

HEMINGWAY AND HIS PARENTS:
THE RELATIONSHIP IN FICTION AND IN REAL LIFE

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At the core of Ernest Hemingway's philosophy of art is his assertion that "a writer's job is to tell the truth."¹ The simplicity of Hemingway's statement is deceptive. For one must ask his definition of truth and inquire to what degree a writer relies on direct experience or literary invention. Carlos Baker speaks to this point: "'I only know what I have seen,' was a statement which came often to [Hemingway's] lips and pen. What he had personally done, or what he knew unforgettably by having gone through one version of it, was what he was interested in telling about. This is not to say that he refused to invent freely. But he always made it a sacrosanct point to invent in terms of what he actually knew from having been there."² Hemingway once remarked to the biographer Irving Stone that there was no such thing as fiction. Ernest called his own stories "autobiographical" and told Stone how he had used "combinations of characters" to make up one character in a book. Hemingway, said Stone, "was making the point . . . that there was no such thing as pure imagination in writing, that we simply did not pull ideas and characters and concepts out of left field. He intimated that his own novels could be called biographical novels rather than pure fictional novels because they emerged out of 'lived experience.'"³

If Hemingway's stories are essentially "autobiographical," then his views of, and attitudes toward, his parents should emerge from his fiction. Such a possibility cannot fail to pique the curiosity of the reader. In Hemingway's fictional accounts of

his "hero's" parents range from equivocal, to unflattering, to damning. There is something warped in the father-son relationship when in "Fathers and Sons" Nick Adams contemplates exorcising a private devil as he thinks of his father: "If he wrote it he could get rid of it. He had gotten rid of many things by writing them."⁴ Just as startling is John Dos Passos' remark about Hemingway: "Hem was the only man I ever knew who really hated his mother."⁵ On the other hand, Ernest's feeling of alienation from and shame for, his father (and contrasting affection and respect for his grandfather) is evident in Robert Jordan's inward thought in For Whom the Bell Tolls: " . . . if there was any such thing as ever meeting [in the hereafter], both he and his grandfather would be acutely embarrassed by the presence of his father."⁶

Some basic assertions can be made about Ernest's fictional attitudes toward his parents. Generally, Hemingway's hero saw his mother as a domineering, intruding, sly woman who failed to understand him as a son. Toward his father, he was somewhat more ambivalent; the son acknowledged some fine qualities in his father, but could never forgive him for his lack of "manliness," both in allowing his wife to dominate him and in committing the final act of cowardice, suicide.

Actually, the fictional portraits only partly reflect reality. Threatened by his mother's dominating personality and shamed by his father's "cowardice," Hemingway, by selectivity and emphasis, pictures his parents as essentially negative personalities.

This study will discuss the nature of Hemingway's relationship with his parents by examining their fictional portraits and, through the use of biographical and critical materials, by evaluating the degree of "truth" captured in each of the portraits. Each relative will be considered separately, with the writing pertaining to each treated in order of publication, so that shifts in Hemingway's attitudes or emphases may be noted.

Grace Hall Hemingway, Ernest's mother, is given fictional life in the 1920's with the publication of In Our Time and Men Without Women. She figures prominently in three short stories: "Soldier's Home," "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," and "Now I Lay Me."

"Soldier's Home" focuses on the mother-son relationship. The mother is unaware that her son (Harold Krebs), who has recently returned from overseas, has been profoundly changed by his wartime experiences. She still treats him like a very young child, still expects him to cater to her desires and expectations of what he should be. A number of details bear this out: she babies him by offering him breakfast in bed, nags him about mussing the paper before his father has read it, wants to know about his war experiences (but Krebs notices that her attention wanders as he tells her), and gives him permission to use the family car in the evenings. But permission is granted only after she makes it clear to her son that the car is not needed for the

father's business in the evening; thus Krebs sees that she is returning him to his pre-war filial status. In this assertiveness she is clearly the parental spokesman. She informs her son that she and his father have been talking about him and his future. It is she who communicates the father's opinions concerning the use of the car, the need for him to settle down and end his indecisive idleness, and the belief that he should become "a credit to the community" like other young men of his age.⁷ The mother further alienates Krebs when she forces her sodden religiosity on him and makes it a matter of filial piety for him to accede to her expectations. Her sentimental motherliness nauseates him because it forces him to lie to her to avoid hurting her further. Richard Hovey in Hemingway: The Inward Terrain comments on "Soldier's Home":

The son's feelings toward his mother are marked by heart-chilling alienation and marrow-deep resentment. . . . Neither of his parents has any notion of what he has been through in Europe or what is wrong with him. His weak father is unimportant, out of the picture. It is the mother who forces the issue, dramatizes the living lie, and induces the real "'nausea.'"

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Against a parent who forces one into hypocrisy and who denies one's maturity, there is only one action to take: flee.⁸

Initial impressions of the mother are reinforced by her second fictional portrait in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife." The mother, a Christian Scientist, is lying on her bed in a darkened room with Bible, Science and Health, and her Quarterly beside her on a table. When her doctor-husband comes in after

his verbal altercation with several Indian sawyers, she implies disapproval of his stopping his labors, cautions him against loss of temper by quoting scripture to him, pries from him information about the incident which he is reluctant to give, and denies meanness of motive in the Indians and humanity in general. Yet her remarks are almost cloyingly gentle; she addresses her husband as "dear" six times in the course of a short conversation. As the doctor leaves and slams the door, she reacts by audibly catching her breath. He feels compelled to apologize and she forgives him. She has also requested that he carry to their young son Nick the message that she wants to see him. But Nick ignores his mother's request-command, and the father permits him to do so. The movement at the story's end is away from the mother's naive, feminine (but nevertheless powerful) control over her males. The story implies that her domination of her husband is an accomplished fact, but her effort to extend her sphere of influence to include the son is being resisted.

"Now I Lay Me" contains a section in which Nick, as therapy for his night fears, returns mentally to his childhood. He recalls the time the family moved from his maternal grandfather's house, where he was born, to a new house "designed and built by my mother." He recalls seeing the tin box containing the mother's and father's wedding cake hanging from a rafter and in the attic the jars of snakes and other zoological items which his father had collected as a boy. The snakes were preserved in alcohol, which had sunk in the jars so that the exposed backs of

the snakes had turned white. The jars were not to be moved to the new house and were burned along with other things in the back yard. Nick says, "I could not remember who burned the things even. . . ." But the real significance of this ambiguous statement is clarified when a similar incident occurs after the family has lived awhile in the new house. The mother cleans out the basement while the father is away on a hunting trip; she burns "everything that should not have been there." This includes the father's collections of Indian artifacts: stone axes, skinning knives, tools, pieces of pottery and arrowheads. When the father returns, she greets him pleasantly: "'I've been cleaning the basement, dear.'" The father, saying nothing, has Nick help him retrieve the damaged artifacts from the ashes. While the father and son busy themselves with the blackened and chipped stone implements, the mother has retreated inside the house, but it is clear that she has won in this contest of wills. "Now I Lay Me" thus indicates the extent to which the family has come under matriarchal domination. The pattern began early in Nick's childhood and even includes the house the family inhabited. The fires show that the mother is a destroyer; she also employs craft in her timing the fire during the husband's absence and in her smiling greeting which places the responsibility for any unpleasantness upon the husband.⁹

Hovey comments interestingly on the unmistakably Freudian imagery of Hemingway's recollection in "Now I Lay Me":

The tin box symbolizes the female genitals--emphatically so when it contains the wedding cake; the snakes

symbolize the male organ--emphatically so, for a Caucasian, when their whiteness is recollected.

Some of these [Indian] relics the Freudian would consider phallic symbols; all of them except the pottery are at least representative of masculine authority and prowess. . . .when she the mother burned the white snakes, she symbolically destroyed the male organ. . . . in Nick Adams the fear of castration is stronger than in most men. It is the mother who intensifies that fear.¹⁰

Hemingway's fictional picture of his mother clearly is that of a dominating female who, when she feels her cause is just, or senses neglect in the male's attitude toward her, or believes her dominant role threatened, occasionally resorts to cunning to thwart or blunt the male's bid for independence or freedom. Positive aspects of her personality are either ignored or underplayed; for example, in "Soldier's Home" the reader is in danger of forgetting the mother's honest concern for her son's future, and in "Now I Lay Me" Hemingway gives the mother no credit for creatively designing and generously providing the whole family with a new home. An examination of the biographical evidence will both balance the mother's picture and show the degree to which Hemingway was able to view his mother realistically in his fiction.

Considerable evidence supports the portrait of the domineering mother. Ernest's brother, Leicester, asserts that, "Father longed to be a medical missionary like his brother Will. He was offered chances to go to Guam and Greenland." These offers came early in his career when he was deciding where to practice, but he stayed in Oak Park right where he was. "Mother, cultural

arbiter," declares Leicester, "dealt firmly with this wanderlust."¹¹

Mrs. Hemingway had suffered scarlet fever as a child and the illness had left her blind for several months. Though she eventually recovered her sight, her eyes remained extremely sensitive to strong light. This sensitivity caused recurrent headaches.¹² Grace was not above taking advantage of her visual weakness if it served her purpose to do so. Leicester wryly observes, "Whenever there was a serious emotional crisis she rushed to her room, drew the shades, and declared she had a sick headache. Having her wishes crossed always produced a crisis, and there were hundreds of them while we children were growing up."¹³ In fact, it is precisely such an incident which Ernest dramatized in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife."

Carlos Baker in his biography observes:

The domestic quarrels, when they came, centered mainly on questions of money and the raising of the children. . . . She the mother was by nature somewhat extravagant, and much given to dressing up in "'grande-dame'" clothes and hats with ostrich plumes, as befitted a woman who had once planned a career in opera. She felt that in marrying and bearing children she had made a considerable personal sacrifice. Her lack of interest in housekeeping, like her determination to be cultured and creative, made servants a necessity rather than a luxury. Their wages, though small enough by modern standards, caused a steady drain on the family income, which was not in any case abundant.¹⁴

In her extravagance Grace generally had her way.

She also had her way, despite uncooperative Nature, concerning her desire to have a set of "twins." There was only about a year's difference between the ages of the eldest children,

Marcelline and Ernest, and their mother was determined, as this reminiscence by Marcelline indicates, to have her twins:

When we were little, Ernest and I were dressed alike in various outfits, in Oak Park in gingham dresses and in little fluffy lace-tucked dresses with picture hats, and in overalls at the summer cottage Later, we had a sort of compromise boy-girl costume . . . a belted blouse worn over bloomers. . . . We wore our hair exactly alike in bangs, in a square-cut Dutch bob.

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Mother continued with her plan of making us into twins even in our school life. I had an extra year of kindergarten while waiting for Ernest to be old enough so we could start first grade together when he became six.¹⁵

Marcelline mentions that they had toys alike and were encouraged to do things together. While they enjoyed each other, there were times especially in school when Marcelline would have liked to be able to go ahead by herself.¹⁶ She does not mention how long their "twin" status was enforced by their mother. Neither is there any record of Ernest's overt feelings about his mother's insistence on his being a "twin."

An incident which occurred when Ernest and Marcelline were teens reveals how Grace could, when the issue called for it, force her husband to accede to her own opinions regarding the children. Marcelline had attended her first dance and had been miserable because she did not know how to dance and had not been allowed to learn (the father believing social dancing immoral). Marcelline was so emphatic in her misery that Grace determined to send her eldest daughter and son to social dancing classes. It took her several weeks to overcome the doctor's objections. Marcelline repeatedly mentions her father's silence as her mother

informed the children that the decision had been made to allow the dancing lessons. The children later found out that the doctor's mother had sided with Grace.¹⁷ From Marcelline to Grace to the elder Mrs. Hemingway, the women imposed their wills on the doctor; thereafter the doctor's whole family, including Grace, learned how to dance--the doctor himself was the sole exception.

During the summer of 1919 after Ernest's return from the war, Marcelline observes, " . . . the family was increasingly worried about his lack of interest in going back to college [sic] or in getting a job. Mother talked to Sterling Sanford [Marcelline's future husband] about it, and asked his advice as to what she or Dad might do to interest Ernie in going to college. Mother said, 'You can't have a boy just fooling around all the rest of his life; he must get interested in something.'"¹⁹ The incident is typical of those which must have inspired Mrs. Krebs' conversation with her son in "Soldier's Home." However, another source for the story may be rooted in an important incident which occurred the following summer.

In July of 1920 at Windemere, the Hemingway summer home in Michigan, after considerable friction between Grace and Ernest, Grace in effect cashiered him from the family. The situation was confused and complicated because neither of the two principals involved wrote directly about the incident (except what is revealed in Grace's letters to the doctor practicing in Oak Park), and the only other family accounts are by Marcelline and Leicester. The former's account is sympathetic to the mother, while the lat-

ter, admitting blame by both principals, clearly favors Ernest's side. However, Marcelline was absent that summer and Leicester was only five years old at the time. Therefore, their accounts of the incident are based on what they later learned from Grace or from letters between Grace and the doctor. To supplement Marcelline's and Leicester's statements, Constance Cappel Montgomery in her book Hemingway in Michigan provides some of Ernest's version of the incident through his letters to a fifteen-year-old friend named Grace Quinlan. Mrs. Montgomery and Carlos Baker (who provides the most recent analysis of the cashiering) both give objective, useful, extra-familial analyses.

Marcelline's account is as follows:

Mother, who had put up with a lot from Ernest and his lack of responsibility that summer, felt that eighteen months was too long for her twenty-one-year-old son to be without work or any plans for a job--except going out as a seaman to the Orient. She refused to give him money for a passport and the fare to San Francisco. She told him that it was time he got busy and earned his way.

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Finally, worried beyond endurance by Ernest's complete lack of adult responsibility, his rudeness and his willingness to let . . . [others] go on providing for him, Mother decided something drastic had to be done to wake him up. Following his twenty-first birthday, July 21, 1920, Mother wrote him a firmly worded letter in which she said that he would either have to get a job or get out; that it wasn't good for him to loaf any more. . . . The feeling between them that summer became quite tense The strong medicine had its effect Ernie came to the [Oak Park family home] only long enough to pick up his clothes.¹⁹

Leicester, in analyzing the event, says of Grace:

Though Mother was temperamental, she was a basically honest person who was simply a poor observer. She would get so involved looking at her side of a problem she could forget there was another side. The situation

. . . that summer might have been very different if Father had not needed to be back in Oak Park attending patients most of the time. Yet the events and attitudes leading to the break had been building up over the previous years . . . Mother and Father managed to carry it [the dismissal] off with a magnificent show of solidarity.²⁰

But subsequent letters from Ernest to his father revealed a different version and "Father wavered . . . in his belief that all had been as represented to him [by Grace]."²¹ Leicester concludes:

Years later, on being shown the long letter formally drumming Ernest out of the family's summer home, which our mother had written for his birthday, I was surprised. With all the emotion and mutual recriminations, anyone would think some dreadful sins had been committed. Actually Mother did some mighty belaboring of his lack of courtesy and gainful employment, enumerating all the ways he had changed since she remembered him as her dear little boy, listing some trivial actions she deemed worthy of censure, and commanding him to leave Windemere, not to return unless specifically invited. Few affronts to personal dignity could top that of holding a ceremonial dinner on a twenty-first birthday, while getting ready to slip the guest of honor a letter asking him to kindly leave the premises.²²

Mrs. Montgomery also comments on the central role Grace Hemingway played in her son's dismissal. Grace expected Ernest to help around the house to fill the role of her absent husband. Besides resenting his handy man's status, Ernest was rebellious because his mother did not accept his writing as an occupation, since he had not yet sold any fiction. His mother, Ernest thought, had shirked responsibility through her headaches and escape from womanly duties and Ernest did not want her to have her way with him. The Quinlan letters are indirectly quoted by Mrs. Montgomery and make clear the details of a "'midnight party'"

of some boys and girls which included Ernest and which precipitated his dismissal. The mother of one of the girls had accused him of "organizing the party for some foul purpose" whereas Ernest had been talked into going along to act more or less as a chaperone. Ernest further stated that Mrs. Hemingway refused to hear his side of the story. She had earlier spent several thousand dollars on a private retreat for herself near the summer home rather than saving the money for college for the younger children; Ernest had opposed this building project and felt that she hated him for his opposition.²³

Baker mentions that Ernest's mother was suffering from emotional difficulties,²⁴ and Marcelline too remarks on her mother's lack of "good health" that year.²⁵ Neither is specific about the nature of the illness. Some light, however, is shed on Grace's health in Hemingway in Michigan. Mrs. Montgomery includes an interview with Joseph Baker, a Michigan friend of Dr. Hemingway: "'Mrs. Hemingway lost her mind when she went through the change of life. Dr. Hemingway was down in Chicago then and told me to wire him if anything went wrong. Once Mrs. Hemingway got out of hand and I wired the doctor. He came up immediately and afterwards told me "You know most people would put her in a sanatorium or lock her up, but I just won't do it." This was a few years before he committed suicide.'"²⁶ The doctor died in 1928 and Ernest's dismissal letter was written in 1920; it is entirely possible that Grace's emotional illness was a factor in the cashiering situation.

Baker believes ill health made Grace especially sensitive to Ernest's behavior. According to Baker, the dismissal letter

developed . . . an elaborate simile . . . between a mother's love and a bank account. When the child is born, the mother deposits great stores of love and patience, on which the child subsequently draws for sustenance. Ernest, she felt, had overdrawn his account many times over. . . . 'When you have changed your ideas and aims in life, you will find your mother waiting to welcome you, whether it be in this world or the next--loving you and longing for your love. The Good Lord watch between me and thee, while we are absent one from the other.'²⁷

But Grace waited six weeks before sending her husband a copy of her letter to Ernest.²⁸ She acted as though she alone was in command of the family.

Mrs. Hemingway could not directly control Ernest after he left the family home, but she never ceased to try to get him to conform to her expectations of what he should be. Baker's biography quotes in part her letter to Ernest regarding The Sun Also Rises.

She was glad to know his book was selling, even though it seemed to her "a doubtful honor" to have produced "one of the filthiest books of the year." Had her son ceased to be interested in loyalty, nobility, and honor? Surely he must know other words besides damn and bitch. . . . "But I could not keep silence any longer," she wrote, "if any word from me might help you to find yourself." . . . Even before his conception he had been dedicated to God in the hope that he might make the world a better place. "I love you, dear," wrote Grace, "and still believe you will do something worthwhile. Try to find Him and your real work. God bless you."²⁹

Mrs. Hemingway was indeed a dominating and occasionally domineering person in real life. She could be very open in her opposition, not hesitating to quarrel with and to criticize both

father and son. She was able to accept confrontations with, and even to challenge openly, the males in the family. But Grace was also adept at more indirect methods; the nature of the family situation virtually required a certain shrewdness in her. Marcelline recalls that the children called upon their mother to soften up the doctor in advance of any new project or request made by the children; the doctor's tendency was almost invariably to say "no" when surprised by a sudden request.³⁰ Therefore, it is easy to view Grace using her carefully developed cunning in her own behalf as well as in behalf of her children. She could triumph over the males in family crises by using her headaches to advantage just as she could get her mother-in-law on her side in winning dancing lessons for the children. That she did not hesitate to invoke God Himself is shown in her letters to Ernest and in "Soldier's Home."

In "Now I Lay Me" and "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," the woods and the hunt are temporary refuges for the male. But in real life, even the woods were not safe from the mother's intrusive domination. It was she who presided over the Hemingway summer cottage in forested Northern Michigan. There Grace conducted the summer feud with Ernest and dismissed him from the family while the father was absent. It was close by that she built her private retreat, where the family--males included--visited by invitation only.³¹

But if Grace Hemingway could be domineering and shrewd, she also had--as her whole life testifies--many positive quali-

ties of character and temperament. The great creative passion and talent of her life was music, particularly voice. Before her marriage she studied in New York and was offered a contract with the Metropolitan Opera; but after considerable debate with herself, she rejected it in favor of marriage with young Dr. Hemingway. At the time of her marriage she was teaching a large number of music students and making as much as one thousand dollars a month from musical endeavors.³² She taught or sang professionally for many years thereafter.

Grace's tendency toward the unconventional began in her youth. Marcelline notes that Grace resented the Victorian restrictions placed on the upbringing of the proper young lady of her day. She was the first girl in Chicago to ride a boys' high bicycle; the incident occurred in the 1880's and Grace wore men's pants for the occasion. Grace's mother abetted her unconventionality; proud of her daughter's musical abilities, she always shooed Grace out of the kitchen--"You tend to your practicing. There is no use any woman getting into the kitchen if she can help it."³³ When Grace was older, she continued to try new things, even if her participation provoked laughter. She was one of the first women to join a women's gym class organized to promote women's physical fitness at the Oak Park YMCA.³⁴ When she decided to build her private retreat across from the Hemingway summer home, she helped form an adult manual training class in Oak Park. Her training enabled her to make all the furnishings for her new cottage.³⁵

Temperamentally, she was generally serene, whereas her husband was tensely nervous. Marcelline remarks that, when Ernest was serving in the ambulance corps in Italy, Grace's serenity was evident in her calm faith in Ernest's safety in contrast to the doctor's continual worry about his son.³⁶

Mrs. Hemingway was intensely aware of her need for quiet and solitude. When this need was fulfilled, she was able to maintain emotional equilibrium and to continue her creative, artistic mode of living. She said of herself: "'It's worth going without water and food to have peace and quiet and a place to be alone. I love you all, but I have to have a rest from you all now and then if I am to go on living.'"³⁷ "Once I asked her," writes Marcelline, "why she had to be alone at her cottage, and this was her explanation: 'People are made differently,' she said. 'Some women cling to their husbands and their children. They want to possess them. Some women feed their egos by touching and owning the members of their families. Others like to share their abilities and their interests, but they need solitude and communion with God--the source. I think I am one of these people. I must have quietness and peace to live.'"³⁸

Generosity was certainly one of her virtues. She used most of her inheritance from her father to build the new home to which the Hemingways moved in 1906.³⁹ With the remainder of her patrimony she made it possible for her doctor-husband to step up professionally from general practitioner to specialist in obstetrics. The doctor participated in a four months' course

in a New York hospital, visited Eastern relatives, and cruised up the Mississippi on his return home--all through Grace's generosity.⁴⁰ And Mrs. Hemingway often gave lessons to talented young people in return for service as live-in help. It was a way to permit her to spend her time on other than household duties.⁴¹

In many diverse ways she showed how seriously she took her maternal responsibilities. When the foundation of the family's new house was laid, there was a dedicatory ceremony. The family's minister held a brief service and a tin box containing family mementos was placed in a hearthstone. "Spontaneously," recalls Marcelline, "Mother began to sing 'Blest Be the Tie That Binds,' and we all joined with her." Then refreshments were served in the open air.⁴²

Far from being destructive, she tried to pass her own creativity on to her children. She wanted the children to enjoy life, which meant an awareness of the arts. "She saw from the first that they all had music lessons. As soon as they were old enough, she bought them tickets for symphony concerts, operatic performances, and the better plays that came to Chicago, and they were encouraged to acquaint themselves with the paintings and drawings at the Chicago Art Institute."⁴³ Training in the arts is evident in many places in Ernest's writing. One example of his subtle but effective use of music is in The Fifth Column: the Chopin Mazurka used as background music for the bombardment symbolizes the old, settled ordering of life now

under attack from new, disruptive political forces. Similarly, the painter's passionate attention to detail is evident in the following statement from Death in the Afternoon: "If I could draw I would make a picture of a table at the cafe during a feria with the banderilleros sitting before lunch reading the papers, a boot-black at work, a waiter hurrying somewhere and two returning picadors, one a big brown-faced, dark-browed man usually very cheerful and a great joker, the other a gray-haired, neat, hawknosed, trim-waisted little man, both of them looking the absolute embodiment of gloom and depression."⁴⁴

Around the age of twelve, each of Grace's children (except one of the girls) accompanied the mother to Nantucket, where mother and child had an opportunity to be alone together. Grace felt she otherwise could not really get to know each child as an individual, because the family was so big and busy. A side benefit for the child was the extended immersion in New England history and culture.⁴⁵ Eleven-year-old Ernest vastly enjoyed himself when his turn came to visit Nantucket.

"Wow, what a surf. What wonderful waves," Mother reported as his reaction to the first day's swimming. . . . Ernest's first taste of salt water was enough to whet his appetite for a lifetime of big-game fishing, when he was finally able to live near the ocean.

Writing home from Nantucket on September 13, 1910, Ernest said he had sailed up to Great Point, fourteen miles away. He boasted that he had been feeling fine and rough and had gone out in the open ocean where the boat had shipped water grandly. He had purchased the sword of a big swordfish from an old salt named Judas

. . . .

Mother had taken him along to a meeting on women's suffrage but he had managed to sleep through all of that, he said. He was looking forward to going with Mother to the historical society to see the whaling exhibits after he finished this letter home.⁴⁶

Taking her maternal responsibilities seriously meant for Grace, besides understanding her children, continuing to provide them with advice and direction in their adult years. Her letter to Ernest after the publication of The Sun Also Rises has already been mentioned. From her point of view she was merely providing direction to a child obviously in need of it. There are many such examples in Grace's correspondence to Ernest. In 1940, for example, she wrote to Ernest that she had learned he was doing a novel. She hoped for once it would contain "'something constructive.'"⁴⁷ Marcelline recalls a conversation between herself and her mother, then in her late seventies: "'It's not easy to be a mother,' she said. 'I love all my children, but at times I've had to take stern measures to do my job. It doesn't make you popular when you have to correct your grown children. . . . We tried to bring up you children to be independent and self-reliant. We wanted you to be honorable men and women. It's nice if your children can be talented, but it's even more important if they are decent and kind.'"⁴⁸

Besides all her other virtues, Grace Hemingway was adaptable and self-reliant. After her husband's death she learned to make all the decisions a woman alone must make, even to renting part of her large, mostly empty home because she needed the income the rent provided. She learned to drive and took long trips alone throughout the United States. She began to lecture extensively, and even launched an artistic career late in life, selling her paintings for good prices.⁴⁹

Grace Hemingway, then, was not the overwhelmingly negative person Ernest portrayed in his fiction. But even on the rare fictional occasion when his attitude toward her softens, his words are equivocal. In "Soldier's Home" Krebs says, regarding his mother's questions about his future, "His mother did not say this in a mean way. She seemed worried." But the admission of maternal sincerity is later undercut by her open religiosity, her inability to value his lack of religious concern, and her weeping sentimentality. Later Krebs says, "He had felt sorry for his mother," but the statement is completed and negated by " . . . and she had made him lie." In "Now I Lay Me" the parents' section begins and concludes with Nick's praying for his parents but, as he says initially, he was praying "for all the people I had ever known," and was merely beginning with the people who had chanced to be in his earliest recollections: his mother and father. As the family recollections conclude Nick says, "In remembering that, there were only two people, so I would pray for them both."⁵⁰ He does not even designate the "two people" as "parents"--he seems reluctant to acknowledge them as such. Nick's feelings for his parents are those of carefully controlled distaste; the tone is all the more devastating for its sense of quiet desperation.

But what about his real-life reactions to his mother? His verbal statements, chronologically ordered, generally ranged from sardonic or cynical to vicious. Regarding his mother's previously quoted criticism concerning The Sun Also Rises, Ernest

advocated "'a little shot of family loyalty'" which "'might serve her as an anesthetic against all his so obvious disreputability.'"⁵¹ A year later (1927) Ernest wrote to a friend, mentioning his mother's recent interview in the Oak Park News: "No doubt, said Ernest sourly, Grace wished that her son Ernie were . . . some highly respectable Fairy Prince with an English accent and a taste for grandmothers."⁵² In 1932 Ernest observed, "There are no subjects I would not jest about if the jest was funny enough, just as, liking wing shooting, I would shoot my own mother if she went in coveys and had a good strong flight."⁵³ On at least two occasions (1939 and 1944) he referred to his mother as a bitch.⁵⁴ In 1943 in a letter to a friend, Ernest reported that his mother was still alive, "though increasingly guided by divine voices."⁵⁵ At one point Ernest "condemned his mother as a shrew who had driven his father to suicide."⁵⁶

Several years later Ernest told Charles Scribner something of his feelings for his mother:

A woman at McCall's Magazine had been trying to get an interview with his aging mother in River Forest, Illinois. . . . Lately, he had been "'playing the role'" of a devoted son. But the truth, Ernest said, was that he hated his mother's guts precisely as she hated his. Some time in the Depression, when Ernest had ordered her to sell the worthless Florida real estate [the financial drain was a contributing factor in Dr. Hemingway's suicide], she had warned him never to threaten her: his father had tried it once when they were first married, and he had lived to regret it. Now Ernest took a firm stand. If she ever granted an interview to that bitch from McCall's, he would cut her off without a penny.⁵⁷

Ernest's kindest remarks about Grace were occasioned by her death. To Baker he wrote that "the news [of her death] had

made him recall how beautiful Grace had been when she was young before 'everything went to hell in the family,' and also how happy they had all been as children before it all broke up. . . . He added that he did not believe that she had had 'the grace of a happy death.'"⁵⁸ But Ernest's moratorium of criticism was called off two months later when he observed, regarding his childhood trip to Nantucket with his mother, that she "was trying to civilize him by exposing him to some of his fancier relatives, and that she was a great snob, bowdlerizing everything in the family history into a wonderful respectability, and substituting the Elysian Fields for the actual Tyburn Hill."⁵⁹

Despite the negative cast of Ernest's remarks, his financial actions toward her were more generous. After the doctor's death, he sent his mother a hundred dollars a month as well as substantial tax payments on her real estate holdings. Further, "he would continue to help out at home as long as he had money."⁶⁰ In 1933 with money from the various proceeds of A Farewell to Arms and from Ernest's wife's generous uncle, August Pfeiffer, a trust fund for Grace's use was set up. The original idea for the fund was not Ernest's, but his wife's. She was eager for Ernest to be relieved of worry regarding Grace's welfare.⁶¹ In essence, Ernest's financial generosity to his mother in face of his unrelenting criticism of her was really a salve for his conscience, a way to convince himself that he had fulfilled his responsibility to her. It was also a measure of the dual emotional problem she presented to him: it is bad enough to feel resentment and

hatred for one's mother, but to ignore her existence entirely would be unthinkable.⁶²

In the summer of 1920 at the end of his year-and-a-half hiatus, Ernest felt strong resentment for his mother and the completeness of her domination of the family. Yet before his dismissal he was a parasite, as much under her aegis as any of the younger children; both the fictional recollections and the biographical evidence show his resentment of her command and his own subordinate position. But Grace, while appearing to wield the ultimate weapon of matriarchal dominance in dismissing her elder son, was actually forcing him to break from familial dependence. Yet Ernest could never openly admit the wisdom of his mother's action in her dismissal letter. Since Ernest's relationship to his mother was basically antipathetic, he would have to search for and find some other meaningful adult relationship in his own family if he were to attain emotional stability. For most boys the emotional attachment is to the father, but Ernest had several deeply personal reasons for rejecting his father.

The catalog of stories in which Dr. Clarence Edmonds Hemingway figures either prominently or secondarily is impressive. In 1923 in his first slim volume, Three Stories and Ten Poems, Hemingway includes a story about a boy and his father, "My Old Man." Two years later in In Our Time there are four stories in which the father figures (along with "My Old Man," which has been reprinted in this volume): "Indian Camp," "The Doctor and

the Doctor's Wife," "The Three Day Blow," and "Soldier's Home." In 1927 Men Without Women includes "Ten Indians" and "Now I Lay Me." The father is briefly but significantly mentioned in A Farewell to Arms; in fact, it is during the re-write of this novel that Dr. Hemingway's death occurs. It is several years before he again deals extensively with his relationship to his father. Not until "Fathers and Sons" in the Winner Take Nothing collection does he make full fictional use of his dead father. Hemingway's concern with the problem of his father is ostensibly laid to rest in For Whom the Bell Tolls in 1940. After that, the father is not mentioned again in Ernest's writing.

"My Old Man" is the story of a young son's deep love for his father and his gradual awareness of the father's moral decay. The father and son are alone in the world and have only each other; thus, their closeness is especially important. Because the story is told through the boy's eyes, the reader initially shares the limited awareness of the father's flawed morality. But the reader quickly outstrips the boy's understanding as the son reveals his father's illegal racing practices without immediately grasping their significance. In the same way the reader learns that, although the father-son relationship is a deep and loving one, the father is unable to communicate fully with the son, particularly when the parent would have to acknowledge his illegal activities. When his son observes him being bested in an argument with two antagonists, the father "sort of smiled at me, but his face was white and he looked sick

as hell" Moments later the father observes to his son, "'You got to take a lot of things in this world, Joe.'"⁶³ Later Joe overhears his father get a tip on a winning horse from the jockey who has agreed to allow his own horse to lose. But Joe forgets the incident as he cheers on the best horse, the one which will not be allowed to win. When the son speaks of the race as a "swell" one, the father casts a peculiar glance at his son and refers to the fixed nature of the race. Joe says, "Of course I knew it [the race] was funny all the time. But my old man saying that right out like that sure took the kick all out of it for me and I didn't get the real kick back again ever" ⁶⁴ In the first incident the father tries to avoid having to explain himself to his son, which he does by passing off a noncommittal remark. But in the second incident, the father's glance at his son implies that the parent sees the negative moral impact of his own actions on his son. When the father then acknowledges that the race is fixed, the son is shattered by his father's admission. It is all part of the son's having to reconcile his affection for his father with the father's imperfection as a human being. At the story's end after his father's death, Joe overhears a merciless condemnation of his father and tries to pass responsibility for the effect of the overheard conversation on to the speakers: "Seems like when they get started they don't leave a guy nothing." But the reader sees the boy is subconsciously trying to avoid coping with anything which would further destroy the remembered image of a deeply

loved father. The son is terribly alone with only flawed memories of his father. "My Old Man" is an initiation story, significantly among the earliest stories Hemingway wrote. The author is clearly trying to sort out his own feelings for his father, but this fact may not be known to the reader who has no knowledge of the writer's family background. When Hemingway later develops the Nick Adams persona, the autobiographical references to his family make an obvious pattern.

The second of the stories about the father is "Indian Camp." Again there is a failure of communication from father to son and consequently the son, Nick Adams, gains a dangerously imperfect understanding of the painful and violent birth-death incident. Nick, a young boy of unspecified age, is accompanying his father on an obstetrical call to an Indian camp. But Dr. Adams refers to the squaw patient as a "lady" who is "very sick"; he uses euphemisms to disguise the harsh reality. At the camp the father gives Nick a very simplistic explanation of the woman's labor and screams, avoiding the use of the word "pain." The doctor operates without anaesthetic and maintains a cheerful, talkative, objective attitude toward the job at hand; he is professionally insensitive to the sickening effect such primitive methods and such human unconcern would have on the young inexperienced boy. When Nick voices distress at the screams, Dr. Adams says, "' . . . her screams are not important.'"⁶⁵ The doctor, however, proves to be mistaken for the woman's husband, unable to bear her screams, has quietly com-

mitted suicide. At the story's conclusion there is an interchange between father and son which reveals the sparseness of their communication. The conversation concerns birth and death but consists of a series of short questions and one-line answers which would never begin to explain the topics satisfactorily even for a young boy. Nick's rapid-fire questions indicate the intensity of his interest in what he has seen, yet Nick seems to accept tacitly his father's simplistic answers without pressing the parent for more depth. "'Is dying hard, Daddy?'" "'No, I think it's pretty easy, Nick. It all depends.'"

Nick concludes in the last line of "Indian Camp" that "he felt quite sure he would never die."⁶⁶ In a situation where a father is responsible for interpreting life to his son but falls short of doing an adequate, realistic job, the effect on the son could be potentially disastrous. The Indian's suicide was an event over which the doctor had no control and could not meaningfully interpret for his son. Many such violent incidents occur beyond the reach of parental control when a son is on his own. If the son has been ill-prepared to deal with them, adulthood can be very traumatic. The story, then, deals with a failure in communication between father and son and clearly implies the father's inability to carry out his parental responsibility despite love and closeness between parent and offspring.

The two incidents involving the father in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" reveal different but rather complementary

qualities in his personality. The situation with the Indian sawyers show him to be highly sensitive to insinuations that he is morally at fault in claiming the accidentally jettisoned logs. Though the doctor is clearly blameless, one of the sawyers purposely eggs him into a confrontation by labeling the logs as "stolen" timber rather than "driftwood." Rather than laugh off the repeated accusation, thus robbing it of its barb, the doctor takes the insinuation very seriously and soon threatens the sawyer, only to find he must back down from the big half-breed. After the doctor's dignified but angry retreat into the cottage, the Indians laugh scornfully at him.

This picture of the doctor as an over-sensitive, humorless man who cannot command the respect of the Indian laborers is completed by his actions in the cottage in the presence of his wife. The first thing he sees as he enters is a pile of unopened medical journals. He is irritated because they remind him that he is too busy to remain current in his profession. Yet his wife, by contrast, is entirely inactive as she lies on her bed. She immediately assumes command of the conversation and the doctor replies either shortly or not at all. Thus, the normal marital relationship is entangled and inverted as the father, though physically active, is passive when confronted with his wife's ready self-assertiveness. He has been dominated by an Indian laborer and by his wife and can only assert his masculinity by cleaning a favorite shotgun as he listens to his wife's comments and advice. But he cuts this activity short in

an effort to escape his wife, who has only increased his anger, as evidenced by his slamming the door upon leaving the cottage. His final degradation is in becoming message-bearer for his wife in her symbolic subversion of their son. But in allowing Nick to remain with him, the father gets back at his wife, though he can effect no more positive action against her or the Indians, all of whom have scarred his ego.

In leaving the house, Robert Davis observes, the doctor re-enters the world outside where his medical knowledge and gun cannot help him deal with the world though they provide compensation for failure to do so. However, the father's turn to Nick is regression into the non-adult world where the father may yet see some success in dealing with another individual--his own son.⁶⁷ As Philip Young points out, Nick learns "something about the solidarity of the male sex."⁶⁸ But Hovey correctly observes that a son who becomes aware of having such a father will not be able to identify meaningfully with him.⁶⁹ Thus, the father will eventually lose face with his son, also.

In "The Three Day Blow," the problem of the father-son relationship is submerged just below the surface as Nick finds himself relating comfortably to his peer, Bill. Both boys are in their upper teens; their conversation and actions reveal them to be tentatively adult-oriented, but with a considerable degree of residual immaturity. They like to appear solidly knowledgeable to each other, so they discuss the problems of big-league baseball, the relative merits of their favorite fiction, the

proper way to consume alcohol, and the necessity of avoiding being trapped into marriage. The subject of fathers is implied in the novels the boys discuss. Hovey observes, "Bill has been enjoying Richard Feverel, that tragic novel of a son whose soul is destroyed by his egoist father's systematic love. Nick says he 'couldn't get into it.' On the other hand, he thinks Hugh Walpole's Fortitude is 'a real book.' 'That's where his old man is after him all the time.' We surmise that a moralistic Adams, Sr., has been dogging Nick."⁷⁰ Evidently the first novel provided no parallel to Nick's relationship to his father; the second one did.

As the boys drink, the subject of their fathers surfaces. Nick inquires about Bill's father and says, "'He's a swell guy.'" Then Nick feels compelled out of loyalty to assert, "'My old man's all right,'" and asserts matter-of-factly that "'he claims he's never taken a drink in his life.'" "'He's missed a lot,' Nick said sadly. . . . 'He says he's missed a lot himself,' Nick confessed."⁷¹ Then Nick wishes to show he can hold his liquor even though his father has not been able to teach him this masculine talent. Already Nick feels drawn to another boy's father as he uneasily recognizes Dr. Adams' simultaneously positive and negative qualities. But the boys' concerns are pushed into the background as they leave to join Bill's father to hunt. The reader sees that Nick has accepted Bill's father as a model superior to Dr. Adams. Nick visits with Bill in Bill's home, drinks Bill's father's whiskey, shares his thoughts

and feelings with the other boy, and hunts with him and his father. Nick feels sadness for himself and his father because he cannot relate meaningfully to his own parent. Dr. Adams cannot be relied upon to do the things a parent must do if a son is to succeed among other males. Nick must either learn on his own or adopt a substitute father, which he does with Bill's father. By the conclusion of "The Three Day Blow," Nick has subconsciously given up trying to alter the flawed relationship with his father.

In "Soldier's Home" the father is a distant figure who is even less significant than the alien mother with whom Krebs deals in the last part of the story. Young Krebs is openly antagonistic when his mother becomes his father's mouthpiece. The son hates her for such action and hates his father for allowing it to happen. "'He asked me to speak to you this morning [about settling down to work],' " says Mrs. Krebs, "'and then you can stop in and see him at his office.'" ⁷² Evidently the father does not have the courage to broach the touchy subject to his son though it is clearly the father's masculine responsibility to do so. The father will take over at his office only after the mother has done the most difficult part. But Krebs is no less sickened by his father than by his mother. He will avoid his father's office as he has avoided as much as possible anything which could challenge his disengagement from the world. Neither parent is of any use to him, and the absence of the father from the events of the story is a measure of how

completely the male parent has been eclipsed by the female. The real tragedy is that the parent who should be closest to the son has been crippled into complete uselessness by a combination of the father's own acquiescence and the mother's willingness to displace him in the family.

By contrast, "Ten Indians" presents a relatively happier view of the Dr. Adams-Nick relationship. At the beginning of the story, the Garners are seen as a family which enjoys an easy, comfortable relationship together. In fact, Nick is almost an adopted Garner son; Nick has spent the holiday with them, has been joshed about Prudence, his Indian girl friend (as the Garner sons and their father tease each other about their own girl friends), and has even been invited to have supper with the Garners. But Dr. Adams has remained by himself for the entire day. The doctor and Nick seem to be easy enough with each other until the former tells his son about the Indian girl's infidelity; the doctor says, "'I just heard them threshing around.'" To this sexual euphemism Nick does not know quite how to respond. "'Were they--were they--'" The doctor insensitively comes back with "'Were they what?'" And Nick is forced into a similar euphemism: "'Were they happy?'"⁷³ Again there is an insufficiency of communication between father and son. This is in sharp contrast to the easy sexual attitudes communicated between Mr. and Mrs. Garner and their sons.

But Dr. Adams is conscious of not being able to communicate easily and fully with Nick. He leaves to permit Nick to

vent his emotions; when the doctor re-enters the room sometime later, he tries to compensate for not letting Nick talk out his problem by plying the boy with more pie. William Aiken asserts that Nick is the tenth Indian and that Dr. Adams is serving as bartender for his son who is working out the effects of his jilting. Instead of whiskey, the doctor substitutes berry pie, and encourages him to "sleep it off."⁷⁴ The therapy is effective for Nick, yet the story leaves the reader with certain negative impressions about the father: though Dr. Adams loves and obviously wants to help his son (and does eventually), he cannot communicate easily with Nick, particularly in the matter of sex; because of their communication problem, the father has already unconsciously compelled his son to seek other communication outlets. This Nick has done in his interaction with the Garners; this family, with the free talk of multiple girl friends, has (as much as Dr. Adams' efforts) prepared Nick for recovery from his jilting.

With "Now I Lay Me" Hemingway is back to the theme of the father's lack of courage. It is bad enough to lack the courage to attempt communication with one's son, but the most cowardly action of all is to lack the courage to stand up to a domineering wife. The father, just returned from the hunt, in this story does not address a single remark to his wife, nor does he look at her. Instead, he instructs Nick to help him retrieve his damaged collections from the fire. Symbolically, the father is aligning the son with him against the mother, as is further

evidenced when young Nick, at his father's request, carries his dad's gun and game bags, obvious masculine symbols both, into the house. While Dr. Adams does fight back against his wife in retrieving the Indian collections and returning them to the house, Nick is aware that his father's action is not assertively masculine.

Frederick Henry has a father in A Farewell to Arms, but unlike Hemingway's other male parent figures, the man is a step-father. Frederick does not maintain contact with his family except for very infrequent post cards and the sight drafts which he receives from them. When Catherine asks Frederick, "Don't you care anything about them?" Frederick responds, "I did but we quarreled so much it wore itself out." Then he adds, "Let's not talk about them or I'll start to worry about them."⁷⁵ The step-father reference draws on folk and literary allusions which often designate step-parents as inferior to natural ones. Thus, the father is again placed at a certain emotional distance from his son as in "Soldier's Home." A step-father, a family quarrel, and broken communication indicate a warped family relationship. Yet Frederick's worrying whenever he has to think about his parents indicates that familial ties have not been completely destroyed. Indeed, when Frederick grows a beard while he and Catherine await the birth of their child, Hemingway makes his hero, in one respect, resemble his own doctor-father, who always wore a beard.⁷⁶ In subtle, almost unnoticed ways the Hemingway father-son relationship makes itself known in this novel.

The short story "Fathers and Sons" is the richest source for Dr. Hemingway's portrait and also shows most clearly Ernest's love-hate feelings for his father; the feelings are woven back and forth like a rich fabric in the story. Nick finds much to praise about his father. The finest lyric passages of the story concern Nick's deep appreciation of his father for having introduced him to hunting and fishing (and an awareness of nature), which have ever since been Nick's passion:

His father came back to him in the fall of the year, or in the early spring when there had been jacksnipe on the prairie, or when he saw shocks of corn, or when he saw a lake, or if he ever saw a horse and buggy, or when he saw, or heard, wild geese, or in a duck blind; remembering the time an eagle dropped through the whirling snow to strike a canvas-covered decoy, rising, his wings beating, the talons caught in the canvas. His father was with him, suddenly, in deserted orchards and in new-plowed fields, in thickets, on small hills, or when going through dead grass, whenever splitting wood or hauling water, by grist mills, cider mills and dams and always with open fires.⁷⁷

Nick approvingly recalls his father's physical description: "When he first thought about him it was always the eyes. The big frame, the quick movements, the wide shoulders, the hooked, hawk nose, the beard that covered the weak chin, you never thought about--it was always the eyes. . . . set deep as though a special protection had been devised for some very valuable instrument. . . . they were the great gift his father had."⁷⁸ Nick also recalls the "frost in his beard in cold weather and in hot weather he sweated very much. He liked to work in the sun on the farm because he did not have to and he loved manual work" ⁷⁹

The father in this story is greatly loved by his son; twice Nick states it in his reverie. But the love for his father is darkened by shadows. " . . . Nick had loved him very much and for a long time. Now, knowing how it had all been, even remembering the earliest times before things had gone badly was not good remembering."⁸⁰ Later Nick states, "After he was fifteen he had shared nothing with him." Soon Nick reiterates his love but partially negates it at the same time: "Nick loved his father but hated the smell of him" ⁸¹

There are many indictments against the father in "Fathers and Sons." The doctor was very nervous and sentimental; " . . . like most sentimental people, he was both cruel and abused. Also, he had much bad luck, and it was not all of it his own. . . . they had all betrayed him in their various ways before he died. All sentimental people are betrayed so many times."⁸² But Nick/Ernest is not specific enough for the reader to fix blame: who are "they"? what were the various means of betrayal? and what was the doctor's "bad luck"?

As in two previous stories, the doctor in "Fathers and Sons" is unsound in his sexual attitudes and unable to communicate adequately with his son. Here, the father speaks to his son of sexual matters on only two occasions and then, desiring to protect his son, imparts insufficient or negative information. Nick as a result misunderstands, and the father's evasions and inadequate advice leave Nick for a while with sexual misapprehensions. Nick the adult, looking back on his father's sexual advice,

has determined that no sexual advice is really necessary; each man learns for himself. Nick turned to the Indians for his sex education; he acquired it on his own with an Indian girl. As in "Ten Indians" and "The Three Day Blow," the father is too inhibited or fearful to communicate on topics of importance to his son, so the son turns to other sources for what he must learn. The father cannot be trusted as a father. For all the piercing vision of his eyes, the father lacks emotional insight into his own son.

The father, then, has a negative impact on his son in "Fathers and Sons." The son objectifies his feelings for his father by hating the smell of his parent. Nick's being repelled by the imagined odor and his removing a suit of his father's outgrown underwear and hiding it in the creek are a symbolic rejection of what the son dislikes about his father. The underwear, because of its proximity to the sexual organs, also objectifies the father's unhealthy sexual attitudes which Nick wishes to cast off. But the father's severe anger at Nick's purposely losing the underwear results in Nick's strong wish to murder his father; the son sits in the woodshed door aiming at his father with the gun that his father gave him. Nick eventually loses the anger but feels strong impulses of sick guilt for wishing death on his father. The reader is aware that Nick is working through his feelings of personal guilt which are associated with his father and his manner of death. Hovey rightly observes that when the son's wish to kill his father "goes so

far that the son actually has a readied murder weapon in his hand, we gain a little more insight as to why the father's suicide, as fulfillment of an old obscure wish, might induce greater guilt than was normal."⁸³

"Fathers and Sons," then, is Hemingway's fullest expression so far of his feelings for his father. In it the father's portrait is more balanced than it has been heretofore, but there is also more probing into the father's negative qualities and their effect on his son. These negative qualities are generally the same ones which have been illustrated in earlier stories.

Hemingway's final consideration of his father is in For Whom the Bell Tolls. No longer content merely to show the situation and to allow the reader to form his own conclusions, Hemingway now sets out to evaluate his father from an adult point of view. The personal guilt of "Fathers and Sons" is laid aside to enable him to see clearly and to be as unrelentingly harsh as necessary.

Robert Jordan, speaking of politics with Maria and Pilar, says his father was a Republican though he is now dead. When asked how he died, Jordan says, "'He shot himself.'" "'To avoid being tortured?'" asks Pilar. Jordan responds affirmatively, repeating Pilar's question in statement form. At least, Maria asserts, Jordan's father had the good fortune to have a weapon. "'Yes. It was pretty lucky,'" Robert Jordan said. "'Should we talk about something else?'"⁸⁴

Jordan's father's suicide is still bothering him. The reader gauges the extent of the concern better than Jordan's listeners can. It is obvious that Jordan uses the word "lucky" ironically, but Pilar and Maria could not know this. As in A Farewell to Arms the protagonist seeks to change the subject when the family problem strikes too close.

Much later Jordan speaks of the Civil War pistol which belonged to his grandfather--the same gun his father used to commit suicide. But there is yet no mention of the father's reasons for committing suicide. However, Jordan mentions in precise detail how the gun was returned to him by the coroner and how he, Jordan, took the pistol into the Montana high country and dropped it into a deep mountain lake. Jordan, who was accompanied by a companion on the trip, cuts off his friend's conversation about the disposal of the gun: "'I know why you did that with the old gun, Bob,' Chub said. 'Well, then we don't have to talk about it,' he had said."⁸⁵

Jordan realizes that if he ever meets his grandfather after death, both of them "would be acutely embarrassed by the presence of his father. Anyone has a right to do it, he thought. But it isn't a good thing to do. I understand it but I do not approve of it. . . . But you do understand it? Sure, I understand it but. Yes, but. You have to be awfully occupied with yourself to do a thing like that."⁸⁶ Jordan, about to perform in war, thinks of his father's suicide in terms of his own needs: the son must learn something (how to face danger prop-

erly) which his father never possessed to teach him. "I'll never forget how sick it made me the first time I knew he was a cobarde. Go on, say it in English. Coward . . . He wasn't any son of a bitch, though. He was just a coward and that was the worse luck any man could have. Because if he wasn't a coward he would have stood up to that woman and not let her bully him. . . . Maybe the bully in her helped to supply what was missing in the other." Jordan concludes: "He understood his father and he forgave him everything and he pitied him but he was ashamed of him."⁸⁷

Jordan restates the reasons for which the Hemingway hero has criticized his male parent in earlier stories. His father cannot be trusted to pass on knowledge or behavior patterns which are vitally necessary to the son. The father had no war experience and thus could not help his son understand real courage; to make matters worse, committing suicide bespeaks a lack of stoic endurance and courage to go on despite all obstacles. And most degraded of all is the man whose wife bullies him. The diction Jordan uses in speaking of his parents is indicative of his alienation. The father is mostly referred to as "he" and the mother is "that woman"; in neither case does Jordan really wish to dignify them by referring to them as "mother" or "father." Particularly emphatic is the use of the phrase "the other" to refer to his father. The effect is to turn the male parent into a neutered non-entity that must be placed at an emotional distance. The father in no way merits his son's respect

or admiration. He understands him, he forgives him, he pities him--but he is ashamed of his father.

On one other occasion in For Whom the Bell Tolls Jordan remembers his father in detail. When young Jordan went away to school for the first time, his father embarrassed him by his behavior. The son had been afraid to leave home but did not want anyone to know it. As the son boarded the train,

his father had kissed him good-bye and said, 'May the Lord watch between thee and me while we are absent one from the other.' His father had been a very religious man and he had said it simply and sincerely. But his moustache had been moist and his eyes were damp with emotion and Robert Jordan had been so embarrassed by all of it, the damp religious sound of the prayer, and by his father kissing him good-bye, that he had felt suddenly so much older than his father and sorry for him that he could hardly bear it.⁸⁸

The father's sentimental emotionalism is a sign of effeminate weakness to the son who carefully hides his own fear. The son's stoicism, he believes, gives him the right to feel older and superior to his father. Though young Jordan recognizes the sincerity of his parent's feeling, he cannot excuse it or forget it. Nor can he accept such behavior for himself.

When the wounded Jordan is alone covering the retreat of the guerrillas, he is tempted by the thought of suicide. "I don't want to do that business my father did. I will do it all right but I'd much prefer not to have to. I'm against that. Don't think about that. Don't think at all."⁸⁹ The thought recurs as the pain mounts and he fears capture and torture. But he rejects his father's way of death in favor of "one thing

well done. . . ."90 Jordan must define courage for himself; his father has not been a suitable example for the son to emulate.

Ernest Hemingway's portrait of his father, then, is much more complicated than the one he drew of his mother. The greater number of fictional representations coupled with the relatively greater complexity of the father's portrait clearly show how interested Ernest was in the father-son relationship. Overall, Ernest regarded his father with a high degree of ambiguity; he could see much that was positive, but was deeply disturbed by what he considered harmful attitudes or qualities in his father. Ernest was sensitive to what an ideal father-son relationship could be; this is evidenced in his pictures of the Garner family ("Ten Indians") and of Bill and his father ("The Three Day Blow"). And Ernest was also aware that he and his father had love and affection for each other ("My Old Man," "Indian Camp," "Ten Indians," "Fathers and Sons"). He recognized too the father's sincerity and religiosity (For Whom the Bell Tolls, "The Three Day Blow"). Ernest, moreover, was deeply grateful for his father's inciting in him his great passion for hunting, fishing, and nature ("The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," "Now I Lay Me," "Fathers and Sons").

But Ernest found it very difficult to forgive his father for the qualities which tore the father-son relationship asunder and forced the son to learn on his own what the father should have taught. The dominant quality Ernest felt that his father lacked is courage; it is at bottom of every criticism he offers.

The father is morally rigid, hyper-sensitive and emotional; he does not know the proper way to show masculine courage. He cannot or will not demonstrate courageous domination over his wife nor can he communicate with frankness to his son. Then, too, the father does not have any war experiences, and for Ernest war is the most ancient and honorable proving ground for masculine courage. The father, then, is essentially an unfit model for his young son; thus, the father-son relationship breaks down, leaving the son with a feeling of utter loneliness.

Hemingway's treatment of his father, unlike his portraits of his mother, does show a shift over a period of some seventeen years. Most of the short stories are told from the child's or youth's point of view. Only three accounts ("Soldier's Home," "Father's and Sons," and For Whom the Bell Tolls) are related from the viewpoint of the experienced adult. They make a clear, overt effort to judge the father. The first story shows the son judging and then escaping from his father's influence; the second shows Nick's mature effort to evaluate his father because of the questions his own young son asks (and Nick ironically reveals the same parental faults he ascribes to his father). But it is only in the novel that the protagonist can really bring himself to say he understands and forgives; and with this account Ernest ceases to write autobiographically about his father's relationship to him.

Though the picture of the father is less one-sided than that of the mother, Ernest does not really present his father with fairness, as the biographical evidence demonstrates.

The doctor was, indeed, a Christian who took Christian morality very seriously. Marcelline recounts that when her father was a boy, he and his brothers "caught a farmer's red cow and milked it without permission. Then, lest we children consider this the right thing to do, Daddy always hastened to add that in later years he took care of that same farmer's children when they were sick and that he did not charge the family for his services; so in his own mind he had more than paid back what he owed for the cow's milk he had appropriated."⁹¹ When the father had to discipline his children, Marcelline further notes, "Always after punishment we were told to kneel down and ask God to forgive us."⁹² His views on moral issues were, as Marcelline states, mostly black and white with very little gray in between. Social dancing, card playing, and gambling were wrong. Smoking was disapproved and drinking alcoholic beverages was both forbidden and looked upon with scorn.

Ernest protests his father's lack of emotional restraint in the recollection of Jordan's leaving home for school in For Whom the Bell Tolls. The incident, according to Baker, actually happened when Ernest left home the fall after his high school graduation to go to work on the Kansas City Star.⁹³ The father's response to the departure of his eldest son is understandable yet Ernest in remembering it, placed a disproportionate emphasis on it in his novel. However, research does not reveal any other particularly sentimental outbursts on the father's part.

The case against Dr. Hemingway as a dominated husband has already been made in the section on the mother. But a few

additional remarks by his daughter and youngest son are relevant here. Marcelline believed that her father disliked making family decisions and permitted Grace to take over part of this responsibility and to prepare him for requests from the children. She seemed to have at least tacit approval from him to exert her authority. Another explanation for the doctor's apparent domination by his wife is offered by Leicester. "Father had a horror of physical violence. When only a boy he was once chased into his own kitchen and brutally beaten by a bully right in front of his mother. Grandmother Hemingway would not allow him to strike back, so strictly did she hold to the Biblical admonition about turning the other cheek."⁹⁴ Here the doctor had been strongly influenced by a woman--in this case, his own mother.

On the matter of inadequate communication between father and son, particularly regarding sex, there is little biographical evidence. Baker in his biography of Hemingway simply speculates on this point: "If his fictional account of his father can be trusted, he did not find their discussions of sex highly illuminating." Baker then goes on to quote the discussion in "Fathers and Sons."⁹⁵ But the father's fictional reluctance to discuss sex is given some support by an angry letter the doctor later wrote his son after the publication of In Our Time. According to Marcelline his father "told him that no gentleman spoke of venereal disease outside a doctor's office."⁹⁶ The father's ideas on the discussion of sex were clearly Victorian.

Regarding the father's lack of war experience, Marcelline reports, "My father would mention . . . how he himself had longed

to serve in the Spanish-American War, but because he was married and the first baby had just arrived, he did not get a chance to be active in the Army Medical Corps as he had hoped."⁹⁷ Yet Ernest/Jordan in For Whom the Bell Tolls clearly associates his father's marital cowardice with his lack of war service and suicide. He does not establish direct cause-effect relationships, but the definite implication is that all three are illustrative of a basic lack of courage. Ernest is not really telling the entire truth in his novel about the reasons for his father's lack of war service.

Neither does he tell us enough about his father's suicide to permit us to judge whether it was a cowardly death. The reader is expected to accept the doctor's cowardice and see its negative impact on Jordan. Such dramatic expediency works for the novel in helping increase Jordan's heroic value, but it does not do justice to Dr. Hemingway.

Marcelline's account of the circumstances surrounding her father's suicide is the fullest. During the summer of 1928 the family noticed changes in the doctor; though he kept up his full schedule, he was not taking care of himself. "He knew he was suffering from angina pectoris, a devastatingly painful form of heart disease, but he ignored the medical advice of his fellow physicians and Mother's urging that he rest." There were personality changes: " . . . my father changed from his high-strung, active, determined, cheerful self . . . to an irritable, suspicious person. He was quick to take offense, almost unable

to let himself believe in the honesty of other people's motives." Leicester was especially important to the doctor. He had an "almost possessive love" for Leicester. "In the last months of 1928, Daddy wanted Les with him all the time." The boy often rode in the car with his father on house calls. But soon even that stopped. "The angina attacks began hitting Dad more frequently. . . . We learned the reason he would not take anyone with him in the car was because he was afraid he might not be able to control it if an attack should come while he was driving." Also a large payment was due December first on some Florida property acquired three years earlier. Lack of ready cash and illness aggravated his worry. He asked advice of his brother George, a bank director and realtor. George said the investment was largely worthless and most of it should be sold. "But my father could not face making decisions just then. He talked it all over with Mother." She was agreeable to whatever her husband decided. "Dad thought about it, but his illness confused his thinking. He'd neglected his necessary diet restrictions [having earlier developed diabetes]." "On the morning of December 6, Daddy awoke with a pain in his foot. . . . gangrene of the feet often accompanied neglected cases of diabetes." He mentioned the pain to Grace and promised to have someone check him at the hospital. He came home at lunch and said he would lie down until called to eat. Upstairs there was a shot. "There in his room, Dad had solved all his problems."⁹⁸

Joseph Baker, the doctor's Michigan friend, recalled the elder Hemingway's remarks on pain and suicide: " . . . he always

hated to see his patients suffer and he said he'd never do the same. Once when we were riding around the lake in their boat, the doctor said, 'A sane person doesn't commit suicide.'"⁹⁹ In his own words, then, the doctor revealed the lengths to which he would have to be driven to commit suicide.

The central feature of Ernest's reaction to his father's manner of death was his concern for what other people would think. Leicester notes that his father

had been a deacon of the Church, knew intimate details of the lives of many of the parishioners, and in the narrow-minded hypocritical view of many local residents, had disgraced himself pretty thoroughly by committing suicide. Emotional illness was very little understood even thirty years ago. Ernest took me aside and pointed out some of the realities, and his own interpretation, as soon as he had the chance.

'At the funeral, I want no crying. . . . There will be some others who will weep, and let them. But not in our family. We're here to honor him for the kind of life he lived, and the people he taught and helped. And, if you will, really pray as hard as you can, to help get his soul out of purgatory. There are plenty of heathens around here who should be ashamed of themselves. They think it's all over, and what they don't seem to be able to understand is that things go right on from here . . .'¹⁰⁰

But Marcelline reports that Ernest was able to view their father's death with filial understanding: " . . . Dad was too sick to think about anything," said Ernest. . . . He was too sick to know what he was doing. If he'd only told me how worried he was, I could have borrowed some money to help him!"¹⁰¹

But Ernest does not report all this in his fictional statements because it did not serve dramatic purpose to do so. Yet, the half-truths and fictionalized incidents which cannot

be supported biographically harm the reality of Dr. Hemingway's personality. The doctor took his life because physical illness and financial problems exerted unbearable emotional pressures upon him. It is difficult to judge whether rational considerations of cowardice or courage had any bearing upon his situation.

Ernest does admit some good qualities in his father. The fictional accounts of the sincere love and affection between father and son are supported by biographical evidence. According to Leicester, "Father was Ernest's most serious backer all during his life. Ernest learned everything he could from him in the early years and loved him deeply."¹⁰² After Ernest's estrangement from his parents over their stern reaction to In Our Time, Ernest's wife Hadley gradually healed the rift with kindness. " . . . Father wrote and asked to see more of Ernest's work. Ernest's reply . . . was a calmly logical statement of his literary aims. He very much wanted Father's understanding and approval, but he had gained enough maturity to keep his emotions under control." Ernest maintained that in all his fiction he was trying "to get the feeling of actual life across--not just to depict it or criticize it. He hoped that when any one read his work he would actually experience the thing." Ernest felt that to be honest he must include both the good and the ugly. "When Father saw some of his work that he didn't like, Ernest asked him to remember that he was sincere and was working toward a definite goal."¹⁰³ At least Ernest did what he could to stay on happier terms with his father.

When his parents visited Ernest in the spring of 1928 in Key West, Marcelline reports, "This meeting with Ernest meant much to our parents, especially to Dad, for he had missed Ernie during the estrangement which followed his separation from Hadley and his marriage to Pauline."¹⁰⁴ After his father's suicide, Ernest wrote to Max Perkins at Scribner's that what made him feel worse about the whole affair (the doctor's suicide) was that his father was the one he really cared about.¹⁰⁵

"Fathers and Sons" shows clearly that Ernest's greatest love for his father is expressed in terms of their mutual passion for nature, hunting, and fishing. Biographical accounts verify the father's passion for the outdoor life. According to Marcelline, the doctor got his love of nature from his mother who had specialized in botany and astronomy in college.

As a boy, Daddy often spent his free hours after school delving into old Indian Mounds. . . . He hunted for arrowheads, clay bowls, spear heads and other remnants of Indian life for his growing collection of Indian artifacts. . . . he had a remarkable collection of flints which he showed to us when we were children. He could make fire with the flints as the Indians had done.

He still found time to look for many of the wild plants both edible and medicinal which he pointed out to us years later when he took us on hikes along the river . . .¹⁰⁶

Leicester reports that his father spent one summer with the Sioux Indians of South Dakota, where he absorbed nature lore and gained a great admiration for Indian ways.¹⁰⁷

Ernest's earliest years were filled with much nature learning from his father. Ernest fished with his father be-

ginning at age three; before he went to school he knew the pictures and Latin names of many of the birds of North America.¹⁰⁸ Dr. Hemingway also taught his son the rudiments of taxidermy; his father taught this art to the Agassiz Society, of which he was local branch founder.¹⁰⁹ And with his fine eyes the doctor was able to outshoot the local Indians in Michigan. Ernest himself said, "My father . . . was a beautiful shot, the fastest I have ever seen."¹¹⁰ "Besides the summer vacations together," says Leicester, "the two went hunting every fall when the game season opened. Our father had an extensive gun collection and regarded guns with tremendous respect, having been nearly blinded when a rifle exploded in his face during [a] surveying summer in the Great Smokies."¹¹¹

There was regular Sunday target practice for the whole family at the lake. Every child practiced, working up to being allowed to hold and shoot "Daddy's gun." This gun training resulted in Ernest's being a good wing shot by the time he was ten years old.¹¹² Marcelline reports extensively on the family's sportsmanship training. Clearly, precision and "doing things the right way" came to Ernest through his father. "'Accidents don't happen to people who know how to handle guns,' he told us over and over. 'Treat a gun like a friend. Keep it clean. Oil it, clean it after every use, but always remember, it's an enemy if it's carelessly used.'"¹¹³ The doctor was very firm about marksmanship. "'Don't you ever let me catch you closing your eyes as you shoot. A marksman can be a murderer in a split

second if he's not in control of his weapon. It takes judgment to shoot. It takes kindness to kill cleanly, and it takes a wise man never to shoot more than he can use to eat.'" On this last point Dr. Hemingway was unyielding. Once when Ernest and a friend brought home a porcupine they had shot, the doctor insisted they consume it. Hours of cooking did not affect the "shoe-leather" flesh. But the boys ate it and never shot another porcupine.¹¹⁴ Though the doctor provided a good example for his son, Ernest on occasion didn't measure up. After Ernest's first marriage he was to turn over one of his guns to his father in return for his father's payment of the honeymooner's milk and grocery bill. Leicester reports,

There were short bitter exclamations. He [Dr. Hemingway] turned to me in a lesson teaching mood. 'Look at this.' He held up the barrel of the dismantled rifle. 'This is the gun I taught Ernest to take care of properly. He let something get into the bore and then tried to shoot it out. . . . Now it will have to be completely rebored. Medals for military valor, but he ruins a good weapon like this.'¹¹⁵

Ernest, though able to admit some fine qualities in his father, does not really touch in his fiction on the wide-ranging excellence of his father's personality. For example, it was his father who taught him the stoic's way to bear pain when Ernest suffered a serious throat injury as a young boy. Leicester reports,

Ernest's throat was tender for some time after the accident. Our father told him to concentrate on whistling when he felt like crying as a way to take his mind off the pain. And whistling became Ernest's stoic reaction to pain from that time on. A picture of the wounded hero taken in an Italian hospital during World War I shows him whistling through clenched teeth.¹¹⁶

Dr. Hemingway had schooled himself to endure pain, too. "He had great courage, not only where moral issues were concerned but in enduring physical pain," says Marcelline. On one occasion during a fishing trip the doctor developed blood poisoning in the left arm from a fishhook. All palliative measures failed and the doctor had to operate on himself to drain the infection; he instructed his hunting companions to restrain him and hold his arm still for the ordeal. One day longer and the doctor might have lost the arm.¹¹⁷

The doctor was a highly sensitive person. As Marcelline asserts, "From the time he was a small boy, my father's emotions were touched by the need of any wounded animal." By the time he was in high school he realized helping people rather than animals should be his aim.¹¹⁸ Joseph Bacon's recollection of the doctor's sensitivity to his patients' suffering is significant. It is understandable that a man so finely attuned to the disposition of others should have a tendency to sentimentality as Ernest asserts. Yet such is far preferable to emotional callousness.

Dr. Hemingway's sensitivity and Christian morality combined into one great quality which is central to virtually his entire life: an intense, selfless generosity. He was, like his wife, a person of many talents. It is easy to cite many instances in which these talents were directed toward others. His talent for design was evident in the invention of steel forceps for delicate spinal surgery. He also developed an effective

cough syrup. Both items he refused to patent, believing they should be available to all for the welfare of mankind.¹¹⁹

Many other generous impulses were manifested by the doctor. His nature lore he passed on through speeches to boys clubs; he taught a Sunday School class for young men at his church. The doctor performed much charitable medical work in Oak Park and surrounding communities. While he took care of his parents and other relatives without charge, he also sent no bills to patients in strained financial circumstances. For many years he took care of two widows and their children; in return, the widows used to do the Hemingway family laundry. He performed plastic surgery on several babies born with facial deformities. In one case, he constructed a nose for a baby born without one, though the family was too poor to be able to afford the operation. With other doctors he gave his services on a monthly rotating basis to an Oak Park orphanage.¹²⁰ In Michigan he practiced among the poverty-stricken Ojibway Indians as is revealed in "Indian Camp."¹²¹

"Father's conscientious desire to do what was right and to serve where he was needed," writes Marcelline, "made it impossible for him to neglect home duties just as later it was impossible for him to turn down anyone who needed him professionally no matter how tired he was."¹²² Fatherhood was a serious occupation. When the doctor and his wife had the big family cottage at the lake built, the doctor designed the large fireplace which heated the entire house and even sank a well

right in the kitchen for his family's convenience.¹²³ Marcelline reports that when her father was free of his medical duties, he liked to be with his family. He liked physical activity and resented anyone taking time to rest or pursue quiet mental activities. Besides the hunting and fishing trips, there were museum-browsing expeditions, or the doctor would take the children one or two at a time in the buggy on house calls. The children saw their father often since he held his office hours in their house after lunch and in the early evening. He usually lunched at home with the rest of the family.¹²⁴

At Walloon Lake he taught the children to swim at an early age; there were also life-saving drills. He and the children raised a flock of ducks and some pigs each summer.¹²⁵ Leicester says,

During these "vacations" his time was largely filled with cooking, shopping, seeing that the laundry got done, and the children were clean at mealtimes, no matter what they looked like between meals. Even breakfast was a formal affair in that it required proper clothing, dignified manners, and food that was correctly served. Maintaining this decorum in a houseful of growing, headstrong Hemingways would have finished a lesser man than father.¹²⁶

But Marcelline seems to deny Leicester's picture of a professional man shackled to an apron. She states that her father did the marketing while out on calls to his shop-keeper patients. He would give the cook directions about meals, though Grace usually arranged the menus. But here he often countermanded her menu orders, bringing home something he liked and announcing to the cook, "'It's for lunch.'" He liked to

pretend to be saving Grace domestic trouble and worry but "actually he enjoyed running things in the kitchen end."¹²⁷ The doctor liked to preserve and can foods and felt great pride when his family admired and ate his canned goods.¹²⁸

He had strong beliefs regarding the way his children should be raised and did not turn these responsibilities over to his wife. Marcelline asserts that she and Ernest were called to their father's office for punishment.¹²⁹ There was physical punishment but no cruelty. "Sometimes," says Marcelline, "the change from being gay to being stern was so abrupt that we were not prepared for the shock that came, when one minute . . . we would be laughing and talking, and a minute or so later--because of something we had said or done, or some neglected duty of ours he suddenly thought about--we would be ordered to our rooms and perhaps made to go without supper."¹³⁰ The Protestant ethic is evident in Leicester's humorous assertion, "Our father had been raised frugally. He believed the path to hell was paved with easy money, so he transferred cash into the hands of his offspring by assigning definite tasks at low, pre-fixed rates." If the children felt they needed more money, they were free to take outside jobs.¹³¹ Marcelline says he liked initiative in the children no matter what activity they were engaged in.¹³²

One must not overlook the doctor's unanimity with Grace in their responses to Ernest. There was definite parental cooperation. "Our parents," says Leicester of Ernest's post-war return to the family nest, "had harbored definite hopes that his

fling at soldiering had taught him a lesson, that now he would suddenly show a keen interest in some 'sensible' way of life."¹³³ Leicester also reveals the degree of his father's commitment to his family in the extensive correspondence he shows regarding Ernest's falling out with his family. "At first," says Leicester, "Father was cautious in reacting to mother's complaints." But a two-week stay at the lake had made the doctor even more "baffled by Ernest's refusal to settle down and frightened to think of where further independent behavior might lead." Back in Oak Park the doctor wrote Ernest to get a job to cut down the family's burden of providing for him. To Grace, the doctor advised, "'Keep up your courage, my darling. We are all at work and very soon he will settle down'" After Grace's dismissal letter the doctor wrote her, "'I am greatly relieved to know Ernest has at last gone, and trust he will stay away and now you can get what you so much need this summer.'" He also stated, "'Ernest's last letter to me . . . does not require an answer. It was written in anger and was filled with expressions that were untrue to a gentleman and a son who has had everything done for him. We have done too much. He must get busy and make his own way, and suffering alone will be the means of softening his Iron Heart of selfishness'" When Grace finally sent her husband a copy of her dismissal letter to Ernest, the doctor responded, "'That is a masterpiece. I will always prize it as the right conception of the mother's part of the game of Family life. Keep up your courage, my darling, as I know you will re-

cover from this summer's shocks. It is a long session of the family's existence, and we must be brave.'"¹³⁴ All these statements stand as proof of the father's strong authority in the family. Ernest could only have resented having to deal more with his mother than with his frequently absent father during that difficult summer.

Like Grace, the doctor later maintained his interest in his son's personal affairs and in the developing art of his writing. Baker observes regarding the father's reception of In Our Time, "The good doctor could not entirely conceal his belief that the book was somewhat lacking in spiritual uplift. 'Trust you will see and describe more of humanity of a different character in future volumes,' he wrote. 'The brutal you have surely shown the world. Look for the joyous, uplifting, and optimistic and spiritual in character. . . . Remember God holds us each responsible to do our best. . . .'"¹³⁵ And compared to Grace's reaction to The Sun Also Rises, the doctor maintained a more satisfactory equilibrium. He sent Ernest a copy of the Literary Digest Book Review and underscored an editorial which said there was a strong public reaction to the 'sex novel' and the 'highbrow realistic novel.' "But the doctor remained loyal to his son despite his own preference for 'healthier' forms of literature, merely expressing the hope that Ernest's future books would deal with a somewhat higher level of subject matter."¹³⁶ Ernest, though sorry for his father's disapproval of his subject matter, no doubt appreciated his loyalty (as his remark to Max Perkins after his father's death would indicate).

Though the maturing son abandoned hope that his father could serve as a suitable model, in the earlier years of his boyhood Ernest showed some signs of wanting to follow in his father's footsteps. Marcelline remarks that Ernest at about nine years of age planned on being a doctor, to his father's obvious pleasure. The doctor let him help in the office or go along when he treated Indians on the lake; one of the latter occasions involved a patient with a gunshot wound. Ernest even got to observe an operation at the hospital where his father was head of obstetrics. "Ernest was interested but he sat down when he felt faint and he did not go again."¹³⁷ No one knows when or precisely why Ernest ceased to value his father as an example to emulate since Ernest himself is far from specific. But he says in "Fathers and Sons" that Nick did not share anything with his father after he was fifteen. And the fictional indictment of his father sharply focuses on his father's lack of masculine courage.

In such a conflictive situation, Hemingway's paternal grandfather provided a much-needed external point of reference. Between grandfather and grandson there was a mutual regard; the strongest link was their common interest in war and its attendant experiences.

On the eve of his dangerous guerrilla mission in For Whom the Bell Tolls, Robert Jordan's thoughts center on his grandfather: "I wish grandfather were here instead of me. . . . I'd like to be able to talk to him and get his advice. Hell, if I

didn't get advice I'd just like to talk to him. It's a shame there is such a jump in time between ones like us." For Jordan, his grandfather personifies the trait he now desperately needs: courage to overcome his fear and to perform his duties well. The grandfather's Civil War service earned him a worthy reputation, and Jordan knows their shared war experiences would give them a deep sense of camaraderie. Jordan begins to feel he may be a worthy successor to his grandfather: "maybe he sent me what little I have through that other one that misused the gun. Maybe that is the only communication that we have. . . . I wish . . . I could have learned from him what the other one never had to teach me. . . . maybe the good juice only came through straight again after passing through that one?"¹³⁸

In real life the relationship between Ernest and his grandfather was quite close. Grandfather Hemingway, Leicester mentions, gave Ernest his first shotgun for his eleventh birthday; the single-barreled twenty-gauge weapon was for birds and small animals and it "cemented the fondness between our grandfather and Ernest. . . ." ¹³⁹ As a boy, Ernest loved to listen to Grandfather's fascinating yarns about the Civil War. Ernest was recalling all he had heard about those exploits when he wrote Marcelline of his intense determination to enlist: "I can't let a show like this go on without getting in on it. There hasn't been a real war to go to since Grandfather's shooting at the Battle of Bull Run."¹⁴⁰

For Ernest military combat was a test of manhood for which there was no parallel in his father's life. Ernest loved his father while never really approving of him. And the fiction shows he was basically no more fair in the fictional treatment of his father than he was regarding his mother, despite his awareness of more complex reactions to his male parent. Ernest frequently tried to use his father's suicide as a measure of Dr. Hemingway's manhood. In the end, the son ironically saw suicide as a measure of his own courage as he came to see how much alike he and his father truly were.

Hemingway's fictional treatment of his parents serves as proof of the difficulty and complexity of performing the writer's job of telling the truth. His "truth" about his parents as they are portrayed in his fiction is, to a reader acquainted with the biographical facts, but a half truth. As a writer of fiction, Hemingway is not obligated, of course, to use all or any of the facts pertaining to his parents. But he is a self-confessed "autobiographical" writer, and he does assign to his fictional hero parents who are clearly recognizable as his own. In the case of Hemingway, it is difficult to dismiss completely the distorted portraits of his mother and father as literary license or literary invention. Perhaps his decision not to write down the whole truth is explained by his literary technique, in which a writer "may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those

things as strongly as though the writer had stated them."¹⁴¹ Or perhaps--and this is more likely the case--Hemingway's sense of personal values, emphasizing freedom and courage, blinded him to the whole truth about his parents.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Ernest Hemingway, ed. Men at War (New York, 1942), p. xv.
- ²Hemingway: The Writer as Artist, 3rd ed. (Princeton, 1963), p. 48.
- ³Carlos Baker, Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story (New York, 1969), pp. 267-268.
- ⁴The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1953), p. 491.
- ⁵The Best Times (New York, 1966), p. 210.
- ⁶Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York, 1940), p. 338.
- ⁷The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 151.
- ⁸Hemingway: The Inward Terrain (Seattle, 1968), pp. 41-42.
- ⁹The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, pp. 365-366.
- ¹⁰Hemingway: The Inward Terrain, pp. 50-52.
- ¹¹Leicester Hemingway, My Brother, Ernest Hemingway (Cleveland, 1962), p. 21.
- ¹²Marcelline Hemingway Sanford, At the Hemingways (Boston, 1962), p. 55.
- ¹³My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 42.
- ¹⁴Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 8.
- ¹⁵At the Hemingways, pp. 61-62.
- ¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 62.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 141-143.
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 198.
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 204-206.
- ²⁰My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 62.
- ²¹*Ibid.*, p. 63.
- ²²*Ibid.*, p. 69.

- ²³Hemingway in Michigan (New York, 1966), pp. 173-174.
- ²⁴Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 71.
- ²⁵At the Hemingways, p. 204.
- ²⁶Hemingway in Michigan, pp. 84-85.
- ²⁷Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 72.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 73.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 180.
- ³⁰At the Hemingways, p. 27.
- ³¹Ibid., p. 195.
- ³²Ibid., pp. 57-60.
- ³³Ibid., pp. 53-54.
- ³⁴Ibid., p. 63.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 196.
- ³⁶Ibid., p. 160.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 194.
- ³⁸Ibid., p. 197.
- ³⁹Ibid., p. 103.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 112.
- ⁴¹Ibid., pp. 65-67.
- ⁴²Ibid., pp. 103-104.
- ⁴³Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 9.
- ⁴⁴Death in the Afternoon (New York, 1932), pp. 56-57.
- ⁴⁵At the Hemingways, pp. 112-113.
- ⁴⁶My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 31.
- ⁴⁷Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 349.
- ⁴⁸At the Hemingways, p. 239.

- ⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 235-238.
- ⁵⁰The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 366.
- ⁵¹Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 180.
- ⁵²Ibid., pp. 188-189.
- ⁵³Ibid., p. 234.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 344, 387.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., p. 635.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., p. 452.
- ⁵⁷Ibid., p. 474.
- ⁵⁸Ibid., p. 493.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., p. 568.
- ⁶⁰Ibid., p. 200.
- ⁶¹At the Hemingways, pp. 235-236.
- ⁶²Hovey remarks in Hemingway: The Inward Terrain (p. 22) on the short story "The Mother of a Queen." The subject matter is a son's rejection of his mother; the story sheds some light on Ernest's pointed financial support of his mother despite his antagonism toward her. Hovey remarks that the homosexual bullfighter had killed his mother in his own heart long ago. "Unconscious rejection of his mother had . . . twisted and deadened his heart." Thus, the bullfighter's homosexuality is an objectification of abnormal responses in other directions--toward his mother, other people, and money. Ernest wished to forestall any criticism of his treatment of his mother by making sure she was financially comfortable.
- ⁶³The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 194.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 199-200.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 92.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., p. 95.
- ⁶⁷"Hemingway's 'The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife,'" The Explicator, 25 (Sept., 1966), Item 1.
- ⁶⁸Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration, (1966; rpt. New York, 1966), p. 33.

- ⁶⁹Hemingway: The Inward Terrain, p. 39.
- ⁷⁰Ibid., p. 37.
- ⁷¹The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 120.
- ⁷²Ibid., p. 151.
- ⁷³Ibid., p. 335.
- ⁷⁴"Hemingway's 'Ten Indians,'" The Explicator, 28 (Dec., 1969), Item 31.
- ⁷⁵A Farewell to Arms (New York, 1929), p. 314.
- ⁷⁶Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 2.
- ⁷⁷The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 496.
- ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 489.
- ⁷⁹Ibid., p. 496.
- ⁸⁰Ibid., p. 491.
- ⁸¹Ibid., p. 496.
- ⁸²Ibid., pp. 489-490.
- ⁸³Hemingway: The Inward Terrain, p. 47.
- ⁸⁴For Whom the Bell Tolls, pp. 66-67.
- ⁸⁵Ibid., p. 337.
- ⁸⁶Ibid., p. 338.
- ⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 338-340.
- ⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 405-406.
- ⁸⁹Ibid., p. 469.
- ⁹⁰Ibid., p. 470.
- ⁹¹At the Hemingways, pp. 22-23.
- ⁹²Ibid., p. 31.
- ⁹³Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 31.
- ⁹⁴My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 29.

- ⁹⁵Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 26.
- ⁹⁶At the Hemingways, p. 219.
- ⁹⁷Ibid., p. 158.
- ⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 228-232.
- ⁹⁹Hemingway in Michigan, p. 83.
- ¹⁰⁰My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 111.
- ¹⁰¹At the Hemingways, p. 234. Concerning Ernest's offering money to his father, there is some disagreement in Marcelline's and Leicester's accounts. Leicester writes (in My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 99) that Dr. Hemingway asked for financial aid from Ernest who responded immediately with a check to cover the note on the Florida property. "When Ernest reached the house [after his father's suicide] he found his letter had arrived. It lay unopened, with others, on top of Father's white painted bedside table. It had reached the house that very morning, and could only have been carried upstairs, and placed there by the man to whom it was addressed, and who must have been dazed and bewildered . . . beyond any close touch with reality."
- ¹⁰²My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 37.
- ¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 92-93.
- ¹⁰⁴At the Hemingways, p. 227.
- ¹⁰⁵Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 199.
- ¹⁰⁶At the Hemingways, p. 21.
- ¹⁰⁷My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 20.
- ¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 24.
- ¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 20.
- ¹¹⁰Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 14.
- ¹¹¹My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 37.
- ¹¹²Ibid., p. 33.
- ¹¹³At the Hemingways, p. 79.
- ¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 81.

- ¹¹⁵My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 75.
- ¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 26.
- ¹¹⁷At the Hemingways, pp. 41-42.
- ¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 23.
- ¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 29-30.
- ¹²⁰Ibid., p. 30.
- ¹²¹Ibid., p. 70.
- ¹²²Ibid., p. 23.
- ¹²³My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 23.
- ¹²⁴At the Hemingways, pp. 27, 38, 119.
- ¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 75-76.
- ¹²⁶My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 42.
- ¹²⁷At the Hemingways, p. 131.
- ¹²⁸Ibid., pp. 37-38.
- ¹²⁹Ibid., p. 3.
- ¹³⁰Ibid., p. 31.
- ¹³¹My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 41.
- ¹³²At the Hemingways, p. 34.
- ¹³³My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 56.
- ¹³⁴Ibid., pp. 63-67.
- ¹³⁵Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story, p. 160.
- ¹³⁶Ibid., p. 180.
- ¹³⁷At the Hemingways, p. 134.
- ¹³⁸Ibid., p. 338.
- ¹³⁹My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 33.

¹⁴⁰At the Hemingways, p. 157. Marcelline adds (p. 157), "That Grandfather Hemingway served at Vicksburg and didn't happen to have been in the Battle of Bull Run did not affect Ernie's point at all."

¹⁴¹Death in the Afternoon, p. 192.

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HEMINGWAY AND HIS PARENTS:
THE RELATIONSHIP IN FICTION AND IN REAL LIFE

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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Ernest Hemingway in his "autobiographical" fiction portrayed his parents as largely negative personalities. Both in life and in fiction, Hemingway saw his mother as a domineering, intruding, sly woman who failed to understand him as a son. Toward his father he was somewhat more ambivalent; the son acknowledged some fine qualities in his father, but could never forgive him for his supposed lack of courage. However, the fictional portraits only partly reflect reality since Hemingway felt threatened by his mother's dominating personality and shamed by his father's "cowardice." This study discusses the nature of Hemingway's relationship to his parents by examining their fictional portraits and, through the use of biographical and critical materials, by evaluating the degree of "truth" captured in each parent's portrait. Each parent is considered separately with the writing pertaining to each treated in order of publication so that shifts in Hemingway's attitudes or emphases may be noted. Biographical evidence proves that Grace Hall Hemingway could indeed be a shrewd, domineering wife and mother, but the evidence also shows the more positive qualities that her writer-son de-emphasized or entirely ignored: her considerable musical talent, unconventionality, generosity, creativity, and devotion to her family. Yet Ernest was invariably critical of her in his fiction and his real-life attitudes. Nor was Ernest able to attain a satisfactory relationship with his father, Dr. Clarence E. Hemingway. Although grateful to his father for instilling in him the love for hunting and the outdoors, he felt

his father lacked manliness in dealing with his dominating wife and in communicating meaningfully with his son; more important, Hemingway never got over the shame of his father's suicide, which he believed was a cowardly act.

Ernest's fiction shows his criticism of his father while ignoring most of the father's other good qualities: his sensitivity to the needs of others, selfless generosity with his time and talents, and devotion to his family. It is only with the last fictional account of his father in For Whom the Bell Tolls that Hemingway was able to say that he understood, forgave, and pitied his father, yet he still felt the shame. Since Ernest did not wish to emulate his father, he turned to his paternal grandfather for the much-needed masculine model. Between grandfather and grandson there was in real life and in fiction a mutual regard; the strongest link was their common interest in war and its attendant experiences as a test of masculine courage. Hemingway's fictional portraits of his parents, then, are but half truths. His own personal values--emphasizing freedom and courage--probably blinded him to the whole truth about his parents.