

# FATHERS AND SONS IN THE FICTION OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

by

ROBERT CHARLES CLARK

(Under the Direction of James Nagel)

## ABSTRACT

This thesis will show that Ernest Hemingway's fictional portrayal of fathers and sons is complex and multi-layered. It is an argument against a critical tradition that has largely misread Hemingway's writing about the paternal role. In the course of my essay, I provide close readings of seven short stories, "Indian Camp," "Ten Indians," "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," "Cross-Country Snow," "Fathers and Sons," "Great News from the Mainland," "I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something," and one novel, *Islands in the Stream*.

INDEX WORDS: Ernest Hemingway, Fathers and Sons

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ROBERT CHARLES CLARK

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ROBERT CHARLES CLARK

Major Professor: James Nagel

Committee: Hubert McAlexander  
Hugh Ruppensburg

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
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DEDICATION

For my wife Heather and our two children, Samuel and Annika.

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## CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

Criticism of Ernest Hemingway's fictional representations of the relationship between fathers and sons is, to its detriment, often shaped by an overarching theory. In their collection of essays *Hemingway's Genders: Rereading the Hemingway Text*, Nancy Comley and Robert Scholes wrote that in the "larger Hemingway Text," there is evidence "indicating that to father a son is to write your own death warrant."<sup>1</sup> Counter to Comley and Scholes's conclusion, other interpretations of Hemingway's works suggest that children are the victims of their parents: when analyzing the "Nick Adams stories," many critics regard Nick as the victim of his dad's cruelty. Further complicating the issue are assessments of Hemingway's stories that use biographical information to decipher the author's intent. "Bimini," the first and perhaps best-written part of the posthumous *Islands in the Stream*, is degraded by biographer Jeffrey Meyers and reviewer Jonathan Yardley as an "idealization" and "fictions about a fiction" meant to "shore up" Hemingway's reputation.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, some scholars offered balanced interpretations of Hemingway's work that reflect a careful understanding of the texts. They have said that Hemingway's views on fatherhood, as expressed in his fiction, were neither simple nor overtly negative. For example, Robert E. Fleming wrote a measured analysis of Dr. Henry Adams, the father in the "Nick Adams stories," in which he concluded that the doctor is neither cruel nor an excellent father, but ambiguous. Fleming's essay only dealt with "Ten Indians," however; Dr. Adams is a central figure in four tales about Nick: "Indian Camp," "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," "Ten Indians," and "Fathers and Sons." When all four stories are taken into account, the portrait that emerges of Nick's father is that he is a man who is competent in some areas, such as hunting and



medicine, but lacking in sensitivity when it comes to talking to his son about important life issues such as love and sex.

Nick Adams's approach to fatherhood is not as well-defined as that of Dr. Adams. Only two stories, "Cross-Country Snow" and "Fathers and Sons," reveal his thoughts about being a parent. "Cross-Country" snow implies that Nick did not welcome the idea of having a baby at first but that eventually he accepts the role. "Fathers and Sons" takes place approximately ten years later, and Nick's son sits beside him as they drive to an unknown destination. Working through memories of his father, Nick ponders the choices he has made and how they will bear on the decisions he needs to make while raising his own son. He does not come to any firm conclusions; he has not yet come to terms with Dr. Adams's death and legacy.

The posthumous work adds another layer to Hemingway's fictional depiction of the father-son relationship. "Bimini" is about a dangerous and emotional summer Thomas Hudson, a painter, experiences with his three sons. Similar to *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway explores surrogate fatherhood: Hudson's friend, Roger Davis, and his cook, Eddy, accept responsibilities traditionally associated with the role of parent. Two late short stories, "I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something" and "Great News from the Mainland," do not share the levity and happy times depicted in "Bimini." They are tales about the dark feelings that arise when a son disappoints his father; they are unusual in that Hemingway more often wrote about fathers who fail their children.

Hemingway explored a full range of emotions related to fatherhood in the corpus of his work. His depiction of parenthood is not static or formulaic. Instead of remarking about what he "generally" thought about being a dad in order to make his work more "theorizable," it is essential to examine what he wrote and when. Paul Strong remarked that Nick Adams feels a

“complex admixture of love and anger” towards Dr. Adams in the short story “Fathers and Sons.”<sup>3</sup> Strong’s statement can appropriately be applied to Hemingway’s work in a wider context. Carefully examined, the father and son relationship depicted in Hemingway’s fiction reveals itself to be both dynamic and multi-layered.

## CHAPTER TWO

### HEMINGWAY, HIS FATHER, AND HIS SONS

Hemingway's relationship with his father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, and sons, John, Patrick, and Gregory, had significant influence on the author's fiction. Evidence about Hemingway's life suggests that he did not have a static view of his dad or his children. While his stories should not be interpreted as biography, information about Hemingway's relationship with his family offers context in terms of the action and emotional themes that come out in the work. For example, Nick Adams's passion for hunting and fishing has a parallel in Ernest's relationship with Clarence: Clarence taught Ernest to hunt and fish, and they shared a love of nature.

Clarence Hemingway was an avid outdoorsman who "greatly relished all kinds of fish and game."<sup>4</sup> He was also a skilled cook. His daughter Marcelline wrote that one of her favorite stories was about how he baked a feast for his friends while camping in the Great Smokey Mountains. He had a Victorian sensibility, a "conscientious desire to do what was right and to serve where he was needed."<sup>5</sup> These qualities contributed to his being remembered as a competent and accomplished physician:

He was an extremely busy doctor and became medical examiner for three insurance companies and the Borden Milk Company, head of the obstetrical department at the Oak Park hospital, inventor of laminectomy forceps, president of the Oak Park Physicians Club and the Des Plaines Medical Society. He delivered more than three thousand babies during his career, including his own six children. . . .<sup>6</sup>

He was not only Ernest's intellectual equal but perhaps his most influential teacher. Before he was married to Grace, he became president and leader of the Oak Park Agassiz club, devoted to the careful study of nature geared toward adolescent boys.<sup>7</sup> Ernest became involved with the group at an early age, a fact of which his mother and ostensibly his father were proud. Susan F. Beegel published some of Grace's reactions to her small son's participation:

"Ernest," according to his mother, "at 4 years 8 months. . . . Goes to the Agassiz of which he is a member and makes observations with the big Boys."<sup>8</sup> His father directed him in home nature study as well. Grace writes, "At five years old . . . he is delighted to look at specimens of rocks and insects by the hour through his microscope."<sup>9</sup>

Beegel's description of pictures taken during Agassiz outings paint a serene, ideal image of a boy enjoying time with his father: "Photos of the Agassiz Club in the field show children with their hands full of leaves and wildflowers, abandoned birds nests, collecting baskets, jars of insects and pond scum, and notebooks. Ernest glows with enjoyment."<sup>10</sup> Ernest's education in the wilderness began much earlier, however. Kenneth Lynn wrote that Clarence began to take his son on hunting and fishing trips before the boy turned three.<sup>11</sup> Summers in Michigan, spent in Windemere Cottage on Walloon Lake, seem to have provided the setting necessary for a close bond. Ernest was devoted to his father and was careful to learn from him the "proper way" to do things as a woodsman.<sup>12</sup>

In 1911, when Ernest was twelve, there are indications that the relationship between son and father began to weaken. The fifth Hemingway child, Carol, was born and Clarence determined that he would not be able to take as much time off in the summers. He is said to have taken care of most of the household chores because of Grace's aversion to "dirty diapers, sick

children, house cleaning, dishwashing, and cooking.”<sup>13</sup> In other words, a new baby meant an increase in his personal workload. The decision to take less vacation decreased his opportunities to go hunting and fishing with his twelve year-old boy. In 1910, Clarence also ceased his involvement in the Agassiz Club he organized for Ernest and Marcelline at Holmes Elementary School. An increase in labor probably contributed to Clarence’s decision in 1912 to take time off for a “rest cure.” As early as 1904, he is said to have become more “nervous,” a vague term sometimes used by his children to describe him in moments of mental strain.<sup>14</sup> Time away from the family, coupled with the approach of Ernest’s teenage years, indicate that Clarence was not coping well with the pressures of life.

It is not uncommon for parents and children to grow apart during the teenage years: it appears that Ernest and his father were no exception. Jeffrey Meyers recorded some of the statements made by Ernest’s boyhood friends about Clarence:

Bill Smith remembered that Ed [Clarence]<sup>15</sup> was “big, dark, and hairy, looked very formidable, almost forbidding. I thought he looked cruel.” Carl Edgar recalled: “He was a very arbitrary, very gruff man. He and Ernest did not get along then or at any other time and I think home was none to attractive too Ernest.” A female classmate, however, saw Ed’s [Clarence’s] gentle but shabby side: “Dr. H was a dear, but his wife never saw to it that he was well groomed any more than she did her son, and he too had a slightly seedy and unkempt air. It always seemed to explain his not being too successful as a doctor, for everyone liked him.”<sup>16</sup>

Some of these comments are difficult to reconcile with other accounts of Clarence’s personality and character. For example, Marcelline contradicted the last remark, saying he was “great stickler for cleanliness. He was particular about everything important being almost surgically

clean. Not only did this apply to his food and its preparation, but it extended to clothing and bodily care.”<sup>17</sup> Carl Edgar’s allegation about Clarence and Ernest never getting along flows in direct contrast to an abundance of other evidence. The value of these claims is that they are probably the impressions of young men and women who based their opinions on what Ernest may have said about his father during private moments.

After graduating from high school on June 13, 1917, Hemingway chose to go into journalism rather than to university. Hemingway “showed no initial interest” in joining the armed forces at the time nor was he old enough to be drafted.<sup>18</sup> Despite his disappointment in Ernest for not wanting to attend college, Clarence agreed to write to his brother Tyler, a wealthy lumberman in Kansas City, asking him to use his influence to obtain a position for Ernest at the *Kansas City Star*.<sup>19</sup> Ernest got a job and left home in October of 1917. While he was working as a reporter, Marcelline claimed that Ernest told her in a message that he was denied enlistment into the United States Army, Marines, and Navy because of a congenital condition, passed on from his mother’s side of the family, affecting the vision in his left eye.<sup>20</sup> Whether Hemingway did indeed try to join the armed forces at that time is a point of contention among biographers. Ernest indicated in a letter home to his parents that he had become a part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry, a “Home Guard” unit assembled when the National Guard unit from that area was deployed to France.<sup>21</sup> Hemingway eventually joined the American Red Cross Ambulance Corps; Marcelline said Clarence appeared proud that Ernest finally achieved his military goals.<sup>22</sup>

Ernest’s actions between the time he departed and the day he returned from service with the Red Cross in Italy are well-documented. Despite his heroic return to Oak Park, his parents became irritated with his lack of motivation during the summer of 1920. Shirking his duties at

Windemere, Clarence told his son that he and his friends were no longer welcome at the lake because of their refusal to help Grace:

Try not to be a sponger. . . . It is best for you (and Ted)<sup>23</sup> to change camps and go to new fields to conquer, it is altogether too hard on your mother to entertain you and your friends, when she is not having help and you are so hard to please and are so insulting to your dear mother. So please pack up and try elsewhere until you are again invited . . . to Windemere.

Ernest did not leave. Michael Reynolds asserted that Hemingway was waiting for his mother to act.<sup>24</sup> It is difficult to gauge what this disagreement meant about the relationship between father and son. Clarence had twice requested that Ernest move out. It is possible that Hemingway viewed this as a kind of betrayal, another instance of his father caving to the wishes of the domineering Grace. A now-famous letter written by Grace was what finally convinced Ernest it was time for him to make his exit.<sup>25</sup>

Ernest's correspondence with Clarence in the years that followed does not suggest the two had an extended quarrel. The letters sent home to Clarence between April, 1921 and November, 1923 are cordial in tone. While vacationing in Chamby-sur-Montreux in May, 1922, Ernest mailed home a beautiful description of the Swiss landscape:

Today we climbed the Cape au Moine, a very steep and dangerous climb of 7,000 feet and had a great time coasting down the snow fields coming down by simply sitting down and letting go. The fields in the lower valleys are full of narcissus and just below the snow line when we climbed the Dent du Jaman the other day we saw two big Martens. . . . I've caught several trout in the stream called Canal du Rhone up the Rhone valley. It is all fly fishing and as the trout

have been fished for for over two thousand years or so they are fairly shy. . . .

The mountain streams are still too full of melted snow and roily to be able to fish, but there is one wonderful stream called the Stockalper over across the Rhone about twelve miles above where it flows into Lake Geneva that I am very keen to fish.<sup>26</sup>

If anyone would appreciate Ernest's love of nature and the outdoors, it would most likely be his father, the man who taught him to fish for trout. In his description lies something of his boyhood enjoyment of being outside collecting leaves and abandoned bird nests. Many of the messages he sent to Oak Park during the early 1920s talk about fishing as well, usually Hemingway saying that he hopes his dad has been able to get out. Even though their relationship may have been in some way compromised by the events of the summers of 1911 and 1920, Ernest's words and sentiments reflect what the two men always had in common.

What father and son did not always share was a common literary aesthetic. Clarence and Grace ordered six copies of *in our time* when it was published and ended up sending all of them back to the Three Mountain Press. Clarence is said to have called it "filth" upon reading "Chapter X," the vignette about a young war veteran who contracts gonorrhea from a girl in the backseat of a Chicago taxicab. Grace allegedly wanted to keep one, but she was overruled by her husband.<sup>27</sup> The tone of Ernest's letters home after this incident became more defensive where his writing was concerned: "The reason I have not sent you any of my work is because you or Mother sent back the In Our Time books. That looked as though you did not want to see any." After explaining what he was after in his writing and rationalizing his depictions of things that might appear "ugly," the twenty-six-year-old author revealed that the opinion of his father still mattered: "So when you see anything of mine that you don't like remember that I'm sincere in



doing it and that I'm working toward something. If I write an ugly story that might be hateful to you or to mother the next one might be one that you like exceedingly."<sup>28</sup> But there is also something underhanded in this rationalization; Hemingway had already written stories that if read biographically were demeaning to his parents.<sup>29</sup> What sounds like a sincere request to be taken seriously as a writer could have been an attempt at damage control. Perhaps Hemingway wanted to prove that he was not a "sponger," that he did indeed have abilities that were of value out in the real world.

Hemingway had new experiences to write home about after the birth of John Hadley Nicanor Hemingway in October of 1923. The adjustment to fatherhood does not appear to have been easy for him at first. In what he termed a "gloomy letter" from Toronto, the young father told Clarence that he had missed a hunting trip with "the gang" because of his month-old boy. "Bumby," as John was nicknamed, had quite a set of lungs: "The Baby has taken to squawling and is a fine nuisance. I suppose he will yell his head off for the next two or three years. It seems his only form of entertainment."<sup>30</sup> Having played a large role in the rearing of six of his own children, Clarence could probably empathize with his son about the transitional difficulties a new dad has to face. The tone of this message home is good-natured for the most part though it ends with Ernest revealing that he felt going to Canada for the delivery was a mistake.

In the years that followed, mixed in with happy reports about the "husky and strong" Bumby playing in the Parc du Luxembourg, additional correspondence arrived that suggested the increasingly famous author of *The Sun Also Rises* still wanted his parents' approval.<sup>31</sup> In a message to his mother, he reiterated the claim that he was "sincere" in what he was writing. In a surprising show of support for a father who sent back *in our time*, Ernest told Grace that "Dad has been very loyal and while you, mother, have not been loyal at all[.] I absolutely understand

that it is because you believed you owed it to yourself to correct me in a path which seemed to you disastrous.”<sup>32</sup> These words carry in them the shadow of the letter Grace wrote to Ernest in the summer of 1920. It is also unclear whether Ernest truly felt that his father had been loyal; this statement may have been written to make Grace feel jealous toward a man she had almost always controlled. But it is more likely that Hemingway did still appreciate and respect Clarence.

Shortly after his dad killed himself, Hemingway told F. Scott Fitzgerald that “I was fond as hell of my father.”<sup>33</sup> As previous communication between Clarence and his son implies, Ernest’s father had provided him with emotional support and paternal camaraderie through the years.

When Hemingway first learned Hadley was pregnant, Gertrude Stein wrote that he did not welcome the prospect of having a new responsibility at age twenty-four:

He came to the house about ten o’clock in the morning and he stayed, he stayed for lunch, he stayed all afternoon, he stayed for dinner and he stayed until about ten o’clock at night and all of a sudden he announced that his wife was enceinte and then with great bitterness, and I, I am too young to be a father. We consoled him as best we could and sent him on his way.

Interpreted within the context of her piece on Hemingway, Stein’s insinuation is that Ernest viewed children as an obstruction to his career goals. More broadly, the underlying theme of her polemic is that Ernest was a dishonest careerist: “But what a story that of the real Hem, and one he should tell himself but alas he never will. After all, as he himself once murmured, there is the career, the career.”<sup>34</sup> This passage is not irrefutable evidence about Hemingway’s attitude toward parenthood. Stein was not writing an objective account of her relationship with Hemingway. Those who construct Hemingway’s biography from a narrow sampling of his stories suggest that Ernest never did adjust to life with children. Hemingway’s letters after John’s birth, however,

suggest that while he may have had some initial difficulties, he grew to appreciate his boy. In addition to the correspondence with Clarence, updates mailed to other friends often report on Bumby's physical and mental growth.<sup>35</sup>

Ernest had two more boys, one shortly before and another after Clarence's death. In many ways, Hemingway's three sons were fond of their father. John wrote in his memoir, *Misadventures of a Fly Fisherman: My Life With and Without Papa*, that being with Ernest as a young boy, surrounded by the elder man's "friends and admirers" in Paris, was exciting.<sup>36</sup> But Hemingway's children were also unafraid to talk about what they perceived to be his failures as a father and husband. Gregory wrote *Papa: A Personal Memoir* in 1976, and his portrayal of Ernest reveals a man who could be sensitive, overly permissive, cruel, and loving. In the opening chapter, "Death Be Not Proud," Gregory recounted the bitterness that surfaced between him and his dad after the death of Pauline Hemingway in 1951. Later in the book he wrote about how Ernest taught him to shoot and provided emotional support through the stresses of a major pigeon-shooting tournament in Havana.<sup>37</sup> John described Ernest as "excitement and unbounded enthusiasm interspersed with dark moods." His account of life with Papa contains contradictory emotions. For example, John conceded that his dad "opened up the possibilities of life" for his mother, Hadley Richardson, as a husband. But he also wrote that the divorce between she and Ernest was a "blessing."<sup>38</sup> Even though he was well-loved, Hemingway rarely maintained close relationships with people: his wives and children were no exception.

Hemingway seems to have grown into his role as a father, but he participated in the lives of his kids on his own terms. "Bimini" may very well have been an "idealization" of adventures Ernest shared with his son but it was one that had some basis in fact. In his essay "*Islands in the Stream: A Son Remembers*," Patrick refuted the idea that what was written in "Bimini" is

nothing more than an attempt by his father to alter his reputation: “*Islands in the Stream* is based to a large extent on a wonderfully exciting trip that my younger brother and I had the opportunity to make with our father, probably the last really great, good time we all had together.”<sup>39</sup> The last part of his statement is a reminder that in the years that followed, Patrick, and particularly Gregory, experienced a variety of psychological and emotional problems that put a strain on their relationship with their father.<sup>40</sup> Ernest also had physical and mental disorders such as insomnia, hypertension, and severe depression, some of which may have contributed to his decision to commit suicide in 1961.<sup>41</sup>

Gregory Hemingway wrote that the day before Ernest’s funeral was “strange.” Few people traveled to Idaho for the service, but “hundreds of telegrams of condolence came in from all over the world.” Gregory concluded that the reason for the low attendance was that “there weren’t too many really good friends left.” Hemingway’s sons were there, however, and Gregory said that it was the first time that he, John, and Patrick had been together in over two decades.<sup>42</sup> Their presence at Ernest’s service suggests that there was a strong familial bond that transcended feuds and disagreements, particularly in light of Gregory’s problems with Ernest.<sup>43</sup> Despite the barriers that can be created by failure and disappointment, the connection between parent and child is not easily severed; Hemingway’s fiction at times reflects the power of loyalty and unconditional love.

## CHAPTER 3

## FATHERS AND SONS IN THE FICTION OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

*The Young Nick Adams*

Hemingway's short stories "Indian Camp," "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," and "Ten Indians" are about Nick Adams's relationship with his father, Dr. Henry Adams.

Chronologically, they are the first three works featuring the Adams family. Nick is the central character in each. The tales track his development from boyhood to his teenage years, laying the foundation of his persona. Nick is portrayed as a loyal son whose dad, despite meaning well, allows his young child to be exposed to intense situations and concepts before Nick is able to comprehend their significance.

Hemingway's minimalist style complicates an analysis of Nick and his father. The narrator rarely delves into the minds of either character, and when he or she does, little is revealed. Dr. Adams has been characterized as both villain and loving father, and the reason for this is in part because his thought processes are rarely exposed with any depth. His actions, rather than a combination of his deeds and thoughts, are the only things by which he can be judged. In addition, the doctor's treatment of Nick has implications for the way Nick is viewed. The young boy's thoughts are more plentiful, and they reveal that he is loving and trusting. Critics have for many years used various methods to unearth whether Dr. Adams treats his son the way a responsible parent should.

Recent critical approaches to the early stories have made extensive use of excised sections of early manuscripts. Like biographical material, they do not *prove* anything about what Hemingway approved for publication. Larry Grimes offered a reading of "Indian Camp" as a "sequel" to the introductory pages Hemingway cut. Philip Young titled the lopped-off section

“Three Shots.” Grimes arrived at the rather morbid conclusion that “death, violence, cultural imperialism, and sordid morality are rubbed in Nick’s face” in “Indian Camp.”<sup>44</sup> Grimes then went into his theory about how Uncle George is the father of the squaw’s baby. Other scholars, such as Linda W. Martin, have also talked about the violence, death, and cultural hegemony in “Indian Camp” based solely on what Hemingway printed, so it is difficult to see how “Three Shots” has enhanced what was already known about Nick’s character. In his essay “Hemingway’s Dr. Adams – Saint or Sinner,” Robert E. Fleming used the alternative endings of “Ten Indians” to argue that Dr. Adams should not be viewed as cruel or as a particularly competent parent but as “ambiguous.” Again, this conclusion can be constructed without the earliest manuscripts. Fleming himself suggested that he was partially allying himself with scholars Joseph DeFalco, Sheldon Norman Grebstein, and Arthur Waldhorn in that all of them have argued that Dr. Adams’s character is in some way mired in ambiguity.<sup>45</sup>

Reviewers who wrote on *In Our Time* shortly after it was published focused more upon Hemingway’s revolutionary style and brutal themes than the relationship between Nick and Dr. Adams. Allen Tate commented extensively upon Hemingway’s sparse style, referring to it as a “precise economical method.”<sup>46</sup> In his assessment, D. H. Lawrence posited that *In Our Time* suggests that emotional bonds are restrictive: “Nothing matters. Everything happens. One wants to keep oneself loose. Avoid only one thing: getting connected up.” Lawrence said nothing of the young Nick, describing him instead as a “type one meets in the more wild and woolly regions of the United States.”<sup>47</sup> Given the controversy that developed years later, generated by depictions of Dr. Adams in “Indian Camp,” “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife,” and the “crooked” father in “My Old Man,” it is surprising that few of the early critics say much about fathers and sons. Paul Rosenfeld is a rare exception in that he briefly alluded to Nick Adams: “A lad sees his sensitive

father beset by the active brutality of men and the passive brutality of women. . . . The sheer unfeeling barbarity of life, and the elementary humor and tenderness lying close upon it, is a favorite theme.”<sup>48</sup> It is unclear what Rosenfeld was speaking about by “elementary humor”; perhaps he was thinking of the lighter moments in “The Battler.”

Philip Young attributed the relative absence of Nick Adams from the reviews to a larger problem:

One of the reasons why these stories were once not generally understood is that it is not at first apparent that they are about Nick at all; they seem to be about other people, and it simply seems to happen that Nick is around. "Indian Camp," for example, tells about a doctor, Nick's father, who delivers an Indian woman of a baby by Caesarean section, with a jackknife and without anesthetic. The woman's invalid husband lies in a bunk above his screaming wife, Nick -- a young boy -- holds a basin for his father, and four men hold the mother down until the child is successfully born. . . . The story ends (with Nick and his father rowing off from the camp) so objectively, so completely without comment, that it is easy to understand why readers failed to see that Nick is the central character in a book of short stories that is nearly a novel about him, so closely related are the seven stories in which he appears.<sup>49</sup>

As Young suggested, Hemingway offers few indications of how Nick is to be perceived. The action is focused on Dr. Adams, but the final lines are devoted to Nick's thoughts: “He felt quite sure that he would never die.”<sup>50</sup> Nick's centrality is established through Hemingway's narrative method. Carl Ficken made an observation about the Nick episodes that can be applied to much of Hemingway's short fiction: “All through the [Nick] stories the relationship between author-

narrator-character is especially close.”<sup>51</sup> While it is impossible to judge how emotionally close the author is to the narrative, the connection between Nick and the narrator is significant: of all the characters, Nick’s feelings and senses are those most often revealed. Early on, the teller establishes that he or she knows what Nick hears: “Nick heard the oarlocks of the other boat quite a way ahead of them in the mist” (p. 15). During the delivery, the rationale for why Nick turns away from the freshly delivered baby is offered: “He was looking away so as not to see what his father was doing” (p. 17). In the final moments of the story, “Nick trailed his hand in the water. It felt warm in the sharp chill of the morning” (p. 19). Perhaps the invigorating water on his fingers contributes to his assumption that he is immortal.

Nick’s thoughts and senses are helpful in constructing a detailed picture of what is known about him in “Indian Camp.” He is around ten years-old, possibly younger. His age is not explicitly stated, but he is too young to stay alone at the camp.<sup>52</sup> It is also telling that he does not ask his father where they are going: he trusts his father’s judgment to the point that he will loyally follow him into the boat before bothering him with questions. Nick does not appear frail or weak in “Indian Camp”: he ostensibly watches the incision and delivery of the baby, both of which take “a long time” (p. 17). Nick turns away while the doctor attends to the after-birth and does not pay attention while the stitches are put in. It seems that throughout the ordeal, he tries to be as helpful as possible.

Robert M. Slabey and Kenneth G. Johnston described Nick as “impressionable.”<sup>53</sup> Nick is indeed emotionally malleable, but he is only influenced by those with whom he has a personal connection. His belief that he will never die suggests that he has either not understood what happened at the camp or that what he saw did not resonate with him. Flora offered one possible explanation of why Nick seems to have missed the point of what happens in the final moments of



“Indian Camp”: “The Indian’s death, while vivid, does not touch Nick personally, nor is Nick unusual in his ability to dismiss death.”<sup>54</sup> Nick has nothing in common with those who experience pain and death in “Indian Camp,” so he does not see parallel between their experience and his. The Indian father and mother are older than he is and are part of a world Nick knows little about. The person Nick most resembles in the story is the infant: they are both boys, innocent in their youth, who have been part of a sorrowful event.

What has not been suggested is that Nick’s mental focus at the conclusion is still upon the birth he witnessed, and that is what leads him to believe in his own immortality. Nick’s first question to his father is about childbirth: “Do ladies always have such a hard time having babies?” (p. 19). This is significant because it suggests that the delivery was the most pressing thing on his mind even though chronologically the suicide is more recent. The narrator makes it clear that the Caesarean procedure “took a long time” (p. 17). Nick actively participates in it and sees the child’s emergence. Nick has not rejected the memory of the Indian father’s demise; almost all of his questions on the final page are in reference to it. He has instead formed his final judgment in accordance with the event that affects him most personally: the baby’s delivery. Influenced by the powerful image of life at its beginning, Nick believes that he himself has an infinite number of years ahead of him.

Because Nick is the central character in these stories, the actions of Dr. Adams and Uncle George should only be assessed insofar as they have any bearing on the boy’s development. It is interesting that Nick’s penultimate question to his father concerns the whereabouts of his uncle. This reflects Nick’s sensitivity to the importance of family, perhaps even a sense of camaraderie formed when individuals have shared an intense experience. George’s role in the story is limited. When Dr. Adams’s nervously remarks about the delivery being “one for the medical journal,”

George sarcastically responds, “Oh, you’re a great man, all right.” The comment does not appear to have any effect on his nephew (p. 18). The relationship between Nick and his uncle does not seem to affect Nick in a significant way.

In contrast to Uncle George, Nick’s relationship with his father is central to the boy’s development. Dr. Adams views himself as his son’s instructor: “Indian Camp” is in many ways the story of a lesson gone wrong. An early exchange between Nick and his dad indicates that the boy’s presence at the operation is intended to be educational:

“This lady is going to have a baby, Nick,” he said.

“I know,” said Nick.

“You don’t know,” said his father. “Listen to me. What she is going through is called being in labor. The baby wants to be born and she wants it to be born. All her muscles are trying to get the baby born. That is what is happening when she screams.” (p. 16)

Dr. Adams’s underlying assumption is that if Nick understands what is happening he will not be afraid. Knowledge is meant to be a means of emotional comfort.

What is naïve on Dr. Adams’s part is his hope that facts about childbirth are going to somehow make up for Nick’s lack of maturity and experience. For example, understanding the reason for the woman’s screams do not mitigate their effect on Nick: “‘Oh, Daddy, can’t you give her something to make her stop screaming?’ Nick asked.” Dr. Adams perhaps assumes that Nick can mentally shut out the mother’s cries the same way he can if he has the same knowledge: “I don’t hear them because they are not important” (p. 16). Nick does not have Dr. Adams’s professional experience to lean on in order to make himself less distressed. Dr. Adams

displays a lack of sensitivity by thinking that a brief explanation can overpower events of such emotional intensity.

Many pages have been written about whether Dr. Adams is being “cruel” to his son by making him a part of the surgical procedure. Parents often have different ideas about what is “age-appropriate,” and the issue at stake when talking about Dr. Adams as a bad father often has to do with whether Nick is mature enough to handle what he sees. Determining whether Nick is old enough to participate in a surgery is a subjective question that cannot be resolved.

Regardless, nothing in the text suggests Dr. Adams wanted his son to see a suicide. The Indian father’s death in part brings about the apology at the end of the story: “I’m terribly sorry I brought you along, Nicky. . . . It was an awful mess to put you through” (p. 18). A man seeking to shock or wound his child would not be sorry afterwards.

There is no textual evidence that suggests Nick has suffered a “psychic wound” from what he has seen. Young applied his well-known “wound theory” to “Indian Camp” in decisive terms:

[“Indian Camp”] is also perhaps the most violent, and unintentionally portentous, of all Hemingway stories, and it lays down what was to become the basic pattern of all his fiction, which is to expose a character to violence, to physical or psychological shock, or severe trial, and then to focus on the consequences.<sup>55</sup>

Nick’s closing thoughts and actions do not explicitly state the consequences of the events.

Young’s assessment relied upon assumption. If Nick is indeed still thinking about birth rather than suicide, it seems he has emerged from the situation relatively unscathed. His relationship with his father is still strong; his questions suggest that he continues to view Dr. Adams as an

authority. If Nick were in a state of “psychological shock,” he most likely would have been silent during the journey home.

“The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife,” a story that takes place after the events of “Indian Camp,” does not contain a potentially traumatic event in Nick’s life. It reveals that Nick loves his father and remains loyal to him even though Dr. Adams’s bravery is called into question. Nick’s relationship with Dr. Adams remains unchanged in the immediate aftermath of “The Doctor,” presumably because contrary to what F. Scott Fitzgerald and others wrote about the story, Nick does not see what happens.<sup>56</sup> Some critics have interpreted the “The Doctor” as an account of the moment Nick realizes his father is a coward. The probable reason behind these interpretations has to do with statements Hemingway made about Clarence. In his reading of the story, Michael S. Reynolds mentioned that Ernest wrote a “cryptic letter” to Bill Smith in 1922 claiming that “his father was the yellowest man he knew.”<sup>57</sup> Young and Flora reported that the story was said to have been based on an incident that revealed to Ernest that Clarence “was a coward.”<sup>58</sup> Regardless of what Hemingway said about the tale, it is not clear that Dr. Adams is a coward. What does become apparent is that he is rash, has trouble controlling his tongue, and does not confront his wife when she challenges him.

“The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife” is built around two conflicts and divides into halves. In the first part, Dr. Henry Adams is down on the beach near his cottage. Three men from the Indian Camp, Dick Boulton, his son Eddy, and Billy Tabeshaw have come to help cut up some logs that have washed up onto the sand. The doctor later tells his wife that Dick and the men are performing the labor in order to pay off a medical debt Boulton accrued.<sup>59</sup> Before they are done with the work, Dick accuses the doctor of stealing the wood; the doctor counters by saying that the logging company will not come back for it and it will “rot” if left uncollected. Boulton

presses the issue and causes a row. Ultimately, Henry threatens to “knock” Boulton’s “eye teeth” down his throat. Boulton is a “big man,” however, and intimidates the doctor by assuring him, “Oh, no, you won’t, Doc.” Dr. Adams eventually walks away (p. 25).

Henry’s decision to retreat is wise rather than cowardly, but it is wisdom that follows in the wake of foolishness. The doctor’s anger, rather than common sense, leads him to threaten Boulton. Losing a fight does not constitute bravery, even if it comes as the result of following up on a challenge. Henry also uses good judgment when he refuses to enter into an argument with his wife in the second half of the story.

In the second part of “The Doctor,” it immediately becomes clear that home is not a sanctuary for Henry. He and his wife have separate rooms, which is representative of the lack of affection she shows for him throughout the story. She does not try to comfort him after his difficulties but rather asserts moral authority over him once he admits he had a conflict with Boulton: “ ‘Remember that he who ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city,’ said his wife.” As if the coldness of his relationships with his wife and Dick Boulton are not enough, even some of his belongings are a bane to him: “The doctor, sitting on the bed in his room, saw a pile of medical journals on the floor by the bureau. They were still in their wrappers unopened. It irritated him” (p. 25). The use of the word “it” rather than “they,” which would refer strictly to the unopened journals, indicates that the entire situation is upsetting to him.

After Henry tells his wife that he thinks Boulton started the argument over medical bills, the scene inside the cottage becomes even more ominous: “His wife was silent. The doctor wiped his gun carefully with a rag. He pushed the shells back in against the spring of the magazine. He sat with the gun on his knees. He was very fond of it.” The implication here is that Dr. Adams is considering violence. What is not clear is who or what he is thinking of as a target. Oddly, his

wife somehow defuses him. After telling him her opinion of what happened, ironic because she did not see what transpired, he puts his gun “in the corner behind the dresser” and goes outside to take a walk (p. 26).

Dr. Adams is not forthcoming with his wife, and she appears to be an invalid. She uses her religious piety as a means to exercise control over her already hurting husband. Perhaps most egregiously, she doubts her spouse’s assessment of what has happened: “Dear, I don’t think, I really don’t think that any one would really do a thing like that” (p. 26). Flora wrote that “The Doctor” is an illustration of the “sexual distance” between Henry and Mrs. Adams.<sup>60</sup> But the distance is spiritual and mental as well. If their exchange can be viewed as representative of the way they communicate with one another in general, then it is difficult to see any common ground between them. She promotes control whereas he considers violence while cleaning his gun. She prefers darkness and reclusion for comfort while he goes out for a walk in the forest in order to collect himself. Even if Nick has not seen his father and mother act this way during this specific narrative, it is safe to assume he has been exposed to this kind of thing before.

Nick may or may not have seen what happened on the beach or heard the conversation between his parents. Conceding that either view of the matter is defensible, in the end it is an insignificant point. Everything that occurs in “The Doctor” reflects upon the development of Nick’s character. Based upon his role in “Indian Camp,” Henry views himself as his son’s instructor and mentor. He has influence over Nick. The implication of this story is that Nick’s parents have an established pattern of behavior with which Nick is already accustomed. He did not have to see the specific events on the beach and in the house to know who and what his parents are. Nick likely knows that his father has a temper, says things that he should not say, and that the elder man is emotionally dominated by his wife.

The love Nick shows for Dr. Adams through his decision at the end of the story is based upon the long-term relationship he has had with his father. In other words, it is not a condescending act of sympathy. Shortly after he enters the woods, Henry finds Nick leaning against a tree, reading. Following his wife's instructions, Dr. Adams tells Nick that his mother wants to see him. Nick responds, "I want to go with you" (p. 27). As in the end of "Indian Camp," Nick again affectionately refers to Henry as "Daddy." In his original reading, Flora implied that Nick's choice is more fortuitous for Dr. Adams than a case of Nick feeling sorry.<sup>61</sup> What is most telling about the closing lines is that Nick chooses his dad and Henry condones the boy's decision. It is a moment of loyalty for both. Dr. Adams could have insisted that his son follow orders and go to see Mrs. Adams: he does not. Nick's journey with his father to find black squirrels is in some ways more emotionally consistent with other Adams stories if Nick goes out of love rather than pity.

Nick's relationship with his father is again the focus in "Ten Indians" even though Nick's growing sexual awareness is also a central concern. Published in *Men Without Women*, it has been remarked that "Ten Indians" may have fit in more appropriately with the first set of Nick Adams stories: it "looks like a fugitive from *In Our Time*, fusing the actions of 'The End of Something' and 'The Three-Day Blow'."<sup>62</sup> It is a tale about Nick's first painful experience in a sexual relationship. The opening scene shows Nick riding home from a baseball game in Petoskey, Michigan. He is with the Garner family. They rib Nick about having a "girl," Prudie Mitchell. Nick playfully denies they are in a relationship, an ironic comment given what happens later. Nick arrives home to find his father waiting for him. While Nick eats a cold dinner, he asks his dad about his day and finds out that Dr. Adams has seen Prudie and Frank Washburn together

in the forest near the Indian camp. Heartbroken, Nick passes a fitful night of sleep and awakes the next day to find his sorrow already beginning to diminish.

The degree to which Nick and Prudie have been intimate is unknown. They have presumably agreed to commit to one another, and Nick is ultimately betrayed when he hears from his dad that Prudence was “threshing around” in the woods with Frank.<sup>63</sup> Because the episode directly comments on the nature of Dr. Adams’s attitude toward his son and vice versa, it shares a connection with “Indian Camp” and “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife.” The critical response also follows in the tradition of the other stories: Dr. Adams’s decisions are severely scrutinized.

Some critics have essentially “shot the messenger” in their readings of this story by accusing Dr. Adams of being cruel while others have remained positive about or unsure of Dr. Adams. Young and Steven Carter both asserted that the doctor is cruel. Young suggested it may be because Dr. Adams is smarting from his row with Dick Boulton and sees breaking Nick up with Boulton’s daughter as a means of revenge. Young did not clearly explain how hurting Nick equates to punishing Boulton, however. Carter posited that Adams is using sexual double-entendre when he says the word “piece” to his son, painting the boy’s father engaged in some kind of perverse word play.<sup>64</sup> Margaret A. Tilton and Anne Edwards Boutelle wrote what are perhaps the most conspiracy-laden depictions of Dr. Adams’s character. Boutelle took a distinctly psychological route and invented the underlying conflict that drives the characters’ actions: “‘Ten Indians’ and ‘Indian Camp’ both have as a hidden center the fantasized murder of the father by the son.” Tilton suggested that Dr. Adams is intentionally breaking his son’s heart because he himself is in the midst of an affair with Prudie and wants Nick out of the way. Like Boutelle, Tilton conjured evidence by suggesting that when Mrs. Garner whispers to her



husband, she may be talking about Prudie and the doctor. It is extremely unlikely that, given the context of the conversation in the wagon and the fact that Nick is a few feet away, Mrs. Garner would spread such a salacious rumor at that time.<sup>65</sup> Countering those who insist that the doctor is a menace, Flora was consistently sympathetic to the doctor in his readings. DeFalco and other critics construed Adams as an ambiguous figure who is at some things a failure.

The story hinges on the discussion between Nick and his father that takes place shortly after the young man has returned from Petoskey and finished his first course of dinner. Dr. Adams cuts Nick a “big piece” of huckleberry pie and the most important conversation in the tale begins:

“What did you do, dad?”

“I went out fishing in the morning.”

“What did you get?”

“Only perch.”

His father sat watching Nick eat the pie.

“What did you do this afternoon?”

“I went for a walk by the Indian Camp.”

“Did you see anybody?”

“The Indians were all in town getting drunk.”

“Didn’t you see anybody at all?”

“I saw your friend, Prudie” (p. 115).

It is apparent that Nick is pressing for a specific answer once he learns that the elder man has been walking up by the Indian Camp. When he says “anybody,” he means Prudie. Not wanting to get into what happened, the doctor treats his boy’s request literally. When Nick repeats his

question, his dad recognizes that he has to go into what will be a painful revelation. Given Nick's insistence on receiving news about his girlfriend, Dr. Adams is not a villain.

While he is not "cruel" in being truthful with his son, Nick's dad is undeniably tactless during the remainder of the conversation. Referring back to "Indian Camp" and looking ahead to what is in "Fathers and Sons," it is clear that the doctor has difficulty talking to his son about sex. When he hears Prudie and Frank "threshing around," it is possible that he looked at them to see if the boy was his own. It is also conceivable that when he saw it was not Nick, he realized that on another day it might have been. For Dr. Adams, the entire situation is difficult to discuss and this leads to what appears to some as extreme insensitivity. He cannot find the words to tell Nick what he has seen and then engage in a meaningful dialogue about sexuality.

Like at the end of "Indian Camp," in "Ten Indians" it is difficult to know what the lasting consequences of Nick's broken heart will be without using Hemingway's other short fiction for context. Attention is drawn, perhaps for the first time in the Nick Adams stories, to the presence of an interminable generational gap between father and son. Nick now appears to be a sexually active teenager with a dad who cannot adequately talk to him about an important aspect of life. Regardless, Nick does seem to be recovering from what has happened: "In the morning there was a big wind blowing and the waves were running up high on the beach and he was awake a long time before he remembered that his heart was broken" (p. 117). Time sometimes helps male Hemingway characters come to terms with relationships that have ended badly.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Nicholas Adams and Fatherhood*

"Cross-Country Snow" and "Fathers and Sons" are the only two stories in which Nick deals with issues relating to fatherhood. In "Cross-Country Snow," Nick has a conversation with

his friend George about the upcoming birth of his first child. Over a decade later, Nick sits next to his adolescent son and thinks of his dad while driving to an unnamed destination. What is begun in “Cross-Country Snow” continues with “Fathers and Sons.” They are important pieces in the corpus of Hemingway’s fiction in that they document changes in perspective about what it means to be a parent. They are also a testament to the fact that Nick’s emotional attitudes about paternity are in many ways shaped by the experiences he had with his father.

The opening section of “Cross-Country Snow” features lush description of Nick and George skiing. The beauty and speed of their movements reflect a carefree attitude. After taking their run, the two young men decide to take a break for food and drink in an alpine inn. While inside, they see and talk about their pregnant waitress, and this leads George to question Nick about the upcoming birth of Nick and Helen’s child. The topic is implicitly about the constraints fatherhood imposes, and they are juxtaposed with the freedom expressed in the first part of the story. Despite George’s prodding and negative presumptions about being a parent, Nick does not say anything adverse about the prospects of becoming a father nor does he give his companion reason to think that he is having a problem with Helen. He suggests that despite the potential changes to his lifestyle that having an infant will impose, he is “glad” about his future responsibility.

Criticism of “Cross-Country Snow” is not as plentiful as some of the other stories, perhaps because some critics viewed it as one of the weaker pieces in *In Our Time*. It does not feature death or betrayal, and the most violence in it involves two young men falling down in the snow. Perhaps the problem is that the shocking nature of the other tales and vignettes draws the eye away from Nick’s gentler moments. Some of the most recent essays have focused on the idea of “biological entrapment.” Nick’s pregnant significant other, Helen, is in several ways said to be

restricting him through sex or more broadly, her body. In other words, Nick's sexual desire for Helen stands in opposition to his freedom because her pregnancy no longer allows him to enjoy both without consequence.<sup>67</sup> Martina König and Gerhard Pfeiffer made a tenuous argument based on the premise that Nick and George do not pay for their wine and strudel when they leave the inn. They went on to assert that when it becomes apparent that they have not settled their bill, it brings about an epiphany: "Nick Adams certainly has to 'pay' for his alliance with the feminine world and its irreversible consequences."<sup>68</sup> In an earlier work, Philip Young remarked that "in 'Cross-Country Snow' it is again the stubborn reality of a woman's body that impinges on the skiing."<sup>69</sup> It is interesting that these critics' attention is focused upon Helen and not the unborn child.

Contrary to their interpretations, "Cross-Country Snow" is about Nick and his response to the idea of fatherhood. Flora offered a partially useful evaluation of the central theme: "'Cross-Country Snow' is about pleasure – and about responsibility. And responsibility is not something every person accepts immediately."<sup>70</sup> Rather than use the term "pleasure," "Cross-Country Snow" is more accurately about *freedom* and responsibility. Nick is torn between two emotions but also proves that he has resolved the issue with maturity.

The central dialogue in the story concerning Nick's opinion about becoming a father indicates that he is "glad" about having a child:

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

"Yes."

"When?"

"Late next summer."

"Are you glad?"

“Yes. Now.”<sup>71</sup>

Even though the majority of her essay on “Cross-Country Snow” is about entrapment, Olivia Carr Edenfield admitted that Nick is here indicating that at one time he did not want to be a dad but that he has come to terms with it.<sup>72</sup> Young said that he “approves the idea of the baby.”<sup>73</sup> “Cross-Country Snow” is not simply a story about a man feeling caged by his circumstances. It is a depiction of the complex stages of life, some of which demand responsibility and others that do not. Moments of raw freedom are countered by the realization that some sensations cannot last forever. Young wrote that these moments are in “opposition”: this is only partially accurate. Instead, “Cross-Country Snow” testifies to how disparate emotions can coexist. Nick is able to enjoy his time on the slopes despite the knowledge that his role is about to change.

Nick proves himself to be the wiser of the two young men in that he recognizes there are no certain answers when it comes to the prospect of fatherhood. George’s queries are like those of a young boy, someone who has not yet thought through the concepts of marriage and fatherhood: “It’s hell, isn’t it?” (p. 111). George’s questions are tempting to answer without nuance because they seem informed by “conventional wisdom”: marriage and babies are supposed to be “hell” for an active adult male. Nick’s terse, non-committal replies indicate that he is not prepared to explain his emotions. Flora wrote that that when Nick tells George that “there isn’t any good in promising,” he is speaking with a “new maturity” that “checks” his companion’s “boyish impulse.”<sup>74</sup> His refusal to promise seems driven by cold honesty more than maturity. It is ironic that George wants a kind of verbal contract, to lock Nick down, when only moments before he promulgates the “hell” associated with being cornered.

In “Fathers and Sons,” the perceived entrapment of “Cross-Country Snow” is countered by the physical and mental freedom the middle-aged Nicholas experiences while driving with his

son to an unspecified destination. The story suggests that Nick has survived the early challenges of fatherhood and emerged a conscientious parent. As the tranquil fields roll by outside his car window, Nick ponders his surroundings:

Nick noticed which corn fields had soy beans or peas in them, how the thickets and the cut-over land lay, where the cabins and houses were in relation to the fields and the thickets; hunting the country in his mind as he went by; sizing up each clearing as to feed and cover and figuring where you would find a covey and which way they would fly.<sup>75</sup>

Nick's imagination ultimately leads him to think about his father: "Hunting this country for quail as his father had taught him, Nicholas Adams started thinking about his father" (p. 226). His boy asleep beside him and his dad on his mind, the final Nick Adams story is about the tenuous emotional bond between the three generations of Adams men.

Dr. Adams has died at the time of "Fathers and Sons," but he lingers in Nick's mind as a complex mixture of strengths and weaknesses. The general idea of the story is that Nick does not ultimately know what to believe about his father. The aspect of his dad that Nick remembers most is his eyes. They are described in almost mythical terms: "They saw much farther and much quicker than the human eye sees and they were the great gift his father had" (p. 227). But his astounding vision came at a price: "Like all men with a faculty that surpasses human requirements, his father was very nervous." Nick goes on to describe him as "sentimental," and this led him to be "both cruel and abused" (p. 228). As Nick mentally travels deeper into the past, his initially positive impression of Dr. Adams darkens. Though the elder man taught Nick to hunt and shoot, he was "unsound on sex" (p. 228). Nick thinks upon instances when his father gave him cryptic advice about sexuality; the lessons were for Nick not to have intercourse with

animals or become a “masher” like the opera singer Enrico Caruso. He considers Dr. Adams’s inability to talk about sex and concludes that “his father summed up the whole matter by stating that masturbation produced blindness, insanity, and death, while a man who went with prostitutes would contract hideous venereal diseases and that the thing to do was keep your hands off of people” (pp. 229-30). Nick seems frustrated by his dad’s lack of candor, but he also thinks that “all the equipment you will ever have is provided and each man learns all there is for him to know about it without advice,” suggesting that perhaps Dr. Adams’s reticence was not necessarily a bad thing (p. 229). Even though Henry was an excellent instructor in some areas, Nick was essentially left on his own to learn about love, intercourse, lust, and passion. It is ambiguous whether he resents his dad for that.

Nick’s memories cycle through sex, hunting, and death twice in the next two sections of the story. The repetition of the sequence accentuates the connection between these three themes and Dr. Adams in Nick’s mind. One of the richest aspects of “Fathers and Sons” is the way that no matter how far Nick wanders during his mental journey through the past, he always comes back to his own father. Nick first remembers intercourse with Trudy Gilby while in the presence of her brother Billy; looking for a black squirrel while he regrets his father “gave him only three shells;” and recalls a murder fantasy in which he murders Trudy’s brother, Eddy, for trying to “sleep in bed” with Nick’s sister Dorothy (pp. 234-35). After graphically describing how he would shoot and scalp Eddy, Trudy pleads with him to spare her sibling. Nick acquiesces and the two make love once again, implied to be the third time during the day, and it leads Trudy to ask, “you think we make a baby?” While they talk, Billy fires his gun in the woods and brings back a black squirrel “bigger than a cat” (p. 237). Trudy and Nick separate with a kiss, leading Nick to shift once again to thoughts of his father.

Completing the second sequential triad, Nick recalls a second murder fantasy. Once again, Nick's ambivalence about Dr. Adams arises in a flashback:

Nick loved his father but hated the smell of him and once when he had to wear a suit of his father's underwear that had gotten too small for his father it made him feel sick and he took it off and put it under two stones in the creek and said that he had lost it. . . . When Nick came home from fishing without it he was whipped for lying. (p. 239)

Angry at his dad for the punishment, Nick imagines killing him. He sits in the woodshed, looking at his father, who is reading a newspaper on the porch, and thinks, "I can blow him to hell. I can kill him." He does not shoot his father because he "felt the anger go out of him," and he feels "a little sick about it," but only because he was using "the gun that his father had given him" (p. 240). Nick concludes by remembering that he only likes the smell of one person in his family, a younger sister, and that he could only get rid of the scent of his father by becoming a smoker.

Before he ponders this sequence of events, Nicholas asserts that he is "all through thinking about his father" (p. 238). He has the same thought earlier in the story: "So he decided to think of something else." Like smoking to mask the scent of Dr. Adams, Nicholas thinks that writing is a means of expelling painful memories about his dad: "If he wrote it he could get rid of it." But he is unable to do it: "There were still too many people" (p. 231). His attempts to block out painful memories is important because when his own son raises the topic of visiting his grandfather's tomb in the final section, Nick no longer has the option to "think of something else."



In the end of “Fathers and Sons,” it is apparent that Nick’s boy wants to perform as a good grandson should. He has a degree of separation from his grandfather, an emotional buffer, which Nick does not. While it is unclear what it means to be a dutiful heir, it takes form in the belief that together they must visit Dr. Adams’s tomb. After talking about the Indians, the topic of conversation, like Nick’s thoughts up to this point, eventually leads back to Dr. Adams. Nick’s son says, “Well, I don’t feel good never to have even visited the tomb of my grandfather.” “We’ll have to go,” Nick said. “I can see we’ll have to go” (p. 244). Because Nick’s last private thought before talking with his son is his memory of wanting to kill the doctor, his seemingly half-hearted promise to follow through does not sound convincing. Despite Nicholas’s assurances, the pattern of the response he gives his son is similar to what he says to George in “Cross-Country Snow.” At first, Nick is adamant about skiing again, twice repeating the phrase “We’ve got to.” But when asked to promise, he admits there “isn’t any good in promising” (p. 112). Nick is not prepared to write about what happened to his dad yet, and so it is unlikely that he is willing to visit his grave again.

Perhaps the critical question raised by the story centers on whether Nick’s son will perpetuate or end the misunderstandings formed between Nicholas and Dr. Adams. Ivan Turgenev’s novel *Fathers and Sons*, from which Hemingway borrowed the title despite not holding it in high esteem, is generally viewed as a depiction of a “generational gap.” Henry James melodramatically stated the central conflict in Turgenev’s book:

The opposing forces in M. Turgénieff’s novel are an elder and a younger generation; the drama can indeed never have a more poignant interest than when we see the young world, as it grows to a sense of its strengths and its desires, turning to smite the old world which has brought it forth with a mother’s tears

and a mother's hopes.<sup>76</sup>

Hemingway does not provide a well-defined arena of contention in "Fathers and Sons" in that it is not a story about a clash of intellectual philosophies. Nicholas does not completely love or despise his father; his own child is at a point where he feels comfortable acting as a corrective.

The conclusion of "Fathers and Sons" does not offer a clear reconciliation between the generations or a promise that one might occur in the near future. Using Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* as a point of reference, Myler Wilkinson offered one possible reason why this is the case: "One may conjecture that what Hemingway saw in *Fathers and Sons* was a novel which had not gone far enough with its implied argument." Turgenev's novel ends with a celebratory resolution, the "harmony and continuity" when both Arkady and his father marry and settle their differences, whereas "for Hemingway the balance between apocalypse and resolution was no longer a literary possibility."<sup>77</sup> Wilkinson's "conjecture" was in reference to Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises*, but some of the same principles apply to Nick Adams and his child. Of the two generational conflicts present in "Fathers and Sons," neither is counteracted with substantial hope for future "harmony and continuity."

In his essay "To Embrace or Kill: *Fathers and Sons*," Richard McCann posited that there is a possibility that Nick's son will be unable to break the cycle of "disappointment with the father" because of his dad's reticence about sexuality and death.<sup>78</sup> In other words, Nick appears to be emulating his own parent's failures, thereby perpetuating the negative. Whether this is the case is ambiguous. Nick's boy is not yet twelve: it is fair to say that he might not be of age to hear about his father's sexual adventures in the woods with Billy and Trudy Gilby. Given the extreme intensity of the things Nick is exposed to when too young, perhaps he has indeed

learned from the doctor's mistakes in not revealing everything to his progeny. Regardless, Hemingway offers no certainty in the end.

"Cross-Country Snow" and "Fathers and Sons" reflect the complexity of Hemingway's fiction dealing with the relationship between parent and child. In both tales, positive memories and sensations find their place alongside the hard realities of being responsible for children. It is unfortunate that more was not written about the youngest Adams's coming of age. However, Ernest eventually wrote a more elaborate reaction to paternal suicide in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. He also reversed course and wrote about sons who disappoint their fathers in two of his posthumously published works.

#### *Fatherhood in Hemingway's Late Fiction*

With the exception of *A Moveable Feast* and perhaps *The Garden of Eden*, Hemingway's posthumously published work has been derided far more than anything he allowed printed while alive. Critics have for years praised his editing abilities, and his standards would no doubt have saved him from some negative commentary had he been able to apply them to all of his late writings. He left thousands of manuscript pages behind, some of which he hoped would be able to benefit his family if he were to pass away unexpectedly.<sup>79</sup> Relationships between a father and son feature prominently in one novel and two short stories he composed in the 1940s and 50s: *Islands in the Stream*, "I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something," and "Great News from the Mainland." As in his early fiction, Hemingway depicts the parent-child relationship as a complex mixture of intense emotions. Unlike his previous stories, the narrative perspective reflects a more mature paternal viewpoint less sympathetic to the difficulties associated with being an adolescent.

Part of the shift in perspective is likely a result of Hemingway's growing older. In 1944, he was thinking about writing a novel based on his World War II experiences. He wrote to Maxwell Perkins that this book "should have the sea and air and the ground in it."<sup>80</sup> Over the next eight years, Hemingway eventually produced four sections based on his original premise. Only one of them appeared while he was alive: it was the fourth part, titled *The Old Man and the Sea*. The other three arrived eighteen years later in 1970 as *Islands in the Stream*. It does not have any overt connection with Santiago and Manolin but tells the story of a middle-aged painter named Thomas Hudson. The first section, "Bimini," is about a time when Hudson's three sons visit him while he is working on the Caribbean island. The narrative is well-written, and the story contains several momentous events that capture and maintain attention. But despite its merits, *Islands in the Stream* was not as well-received critically.

Several reviewers were pleased with fragments of it but unhappy with the majority of *Islands in the Stream*. Some of the most virulent remarks written were by those who saw the book as autobiographical revisionism. Christopher Ricks wrote that Thomas Hudson is a thinly-veiled version of the author whose "sons are slaughtered for the cruelest of markets; not commercialized sentimentality, but authorial escape. They are thrown off the sled so that Thomas Hudson – alias Ernest Hemingway – may get away."<sup>81</sup> The underlying idea appears to be that Ernest was emotionally doing away with his sons by writing "Bimini," which does not make sense in the context of the book: Hudson essentially loses the will to live after his boys are gone. Jonathan Yardley went along with Ricks in making a biographical connection and posited that this is a work Hemingway wrote to recast his paternal image, calling *Islands in the Stream* "self-promotion." It is difficult to understand why Hemingway would do such a thing and then never release the story to the public while he was alive: Yardley presumably has a theory.<sup>82</sup>

Upon analysis, the logic behind these reviews appears dubious. Authors do not necessarily use their conscious or subconscious desires for inspiration, and assuming that Hemingway is constructing a macabre wish-fulfillment in *Islands in the Stream* is ludicrous. Paul Theroux suggested the novel was not published because it is in fact autobiographical and that Hemingway wanted to maintain his privacy.<sup>83</sup> Given what is known about Ernest's intentions for the manuscript, this also seems unlikely.

Perhaps what is most unusual about "Bimini" is that it depicts three men with strong paternal instincts: Thomas Hudson is the biological father while the other two, Eddy and Roger Davis, act as surrogates. When Hudson's three boys, Tom, David, and Andrew, come to visit, three men devote themselves to their protection and development. The adult males do not fit the masculine mold often attributed to "Hemingway heroes": they are flawed and lack self-assurance, not unlike Henry Adams or even Jake Barnes in some ways. Roger Davis, Hudson's author-friend, is portrayed as a person who needs loneliness and community in equal measure. He is hampered by a sense of self-loathing that he seems to shed only when he is with Thomas and the boys. Eddy, the cook on Hudson's boat, is wise in the ways of the sea but also a man whose nerves drive him to drink. On several occasions he expresses his affection for Tom, David, and Andrew by risking his physical health for their honor.<sup>84</sup> John Updike described Hudson as an "affectionate and baffled father," which is an apt description.<sup>85</sup> Hemingway did not often write about "happiness" without some form of qualification; in "Ten Indians" and "Fathers and Sons," Nick is said to feel "happy and hollow." Hudson finds contentment in being with his kids but is also saddened by the limitations placed upon his time with them:

Happiness is often presented as being very dull but, he thought, lying awake, that is because dull people are sometimes very happy and intelligent people can and do

go around making themselves and everyone else miserable. He had never found happiness dull. It always seemed more exciting than any other thing and capable of as great intensity as sorrow to those people who were capable of having it. This may not be true but he had believed it to be true for a long time and this summer they had experienced happiness for a month now and, already, in the nights, he was lonely for it before it had ever gone away. . . . He had always loved his children but he had never before realized how much he loved them and how bad it was that he did not live with them.<sup>86</sup>

Unlike Nick Adams in “Cross-Country Snow,” Hudson seems unable to allow disparate sensations to coexist. In other words, the pleasure he has in being with others is tempered by the knowledge they cannot stay forever.

The two core episodes in “Bimini” illustrate the father and son dynamic. Both events focus upon the middle child, David. In the first, he and Andrew are out spear-fishing with Roger when an enormous hammerhead shark makes a run at them. Thomas sees what is about to happen and attempts to shoot the beast with his Mannlicher rifle. Reminiscent of Francis Macomber, he does not perform well under pressure and misses all four of his shots. Fortunately, Eddy appears with a machine gun and kills the predator at the last moment. The ensuing response to the trauma is evidence of how much the three men care about Hudson’s boys. In his own way, each “father” expresses his emotional attachment. Eddy constantly watches the kids while they are out, fretting about the tide level. After his heroics, Eddy yells “I can’t stand this sort of thing” (p. 89). Once Roger is back in the boat, Eddy admits that he feels “responsible” for what happened because he has local knowledge and should have known better (p. 90). His heavy, secretive drinking after the incident shows that he is mentally strained. Hardly a stoic man of

action, the thought of his children being killed leaves Thomas with a “shaky and hollow sick feeling inside” (p. 89). Perhaps dreading his inability to protect his family, Hudson tries to speak the memories out of his mind: “He was trying to get rid of the emotion” (p. 93). Roger’s ominous joke about wanting to drink “hemlock” oddly reflects his devotion to the boys, suggesting he would rather die than see something bad happen to them. Ironically, David is the last to break down, crying like a “little boy” once the danger is passed (p. 91). It is tempting to attribute selflessness of the three men to disillusionment with life or a death wish, especially in light of the transition Hudson makes in the two parts following “Bimini.” But to arrive at such a conclusion is to downplay not only their apparent love but also their desire to instill a sense of meaning into a future generation, something which they lack.

Though it seems uncharacteristically optimistic for Hemingway’s fiction, the scene in which David fights a giant broadbill reflects a desire on behalf of Hudson and his friends to create something positive for the future. The narrative during the battle suggests that everyone on the boat is with David in spirit. Young Tom’s melodramatic dialogue is a weak point in the action, but it at times seems heartfelt: “‘David’s a saint and a martyr,’ Tom said to his father. ‘Boys don’t have brothers like David’ ” (p. 126). While Tommy’s brotherly love eventually leads him to wonder if David should be allowed to continue on, Hudson calmly explains that David is in the midst of something greater: “You’re an awfully good boy, Tommy. But please know I would have stopped this long ago except that I know that if David catches this fish he’ll have something inside him for all his life and it will make everything else easier” (p. 132). Reminiscent of *The Old Man and the Sea*, landing the fish does not take precedent over David’s courage during the struggle.<sup>87</sup> Even in failure, the boy will have learned something about himself and the human condition.

As Thomas looms above the scene, Roger and Eddy support David physically and emotionally. It is a resumption of the duties they took on during the shark attack. Each man performs a paternal role, no one more important than the other. Eddy constantly checks the boy's eyes, asking him if he has a headache. Roger provides instruction on what to do, proving himself a master fisherman. Shortly before the fish is lost, all three men come together on the same level of the boat: the narrator explains in detail how Hudson's perception changes (p. 137). When the hook slips loose, Eddy risks his life by diving in after the broadbill with the gaff: his action is a tribute to his surrogate son's efforts. When David realizes the fight is over, it is Roger who lifts him out of the "fighting chair" and carries him to a bunk bed. Perhaps speaking for all three men, the narrator says that Hudson "was surprised that he had no feeling at all except pity and love for David. All other feeling had been drained out of him by the fight" (p. 140). After talking about the loss, David and Roger share what is perhaps the most poignant moment of the chapter:

"Thank you very much, Mr. Davis, for what you said when I first lost him," David said with his eyes still shut.

Thomas Hudson never knew what it was that Roger had said to him. (p. 143)

Despite Hudson's regret over allowing the battle to take place, David has emerged from it with "something inside him": peace despite loss. It is not what his dad envisioned, but it is a valuable lesson nonetheless.

The view of parenthood Hemingway presents in two of his posthumously published short stories does not match that of "Bimini." "Great News from the Mainland" and "I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something," both written around 1955, are a radical departure from much of what Hemingway had written about the father-son relationship in the three previous decades. In no way are these late tales idealizations. The dad, called Papa in "I Guess" and Mr.



Wheeler in “Great News,” is a man embittered and saddened by the failures of his boy, Stevie. This is a thematic reversal for Hemingway: he more often wrote about fathers who disappoint their sons. While perhaps not as significant literarily, “I Guess” and “Great News” match the emotional complexity of “Fathers and Sons.” Told from the perspective of a grieving father, they are about a man trying to figure out what to make of a disintegrated parent-child bond.

“I Guess” has received scant critical attention. Perhaps scholars, like many reviewers, have decided that it is not a “great” Hemingway story and as a result deemed it unworthy of a thorough explication. Flora wrote a brief analysis largely based upon Greg’s memoir.<sup>88</sup> He covered the primary biographical events but too readily accepted the conclusion of the tale. He failed to ask what might have happened in the five years of vileness that led to the father’s final determination about Stevie. In his biography of Ernest, Meyers also briefly touched on the history behind the work but offered little in the way of exegesis.

“I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something” has a fairly simple plot but a complicated timeline. A young boy named Stevie has informed his father, who is a writer, that he has won a short story prize at school. Papa is proud of his son and wants to help him develop his talent. But something seems off. Papa wonders how Stevie could be a natural at something that for many is a craft that develops over time. In the young man’s favor, Papa remembers back approximately six years to a shooting tournament his small child nearly won. Stevie had learned to shoot with relative ease, so Papa considers it possible that his precocity helped him to excel as an author as well.

Papa also remembers how Stevie was arrogant after the tournament: “It was the night after the last big international shoot that they had ever shot in together that they had been talking and the boy had said, ‘I don’t understand how anyone ever misses a pigeon’.”<sup>89</sup> It becomes

apparent to him that when Stevie remarks that he does not understand how anyone ever misses a shot, it is evidence that Papa's progeny has forgotten the long hours of practice that went into making him an excellent marksman. He has also failed to remember that his papa was his patient, knowledgeable teacher: "With all his unbelievable talent the boy had not become the shooter he was on live birds by himself nor without being taught or disciplined. He had forgotten now about all the training" (p. 600). The sense Papa has is that even though things look bright for his son on the outside, something does not seem right below the surface. He is skeptical because he views himself as the boy's mentor: Stevie had not achieved anything "by himself," and Papa has not yet taught Stevie to write.

The title of the story is a statement Stevie makes when his father reads his work and thinks he may have seen something similar in the past. In other words, it is a phrase used as a cover-up. Seven years after reading Stevie's work, Papa eventually discovers that the prize-winning tale is an act of plagiarism. Embittered about what he has found out, and what Stevie has become, Papa comes to a darkly absolute conclusion: "Now he knew that boy had never been any good. He had thought so often looking back on things. And it was sad to know that shooting did not mean a thing" (p. 600). Contrasted against the happier times depicted in *Islands in the Stream*, Papa's despairing interpretation of events seems unreasonably cruel. Because Stevie's actions are not described in detail, "the boy had done everything hateful and stupid that he could," it is impossible to know whether Papa's dismissal of Stevie is justified (p. 601). The narrator indicates that Papa feels "sad" about what has become of his bond with Stevie.

"I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something" is related to "Great News from the Mainland," and the action of the latter story seems to take place after Papa's fallout with Stevie. "Great News" is sinister in that it depicts Stevie as a kind of monster, and his father seems

relatively disinterested in what his boy is going through. For example, Papa's conversation with Dr. Simpson is far more involved than the one he has with Stevie near the end of the story. On the other hand, it is possible to interpret Papa's disconnection as evidence that he is trying to cope with something painful to him by ignoring it. The ambiguity of Papa's feelings about Stevie is evidence of the complexity of the tale.

While the details of "Great News" are emotionally intense, the plot is relatively uncomplicated. Papa, now also referred to as Mr. Wheeler, is in his home and the wind has been blowing "day and night for five days."<sup>90</sup> On a Tuesday during Lent, he makes a call to the mainland to speak with the doctor who is overseeing Stevie's electro-shock treatments. The conversation between the two men is at times bizarre, drifting off into commentary about the weather as well as information about the patient. Dr. Simpson also tells Papa that the treatment had to be postponed because despite being sedated, Stevie has been violent: "[He] threw five of us around just as though we were children" (p. 602). The conversation between the two men is scattered from that point on. Dr. Simpson says that the boy is "really making progress" and then reveals that the treatments are not mandatory: Stevie has requested them. He goes on to remark that "there might be something masochistic in that" (pp. 602-03). Consciously or unconsciously, Hemingway has turned Stevie into a caricature, or mockery, of his "hero": the young man has superhuman strength, copes with his drugs well, and seemingly has a wish to show others how much pain he can endure. Stevie is also said to have written a "brilliant letter," ironic given his plagiarizing in "I Guess" and the tradition of writer-protagonists in Hemingway's earlier work.

The last part of "Great News" is the most revelatory in showing how Stevie and his father interact. Mr. Wheeler is finally told to call back on Thursday if he wants to talk with his boy. Two days pass while Papa thinks about writing and what the wind has done to the palm trees

outside. When the call to Stevie finally comes through, the dialogue between the two is similar to the superficial exchanges found in “I Guess.” Stevie seems to speak quickly, assuring his father that the treatments are going well and that he has “really got this thing beat now” (p. 604).

Outwardly, their conversation suggests that Stevie and Papa do not have a meaningful relationship. But it is also apparent that the boy desperately wants his father to believe in him, to know that what he is doing is making him into something better. Read in the context of the end of “I Guess,” it appears that Stevie knows that his dad has essentially given up on him, and the son wants to regain his affection. The last four lines are interesting because of an apparent mistake Hemingway commits by slipping into first person:

“Stevie sent you his best,” I said to the houseboy.

He smiled happily, remembering the old days.

“That’s nice of him. How is he?”

“Fine,” I said. “He says everything is fine” (p. 604).

Up until this point in the story, the narrator appears to be a separate entity. In both “I Guess” and “Great News,” the story is told with a sympathetic view of the father. In other words, the line between Papa and the narrator seems blurred. The movement into first person suggests that Hemingway intended the voice of teller to be an extension of Papa’s persona. The second line is also notable because not only is Papa now the narrator, he is also displaying omniscience by relating the houseboy’s thoughts. And the line could be an encapsulation of what Papa is thinking as well: he wishes things could go back to being as they were “the old days” when Stevie was a precocious pigeon-shooting champion.

*Islands in the Stream*, “I Guess,” and “Great News” offer distinctly different visions of fatherhood, each connected in some way to the powerful nature of memories. “Bimini” is in

many senses a tribute to happier times, perhaps even a partially autobiographical record of the best moments Hemingway experienced as a parent. The Stevie stories illustrate the fleeting nature of those days and how devastating life can be for a family coping with mental illness. No overarching theory or formula about Hemingway's fiction satisfactorily explains what generated these tales. They appear the work of a man attempting to both preserve and cope with a flood of intense emotions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

When multiple works from over the span of Hemingway's career are considered, the portrait of fatherhood that emerges in his work is varied. Henry Adams, Thomas Hudson, Nicholas Adams, and the other fathers are unique; they do not blend together or appear closely related. Despite attempts by critics to generalize about Hemingway's life and characters and fit them into a mold such as the "Hemingway hero," the novels and stories about parenthood do not follow a monolithic pattern. Ernest wrote about the father-son relationship with a sensitivity to its challenges and difficulties, often with the awareness that it is a bond vulnerable to the vicissitudes of life.

Despite the hardships it carries with it, fatherhood in Hemingway's fiction is something more than a duty. Dr. Adams views himself as an instructor and friend to his son, a man who must guide Nick through physical and moral danger. For Nick, becoming and being a dad is not a fixed role; he does not seem to have decided what his approach to parenting will be in the long-term. Thomas Hudson, Eddy, and Roger Davis love the Hudson boys unconditionally, hoping that the kids will not make the same mistakes they have. Mr. Wheeler is in a place from which he does not know how to proceed other than to emotionally distance himself from a series of bad circumstances.

Confronting the difficulties associated with raising children is not presented as a simple task, or one with established rules for success. While they may have some similarities, each father is unique in terms of circumstance and philosophy. Dr. Adams is driven to make sure his son receives a proper education about the real world, but he is not necessarily equipped to provide one. He is not a wealthy man with famous friends as Thomas Hudson is, nor is it likely

he would allow another man to guide Nick through a dangerous situation such as fighting a swordfish. Similar to Henry Adams, Hudson appears helpless at times. He seems to believe that he cannot be all things to his boys. In another sense, his delegation of important life-lessons to Roger suggests that Hudson lacks confidence in himself. Perhaps he is afraid he will fail his son, a sentiment Stevie's father resigns himself to in the end of "I Guess." Mr. Wheeler had a distinct vision for Stevie's future at one time, but his self-assurance was broken when his boy did not turn out the way he wanted. His musings about writing, the wind, and mango trees during the interlude between his discussion with Dr. Simpson and the call to Stevie suggests that he, like Nick Adams in "Fathers and Sons," would rather divert his thoughts to trivial things than confront the truth. In other words, he retreats into self-initiated therapy.

Fathers in Hemingway's fiction attempt to achieve emotional relief through various means. Without exception, Hemingway's narrators describe what each man does to cope with oppressive thoughts. Dr. Adams retreats into the woods, whereas the middle-aged Nicholas Adams uses his art as a means of emotional purgation: "If he wrote it he could get rid of it." Thomas Hudson tries to talk about what happened after the shark attack while Eddy drinks alcohol on his own, away from the others. Mr. Wheeler's method of coping with pressure is similar to Nick's, perhaps because they are both writers. In "Great News from the Mainland," Papa thinks about writing while he considers the weather outside his home. His close association with the narrator in both "Great News" and "I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something" suggests that he has perhaps written the tales himself as a means of expelling painful memories. Fatherhood is portrayed as a mental and emotional hardship, but this is because, as *Islands in the Stream* suggests, it can also offer parents a sense of purpose and meaning. As is the case in many of Hemingway's stories, things that are worth having and doing often involve risk.

## NOTES

## CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup> Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes, "Decoding Papa," *Hemingway's Genders: Rereading the Hemingway Text* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey Meyers, *Hemingway: A Biography* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), p. 483; Jonathan Yardley, "Islands in the Stream," *New Republic* 163 (October 10, 1970), 26, 30.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Strong, "Gathering the Pieces and Filling in the Gaps: Hemingway's 'Fathers and Sons,'" *Studies in Short Fiction* 26 (Winter 1989), 56.

## CHAPTER TWO

## HEMINGWAY, HIS FATHER, AND HIS SONS

<sup>4</sup> Carlos Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (New York: Collier, 1988), p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Marcelline Hemingway Sanford, *At the Hemingways* (Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 1999), pp. 24-26, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Meyers, *Hemingway: A Biography*, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Susan F. Beegel, "Eye and Heart: Hemingway's Education as a Naturalist," *A Historical Guide to Ernest Hemingway*, ed. Linda Wagner-Martin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 68.

<sup>8</sup> Beegel is quoting one of Grace Hemingway's scrapbooks. Beegel includes the following note about the scrapbooks and their pagination:

The scrapbooks of Grace Hall-Hemingway, part of the Hemingway collection at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, are in extremely fragile condition. To



preserve the scrapbooks from unnecessary handling, researchers work from a transcript. Quotations from the scrapbooks in this essay, and the volume and page numbers given in parenthetical citations, are as given in the transcript. (p. 88)

The quote used here is from “Eye and Heart,” p. 69 and Beegel’s citation is scrapbook volume II, p. 76. She wrote it “(II, 76)” in the text of her essay.

<sup>9</sup> Beegel, “Eye and Heart,” p. 69. Beegel’s citation here is “(II, 87),” which means Grace Hemingway’s scrapbook, volume II, p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> Beegel, “Eye and Heart,” p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth S. Lynn, *Hemingway* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> Lynn, *Hemingway*, p. 62. Lynn wrote that “to do things properly in the woods became a kind of religion for” Ernest.

<sup>13</sup> Meyers, *Hemingway: A Biography*, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Michael S. Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 112, 84-85.

<sup>15</sup> Ernest Hemingway’s father’s full name was Clarence Edmonds Hemingway. People who knew him sometimes referred to him as “Ed.”

<sup>16</sup> Meyers, *Hemingway: A Biography*, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> Sanford, *At the Hemingways*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>18</sup> James Nagel, “Hemingway and the Italian Legacy,” *Hemingway in Love and War*, ed. James Nagel and Henry Villard (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989), p. 200.

<sup>19</sup> Lynn, *Hemingway*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>20</sup> Sanford, *At the Hemingways*, p. 156.

<sup>21</sup> Nagel, “Hemingway and the Italian Legacy,” pp. 201-02.

<sup>22</sup> Sanford, *At the Hemingways*, pp. 156-58.

<sup>23</sup> Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway*, p. 134. Reynolds inserted Ted's name.

<sup>24</sup> Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway*, pp. 134-35.

<sup>25</sup> For a full transcript of the letter, see Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway*, pp. 136-38.

<sup>26</sup> Ernest Hemingway, [Letter to C. E. Hemingway from Ernest Hemingway, May 24, 1922], *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-1961*. ed. Carlos Baker (New York: Scribners, 1981), pp. 67-68.

<sup>27</sup> Lynn, *Hemingway*, p. 225. This vignette provided the basis for "A Very Short Story."

<sup>28</sup> [Letter to C. E. Hemingway from Ernest Hemingway (March 20, 1925)], *Selected Letters*, pp. 153-54.

<sup>29</sup> For example, Ernest had written "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" in 1924. Clarence read the story and it caused him to reminisce about the summer of 1911 rather than be upset with his son.

<sup>30</sup> [Letter to C. E. Hemingway from Ernest Hemingway (November 7, 1923)], *Selected Letters*, p. 99.

<sup>31</sup> [Letter to Hemingway Family from Ernest Hemingway (December 1, 1926)], *Selected Letters*, pp. 233-34.

<sup>32</sup> [Letter to Grace Hall Hemingway from Ernest Hemingway (February 5, 1927)], *Selected Letters*, p. 244.

<sup>33</sup> [Letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald from Ernest Hemingway (December 9, 1928)], *Selected Letters*, p. 291.

<sup>34</sup> Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (New York: Vintage, 1990), pp. 213, 216-17.

<sup>35</sup> For examples, see [Letter to Sylvia Beach from Ernest Hemingway (November 6, 1923)], *Selected Letters*, p. 97; [Letter to Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas from Ernest Hemingway (November 9, 1923)], *Selected Letters*, p. 101.

<sup>36</sup> Jack Hemingway, *Misadventures of a Fly Fisherman: My Life With and Without Papa* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1986), p. 21. Although he signed his book with his nickname, “Jack,” the author’s full name is John Hadley Nicanor Hemingway.

<sup>37</sup> Gregory Hemingway, *Papa: A Personal Memoir* (New York: Kangaroo, 1977), pp. 82-90.

<sup>38</sup> Jack Hemingway, *Misadventures*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>39</sup> Patrick Hemingway, “*Islands in the Stream: A Son Remembers*,” *Ernest Hemingway: The Writer in Context*, ed. James Nagel (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> For a description of the Hemingway family’s history of depression, see Michael S. Reynolds, “Hemingway’s Home: Depression and Suicide,” *Ernest Hemingway: Six Decades of Criticism*, ed. Linda W. Martin (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1987), pp. 9-17. Reprinted from *American Literature*, 57 (December, 1985), 600-10. For an account of Patrick and Gregory’s mental illness, see Lynn, *Hemingway*, p. 481. Patrick underwent shock therapy in 1947, Gregory in 1957 (among other dates). In her book *Running with the Bulls: My Years with the Hemingways* (New York: Ballantine, 2004), Valerie Hemingway offered her perspective on Gregory’s long struggle with mental illness and how it affected his relationship with Ernest.

<sup>41</sup> Reynolds, “Hemingway’s Home,” pp. 16-17. Reynolds meticulously compared Ernest’s physical and mental condition with that of his father’s. Both men committed suicide, Clarence in 1928 and Ernest in 1961.

<sup>42</sup> Gregory Hemingway, *Papa*, pp. 154-55.

<sup>43</sup> Gregory had a bitter quarrel with Ernest from 1951 until the elder man's death.

### CHAPTER 3

#### FATHERS AND SONS IN THE FICTION OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

<sup>44</sup> Grimes used these exact words in two of his works: "Night Terror and Morning Calm: A Reading of Indian Camp as Sequel to 'Three Shots,'" *Studies in Short Fiction* 12 (Fall 1975), 413 and *The Religious Design of Hemingway's Early Fiction* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Research Press, 1985), pp. 55-56.

<sup>45</sup> Robert E. Fleming, "Hemingway's Dr. Adams – Saint or Sinner?" *Arizona Quarterly*, 39 (Summer 1983), 103, 108.

<sup>46</sup> Allen Tate, Review of *In Our Time, Hemingway: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 70. Reprinted from *The Nation* 122 (February 10, 1926), 161-62.

<sup>47</sup> D. H. Lawrence, Review of *In Our Time, Hemingway: The Critical Heritage*, p. 73. Reprinted from *Calendar of Modern Letters* 4 (April, 1927), 72-73.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Rosenfeld, "Tough Earth," *Critical Essays on Ernest Hemingway's In Our Time*, ed. Michael S. Reynolds (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1983), pp. 18-19. Originally printed in *New Republic* 45 (November, 1925), 22-23.

<sup>49</sup> Philip Young, *Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966), p. 31.

<sup>50</sup> Ernest Hemingway, "Indian Camp," *In Our Time* (New York: Scribners, 1930), p. 19. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

<sup>51</sup> Carl Ficken, "Point of View in the Nick Adams Stories," *The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: Critical Essays*, ed. Jackson J. Benson (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975), p. 94. Reprinted from *The Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual*, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli and C. S. Frazier Clark, Jr. (Washington D. C.: NCR Microcard Editions, 1971), 212-35.

<sup>52</sup> As Joseph M. Flora pointed out, Hemingway does clearly imply they are in a camp and not at the Adams's cottage before leaving for the Indian camp. Dr. Adams washes his hands with "a cake of soap he had brought from the camp" (p. 17). "A Closer Look at the Young Nick Adams and his Father," *Studies in Short Fiction* 14 (Winter 1977), 77.

<sup>53</sup> Robert M. Slabey, "The Structure of *In Our Time*," *Critical Essays on Ernest Hemingway's In Our Time*, ed. Michael S. Reynolds (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1983), p. 79. Reprinted from *South Dakota Review* 3 (August, 1965), 38-52. Kenneth G. Johnston, "In the Beginning: Hemingway's 'Indian Camp'," *Studies in Short Fiction* 15 (Winter 1978), 104.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph M. Flora, *Hemingway's Nick Adams* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), p. 28.

<sup>55</sup> Philip Young, "Big World Out There: 'The Nick Adams Stories'," *A Forum on Fiction* 6:1 (Autumn 1972), 7.

<sup>56</sup> F. Scott Fitzgerald, Review of *In Our Time*, *Hemingway: The Critical Heritage*, p. 71. Reprinted from *Bookman* 63 (May, 1926), 264-65; Paul Smith, "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," *A Reader's Guide to the Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1989), p. 64. Smith cited an essay by Richard Fulkerson to suggest that six critics and biographers have stated or implied Nick was present for his father's confrontations. Flora had a hybrid theory: he wrote that Nick saw the argument with Nick Boulton but was not within earshot of the exchange

between Dr. and Mrs. Adams. *Ernest Hemingway: A Study of the Short Fiction* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1989), p. 119, Note 33.

<sup>57</sup> Michael S. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Paris Years* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), p. 187.

<sup>58</sup> Young, "Big World," 8, and Flora, *Hemingway: A Study*, pp. 18-19. Neither man indicated where or when Hemingway said this.

<sup>59</sup> Ernest Hemingway, "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," *In Our Time*, p. 26. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

<sup>60</sup> Flora, *Hemingway: A Study*, p. 49.

<sup>61</sup> Flora, *Hemingway's Nick Adams*, p. 42. In this work, Flora insisted that Dr. Adams's "defeats" were private. As is indicated in note 18, he changed his reading and said that Nick saw what happened on the beach. His change negates much of what he said about "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" in *Hemingway's Nick Adams*.

<sup>62</sup> Smith, *A Reader's Guide*, p. 199. Smith quoted Wirt Williams, *The Tragic Art of Ernest Hemingway* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), p. 93.

<sup>63</sup> Ernest Hemingway, "Ten Indians," *Men Without Women* (New York: Scribners, 1927), p. 116. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

<sup>64</sup> Young, "Big World," p. 8, and Steven Carter, "A Note on Hemingway's 'Ten Indians' and Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*," *Hemingway Review* 20 (Spring 2001), 103-06.

<sup>65</sup> Anne Edwards Boutelle, "Hemingway and 'Papa': Killing of the Father in Nick Adams Stories," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 9:1 (1981/1982), 139, and Margaret A. Tilton, "Garnering an Opinion: A Double Look at Nick's Surrogate Mother and Her Relationship to Dr. Adams in Hemingway's 'Ten Little Indians,'" *Hemingway Review*, 20 (Fall 2000), 79-90.

<sup>66</sup> For one example, see James Nagel, “Catherine Barkley and Retrospective Narration in A Farewell to Arms,” *Ernest Hemingway: Six Decades of Criticism*, ed. Linda W. Martin (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1987), pp.171-93.

<sup>67</sup> Olivia Carr Edenfield, “Doomed Biologically: Sex and Entrapment in Ernest Hemingway’s ‘Cross-Country Snow,’” *Hemingway Review* 19 (Fall 1999), 141. This is, for the most part, the thesis of her essay. I do not agree with her statement that “ironically, the descriptions of skiing, usually linked by critics to Nick’s love of freedom, simultaneously describe the act of making love, the experience that has brought his days of independence to an end.” I do not see a sexual parallel in the text of “Cross-Country Snow” or in the sport of skiing.

<sup>68</sup> Martina Konig and Gerhard Pfeiffer, “‘The Bill Always Came’: Hemingway’s Use of the Epiphany in ‘Cross-Country Snow,’” *Hemingway Review* 16 (Fall 1996), 98. Another essay that is on “biological entrapment” is Olivia Carr Edenfield, “Doomed Biologically: Sex and Entrapment in Ernest Hemingway’s ‘Cross-Country Snow,’” *Hemingway Review* 19 (Fall 1999), 141-48.

<sup>69</sup> Young, “Big World,” 17.

<sup>70</sup> Flora, *Ernest Hemingway: A Study*, p. 42.

<sup>71</sup> Lynn, *Hemingway*, p. 191, and Ernest Hemingway, “Cross-Country Snow,” *In Our Time*, p. 111. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

<sup>72</sup> Edenfield, “Doomed Biologically,” 145.

<sup>73</sup> Young, *Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration*, p. 42.

<sup>74</sup> Flora, *Hemingway’s Nick Adams*, p. 198.

<sup>75</sup> Ernest Hemingway, “Fathers and Sons,” *Winner Take Nothing* (New York: Scribners, 1970), p. 226. All subsequent quotations are from this edition

<sup>76</sup> For an exploration of Hemingway's view of Henry James, see Neal B. Houston, "Hemingway: The Obsession with Henry James. 1924-1954," *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 39:1 (1985), 33-46. The James quote comes from Henry James, *Literary Criticism: French Writers and Other European Writers* (New York: Viking Press, 1984), p. 984.

<sup>77</sup> Myler Wilkinson, *Hemingway and Turgenev: The Nature of Literary Influence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Research Press, 1986), pp. 48-49.

<sup>78</sup> Richard McCann, "To Embrace or Kill: *Fathers and Sons*," *New Critical Approaches to the Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*, ed. Jackson J. Benson (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 272. Reprinted from *Iowa Journal of Literary Studies* 3:1-2 (1981), 11-18.

<sup>79</sup> See Ernest Hemingway, [Letter to Charles Scribner from Ernest Hemingway (July 20, 1951)], *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-1961*, ed. Carlos Baker (New York: Scribners, 1981), pp. 730-32.

<sup>80</sup> [Letter to Maxwell Perkins from Ernest Hemingway (October 15, 1944)], *Selected Letters*, p. 574.

<sup>81</sup> Christopher Ricks, Review of *Islands in the Stream, Hemingway: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 543. Reprinted from *New York Review of Books* 15 (October 8, 1970), 17-19.

<sup>82</sup> Jonathan Yardley. "Islands in the Stream," *New Republic* 163 (October 10, 1970), 25-26, 30.

<sup>83</sup> Paul Theroux. Review of *Islands in the Stream, Hemingway: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), pp. 578-84. Reprinted from *Encounter*, 36 (February 1971), 62-66.



<sup>84</sup> He risks his life by diving in after David's fish. He then gets in a series of fights in various bars for talking about the size of the broadbill.

<sup>85</sup> John Updike. Review of *Islands in the Stream*, *Hemingway: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 563. Reprinted from *New Statesman*, 80 (October 16, 1970), 489.

<sup>86</sup> Ernest Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* (New York: Scribners, 1970), pp. 98-99. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

<sup>87</sup> In his review of *Islands*, Bernard Oldsey went so far as to say that this section could have been titled "The Young Man and the Sea." "The Novel in the Drawer," *Nation* 211 (October 19, 1970), 376.

<sup>88</sup> Flora, *Ernest Hemingway: A Study*, pp. 105-07.

<sup>89</sup> Ernest Hemingway, "I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something," *The Complete Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Scribners, 1987), p. 599. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

<sup>90</sup> Ernest Hemingway, "Great News from the Mainland," *The Complete Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*, p. 602. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.