CHAPTER II

IN OUR TIME
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In this chapter, I have discussed the stories contained in In Our Time. The inter-chapter sketches contained in the uncapitalised edition of Paris in our time have been dealt in separate paragraphs. My contention is that the inter-chapter sketches have a unique literary value and contain all the characteristics which were to be the hallmark of Hemingway's subsequent creative works. In one instance the original newspaper reporting has been compared with inter-chapter No: V to point out how Hemingway has given timelessness to the incidents of topical interest.

The stories discussed in the chapter have been analysed and examined in the light of Hemingway's Oak Park background. The facts have been separated from fiction and the actual finding is that Hemingway's aim is always the aim of an artist. Moreover, Hemingway's 'our time' is everybody's own time. Philip Young has rightly said that In Our Time is truly the start of everything Hemingway was ever going to do.

Inter-Chapter Sketches

In Our Time, the first collection of Hemingway's short stories appeared in 1925 when its author was hardly 26 years old. The cover for In Our Time was a pastiche of chaotically placed newspaper clippings with headline like "Common Malady is Found Serious Among Women Here," "Comment va-t-on
Declarer La Prochaine Guerre?" and "General Public Barred from Films on obstetrics." Hemingway, an extraordinary imaginative boy who boasted of being "afraid of nothing," came in contact with brutality and violence in the life of human beings. Being the son of a doctor in Oak Park with background of victorian morality and respectability, Hemingway was caught between two worlds — one dead, the other powerless to be born. Hemingway derived the title In Our Time from the Prayer Book's "Give peace in our time, O Lord."

The choice of the title from the Prayer Book suggests the inroads of religious background in the sub-conscious mind of Hemingway. Hemingway's "Our" time is reader's own time. Moreover In Our Time represents the analysis of the first quarter of the twentieth century — the age of interrogation when everything is subject to searching questions. The Prayer Book prays to God to protect us from the violence and pain in our time, and Hemingway honestly and undauntedly, reproduces the genuine features of the hard countenance of the age. The undertone of sympathy beneath the description of brutality and violence is the substitute of prayer to God to give us peace in our time.

The grim realities of life are featured in Hemingway's stories with accuracy and convincing power. In Our Time contains 15 stories and 16 inter-chapter sketches. The inter-chapter sketches are short and deal with the incidents based on Hemingway's war experiences. These inter-chapter...
sketches are "excellent, so short, like striking a match, lighting a brief sensational cigarette, and it is over." They are called sketches, miniatures, inter-chapter sketches or vignettes. It was not an idle boast when Hemingway showed the proof sheet of in our time from Bill Bird to his friends saying "I've discovered a new form." These sketches have a literary value of their own and have an importance in the study of Hemingway as a writer-artist. The sketches amuse the readers by leaving much unsaid. They make us realise how the life in our time is. The Paris edition in our time contained only the miniatures which, in later editions, served as inter-chapter sketches. These sketches seem to have very little to do with the stories following them. The second chapter just after Indian Camp has some relation with the main story. In Inter-chapter II, there is the description of the evacuation scene.

"Women and kids were in the carts crouched with mattresses, mirrors, sewing machines, bundles. There was a woman having a baby with a young girl holding a blanket over her and crying. Scared sick looking at it. It rained all through the evacuation."*

Eight chapters deal with war, six with bull-fighting, and the last two show the indifferent and callous attitude of those

* Excepting The Chauffeurs of Madrid, Under the Ridge and The Butterfly and the Tank, all references to the stories of Ernest Hemingway will be from The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: First Forty-Nine Stories and the Play The Fifth Column (New York: The Modern Library, Random House Inc., c. 1938). Page numbers from this edition will be cited within the text.
persons who are not in the imminent danger of death. Thus the sketches deal with death in one way or the other. The sketches are not merely newspaper cuttings. They show Hemingway's power of observation which enabled him to catch small, sometimes microscopic incidents to throw light on human nature under conditions of stress and tension. The 15th chapter leaves the reader amused and surprised while it exposes the hypocrisy of those who are unaffected by the grim and difficult situations of life. One of the soldiers to be hanged is so nervous that he cannot come to the gallows nor can he stand on his legs. The priest posted to show the cross to the soldier Cardinella says, "Be a man, my son." How easy it is to say "be a man" for those who are not faced with a similar situation! Sam Cardinella is dragged to the gallows. The priest shows the cross but "skipped back on the scaffolding just before the drop fell."

The last sketch deals with Greek king and queen who are not allowed by the revolutionary council to go outside the palace garden. Despite these restrictions, the life is as easy for them as it was before. The revolutionary council has shot dead some persons. The king comments:

"I think he did right, though, shooting those chaps. If Kerensky had shot a few men things might have been altogether different." (p.33)

We smile when the king further says, "Of course, the great thing in this sort of affair is not to be shot oneself!" The sketch ends with a remark:

"It was very jolly. We talked for a long time. Like all Greeks he wanted to go to America."
As a journalist Hemingway has learnt to pare his style to a verbal photography of action. In Chapter XIV, there is wonderful photography of a dying bull-fighter:

"Maera felt everything getting larger and larger and then smaller and smaller. Then it got larger and larger and larger and then smaller and smaller. Then everything commenced to run faster and faster as when they speed up a cinematograph film. Then he was dead." (p.305)

The reportorial accuracy has been the result of Hemingway's hard work as a correspondent for The Star. He took keen interest in his work. His friend Carl complained that Ernest kept wanting to talk about the romance of newspaper work when it would have been better for them to go to sleep. His hardworking nature along with the keenness of desire to have direct and personal experience, gave him a mastery over language. As an ambulance driver, Ernest wanted always to go where the action was. Around midnight on July 8, 1918, Ernest was severely wounded. He was so shocked by the sight of dead and dying that "to die seemed more natural and normal than to go on living." His father wanted him to come back but Ernest replied that he felt duty-bound to stay until the war was over. Ernest wrote, "It does give you an awfully satisfactory feeling to be wounded .... All the heroes are dead .... Dying is a very simple thing." This is the impression on the sensitive mind of Ernest about the life in his time. Besides this Ernest had "a flair for invention of ingenious news pegs on which to drape his always lively though often rather sophomoric prose and he seemed to be skilled in turning any subject into a saleable human-interest story."
Chapter V deals with the execution of the Greek cabinet ministers that took place at Athens in 1922 following the disastrous war with Turkey. Michael S. Reynold has given the original newspaper reporting of the execution of the ministers. It is really of much interest to compare Hemingway's fiction with the original news report. Hemingway shows no compunction about using secondary materials. The newspaper reporting of the above incident is like this:

"ATROCITIES MARKED GREEK EXECUTION OF FORMER LEADERS"

Uncensored Account Brought from Athens-Dead Man was Propped up in line:

GOUNARIS NERVED BY DRUG. Ex-premier dying from illness, was Artificially Stimulated to Stand.

M.Gounaris, an ex-premier, was in a hospital in a very critical condition. About 11 a.m. he was taken out on a stretcher, placed in a motor van and driven to a place about one and a half miles outside of the city. He was left lying on his stretcher in a dying condition while the car went back to fetch five others from the prison where they had all been confined in a single room.

To begin the horrors of that morning it was discovered by the guards that one of the five had died in a van on the way out from heart failure.

On the arrival of the van Gounaris was lifted out of the stretcher to stand up and face a firing party. It was then found that this wretched man, who, after all, had been a figure in the recent history of Europe, was unable to stand at all. He was thereupon given sufficient injections of strychnine to strengthen the action of his heart to enable him to stand up in front of the firing party. The man who had died on the way out was propped up beside him - a ghastly line of four live men, one half dead and one dead man.

They were then asked - Gounaris, the dead man and all - if they had anything to say, an appalling instance of mockery. No reply was made, but M.Battazis took out his monocle, polished it and put it back again. General Hadjanestis calmly lit a cigarette.

The order to fire was given. The moment the prisoners fell the firing party rushed forward and emptied their
revolvers into the corpses, including that of the man who
had died on the way to a public cemetry just outside of the
city and were thrown out casually in a heap in the mud of
the ground." 12

From the above reporting Hemingway had made chapter V.
The brevity with which the incident has been made the subject
of Chapter V speaks of Hemingway's genius. The selection as
well as the deletion of incidents throws light on Hemingway's
technique. The ruthless economy of words is the most important
thing. From 11 a.m. Hemingway has moved the time back to
6.30 a.m. There is irony in placing the ministers against
the wall of a hospital whose shutters are nailed closed. The
dead man has been eliminated. The minister is made to suffer
from typhoid. The rainy weather is always associated with
grim and sad incidents. Hemingway has left much for reader's
imagination. The minister has been left sitting on the ground.
The chapter ends with the remark: "When they fired the first
volley he was sitting down in the water with his head on his
knees." (p.225) The minister "sitting down in the water
with his head on his knees" is much more pathetic figure than
he is in the newspaper account. Chapter V written by
Hemingway has literary and artistic value while the original
source is simply a newspaper reporting. Here lies the cue
of Hemingway's artistic handling of the otherwise ordinary
news item which loses its value after twenty four hours. It
is significant to note how Hemingway cuts short reality for
the sake of fiction. He is not bound to documentary realism.
The implications of the Chapter V reflect on human nature
and are not limited to a single day in a Kansas City newspaper.13
A very Short Story and The Revolutionist were placed as chapters in Paris edition of In Our Time. In subsequent editions these two were raised to the status of stories. A comparative study of these two short stories with other inter-chapter sketches helps us to form an idea as to what Hemingway's conception of a short story is. A Very Short Story and The Revolutionist are much bigger than the sketches. Of course, as short stories, they are shorter than other stories. The hero in the stories is influenced by the incidents while the sketches are mere narration of incidents. They are miniatures in the true sense of the word. The inter-chapter sketches contain in brief what the writer has to say in details afterwards. In Chapter VI, Nick Adams is wounded in spine. The wound forces him to have "separate peace" and not to be a "patriot." From now on, Hemingway's hero is a wounded one. Without being an avowed existential philosopher, Hemingway's works advocate "separate peace" and the individuality of the hero. Thus the sketches give us a peep into the mind of Hemingway. It is difficult to find an author who has written of death as often and as consistently as has Hemingway done. These inter-chapter sketches are found only in In Our Time. We do not find them in other collections of short stories. However, they are called sketches, miniatures, vignettes to distinguish them from short stories. They are of permanent value because they deal with life. Their ending — abrupt and dramatic leaves the reader amused and surprised; but with something in his mind to think over.
his false notions about religion, morality, respectability and finally about human life itself. We find that Hemingway in his twenties has full grip on the situations of life which were to be his special fields in the stories and the novels to come. Moreover, Hemingway finds nothing in our time to be religious in conventional sense nor was romantic enough to be in heaven to be a young man. Shocks and disillusionments leave him morose and melancholy but he is, like Nick Adams, ready to fish in 'swamps' in later life. There is disillusionment but the hero has the courage never to yield and never to be defeated.

These sketches, though written in the twenties of Hemingway, show not only the depth of subject-matter but also the peculiar Hemingway's style which found few imitators and no successors. The sentences are short, pointed and poignant. There are no metaphors and similes and yet the style is forceful. In the inter-chapter sketches, the following are invariably associated with feelings or ideas given before them:

Chapter II  Rains — scared sick
Chapter III Wall — death
Chapter IV Hot day — defeat
Chapter V Wall — death
Chapter V rains — scared sick
Chapter V head on the knees — helplessness, death
Chapter V Puddle of water — helplessness
Chapter VI Wall — Badly wounded, death
Chapter VI sweaty, dirty, hot — badly wounded
Thus the inter-chapter sketches centre round the theme of death and helplessness. Death has been the dominant theme in all stories and novels of Hemingway. What is really important is the fact that the style, the subject matter and the technique adopted by Hemingway in In Our Time is present in him all through his career reminding us of Rinaldi's remark in A Farewell to Arms:

"No... we are born with all we have and we never learn .... we all start complete." 14

The scenes from inter-chapter sketches recur in Hemingway's later work. The evacuation scene from chapter X recur in A Farewell to Arms. 15

"Wall" generally connotes death. In Indian Camp, the husband of the Indian woman is lying with his face towards the wall. Wall, so to say, blocks the passage of life. It gives us the picture of helplessness before death. In the story The Killers, the bull-fighter Ole Andreson waiting for
his murderers, is lying on his bed with his face towards the wall. In Chapter III the three soldiers are fired at and they fall dead while climbing the wall. In Chapter V the six cabinet ministers going to be shot dead are made to stand against the wall. The 'door' in the wall in Chapter XV shows gallows. The dead body of the wife is put up against the 'wall' in Alpine Idyll. Thus the inter-chapter sketches serve as bedrock for the later novels and short stories.

Nick Adams appears only in one inter-chapter sketch and has individuality of his own to stand apart from the common multitude. In other words, he 'ex-sists'. Immediately after it, the next chapter tells us of an unidentified "he" who being faced with the danger of being killed in bombardment prays to Jesus Christ:

"... oh jesus christ get me out of here. Dear jesus please get me out. Christ please please please christ. If you'll only keep me from getting killed I'll do anything you say. I believe in you and I'll tell every one in the world that you are the only one that matters. Please please dear jesus." (p.241)

But when the danger is over, he does not tell the girl he goes upstairs with at the Villa Rossa about Jesus. And he never tells anybody. Here we find the contrast. Nick Adams has an individuality of his own while the other unnamed one loses himself in common multitude and is a 'complicated' being for proving religious. Thus the inter-chapter sketches clearly make known to us Hemingway's distinction between "simple" and "complicated" individuals. Hemingway arranged, rearranged and made changes in the placing of stories.
in between the inter-chapter sketches and he did it with the specific purpose of giving thematic unity to his stories in *In Our Time* "to give the picture of whole between examining it in detail." He placed the vignettes in between the stories to produce the effect like that of watching a coastline from a ship, first with the naked eye and then with binoculars.

**Indian Camp**

*Indian Camp* is the first story in the collection *In Our Time*. The doctor, his brother and Nick are clearly modelled on Dr. Hemingway, his brother George and Ernest. The story is based on an emergency visit of Doctor Hemingway to the Indian Settlement near Bacon Farm. An Indian woman was in labour pains for two days. Doctor Hemingway did the caesarean operation with the kitchen knife and used fishing gut leader to sew the stitches. At first the story had another beginning. Hemingway dropped the original beginning because he wanted Nick Adams to be of tougher fibre. However, the present beginning suggests to the readers the urgency of situation. "At the lake shore there was another rowboat drawn up. The two Indians stood waiting." (p. 189) Nick is informed of the purpose of the emergency visit that "there is an Indian lady very sick." When they reach the other side of the shore they see an old lady standing in the "doorway holding a lamp." By now, Nick is aware of the seriousness of situation. When his father explains how the child is born, Nick simply remarks, "I see." (p. 190) Unable
to see the sufferings of the woman, Nick asks his father to give her something to stop her screams. The doctor has no anaesthesia. Moreover, the screams of the woman are not important for him. He does not hear them. The operation is performed and a boy is born to the Indian woman. The scene of suffering and labour pain finish Nick's curiosity. The father feels exalted and "talkative as football players are in the dressing room after a game." (p.192) Now the other part of the story begins. So far Nick has seen the birth of a child in the crudest possible manner. Now he sees the husband of the Indian wife lying dead on the upper bunk by cutting his neck with a razor from ear to ear as he was unable to stand the screams of his wife. On way back, Nick asks his father:

"Is dying hard, Daddy?"

"No, I think it's pretty easy, Nick. It all depends." (p.193)

It is daylight. Night is over. The first lesson in the education of Nick is over.

In *Indian Camp* we find Hemingway's favourite journey artifice. The two journeys are important. It was night when the first journey began and it was daylight when the second journey began. In the first "Nick lay back with his father's arm round him" (p.189) but in the second journey Nick sits on the stern of the boat and feels quite sure that "he would never die." (p.193). The choice of title is significant. The crude caesarean operation cannot fit in a sophisticated set-up. Moreover Hemingway represents humanity in an environment
shorn of all artificialities. The Indian settlements were just near the Bacon Farm where the Hemingway family had moved when Ernest was hardly a few weeks old.

The Doctor and the Doctor's wife

The Doctor and the Doctor's wife is a story having the whole Hemingway family in its Bacon Farm setting. Nick Boulton is one of the Indian settlers known to Hemingway from his childhood. Once Dr. Hemingway called the woodcutters to cut the drift-wood. Doctor Hemingway supervised the work and took some photographs. From these simple incidents, Hemingway made a story which gives us a peep into the mind of his father and mother.

Dick Boulton, Eddy and Billy Tabeshaw are called to cut the drift-wood for Nick's father. The logs are lying uncared for and the proprietor shall not take them away as the transport charges will be more than the cost of wood. Hence the Doctor thinks it his legitimate right to make use of the logs or else they will rot in water. So he calls three Indians to cut the logs. Dick Boulton, in his rough unsophisticated manner tells Nick's father, "Well, Doc,.... that's a nice lot of timber you've stolen." (p.198) The word "stolen" irks the doctor who sharply replies, "You'd better not saw it up then, Dick." (p.198) Dick seems to be bent upon pricking the doctor. "Don't get huffy, Doc,.... Don't get huffy. I don't care who you steal from. It's none of my business." (p.198) The doctor is all the more irritated at Dick's emphasis on the logs being stolen. Dick is also
roused to anger. Spitting the juice of tobacco on the log, Dick says, "You know they're stolen as well as I do. It don't make any difference to me." (p.198) The doctor loses his temper and asks Dick to get out and not to show familiarity by calling him "Doc." "If you call me Doc once again, I'll knock your eye teeth down your throat." (p.199) It is too much for Dick Boulton who simply says, "Oh, no, you won't, Doc." (p.199) The doctor realises his weak position. Moreover Dick is happy in picking quarrels with others. The superior physical strength of Dick dawns upon the doctor who now realises the delicacy of situation. "The doctor chewed the beard on his lower lip and looked at Dick Boulton." (p.199) The doctor turns away and walks up the hill to the cottage. The three wood-cutters "could see from his back how angry he was."

The doctor reaches home where the "medical journals in the wrappers unopened" irritate him all the more. The un-opened medical journals remind him of the duality of his own personality. The doctor's wife is a Christian-scientist. Her Bible, her copy of Science and Health and her Quarterly are on a table beside her bed in a darkened room — a room where she is lying with its "blinds drawn." The 'darkened room,' 'blinds drawn' are highly suggestive of the world of idealism far away from the realities of life. It is easy for her to preach "... he who ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." (p.199) She refuses to believe that Dick picked quarrel to save himself from getting medical charges (due against him) deducted
from his wages of cutting the logs. She refuses to see evil. The doctor is also effeminate in his attitude towards his wife. His sense of victorian respectability makes him too polite and effeminate. He hears his wife catch her breath when the door is slammed and says "sorry."
The doctor goes out in the forest. The wife asks him to send Nick to her. Now Nick appears in the story. He is seen reading the book. He has overheard the quarrel between Dick and his father. Nick is irked by the unsympathetic attitude of his mother towards his father. He does not want to go to his mother and goes with his father for hunting so that he may grow tough enough to face the realities of life. The father puts Nick's book in his pocket and takes Nick with him for hunting.

Nick is the central figure of the story though he appears only in the end. Here we get first the hint of Nick's alienation from home. The story throws light on Nick's reactions towards his father and mother. He shows preference for father over his mother.

The End of Something

In The End of Something, Nick has grown old enough to fall in love with a girl named Marjorie but is discreet enough to dissociate himself when he finds himself in the danger of being possessed by her. In the background of the deserted town, Nick and Marjorie are seen on the bank of a lake fishing trout. Marjorie likes fishing especially with Nick. It is a moon-lit night and Marjorie is in a
romantic mood. The broken foundation of the mill looks like a castle to her. Nick is fed up with love-making and says, "it isn't fun any more."(p.208) Marjorie leaves him and he is found sitting "with his head in his hands."(p.209) Nick is alone.' Billy comes and asks if there is any scene. It is clear that Billy is in the know of the fact that Nick is going to break ties with Marjorie who has started acquiring proprietary interest over him. Bill expected some scene being created by Marjorie and wants to know if there was any. He wanted to know how Nick feels about breaking the affair with Marjorie. "Oh, go away, Bill! Go away for a while." (p.209) It shows mental condition of Nick. Of course the affair has ended but it is the end of "something" which shall leave its impression on him. The story is a powerful one expressing the feelings of Nick whose idea of love is not confined to physical plane only. He has an individuality of his own not to herded like the multitudes in the conventional domesticity of life. Though Nick has broken with Marjorie but is is heavy for him. In the end, we find Nick lying down "with his face in the blanket by the fire." (p.209) "Face in the blanket" shows Nick's remorse at the break of love which is really "something", and "by the fire" is highly suggestive of the fire of sex in a young man like Nick. Thus Nick is found lying with his face in the blanket while Bill, unaffected by the similar feelings, simply takes a sandwich from the lunch basket and walks over to have a look at the fishing rod.
The Three-Day Blow

The Three-Day Blow is actually a continuation of the previous story *The End of Something*. After the end of the love affair Nick wants to be alone. With the passage of time, the shock is over. The storm (the three-day-blow) rips off the leaves of the trees and makes them naked. The storm in Nick's mind removes his idealism and leaves him realistic enough to have supplementary affairs whenever he goes to town without fear of involvement in the affair.

Nick goes to Bill's house. They talk about that storm. Nick asks, "Is your dad in?" He is glad to know that Bill's father is out. He wants to have free talk with Bill without the interference of elders. There is much difference in the Nick Adams of the first three stories and the Nick Adams of *The Three-Day Blow*. Nick and Bill drink to their heart's content. Their conversation is about books, games and finally about Marjorie affair. They talk about Walpole, Chesterton and about *The Dark Forest*, *Fortitude* and *Forest Lovers*. Nick has a liking for the famous stanza from *Flying Inn*.

"If an angel out of heaven
Gives you something else to drink,
Thank him for his kind intentions;
Go and pour them down the sink." (p.217)

Nick has learnt that the heavenly drink is too good to be of any use to a man of flesh and blood. It is to be thrown in the sink. Earthly drink is better than heavenly drink. However, the love confined to physical plane is no more a fun. What he wants is a real union between man and woman.
responsive to each other's emotion. It should not hamper Nick's individuality by involving him in consequences. We find signs of a rebel in Nick. Bill asked him about his father. Nick says, "My old man's all right." (p. 218) What a difference in the Nick of *The Indian Camp* and the Nick of *The Three-Day Blow!* Nick jeers at his father: "He claims he's never taken a drink in his life." (p. 218) Nick is sad to say about his father, "He's missed a lot." (p. 218) Bill and Nick drink and drink till they can drink no more. Bill comes to the Marjorie affair. Nick says nothing when Bill points out that he was very wise to bust off the Marjorie affair. Nick again says nothing when Bill expresses his opinion about marriage. He only nods his head when Bill recounts the disadvantages if Nick had married Marjorie. Nick says nothing when Bill says, "you came out of it damned well." (p. 221) During the whole course of conversation about Marjorie affair, Bill does most of the talking. But Nick says 'nothing' three times; simply nods his head once; and sits quiet once. The effect of conversation is:

"Nick said nothing. The liquor had all died out of him and left him alone." (p. 221)

Nick does not want to talk about it. Bill, who has a good understanding of human nature says:

"You don't want to think about it. You might get back into it again." (p. 222)

It comes as a revelation to Nick. It makes him feel better. Nothing is finished. He can go to the town and have an affair with any girl without fear of involvement in the matter. He feels light. He goes out in the storm to look
for Bill's father who has gone for hunting in 'swamps.' The whole Marge-affair is not important. Still he can go to town Saturday night. "It was a good thing to have in reserve." (p. 223) Now a definite stage in Nick's education has reached. He has learnt to throw in sink if 'an"angel out of heaven gives him something else to drink'.

Bill's remark, "You don't want to think about it. You might get back to it again," is of particular importance. In The Killers and Old Man at the Bridge, the advice given is "you better not think about it." The implication of the advice is that it is a problem which should be properly thought over. Of course, Nick had learnt an important lesson in The Three-Day Blow. Nick comes nearest to Ernest Hemingway in this story. 'Wemedge' is one of the nicknames of Ernest and Nick is called Wemedge several times in this story.

The Battler

In The Battler, we find Nick directly and personally coming in contact with physical violence and brutality. Again we find Hemingway's masterly use of journey artifice. Nick has been thrown down the train by a brakesman. His pants are torn and the skin is barked at the knee. A big bump is coming up near his eye. Nick abuses the brakesman with a determination "to get him [brakesman] some day." (p. 227) He sees a man sitting with his head in his hands "looking in the fire." He is Ad Francis, the prize fighter. Noticing the shiner on Nick's eye, Ad Francis remarks, "It must have made him [brakesman] feel good to bust you." By implication
of his first remark, we are made aware of the quarrelsome nature of Ad Francis whose advice to take revenge and be tough is accepted by Nick.

Nick sees in firelight that Ad Francis had mis-shapen face. His nose is sunken, his eyes are slit and he has a queer-shaped lips. He has only one ear which is thickened and tight against the side of his head. There is only a lump where there should have been another ear. Nick feels a little sick on seeing the queer-shaped Ad Francis. Moreover, he has also a slow heart which beats only 30 times a minute. Besides, he is also crazy. Thus Ad Francis is abnormal psychologically and physiologically. In the meantime, Bugs, the negro reaches there. Nick is invited to eat something. Suddenly Francis has a fit of craziness as a result of which he wants to take knife from Nick's hand. Bugs gives him a timely warning, "Hang onto your knife, Mister Adams." (p. 232) Suddenly Francis is furious and is bent upon beating Nick. Bugs taps him across the base of skull and he falls down unconscious. Bugs informs the bewildered Nick that it is the way to control Ad Francis, whenever, he has a fit of craziness. "He won't remember nothing of it," says Bugs. Nick asks, "What made him crazy?" Bugs gives a cup of coffee as if to reduce the shock Nick is sure to get on hearing Ad's story. So far Nick has faced physical violence only but now there is a thunderbolt. Ad Francis has a twin sister. The real brother and sister were married in New York. Naturally there was much hue and cry. "Of course they wasn't brother and sister no more than a
rabbit, ...." (p. 235) Their marriage creates horror in the minds of the people. Thus one day she leaves Ad and never comes back. Ad Francis goes crazy and busts people all the time after she has gone. He is sent to jail where he meets Bugs who was there for cutting a man. Since their release from jail they are living together. Bugs likes to stay with him though Ad thinks him crazy. They have no problem of money which is sent to them by the sister. Bugs has to see that Ad Francis is away from people. He knows how to bring Francis to his senses. But Nick should go away before Ad Francis comes to his senses or else there may be trouble again. Bugs does not want to be inhospitable but there is no way out. He offers Nick a cup of coffee and a sandwich. When Nick leaves the place, Ad Francis is brought to his senses.

Nick is so amazed at all these incidents that he does not remember that he has got a sandwich in his hand. He puts it in his pocket. The ending is powerful because it leaves many things unsaid.

This story was written as a substitute for Up in Michigan which, according to Horace Liveright, the publisher of In Our Time (1925 edition) involved too much sex and it had to be changed. Hemingway set to work on a borrowed typewriter and wrote the story entitled A Great Little Fighting Machine which was later on shortened to The Battler. The character of Ad Francis is modelled on two real-life fighters Ad Wolcast and Bat Nelson whom Hemingway knew well. Bugs is modelled on a Negro trainer who had looked after
Wolgast in the period of his decline. But the incidents are wholly invented. The story was in the mind of Ernest for quite a long time. He revised and retyped it working through the night of February 12th and finishing on the morning of Friday, the 13th February, 1925.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{A Very Short Story}

The title of the story \textit{A Very Short Story} is not only apt but also meaningful. It was previously included as a vignette in Paris edition of \textit{In Our Time} but, in later edition of \textit{In Our Time}, it was raised to the status of a story. This story is bigger than the inter-chapter sketches but shorter than many other stories. This is the story which has direct connection with the actual incidents of Hemingway's life. Hemingway was an ambulance driver on Italian front. Around midnight of July 8, 1918, on the west bank of the river near Fossalta, Ernest had been severely wounded. There had been exchange of fire for the whole day. Hemingway had been carrying cigarettes, post cards and chocolates for soldiers. Suddenly there was an explosion. Hemingway felt that it was like a hurricane of such a force that it tore the eardrums, and snatched away the breath. "I tried to breathe," wrote Hemingway afterwards, "but my breath would not come..." The ground was torn up and in front of my head there was a splintered beam of wood. In the jolt of my head I heard somebody crying .... I tried to move but I could not move." I heard the machine guns and rifles firing across the river."\textsuperscript{22}
The man just near was dead. The other man was seriously wounded. He was crying piteously. Ernest, in a true red-cross spirit, heaved up the badly hurt man in fireman's carry and began to stagger back towards the command post. He had hardly covered fifty yards when a bullet from heavy machine gun tore into his right leg at the knee. Ernest stumbled and fell with the man on his shoulders. He never remembered how he covered the final hundred yards. But he covered it and delivered the wounded man on his shoulders to the red-cross authorities and himself lost consciousness. A heroic deed indeed! He lost his consciousness only after he had done his duty. A.E. Hotchner asked Hemingway how he could carry the man. Hemingway's reply was: "Christ, I don't know, Hotch. When I think of that leg — I doubt that I did." His uniform we so thickly soaked with Italian blood that the doctors thought that the bullets have pierced through the chest. Ernest lay there for two hours. An ambulance van took him to a school converted into a hospital. The doctors gave him morphine and anti-tetanus. Twenty eight scaggia pieces from his feet and legs were taken out. He was removed to a field hospital near Treviso. He spent five days in a long ward. On 15th July, he was taken for Milano in a slow train. He reached Milano on Wednesday, July 17, 1918, i.e., four days before his 19th birthday.

Milan hospital was really an excellent hospital. Ernest was to get Italy's highest honour. He was recommended for the silver medal of valour. He was a hero. In the
hospital he came in contact mainly with four nurses.
(1) Elsie Macdonald (2) Ruth Brooks (3) Loretta Cavanaugh (Sis Cavie) (4) Agnes Hannah Von Kurowsky. Ernest adored Elsie Macdonald and liked Sis Cavie. Ruth Brooks was a flirt. But Agnes Hannah Von Kurowsky captured Ernest's imagination. Agnes is the Luz of A Very Short Story. At that time she was 27 while Ernest was only 19 years old. Carlos Baker has pointed out: "He [Hemingway] formed many friendships with women, at first older and later younger than he." Here also Agnes was seven years senior to him in age.

Agnes was tall and beautiful. After her father's death in 1910, she had worked as an assistant in Washington Public Library. Then she went to nursing school at Bellevue. In 1918 she applied for admission to Red Cross Nursing Service. She was kind, generous, and bright, and full of bubbling energy. She 'rather liked night duty' and often volunteered to take the place of other nurses. Ernest was madly in love with Agnes who also reciprocated but not to the degree as Ernest wanted her to do. It was the first adult love-affair of Ernest who hurled himself into it with uncommon devotion. She was night nurse for most of August and September. Of course, she never neglected her duties and when other patients slept she came to Ernest's room. She refused to permit the affair to go beyond the kissing stage. She called Ernest Kid and herself Mrs. Kid. She also permitted Ernest to call her Ag or Agie. She carried Ernest's picture in the pocket of her uniform. Yet she
suspected that the wartime romance was not likely to last.
But Ernest has no such misgivings. The romance continued.
Agnes volunteered herself for service at the Territorial
Hospital in Florence. Ernest bid her farewell. She wrote
him letters. Ernest wrote her letters daily and sometimes
twice a day. She called him "The Light of my Existence, My
Dearest and Best, Most Ernest of Ernies, More precious than
Gold and my Hero." 28

On January 21, 1918 Ernest reached home. He was
only 19 years old but his injuries, his five month's
convalescence, and the love-affair with Agnes had matured
him faster than anything else has done. Ernest daily wrote
letters. Agnes replied, but with the passage of time there
was the cooling down of her passion. In one of her letters
she complained to Ernest that he should not write so often
because she did not get enough time to read. Any one less
in love than Ernest would have read between the lines.
Ernest was so wildly in love with Agnes that she could not
imagine the possibility of the cooling down of emotions.
In fact, Agnes had fallen in love with an Italian. At last
in March, 1919, Ernest received the letter announcing her
love-affair with the Italian Officer. She was sorry, as
Ernest later recorded it, and she knew he would probably
not be able to understand, but might some day forgive her,
and be grateful to her. She hoped he would have a great
career, and believed in him absolutely. 29 The effect of
the letter on young Hemingway can very well be imagined.
He was besides himself with horror and dismay. He began to
run temperature. He wrote a crackling letter to Elsie Macdonald telling her the news and adding that when Agnes disembarked in New York on her way home, he hoped that she would stumble on the dock and knock out her teeth. He began to cauterize his wound of the memory of Agnes with a course of booze and other women.

The above are the facts of Hemingway's love-affair with Agnes. He has the wonderful knack of turning the actual facts into fiction. The selection and deletion of actual facts for the making of this story gives us the insight into the mind of Hemingway. The story has an abrupt beginning. The circumstances of his being wounded are omitted. The opening line runs as thus:

"One Hot evening in Padua they carried him up onto the roof and he could look out over the top of the town." (p. 239).

Actually Hemingway was admitted in a hospital at Milan. After being discharged from Milan, Hemingway again came to meet Agnes who was in Padua nursing the patients suffering from influenza. He reached Padua on December 9, 1918 when his love-affair was already much advanced. Ernest found himself in a bit of heaven to be in the company of Agnes. The "hot evening" and the "hot night" remind the reader of war and injury. Luz sat on his bed. "She was cool and fresh in the hot night." Here the first paragraph ends. The first paragraph is 77 only 7 sentences but Hemingway has conveyed much more to the reader than the seven sentences can do.
The second paragraph shows the intensity of his passion for Luz. She stayed in night duty for three months. When he was being operated she was near him. He was afraid that under the influence of anaesthesia "the silly talky time" he may blab out his passion for Agnes. This throws light on Hemingway's inherent sense of exclusive privacy in matters of love with Agnes. Her comfort was his comfort. "After he got on crutches, he used to take the temperatures, so Luz would not have to get up from the bed." (p.239) There were a few patients. They all knew about their affair, yet while maintaining the decency and decorum, he describes his desires about Luz, "He thought of Luz in his bed." Here the second paragraph ends. It is of 9 sentences and the third paragraph is only of 4 sentences. They went to church and prayed to God. "They felt as though as they were married, but they wanted everyone to know about it, ...." (p.239) Here the third paragraph ends. The fourth paragraph is of 3 sentences only telling us how he received 15 letters in bunch, and how he serially arranged and read them. In the fourth paragraph we find how much Luz loved him and how terrible it was "missing him at night." Here the paragraph changes. The fifth paragraph is of seven sentences. They agreed to be married as soon as he was settled and it was also agreed that he would not drink. He was going back but Luz did not agree to go back to the States. He quarrelled with her on the train from Padua to Milan.
"... they kissed good-bye, but were not finished with the quarrel. He felt sick about saying good-bye like that."(p.240)

Here we get a clear indication that Luz has started becoming cold in her love.

Sixth paragraph begins. Luz was nursing an Italian battalion. She fell in love with an Italian major. She had never known Italians before. She wrote to Ernest that "... theirs had been only a boy and girl affair."(p.240) However, she hoped that Ernest would have a great career. "She knew it was for the best." Here the paragraph ends.

The name of the Italian major has not been given. It was "muddy" and "rainy" town where Luz has fallen in love with the Italian major. "Muddy" and "rainy" are associated with defeat and sickness in Hemingway's fiction.

Last paragraph is only of three sentences. "The major did not marry her in the spring, or any other time." (p.240) Agnes wrote him a letter about it but he did not reply it.

"A short time after he contracted gonorrhea from a sales girl in a loop department store while riding in a taxi-cab through Lincoln Park." (p.240)

The pathetic ending shows the unhappiness of both. Luz regarded herself matured enough to think that it was only a boy and girl affair but that very Luz fell victim to the faithlessness of an Italian major. Thus unhappiness and disillusionment to both. The reaction of Ernest was of a typical modern man. He "cauterized" the wound of his love.
with "booze and other women." However, the last sentence of the story is pure fiction but it serves its purpose of showing Ernest's violent reaction against Agnes.

Ernest has omitted all the circumstances of his being wounded prior to his falling in love. Moreover, he has not also mentioned how Agnes's affair with the Italian major had ended. Ernest received a letter from Agnes in March. She informed that her love-affair with the Italian major Tenete Domenico Carraciolo had ended. She went to Naples with the major. The major was, in fact, the son of a duke. The parents of the major did not approve of the proposed marriage. They thought that Agnes was an American adventuress trying to grab wealth and honour through the marriage. Agnes also informed Ernest that she thought of coming home in July.
Ernest received the letter but did not reply. However, he was not vengeful. He had pity for Agnes. "Poor damned kid, I am sorry as hell for her," said Ernest. He was not an idealist like Sydney Gorton or Major Dobbin. He closed the chapter of his love-affair with relief. The whole affair in Milano seemed to Ernest "long ago and far away."

Soldier's Home

The short story Soldier's Home is quite closely connected with the previous one. Krebs is Ernest who has come back to his native place from war. The condition of Ernest can very well be visualised. He was badly hurt in body, mind, spirit and morals. While surrounded with dead and dying, he felt that it was better to be dead than to be
alive. The bullet injury in his leg had crippled him for quite a long time. His love-affair with Agnes has made him a lonely man. He was back home but felt a longing to be back again to Milano. He has seen death at a very close range. Now he cannot enter the world of complications. His life at Italian front was in direct contrast with the life at home. Here life was conventional. Instead of very swift and fast, he has come to a very, very slow world. A sensitive boy like Ernest who, in his 20th year has seen the worst thing of life, develops a feeling of nothingness in himself. He has faith neither in religion nor in the conventions of the society. He cannot lose his individuality by allowing himself to be absorbed in the mass-life. He wants to lead the life without consequences. His mental condition has been aptly described by his sister Marcelline that he resembled someone "put in a box with the cover nailed down." 32

In this story Hemingway has shown the reactions and disillusionments of a young man after the war. The people at home have romantic idea of war. They want to be thrilled by the absurd exaggerated stories of the atrocities of war. Krebs cannot thrill the people by the actual account of the war. The hero's welcome accorded to war veterans is over by the time Krebs comes back. On the other hand, a reaction has started. Krebs also feels the reaction. He, like other soldiers, tells the lies and soon gets fed up with them.

"A distaste for everything that had happened to him in the war set in because of the lies he had told." (53). When
he meets other soldiers he tells frankly how he has been badly, sickeningly frightened all the time. In this way, he finds himself a lost man.

On return to home, Krebs has no particular activity. He gets up late, gets a book from the library, reads the book on the porch till he gets bored. He is a hero to his sisters and mother. His mother often comes to him to listen to the stories of war. When she hears the stories, her attention wanders and she is absorbed in her own thoughts. She realises that Krebs is a lost man and she desires that he should soon return to routine duties of a young man. Before going to war, he was not allowed to take his father's car because he was just a boy — not matured enough to drive the car himself. "Now after the war it was the same car" shows the sameness of ideas in the little Oak Park. Krebs has seen so much of the world that his parents cannot cope up with his mental conditions. He feels nausea for everything 'complicated.' He wants to be his own-self without letting himself be absorbed in a lump. As compared to war-time life on the front, the life in the relatively sheltered world of Oak Park is "complicated" and he dares not break it.

The parents are worried over the mental condition of Krebs. He has lost ambition. He has lost interest in everything around him. In order to awaken his interest in himself and in things around, the parents permit him to use the car in the evening. Krebs's mental condition is very well summed up in her sister's remark, "you old sleepyhead. What do you ever get up for?" (p.247) The sister invites
him to come to the school to see her game. Krebs has no
mind to go there. The worst thing is that he has lost
interest in girls. So the parents give him permission to
take some girls with him in the evening in the car.

The mother persuades him to take up some job as other
young persons back from war have done. Her argument is,
"There can be no idle hands in His Kingdom." Krebs cannot
swallow this argument. "I am not in His Kingdom" is the
blunt reply of Krebs. Against her mother's pleadings on
conventional moral grounds he simply says, "Is that all?"
The mother has not expected this answer. She uses her last
and most powerful argument, "Don't you love your mother,
dear boy?" To her astonishment, Krebs says, "No." There
are tears in her eyes. Krebs modifies his statement. "I
don't love anybody." It is his frankness. He does not
want to be a 'complicated' man. Krebs has again reaction
when his mother tells him, "I held you next to my heart when
you were a baby." Krebs has repulsion and reaction against
himself that he cannot respond to the idealism of life. He
feels sickly and nauseated. Hemingway has in a masterly
way described the effect of nothingness on Krebs. He does
not believe in prayers but allows his mother to pray for
him. The mother's love bows him down, "I'll try and be a
good boy for you." Krebs wants to keep his life 'simple'
and not 'complicated'. He wants to be straight and do what
he feels but the way of the world is different. "I would
go to Kansas City and get a job and she would feel all
right about it." Finally he decides to go the school to
see his sister Helen play indoor baseball.
Krebs's sister and mother ask him, "Do you love me?"

To his sister Helen, Krebs readily says:

"Uh, huh."

"Will you love me always?"

"Sure."

"Will you come over and watch me play indoor?"

"Maybe." (p. 248)

But Krebs's reaction is quite different to his mother. He bluntly says that he does not love her. He is against parental authority and so also against all other conventional ways of life which are aimed at destroying the uniqueness of his individuality and at incorporating him into a larger entity. He has revolting attitude, but he is not anarchic. There is still something in him and it is his power to respond to love.

De Falco is of the opinion that the title is an ironic commentary on the surface action. "The 'home' of the soldier is not a place of comfort and security where a battle-veteran may live out his life under the care of some benevolent agency. Nor is the place where he may relax after the experience he has undergone in the war." 33

Before he leaves for war, Krebs attends a Methodist School (accepted religion) belongs to a fraternity (accepted society) and wears "exactly the same height and style collars" (accepted fashion) as all his fraternity. But the war is death on pattern and when Krebs returns home he cannot tolerate them in any area of life. The opposition between
two worlds—one simple, the other complicated, is present in stories of Hemingway particularly in *Soldier's Home*. The bifurcation always occurs between 'simple' and 'complicated' after an experience of violence or death. "Here at home everything was complicated," Krebs tries to keep his life from being complicated. Krebs is not among those who accept the universe as handed down to them and interpreted by the grown ups. The failure to be one's self is the real sickness of Krebs.

"It was his awareness of death that separated Hemingway from the Middle West. The West has never known what the war was about; Hemingway returned from it like Krebs in that story which is the best account written by an American of the returned soldier. Krebs found all communication with his family impossible. He sat on the front porch and saw the girls that walked on the other side of the street. He liked the look of them much better than the French or German girls. But the world they were in was not the world he was in." 34

Krebs has in him all the qualities which are commonly there in all existential heroes. Krebs is a rebel. He is homeless. He has his individuality. He feels existential nausea, the feeling of nothingness that precedes the establishment of the fundamental self when he says "no" to his mother. However, it is not correct to say that Hemingway has based Krebs on any conscious plan of existential philosophy. The portrayal of Krebs's character has not been affected by contact with existentialists but has been the result of war experiences of Hemingway himself. Krebs's attitude as given in the story is similar to Ernest's on his return from Italy. Ernest, on return from Italy, did nothing but spent his time in loafing about. His mother said more
and more irritated. The house was too much for her to manage alone. After a final bitter quarrel with Ernest over his irresponsibility, she wrote him a letter literally throwing him out of the house and forbidding him to return unless his attitude changed. The letter was dated July 21, 1920. 35

The Revolutionist

The Revolutionist was one of the two stories which appeared as a miniature in in our time but in later collection, it was raised to the status of a full-fledged story. Hemingway was in very close touch with the political actualities for a number of years. By 1923, Hemingway was an anti-Mussolinist but he never allowed politics to come in the way of the pure artist as he always was. The revolutions attracted him but not the political intrigues. The Revolutionist is a story about a chance meeting with a young Hungarian communist in Italy. 36

The hero of the story The Revolutionist is a shy young boy who is more an artist than a revolutionist. He loves the principles of revolutions for their own sake. He has almost become a beggar for the sake of revolution. His selfless service is recognised by the party. He is given a recommendatory letter which is almost a testimonial for him. He has no money and uses the recommendatory letter as a ticket. The railway staff pass him from one crew to another. He is fed in cheap railway stalls. However, the revolutionist being a man of artistic taste, collects the works of art from Italian painters. The unidentified 'I' is the narrator of the story.
as well as the worker for "the movement" in Italy. The revolutionist is innocence untouched by experience. The narrator of the story has a very pleasant journey with the revolutionist.

"We had a good trip together. It was early September and the country was pleasant: He was Magyar, a very nice boy and very shy." (p.255)

The narrator's description of the revolutionist as 'very nice boy and very shy' and the pleasant journey with him suggest the narrator's homosexual leanings towards the boy who had already been ill-treated by Horthy's men. The naive innocence of the revolutionist is brought home to the reader.

"Horthy's men had done some bad things to him. He talked about it a little. In spite of Hungary, he believed altogether in the world revolution." (p.255)

The boy is hopeful of the success of the "movement."

"But how is the movement going in Italy?" "Very badly," I said. "But it will go better," he said.... (p.255)

The narrator is experienced enough to be a realist about the movement while the boy, overbrimming with enthusiasm, cannot see the harsh realities of life. He is lover of nature and is eager to pass over the pass while the weather is good.

The story ends in a characteristic Hemingway manner.

"The last I heard of him the Swiss had him in jail near Sion." (p.256)

The young starry-eyed revolutionist is a pitiable character. "This story is not so much an indictment of the ideal of it is an examination of the individuals who are really blindly committed to it." 37
Mr. & Mrs. Elliot

The earlier title of the story was Mr. and Mrs. Smith based on the sexual ineptitude of Mr. and Mrs. Chard Power Smith. Mr. Smith read the story in December, 1927, long after its appearance in both The Little Review and In Our Time. Mr. Smith charged Hemingway that he was deliberately indulging in character assassination. Hemingway who was in Switzerland at that time replied that Smith would have not written such a letter without knowing for sure that he was out of town. Ernest further threatened that, on returning to Paris, he would have great pleasure in knocking down Smith for a few times, or only once, depending on his talent of getting up. Ernest openly expressed his contempt for the past, present, future of Smith and his epistolary style.38

The change of title from Mr. and Mrs. Smith to Mr. and Mrs. Elliot is significant as it mocks Smith, Gertrude Stein and T.S. Eliot. When Ernest came to Paris, he was introduced to Stein who proved to be a great influence by giving practical tips how he should become a good writer. Ernest, while on the staff of the Transatlantic helped Stein in publishing The Making of Americans. Later on, she felt that her writings have been made one of the targets in Hemingway’s The Torrents of Spring. Gertrude Stein with all her motherly solicitude and hospitality to young writers in Paris, could be feline when crossed. She maligned the image of Ernest in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas by offering her own account of the source of The Torrents of Spring. She made it known to others that it was Anderson who taught
boxing to Hemingway. She also levelled the charge that Hemingway was afraid of Anderson. She claimed that Ernest has learnt the art of writing by correcting the proofs of The Making of Americans. Hemingway's rejoinder came in Green Hills of Africa:

"It's a damned shame, though, with all that talent gone to malice and nonsense and self-praise. It's a god-damned shame, really. It's a shame you never knew her before she went to pot. You know a funny thing; she never could write dialogue. It was terrible. She learned how to do it from my stuff and used it in that book. She had never written like that before. She never could forgive learning that and she was afraid people would notice it, where she'd learned it, so she had to attack me. It's a funny racket, really. But I swear she was damned nice before she got ambitious. You would have liked her then, really." 29

Moreover, Hemingway could not tolerate poseur, intellectual cowards and politicians. He found decline in Stein's talent and he thought it his duty to expose her. Of course, there was professional jealousy also. Moreover, as Carlos Baker has pointed out in his foreword to Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story that Ernest always picked quarrels with those who began to assume a "proprietary interest over him."40 Gertrude Stein had started thinking that Ernest was her disciple. Ernest was angry over some derogatory remarks in Stein's memoirs openly disguised as The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. Ernest remarked that Gertrude Stein had become damned patriotic over sex about the time she reached her climacteric.41 Ernest also acidly remarked that when he reached the point at which he could write nothing, he would come out with some memoirs of his own.
In Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, Ernest has mocked Stein and Elliot. "T.S. Eliot plus Stein equal sterility." Mrs. Elliot is highly suggestive of Stein. "She [Mrs. Elliot] was sick and when she was sick she was as sick as southern women are." Gertrude Stein came of the Southern states. Mrs. Elliot is 40 years old. When Ernest met Stein in Paris, she was 48 years old. The climacteric changes occur in women after forty years. Ernest charged that Stein became "damned patriotic over sex" about the time she reached climacteric. Mrs. Elliot, aged forty years was "damned patriotic over sex" when she said to Hubert, "Kiss me again like that."

The following points strongly suggest that Mr. Elliot is T.S. Eliot:

1) There is only a slight difference of spelling.

2) T.S. Eliot had married his typist. Here also Cornelia typed the long poems written by Hubert Elliot.

3) The reference to Paris in the story is significant. T.S. Eliot had also spent good many years in Paris.

4) In The Wasteland we find "... with an automatic hand and put a record on gramophone." In Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, we find Cornelia dancing to the gramophone in the back room of the shop.

5) The theme of The Wasteland is sterility while that of Mr. and Mrs. Elliot is also sterility.

6) "Who is this third?" is the question asked in The Wasteland. In Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, this "third" is the girl-friend of Cornelia.

7) The Wasteland ends on the note of peace.

"... Shantih, Shantih."

The end of Mr. and Mrs. Elliot is also like this:

"... they were all quite happy."
Ernest Hemingway was a man of very strong likes and dislikes. He had strong liking for Conrad and equally strong dislike for T.S. Eliot. On the death of Conrad, it was decided to issue special supplement for the Transatlantic. Ernest went out of the way to remark in print that if "he could bring Conrad back to life, by grinding Mr. Eliot into a fine dry powder and sprinkling that powder over Conrad's grave in Canterbury, he would leave for London early tomorrow morning with a sausage grinder." 43

Thus the story Mr. and Mrs. Eliot mocks Chard Power Smith, T.S. Eliot and Gertrude Stein; but the story could not have been of lasting importance if it had been only an invective against a particular individual or merely a sex scandal story. Hemingway has dealt with the theme of sexual ineptitudes, lesbianism and onanism. Their sterile effects have been shown in direct contrast with the happy marriage-relationship. Hubert is only 25 while Cornelia is 40. Hubert keeps himself pure and has never gone to bed with any other woman. He keeps himself pure in the sense that he has no sexual intercourse with other women though he has not mental purity which, of course, is of real importance. The girls of his age, at first, feel attracted towards him but soon lose interest in him because he lacks aggressive male virility which the young girls demand from him. Joseph Defalco points out that Hubert develops an outsized mother complex which makes him fall in love with Cornelia who looks like his mother. 44 Cornelia has lesbian relations with another woman eight years senior to her in age who...
calls her 'Honey'. The mother-complex in Hubert produces a strong desire in him that the initiative in matters of love-making should be taken by the woman herself. Being senior in age, Cornelia addresses Hubert "You dear sweet boy." She asks him, "Kiss me again like that." Hubert's declaration that he has kept himself pure for her, always "sets her off." Hubert had learnt the way of kissing from hearing a fellow tell a story once. Hubert is delighted with the experiment. Hubert and Cornelia develop it as far as possible. He has no idea when they decided to marry. Soon after the marriage the repulsion begins. Hubert's mother realises the danger of such unequal marriage.

"His mother cried when he brought Cornelia home after their marriage but brightened very much when she learned they are going to live abroad." (p.260)

In the first six paragraphs Ernest has traced their reactions before marriage. Now he narrates their experiences on the night of their marriage. A woman addicted to lesbianism and a boy given to masturbation cannot be happy in their first night. They are disappointed and finally Cornelia goes to sleep while Hubert, being only 25 years of age, cannot sleep as Cornelia does. He walks out of his room of the hotel and on seeing the "pairs of big and small shoes" outside other rooms rushes back to his room to find Cornelia asleep.

"He did not like to waken her and soon everything was all right and he slept peacefully." (p.261)
It is anybody's guess that Hubert sleeps peacefully only after he has masturbated himself. Thus they try to have a baby and fail in their attempt. The suppressed emotions of Hubert find outlet in writing very rapidly long poems to be typed by Cornelia. The disappointment in fruitful sexual act gives bad temper to Hubert who is very severe about mistakes and asks her to re-do the entire page if there is a single mistake. Both know the cause of their mental tension. They try to have baby. They move from place to place and at every place they fail to have baby till at last Cornelia suggests him to allow her to call her girl friend who has been in the tea-shop. Hubert agrees. The girl-friend comes and Cornelia becomes brighter. She calls Cornelia 'Honey'. Cornelia very much resembles Miss Toklas who had very intimate relations with Gertrude Stein. It was Miss Toklas's aggressive lesbianism that offended Ernest Hemingway.45

These three live together but the difference is that the girl friend sleeps on the hard bed where Hubert used to sleep with Cornelia. Hubert sleeps in another bed. Cornelia and her girl-friend sleep together and have "many good cries together." (p.261) In his frustration, Elliot takes to drinking white wine. He cannot sleep at night and writes a good deal of poetry. In the morning he is exhausted.

"In the evening they all sat at dinner together in the garden under a plane tree and the hot evening wind blew and Elliot drank white wine and Mrs. Elliot and the girl friend made conversation and they were all quite happy." (p.262)
Joseph Defnico in *The Hero in Hemingway's Short Stories* writes about the ending of the story.

"The complete reversal of normal roles becomes the point here, for the action has come full cycle from the opening line. There Mr. and Mrs. Elliot are said to be trying to have a baby; here the suggestion is quite clear: Mrs. Elliot, at least, has got her baby — Mr. Elliot. The implied abnormal relationship between Mrs. Elliot and the girl friend, who is several years older, is one in which the girl friend has become a surrogate husband. Now the controlling figure of the complex, she has usurped Elliot's marital bed. Elliot's poetry has become his substitute mate; his sleeping apart and working at night suggest that it has become a substitute for the sexual act. The evening scenes typify a normal family setting, but here it is presented in ironic terms. The girl friend and Mrs. Elliot engage in "conversation" (an obvious pun on the archaic meaning of the word), and this is an adult function. Elliot drinks white wine, a fact which suggests milk or some other innocuous or soporific beverage. In this way Elliot's lapse into a childish state is portrayed, and he never does become a man or its equivalent: "get a baby." 46

**Cat In The Rain**

*Cat in the Rain* was derived from a rainy day spent with Hadley in February, 1932, at the Hotel Splendide in Rapallo. Ernest took some notes which were later on finished up as *Cat in the Rain*. The following were the notes taken by Hemingway:

"There were only two Americans stopping at the Hotel .... They did not know any of the people they passed on the stair .... The room was on the second floor facing the sea. It also faced the public garden and the war monument .... The American wife stood at the window looking out .... Right under their window a cat was crouched under one of the dripping green tables." 47
In the full-fledged story which developed out of the above notes, we find the very sentences incorporated in it. It also speaks of the artistic talent of Ernest how an ordinary incident is converted into an artistic story. Cat in the Rain can very well be compared and contrasted with Mr. and Mrs. Elliot.

1) Both the stories deal with married couples but in Mr. and Mrs. Elliot there is wide difference of age in husband and wife while the couple in the other story is of proper age.

2) In both the stories the married couples are staying in hotels and not in their own homes.

3) In Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, they have a keen desire to have a baby and there is disappointment to both. In other story, the desire of the American wife is to have the fulfilment of her personality. She has a loving husband. The manager of the hotel is deferential to her. The chamber-maid is obedient and considerate. Yet the American wife has an instinctive desire to have the ideals of bourgeois domesticity i.e. she wants to have her own house with necessary things and a cat in her lap.

The story Cat in the Rain is written from the woman's point of view. A young couple is staying in a hotel. It is raining. The husband is reading a book and his wife is fidgeting. She sees through the window of the hotel a cat crouching under a table to protect herself from the rains. When she goes to get it, the cat has gone away. The cat arouses in the mind of the wife certain associations expressive of comfortable domesticity. The disappearance of cat means the disappearance of things she longs for. The American wife is tired of looking like a boy. She longs to have long hair that she can tie in a knot at the back of her neck; a candle-lighted dining table where her silver gleams; the season of spring.
and nice weather; and of course, some new clothes. The husband, failing to probe deep into the recesses of her mind, simply says, "you look pretty darn nice." When the wife expresses the desire to have the things mentioned above, her husband mildly advises her to shut up and read something. The young wife insists;

"Anyway, I want a cat, .... I want a cat.
I want a cat now. If I can't have long hair or any fun I can have a cat." (p.268)

She repeats the sentences "I want a cat" four times.

Hemingway's characters repeat the words or sentences several times when they are at the pitch of emotional intensity.

"The poor girl is the referee in a face-off between the actual and the possible. The actual is made of rain, boredom, a preoccupied husband, and irrational yearnings. The possible is made of silver, spring, fun or new coiffure, and new dresses. Between actual and possible stands the cat."48

When the American wife goes after the cat, she encounters the hotel-keeper who becomes for her a substitute authority figure. He is very considerate and sends a chambermaid with an umbrella to protect the American wife from rains. The maid asks the meaningful question: "Ha perduto qualche cosa, Signora?" (Have you lost something, madame?). She cannot describe what she has lost, although, she, later on, expresses desire to have long hair and a cat in the lap. However, the cat is sent to her by the manager, "The gift of the cat is an answer to the literal, superficial need of the woman but in no way answers the greater needs suggested by her identification with the cat that had been expelled."49
Out of Season

The title of the story, Out of Season refers not only to trout fishing but also applies to disenchantment with the love relationship between a husband and a wife. The chief character are a young gentleman, his wife and Peduzzi, a wine-soaked old reprobate hated by all the villagers. The husband is called "young gentleman" so many times that "it becomes an ironic tag-name to represent the inner weaknesses of the character." The name Peduzzi suggests "teacher", but what he teaches is neither legally nor morally wholesome or desirable. He guides the young gentleman to illegal fishing "in a brown and muddy" river with a "dump heap" nearby.

The opening line gives us an idea about Peduzzi who is drunk all the time. He insists on the young man to fish for trout in defiance of local laws. He extracts money from the young gentleman to drink wine. The wife of the young man is not in a mood to go with them for fishing. However, she walks behind the two. The husband asks her to walk with them. Peduzzi is looked upon with contempt in the whole town. Peduzzi wants to show to the people that he is with the American couple. So he greets everybody elaborately tipping his hat but the reaction is just the reverse. The bank clerk stares at these three persons and the labourers working on the foundation of a new hotel look up as they pass. Only the village beggar lifts his hat as they pass.

Peduzzi stops before a hotel to purchase wine for which he has already with him an empty bottle. The young man gives money for it. The wife, already in her mood,
stands sullenly. "You'll have to play up to this," she said. "I cannot understand a word he says. He's drunk, isn't he?" [p.272] The shop is closed and hence they reach Concordia. By this time the realisation dawns upon the husband that he has become an object of ridicule by consenting to go with Peduzzi whom he asks to stay behind while he goes in the hotel to have a drink. Peduzzi feels embarrassed. The husband asks his wife to drink as it may do her good but the wife sits and looks at the glass.

"I'm sorry you feel so rotten, Tiny," he said. "I'm sorry I talked the way I did at lunch. We were both getting at the same thing from different angles."

"It doesn't make any difference," she said, "None of it makes any difference."

"Are you cold?" he asked. "I wish you'd worn another sweater."

"I've got on three sweaters." (p.273)

The above conversation explains another meaning of the title Out of Season. In the meantime, Peduzzi is walking up and down holding the rods. He feels bored at the way the young couple asks him to stay out of the hotel. He asserts himself and tries to show his influence over the people in the town.

"Come on," he said, "will carry the rods. What difference does it make if anybody sees them? No one will trouble us. No one will make any trouble for me in Cortina. I know them at the municipio. I have been a soldier. Everybody in the town likes me. I sell frogs. What if it is forbidden to fish? Nothing. Nothing. No trouble. Big trout, I tell you. Lots of them." (p.274)
In other attempt to raise his status, Peduzzie points at the girl standing at the door saying, "My daughter." Pduzzi is so drunk that his pronunciation of daughter sounds 'doctor' to Tiny who remarks "Was he got to show up his doctor?" The husband corrects Tiny, "he says his daughter." The girl goes inside the house as Peduzzi points at her. In fact, the girl is not his daughter and she goes inside the house to save herself from the gazes of Peduzzi known for drunkenness in the town. This doctor/daughter error suggests the quarrel between husband and wife whether to have or not to have a child.\(^1\) Now the three walk together. Peduzzi talks rapidly with much "winking and knowingness." Once he nudges Tiny in her ribs. Sometimes he talks in one dialect and sometimes in another. The young man realises his mistake.

"Everybody in the town saw us going through with these rods. We're probably being followed by the game police now. I wish we weren't in on this damn thing. The damned fool is so drunk, too." (p.274)

Now, it is wife's turn to hit at the right point. "Of course you haven't got the guts to just go back." (p.274) On the persuasions of her husband, Tini goes back to the hotel. Peduzzi is shocked. Peduzzie and the young man sit down and prepare the rods for fishing but the man is uncomfortable. They arrange the rods but they have no lead without which the bait will float on the water. Thus all this expenditure and toleration for the drunken Peduzzi go in vain. Peduzzi says, "Your stuff is all clean and new but you have no lead. I would have brought some. You said you had everything." (p.276) The 'young gentleman' who says that he has "everything" has no lead. But for the lead everything is spoiled.
"You must have lead" is repeated several times in the same way as "the young gentleman" is repeated all through the story. Peduzzie reminds him, "I would have brought some. You said you had everything."

The young man looks at the river which is discoloured by the melting snow and gives his final decision that he will not fish that day. He decides not to fish and hence not to break law. He is comfortable. It is warm and pleasant. The clouds vanish and the snow melts. The young man takes out the bottle of Marsala and passes it to Peduzzi who drinks it to his heart's content. Peduzzi is all the more drunk. He shows familiarity by calling the young man "Caro" (dear). Now they go back. The young man is ahead and Peduzzi follows him. Peduzzi asks him to give 5 lire note for today.

"For to-day?", asked the gentleman frowning. (p. 276)

The young man has now "lead" enough within himself to frown. Peduzzi promises to arrange everything for tomorrow for 5 lire. The young man gives 4 lire and not five. The young man's changed attitude prepares us for the coming event of the young man's leaving "word" with the manager of the hotel. He gives 4 lire but adds, "I may not be going, ... very probably not. I will leave word with the [illegible] at the hotel office." (p. 277) This dramatic ending is remarkable. Many things are left unsaid.

Ernest liked the ending of this story. He has evolved a new theory that "you could omit anything if you
knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood." However, this theory does not prove successful in Out of Season. Ernest complained to the manager and got Peduzzi sacked as a result of which he hanged himself in a stable. The concluding sentence of the story "I will leave word with the ..." at the hotel office" does not indicate that the young man is going to complain against Peduzzi. The word "Peduzzi" suggests 'teacher' and Peduzzi teaches the young man that he must have "lead" while, the irony of fate, is that the young man uses the "lead" against him only. Carlos Baker calls the story "almost straight autobiography."

**Autobiographical element in the story.**

1) Ernest and Hadley stayed in Cortina in April, 1923.

2) Peduzzi was a real-life wine-soaked reprobate whom all the villagers scorned.

3) Ernest and Hadley had paid a visit to Max Beerbohm who offered them Marsala. We find reference to Max Beerbohm and Marsala in the story.

4) Ernest complained against Peduzzi as a result of which his services were terminated.

5) Peduzzi had committed suicide but this fact has been omitted from the story.

This story is gateway to the best writing of Hemingway's career. Carlos Baker points out: "The forward-looking item in the first book was Out of Season, a remarkably subtle blend of statement and implication, .... the best short story in English to be published during 1923."
Cross-Country Snow

Nick again appears in this story written to commemorate his skiing sessions with George O'Neill in January, 1923. Nick has come back from the war with a badly wounded leg with the result that he cannot telemark with his leg. The two boys — Nick and George go to a hotel where the waitress, a German girl is singing an opera. By this time, Nick has much experience and maturity. There is much difference in Nick Adams of The End of Something and of Cross-Country Snow. The waitress is pregnant but her apron covers the swelling belly in such a way that Nick is unable to mark it. Since Nick's wife Helen is also pregnant, he is surprised why he could not mark the pregnancy of the waitress. However, Nick is matured enough to understand that the girl is pregnant without being married.

"How do you know she isn't married?"

"No ring. Well, no girls get married around here till they're knocked up." (p.284)

The above conversation between two boys subtly conveys to the reader that Nick's initiation experiences are over and he is on the threshold of the maturer world. He is a married man and his wife Helen has her first pregnancy. Nick and George are fond of each other. George has to go back to school. "I wish you could stick over and we could do the Dent du Lys tomorrow," Nick says to George who, feeling the gulf created by the marriage and pregnancy of Nick's wife wishes, "We could just bum together — and not give a damn about school or anything." (p.284) But the wish has its
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effect on George who feels good but funny. Nick's remark "I know" suggests us that he has now become matured enough to realise how a novice feels after being drunk. George leans his elbow on the table, slumps back against the wall and coming down to the table from the wall asks, "Is Helen going to have baby?" George's posture of slumping back against the table and coming down to the table suggests the tension in the mind of George. Through wonderful economy of words, Hemingway conveys to the readers the reaction of a young would-be-father.

"Is Helen going to have a baby?" George said, coming down to the table from the wall.

"Yes."

"When?"

"Late next summer."

"Are you glad?"

"Yes. Now."

"Will you go back to the States?"

"I guess so."

"Do you want to?"

"No."

"Does Helen?"

"No." (p.285)

"Yes. Now." conveys to us the whole turmoil that had been in Nick's mind on the pregnancy of his wife Helen. Gertrude Stein in the Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas writes:

"He [Hemingway] and his wife went away on a trip and shortly after Hemingway turned up alone. He came to the house about ten O'clock in the morning, he stayed, he stayed for lunch, he stayed all the
afternoon, he stayed for dinner and he stayed until ten O'clock at the night and then all of a sudden he announced that his wife enciente and with great bitterness, and I, I am too young to be a father. We consoled him as best as we could and sent him on his way." 55

Thus Nick's "Yes. Now" suggests that he has now adjusted himself to the changed circumstances. Going back to the States means going back under the control of parents which the husband and wife do not want. The harsh realities of the life, pregnancy of Helen and unwillingness to go the States, make George feel hollow from within. "George sat silent. He looked at the empty bottle and empty glasses." To George it is a "hell" to be burdened with responsibilities but for Nick it is not so.

"Will you ever go skiing together in the States?" George said.
"I don't know," said Nick. (p.285)

George jumps to the conclusion that they will not go for skiing again. But Nick's reply is realistic:

"We've got to," said Nick. "It isn't worth while if you can't." (p.286)

George wants to have promise about it but Nick says, "There isn't any good in promising."

In Cross-Country Snow, Nick Adams after serious wound in war, has become matured faster than George who is of his age. He has learnt that life is struggle. Moreover, life is not worth living if there is no sport or entertainment. Moreover, he is past the age to make unrealistic promises. Life is an uphill task.
"They opened the door and went out. It was very cold. The snow had crusted hard. The road ran up the hill into the pine trees."
(P.286)

My Old Man

Hemingway seems to be in love with the old man striving hard to face the unconquerable difficulties of life. In the story My Old Man, the 'old man' is a sort of "dried up" person undergoing rigorous physical exercise to keep his weight down. It is an invented story about a boy who learns with dismay that his father whom he adores is a crook. Ernest and Hadley had been interested in horse races and Ernest has made the best use of his first-hand knowledge of San Siro race track in Milan. Of course, Ernest has never seen a jockey killed in a race course when he wrote My Old Man. His imagination supplied the material for the death of the jockey. "The only writing that was any good was what you made up, what you imagined... Like when [you] wrote "My Old Man"[you'd] never seen a jockey killed and the next week Georges Parfrement was killed at that very jump and that was the way you looked." Lincoln Steffens liked the story so much that he insisted on sending it with imprimatur to Ray Long at Cosmopolitan. Edward O'Brien was collecting material for the best short stories of 1923. Only the stories already published in magazines were to be included in the anthology but O'Brien was so impressed with My Old Man that he made an exception with it and published it in the anthology of best stories of 1923.

The story begins with a flashback. The boy Joe reminisces about his jockey-father. We are acquainted with the
hard and strenuous life of a jockey who has to keep down his weight by rigorous exercises. After every ride the jockey loses about one kg. of weight. The old man is a "dried out" fellow and hence the horse-ride makes no difference to his weight. Hence he puts two rubber sweaters to make himself sweat heavily to reduce the fat. The old man and the boy go for a race. In the beginning, the old man is ahead and Joe is behind but soon the boy is ahead and the old man is behind. After a while he is found sitting under a tree sweating heavily. Then he takes a rope out of his pocket and starts skipping. The passers-by think that the old man is "nuts" but Joe is proud of him. "Sure is hell keeping it down, Joe, .... it is ain't like when you're a kid." (p.290)

It is hell to keep down the weight but he must do it to earn his livelihood. It is the way of the world. We feel an instinctive liking for the old man:

"Sweating heavy and he'd just be dogging it along with his eyes on my back, but when he'd catch me looking at him he'd grin and say, "Sweating plenty?" When my old man grinned, nobody could help but grin too." (p.289)

Anderson's influence on this story can very easily be traced but it is Hemingway's magic pen which turned the base material into gold. It is not merely race-track story. It tells us of the life of a jockey and how his son's illusions are shattered as he grows up to find that his father is a crook. The hero-figure of father is blurred. Joe is made aware of the underhand dealings when he (Joe) marks that the old man is looking red-faced and tired. Joe thinks that bagoli has bumped him. The old man only says, "Oh, to hell with it."
It is dog's life for the old man going back and forth between Mirafiore and San Siro. Joe admires the horses but the old man says, "None of these things are horses, Joe. They'd kill that bunch of skates for their hides and hoofs up at Paris." (p.292) Joe learns many things about race-courses. Once after winning a race they leave Italy. The old man, Holbrook and a fat wop are sitting in the Galleria. Something is going on. The old man does not want Joe to know what is going on. He gives him some money to go and buy the magazine *Sportsman*. Joe goes but comes back soon. The old man says, "Want an ice, Joe?" Holbrook looks down at the old man and says in a slow and sad tone, "You son of a bitch." Joe is scared and feels sick inside because he knows something has happened and does not see how anybody can call his old man a son of a bitch. The old man says, "You got to take a lot of things in the world, Joe." (p.292)

The image of authority-figure father is shattered. Moreover, the boy has learnt an important lesson. "You got to take a lot of things in the world." The old man and Joe come to Paris.

"Paris was an awful big town after Milan. Seems like in Milan everybody is going somewhere and all the trams reach somewhere and there ain't a sort of mix-up, but Paris is all balled up and they never do straighten it out." (p.293)

The old man spends a lot of money on other jockeys. Everybody likes him but it seems that nobody is interested in giving him chance in the race-course. Joe always goes to the race-course and learns many things about races. George Gardner is
the jockey of Kzar* which looks like "just nothing but run." Kzar passes near Joe and he feels "all hollow inside because he was so beautiful." (p.295) Before the race, the old man goes to George and asks "What's the dope, George?"

"He won't win," George says very low, leaning over and buttoning the bottoms of his breeches.

"Who will?" my old man says, leaning over close so nobody can hear.

"Kirchubin," George says, "and if he does, save me a couple of tickets." (p.295)

The race begins and the people are crazy about the Kzar but somehow it is not the winner. Joe feels all "trembly and funny inside." Although the defeat of the Kzar means a big gain to the old man, yet Joe cannot reconcile to the defeat of Kzar.

"And I thought, I wish I were a jockey and could have rode him instead of that son of a bitch. And that was funny, thinking of George Gardner as a son of a bitch because I'd always liked him and besides he'd given us the winner, but I guess that's what he is, all right." (p.298)

The old man gets enough money. They enjoy life at Paris. There seems to be no generation gap in Joe and the old man. Even in matters of sex, the old man is very frank. The old man kids Joe on account of an American girl towards whom Joe is attracted. Joe gets red but likes being kidded about her. It gives him good feeling. The old man drinks whisky and is

* In The Essential Hemingway (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, Penguin, 1964) the names of two horses are Foxless and War Cloud while in The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway (New York: Random) the names are Kzar and Kirchubin.
getting fatter. He talks about his young age. He is a lonely man after the death of his wife. He talks about riding down in Egypt. He talks about when he was a boy in Kentucky and went for coon hunting. He remembers the good old days of his childhood. Much later, in *The Old Man and the Sea*, Santiago remembers his good old days and dreams of lions in Egypt.

The old man purchases a horse Gilford. After all, it is something else to ride on one's own horse. They are so excited that they cannot sleep in the night. In the second race Gilford falls down and the old man is killed. Joe cries and cries. Gilford is also shot dead. Joe feels that Gilford should have been shot dead. George Gardner is beside Joe consoling him. Some guys pass by and remark, "I don't give a good goddam if he did, the crook. He had it coming to him on the stuff he's pulled." (p. 303) The other guy tears his ticket in two saying that the old man tried to lose the race intentionally because he was a crook. George Gardner says to Joe, "Don't you listen to what those bums said, Joe. Your old man was one swell guy." (p. 303)

The story ends with a bitter realisation to Joe that his old man was a crook. This is the way of the world. This story shows Anderson's influence on Hemingway but the treatment and ending of the story are peculiarly characteristic of Hemingway. Originality does not lie where we begin but where we end. *My Old Man* was published in the anthology of the best short stories of 1923.
Big Two-Hearted River

Big Two-Hearted River is the last story in In Our Time. From the short sketches to Big Two-Hearted River, it is a big stride taken by Hemingway in the field of short fiction. This story is in two parts and naturally very long although its last nine pages have been lopped off.

Nick Adams again appears in this story. In Indian Camp, Nick is just a child but now he is grown up; has been to the battlefield and is making a lonely fishing trip to the Fox River near Seney in the northern Peninsula of Michigan to recuperate from the wounds of war. Ernest Hemingway has personal experiences of fishing of the Fox in 1919 with his friends Al Walker and Jack Pentecost after his return from war. In this story, Ernest has omitted these two facts. The name of the river has been changed from Fox to Big Two-Hearted River. Ernest later explained that the change was made "not from ignorance nor carelessness but because Big Two-Hearted River is poetry." His camping trip to Seney gave him the background to the story Big Two-Hearted River. When Ernest got off the train at Seney, the brakesman said, "There is a cripple and he needs time to get his stuff down." It shocked Ernest as it made him realise that he was a cripple. However, he soon removed the incident from his memory. Ernest has omitted this incident but has pointed out the effect of this incident in a subtle way.

The opening of the story is again poetic as well as dramatic with the scene of a journey and a river. "The train
went on up the track out of sight." In The Battler, we also find almost similar description: "He looked up the track at the sight of the Caboose going out of sight around a curve." In The Battler Nick is bumped by the brakeman but here he meets a sympathetic brakeman whose sympathetic remark has shocked him in the same way as the violence had shocked him in The Battler. Nick has come to Seney for complete relaxation. He has left behind all the cares of life and is standing over the bridge, staring at the river and watching the trout.

"Nick looked down into the clear, brown water, colored from the pebbly bottom, and watched the trout keeping themselves steady in the current with wavering fins. As he watched them they changed their positions by quick angles, only to hold steady in the fast water again. Nick watched them a long time." (p.307)

It awakens the old feelings in Nick who regains his self-confidence which makes him walk uphill. "His muscles ached and the day was hot but Nick felt happy."(p.308) Moreover, he feels that he has left everything behind "the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs." Thinking is equivalent to worrying. The return to river and trout is is itself a cure for Nick who feels new vigour. "Seney was burned ... It could not be all burned."(pp.308-309) The effects of war cannot be permanent. Nick goes to sleep and when he gets up it is evening. After a day's walk and a good sleep, he feels hungry. He has never been hungrier before. It is definitely a sign of health and good spirits. It is a pleasure to have his own tent. "It smelled pleasantly
of canvas. Already it was mysterious and home-like."

Nick is happy. He is hungry. He takes out his utensils and starts preparing meals. He makes coffee in the way his friend Hopkins used to make it. Hemingway, known for his economy of expression, devotes full two paragraphs on Nick's relationship with Hopkins. The relationship with Hopkins has been closed. Hopkins has promised to come to fishing but somehow the promise is not kept. Nick drinks coffee — the coffee according to Hopkins. It is bitter. Nick laughs as it makes a good ending to the story. He believes that many things for which we crave hard in life end in bitter taste like that of coffee. Paul Victor Anderson is of the view:

"A comparison of Nick and Hopkins is the key to the understanding of Nick's struggle in Big Two-Hearted River because the comparison reveals Nick's adversary, his own lack of self-confidence. Hopkins rushes into the world and makes himself a success in it. He acts with speed. "He could not have wired for money. That would have been too slow." In contrast, Nick makes a conscious effort not to rush throughout the story. When the story opens, Nick is not leaving the familiar world to seek new challenges; he is fleeing from the familiar world, a world filled with "needs", a world that is too challenging for him." 59

Nick struggles hard to protect and build up his self-confidence. He tries to insulate himself from thoughts that remind him of his shortcomings. The thoughts of Hopkins start the working of his mind but he knows that he can choke it because he is tired. He goes to sleep in the tent. Here the part I ends.

The two parts of the story show the two phases of Nick. In Part I, failure predominates. Part I begins and ends with Nick's seeking insulation from thought and action. In
Part II we find the predominance of success. After last
day's hard labour and night rest, Nick begins the second
day with regained self-confidence and renewed vigour. He
comes out of the tent. He catches grasshoppers for the
bait and then takes his breakfast. "He turned the skillet
upside down on the grill, drank the coffee, sweetened and
yellow brown with the condensed milk in it, and tidied up
the camp. It was a good camp." (p.321) He starts his
fishing expedition. He knows where to 'strike the river'.
He feels awkward and professionally happy with all his
equipments hanging from him. He steps into the river. The
effect of water on his nerves has been graphically
described.

"He stepped into the stream. It was a shock.
His trousers clung tight to his legs. His
shoes felt the gravel. The water was a
rising cold shock." (p.322)

Nick prepares his fishing-rod. His first task in the river
is deliberately towards a small opponent. He fishes in a
shallow water where he is sure of his success. He catches
a small trout. He moistens his hands so that the delicate
mucous on the trout is not disturbed, unhooks the barb and
drops the trout in the water. It is his first success. He
is sympathetic towards the trout. He has learnt in his
childhood that a trout if touched by a dry hand is attacked
by the fungus on the unprotected part. Hence he takes
precautions to wet his hands before touching the small trout
which he does not want to kill.
The success with the first fish gives Nick confidence to go to deeper water. He wants to catch a big trout. There is a long tug by a big trout. Nick realises the danger.

"His mouth dry, his heart down, Nick reeled in." (p.324) His hands are shaky and he feels the chances of failure. "He felt, vaguely, a little sick, as though it would be better to sit down." (p.324) The leader is broken where the hook is tied to it. He imagines that the trout's teeth will cut through the snell of the hook. The trout will be angry.

"Anything that size would be angry. That was a big trout. He had been solidly hooked. Solid as a rock. He felt like a rock, too, before he started off. By God, he was a big one. By God, he was the biggest one I ever heard of." (p.325)

Nick loses some of his confidence. He is disappointed but the size of fish makes the defeat acceptable; failure is understandable. After losing the fish, Nick retreats from deep water to land. Slowly the feeling of disappointment leaves him. He again begins his next engagement where it is not too deep. He tries less dangerous fishing under a tree in which his line gets caught. He catches a big fish. Then he climbs on to the log - an 'island in the river circle, takes rest and eats his well-deserved lunch.

Nick has now fished in every circle except the swamp. He does not want to fish the swamp because it is a tragic adventure. He knows that, in order to fish in swamps, he will have to adapt himself to the tougher condition of life.

"It would not be possible to walk through a swamp like that. The branches grew so low. You would
have to keep almost level with the ground to move at all. You could not crash through the branches. That must be why the animals that lived in swamps were built the way they were, Nick thought."

(p.329)

Now at this time Nick feels that he should have a book with him. The desire to have a book is a healthy sign. The therapeutic influence has cured him of his mental and physical lethargy. He does not bother about the swamps.

"In the swamps fishing was a tragic adventure. Nick did not want it. He did not want to go down the stream any further today."

(p.329)

Thus Nick re-establishes his self-confidence in steps. He does not take all the steps in the same day but he will certainly complete the journey. "There were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp."(p.330) Nick's rehabilitation is indicated near the end of the story. "He took out his knife, opened it and struck it in the log."(p.329)

The virile imagery of the erection of knife sharply contrasts with the barrenness of Seney at the beginning of the story. He finds that the trout caught by him are male trout whose sexual glands are filled with reproduction secretion.

"Nick, who at the outset runs from all engagements because of an extreme lack of self-confidence (revealed by his account of Hopkins'), begins, through the methodical and successful performance of certain tasks to rehabilitate himself. From his initial insulation from thought and action, he works his way through levels of increasingly intense engagement, symbolised geographically, until he reaches the final level, the Swamp, which he cannot face at this time. However, the appearance of images of virility, the pattern of his progress so far, and his own promise to return made in the last sentence of the story, indicate that this set-back is only temporary."60
It was his boyish modesty when Ernest wrote to Gertrude Stein about The Two-Hearted River that he was trying to do the country like Gaetanne. He wrote, "It is about 100 pages long, and nothing happens and the country is swell, I made it all up, so I see it all and part of it comes out the way it ought to .... But isn't writing a hard job, though? It used to be easy before I met you. I certainly was bad, gosh, I'm awfully bad now but it's a different kind of bad." Carlos Baker has rightly said about the above remarks: "These words to Gertrude were, however, only the seeming modesty of a young challenger about to overtake a past master." "It's different kind of bad" shows Ernest's faith in himself and in his writings. Ernest described this story as "far and away his best work to-date." Tate praised The Two-Hearted River as "the most completely realised naturalistic fiction of the age." Ernest Hemingway was very certain about In Our Time and was of the opinion that it could be praised by highbrows and could be read by lowbrows. Nobody with the high school education would have the slightest trouble with prose. Edmund Wilson said that In Our Time was in fact "a key to the later and more ambitious books." Ernest's father Dr. Hemingway read the book with interest and wrote to Ernest:

"Trust you will see and describe more of humanity of a different character in future volumes... The brutal you have surely shown the world. Look for the joyous, uplifting, and optimistic and spiritual in character. It is present if found. Remember God holds us each responsible to do our best. My thoughts and prayers are for you dear boy every day."
References


17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., p. 33.

19. Ibid., p. 104.

20. Ibid., p. 178.

21. Ibid., p. 179.

22. Ibid., pp. 68-69.

23. Ibid., p. 69.


26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., p. 14.

28. Ibid., p. 77.

29. Ibid., p. 85.

30. Ibid., p. 88.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., p. 83.


41. Ibid., p. 292.


45. Lawrence D. Stewart, "Hemingway and the Autobiographies of Alice B. Toklas" *Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual, 1970*, p. 120.


50. Ibid., p.164.


53. Ibid.


57. Ibid., p.163.

58. Ibid., p.90.

60. Ibid.


62. Ibid., p. 177.


65. Ibid., p. 269.

66. Ibid., p. 201.