In Another Country Study Guide

In Another Country by Ernest Hemingway

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Introduction

Ernest Hemingway is a legendary figure in twentieth- century American literature. His reputation stems not only from his body of written work, but from his adventurous and amorous lifestyle. His crisp, almost journalistic prose style, free of the long, sometimes flowery language common to much of the literature that appeared before him, has won him great acclaim and some of the highest literary honors: The Pulitzer Prize, which he won for his novella, *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1952; the Nobel Prize for Literature, which he received in 1954; and the Award of Merit from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which he also received in 1954.

Despite these accolades, Hemingway is not without his critics. Some scholars complain that his tough, often violent subject matter is limited and without insight, and that his female characters, in particular, lack dimension. His devotees claim that behind his work's often tough, macho exterior lurks a complex world of wounded, complicated human beings. His short stories are among those most frequently studied and anthologized, especially "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," "A Clean, Well Lighted Place," "The Gambler, the Nun, and the Radio," "The Short, Happy Life of Francis Macomber," and "In Another Country," which was first published in 1927 in Scribner's magazine. His novels include such American classics as *The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and *The Old Man and the Sea*. He has also written several works of nonfiction, including *Death in the Afternoon*, about bullfighting, and *The Green Hills of Africa*, about big game hunting.

Author Biography

Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, into an upper-middle-class family. Although his childhood does not seem to have been particularly traumatic, in later years he often displayed bitterness towards his father, whom he saw as weak and ineffectual, and his mother, whom he felt was strict and domineering. By the time he was in high school he had developed an interest in literature, writing for his school newspaper and its literary magazine. During his family's summers in northern Michigan, he developed a love of hunting, fishing, and outdoor life. Upon graduation, he took a job at the *Kansas City Star*, where he honed the spare, objective style that would be his hallmark.

When the United States entered World War I, Hemingway volunteered as an ambulance driver for the Red Cross in Italy. Wounded, he recuperated in a Milan hospital among injured Italian soldiers, an experience that would provide the background for his 1927 story "In Another Country." This is also where he met nurse Agnes von Kurowsky, the inspiration for Catherine Barkeley in his novel *A Farewell to Arms*.

Upon returning to the United States in 1919, Hemingway wrote several short stories, but sold none. One year later, he met Hadley Richardson; they were wed the following year. They moved to Europe, settling primarily in Paris where their expatriate colleagues included important literary figures, such as F. Scott Fitzgerald and Gertrude Stein. During that time, Hemingway published two collections of short stories, followed by his acclaimed novel *The Sun Also Rises*, which featured characters based on his new circle of friends. Not long after, in 1927, he and Richardson divorced; Hemingway married Pauline Pfeiffer, a writer, less than two months later. In 1929, *A Farewell to Arms* was published, which cemented his literary reputation.

During the 1930s, Hemingway moved to Key West, Florida, yet spent much of his time traveling in Spain, where his fascination with bullfighting became the subject of his 1932 nonfiction work, *Death in the Afternoon*. He also pursued big game hunting, which he wrote about in *The Green Hills of Africa* (1935). Hunting figures prominently in many of Hemingway's stories, including "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," first published in 1936.

In 1937, Hemingway went to Spain to cover the Spanish Civil War for the North American Newspaper Alliance and began a relationship with writer Martha Gelhorn, whom he had met in Florida. He received a divorce from Pfeiffer in November, 1940; Gelhorn became his third wife two weeks later. The same year, he published his novel about the Spanish Civil War, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, another major success, and his play *The Fifth Column* was performed briefly on Broadway.

Plot Summary

"In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it anymore." So begins Ernest Hemingway's short story, "In Another Country." The war he refers to is World War I; the setting is Milan, away from the scene of the fighting. The narrator describes the city he passes on his way to the hospital to receive physical rehabilitation for the leg wounds he received while at the front. Though the narrator remains unnamed, scholars generally agree the young man is Hemingway's alter ego, Nick Adams.

At the hospital, the narrator, a young man, sits at a machine designed to aid his damaged knee. Next to him is an Italian major, a champion fencer before the war, whose hand has been wounded. The doctor shows the major a photograph of a hand that has been restored by the machine the major is using. The photo, however, does not increase the major's confidence in the machine.

Three Milanese soldiers, the same age as the narrator, are then introduced. The four boys hang out together at a place called Cafe Cova following their therapy. As they walk through the city's Communist quarter, they are criticized for being officers with medals. A fifth boy, who lost his nose an hour after his first battle, sometimes joins them. He wears a black handkerchief strategically placed across his face and has no medals.

One of the boys who has three medals has

lived a very long time with death and was a little detached. We were all a little detached, and there was nothing that held us together except that we met every afternoon at the hospital. Although, we walked to the Cova through the tough part of town, walking in the dark, with the light singing coming out of wineshops, and sometimes having to walk into the street where the men and women would crowd together on the sidewalk so that we would have to jostle them to get by, we felt held together by there being something that had happened that they, the people who disliked us, did not understand. (Excerpt from "In Another Country")

Having all faced death and survived, the boys are linked in a way that the outsiders cannot understand. This special bond exists between them even though the narrator as an American, is otherwise more of an outsider to the soldiers than the unwounded Italians on the street who despise them. They feel particularly connected at the Cova, where they drink and carouse with local girls.

The Italian soldiers change their manner toward the narrator when they realize he received some of his medals for being an American, and not for bravery, as they had. Though the narrator likes to imagine he would have been as brave as they had, he knows this is not true because he is indeed afraid to die. Despite their initial common bond, the Italian soldiers drift from the narrator due to this difference. Only the undecorated boy, without the nose, remains his close friend. This boy will not return to the war, so will never get the chance to find out if he also is afraid of death.

The major, the great fencer, is cynical about bravery, and so the narrator then feels a bond with him. As they sit at their respective physical therapy machines, the major helps the narrator improve his Italian.

One day when the narrator feels as hopeless about his machine as the major does about his, the major, usually poised and soldier-like, suddenly calls the narrator "a stupid impossible disgrace," who he had been "a fool to have bothered with." Standing upright to calm himself, the major asks the narrator if he is married. He answers, "No, but I hope to be." The major bitterly tells him, "A man must not marry," explaining that a man "should not place himself in a position to lose [everything] . . . He should find things he cannot lose." When the narrator counters this statement, the major angrily exclaims, "He'll lose it. Don't argue with me!," then demands his machine be turned off.

The major goes into another room for a massage, then asks for a phone, shutting the door for privacy. A short time later the major returns, composed. He apologizes to the narrator, then announces his wife has just died. The narrator feels sick for him, but the major remains controlled, saying, "It is difficult. I cannot resign myself." He then begins to cry. Quickly, however, the major stands erect, like a soldier, and fighting back his tears, exits.

The doctor says that the major's wife, a young, healthy woman, had died unexpectedly of pneumonia. The major returns three days later, wearing a black band on his sleeve to signify mourning, a symbol which further separates him from the narrator. Large framed photographs of healed hands have been hung to offer the major hope. However, the major ignores them; instead, he just stares out the window, knowing the machines cannot cure him of this different kind of injury.

Detailed Summary & Analysis

Summary

The story opens in the fall in Milan. The narrator, an American soldier who was wounded in World War I, describes going to the hospital every afternoon for physical rehabilitation. He explains that although there are many ways to get to the hospital, he must always cross one of three bridges. On one of the bridges is a woman who sells roasted chestnuts. He likes the warmth of the fire and the warmth of the chestnuts once they are in his pocket on the cold, windy, fall days.

Each day while in rehabilitation, he meets up with a group of former soldiers. They sit in their "machines that were to make so much difference" with the hopes of a full recovery from their injuries. We learn that the narrator used to like to play football when his doctor tells him that he will be able to play football again "better than ever." The narrator then explains how his knee no longer bends. His rehabilitation consists of him sitting in a machine that is supposed to bend his knee as if riding a bike. Not even the machine, however, can get it to bend yet. The doctor has a positive attitude and reassures the narrator that he will be able to play football once again.

We meet one of the other soldiers in the group, an Italian major. His hand is small and withered and he spends his afternoons trying to rehabilitate it. Although he was once a great fencer (before the war, he now cannot fence because of his injury. His machine has leather straps that flap the fingers, trying to loosen their stiffness. The major expresses doubt and the doctor reassures by showing him a "before" picture of a small withered hand and an after shot of a slightly larger hand (after it had "taken a machine course").

Three others that meet at the hospital on those fall afternoons are originally from Milan; they sometimes walk with the narrator to a café after their treatment. They would always take a shortcut through the communist neighborhood. Even though the people do not like to see the officers on their territory, the officers feel safe because there are four of them together. Sometimes a fifth soldier joins them on their trips to the café. He wears a black silk scarf over his face because he does not have a nose – he had been in the military academy and then went straight to the front lines. Within an hour, he had been wounded. He did eventually have his face rebuilt, but the narrator explains that his nose never looked quite right.

All of them have medals from the war except for the soldier wearing the scarf – he did not fight long enough to earn any. One of the other three soldiers (the one who had wanted to be a lawyer) had three medals but the other soldiers only had one each. While they had all been around death and had become detached because of it, this soldier had been around death more and was even more detached. The one thing that holds them all together, however, is the fact that they meet together every afternoon at the hospital.

The narrator also explains that the others are polite and understanding towards his medals, but, once they find out what he had done to get them, they change their manner towards him. The papers with his medals say that he had received the medals for simply being an American, not for some heroic act. The other three had done something other than being wounded (which is just an accident, anyway) to earn their medals. The narrator sometimes imagines that he had done all the different things the others had done to earn their medals, but is proud of his ribbons and medals none-the-less. He also admits that he is afraid to die and probably would never have done those things anyway. Eventually, even though the three soldiers from Milan stick together, they drift away from the narrator. However, the narrator does stay close to the young soldier who was wounded during his first day in action.

The narrator then explains that the major does not believe in bravery and the stories of the three soldiers from Milan. He does not shy away from the narrator regardless of his medals and ribbons and their history. Instead, the major gives the narrator Italian grammar lessons while they talk during rehabilitation. While the major never misses a day of rehabilitation, it is obvious that he does not believe it will do any good.

During one of the days, the major is particularly agitated, says that the machines are simply nonsense, and scolds the narrator for not learning his grammar. He calls the narrator "a stupid, impossible disgrace." The major asks the narrator what he will do when the war is over. The narrator explains that he wants to return to the United States and to get married. The major says that it is foolish to get married because that is just placing himself in a position to lose. The major then orders an attendant to unhook him from the machine and goes to get a massage. When he returns, he apologizes to the narrator saying that he just lost his wife – she had come down with pneumonia and had only been sick a few days. No one had expected her to die. The major then leaves and does not return for rehabilitation for three days. When he does return, he has a black band around his sleeve. The doctor has placed framed photographs of injuries before and after using the machines on the walls around the room. Those in front of the major's machine are pictures of hands like the major's that have been completely restored. The narrator marvels at how the doctor gets these pictures because they are supposed to be the first people to use them. It does not matter to the major, however, because all he does is look out the window anyway.

Analysis

Throughout the story and all aspects of the story, loss is a recurring theme. When the narrator walks through the hospital gates, he mentions that there is usually a funeral starting. All of the soldiers meeting at the hospital rehabilitation center have lost something, and they can come together as a tie to help them through their detachment and mourning.

The setting is an important aspect of this story. It is important that this story take place in Italy because, even though the narrator is no longer on the front lines of the war, he is nowhere near being home. He has been pulled from the camaraderie of his fellow

American soldiers due to injury; he has been kept from going home due to injury. Not only has he lost the use of his leg, but also he has lost his teammates and his home. He is in another country and must navigate through each day trying to find a way to fit in until the day comes that he can either return home or back to the front lines. Living in another country is not easy. Even if he shares characteristics with these other people, he struggles to fit in with some of them – someone from a different country is always an outsider and must find small comforts to make it seem more like home. They must also learn the language and customs as well as try to find support network of friends.

The Italian major is probably the most well rounded and dynamic of the many characters in the story. We know that he has great common sense. He shows doubt towards the machines that have no real proof of success, and he does not pretend to think they will work. He is also a very composed father figure to the American soldier. He teaches him Italian grammar, and they talk about life. He does everything right, but still he suffers great loss. On the day that he breaks down about his wife's death, we see him as a human beginning to realize some things in life never change, while others will never stay the same. Even though he did everything right, he lost his career, his wife and his favorite pastime Sadly, he knows there is no way to find any of them again.

The other two main groups of characters directly contrast one another. The first of these contrasting groups includes three soldiers that the narrator befriends during his rehabilitation. They represent the characteristics that soldiers are expected to embrace during war whether or not they actually feel that way. One had wanted to be a lawyer, one a painter and one a soldier. While the first two lose their ability to be what they wanted to be, they know that, primarily, they need to be brave. They have medals and tell great stories of their brave acts that helped them earned these medals – so much so that the American soldier has dreams of being like them (but it is such an unreachable goal that he questions if he would be able to even go back to the front lines). These three soldiers also stick together. No matter what happens or what they lose, they are there for each other, even if that means leaving an outsider (the American soldier) behind in order to keep their alliance.

The second category of characters is only the American soldier (or the narrator). Hemingway writes the narrator to be the epitome of what characteristics young American men really embrace during war: survival, fear and optimism. He, like so many other soldiers, is young and trying to survive in another country. After being wounded, he found a group of soldiers with whom he only had a few commonalities: rehabilitation at the same time in the same hospital and their awarded medals tied together by the losses they share. This soldier is not cowardly by any means, but freely admits to himself that he is not overly brave either. He is afraid of death and does not know how he will handle going back to the front lines if he is ever rehabilitated. He is hopeful, however, that he will return home to play football and to get married.

The point of view of "In Another Country" also says a great deal about the American soldier. We get details about a few events surrounding his time at the Milan hospital, so they all must have an effect on him for some reason. The first thing that he details for the readers is the lady who sells chestnuts. This is important enough to tell others and

tells us that he likes the consistency of her being there day after day. He also likes the comfort and warmth he feels when he visits her vending stand, especially amidst all the loss he suffers during the war. The second event he tells in detail is the relationship with the three soldiers. This is a tough place to fit in – with locals in a different country. He does well, but as soon as they find a way for him to stand out because of where he is from (the reason he was awarded his medals) they begin to drift away. It illustrates that he can fit in with them superficially, but once the relationship gets deeper, there is not enough to hold them together. The relationship with them becomes yet another loss. Finally, his last event shows that a book cannot be judged by its cover. The Italian major always seems so composed and confident until the day he breaks down and cries about his wife. The narrator finally realizes that the major is not just upset about losing his wife, but that he has resigned himself to the fact that his hand will also never recover, and the American soldier loses yet another friend.

Characters

American Soldier

See Narrator

Italian Major

The Italian major, a former fencing champion, is in the Milan hospital because his hand has been mangled in battle. A controlled military man, he is cynical about the machines that are used to rehabilitate his wounded extremity, and about the tales of bravery and heroism he hears from the young Italian officers. He befriends the narrator, who is also injured, and tutors him in Italian. The Italian major has recently married a young woman, something he would not do until he was injured—and therefore would not be sent into battle again. However, when his wife dies unexpectedly from pneumonia, the major loses his soldier-like composure, and weeps, not just for her death, but also, according to Earl Rovitt in his essay, "Of Human Dignity: 'In Another Country,'" for his understanding that he must now confront the meaninglessness of life, one that has shown him that his strict military code could not protect him from life's vulnerabilities.

Major

See Italian Major

Major's Wife

Though the major's wife never appears in the story (she is mentioned only in the second-to-last paragraph of the story), she plays a major role. A young, healthy woman, her sudden death from pneumonia leads the Italian major, her husband, to learn he cannot control life, a lesson which is also observed by the story's young narrator.

Narrator

The narrator is a young American in Italy during World War I. Though unnamed, the narrator's identity is assumed to be Nick Adams, an alterego for many of Hemingway's semi-autobiographical short stories. The narrator is in an Italian hospital receiving therapy for his injured leg. He befriends several other officers with whom he shares the experience of facing death and surviving, and of getting decorated for their efforts. When the other soldiers learn that the narrator's other medals are merely for his being an American, and not for acts of heroism or bravery, he becomes an outsider to their circle. Realizing that his fear of death would make him an unlikely member of their group in the future, the narrator befriends an Italian major whose hand is wounded, a

man whose cynicism toward bravery does not alienate the narrator from him. The narrator senses their connection is lost, however, when the major unexpectedly loses his young wife to pneumonia. According to Laurence W. Mazzeo in his "Critical Survey of Short Fiction," Nick comes to realize that "nothing of value can last in this world."

Signor Maggiore

See Italian Major

Themes

Dignity and the Human Condition

In the story, the young narrator has faced death and survived. This is also true of the Italian officers who, like the narrator, come to the hospital each day to receive therapy for the wounds they have received while at the front. The narrator learns about dignity and the human condition primarily through his interaction with an Italian major. While the young narrator is fearful of dying on the battlefield, the major seems to have made peace with this possibility. He knows he must do his duty in the dignified manner consistent with being a professional soldier and, more specifically, an officer. He is uninterested in the bravado expressed by the young decorated officers. Bravery requires acting on impulse, making snap decisions based on one's emotions. The major instead depends on control and precision. One day, however, the major breaks his composure; while sitting at the machine intended to heal his injured hand, he becomes angry with the narrator's hope to marry in the future, irately adding that the young American "should not place himself in a position to lose [everything]. . . . He should find things he cannot lose." The major then does the previously unthinkable; he breaks into tears. The narrator soon learns from a doctor that the major's young and, presumably, healthy wife has suddenly died from pneumonia. When the major returns to the hospital, three days later—his first break in his regime of daily visits—he is a more openly vulnerable man. He sits dutifully at his machine, stands in an erect, soldierly manner, but now his dignified stance is more hard won. He has learned that life cannot be controlled, that it is filled with arbitrary tragedies, even off the battlefield, for which one may be unprepared. The major may have been prepared for his own death, like any good soldier, but his wife's sudden passing leads him to confront life's meaninglessness, an aspect of the human condition he, who has survived, must now struggle to face with dignity.

Courage and Cowardice

Not unconnected is the theme of courage and cowardice. While many heroes, particularly in American fiction, especially American films, are portrayed as stoic and unafraid, "In Another Country" depicts a more complex and humanistic type of courage. Following the unexpected loss of his wife, the major's return to the hospital signifies his willingness to survive, even with his new awareness of chaos in the world and his inability to prevent being touched by it. His willingness to face life with this new and painful understanding can be seen as a definition of genuine courage, the kind of courage befitting a real hero. This truer, more human heroism even requires the initial shedding of tears, an act that is seen in some circumstances as a sign of cowardice.

This definition of heroism contrasts with the more traditional kind of heroics, the kind that wins medals, displayed by the brash young Italian offi- cers. These men are seemingly proud of their naive bravado; however, because they have not dealt with the

emotional consequences of the violence they have faced, they have become "a little detached" and withdrawn.

Alienation and Loneliness

This theme is expressed initially in the story's title, "In Another Country," which refers to being or feeling alienated from the comfort of the familiar, a circumstance which often leads to loneliness. In this story, the narrator is literally in another country, Italy, an ocean apart from his home, the United States; however, he is also apart in other ways. When he walks in the streets of Milan alongside the young Italian officers he is first accepted by, he knows the civilians who verbally abuse them do not understand what they, the officers, have faced. Though the officers and these native Milanese share the same streets, they are in "another country" from each other, separated by their differing life experiences. Once inside the warmth of the cafe, the narrator feels the loneliness this alienation causes disappear. Later, these same officers drift from him because they discover that some of his medals are for being an American, while theirs are for feats of bravery, acts the narrator knows his own fear of death would probably not permit him to perform. This leads to his being separate, in "another country," from his former friends. Out of loneliness, the narrator maintains a friendship with the only member of the group who has not received a medal and, since he is too injured to return to battle, never will. The narrator likes to pretend this friend would be like him in battle, cautious and a little afraid. The narrator insists on imagining he and this young man are connected in this way to alleviate the loneliness he feels now that he has become alienated from the others. At the end of the story, the narrator becomes alienated from his new friend, the major, after the major experiences a loss that the narrator has not, the death of a wife to pneumonia. The major's resulting understanding of life's cruel lack of meaning puts him in "another country" from the younger, still somewhat idealistic narrator. The mind set of the major is both alien to him and lonely, yet it is inevitable to all human beings. After all, the story suggests, attempts to avoid loss are only temporary.

Style

Point of View

All of the events that occur in "In Another Country" are told from the point of view of the story's unnamed narrator, an American officer receiving physical therapy in a Milan hospital on his leg, which has been wounded at the front during World War I. The narrator is a young man, presumably about 19, the same age as the author when he also spent time in a Milan hospital, recovering from leg injuries received while working as an ambulance driver for the Red Cross. The events are filtered through the narrator's perspective, therefore the first person "I" is used throughout. How these events affect the narrator, particularly those which are written about in the greatest detail, like the major's disillusionment following the death of his wife, is not directly revealed. However, it is apparent that what he has witnessed has made a strong impact on him because he has chosen to recount the story so vividly. Readers may assume it is an older narrator who is telling the story, as it is written in the past tense.

Objectivity

One of the most distinctive aspects of this story, and most of Hemingway's literature, particularly his many stories about this same narrator—unnamed here, but known as Nick Adams elsewhere—is its objective tone. Though the story is told from the narrator's perspective, how they affect him is never made explicit. Instead, each of the events is described almost in the way a journalist reports a newspaper story, with as little subjectivity, or personal interjection, as possible. One way this is achieved is by using very few adjectives. This is done to avoid manipulating the reader's imagination. The specific details of each event are recorded in an objective way, leaving the readers to put the pieces together; this way readers can discover their own interpretation of what the events mean. This distinctive style, perfected by Hemingway, has been widely imitated and greatly praised, though it has its share of detractors as well.

Existentialism

Existentialism is a philosophy concerned with the meaning of existence. One of the aspects of this philosophy is the isolation of the individual, a condition all human beings must face at some time. The Italian major comprehends this after the unexpected death of his wife to pneumonia. When he returns to the hospital to continue the machine treatments on his hand soon after her passing, the narrator observes the major struggle to maintain his previous soldierly posture as he stares out the window. It has been implied by scholars that, having lost his innocent belief that loss can be minimized through discipline and precision, what the major sees out that window is life's vast emptiness. He is coming to terms with the fact that all conne connections are eventually lost, especially through death, and that life carries with it a sense of its own

meaninglessness. This knowledge is one of the cornerstones of the existentialist philosophy, and it can be found in much of Hemingway's literature.

Symbolism

There are several examples of symbolism throughout the story. One such symbol is the window the major looks out of following the death of his wife. Previously, he looked at a wall while receiving his machine therapy. But, after his wife's death, he stares out the window instead. The major, at this point, is no longer emotionally walled in; he is open, vulnerable. The window symbolizes this opening inside him. The machines also have symbolic significance. Though utilized by the patients, the men know that they are probably ineffective; yet, they still return to them day after day, following the regime their use requires. Humans each follow their own daily regimes, hoping that they, too, are useful, purposeful. However, the story suggests, this is unlikely. The machines are an external symbol of life's probable futility, a condition which becomes apparent to the major after his tragic loss.

Irony

Irony occurs when the outcome of an event contrasts the intention of what has come before it. A particularly strong example of this can be seen with the Italian major. He has lived his life carefully, following a strict military code which has helped him maintain emotional control even while having to confront death, his own and that of others, nearly every day while at war. He depends on this, believes it will save him from being unprepared for great loss. Ironically, this man who believes he is in control of his life, soon learns, via the death of his wife, that his composure, his military precision worn like armor, cannot protect him from personal tragedy. This irony changes his life, and brings out many of the story's major themes.

Historical Context

Ernest Hemingway's story "In Another Country" takes place in a war hospital in Milan during World War I. The war began in 1914 when Archduke Franz Ferdinand, a member of the Hapsburg family, the rulers of what was then known as the Austro- Hungarian empire, was assassinated while on an official state visit to the city of Sarajevo in Bosnia. His killer was a young Bosnian Serb, Gavrilo Princip, a member of a secret underground organization who protested the Austro-Hungarian empire's claim over their country. When the Austro-Hungarians demanded entrance to Bosnia so they could find and then bring to trial Ferdinand's assassin, the Bosnian government refused, insisting they would conduct their own investigation. The Austro-Hungarians then declared war on Bosnia. Quickly, Germany allied with the Austro-Hungarian empire, while Russia, France and Great Britain allied with Bosnia, with Italy soon to follow.

The United States joined World War I at the end of 1917. A German submarine had torpedoed a British passenger ship, the Lusitania, claiming it secretly carried American munitions aboard. The United States denied this, but joined the fray when the British and French requested their assistance. Most American soldiers were initially stationed on the Western Front, in France. Believing the American army to be inexperienced and, according to Hemingway, "overfed and under trained," the Germans immediately attacked. To much of the world's surprise, the Americans, despite being outnumbered and lacking experience, fought off the German army, solidifying their reputation as a world military power. The United States and its allies won the war in 1918. About 118,000 American soldiers were killed in action, more than double the 55,000 lost in World War II, a generation later.

Hemingway wrote "In Another Country" while residing in Paris in 1926. There he lived among a circle of writers and poets, many of whom would go on to be among the most prominent literary figures of the century. Expatriates like himself, these authors included F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, John Dos Passos, Thornton Wilder, Ezra Pound, e. e. cummings, and Hart Crane, along with Gertrude Stein and her lover, Alice B. Toklas, whose salon was a common meeting ground for the group. Coined "The Lost Generation" by Stein, these writers came to Paris in search of inspiration and a new understanding of the boundaries and purpose of art. Malcolm Cowley, one of their clique, wrote about this period in his book *Exile's Return*. A collection of Hemingway's anecdotes of this experience was published posthumously under the title *A Moveable Feast* in 1964.

Critical Overview

Hemingway's spare, objective style has been widely imitated and adapted by many other writers. His choice of material, and his stoic, masculine way of dealing with issues of life, death, and love in a troubled, often violent world has made him a controversial figure. Though many admire his sparse prose, suggesting it reveals the inner workings of his macho male heroes, a share of scholars, feminists in particular, have criticized his work, arguing that rather than illuminating and critiquing the hemen behavior of his characters, he is, instead, embracing, even sentimentalizing it. They also complain that his female characters have less dimension than his male characters, and that they generally fall into two stereotypical categories, the saintly and the whorish, showing an underlying dislike of women in general. Hemingway supporters counter that he adores the women he writes about, almost to the point of idealization.

His short story, "In Another Country" is one of his most popular; it is also one of his most anthologized. Like much of Hemingway's work, it has been written about at great length. Forrest Robinson in his article "Hemingway's Invisible Hero," published on *Essays in Literature* argues against the notion that the story's narrator is not "merely passive in his painful acceptance of his lack of bravery, and is respectful in his observance of the [Italian] major's resignation to despair." He goes on to say that the narrator is not really the story's protagonist, which many assume, but that the Italian major is.

"In Another Country" is widely considered to be one of Hemingway's serial, semi-autobiographical Nick Adams stories. In fact, when all the stories featuring Nick were published together as *The Nick Adams Stories* in 1972, "In Another Country" was included in the book. However, James Steinke, in his article "Hemingway's 'In Another Country' and 'Now I Lay Me,'" published in *The Hemingway Review* in 1985, argues that the story has been "mistakenly seen as one more contribution to composite of 'Nick Adams.'" He also writes that the Nick Adams stories are not "fictionalized personal history," as others claim. He uses a quote by the author himself to support his point: "When you first start writing stories in the first person, if the stories are made so real that people believe them, the people reading them nearly always think the stories really happened to you."

In addition to having his work labeled fictionalized autobiography, Hemingway's work has also led to the author being called such "critical classifying terms as Disillusioned Idealist, Realist, Naturalist, Existentialist and even—after *Old Man and the Sea*—Christian," according to Richard Irwin in his essay, "Of War, Wounds, and Silly Machines: An Examination of Hemingway's 'In Another Country.'" Irwin goes on to say that the author may be a Naturalist, but that he is not a true Naturalist. He feels Hemingway is a Naturalist "in the sense that for him human destiny is largely controlled by factors which lie beyond the individual will and choice, and those factors do not operate at the behest of an ultimately beneficent divine being." However, he feels that Hemingway can not be called solely a Naturalist because his work does not "reveal . . . sentimentality toward the hard aspects of the human condition . . . a belief in a benign, responsible creator [or] a keen awareness of the 'forces' which operate independently of

man's conscious will." He also comments that Hemingway's writing does not "assume a universe indifferent to the suffering of human beings," and so does not fulfill the definition required to be considered a Naturalist.

Despite the vast array of opinions surrounding the work of Ernest Hemingway, his popularity and influence are still felt 35 years after his death. His position as one of the most distinctive and lauded writers of this century is assured, a title supported by a long list of devoted readers, the inclusion of his work in dozens of anthologies, and several of the most prestigious honors a writer can receive.

Criticism

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Critical Essay #1

Zam has been an associate professor at Fordham College and New York University, as well as a writer for the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Review and Details magazine. In the following essay, he examines Hemingway's sparse writing style, and compares that style to the early motion-picture technique of montage.

One of the most often-discussed aspects of Ernest Hemingway's writing is his distinctive style. Whereas many writers of his day were still heavily influenced by the verbose, extremely descriptive style of English and American authors of the nineteenth century such as Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, and Herman Melville, Hemingway was not. His literature is free of the extensive use of adjectives common in the work of many earlier writers, and of many of his immediate contemporaries. As a result, his work has often been described as sparse, objective, and journalistic. It's also been called original, so much so that even readers who would not consider themselves scholars can immediately recognize a book, a story, or even a paragraph that he has written without knowing beforehand that he was its author. His style is so singular, in fact, that to this day there is an international writing contest held every year in which writers are asked to submit a short story in his style. Knowing full well that the results will most likely be second rate, the contest is called the "Bad Hemingway Competition." The winner is awarded a free trip to Italy which includes a complimentary dinner at Harry's Bar in Venice, one of Hemingway's old hangouts.

The fact that Hemingway worked throughout his life as a journalist clearly influenced his spare prose style. In fact, before he had published any fiction, Hemingway, upon his graduation from high school, took a job as a junior reporter at the *Kansas City Star*. Only eighteen years old, and still developing his authorial voice, Hemingway was clearly inspired by the *Star*'s guidelines which demanded compression, selectivity and precision for their news stories. Though his background in news writing was an undisputed influence on his writing style, there is another strong influence that guided it as well: the movies. This is not too surprising; Hemingway was born just before the start of the twentieth century, the same time mass motion pictures were invented.

At the time that Hemingway began writing prose seriously, just at the end of World War I, in 1919, and up until the time he was considered an important writer some seven years later, movies were the most popular form of entertainment throughout the western world. This was more than three decades before television overtook motion pictures in popularity—in fact, television as a technology as we now know it had not yet been invented. Many people commonly went to the cinema several nights a week in the 1920s (even more so in the 1930s and early 1940s). The movies these large audiences were watching were, of course, silent movies.

Films with synchronized sound were not introduced to mainstream audiences until 1927, when *The Jazz Singer*, which included several musical numbers with synchronized sound, revolutionized the industry. That film's astronomical success led movie studios, within the year, to stop producing silent films. Because the sound

technology was so new, these early "talkies" became more stagebound, featuring longer scenes with actors clustered around flower vases and table lamps that hid strategically placed microphones. Movies had, for a time, lost their visual flair. The word overtook the image as the prime focus of filmmakers. Silent film, starting in the late 'teens, and up to 1927 (the same years Hemingway began seriously writing fiction), had matured; film language, dependent on the visual image to tell its story (with the exception of a few inter titles for important dialogue), had hit what many film scholars consider an artistic peak that was not found again for many decades to follow

One of the ways in which the best silent films of the time communicated their narratives and the emotions that they wanted their audiences to experience while watching them was through a technique called "montage." Montage is when several unrelated images are edited together to create a desired effect. For instance, if one sees an image of a man turning his head suddenly, then to one of a gun being aimed in his direction, to a shot of a tree falling in a nearby forest, the audience instinctively knows that the man has been shot, even without the sound of the gunshot. If we see several shots of an impatient crowd, followed by an image of a raised fist, we know that the fist represents the angry emotion of the mob without having to be told this. Hemingway makes subtle use this same montage technique in his writing.

An example of this can be seen clearly in the story, "In Another Country," especially the first paragraph. "In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it anymore. It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows." This establishes the setting and context of the story. Hemingway follows with a series of images which collectively create a mood and develop the story's themes. "There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered the fur of the foxes and the wind blew their tails. The deer hung stiff and heavy and empty, and small birds blew in the wind and the wind turned their feathers." We can feel the approaching winter through these details, and may start to subliminally sense that the details are also showing us, as opposed to telling us, that death, too, is approaching. Winter is the time when the life that bloomed in spring, thrived in summer, and weakened in fall, is taken away. We may also feel that a life-changing transition is also coming, and that, like the coldest of seasons, it will be a chilly reminder that the life we innocently enjoyed during the warmer months will be gone.

This montage technique is also prominently used in the story's important climactic sentences when the Italian Major returns to the hospital after hearing of his wife's sudden death from pneumonia. "Then he came at the usual hour, wearing a black band on the sleeve of his uniform . . . there were large framed photographs around the wall, all sorts of wounds before and after they had been cured by the machines. In front of the machine the major used were three photographs of hands like his that were completely restored." Hemingway then interjects his own equivalent of a silent film's inter title, "I do not know where the doctor got them. I always understood we were the first to use these machines." But the major, he tells us in the last sentences, is not moved by the photographs; instead, in the story's final, telling image we are told that the major "only looked out the window." Again, image builds upon image to create a final

impression of existential despair, a message artfully expressed without being directly stated.

Is it any wonder, then, that Hemingway's works were quickly scooped up by movie studios? However, this did not occur until talkies were already in place and most of these adaptations, critics argue, lack much of the visual expressiveness present in Hemingway's writing. In fact, the film version that is considered most successful on an artistic level is the first, *A Farewell to Arms* of 1932. Though it has its share of characters sitting in rooms talking, like most films of its period, even these scenes are punctuated with what one critic called "a strange, brooding expressionist quality," which other adaptations of his writing lack.

It's important to note that Hemingway was clearly a filmgoer. According to his letters, published in a thick volume under the title, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters: 1917-1961*, the author writes many times about film stars, some of whom he had met, as well as discussing in some detail his involvement in casting choices and screenplay ideas he had contributed to several of the films made from his work. Films clearly played a role in his life and, to some extent, played a part in his work as well.

One of the things for which Hemingway has been criticized, particularly in the decades following his death, is his portrayal of macho characters. Many scholars and feminists have commented that Hemingway's work has embraced the stoic, unfeeling masculine stereotype. However, though his heroes are nearly always strong men who are not weepily sentimental, Hemingway has usually found a way to show the pain these men feel. In fact, part of his interest in writing about these characters is so he can use them to comment on their macho posturing. Again, "In Another Country" can serve as an example of this. Hemingway shows the story's narrator spending time with a group of young Italian officers who are proud of the masculine bravado they have demonstrated in battle. He writes, however, that they are emotionally "detached," unable to express their innermost feelings about the tragedies they have witnessed and experienced. He contrasts their behavior with that of the Italian major, a man who, in the end, is held up as a braver man for giving up his controlled facade, for coming to terms with the deep loneliness and isolation of death and the loss that it entails. Even when the major cries, that most unmacho of acts, the author does not criticize him; in fact, Hemingway seems to be rather approving, as long as the tears do not relate to cowardice.

Source: Michael Zam, "Overview of 'In Another Country,'" for *Short Stories for Students*, The Gale Group, 2000.

Critical Essay #2

Forrest Robinson is affiliated with Western Illinois University. In the following excerpt, he argues that the reader's revelation in Hemingway's "In Another Country" "can be seen only through the consciousness of the invisible first-person narrator who—in the creative act of giving a form and a focus to his own past experience—resolves a conflict implicitly disclosed in the process of narration."

Hemingway's "In Another Country" offers unusual evidence of the essentially heuristic and therapeutic nature of his storytelling. His thematic concern— that a person "find things he cannot lose"— takes on considerable significance when the distinction between the protagonist and the first-person narrator is clarified. It is the protagonist who, along with the Italian major, faces the wall of despair and death after being wounded in Italy during World War I. It is the narrator, however, who epitomizes Hemingway's hero in this story. True heroism is not passive. True heroism is the action of the creative artist, the storyteller of "In Another Country" who discovers a "window" through which he can see beyond the "wall" facing those who suffer permanent wounds.

Confusion is understandable because Hemingway's narrator in this story is "invisible," that is, nameless, and he tells his own story. Moreover, he never calls attention to himself as narrator except indirectly in comments which establish a temporal distance between his past experience and his narration. Because of the narrator's "invisibility," readers can easily fail to see his formal function, therefore focusing their attention exclusively upon the narrator's younger self, the protagonist. Consequently, they see the young protagonist as one who is merely passive in his painful acceptance of his lack of bravery and is respectful in his observance of the major's resignation to despair. To overlook the formal function of Hemingway's invisible firstperson narrator, however, represents a failure to apprehend the story as a total imaginative act. It is the narrator who looks back upon himself in a conflict which he, as protagonist, could not understand. As protagonist, he acted blindly, victimized as he was by his unrecognized responses to the world around him. "In Another Country," therefore, is not the protagonist's story, nor is it the major's. It is the narrator's, and the way into the story is through an effort to understand his concern in the conflict he recalls. The revelation of the story, then, can be seen only through the consciousness of the invisible first-person narrator who—in the creative act of giving a form and a focus to his own past experience—resolves a conflict implicitly disclosed in the process of narration.

That the narrator is an older man looking back over the years can be established in two ways. First, and more obviously, the narrator employs the past tense. Secondly, when he tells about the four soldiers with whom he used to walk in the streets of Milan, he offers an explicit statement about the temporal distance between his narration and his past experience. One of the young soldiers wears a black silk handkerchief to cover his horribly mutilated face. The narrator comments upon him in such a way as to indicate a knowledge extending years beyond the action of the story:

They rebuilt his face but he came from a very old family and they could never get the nose exactly right. He went to South America and worked in a bank. But this was a long time ago, and then we did not any of us know how it was going to be afterward.

The failure to consider the function of a narrator who is invisible is, I have said, understandable. All of his attention is focused upon himself as a young man in his encounters with therapeutic machines, "hunting hawks," and a major. Nonetheless, whatever the narrator's story discloses grows out of the way in which the machines, the hunting hawks (those men who were brave), and the major participate in the resolution of a conflict within the narrator's mind.

Critical Essay #3

One way to focus the conflict is to examine the structure of the story. What the narrator remembers can be divided into five sections. With the possible exception of the last paragraph of the story, which is expository, sharp transitions help to set off each section. In the first two-paragraph section, the narrator begins to focus his attention in the process of recollection. Moving from his memory of specific sensations in the streets of Milan to the various routes he and his friends used to walk to the hospital, the narrator allows us to enter his consciousness, thereby enabling us to experience his sense of isolation as he walks to the new pavilions, which were beyond the old hospital and the courtyard where the funerals begin, and to "the machines that were to make so much difference." The machines which were to heal their wounds have not, of course, made much difference at all. If we think of the first section figuratively, as a recalled movement toward healing, we will have a way of conceptualizing each section of the story as a movement toward a healing which fails.

Before moving to the second section, let us return to the first sentence: "In the fall the war was always there but we did not go to it anymore." The fall is the season of nature's dying, and it is also the season for killing game, or hunting. Beyond the cluster of associations recalled by the narrator as he remembers his walks by the shops is the larger and seemingly interminable context of the war. That he says ". . . we did not go to it anymore" reveals the first element of separation. In other words, the narrator recollects that he and his four wounded friends are soldiers who are no longer participating in the action of the war. As we learn in section three, the protagonist is separated from more than the war; he is cut off from his "hunting hawk" friends who had earned their medals for bravery. Their only common ground lies in their having been wounded and in their efforts to recover from their wounds by going to the "healing machines."

The second section of the story, which begins with the, doctor's asking the protagonist what sport he played before being wounded, serves to emphasize a sense of the futility of the therapy. Both the protagonist and the major he encounters are damaged, and they realize that they are permanently damaged. Juxtaposed with their awareness of futility is the ineffectual but well-meaning effort of the doctor to persuade them that the machines are going to make them completely whole again. The language the doctor uses—"Did you practice a sport?" and "You will play football again like a champion"—implies a lack of knowledge about sports and calls into question his judgment about the protagonist's full recovery. When the doctor tells the protagonist that he will play football better than ever, the narrator conveys the impossibility of such restoration by simply stating that his calf had been completely shot away. Also played down is the intense pain which he must have felt when the machine lurched, indicating that its force met the resistance of the knee that would not bend. The major, moreover, is not under any illusions about his hand, which is reduced to the size of a baby's. His fencing days are over, and not all of the photo graphs in the world can convince him that he will recover fully from his wound. If the first section is seen as a movement toward the ineffectual

healing machines, the second section can be seen as a movement away from false hope toward no hope.

By regarding the first two sections of the story as movements of consciousness, the narrator's concern— what he is seeking—becomes clearer. Each movement of consciousness happens against the backdrop of the "world" of the story—a world at war, a world of destruction and death. The narrator's concern is how to participate in a world that inflicts wounds from which there is no permanent recovery. His football and soldiering are behind him, and the first of three efforts to recover has failed. The healing machines cannot heal permanent wounds. And the narrator recalls that it is the major who faced head-on the fact of his condition.

Although the major is not mentioned in section three, this scene immediately follows his flat assertion that he has no confidence in the healing machines. The transition is so abrupt that we are likely to overlook how the major's honesty influences the narrator's recollection of relationships with the other wounded boys. In fact, the progression of the narrator's use of the first-person plural "we" to the singular "I" in this section is framed by the major's attitude toward the machines and his attitude toward bravery in the first sentence of section four.

In the first paragraph of section three, the narrator tells us about the sense of camaraderie which he and the other three boys experienced as they were ridiculed when they walked the streets of Milan. The narrator proceeds in the next paragraph to tell us that they had all received medals except the boy who wore the black silk handkerchief over his face. He had not been at the front long enough to get any medals. As the narrator focuses upon his relationships with the other young soldiers who had been wounded, he recalls his sense of alienation: "We were all a little detached, and there was nothing that held us together except that we met every afternoon at the hospital." The only bonds among the men were created by the dislike and discourtesy of the people in the streets and the universally understandable appetites that could be satisfied at the Cova, where in war or peace the girls were "patriotic." The narrator's comment that he believes the girls are still "patriotic" is a minor intrusion; however, it serves to establish further his distance in time from the past action.

The shift from "we" to "I" in the fourth paragraph of the third section reveals that the second method of participation within a context of struggle is unsatisfactory. Just as the therapy machines cannot fully restore wholeness of body, neither can other people be encountered in any satisfying relationship when the basis for human encounter is an ideal one cannot live up to. The narrator recalls that his failure to earn medals for bravery under fire had separated him from those who had. He had become a friend against outsiders, but he knew that he was not really one of the "hunting hawks." After the cocktail hour he could imagine he had been brave enough to earn citations; but in the cold air walking home he knew that he would never have been brave and that he was afraid to die. In other words, under the warming effects of alcohol he could, like the well-meaning doctor, avoid facing the fact of his estrangement. In the cold air of the street, however, he is like the major who coldly faces the fact of his condition.

We can now see that the narrator is recalling two aspects of his former condition of estrangement and despair; furthermore, we can realize that he is "meeting himself"—from the ground of a present crisis—in the events of his past. His process of focusing his consciousness upon these particular events implicitly discloses his concern about a present condition of estrangement and despair which is epitomized in his memory of the healing machines, the relationships with the other wounded soldiers, and, particularly, the major. The narrator first recalls wounds which cannot be healed by the products of modern science, the therapy machines. He then recalls his sense of being cut off from those men who embodied for him an ideal of selfhood which he felt—and continues to feel—incapable of attaining. At this point in the story, however, the ideal is not articulated. The narrator does this in the next paragraph.

In the fifth paragraph of section three, the image of the hunting hawk emerges in the consciousness of the narrator as a symbol for that capacity to function within a natural order characterized by struggle and death. The hunting hawk is a bird of prey, capable of sweeping down for the kill, swiftly and instinctively. The narrator remembers how the hawk had become for him an ideal of selfhood from which he had been hopelessly estranged. Significantly, his friend among the other boys was the one who had been wounded before he was tried under pressure.

Critical Essay #4

The context of the war is only one of two contexts in the story. As we noted, the war serves as a metaphor for the natural order within which people struggle and die. The second context is the hospital, within which the issue at hand is the healing of those persons who have been wounded within the war-context. By extending these metaphors, we might suggest that the narrator's stake in his narrative is the resolution of how to be healed or how to be rejoined to a world characterized by destruction and death. The healing machines could not make him physically whole again, and he recalls that he could never be a hunting hawk; consequently, two of the three modes of survival in a destructive element failed to work.

Juxtaposed with the narrator's certainty that he was not a hunting hawk is his first comment about the major in section four: "The major, who had been a great fencer, did not believe in bravery." Bravery, that quality possessed by the hunting hawks, is of no importance to this man. What is important to him is what the narrator derives from him: precision and discipline. These qualities can no longer be exercised in fencing, but they can be in communication. In contrast with the doctor who uses false photographs to create the illusion of hope, the major calls things as he sees them and insists upon correct grammar. We might observe, then, that at this point in his narration the narrator remembers his initial regard for the major as a man of precision and authority.

By keeping in the foreground our primary effort to discover the narrator's stake in his re-enacted experience, we can see that he is groping for more than he has recalled thus far in his narrative. The major has given him a greater respect for precision and discipline in communication, but he has given him much more than this. In looking back, the narrator recalls that the major had also been engaged in finding a satisfactory mode of participating in the destructive element of life. He had acquired great competence as a fencer, and he had proved competent enough as a hunting hawk to become a major. Both accomplishments represent only partial and temporary modes of participation. The major had been deprived of his fencing skill by a wound, and the wound had forced him beyond "hawkery," as a mode of participation, to human love. Furthermore, the major had so valued the possibility of participation in life through human love that he waited until he knew he was permanently out of the war before he married.

Close to the end of the story the narrator recalls an incident which represents a turning point in his relationship with the major. Sensing that his young wife is going to die, the major tells the protagonist that he is a fool to hope to get married. Here again, the narrative perspective from which we are viewing this situation enables us to see more than a passive young man being instructed by an older man. We can now grasp what the major was trying to tell him: that there is no single way, once one has been wounded, to be rejoined in life—not by fencing, nor by hawkery, nor even by human love. The narrator learns that there are no things he cannot lose. And he also learns (when he recalls that the major had told him not to address him as "Signor Maggiore") that the possibility of death removes the distinction of rank, and there is now a common condition.

Critical Essay #5

Thus, we can say that the ground upon which the narrator stands is similar to the major's at the end of the remembered experienced. Wounded by life, the storyteller recalls his earlier predicament as a young man physically wounded in the war. Struggling, also, for a way to heal his psychic wound— his sense of estrangement in the present—he recalls the context of healing in the new pavilions at the hospitals in Milan. Just as his body could not be restored to wholeness by the machines, neither could his estrangement as a young man be overcome by trying to be a hunting hawk. The death of the major's wife, therefore, is intensely relevant to the narrator's present condition. At the conclusion of his recalled experience, the death of a young woman seemed to seal off all avenues of recovery from the damage done to the major by life. Even human love cannot be relied upon as a way of reentering the world.

All that can be done is what the major has done; what the major has done can easily be overlooked, however, because Hemingway's narrator forces each sentence in his story to carry heavy freight. For example, the major had earlier in the story sat at the machine and looked at the wall. At the end of the story, though, he sat at the machine and looked out the window. If we briefly retrace what the narrator recalls, we can see that the major's progression toward his particular end is similar to the boy's; and we can see that it is the narrator who welds both together in a story. The major who looks at the wall has gone through fencing and hawkery, and is facing the death of his wife. The young boy has gone through football, has failed at hawkery, and does not know where to go from here—except that he considers the possibility of marriage when he returns to the States. Although the narrator is distinct from the protagonist, he sees his present crisis epitomized in his earlier experience. If we realize that the narrator is "meeting himself" in his remembered experience, then we can grasp his concern in his narrative. Incidents recalled express his concern in the present, and the end of his narrative becomes more significant if viewed from this perspective.

The death of the major's wife shatters the major's rigid carriage and enables him to move outward toward the boy in a way that was not possible before. This last wound, the death of his wife, forces the major beyond the wall, that is, to the world beyond the confines of his personal and ineffectual therapy. All of these elements, of course, are remembered by the narrator. And not the least of these is what the major has gone through. The narrator's concern seems to be what can be done when nothing seems to assure complete recovery from the condition of being wounded. Once wounded, he realizes, one can never be the same; but perhaps the major points the direction for what can be done—in fact all that can be done. Instead of facing the wall, one would look out the window. The world lies out there to be seen, thought about, and then rendered into an art form—that activity which makes possible a maximum ordering of his life, a maximum association with others, beyond his personal condition of estrangement. The paradoxical truth, however, is that not until one is wounded does one see that world and become able to participate in it.

The narrator participates in the world by telling his story. We do not see this, however, if we focus upon the major as a figure of despair and the young boy as a passive witness. By focusing upon the invisible first person narrator who has relived his past, we can realize that he is no merely passive witness, and that he is the focal point in the story. For the narrator has turned to the only method of healing available to him, a method of healing which transcends that of the major's—the creative act of giving a form and focus to his own condition of estrangement, as honestly and precisely as possible. The narrator, at the end, is like the major in a figurative sense. He is no longer walled in by the impossible ideal of hunting hawkery, which excludes and therefore cuts off association and participation in the human community at a human level. Like the major, at the end of the story, the narrator is not concerned with efforts, no matter how wellmeaning, to create the illusion of hope for full recovery. Nor does human love, even, serve as a lasting mode of participation: love can be killed by any turn of the natural order.

The last word of this story is, significantly, "window." And that window looking out upon the world offers the only release from the damage done by a permanent wound and the realization that there can never be a complete recovery. The world beyond the major's window is the common ground between the major and the boy, and it is the common ground between the narrator and the reader.

Source: Forrest Robinson, "Hemingway's Invisible Hero of 'In Another Country,'" in *Essays in Literature*, Vol. XV, No. 2, Fall, 1988, pp. 237-44.

Critical Essay #6

Cass earned his doctorate in American literature at Ohio State University and has published critical articles on Hemingway, Fitzgerald, London, and James Gould Cozzens, as well as checklists for First Printings of American Authors. *In the following excerpt, he examines several aspects of "In Another Country," including Hemingway's writing style, his allusion to Marlowe's The Jew of Malta, and his use of "window" and "looking" Imagery*.

Ernest Hemingway's short story, "In Another Country," is illuminated by three related observations: that the author shifts his attention from the American soldier to the Italian major midway through the story, that he exercises strict control over his title allusion to *The Jew of Malta*, and that he cultivates a very elaborate motif of images concerned with looking and windows.

The first two-thirds of the work is focused on the nameless [Although nothing in the published version warrants the assumption that the narrator is Nick Adams, many critics have suspected that he is.] young narrator convalescing in Milan. At the climax, however, when the major learns that his wife has died, the American becomes only an observer, and thereafter the major dominates. But the scheme is not as inept as it sounds. For the narrator, several ways of being in another country—for instance, as an American in Italy, a newcomer to the language, an officer among hostile civilians behind the lines, a patient with a serious handicap, and a frightened soldier among genuine war heroes— have already been explored. Hemingway is especially interested in kinds of experience that the American either lacks or underestimates. When the major emerges as the central character, it is because the story moves on to subjects beyond the American's experience, namely, love, despair, and death.

The opportunity for the American to witness the major's grief is so fundamental that Hemingway at the climax takes a big risk to secure it. Strictly speaking, the major's presence at physical therapy the day his wife dies is implausible. Hemingway tries to disarm this objection by saying, "She had been sick only a few days. No one expected her to die." But the major knows *before* the telephone call that she is either dead or dying, as his extreme agitation makes clear. He not only loves his wife; he has no confidence in the treatments. So in life he would have no reason to be present. Yet Hemingway must deliver the bereaved husband to the narrator. For the American to perceive the depths of love and despair, he must witness the effects of the wife's death. And there would be no justification whatever for the American's presence at the wife's bedside. In short, even at the expense of an implausibility, Hemingway is determined to make his point: the major, having experienced love and the loss of it, is in another country from the American.

Hemingway's title allusion to Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* is well known. But because T. S. Eliot draws on the same passage for the epigraph to "Portrait of a Lady," and because Hemingway reuses the material himself in *The Sun Also Rises* and *Across the River and Into the Trees*, criticism has repeatedly been distracted from interpreting

the lines in relation to the present story. As Philip Young says [in *Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration*, 1966], "Unless one knows the origin of this title its point is lost." Yet when he then explains it as "a brutal allusion to the major's bereavement," he appears to have lost half the point himself. In Marlowe ["The Rich Jew of Malta"] the intention of the lines seems clear. Barabas, the Machiavellian Jew, having poisoned his own daughter along with a convent full of nuns, is trying to forestall the charge of murder by interrupting his accusers and confessing lesser sins:

2. Fryar. Thou hast committed-Barabas. Fornication? but that was in another Country: And besides, the Wench is dead.

Correspondences between story and play seem obvious. The major's dead wife resembles the Jew's dead wench, and by extension, the major is counterpart to the Jew. The relationship is, however, patently ironic, not brutal. Hemingway alludes to the cynical, loveless Jew, who fornicated with some wench he cared nothing about, so that we will recognize by contrast the genuine article—love as the major knows it. The major's experience with love places him in another country from both the loveless Jew of Malta and the inexperienced American. One cannot shrug off such love as Barabas shrugs off the wench. Such a loss is desolating. The major cannot resign himself.

Having lost everything of consequence in his life, the major becomes an important exemplar of Hemingway's code of conduct. When, three days later, he returns "at the usual hour, wearing a black band," he has stoically resigned himself to the doubly hopeless situation and recovered his temporarily shattered decorum. But his new experience with loss leaves him utterly detached: "The photographs did not make much difference to the major because he only looked out of the window".

This reference to looking out the window is actually the last image in an intricate motif. Besides mentioning windows three times, Hemingway uses "to look" nine times. This, of course, is a common verb, yet nine occurrences in 2100 words seems unusual, a conclusion borne out by comparison with "A Way You'll Never Be" which, chosen at random, uses the verb eleven times in about 5000 words. The percentage for "In Another Country" (0.43%) is twice that for the control (0.22%). Moreover, after the first reference all the looking is done by the major:

(1) it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows. (2) The major held the photograph with his good hand and looked at it very carefully. (3) he sat straight up in his chair with his right hand thrust into the machine and looked straight ahead at the wall while the straps thumped. (4) He spoke very angrily and bitterly, and looked straight ahead while he talked. (5) "He'll lose it," the major said. He was looking at the wall. (6) Then he looked down at the machine and jerked his little hand out from between the straps. (7) He looked straight past me and out through the window. (8) And then crying, his head up looking at nothing, carrying himself straight and soldierly, with tears on both his cheeks and biting his lips, he walked past the machines and out the door. (9) The photographs did not make much difference to the major because he only looked out of the window.

The looking must not be separated from the three references to windows. They occur precisely at the beginning, the climax, and the end of the story, and their main function is to emphasize the difference between the American's point of view and the major's. In the widely admired opening paragraph, "It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows." This looking in from the cold is an epitome of the lonely exclusion that the American suffers as an outsider. But it is also more. All the many images of death in the opening paragraph are outside—the fall, the cold, the darkness, the game hanging outside the shops, the snow, the wind, the carcasses "stiff and heavy and empty." The first window image creates spatial equivalents for the contrast between death outside and bright warm life within. From the narrator's inexperienced point of view, which dominates the beginning of the story, life seems the way the first paragraph depicts it: he is surrounded by frightening reminders of death and alienation, yet when he looks in the windows, life on the inside seems bright, warm, attractive.

The major, however, whose view prevails in the latter half, sees things differently. Several passages suggest that the unflinching manner of his looking is important. Twice he looks "straight ahead," once "straight past," once he looks "carrying himself straight and soldierly." But what he looks at is surely more informative. When he examines the photograph carefully, the first time he looks at anything, we see both what he would like to believe and what he is too realistic to accept. All the other looking occurs on or after the day his wife dies. Then he looks down on the machine and doesn't even bother to look at the faked photographs. But more eloquently, while his head is full of his wife's death, he is twice looking "at the wall" and once "looking at nothing." This last, in view of Hemingway's insistence on *nada* in "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," probably means more than that the major is not looking at anything. He is looking at death, the blank wall, the nothing.

This brings us back to the windows. The second and third window images confirm the spatial equivalents implied by the first, but from the opposite point of view. The major—in every respect thus far an initiated character, an insider—sees through the windows from the inside out. The second occurrence falls precisely at the climax, and we know that his mind is full of death:

"I cannot resign myself." He looked straight past me and out through the window.

The third occurs in the last line, neatly tying the beginning and climax to the end. The major by now has resigned himself, but the photographs that offered no hope the first time he looked still offer none, "because he only looked out of the window."

It is a deft move indeed, for this line, drawing together the imagery of looking and windows, also turns the structural peculiarity of a split perspective into an asset. Better yet, it discloses what is surely Hemingway's last and best reason for the Marlowe allusion. To the major, the fully experienced insider, life does not contain the brightness and warmth it seems to the American to have in the first paragraph. In gazing out the window, the major looks toward death, perhaps even with a lover's longing analogous to the American's feeling as he looked in. For, of course, the major is still thinking of his

wife who, like Marlowe's wench, is in another country in the most final sense. Being in death, she occupies the one realm of experience from which the major himself has been excluded.

Source: Colin S. Cass, "The Look of Hemingway's 'In Another Country,'" in *Studies in Short Fiction*, Vol. 18, No. 3, Summer, 1981, pp. 309-13.

Adaptations

Hemingway's Adventures of a Young Man is a film which assimilates the author's Nick Adams stories into a single narrative. Adapted by A. E. Hotchner, directed by Martin Ritt, starring Richard Beymer (best known as Tony in the film musical *West Side Story*) as Nick, produced by De Luxe, 1962.

The Killers begins as a nearly word-by-word film adaptation of the Nick Adams story of the same name. In the story, Nick is in a diner as two killers come in looking for a man called Andersson. The film then segues into an original drama about Andersson. Nick is featured in one of these later scenes. Screenplay by Anthony Veiller, directed by Richard Siodmak (Academy Award nomination, best director), starring Burt Lancaster (film debut), Edmond O'Brien, and Ava Gardner. U-I, 1946.

The film *In Love and War* chronicles 19 year-old Hemingway's recovery in an Italian hospital from the wounds he received driving an ambulance during World War I. The film focuses on his love affair with a 26 year-old nurse, the woman who is said to have inspired the character Catherine Barkeley in Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms*. Chris O'Donnell plays the young Hemingway; Sandra Bullock portrays the nurse. Richard Attenborough directed. A New Line Cinema release, 1996.

Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms*, a fictional version of the same love affair featured in *In Love and War*, has been filmed twice, first in 1932 by director Frank Borzage, starring Gary Cooper and Helen Hayes, a Paramount Picture; then in 1957, starring Rock Hudson and Jennifer Jones, directed by Charles Vidor, a De Luxe release.

Topics for Further Study

Explain the multiple meanings of the title of the short story "In Another Country."

Write about a time when you were alienated from those around you because of a physical injury, language barrier, or other circumstances. Relate this to what the protagonist of "In Another Country" experiences.

Read a book or short story about a soldier in the Vietnam War, such as *Dispatches* by Michael Herr or *In Pharaoh's Army* by Tobias Wolff. Compare the attitudes expressed by one of those writers toward the Vietnam war to Hemingway's as expressed in one of his works set during World War I, such as "In Another Country" or *A Farewell to Arms*.

What Do I Read Next?

The Nick Adams Stories (1969) is a collection of all of Hemingway's stories, including "In Another Country," featuring Nick Adams, some of which had been previously published in other collections. Eight stories had never been published, some of which are unfinished.

The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories (1927) is a collection of short stories by Ernest Hemingway including "In Another Country."

Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story (1969), by Carlos Baker, is a well-known biography of the author.

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque is a classic anti-war novel chronicling the fates of several young German men who eagerly enlist in World War I. Originally published in the United States in 1929.

What We Talk About When We Talk About Love (1980) is one of several short story collections by Raymond Carver. His stories, written primarily in the 1970s and 1980s, have often been compared stylistically to Hemingway's.

Exile's Return by Malcolm Cowley (1934) recounts experiences of the expatriate writers, including Hemingway, in 1920s Europe by a writer who knew them intimately.

Further Study

Baker, Carlos, ed. *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters, 1917-1961*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1981, 948 p.

Collection of letters written by Hemingway to family members, friends, and colleagues including prominent literary figures as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Archibald MacLeish, and John Dos Passos, as well as his editor, Maxwell Perkins.

Rovit, Earl. "Of Human Dignity: 'In Another Country,'" in *The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: Critical Essays*, edited by Jackson J. Benson, Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1975, pp. 58-68.

Rovit argues that the Major in "In Another Country" represents "Hemingway's attempt to retain the ideal of dignity without falsifying the ignobility of the modern human condition.'

Steinke, James. "Hemingway's 'In Another Country' and 'Now I Lay Me,'" in *The Hemingway Review*, Vol. V, No. 1, Fall, 1985.

Steinke compares the two short stories in the title of his article, arguing that, despite external similarities, they are actually very different.

Waldhorn, Arthur. *A Reader's Guide to Ernest Hemingway*, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1972, 284 p.

A collection of essays discussing Hemingway's major works.

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Robinson, Forrest. "Hemingway's Invisible Hero in 'In Another Country,'" in *Essay in Literature*, Vol. XV, No. 2, Fall, 1988, pp. 237-44.

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Steinke, James. "Hemingway's 'In Another Country' and 'Now I Lay Me,'" in *The Hemingway Review*, Vol. V, No. 1, Fall, 1985.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Short Stories for Students (SSfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, SSfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels

frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of SSfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of SSfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of classic novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members educational professionals helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in SSfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by SSfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an at-a-glance comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

SSfS includes The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature, a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Short Stories for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the SSfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the SSfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

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When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Short Stories for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from SSfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

Night. Short Stories for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from SSfS (usually the first piece under the Criticism subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on Winesburg, Ohio. Short Stories for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of SSfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition, Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Short Stories for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of SSfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. Richard Wright: Wearing the Mask, in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

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The editor of Short Stories for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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