Two-Hearted River."

In 1926, Scribners published Hemingway's The Torrents of Spring, a parody of Sherwood Anderson's Dark Laughter. There is reason to believe that he used this satirical novel to break his contract with Boni & Liveright, who also published the better-known Anderson, to clear the way for a new contractual agreement with Scribners. In any event, Boni & Liveright refused the novel and Hemingway published it with Scribners, a relationship he maintained to the end of his life.

By 1926 Hemingway had been praised by such illustrious literary figures as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, and Sherwood Anderson. He was regarded as a young author with a stirring vitality and a unique style, a promising writer from whom more would be heard. With the publication in October of that year of The Sun Also Rises, a novel based on his years in Paris and Spain after the war, the period of apprenticeship closed, and Hemingway emerged from it an established writer of international acclaim whose first major effort equaled or eclipsed anything written by his mentors. The publication of his short stories in Men Without Women (1927) added to his growing reputation. But his professional success coincided with familial turmoil; in the fall of 1926 Hemingway had left Hadley Hemingway and their son Bumby, born in 1923, for Pauline Pfeiffer, a woman he had come to know in Paris. They decided to leave Europe, eventually settling in Key West, Florida, in the fall of 1928. Thus began a peripatetic domestic existence for Hemingway that was eventually to involve Montana, Idaho, Cuba, Africa, Spain, Italy, and various other points around the world. The year 1928 brought near-tragedy and death: in June, Pauline Hemingway, small of stature, gave birth to a son, Patrick, by a traumatic cesarean section; in December, Dr. Hemingway, suffering from diabetes and related complications, committed suicide with a revolver. The incident of Patrick's birth Hemingway recreated, with a tragic conclusion, in A Farewell to Arms (1929), his first genuine commercial success, selling 80,000 copies within four months of publication. This novel treated the experiences of Frederic Henry on the Italian front in the First World War and his eventual desertion to Switzerland with Catherine Barkley, only to have Catherine die in childbirth. In 1931 the last of Hemingway's children was born, his third son, Gregory, again by cesarean section.

The 1930s were a decade of personal adventure, and Hemingway hunted in the American West and in Africa, fished the Gulf Stream of Cuba and Florida, and covered the Spanish Civil War as a correspondent. He wrote an extended essay on bullfighting, Death in the Afternoon (1932), which is still considered a valuable treatment of its subject. A collection of stories, Winner Take Nothing, appeared in 1933. Green Hills of Africa, an account of adventures on safari, was published in 1935 and was followed, in 1937, by To Have and Have Not, one of the weakest of Hemingway's novels. But his most notable involvement during this period was his work on behalf of
the Loyalist cause in Spain. Ostensibly a reporter covering the war for the North American Newspaper Alliance, in 1937-1938 Hemingway helped raise money for medical supplies and ambulances by speaking in the United States against the spread of fascism in Europe, and he helped with the production of *The Spanish Earth*, a pro-Loyalist film designed to enlist foreign aid for their cause. Out of this experience as well he wrote a play, *The Fifth Column*, which was published in 1938 along with *The First Forty-nine Stories*. But the most important work to come from his time in Spain was *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), a brilliant novel about Robert Jordan, an American Spanish instructor who fights with the Loyalist forces.

The period before and during World War II brought changes to Hemingway's life. In 1940 he divorced Pauline Pfeiffer and married Martha Gellhorn, a vibrant and determined reporter with whom he had covered battles in Spain. Together they established their home in the Cuban village of San Francisco de Paula near Havana, where Hemingway was to live most of the rest of his life. With the outbreak of the war in Europe he outfitted his fishing boat *Pilar* as an anti-submarine vessel and for nearly two years searched, unsuccessfully, for German submarines in the Gulf, events later given fictional treatment in *Islands in the Stream* (1970), a novel published after his death. In 1944 he went to England as a correspondent for *Collier's*, accompanying Martha Hemingway, who had gone the year before but had returned to be with her husband. Hemingway flew missions with the R. A. F., covered the landing in Normandy, and attached himself to Allied forces in France during the remainder of the war, sometimes serving as scout and interrogator as well as journalist, activities which led to his decoration with the Bronze Star. This period also saw his gradual estrangement from his wife and his deepening involvement with Mary Welsh, also a journalist covering the war, and after his third divorce they were married in Havana in 1946.

Back in Cuba, Hemingway worked on a novel about a colonel named Richard Cantwell who is involved with a beautiful young woman in Venice just before his death. Entitled *Across the River and Into the Trees*, the book seemed nearly a parody of Hemingway's characteristic style and themes, and it was a disappointment to nearly everyone when it appeared in 1950. He had much better fortune with *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1952, which was not only a commercial success but won the Pulitzer Prize. This honor was followed in 1954 by the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Beyond these literary triumphs, Hemingway's adventurous life continued with an African safari with Mary Hemingway in 1953, during which he suffered serious head and abdominal injuries in a plane crash, and with a period in Spain covering the rivalry between two famous matadors, Antonio Ordonez and Luis Dominguin, the account of which was published as "The Dangerous Summer." After the coming to power of Fidel Castro in Cuba, Hemingway moved his home permanently to Ketchum, Idaho, where he continued work on a series of sketches of life in Paris during the early years of his career, a volume published after his death as *A Moveable Feast* (1964). But age was difficult for him. A lifetime of dangerous physical adventure had taken its toll in numerous injuries, including several concussions, many of them severe. In addition he was suffering from hypertension, mild diabetes, and depression, for which he was given electric shock treatments. He became confused, suspicious, and aggressively suicidal; he agonized that he could not write, and he was convinced that he was being watched by government agents. After his release from the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, he returned home to Idaho, and on 2 July 1961, in the early morning, selected a favorite shotgun and committed suicide.

But Hemingway's death did not bring an end to interest in him and his work. Indeed, he is more widely read and taught now than he was at any point in his lifetime. Although he has been most admired for his novels, his other works have received renewed attention, especially his short stories. Hemingway wrote over one hundred short stories in two main periods: 1923-1927, during which he wrote about Nick Adams and other figures in Michigan and Italy in World War I; and 1933-1936, during which he dealt largely with more mature figures in a wider range of settings, including Africa and Florida. A few of his stories—including "The Killers," "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," and "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber"—are as well-known as his best novels and are some of the finest stories in English.
A study of the short stories reveals a good deal about Hemingway's characteristic themes and artistic devices. They depict a harsh and disillusioning world in which traditional values have become irreconcilable with a new view of life. Casting aside social conventions, the characters find little to sustain them apart from "codes" of conduct surrounding specialized conditions (such as bullfighting, hunting, or fishing). Applied to everyday life, these codes provide dignity and meaning in an otherwise absurd and pointless world in which age, war, or psychological despair ensure a tragic destiny. Crucial to conveying these ideas were Hemingway's methods, especially his sparse and economical style, which captured precisely the right tone for the portrayal of modern life. Hemingway abandoned the traditional expository mode of developing a story in favor of restricted narrative methods that allowed characters to reveal themselves through their dialogue and actions, and meanings to develop from situations without authorial comment. One of his key theories was the "iceberg" principle, according to which only a fraction of the meaning of a scene shows on the surface; the rest must be inferred from the individual details. A similar device was synecdoche, the traditional rhetorical device in which a part of something comes to signify the whole, as a few characters might come to stand for an entire generation. These devices, and the use of multiple narrators in some of the stories, help to portray a world in which there are few certainties, in which the comforts of traditional assumptions have been stripped away, and in which violence, conflict, and death are inescapable realities.

Hemingway's fiction began in a sense with the publication of a series of vignettes in *in our time* (1924), brief impressionistic episodes that capture in fiction what the Imagists put into their abbreviated poems, emotional and intellectual constructs captured in instants of time. In each single paragraph Hemingway presented the details and events that communicated what it was like to be part of a civilian retreat in war, to shoot German soldiers coming over a wall, or to observe the execution of political prisoners by a firing squad. In these episodes several important characters are introduced, including a "Nick," who soon becomes a continuing character known as Nick Adams. And several incidents that recur in later works are here suggested, among them a prayer by an insincere but frightened Christian, a bullfighter facing a bull readying for a charge and later being killed himself, and a man being hanged. All are rendered with acute sensory detail, understatement, brevity, and emotional detachment, an impressionistic methodology that was to form the core of Hemingway's fiction.

The Nick Adams stories illustrate these points. As Philip Young established in an excellent early study, *Ernest Hemingway* (1952), these stories are central to Hemingway's fiction in that the adventures of Nick provide a psychological history for nearly all of Hemingway's protagonists, a record of trauma and disillusionment that leaves Nick disturbed at an early age, unable to sleep at night, desperately clinging to anything that can help him retain his tenuous grasp on sanity. As a young boy, in "Indian Camp" (*In Our Time*, 1925), Nick is present while his father, Dr. Adams, performs a cesarean section on an Indian woman with a jackknife and no anesthetic. After the operation Nick sees that her husband has committed suicide by slitting his throat. Nick's feelings are never directly expressed in this story, but his emotions of shock and tragic loss are evoked by the concluding image which shows Nick trailing his hand in the water as his father rows the boat home. Life holds out many such experiences for Nick. In "The Battler" (*In Our Time*, 1925) he meets a boxer who has suffered so many concussions that he has lost his mind, and in "The Killers" (*Men Without Women*, 1927) he sees another boxer who knows he is going to be killed by gangsters but resigns himself to his fate. Wounded on the Italian front in World War I, Nick is shocked by his war experiences, and "In Another Country" (*Men Without Women*, 1927) and "A Way You'll Never Be" (*Winner Take Nothing*, 1933) show him, disillusioned and cynical, having a difficult time retaining his sanity. In Hemingway's best Nick Adams story, "Big Two-Hearted River" (*In Our Time*, 1925), Nick is back from the war and on a fishing trip in northern Michigan trying to find something to sustain him emotionally. The details of building a proper camp, catching grasshoppers, and landing trout thus become psychological indicators of how well Nick is coping with life. "Fathers and Sons" (*Winner Take Nothing*, 1933) shows Nick years later with a son of his own still searching for ways of dealing with the trauma of his youth, especially his father's suicide. Sensitive, strong, but always vulnerable to the tragedies of life, Nick is in many ways the most important character in Hemingway's fiction in that what happens to him can be used as an
indicator of the backgrounds of the other characters. In effect, the Nick Adams stories are indirect narratives in which adventure is used to portray the psychological consequences of violent and disturbing events.

Hemingway's stories involving characters other than Nick Adams develop similar themes. In one of the earliest stories, "Up in Michigan" (Three Stories & Ten Poems, 1923), written in Paris in 1921, the naive Liz Coates, infatuated with Jim Gilmore, a blacksmith, experiences disillusionment about sexual relations. After they make love, Jim falls asleep in a drunken stupor, showing Liz none of the affection and tenderness she had hoped for. Written in the repetitious style of Gertrude Stein to indicate the simplicity of the characters' thoughts, the story portrays the harsh transition from youthful romanticism to a realistic view of modern life. "A Day's Wait" (Winner Take Nothing, 1933) reveals the resignation and shock of a young boy's erroneous belief that he is dying of fever, whereas "Soldier's Home" (In Our Time, 1925) is another story about the emotional effects of war. Harold Krebs returns from war having lost all of his faith in religion and in bourgeois American ideals. When his parents insist that he pray and look for a respectable job, he finds that he cannot. "Fifty Grand" (Men Without Women, 1927) exemplifies the continuing motif that everyone must take a beating in life. In a complex double cross, a boxer named Jack must abide a low blow without falling in order to lose a fight and win the money his family needs. A similar situation occurs in "The Undefeated" (Men Without Women, 1927), a bullfighting story that illustrates in another setting the pain of what must be endured.

These basic ideas are further developed in a score of similar stories, three of which deserve special comment. In "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (The Fifth Column and the First Forty-nine Stories, 1938) a weak American husband, Macomber, is abused and dominated by his adulterous wife, Margot, who has a brief affair with the guide, Robert Wilson, during their African safari. Macomber disgraced himself by running from a wounded lion, after which his wife seized the advantage to humiliate and torture him by flaunting her affair. Led by Wilson, Macomber conquers his fear while hunting buffalo and makes it clear that he will play a more assertive role in the future. Then, in a richly ambiguous scene, he is killed by his wife as she shoots at a charging buffalo and hits her husband in the head. Here the "code hero" concept is given its most complex treatment, as Macomber is transformed from a weak man to a strong and respected one. Told from the point of view of five narrators, this compelling story is one of Hemingway's finest in both theme and method. "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (The Fifth Column and the First Forty-nine Stories, 1938), another excellent African story, portrays a writer dying of gangrene after a routine injury. As he passes the hours before his death, he laments having betrayed his talent to marry a rich but frivolous woman who has helped him to waste his time and energy on pointless adventures. The drama of the story is characteristically understated, having more to do with Harry's review of his life and his uneasy marriage than with physical events. When he dies there is a scene of postmortem narration as he describes being flown over the mountain in a plane. "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" (Winner Take Nothing, 1933), perhaps Hemingway's finest story, is simple in plot but complex in its philosophical themes. An old man, living alone and without friends, derives satisfaction from having a drink each evening in a clean cafe. Two waiters attend him, a young, married waiter eager to close the bar and go home and an older waiter who is himself isolated and who sympathizes with the old man. After work the old waiter goes to a bodega where he prays "Hail nothing full of nothing," a prayer of existential emptiness and despair, of nada. As have so many other characters in the short stories, the old waiter has lost his faith in conventional values and now feels an unfathomable emptiness and pointlessness in his life, one expressed in his insomnia and desperate need for "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place." The stories thus trace characters from childhood to old age while developing themes of disillusionment, anguish, vulnerability, and ultimate defeat, themes that Hemingway helped forge into a central definition of "modernist" life.

But Hemingway's reputation rests primarily on his major novels, which are regarded by many scholars as among the finest in American literature. The first of these, The Sun Also Rises, caused a sensation when it appeared in 1926. It quickly became a celebrated statement of the views of the "lost generation," views that combined disillusionment with traditional values, brought on in part by World War I, with a new hedonistic attitude,
exemplified by the female protagonist, Lady Brett Ashley. It was the first major depiction of the lives of American expatriates in Paris in the 1920s, and American adolescents responded to it immediately, imitating its dialogue and tone of hopeless love; young women cut their hair and adopted clothing inspired by Brett; young men came to think of themselves as being part of the aftermath of the war, even if they were too young to have participated in it.

The novel is narrated in a spare and idiomatic style by Jake Barnes, an American correspondent in Paris who was severely wounded in the war and has been left impotent. As he reveals later, he is in love with Brett, and she with him; because their love cannot be consummated, they find it torture to be together. But their love is the most stable relationship in the novel, and in times of trouble they inevitably come to one another for comfort. The early sections of the novel are deceptively celebrative in tone, however, concentrating on the fervor of expatriate life in Paris. Jake tells about Robert Cohn, a young Jewish writer from Princeton who is living with Frances Clyne, a possessive and insecure woman he quickly tires of. When Jake impulsively picks up a prostitute, he reveals to her that he is "sick" and she indicates that she is too; indeed, everyone is "sick." There is truth in her pronouncement, for nearly all of Jake's friends in Paris are seeking desperately for some unattainable happiness or fulfillment: Brett in romantic conquest, Cohn in romantic novels or, later, in his affair with Brett, and others of the group in their frantic celebration. Even the wealthy Greek, Count Mippipopolous, who carries arrow wounds from earlier wars, shares in this apparently joyous revel. The serious underside of this life is revealed largely through Jake's psychological turmoil, a vestige of the trauma of the war, that at times nearly incapacitates him. He suffers from insomnia; when his "head starts to work" he is emotionally unstable, crying in the night and remembering how he met Brett in England when she was a nurse. Brett, too, has her troubles: her fiance died of dysentery during the war; she made a bad marriage to acquire a title; now she plans to marry Mike Campbell, a Scottish bankrupt who cannot control his drinking and has no hopes for the future.

The second section of the novel is more dramatic and more positive. The central action covers the journey of Jake and his friends to Spain for the fiesta and bullfighting; on the way, Jake and Bill Gorton stop for a few days in Basque country to fish for trout. Here, in a quiet, natural setting, Bill and Jake relax and fish and engage in humorous banter touching on all the serious themes of the novel: religion, expatriation, sex, love, and the aftermath of the war. They are joined in their fishing by a generous and sensitive Englishman named Harris who, along with Bill, is one of the few positive portraits in the novel. Leaving the Basque region, Jake and Bill go on to Pamplona for the running of the bulls and the fiesta, during which the principal drama is the courtship of Brett. Before the fiesta, Brett had run off to San Sebastian with Robert Cohn for a romantic weekend. Now Cohn feels a proprietary interest in her despite her engagement to Mike Campbell and her growing attraction for Pedro Romero, a young bullfighter. Jake, an aficionado, a person who loves and truly understands bullfighting and its ritual, explains the proceedings to Brett and the others. However, he loses the respect of Montoya, another aficionado, when he violates the code by introducing Brett to Pedro. The competition for Brett finally erupts into a fight, with Robert Cohn knocking down Jake and Mike and then beating Pedro badly without being able to make him quit. Despite his injuries, Pedro fights the bulls heroically the next day and then runs off with Brett. The fun and adventure of the fiesta has, by its conclusion, become grimly unromantic.

The final section of the novel is very brief and deals with the denouement of the fiesta. As the group disperses, Jake goes to San Sebastian to recover. There he gets a telegram from Brett in Madrid. She has left Pedro and needs Jake's help. He arrives after an all-night train ride to discover that Brett left Pedro out of conscience, not wanting to ruin him. The dialogue of this section is especially memorable, as when Brett says to Jake: "You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch." "Yes." "It's sort of what we have instead of God." Jake and Brett then drive off in a taxi dreaming about the life they might have had together: "Yes," Jake says, "Isn't it pretty to think so?"

The novel ends where it began, with Brett and Jake trapped in a hopeless love for each other. None of the major
problems have been resolved, none of the characters have achieved any sort of lasting fulfillment: they are truly of the "lost generation." Hemingway prefaced his novel with two quotations: "You are all a lost generation," attributed to Gertrude Stein, and a passage from Ecclesiastes that begins "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever...." Stein's remark points to the disillusionment and emptiness of the novel and to the existential notion that life is fundamentally pointless and absurd, ideas well developed by the events of the novel. The biblical passage has a much more subtle relationship to the novel in its promise of natural continuity and renewal, of a cycle of fortunes from conclusions to beginnings once again. Aside from the brief fishing trip, the vulnerable nobility of Pedro, the love between Brett and Jake, there is little optimism, but there is the suggestion that if the lives of this generation have been ruined by events beyond their control, there will nevertheless be another generation that may yet find meaning in their lives.

These themes owe their intensity to other factors in the novel, especially to Jake's understated yet effective narration. He is on the outside of the world he portrays, unable to participate fully in it, and yet he is an informed and perceptive recorder of its frenetic drama. Like Nick Adams, he knows the proper codes of behavior, and he judges harshly those, like Robert Cohn, who do not. He has been physically and psychologically wounded in the war in ways that have irrevocably changed his life, but he is still a sensitive and prescient human being who matters enormously. Much of the skill of the novel is in its portraying so sympathetically the lives of a "lost" group of people who were intelligent and sentient and yet leading hopeless lives, who were in some way the victim of historical tragedies of epic force. In this sense, the characters of The Sun Also Rises epitomize a generation by portraying the anguish of the Western world over the European war, over the shattered illusion of peaceful order that had been irrevocably lost.

Hemingway's second major novel, A Farewell to Arms, is often regarded as his best artistic achievement, a nearly perfect blend of subject and method. It is a story of love and war set in Italy from 1915 to 1917 and covering the life of Frederic Henry, an American serving in the Italian army who falls in love with Catherine Barkley, an English V. A. D. in an Italian hospital. As the novel opens Frederic, a surgeon named Rinaldi, and their unit are stationed in Gorizia near the Austrian front. They spend much of their time drinking and visiting the bawdy house for officers, much to the displeasure of the priest, who counsels them to respect traditional spiritual values and simple domestic life. This position makes the priest an easy target for the jests of the men. Rinaldi introduces Frederic to Catherine Barkley, a beautiful woman still grieving over the death of her fiance the year before. In her desperation she imagines that he has come back to her in the form of Frederic, who cynically cooperates in the sham in hope of sexual conquest. With this awkward beginning, the early stages of their romance are tinged with an irony and deceit that mocks the norms of traditional love stories. As the fighting resumes, Henry is called to the front to evacuate the wounded only to be injured himself when his dugout is hit by a trench mortar shell, fracturing his skull and lacerating his right knee and foot. After preliminary treatment, he is transported to a hospital in Milan where he is reunited with Catherine.

Frederic now discovers that he genuinely loves her and, after major surgery on his knee, they begin an idyllic affair that lasts throughout the summer. He suggests that they marry, but Catherine is concerned that if they do so she will be sent back to England and away from him. In the early autumn Frederic is ordered to the front just as Catherine reveals that she has become pregnant. Back with his unit, he discovers that the men have become cynical and bitter about the war. The priest, on the other hand, has grown in confidence. Rinaldi complains that Frederic now acts like a married man. For his part, Frederic has grown suspicious of noble rhetoric and talk of heroism and begins to see the war as the result of political incompetence and poor leadership on both sides. As he reaches the front the Austrians attack and, after some ineffectual skirmishing, the Italian army begins a disorganized and confused retreat from Caporetto, the central event of the novel.

The main highways are clogged with civilians and endless columns of soldiers, so Frederic leads his ambulance unit along rural roads where they find food in an abandoned farmhouse. His group is joined by two retreat
soldiers and two women who are fearful for their safety. As one of the cars becomes mired in the muddy road, the soldiers flee against Frederic's orders, and he shoots the sergeant, missing the other man. After one of his ambulance drivers is shot by a sniper, and another runs away, Frederic is left with only Piani as a companion on the retreat, and he comes to resent the incompetence of the Italian army and to feel that the Italians are more of a threat to him than the Germans and Austrians. This feeling is borne out as he attempts to cross a bridge over the Tagliamento River, at which point the Italian guards are shooting officers and anyone in an Italian uniform who speaks with an accent. Since he is vulnerable on both counts, Frederic dives in the river and floats downstream protected by a log. Eventually he makes his way on board a freight train and back to Milan. On the way he has forsaken the war and made his "separate peace," a common theme in Hemingway's works, and now struggles only to maintain his sanity and to get back to Catherine.

In Milan Frederic learns that Catherine has been moved to Stresa, and he follows her there dressed in civilian clothes. Catherine's closest friend, Helen Ferguson, expresses her dismay at Catherine's pregnancy, but the two lovers join in warm reunion. Frederic has a billiard game with Count Greffi in the hotel, and then Frederic and Catherine escape into Switzerland by rowing up the lake during the night. Here they enjoy a peaceful autumn in a chalet near Montreux awaiting the birth of their child, moving to Lausanne to a better hospital as the time for delivery draws near. Catherine, who has been warned that she is dangerously narrow in the hips, has difficulties giving birth and the surgeon delivers a stillborn child by cesarean section. Catherine begins to hemorrhage internally and quickly dies. The novel ends with Frederic leaving the hospital and walking back to the hotel in the rain.

The first thing that must be established about these events is that they do not grow directly out of Hemingway's personal experience. There are some parallels: Hemingway served in the ambulance corps, was wounded in the knee, recovered in a hospital in Milan, and had a flirtation, probably not an affair, with a nurse. But much is different, as Michael S. Reynolds has pointed out in a remarkably fine study, Hemingway's First War (1976). Frederic Henry serves in the Italian army for two years (1915-1917), leaving the military after the disastrous retreat from Caporetto. Hemingway did not arrive in Italy to work for the Red Cross ambulance corps until the summer of 1918. When he wrote the novel he had never seen the Tagliamento River nor the Venetian plain where much of the action takes place, nor had he been to many of the other locations of the novel. He had researched books and newspapers to get his details right and then rendered Frederic's experiences with such impressionistic immediacy and psychological veracity that they radiate intense realism, the mark of a truly great writer.

The central artistic fact about these events is that they are told from a first-person, retrospective point of view: Frederic Henry recites this narrative some time after the final events have taken place. Catherine and their child are dead now; he has become disillusioned with war and cynical about traditional values but feels the need to review the most dramatic period of his life. He not only recaptures the bare events but imposes upon them his subsequent insights, that, for example, "The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places." Reviewing this developing tragedy, Frederic is now able to remember early warnings of impending disaster, from Catherine's narrowness of the hips, to her seeing everyone dead in the rain, to the dead flowers he sees before her operation. In a larger sense, Catherine's death and his loss are the personal manifestation of the destruction and despair pervading Europe and America during and after the war. Frederic's loss and emptiness are representative of emotions widely felt without specific justification. This emotional condition is the genesis of the lost generation: the inception of their psychological trauma, the beginning of their disillusionment and cynicism, the end of their faith in religion and convention as guides to fulfillment.

Frederic Henry finds it impossible to adhere to traditional values under wartime conditions, but he finds strength and meaning in love and personal relationships, in a secularization of the very things the ineffectual priest had advocated at the beginning. Ultimately the greatest wisdom comes from simplicity, from Catherine's confidence
in their self-justifying devotion, Rinaldi's commitment to being a good surgeon, the priest's regard for his family and agrarian values. These are the things that truly matter, but even these are vulnerable and subject to ultimate defeat. Frederic shares much with Brett and Jake Barnes, who also lose everything in the war, and even more with Nick Adams, whose insomnia, separate peace, and mental instability duplicate Frederic Henry's condition.

*To Have and Have Not* is Hemingway's most inventive and experimental novel and, at the same time, one of his least successful. In this book Hemingway attempted more with narrative methodology than he had previously and revealed more social awareness than had any of his previous efforts. One reason that the book contains certain incongruities is that it began as two separate short stories about the central character, Harry Morgan, an ex-policeman from Miami who runs a charter boat in Florida and Cuba during the Depression. The two stories were well received and Hemingway decided to expand the stories into a novel contrasting the "haves" and the "have nots" in Havana and Key West. He added one more incident involving Harry and a series of other episodes and sketches which establish contrasts in economic and social status, in personal integrity, and in familial contentment. The most dramatic device of the novel is its multiple narrative perspectives which give the reader indications of how various characters view the central action and emphasize how little any one perspective reveals of the full complexity of the events. The cause of Harry Morgan's death, for example, is never understood by any of the other characters in the novel, nor can any of them be certain that his friend Albert Tracy is actually dead. This ironic limitation of knowledge helps create a narrative of considerable suspense and emotional intensity.

The story of Harry Morgan is told in three episodes. The first introduces him as a tough but resourceful character struggling to eke out a living by using his boat for a fishing charter. Against a violent background of competing Cuban revolutionary factions, he becomes impoverished when a wealthy client leaves the country without paying him. Desperate for money, he agrees to a dangerous scheme to land Chinese refugees on the Florida coast. Disgusted with the treachery of the operation, Harry kills the organizer of the smuggling racket and lands the refugees back in Cuba. This episode is followed by an equally violent rum-running story in which Harry and his companion, Wesley, are both wounded, Harry eventually losing his arm. They are spotted by a government official and Harry's boat is taken from him. The final episode has him involved in transporting Cuban revolutionaries from Florida to Cuba after they have robbed a bank. Certain they mean to kill him, Harry has a gun battle with them in which he is fatally wounded. He dies in a hospital leaving behind his wife and three daughters. Throughout, he is portrayed as a resourceful individualist with a heroic capacity for stoic endurance, courage, and sacrifice, a portrait of the American proletarian hero who is quick with his fists, proud of his sexual abilities, and coldly calculating in moments of danger.

These qualities are forced into bold relief by contrast with the problems of other characters. Chief among these is Richard Gordon, a playboy socialite who writes undistinguished novels and who is a failure as both writer and man. At one point his wife leaves him with a bitter denunciation of his deficiencies. Other characters are also highlighted for their contrasting qualities: a homosexual couple on the verge of severing their relationship, a wealthy grain broker who cannot sleep for worry over his fraudulent income tax returns, a family aboard a yacht whose outstanding characteristic is that they are happy and love each other, and the wife of a Hollywood director who masturbates in the night out of frustration with the men in her life. These and other characters contrast thematically the fate of the doomed Harry Morgan, whose relentless individualism is no match for a hostile social and economic environment. Like many other Hemingway protagonists, including Robert Jordan of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Harry has fought bravely but has been defeated.

Hemingway's next novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, is generally regarded as his most ambitious artistic endeavor. It is a complex narrative covering a period from Saturday afternoon to Tuesday noon during the last week of May 1937 in the life of Robert Jordan, an American who is fighting with the Loyalist forces in the Spanish Civil War. He has been ordered to destroy a bridge behind enemy lines to prevent rapid Fascist movement following a
Loyalist attack. To assist him Jordan has the aid of a guerilla band of peasants and gypsies led by Pablo, a formerly brave man who has lost his nerve witnessing atrocities to civilians. Others in the band include Anselmo (an uneducated but sensitive old man), Rafael (an irresponsible man who causes much trouble), and Maria (a beautiful young woman who was raped by Fascist sympathizers and whose head was subsequently shaved to indicate her collaboration with the enemy). When Jordan announces his mission, Pablo opposes it: destroying a bridge in their territory will call attention to their sanctuary and endanger his people. After a bitter dispute, the other members of the band side with Jordan. Late that night he is joined in his sleeping robe by Maria, with whom he begins a brief but intensely romantic affair.

As the group prepares to blow up the bridge, a powerful woman, Pilar, tells two dramatic stories, one recounting how Pablo's band executed Fascist sympathizers by throwing them over a cliff and another remembering the struggles of Finito, a small bullfighter who was terrified in the ring. After a survey of the bridge, Jordan enlists the aid of El Sordo, another guerilla leader, who has horses and men to assist in the effort. Meanwhile the group decides to kill Pablo because he might endanger the assault on the bridge. They relent, however, when Pablo says he now favors the effort. Later, Jordan and Maria enjoy another night together. In the morning Jordan shoots an enemy cavalry officer who stumbles onto their camp and then is deeply moved as he reads through the letters the man had in his pocket. At the same time, the remainder of the Fascist unit attacks the camp of El Sordo, killing everyone and beheading the leader. Anselmo subsequently discovers the bodies and then reports the equally disquieting news that the Fascists are aware of the forthcoming attack. Jordan sends a messenger, Andres, to headquarters with the information. Meanwhile, Maria tells Jordan the story of the death of her parents and of her own capture and rape.

As the time for the attack on the bridge nears, the action intensifies. Andres is delayed in reporting his information by the incompetence and bureaucracy of the officers in charge, and his message is too late to stop the offensive. Pablo steals the detonators for the dynamite in the night but returns in the morning to rejoin his band. Anselmo is killed as the bridge explodes, and Jordan discovers that Pablo has murdered his own men to get their horses. As they retreat across a road under fire, Jordan's leg is broken when his horse falls under him. Knowing he cannot go with the rest, Jordan says farewell to Maria. They leave him lying beneath a tree to delay the advance of the enemy forces, and it is certain that he will be killed.

But the bare facts of the plot do not do justice to the richness of the novel. The title, taken from a John Donne meditation that begins "No man is an island," implies a universal context for the tragedy of Robert Jordan: all civilization is diminished by his death as it is, in a larger sense, by the Fascist victory in Spain. Jordan is another of Hemingway's code heroes. He has a realistic skepticism about what the war will actually accomplish, but he dedicates himself fully to the cause nonetheless. In contrast to Frederic Henry, he makes no separate peace. Throughout there is a sense, pervasive in Hemingway's works, that existential man is morally responsible for his judgments; by the nature of his commitments he will ultimately be judged. And Jordan's loyalties are broadly humanitarian rather than narrowly partisan, for he perceives the Spanish war as merely the opening battle of a struggle with Fascist forces that will ultimately lead to a larger war in Europe. In personal terms, Jordan is haunted by a heritage of violence: he has memories of his grandfather's distinguished Civil War record and his father's suicide. His death at the end, rejecting suicide to face the Spanish cavalry, is a moral victory for him.

In terms of technique the novel is nearly perfect. The language suggests that the dialogue and thought occur in Spanish and are then translated into an English that conveys the idiomatic grace of the original. There is a distinctly Iberian style to the book that does much to underscore the local folkways and superstitions that play an important role. The characterizations are classic: the profane Earth Mother in Pilar, the fearful "ruined" leader in Pablo, the courtly elegance of El Sordo, the beautiful victim in Maria, all complement the varied personalities of the gypsies and peasants who join them and help to create a secondary level of interest in the Spanish character, defined by both its nobility and violence. The numerous vignettes told by Pilar and Maria and the
others are among the most compelling narratives in English. In nearly every respect, art and theme complement each other throughout the novel with dramatic grace, making it one of the masterpieces of modern fiction.

After the enormous artistic success of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* Hemingway entered the worst decade of his career, one that began with World War II and ended with the publication of an unfortunate and uneven novel, *Across the River and Into the Trees*. The failure of the novel was ironically not so much a problem of subject as of technique. Always before Hemingway’s style and craftsmanship had shaped indifferent subjects into compelling and arresting art; in this instance he chose a dramatic set of circumstances to portray, but his aesthetic sensibility, for the second time in his life, failed him.

The basic situation could have made for an excellent novel. An aging, fifty-one-year-old American army colonel, Richard Cantwell, leaves his Italian headquarters in Trieste to drive to Venice to spend the weekend with a beautiful, young countess named Renata and to enjoy a morning of duck shooting before returning to duty. Cantwell has a serious heart condition that he knows will soon end his life, and he thinks often of death: of the deaths of his friends in Italy in the First World War, of the many killed by Fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War, of the loss of half of the regiment under his command in France in World War II, of his own impending demise. As a professional soldier, he has been much involved with war, and it has shaped his mind. He thinks of strategic positions and lanes of retreat even when being seated in a restaurant. At times, in the manner of Nick Adams and Jake Barnes, his mind starts working, torturing him with memories. An even more constant reminder of war is his injured right hand, misshapen from an old wound.

Cantwell's driver, Sergeant Jackson, is imprecise and obtuse, and Cantwell is curt with him, as he is with many subordinates. But in Venice he is united with Renata and they enjoy a day together drinking and dining in a fashionable hotel and making love in a gondola. He is more than thirty years older than she is, but their love is intense and consuming, strained only by their mutual knowledge that he will soon die. Revealingly, he calls Renata "daughter" and, indeed, he plays a paternal role with her, lecturing her on events in the war, sharing with her his insights into life and death. Cantwell allows Renata, now properly instructed, to join him and the Gran Maestro in the mock society known as the *El Ordine Militar, Nobile y Espirituoso de los Caballeros de Brusadelli*, a group which parodies the aficionado concept. The Gran Maestro and Cantwell share a mutual respect and affection that goes back to World War I, and they also share dangerous cardiac conditions. Suffering severe angina, Cantwell says goodbye to Renata, taking her portrait with him, and leaves for a morning of duck shooting. He knows he will never see her again, and he arranges his affairs carefully. At the Tagliamento River Cantwell has words with a recalcitrant boatman before a period of unsatisfying shooting. Back in the car, seized with a heart attack he knows he will not survive, he climbs in the back seat to die.

The basic events, although a bit melodramatic, might have been developed into a fine novel. Some of the situations and characters are thematically enriching. Renata, whose name means "reborn," is the same age Cantwell was when he was wounded at Fossalta in the First World War; in their long discussion he frequently reviews the events of his youth, weighing and assessing his life. Her youth and innocence create an atmosphere of hope and assurance, a concentration on the present, for a dying and cynical man with no future. There is a continual development of the theme of death, from the killing of ducks, to the Germans Cantwell has killed, to his contemplation of his own death, to his cryptic comment "Love is love and fun is fun. But it is always so quiet when the gold fish die." Cantwell is also a considerable character, with a tragic past and a capacity for both violence and tenderness. His memories of the destruction of his regiment in France through the incompetence of his superior officers explain in part his cynical self-reliance and his lack of remorse in thinking of his death, as do his thoughts of his three failed marriages. These retrospective scenes also develop the most subtle theme of the novel, the perpetual reality of the past in the present. Cantwell will never be free of what has happened to him. And he is a man of a certain amount of cultural awareness, speaking and thinking often of painters and writers and historical events, such as the founding of Venice.
But much is wrong with the novel, and its weaknesses come on nearly every level. Style is usually the most artistically satisfying element in Hemingway's novels, but in *Across the River and Into the Trees*, despite a certain elegiac charm, the style is often absurd. Hemingway was betrayed by adverbial excess and by a general assumption, unfortunately common in his work and life, that the performance of routine tasks of everyday life somehow constitutes actions of remarkable intelligence. Cantwell does not merely take the champagne out of the ice bucket, he reaches for it "accurately and well." The lovers kiss "true" over and over, putting their arms around one another "gently and well." Renata does not simply eat, she chews "well and solidly on her steak"; Cantwell urges her to "sleep good and well." The *Gran Maestro* does not "feel affection" for the Countess; when he looks at her "his heart rolled over as a porpoise does in the sea." In dealing with sex, Hemingway's descriptions become corny. In clitoral stimulation Cantwell's hand "searched for the island in the great river with the high steep banks"; and the lovemaking concludes with similar metaphoric gaucherie: "when the great bird had flown far out of the closed window of the gondola, and was lost and gone, neither of them said anything."

Beyond style there are other things awry. Cantwell and Renata often sound empty-headed, agreeing to "think of nothing." For a grizzled army colonel to talk this way with an Italian countess seems ridiculous. There is also a certain amount of cruelty in the thinly disguised portraits of Sinclair Lewis, as a writer with a pitted face who knows Venice only through his Baedeker, and of Martha Gellhorn, as a previous wife of limited talent and overweening ambition. If the novel is redeemed it is done so in part by the psychological portrait of Cantwell, by Hemingway's graphic descriptions of the scenes of Venice and the surrounding area, and by his understated treatment of Cantwell's death. But these matters notwithstanding, *Across the River and Into the Trees* is generally regarded as the weakest of Hemingway's novels and a near-parody of his other work.

In the late 1940s, and at various periods thereafter, Hemingway worked on a long narrative in four parts he tentatively entitled "Sea Novel." The unifying subject was the sea, in its many forms, and human attitudes toward the sea. He never completed his work on this book, although nearly all of it was eventually published. Three of the sections, originally called "The Sea When Young," "The Sea When Absent," and "The Sea in Being," were published in 1970 as *Islands in the Stream*; the fourth section appeared earlier, in 1952, as *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Hemingway had published the basic plot of *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1936 in an essay entitled "On the Blue Water," which recounts the story of an old fisherman who hooks a giant marlin that tows him out to sea. After days of struggle, he finally lands the fish only to have it attacked by sharks. He battles the sharks with all the weapons he has on board but is finally beaten and is crying in his boat, exhausted, when some fishermen find him. The plot of *The Old Man and the Sea* retains the central events of this sketch but introduces several elements that create sympathy for the fisherman, Santiago, highlight important themes in his conflict, and provide an ironic context that deepens the tragic nature of his life.

The novel begins at a point when Santiago has fished for eighty-four days without a catch. He is a thin old man with heavily scarred hands from years of fishing, and he lives alone in poverty in a small village in Cuba. He has no family, but he enjoys the affection and loyalty of Manolin, a young boy he has taught to fish and who brings him food. Together they discuss baseball, admiring the courage of Joe DiMaggio, who plays well despite a painful heel condition. When the old man sleeps, he dreams of youth, of the African beaches he visited when young and of the lions he saw playing on them.

As he rows out of the harbor in the morning a good deal is revealed about him, especially his love for the sea and the creatures within it, with whom he feels a kinship. Well out to sea he hooks a huge marlin that tows the boat farther out. Thus begins the first phase of his ordeal, his three-day fight to land his fish. Weak from lack of
food, fighting a younger and stronger fish, Santiago recognizes his vulnerability: he could be seriously injured; he could die of exhaustion. Interspersed in the description of his long battle are memories, reflections, and dreams that reveal Santiago's simple but noble personality. He remembers catching a female marlin and discovering that her mate refused to leave her and stayed with her by the side of the boat. He reflects on the fate of a bird who lands briefly on his skiff and who faces exposure to predatory hawks as he flies back to shore. Such thoughts renew his sense of the tragic beauty in nature and heighten his feelings of respect and love for the marlin he is attempting to kill. He feels betrayed in this effort by his age and by his left hand, which sometimes develops cramps. When the marlin finally jumps for the first time he can see that it is longer than the skiff; it will take an enormous effort to land such a fish. In the lulls during the struggle he thinks of those things which bolster his spirit and give him strength, of the lions and the great DiMaggio, of his own arm-wrestling triumph in a match that lasted an entire day. Finally, on the third day, the marlin weakens and Santiago pulls him alongside the skiff and harpoons him.

The second phase of his ordeal begins when a Mako shark picks up the scent of the marlin and attacks him, tearing huge chunks out of his side. Santiago kills the shark with a harpoon but loses the weapon when the shark sinks to the bottom. He knows more sharks will come and that he will be unable to drive them away. His thoughts turn, during the long journey home, to notions of defeat and destruction, and he feels that he is responsible for losing his catch because he fished too far out, violating his luck. He resolves to fight the sharks to the death, but eventually every knife or club he has breaks and the sharks eat all of the marlin. Santiago returns to shore exhausted and beaten. Manolin weeps when he sees the old man sleeping in his bed, his hands torn from the fishing lines. Meanwhile, at the harbor, tourists totally misunderstand what has happened, thinking that the old man had caught a shark. At home, with Manolin sitting at his side, the old man dreams of the lions.

It is a poignant tale, and it evokes natural and elemental themes. The youth and strength of Manolin, the marlin, DiMaggio, and the lions contrast with Santiago's age and infirmity, but his dignity and tenacity are equal to any. The care and sympathy of Manolin for the old man evoke themes of compassion, respect for age and ability, love of child for father. The imagery of the novel implies parallels between Santiago's trial and that of Christ, parallels that suggest mythic dimensions. But the power of the novel is in its simple beauty, in the style that describes Santiago's adventure and thoughts, and in his attempts to earn a humble livelihood and to live with dignity. In these concerns Hemingway captured the tragic elements of the struggle for existence of all earthly creatures.

Many of these same ideas, although with a different emphasis, are present in Islands in the Stream, especially the use of the sea as a platform for the human drama of life and death. The manuscript of the novel, never polished nor approved for publication by Hemingway, was cut and shaped by Charles Scribner, Jr., and Mary Hemingway and finally published to mixed reviews. Curiously, American reviewers were initially unsympathetic to the novel, lamenting its autobiographical overtones, its episodic plot, and its unpolished style, while British reviewers were more enthusiastic, welcoming this addition to the Hemingway canon and stressing its moving portrayal of loneliness. More extended criticism in the years that followed has generally expressed these same points of view.

As published, the novel is broken into three discontinuous units of action: "Bimini," which deals with the visit of three boys to their father, Thomas Hudson, a painter; "Cuba," which documents Hudson's life in Cuba after the death of his sons; and "At Sea," which depicts Hudson's activities as head of a unit chasing German submarines in the Caribbean in World War II. Apart from Hudson, there is little continuity of characters, nor are there major developments of theme from one section to another.

In "Bimini" the central concern is for family, for Hudson's sons by his two former marriages and for the new family of comrades he has assembled on his island. The central event is a visit from his three sons, Tom, David, and
Andrew. Together they fish, swim, dine, and talk, the boys reviewing school and friends for their father, Tom reliving his childhood in Paris (where, as the oldest child, only he has lived), for the benefit of the other two boys. There are two especially dramatic events in this section: an intense and nerve-wrenching scene in which David, skin diving with his brothers, suddenly becomes the intended prey for a shark, and another long and agonizing scene in which David hooks a marlin and fights with him for hours, with somewhat more technologically advanced equipment than Santiago, only to lose him at the last moment. But the emphasis throughout is on Hudson's love for his children and his first wife and his loneliness when they are away from him. Besides his children there are other members of this extended family, among them Joseph, a houseboy who cares deeply for Hudson and the children, Roger Davis, a writer, and Eddy, an alcoholic who is at his best in times of trouble. Together they form a group to replace the family Hudson has lost, one in which there is concern for domestic regularity, mutual affection, respect for culture, and promise for the future, and so it is all the more tragic when his sons David and Andrew are killed in an automobile accident along with their mother and Thomas Hudson loses his family, in effect, for the third time.

The emphasis in the "Cuba" section is on love, familial love, love of work, love of animals, and carnal love in a variety of expressions. The dominant underlying emotion of the section is Hudson's love for his dead sons and the nearly overpowering grief he feels when he allows himself to think of them. Although in the first section it was clearly David who was the favorite, in this part he thinks most often of Tom. His most immediate love, however, is for Boise, one of his many cats, with whom he shares affection with beautiful simplicity. At times his feeling for Boise is clearly inextricable from his memories of his sons: his memories of Boise as a kitten are enriched by the knowledge that his sons were alive then. His other memories often involve sensual love: his affair with a princess aboard a ship, his sexual exploits with three Chinese girls, his relationship with Honest Lil, a somewhat heavy, if accommodating, local prostitute. But the section ends with his most intense love, his love for his first wife, an actress, who stops briefly in Cuba while on tour. It is this scene of their mutual acknowledgment of the death of their son and the impossibility of their ever marrying again that explains Hudson's willingness to risk danger in the final section of the novel: Hudson wishes to die to escape the pain he is forced to live with.

The tension of "At Sea" thus derives from Hudson's implicit death wish and the danger of his present circumstances: commanding a reconditioned fishing boat on its search for German submarines. Manned by a rag-tag collection of enthusiastic amateurs, supplied with only light weapons, Hudson's boat is vulnerable and unlikely to survive the encounter with a submarine her commander desires. The theme of death permeates the section, giving the ending of the novel a sense of tragic inevitability.

"At Sea" is artistically stronger than the first two sections. Its narrative pace is steady, its characters more sharply drawn, its dialogue brisk and realistic. The section is basically one episode of progressively intensified action. And the prose exhibits some of Hemingway's best impressionistic style. But the central unifying idea centers on death, from the villagers killed by the Germans Hudson pursues to Hudson's own wound at the end. Along the way death appears in many forms, from the pig who swims to his death to Hudson's dreams of the deaths of his fawn and dog in his youth. Much has changed from the earlier sections: in place of the love of family and work, there is now the intensity of purpose and the certainty of death. The family group has been replaced by a disputatious military group. Sexual love has been transmogrified to bring death rather than life, for Hudson now sleeps with a pistol that he thinks of as a woman. War has converted the things of normal life into destructive and threatening forms. Hudson's dreams and memories of happier times deepen the sense of tragic loss: he thinks of Paris and young Tom, of days spent hunting, of his family, of painting, and the satisfaction of good work. The concluding action rings with ironic tragedy. Hudson succeeds in capturing the German boat, but the remaining enemy crew ambush Hudson and critically wound him. At the end of the novel he lies dying on his boat, thinking that he will never paint again, and listening to one of his crew, Willie, plead with him not to die.

As subsequent criticism has indicated, *Islands in the Stream* was a welcome addition to Hemingway's fiction, but
it is not one of his major novels. It has less structural unity than his first novels, less thematic development, less technical coherence in such matters as narrative perspective. And there are some major flaws: Hudson’s sons die offstage with no foreshadowing, a deus ex machina event that seems unnecessarily abrupt and contrived. Sometimes Hudson’s ability to elicit love and admiration from those around him seems not to be justified by any evidence of extraordinary sensitivity or intelligence or wit on his part. And, unique among Hemingway’s novels, too much is told and too little shown in some of the sections. But the novel contains some of Hemingway’s best impressionistic prose, some stirring adventure, fine portraits of children and animals, and a wrenching evocation of Hudson’s psychological anguish in the later sections of the novel.

Hemingway’s artistic reputation rests solidly on his major short stories and on the best of his novels, *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and *The Old Man and the Sea*. His literary productivity in other genres was much less substantial and has received proportionately less attention, but it does deserve at least brief comment. *The Torrents of Spring*, Hemingway’s parody of Sherwood Anderson’s *Dark Laughter*, received mixed reviews when it first appeared in 1926, with the distinguished poet Allen Tate arguing that Hemingway’s parody was better than the novel satirized. Most of the other reviewers, however, felt that although it effectively pointed to weaknesses in Anderson’s characteristically naive narrators and primitive characterizations, the novel failed as a work of art. The title, which Hemingway borrowed from Turgenev, alludes to sexual torrents that find expression in an absurd cast of characters that mimics the people portrayed in Winesburg, Ohio, a favorite location for Anderson’s stories. Hemingway effectively mocks the innocent sentimentalism of Anderson’s world but without creating a work interesting within itself, as Henry Fielding had done in *Joseph Andrews* (1742), one of his satires of Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740-1742). Indeed, the chief interest in the book today derives from its role in Hemingway’s highly advantageous break with Horace Liveright’s publishing firm, which also published Anderson, and a new arrangement with Scribners, a move that benefited him the rest of his life.

*Death in the Afternoon* (1932), Hemingway’s first extended work of expository prose, was well received and is generally regarded as the finest discussion of bullfighting in English. It is a handbook of bullfighting which attempts to make intelligible for the novice the complex language, ritual, and drama of what Hemingway regarded as a tragedy rather than a sport. But it ranges beyond bullfighting to discuss at length the Spanish character and various issues in literature and modern life, including the scenes in war that he had earlier written about in fiction. The basic insight that Hemingway offers into bullfighting, as Arthur Waldhorn has observed, is that it does not involve killing for its own sake but “killing to give man respite from his own tragedy by imposing it upon the bull.” Thus man, through stylized ritual that demands the risk of life itself, gains temporary victory over death.

*Green Hills of Africa* (1935) represents a further experiment in nonfiction prose. It is an essentially autobiographical account of an African safari Hemingway enjoyed in 1933-1934. He explained the point of it in a foreword: “The writer has attempted to write an absolutely true book to see whether the shape of a country and the pattern of a month’s action can, if truly presented, compete with a work of the imagination.” The demands he placed upon himself were essentially twofold: to tell the truth; to present an honest record in an artistically satisfying way. To make art out of life requires a sense of order, and Hemingway shaped the experiences depicted into four units of action, each constituting a variation on the theme of the “pursuit” of the hunter: “Pursuit and Conversation,” “Pursuit Remembered,” “Pursuit and Failure,” and “Pursuit as Happiness.” As the sections progress, Hemingway provides detailed accounts of hunting and beautiful descriptions of landscape. There is action in the chase, conflict between man and beast, competition between Hemingway and his fellow hunter, Karl, who bests him at nearly every turn, and psychological growth as the author learns to deal with the success of others. There is character interest in the contrasting portraits of various African guides, the most intriguing of whom is M’Cola, and in a variety of companions, Pop, Kandisky, and others. There is the humor of good fellows enjoying an outing together but relatively little serious thematic development. Hemingway himself becomes
something of a "code hero," shooting well and dealing with wounded animals properly, yet there is the unsound assumption that the enjoyment of killing animals contains within itself a justification of the action. One point of continuing interest is the contemplation of writing and other writers. Among the American authors Hemingway admires, he mentions Mark Twain, Stephen Crane, Henry James, and William Faulkner. He also praises James Joyce, Tolstoy and Dostoevski, Flaubert and Stendhal. But apart from observations of isolated interest, the book as a whole does not compare favorably with Hemingway's fiction, does not captivate attention as do his best novels, and does not give the sense of a satisfying whole. Some critics have found it boring, but most have pronounced it to be a worthy experiment in autobiography that achieves a modest success.

Hemingway's one experiment in drama was *The Fifth Column*, a play about the Spanish Civil War written in the autumn of 1937 and performed in New York in the spring of 1940. Since dialogue had always been one of the best components of his fiction, there was a general feeling among critics that Hemingway had a good deal of potential as a dramatist. Unfortunately, the play was unsuccessful both critically and commercially. It features Philip Rawlings as a correspondent in Madrid who is heavily involved in the Loyalist cause. That this situation is remarkably close to Hemingway's own experience was not lost on drama critics. Indeed, Carlos Baker, a leading Hemingway scholar, has complained that the author gave Rawlings "so many of his own personal traits, desires, and illusions that the feeble dramatic structure of the play buckled under the load." But surely another weakness of the play was Hemingway's loss of artistic objectivity in his passionate advocacy of the Loyalist cause, a weakness he had skillfully avoided in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. This advocacy is also evident in *The Spanish Earth*, a documentary film that Hemingway helped produce in conjunction with John Dos Passos, Lillian Hellman, and Archibald MacLeish. As Carlos Baker has explained, Hemingway's contribution was the writing of the sound track. The film, which recounts the experiences of a young man named Julian, depicts the need for agrarian reform in Spain, putting land back in the control of peasants to use for agricultural purposes. This film, which Hemingway showed to President Roosevelt in the White House, helped to raise money in support of the Loyalist cause.

The most successful of Hemingway's nonfiction works is *A Moveable Feast*, a collection of autobiographical sketches covering his life in Paris from 1921 to 1926. Written in the late 1950s, when Hemingway's health was faltering and his career nearly over, the twenty essays deal with a period when he was struggling to establish himself as a writer, when his health was good and he was productive and optimistic, and when his marriage to Hadley Hemingway was still going well. Ironically, although he was working in part from notes taken during the 1920s, Hemingway was at this late period in his life writing the best prose of his career. His style is richly impressionistic and evocative. His eye for meaningful detail and his ear for capturing nuances in speech were never better.

For these sketches Hemingway presented dramatic individual scenes rather than summary statements of what the experience had been. He portrayed himself as a struggling writer more devoted to his craft than those around him who fritter away their time and energies on literary gossip and trivial socializing. There are brilliant descriptions of Paris, of the Place Contrescarpe in winter, the atmosphere of the Cafe des Amateurs, and of the other struggling writers who befriended him. He recalls going to the Musee du Luxembourg to view the Impressionist paintings, and he offers the notable comment that he was learning to write by studying the paintings of Cezanne. His representations of other writers are particularly interesting, not so much for what they reveal about other people but for what they suggest about Hemingway's attitudes toward his fellows near the end of his life. Here, in effect, Hemingway repays with vengeance his old debts for slights and insults over the years. Gertrude Stein, who had supported and encouraged him during the 1920s, is portrayed as looking like a "peasant woman." According to this account, Hemingway breaks off their friendship when he overhears her in a lesbian quarrel with her lover, Alice B. Toklas. Wyndham Lewis is described as a frog, Ford Madox Ford as a pretentious fraud, and Zelda Fitzgerald as a hawk who delighted in ruining her husband's career. Indeed, the Fitzgeralds are treated with great condescension. Scott Fitzgerald is depicted as a social child, unable to drink
even moderately without becoming unconscious, a man who hires a Cockney nanny for his daughter because he wants her to grow up with a fine English accent. He is portrayed as sexually insecure, a hypochondriac, a writer with talent but no discipline or commitment. On the other hand, there are loving portraits of Hadley Hemingway and their son, Bumby, and of the nobility of Ezra Pound and the kindness of Sylvia Beach. For its sharp descriptions of scene and character, for its record of literary struggle and growth, but even more for the controlled elegance of its style, *A Moveable Feast* established Hemingway among the masters of expository prose.

Hemingway will never have much critical reputation as a poet despite the fact that his career began, as did that of William Faulkner, with verse. As a schoolboy he was publishing humorous poems in the newspaper *Trapeze* and the literary magazine *Tabula* at Oak Park High School. Later, in 1923, he placed six poems in Harriet Monroe's *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* and *Three Stories & Ten Poems* with Contact Publishing Company. After that his poetic career quickly faded. Only twenty-five poems in his career, juvenilia aside, were published, and by 1929 he had written seventy-three of what were ultimately published in *88 Poems* (1979), edited by Nicholas Gerogiannis.

In general, Hemingway’s poems fall into three categories of compositional form: juvenile humor, imagism, and expository love poems to Mary Welsh, who became his fourth wife. His juvenile poems are of the most ordinary sort, reflecting the common pose of athletic roughness pressed into poetic service. "Oh, I've never writ a ballad / And I'd rather eat shrimp salad" is representative of this type. Hemingway's "imagistic" poems are somewhat more interesting, especially since they are preceded by one sentence "prose poems" that are roughly the prosaic equivalents of Ezra Pound's verse. Each of these curious pieces captures in a sentence a kinetic portrait of a streetwalker on the Boulevard Madelaine at night or a fallen horse at the races in Auteuil. Similarly, his early poems often reflect this imagistic impulse, including such "Athletic Verse" as "The Tackle" and "The Punt": "The sodden thump of a pigskin being kicked, / And the ball rises higher and higher in the air / While the grimy, muddy figures race down the field." Some of these poems reveal a clear inspiration from the verse of Stephen Crane in their pithy observations of universal injustice. Despite the fact that Hemingway's natural gifts were for linguistic precision and sharp impressionistic scenes, these poems are ultimately weak in precisely those areas in which his prose is strong. His use of rhyme and rhythm is generally obtrusive, his wit insistent, his point graphically emphasized. In addition, his predilection for barracks humor, profane phrases, and explicit sexuality offended many readers. His late poems to Mary Welsh, written during World War II, perpetuate these tendencies, but their redeeming feature is their emotive power in suggesting psychological reactions to war: bitter revulsion from death and destruction, fascination with death, admiration for courage and sacrifice. The best of these is "Poem to Mary (Second Poem)," which begins "Now sleeps he / With that old whore Death / Who, yesterday, denied her thrice."

Hemingway's reputation will forever rest on an uneasy blending of the myth of his personal adventures with the artistic merit of his best fiction. But it is as artist that he deserves the attention of posterity. He was, without doubt, one of the finest prose stylists in English. He captured in stunning stories and novels the uncomfortable realities of his age and forced into public consciousness a realization of the brutalities of war and their lingering psychological effects. His stories of Nick Adams depict the adolescent agonies of a generation; his novels, especially *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, record for all time the emotional turmoil of modern warfare and, in a larger sense, of modern life. And by concluding his career with *The Old Man and the Sea* he showed that even in the anguish of modern life there is nobility in human perseverance.
and dignity in devotion to performing a task well. Whatever failings he had as a man, and there were many, as a writer he was sometimes nearly perfect. It is the integrity of his craft, a richness beyond legend, that will forever endure.

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