

## How Do You Like It Now, Gentlemen?

Profile of Ernest Hemingway by Lillian Ross  
in the *New Yorker*, May 13, 1950

ERNEST HEMINGWAY, who may well be the greatest living American novelist and short-story writer, rarely comes to New York. He spends most of his time on a farm, the Finca Vigia, nine miles outside Havana, with his wife, a domestic staff of nine, fifty-two cats, sixteen dogs, a couple of hundred pigeons, and three cows. When he does come to New York, it is only because he has to pass through it on his way somewhere else. Not long ago, on his way to Europe, he stopped in New York for a few days. I had written to him asking if I might see him when he came to town, and he had sent me a typewritten letter saying that would be fine and suggesting that I meet his plane at the airport.

'I don't want to see anybody I don't like, nor have publicity, nor be tied up all the time,' he went on. 'Want to go to the Bronx Zoo, Metropolitan Museum, Museum of Modern Art, ditto of Natural History, and see a fight. Want to see the good Breughel at the Met, the one, no two, fine Goyas and Mr. El Greco's Toledo. Don't want to go to Toots Shor's. Am going to try to get into town and out without having to shoot my mouth off. I want to give the joints a miss. Not seeing news people is not a pose. It is only to have time to see your friends.' In pencil, he added, 'Time is the least thing we have of.'

Time did not seem to be pressing Hemingway the day he flew in from Havana. He was to arrive at Idlewild late in the afternoon, and I went out to meet him. His plane had landed by the time I got there, and I found him standing at a gate waiting for his luggage and for his wife, who had gone to attend to it. He had one arm around a scuffed, dilapidated briefcase pasted up with travel stickers. He had the other around a wiry little man whose forehead was covered with enormous beads of perspiration. Hemingway was wearing a red plaid wool shirt, a figured wool necktie, a tan wool sweater-vest, a brown tweed jacket tight across the back and with sleeves too short for his arms, gray flannel slacks, Argyle socks, and loafers, and he looked bearish, cordial, and constricted.

His hair, which was very long in back, was gray, except at the temples, where it was white; his mustache was white, and he had a ragged, half-inch full white beard. There was a bump about the size of a walnut over his left eye. He was wearing steel-rimmed spectacles, with a piece of paper under the nosepiece. He was in no hurry to get into Manhattan. He crooked the arm around the briefcase into a tight hug and said that it contained the unfinished manuscript of his new book, 'Across the River and into the Trees.' He crooked the arm around the wiry little man into a tight hug and said he had been his seat companion on the flight. The man's name, as I got it in a mumbled introduction, was Myers, and he was returning from a business trip to

Cuba. Myers made a slight attempt to dislodge himself from the embrace, but Hemingway held on to him affectionately.

‘He read book all way up on plane,’ Hemingway said. He spoke with a perceptible Midwestern accent, despite the Indian talk. ‘He like book, I think,’ he added, giving Myers a little shake and beaming down at him.

‘Whew!’ said Myers.

‘Book too much for him,’ Hemingway said. ‘Book start slow, then increase in pace till it becomes impossible to stand. I bring emotion up to where you can’t stand it, then we level off, so we won’t have to provide oxygen tents for the readers. Book is like engine. We have to slack her off gradually.’

‘Whew!’ said Myers.

Hemingway released him. ‘Not trying for no-hit game in book,’ he said. ‘Going to win maybe twelve to nothing or maybe twelve to eleven.’

Myers looked puzzled.

‘She’s better book than ‘Farewell,’’ Hemingway said. ‘I think this is best one, but you are always prejudiced, I guess. Especially if you want to be champion.’ He shook Myers’ hand. ‘Much thanks for reading book,’ he said.

‘Pleasure,’ Myers said, and walked off unsteadily.

Hemingway watched him go, and then turned to me. ‘After you finish a book, you know, you’re dead,’ he said moodily. ‘But no one knows you’re dead. All they see is the irresponsibility that comes in after the terrible responsibility of writing.’ He said he felt tired but was in good shape physically; he had brought his weight down to two hundred and eight, and his blood pressure was down too. He had considerable rewriting to do on his book, and he was determined to keep at it until he was absolutely satisfied. ‘They can’t yank novelist like they can pitcher,’ he said. ‘Novelist has to go the full nine, even if it kills him.’

We were joined by Hemingway’s wife, Mary, a small, energetic, cheerful woman with close-cropped blond hair, who was wearing a long, belted mink coat. A porter pushing a cart heaped with luggage followed her. ‘Papa, everything is here,’ she said to Hemingway. ‘Now we ought to get going, Papa.’ He assumed the air of a man who was not going to be rushed. Slowly, he counted the pieces of luggage. There were fourteen, half of them, Mrs. Hemingway told me, extra-large Valpaks designed by her husband and bearing his coat of arms, also designed by him — a geometric design. When Hemingway had finished counting, his wife suggested that he tell the porter where to put the luggage. Hemingway told the porter to stay right there and watch it; then he turned to his wife and said, ‘Let’s not crowd, honey. Order of the day is to have a drink first.’

We went into the airport cocktail lounge and stood at the bar. Hemingway put his briefcase down on a chromium stool and pulled it close to him. He ordered bourbon and water. Mrs. Hemingway said she would have the same, and I ordered a cup of coffee. Hemingway told the bartender to bring double bourbons. He waited for

the drinks with impatience, holding on to the bar with both hands and humming an unrecognizable tune. Mrs. Hemingway said she hoped it wouldn't be dark by the time they got to New York. Hemingway said it wouldn't make any difference to him, because New York was a rough town, a phony town, a town that was the same in the dark as it was in the light, and he was not exactly overjoyed to be going there anyway. What he was looking forward to, he said, was Venice. 'Where I like it is out West in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, and I like Cuba and Paris and around Venice,' he said. 'Westport gives me the horrors.' Mrs. Hemingway lit a cigarette and handed me the pack. I passed it along to him, but he said he didn't smoke. Smoking ruins his sense of smell, a sense he finds completely indispensable for hunting. 'Cigarettes smell so awful to you when you have a nose that can truly smell,' he said, and laughed, hunching his shoulders and raising the back of his fist to his face, as though he expected somebody to hit him. Then he enumerated elk, deer, possum, and coon as some of the things he can truly smell.

The bartender brought the drinks. Hemingway took several large swallows and said he gets along fine with animals, sometimes better than with human beings. In Montana, once, he lived with a bear, and the bear slept with him, got drunk with him, and was a close friend. He asked me whether there were still bears at the Bronx Zoo, and I said I didn't know, but I was pretty sure there were bears at the Central Park Zoo. 'I always used to go to the Bronx Zoo with Granny Rice,' he said. 'I love to go to the zoo. But not on Sunday. I don't like to see the people making fun of the animals, when it should be the other way around.' Mrs. Hemingway took a small notebook out of her purse and opened it; she told me she had made a list of chores she and her husband had to do before their boat sailed. They included buying a hot-water-bottle cover, an elementary Italian grammar, a short history of Italy, and, for Hemingway, four woollen undershirts, four cotton underpants, two woollen underpants, bedroom slippers, a belt, and a coat. 'Papa has never had a coat,' she said. 'We've got to buy Papa a coat.' Hemingway grunted and leaned against the bar. 'A nice, rainproof coat,' Mrs. Hemingway said. 'And he's got to get his glasses fixed. He needs some good soft padding for the nosepiece. It cuts him up brutally. He's had that same piece of paper under the nosepiece for weeks. When he really wants to get cleaned up, he changes the paper.' Hemingway grunted again.

The bartender came up, and Hemingway asked him to bring another round of drinks. Then he said, 'First thing we do, Mary, as soon as we hit hotel, is call up the Kraut.' 'The Kraut,' he told me, with that same fist-to-the-face laugh, is his affectionate term for Marlene Dietrich, an old friend, and is part of a large vocabulary of special code terms and speech mannerisms indigenous to the Finca Vigia. 'We have a lot of fun talking a sort of joke language,' he said.

'First we call Marlene, and then we order caviar and champagne, Papa,' Mrs. Hemingway said. 'I've been waiting months for that caviar and champagne.'

'The Kraut, caviar, and champagne,' Hemingway said slowly, as though he were memorizing a difficult set of military orders. He finished his drink and gave the

bartender a repeat nod, and then he turned to me. 'You want to go with me to buy coat?' he asked.

'Buy coat and get glasses fixed,' Mrs. Hemingway said.

I said I would be happy to help him do both, and then I reminded him that he had said he wanted to see a fight. The only fight that week, I had learned from a friend who knows all about fights, was at the St. Nicholas Arena that night. I said that my friend had four tickets and would like to take all of us. Hemingway wanted to know who was fighting. When I told him, he said they were bums. Bums, Mrs. Hemingway repeated, and added that they had better fighters in Cuba. Hemingway gave me a long, reproachful look. 'Daughter, you've got to learn that a bad fight is worse than no fight,' he said. We would all go to a fight when he got back from Europe, he said, because it was absolutely necessary to go to several good fights a year. 'If you quit going for too long a time, then you never go near them,' he said. 'That would be very dangerous.' He was interrupted by a brief fit of coughing. 'Finally,' he concluded, 'you end up in one room and won't move.'

After dallying at the bar a while longer, the Hemingways asked me to go along with them to their hotel. Hemingway ordered the luggage loaded into one taxi, and the three of us got into another. It was dark now. As we drove along the boulevard, Hemingway watched the road carefully. Mrs. Hemingway told me that he always watches the road, usually from the front seat. It is a habit he got into during the First World War. I asked them what they planned to do in Europe. They said they were going to stay a week or so in Paris, and then drive to Venice.

'I love to go back to Paris,' Hemingway said, his eyes still fixed on the road. 'Am going in the back door and have no interviews and no publicity and never get a haircut, like in the old days. Want to go to cafés where I know no one but one waiter and his replacement, see all the new pictures and the old ones, go to the bike races and the fights, and see the new riders and fighters. Find good, cheap restaurants where you can keep your own napkin. Walk over all the town and see where we made our mistakes and where we had our few bright ideas. And learn the form and try and pick winners in the blue, smoky afternoons, and then go out the next day to play them at Auteuil and Enghien.'

'Papa is a good handicapper,' Mrs. Hemingway said.

'When I know the form,' he said.

We were crossing the Queensboro Bridge, and we had a good view of the Manhattan skyline. The lights were on in the tall office buildings. Hemingway did not seem to be impressed. 'This ain't my town,' he said. 'It's a town you come to for a short time. It's murder.' Paris is like another home to him, he said. 'I am as lonesome and as happy as I can be in that town we lived in and worked and learned and grew up in, and then fought our way back into.' Venice is another of his home towns. The last time he and his wife were in Italy, they lived for four months in Venice and the Cortina Valley, and he went hunting, and now he had put the locale and some of the

people in the book he was writing. ‘Italy was so damned wonderful,’ he said. ‘It was sort of like having died and gone to Heaven, a place you’d figured never to see.’

Mrs. Hemingway said that she had broken her right ankle skiing there but that she planned to go skiing there again. Hemingway was hospitalized in Padua with an eye infection, which developed into erysipelas, but he wanted to go back to Italy and wanted to see his many good friends there. He was looking forward to seeing the gondoliers on a windy day, the Gritti Palace hotel, where they stayed during their last visit, and the Locanda Cipriani, an old inn on Torcello, an island in the lagoon northeast of Venice on which some of the original Venetians lived before they built Venice. About seventy people live on Torcello, and the men are professional duck hunters. While there, Hemingway went duck-hunting a lot with the gardener of the old inn. ‘We’d go around through the canals and jump-shoot, and I’d walk the prairies at low tide for snipe,’ he said. ‘It was a big fly route for ducks that came all the way down from the Pripet Marshes. I shot good and thus became a respected local character. They have some sort of little bird that comes through, after eating grapes in the north, on his way to eat grapes in the south. The local characters sometimes shot them sitting, and I occasionally shot them flying. Once, I shot two high doubles, rights and lefts, in a row, and the gardener cried with emotion. Coming home, I shot a high duck against the rising moon and dropped him in the canal. That precipitated an emotional crisis I thought I would never get him out of but did, with about a pint of Chianti. We each took a pint out with us. I drank mine to keep warm coming home. He drank his when overcome by emotion.’ We were silent for a while, and then Hemingway said, ‘Venice was lovely.’

The Hemingways were stopping at the Sherry-Netherland. Hemingway registered and told the room clerk that he did not want any announcement made of his arrival and did not want any visitors, or any telephone calls either, except from Miss Dietrich. Then we went up to the suite — living room, bed room, and serving pantry — that had been reserved for them. Hemingway paused at the entrance and scouted the living room. It was large, decorated in garish colors, and furnished with imitation Chippendale furniture and an imitation fireplace containing imitation coals.

‘Joint looks O.K.,’ he said. ‘Guess they call this the Chinese Gothic Room.’ He moved in and took the room.

Mrs. Hemingway went over to a bookcase and held up a sample of its contents. ‘Look, Papa,’ she said. ‘They’re phony. They’re pasteboard backs, Papa. They’re not real books.’

Hemingway put his briefcase down on a bright-red couch and advanced on the bookcase, then slowly, with expression, read the titles aloud — ‘Elementary Economics,’ ‘Government of the United States,’ ‘Sweden, the Land and the People,’ and ‘Sleep in Peace,’ by Phyllis Bentley. ‘I think we are an outfit headed for extinction,’ he said, starting to take off his necktie.

After getting his necktie off, and then his jacket, Hemingway handed them to his wife, who went into the bedroom, saying she was going to unpack. He unbuttoned his

collar and went over to the telephone. ‘Got to call the Kraut,’ he said. He telephoned the Plaza and asked for Miss Dietrich. She was out, and he left word for her to come over for supper. Then he called room service and ordered caviar and a couple of bottles of Perrier-Jouët, brut.

Hemingway went back to the bookcase and stood there stiffly, as though he could not decide what to do with himself. He looked at the pasteboard backs again and said, ‘Phony, just like the town.’ I said that there was a tremendous amount of talk about him these days in literary circles — that the critics seemed to be talking and writing definitively not only about the work he had done but about the work he was going to do. He said that of all the people he did not wish to see in New York, the people he wished least to see were the critics. ‘They are like those people who go to ball games and can’t tell the players without a score card,’ he said. ‘I am not worried about what anybody I do not like might do. What the hell! If they can do you harm, let them do it. It is like being a third baseman and protesting because they hit line drives to you. Line drives are regrettable, but to be expected.’ The closest competitors of the critics among those he wished least to see, he said, were certain writers who wrote books about the war when they had not seen anything of war at first hand. ‘They are just like an outfielder who will drop a fly on you when you have pitched to have the batter hit a high fly to that outfielder, or when they’re pitching they try to strike everybody out.’ When he pitched, he said, he never struck out anybody, except under extreme necessity. ‘I knew I had only so many fast balls in that arm,’ he said. ‘Would make them pop to short instead, or fly out, or hit it on the ground, bouncing.’

A waiter arrived with the caviar and champagne, and Hemingway told him to open one of the bottles. Mrs. Hemingway came in from the bedroom and said she couldn’t find his toothbrush. He said that he didn’t know where it was but that he could easily buy another. Mrs. Hemingway said all right, and went back into the bedroom. Hemingway poured two glasses of champagne, gave one to me, and picked up the other one and took a sip. The waiter watched him anxiously. Hemingway hunched his shoulders and said something in Spanish to the waiter. They both laughed, and the waiter left. Hemingway took his glass over to the red couch and sat down, and I sat in a chair opposite him.

‘I can remember feeling so awful about the first war that I couldn’t write about it for ten years,’ he said, suddenly very angry. ‘The wound combat makes in you, as a writer, is a very slow-healing one. I wrote three stories about it in the old days — ‘In Another Country,’ ‘A Way You’ll Never Be,’ and ‘Now I Lay Me.’’ He mentioned a war writer who, he said, was apparently thinking of himself as Tolstoy, but who’d be able to play Tolstoy only on the Bryn Mawr field-hockey team. ‘He never hears a shot fired in anger, and he sets out to beat who? Tolstoy, an artillery officer who fought at Sevastopol, who knew his stuff, who was a hell of a man anywhere you put him — bed, bar, in an empty room where he had to think. I started out very quiet and I beat Mr. Turgenev. Then I trained hard and I beat Mr. de Maupassant. I’ve fought two

draws with Mr. Stendhal, and I think I had an edge in the last one. But nobody's going to get me in any ring with Mr. Tolstoy unless I'm crazy or I keep getting better.'

He began his new book as a short story. 'Then I couldn't stop it. It went straight on into a novel,' he said. 'That's the way all my novels got started. When I was twenty-five, I read novels by Somersault Maugham and Stephen St. Vixen Benét.' He laughed hoarsely. 'They had written novels, and I was ashamed because I had not written any novels. So I wrote 'The Sun' when I was twenty-seven, and I wrote it in six weeks, starting on my birthday, July 21st, in Valencia, and finishing it September 6th, in Paris. But it was really lousy and the rewriting took nearly five months. Maybe that will encourage young writers so they won't have to go get advice from their psychoanalysts. Analyst once wrote me, What did I learn from psychoanalysts? I answered, Very little but hope they had learned as much as they were able to understand from my published works. You never saw a counter-puncher who was punchy. Never lead against a hitter unless you can outhit him. Crowd a boxer, and take everything he has, to get inside. Duck a swing. Block a hook. And counter a jab with everything you own. Papa's delivery of hard-learned facts of life.'

Hemingway poured himself another glass of champagne. He always wrote in longhand, he said, but he recently bought a tape recorder and was trying to get up the courage to use it. 'I'd like to learn talk machine,' he said. 'You just tell talk machine anything you want and get secretary to type it out.' He writes without facility, except for dialogue. 'When the people are talking, I can hardly write it fast enough or keep up with it, but with an almost unbearable high manifold pleasure. I put more inches on than she will take, and then fly her as near as I know to how she should be flown, only flying as crazy as really good pilots fly crazy sometimes. Most of the time flying conservatively but with an awfully fast airplane that makes up for the conservatism. That way, you live longer. I mean your writing lives longer. How do you like it now, gentlemen?' The question seemed to have some special significance for him, but he did not bother to explain it.

I wanted to know whether, in his opinion, the new book was different from his others, and he gave me another long, reproachful look. 'What do you think?' he said after a moment. 'You don't expect me to write "The Farewell to Arms Boys in Addis Ababa," do you? Or "The Farewell to Arms Boys Take a Gunboat"?' The book is about the command level in the Second World War. 'I am not interested in the G.I. who wasn't one,' he said, suddenly angry again. 'Or the injustices done to me, with a capital 'M.' I am interested in the goddam sad science of war.' The new novel has a good deal of profanity in it. 'That's because in war they talk profane, although I always try to talk gently,' he said, sounding like a man who is trying to believe what he is saying. 'I think I've got 'Farewell' beat in this one,' he went on. He touched his briefcase. 'It hasn't got the youth and the ignorance.' Then he asked wearily, 'How do you like it now, gentlemen?'

There was a knock at the door, and Hemingway got up quickly and opened it. It was Miss Dietrich. Their reunion was a happy one. Mrs. Hemingway came out of the

bedroom and greeted the guest enthusiastically. Miss Dietrich stood back from Hemingway and looked at him with approval. 'Papa, you look wonderful,' she said slowly.

'I sure missed you, daughter,' said Hemingway. He raised his fist to his face, and his shoulders shook as he laughed silently.

Miss Dietrich was wearing a mink coat. She sighed loudly, took off the coat, and handed it to Mrs. Hemingway. Then she sighed again and sat down in an overstuffed chair. Hemingway poured a glass of champagne, brought it to her, and refilled the other glasses.

'The Kraut's the best that ever came into the ring,' he said as he handed me my glass. Then he pulled a chair up beside Miss Dietrich's, and they compared notes on friends and on themselves. They talked about theatre and motion-picture people, one of whom, a man, Hemingway referred to as a 'sea heel.'

Miss Dietrich wanted to know what a 'sea heel' was.

'The sea is bigger than the land,' he told her.

Mrs. Hemingway went into the serving pantry and came out in a few minutes with caviar spread on toast.

'Mary, I am telling Papa how I have to behave because I am a grandmother,' Miss Dietrich said, taking a piece of toast. 'I have to think always of the children. You know, Papa?'

Hemingway gave a sympathetic grunt, and Miss Dietrich took from her purse some snapshots of her grandson and passed them around. He was eighteen months old, she told us. Hemingway said he looked like a winner, and that he would be proud to own a piece of him if he ever got into the ring.

Miss Dietrich said that her daughter was going to have another child soon. 'I'll be a grandmother again, Papa,' she said.

Hemingway gave her a bleak look. 'I'm going to be a grandfather in a few months,' he said. 'My son Bumby's wife.'

Mrs. Hemingway told me that Bumby is the nickname of her husband's eldest son, John, an Army captain stationed in Berlin. His two other sons, she said, are Patrick, known as Mouse, who is a twenty-one-year-old sophomore at Harvard, and is planning to get married in June, and Gregory, known as Gigi, who is eighteen and a freshman at St. John's, at Annapolis. In addition to the present Mrs. Hemingway, Patrick is going to invite to his wedding his and Gigi's mother Pauline Pfeiffer, who was Hemingway's second wife. Bumby's mother and Hemingway's first wife was Hadley Richardson, who is now Mrs. Paul Scott Mowrer, and Hemingway's third wife was Martha Gellhorn.

'Everything you do, you do for the sake of the children,' Miss Dietrich said.

'Everything for the children,' Hemingway said. He refilled Miss Dietrich's glass.

'Thank you, Papa,' she said, and sighed. She lives at the Plaza, she told him, but spends a good deal of her time at the apartment of her daughter, who lives on Third



Avenue. ‘Papa, you should see me when they go out,’ she said, and took a sip of champagne. ‘I’m the baby-sitter. As soon as they leave the house, I go around and look in all the corners and straighten the drawers and clean up. I can’t stand a house that isn’t neat and clean. I go around in all the corners with towels I bring with me from the Plaza, and I clean up the whole house. Then they come home at one or two in the morning, and I take the dirty towels and some of the baby’s things that need washing, and, with my bundle over my shoulder, I go out and get a taxi, and the driver, he thinks I am this old washerwoman from Third Avenue, and he takes me in the taxi and talks to me with sympathy, so I am afraid to let him take me to the Plaza. I get out a block away from the Plaza and I walk home with my bundle and I wash the baby’s things, and then I go to sleep.’

‘Daughter, you’re hitting them with the bases loaded,’ Hemingway said earnestly.

There was a ring at the door, and a bellboy brought in a florist’s box. Mrs. Hemingway opened it and took out some green orchids and read the card: ‘Love from Adeline.’ ‘Who the hell is Adeline?’ she asked. Nobody knew. Mrs. Hemingway put the flowers in a vase and said it was time to order supper.

As we ate, the Hemingways and Miss Dietrich talked about the war. All three had seen it at first hand. Mrs. Hemingway, who, as Mary Welsh, was a Timecorrespondent in London, met Hemingway there during the war, and both saw a good deal of Miss Dietrich there and, later on, in Paris. Miss Dietrich was a U.S.O. entertainer, and performed on almost every front in the European theatre. She grew a little sad as she talked about the war. She had loved entertaining the troops, and the spirit overseas, she said, was the best she had ever found in people anywhere. ‘Everybody was the way people should be all the time,’ she continued. ‘Not mean and afraid but good to each other.’

Hemingway raised his glass in a toast to her.

‘I’ve finally figured out why Papa sometimes gets mean now that the war is over,’ Mrs. Hemingway said. ‘It’s because there is no occasion for him to be valorous in peacetime.’

‘It was different in the war,’ Miss Dietrich said. ‘People were not so selfish and they helped each other.’

Hemingway asked her about some recordings she had made, during the war, of popular American songs with lyrics translated into German, and said he’d like to have them. ‘I’ll give you manuscript of new book for recordings if you want to trade even, daughter,’ he told her.

‘Papa, I don’t trade with you. I love you,’ said Miss Dietrich.

‘You’re the best that ever came into the ring,’ Hemingway said.

Mrs. Hemingway said, ‘Who the hell is Adeline?’

Late the next morning, I was awakened by a telephone call from Hemingway, who asked me to come right over to the hotel. He sounded urgent. I had a fast cup of

coffee, and when I turned up at the suite, I found the door open and walked in. Hemingway was talking on the telephone. He was wearing an orange plaid bathrobe that looked too small for him and he had a glass of champagne in one hand. His beard looked more scraggly than it had the day before. ‘My boy Patrick is coming down from Harvard and I’d like to reserve a room for him,’ he was saying into the telephone. ‘P,’ as in ‘Patrick.’ He paused and took a sip of champagne. ‘Much obliged. He’ll be down from Harvard.’

Hemingway hung up, and from his bathrobe pocket took a box of pills. He shook two of them into the palm of his hand, and downed them with a mouthful of champagne. He told me that he had been up since six, that his wife was still asleep, and that he had done enough work for that morning and wanted to talk, an activity he finds relaxing. He always wakes at daybreak, he explained, because his eyelids are especially thin and his eyes especially sensitive to light. ‘I have seen all the sunrises there have been in my life, and that’s half a hundred years,’ he said. He had done considerable revision that morning on the manuscript. ‘I wake up in the morning and my mind starts making sentences, and I have to get rid of them fast — talk them or write them down,’ he said. ‘How did you like the Kraut?’

Very much, I said.

‘I love the Kraut and I love Ingrid,’ he said. ‘If I weren’t married to Miss Mary and didn’t love Miss Mary, I would try to hook up with either of them. Each one has what the other hasn’t. And what each has, I love very much.’ For a moment, he looked bewildered, and then he said quickly, ‘Would never marry an actress, on account they have their careers and they work bad hours.’

I asked him whether he still wanted to buy a coat, and he said sure but he didn’t want to be rushed or crowded and it was cold outside. He went over to the vase of green orchids and looked at the card, which was still attached to them. Adeline, he said, was the name of nobody he knew or ever would know, if he could help it. On a serving table near the couch were two champagne coolers, each containing ice and a bottle. He carried his glass over there and held up one of the bottles and squinted at it. It was empty. He put it back in the cooler, head down. Then he opened the other bottle, and as he poured some champagne into his glass, he sang, ‘So feed me am-mu-nition, keep me in the Third Division, your dog-face soldier boy’s O.K.’ Breaking off, he said, ‘Song of the Third Infantry Division. I like this song when I need music inside myself to go on. I love all music, even opera. But I have no talent for it and cannot sing. I have a perfect goddam ear for music, but I can’t play any instrument by ear, not even the piano. My mother used to make me play the cello. She took me out of school one year to learn the cello, when I wanted to be out in the fresh air playing football. She wanted to have chamber music in the house.’

His briefcase was lying open on a chair near the desk, and the manuscript pages were protruding from it; someone seemed to have stuffed them into the briefcase without much care. Hemingway told me that he had been cutting the manuscript. ‘The test of a book is how much good stuff you can throw away,’ he said. ‘When I’m

writing it, I'm just as proud as a goddam lion. I use the oldest words in the English language. People think I'm an ignorant bastard who doesn't know the ten-dollar words. I know the ten-dollar words. There are older and better words which if you arrange them in the proper combination you make it stick. Remember, anybody who pulls his erudition or education on you hasn't any. Also, daughter, remember that I never carried Teddy bears to bed with me since I was four. Now, with seventy-eight-year-old grandmothers taking advantage of loopholes in the G.I. Bill of Rights whereby a gold-star mother can receive her son's education, I thought of establishing a scholarship and sending myself to Harvard, because my Aunt Arabelle has always felt very bad that I am the only Hemingway boy that never went to college. But I have been so busy I have not got around to it. I only went to high school and a couple of military cram courses, and never took French. I began to learn to read French by reading the A.P. story in the French paper after reading the American A.P. story, and finally learned to read it by reading accounts of things I had seen — *les événements sportifs* — and from that and *les crimes* it was only a jump to Dr. de Maupassant, who wrote about things I had seen or could understand. Dumas, Daudet, Stendhal, who when I read him I knew that was the way I wanted to be able to write. Mr. Flaubert, who always threw them perfectly straight, hard, high, and inside. Then Mr. Baudelaire, that I learned my knuckle ball from, and Mr. Rimbaud, who never threw a fast ball in his life. Mr. Gide and Mr. Valéry I couldn't learn from. I think Mr. Valéry was too smart for me. Like Jack Britton and Benny Leonard.'

Jack Britton, he continued, was a fighter he admired very much. 'Jack Britton kept on his toes and moved around and never let them hit him solid,' he said. 'I like to keep on my toes and never let them hit me solid. Never lead against a hitter unless you can outhit him. Crowd a boxer,' he said, assuming a boxing stance and holding his right hand, which was grasping the champagne glass, close to his chest. With his left hand, he punched at the air, saying, 'Remember. Duck a swing. Block a hook. And counter a jab with everything you own.' He straightened up and looked thoughtfully at his glass. Then he said, 'One time, I asked Jack, speaking of a fight with Benny Leonard, 'How did you handle Benny so easy, Jack?' 'Ernie,' he said, 'Benny is an awfully smart boxer. All the time he's boxing, he's thinking. All the time he was thinking, I was hitting him.' 'Hemingway gave a hoarse laugh, as though he had heard the story for the first time. 'Jack moved very geometrically pure, never one-hundredth of an inch too much. No one ever got a solid shot at him. Wasn't anybody he couldn't hit any time he wanted to.' He laughed again. 'All the time he was thinking, I was hitting him.' 'The anecdote, he told me, had been in the original version of his short story 'Fifty Grand,' but Scott Fitzgerald had persuaded him to take it out. 'Scott thought everybody knew about it, when only Jack Britton and I knew about it, because Jack told it to me,' he said. 'So Scott told me to take it out. I didn't want to, but Scott was a successful writer and a writer I respected, so I listened to him and took it out.'

Hemingway sat down on the couch and nodded his head up and down sharply a couple of times to get my attention. 'As you get older, it is harder to have heroes, but it is sort of necessary,' he said. 'I have a cat named Boise, who wants to be a human being,' he went on slowly, lowering his voice to a kind of grumble. 'So Boise eats everything that human beings eat. He chews Vitamin B Complex capsules, which are as bitter as aloes. He thinks I am holding out on him because I won't give him blood-pressure tablets, and because I let him go to sleep without Seconal.' He gave a short, rumbling laugh. 'I am a strange old man,' he said. 'How do you like it now, gentlemen?'

Fifty, Hemingway said, on reconsideration, is not supposed to be old. 'It is sort of fun to be fifty and feel you are going to defend the title again,' he said. 'I won it in the twenties and defended it in the thirties and the forties, and I don't mind at all defending it in the fifties.'

After a while, Mrs. Hemingway came into the room. She was wearing gray flannel slacks and a white blouse, and she said she felt wonderful, because she had had her first hot bath in six months. She walked over to the green orchids and looked at the card. 'Who is Adeline?' she asked. Then she abandoned the problem and said she was going out to do her errands, and suggested that Hemingway get dressed and go out and do his. He said that it was lunch-time and that if they went out then, they would have to stop someplace for lunch, whereas if they had lunch sent up to the room, they might save time. Mrs. Hemingway said she would order lunch while he got dressed. Still holding his glass, he reluctantly got up from the couch. Then he finished his drink and went into the bedroom. By the time he came out — wearing the same outfit as the day before, except for a blue shirt with a button-down collar — a waiter had set the table for our lunch. We couldn't have lunch without a bottle of Tavel, Hemingway said, and we waited until the waiter had brought it before starting to eat.

Hemingway began with oysters, and he chewed each one very thoroughly. 'Eat good and digest good,' he told us.

'Papa, please get glasses fixed,' Mrs. Hemingway said.

He nodded. Then he nodded a few times at me — a repetition of the sign for attention. 'What I want to be when I am old is a wise old man who won't bore,' he said, then paused while the waiter set a plate of asparagus and an artichoke before him and poured the Tavel. Hemingway tasted the wine and gave the waiter a nod. 'I'd like to see all the new fighters, horses, ballets, bike riders, dames, bullfighters, painters, airplanes, sons of bitches, café characters, big international whores, restaurants, years of wine, newsreels, and never have to write a line about any of it,' he said. 'I'd like to write lots of letters to my friends and get back letters. Would like to be able to make love good until I was eighty-five, the way Clemenceau could. And what I would like to be is not Bernie Baruch. I wouldn't sit on park benches, although I might go around the park once in a while to feed the pigeons, and also I wouldn't have any long beard, so there could be an old man didn't look like Shaw.' He stopped

and ran the back of his hand along his beard, and looked around the room reflectively. ‘Have never met Mr. Shaw,’ he said. ‘Never been to Niagara Falls, either. Anyway, I would take up harness racing. You aren’t up near the top at that until you’re over seventy-five. Then I could get me a good young ball club, maybe, like Mr. Mack. Only I wouldn’t signal with a program — so as to break the pattern. Haven’t figured out yet what I would signal with. And when that’s over, I’ll make the prettiest corpse since Pretty Boy Floyd. Only suckers worry about saving their souls. Who the hell should care about saving his soul when it is a man’s duty to lose it intelligently, the way you would sell a position you were defending, if you could not hold it, as expensively as possible, trying to make it the most expensive position that was ever sold. It isn’t hard to die.’ He opened his mouth and laughed, at first soundlessly and then loudly. ‘No more worries,’ he said. With his fingers, he picked up a long spear of asparagus and looked at it without enthusiasm. ‘It takes a pretty good man to make any sense when he’s dying,’ he said.

Mrs. Hemingway had finished eating, and she quickly finished her wine. Hemingway slowly finished his. I looked at my wristwatch, and found that it was almost three. The waiter started clearing the table, and we all got up. Hemingway stood looking sadly at the bottle of champagne, which was not yet empty. Mrs. Hemingway put on her coat, and I put on mine.

‘The half bottle of champagne is the enemy of man,’ Hemingway said. We all sat down again.

‘If I have any money, I can’t think of any better way of spending money than on champagne,’ Hemingway said, pouring some.

When the champagne was gone, we left the suite. Downstairs, Mrs. Hemingway told us to remember to get glasses fixed, and scooted away.

Hemingway balked for a moment in front of the hotel. It was a cool, cloudy day. This was not good weather for him to be out in, he said sulkily, adding that his throat felt kind of sore. I asked him if he wanted to see a doctor. He said no. ‘I never trust a doctor I have to pay,’ he said, and started across Fifth Avenue. A flock of pigeons flew by. He stopped, looked up, and aimed an imaginary rifle at them. He pulled the trigger, and then looked disappointed. ‘Very difficult shot,’ he said. He turned quickly and pretended to shoot again. ‘Easy shot,’ he said. ‘Look!’ He pointed to a spot on the pavement. He seemed to be feeling better, but not much better.

I asked him if he wanted to stop first at his optician’s. He said no. I mentioned the coat. He shrugged. Mrs. Hemingway had suggested that he look for a coat at Abercrombie & Fitch, so I mentioned Abercrombie & Fitch. He shrugged again and lumbered slowly over to a taxi, and we started down Fifth Avenue in the afternoon traffic. At the corner of Fifty-fourth, we stopped on a signal from the traffic cop. Hemingway growled. ‘I love to see an Irish cop being cold,’ he said. ‘Give you eight to one he was an M.P. in the war. Very skillful cop. Feints and fakes good. Cops are not like they are in the Hellinger movies. Only once in a while.’ We started up again, and he showed me where he once walked across Fifth Avenue with Scott Fitzgerald. ‘Scott

wasn't at Princeton any more, but he was still talking football,' he said, without animation. 'The ambition of Scott's life was to be on the football team. I said, 'Scott, why don't you cut out this football?' I said, 'Come on, boy.' He said, 'You're crazy.' That's the end of that story. If you can't get through traffic, how the hell are you gonna get through the line? But I am not Thomas Mann,' he added. 'Get another opinion.'

By the time we reached Abercrombie's, Hemingway was moody again. He got out of the taxi reluctantly and reluctantly entered the store. I asked him whether he wanted to look at a coat first or something else.

'Coat,' he said unhappily.

In the elevator, Hemingway looked even bigger and bulkier than he had before, and his face had the expression of a man who is being forcibly subjected to the worst kind of misery. A middle-aged woman standing next to him stared at his scraggly white beard with obvious alarm and disapproval. 'Good Christ!' Hemingway said suddenly, in the silence of the elevator, and the middle-aged woman looked down at her feet.

The doors opened at our floor, and we got out and headed for a rack of topcoats. A tall, dapper clerk approached us, and Hemingway shoved his hands into his pants pockets and crouched forward. 'I think I still have credit in this joint,' he said to the clerk.

The clerk cleared his throat. 'Yes, sir,' he said.

'Want to see coat,' Hemingway said menacingly.

'Yes, sir,' said the clerk. 'What kind of coat did you wish to see, sir?'

'That one.' He pointed to a straight-hanging, beltless tan gabardine coat on the rack. The clerk helped him into it, and gently drew him over to a full-length mirror. 'Hangs like a shroud,' Hemingway said, tearing the coat off. 'I'm tall on top. Got any other coat?' he asked, as though he expected the answer to be no. He edged impatiently toward the elevators.

'How about this one, sir, with a removable lining, sir?' the clerk said. This one had a belt. Hemingway tried it on, studied himself in the mirror, and then raised his arms as though he were aiming a rifle. 'You going to use it for shooting, sir?' the clerk asked. Hemingway grunted, and said he would take the coat. He gave the clerk his name, and the clerk snapped his fingers. 'Of course!' he said. 'There was something —' Hemingway looked embarrassed and said to send the coat to him at the Sherry-Netherland, and then said he'd like to look at a belt.

'What kind of belt, Mr. Hemingway?' the clerk asked.

'Guess a brown one,' Hemingway said.

We moved over to the belt counter, and another clerk appeared.

'Will you show Mr. Hemingway a belt?' the first clerk said, and stepped back and thoughtfully watched Hemingway.

The second clerk took a tape measure from his pocket, saying he thought Hemingway was a size 44 or 46.

‘Wanta bet?’ Hemingway asked. He took the clerk’s hand and punched himself in the stomach with it.

‘Gee, he’s got a hard tummy,’ the belt clerk said. He measured Hemingway’s waistline. ‘Thirty-eight!’ he reported. ‘Small waist for your size. What do you do — a lot of exercise?’

Hemingway hunched his shoulders, feinted, laughed, and looked happy for the first time since we’d left the hotel. He punched himself in the stomach with his own fist.

‘Where you going — to Spain again?’ the belt clerk asked.

‘To Italy,’ Hemingway said, and punched himself in the stomach again. After Hemingway had decided on a brown calf belt, the clerk asked him whether he wanted a money belt. He said no — he kept his money in a checkbook.

Our next stop was the shoe department, and there Hemingway asked a clerk for some folding bedroom slippers.

‘Pullman slippers,’ the clerk said. ‘What size?’

‘Levens,’ Hemingway said bashfully. The slippers were produced, and he told the clerk he would take them. ‘I’ll put them in my pocket,’ he said. ‘Just mark them, so they won’t think I’m a shoplifter.’

‘You’d be surprised what’s taken from the store,’ said the clerk, who was very small and very old. ‘Why, the other morning, someone on the first floor went off with a big roulette wheel. Just picked it up and —’

Hemingway was not listening. ‘Wolfie!’ he shouted at a man who seemed almost seven feet tall and whose back was to us.

The man turned around. He had a big, square red face, and at the sight of Hemingway it registered extreme joy. ‘Papa!’ he shouted.

The big man and Hemingway embraced and pounded each other on the back for quite some time. It was Winston Guest. Mr. Guest told us he was going upstairs to pick up a gun and proposed that we come along. Hemingway asked what kind of gun, and Guest said a ten-gauge magnum.

‘Beautiful gun,’ Hemingway said, taking his bedroom slippers from the clerk and stuffing them into his pocket.

In the elevator, Hemingway and Guest checked with each other on how much weight they had lost. Guest said he was now down to two hundred and thirty-five, after a good deal of galloping around on polo ponies. Hemingway said he was down to two hundred and eight, after shooting ducks in Cuba and working on his book.

‘How’s the book now, Papa?’ Guest asked, as we got out of the elevator.

Hemingway gave his fist-to-the-face laugh and said he was going to defend his title once more. ‘Wolfie, all of a sudden I found I could write wonderful again, instead

of just biting on the nail,' he said slowly. 'I think it took a while for my head to get rebuilt inside. You should not, ideally, break a writer's head open or give him seven concussions in two years or break six ribs on him when he is forty-seven or push a rear-view-mirror support through the front of his skull opposite the pituitary gland or, really, shoot at him too much. On the other hand, Wolfie, leave the sons of bitches alone and they are liable to start crawling back into the womb or somewhere if you drop a porkpie hat.' He exploded into laughter.

Guest's huge frame shook with almost uncontrollable laughter. 'God, Papa!' he said. 'I still have your shooting clothes out at the island. When are you coming out to shoot, Papa?'

Hemingway laughed again and pounded him on the back. 'Wolfie, you're so damn big!' he said.

Guest arranged to have his gun delivered, and then we all got into the elevator, the two of them talking about a man who caught a black marlin last year that weighed a thousand and six pounds.

'How do you like it now, gentlemen?' Hemingway asked.

'God, Papa!' said Guest.

On the ground floor, Guest pointed to a mounted elephant head on the wall. 'Pygmy elephant, Papa,' he said.

'Miserable elephant,' said Hemingway.

Their arms around each other, they went out to the street. I said that I had to leave, and Hemingway told me to be sure to come over to the hotel early the next morning so that I could go with him and Patrick, to the Metropolitan Museum. As I walked off, I heard Guest say, 'God, Papa, I'm not ashamed of anything I've ever done.'

'Nor, oddly enough, am I,' said Hemingway.

I looked around. They were punching each other in the stomach and laughing raucously.

The following morning, the door of the Hemingway suite was opened for me by Patrick, a shy young man of medium height, with large eyes and a sensitive face. He was wearing gray flannel slacks, a white shirt open at the collar, Argyle socks, and loafers. Mrs. Hemingway was writing a letter at the desk. As I came in, she looked up and said, 'As soon as Papa has finished dressing, we're going to look at pictures.' She went back to her letter.

Patrick told me that he'd just as soon spend the whole day looking at pictures, and that he had done a bit of painting himself. 'Papa has to be back here for lunch with Mr. Scribner,' he said, and added that he himself was going to stay in town until the next morning, when the Hemingways sailed. The telephone rang and he answered it. 'Papa, I think it's Gigi calling you!' he shouted to the bedroom.

Hemingway emerged, in shirtsleeves, and went to the phone. 'How are you, kid?' he said into it, then asked Gigi to come down to the Finca for his next vacation.



‘You’re welcome down there, Gigi,’ he said. ‘You know that cat you liked? The one you named Smelly? We renamed him Ecstasy. Every one of our cats knows his own name.’ After hanging up, he told me that Gigi was a wonderful shot — that when he was eleven he had won second place in the shoot championship of Cuba. ‘Isn’t that the true gen, Mouse?’ he asked.

‘That’s right, Papa,’ said Patrick.

I wanted to know what ‘true gen’ means, and Hemingway explained that it is British slang for ‘information,’ from ‘intelligence.’ ‘It’s divided into three classes — gen; the true gen, which is as true as you can state it; and the really true gen, which you can operate on,’ he said. He looked at the green orchids and asked whether anybody had found out who Adeline was.

‘I forgot to tell you, Papa,’ said Mrs. Hemingway. ‘It’s Mother. Adeline is Mother.’ She turned to me and said that her mother and father are in their late seventies, that they live in Chicago, and that they always remember to do exactly the right thing at the right time.

‘My mother never sent me any flowers,’ Hemingway said. His mother is now about eighty, he said, and lives in River Forest, Illinois. His father, who was a physician, has been dead for many years; he shot himself when Ernest was a boy. ‘Let’s get going if we’re going to see the pictures,’ he said. ‘I told Charlie Scribner to meet me here at one. Excuse me while I wash. In big city, I guess you wash your neck.’ He went back into the bedroom. While he was gone, Mrs. Hemingway told me that Ernest was the second of six children — Marcelline, then Ernest, Ursula, Madelaine, Carol, and the youngest, his only brother, Leicester. All the sisters were named after saints. Every one of the children is married now; Leicester is living in Bogotá, Colombia, where he is attached to the U. S. Embassy.

Hemingway came out in a little while, wearing his new coat. Mrs. Hemingway and Patrick put on their coats, and we went downstairs. It was raining, and we hurried into a taxi. On the way to the Metropolitan, Hemingway said very little; he just hummed to himself and watched the street. Mrs. Hemingway told me that he was usually unhappy in taxis, because he could not sit in the front seat to watch the road ahead. He looked out the window and pointed to a flock of birds flying across the sky. ‘In this town, birds fly, but they’re not serious about it,’ he said. ‘New York birds don’t climb.’

When we drew up at the Museum entrance, a line of school children was moving in slowly. Hemingway impatiently led us past them. In the lobby, he paused, pulled a silver flask from one of his coat pockets, unscrewed its top, and took a long drink. Putting the flask back in his pocket, he asked Mrs. Hemingway whether she wanted to see the Goyas first or the Breughels. She said the Breughels.

‘I learned to write by looking at paintings in the Luxembourg Museum in Paris,’ he said. ‘I never went past high school. When you’ve got a hungry gut and the museum is free, you go to the museum. Look,’ he said, stopping before ‘Portrait of a

Man,' which has been attributed to both Titian and Giorgione. 'They were old Venice boys, too.'

'Here's what I like, Papa,' Patrick said, and Hemingway joined his son in front of 'Portrait of Federigo Gonzaga (1500–1540),' by Francesco Francia. It shows, against a landscape, a small boy with long hair and a cloak.

'This is what we try to do when we write, Mousie,' Hemingway said, pointing to the trees in the background. 'We always have this in when we write.'

Mrs. Hemingway called to us. She was looking at 'Portrait of the Artist,' by Van Dyck. Hemingway looked at it, nodded approval, and said, 'In Spain, we had a fighter pilot named Whitey Dahl, so Whitey came to me one time and said, 'Mr. Hemingway, is Van Dyck a good painter?' I said, 'Yes, he is.' He said, 'Well, I'm glad, because I have one in my room and I like it very much, and I'm glad he's a good painter because I like him.' The next day, Whitey was shot down.'

We all walked over to Rubens' 'The Triumph of Christ Over Sin and Death.' Christ is shown surrounded by snakes and angels and is being watched by a figure in a cloud. Mrs. Hemingway and Patrick said they thought it didn't look like the usual Rubens.

'Yeah, he did that all right,' Hemingway said authoritatively. 'You can tell the real just as a bird dog can tell. Smell them. Or from having lived with very poor but very good painters.'

That settled that, and we went on to the Breughel room. It was closed, we discovered. The door bore a sign that read, 'now undertaking repairs.'

'They have our indulgence,' Hemingway said, and took another drink from his flask. 'I sure miss the good Breughel,' he said as we moved along. 'It's the great one, of the harvesters. It is a lot of people cutting grain, but he uses the grain geometrically, to make an emotion that is so strong for me that I can hardly take it.' We came to El Greco's green 'View of Toledo' and stood looking at it a long time. 'This is the best picture in the Museum for me, and Christ knows there are some lovely ones,' Hemingway said.

Patrick admired several paintings Hemingway didn't approve of. Every time this happened, Hemingway got into an involved, technical discussion with his son about it. Patrick would shake his head and laugh and say he respected Hemingway's opinions. He didn't argue much. 'What the hell!' Hemingway said suddenly. 'I don't want to be an art critic. I just want to look at pictures and be happy with them and learn from them. Now, this for me is a damn good picture.' He stood back and peered at a Reynolds entitled 'Colonel George Coussmaker,' which shows the Colonel leaning against a tree and holding his horse's bridle. 'Now, this Colonel is a son of a bitch who was willing to pay money to the best portrait painter of his day just to have himself painted,' Hemingway said, and gave a short laugh. 'Look at the man's arrogance and the strength in the neck of the horse and the way the man's legs hang. He's so arrogant he can afford to lean against a tree.'

We separated for a while and looked at paintings individually, and then Hemingway called us over and pointed to a picture labelled, in large letters, ‘Catharine Lorillard Wolfe’ and, in small ones, ‘By Cabanel.’ ‘This is where I got confused as a kid, in Chicago,’ he said. ‘My favorite painters for a long time were Bunte and Ryerson, two of the biggest and wealthiest families in Chicago. I always thought the names in big letters were the painters.’

After we reached the Cézannes and Degases and the other Impressionists, Hemingway became more and more excited, and discoursed on what each artist could do and how and what he had learned from each. Patrick listened respectfully and didn’t seem to want to talk about painting techniques any more. Hemingway spent several minutes looking at Cézanne’s ‘Rocks — Forest of Fontainebleau.’

‘This is what we try to do in writing, this and this, and the woods, and the rocks we have to climb over,’ he said. ‘Cézanne is my painter, after the early painters. Wonder, wonder painter. Degas was another wonder painter. I’ve never seen a bad Degas. You know what he did with the bad Degases? He burned them.’

Hemingway took another long drink from his flask. We came to Manet’s pastel portrait of Mlle. Valtresse de la Bigne, a young woman with blond hair coiled on the top of her head. Hemingway was silent for a while, looking at it; finally he turned away. ‘Manet could show the bloom people have when they’re still innocent and before they’ve been disillusioned,’ he said.

As we walked along, Hemingway said to me, ‘I can make a landscape like Mr. Paul Cézanne. I learned how to make a landscape from Mr. Paul Cézanne by walking through the Luxembourg Museum a thousand times with an empty gut, and I am pretty sure that if Mr. Paul was around, he would like the way I make them and be happy that I learned it from him.’ He had learned a lot from Mr. Johann Sebastian Bach, too. ‘In the first paragraphs of ‘Farewell,’ I used the word ‘and’ consciously over and over the way Mr. Johann Sebastian Bach used a note in music when he was emitting counterpoint. I can almost write like Mr. Johann sometimes — or, anyway, so he would like it. All such people are easy to deal with, because we all know you have to learn.’

‘Papa, look at this,’ Patrick said. He was looking at ‘Meditation on the Passion,’ by Carpaccio. Patrick said it had a lot of strange animals in it for a religious painting.

‘Huh!’ Hemingway said. ‘Those painters always put the sacred scenes, in the part of Italy they liked the best or where they came from or where their girls came from. They made their girls the Madonnas. This is supposed to be Palestine, and Palestine is a long way off, he figures. So he puts in a red parrot, and he puts in deer and a leopard. And then he thinks, This is the Far East and it’s far away. So he puts in the Moors, the traditional enemy of the Venetians.’ He paused and looked to see what else the painter had put in his picture. ‘Then he gets hungry, so he puts in rabbits,’ he said. ‘Goddam, Mouse, we saw a lot of good pictures. Mouse, don’t you think two hours is a long time looking at pictures?’

Everybody agreed that two hours was a long time looking at pictures, so Hemingway said that we would skip the Goyas, and that we would all go to the Museum again when they returned from Europe.

It was still raining when we came out of the Museum. ‘Goddam, I hate to go out in the rain,’ Hemingway said. ‘Goddam, I hate to get wet.’

Charles Scribner was waiting in the lobby of the hotel. ‘Ernest,’ he said, shaking Hemingway’s hand. He is a dignified, solemn, slow-speaking gentleman with silvery hair.

‘We’ve been looking at pictures, Charlie,’ Hemingway said as we went up in the elevator. ‘They have some pretty good pictures now, Charlie.’

Scribner nodded and said, ‘Yuh, yuh.’

‘Was fun for country boy like me,’ Hemingway said.

‘Yuh, yuh,’ said Scribner.

We went into the suite and took off our coats, and Hemingway said we would have lunch right there. He called room service and Mrs. Hemingway sat down at the desk to finish her letter. Hemingway sat down on the couch with Mr. Scribner and began telling him that he had been jamming, like a rider in a six-day bike race, and Patrick sat quietly in a corner and watched his father. The waiter came in and passed out menus. Scribner said he was going to order the most expensive item on the menu, because Hemingway was paying for it. He laughed tentatively, and Patrick laughed to keep him company. The waiter retired with our orders, and Scribner and Hemingway talked business for a while. Scribner wanted to know whether Hemingway had the letters he had written to him.

Hemingway said, ‘I carry them every place I go, Charlie, together with a copy of the poems of Robert Browning.’

Scribner nodded, and from the inner pocket of his jacket took some papers — copies of the contract for the new book, he said. The contract provided for an advance of twenty-five thousand dollars against royalties, beginning at fifteen per cent.

Hemingway signed the contract, and got up from the couch. Then he said, ‘Never ran as no genius, but I’ll defend the title again against all the good young new ones.’ He lowered his head, put his left foot forward, and jabbed at the air with a left and a right. ‘Never let them hit you solid,’ he said.

Scribner wanted to know where Hemingway could be reached in Europe. Care of the Guaranty Trust Company in Paris, Hemingway told him. ‘When we took Paris, I tried to take that bank and got smacked back,’ he said, and laughed a shy laugh. ‘I thought it would be awfully nice if I could take my own bank.’

‘Yuh, yuh,’ Scribner said. ‘What are you planning to do in Italy, Ernest?’

Hemingway said he would work in the mornings and see his Italian friends and go duck-hunting in the afternoons. ‘We shot three hundred and thirty-one ducks to six guns there one afternoon,’ he said. ‘Mary shot good, too.’

Mrs. Hemingway looked up. 'Any girl who marries Papa has to learn how to carry a gun,' she said, and returned to her letter-writing.

'I went hunting once in Suffolk, England,' Scribner said. Everyone waited politely for him to continue. 'I remember they gave me goose eggs to eat for breakfast in Suffolk. Then we went out to shoot. I didn't know how to get my gun off safety.'

'Hunting is sort of a good life,' Hemingway said. 'Better than Westport or Bronxville, I think.'

'After I learned how to get my gun off safety, I couldn't hit anything,' Scribner said.

'I'd like to make the big Monte Carlo shoot and the Championship of the World at San Remo,' Hemingway said. 'I'm in pretty good shape to shoot either one. It's not a spectator sport at all. But exciting to do and wonderful to manage. I used to handle Wolfie in big shoots. He is a great shot. It was like handling a great horse.'

'I finally got one,' Scribner said timidly.

'Got what?' asked Hemingway.

'A rabbit,' Scribner said. 'I shot this rabbit.'

'They haven't held the big Monte Carlo shoot since 1939,' Hemingway said. 'Only two Americans ever won it in seventy-four years. Shooting gives me a good feeling. A lot of it is being together and friendly instead of feeling you are in some place where everybody hates you and wishes you ill. It is faster than baseball, and you are out on one strike.'

The telephone rang, and Hemingway picked it up, listened, said a few words, and then turned to us and said that an outfit called Endorsements, Inc., had offered him four thousand dollars to pose as a Man of Distinction. 'I told them I wouldn't drink the stuff for four thousand dollars,' he said. 'I told them I was a champagne man. Am trying to be a good guy, but it's a difficult trade. What you win in Boston, you lose in Chicago.'