Reading Escape and Writing It

Intimacy and Away in the Hemingway Aesthetic

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Abstract

In this thesis I will lay out an argument for an implicit intimacy between Hemingway and his reader that runs counter to a great deal of the tired ideas we have about the writer. I will propose that the aesthetic dimension mediated by the Hemingway reading experience promises a mutual escape for both the reader and the writer, and that that intimacy and that promise of escape is at the heart of Hemingway's continuing appeal to the reader.

At first glance this may seem ridiculous, in part due to our common ideas about Hemingway and perhaps more directly because of the more than seventy years of critical explanations which have more or less reworked the same terrain by speaking about style and subject matter, the "iceberg technique," violence, manliness and so forth. But an attentive observer may pause to ask if these old hats still fit. When I first encountered Ernest Hemingway, I was a child in the twenty-first century. And sure, some of those old hats still adorned the bust of my image of Hemingway, but what kept me reading was not the presence of the things I was told that I would find there. Instead, what kept me reading what that little secret, that little shared experience that no one ever told me about. Since then, the intimacy has deepened, not because I've come to understand more about Hemingway's style or his biography, but in spite of those things, as if the more I read about Hemingway, the further I get from what it is about Hemingway that hooked me in the first place. My project here then is simply an attempt to articulate a more accurate description of the relationship between Hemingway and the reader, and the intimate escape within that shared aesthetic experience. Drawing from aesthetic response theory, my work traces the relative position of the reader and the writer on two sides of the aesthetic textual divide to demonstrate how Hemingway's initial position as a reader, and his interest in the affective potential of the aesthetic experience ultimate rendered the aesthetic ideal that we so frequently try to identify when we make claims about his masculinity, or his work as a "stylist".

In short, I assert that the continuing appeal of Ernest Hemingway is due in significant degree to to the transportive experience of reading him which takes us away, as it were. While his subjects and stylistic approach do represent notable aspects of his writing, it is not his supposedly masculine texts or his "tough, terse prose" that account for Hemingway's still significant appeal. Instead, it is the highly participatory aesthetic experience of reading him, and the consistent idealization of escape in his work that keep us close. While the trajectory of his career would see the exploration of escape manifest in different aspects— at times idealized as a physical remove or a *getting away* from social contexts, and other times manifest in the exploration of the experiential potential of reading and writing themselves— in total, Hemingway's belief that the aesthetic potential of reading could be transportive, and his persistent pursuit of a higher degree of intimacy in the aesthetic space shines through like a beacon, summoning the reader with still seemly unflagging intensity.

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Introduction

Section I) Premise

I.i) Why do we still read Hemingway?

When I first picked up Hemingway, I was a teenage boy beset by a standard set of contemporary woes; a fragile and foundering sense of masculinity, a disaffected, bored, and underwhelmed disposition, and a defensive formulation of identity. I read *In Our Time* and kept it close like a secret. Returning to a senior English class one year after a long summer, one of my classmates delivered a scathing report on *A Farewell to Arms* and I resolved myself to read it because I knew that she was wrong. There was something there that she was missing, surely. Since then, I've had an agreement with Hemingway. Like Jake Barnes and Montoya in *The Sun Also Rises*, I've been a secret intimate with Hemingway. Montoya "always smiled as though there were something lewd about the secret to outsiders, but that it was something that we understood. It would not do to expose it to people who would not understand" (*SAR* 136). As with Jake and Montoya, Hemingway and I share an intimate understanding.

But apparently it is not just me. According to The Hemingway Society, in 2017 alone, there were nineteen major "Hemingway-related publications," seventeen in 2016, seventeen in 2015, and two already on the list for 2018. Why, then? Why are we still enamored of the artist and his work? Admittedly, the cult of Hemingway has become a sort of cottage industry, and I cannot deny that. His biographies and representations play well in a contemporary climate where shaky and shifting identity formulations gravitate toward an imagined past greatness. But while these types of Hemingway-related products do keep Hemingway's name in the popular mind, they do not account for why we are still reading him. In this thesis I will lay out an argument for an implicit intimacy between Hemingway and his reader that runs counter to a great deal of the tired ideas we have about the writer. I will propose that the aesthetic dimension mediated by the reading experience promises a mutual escape for both the reader and the writer, and that that intimacy and that promise of escape is at the heart of Hemingway's continuing appeal to the reader.

At first glance this probably seems ridiculous, in part due to our common ideas about Hemingway and perhaps more directly because of the more than seventy years of critical explanations which have more or less reworked the same terrain by speaking about style and subject matter, the "iceberg technique," violence, manliness and so forth. But an attentive observer may pause to ask if these old hats still fit. When I first encountered Ernest Hemingway I was a child in the twenty-first century. And sure,

some of those old hats still adorned the bust of my image of Hemingway, but what kept me reading was not the presence of the things I was told that I would find there. Instead, what kept me reading what that little secret, that little shared experience that no one ever told me about. It wasn't how manly his writing was. It wasn't how stylish. It was something felt. "Big Two-Hearted River" was an escape. Crickets buzzed in the burnt out grass. Trout shifted like prismatic ghosts in the cold running current. "The End of Something" hurt me because I'd done it too. "The Three Day Blow" was me and a friend and gin and tonics out of pint glasses and a baseball game and endless cigarettes and trying to walk home through a horse field and vomit on my shoes. It was feeling hope after feeling hollow. It was getting back. Since then, the intimacy has deepened, not because I've come to understand more about Hemingway's style or his biography, but in spite of those things, as if the more I read about Hemingway, the further I get from what it is about Hemingway that hooked me in the first place. My project here then is simply an attempt to articulate a more accurate description of the relationship between Hemingway and the reader, and the intimate escape within that shared aesthetic experience.

I.ii) Against the Hemingway Monument

Of course, what we tend to say about Hemingway has no sense of this dynamic. We talk about Hemingway's style. We talk about how manly he was. We cover these talking points so automatically that Style and Masculinity (I capitalize these in accordance with the convention that has us capitalize nicknames) have become the twin pillars of a frozen figure that Richard Hovey calls the "Hemingway monument"(xi). But these synonymous tags do precious little to really speak to why we still read Hemingway. In my experience, they do quite the opposite. As with nicknames, familiarity undermines curiosity. Name something and you know it. Hemingway is a great stylist, we say, and we parrot the monument makers. He wrote "in short, declarative sentences and was known for his tough, terse prose." He "did more to change the style of English prose than any other writer in the twentieth century."[1] And we take this assessment, and we make it a nickname—Stylist. And in that superimposed knowing, we miss something— a "little lower layer" to borrow an idea from Melville[2].

Masculinity works the same way with Hemingway. One of my favorite descriptions comes from Jackson J. Benson whose image of Hemingway as "a big lumbering boy out of a high school in Middle

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[1] This description is found on all of the Scribner paperbacks published in the early 2000s.

[2] A formulation from *Moby-Dick*'s Captain Ahab: "Hark ye yet again,— the little lower layer. All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each evident—in the living act, the undoubted deed—there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning the unreasoning mask. If a man will strike, strike through the mask" (179)!

America who believed in sport as a vehicle for manhood, who thought Indian girls were a fine way to learn about sex, who condemned anyone who didn't work hard and earn their way, and who made fun of artistic 'types,' Jews, homosexuals, and anyone who couldn't hold his liquor" (2) sounds more like a mid-twentieth-century white American locker-room hero than Ernest Hemingway to me. I don't read Hemingway this way at all, but the monument still stands. "I'm writing about Hemingway," I said to a colleague. "Typical," she said. Apparently a thirty year old middle-class white guy writing about Hemingway is typical. And this is the real problem with the monument. It is not that naming Hemingway's philosophy of omission the "iceberg technique," or valorizing his machismo are incorrect in themselves. Instead, it is that the stylist misogynist hero character who emerges from these truisms does very little to explain why we still care about the writer's actual work (except perhaps to the fragile masculinity of the other white boys in that proverbial mid-twentieth century locker-room). In short, the monument makes it easy not to engage at all. Hemingway? yeah sure — he was a hell of writer. Did alright with the ladies, too, am I right? Not really.

But it is also true that the selfsame monument I am shouting at is to some degree Hemingway's own creation. Hemingway had what Stephen Koch calls "a gift for being famous" (21). Not only was his style an indelible mark upon the broader artistic and cultural moment, he managed to commingle art and life into one tremendously recognizable package. Koch continues, "as a modernist, he was seen as an heir to Stein, Pound, and Joyce, admired for the technique of living, an adept of the good life. Few writers have more effectively turned a sense of how to live – the technique of living well – into a credible image of heroism" (21). And though contemporary depictions of the writer, such as Woody Allen's overdrawn sketch in *Midnight in Paris* or the HBO film, *Hemingway and Gelhorn*, for example, frame him as a cultural hero, they continue to perpetuate a somewhat monotone image of bravado and guts that doesn't match up with the man or his writing. But this certainly does not account for why we still *read* Hemingway. After all, the Hemingway monument is only appealing when we remember that we're still talking about a writer, and a very good one at that.

More recently, scholars and critics have begun to freshen and problematize the macho caricature from newer critical angles. Notions that Hemingway's sexual identity was far more fluid than the classical, hyper masculine, hetero-confident cult hero we imagine (Debra Moddelmog's *Reading Desire: In Pursuit of Ernest Hemingway* for example) challenge a great deal of monolithic reading predicated on the work of the monument makers, but these too seem to miss a more fundamental element at work in Hemingway's writing. Still, these newer treatments are significant if for no other reason than the fact that contemporary critics still consider Hemingway, in spite of the resilience of those older characterizations. But these treatments seem to me to fill a revisionist role, attempting to correct the older, whiter and more heteronormative critical modes that helped erect the monument in the first place. The problem with this is

that we are titillated by a murmur that Hemingway liked to wear women's clothes, and we dig in to unearth something new, but what brought out the shovels was not an encounter with Hemingway, but, rather, an irritation with the long and heavy shadow cast by his monument in the academy square.

This is not to say that I disagree wholesale with the style and masculinity truisms, or that queering Hemingway doesn't serve a useful purpose. While I feel that the style angle is a misfire, and the masculinity angle is more a product of a cultural anxiety than a textually defensible characteristic, I can admit that language deployment and considerations of the nature of manhood are central markers of Hemingway's work. But what we're missing is the intimacy implied and demanded in Hemingway's work manifest in both a continual idealization of escape across his oeuvre, and a shifting formulation of complicity between the writer and his intimates. Perhaps this is because Hemingway's shared escape dynamic develops over time as a fundamental element of his aesthetic, moving from a broad, generational appeal to a formulation so guarded and personal it is almost unrecognizable unless, by chance, the reader is exactly the type of intimate the writer demands. Further, the implications of this dynamic pick up many of the threads approached from different angles in more recent Hemingway criticism. Queering Hemingway, for example, falls naturally into the lap of my work, too, in that the intimacy I identify between the writer and the reader begs natural questions about the reader's identity and implies at the very least a homosocial relationship meditated by the textual experience. Working backwards then, the dull generic machismo and masculinity assertions that are always conversational bedfellows with Hemingway stand in a different light. Finally, the great stylist nickname begs new scrutiny, specifically given my questions about Hemingway's implied reader. In this chapter I will address the style truism directly, in part because it is more monolithic, and my quarrel on these grounds is to some degree, semantic. I will return to the masculinity issue repeatedly once I have established the theoretical frame for my work here, but this issue is far more dynamic, and as such, my treatment will emerge at moments when the development of my position intersects with it over the course of my thesis. To sum up, my argument is set against a backdrop of the Hemingway monument— that old familiar figure set in academic and cultural stone— and a simple idea that it is none of those old truisms that keep Hemingway in the hands of the reader. Instead, it is Hemingway's unique ability to write meaningful escape experiences, and the still-relevant contexts against which he wrote them that provides the reader with a powerful sense of sharing escape.

I.iii) On Hemingway's "Style"

First, to style. Identifying Hemingway's sparse prose is of a piece with the broader cultural sense of

him. And Hemingway was, most certainly, a meticulous wordsmith known for integrating revision into his daily writing process (Fleming 4) and his commitment to Pound's notion of the *"mot juste"* (*MF* 118), but the Hemingway style truism is a bit of a misfire. When we talk about Hemingway's style—when Scribner writes about his "tough, terse prose"—we are not actually interested in his sentences or the words on the page. Hemingway's sentences, in a vacuum, sound like this: "The American wife stood at the window looking out" (*IOT* 92). Or, "Nick was hungry" (*IOT* 139). These are not objective masterpieces. At least, not as they stand alone. And, yes, empowered as the curator, I have chosen two very mundane sentences to make my point, but if I move to more celebrated ground, a "better" sentence will not take me much further: "In the early morning on the lake sitting in the stern of the boat with his father rowing, he felt quite sure that he would never die" (*IOT* 19). This final sentence to the much discussed "Indian Camp," is surely more "stylish" than the previous selections from "Cat in the Rain" and "Big Two-hearted River, Part I" but this is not "tough, terse prose," nor is it a typical Hemingway sentence. It also carries with it the amplification of the reading experience. For a reader who has made it this far in "Indian Camp" already, memories of a silent suicide and a "jack-knife" (18) cesarean will doubtless come screaming back.

My point is that we do not laud Hemingway's writing for his "style," as we do countless others, Modernist or otherwise, where the craft of the sentence, or the lyricality of the prose is a notable part of the reading experience. An English professor once told me that Henry James was the master of the English sentence. Fair enough. This is the sort of assertion that ought to accompany claims about style. And Hemingway's style is certainly distinctive. He is among the most distinguishable writers of the English prose. But what marks this style is absence. It is how little is really on the page. And this assertion is nothing new, of course; I'm just quarreling with the way we treat this characteristic because what we've given to calling style refers more to the nature of the reading encounter itself than to syntactical arrangement. My point by extension is that we have jumped for an easy expression and used it poorly to describe something much more nuanced. What matters when we read Hemingway is not his "style," as such, it is the uniquely participatory, albeit fleeting freedom inherent in reading him. What Hemingway does that is so undeniable is aesthetic, yes, but it is not "style". It is in the active, moving co-creation of reading Hemingway that what we've decided to call his "style" really emerges.

To belabor this point, consider the distinction that Jean-Paul Sartre correctly describes in *What is Literature?*— that the reading experience does not emerge from a line by line textual analysis (29). That is, the textual encounter does not emerge from a comparison of the merits of Hemingway's sentences. When I read Hemingway I do not often pause and think, "Hemingway is the master of the English sentence." Perhaps this is because I am too busy reading. What we care about with Hemingway emerges in the active experience of the text from the *aesthetic dimension*. And this is a space initiated by the

words on the page, surely—those lines and those sentences—but the experience of reading Hemingway is extra-textual. The aesthetic dimension is a collaborative, liminal space sustained by the active participation of the reader and it is the feeling of this experience that is what we're trying to describe when we talk Hemingway's style.

But, you might say, doesn't this aesthetic response account for all reading experiences, not just the Hemingway experience? To degrees, certainly. The idea of activating the imagination is nothing new to the story. But Hemingway's special appeal concerning a thing that we're given to calling "style" is really the intoxicating degree of freedom we feel reading Hemingway, precisely because of what isn't there at all. There is a tone to the Hemingway reading experience that is remarkable and unique. It is identifiable, much the same way that a more appropriately dubbed "stylist" might be identified by his sentences. In short, Scribner's descriptions, "tough" and "terse," do not describe Hemingway's style, they describe the experience of reading his prose.

I.iv) Distinguishing the Aesthetic

So, it is not style that keeps Hemingway around. It is the *experience of reading* Hemingway. I still remember how "The Three-Day Blow" *feels*. It takes me somewhere. It is transportive.

> The rain stopped as Nick turned into the road that went up to the orchard. The fruit had been picked and the fall wind blew through the bare trees. Nick stopped and picked up a Wagner apple from beside the road, shiny in the brown grass from the rain. He put the apple in the pocket of his Mackinaw coat.
>
> The road came out of the orchard on to the top of the hill. There was the cottage, the porch bare, smoke coming from the chimney. In back was the garage, the chicken coop and the second-growth timber like a hedge against the woods behind. The big trees swayed far over in the wind as he watched. It was the first of the autumn storms.
>
> As Nick crossed the open field above the orchard the door of the cottage opened and Bill came out. He stood on the porch looking out.
>
> "Well, Wemedge," he said.
>
> "Hey, Bill," Nick said, coming up the steps.
>
> They stood together, looking out across the country, down over the orchard, beyond the road, across the lower fields and the woods of the point to the lake. The wind was blowing straight down the lake. They could see the surf along Ten Mile point. (*IOT* 39)

When I read this, I experience it. The gusty wind. The hard apple in my pocket. I see the wind cut white

sprays across the lake down the hill in the distance. I sense the coming storm and my skin tightens in anticipation. I smell electricity. I enter the text, the "division between subject and object no longer applies [...] and meaning is no longer an object to be defined, but [...] an effect to be experienced" (*Act* 10). I'm gone. In short that "little lower layer" moves beyond just style; moves beyond the iceberg technique and textual omission. What Hemingway does so completely, is build a textual scheme that invites the reader to complete it. It is powerful because reading is being there, in a sense. And beyond that, it feels intimate. It feels shared. I am transplanted to an experiential dimension that I am both given, and taking—choosing to move further away from where I was—not just following Hemingway, but working with him. I am complicit in our escape.

Sharing this escape is, incidentally, exactly the type of interaction that Hemingway had in mind when he started working out his aesthetic. I will return to this claim in depth, but first it is necessary to define this space and the nature of this interaction. If I experience escape when I read Hemingway, how does it work? Can my reading really be called experience? If I am escaping, where do I go? Surely, I remain sitting exactly where I was when I opened the book, right?

Yes and no. The reading interaction, and the experience I claim to have when reading Hemingway exists in an aesthetic space, and the aesthetic is phenomenal. Here its is important to distinguish "aesthetic" from its colloquial sense which generally conjures artistic quality. When I talk about Hemingway's "aesthetic" I am not talking about his art, his style, or his contexts; I am talking about the space where these things happen. From this perspective, the "style" and "aesthetic" conflation is understandable, particularly when in its object form, aesthetic refers to an identifiable signature or approach. But the aesthetic space is really much closer to "feeling" than to "style." Wolfgang Iser writes that "it is characteristic of aesthetic effect that it cannot be pinned to something existing, and indeed, the very word 'aesthetic' is an embarrassment of referential language, for it designates a gap in the defining qualities of language rather than a definition" (*Act* 22). Indeed. What we are talking about when we talk about the aesthetic dimension then is not a quality, but an experience. How Hemingway (or any artist for that matter) makes you feel is conjured by aesthetic response. Inherent in this definition then, is the need for another, a reader, an audience, a witness, even a collaborator, and this dynamic is a frustrating state of affairs, especially for literary criticism. It exists, surely, but only in a liminal space, and only as an interaction.

And the feeling of escape I associate with Hemingway is difficult to articulate, and even more difficult to differentiate. From a philosophical perspective, the aesthetic experience is a phenomenon. Why does reading Hemingway have such a powerfully magnetic, intimate appeal for me? It is certainly not for lack of exposure. There are dozens of other literary artists whose work has moved me in a different way. Instead, it has something to do with my collaborative presence in the reading process. It

has to do with the way that Hemingway's aesthetic works. And the way I respond when I read Hemingway is part of that perspective. Iser writes that "the phenomenological theory of art lays full stress on the idea that, in considering a literary work, one must take into account not only the actual text but also, and in equal measure, the actions involved in responding to that text" (*Implied* 274). In other words, when we talk about the aesthetic dimension, we are talking not just about the words on the page, textual styling or syntactical choices. Nor are we talking about the story, the context, or the synopsis. What happens in the aesthetic dimension is far more than what happens in the story. And with Hemingway, the steady and relentless pursuit of this dynamic potential is the real heart of why we still read him.

Section II) Aesthetic Response

I.v) Aesthetic response belongs

So, addressing aesthetic response can be tricky, but Hemingway's work specifically demands it. His personal metric for success was the degree by which his writing could invite the reader and generate a feeling of presence in the reading experience. In 1925, Hemingway wrote to his father,"You see I'm trying in all my stories to get the feeling of the actual life across – not to just depict life – or criticize it – but to actually make it alive. So that when you have read something by me you actually experienced the thing" (qtd. in Tetlow 16). And this, I believe, is the very simple core of Hemingway's entire aesthetic. I will return to the emergence and significance of this idea again in the second chapter, but for now, take, if you will, the call of this mantra from the position of the literary scholar. If we are to approach Hemingway on the level, we must take reader response as our primary focus. Unfortunately, the critical mode that proposed to address aesthetic response did not achieve lasting credibility or academic approval, but I will do my part here to exhume it, because Hemingway's work demands a consideration of the trans-textual interaction.

Robert Dale Parker explains that reader response theory had its day in the 1960s and 70s amidst the boom of critical perspectives ushered in by the New Critics. But it quickly fell by the wayside, doomed in part by the "hodgepodge" of approaches it encompassed, and the quickly adopted sense that all literary criticism is reader response criticism to some degree (*Interpret* 330). More specifically, as an alternative to the wildly popular New Critics, reader response theorists were still understandably responsive to New Criticism and their willingness to compromise the reader-oriented mandate of their theory and yield to the systematic rules of the formalists to gain access to the broader critical conversation undermined the most

significant element of their work. Winfried Fluck describes their death by triviality: “In almost all discussions of the aesthetics of reception, the discussion has remained on a synchronic and strictly intradisciplinary level, constituted by the broad umbrella terms of “reception theory” or “reader-response” criticism, so that the “context” in which reception aesthetics is discussed is that of competing theories of the reading process” (177). So, different formulations of the reader and a lack of cohesion among theorists rendered an otherwise useful position in literary scholarship trivial by its inability to agree upon an essential reader—a notion itself which does not accord with the modern condition, or many post-New Critical modes, for that matter[3]. Then, what was missed in the argument over terminology was further buried by the likes of Terry Eagleton whose criticism of reader-oriented theory wedged open the myopic battle over specific formulations of “the reader” and applied the general weight of other theoretical positions (in Eagleton’s case, a marxist problematization) to discredit what could otherwise be perhaps the most meaningful formula for speaking intelligently about Modern literature.

But defining the reader was a foremost concern for these critics and theorists, in part because an approach to literary criticism that proposed to abandon the long standing notion of literature as a static object and cross the plane of the textual interaction to focus on the reader and subjectivity was inherently susceptible to reactionary criticism. Practically, the common object-ness of a book is much easier to accept at face value than a proposed common hypothetical reader in the literary interaction (especially under the vogue inculcated by the New Critics which demanded systems and procedures). In an attempt to play by the rules, various reader response theorists (a term that itself is both misleading and a tad pejorative) made various efforts to describe and define a common hypothetical reader.

Here, I must take a brief digression to discuss some of these formulations because they are essential to my understanding of the Hemingway aesthetic, and to explaining my claim that an intimate relationship between the reader and the writer is prerequisite to the experience of escape in reading Hemingway. Two formulations that still hold water, to my mind, are Stanley Fish’s “informed reader,” “a competent speaker of the language,” “in full possession of ‘the semantic knowledge that a mature listener brings to his task of comprehension’, with “*literary* competence” (145), and Wolfgang Iser’s “implied reader,” whose formulation is much more in line with the natural Hemingway reader. Because Iser’s “implied reader” suggests a reader called by the text and manages to avoid Fish’s mistake in laying out rules for the proposed reader, it is far more appropriately positioned to address the Hemingway reader and the nature of aesthetic response in reading Hemingway. I will elaborate on this extensively in the second chapter. For now, what I mean to say is that the reader that Hemingway’s writing invites does not necessarily accord with the formal requirements laid out by Fish, such as “the semantic knowledge [of a]

---

[3] Consider for example Derrida’s “The End of the Book and the Beginning of Writing” (1967), Barthes’ seminal “The Death of the Author” (1968) or “From Work to Text” (1971), as well as other major contributions to

mature listener" or a "literary competence," nor does it stumble over the troubling implications of a common reader prevalent in other formulations, such as Riffaterre's or Wolff's (*Act* 30). Still, in the long run, these distinctions are not very important.

What is important is the model of textually-mediated interaction that posits an active, complicit creative experience in the reading process and a consideration of the living reading subject, not simply the inanimate textual object. But different situations require different tools. If anything, approaching subjectivity and the individual was one of the core tenants of the broader Modern context. This is to say that Iser's *The Implied Reader* was right to approach Faulkner, Beckett and Joyce, because the subjectivity and individuality treated by Modern literature make aesthetic response a primary concern of Modernism.

Of course Modernism may be an even more slippery subject to introduce, but I would be remiss not to at least take a stab at contextualizing Hemingway, the aesthetic dimension, and this emergent notion of subjectivity within the broader literary zeitgeist. The social shifts that marked the early part of the twentieth century which lead an indignant, aging Gertrude Stein to proclaim Hemingway and his contemporaries "une génération perdue" (*MF* 26), simultaneously produced a more controlled and controlling space and helped to form a social inclination toward an emancipatory individual ideal. The British poet and novelist Edwin Muir wrote in 1918 that if the myriad *-isms*[4] which proposed to make up Modernism were "movements in the direction of emancipation" as opposed to simply "new," then they should make up that standard by which we identify the Modern (355). While Muir's voice is one of many in the Modern Choir of the Emancipatory, Virginia Woolf's 1919 formulation of the task of the Modern novelist speaks to impossibility of depicting a generic lived experience, carrying with it the impetus of the individual.

> Look within and life, it seems, is very far from being 'like this'. The mind receives a myriad of impressions […] as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old; the moment of importance came not here but there…. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible? (397)

My point is simply that reader repose theory belongs, not just with Hemingway specifically, but with the broader context of the Modern project which stresses both the subjective and inward life, and freedom from domineering forms.

Deconstruction, or any of the structural or post-structural modes whose central tenants are non-essentialist.

[4] i.e. Futurism, Cubism, Imagism, Expressionism, Vorticism, Eccentricism, Construstivism, Dada(ism), Surrealism, to name a few, not to mention Communism, Socialism, Anarchism, all of which announced themselves with some sort of manifesto or mission statement, or developed in the early part of the twentieth-century. See Kolocotroni et al. for more information.

Because of its focus on the *meaningful* experience of reading rather than the extraction of *meaning*, the value of aesthetic response theory[5] in application to the moderns is undeniable. Barthes' *The Pleasure of the Text,* for instance, embraces the explosion of indeterminacy in Modern literature. But a surly Eagleton, a response theory detractor, describes Barthes' theory of reception as a model which:

> demands less a 'hermeneutics' than an 'erotics': since there is no way to arrest it into determinate sense, the reader simply luxuriates in the tantalizing glide of signs, in the provocative glimpses of meanings which surface only to submerge again. […] Reading is less like a laboratory than a boudoir. Far from returning the reader to himself, in some final recuperation of the selfhood which the act of reading has thrown into question, the modernist text explodes his or her secure cultural identity, in a *jouissance* which for Barthes is both readerly bliss and sexual orgasm. (*Literary Theory* 71-2).

Thus, Eagleton's frustration with Iser's brand of "German rationalist" liberal humanism is matched measure for measure in his contempt for the Frenchman's "self-indulgent avant-garde hedonism" (71; 72), but these are exactly the interactional modes we ought to consider when the literature before us is working toward an emancipatory, individualist goal. Letting his Marx hang out a bit, Eagleton decries both for their deemphasis of historical context and their "liberal distaste for systematic thought" (72). But this sort of deemphasis is precisely the point, not only of the theory, but of many of the moderns, Hemingway among them. And further, Eagleton's dissatisfaction with the degree of potential political agency in Iser's aesthetic response theory is poorly formulated. Iser himself explains that his theoretical framework provided for negation through the reformulation of social norms, but does not propose a political alternative in and of itself:

> […] The repertoire produces the familiar, but strips it of its current validity. What it does not do, however, is formulate alternative views such as one might expect after a process of negation; unlike philosophies and ideologies, literature does not make its selections and its decisions explicit. Instead, it questions or recodes the signals of external reality in such a way that the reader himself is to find the motives underlying the questions, and in so doing he participates in producing the meaning. (74)

While there is no overt political agency in Iser or Barthes, the shift of focus from structural *meaning* to functional *meaningful* traced by aesthetic response theory seems to me to pick up on a line that the (marxist, and therefore political) Frankfurt school also identified, namely in the way that cultural expression becomes quickly appropriated. Hemingway was aware of this, too. And this I believe, is the heart of his refusal to write a universal position, even with *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and the context of the

[5] It is for this reason that reception studies and literary anthropology have remained, and even found a new home in film criticism, for example, despite the relative obscurity of response theory in literature.

Spanish Civil War.

But the marxist position has also been willing to consider individual emancipation via art, to varying degrees. To continue Iser's line on marxist (but definitely not Marxist[6]) terms, take Herbert Marcuse's explanation that in an attempt to liberate itself from bourgeoise appropriation, art under modern "monopoly capitalism" is most likely to be meaningful if, rather than advocating for The Revolution (and thus being summarily swept into the bin with the rest of the resistance branch of the bourgeois artists) it simply formulates "a rupture" (*Aesthetic* 34). And, consistent with these formulations, Hemingway's writing avoids direct political activism, too, but it does return, again and again to that moment that Marcuse calls the rupture. And this distinction is significant in the context of Modernism, generally, in that on the spectrum of emancipation, Hemingway's writing lines up in a decidedly non-activist position, though functionally, the rupture Marcuse defines along the political-structural line is the flip-side of the *restive* nature of Hemingway's aesthetic, and the back door to his escape ideal in that is is for me, or for you, but not for *us*.

That is, Hemingway never takes up a revolutionary cause in his writing, like John Dos Passos does, for example. Even the runaway diatribe on haves and have-nots at the end of *To Have and Have Not*, or the revolutionary context of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* soundly[7] foregoes political critique by avoiding a collective identification altogether or by pointing to the absurdity of collective causes. In Hemingway, there is not us versus them on a grand scale. There is only person and experience. While Hemingway's characters confront the social given and struggle with it again and again, never does Hemingway make the leap from the individual to the universal, at least not in his prose[8].

And this is another element of aesthetic response that Eagleton and others do not consider; the intimacy inherent in the reading experience. Though a novel like *A Farewell to Arms* may have been read by millions of people, an attempt to aggregate their responses will not bear fruit, because their reading experiences may vary wildly. My high school classmate's response to *A Farewell to Arms* was not "wrong," though I felt that way at the time. It was simply the result of a different interaction. The intimacy between me and the text was not born out the same way in her interaction with it. When I said earlier that the response theorists' quarrel over the reader is not important, that was to say that an attempt to define or categorize the reader is not a useful endeavor. For though there certainly is an intended

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[6] Marcuse's work is certainly an offshoot of classical Marxism, but, as with Adorno, Horkheimer and Benjamin, I believe it is productive to distinguish that work as part of the broader political -economic paradigm that is based on Marx's work, but certainly is not "Marxism." By this distinction, Marcuse's work with *The Aesthetic Dimension* is squarely little-"m" marxist.

[7] Novels whose contexts both treat social and economic disparity and revolutionary action.

[8] Though there is a case to be made for his work on the film *The Spanish Earth*, I would remind the reader that film is, by its nature, a far more ecumenical format than literature, considering both its group experience format, and its passive delivery of what in literature generates subjective agency.

reader, whether the image of the reader emerges before the writer clear as day or remains ethereal is not a worthwhile discussion, perhaps because both of these possibilities, and myriad others are certainly in play in literature in general. Sartre writes that while the idea of a universal reader may seem like the obvious explanation, in reality, the demand of the writer's own situation, his "own freedom" which is "not so pure," must be "clean[ed]," pointing to the inherent intimacy between the needs and abilities of the writer and the audience that will rise to meet him and help him to realize his project (*WiL?* 50). And this demand for intimacy between the reader and writer undermines the idea of a universal reader if the writer himself is willing to do the work to approach a purer freedom. "It is dangerously easy to speak too readily about eternal values" Sartre writes, "eternal values are very, very fleshless" (50).

And I agree with Sartre wholeheartedly, both as a general observation, and in specific relationship to Hemingway. While literature may offer a universal appeal, the most intimate writing cannot address the universal audience because the writer is an individual, and the reader is an individual. Charlotte Brontë's famous "reader, I married him" (365) clearly has a different reader in mind than any of Hemingway's work. And yes, this is due in part to the location of *Jane Eyre* relative to the broader social space and the role of the novel in the middle of the nineteenth century, but with Hemingway, intimacy is of the highest priority, and it is born out in his escape aesthetic, his narrative contexts, and in his eventual resolve to the space of the writer in spite of the immediate intimacy of the people around him.

On the first level, Hemingway's escapist aesthetic requires both complicity and commitment, and it is for this reason that I am drawn to Iser's formulation, perhaps for the very same reason that Eagleton is not. The process that Iser describes does require some conditions for the reader and so does Hemingway. Iser's "implied reader" is well-suited to Hemingway in that it supposes a certain expectation of the reader on the part of the writer, but my argument does not rely on Iser's aesthetic response theory exclusively, because Hemingway demands a level of complicity that passes through the textual experience. While Iser's focus is on the interaction between the text and the reader, my focus includes a consideration of the writer himself, and attempts to articulate the textual experience as a shared escape space between the two. In the first chapter, I will expand on Hemingway's demands, but for now I will simply suggest that his characteristic deployment of omission, as well as his stylistic sparsity carries with it a demand for a high level of trust in the writer and a certain similarity or commonality in experience. The complaint that aesthetic response criticism does not offer a structural application mechanism is correct, but we must also remember that Hemingway is decidedly not after revolution, just escape, and that escape has a relative nature that involves *leaving behind.*

Here, I think it is also necessary to contextualize the formulation of Hemingway's specific ideal relative to the broader literary moment, specifically concerning the liberation and emancipation that seem to be of a piece with Modernism, even beyond obvious socio-political modes. Eagleton's critique of

response theory amounts to an accusation that it is too liberal, and that it does not support a liberation. As I have already said, Hemingway's prose was not actively political. Despite the fact that his work in the 1930s addressed moments of actual class conflict and revolution— haves and have-nots in Cuba, civil war in Spain with *To Have and Have Not* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, respectively— Hemingway's work focuses more on the nature of the experience than on universalizing that experience. In this, he seems to pick up Woolf's line concerning the role of the modern novelist. Even in *In Our Time*, Hemingway's first major publication and his broadest cultural treatment, the collection's presentational mode curtails any strong argument for a universal polemic.

Still, there is a revolutionary aspect to Hemingway's work, depending on the definition of revolution. Two theorists that locate the revolutionary potential of art in the interaction between art and the individual identify some of the dynamic mechanisms at play in Hemingway's writing. Both Marcuse and Julia Kristeva base their formulations of this relationship on a conception of social structures and dominant discourse against which the individual positions himself. In *The Aesthetic Dimension*, Marcuse claims that "art can be called revolutionary in several senses" (x), and he works to define an individually located sense of revolutionary transformative aesthetics from within the broader marxist terminology. Art is frequently judged according to technical or stylistic perspectives, for example, and in this mode, "radical change" may be called revolutionary. Or, it may be judged by content, such that qualitative judgments on its epistemology may substantiate a revolutionary designation. This sense pertains to the perceived presence of an argument. On subtler ground, even art which does not seem to carry an overt polemic still carries "the logic of the unconscious," and manifestations of semiotic disposition (poetic language) then "assume the privilege of communicating regression and jouissance" and "may be interpreted as an affirmation of freedom" and even "an anarchic revolt… against a society that extols material goods and profit" (Roudiez 3). This is to say that "the logic of the unconscious," elsewhere formulated as "social determination" (Marcuse 6) inherently present in the literary work, prime that work to "communicate" or "affirm" an ideal of alterity. How this works is more complex, but as Marcuse argues, literature provides more than "a retreat into a world of fiction where existing conditions are changed and overcome only in the realm of the imagination" (1). It has a restive aspect, too, by which I mean *a taking away.*

These positions emerge in Hemingway as well. While Hemingway's semiotic disposition does not arrive at "an anarchic revolt" against a capitalist society as such, "the subject of writing also includes the non-conscious… the notion of dominant ideology: the whole system of myths and prejudices that gives our view of society and of our place in it a specific orientation" (Roudiez 8). And we read this constantly in Hemingway, from overt portraits of "our time" in *In Our Time*, to the domineering social mores in *The Sun Also Rises*, to the romanticization of elsewhere and other in *A Farewell to Arms*, for example.

Beyond this, art is perhaps more meaningful if "by virtue of the aesthetic transformation, it

represents, in the exemplary fate of individuals, the prevailing unfreedom and the rebelling forces, thus breaking through the mystified (and petrified) social reality, and opening the horizon of change (liberation)" (*Aesthetic* xi). This implies something elemental that goes far beyond *style* or *context*. But Marcuse's formulation misses the type of experiential imperative in Hemingway's aesthetic when he writes that aesthetic transformation "represents," though his claim that art's exemplary individuals are revolutionary is not lost. If anything, this dissonance helps to further identify the aesthetic dimension in Hemingway specifically. Wolfgang Iser writes:

> the aesthetic effect is robbed of [its] unique quality the moment one tries to define what is meant in terms of other meanings that one knows. For if it means nothing but what comes through it into the world, it cannot possibly be identical to anything already existing in the world. At the same time, of course, it is easy to see why specific definitions are attributed to this indefinable reality, for one automatically seeks to relate it to contexts that are familiar. The moment one does so, however, the effect is extinguished, because the effect is in the nature of an experience, and not an exercise in explanation. Thus, the meaning of a literary text is not a definable entity but, if anything, a dynamic happening. (*Act* 22)

The aesthetic space is necessarily individual then, and this individuality is not revolutionary, but *restive*, in the way that the aesthetic experience takes the individual *away*.

But, though these formulations of the aesthetic dimension are crucial to the Hemingway experience, they are not necessarily exclusive to Hemingway. What distinguishes Hemingway's aesthetic returns to escape, which forms a unity between the aesthetic experience identified by Iser, and the exemplary nature identified by Marcuse. In Hemingway, the aesthetic experience *is* the experience of escape[9] because the Hemingway's context is escape as well. As Marcuse elaborates, "literature can be called revolutionary in a meaningful sense only with reference to itself, as content having become form" (*Act* xii).

Section III) Escape

I.vii) What is escape?

To be clear, this escape that I am identifying is not of a piece with the fleeting and momentary contemporary "escapism"— its trips to the amusement park and exotic vacations temporary distractions

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[9] Whereas in Woolf, the aesthetic experience may be a treatment of the moments in a life marked against the passage of time in *To The Lighthouse* or *Jacob's Room*, for example. In Joyce's *Dubliners* the aesthetic experience plays with the boundary between the individual and the collective to carry a more overt social critique. In Dos Passos' *USA*, the aesthetic can be read to represent not the individual at all, but the national experience.

from reality. Nor is it the behavior of the Hegelian "beautiful soul," who "washes his or her hands of the corrupt world, refusing to admit how in this very abstemiousness and distaste he or she participates in the creation of that world" (Morton 13). And this is precisely because, in both of those models, escape is merely an avoidance or deferment of individual accountability. On the contrary, the escape that Hemingway idealizes is exactly the opposite, an authentic and existential manifestation of individual accountability to oneself[10].

This escape is at once negative and affirmative. It is refusal and constitution. It is action. It cannot be static. It cannot rest. It is not revolutionary in a relative social sense, but it is restive. It is alternative and alterity. It is liminal, and it is individual. It is not meaning, but it is meaningful.

Liminal spaces or modes such as escape are fraught because they resist definition, but Hannah Arendt's formulation of "the nowhere" between "being" and "thinking" as a useful model for such a space. (Here, I mean "space" not merely in the physical sense of place, per se, but in the existential locational sense that incorporates time and subject-perspective. That where I "am" when I sit and write this, and where I "am" when I sit and read Hemingway, for example - these are spaces, surely - but these spaces are also inherently in motion, relative to time and experience. They are not simply me at my desk, or me on the couch. In the way that writing is not just one fixed experience-space, and that reading is not simply reading, but also motion, so is the nature of liminal spaces, as I have chosen to designate them, never fixed, never essential, and never just a single "thing.")

In writing about thinking, Arendt puts forward the idea that thinking "interrupts all ordinary activities and is interrupted by them" (197). She conjures Socrates, whose habit of "suddenly 'turning his mind to himself,' breaking off all company, and taking up his position wherever he happened to be, 'deaf to all entreaties' to continue with whatever he had been doing before" models the aspects of "withdrawal" and "interruption" that help to identify the liminality of the thinking space (Arendt 197). Later, she appropriates the Aristotelian distinction between acting and thinking to stress the relative significance of social interaction (*"bios xenikos")*, where the space of the mind (*"bios theōrētikos")* implies and even requires an aspect of solitude (Arendt 198).

Writing is thinking, but it is not pure thought, since writing has at its essential level constrained itself in its ordering and by its presentations. In its formulation it has clothed itself in frames and forms, assumed discourses, the social unconscious, the writer's psyche, and all manner of other structures that I have no intention of addressing. (*WiL?* 51, *Act* ix, *Aesthetic* xii) Here I am content to indicate that writing is (though not thinking as such, in the way that Arendt identifies it) a thought process. Thinking is writing's impetus.

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[10] Although this thesis does not address Existentialism extensively, the existential mandate of authenticity which Sartre describes, and from whom I draw extensively, is manifest time and again in Hemingway's oeuvre.

Writing is also being. It is not pure being, though, because it requires considerations, memory and imagination, and the mobility and liberty of mental time travel. Still, being is also writing's impetus. Thus, writing is a liminal space. Writing is an escape space. Writing is somewhere in Arendt's "nowhere" between thinking and being in that it defers, always, to both. In keeping with Arendt's terminology, "being" includes elements of the social and elements of action, and "thinking" is both solitary and immobile (in the sense that it does not seem to be bound by a linear time figuration the way that being does — immobility, then, is not a restriction, but a freedom from the time-space motion mandate upon "being").

Escape lies between social encroachment and solitude, between motion and immobility. Earlier I claimed that escape is not revolutionary. This is true so far as as revolution is imagined in a social sense. Consider Wolfgang Iser's explanation of negation, a term he deploys with specific reference to literature and its proposed revolutionary function in the nineteenth century:

> With pure negation, the revolution remains dependent upon that which it negates, and the more radical the destruction, the more inevitably it must lead to self-destruction. Thus, the tradition of the nineteenth century has prevailed over its would-be destroyers, because they could not free themselves from the contradiction that is inherent in that tradition and that prevented the revolution from becoming a starting point for a literature of the future. We must therefore take a closer look at this contradiction inherited from the nineteenth-century aesthetic tradition — not only because it blunted the knives raised against it, but also because the impasse that it created released new possibilities for literature. (*Prospecting*, 200)

In a relative sense, Iser's point is well-taken, and in the way that revolution proposes and proposes to be a fundamental structural realignment, the Marxist sense of revolution and social liberation does not find its space in literature because negation is, itself, relative and thus dependent. In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Julia Kristeva offers another formulation of the same idea in different terms. "Rejection," like Iser's "negation" implies change, implies revolution, and then fails to achieve it because of its relative, dependent position.

> Rejection, or expenditure, constitutes the key moment shattering unity, yet it is unthinkable outside unity, for rejection presupposes thematic unity as its precondition and horizon, one to be always superseded and exceeded. Rejection serves to bind only to the extent that it is the *precondition* of the binding that takes place on another scene. […] Its law is one of returning, as opposed to one of becoming; it returns only to separate again immediately and thus appear as an impossible forward movement. (Kristeva 147)

But escape is not this, precisely because it is liminal. Escape is always relational, but never fixed, either

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Central to that authenticity is the idea of making oneself, as described in Lehan (47 - 68).

because it does not propose a negation or a rejection, or because it proposes one in both directions. This is the *restive* nature of escape. It is more akin to Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" (Melville 17) than to Marx's Revolution. In other words, escape works where revolution does not precisely because it does not propose a structural realignment or a thematic unity.

I.viii) Escape as "Away"

So, for all the many formulations of escape considered here, Hemingway's specific brand of escape may be best described as "away."

Away is easy enough at first glance. If I say to you, "I'm going away for the weekend" you understand that I will not be here and that I will be somewhere else. At least in the colloquial context, this concept is simple enough. But where am I really going? Perhaps I have a destination in mind. From your perspective, I probably do. Suppose then that you're a curious sort of person. Maybe you'd say, "Oh, nice. Where are you going?" Now we've come to the real heart of away. In short, away is not a place, per se; it is an escape space. For the purposes of my example, I could be going on an enviable vacation, but I could also not be going anywhere at all. When I say that I am going away, what I am really saying is that I will be in a space that you cannot know about or participate in. Away is a bubble, inherently spatial and temporal, and always liminal because it represents a decided betweenness. Consider my choices in response. If I say, "I'm going to visit my parents" then you know where I am, satisfactorily, even if you do not know where my parents are. Then, if a third acquaintance of ours asks you, "Where's David this weekend?" you can choose to say, "He's visiting his parents." But, suppose I reply, "I'm just gonna get away for the weekend, I've been needing a change of pace." Then you might have any manner of reactions. Perhaps you'll find me rude and sense that we aren't as close as you'd imagined. Perhaps you'll be sympathetic and realize that you, too, should get away soon. Perhaps something else will strike you. At any rate, what and where away is, is preserved specifically by its relational function. Away only exists relative to other people. If I am simply tired of my surroundings and I decide that I need a new experience, my action is to go somewhere. Even if I am feeling particularly unbound and I carelessly point to a map and then go, my destination is a place that I know, and it is a place. But I can make it away if I know it, and you do not. If I have chosen to go skiing in Schruns, well then I'll be in Austria, certainly. But when you ask me, "where are you going" and I say, "I'm just gonna get away for the weekend," now I have created away, and away is a time-space construct that exists only in that you do not know where I am going.

And we have agreed on the value of this construction. Other colloquial uses of the term reinforce the

sense of ignorance that away leverages upon the recipient. If my old friend goes to prison, for instance, perhaps in polite conversation I will say, “he went away for a while,” a construct that indicates to the receiver that he ought to leave that topic alone. Or if I am in a movie theatre and I cannot keep from looking at my phone, I may be sharply advised to “put it away” by one of my fellow moviegoers, and in this case, a sense of decorum will remind me that my phone really ought to be somewhere unknown to the people sitting around me. Though in the cases of my phone and my friend, all parties do have a sense of the actual whereabouts of our conversational objects, these uses represent a social understanding that away is a construct that relies on being unknown or undisclosed.

Or, in another common form, away can be restive. Take for instance, a lover’s formulation:

> Don’t make me close one more door /
> I don’t wanna hurt anymore /
> Stay in my arms if you dare / must I imagine you there? /
> Don’t walk *away* from me /
> I have nothing, nothing, nothing, if I don’t have you. (Whitney Houston, “I Have Nothing”)

In Whitney’s formulation, away represents the motion-based departure from the space of the intimate to a future space of anonymity. Here, away becomes representative of severance. Notably, this formulation belies the idea that away must always be alone. I can go *away with* my lover and my dog just the same as if I go *away from* my lover and my dog. All that matters is the relative recipient of my away destination. It is for this reason that away is always an escape on one side of a binary. Going away with a companion is possible, so long as our escape is mutually protected.

Lastly, away is indefinite, in that I can be away indefinitely. If I go to Schruns with my wife and my dog and I tell my friend that I am “going away,” then I cannot be found (assuming I have accounted for the obvious modern technologies that undermine this potential); I can stay away indefinitely. But if I tell my friend that I am going to Schruns, he can show up one day, impose himself on my vacation and effectively end my escape.

I.ix) The project

Hemingway’s escape plays with deployments of away on a textual level (that is on the level created by the act of reading) with these considerations in mind. As I have already attempted to describe, the aesthetic dimension of Hemingway’s work amplifies the experience of the reader toward the point of being there, but beyond this, his stories exemplify (that is, on a contextual level) a tendency toward escape as central to his artistic project.

Another purpose of my project then is to trace the manifestations of this tendency toward escape

across the writer's career. Broadly, Hemingway's escapism is positioned relative to larger social constructs and gradually shifts toward more intimate formulations. In fact my attempt to define Hemingway's *away* against formulations of revolution or even of collective causes is because of the relative position necessary for away to be realized. The natural extension of this formulation works to identify the intimacy implied and even demanded by the writer and the reader in the aesthetic dimension. And indeed there is an aesthetic, experiential aspect to the writing process, too. In short, I will argue that the interaction between the writer and the reader is the most intimate formulation in Hemingway's aesthetic, and I will work to trace the emergence of this position in Hemingway's work as the position of the writer as a character (or as a lifestyle) becomes the locus of Hemingway's final artistic focus.

Reading, Writing and Aesthetic Complicity

Section I) Hemingway, reading

II.i) The authenticity of the writer as reader, and avoiding bad faith

As I have already begun to argue, one of the key markers of Hemingway's escape ideal is his careful curation of the reading experience, and the way that Hemingway makes us *feel*, the *experience* of reading Hemingway — these are manifestations of the presence of Hemingway the reader in Hemingway the writer.

Hemingway was fascinated by aesthetic response. Fascinated. Recall his letter to his father after the publication of *In Our Time*: "You see I'm trying in all my stories to get the feeling of the actual life across – not to just depict life – or criticize it – but to actually make it alive. So that when you have read something by me you actually experience the thing" (qtd. in Tetlow 16). This simple notion defines Hemingway's entire aesthetic conception and cannot be stressed enough. Rather than focusing on style or styling, or any other discernible optic by which artists are often identified, Hemingway was concerned with the reader's aesthetic response. But figuring out how to generate that degree of response was not something that came automatically.

In *Death in the Afternoon*, which marks Hemingway's first active treatment of his own writing process, he describes his own struggle to write well about the things that he had seen in bullrings and war. What emerges is a belief that authenticity was key to generating real, meaningful experience for the reader.

> I was trying to write then and I found the greatest difficulty, aside from knowing truly what you really felt, rather than what you were supposed to feel, and had been taught to feel, was to put down what really happened in action; what the actual things were which produced the emotion that you experienced. In writing for a newspaper you told what happened and, with one trick and

> another, you communicated the emotion aided by the element of timeliness which gives a certain emotion to any account of something that has happened on that day; but the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion and would be as valid in a year as in ten years or, with luck and if you stated it purely enough, always, was beyond me and I was working very hard to get it. (*DIA* 1-2)

But even his realization that presentational purity, that "sequence of motion and fact" that generated "the real thing" and made lasting emotion, did not yield the aesthetic that he was after immediately. So, on the one hand, we should recognize Hemingway's pursuit of a degree of writing that had the potential to last—that had the potential to be truly meaningful. On the other, we ought to be acutely aware of the processes that took him there, namely because early in his career, Hemingway was as active a reader as he was a writer and he worked from a reader's perspective.

One of the ways that this position comes to bear most frequently is in Hemingway's treatment of other writers and artists. Not surprisingly, many of the more established figures from Hemingway's Paris days did not fare so well, perhaps simply because of the literary vogue that they helped to shape and perpetuate. When Hemingway lambasts Wyndham Lewis for putting on the act of artist in *A Moveable Feast,* he points to a disconnect between an established and commercially successful writer, and an authentic disposition—the essential bad faith, the existentialist cardinal sin (*Being* 71). For Hemingway, Lewis's presentation, like his writing, was style without substance. It was pure affectation.

> Wyndham Lewis wore a wide black hat, like a character in the quarter, and dressed like someone out of *La Bohème.* […] At that time we believed that any writer or painter could wear any clothes he owned and there was no official uniform for the artist; but Lewis wore the uniform of a prewar artist. It was embarrassing to see him…. (*MF* 96)

And Hemingway's disdain for affectation makes sense because affectation belies authenticity. For Hemingway, by simply putting on a recognizable presentation of the artist's appearance, as with Lewis here, or by simply remaking the same form, which Hemingway would attack relentlessly with Anderson, the artist had abdicated the potential of his position and his craft by refusing the reader the possibility of a new experience. Not surprisingly, Hemingway's presentation here conflates Lewis's presentation and his outdatedness. In the "uniform of a prewar artist" Lewis is "embarrassing." Situated against many of Hemingway's criticisms of other popular writers of the 1920's, we begin to understand that all of it, the outdated, affected style, and the implicit disconnect between these writers and their readers was the context for Hemingway's focus on the reader. Initially, the reader's position was far more significant than the writer's position, and this accords with the idea that reading has the potential to be experiential[11], but

[11] This idea also accords with the position of the Reader Response theorists. Wolfgang Iser writes, "In reading we are able to experience things that no longer exist and to understand things that are totally unfamiliar to us…"

only if the writer is willing to write true. In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway describes the kernel of his approach to writing as something that presupposes method because it was based on authenticity in presentation and critical respect for the power of the craft. “I would stand and look out over the roofs of Paris and think, ‘Do not worry. You have always written and you will write now. All you have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence you know’” (12). Consider this in the context of Gertrude Stein’s comments on Lewis later in *A Moveable Feast.*

> He comes over from London and he sees a good picture and takes a pencil out of his pocket and you watch him measuring it on the pencil with his thumb. Sighting on it and measuring it and seeing exactly how its done. Then he goes back to London and does it and it doesn’t come out right. He’s missed what it’s all about.(AMF 97)

As with Hemingway’s comments on Lewis’s “uniform of a prewar artist,” where the presentation of an imitation is a violation of the artist’s role, here again, the work itself—the art being produced around Hemingway was decidedly inauthentic.

In this sense, we may also better understand Hemingway’s scorn for Sherwood Anderson and the Chicago school characters. Hemingway writes that he often went to the Musée du Luxembourg “for the Cézannes and to see the Manets and the Monets and the other Impressionists” that he had “first come to know about in the Art Institute at Chicago” (*MF* 12-3). This is a point not to be missed in the context of *The Torrents of Spring* and Hemingway’s general disdain for the trend to prioritize impression, perhaps, over the potential reading experience. “I was learning,” he continues, “something from the painting of Cézanne that made writing simple true sentences far from enough to make the stories have the dimensions that I was trying to put in them” (*MF* 13). To be sure, Hemingway was going quite the opposite direction from Lewis and Anderson, effectually *toward* what “it’s all about.” In other words, what Hemingway was learning from Cézanne was precisely what the others were missing—that impression, or perhaps style, were hardly enough to generate the true and lasting emotion that he was after.

To this point, there is also something important to consider about the influence of painting on the development of Hemingway’s aesthetic. Hemingway claims in *A Moveable Feast* that he learned from looking at Cézenne’s work, and here we can also identify his emerging attempt to move beyond impression and into actual experience. “I was learning very much from him,” Hemingway writes, “but I was not articulate enough to explain it to anyone. Besides it was a secret” (*MF* 13). And indeed secrecy and the inarticulate become, not surprisingly, elemental in Hemingway’s writing, but in the context of Lewis and Anderson, the real significant implication here is that what Hemingway was learning was a secret. By extension then, it was not something easily reduced into a replicable form. It was fundamentally resistant to appropriation, and couldn’t simply be put on—it had to be earned. Later,

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(*Act* 19).

Hemingway writes that:

> You could always go into the Luxembourg museum and all the paintings were sharpened and clearer and more beautiful if you were belly-empty, hollow-hungry. I learned to understand Cézanne much better and to see truly how he made landscapes when I was hungry. I used to wonder if he were hungry too when he painted; but I thought possibly that it was only that he had forgotten to eat. It was one of those unsound but illuminating thoughts you have when you have been sleepless or hungry. Later I thought Cézanne was probably hungry in a different way. (*MF* 59)

Existential hunger marks that earning process. Physical want sharpens the senses and makes a higher level of meaning discoverable in Cézanne's work, but apart from the physical condition, Hemingway describes a secret shared experience; he hungry, looking; Cézanne, giving, forgetting to eat. Of course this position is imagined to some degree from Hemingway's position as a reader (of Cézanne, so to speak), though Hemingway's own concept of the reader-artist relationship demands a figuratively hungry reader by the simple corollary that the reader and writer must both rise to meet each-other's demands. When he later he writes that "you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood" (*MF* 64), we should be quick to recognize the emerging shape of Hemingway's aesthetic ideal. Hunger (the brand in play here clearly surpasses the physical, even if it is rooted in the physical), secrecy and the inarticulate can be shared, but only by a common experience. Fundamental to that sharing is authenticity on the part of the writer. The concept of *aficion* which emerges in *The Sun Also Rises,* for example*,* is the philosophical manifestation of this situation, and the honest reciprocity in the aesthetic experience becomes a subtle call in Hemingway's work for a confidant, for the sharing of the unspoken requires a complicit companion.

II.i) Influences

Reading *A Moveable Feast*, or any number of Hemingway's correspondences will quickly indicate the crucial relationship between Hemingway's developing aesthetic and his position as a reader. Though this position is often marked by an aggressive, combative or outright disdainful disposition toward other writers, we also discover tempered admiration in the presence of something Hemingway reads as different and meaningful. What we read, in short, is Hemingway studying the nature of the aesthetic dimension and the way that writing could be transportive, contextualized against a literary vogue that he had little use for.

As a reader, Hemingway was focused on affective (not affected) writing—writing that made something happen or took the reader with it. Hemingway's fascination with Dostoyevsky, for instance, despite the apparently unusual nature of his style, indicates Hemingway's willingness to consider reformulating his own writerly conventions in the service of his emerging aesthetic agenda. Troubled by Dostoyevsky, Hemingway decided to consult Ezra Pound concerning "what he really thought about Dostoyevsky." Pound, a man of stylistic conviction "who believed in the *mot juste* - the one and only correct word to use" and who would later teach Hemingway to be distrustful of adjectives and "certain people in certain situations" (118) stands in *A Moveable Feast* as both an arbiter of convention, and an advocate for the expression of artistic individuality. Hemingway writes, "I wanted his opinion on a man who almost never used the *mot juste* and yet had made his people come alive at times, as almost no one else did" (118). In short Hemingway was working out the distinction between style and the aesthetic on his way to really understanding the experiential possibility of reading. If Pound's edicts concern style, Dostoyevsky's writing presents an example where the reading experience can transcend stylistic concerns and produce a powerful interaction just the same. Over and over, in *A Moveable Feast* and in his letters and interviews, Hemingway's enthusiasm for some artists and his scorn for many others breaks along this line. He writes,

> In Dostoyevsky there were things believable and not to be believed, but some so true they changed you as you read them; frailty and madness, wickedness and saintliness, and the insanity of gambling were there to know as you knew the landscape of the roads in Turgenev, and the movement of troops, the terrain and the officers and the men and the fighting in Tolstoi. Tolstoi made the writing of Stephen Crane on the Civil War seem like the brilliant imagining of a sick boy who had never seen war but had only read the battles and chronicles and seen the Brady photographs that I had read and seen at my grandparents' house. (*MF* 117)

What had him with Dostoyevsky (and others) was the *experience of reading*, despite Dostoyevsky's apparent formal deficiencies; with painting the metric was the same, and the impact of Cézanne's work, not just the impression, but that hungry, inarticulate truth that really made it beautiful.

Notably, most of our best examples of Hemingway's early instructive processes come to us from work later in his career. Because of this, certain writers that Hemingway once held in high regard seem to get a rather dismissive treatment retrospectively, but what we do learn above all is that Hemingway had ruthless standards and unyielding opinions. Sometimes in reflections on his influences certain works stick around, though the artists don't seem to achieve Hemingway's high standard for comprehensive praise. E.E. Cummings *The Enormous Room*, for example, appears in Hemingway's letters, and in the unpublished addendum to "Big Two-Hearted River," "On Writing," but Cummings himself does not appear as one of Hemingway's greats. "Against this age, skyscraper primitives, Cummings when he was

smart, it was automatic writing, not *The Enormous Room*, that was a book, it was one of the great books. Cummings worked hard to get it" (*NAS* 239). What Hemingway lauds with *The Enormous Room,* then, is the hard work that he recognizes in its composition, not the figure of the artist. Other times, though far less frequently, certain artists stick around, as if their whole body of work is of a piece with their aesthetic. Rather than "being smart," it is this type of artist Hemingway was out to build in himself. His[12] fascination with Cézanne made a considerable impression on his writing.

> Nick knew just how Cézanne would paint this stretch of river. God, if he were only here to do it. […]
>
> Nick, seeing how Cézanne would do the stretch of river and the swamp, stood up and stepped down into the stream. The water was cold and actual. He waded across the stream, moving in the picture. […]
>
> He climbed the bank of the stream, reeling up his line and starting through the brush. He ate a sandwich. He was in a hurry and the rod bothered him. He was not thinking. He was holding something in his head. He wanted to get back to camp and get to work. (*NAS* 240)

This passage helps us understand the considerable impact of Cézanne with relation to Hemingway's own visualizations of his writing. Here, as he thinks about Cézanne's aesthetic, he moves into the picture he imagines. Even as he interacts with the stream, "cold and actual," he is consumed with an idea. Then, in seeing like Cézanne's painting, he has achieved the correct aspect and must write it. Perhaps the significance of this interaction lies simply in the distinction Hemingway identifies between the Chicago schooler's "impressions" and the possibility of "moving into the picture." In this particular encounter, the experience of art is in some way more real than the "cold and actual" river and whatever has been gleaned by this experience is enough to drive the writer back to his work, though what was gained remains inarticulate.

Thus from a higher plane, what emerges again and again in Hemingway's reflections on the art that impressed him is the power of his own aesthetic response. Though a "very shy" (*MF* 31) Hemingway first arrived in Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company hoping to bump into James Joyce, the Turgenev, *Sons and Lovers*, and *War and Peace* that he got instead ended up meaning much more to him. The reading experience (or, *looking at*, as the case may be with painting) is capable, if done correctly, of transplantation, not just impression. And a corollary to this formulation is an idea about aspects and presentational form. There are many ways to approach the subject, but the best work does it such that

[12] "On Writing" is a valuable piece of the Hemingway aesthetic puzzle, because it overtly substitutes Hemingway's autobiographical Nick Adams for Hemingway himself, definitively bridging that speculative gap and offering up some fine intimate details about Hemingway's relationship with aesthetics. Incidentally, I believe that the presence of this bridge between the character and the writer is probably the reason that Hemingway never submitted "On Writing" for print. Nevertheless, in calling himself Nick Adams, Hemingway gives away a great deal

instead of reading, you're moving. Instead of looking, you're leaving.

In *A Moveable Feast,* Hemingway writes of his early reading experiences after discovering the Russians, and the transportive and experiential textual potential that expanded his understanding of what reading could do:

> […] I had read all of Turgenev, what had been published in English of Gogol, the Constance Garnett translations of Tolstoi and the English translations of Chekov. […] I had been told Katherine Mansfield was a good short-story writer, even a great short-story writer, but trying to read her after Chekov was like hearing the carefully artificial tales of a young old-maid compared to those of an articulate and knowing physician who was a good and simple writer. Mansfield was like near-beer. It was better to drink water. […] To have come on all this new world of writing, […] was like having a great treasure given to you. […] There were always books, so that you lived in the new world you had found, the snow and the forests and the glaciers and their winter problems and your high shelter in the Hotel Taube in the village in the day time, and at night you could live in the other wonderful world the Russian writers were giving you. (117-8)

Notice again that Hemingway's encounters with Gogol and Tolstoi, Dostoyevsky and Chekov are not marked by observations about their technical characteristics or their style. Instead, the lasting impact of these writers lay in the transportive potential of the act of reading. At night, "the other wonderful world" is nothing if not an active escape. And in this particular passage, we also see a glimpse of the light cast through a crack in the door to Hemingway's ideal of away. It's a strange formulation, "winter problems"— as if by his very presence somewhere, even a very idyllic somewhere, the situation is fraught. But with the "other wonderful world" formulation Hemingway identifies a secret and intimate brand of escape that he himself would begin to focus on more and more as his writing developed, both as a contextual ideal and as an aesthetic feature. In other words, leaving one place for another by opening the flyleaf and choosing to join in is a notion that sticks with Hemingway and the idea that reading can either be near-beer or the real thing dominated Hemingway's conceptualization of the reader's experience.

But this is not to say that reading Turgenev in Austria manifest the mature Hemingway aesthetic spontaneously. His first full length publication *In Our Time*, for instance, relies heavily on conventional and presentational maneuvers to create a longing for escape, but rarely sees it realized contextually. While in its entirety, the project still marks a tremendously consistent aesthetic concept, it does not attempt to generate the sort of away that Hemingway describes with the Russians in Austria. A year later *The Torrents of Spring* would choose to parody, rather than beat a lesser writer and in this may be seen as markedly immature relative to Hemingway's full body of work. If anything, the contempt that Hemingway eventually expressed for nearly every writer he knew seems to stem from his conviction that

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about his own relationship to writing. See Chapter III.vii for a deeper consideration.

there was a real experiential level beyond style. He didn't want to be Mansfield's near-beer. And even the Russians that he loved eventually needed to be beat with a better brew.

II.ii) Faking bastards

In a 1925 letter to Fitzgerald, Hemingway offered a take on material and learning from other writers that bears out the kernel of his approach to writing as a reader. "I think you should learn about writing from everybody who has ever written that has anything to teach you[,]" he writes. "But what all these bastards do is learn certain concrete ideas that are only important as discoveries. Like if I were now, suddenly, to discover the law of gravitation" (*Letters* vol. 2 446). To the first bit, the idea of learning from anybody who has anything to teach you accords with early Hemingway's own practice. Stephen Koch claims that Hemingway was "probably the most dedicated writing student of all time"(14), and that dedication came largely in the form of reading. In *The Breaking Point*, Koch describes the relationship between a young Hemingway and a young John Dos Passos on their journey toward literary greatness. "Dos was twenty-eight; Hemingway all of twenty-five. They were going to teach each other to write. Hem had decided they should hone their prose by reading aloud from the King James Version of the Old Testament" (13). Elsewhere, Hemingway writes about the idea of "beating" the writers he admires. Asked "What books should a writer have to read?" Hemingway responds, "He should have to read everything so he knows what he has to beat" (Phillips 91-2). Pressed, "What do you mean 'has to beat'?," Hemingway responds, "Listen. There is no use writing anything that has been written before unless you can beat it. What a writer in our time has to do is write what hasn't been written before or beat dead men at what they have done" (Phillips 93). Curiously, Larry W. Phillips 1984 pre-chewed collection of Hemingway attributions called *Ernest Hemingway On Writing* excerpts the same 1925 letter to Fitzgerald, intentionally clipping the claws of the quote and rendering a line better suited to sell coffee mugs and tote bags at book stores than to contribute anything useful to our understanding of Hemingway. Phillips' edit reads like this: "I think you should learn about writing from everybody who has ever written that has anything to teach you" (91). But really it's the second bit, the bit Phillips didn't print, that informs the whole idea. Reading served an instructive function for the aspiring young writer, but coming into the most productive period of his career, it was his impassioned refusal to recreate the same forms, and his equal belief in finding the new ones that drive this idea about writing.

Perhaps this explains, in part, our treatment of *The Torrents of Spring*. Because *The Torrents of Spring* is a parody, it does not read like Hemingway. That is, it is built of neither "tough, terse prose," nor

the "iceberg technique" and its characters are not "men and women of courage and conviction."[13] Instead, *The Torrents of Spring* proposes a bewildered cast of characters steeped in child-like wonderment, unsuspecting, naive to an impossible degree, and absolutely incapable of living life instead of imagining it, and it populates them onto an America full of richness and possibility; adventure at the next railway siding, love at the next deli counter, true friendship with one-armed Indians, the rapturous arrival of the next literary magazine and its sure masterpieces, etc. Narrative pacing is clipped and looped by the ready deployment of false starts and restarts and characters who know nothing despite their age and experience demonstrate a pervasive lack of human grounding, reinforced by their willingness to slide from one moment to the next without referent, or their desperation to hold onto things that cannot be held. But *The Torrents of Spring* is a real treasure if we are willing to consider, not the Hemingway monument, but the Hemingway project. For my purposes, tracing the emergence of Hemingway's intimate escape aesthetic begins where Hemingway began, even if his negative moves do not accord with our popular image of the writer.

And indeed it seems that *The Torrents of Spring* has been actively buried out of a fear that a potential reader will take it seriously. The Scribner synopsis on the back cover of its 2004 paperback edition is quick to alert any potential reader about what it contains, suggesting that the novella is not Hemingway himself, but rather, Hemingway playing at something else:

> First published in 1926, *The Torrents of Spring* is a hilarious parody of the Chicago school of literature. Poking fun at that "great race" of writers, it depicts a vogue that Hemingway himself refused to follow. In style and substance, *The Torrents of Spring* is a burlesque of Sherwood Anderson's *Dark Laughter*, but in the course of the narrative, other literary tendencies associated with American and British writers akin to Anderson — such as D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, and John Dos Passos — come in for satirical comment. A highly entertaining story, *The Torrents of Spring* offers a rare glimpse into Hemingway's early career as a storyteller and stylist. (*TOS*)

But *The Torrents of Spring* is much more than simply a "hilarious parody." It points to something that Hemingway was working against, namely treatment of the same tired material with the same tired techniques. What I mean to stress is not simply that Hemingway imitated Anderson and company, but *why* he did it. Hemingway wrote about *The Torrents of Spring* at the end of 1925 in a letter to Ezra Pound.

> Have written a funny book. […] Probably unprintable but funny as hell. […] Wrote it to destroy Sherwood and various others. […] It is a regular novel only it shows up all the fakes of Anderson, Gertrude, Lewis, Cather, Hergo, and all the rest of the pretentious faking bastards. […] Its the funniest book I've read since Joseph Andrews. […] I don't see how Sherwood will ever be able to

[13] This description of Hemingway's characters is also found on the Scribner paperbacks from the 2000s.

> write again. (*Letters* vol. 2 422-3)

So, even though *The Torrents of Spring* is a stylistic outlier, it allows us to watch Hemingway watching other writers. For as much inspiration came to Hemingway from the Russians and Cézanne, it seems a great deal more came from his outright contempt for the literary vogue in 1925. Therefore, close attention to *The Torrents of Spring* offers a great deal of insight into not just Hemingway's mockery of Sherwood Anderson's style, but of his content, too.

II.iii) *The Torrents of Spring: A Romantic Novel in Honor of the Passing of a Great Race*; or "Anything might happen. But nothing really does."

With this in mind a reading of *The Torrents of Spring* beside *Dark Laughter* reveals a great deal about what Hemingway was out to reject. *Dark Laughter* reads like this:

> Bruce Dudley stood near a window that was covered with flecks of paint and through which could be faintly seen, first a pile of empty boxes, then a more or less littered factory yard running down to a steep bluff, and beyond the brown waters of the Ohio River. Time very soon now to push the windows up. Spring would be coming soon now. Near Bruce at the next window, stood Sponge Martin, a thin, wiry little old man with a heavy black mustache. Sponge chewed tobacco and had a wife who got drunk with him sometimes on pay-days. Several times a year, on the evening of such a day, the two did not dine at home but went to restaurant on the side of the hill in the business part of the city of Old Harbor and there had dinner in style. (Anderson 1)

And *The Torrents of Spring:*

> Yogi Johnson stood looking out of the window of a big pump-factory in Michigan. Spring would soon be here. Could it be that what this writing fellow Hutchinson had said, "If winter comes can spring be far behind?" would be true again this year? Yogi Johnson wondered. Near Yogi at the next window but one stood Scripps O'Neil, a tall, lean man with a tall, lean face. Both stood and looked out at the empty yard of the pump-factory. Snow covered the crated pumps that would soon be shipped away. Once the spring should come and the snow melt, workmen from the factory would break out the pumps from piles where they were snowed in and haul them down to the G. R. & I. Station, where they would be loaded on flat-cars and shipped away. Yogi Johnson looked out of the window at the snowed-in pumps, and his breath made little fairy tracings on the cold windowpane. Yogi Johnson thought of Paris. Perhaps it was the little fairy tracings that

reminded him of the gay city where he had once spent two weeks. Two weeks that were to have been the happiest of his life. That was all behind him now. That and everything else. (*TOS* 3)

From syntactical and grammatical maneuvers, to the relative proximity of the narrating to the narrative,[14] *The Torrents of Spring* highlights the pretentious and affected style of Anderson and company by amplifying the affects in *Dark Laughter.* Hemingway's play with Anderson's looming spring highlights the overwhelming stasis of Anderson's text. Two men looking out the window waiting for something to happen and drifting off into, not daydreams, but memories, immediately reinforce the absolute frozen nature of these lives. The promise of the thaw, which Hemingway highlights with his kinetic title, is perpetually unfulfilled.

Elsewhere, Hemingway frequently picks up constructions where Anderson undermines the promise of his own syntax,[15] such as his description of Sponge and his wife's routine ("This only happened in the spring, summer and fall and when the nights were fair and the fish biting") to focus the reader on the looping effect of Anderson's prose and amplify the sense that nothing is happening (Anderson 1). Hemingway writes of his own parody couple, Scripps and his Mancelona wife, "Sometimes they drank all night. Sometimes they drank for a week at a time. It did them good. It made Scripps strong" (*TOS* 4) The description of their drinking, announced by "sometimes" despite the syntactical evidence that a steady routine exists undermines the open construction it promises, and caps off the routine with benevolent proclamations ("It did them good. It made Scripps strong.") which ring false almost immediately, suggesting that either the narrator is as sentimental as the characters, or that the characters themselves are active participants in their own fecklessness.

Because the key marker of affectation according to Hemingway is an incipient discord between the promise of the text and its actualization—something akin to Existentialism's bad faith—Hemingway is relentless with his amplifications of Anderson's false starts and returns. Hemingway writes, "Could it be that what this writing fellow Hutchinson had said, "If winter comes can spring be far behind?" would be true again this year?" Yogi Johnson's active engagement with a rhetorical flourish from a "writing

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[14] (Genette 29) While Genette's *Narrative Discourse* does not factor heavily in my argument, here I do use his designations of narrative layers to identify the textual play between a very present narrator and the narrative in *The Torrents of Spring*. This distinction stands in stark contrast to Hemingway's non-parody prose, a point that Jonathan Culler identifies in his discussion of narrative focalization in his introduction to *Narrative Discourse*. In "*external focalization*," he writes, "the narrative is focused *on* a character, not through him. For example, in Hemingway's "The Killers"… we are told what the characters do but not what they think or see" (qtd. in Genette 11).

[15] This type of observation is a key critical maneuver in Fish's "Affective Stylistics." Fish highlights grammatical deep structures which "deliberately [frustrate] the reader's natural desire to organize the particulars" (135) of sentence to explore ways in which meaning can be affected by syntactical choices. While Fish pursues a different line, his point is well taken here in the context of the broader discussion about affectation and Hemingway's crusade against it. The exaggeration of the idea that the arrangement of words can undermine the natural delivery of meaning is part of Hemingway's work as a reader in his writing. Exposing this type of maneuver as "faking" gives us a clear referent by which to measure Hemingway's subsequent work.

fellow" about the coming of spring is nothing short of absurd in the context of a grown man looking out the window in late winter and wondering if spring will come. And the asking of questions becomes a textual whipping post for Hemingway as *The Torrents of Spring* unfolds.

> Scripps walked along [the street] toward the part of town where the pump-factory stood. At the door of the pump-factory he was embarrassed. Could this really be the pump-factory? True, a stream of pumps were being carried out and set up in the snow, and workmen were throwing pails of water over them to encase them in a coating of ice that would protect them from the winter winds as well as any paint would. But were they really pumps? It might all be a track. These pump men were clever fellows.
>
> "I say!" Scripps beckoned to one of the workmen who was sloshing water over a new, raw-looking pump that has just been carried out and stood protestingly in the snow. "Are they pumps?"
>
> "They will be in time," the workman said.
>
> Scripps knew it was the factory. They weren't going to fool him on that. He walked up to the door. There was a sign on it:
>
> KEEP OUT. THIS MEANS YOU
>
> Can that mean me? Scripps wondered. He knocked at the door and went in. (*TOS* 27-8)

In this narrative styling, the bewilderment of the character reinforces the affectation of the text. All that remains is the deployment of words to a minimum of experience, which naturally elevates the writer to the position of a performer, and minimizes the collaborative potential between the text and the reader. To amplify this, the parodic construction that Hemingway maintains runs in ceaseless loops, doubling back upon itself with such speed that it curtails the motion of the story to a maddening degree. There was a pump factory, could it really be a pump factory? Outside there were pumps, were they pumps? From the reader's perspective, Scripps's boundless naiveté and complementary suspicion don't offer a space for complicity either, they only distance the reader from the text, objectify it, and work to actively focus the reader's attention on the writer's next flourish. Faking bastards.

So a good deal of what we learn from the *Dark Laughter* parody amounts to a refusal on stylistic grounds, and reminds us of exactly that advice Hemingway wrote to Fitzgerald (less than a year before the publication of *The Torrents of Spring)*. Reliance on "certain concrete ideas" as opposed to "important discoveries" manifest in *The Torrents of Spring* as affectation, the true object of Hemingway's parody and identified by gratuitous Fielding epigraphs, explored cover to cover in the form and content of the novella.

The only source of the true Ridiculous (as it appears to me) is affectation.

HENRY FIELDING (*TOS 1)*

The epigraph to "Part One" identifies affectation as the source of the ridiculous; the text emphasizes the uncertainty and meaningless of its what's-it-all-about? musing, and the absurdity of the story itself, which depicts lives worthy of considerable scorn on account of their sheer stupidity, obliviousness, and utter lack of agency. These, and Hemingway's increasing use of textual asides in the form of an "Author's Note" (46), an "Author's Note to the Reader" (67), a "P. S.—From the Author to the Reader" (68), another "Author's Note to the Reader" (76), another "P. S.—To the Reader" (77), and finally, the "Author's Final Note to the Reader" (89), which asks, "Well, reader, how did you like it?" before going on to "just one place I would like to clear up" all serve as indictments of a self-conscious and impotent style, which, for Hemingway, is tantamount to fraud. (One might be reminded of Hemingway's portrait of Wyndham Lewis from *A Moveable Feast*.) And this fraud is manifest not in the writing, but in the *writing for*. *The Torrents of Spring* asks, why are we still writing like this? In Hemingway's conception, Newton's discovery of gravity was something, but subsequent returns were hardly anything at all.

And indeed another significant aspect of Hemingway's parody is his frustration with the deployment of ready-made forms. While we read Hemingway's obsession with the possibility of reading as experience in his letters, perhaps we read even more convincingly his dissatisfaction with the current state of literature (in English). To Fitzgerald he writes, "Did you ever read The Growth of the Soil? And then for Christ sake to read Thom Boyd" (*Letters* vol. 2 446). What Hemingway is excited about in Hamsun's *The Growth of the Soil* is the very thing that is lacking in Boyd's *Through the Wheat*, as if the Norwegian was on to something the American hadn't even begun to approach. *The Torrents of Spring* proposes a clear connection between the so-called fakers, from Anderson to Boyd, and the tired deployment of the same ready-made forms. Whatever it was that spoke to Hemingway in Hamsun was something felt, an aesthetic response, but the implication that Boyd's novel was far from the quality of Hamsun's points to Hemingway's concurrent complaint about the "much abused" (*Letters* vol. 2 446) American scene, as if America itself had become a cheaply deployed ready-made in the frequent service of the American literary vogue.

So, under Hemingway's pen, *The Torrents of Spring* works not only to expose the meaninglessness of reading Anderson and Boyd, but also their inability to bridge the gap from an older mode of symbolic, object-meaning marked by the tired deployment of ready-made forms, to the realm of the meaningful. Consider those sentimental asides about a "Great Race" of Americans in *The Torrents of Spring* that identify a pervasive sense of confusion, and work to reinforce an overwhelming sense of stasis:

> Henry James, Henry James. That chap who had gone away from his own land to live in England among Englishmen. Why had he done it? For what had he left America? Weren't his roots here?

> His brother William. Boston. Pragmatism. Harvard University. Old John Harvard with silver buckles on his shoes. Charley Brickley. Eddie Mahan. Where were they now? (*TOS* 38)

Scripps' inability to make sense of Henry James's behavior and the meaningless or inscrutable signs associated with him is only a single instance of the perpetual confusion that shades Hemingway's parodic characters an ineffectual hue. Indeed the entire non-Indian population of *The Torrents of Spring* is marked by its inability to make meaning of experience and its simultaneous vague sense that things (in this sense, objects and signs) are somehow important because America is at work being great. From soppy sentimentality—"'You are my man and more than my man.' She looked into his eyes. 'You are all of America to me'"(33)—to more vague notions of the significance of the times, *The Torrents of Spring* compounds its indictment of the state of American literature by parodying ineffectual literary style and suggesting that its proselytes are nearly incapable of *experiencing* anything.

These deployments that push America toward the ridiculous serve several functions in *The Torrents of Spring*, but the unification of the novel's population under a general reverence for the so-called great American writers is steadily punctuated by Scripps' bewildered musings: "The long black train of Pullman cars passed Scripps as he stood beside the tracks. Who were in those cars? Were they Americans, piling up money as they slept? Were they mothers? Were they fathers? Were there lovers among them? Or were they Europeans, members of a worn-out civilization world-weary from the war? Scripps wondered" (*TOS* 10). Scripps is marked by an overwhelming inability to make meaning, and he himself a published writer. His apparent lack of experiential philosophy results in perpetual confusion. "What for? Scripps wondered. What was it all about, anyway" (38)? "Who were these Indians? What did they mean to him" (58)? Other times, he is even suspicious of the reports of his own faculties.

> A man inside the station, tapping something back of a wicket window. He looked at Scripps. Could he be a telegrapher? Something told Scripps he was.
>
> He stepped out of the snow-drift and approached the window. Behind the window the man worked busily away at his telegrapher's key.
>
> "Are you a telegrapher?" asked Scripps.
>
> "Yes, sir," said the man. "I'm a telegrapher."
>
> "How wonderful!" (12)

Elsewhere, experience is inexplicable. "He felt vaguely mistrustful of himself. Something, somewhere was stirring inside of him" (36). "Something had stirred inside of him, some vague primordial feeling…" (78). "He had a new feeling" (79). "Something was pounding inside of him. Something he could not control. […] The thing was pounding away inside of him. It would not stop" (86). Then, in a sort of crescendo of bewilderment, Scripps is overcome by the nearing of a meaningful experience and the approach of a feeling.

> Mandy talking on. Telling literary reminiscences. Authentic incidents. They had the ring of truth. But were they enough? Scripps wondered. She was his woman. But for how long? Scripps wondered. Mandy talking on in the beanery. Scripps listening. But his mind was straying away. Straying away. Straying away. Straying away. Where was it straying? Out into the night. Out into the night. (87)

The parody is clear, but the criticism is crucial, too. Scripps's inability to connect with the meaningful, his inability to understand the "grand sweep to this America of ours" (53) and his belief in the importance of literature, but its substitution as anecdotes about writers and "literary reminiscences"—these presentations cut deep.

The Torrents of Spring argues that Anderson's *Dark Laughter* (among others) has moved beyond an older literary mode marked by the presence of symbolic meaning, but that it has not discovered anything better. It is this shift that Wolfgang Iser points to in his discussion of Henry James's 1896 "The Figure in the Carpet" which takes the outmoded "search for meaning" as its subject (*Act* 3).

> The implication here is that the search for meaning… is in fact considerably influenced by historical norms, even though this influence is quite unconscious. The hypostasis of historical norms, however, has always shown the extent of their inadequacies, and it is this fact that has hastened the demise of this form of literary interpretation. James's story directly anticipates this demise. (3)

Specifically, James' story illustrates the emergent disconnect between an outmoded critic, who cannot discover *the* meaning, as a definite, reducible, and thus appropriable object and the text itself. In place of that old notion of essential, object-meaning, the critic "is confronted by an empty space. And this emptiness cannot be filled by a single referential meaning and any attempt to reduce it this way leads to nonsense" (Iser 8). And according to Hemingway, that emptiness left after the departure of object-meaning in literature had not yet been sufficiently or satisfactorily filled by the established American writers. In that same 1925 letter to Fitzgerald, Hemingway bemoaned a literary scene marked by either subpar writers punching above their class, or literary giants failing their readers with sameness. He writes:

> Buddenbrooks is a pretty damned good book. If he were a great writer it would be swell. When you think that a book like that was published in 1902 and unknown in English until last year it makes you have even less respect, if you ever had any, for the people getting all stirred up over Main Street, Babbitt and all the books your boy friend Menkin has gotten excited about just because they happen to deal with the much abused Am[erican] Scene. (*Letters* vol. 2 446)

While James' critic searches for meaning as object, or meaning as puzzle key, Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, H. L. Menkin, Thom Boyd and the rest of the "faking bastards" have been unable to find what comes next, substituting a cheap brand of affection for something meaningful. This is why Hemingway's Scripps O'Neill is on the one hand, so perpetually bewildered, and on the other, so perpetually unable to articulate

himself. The gap left after the departure of essential object meaning in literature has not yet been filled by the *meaningful* potential of the reading experience.

The Torrents of Spring is an existential scream, then, on behalf of the reader. While I am not out to suggest that Hemingway single-handedly shifted literary Modernism, his protests against affectation, vapid form and self-congratulatory replication drove his serious (that is, non-parody) work and created an aesthetic that Scribner claims "did more to change the style of English prose than any other writer in the twentieth century" (*IOT).* But this change arrived in part by a refusal to write like Anderson, announced by a single attempt to write just like Anderson. If Scripps O'Neil was bewildered beyond hope, the literature that he was reading was only adding to the trouble.

On the one hand, Hemingway's response to his contemporary literary vogue paints a picture of a literature where nothing happens, and though figures and things may no longer mean anything, meaningful experience refuses to emerge. On the other hand, the relationship between literature and people was shifting from the other direction, too, evidenced by Hemingway's own experience reading the Russians in Austria— "the other wonderful world" (*MF* 118).

If, then, *The Torrents of Spring*'s construction is a fair characterization of the 1926 literary situation, Diana and Scripps are still manifestations of the "hypostasis of historical norms" and, like James's critic, cannot find meaning, though for them the move away from object-based meaning has been replaced by affectation which delivers neither meaningful *experience*, nor instructive *meaning*. This dynamic is reinforced by the endless reading and having of all the important literary publications.

> Diana subscribing for *The Forum*. Diana reading *The Mentor*. Diana reading William Lyon Phelps in *Scribner's.* Diana walking through the frozen streets of the silent Northern town to the Public Library, to read *The Literary Digest* "Book Review." Diana waiting for the postman to come, bringing *The Bookman*. Diana, in the snow, waiting for the postman to bring *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Diana, bareheaded now, standing in the mounting snowdrifts, waiting for the postman to bring her the New York *Times* "Literary Section." Was it doing any good? (43)

What's missing in the lives of these characters, and apparently in their literature, is *meaningful* experience. Even on the narrative level, *The Torrents of Spring* screams this. In the previous passage, Hemingway uses fragments to establish the reality of Diana's frozen life. The "Diana (something)-ing" constructions are snapshots. They're images. They have no inherent motion. Beyond this, Diana's stasis is reinforced to a comical degree by the "frozen streets" of a "silent town"; Diana "waiting", Diana "in the snow" (here, the prepositional phrase preempts the verb [which again is "waiting,"] such that the functional implied verb is simply the gerund form of existence, "being": Diana being in the snow), Diana "standing in mounting snowdrifts, waiting" (here, even weather has a more dynamic existence)—what is this then, if not a complete severance from that hypostasis of historical norms *and* a convincing demand

for meaningful experience in literature and in life?

Section II) The Hemingway Reader

II.iv) The Reader

The reader's experience, then, is the real thing with Hemingway. Recall his letter to his father once again:

> You see I'm trying in all my stories to get the feeling of the actual life across – not to just depict life – or criticize it – but to actually make it alive. So that when you have read something by me you actually experienced the thing. (qtd. in Tetlow 16)

Indeed a central pillar of my argument relies on the special relationship between Hemingway and the actual reader. As such, what I propose with specific reference to Hemingway does not apply to all. For the purpose of much of this argument, the reader is me, replete with my own degree of scholarship, as well as all my cultural conditioning, prejudices and predispositions, ignorances and hopes, inclinations and preferences—not the least of which includes an unabashed love for Ernest Hemingway. Of course, other readers are also capable of "experiencing the thing" in Hemingway, but not every reader will be able to approach the same degree of experience. In other words, the Hemingway reader is decidedly not a universal reader; instead Hemingway invites individual readers in whom the repertoire is sufficiently primed for complicity in the reading experience.

Repertoire essentially identifies commonality. From a formal theoretical position, the notion of repertoire in the context of reading is based on speech-act theory, and the general idea that the degree of shared situational or contextual commonality among communicants influences their ability to communicate. In Wolfgang Iser's work, the concept of the repertoire is foundational to the implied reader; that is, the reader that a given text was written for (*Act* 53 - 62), but Iser's work does not propose to address the interaction between the reader and the writer, only the reader and the text. For Jean-Paul Sartre, this idea is also central, though his concept moves beyond Iser's boundary of the reader-text interaction to identify a textually mediated dynamic between the reader and the writer himself. Not surprisingly, Sartre's formulation gets closer to the interaction that Hemingway's aesthetic creates, the selfsame interaction that I am out to identify. Sartre writes, "even if the author's aim is to give the fullest possible representation of his object, there is never any question as to whether he is telling everything. He knows far more than he tells" (*WiL?* 51). In other words, writers do not put down every single aspect of what they are writing. And this is based simply on the idea that the reader and writer will share a common

experience, or repertoire and thus the reader will be equipped to correctly identify textual indeterminacies himself. Sartre elaborates, "people of the same period and community, who have lived through the same events, who have raised or avoided the same questions, have the same taste in their mouth; they have the same complicity, and there are the same corpses among them" (51). Interestingly, Sartre's formulation both provides for a certain colloquial brand of writer-reader interaction, and introduces a notion that also seems to contradict my point about Hemingway's aesthetic. On the one hand, I have a great deal in common with Hemingway, and yet it may seem like I have far less than his contemporary reader. Indeed an extension of my argument here intends to identify Hemingway's continual appeal in the twenty first century. But while Sartre's formulation of complicity may seem to imply a requisite historical proximity, I would argue that the aspect of the "period and community" that I have lost generally speaking, are given to me in the Hemingway text, and the indeterminacies that I must recognize and fill relate instead to the escape that the Hemingway aesthetic idealizes. In other words, Hemingway's writing inverts the conventional repertoire deployment to some degree, to the ends that what the reader must bring to the text is a mutual desire to escape, not a mutual context to escape from.

Consider "On the Quai at Smyrna," "The Revolutionist," and "Cross-Country Snow" for instance, as early examples where the story's context is largely omitted, but the demand on the reader is not that he was present is Greece, Italy, Hungary or Switzerland, in these cases, but rather that he has found himself disoriented and hopeless in the face of the circumstance, temporarily hopeful on behalf of another, or measured his life backwards and forwards against the common referent of an old friend. This sort of reader dynamic is also proven, as it were, by the plural possessive in *In Our Time* which arranges those moments of war with moments of childhood, considerations of family dynamics, and longing and loneliness and sex and death to the ends that is it not simply the "our" of soldiers who went to war, but also of men who were boys and went fishing, went skiing, went train hopping, were in love, had children, were afraid, were alone and were there, in "our time" — just as intimate as can be. That is to say that "our" time can be both "our time"— all of us, or "our time"— you and me. This dynamic is also amplified by Hemingway's contexts which deal with what he called "the simplest things" in *Death in the Afternoon* (2). In this then complicity becomes extremely intimate as the reader and writer meet in the textual experience, despite (even in spite of) the social context which surrounds them.

II.vi) *Aficion* and context

In Our Time is the closest Hemingway gets to a universal reader (that is, a general reader, a reader

included in the "all of us" sense of the collective possessive) and this situation is generated by the universality of the war and the context of the young man's space. And still, the Nick Adams stories in *In Our Time* ask for a level of intimacy that the collection as a whole may not demand across the board. What the chapters do is reaffirm the inscrutability of the universal event of the Great War, and in its totality *In Our Time* can be read as the precipitating action for Hemingway's future moves toward a more perpetual away.

Another way to consider *In Our Time* is as the first work of a writer working to carve out an aesthetic space. In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway writes that he knew he "must write a novel" (*MF* 64), but he does not explain the impetus for this belief. I'd propose that when we consider the way that *In Our Time* is built, its fractured presentation is in some ways a defensive position to guard against a violation of intimacy by the universal reader (again, that general, mass market "all of us" reader). While the ideas of physical escape are already well-developed, Hemingway's short stories, which are characterized by their reliance on omission and the so-called "iceberg technique" to hide what really happens (*MF* 63) may be seen as part of Hemingway's defensive position. Robert E. Fleming suggests that "a problem of great personal significance to Hemingway" was the "balance which a writer must establish between the necessity to safeguard his own privacy" and "the necessity to treat his inner life if he is to produce honest and meaningful fiction" (10). Consider, then, that Hemingway's need to write a novel was born, at least in part, by his own desire to be able to establish a more exposed position in a longer narrative, and generate his emerging escape ideal more completely while at the same time calling for a more intimate reader. Along these lines, *The Sun Also Rises* may be seen to guard against too much exposure on the part of the writer by rendering Jake Barnes impotent to protect against scorn at his inability to have Brett. From behind this position, Hemingway was able to work out some of the other elemental pieces of his aesthetic, not simply the physical, textual escapes, but the intimate, textually mediated reader and writer escapes. Thus, relatively free from heavily domineering sexual-social expectations (including a potential homosexual panic[16]), Hemingway is able to expose secret fears and desires in his character to the reader who is equipped to understand them. Following this development, *A Farewell to Arms* offers what might be called Hemingway's first mature novel, in that he is able to incorporate both the sexual-textual love aspect of his character and the trans-textual reader-writer escape with the same degree of freedom.

Moving forward, Hemingway's aesthetic continues to formulate escape as an event that requires a companion, though the potential for companionship between the Hemingway character and his lover begins to slide into a more sequestered space as he simultaneously begins to increase the space for another, secret companion. In other words, Hemingway's characters never arrive at a happily-ever-after moment—Brett and Jake are doomed, Catherine Barkley dies, Harry Morgan dies, etc.— but the space for

the reader as an intimate companion continues to expand. Thus, the most important dynamic in Hemingway's work is actually the intimacy between Hemingway and his reader. And like Jake and Montoya in *The Sun Also Rises*, the reader must be just as passionate as the writer, and just as honest; an *aficionado*.

In *What is Literature?* Sartre proposes the liberating potential of literature in a formulation that relies on a mutual effort between the reader and the writer; a collaboration, a complicity. To this proposal, Sartre anticipates the sort of criticism that doubts the true freedom of the reading experience in the cynical formulation of the nonbeliever. If reading proposes a freedom in process, reading will either create a resentment of the writer, for his ability to give (and take) that freedom, or the anger of disappointment if the writer cannot deliver.

> 'Either one believes in your story, and it is intolerable, or one does not believe in it, and it is ridiculous.' But the argument is absurd because the characteristic of aesthetic consciousness is to be a belief by means of commitment, by oath, a belief sustained by fidelity to one's self and to the author, a perpetually renewed choice to believe. I can awaken at every moment, and I know it; but I do not want to; reading is a free dream. (37)

This is exactly the formulation that Hemingway understood as a reader and worked toward as a writer. But, with Hemingway, the freedom that Sartre describes, is better formulated as escape, because, if for no other reason, it cannot be sustained indefinitely, and it must be active, it must happen. It is not a state of being. I must choose to pick up the book and turn the page.

II.v) Complicity

Just like Hemingway's reading experience with the Russians in the mountains in Austria, that experience, that textually mediated complicity between the reader and the writer is the key to understanding Hemingway's continual appeal. If in reading I can experience the thing I have read, I will read, especially if that experience offers me an escape that is not possible for me apart from reading. But what makes reading capable of such an effect is far more than the pleasure (or horror, or boredom) of a story. The complicity that is so crucial to reading Hemingway is crucial because the experience is collaborative. When I read, I am not simply entertained, I am involved. Sartre describes the reciprocal dynamic of reading in relation to Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment.* Sartre writes:

> On the one hand, the literary object has no other substance than the reader's subjectivity; Rasholnikov's waiting is *my* waiting which I lend to him. Without this impatience of the reader

[16] See Sedgwick *Between Men*, especially pp.89-90

> he would remain only a collection of signs. His hatred of the police magistrate who questions him is my hatred which has been solicited and wheedled out of me by signs, and the police magistrate himself would not exist without the hatred I have from him via Raskolnikov. That is what animates him, it is his very flesh.
>
> But on the other hand, the words are like traps to arouse our feelings and to reflect them towards us. Each word is a path of transcendence: it shapes our feelings, names them, and attributes them to an imaginary personage who takes it upon himself to live them for us and who has no other substance but these borrowed passions; he confers objects, perspectives, and a horizon upon them. (*WiL?* 33)

It must not be a coincidence that Sartre and Hemingway both looked to Dostoyevsky as a model of high reader interaction. But as Hemingway explained, the writer's task is either to do something new, or to do something better. It is in this context that Hemingway's style comes into play. While the complicit reader dynamic is the real core of the Hemingway's aesthetic, two stylistic moves amplify its impact and render it a seemingly endless sticking point for the critic and reader alike.

First, Hemingway's prose avoids directive elements as much as possible. Adjectives and qualifiers, slang and other sorts of flourishes are kept to a minimum because they naturally undermine the reader's constructive agency in the reading experience[17] (*MF* 118; Phillips 81). And, simply put, in the absence of instructive qualifiers, creative demand continues to turn back to the reader on a high level. This relative textual sparsity then allows the reader to populate the narrative indeterminacies quite freely without the guidance of more overt directions. As per Iser's aesthetic response theory, these so-called indeterminacies are simply an inherent element in the reading experience born of the notion that since reading is a process of continually active construction, "the literary text has no concrete situation to refer to" (*Act* 66). In terms of aesthetic response, the reader actively works to fill these indeterminacies, and this is one of the primary roles of the reader. By extension, a higher incidence of indeterminacy can enhance the reader's participation in the text. And while this characteristic is applied by Iser to the reading experience generally, what I am stressing is Hemingway's intentional amplification of these indeterminacies by his purposeful refusal to deploy unnecessary directives to the reader. In other words, a distinguishing marker of Hemingway's writing is the degree to which it demands the reader create a great deal of his own experience. Or, perhaps more correctly, populate a great deal of his own experience into the act of reading. But the sparsity that is so often identified in Hemingway is the product of a deployment more

[17] For reference, consider Anderson's interjectory style, which not only deploys a domineering authorial voice, but which disrupts the flow of natural reading with stops and asides (and thus the liberating experience vis. Sartre, Iser and even Marcuse): "She had been that way since she was a kid, hadn't she"(3)?; "She made Sponge feel—Lordy"(3)!; "Then the grin had come. Often it knocked her off her pins for a whole day. She couldn't write a word. What a dirty trick, really"(79)!

deliberate than a simple refusal to say more. Hemingway's prose is always direct and precise, and the indeterminacies in the reading experience do not come from a presentational weakness, but from a carefully measured word-craft. What is given is given directly and cleanly. Consider the introduction to "The Battler":

> Nick stood up. He was all right. He looked up the track at the lights of the caboose going out of sight around the curve. There was water on both sides of the track, then tamarack swamp.
>
> He felt of his knee. The pants were torn and the skin was barked. His hands were scraped and there were sand and cinders driven up under his nails. He went over to the edge of the track down the little slope to the water and washed his hands. He washed them carefully in the cold water, getting the dirt out from the nails. He squatted down and bathed his knee. (*IOT* 53)

Not only do I (or Hemingway's implied reader) have a pretty good sense of what has happened, but my active construction is almost entirely unimpeded by the stage directions of adjectives or other qualifiers. What I know now I have constructed without a color code, as it were, and what I have built is populated entirely by what I bring to the text, aside from the necessary elements which I have been given to understand the action. Nick's looks, his clothes, his age, the time of day, the season, the weather, not to mention his general circumstances, the particulars of how he ended up in the sand and cinders of a railroad track, and so forth— these things I am left to create on my own, though I have been clued to some of these answers by the very nature of the textual presentation, and I will be corrected and redirected repeatedly as I move forward through the text (*Act* 35-38, 67).

I am startled by Nick's injuries in part because I understand that he was on the train just moments before I joined him, and I am compelled to be sympathetic because he is injured and because I cannot imagine a voluntary jump from a moving train just for kicks. And I realize that even if the jump was of his own volition, I would need to be a pretty good reason to jump from a moving train, and so I imagine that he would, too. The train rounds the corner. It is dusk, and summer because Nick notes the lights of the caboose as it rounds the corner, and summer seems to be the time to be train-hopping. This situation also explains our sudden arrival on the track embankment. The cuts on Nick's hands and knees reaffirm my feeling that he did not jump on his own. I assume that a jumper would make every effort to roll, and while injury would still be likely, cinders under fingernails suggest a defensive fall-breaking reaction, not a jump and roll.

Of course, these understandings happen immediately as I read; concurrently. I do not read like a forensic investigator. I know these things because I have the necessary repertoire. I can assemble this entire structure from my existing understanding (*Act* 24). I move quickly because the text allows me to by not telling me any more about what I have already been told. I also avoid unnecessary details because the text does. Nick's pants are not bluejeans, for instance. Or, perhaps they are. In my own reader's

experience, I do not attribute any specific pants to Nick, in part because Hemingway does not bring Nick's pants into focus. While I am certain that Nick is wearing pants—I am explicitly told that they are torn—I focus instead on his injury. And I do not have time to dwell on this detail precisely because instead of allowing my mind to wander in a narrative lull, Hemingway's pacing moves me forward. Instead, I remember the ginger handling of a freshly skinned knee, and the stinging pain of washing it clean. In this, I anticipate something the text does not need to elaborate upon, and forego an unnecessary focus on unnecessary details. The text moves quickly, so I do too, and that urgency keeps pulling me along. I am active and engaged, and I do not have time to wander.

On the narrative level, this approach to pacing and focus marked by a careful avoidance of distracting directives is one of Hemingway's signatures. The second involves more overt appeals to the reader, often as a second person:

> You know how it is there early in the morning in Havana with the bums still asleep against the walls of the buildings; before the ice wagons come by with ice for the bars? (*THHN* 3)

This, the opening sentence of *To Have and Have Not* is for me one of the most memorable lines in all of Hemingway, not for its beauty or poetry, but for the way that it makes me immediately complicit. Waring Jones suggests that this brand of appeal functions primarily to invite the reader. Picking up the notion of textual invitations in *In Our Time* heralded immediately in "Indian Camp" ("At the lake shore there was another rowboat drawn up" (15)), Jones identifies the double layer of motion in our complicity; not only is the textual invitation overt, but the immediate transplantation from where I sit and read, to where I join the story is abrupt and urgent, as with "The Battler." Jones continues, "Usually when some one tells me, 'You know how it is,' I want to cry out, 'No, I don't know!' With Ernest it is different—he rows us right into the experience with his details, and we are aboard and off. Then, when the story is over, we catch a glimpse of another ship, making its way on the horizon. So often as one trip ends he gives us these low-key evocations of a new one" (11). The complicity that Jones identifies demands the inherent escape of motion. As we enter the Hemingway construct we are transplanted and compelled forward.

What's more, this overt brand of direct appeal with the second person 'you' does not function to break the fourth wall the way that Hemingway's Andersonesque asides in *The Torrents of Spring* do, which destroy the active pace of the reading experience and make the reader aware of writer; this is interaction on an intimate level. And while this example is the most overt and arresting of Hemingway's second person inclusions, his frequent use of the interactive second person pronoun continues to speak to the intentional presence of the reader as an active individual participant.

Elsewhere, the reader's complicity is not to such exhilarating ends. While the feeling of being along for the ride in *To Have and Have Not* is of a piece with a later Hemingway (whose writing begins to become more withdrawn and personal for various reasons—celebrity for example—which I have begun

to explain, and will continue to expand upon), earlier in his writing, namely *In Our Time,* a less welcoming sense of complicity amplifies the power of Hemingway's generational portrait. Even before the inviting second rowboat from "Indian Camp" echoes Frost's pastoral "You come too" (Jones 11) convocation, "On The Quai at Smyrna" makes 'you' complicit in an overwhelming sense of confusion:

> You remember the harbor. There were plenty of nice things floating around in it. That was the only time in my life I got so I dreamed about things. You didn't mind the women who were having babies as you did those with the dead ones. They had them all right. Surprising how few of them died. You just covered them over with something and let them go to it. They'd always pick out the darkest place in the hold to have them. None of them minded anything once they got off the pier. (*IOT* 12)

There is not an invitational question here, like in *To Have and Have Not.* Instead, I remember the harbor. I do not have a say in the matter, and that I do not, in truth, remember the harbor generates its own powerful amplification of the story's overall urgent inscrutability. I am complicit without understanding. Functionally, "On The Quai at Smyrna" establishes a tone for *In Our Time* and serves to bridge the focal gap between the collection's chapters, which generally assume a similar, inscrutable tone and focus on moments of war, and its stories which, like "Indian Camp" again and again provide a participatory, motion-based escape experience. But what the narrative deployment of the direct appeal in "On the Quai at Smyrna" does is to reinforce the collective possessive of the collection's title. "Our" time, is a shared space, and the collection's cross-cutting between startling moments of war and conflict, and intimate experiences of escape draw on the more collective consciousness of the 'you' that belongs with 'our' in the chapters, and the intimate 'you' that also belongs with 'our' in, say, "Soldier's Home" or, "The Three Day Blow."

Elsewhere, direct appeal to the reader emerges as an intimate position defined by the context of the narrative. This type of secret or shared understanding essentially forms an intimacy that itself functions like 'away' by suspending the reader and the character in a certain space that separates them from the broader social context. Consider the early emergence of this sort of position in *The Sun Also Rises*, where it is only the reader that has full access to Jake, even amidst the novel's complex social dynamics, thanks in part to the novel's first person narrative, and a single, well-placed conversational "you" which spins the entire story toward confession. Giving his introduction to the character of Robert Cohn, Jake explores his perception of Cohn's naiveté in a formulation that not only acknowledges the reader, but makes him a confidant:

> For a man to take it[18] at thirty-four as a guide-book to what life holds is about as safe as it would

[18] W. H. Hudson's *The Purple Land;* lascivious, apparently. "It recounts splendid imaginary amorous adventures of a perfect English gentleman in an intensely romantic land, the scenery of which is very well

> be for a man of the same age to enter Wall Street direct from a French convent, equipped with a complete set of the more practical Alger books. Cohn, I believe, took every word of "The Purple Land" as literally as though it had been an R. G. Dun report. You understand me, he made some reservations, but on the whole the book to him was sound. (*SAR* 17)

"You understand me" not only places Jake and the reader on an equal footing concerning Cohn's response to *The Purple Land*, it also is a conversational maneuver which renders this single example synecdoche and endears us to Jake by leveraging a mutual perspective of Cohn. But this complicity hardly stops at cutting Cohn, and given the confidential tone by which the reader is directly summoned, all future narrating is done to the reader specifically.

But complicity with the reader is not only dependent on direct appeals. What Hemingway does with the Nick Adams stories, wherein the sparsity of the narrative deployment garners a high degree of active reader participation, he takes to a higher level when he begins to address the writer as a character. *The Garden of Eden* makes the reader an intimate confidant relative to the writer's lived situation. Like Jake Barnes, David Bourne's unspoken life is accessible, but unlike Jake, David's work as a writer becomes the aspect of his life that he must defend against his increasingly destructive wife. By positioning fraught physical intimacy with Catherine as just one side of David's human needs, the emotional intimacy that he increasingly lacks with his wife is increasingly found in his writing, which, like *In Our Time's* "Big Two-Hearted River" is able to summon or reconstruct an escape space from an intimate past experience, not because the remembered experience was an escape, but because the (re)construction of writing wrests the vulnerability of the original experience from it, and offers it to the reader. For the reader reading *The Garden of Eden*, access to the emotional needs of the character of the writer and a view of the importance of the reader's role in the life of the writer works to endear the reader to the writer, and the aesthetic space they share is compounded by pass-through passages[19] which make the Hemingway reader the David Bourne reader, and blur the boundary between their texts, amplifying the creative agency of reader and writer, and minimizing the value of external, that is non-aesthetic spaces, as David's writing becomes more and more necessary for him though the development of *The Garden of Eden*.

Beyond this, *The Garden of Eden* also considers the reader's proximity to the writer within the aesthetic plane, idealizing a reading experience that brings the reader so close to the experience of the narrative, that the distinction between the two disappears altogether.

> It was not him, but as he wrote it was and when someone read it, finally, it would be whoever

described" (*SAR* 17).

[19] I will return to this concept again in the final chapter. Essentially, a pass-through passage moves the reader's perspective from one "place" to another seamlessly without any discernible transition. Hemingway also makes use of this maneuver several times in *A Moveable Feast*, but in *The Garden of Eden*, its affect summons a direct consideration of the transportive nature of the act of reading in intimate connection to the act of writing, and against

> read it and what they found when they should reach the escarpment, if they reached it, and he would make them reach its base by noon of that day; then whoever read it would find what there was there and always have it. (*GOE* 129)

Several dynamics contribute to reader complicity here. First, structurally, the reader is reading a writer (who is not Hemingway) discussing the emotional intensity of an experience, which will be a simultaneous discovery for both. In this position, the two are separate, but completely harmonious. Second, the reader is aware of being privy to an aesthetic formulation idealized by Hemingway himself, and thus draws closer to him in the way that what is written here is also an intimate exchange that speaks to the very heart of intimacy in his own interactional conception. Third, David understands the reader dynamic as fundamentally active, but, significantly, while even the writer knows the way, as it where, neither the writer nor the reader know what they will find when they get there. This is a crucial aesthetic development in the Hemingway context, because it overtly imagines a complicit escape based on a formulation of away which is inherently unspoilable, precisely because neither the writer nor the reader can say exactly where they are going, but they are certainly going together, motivated by the same motion, and bound by the same intention: to get there. If we then consider the context of *The Garden of Eden*, Catherine's self-destruction and the crumbling intimacy between she and David serves to amplify the acknowledged complicity between David and his reader, and the reader and writer share an escape in spite of the encroachment of David's life beyond the text.

II.viii) Hemingway's demands

What does Hemingway demand of his reader then? He demands emotional complicity, and an ability to see clearly. He demands a certain fearlessness. In "Beating Mr. Turgenev: 'The Execution of Tropmann' and Hemingway's Aesthetics of Witness," Mark Cirino suggests that Hemingway's so-called "aesthetics of witness" demands that the artist "witness violence in all of its horror", "observe even the most minute details that may challenge one's humanity," and "render that scene with an accuracy that not only inspires emotion, but conveys authenticity" (32). Though Cirino's essay largely works to polish the Hemingway monument, his idea of presence, what he calls "witness," is right on in terms of the Hemingway reader if we consider the significance of Hemingway's focus on aesthetic response. After all, the intimate and complicit relationship between the writer and reader is based entirely on a mutual willingness to give to one another, measure for measure (*WiL?* 38). While Cirino's "aesthetics of witness" is a static formulation built on a misreading that takes the event itself as the focus of Hemingway's

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the encroachment of the non-aesthetic plane beyond the text.

aesthetic, the idea of witness may be more correctly applied if we consider the active nature of witness and the complicity therein. If the reader is able to watch and not look away, then the reader will both understand, and *feel* the beauty of the experience. Like the bull and the bullfighter, reading Hemingway requires a dangerous intimacy, and an ability to cross into the terrain of the other. In *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway writes:

> In bull-fighting they speak of the terrain of the terrain of the bull and the terrain of the bull-fighter. As long as a bull-fighter stays in his own terrain he is comparatively safe. Each time he enters into the terrain of the bull he is in great danger. Belmonte, in his best days, worked always in the terrain of the bull. This way he gave the sensation of coming tragedy. People went to the corrida to see Belmonte, to be given tragic sensations, and perhaps to see the death of Belmonte. Fifteen years ago they said if you wanted to see Belmonte you should go quickly, while he was still alive. Since then he has killed more than a thousand bulls. (217-8)

Here we can see a clear parallel between the writer and the bullfighter. What he does is beautiful in part because it is so dangerous to be so exposed. But when we understand that the beauty comes from the exposure, we are captivated. We want to see action. We want to see the event play out. We feel the "tragic sensation" because we watch the fighter close to death. Of course, the bull can be may things, and like Belmonte, Hemingway will stand in the ring with thousands of proverbial bulls. The danger is in dealing with all those matters of the soul, those existential moments that define a life. What Hemingway demands then, is a witness, yes, but not a static watcher. This is not merely a man in the crowd around the gallows, this is Jake and Brett at the bullring in Pamplona.

> I sat beside Brett and explained to Brett what it was all about. I told her about watching the bull, not the horse, when the bulls charged the picadors, and got her to watching the picador place the point of his pic so that she saw what it was all about, so that it became more something that was going on with a defiant end, and less of a spectacle with unexplained horrors. I had her watch how Romero took the bull away from the fallen horse with his cape, and how he held him with the cape and turned him, smoothly and suavely, never wasting the bull. […] She saw how close Romero always worked to the bull, and I pointed out to her the tricks the other bull-fighters used to make it look as though they were working closely. She saw why she liked Romero's cape work and why she did not like the others. (*SAR* 171)

In a sense, the witness is intimate to a degree that even the participants are not, for the bull has his moves, and the fighter has his own, and each sets about his work. But the witness is there, ready to love the fighter, and perhaps the bull, too, if there is beauty in their work. If the interaction is honest it will be dangerous and it will be beautiful. If the witness is able to see the steps and follow the line, that "absolute purity of line" (*SAR* 171), then the writer is able to leave out the things that do not need to be written and

in that absence, make "people feel something more than they [understand]" (*MF* 64*)*. This experience is purely aesthetic. More importantly, what matters is the motion, the interaction, the steps. Killing the bull, or being killed by it, for that matter, is the part we already know.

But, the thing that is unwritten can only be beautiful if the reader is able to sense that it is there, and it is this that separates the Hemingway reader from the people in the crowd around the gallows. In Hemingway's reader, there is a witness, surely, but that witness must be as active and mobile as the writer and the writing, and he must be equipped well enough to follow along. In "Fathers and Sons" Hemingway writes, "when you have shot one bird flying you have shot all birds flying. They are all different and they fly in different ways but the sensation is the same and the last one is a good as the first" (*MWW* 166). The Hemingway reader must then be able to remember the sensation of shooting a bird flying, so to speak, because the intimacy of the reading experience will always rely on a sense of something, not just a presentation of the thing itself. This dynamic is also the mechanism of escape in Hemingway's writing. That aesthetic space, that sensation, the feeling of shooting a bird flying, it comes with the shooting of every flying bird, even though they are all different. The sensation I have as a witness is my own. It is my fear, my anger, my love. I am like Sartre with Rasholnikov, over and over again. And just as Hemingway writes that in writing he could "[get] rid of things"(*MWW* 160), in reading him, there in the bullring with his absolute purity of line, we share a sensation, and though we may be shooting different birds, and we both get rid of things together. In this, we share an escape.

Writing Escape

Section I) Premise

III.i) "the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion..."

Of course, these considerations of the reader's position and textually mediated aesthetic dimension count for very little if we do not take writing itself into consideration. Recall again the opening passage from *Death in the Afternoon*: "I was trying to write then and I found the greatest difficulty [...] was to put down what really happened in action; what the actual things were which produced the emotion that you experienced" (*DIA* 1-2). Hemingway's consideration of how to write begins in a place often bound up in the broader cultural sense of him; his project was simply to witness death in the bull ring and to learn how to render it effectively. His subject was primal. Death and dying as subjects fall squarely into the discussion of Hemingway's masculine writing, and his own stated goal of learning how best to present them fits just as easily into the discussion of Hemingway as a stylist. And this passage reveals that at the time he was possessed of the idea that what he was after was simply a matter of presenting his subject as it really was, beginning with those simple things. But, editorially, as *Death in the Afternoon* looks back on a time that predated or was contemporaneous with the period described in *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway clarifies the element of motion necessary to endow his writing with the degree of vivacity he was seeking. He writes that, at the time "the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion [...] was beyond [him] and [he] was working very hard to get it" (*DIA* 1-2).

When I introduced this passage in the previous section, my focus was on Hemingway's mandate of authenticity, but rolled up with that authenticity was also a consideration of subject and how best to present it. Though the "sequence of motion and fact" that Hemingway identifies seems impossible to separate entirely from the wholeness of his aesthetic, it is necessary to consider his subjects and contexts to understand the shifting nature of his escape formulations and to demonstrate that escape was, in fact, a central element in his artistic project. So, though my attempt to consider what is being addressed separately from how it is being addressed is admittedly artificial, it is also useful once we consider that for Hemingway it was the "motion and fact" that formed the impetus for a story.

In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway discusses how an encounter with a reader demonstrated to him the potential power of his own aesthetic and taught him that he was capable of generating an aesthetic

response that had a real, visible emotional impact:

> […] Then, when he read the story, I saw that he was hurt far more than I was. I had never seen anyone hurt by a thing other than death or unbearable suffering except Hadley… (*MF* 63)

In addition to Hemingway's description of the emotional impact of the story, we should recognize the way that Hemingway characterizes the story itself. While "My Old Man" does end with death, the death of the father is an anticlimax positioned against the story of a life told by a son, and this does not necessarily accord with Hemingway's contemporaneous notions concerning subject and presentation. The death is witnessed from afar, and by Hemingway's own criticism of the representative "blurs" of death in literature, "My Old Man" certainly does not offer a vivid alternative. Indeed, by Hemingway's description, the story is little more than a remnant — some vestigial thing from another time. But seeing his reader (Edward O'Brien) "hurt" by the story seemed to endow Hemingway with a sense of awe at the power of his own craft, even though the subject of "My Old Man" was not "death or unbearable suffering." What mattered was O'Brien's response. Then, as Hemingway tells it, this encounter affirmed his understanding of the aesthetic dynamic that would become the premise for his principle of omission, and allow him to find the aspect he was looking for in both *Death in the Afternoon* and early in *A Moveable Feast*.

Considered in conjunction with Hemingway's work to learn to "put down what really happened" described in *Death in the Afternoon*, we may begin to understand the writer's position in the reader/writer dynamic and the textually mediated complicity between the two. What was eluding Hemingway early was not simply a meaningful subject, but a presentational aspect. And this is exactly what Hemingway was identifying with his considerations of Cézanne in *A Moveable Feast* when he wrote: "I was learning something from the painting of Cézanne that made writing simple true sentences far from enough to make the stories have the dimensions that I was trying to put in them… but I was not articulate enough to explain it" (13). Now this is not to say that after his discovery of the relationship between omission and aesthetic impact, Hemingway abandoned death and other "unbearable suffering" entirely. He did not. Instead, this is to say that his sense of context loosened around the discovery that he could leave things out to get a stronger response, and that the seat of this affect was in the motion, the action around the event, but rarely in the event itself. Put another way, the "sequence of motion" seems to have become more significant than the "fact".

In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway recalls "a very simple story called 'Out of Season'… I had omitted the real end of it which was that the old man had hanged himself. This was omitted on my new theory that you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood" (*MF* 63- 64). Incidentally, this idea of omission relies on the concepts of repertoire and textual indeterminacy that Wolfgang Iser identifies (*Act* 53, 20).

The exact reason that O'Brien was "hurt" reading "My Old Man" may be impossible to identify explicitly, but it is certain that what leveraged that emotional response was the complicity garnered by a common repertoire between O'Brein and the text, and the textual indeterminacy that encouraged him to populate his own experience into it. As such, what is not in the text becomes a central aspect of the Hemingway reading experience, and learning to write what wasn't there seems to be the key to what Hemingway was looking for when he was considering Cézanne in Paris, or bullfights in Spain for that matter. Consider again that these indeterminacies create the possibility for a collaboration and a complicity with the reader that is able to feel what is there, even if something important is not given.

If we consider that "Out of Season," for instance, avoids "the real end of it which was that the old man hanged himself," we can see how Hemingway's writing works to invite the reader, and simultaneously expand the affect of the aesthetic experience, even if the situation does not provide for the same high degree of reader intimacy that characterizes the Nick Adams stories, or much of the rest of *In Our Time,* for that matter. With "Out of Season" the context of the tension between the young couple is buried by Peduzzi's desperation, though as the day unfolds, Peduzzi's frenetic and pathetic presence works to against like a foil. Though the young couple get along well enough, we know that they had a dispute at lunch, and as the girl, Tiny, eventually turns back from their ill-fated fishing expedition, the gentleman's enthusiasm for fishing is supplanted by his unwillingness to concede to the mounting evidence that he is being taken advantage of at the hands of an incompetent drunk. In effect, the story ends in a dark sense of relief, though this relief amounts to little more than a sense of escape from an uncomfortable situation. But a sense that everyone has lost something is made more sombre by the disproportionate magnitude of what has been lost. For the couple, a lost day pales in comparison to the immediacy of Peduzzi's situation, though the sense of good riddance that punctuates the story exposes a discord that unsettles us even if we do not read "the real end of it" where Peduzzi hangs himself. We identify with the young couple for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the narrative attribution which spins Peduzzi toward the absurd, but keeps the couple on a level footing. And though we do not see that this ends up being the old man's last day, we feel the intensity of his desperation as he waxes ecstatic over the prospect of a bottle or a payment. What is at stake for the young gentleman is trivialized relative to the old drunk. The "wonderful day"(102) and the "living"(103) that Peduzzi feels is predicated on the young man's tolerance, which itself is built on the context of the young couple's vacation. For the young couple, humoring Peduzzi is little more than annoyance, but for Peduzzi, it is 'life opening out"(103). By the same disparate math, the end of the young man's patience is for Peduzzi suicide, apparently. But, even without the omitted suicide, the scales by which the characters take their measure of the day create a powerful dissonance that we can feel. And this is not to say that the story carries even the faintest whiff of sanctimoniousness; it simply provides an experience that is sad because it is inevitable, and affective

because it is relatable, if not for the specific context, for the relational dynamic. What becomes of Peduzzi, and the couple for that matter, is written by the trajectory established in the story, even if we do not see "what really happened."

Here then, we must return to *Death in the Afternoon* once more because it is important to pick up the line that Hemingway establishes with the opening passage of his bull fighting and writing manifesto. Simply put, his original stated goal of learning to write the simplest things does not last, and the dynamic that Hemingway discovers in the complex play of life and death in the bullring is much more significant if we are to follow the development of Hemingway's aesthetic.

> The only place where you could see life and death, *i.e.* violent death now that the wars were over, was in the bull ring and I wanted very much to go to Spain where I could study it. […] I had read so many books in which, when the author tried to convey [death], he only produced a blur, and I decided that this was because either the author had never seen it clearly or at the moment of it, he had physically or mentally shut his eyes, as one might do if he saw a child that he could not possibly reach or aid, about to be struck by a train. In such case I suppose he would probably be justified in shutting his eyes as the mere fact of the child being about to be struck by the train was all that he could convey, the actual striking would be an anti-climax, so that the moment before the striking might be as far as he could represent. (*DIA 2*)

Hemingway's point about the anticlimax of the "actual striking" is extremely important. Already, the idea that he must write death itself begins to realign considering the way that bearing witness is limited by the position of the witness. Hemingway continues:

> So I went to Spain to see bullfights and to try to write about them for myself. I thought they would be simple and barbarous and cruel and that I would not like them, but that I would see certain definite action which would give me the feeling for life and death that I was working for. I found the definite action; but the bullfight was so far from simple and I liked it so much that it was much too complicated for my then equipment for writing to deal with…. (*DIA* 3)

So we see that those initial ideas about writing simply and truly begin to change as the writer begins to focus more on the nature of the "definite action" he was looking for. What changes is not the nature of the actual moment of death, but, in bullfighting terms, the "definite action" of life that surrounds it and builds up to it. And this impression sticks with Hemingway. In "Indian Camp" a young Nick Adams asks his father:

> "Is dying hard, Daddy?"
>
> "No, I think it's pretty easy, Nick. It all depends." (*IOT* 19)

Like the bullfights and like O'Brien with "My Old Man," what "hurt" was not the subject of the story so much as the "sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion" (*DIA* 2) and the reader's

connection to it. Furthermore, while Hemingway's early idea may have been to learn to write a more vivid death, death is, after all difficult for a reader to comprehend as an impact point. As with Hemingway's hypothetical child death, the witness to death can do nothing, so the death itself is really an anticlimax, though the life just before it is the space of intense emotional experience.

In short, what is given is often circumstance or a position relative to a broader context, and what must be inferred or understood is the action around it. This is the reason for Hemingway's characteristic bathos, especially in his short stories. What happens, as it were, is often of secondary importance to how or why it happens. What I mean to identify here is the way that, though death or other primal subjects may still be the intentional anchor for the story, the death itself is not the most significant aspect of the story. Nor is the "fact" itself, necessarily. As such, the aesthetic context of "My Old Man" and "Out of Season" is the emotional element that goes far beyond just bearing witness to an event, and the thing that Hemingway claimed to be trying to work out in *Death in the Afternoon* was perhaps exactly this: that his writing did not necessarily need to bear witness to the "simplest things," "violent death" (*DIA* 2) or any of the other "sorts of stuff" (*Letters* vol. 2 446*)* brought out by war, if only for the sake of presenting them well. Instead, it needed to find the aspect that made those things meaningful "and [made] the people feel something more than they understood" (*MF* 64).

It is this dynamic at work in "Out of Season." And this is really what I'm getting at when I claim that Hemingway's degree of complicity with the reader is based on an inversion of a more recognizable model of repertoire deployment in fiction, though admittedly, "Out of Season" does not offer the best example of complicity in the Hemingway aesthetic. But we should bear in mind that "Out of Season" is one of Hemingway's earliest stories, and though it is useful to demonstrate the aesthetic value of Hemingway's developing theory of omission, in many ways it is uncharacteristic of Hemingway's more mature style. Of course we must also recognize that the development of Hemingway's aesthetic was not as simple as a single epiphany watching Edward O'Brien read "My Old Man." Furthermore, the discoveries traced in part by *Death in the Afternoon* and *A Moveable Feast* were more or less contemporaneous and predated the 1925 publication of *In Our Time*. But Hemingway's writing matured quickly, and even *In Our Time* includes many stories which are marked not only by Hemingway's discovery of the presentational aspect explored here, but also the amplification of reader complicity that quickly became the central aspect of his aesthetic.

III.ii) Escape in context

To expand the consideration of Hemingway's contexts and subjects, return again to his letter to

Fitzgerald from 1925. Hemingway pokes at Fitzgerald, “Want me to write you a little essay on The Importance of Subject? […] Well the reason you are so sore you missed the war is because war is the best subject of all. It groups the maximum of material and speeds up the action and brings out all sorts of stuff that usually you have to wait a lifetime to get” (*Letters* vol. 2 446*).* What comes to bear here, broadly, is not simply that war makes for good “material,” but that context is of first importance. Hemingway continues: “What made 3 Soldiers a swell book was the war. What made Streets of Boston a lousy book was Boston. One was as well written as the other” (446). Hemingway’s position in this letter reminds us of his realization in *A Moveable Feast* that simply writing true was not enough. For Hemingway, contextual experience was of foremost significance and that experience itself can be based on “all sorts of stuff.” If we consider his denunciatory positions toward Anderson, the Chicago schoolers, and the “much abused American scene,” it is not a stretch to image the sort of contextual positioning Hemingway had in mind, even before we begin to consider his work. Aside from the decidedly bad writing that plagued Hemingway’s contemporary scene, the scene itself was tired. While war provided fodder for fresh contexts, beyond the war, we can be certain that Hemingway was looking to escape the tired streets of Boston, literally. If anything, what war, or bull fights, or hunting expeditions had that Boston did not, was a contextual openness that was desirable and inviting. The newness or excitement of the situation itself worked in conjunction with the aforementioned aesthetic techniques to enhance the reader’s participation, and maximize the feeling of being transplanted there.

In this way we may consider the Hemingway escape aesthetic not simply by the affect of his writing and the complicity generated by his brand of textual indeterminacy, but also in context. Earlier work, such as *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises* makes the physicality of the context centrally important, such that Hemingway’s early work often pairs physical or recognizable motion-based remove with his intentional brand of textual indeterminacy and repertoire deployment to appeal to the reader. *In Our Time* presents numerous instances where escape is located in physical remove, usually in direct opposition to the forces of a broader social affliction, a position punctuated by Hemingway’s relentless accusation of the meaninglessness of frozen lives in *The Torrents of Spring.* And a similar formulation emerges in *The Sun Also Rises,* which is built on locational distinction that juxtaposes life in Paris and life in Spain to amplify the novel’s considerations of authenticity and intimacy (Müller 31). Not surprisingly, these contextual considerations are at the crux of their respective textual experiences.

But while contextual formulations which are based on physical movement or are relative to place characterize Hemingway’s work broadly, subtler escape contexts quickly emerge, and eventually present themselves as the most important contextual aspect of Hemingway’s stories. In other words, the locations of Hemingway’s escapes are not always places but perhaps more correctly, spaces. Roughly, it may be helpful to imagine a gradual shift in the location of Hemingway’s escape formulations from places to

spaces, with (again, generally) his most physical (in the sense of a physical flight or a temporary, voluntary turning away) formulations in *In Our Time*, and his most spatial (i.e. non-physical) ones in *The Garden of Eden*.

But beyond this, it is nearly impossible to make any useful reduction to trace a clean and gradual shift from place to space in the contexts of the Hemingway escape. In fact, there is a great deal of textual evidence that would support an argument in reverse—that early in his career, Hemingway's escape contexts were more internal or personal, and that later he moved to more physical formulations. This is part of the reason that I am insisting on the addressing Hemingway's aesthetic, not simply his contexts or his writerly dispositions, because the aesthetic is a sense of totality, not just "style" or simply "subject matter." Just as the second chapter often crossed the plane from the Hemingway text (that is, the shape and shaping of the words on the page) to the Hemingway context (that is, what's happening and what's around it), this third chapter will do the same thing. While my focus in this chapter is on tracing Hemingway's formulations of escape in context, I will frequently return to the relationship between the writer and the reader laid out in the first chapter, because, again, I am concerned with discussing Hemingway's aesthetic and describing his particular brand of escape which is contingent upon an unspoken intimacy with the reader.

In my introduction, I laid out the significance of the concept of "away" as the best model for the Hemingwayan escape. I claimed that, in its requisite referential formulation, "away" functions only to create a protected space relative to its intended recipient. In the last chapter, my focus was on the separation that away creates between people and on the way that away can form a protective and transportive boundary between those on either side of its performative[20] divide. In this chapter, my focus lies on the ways in which the position that away creates can be an actual, physical *place*, or a sort of non-physical, but still very actual *space*. Again, I must acknowledge that this distinction is a semantic move—both the physical and aesthetic connotations of "space" are readily available to the contemporary conception, but this distinction is significant, especially because Hemingway's eventual escape formulations began to approach the non-physical space despite the locational moves which often served as a prerequisite contextual element[21].

In the second chapter I wrote that *In Our Time* is the closest Hemingway gets to a universal reader,

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[20] For a linguistic consideration of the performative, see J.L. Austin's "How To Do Things With Words." For a social consideration, see Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*. In both formulations, the performative has a bit of magic to it in that it makes or conjures. Refer to Chapter I.viii in this thesis for a more detailed description of the performative nature of "away".

[21] As in *The Garden of Eden*, where the constant movement between locations serves as a distraction for Catherine while David is working, and movement as premise for their relationship. By *The Garden of Eden*, physical escape has become more of a distraction, or even a lifestyle marker, rather than the sort of physical escape Hemingway writes at the beginning of *A Moveable Feast*, where the escape with Hadley is a true, existential decision, it is the main thing, not the distraction (*AMF* 6).

due in part to the universality of the war and the context of the young man's space. In this chapter, as I move to a consideration of escape in context I will take on *In Our Time* again, though with a caveat claim that is based on a biographical consideration. While *In Our Time* formulates escape in the context of active, physical or motion-based removes, it also predates Hemingway's celebrity. What happened to the writer in the period between the 1925 Scribner release of *In Our Time* and the 1926 release of *The Sun Also Rises* had already begun to change the writer, and the formulations of escape present in *In Our Time*, namely, the youthful senses of escape that accord with either adventure or solitude, rapidly fell away in the face of a more immediate social considerations. What *In Our Time* had that none of his subsequent work could claim, was a Hemingway largely unencumbered by being known, or by money. In short, the work that followed Hemingway's success was largely influenced by it, and celebrity created a situation that demanded subtler social escapes, as well as an increasingly desperate longing for an intimate companion, though both of those desires were apparently harder and harder to find or hold. Thus, Hemingway's final positions turned to the space of the artist as the context for his work, where the unique brand of reader complicity in Hemingway's aesthetic finds as natural completion in the direct consideration of the writer as character, and the reader as confidant in *The Garden of Eden*.

Section II) Writing before celebrity

III.iii) Escape in *In Our Time*

As I have already mentioned, my goal here is not to be completist, either in the sense of a full treatment, or in the sense of a final position. So, will leave my assertions about the latent and pervasive escape ideal in *In Our Time* largely undefended on two grounds. First, because of the book's arrangement, especially in light of the overt interconnectedness signaled by "Chapter VI," I assert that *In Our Time* is, as Hemingway himself asserted, a unified text. Second, the omitted end of "Big Two-Hearted River," which became called "On Writing" in *The Nick Adams Stories* blurs the distinction between Hemingway and Nick, attributes authorship [22]of "Indian Camp" and "My Old Man" to Nick, and serves as a bridge between the two parts of "Big Two-Hearted River." Thus, per my consideration of the reader/writer dynamic in Hemingway's aesthetic and the complicit formulations of escape based upon a textually mediated intimacy between the two, a consideration of Nick Adams through *In Our Time* serves to

[22] As well as the entirety of *In Our Time*, according to Debra A. Moddelmog in "The Unifying Consciousness of a Divided Conscience".

address the complete whole. That "On Writing" did not make the 1925 or 1930 Scribner cut of *In Our Time* does not matter. What does matter is what it tells us about Hemingway's proximity to his writing, and particularly his inclination toward what we might call a confession to an implied, intimate reader.

By positioning the individual, and in most instances the young man specifically, against the broader machinations of social appropriation, *In Our Time* formulates the idea of an alternative experience that is not bound or beholden, even if those alternatives are never complete or satisfying. D.H. Lawrence picked up on this idea when wrote of *In Our Time*, "One wants to keep oneself loose. Avoid one thing only: getting connected up. Don't get connected up. If you get held by anything, break it. Don't be held. Break it, and get away" (qtd. in Svoboda and Waldmeir 35). In *In Our Time*, context is almost always the thing we already know, and the alterity proposed is almost always something we do not, if simply for the fact that the experiences of the young men in *In Our Time* are new ones. As such, most of the escapes it proposes are also heavily linked to place, though place is often synonymous with the broader social situation.

In Our Time also begs consideration of form. Though it is not merely a collection of short stories, *In Our Time* operates in stories and vignettes, clipping the expected developmental trajectories demanded by longer narrative forms (namely the novel) to amplify the experience of single moments, and simultaneously deemphasize the approach to story telling that relies on an idea that characters develop over time. Still, the affect of *In Our Time*'s presentation is meant to be considered as a whole, and apart from Hemingway's own work to ensure[23] what he would eventually call a "pretty good unity" (*CL 166*), the curious reader will find the inclusion of "On The Quai at Smyrna" as a story[24] rather than a chapter, and Nick Adams' presence in "Chapter VI," rather than in a story as evidence that *In Our Time*'s presentations should be taken as a whole. Jacquelyn Vaught Brogan suggests what she calls a "cubist anatomy" in *In Our Time*, and there is real merit to this assessment. While Vaughan's treatment proposes to accept Hemingway's own assessment of the work as a unified project, her primary focus is on the anatomy of *In Our Time*, highlighting the curatorial moves that Hemingway made in subsequent publications to argue for a better unity and a more polished aesthetic. I would add that this so-called "cubist anatomy" flattens and compresses the many facets, moments, lives and experiences covered in *In Our Time* into a sort of generational coming of age portrait. This is one of the reasons that I see *In Our Time* as Hemingway's work which appeals to his most open formulation of the reader. And beyond this broad appeal, the unity of *In Our Time* is significant in the way that it compounds the affect of its composite parts. The sequence from "The Battler" to "Chapter VI" to "A Very Short Story" to "Chapter

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[23] The publication history of *In Our Time* is fraught. Published in four distinct forms from 1923 to 1930, the variety and editorial process over the life of *In Our Time* alone beg consideration. For a deeper look, see Tetlow, Astro and Benson, and Flora, as well as the articles by Brogan and Narbeshuber.

[24] And in the 1930 version, retitled as an "Introduction by the Author" (Brogan 31).

VII" to "Soldier's Home," for instance, expands and compresses the space of the reader's aesthetic experience. "The Battler" opens out almost endlessly as the young Nick moves on, past the encounter with Ad Francis and Bugs (whose lives are decided by the accumulation of circumstance), forward down the railroad tracks. But "Chapter VI" does not go anywhere, placing Nick at the mercy of the war in immediate and direct contrast to his physical motion on the previous page (which is also in the previous encounter). While the stories are intimate and active, the chapters are like stills, each one demanding participation or scrutiny, but all subject to a flattening or a compression in the face of the larger context (in this case, both their collection in a single binding, and figuratively, the broader social machine which reduces lives and eliminates freedoms) like cubist painting, which argues (to some degree) that the whole is less than the sum of its parts.

Still, as per Marcuse's formulation of the restive nature of art, we may consider that "content becomes from" with *In Our Time* in that the omission of a long trajectory in any of its stories or vignettes (save "My Old Man," perhaps) makes an aggressive play on Sartre's idea of a collective "taste in the mouth" (*WiL? 51*), positioning its focus on moments where the social context of the story provides a recognizable impetus for escape. Getting away from a dead, backwater town ("The End of Something," "The Battler"), avoiding the baby trap ("Indian Camp," "Cross-Country Snow"), and broader social expectations in general ("The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," "Soldier's Home"), are positioned with the same existential considerations as avoiding getting killed for an inscrutable collective cause ("Chapter V," "Chapter VI," Chapter VII") if we take *In Our Time* as a carefully curated book with a more-than-"pretty good unity." I certainly do. What's more, the physical escapes in *In Our Time* propose a certain sense of fulfillment. If we consider "Big Two-Hearted River: Part I" and "Big Two-Hearted River: Part II" as the type of escape experience that Nick Adams was after, fishing physically and emotionally in a dreamlike desolate terrain, the final image from "L'Envoi" completes the inscrutability of "On the Quai at Smyrna" given the Greek context specifically and the war vignettes generally, in a parity that trivializes the shooting of this or that man in equal measure to the frantic and horrifying pace of "Quai," with its ridiculous exclamatory excitement. Just as "On the Quai at Smyrna" and "Indian Camp" stand as dual introductions which present wildly different manifestations of the same social forces, so "Big Two-Hearted River" and "L'Envoi" present dual conclusions which render the ideal of physical and emotional remove universal, but question man's ability to do so.

III.iv) War Stories

Though *In Our Time*'s chronological narrative arch begins with the second story, "Indian Camp," it is

"On the Quai at Smyrna" that we encounter first, and while "Indian Camp" depicts a formative childhood experience for Hemingway's frequent alter ego, Nick Adams, it is the inscrutable wartime context of "On the Quai at Smyrna" which establishes the tone for *In Our Time*, working to undermine any sense of sense to reinforce the collection's fragmentary moments.

Given the story's placement as the first encounter in *In Our Time*, the elements that stand out concern the absolute inscrutability of it all. Pacing, compounded by heavy erasure— the technique for which Hemingway's style has become synonymous— generates a frantic sense of disorientation in a sustained and overwrought narrative dash.

> The strange thing was, he said, how they screamed every night at midnight. I do not know why they screamed at that time. We were in the harbor and they were all on the pier and at midnight they started screaming. We used to turn the searchlight on them to quiet them. That always did the trick. (*IOT* 11)

We strain for something recognizable. This collective "they," screaming together for an un-understandable reason immediately conjures the horrific. Combining this hellscape of the undiscoverable with the curious remove in the narrative voice— the "he said" (11) which renders the reader the audience to a retelling, ensures that access to the whole of it is certainly impossible. In and of itself, this may not be noteworthy, but given the disorienting, heavily clipped presentation, the reader is essentially forced to assume the role of a confidant or compatriot— one with the requisite context to understand. This is a war story. This is a war story the likes of which soldiers only tell to one another upon the condition of mutual understanding by mutual experience. Later in "Soldier's Home," the truth of war stories becomes a focal point, and the way that these stories are always changed to suit civilian thrill seekers gives Krebs "nausea in regard to experience that is the result of untruth or exaggeration" (*IOT* 70). But, "when he occasionally met another man who had really been a soldier and they talked a few minutes in the dressing room at a dance he fell into the easy pose of the old soldier among soldiers", the truth of which was "that he had been badly, sickeningly frightened all the time" (70). What Krebs's experience affirms is that a war story is more like "On the Quai at Smyrna" than the "detailed accounts of German women found chained to machine guns in the Argonne forest" (70) he had to contend with when he got back home. We do not understand "On the Quai at Smyrna" because, even if we have been soldiers, we certainly have not been in proximity to experience retold here. And to the reader who would suggest that in 1925, many of *In Our Time*'s readers certainly had been soldiers in that same war written here, the point still stands. It is not simply a matter of access to the soldier's experience. Instead, it is precisely the inscrutability of this experience that matters, because it establishes a sense of meaningless causality (and casualty) against which much of *In Our Time* is positioned. But the point is not to alienate the reader. The reader is a confidant despite the inscrutability of the context, so much more complicit because of it.

So we agree to the narrative's terms and listen to the retelling because it is fascinating and horrible, and we hope to understand along the way, still acutely aware of our own inability to do so. But our implied complicity on the individual level never rectifies itself, and we must get by on the social level, broadly, because we (that is, the collective we, the social we, all of us) know about the war and about horror. That is to say, we do not understand.

In this way, "On the Quai at Smyrna" establishes the reader's perspective for *In Our Time* by force. It welcomes the reader with a heavy hand and bluntly demands that we cull the context of a personal moment from a broader social consciousness. But this is a task that we will not achieve. Even the reader with shared war experience is subverted by the subsequent direct addresses to the reader's character perspective in the story. "You remember when they ordered us not to come in to take off any more?" (12) the narrator asks us, complicit. And again, the definitive, "You remember the harbor. You didn't mind the women who were having babies as you did those with the dead ones" (12). These second person appeals at once conjure the collective possessive "our" in *In Our Time* and subvert it by making the "you" of the story powerless and false.

This dynamic is fraught, to be sure, and it foregrounds *In Our Time*'s central conflict, which, contrary to the overwhelming chorus of old criticism, does not concern violence, reinforce a discourse of masculinity, glorify war, or subjugate women. Instead, it is the conflict between the individual experience and the oppressive and reductive nature of social interaction, and the resolution hardly ever shakes out clean. And Hemingway is relentless with this point in *In Our Time*, peppering the book's stories with interspersed chapters which create close proximity witness but curtail reader complicity by presenting moments where individual agency is all but eliminated by the determination of a social position. War, as well as marriage, babies, and social decorum are all instances of social determination which come to bear on the lives of *In Our Time*'s young men, though war is surely the most inescapable of these. Here, we should be absolutely clear that war is a social position, and for the young men in *In Our Time,* a potentially final position from which no personal agency can wrest them, and no physical escape is possible. "Chapter VI" and "Chapter VII" make this point abundantly clear. "Chapter VI" puts Nick at the mercy of the inarticulate forces of war, shot and waiting for salvation leaned against the side of a church in Italy or Austria, the uncertainty of the setting amplifying the sense of hopelessness.

> *Nick sat against the wall of the church where they had dragged him to be clear of machine-gun fire in the street. Both legs stuck out awkwardly. He had been hit in the spine. His face was sweaty and dirty. The sun shone in his face. The day was very hot. Rinaldi, big backed, his equipment sprawling, lay face downward against the wall. Nick looked straight ahead brilliantly. The pink wall of the house opposite had fallen out from the roof, and an iron bedstead hung twisted toward the street. Two Austrian dead lay in the rubble in the shade of the house. Up the*

street were other dead. Things were getting forward in the town. It was going well. Stretcher bearers would be along any time now. Nick turned his head carefully and looked at Rinaldi. "Senta Rinaldi. Senta. You and me we've made a separate peace." Rinaldi lay still in the sun breathing with difficulty. "Not patriots." Nick turned his head carefully away smiling sweatily. Rinaldi was a disappointing audience. (IOT 63)

In this place, there is no more motion for Nick, though in the grander conception, things are apparently "going well." But the impact of this moment rests on Nick's refusal to acknowledge meaning around him, and his tragicomic pairing with the dying Italian who "was a disappointing audience" underscores Nick's summary of the situation: "not patriots." Though the apparent progress of the assault promises "stretcher bearers" soon, Nick's "separate peace" amounts to an absolute refusal of the cause, real or imagined, where the only men who share his space are already dead, or dying before him.

Similarly, "Chapter VII" echoes Harold Krebs's "sickly" wartime fear, and amplifies the absolute and inscrutable determination of war.

While the bombardment was knocking the trench to pieces at Fossalta, he lay very flat and sweated and prayed oh jesus christ get me out of here. Dear jesus please get me out. Chirst please please please christ. If you'll only keep me from getting killed I'll do anything you say. I believe in you and I'll tell every one in the world that you are the only one that matters. Please please dear jesus. The shelling moved further up the line. We went to work on the trench and in the morning the sun came up and the day was hot and muggy and cheerful and quiet. The next night back at Mestre he did not tell the girl he went upstairs with at the Villa Rossa about Jesus. And he never told anybody. (IOT 67)

Incidentally, the soldier's failure to make good on his desperate promise rings more truthful given the pervasive sense in *In Our Time* that neither religion, nor patriotism, nor the dumb chance of any other collective construct can offer real salvation. In "Chapter VII," the soldier's single moment of individual determination marked by breaking free from that commitment echoes Nick's "not patriots" sentiment in "Chapter VI." In short, the war stories in *In Our Time* present a position from which soldiers return only by incomprehensible turns of fate and circumstance. There is no escape here save dumb luck, and this contextual position works in conjunction with *In Our Time's* stories to amplify the young man's desire to escape physically, or escape from yet another social formulation (marriage, the respectable working man) that will curtail his ability to get away in the future.

III.v) "Indian Camp"

Structurally, it is jarring to move from these impenetrable moments to the intimate stories they separate. As with the jump from "On the Quai at Smyrna" to the seemingly dreamlike boyhood context of "Indian Camp", the unities and continuities of *In Our Time* are amplified by this fragmentary nature and short clip presentational format. Central to these unities is the growth of Nick Adams, one of Hemingway's fictional proxies, and a favored recurrent character who appears beyond *In Our Time*. The Nick Adams stories in *In Our Time* serve as a sort of central thread around which the rest of the stories and vignettes are positioned, and they trace a certain modern coming of age, from Nick's boyhood experience at "Indian Camp" to his young man's escape to "Big Two-Hearted River." Definitive to Nick Adam's experiences in *In Our Time* is a resounding liminality that echos outward across the book, characteristic both of the transition from boyhood to manhood, and the endlessly fraught relationship between sex and freedom in the space of the age, which is overwhelmingly controlled by social discourse.

While "On the Quai at Smyrna" opens *In Our Time* and establishes its broader contextual component, it is the intimacy of "Indian Camp," in conjunction with that context that proposes *In Our Time* as a sort of generational coming of age portrait. "Indian Camp" is the story of a truly formative, traumatic early childhood experience which powerfully correlates pregnancy and suicide and sets the tone for the complex male/female pairing dynamic that defines nearly all of the stories in *In Our Time*, not to mention nearly all the rest of Hemingway's oeuvre.

The story's narrative dances subtly between the events of a childhood experience, and an editorial comment mode which strongly implies an older Nick as the story's narrator and establishes the frame of impact. In the slight variance between its narrative remembering and narrative editorializing, "Indian Camp" provides an excellent early example of the sort of textual situation building that generates intimate complicity in the Hemingway aesthetic. Narrating in "Indian Camp," and the rest of the Nick Adams stories, for that matter, is of central importance because of the close proximity that the reader shares with the narrative focalizer. While on the one hand, the sense of an older narrating voice feels like an older Nick retelling a childhood memory, this perspective's refusal to connect to the perspective of the boy Nick in the story creates a distance that allows the reader to experience the perspective of the memory, not the rememberer.

"Indian Camp" also makes use of a highly recognizable, traditional repertoire formulation to amplify the reader's sense of the moment of disillusionment which marks the end of childhood. The opening sequence is a dreamlike scene that juxtaposes a sleepy boy Nick Adams with the rushing urgency of the Indians from elsewhere on the lake in the early morning calm. That Nick is neither worried, nor enticed by the prospect of what is to come establishes a profound initial feeling of safety, though the passage by

water and the pacing of the second boat, which moves beyond Nick and his father though the ethereal mist belies the tranquility of the narrative's adherence to the boy's perspective. On the other shore, the ethereal mist is replaced by the presence of smoke, passed from Uncle George to the two Indians. Their passage to the Indian camp continues as a stream of remembered events, as well as a retrospective warning sequence under the oscillating narrative perspective between the boy's remembering and the immediate narrator's coloring. The barking dogs that rush out to them conjure Cerberus and "an old woman… in the doorway holding a lamp" (*IOT* 16) brings the female sphere into play under foreboding circumstances. The lake the Lethe, the Indian pole-man, the journey to death.

What happens in the cabin is a playact of the social male/female crisis "in our time." The narrative mise-en-scène arranges props and objects— the wooden bunk, the "very big quilt," pipe smoke, the "very bad" smell of the room, but also "the young Indian woman" who "had been trying to have her baby for two days," "all the old women" who "had been helping her," the men outside who "had moved off up the road to sit in the dark and smoke out of range of the noise she made," and the silent husband with the self-inflicted ax wound in the upper bunk — all of these a tableau, equally static and human (*IOT* 16). And if we consider Hemingway's presentational "sequence of motion and fact" concept, the facts in "Indian Camp" include the things arranged in this tableau, but the motion enters at the pregnant woman's screaming, and Nick's response to it:

> "Oh, Daddy, can't you give her something to make her stop screaming?" asked Nick.
>
> "No. I haven't any anæsthetic," said his father. "But her screams are not important. I don't hear them because they are not important." (16).

But the matters of fact put forth by Doctor Adams are of little consequence to Nick, whose pleading for something to make the woman stop screaming reads less as a tendency toward compassion, and more as a desire to quiet some elemental unsettling. That the breach bound baby and a jack-knife cesarean hardly qualify as a typical childbirth experience is also of no consequence for Nick, nor for the men out smoking away from the screaming even if it is "one for the medical journal" (18). What counts is the screaming.

More importantly, the screaming places Nick and his father in two different spaces. Doctor Adams does not hear the screams "because they are not important." He assumes a surgeon's position in an operating theatre, directing and narrating his work. "Pull that quilt back, will you, George? I'd rather not touch it" (*IOT* 17). "See, it's a boy Nick. How do you like being an interne" (17)? Nick, on the other hand, does not see the process as interesting or exciting. "He was looking away so as not to see what his father was doing" (17). When the his father "put something into the basin… Nick didn't look at it." And when his father invites him to witness the sutures, "Nick did not watch. His curiosity had been gone a long time" (17).

But the experience begun at the screaming continues, and while Nick's father, whose various roles as

man, father, and physician are affirmed by his understanding of what is going on, what happens for Nick is a prolonged attempt to get away, marked by the chronic distance in his curiosity. While his repeated looking away, or not looking is certainly the escape of a child, the significance of witness also signals the disillusionment moment, where quite literally, the illusion is lifted. Before the operation, Doctor Adams tells Nick that the Indian woman is "going to have a baby," (16) a fact which Nick claims to "know"(16). But Doctor Adams corrects him: "You don't know"(16), he says, and as he describes the physical processes at work, the "muscles trying to get the baby born"(16), the childhood abstraction of pregnancy becomes real and traumatic, not because of the Doctor's explanations, but because of the screaming and the eventual "something" in the basin. What separates Nick from his father is a lack of experience. Where the matters of fact of pregnancy and childbirth are simply that for Doctor Adams, Nick has now experienced their sequence of motion and fact for the first time, and he wants to look away, to get away. This is his first child struck by a train, as it were. But the experience is not over for Nick. As Doctor Adams moves to conclude his professional business and "have a look at the proud father," (18) silent on the bunk above, Nick's witness to the husband's razor blade suicide is the real completion of Nick's disillusionment.

> [The Doctor] pulled back the blanket from the Indian's head. His hand came away wet. […] The Indian lay with his face toward the wall. His throat had been cut from ear to ear. The blood had flowed down into a pool where his body sagged the bunk. […] The razor lay, edge up, in the blankets.
>
> "Take Nick out of the shanty, George," the doctor said.
>
> There was no need of that. Nick, standing in the door of the kitchen, has a good view of the upper bunk when his father, the lamp in one hand, tipped the Indian's head back. (IOT 18)

For the doctor, the husband's suicide represents the traumatic bridge too far, signaled by his instructions to take Nick away, but Nick's experience spins a bit differently. Nick was present for the whole operation, which "all took a long time"(*IOT* 17) and involved "Uncle George and three Indian men"(17) to hold the woman still, after which he was told that he could "watch or not, just as [he liked]"(17) during the sutures, and carried the basin and its post-operative contents to the kitchen. For Nick "a good view of the upper bunk" and of the dead Indian runs into the same operation, but for his father, the husband's silent suicide during the operation was the impetus to exclude Nick from the scene. This correlative perspective is reinforced by Nick's line of questions on the way back home, which traces a direct implied causality from "ladies… having babies" to the husband's suicide.

> It was beginning to be daylight when they walked along the logging road back toward the lake.
>
> "I'm terribly sorry I brought you along, Nickie," said his father, all his post-operative

exhilaration gone. “It was an awful mess to put you through.”

“Do ladies always have such a hard time having babies?” Nick asked.

“No, that was very, very exceptional.”

“Why did he kill himself, Daddy?”

“I don’t know, Nick. He couldn’t stand things, I guess.”

“Do many men kill themselves, Daddy?”

“Not very many, Nick.”

“Do many women?”

“Hardly ever.”

“Don’t they ever?”

“Oh, yes. They do sometimes.”

“Daddy?”

“Yes.”

“Where did Uncle George go?”

“He’ll turn up all right.”

“Is dying hard, Daddy?”

“No, I think it’s pretty easy, Nick. It all depends.”

They were seated in the boat, Nick in the stern, his father rowing. The sun was coming up over the hills. A bass jumped, making a circle in the water. Nick trailed his hand in the water. It felt warm in the sharp chill of the morning.

In the early morning on the lake sitting in the stern of the boat with his father rowing, he felt quite sure that he would never die. (IOT 18 - 9)

The passage back seems to break the spell and render a certain distance, as with a dream. The sun rises, the scene placid. Assured by the presence of his father and assuaged by his father’s sure answers, the memory of a moment resolves itself to a sort of turning away that reminds us of the narrative treatment of the placental “something” that Doctor Adams “put… into the basin” (IOT 17). And as with the remembered boyhood Nick, whose “not look[ing] at it” implies that he has seen it, here, Nick’s boyhood certainty is undermined by a far more ominous adult understanding. But physical remove and motion through a tranquil space produce the feeling of freedom again, and Nick’s surety about his own immortality arrives by what may be read as a simple childhood decision akin to avoiding touching the hot stove — a lesson learned once and completely by experience, unnecessary to learn again.

Yet, while the story’s narrative closure may portray a certain dispositional escape for the young Nick Adams, “Indian Camp” is only the beginning of an escape trajectory that finds its natural conclusion at the end of *In Our Time* with “Big Two-Hearted River: Part I” and “Big Two-Hearted River: Part II.”

Unsurprisingly, the existential male/female conflict position established by “Indian Camp” continues to dominate the development of Nick Adams through *In Our Time*, and the emerging formulation that women and sex are more trouble than they are worth takes its definite punctuation from “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife,” *In Our Time*’s final presentation of Nick Adams as a child. In short, the correlation between pregnancy and death becomes a recurrent trope, and when situated against the context of the war, as in “On the Quai at Smyrna” or “Chapter II,” the correlation between escape from death and escape from pregnancy (as well as its attendant, socially-enforced coupling) becomes overt. With “On the Quai at Smyrna” and “Indian Camp” in place to establish the thematic tone for *In Our Time*, war and the obligations of pregnancy make compelling social positions from which the young man is understandably compelled to escape.

III.vi) Men at home: “The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife”

Recall again Hemingway’s considerations of subject mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. While war and death do make for good subjects, Hemingway quickly learned that it was not only a view of death that made for a good story, and we see this in the move from “Indian Camp” to “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife.”

The experience of “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife” is tense and the story, that is, what happens, to use Genette’s distinction, is hard to define. Unlike “Indian Camp,” where the story unfolds in such a way that it outpaces the narration and creates a shocking reading experience, “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife” inverts its pacing, and the narration runs well beyond what happens in the story, such that ‘what happens,’ as it were, is inscrutable. Roughly, what “Indian Camp” establishes, “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife” undermines relative to the characterization of Nick’s father in a different place. Where “Indian Camp” portrays a mostly heroic Doctor Adams as a man above on the social plane, unshaken by the obviously impressive circumstances of his call, and confident (if not certain) in his responses to Nick’s line on the Indian suicide, “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife” decisively neuters those manly behaviors at home.

The story opens with a seemingly unprovoked conflict between Doctor Adams and Dick Boulton, but unlike “Indian Camp,” where nothing seems to be omitted, here the unwritten abounds. Dick Boulton’s arrival from the Indian camp and the ensuing conflict over who owns the “stolen” logs, as per Dick’s assessment, or “driftwood” as per the doctor’s, is significant but only in relation to its effect on the doctor and the doctor’s wife (24). On the one hand, the masculine tension between Dick and Doctor Adams is framed in typically male terms; a territorial claim concerning the logs, the threat of physical violence. On

the other, what makes the doctor back down from Dick is his consideration of his obligations to his family, evidenced by the doctor's decision to "[turn] away and [walk] up the hill to the cottage" (*IOT* 25). But this decision is not one easily made, a point made clear by the narrative reiteration of the doctor's grudging return to the cottage. "They could see from his back how angry he was. They all watched him walk up the hill and go inside the cottage" (*IOT* 25).

As with many of the stories in *In Our Time*, where things happen is significant. This is certainly the case with "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife." Doctor Adams, seething but in control, completes his successful avoidance of conflict by withdrawing from it. But back in the cottage, things are no better as the doctor's wife plays further antagonist.

> In the cottage the doctor, sitting on the bed in his rooms saw a pile of medical journals on the floor by the bureau. They were still in their wrappers unopened. It irritated him.
>
> "Aren't you going back to work, dear?" asked the doctor's wife from the room where she was lying with the blinds drawn.
>
> "No!"
>
> "Was anything the matter?"
>
> "I had a row with Dick Boulton."
>
> "Oh," said his wife "I hope you didn't lose your temper, Henry."
>
> "No," said the doctor.
>
> "Remember, that he who ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city," said his wife. She was a Christian Scientist. Her Bible, her copy of *Science and Health* and her *Quarterly* were on a table beside her bed in the darkened room.
>
> Her husband did not answer. He was sitting on his bed now, cleaning a shotgun. He pushed the magazine full of the heavy yellow shells and pumped them out again. (*IOT* 25 - 6)

Situationally, Nick's father is unable to find a place for himself even at home. Having successful avoided a larger conflict with Dick Boulton, and thus behaved himself, as it were, the Doctor is denied his natural anger and his necessary space by a wife who nags at him a from self-righteous and protected position. Thus, the doctor moves again, leaving the cottage, presumably to find that necessary space. But his wife's control of the home space emanates behind him, past the immediate physical boundary of the cottage: "He heard his wife catch her breath when the door slammed" (*IOT* 26).

Thus, the conflict with Dick Boulton merges into a sense of an impasse with the doctor's wife back home, and summarily undermines the doctor's potency established in "Indian Camp." Tension in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" arrives via challenges to the doctor's masculinity and his requisite dominion, unsettling both Doctor Adams and Nick, whose final image of his father from "Indian Camp" as a locus of safety and surety is subverted by his father's implicit obligations to decorum and the need to

avoid confrontation at home. The present possibility of an alternative experience in an all male sphere — "If you call me Doc once again, I'll knock your eye teeth down your throat." "Oh, no, you won't Doc." (IOT 25) — reinforces a sense that Nick's father is effectively cuckolded by these social obligations, to which adherence is coerced by his position relative to the larger social construct; a salient impression reinforced by his second escape from the home into the woods.

In the woods, the long-suffering Doctor Adams finds Nick, and carries out his wife's bidding to tell Nick "his mother wants to see him" (*IOT* 26).

> "Your mother wants you to come and see her," the doctor said.
>
> "I want to go with you," Nick said.
>
> His father looked down at him.
>
> "All right. Come on, then," his father said. "Give me the book, I'll put it in my pocket."
>
> "I know where there's black squirrels, Daddy," Nick said.
>
> "All right," said his father. "Let's go there." (*IOT* 27).

In the story's third position[25], Nick and his father choose to enter the same space, which is simply out, or away, and the place that they resolve to go to is formulated as a secret. But the idealization of escape in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" is not simply limited to a sequence of removes by Doctor Adams and Nick. Relative to the larger Nick Adams saga, we see that at a young age, Nick had already begun to take to reading as an escape. Beyond this, we see an intimate portrait of Nick's own model of the husband and wife dynamic. Nick's mother does not validate her husband's work, evidenced by the unwrapped medical journals on the floor in his room[26]. She also represents not only a controlling presence in the home, but a figure who places great stock in a silly and ineffectual (evidenced by her poor health) religion which itself reinforces her willingness to assume dogmatic adherence to social constructs, and simultaneously minimizes her husband's apparently formidable skill as a doctor. Further, it may not be a stretch to read her "back to work" (25) comment as a passive emasculation of the doctor when we consider his actual work, nothing short of heroic in "Indian Camp" and reaffirmed again in this story by the doctor's reference to "pulling [Dick's] squaw through pneumonia" (26). Physically, Nick's father passes through the house, from out to out in a series of small removes, but he avoids physical confrontation with Dick Boulton, simultaneously embodying the religious truism lobbed at him by his wife while in the cottage, "that he who ruleth his spirit is greater than he that that taketh a city" (25) and reaffirming that escape is perhaps the best way to do that.

In the story's final position, Nick affirms his original choice to go into the woods by refusing to

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[25] "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" has three spatial positions, on the beach, in the cottage, and in the woods.

[26] The home space is clearly hers. This narrative observation indicates her apparent dismissal of her husband's trade and tools.

return home. And while we do not read anything to suggest a negative relationship between Nick and his mother, she still plainly represents the controlling voice of broader social constructs, and will remind us of Krebs' mother in "Soldier's Home" later in *In Our Time*. Finally, pairing reading with an escape into the woods, Hemingway compounds the idea of escape in his young proxy relative to the doctor in that Nick's escape is twofold, and open, whereas the doctor's is limited by the presumably reasonable expectations that govern him in his marriage, not to mention figuratively by the medical journals he would read, if only they were accessible— a double cruelty in that the doctor's would-be reading would only work to perpetuate the social role that binds him.

So, beyond the simple correlation between pregnancy and death from "Indian Camp," the relational dynamics explored by "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" continue to expand and complicate the male/female dynamic in *In Our Time*. In short, Nick's two childhood experiences in *In Our Time* provide vivid examples of the bad state of things for married men. And while "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" does not pass judgement on the overall state of the Doctor's marriage, it certainly presents a complicated dynamic within which the Doctor must yield to rules of the union— compromises he certainly would not need to make as a single man. Considered against the broader context of *In Our Time,* which takes the young man as its focalizer, marriage, like war, poses a grave threat to personal determination.

III.vii) Men at home: "Soldier's Home"

Similarly, home poses a problem for Harold Krebs, Hemingway's other featured young man in *In Our Time*. Like in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" the home space in "Soldier's Home" is not a place for rest or intimacy, it is a place to reinforce social expectations. In *In Our Time*'s most frustrated consideration of the young man and the appropriative demands of social expectations, "Soldier's Home" presents the existential conflict of the young man returned from the war, and rushed back towards another social position which will once again bind him to obligations which will reduce his own agency, and like so much of the Hemingway context, this dynamic plays out between a young man and a woman. But, unlike "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," or any of the Nick Adam's stories, the male/female dynamic is not between lovers or partners, but between a young man and his mother. While Harold's mother is gentle and patient, her designs for her son do not align with his own, in part due to the fracture he senses between himself and the world he has returned to. Like the girls in town, "the world they were in was not the world he was in" (*IOT* 72).

Like "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," "Soldier's Home" is minefield of indeterminacy. Harold Krebs is torn between being a boy and being a man, and the war experience that stands between the two

enhances a sense of youth unrealized. On the one hand, Harold "liked to look at [the girls in town] from the front porch as the walked on the other side of the street" (*IOT* 71). On the other, he "did not really need a girl. The army had taught him that" (71). Most importantly, "he did not want any consequences. He did not want any consequences ever again. He wanted to live along without consequences" (71). For Harold, old before his time, watching young girls from the porch has a voyeuristic and unsettling quality, but the distinction between watching and interacting is crucial. In the passivity of watching, Harold is able to "avoid consequences," but the consequences on Harold's mind are not simply the omnipresent young man's baby fears; they are the attendant requirements of a return to the social space.

But, like in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," home is formulated as a stronghold of social pressure. "One morning after he had been home about a month his mother came in to his bedroom and sat on the bed. […] 'I had a talk with you father last night, Harold,' she said, 'and he is willing for you to take the car out in the evenings'"(*IOT* 73). While Harold's mother is kind and loving, her insinuation with car is the first in a string of assaults on Harold's attempt to "avoid consequences." Over breakfast, Harold's mother works to nudge him along again when she asks him if he has "decided what [he is] going to do, yet" (74), adding, "don't you think it's about time?" (75). His mother's line is simple, and it follows the (twentieth century) middle-class social respectability playbook unerringly: meet a "nice girl" (75), get a job and settle down; contextualize the sensibility of it all.

> "Your father is worried, too," his mother went on. "He thinks you've lost your ambition that you haven't got a definite aim in life. Charley Simmons, who is just your age, has a good job and is going to be married. They boys are all settling down; they're all determined to get married somewhere; you can see that boys like Charley Simmons are on their way to being really a credit to the community." (75)

But Harold is disaffected, watching "the bacon fat hardening on his plate" (75). In "Soldier's Home" what happens is perhaps even less definite than in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," but its textual indeterminacies are highly recognizable, and in the frame of *In Our Time*, Harold's simple desire to "avoid consequences" reiterates the specific formulation of Hemingway's escape ideal, which is not revolutionary, but restive. Harold does not imagine an alternative, he just wants to be left alone, and perhaps to watch his sister play baseball. But his mother cannot understand, the same way she cannot understand his lack of interest in meeting a "nice girl." For Harold, living in a different world, social expectations and personal consequences are of a piece. The army had taught him that, too. And, lucky to survive "Belleu Woods, Soissons, the Champagne, St. Mihiel, and […] the Argonne" (69) (truly, considering "Chapter VII"), Harold's escape ideal includes even the polite social expectations that will once again remove from him his own personal freedom. So, Harold sees that being "home" and "avoiding consequences" do not accord. "There would be one more scene maybe before he got away. He would not

go down to his father's office. He would miss that one. He wanted his life to go smoothly. It had just gotten going that way" (77). Thus, the young man's Bartleby-styled, restive refusal in "Soldier's Home" rejoins the broader trajectory in *In Our Time*, idealizing an individual escape in the face of external, social impositions as an "away" wherein the young man must move to another space to realize the situation that suits him.

III.viii) "Big Two-Hearted River," "On Writing," "The Three-Day Blow," "Cross-Country Snow" and the Nick Adams and Hemingway blender

And eventually, *In Our Time* does formulate the physical, spatial escape ideal imagined previously in "Soldier's Home,""The End of Something" and "Chapter VII" with "Big Two-Hearted River." *In Our Time's* intimate ending, which provides some closure to the book's central Nick Adams coming-of-age narrative, formulates a significant physical remove from death and from social expectations which plague its young men, and from the outset, we would be remiss not to notice the parallel construction to "The Battler," en medias res, with Nick by the side of the railroad tracks. But the situation has changed. Nick is an adult, and all that has been "pitched out of the door" by the baggage man is his baggage (*IOT* 133), shifting our initial focus from Nick's physical injuries in "The Battler," to what we may read as the country's physical injuries, burned-over and unrecognizable (conjuring the war context), save the tracks (escape embodied) and the river in the distance (the destination).

> There was no town, nothing but the rails and the burned-over country. The thirteen saloons that had lined the one street of Seney had not left a trace. The foundations of the Mansion House hotel stuck up above the ground. The stone was chipped and spilt by the fire. It was all that was left of the town of Seney. Even the surface had been burned off the ground. (133)

Here we should also recognize the parallels to "The End of Something," which also opens in the ruins of the mill in Hortons Bay: "Ten years later there was nothing left of the mill left except the broken white limestone of its foundations showing through the swampy second growth as Nick and Marjorie rowed along the shore" (31). Also a fishing story, while "The End of Something" signals a departure, "Big Two-Hearted River" signals a return, and both are based on the longing for an ideal, if not for the actual physicality of escape. In "The End of Something" Nick senses that Marjorie, Hortons Bay, and "love" (34) are holding him back, and his departure in "The Battler" shows that his escape ideal is wild and spatial: wild in that the escape itself seems to be the goal, not necessarily the destination — a formulation

that pre-dates the heavier social constraints resized in Nick's increasingly adult world; spatial in that leaving Marjorie and Hortons Bay is the way to make it happen. But beyond this, "Big Two-Hearted River" complicates the simple, youthful formulation of escape presented in *In Our Time*'s adolescent/young-man sequence ("The End of Something," "The Three Day Blow," "The Battler,") and picks up on the complexities introduced with "Cross-Country Snow," namely the loss of companions to social obligation or the complications of children and marriage.

"Big Two-Hearted River" is an archetypal adult "gone fishin'" moment that is a physical and emotional away which realizes a physical escape for Nick Adams, as well as the solitude and peace demanded by the rest of *In Our Time.* But it is many other things, too. Apart from the significance of the landscape itself, which charts the terrain[27] of Nick Adams, or perhaps, *back to* Nick Adams, (much has been written on the psychological aspect of "Big Two-Hearted"), if we consider that "Big Two-Hearted River" is Nick's return to his childhood home and to simplicity, the story also presents a complex and largely inarticulate sense of longing for a companion who is decidedly and crucially not female, and not sexual. Because its fishing, we remember Bill, Nick's old fishing buddy whose presence once fractured Nick's pensive longing in "The End of Something", emerging from the woods to ask Nick how the breakup went before "select[ing] a sandwich from the lunch basket and walk[ing] over to have a look at the rods" (35).

So on one hand, "Big Two-Hearted River" is a spatial remove to solitude and happiness by a physical departure from the things Nick associates with being back wherever he was before. "It was hard work walking up-hill. His muscles ached and the day was hot, but Nick felt happy. He felt he had left everything behind, the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs. It was all back of him" (*IOT* 134). In this instance, the away of "Big Two-Hearted River" is relative to the space "space where he had left everything behind," and though we cannot be sure where it is, or what it is like beyond the understanding we have culled from Nick's previous stories, but we can be sure that the things of the mind, "the need for thinking" and "the need to write" are of a piece with that space.

On the other hand, though fishing is a physical escape, it is not a solitary thing, and we should recognize that Nick' ideal final position in "Big Two-Hearted River" is not entirely apart from society. The strangeness of Nick's voice "in the darkening woods" is followed shortly by thoughts of Hopkins, another of Nick's old fishing buddies.

> He could not remember which way he made coffee. He could remember an argument about it with Hopkins, but not which side he had taken. He decided to bring it to a boil. He remembered now that was Hopkins's way. He had once argued about everything with Hopkins. […] The coffee boiled as he watched. The lid came up and coffee and grounds ran down the side of the

pot. […] He would not let it steep in the pot at all. It should be straight Hopkins all the way. Hop deserved that. (*IOT* 141)

In the most trivial of instances, Hopkins is of central importance, as is the eventually edited passage[28] with Bill, which arrives just after Hopkins. These are absent companions, conjured by Nick's escape and for as much as the context of the fishing trip makes him happy, the silence of the darkening woods marks the absence of a once present complicit companion. Bill, whose position in "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow" is set off relative to Marjorie, is also his old fishing buddy whose disposition toward Marjorie and commitment in general was decidedly negative. Discussing the break up in "The Three-Day Blow," Bill's position on coupling reminds us of D.H. Lawrence's synopsis of *In Our Time* in whole: "if you get held by anything, break it."

> "It was the only thing to do. If you hadn't, by now you'd be back home working trying to get enough money to get married.
>
> Nick said nothing.
>
> "Once a man's married he's absolutely bitched," Bill went on. "He hasn't got anything more. Nothing. Not a damn thing. He's done for. You've seen the guys that get married."
>
> Nick said nothing.
>
> "You can tell them," Bill said. "They get this sort of fat married look. They're done for." (46)

In "On Writing" Nick writes, "When he married he lost Bill Smith, Edgar, the Ghee, all the old gang. Was it because they were all virgins? […] No, he lost them because he admitted by marrying that something was more important than fishing" (*NAS* 234), carving out what fishing used to mean for Nick and his "old gang" relative to coupling. For Nick, those old companions were of a piece with fishing and without women. But the same formulation pitted his companionship with the "old gang" against the women that he would eventually choose over them. And the reflective voice in "On Writing" breaks the narrative position of "Big Two-Hearted River" to localize the loss of old friends and make this dynamic explicit. "Once Bill meant Bill Smith. Now it means Bill Bird. Bill Bird was in Paris now" (234).

Similarly, we read the tension between Nick's old friends and the obligations of marriage in "Cross-Country Snow," where George and Nick's presumably last ski trip together is colored by Nick's anxiety about pregnancy just as Nick and Bill's cabin drinking session is framed against "the Marge business" (*IOT* 49) in "The Three-Day Blow." With Bill, the toasts serve as a sort of ceremonial dedication to things really worthwhile.

> "What'll we drink to?" Nick asked, holding up the glass.
>
> "Let's drink to fishing," Bill said.

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[27] See Hovey.

[28] What would eventually be called "On Writing" and included in *The Nick Adams Stories.* I will return to this

"All right," Nick said. "Gentlemen, I give you fishing."

"All fishing," Bill said. "Everywhere."

"Fishing," Nick said. "That's what we drink to."

"It's better than baseball," Bill said.

"There isn't any comparison," said Nick. "How did we ever get talking about baseball?"

It was a mistake," Bill said. "Baseball is a game for louts."

They drank all that was in their glasses. (45)

Fishing, after all, is something Nick shares with Bill despite Marjorie's attempt to get involved, and if Bill's presence and interest in "the lines" at the end of "The End of Something" is not enough to mark this, Nick confirms it in the edited portion of "Big Two-Hearted River" when he writes that he "knew there were trout in each shadow" because "Bill and he had discovered it" (*NAS* 233).

In the lodge after their run in "Cross-Country Snow," Nick and George reminisce in a context parallel to Nick and Bill from "The Three-Day Blow".

> "There's nothing really can touch skiing, is there?" Nick said. "The way it feels when you first drop off on a long run."
>
> "Huh," said George. "It's too swell to talk about." (*IOT* 109)

Like the situation in the cabin in "The Three-Day Blow," Nick and George consecrate the significance of their relationship by acknowledging the sacredness of their shared experience. With Bill, it's fishing. With George it's skiing.

But unlike Nick's adolescent perspective, were breaking off with Marjorie preempts a certain doom as imagined by Bill, "Cross-Country Snow" depicts a finality the other way: "The girl came in and Nick noticed that her apron covered sweepingly her pregnancy. I wonder why I didn't see that when she first came in, he thought" (*IOT* 110). As George remarks that the waitress "isn't so cordial," Nick attributes it to her pregnancy: "She's from up where they speak German probably and she's touchy about being here and then she's got that baby coming without being married and she's touchy" (110). But the lodge and the place brings him back again, and the romance of the Alpine scene prompts Nick to try to hold on to it a little longer: "I wish you could stick over and we could do the Dent du Lys tomorrow." "I got to get educated," (110) George says, in the voice of adult responsibility, but he wants to, too:

> "Gee, Mike, don't you wish we could just bum together? Take our skis and go on the train to where there was good running and then go on and put up at pubs and go right across the Oberland and up the Valais and all through the Engadine and just take repair kit and extra sweaters and pajamas in our rucksacks and not give a damn about school or anything." (110)

In this, escape has become little more than a fleeting ideal. George has to go back to school, and Nick's

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passage shortly.

fixation with the waitress's pregnancy signals Nick's own looming responsibility:

> They sat there, Nick leaning his elbows on the table, George slumped back against the wall.
>
> "Is Helen going to have a baby?" George said, coming down to the table from the wall.
>
> "Yes."
>
> "When?"
>
> "Late next summer."
>
> […]
>
> George sat silent. He looked at the empty bottle and empty glasses.
>
> "It's hell, isn't it?" he said. (111)

Then the scenario plays out. George and Nick understand that they have come to their own end of something. "Maybe we'll never go skiing again, Nick," (112) George says, dropping the nickname "Mike," like Bill's "Wemedge," and addressing Nick as a man. "We've got to," [says] Nick. "It isn't worth while if you can't" (112). And then they lie to each other in resolution before George tries once more to hold on to it. "I wish we could make a promise about it" (112) he says, but Nick is the first to call it how it is. "There isn't any good in promising" (112) he says.

Sitting by the fire drinking coffee beside Big Two-Hearted River, the promises of youth come back to Nick where those elemental things, fishing or, in this instance, making coffee remind him of intimate companions defined against the broader context of social expectations—marriage or school, or work (as in the case of Harold Krebs in "Soldier's Home"). Nick lost Hopkins, too, not to a woman, but to money; "he made millions of dollars in Texas" and then "went away when the telegram came" (141).

> It took eight days for the telegram to reach him. Hopkins gave away his .22 caliber Colt automatic pistol to Nick. He gave his camera to Bill. It was to remember him always by. They were all going fishing again next summer. The Hop Head was rich. He would get a yacht and they would all cruise along the north shore of Lake Superior. He was excited but serious. They said good-bye and all felt bad. That was a long time ago on the Black River. (*IOT* 141)

Even as Nick remembers it, Hopkins goes "away," and in this instance, Nick himself is on the other side of the relative chasm away creates, and the promise to go fishing next summer never comes to fruition. In this way, perhaps, Nick learned that "there isn't any good in promising" (112), but in another, Nick fulfills the trip that he, Hopkins and Bill had resolved to take, and while the companions of his youth have gone, he begins to formulate a new intimacy.

> Nick drank the coffee, the coffee according to Hopkins. The coffee was bitter. Nick laughed. It made a good ending to the story. (142)

While there is only a sliver of context here, Nick is a writer, and we see that writing has become a way to (re)discover an intimate space. And while this dynamic has perhaps not fully emerged as the locus of an

intimate escape, we must recognize that so early in his career, Hemingway was already beginning to consider the freedom of the aesthetic space relative to the constraints of the social by proxy with Nick Adams. What Nick is working on is a story that will find a good ending with Nick himself drinking the Hopkins-style coffee. In this, Hemingway has created a sort of metacommentary on the nature of the text that can either suspend a moment in perpetuity, or serve to create an alterity depending on how we consider Nick's satisfaction. Either way, in writing what he has lived, Nick can reincorporate the absent companion.

Toward the writer's position, then, we benefit from "On Writing" in that it offers us an active example of Hemingway's work to build the intimacy of that textually mediated space. We also benefit from its removal from "Big Two-Hearted River" because its absence preserves the aesthetic space so carefully constructed by the cumulative experience of the Nick Adams stories in *In Our Time*. Happy it was cut from "Big Two-Hearted River," Joseph M. Flora points out that "the pristine quality of the […] experience would surely be diminished by inclusion of the "On Writing" material. Particularly since the material is on writing, we would leave the Nick that we have come to know in the stories" (181). And we cannot do that. The Nick that we have come to know through *In Our Time* is to some degree, also a proxy for the reader, especially given the flattening and simultaneity of book's structure, where Nick, like Krebs, and like the nameless soldiers in the chapters and on the quai can be, at least in part, ours, as marked by the title.

Further, in the narrative shift that marks "On Writing", the acknowledgements that Nick offers about writing and craft scuttle the experience with Nick on Big Two-Hearted. Thus, by removing the overt focus on Nick's marriage, as well as a dangerous conflation of himself with Nick, Hemingway preserves the sanctity of the space carefully built for Nick, and allows him to consider losing companions without undoing them as a construct of his writing. We would also get much closer to Hemingway himself if we had "On Writing" included in *In Our Time*, such that Nick Adams would become an undeniable proxy and the question of the validity of what happened in the stories would probably come to bear. And in truth, Nick isn't Hemingway, exactly, so both benefit from the shrewd cut to "Big Two-Hearted River." Defending the distance between Hemingway and Nick, Flora points to Carlos Baker's Hemingway autobiography to remind us that the fishing trip that Hemingway took which "was the basis" for "Big Two-Hearted River," he took "with two companions" (180). Thus the danger of conflating Nick with himself too directly threatened to undo the entire construct, and this is especially important as we consider the reader's close proximity to Nick.

Without "On Writing," "Big Two-Hearted River" serves as a final escape position for Nick, but it is colored melancholy by the absence of his friends. While on the one hand, getting away to Big Two-Hearted River is the fulfillment of an ideal, being alone is not part of it. At the same time we see that Nick

is protective of the intimacy he has with his companions. “Nick did not like to fish with other men on the river. Unless they were of your party, they spoiled it” (149). Alone to address the psychological traumas of the war, Nick’s fear of fishing the deep water, and his longing for a companion serves to keep the escape ideal alive by demanding a confidant that does not appear. And if we take Nick’s home life into consideration, Helen, the expectant mother of his child as per “Cross-Country Snow” and his wife, as per the omitted “On Writing” is nowhere to be seen, nor does she come up in Nick’s escape, and what we make of this is wide open.

The simple conflation of wives with being “absolutely bitched” is a easy point to reach for, and perhaps at this point in has career, Hemingway was still considering this formulation, but I soundly reject the idea that *In Our Time* proposes a simple escape from women. Recall the end of “The Three-Day Blow” when Bill suggests to Nick that he shouldn’t think about the end of things with Marjorie because he “might get back into it again” (*IOT* 48).

> Nick had not thought about that. It had seemed so absolute. That was a thought. It made him feel better.
>
> “Sure,” he said. “There’s always that danger.”
>
> He felt happy now. There was nothing that was irrevocable. He might go into town Saturday night. Today was Thursday.
>
> “There’s always a chance,” he said.
>
> “You’ll have to watch yourself,” Bill said.
>
> “I’ll watch myself,” he said.
>
> He felt happy. Nothing was finished. Nothing was ever lost. He would go into town on Saturday. He felt lighter, as he had before Bill started to talk about it. There was always a way out. (*IOT* 48 - 49)

Though the way that Nick feels about the prospect of things with Marjorie picking up again predates the more dangerous and final implications of pregnancy and childbirth, Nick’s enthusiasm suggests that real love is still in play, therefore a more convincing argument about the male/female dynamic in *In Our Time* and even Hemingway’s body of work in general would look at the attendant social demands of marriage and childbirth. What is certain is that for Hemingway, the ideal companion is one to escape with, not one that will trap you. It is for this reason that sexuality quickly becomes central consideration in Hemingway, not for the attendant aspects of pleasure, which is granted, but in various attempts to find a way to circumvent the baby trap that inevitably turns the complicity of a lover into the certainty of a shackle.

III.ix) Beyond "Big Two-Hearted River;" sexuality, social normativity, and the search for intimacy

Several texts take up this issue. Within the frame of *In Our Time*, “Mr. And Mrs. Elliot” plays with the social expectations of consummating a social union (“Mr. And Mrs. Elliot tired very hard to have a baby. They tried as often as Mrs. Elliot could stand it. They tried in Boston after they were married and they tried coming over on the boat. They did not try very often on the boat because…” (85). Ironically, all that “trying,” a term which itself points to the absurdity of the social expectation, amounts to nothing by social standards, but after the expectation passes, Hubert and Cornelia find a satisfying life together after “Elliot had taken to drinking white wine and lived apart in his own room” and “Mrs. Elliot and the girl friend now slept together.” (88) While Hemingway goes no further in this instance, the still somewhat euphemistic homosexual formulation here proposes an alternative to the hyper static conventional male/female, sex-for-procreation social model that plagues Hemingway’s men elsewhere. In “Cat in the Rain,” a newlywed girl approaches hysteria as she tries to wrestle out a position between child and wife. This socio-spatial struggle is marked by her oscillation between affection for the avuncular hotel-keeper, and full emotional meltdown, demanding “a kitty to sit on my lap and purr when I stroke her” (93), and “to eat at a table with [her] own silver” and “candles” and for “it to be spring” and “to brush [her] hair out in front of a new mirror” and “a kitty” and “some new clothes” (94). This tension is made all the more extreme by the husband’s sheer obliviousness to the transitional social pressure driving his young wife to the point of collapse.

Elsewhere, Hemingway considers ideas of avoiding the baby trap medically. In perhaps his most famous story, “Hills Like White Elephants,” the solution to an unwanted or unexpected pregnancy, according to the young man is a simple fix, “all perfectly natural” and afterward, the two lovers will be “just like [they] were before” (*MWW* 52). Of course, the young woman knows better, (“once they take it away, you never get it back” (53)) and the aporia between the social and the biological is marked contextually by the couple’s placement in space, on the platform at a train station, between to proverbial directions, but without a better alternative.

In a little known story from 1933’s *Winner Take Nothing*, “God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen” gives us a sixteen-year-old “lad who sought eunuch-hood” (*WTN* 69). After being denied elective castration to cure “that awful lust” (69) by doctors at the local clinic, he performed his best approximation of one on himself and nearly died of blood loss. “Castrated?” asks one of the doctors, hearing the story. “No,” says the other, “He didn’t know what castrate meant”(70). Trying to figure out how to record the injury in their notes, the doctors decide “it was an amputation the young man performed” (70). In addition to the shocking prospect of a sixteen-year-old boy cutting off his own penis with a razor to free himself from

"awful lust," the religious context of the story calls to mind the dogmatic and absolute position on lust that "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (*Authorized King James Version with Apocrypha*, Matt. 5.28-29). Even if this corollary is not readily apparent to the contemporary reader, in the story, the boy's religious upbringing is under indictment as he tells the doctor, "I've prayed and I've done everything, and nothing helps." On further questions from the doctor, the boy is absolved of the "sin" (of untimely erections, presumably) in the name of his physiological nature.

> "Listen boy," Doc Fisher said. "There's nothing wrong with you. That's the way you're supposed to be. There's nothing wrong with that."
> "It's wrong," said the boy. "It's a sin against purity. It's a sin against our Lord and Saviour."
> "No," said Doc Fisher. "It's a natural thing. It's the way you are supposed to be and later on you will think you are very fortunate.
> "Oh, you don't understand," the boy said.
> "Listen," Doc Fisher said and he told the boy certain things. […] "If you are religious remember that what you complain of is no sinful state but the means of consummating a sacrament." (*WTN* 69)

Here, the troubling thing is not simply the self-mutilation of a young man, but the context of an intensely domineering social discourse which conflates sexual desire (in this case, little more than physical arousal) with sin and provides no intimate guidance for a young man save the notion that he should destroy himself rather than break the rules. What's more, the boy's instinct to escape is turned back on him, and he attempts to escape from himself, rather than from the affliction of social construct that is truly tormenting him. Complicit in this violence is an entire aspect of social formulation.

Beyond these short stories, *The Sun Also Rises* also physically neuters its protagonist, though this time, the wound is a wartime acquisition—tragic, but not disgusting. As a novel, *The Sun Also Rises* accepts the formal mandate of more developed character exposition avoided by *In Our Time*, but already there is a tonal shift to a more willing and nuanced consideration of society at large which corresponds to more complex considerations of intimacy, as well as to the presentational dynamics demanded by the formal shift. In tracing the development of Hemingway's aesthetic ideal, it seems fitting that, after all of the refusal and loneliness that characterizes *In Our Time*, *The Sun Also Rises* attempts to discover intimacy despite the considerable social constraints that dictate its course.

Still, *The Sun Also Rises* is unable to formulate a workable and sustainable intimacy for Jake and Brett, and while more and more of the men around Jake have sex with Brett, he himself moves back

toward a position similar to Nick Adams in "Big Two-Hearted River," without a present physical companion. Ultimately, the tragedy of Jake and Brett arrives from the communicative disconnect between sex and companionship. What keeps Jake from having Brett is his sexual inability, though for Jake, longing for Brett is rarely framed as a sexual desire. Instead, Brett is painted as a muse, and at times a siren. This struggle is intensified by the novel's chorus of characters who continue to affirm Brett's status as an object of inspiration and disaster. As Brett collects a string of smitten admirers, Jake's claim to her on an intimate, emotional level fades, not for lack of trying, but because her participation in the broader social sphere destroys the already fragile intimacy between them. Thus, what *The Sun Also Rises* does do, in terms of the development of an intimate escape formulation is to effectively separate sexuality from intimacy, though this formulation is simpler when complete physical sexuality is not possible. But in separating sex from intimacy and relegating the former, *The Sun Also Rises* also gives the Hemingway reader the first real admission of loneliness in one of Hemingway's men.

> We kissed again on the stairs and as I called for the cordon the concierge muttered something behind her door. I went back upstairs and from the open window watched Brett walking up the street to the big limousine drawn up to the curb under the arclight. She got in and it started off. […] This was Brett, that I had felt like crying about. Then I thought of her walking up the street and stepping into the car, as I had last seen her, and of course in a little while I felt like hell again. It is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything in the daytime, but at night is another thing. (*SAR* 42)

The tenderness of Jake's loneliness hits hard. We see the often aloof Jake vulnerable in a way that even his war-wound impotence rarely belies. And its not about sex. Or, it is, but not directly. Jake's trouble keeping things "hard-boiled" is sparked by his inability to hold Brett, the emotion comes at night, when he is alone, and their proximity and momentary intimacy makes the ease with which she comes and goes all the more painful.

Further, the physical escape aspect of their dynamic is hardly a problem. The novel's development is framed by the ease with which Jake, Brett, Cohn, and their fellow revelers relocate on a whim. Instead, it is meaningful intimacy that eludes Hemingway's Jake Barnes, a position made all the more apparent by his own social ease and the momentary intimacies he shares with strangers and friends alike, thanks to his freedom to move. But the end of the novel makes the perpetual motion and perpetual loneliness that defines life for Jake Barnes a bitter, existential joke.

> "Oh, Jake," Brett said, "we could have had such a damned good time together."
>
> Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.
>
> "Yes," I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?" (*SAR* 251)

In a parallel construction, *The Sun Also Rises* ends as it begins, with Jake and Brett in a taxi, the very embodiment of complicit motion, just driving, going anywhere ("Where should I tell him?" I asked. "Oh, just tell him to drive around"), but unable to get any closer, or hold each other (32). Brett's wistful "what-if" question and Jake's cool "no-matter" answer reaffirm the absolute impasse between them, while externally, a man raises a phallic object and thrusts them together, a repetition of the flight and return dynamic that defines Jake's relationship with Brett. Brett moves around, a man raises his figurative baton (the symbolism here is too blunt to miss, especially given Hemingway's general avoidance of the symbolic), and then for a moment she is thrust back against Jake, but they never do have that "damned good time together."

Broadly, *The Sun Also Rises* gives us a dynamic and socially nimble young man who is well-received by his peers, adventurous, passionate, and likable, but it also presents a far more complex consideration of the nature of intimacy. In spite of Jake's friends, his self-determination, and his authenticity, the intimacy that eludes him because of his sexual incapacity presents a cruel and paradoxical position relative to Hemingway's previous formulations in *In Our Time*.

But Hemingway would not put that consideration away with *The Sun Also Rises*. Subsequent texts would see him return to the conflict between the sexual companion and lasting intimacy, framed against the context of the seemingly inevitable constraints that arise from the sex, though no text would see him realize a sustainable escape position with a lover. *A Farewell to Arms* would get closer by allowing its lovers a mutual, physical escape, only to kill off Catherine as a complication of childbirth. *To Have and Have Not* and *For Whom The Bell Tolls* would allow their protagonists, Harry Morgan and Robert Jordan meaningful experiences with their lovers, before eventually killing them off in the machinations of larger social forces. In Hemingway's final novel, *The Garden of Eden*, he would eventually formulate a mutual lovers' escape, unencumbered by social or biological determination, only to undo it as a product of selfishness, real or perceived, on the part of both. But in that final formulation, the emergence of the writer as a character, and the reader as an ideal companion for the aesthetic escape space come to bear fully. Unfortunately, the gap between *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Garden of Eden*, a cavernous sixty years thanks in part to Hemingway's suicide, was marked by, among other things, not an approach to new intimacies, but a retreat from them.

Section III) Celebrity, "the rich," the retreat of intimacy, and dynamic sexuality

III.x) Celebrity, "the rich," the retreat of intimacy, and dynamic sexuality

At this point it is necessary to consider the effect of celebrity on the work of the writer, because his rapid rise to fame had a notable impact on his writerly disposition. By 1926, John Dos Passos would declare Hemingway "a figure in the top literary Valhalla of Paris" (qtd. in Koch 14). But a conflict was emerging with that celebrity. Eventually, "his public image […] attracted the interest of Hollywood, and made his private life a subject for public consumption" (Meyers 133), and the demands of such fame wore hard on the writer whose own model required privacy and space.

Indeed much of the content of *A Moveable Feast* recalls the encroachment that his celebrity eventually brought on, even before the major success of *The Sun Also Rises*. From invasions of his work space ("some days it went so well… then you would hear someone say, 'Hi, Hem. What are you trying to do? Write in a cafe?'(79)), to proximal jockeying between he and other characters in the Paris literary community, the daily encroachments of celebrity took their toll, to be sure. But this type of public encounter was not the only manifestation of Hemingway's exploding celebrity, nor was it the most pernicious.

Instead it was the quick arrival of "the rich" (*MF* 179), brought into his life by a "pilot fish" (180), a sort of talent scout for the rich hangers-on and trophy collectors who would eventually do serious damage to the writer and his writing. For Hemingway, retrospectively, the arrival of the rich ruined his relationship with Hadley, which was pure and unassuming, and they settled around him before he was equipped to recognize the danger inherent in their presence. He writes:

> When you have two people who love each other, are happy and gay and really good work is being done by one or both of them, people are drawn to them as surely as migrating birds are drawn at night to a powerful beacon. If the two people were as solidly constructed as the beacon, there would be little damage except to the birds Those who attract people by their happiness and their performance are usually inexperienced. They do not know how not to be overrun and how to go away. (*MF* 180)

In short, the rich began to destroy the simple lifestyle upon which Hemingway had established himself as a serious writer, and their proximity encroached upon his own intimacies, exploited his vanity, and drew him away from the contexts that had characterized his life and his work before their arrival.

I digress to consider biography here because Hemingway's early celebrity encroaches visibly on his developing formulations of intimacy and escape. To reduce *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises* to the

bone, the young man just wants to get away to his own space by his own determination, and the man of the world wants someone with whom to make his experiences meaningful. But celebrity and the rich posed a serious threat to Hemingway's ability to develop these considerations, in part because of the intimacy generated by his aesthetic and the proximity, real or imagined, of his fiction to his own life. Meyers, like so many others, identifies this relationship as central to understanding Hemingway's life and work: "Given his predisposition to mythomania, his reluctance to disappoint either his own expectations or those of his audience, and the difficulty of refuting or verifying the facts of his life, he felt virtually forced to invent an exciting and imaginative alternative to commonplace reality" (134). And this relationship is not merely an interpretive reach; in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" and *The Garden of Eden*, two texts that take the writer as a subject, Hemingway's writers allude to the things they've never written, contextualized against an implicit fear of the proximity of those unwritten things to the writers' own lives.

Thus, Hemingway's contexts shifted away from the intimacy and escape so central to his early artistic project. Whereas his early contexts had been intimate, in part because of their proximity to Hemingway's own lived experiences, it is also not hard to imagine that the complaint of a writer losing his edge may not have provided the appropriate repertoire to garner the same degree of active reader interaction which marked *In Our Time*, especially in the eyes of Hemingway's bourgeois American and European readers. After all, his increasingly curated image eventually included endorsements for Parker pens and Ballantine beer (Meyers 135), and his success as a writer was what had gotten him there— surely things couldn't be so bad. This is to say that for a time, the subject of the life of a writer did not seem to provide the proper context, especially when life as a writer, for Hemingway, was so fraught. And so we see Hemingway dodge it with *The Sun Also Rises* and avoid it altogether in *A Farewell to Arms.* Robert E. Fleming points out that "after his midcareer exploration of the problems of the writer in the 1930s… for all practical purposes Hemingway departed from the theme [of writing] in the rest of the works that he published[29]" (102). Here we should note that while writing does stick around in Hemingway's 1930s, with the exception of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," the explorations of what Fleming calls the "problems of the writer" either focus on the writing process, not the writer as a character, as with *Death in the Afternoon*, or bury the role of the artist, as with the peripheral and effete Richard Gordon in *To Have and Have Not*.

To complicate the consideration of Hemingway's latent celebrity further, it must also noted that Hemingway initially embraced the opportunities of celebrity which tempted him away from his early discipline and the principles which had guided him in his early career. We read the emergence of this dynamic already in the period before the publication of *The Sun Also Rises,* which Hemingway describes in *A Moveable Feast*. In a bitter characterization intensified by the retrospective construct of *A Moveable Feast,* Hemingway considers the way that his life and career took a turn with the arrival of the rich:

> Under the charm of these rich I was as trusting and as stupid as a bird dog who wants to go with any man with a gun…. That every day should be a fiesta seemed to me a marvelous discovery. I even read aloud the part of the novel that I had rewritten, which is about as low as a writer can get…
>
> When they said, 'It's great, Ernest. Truly it's great. You cannot know the thing it has,' I wagged my tail and plunged into the fiesta concept of life to see if I could not bring some fine attractive stick back, instead of thinking, 'If these bastards like it what is wrong with it?' (*MF* 180 - 181)

By his own consideration, it seems that chasing the "fine attractive stick" may have been more the impetus for contextual shift in his writing than a defensive or deflective position, at least originally. In "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," for instance, Hemingway's writer Harry describes his original idea to mingle with the rich as "a spy in their country" (*Snows* 10) not as one of them— his time spent there would simply be research for some future project. But, if we are to accept Hemingway's later reflections in *A Moveable Feast*, or 'The Snows of Kilimanjaro," for that matter, once "you have the rich," "nothing is ever as it was again" (*MF* 179). Either way we can imagine why the conflict between life and lifestyle in the Caribbean and the Spanish Civil War served as appropriate fodder for *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), respectively. While strictly speaking, these novels still do formulate escape experiences by the same brand of stylistic maneuvers that invite the reader to a highly complicit aesthetic intimacy with their characters, more significantly, they position a character at odds with a great and often inconceivable force and move far away from a potential similarity to the imagined life of Hemingway himself. And while I do not mean to insinuate that the revolutionary context of *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* or the momentum of a man's lot in life in *To Have and Have Not* is merely a ploy by which to express his own sense of affliction, Hemingway's turning away from his earlier contexts which generated more intimate proximity between the writer and the reader seems to me to serve to protect the writer by distancing him from closely autobiographical contexts while simultaneously positioning his characters against more insidious, inscrutable oppressors. In other words, the contextual shift that marks Hemingway's work after *The Sun Also Rises*, trades intimate complicity with a character that conjures the writer himself for schematized views which position the aesthetic "sequence of motion and fact" away from the writer, though they still idealize escape and still invite the reader to participate in a complicit escape experience. These contexts simply move the seat of that complicity away from the writer, and toward a character who is decidedly not one.

Still, being known, as it were, seems to have driven Hemingway inward as well as further away. As Africa, Cuba, Key West, and the Bahamas played host to the man and became settings for some of his

[29] Note that *Islands in the Stream* (1970) and *The Garden of Eden (*1986) were published posthumously.

post-celebrity work, his characters continued to explore the desire "to be good and hold it" (AMF 152) with a companion in the face of the external social pressures which would eventually tear them apart— an idea that arrives at its most overt formulation in Hemingway's Harry Morgan, whose dying breath attests that "a man alone ain't got no bloody fucking chance" (*THHN* 225). But while *To Have and Have Not* paints a desperate portrait of defeat by tremendous social machinations come to bear on a single life, it is in many ways an outlier if we consider Harry Morgans's otherwise unprecedented (at least within the Hemingway oeuvre) ability to separate his intimacy at home from his public and outward life. In *To Have and Have Not*, the death of Harry is not formulated as the direct effect of some ruined or threatened intimacy, and this represents a break from the danger of ruin constantly formulated relative to a loss of intimacy between characters, either at the hands of social pressures or the silent mandate of biology in much of Hemingway's work. As for *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, romantic intimacy is again formulated within the larger wartime context, and though Robert Jordan's affair with Maria is intimate and true, it cannot be sustained or "held," because, as with *A Farewell to Arms*, it is still subject to the movements of the broader social construct. Still, with both novels, Hemingway is able to formulate workable sexual relationships which do not encroach upon his protagonists' agency, and in this we mark a considerable development in male/female sexuality conflict in Hemingway's oeuvre. At the same time, Robert Jordan and Harry Morgan's sexual partners do not share the same degree of intimacy with them as Catherine Barkley does with Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms*, or even Brett Ashley, for that matter, with Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises.* So while the contexts of Hemingway's 1937 and 1940 novels show no signs of re-approaching a character more directly identifiable with Hemingway himself, or even with an artist, we do still see a development in the formulations of Hemingway's sexual ideals.

But, subsequent works would return to considerations of sexuality as a possible locus for more protracted intimate escapes begun as early as *In Our Time* with "Cat in the Rain" and "Mr. and Mrs. Eliot" and expanded considerably in *The Sun Also Rises*. Sex, in short, becomes a frontier whereby a couple may be able to "be good and hold it" by a sort of exploration that makes it new— a notion certainly of a piece with Hemingway's aesthetic and the boarder literary project at the time. Where "Cat in the Rain" makes subtle overtures to gender role definitions and blurry sexuality, "Mr. and Mrs. Elliot" considers the possible escape in the addition of a third lover, and both of these ideas become central explorations in Hemingway's posthumous *The Garden of Eden*, a fact that, in and of itself validates my idea that the artist's pursuit of an aesthetic of escape (in this sense, the way to do it) never diminished, though his contexts began to move the aesthetic interaction further from and intimate association with the writer himself. If *In Our Time* proposes a relationship between companionship and escape, the scales arrange the two in opposite pans and tip heavily toward the latter. But the young man's formulation of woman as siren (cf. "The End of Something") quickly begins to yield to the more worldly man's

understanding of the role of a woman as muse (cf. *The Sun Also Rises*), and still beyond as a tragic companion (cf. *The Garden of Eden*). Implicit in this gender distinction is the physicality of male/female coupling, which, as per social mores (cf. "Mr. And Mrs. Elliot," "The Three Day Blow," "Cat in the Rain," "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen") or biological determination (cf. "On the Quai at Smyrna," "Indian Camp," "A Very Short Story," "Cross-Country Snow," "Hills Like White Elephants," *A Moveable Feast*) is inherently dangerous.

And Hemingway never offers a view of a lasting mutual escape, even in the instances of meaningful intimacy. But in returning to writing as a contextual element, and the writer as a character in the *The Garden of Eden*, Hemingway's posthumously published final novel offers his most complex formulation of intimate companionship, which relies heavily on sex at its base, but considers escape inside even the sexual dimension, with gender fluidity and blurred role distinctions and a third lover to boot — all of which remain mainly in the bedroom and complementary to the writer's space as a writer, wherein his escape is the fullest, most complicit, and also entirely aesthetic. This separate writer's space then completes the ideal of the reader as a companion and confidant by whom the writer's work is validated and the writer is loved and admired. In the text within the text of *The Garden of Eden*, Hemingway's David Bourne relies on the aesthetic dynamic that Hemingway himself worked hard to maximize early in his career, namely, "the joint effort of author and reader which brings upon the scene that concrete and imaginary object which is the work of the mind" (*WiL?* 31). And, this collaboration takes as its necessary condition, intimacy and truthfulness if the experience is to be complete, in that what each brings to the creation of the literary object is personal, and because "the artist must entrust to another the job of carrying out what he has begun" (*WiL?* 33). In other words, Hemingway's return to the writer as character, and his inclusion of the writer writing on the first narrative plane offers an entirely new level of consideration of the reader / writer dynamic imagined by Hemingway himself.

Thus, in addition to offering the potential for a companionship that is always already liminal and active, this position relative to the textual boundary mediates and deflects what in a personal relationship would surely include encroachment upon the individual autonomy originally idealized in getting away. In short, the relationship between the reader and the writer promises to be the most ideal formulation of companionship, in that they collaborate in an experience that is both liminal and active. Further, the degree of intimate proximity between the reader and the writer cannot be achieved with a physical (or present, or real) companion due to, among other things, the differences in perception that color the companion's experience, and the interpersonal dynamic that includes all manner of suspicions, prejudices, resentments and assumptions—the likes of which are surely insurmountable in an attempt to experience anew in the way reading allows. But, with the reader, none of these relational dynamic problems come to bear, because the reader and writer share the same perspective in the aesthetic space, and because the

reader is continually reaffirming his willingness to participate in the mutual creation of that experience. Just as the dual lover model in *The Garden of Eden* proposes a dynamic that blends intimacy with the promise of newness, so the dual companion model which includes reader and lover provides an intimacy to both, a newness to both, and attempts to prolong the magic with both by holding the intimate away from the social.

Of course, the question of publication undermines the surety of this formulation. That *The Garden of Eden* and *Islands in the Stream* (which also takes an artist as its protagonist) went unpublished suggests that Hemingway may have had misgivings about releasing a treatment that brought the reader so close to the writer. After all, the celebrity that plagued him and eventually contributed to his suicide also contributed to an increasingly defensive position in his work. Robert Fleming suggests that part of Tom Jenks[30]' task in editing the manuscript of *The Garden of Eden* into publishable form involved extracting the David, Catherine and Marita story from concurrent plot lines which, according to Fleming, served to distance the character of David from Hemingway himself (such as including Hemingway and Fitzgerald as characters who meet David at some point), a position that clearly reflects on the the way that Hemingway's celebrity continually undermined his ability to get away (Fleming 6). According to Fleming's interpretation, the sexual content of *The Garden,* in addition to old rumors concerning Hadley and Pauline's[31] sexual preferences (135 - 8), troubled Hemingway a great deal, not because of the content itself (Hemingway's approach to presentation had never cared about stifled sensibilities[32]) but because the automatic tendency to conflate the lives of his characters with his own life undermined the aesthetic potential of his writing. A similar consideration was at play in Hemingway's decision to remove "On Writing" from "Big Two-Hearted River." Though in a 1924 letter to Robert McAlmon, Hemingway wrote that he had "decided that all that mental conversation from the long fishing story [was] shit"(*CL* 170) and to cut it out, he also benefitted from its removal on personal grounds because that passage included direct affirmation of Nick Adams as Hemingway's literary proxy. Thus the removal of "On Writing" preserved, at least to some degree and for some time, the distance between the two.

So we see that the conflict between intimacy and escape that defined Hemingway's life and work was still unresolved at the time of his death, but in *The Garden of Eden*, Hemingway does formulate a potential final escape position through David Bourne. In the construct of *The Garden of Eden,* David does

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[30] The Scribner editor who edited an assembled the published version of *The Garden of Eden*.

[31] Hemingway's first two wives.

[32] Indeed an entire section of Larry L. Phillips rather villainous *Ernest Hemingway on Writing* is dedicated to "Obscenity." Excerpted in there is a 1936 letter to Maxwell Perkins. Hemingway writes: "Green Hills came out in England on April 3—Haven't heard yet. They made a very nice looking book. I took out 7 bloodies, one son of a bitch and 4 or five shits voluntarily to see what difference it would make, to please them and Owen Wister. See if it will sail as well or as badly with those reefs. A shame I couldn't have removed a cocksucker as a special gift to Jonathan Cape Ltd." (Perkins 86)

what Hemingway's previous writer in existential crisis (Harry from "The Snows of Kilimanjaro") could not, not only because he is a truer artist, but, more importantly, because he sees writing what he calls "the hardest one there is" the only way to prolong his crumbling relationship with Catherine, and "last [himself]" (*GOE* 108). As *The Garden of Eden* plays out, it is David's willingness to write his own guarded places (which simultaneously brings the reader into the closest proximity with the writer in the Hemingway oeuvre) that helps him to escape from the tyranny of Catherine's changing, effectively splitting sexual intimacy from aesthetic intimacy but sustaining both. Broadly, while the writer is unable to resolve the inevitable deterioration of intimacy with the sexual companion, he is at least able to prolong the escape experience and achieve his most intimate proximity to the reader.

Section IV) Writing as escape

III.xi) *The Garden of Eden*

As I have previously asserted, Hemingway is unable to write a sustainable intimacy for any of his characters, and given the prevalence of the escape ideal and the desire for complicity across his oeuvre, it is not surprising that in his final novel he takes up the writer as a character and prioritizes the writer's intimacy with the reader over intimacy with his lover, positioning that intimacy as an escape. It is also not surprising that Hemingway never finished it.

The Garden of Eden is a fascinating text, unlike anything else in the Hemingway oeuvre and it moves in two narratives simultaneously. In the first narrative, Hemingway's writer David Bourne and his young wife Catherine move around in France and Spain and their relationship deteriorates due to Catherine's mental instability and David's return to writing. This narrative is split into two lines; one where what happens to David and Catherine together plays out, and the second where David writes. The second narrative is an extension of this line, and it is the book that David is writing. The book that David writes is then itself composed of a "narrative" which is an account of David and Catherine moving around in France and Spain and what happens there, and "stories" which address David's time in Africa with his father as a child. Thus, to begin with, what is happening, and where its is happening is of central importance.

For many scholars, the interactional line of the first narrative is the most dynamic aspect of *The Garden of Eden*, and justifiably so. David and Catherine's sexual relationship, Catherine's gender performance experimentation, the arrival of a third lover, and Catherine's slow decent into emotional

instability and intense jealousy present a rich and nuanced narrative. But the sexual dynamic that *The Garden of Eden* presents is not the novel's core consideration. Instead, it is the play between the two narratives and the writer's increasing involvement with his writing, in spite of his declining relationship with Catherine. Ultimately, *The Garden of Eden* formulates an intensely intimate reader/writer dynamic by focalizing the writer writing, and then presenting the text that he is writing, such that the reader sees both the process and the product. And, given the split development of the novel's first narrative, the increasing presence of David writing in the first narrative also signals the writer's increasing prioritization of his own work as the novel progresses.

But, this is not to say that David is absent in the relationship, or that he abandons Catherine. Quite the opposite. Though the deteriorating relationship is initially the result of Catherine's sexual experimentation and identity reformulation, David is still deeply in love with her. Even after the moment of fracture which marks the beginning of gradual loss of intimacy between David and Catherine, David tries to "be good and hold it" with Catherine as long as possible.

Ryan Hediger sharply notes that the fleeting intimacy between David and Catherine is marked by their respective willingness to pursue their own individual expressions and to allow that process in the other. Curiously, Hediger calls this "sympathy" between David and Catherine, which "involves feeling for others, imagining their situations, and thus expanding the self" but also making the self "vulnerable" (81). "They make more of themselves—more selves—by changing their hair, their gender roles, their marriage roles, and by producing second selves textually [by writing] […] But they press their desires beyond the breaking point, reminding us that sympathy too has its limits, as they both slip back into sympathy-destructive, self-protective selfhood…" (81). But this point does not come to bear on an even balance. While David is tolerant of Catherine's experimentation, he is not complicit in it. He allows himself to participate in Catherine's sexual role reversals and humors her experimentation, but Catherine, on the other hand, does not allow David the creative freedom that Hediger imagines. What's missing is complicity. David and Catherine are not mutual participants in the same experience, despite David's participation because after "Catherine had walked in the Museo del Prado in the light of the day as a boy… there would, it seemed to him, be no end to the change" (*GOE* 75, 67). In Catherine's changing, the easy intimacy once promised by the early honeymoon begins to slip away, not for loss of love—Catherine and David are eager to reaffirm it even in the midst of all the changes—but for loss of complicity. In a sense, their journeys have divided, though they continue on a parallel track.

In the morning after the moment of irrevocable change, the first narrative marks this split: "it was green and all the trunks of the trees were dark and the distances were all new. The lake was not where it had been and when they saw it through the trees it was quite changed" (68). While "they" see the lake together, "quite changed," Catherine sends David on ahead and when he looks at the lake again, alone and

from a different perspective, he [knows] that it [is] to far to ever walk to" (68). With the break irrevocable now, the love that remains becomes a sort of wound. "She looked particularly beautiful that morning and she smiled at their secret and he smiled at her and then took his remorse to the cafe. He did not think he would make it but he did and later when Catherine came he was finishing his second absinthe and the remorse was gone" (68-9). Here the attribution of the collective possessive "their" to Catherine ("*she* smiled at *their* secret"), but the singular perspective to David ("and *he* smiled at *her* and then took *his* remorse to the cafe"), as well as the narrative denial of complicity relative to "their secret," which is hers, but not his, indicates that the change is already foregone and that it hurts.

And if we are to be perhaps a bit too involved, it may also be worth noting that the novel David is writing in *The Garden of Eden* is his third. If David mirrors Hemingway, the aspect of the lake scene is worth considering, then, as Hemingway's third novel was *A Farewell to Arms*, and for my money, the escape across the lake there (also with a Catherine) is the most complete example of physical escape in the Hemingway oeuvre. It follows then that what Hemingway does with this recurrent lake motif and perhaps even the idea of distances, which picks up threads from "Big Two-Hearted River" and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" among others, is to abandon the idea of physical escape. This abandonment then is amplified by the physical nature of the relationship dynamic between David and Catherine which is the manifestation of the wedge between their intimacy and personal exploration as physical exploration does not yield the intimate escape explored and examined over and over in Hemingway's prose.

After this examination of the ultimate failure of physical escapes when Catherine suggests that they could "stay on" because "the town and here" are "[theirs] now," it is David who counters, "there aren't any more moves to make" (69), denying the possibility of an intimate physical escape on account of their broken complicity, and thus denying his own participation in Catherine's physically experimentation in parallel. But Catherine, still unaware of the break, or unwilling to accept it chides him:

> "Don't. We've only just started."
>
> "Yes . . . we can always go back where we started."
>
> "Of course we can and we will."
>
> "Let's not talk about it," he said.
>
> He had felt it start to come back and he took a long sip of his drink.
>
> "It's a very strange thing," he said. This drink tastes exactly like remorse. It has the true taste of it and yet it takes it away." (69)

This is not David leaving, it is David understanding that Catherine is leaving, even if she does not yet see that change, and what we make of David's sentiment about "always [being able to] go back" speaks, not to David and Catherine, but to David and writing. After all, before this fracture to their intimacy, David is "not working" on account of "the enforced loneliness" that writing demands and his feelings of obligation

to Catherine not to be apart from her at all (*GOE* 14). Incidentally, the novel's second narrative follows David "going back" to where, in a sense, he started— to his own disillusionment process with his father, hunting elephants in Africa.

As a cure for David's "remorse," Catherine suggests that they go back to "la Napoule," because, after all they "didn't stay there long enough before" (*GOE* 71). But Catherine does not realize that David's remorse is caused by her departure from their initially complicit intimacy, and "the new plan [lasts] little more than a month" (75), in part because the physical move imagined by Catherine no longer serves as a complicit escape if the intimacy between David and Catherine has been broken. But, notably, this physical remove also appeals to David's remorse in that it marks a physical return to a space already full of the memory of a time before the rupture. And while there is a compelling argument to be made that David and Catherine's escape is successful, marked by "the empty beaches" and "no one staying at the long house now in the summer" (75), the true final position of this escape is non-physical, marked instead by the way that Catherine and David both begin their own approaches to new intimacy.

It is in this climate that David begins to write in earnest. It is also in the context of writing that we see Catherine begin to become jealous, a lurking possibility first signaled earlier when David tries to read the press clippings of coverage from his recently published second novel:

> They both read the clippings and then the girl put the one she was reading down and said, "I'm frightened by them and all the things they say. How can we be us and have the things we have and do what we do and you be this that's in the clippings?"
>
> […] "You don't think I married you because you are what they say you are in these clippings do you?" (*GOE* 24)

So while Catherine's latent jealousy is initially difficult to discern, Catherine quickly begins to ridicule David for his interest in the clippings, and we begin to understand that her jealousy is in direct response to the intimacy she recognizes shared elsewhere. And to some degree, this jealousy is well-founded: "He stared to write and he forgot about Catherine and what he saw from the window and the writing went by itself as it did with him when he was lucky. He wrote it exactly and the sinister part only showed as the light feathering of a smooth swell on a calm day marking the reef beneath" (*GOE 42).* Still, at this point, David is still only writing the "narrative;" that is, the story that is based on he and Catherine, and for a time, that story interests Catherine because she is in it.

On a higher level, Hemingway himself begins to play with narrative conventions as the narratives in *The Garden of Eden* begin to separate. In a stylistic move used several times in *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway deploys pass-through passages in the context of the break between David and Catherine, marking the first time the reader is invited beyond the intimacy between David and Catherine in being privileged to read what Catherine is not:

> He was writing about the road from Madrid to Zaragossa and the rising and falling of the road as they came as they came at speed into the country of red buttes and and the little car on the then dusty road picked up the Express train and Catherine passed it gently car by car, the tender, and then the engineer and fireman, and finally the nose of the engine, and then she shifted as the road switched left and the train disappeared into a tunnel. (78)

In this single-sentence passage, the reader, David, and Hemingway all experience David and Catherine through David's construction, and in a way, both Hemingway and the reader occupy David's consciousness in the passenger seat of "the little car on the then dusty road" watching Catherine race a train. With someone else literally in the driver's seat, the acquiescence of reading mirrors the acquiescence of a passenger that constitutes complicity in the absence of protest. But this textual pass-through, this second (or third, depending on where we begin) level of complicity with the reader is broken by none other than Catherine, not in the second story, but in the present first—"when he heard her voice in the garden, he stopped writing. He locked the suitcase with the cahiers of manuscript and went out locking the door after him" (78), effectively guarding a separate intimacy with the reader. When a curious Catherine later asks David, "can you publish it or would it be too bad?" David is coy and guarded. "I've only tried to write it," he says.

> "Can I ever read it?"
>
> "If I ever get it right."
>
> "I'm so proud of it already and we won't have any copies for sale and none for reviewers and then there'll never be clippings and you'll never be self conscious and we'll always have it just for us." (77-8)

In the same way that Catherine is cruel to David concerning his interest in the newspaper clippings, earlier, here she basks in the idea of a book denied its audience and thus unfulfilled and we are immediately reminded both of David's earlier sensitivity concerning the clippings, and the secret relationship between the reader and the writer locked up in its notebooks in the briefcase behind the locked door upstairs, put safely *away*.

As *The Garden of Eden* unfolds, David writing in the first narrative begins to become more frequent:

> It was the third day of the wind but it was not as heavy now and he sat at the table and read the story over from the start to where he had left off, correcting as he read. He went on with the story, living in it and nowhere else, and when he heard the voices of the two girls outside he did not listen. (*GOE* 107)

By the novel's midpoint here, the uncertainty that defines David's relationship with Catherine and their newly acquired lover is juxtaposed with the certainty that he is working again, picking up the negative relational dilemma between writing and being with Catherine, but favoring, more and more, the intimacy

inherent in his writing. In the context of David's immediate reality, writing itself becomes an escape space, and there is no doubt that David is very much there, too. The voices of the girls are a distraction and it is their departure that allows him to "go back into the story" and finish it (107). But upon finishing, David finds that he does not want to join the girls or eat breakfast, and he begins to interact with himself concerning what he really wants. He wants an egg and a beer. "But the beer on this coast was worthless and the thought happily of Paris and other places he had been and was pleased he had written something he knew was good and that he had finished it. This was the first writing he had finished since they were married" (108). Then, thinking (to himself), David resolves to finish his project. "If you don't finish, nothing is worth a damn. Tomorrow I'll pick up the narrative where I left it and keep right on until I finish it. And how are you going to finish it? How are you going to finish it now? (108). While the resolution to "finish it" stands for a prioritization that removes Catherine from a position of primary importance, the problem of how to finish it arrises from the fact that the narrative he's writing is in fact about David and Catherine. This is "the narrative," which David refers to.

Of course he is also writing what he and Catherine call "the stories," which for David, become the real intimate space of his writing:

> He left the ongoing narrative of their journey where it was to write a story that had come to him four or five days before and had been developing, probably, he thought, in the last two nights while he had slept. He knew it was bad to interrupt any work he was engaged in but he felt confident […] he could leave the longer narrative and write the story which he believed he must write now or lose. (*GOE* 93)

And though David feels that the longer narrative (that is, the story of David and Catherine) is going well, he is increasing drawn into the stories, and increasingly unable to write the narrative, in part because what is actually happening to David and Catherine is approaching destruction, and David knows it.

Significantly, Catherine hates the stories, which follow David as a boy, hunting with his father, and include thematics that define a young boy's struggle to come to terms with the ignobility of manhood. But the stories are the most important thing to David once they have begun to develop, and in this David's acceptance of his obligation to write them surpasses Hemingway's regretful writer from "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," who: "[…] *had never written any of [the most meaningful moments in his life] because, at first, he never wanted to hurt any one and then it seemed as though there was enough to write without it*" (*Snows* 17). So, in a somewhat paradoxical formulation, Hemingway's later writer, David, does what his earlier writer, Harry, cannot, and this he avoids the existential regret that follows Harry to the grave. At the same time, by embracing the call of his own craft, David continues to alienate Catherine, growing closer to his writing, and further from her.

But David's increasing investment in the stories pays off in the sense of his position as a writer, and

his ability to successfully uncover new aspects of something old indicates the quality of his work and the depth of the writer's intimacy with what he is writing: "The difficult parts he had dreaded he now faced one after another and as he did the people, the country, the days and nights, and the weather were all there as he wrote" (128). Not to be missed here is also the implicit corollary between the writer's bravery and the authenticity of his writing, and in this writing the writer expresses his own presence in the textual experience, not as the writer, but as the subject:

> "It was not him, but as he wrote it was and when someone read it finally, it would be whoever read it and what they found when they should reach the escarpment, if they reached it, and he would make them reach its base by noon of that day; then whoever read it would find what there was there and have it always" (129).

Here, then, the writer imagines the closest and most intimate proximity between the reader and the writer in the aesthetic space as the two become complicit in the same experience. And just as I described with "Indian Camp," for example, where the reader's proximity to the the narrative creates both a sense of complicity with the textual character, and a sense of presence as that character, here Hemingway's writer understands the same dynamic from the opposite side of the aesthetic dimension.

As we know, *The Garden of Eden* was not finalized by Hemingway before he died, and as I have mentioned elsewhere, the question of authorial intent and the final form of the novel looms large in any consideration of it. While the novel's ultimate path has Catherine burn the stories that David becomes increasingly present in, the final chapter presents a sort of resolution wherein David is able to rewrite them again though this ending feels to many (myself included) a sort of *deus ex machina* unsubstantiated by the trajectory of the full manuscript (Fleming 129). For my part then, it is difficult to make a final proclamation on the considerations of intimacy between the writer and the reader in Hemingway's final novel, for, on the one hand, the writer's work is denied to his audience, completing Catherine's early promise to "destroy" David (*GOE 5).* On the other, as per Tom Jenk's editorial decisions, the novel's final chapter proposes that the writer who has been true to himself and his craft is ultimately able to approach the reader at last, despite Catherine's attempt to destroy him. Either way, what the novel does yield is an undeniable presentation of the perceived complicity between the reader and the writer in specific reference to the intimacy they share in the experience of the text. And for both the reader and the writer, that aesthetic experience is an escape.

III.xii) Conclusion

To summarize, then, the continuing appeal of Ernest Hemingway is due in significant degree to to the experience of reading him. While his subjects and stylistic approach do represent notable aspects of his writing, it is not his supposedly masculine texts or his “tough, terse prose” that account for Hemingway’s still significant appeal. Instead, it is the highly participatory aesthetic experience of reading him, and the consistent idealization of escape in his work that keep us close. While the trajectory of his career would see the exploration of escape manifest in different aspects— at times idealized as a physical remove or a getting away from social contexts, and other times manifest in the exploration of the experiential potential of reading and writing themselves— in total, Hemingway’s belief that the aesthetic potential of reading could be transportive, and his persistent pursuit of a higher degree of intimacy in the aesthetic space shines through like a beacon, summoning the reader with seemly unflagging intensity.

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