**A Farewell to Arms**

SOME INFO ON ERNEST HEMINGWAY

The first son of Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, a doctor, and Grace Hall Hemingway, Ernest Miller Hemingway was born in a suburb of Chicago. He was educated in the public schools and began to write in high school, where he was active and outstanding, but the parts of his boyhood that mattered most were summers spent with his family on Walloon Lake in upper Michigan. On graduation from high school in 1917, impatient for a less sheltered environment, he did not enter college but went to Kansas City, where he was employed as a reporter for the Star. He was repeatedly rejected for military service because of a defective eye, but he managed to enter World War I as an ambulance driver for the American Red Cross. On July 8, 1918, not yet 19 years old, he was injured on the Austro-Italian front at Fossalta di Piave. Decorated for heroism and hospitalized in Milan, he fell in love with a Red Cross nurse, Agnes von Kurowsky, who declined to marry him. These were experiences he was never to forget.

After recuperating at home, Hemingway renewed his efforts at writing, for a while worked at odd jobs in Chicago, and sailed for France as a foreign correspondent for the Toronto Star. Advised and encouraged by other American writers in Paris--F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound--he began to see his nonjournalistic work appear in print there, and in 1923 his first important book, a collection of stories called In Our Time, was published in New York City. In 1926 he published The Sun Also Rises, a novel with which he scored his first solid success. A pessimistic but sparkling book, it deals with a group of aimless expatriates in France and Spain--members of the postwar "lost generation," a phrase that Hemingway scorned while making it famous. This work also introduced him to the limelight, which he both craved and resented for the rest of his life. Hemingway's The Torrents of Spring, a parody of the American writer Sherwood Anderson's book Dark Laughter, also appeared in 1926.The writing of books occupied him for most of the postwar years. He remained based in Paris, but he traveled widely for the skiing, bullfighting, fishing, or hunting that by then had become part of his life and formed the background for much of his writing. His position as a master of short fiction had been advanced by Men Without Women in 1927 and thoroughly established with the stories in Winner Take Nothing in 1933.

Among his finest stories are "The Killers," "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." At least in the public view, however, the novel A Farewell to Arms (1929) overshadowed such works. Reaching back to his experience as a young soldier in Italy, Hemingway developed a grim but lyrical novel of great power, fusing love story with war story. While serving with the Italian ambulance service during World War I, the American lieutenant Frederic Henry falls in love with the English nurse Catherine Barkley, who tends him during his recuperation after being wounded. She becomes pregnant by him, but he must return to his post. Henry deserts during the Italians' disastrous retreat after the Battle of Caporetto, and the reunited couple flee Italy by crossing the border into Switzerland. There, however, Catherine and her baby die during childbirth, leaving Henry desolate at the loss of the great love of his life.

Hemingway's love of Spain and his passion for bullfighting resulted in Death in the Afternoon (1932), a learned study of a spectacle he saw more as tragic ceremony than as sport. Similarly, a safari he took in 1933-34 in the big-game region of Tanganyika resulted in The Green Hills of Africa (1935), an account of big-game hunting. Mostly for the fishing, he bought a house in Key West, Florida, and bought his own fishing boat. A minor novel of 1937 called To Have and Have Not is about a Caribbean desperado and is set against a background of lower-class violence and upper-class decadence in Key West during the Great Depression.By now Spain was in the midst of civil war. Still deeply attached to that country, Hemingway made four trips there, once more a correspondent. He raised money for the Republicans in their struggle against the Nationalists under General Francisco Franco, and he wrote a play called The Fifth Column (1938), which is set in besieged Madrid. As in many of his books, the protagonist of the play is based on the author. Following his last visit to the Spanish war he purchased Finca Vigia ("Lookout Farm"), an unpretentious estate outside Havana, Cuba, and went to cover another war--the Japanese invasion of China.

The harvest of Hemingway's considerable experience of Spain in war and peace was the novel For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940), a substantial and impressive work that some critics consider his finest novel, in preference to A Farewell to Arms. It was also the most successful of all his books as measured in sales. Set during the Spanish Civil War, it tells of Robert Jordan, an American volunteer who is sent to join a guerrilla band behind the Nationalist lines in the Guadarrama Mountains. Most of the novel concerns Jordan's relations with the varied personalities of the band, including the girl Maria, with whom he falls in love. Through dialogue, flashbacks, and stories, Hemingway offers telling and vivid profiles of the Spanish character and unsparingly depicts the cruelty and inhumanity stirred up by the civil war. Jordan's mission is to blow up a strategic bridge near Segovia in order to aid a coming Republican attack, which he realizes is doomed to fail. In an atmosphere of impending disaster, he blows up the bridge but is wounded and makes his retreating comrades leave him behind, where he prepares a last-minute resistance to his Nationalist pursuers.All of his life Hemingway was fascinated by war--in A Farewell to Arms he focused on its pointlessness, in For Whom the Bell Tolls on the comradeship it creates--and as World War II progressed he made his way to London as a journalist. He flew several missions with the Royal Air Force and crossed the English Channel with American troops on D-Day (June 6, 1944).

Attaching himself to the 22nd Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division, he saw a good deal of action in Normandy and in the Battle of the Bulge. He also participated in the liberation of Paris and, although ostensibly a journalist, he impressed professional soldiers not only as a man of courage in battle but also as a real expert in military matters, guerrilla activities, and intelligence collection.Following the war in Europe, Hemingway returned to his home in Cuba and began to work seriously again. He also traveled widely, and on a trip to Africa he was injured in a plane crash. Soon after (in 1953), he received the Pulitzer Prize in fiction for The Old Man and the Sea (1952), a short, heroic novel about an old Cuban fisherman who, after an extended struggle, hooks and boats a giant marlin only to have it eaten by voracious sharks during the long voyage home.

This book, which played a role in gaining for Hemingway the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954, was as enthusiastically praised as his previous novel, Across the River and into the Trees (1950), the story of a professional army officer who dies while on leave in Venice, had been damned.By 1960 Fidel Castro's revolution had driven Hemingway from Cuba. He settled in Ketchum, Idaho, and tried to lead his life and do his work as before. For a while he succeeded, but, anxiety-ridden and depressed, he was twice hospitalized at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, where he received electroshock treatments. Two days after his return to the house in Ketchum, he took his life with a shotgun. Hemingway had married four times and fathered three sons.He left behind a substantial amount of manuscript, some which has been published. A Moveable Feast, an entertaining memoir of his years in Paris (1921-26) before he was famous, was issued in 1964. Islands in the Stream, three closely related novellas growing directly out of his peacetime memories of the Caribbean island of Bimini, of Havana during World War II, and of searching for U-boats off Cuba, appeared in 1970.Hemingway's characters plainly embody his own values and view of life.

The main characters of The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, and For Whom the Bell Tolls are young men whose strength and self-confidence nevertheless coexist with a sensitivity that leaves them deeply scarred by their wartime experiences. War was for Hemingway a potent symbol of the world, which he viewed as complex, filled with moral ambiguities, and offering almost unavoidable pain, hurt, and destruction. To survive in such a world, and perhaps emerge victorious, one must conduct oneself with honour, courage, endurance, and dignity, a set of principles known as "the Hemingway code."

To behave well in the lonely, losing battle with life is to show "grace under pressure" and constitutes in itself a kind of victory, a theme clearly established in The Old Man and the Sea.Hemingway's prose style was probably the most widely imitated of any in the 20th century. He wished to strip his own use of language of inessentials, ridding it of all traces of verbosity, embellishment, and sentimentality. In striving to be as objective and honest as possible, Hemingway hit upon the device of describing a series of actions using short, simple sentences from which all comment or emotional rhetoric have been eliminated. These sentences are composed largely of nouns and verbs, have few adjectives and adverbs, and rely on repetition and rhythm for much of their effect. The resulting terse, concentrated prose is concrete and unemotional yet is often resonant and capable of conveying great irony through understatement. Hemingway's use of dialogue was similarly fresh, simple, and natural-sounding. The influence of this style was felt worldwide wherever novels were written, particularly from the 1930s through the '50s.A consummately contradictory man, Hemingway achieved a fame surpassed by few, if any, American authors of the 20th century. The virile nature of his writing, which attempted to re-create the exact physical sensations he experienced in wartime, big-game hunting, and bullfighting, in fact masked an aesthetic sensibility of great delicacy. He was a celebrity long before he reached middle age, but his popularity continues to be validated by serious critical opinion.

Context

Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, in the summer of 1899. As a young man, he left home to become a newspaper writer in Kansas City. Early in 1918, he joined the Italian Red Cross and became an ambulance driver in Italy, serving in the battlefield in the First World War, in which the Italians allied with the British, the French, and the Americans, against Germany and Austria-Hungary. In Italy, he observed the carnage and the brutality of the Great War firsthand. On July 8, 1918, a trench mortar shell struck him while he crouched beyond the front lines with three Italian soldiers.

Though Hemingway embellished the story of his wounding over the years, this much is certain: he was transferred to a hospital in Milan, where he fell in love with a Red Cross nurse named Agnes von Kurowsky. Scholars are divided over Agnes' role in Hemingway's life and writing, but there is little doubt that his affair with her provided the background for A Farewell to Arms, which many critics consider to be Hemingway's greatest novel.

Published in 1929, A Farewell to Arms tells the story of Frederic Henry, a young American ambulance driver and first lieutenant ("Tenente") in the Italian army. Hit in the leg by a trench mortar shell in the fighting between Italy and Austria-Hungary, Henry is transferred to a hospital in Milan, where he falls in love with an English Red Cross nurse named Catherine Barkley. The similarities to Hemingway's own life are obvious.

After the war, when he had published several novels and become a famous writer, Hemingway claimed that the account of Henry's wounding in A Farewell to Arms was the most accurate version of his own wounding he had ever written. Hemingway's life certainly gave the novel a trenchant urgency, and its similarity to his own experience no doubt helped him refine the terse, realistic, descriptive style for which he became famous, and which made him one of the most influential American writers of the twentieth century.

SUMMARY

Book I, Chapters 1-6

Frederic Henry begins his story by describing his situation: he is an American in the Italian army near the front with Austria-Hungary, a mile from the fighting. Every day he sees troops marching and hears gunfire; often the King rides through the town. A cholera epidemic has spread through the army, he says, but only seven thousand die of it.

His unit moves to a town in Gorizia, further from the fighting, which continues in the mountains beyond. His situation is relatively enjoyable; the town is not badly damaged, with nice cafes and two brothels--one for the officers and one for the enlisted men. One day Henry sits in the mess hall with a group of fellow officers taunting the military priest. A captain accuses the priest of cavorting with women, and the priest blushes; though he is not religious, Henry treats the priest kindly. After teasing the priest, the Italians argue over where Henry should take his leave; because the winter is approaching, the fighting will ease, and Henry, an ambulance driver, will be able to spend some time away from the front. The priest encourages him to visit the cold, clear country of Abruzzo, but the other men have other suggestions.

When he returns from his leave, Henry discusses his trip with his roommate, the surgeon Rinaldi. Henry claims to have traveled throughout Italy, and Rinaldi, who is obsessed with beautiful girls, tells him about a group of new English women and claims to be in love with a Miss Barkley. Henry loans him fifty lire (Italian money). At dinner that night, the priest is hurt that Henry failed to visit Abruzzi. Henry feels guilty, and tells him that he wanted to visit Abruzzi.

The next morning, Henry examines the gun batteries and quizzes the mechanics; then he travels to visit Miss Barkley and the English nurses with Rinaldi. He is immediately struck by Miss Barkley's beauty, and especially by her long blonde hair. Miss Barkley tells Henry that her fiancee was killed in the battle of the Somme, and Henry tells her he has never loved anyone. On the way back, Rinaldi observes that Miss Barkley liked Henry more than she liked Rinaldi, but that her friend, Helen Ferguson, was nice too.

The next day, Henry calls on Miss Barkley again. The head nurse expresses surprise that an American would want to join the Italian army, and tells him that Miss Barkley is gone-- but says that Henry may come back to see her at seven o'clock that night. Henry drives back along the trenches, eats dinner, then returns to see Miss Barkley. He finds her waiting with Helen Ferguson; Helen excuses herself, and Henry tries to put his arm around her. She refuses, but allows him to kiss her. Then she begins to cry, and Henry is annoyed. When Henry goes home, Rinaldi is amused.

Three nights later, Henry sees Miss Barkley again; she tells him to call her Catherine. They walk through the garden, and Henry tells Catherine he loves her, though he knows he does not. They kiss again, and he thinks of their relationship as an elaborate game. To his surprise, she suddenly tells him that he plays the game very well, but that it is a rotten game. Henry sees Rinaldi later that evening, and Rinaldi, observing Henry's romantic confusion, feel glad that he did not become involved with a British nurse.

Book I, Chapters 7-12

Driving back from his post, Henry picks up a soldier with a hernia; they discuss the War, and Henry arranges a way to get the man to a hospital. Henry thinks about the War, and realizes that he feels no danger from it. At dinner that night, the men drink and tease the priest; Henry nearly forgets he had promised to go see Catherine, and before he rushes over, Rinaldi gives him some coffee to sober him up. At the nurses' villa, Helen Ferguson tells Henry that Catherine is sick and will not see him. Henry feels guilty and surprisingly lonely.

The next day an attack is scheduled. Henry goes to see Catherine, and she gives him a Saint Anthony medal. He spends the day driving to the spot where the fighting will take place.Henry and his men wait in the trenches as the shelling begins. They are hungry, and Henry risks being shot to fetch some cheese. As he sits down to eat it, he hears a loud noise and sees a flash and believes he has died. A trench mortar shell has struck him in the leg. Wounded men fall all around him.

Henry's surviving men carry him to safety; a British doctor treats him on the field, then sends him in an ambulance to the field hospital. Henry lies in intense pain. Rinaldi comes to visit him at the field hospital, and tells Henry that he will get a medal. Henry shows no interest in medals. Rinaldi leaves him a bottle of cognac and promises to send Miss Barkley to see him soon.

At dusk, the priest comes to visit. They discuss the war, then God. Henry tells the priest he does not love God--he says he does not love anything much. The priest tells him he will find love, and it will make him happy. Henry claims to have always been happy, but the priest says Henry will know another kind of happiness when he finds it. Half delirious, Henry thinks about Italian towns, then falls asleep.

Rinaldi and a Major from their group come to visit Henry the night before he moves to a better hospital in Milan. Henry is still half-delirious, and they drink profusely. After a confused conversation, Henry falls into a drunken sleep. The next day, he is taken on a train to Milan.

Book II, Chapters 13-17

At Milan, Frederic Henry is taken to the American hospital. A young, pretty nurse named Miss Gage makes his bed and takes his temperature. The head nurse, Miss Van Campen, irritates Henry by not allowing him to have wine. Henry pays some Italians to sneak wine into his room with the evening papers.

In the morning, Miss Gage tells Henry that Miss Barkley has come to work at the hospital--she claims not to like her, but Henry tells her she will learn to like her. The porter brings a barber to shave Henry, but the barber mistakes Henry for an Austrian soldier and threatens to cut his throat. After the barber and the porter leave, Miss Barkley comes in, and Henry realizes he is in love with her. He pulls her down into the bed with him, and they make love for the first time.

Henry goes through a round of doctors who remove some of the shrapnel from his leg. The doctors seem incompetent, and tell Henry he will have to wait six months for an operation if he wants to keep his leg. He cannot stand the thought of spending six months in bed, and asks for another opinion; the house doctor says he will send for Dr. Valentini. When Dr. Valentini comes, he is cheerful, energetic, and competent and says he will perform the operation in the morning.Catherine spends the night in Henry's room, and they see a bat. Catherine prepares him for the operation, and warns him not to talk about their affair while under the anaesthetic.

After the operation, Henry is very sick. As he recovers, three other patients come to the hospital--a boy from Georgia with malaria, a boy from New York with malaria and jaundice, and a boy who tried to unscrew the fuse cap from an explosive shell for a souvenir. Henry develops an appreciation for Helen Ferguson, who helps him pass notes to Catherine while she is on duty. Catherine continues to stay with Henry every night, but Henry and Miss Gage finally convince her to take three nights off of night duty--Miss Van Campen has commented that Henry always sleeps till noon.

Book II, Chapters 18-24

That summer Henry learns to walk on crutches, and he and Catherine enjoy Milan. They befriend the headwaiter at a restaurant called the Gran Italia, and Catherine continues to see Henry every night. They discuss marriage, but Catherine remains opposed to the idea for the time being. They pretend to be married instead. Catherine tells Henry that her love for him has become her religion.

When not with Catherine, Henry spends time with a soldier named Ettore Moretti, an Italian from San Francisco who is very proud of his war medals. Ettore is extremely boastful about his military prowess, and Catherine finds him annoying and dull. One night Henry and Catherine lie in bed listening to the rain, and Catherine asks Henry if he will always love her. She says she is afraid of the rain, and begins to cry.

Henry and Catherine go to the races with Helen Ferguson, whom Henry now calls "Fergie," and the boy who tried to unscrew the nose cap on the shrapnel shell. They bet on a horse backed by a racing expert and former criminal named Mr. Myers; they win, but Catherine feels dissatisfied, so they pick a horse for the next race on their own. Even though they lose, Catherine feels much better.

By September, Henry's leg is nearly healed. He receives some leave time from the hospital, and Catherine tells him she will arrange to go with him. She then gives him a piece of startling news: she is six months pregnant. Catherine worries that Henry feels trapped, and promises not to make trouble for him, but he tells her he feels cheerful and thinks she is wonderful. Catherine talks about the obstacles they will face, and mentions the old quote about how the coward dies a thousand deaths, the brave but one. She says that, in reality, the brave man dies perhaps two thousand deaths in his imagination--he simply does not mention them.

The next morning it begins to rain, and Henry is diagnosed with jaundice. Miss Van Campen finds empty liquor bottles in Henry's room, and accuses him of producing jaundice through alcoholism to avoid being sent back to the front. Miss Gage helps Henry clear things up, but in the end he loses his leave time.

Henry prepares to travel back to the front. He buys a new pistol, and takes Catherine to a hotel. The hotel makes Catherine feel like a prostitute, but before the night is over they feel at home there. Before midnight, they walk downstairs and Henry calls a carriage for Catherine. They have a brief good-bye, and Henry boards the crowded train that will take him back to the war.

Book III, Chapters 25-28

After returning to Gorizia, Henry has a talk with the major about the war--it was a bad year, the major says; Henry was lucky to get hit when he did. Henry then goes to find Rinaldi; while he waits for his friend, he thinks about Catherine. Rinaldi comes into the room and is glad to see Henry; concerned, he examines Henry's wounded knee. He says that he has become a skilled surgeon from the constant work with the wounded, but now that the fighting has died down temporarily he has a frustrating lack of work. They talk about Catherine, and at dinner the officers tease the priest.

After dinner, Henry goes to talk with the priest. The priest thinks the war will end soon, but Henry remains skeptical. After the priest leaves, Henry goes to sleep; he wakes when Rinaldi comes back, but quickly falls asleep again.

The next morning, he travels to the Bainsizza area, and sees the damage caused by the war: the whole village is destroyed. Henry meets a man named Gino, and they discuss the fighting. Gino says the summer's losses were not in vain, and Henry falls silent--he says words like those embarrass him. He says that the names of villages and the numbers of streets have more meaning than words like sacred and glorious.That night, the rain comes down hard, and the Croatians begin a bombardment. In the morning, the Italians learn that the attacking forces include Germans, and they become very afraid--they have had little contact with the Germans in the war so far, and prefer to keep it that way. The next night, the Italian line has been broken, and the Italian forces begin a large-scale retreat.

As the forces slowly move out, Henry returns to the villa, but finds it empty; Rinaldi is gone with the hospital. Henry finds the drivers under his command, including Piani, Bonello, and Aymo. Before leaving in the morning, Henry gets a good night's sleep.

They drive out slowly through the town, in an endless line of soldiers and vehicles. Henry takes a turn sleeping, and shortly after he wakes, the column stalls. He finds that Bonello has given two engineer sergeants a ride, and Aymo has two girls in his car. Exhausted, Henry falls asleep again, and dreams of Catherine.That night, columns of peasants join the retreating army. In the early morning Henry and his men stop briefly at a farmhouse, eating a large breakfast. Soon, they continue slowly on their way, rejoining the line of trucks and soldiers.

Book III, Chapters 29-32

Aymo's car gets stuck in the soft ground; the men are forced to cut brush hurriedly to place under the tires for traction. Henry orders the two engineer sergeants riding with Bonello to help; afraid of being overtaken by the enemy, they refuse, and try to leave. Henry draws his gun and shoots one of them, but the other escapes. Bonello takes Henry's pistol and kills the wounded sergeant.

They begin to cut branches and twigs; in the end, they are unable to save the car. Henry gives some money to the two girls travelling with Aymo and encourages them to go down to a nearby village, Aymo gets in Henry's vehicle, and they set out, now cut off from the main column.

Crossing a bridge, Henry sees a nearby car full of German soldiers. As they travel, they begin to notice more and more signs of German occupation, and they worry that they have been completely cut off from Italian-controlled land. They proceed with caution; a sudden burst of gunfire kills Aymo. They realize he was shot by the Italian rear guard--the Italians are ahead, but because the rear guard is afraid, they are almost as dangerous as the Germans.

Fearing death, Bonello leaves in hopes of being taken prisoner. The men hide in a barn that night, and in the morning they rejoin the Italians. The enlisted men become furious with the officers, and Piani is afraid they will try to kill Henry. Suddenly, two men (battle police) seize hold of Henry. They seize Henry because he is a foreigner, and in the chaos of the retreat they intend to shoot him for a spy. When they look away for a moment, Henry dives into the river and swims away.

After floating in the river for what seems like a very long time, Henry climbs out, removes the stars from his shirt, and counts his money. He crosses the Venetian plain that day, then jumps aboard a military train that evening, hiding under a canvas with guns.

Lying under the canvas, Henry thinks about the army, about the war, and about Catherine. He realizes that he will be pronounced dead, and assumes he will never see Rinaldi again. Rinaldi has been concerned he will die of syphilis, and Henry worries for him. Exhausted and hungry, he imagines finding Catherine and going away with her to a safe place.

Book V, Chapters 38-41

That fall, Henry and Catherine live in a brown wooden house on the side of a mountain. They enjoy the company of Mr. and Mrs. Guttingen, who live downstairs, and they remain very happy together; sometimes they walk down the mountain path in Montreux. One day Catherine gets her hair done in Montreux, and afterwards they go to have a beer--Catherine thinks beer is good for the baby, because it will keep it small; she is worried about the baby's size because the doctor has said she has a narrow pelvis. They talk again about getting married, but Catherine wants to wait until after the baby is born when she will be thin again.

Three days before Christmas, the snow comes. Catherine asks Henry if he feels restless, and he says no, though he does wonder about his friends on the front, such as Rinaldi and the priest.

Henry decides to grow a beard and by mid-January, he has one. Through January and February he and Catherine remain very happy; in March they move into town to be near the hospital. They stay in a hotel there for three weeks; Catherine buys baby clothes, Henry works out in the gym, and they both feel that the baby will arrive soon.

Finally, around three o'clock one morning, Catherine goes into labor. They go to the hospital, where Catherine is given a nightgown and a room. She encourages Henry to go out for breakfast, and he does, talking to the old man who serves him. When he returns to the hospital, he finds that Catherine has been taken to the delivery room. He goes in to see her; the doctor stands by, and Catherine takes an anaesthetic gas when her contractions become very painful. At two o'clock in the afternoon, Henry goes out for lunch.

He goes back to the hospital; Catherine is now intoxicated from the gas. The doctor thinks her pelvis is too narrow to allow the baby to pass through, and advises a Caesarian section. Catherine suffers unbearable pain and pleads for more gas. Finally they wheel her out on a stretcher to perform the operation. Henry watches the rain outside.

Soon the doctor comes out and takes Henry to see the baby, a boy. Henry has no feeling for the child. He then goes to see Catherine, and at first worries that she is dead. When she asks him about their son, he tells her he was fine, and the nurse gives him a quizzical look. Ushering him outside, the nurse tells him that the boy is not fine--he strangled on the umbilical cord, and never began to breathe.

He goes out for dinner, and when he returns the nurse tells him that Catherine is hemorrhaging. He is filled with terror that she will die. When he is allowed to see her, she tells him she will die, and asks him not to say the same things to other girls. Henry goes into the hallway while they try to treat Catherine, but nothing works; finally, he goes back into the room and stays with her until she dies.

The doctor offers to drive him back to the hotel, but Henry declines. He goes back into the room and tries to say good-bye to Catherine, but says that it was like saying good-bye to a statue. He leaves the hospital and walks back to his hotel in the rain

CHARACTERS’ PROFILE

Frederic Henry - The novel's protagonist. A young American ambulance driver in the Italian army during the First World War, Henry is disciplined and courageous, but feels detached from life. When introduced to Catherine Barkley, Henry discovers a capacity for love he had not known he possessed, and begins a process of development that culminates with his desertion of the Italian army. Throughout the novel, the Italian soldiers under Henry's command call him "Tenente"--the Italian word for "lieutenant."

Catherine Barkley - An English nurse who falls in love with Frederic Henry. Catherine's fiancee was killed in the battle of the Somme before she met Henry. Catherine has cast aside conventional social values, and lives according to her own values, devoting herself wholly to her love for Henry. Her long, beautiful hair is her most distinctive physical feature.

Rinaldi - Frederic's friend, an Italian surgeon. Mischievous and wry, Rinaldi is nevertheless a passionate and skilled doctor. Rinaldi makes a practice of always being in love with a beautiful woman, and at the beginning of the novel is attracted to Catherine Barkley; Rinaldi's infatuation causes him to introduce Frederic and Catherine to one another.

Helen Ferguson - A friend of Catherine's. Though she remains fond of the lovers and helps them, Helen is much more committed to social convention than Henry and Catherine; she vocally disapproves of their "immoral" love affair.

Miss Gage - An American nurse. Miss Gage becomes a friend to both Catherine and Henry--in fact, she may be in love with Henry. Unlike Helen Ferguson, she sets aside conventional social values to support their love affair.

Miss Van Campen - The superintendent of nurses at the American hospital where Catherine works. Miss Van Campen is strict, cold, and unlikable; she is obsessed with rules and regulations and has no patience for or interest in individual feelings.

Dr. Valentini - An Italian surgeon who comes to the American hospital. Self-assured and confident, Dr. Valentini is also a highly talented surgeon. Frederic Henry takes an immediate liking to him.

Count Greffi - A spry ninety-four year old nobleman. Henry knows Count Greffi from his time in Stresa, and the two play billiards together toward the end of the novel. Despite his advanced age, the count is intelligent, disciplined, and fully committed to life.