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Ernest and Elizabeth

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Ernest and Elizabeth

Eddie Sharon

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of the
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in the English Department
under the advisement of William Cain

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I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust.

- Queen Elizabeth I, "Speech to the Troops at Tilbury",
1588

His helmet was off and his forehead was bleeding below the hair line. His nose was skinned and there was dust on the bloody patch and dust in his hair. "Look at the bump, lieutenant!" he shouted. "Nothing to do. They come back for me."

- Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, 1929

Chapter 1

Ernest Hemingway was born nearly three centuries after the death of Queen Elizabeth I. During that time, the world changed significantly. From the widespread use of electricity and modern plumbing to women's rights to the English language, the twentieth century differed in countless ways from the sixteenth. Elizabeth would not have recognized the world that Hemingway wrote in, and not just because she spent her entire life in England. Wars, cultures, and countries separate them, yet Hemingway tied himself to Elizabeth when he titled his second novel after a poem from her era that was written for her. The poem, "A Farewell to Arms", is not especially well known, nor is the author, George Peele, an eminent figure. However, Hemingway deemed Peele's sentiments regarding Elizabeth to be so relevant that they merited the honor of becoming the title of his work. The depiction of Elizabeth and her era that Peele's verses suggest was important to Hemingway and deserves consideration in conjunction with a close reading of *A Farewell to Arms*.

My analysis of Peele's poem adds a new dimension to Hemingway's novel. Peele writes about a knight who can no longer serve Elizabeth with the robustness of his youth, but the passage of time has left his devotion to the queen untouched. As the title of Hemingway's book, the phrase "A Farewell to Arms" refers both to the death of Catherine Barkley and to Frederic Henry's decision to desert the war effort before the fighting has ended. The title draws immediate comparisons between the knight from the poem and Frederic Henry. Both men are small components of a larger conflict, but they also both have a woman who gives them a personal reason for fighting beyond the greater issues of battle. Hemingway's connection to Peele also draws the comparison between Catherine and Queen Elizabeth I. Catherine is not nearly as powerful as

Elizabeth was, but the diplomacy that she uses to obtain power over Frederic is surprisingly reminiscent of Elizabeth's own diplomatic maneuvers. Connecting Catherine and Elizabeth allows us a greater understanding of the dominance that Catherine hides behind her demure exterior.

The Peele poem is not the only attachment that exists between Elizabeth and Hemingway. Another important connection between the two is Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Hemingway was an avid reader and a big fan of Shakespeare in particular—he identified *King Lear* as his favorite play. He also recognized the impact that his reading had on his work in his book, *Death in the Afternoon*:

Every novel which is truly written contributes to the total of knowledge which is there at the disposal of the next writer who comes, but the next writer must pay, always, a certain nominal percentage in experience to be able to understand and assimilate what is available as his birthright and what he must, in turn, take his departure from. (98)

There is ample evidence in *A Farewell to Arms* that suggests thematic connections to *King Lear*, especially with regards to the extreme pessimism that pervades both texts.

In both stories, fate is not kind to the characters, but when they try to take matters into their own hands, the stories still end in tragedy and underline that there is no way to create an appropriate resolution. Lear, Gloucester, and others bemoan the gods whom they believe do not care about humans. But Lear and Gloucester inadvertently cause their own deaths without any aid from higher powers, Lear through the distribution of his kingdom and Gloucester through the vilification of his son. Frederic Henry never criticizes higher powers directly, but there is some irony to his meeting the love of his life in the midst of a war where they both have a high likelihood

of dying. Similar to Lear and Gloucester, Frederic takes control of his fate when he leaves the war effort to be with Catherine, but she still dies and ends their time together. The tragic conclusions of *A Farewell to Arms* and *King Lear* link the two texts and provide another connection between Hemingway and Shakespeare and the Elizabethan era.

Lear is Jacobean Shakespeare rather than Elizabethan, but *Lear* was written between 1603 and 1606 (likely in the later part of that range) and Elizabeth died in 1603, so Shakespeare was writing not long after her death. His play has strong connections to the final years of Elizabeth's reign, especially the idea of an aging monarch attempting to delegate an heir and establish a legacy. Unlike Lear, who distributes his kingdom among his three daughters, Elizabeth kept her people in suspense about her heir until very close to her death. Lear's madness also links him to Elizabeth because she too was known to be mentally unstable during her last few years and, although she did not abdicate like Lear, she was probably unfit to lead during that time. Elizabeth's connection to *King Lear* affiliates her more closely with Hemingway and *A Farewell to Arms*, which may draw some ideas from Shakespeare's work.

Using Elizabeth as a lens to read Hemingway's novel adds depth to our understanding of Frederic and Catherine's characters. Catherine's power over Frederic is more obvious when she is connected to the queen, while Frederic's role as the knight underlines the divisions that arise from his role as an ambulance driver. Like the knight, Frederic is loyal to those who work alongside him and to the American cause, but he is also loyal to Catherine and his desire to be with her conflicts with his service. When he leaves the fight and says a farewell to arms, he chooses Catherine over the war. For the knight, choosing to fight and choosing to remain loyal to the queen are one and the

same because she is directing the fighting, but Frederic must make a choice between the two.

This difference shows that the world that Frederic lives in subjects him to more complicated constraints than those of the Elizabethan era, but he still shares the knight's core ideals. He is not as powerful over his situation as Catherine is over their relationship which adds to their dynamic; Catherine constantly claims to be subservient to Frederic, but she is the more authoritative of the two. Within her sphere, Catherine experiences the same duality that Elizabeth had to balance throughout her reign: how to wield her power and maintain her feminine image at the same time. This conflict is more relatable for female readers than reading Catherine as a purely submissive foil for Frederic.

The connections between Elizabeth and Hemingway help to make his work accessible to a broader range of readers. Hemingway is known for presenting stoic male characters and compliant female characters, usually based on himself and various women in his life. Some critics believe that this trope is degrading to women, like Rebecca Solnit who writes in the article "80 Books No Woman Should Read" that "Ernest Hemingway is also in my no-read zone, because if you get the model for your art from Gertrude Stein you shouldn't be a homophobic antisemitic misogynist". The first two adjectives are beyond the scope of this work, but Solnit's categorization of Hemingway as a misogynist, while not unfounded, is in many respects an oversimplification of his writing. Viewing Catherine and Frederic in relation to Elizabeth and her knight reveals more complexity in their relationship than is apparent after a first reading. This connection gives Catherine more agency and Frederic more emotional depth. Relating Hemingway and Elizabeth as a context for *A Farewell to Arms* gives us a

new experience of one of the twentieth-century's most important and influential authors.

The main connection between Hemingway and Elizabeth is a poem, so a study of Hemingway's own poetry gives us a greater understanding of how he thought about the poem that he eventually chose as the title. Although Hemingway's prose is widely studied, there is little work analyzing his poetry, largely because scholars do not believe that his poems have literary merit. He wrote 88 poems that we are aware of, but more may exist. A CBS team touring Cuba in 1977 found a poem scribbled on the wall of a bar in Havana which is popularly believed to be Hemingway's work. Hemingway sometimes included verse in his letters so if some of these are unknown or destroyed, some of his poetry is lost as well. Of the 88 poems, only 25 were published in his lifetime, but 73 of them were already completed in 1929, the year that *A Farewell to Arms* was published.

Hemingway's career would not have begun without his poems. His first book, *Three Stories & Ten Poems* was initially meant to be solely a collection of short stories, but his first wife, Hadley, lost the valise containing his manuscripts when it was stolen at a train station in December of 1922. The only stories that Hemingway had left were "Up In Michigan" and "My Old Man", and he wrote the third story, "Out of Season" to flesh out the collection. Without his lost stories, Hemingway needed to include the poems or else his work would not be substantive enough to merit publication. When the book came out, the critic Edmund Wilson wrote the following review: "Mr. Hemingway's poems are not particularly important, but his prose is of the first distinction" (Gerogiannis, xv). *The Transatlantic Review*, the publication where Hemingway worked as an editor, reviewed the stories but ignored the poems entirely. Hemingway took these reviews to mean that the poems had served their purpose as fillers but were not worth

further consideration and from that point, he no longer wrote poetry for a wider audience. In “Poem to Mary (Second Poem)”, produced for his fourth wife, he writes, “Everyone is gone and you say this out loud to yourself”. Hemingway wrote most of his poems for his own benefit rather than for fame or literary acclaim.

Although he knew that his poems were not exceptional enough to bring him glory, Hemingway recognized that they could serve other purposes. He published a few poems in the German magazine *Der Querschnitt*, but in his posthumous memoir, *A Moveable Feast*, he acknowledged that he published these poems for money rather than for literary merit. Hemingway also used his poetry as criticism. In October, 1926, he read his poem “To A Tragic Poetess” at a party and angered some friends who thought that the poem, which expresses disgust with the histrionics of the poetess, was an attack on the writer Dorothy Parker. He also wrote the verse “Poem, 1928” partly to denounce critics who dismissed writing that did not provide moral instruction.

Between 1922 and 1929, Hemingway published three poems, but he produced many other poems that he never made public. The last poem that he published in his lifetime was “Advice to a Son” in 1932. At this point, much of his best prose was still ahead of him, but he would never again pursue the publication of his verse. He did not write much poetry for several years, but he began again near the end of World War II when he wrote long, personal poems to his fourth wife, Mary. In November and December of 1949, he wrote an assortment of poems while finishing the novel *Across the River and Into the Trees*. These verses reflect the mood of the story’s protagonist, Colonel Richard Cantwell, and are written as though a man is talking to himself.

Hemingway’s poems serve as a timeline of his life. They are markers of the periods that created strong memories for him: His youth in Oak Park, Illinois; working

for the *Kansas City Star*; and serving as a mentee of Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound in Paris. Poetry allowed him to explore his own writing style and gain experience with the short sentences and sparse language that he would become famous for. He often wrote his poems quickly, perhaps in fits of inspiration, but over half of his poems exist in more than one draft, which shows that he did labor over them. He was not a successful poet, but the fact that he continued to write poems throughout his life show that Hemingway valued his poems personally rather than professionally.

As a young man in Oak Park, Illinois, Hemingway wrote a few poems for his school's newspaper and literary magazine. These verses deal primarily with sporting events, though some were humorous lines intended to amuse his classmates. In one especially facetious poem, "How Ballad Writing Affects Our Seniors", Hemingway wrote, "For the future I shall promise / (If you let me live this time), / I'll ne'er write another ballad— / Never venture into rhyme" (ed. Gerogiannis, 9). Although Hemingway lied and went on to write many more poems, he had suspicions that his work might not possess any merit. These lines are meant in jest like the rest of the poem, but they also serve as a caveat in case Hemingway's classmates did not find his poem funny. He was mocking himself before anyone else could and displayed a hint of the bitterness that pervades his later work.

The poems that Hemingway wrote about World War I provide a gritty picture of his war experiences that expresses the jarring state of the front and how that intensity inspired shock and numbness. In the poem "Captives", he writes about soldiers who are so tired that "Thinking and hating were finished / Thinking and fighting were finished / Retreating and hoping were finished" (ed. Gerogiannis, 26). The repetitive rhythm of these lines mimics the soldiers plodding along, too tired to maintain any enthusiasm.

But these men cannot remain detached with excessive death and destruction surrounding them. The poem “Champs d’Honneur”, which follows “Captives” in *Three Stories & Ten Poems*, details the horror that these men deal with: “Soldiers pitch and cough and twitch; / All the world roars red and black, / Soldiers smother in a ditch; / Choking through the whole attack” (ed. Gerogiannis, 27). This horrific imagery highlights how the soldiers had no control over the violence they experienced. The world “roars” as countries vie for dominance, but the soldiers are choking and cannot add their voices to this dialogue.

“Champs d’Honneur” voices a disdain for the romantic rhetoric that often surrounds war, a disdain that Frederic Henry later articulates in *A Farewell to Arms*: “I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them... now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory” (Hemingway, 196). Ideas from the poems that Hemingway kept private managed to make their way into his published work, suggesting that his poems served for him to test and collect his thoughts before expanding them.

Another major theme in Hemingway’s war poems is fury. Nicholas Gerogiannis, who researched and compiled Hemingway’s poems, offers the following insight about the overarching themes of these verses: “There is anger in Hemingway’s poetry... At times, Hemingway’s anger is turned upon himself... At other times, his anger is directed at the world in which he lives” (Gerogiannis, 248). One example of this external anger is “To Good Guys Dead”, which further describes Hemingway’s sense of the disconnection between war propaganda and actual fighting: “They sucked us in; / King and country, / Christ Almighty / And the rest, / Patriotism, / Democracy, / Honor— / Words and

phrases, / They either bitched or killed us” (ed. Gerogiannis, 47). Hemingway believes that countries, governments, and religion lured men into fighting with their grandiose words and neglected to reveal the many deadly aspects of war that make up the real combat experience. His anger at these external forces is featured in several other poems, but the internal anger that Gerogiannis references is harder to find. This acrimony may be present in “Sequel”: “So if she dies / And if you write of it / Being a writer and a shit” (ed. Gerogiannis, 91). Like many of Hemingway’s poems, the inspiration for these lines is difficult to decipher. There is no evidence suggesting that this poem was written in a fit of vitriol, as others were, but Gerogiannis does note that Hemingway penned this poem around the time that he left his first wife, Hadley. If “she” is Hadley, then “you” is Hemingway, which means that his profanity refers to himself. He is self-deprecating, as in the poem from his high school days, but this time he criticizes his character rather than his writing skills. Hemingway’s external anger is more evident in his poetry than his internal anger, which requires labyrinthine analysis to uncover.

A hallmark of Hemingway’s writing style is how he forces readers to use their interpretive skills to understand his work. His spare prose creates a sense of immediacy and leaves much of the activity to the imagination. This effect was developed during the time that Hemingway worked as a journalist for the *Kansas City Star*, where stories needed to be concise. He elaborates on his style in his novel *Death in the Afternoon*:

If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water. (Hemingway, 98)

Scholars call Hemingway's style "The Iceberg Principle" or "The Iceberg Theory" because of this comparison. He cultivated this approach as a journalist, and his poetry may also have been a place where he could exercise his theory of omission.

Hemingway leaves much below the surface in the heavily autobiographical "Poem, 1928". The poem details his life story beginning with his time at war and moving briefly backwards before abruptly snapping to the present. Most of the poem uses the general pronoun "we", but this vague group experiences specific events such as when "we... Buried our fathers, when these did shoot themselves for economic reasons" (ed. Gerogiannis, 95). This line refers to Hemingway's father's suicide, an event that must have been harrowing. But the use of the general pronoun and the word "these" makes the suicide appear commonplace and obscures the grief that Hemingway and his family must have felt. The application of the iceberg principle hides happier parts of Hemingway's life in the lines, "We... Who have lived in other countries as well as our own have spoken and understood the language of these countries and have heard what was said by the people; / We have something that cannot be taken from us by an article" (ed. Gerogiannis, 96). Hemingway visited many countries and spoke several languages, but the joy and excitement of these experiences is never referenced in his poem. The only indication that he enjoyed his time in foreign lands is the run-on nature of this phrase, which imitates the way that people speak when excited. He also declines to specify what the "something" is and instead leaves readers to ponder what is hidden below the surface. This poem chronicles Hemingway's life, but the absence of description leaves Hemingway's thoughts about these events open to interpretation.

Hemingway's poetry connects him to Elizabeth, who also wrote poems based on the events of her life. Her surviving verses are not as plentiful as his; fewer than twenty

works are attributed to her and some of those are circumspect though she may have written more poems that have not seen the twenty-first century. However, Elizabeth's poetry is similar to Hemingway's because she never meant for her verse to be distributed. Her subjects would have been a captive audience, but given the extremely public nature of her life, perhaps she enjoyed keeping her writing to herself. Her poems, like Hemingway's, captured her thoughts about pivotal moments in her life ranging from the imprisonment of her youth to her victory over the Spanish armada. Elizabeth's eventful life meant that she never lacked for material.

Queen Elizabeth I was born on September 7, 1533 to Henry VIII and his second wife Anne Boleyn. Upon her birth, she was proclaimed the heir to the throne, but after her mother was executed for charges of adultery and incest, she was declared illegitimate in 1536. Henry's third wife, Jane Seymour, gave birth to his only son Edward a year later. Elizabeth and her older sister Mary were restored to the succession in 1544, just two years before Henry died and Edward assumed the throne. Edward, often sickly as a child, died on July 6, 1553 at age sixteen, leaving no heir and many questions about who would succeed him. In the ensuing confusion, Mary proclaimed herself queen and took the throne on July 19.

The beginning of Mary's reign signaled England's return to Catholicism. She entered marriage negotiations with Philip of Spain, the leader of a Catholic country and England's most prominent enemy. The negotiations were unpopular and led to Wyatt's rebellion in 1554, which was an attempt to remove Mary and put Elizabeth on the throne. The rebellion was put down and Elizabeth was imprisoned in the Tower of London although she claimed to be innocent of any involvement. She was then brought to the estate at Woodstock where she remained under house-arrest.

During this time, Elizabeth wrote a few poems, one purportedly written on a window frame:

O Fortune, thy wresting, wavering state
Hath fraught with cares my troubled wit,
Whose witness this present prison late
Could bear, where once was joy flown quite.
Thou causedst the guilty to be loosed
From lands where innocents were enclosed,
And caused the guiltless to be reserved,
And freed those that death had well deserved.
But all herein can be naught wrought,
So God grant to my foes as they have thought.

Finis. Elisabetha a prisoner, 1555

Much suspected by me, but nothing proved can be. (ed. Marcus, Mueller, Rose, 45-46)

Elizabeth's words are a thinly veiled criticism of Mary. She blames her bad "Fortune" for her situation, but her use of apotheosis hints that she suspects that her circumstances are due to an individual rather than a cosmic force; she later shows that she understood Mary's role in her imprisonment and subsequent interrogation. Elizabeth believed that Mary's rule was unjust because she let the guilty walk free while making life harder for "innocents" like Elizabeth. She ends with the striking line, "Much suspected by me, but nothing proved can be", which likely signifies that she knew that there were greater machinations behind her imprisonment that she was not privy to, but under her circumstances, she did not have enough information to verify her suspicions.

Mary died without an heir in 1558 and suddenly Elizabeth, the least likely of Henry's children to rule, was next in line for the throne. She wrote about her promotion and her desire to become a good leader in a poem addressed to God:

To one in pain Thou dost thy comfort show
And makst him king, if so Thou willst him be;
Thus, God and Master, hast Thou dealt with me
By pulling me out from a prison cruel...
Align me then with what Thou dost decree:
Strength, counsel, doctrine sound to me provide
That well I may Thy people rule and guide. (ed. Marcus, Mueller, Rose,
151-152)

Elizabeth's coronation took place on January 15, 1559 and the petitions from the House of Commons for her to marry began less than a month later. She responded that "this shall be for me sufficient that a marble stone shall declare that a Queen, having reigned such a time, lived and died a virgin" (Dobson and Watson, 34). This reply is perhaps the first time Elizabeth ever made reference to herself as the virgin queen. Despite her words, various marriage negotiations began to unfold.

Even as she entertained an array of foreign suitors, Elizabeth's childhood friend Robert Dudley was her clear favorite at court. However, after she fell ill with smallpox in 1562, her Council and the House of Commons redoubled the pressure for her to marry and produce an heir. Instead of considering her own marriage prospects, Elizabeth absorbed herself with engaging Dudley to her cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots. But Mary had her own plans; she married Henry Darnley in 1565, and Elizabeth and Dudley, now the Earl of Leicester, had a falling out shortly thereafter as Elizabeth's marriage

negotiations resumed. When Darnley was murdered, possibly with Mary's help, Mary made an unpopular marriage and her people rebelled. She sought Elizabeth's protection in England where she remained under house-arrest for nineteen years.

Meanwhile, the stresses of ruling were starting to wear on Elizabeth. Her marriage negotiations continued to no avail and in 1570, Pope Pius V excommunicated her from the Catholic church for being a heretic. Elizabeth could not seem to please anyone. She expressed the difficulties of being a monarch in a poem probably written in 1572:

A hapless kind of life is this I wear:
Much watch I dure, and weary, toiling days
I serve the rout and all their follies bear;
I suffer pride and sup full hard assays;
To others' will my life is all addressed,
And no way so as might content me best. (ed. Marcus, Mueller, Rose, 299-301)

Elizabeth emphasized many times throughout her reign that she lived to serve her people and always put them first, but her poem suggests that she understood how thankless her role was and wished that, on occasion, she could act on her own interests, especially with regards to her love life.

Elizabeth had to put her desires aside a decade later when she was forced to reject one of her most promising suitors, the Duke of Anjou. She penned a verse expressing a similar sentiment to the one she wrote in 1572:

I grieve and dare not show my discontent;
I love, and yet am forced to seem to hate;

I do, yet dare not say I ever meant;
I seem stark mute, but inwardly do prate.
I am, and not; I freeze and yet am burned,
Since from myself another self I turned. (ed. Marcus, Mueller, Rose, 302-303)

After ten years, Elizabeth still felt she had to put her true self aside in order to rule. Her emotions needed to be hidden and she had to become a different person in front of her councilors and subjects so that she could maintain her power and not appear as weak as women were often believed to be. She was also fearful that she might not receive any more proposals:

When I was fair and young, and favor graced me,
Of many was I sought unto, their mistress for to be.
But I did scorn them all, and said to them therefore,
“Go, go, go seek some otherwhere; importune me no more.” (ed. Marcus, Mueller, Rose, 303-304)

Elizabeth worried that she had rejected all the suitors she would ever receive and that she might never marry. She is iconic for maintaining her status as the Virgin Queen, but this role may not have been her ideal. As she passed the age of fifty and remained unmarried, she wrote that “Nature that doth know how time her steps doth try, / Gives place to painful woe, and bids me learn to die” (ed. Marcus, Mueller, Rose, 305). She understood that she was becoming old and unappealing to suitors, and she began to accept that she might die without ever marrying.

Elizabeth’s concerns about marriage were pushed to the background for a few years as she dealt with Mary’s execution, the defeat of the Spanish Armada (For which

she wrote a pair of poems), and the death of the Earl of Leicester in 1588. This last event was particularly painful because Leicester died suddenly, and Elizabeth was so overcome with grief that she locked herself in her room and her door had to be broken down. A couple of years later, she produced a twenty-seven stanza poem entirely in French. The poem is expansive in subject matter as well as length; Elizabeth details the highs and lows of her interactions with God throughout her life. Near the end of the poem, she writes that she feels so peaceful “That the flesh fell dead / That the soul might keep itself alive” (ed. Marcus, Mueller, Rose, 420). Upon her death in 1603, her flesh did fall dead in the sense that she failed to produce an heir of her own blood to take the throne; Mary’s son James succeeded her. But, as she wrote, her soul did remain alive. Elizabeth’s reign continued to influence and affect English culture in the centuries following her death. Her life has been depicted in a plethora of texts, both factual and fictional, and in various film and television presentations. Her prescient observation came true; Elizabeth’s sacrifice of her flesh for her soul gave her a legacy that continues to captivate the world.

Her legacy affected Ernest Hemingway nearly three centuries after her death when he was deciding on a title for his second novel. He considered 41 titles before deciding on *A Farewell to Arms*, the title that he borrowed from George Peele’s poem for Queen Elizabeth, which was published in 1590. The inspiration for many of these other possible choices came from *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, the same volume where Hemingway found “A Farewell to Arms”. Records of Hemingway’s extensive library show that he owned several versions of this collection, including the 1900, 1912, and 1918 editions (He did not own the 1925 edition, which is closest to the 1929 publication date of *A Farewell to Arms*). He also owned two other Oxford anthologies

that Arthur Quiller-Couch compiled—the editor of *The Oxford Book of English Verse*. Hemingway had a plethora of options available for potential titles, but Quiller-Couch’s editing and arranging of poems shows that Hemingway was interested in the chronology of the poems he chose.

In the preface to both the 1912 and 1918 editions of the anthology, Quiller-Couch writes about the organization of his work: “My scheme is simple. I have arranged the poets as nearly as possible in order of birth, with such groupings of anonymous pieces as seemed convenient” (Quiller-Couch, vii). This method means that surrounding Peele’s poems are the works of Edmund Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, and Sir Walter Raleigh, all men of great renown in Hemingway’s time and in their own. The poets who appear soon after, including Shakespeare, Greene, and Marvell, are also well known authors. Choosing one of these famous figures as the inspiration for the title of his book would have served Hemingway well. Quiller-Couch states: “Having set my heart on choosing the best, I resolved not to be... perturbed if my judgement should often agree with that of good critics. The best is the best, though a hundred judges have declared it so” (Quiller Couch, ix). Hemingway wanted to set himself alongside significant literary figures, and titling his novel after their work would have given him an automatic association.

Some of the poems that Hemingway examined were perhaps ruled out because the simplicity of their message failed to appropriately convey the themes of his novel. One example is the work “A Rondel of Love” by the sixteenth-century poet Alexander Scott. As a whole, the poem fits well with the plot of *A Farewell to Arms*. The first verse says that love cannot “The ground of grief remove” which corresponds with how Frederic’s love for Catherine cannot prevent the grief he feels when she dies. This theme

is reinforced at the end of the poem when the Scott begs his reader to “Flee always from the snare” of love which will inevitably bring pain. The phrases that Hemingway considered taking for a title follow this theme. He was interested in the line “Love is one fervent fire” or the subsequent line “Kindlit without desire”. These phrases both deal with absolutes; the first restricts love to a single element and the second denotes a complete absence. Neither one accurately describes Frederic and Catherine’s connection, which moves quickly from the fire of a new love into a brand of domesticity but, as Catherine’s pregnancy shows, does not lack desire. These possible titles do not encompass the complicated nature of the relationship that lies at the heart of Hemingway’s novel.

Hemingway may have flipped from Scott’s poem to the Shakespeare section of *The Oxford Book of English Verse*. He considered using the phrase “Death once dead” from Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 146”, a poem that raises questions about the best way to live when death is inevitable. Shakespeare uses the first eight lines of the poem to compare a human body to a house. He wonders why anyone would spend money on adorning their residence when everyone has “so short a lease” and will eventually give up the body to “worms, inheritors of this excess”, meaning that the destruction of death is imminent. Like all Shakespearean sonnets, this one shifts in the last six lines and answers the original queries about the use of decoration. In these lines, Shakespeare argues that the imminence of death is the reason for luxury because life is short. He concludes the sonnet, “So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men / And, Death once dead, there’s no more dying then”. Shakespeare means that living fully allows the pleasure of life to outweigh the pain of death, and even that pain is not a concern once a person is dead. The message of this poem is fitting for *A Farewell to Arms* because Frederic and

Catherine find happiness in each other while they are both alive and, even though Catherine dies, Frederic manages to evade death in combat. The phrase “Death once dead” is perhaps too final a title for a novel that, while pessimistic, is concerned primarily with the desperate struggle to stay alive.

Some titles did not come from *The Oxford Book of English Verse* but still came from contemporaries of the poets whose work Hemingway considered. Christopher Marlowe, a great playwright from Shakespeare’s time, inspired a pair of possible titles: “In Another Country” and “In Another Country and Besides”. Hemingway had already used the former title for a short story based on his war experience that was published in 1926. Both phrases come from Marlowe’s play *The Jew of Malta* which details the persecution of a Jew named Barabas and the revenge that he enacts on his tormentors. In act 4, scene 1, Barabas admits to “Fornication... / But that was in another country: / And besides, the wench is dead”. Hemingway must have been interested in how these lines provide a stark summary of *A Farewell to Arms*. This pair of titles alludes to Frederic’s removal from the events that he describes. He is speaking from a time where the war is over and Catherine is already dead. Both “In Another Country” and “In Another Country and Besides” imply that Frederic was able to have enough of a life after the events of the novel that he is now able to look back and recount his experience. But in the end, Hemingway selected neither of these titles. They both detract from the immediacy of the story, and perhaps Hemingway did not want to distance the reader from his work before they had even opened the book.

One of the best of the potential titles, “World Enough and Time”, came from Andrew Marvell, a poet who came just after Marlowe and Shakespeare. Hemingway favored the mid-seventeenth-century poem “To His Coy Mistress” so much that,

although he did not choose Marvell's line for the title, he did quote the poem in *A Farewell to Arms*. Shortly after Frederic's convalescence, he and Catherine dine in a hotel, and when Catherine remarks on what a good time they always have together, Frederic says, ""But at my back I always hear / Time's winged chariot hurrying near"", to which Catherine responds, ""I know that poem... It's by Marvell. But it's about a girl who wouldn't live with a man"" (Hemingway, 165). Catherine's summary is accurate; the first half of the poem outlines how the author would like to allow centuries for a woman to fall in love with him, but the lines that Hemingway quotes mark the shift as the author describes how death creates urgency and they must work with the time that they are given, a similar message to Shakespeare's sonnet.

These lines are fitting because a similar shift occurs shortly before Hemingway's quotation; Catherine has just revealed her pregnancy, and the impending arrival of the baby places a time constraint on her relationship with Frederic. The two of them are unaware of how Catherine will die in childbirth, but they are worried that the presence of the baby will alter their connection. The title ""World Enough and Time"" alludes both to the urgency that the protagonists experience in the latter half of the novel as well as their unhurried courtship in the first half, and this dual nature is a defining characteristic of the title that Hemingway eventually chose.

Despite the many famous authors represented in *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, the poem that Hemingway eventually selected came from George Peele, a man whose work is less well known. The most basic facts of Peele's life are mired in uncertainties. The exact year of his birth is unknown and while most sources claim that he was born between 1556 and 1558, another suggests that his university records show that he was born between 1552 and 1553. In either case, Peele was born near

Devonshire, England, and matriculated at Christ Church at Oxford where he received his BA in 1577 and his MA in 1579. A friend, William Gager, described him as “strangely short of leg, dark of complexion, squint-eyed, and red-haired” (Gager, 1.45). During his time at university, he was already highly esteemed as a poet; he produced his first work, *The Tale of Troy*, during his time as a student.

Upon receiving his master’s degree, Peele returned home where at some point in 1580 he married a sixteen-year old girl who was named either Anne Cook or Anne Christian and about whom nothing else is known. The marriage was advantageous for Peele, whose lifelong financial struggles abated somewhat when he acquired land in his wife's right. Shortly after marriage, in 1581, Peele moved his small family to London to pursue his career as a professional playwright, but to say that he was modestly successful is an overstatement.

During his time in London, Peele suffered the uncertain lifestyle common to many English dramatists writing during the waning years of Elizabeth's reign. When one of his works was successful, he was flush with cash, but more often than not, money was tight and he frequently wasted it on alcohol. His life was brightened by the close friendships he forged with other playwrights including Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, and Thomas Nashe, all noteworthy figures of this period. Alexander Dyce, who compiled the works of Peele and Greene, states: “I cannot but be aware that Marlowe had a far more powerful intellect than Peele, and a far deeper insight into the human heart... The superiority of Greene to Peele is, I conceive, on the whole, unquestionable” (Dyce, 346). As a poet, Peele was accomplished, but his record as a dramatist is less impressive.

The hallmark of Peele's work is his ability to combine different genres into one tale; this theme was simultaneously his greatest fault and his greatest strength. Assimilating a variety of stories set his work apart from his contemporaries, but usually, the combination muddled his plays and prevented them from having a clear theme that audiences could latch on to. The blending of genres was effective only in his first play, *The Arraignment of Paris*, which was inspired by his work from university on his poem *The Tale of Troy*. The play, a mix of history and drama, tells the story of Paris, of Trojan fame, when the goddess Diana puts him on trial for giving the golden apple to Venus. This twist on classical mythology was an original idea of Peele's, although the inspiration for Diana was not. He based her character largely on Queen Elizabeth and presented the play to her sometime between 1581 and 1584, shortly after his move to London. Of all the dramatic works that Peele produced, this was the only one to attain any sort of acclaim because the story is told through rhymed verse and some of the lyrics became popular with audiences. At his best, Peele's dramatic success can be attributed to his skills as a poet.

Peele's next interaction with Elizabeth would lead to the production of his most prominent work. When Sir Henry Lee, the queen's champion (the knight responsible for competing on her behalf in jousting events) resigned from his post, Peele was the designer and director in charge of the pageantry to commemorate this event and the subsequent passing of the position to the Earl of Cumberland. For the celebration of this momentous occasion, Peele wrote a long poem titled *Polyhymnia* to which he appended a sonnet that tells of a knight, certainly Lee, who is too old to serve his sovereign but plans to retain his allegiance to her for the rest of his life. Sir William Segar's account of

the celebration from November 17, 1589, shows that this shorter poem was actually sung to the queen during the ceremony. The title of this work was “A Farewell to Arms”.

Peele interacted with Elizabeth two years later when she visited the home of her chief advisor, Lord Burghley, at Theobalds in May of 1591. He wrote a series of three speeches for her to excuse Burghley's absence during the visit; like much of Peele's work, the speeches are more important for their historical context than their literary significance. In 1593, he printed a play that exemplifies this trend: *The Famous Chronicle of King Edward I, surnamed Edward Lonshanks*. The genre of this play is characteristic of the period because Elizabethan drama was shifting from plays about morality to national historic tragedies, Shakespeare produced works like *Richard III* and *Henry VI* around the same time. But while the text shows the author's knowledge, it lacks the lyrical qualities of Peele's best work. From this point on, his already limited career went into decline and he was never again able to echo his former success.

A few years later, on January 17, 1596, Peele sent his daughter to deliver a copy of *The Tale of Troy* to William Cecil, Lord Burghley. The dedication requested patronage from the queen's court to fund Peele as he attempted to recover from illness. His physical and financial health were both in dire straits. Burghley's papers show that the request was filed alongside other similar requests from people who did not merit response, and without this funding, Peele continued to decline. The records of the parish of St. James Clerkenwell show that Peele died later that same year and was buried on November 9; one of his contemporaries, Francis Meres, mentioned in a work from 1598 that Peele had perished of syphilis.

Although Peele's poetry was included in many of the major anthologies of his day and continued to attract some attention after his death, modern scholars have largely

neglected him. His biography was published postmortem in 1607 under the title *The Merry Conceited Jests of George Peele, sometime a Student in Oxford*, and until the publication of David Horne's biography in 1952, this work was believed to be factual. The 1607 book, which has never been published in a modernized edition, portrays Peele as vulgar and fraudulent, a clever knave whose money is spent as soon as he tricks someone out of their own and who wastes his dramatic talents on seducing women. At the same time, the text praises Peele and commends his poetic skills, his authority as a director of various pageants, and his abilities as a translator. Horne's work showed that the biography is largely fictional and is part of a genre called jest-books. Many stories like this one were published using the same format but substituting different figures for the protagonist.

That this 1607 biography went unquestioned for over three hundred years proves how history has forgotten Peele despite his significance, a fact noted by S.A.

Tannenbaum who has extensively cataloged Peele's work:

As an artist he is admitted to have been one of the most original, most versatile, and most competent of the university wits who constitute the group of 'Shakspere's immediate predecessors'... Shakspere [sic] undoubtedly learned much from him... scholarship has very largely passed him by... Amazingly little music has been written for his songs. Foreign scholars, except the Germans, and translators have almost wholly ignored him. (Tannenbaum, vii)

Although history has not been kind to George Peele, Ernest Hemingway still selected his poem, *A Farewell to Arms*, as the title of his second book. How Hemingway made this

decision is an important question for unlocking the meaning of the poem and its significance with regards to the novel.

Peele's poem, "A Farewell to Arms", has an intriguing relationship with Hemingway's text. The poem is explicitly written for Queen Elizabeth from one of her knights, a bond that parallels Frederic and Catherine's relationship where the male participates in waging war. In the final lines, Peele begs, "Goddess, allow this aged man his right / To be your beadsman now that was your knight" so that, though the knight can no longer fight for his queen, he can still serve her through prayer. If Frederic is a knight who serves Catherine, then he loses his knighthood twofold. His first debasement is when he leaves the war and can no longer fight for the cause that he and Catherine support, and his second is when Catherine dies and he can no longer support her. The novel's title refers both to Frederic's decision to leave the army and to the farewell that he must say to Catherine. But, like the knight, though Frederic "saddest sits in homely cell, / He'll teach his swains this carol for a song". He can still tell the story of his experience with Catherine and relive his time with her even though she is gone.

Key images in Peele's poem reinforce the idea that Frederic's remembrance of Catherine in *A Farewell to Arms* is a way of reliving their time together. Peele writes that "Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green" which, in conjunction with Hemingway's novel, means that the devotion that Frederic and Catherine have for each other gives the telling of their relationship a verdant quality despite the fact that the events have already transpired. Catherine is dead but their love survives in Frederic's retelling. This idea is brought forward again in the line, "His helmet now shall make a hive for bees". Frederic, like the knight in the poem, likely has literal relics of his service and memories as well. These relics, and his memories of his time with Catherine, are

carefully kept like bees in a hive. He can care for them and share his story to keep them alive.

The concept of the living dead is one of several paradoxes in Peele's poem. Others include "swiftness never ceasing", "youth waneth by increasing", and "flowers but fading seen". These paradoxes create a feeling of constraint because all actions, whether congruent or opposing, lead to the same outcome. Peele's paradoxes underline how the baby makes Frederic and Catherine, as Frederic says, "trapped biologically" (Hemingway, 148). They are stuck in the nine-month period between conception and birth and, though they have no way of knowing, this time is all that they have to be together. The paradoxes also create a sense of duality which appears again in the title of the poem that became the title of Hemingway's novel; if there is a farewell, there was once a hello. There is a greeting implicit in parting, so while the title alludes to the novel's tragic conclusion, the phrase also refers to Frederic and Catherine's meeting and subsequent relationship. Hemingway's choice of title does not negate Frederic and Catherine's experience because of the way their affair ends and instead, like Frederic recollecting his memories, subtly leads readers back to the beginning.

Peele's contemporary, Shakespeare, provides another important connection between Elizabeth and Hemingway: His play, *King Lear*. Although *King Lear* is certainly an original work, Shakespeare drew inspiration from the mythical figure of Lear who had existed in British folklore since his first appearance in *Historia Britonum* by Geoffrey of Monmouth, written in 1135. The existence of Lear as a true historical personage is questionable given that Geoffrey also included figures like King Arthur, who may or may not have lived, but Geoffrey's story became important to the British people regardless of its veracity. His version of *Lear* bears a strong resemblance to

Shakespeare's work with a few key differences. Lear still has three daughters among whom he divides his kingdom with his famous love test, and Cordelia still refuses to flatter her aging father. Then the process of relieving Lear of his knights and turning him loose proceeds over a few years rather than days, but the result is the same: Lear is reunited with Cordelia.

From here, Geoffrey's story diverges completely from Shakespeare's tale; Lear becomes the leader of Cordelia's kingdom, returns to Britain and overthrows his nefarious daughters, rules for three years, and then dies, leaving Cordelia as his heir. Although this finale is very different than the one that Shakespeare chose, the story as a whole provided a framework that was ripe for reimagining. The first dramatic version of Geoffrey's history was a play by an unknown author titled *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* which was staged in the 1590's and published in 1605. Although this work uses Geoffrey's ending, the author's phrasing strongly suggests that Shakespeare used this play as the inspiration for his own version of Lear's story.

Shakespeare's *King Lear* is widely regarded as one of the best of his many acclaimed works. The dates during which the play was written fall somewhere between 1604 and 1606 with a greater likelihood for the latter half of that span. The play was performed in front of King James I at Whitehall Palace during the Christmas holidays in 1606. At that time, Shakespeare was already a famous dramatist and had several great plays still to come before the end of his career, but with *King Lear*, he reached new heights of drama with an expansive work encompassing such universal themes as war, love, and legacy.

This work falls in the realm of Jacobean Shakespeare because it was written during the reign of King James I and after Queen Elizabeth I's death in 1603. But

because the play does fall close to the end of Elizabeth's reign, there is a strong case for the influence of Elizabethan ideas throughout the text. Although time periods are exact, culture and politics are not; just because Elizabeth was dead and there was a new monarch on the throne does not mean that the British people immediately forgot the trials and triumphs of her reign, particularly the pressing issue of her heir. Near the end of her life, Elizabeth reportedly became a bit mad as Lear does in the play. Interestingly, the actress Glenda Jackson has played both an aging Elizabeth on television and the role of Lear in a theatrical production. Jackson portrayed Elizabeth when she was thirty-five and plays Lear at eighty, with a substantial political career in between. In a review of her theater performance, *The New York Review of Books* writes that “The parallels with the declining Elizabeth... are obvious enough to be taken for granted. In a sense, Lear carries less distance for Jackson simply because both of them are ‘fourscore and upward.’... But a woman playing a man... is itself enough to hold us slightly at bay” (O’Toole, 4). Jackson’s rendition of Elizabeth was notable because of her age but her performance of Lear is striking because of her gender. Her performances connect Elizabeth to Lear with the instability of old age and show how gender affects the differences in how they selected their heirs.

As Elizabeth’s life came to a close, those closest to her knew that King James V of Scotland would be her heir, but she refused to officially name her successor up until right before the moment that she died. This last-minute decision did not mean that she failed to properly contemplate the matter or recognize the weight of her choice; quite the opposite. Elizabeth knew that once she gave a definitive answer to the most prevalent question since her accession, she would become less consequential even though she continued to reign. She was known for always putting her subjects first, but in this

matter, she kept them confused and fearful to ensure that she retained the power and authority necessary to rule.

When James took the throne, these worries abated somewhat because he already had an heir; his first son, Henry, was born in 1594 and James would father two more sons before becoming the king of England. Still, the concerns surrounding Elizabeth's successor had been a part of British culture for a long time, and her former subjects were not likely to forget these deep-seated fears. The best example of the potency of these memories is how, despite the stable dynasty that replaced the virgin queen, the issue of inheritance permeated Shakespeare's work in *King Lear*, both in the main storyline about Lear and his daughters and in the subplot regarding Gloucester and his sons.

The topic of succession may have been part of the reason why this play, of all of Shakespeare's work, held the greatest appeal for Ernest Hemingway. He was enamored with Shakespeare and expressed his admiration on multiple occasions, most notably in his late novel *Across the River and Into the Trees*. The main character, Colonel Richard Cantwell, remarks to a portrait of his lover that Shakespeare was "[t]he winner and still the undisputed champion. Someone might take him, in a short bout. But I would rather revere him. Did you ever read *King Lear*, Daughter?" (Hemingway, 109). Because Cantwell, like many of Hemingway's characters, is practically a doppelganger of his author, these words show Hemingway's own respect for Shakespeare. They also suggest Hemingway's desire to pay homage to his predecessor, presumably through stylistic and thematic choices in his own work. Cantwell's words echo Hemingway's particular reverence for *King Lear*; this preference was confirmed during his interview with *The Paris Review* when he responded regarding his favorite authors: "I read some

Shakespeare every year, *Lear* always. Cheers you up if you read that” (*The Paris Review*). This comment may have been facetious, but his words raise the important point that the real world looks better in comparison to the one Lear lives and dies in.

One of the play’s many famous phrases seems to underscore Hemingway’s interview: “The worst is not / So long as we can saw ‘This is the worst’” (Act IV, Scene 1, Lines 31-32). If a person read *King Lear* every year, as Hemingway purportedly did, their own life would appear quite cheerful by comparison. The bleaker passages in Hemingway’s work may be attempts to evoke the same response in his own readers.

Because Hemingway had such a deep understanding of *Lear* and was undoubtedly influenced by this play, Shakespeare’s work serves as a connector to his writing in a similar manner to George Peele’s poem. Both pieces show the importance and concern surrounding succession in Elizabeth’s reign, but they also both trace back to Hemingway’s writing. *King Lear* does not bridge time periods as overtly as “A Farewell to Arms”, but the play attaches these two monumental figures to each other through the thematic elements that originated with Elizabeth and struck a chord with Hemingway. Among the key ideas in *King Lear* that pertain to both Elizabeth’s reign and Hemingway’s career are the concepts of legacy, gender roles, pessimism and the role of fate, and a variety of types of love. These themes hold universal appeal, but they can also connect two literary and cultural periods and two people in history.

Hemingway and Elizabeth were both interested in how to create a legacy, an idea that features prominently in *King Lear* from the beginning of the play. In the first scene, Lear lays out his plans to divide his kingdom among his three daughters: “Know that we have divided / In three our kingdom, and ‘tis our fast intent / To shake all cares and business from our age, / Conferring them on younger strengths, while we / Unburdened

crawl towards death” (1.1.39-43). Although this speech outlines a plan that will usher Lear into the ease of retirement, his intentions are not completely self-serving; he reveals a few lines later that the division of the kingdom is meant so “that future strife / May be prevented now” (1.1.47-48). He is prioritizing the well-being of his subjects, which is a key aspect of a judicious ruler and one which Elizabeth prided herself on. Lear’s pragmatism is also evident in this speech. He thinks about the situation in terms of age, leadership, and inheritance, which are all practical issues that must be dealt with before he can step down. But his realistic view does not account for the human predispositions of his inheritors and this failure to consider their perspectives ultimately leads to his undoing.

Lear assumes that his plan and the subsequent love test will be successful, and he is correct until he reaches Cordelia, who refuses to acquiesce to her father’s wishes. As justification for her lack of eloquence, she tells Lear, “You have begot me, bred me, loved me. / I return those duties back as are right fit: / Obey you, love you, and most honor you” (1.1.106-108). Her words lay out both her father’s duties and her own and imply that all the expectations that she lists have been met on both sides. But then Cordelia goes further and explains the more complex and individual nature of her affection for Lear: She plans to remain devoted to her father even after marriage which, she claims, will allow her to share her love for Lear with her future husband. This proposal is unusual and shows that although Cordelia understands the standard duties she owes her father, she has her own additional ideas about her paternal relationship that deviate from the typical set of expectations.

Lear did not account for this individuality when creating his plans because he ignored the individual wills of his daughters. Cordelia’s deviation upsets him enough

that he proclaims, “Here I disclaim all my paternal care, / Propinquity, and property of blood, / And as a stranger to my heart and me / Hold thee from this forever” (1.1.125-128). Lear’s words show that inheritance is not only a biological construct but also an emotional matter, a concept that Frederic Henry grapples with in *A Farewell to Arms* when he finds out that Catherine is pregnant. Frederic cannot avoid the child and Lear cannot truly give up “property of blood”, but he can remove Cordelia from his heart and from the legacy that he intends to leave behind.

Lear’s refusal to acknowledge Cordelia as an heir is the beginning of an idea that grows from the central theme of legacy: the concept of unnatural children. These offspring defy their parents and, in doing so, circumvent the natural order of authority. Cordelia is the quintessential unnatural child but Frederic and Catherine’s baby is also unnatural for the way that he disrupts their relationship and leads to Catherine’s death. Lear recognizes that Cordelia’s behavior is unnatural when he calls her “a wretch whom Nature is ashamed / Almost t’acknowledge as hers” (1.1.243-244). This decree casts Cordelia into a realm of abnormality so far removed that she no longer has a father or a mother in any sense and is as unnatural as a child can be. She is not a part of the natural order that Lear later describes while out on the heath: “Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters. / I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness. / I never gave you kingdom, called you children; / You owe me no subscription” (3.2.17-20). The elements may not be his children, but they fit into the natural order better than any of his daughters do.

At this point, Regan and Goneril have also betrayed Lear and become unnatural. When Goneril refuses to house all one hundred of her father’s knights and requires that he cut their ranks to fifty, he goes to Regan to seek a warmer welcome. When Regan

requires that he reduce his train to twenty-five, Goneril shows up. Lear decides to go with the first offer, but Goneril tells him, “What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five” and Regan adds, “What need one?” (2.4.300, 303). Despite Lear’s protests, both daughters agree to house their father but not his train. Their betrayal accompanied with Cordelia’s actions combine so that none of the three women are paying Lear the debt that they owe him for having begot them, bred them, and given them his kingdom; they have overthrown both Lear’s rule and that of nature.

The children are the ones exhibiting unnatural behavior, but the culpability of the parents in these situations cannot be ignored. This blame is also applicable to Frederic and Catherine because although their baby is inconvenient, they are the ones who conceived it. Lear’s responsibility is brought to light when the Fool points out that as much as Lear would like to heap the blame on his daughters’ shoulders, he too is at fault because he “shouldst not have been old till thou hadst / been wise” (1.5.43-44). Although Lear is elderly, the Fool proposes that age alone is owed nothing, and that Lear should have earned his daughters’ respect through judicious conduct as a ruler and a father.

The most egregious incidence of Lear’s lack of dignity towards his children is when he curses Regan with infertility in his attempt to seek revenge. In this scene, he calls upon the same force that he used earlier to cast out Cordelia:

Hear, Nature, hear, dear goddess, hear!

Suspend thy purpose if thou didst intend

To make this creature fruitful.

Into her womb convey sterility.

Dry up in her the organs of increase,

And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honor her. If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen, that it may live
And be a thwart disnatured torment to her. (1.1.289-297)

Lear exhibits abhorrent parenting skills in this passage as he tries to overthrow nature just as his daughters did. He asks Nature herself to make an exception and render Regan sterile in spite of the natural order that she remain fertile. She has prevented Lear from executing the carefully laid plans for his legacy and now he must do the same to her. His wish that Regan remain without an heir recalls Elizabeth, who never produced “A babe to honor her”. But if Lear’s plea is not enough to reverse nature, then he begs for Regan to give birth to a child who is as unnatural as his own daughters have become. This child will torture her mother just as Lear’s daughters have tortured him. His speech would sound callous coming from a stranger, but because he is Regan’s father, a man meant by nature to help her grow, his words defy his biological role and are exceedingly cruel.

Lear rightly blames his daughters for his downfall, but he ignores how he enabled them to cause his destruction. The Fool says that Lear “mad’st thy daughters thy mothers” which implies that Lear was the usurper who forced unnatural behavior upon his children (1.4.176-177). He “gav’st them the rod and put’st down thine own breeches”, ignoring his nurturing role as a father and bringing punishment upon himself (1.4.177-178). Lear does not deserve the harsh treatment that Goneril and Regan heap upon him, but he cannot demand their respect as his offspring when he has neglected his parental duties.

Lear has three daughters and no sons to leave his kingdom to which makes the issues of both legacy and gender important. Gender roles are another key theme that

connect Hemingway and Elizabeth. Though their eras had different expectations for men and women, they each grappled with the effects of these expectations in a provocative manner. Hemingway explored gender roles in his writing; his archetype about stoic men and submissive women characterizes many of his stories. But a deeper analysis of Hemingway's work shows that he shaped male and female characters that simultaneously fit into and defied these archetypes. The women can take control of their situations and exhibit typically masculine behavior, the men can become emotional and effeminate, and expectations of both genders are interrogated and cast aside.

Elizabeth too dealt with assumptions about the influence of her gender on her character when she assumed the throne in 1558. Many people at this time believed that women were fickle creatures who lacked both the stamina and the temperament necessary to rule. Throughout the years of her reign, Elizabeth figured out how to assure her court and her subjects that she was as capable as any king, but she also managed to leverage her womanhood in diplomatic relations, particularly those surrounding her marital prospects. Elizabeth probed and subverted the typical gender roles of her age. The exploration of the expectations placed on both sexes that Shakespeare undertakes in *King Lear* reveals more precise definitions of these roles and how they shape human behavior.

The expectations for women in *King Lear* are clarified in the first scene when Gloucester shares the details of Edmund's conception. When Kent proclaims that he cannot conceive of Gloucester's meaning, Gloucester replies, "Sir, this young fellow's mother could, whereupon she grew round-wombed and had indeed sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed" (1.1.13-16). Gloucester's language in these lines exposes an important aspect of the role of women in *King Lear*: They are expected

to shoulder blame. All of Gloucester's words regarding Edmund's mother put her entirely at fault for the birth of their son even though his role in the process must have been equal to hers. The first two phrases, "she grew" and "her cradle", show that Gloucester blames her because she is the one who carried the child and presumably the one who cared for him. This reasoning shows that the role of women as birthers and nurturers automatically places them at the root of any issues that arise from their spawn.

Gloucester's second two phrases, "she had" and "her bed", keenly display how Edmund's mother is the only one at fault for his conception because both phrases make her responsible for activities in which Gloucester was an equal partner. These words likely spring from the popular notion during the Elizabethan era, dramatized in other Shakespearean works like *Hamlet*, that women had voracious and insatiable sexual appetites. Still, obtaining a husband and sharing a bed are not actions that a woman could take during Shakespeare's time without a consenting male partner. Still, Gloucester's words maintain his spotless reputation and leave Edmund's mother with one so soiled that her name is not worth mentioning either in this passage or at any other point in the play. From these first few lines, the audience already expects that, no matter who causes the conflict in *King Lear*, the female characters will take the blame, just as Elizabeth was held accountable for the political actions of the male politicians surrounding her.

Shakespeare returns to the theme of gender roles later in scene one, shortly after Cordelia is given away to France. In her parting words to her sister, Goneril tells Cordelia, "Let your study / Be to content your lord, who hath received you / At Fortune's

alms. You have obedience scanted / And well are worth the want that you have wanted” (1.1.321-324). As Goneril lays out Cordelia’s role in her new marriage, she also affirms the expectation that women act as subservient caregivers regardless of whether they are daughters or wives. In her marriage to France, Cordelia’s responsibility is to “content your lord” and when she was Lear’s daughter, her duty was, in her own words, to “most honor you” (1.1.108). Her failure to fulfil this duty is what cast her out of her father’s court. But even as she is forced to change countries, Cordelia’s primary directive remains the same: To love a king. According to Goneril, Cordelia must also carry over the obedience that failed her during Lear’s love test.

Goneril’s words again echo Cordelia’s earlier plea to Lear, this time nearly verbatim; Cordelia recognized that one of her duties to Lear was to “[o]bey you” (1.1.108). These parallels indicate that as Cordelia’s position changes, her responsibilities do not. She is a princess, but she is also like many women of Shakespeare’s era; for these women, maturity meant switching from the role of a daughter to that of a wife while the role of caregiver remained constant. The expectation of such consistency does not align with the period’s idea that women were fickle and, in this case, contributes to an unattainable standard of womanhood. Cordelia’s behavior and punishment in the first scene is proof of both the expectation of consistency for women as well as the penalty for those who failed to achieve this impossible goal.

Even though Shakespeare outlines the expectation that his female characters will be subservient to the male ones, he endows the women in *King Lear* with a measure of agency that quickly becomes aggression as the play progresses. Cordelia takes her fate into her own hands in scene one, but Goneril waits a little longer to assume control over her situation. When she can no longer abide the number of knights that Lear retains, she

remarks, “Be then desired, / By her that else will take the thing she begs, / A little to disquantity your train” (1.4.254-256). Goneril shows that her entire speech is merely a formality because regardless of what Lear agrees to, she will get her way. If Lear will not reduce the number of knights in his train, she will exercise her power and force him to let the men go, exhibiting a new level of independence in the process.

Regan is an equal partner to her sister in the destruction of their father, but later, her power escalates as she gives in to the violence that permeates the play. One of her servants refuses to acquiesce when Cornwall removes the first of Gloucester’s eyes, so Regan announces, “Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus?” (3.7.98). Then, according to the stage directions, “She takes a sword and runs at him behind; kills him” (3.7). With this murder, Regan takes matters into her own hands figuratively and literally. What is most notable about the murder is that Regan removes the sword that she uses to commit the crime from one of her attendants, presumably a man. When she steals his weapon, she also takes his largest source of power and uses it for her own ends, proving that women can fulfil their own desires, including murderous ones, without male aid.

Before Regan commits murder, Lear implies that women do not need to take weapons from men because they are always naturally armed. As his daughters reduce the number of knights in his train to zero, he laments, “Touch me with noble anger / And let not women’s weapons, water drops, / Stain my man’s cheeks” (2.4.317-319). Lear implies that women fight not with swords but with tears and that this method is not as “noble” as the way that men solve conflicts. But even if Lear frowns on such a form of aggression, he still proves the existence of a path that allows women to achieve personal goals.

Womanhood in *King Lear* can be a defense as well as a weapon. Albany is the character who recognizes this tactic at the same moment that he confronts Goneril about the way she has mistreated her father. He tells her that, if he could obey his baser instincts, he would be “apt enough to dislocate and tear / Thy flesh and bones. Howe’er thou art a fiend, / A woman’s shape doth shield thee” (4.2.80-82). Albany notes an unexpected benefit for female characters: Though they may behave horribly, they cannot be punished as severely as men because of their gender. The word “shield” harkens to the military world that women cannot be a part of but still benefit from in instances like this one where only Albany’s sense of chivalry prevents him from ripping Goneril apart. She is his wife and must obey him, but he is her husband and he must protect her no matter how outrageously she acts.

Shakespeare creates an idea of what is expected of his female characters, but he also outlines the flaws that prevent them from achieving these standards. Their flaws are defined in situations where they invoke their own agency rather than deferring to a husband or father. The female characters experience a lower status than their male counterparts, but they can elevate themselves to a male status. One incidence of this promotion is when Lear raves on the heath that his daughters “are not men o’ their words; they told me I was everything” (4.6.123-124). Lear is upset that Goneril and Regan are not living up to the flattering speeches that they made in act one, but although he speaks unfavorably of his eldest daughters, he also upgrades them when he calls them “men”. They have become masculine not through any favorable behavior but through their lies.

This path suggests that Goneril and Regan are masculine because they base their actions on their own interests; they are no longer subservient to their father or their

husbands which makes them men in their own right. In a larger sense, Lear's words imply that women cannot be self-serving so Goneril and Regan's behavior means that they must be more male than female. It is not that their actions make them male but rather that they are male because of their actions.

Cordelia also experiences this elevation from female to male status. Her promotion comes from a gentleman who reports, "It seems she was a queen / Over her passion, who, most rebel-like, / Fought to be a king o'er her" (4.3.15-17). The gentleman is referring to Cordelia's reaction upon hearing what has happened to Lear since she left for France. She is a queen in the literal sense as well as the figurative sense to which the gentleman refers, but this feminine title is a mask for the king that exists inside her. This speech demonstrates that Cordelia's demure exterior triumphs over her swirling emotions. However, her concealment is not fool proof because the gentleman can still tell that she is tamping down her feelings in an effort to maintain her collected manner. She is undoubtedly female, but her inner workings contain an aspect of masculinity which the gentleman insinuates may help her to rule effectively.

Lear's daughters are so complicated and disturbing that their characters are frequently explained through comparisons to mythological beings. Lear refers to Goneril and Regan as "unnatural hags" for their betrayal, and he later proclaims that their actions result from a lack of proper human anatomy (2.4.319). As he raves on the heath, he declares to Gloucester, "Down from the waist they are centaurs, though women all above. But to the girdle do the gods inherit; beneath is all the fiend's" (4.6.140-142). Lear believes that his daughter's behavior indicates that they cannot be women and are either fantastic beasts or creatures made by the devil.

He is not the only one who thinks that there is something grotesque about his daughters; after Regan spearheads the effort to remove Gloucester's eyes, one of her servants remarks, "If she live long / And in the end meet the old course of death, / Women will all turn monsters" (3.7.122-124). These words reflect poorly on all women, but they are intended for Regan in particular; the speech could have ended like this: Women will all turn monsters like her. Goneril poisons Regan so she does not "live long", and women are not all monsters, though Lear's words and the servant's indicate that these two daughters are monstrous in some respect. These mythological implications suggest another explanation for self-serving behavior in women: They are not women at all and instead come out of a folk tale or from the pits of hell.

Like Elizabeth and, centuries later, Hemingway, Shakespeare is interested in the exploration of conventional notions of gender. He understood that the structure of society during his time decreed that women become subservient to whichever man took on the main role in their lives. Yet Shakespeare also knew that women are human beings first and as such are endowed with goals that do not necessarily align with those of this major male figure. In *King Lear*, he uses a blend of myth, gender swapping, and natural aggression to rationalize why Lear's daughters abhor this stereotype of servility.

For her part, Elizabeth struggled with this dichotomy between agency and subservience because while her gender dictated that she was inferior, her position as monarch made her the most powerful person in the country, male or female. She had to calculate how to balance her power and her gender in a manner that imbued her with the trust of her subjects rather than having her become an "unnatural hag" in their eyes. Hemingway, meanwhile, also strives for this balance with Catherine Barkley, a character who is outwardly subservient but subtly manages to control her relationship with

Frederic Henry. For Elizabeth, the answer to this conundrum was to propagate the concept of herself as the mother of her country. For Hemingway, motherhood leads to Catherine Barkley's untimely death. This pessimistic approach is another characteristic of Hemingway's work and *A Farewell to Arms* in particular that links him back to *King Lear*.

Underpinning the entirety of *King Lear* is a sentiment of deep pessimism. From the first scene where Lear disowns Cordelia to the gory removal of Gloucester's eyes to the slew of deaths in the final scene, the whole play maintains that, for all characters, there is no amelioration for their pain. Even when they have reached their lowest points, there is always room for more suffering. On several occasions, Lear, Gloucester, and Edgar invoke a higher power as the root of their misfortunes. Interestingly, although they express the belief that some deity causes and enjoys their suffering, they never declare that this god has singled them out. Rather, this power takes a perverse pleasure in the woes of the entire human race. These characters also link the machinations of this deity to fate, which means that their anguish is inescapable, further emphasizing the despairing theme that runs throughout *King Lear*.

The first indication of *Lear's* propensity for pessimism comes when Gloucester confers with Edmund about Edgar's betrayal early on in the play. He bemoans his own situation as well as that of the world in general:

These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us. Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects. Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. (1.2.109-115)

Gloucester begins his speech with an observation regarding two opposing celestial bodies that later coincides with his plethora of images of two parties warring against each other. His first statement invokes a belief in a higher power or a mystical theology that governs the fates of all people and that, at present, is not smiling upon humanity. His use of the absolute phrase “no good” removes the possibility for any optimism to invade his sentiment.

Gloucester goes on to discuss the same higher powers under the pseudonym of “nature” as he notes how this deity must make choices that tend towards melancholy, presumably to balance out the state of the world, but these decisions will have terrible effects that no one is immune to. He gives several examples of these effects, which, unbeknownst to Gloucester, portend many of the future events in *King Lear*: Friendships will be broken, mutinies and treason will occur, paternal bonds have already begun to crack, and the seeds of discord are spreading.

Gloucester’s uncanny ability to unknowingly predict these horrible affairs raises the question of how much the idea of fate influences future tragedies. Gloucester’s speech shows that he believes that fate, in the form of a higher power, controls his life as well as those of all human beings, but his unconscious prediction shows that humans have more agency than his words imply. Human beings are the subjects of celestial activity, but they also act themselves. Even though Gloucester’s absolute language shows that he is certain about his beliefs, the content of his words raises important questions about the struggle for power between fate and human authority.

Lear provides additional insight on this conflict when, during his mad ravings, he proclaims, “When we are born, we cry that we are come / To this great stage of fools” (4.6.200-201). He is referring to how the first action of any baby is to cry, and he

interprets this phenomenon not as a biological need for air but rather as a result of the inherent knowledge that fate is not in their favor and the world will not be kind. The phrase “great stage of fools” shows a belief that there is a grand scheme controlling all of humanity, but these words are ironic because Lear, alongside all the other characters, is part of Shakespeare’s play; he is, literally, on stage as he delivers this line. Although Lear means to emphasize the inescapable command of a higher power, his words are twisted just like Gloucester’s to show that human authority also plays a significant role in the unfolding of the future.

Regardless of whether humanity or fate is more powerful, neither one causes a favorable outcome for anyone, as Gloucester later observes. He makes this point with an apt comparison: “As flies to wanton boys are we to th’ gods; / They kill us for their sport” (4.1.41-42). The connection that Gloucester makes between humans and flies shows how inconsequential human lives are to the larger universe. But the striking piece of this analogy is how casually callous the gods appear. They are “wanton boys” who do not care about the consequences of their actions and view the deaths of humans as “sport”, an activity performed not out of necessity but for amusement.

Gloucester tries to force the blame for death onto the shoulders of an insensitive god, but all the deaths that occur in *King Lear* can be traced back to human beings: Cordelia and Regan are murdered, Goneril commits suicide, and Gloucester himself dies of a heart attack upon finding out that Tom the beggar is his prodigal son Edgar. The only death that could possibly be attributed to the actions of a higher power is Lear’s demise, but a more likely interpretation is that Lear dies from grief over Cordelia, whose death was a result of human action. Once again, whether a god or a human is at the helm, the outcome is consistently negative for all parties involved.

Shakespeare makes sure to establish the theme of universal pessimism, but he also makes the audience wonder whether the events of *King Lear* are abnormally horrible even in the presence of such abundant melancholy. Part of the answer comes once again from Gloucester, who tells Edmund that “We have seen the best of our time. Machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves” (1.2.118-121). The first phrase can be interpreted two ways: Either Gloucester means that the era that he has lived through was the best part of human history or he means that the best days for people of his particular generation have already come to pass. The second interpretation makes Gloucester sound optimistic about the fate of future generations, but the second part of his speech belies this idea so the better interpretation is that the peak of humanity is complete and further destruction will continue until all people have made their way “disquietly to our graves”. Gloucester’s speech means that the play’s events are not unusual, given his description of the sorry state of the universe and his predictions for the future.

As his situation worsens alongside those of the rest of the characters, Gloucester notes that “’Tis the time’s plague when madmen lead the blind” (4.1.54). The phrase “time’s plague” harkens back to his speech about “the best of our time”. He continues to affirm the suggestion that *King Lear* is set during the regression of humanity because his words perfectly describe how Edgar, in the guise of poor Tom, is now responsible for his eyeless father. Gloucester’s line shows that the calamitous developments of the play are to be expected, given the inherent tragedy of the setting.

The pervasive pessimism in *King Lear* raises another important question: Is there any potential for amelioration? The best answer comes from Edgar, who is undoubtedly the most optimistic character, though that is likely due more to the grief of

the other characters than to his own happiness. Still, Edgar is perhaps the only one who emerges from the crisis of *Lear* in better condition than he was at the start. But to reach the ending, he must endure the painful circumstances of his brother's betrayal and his father's abandonment.

At his lowest point, Edgar cries, "O gods, who is 't can say 'I am at the worst'? / I am worse than e'er I was... / And worse I may be yet. The worst is not / So long as we can say 'This is the worst'" (4.1.27-31). Even in his darkest hour, Edmund knows that his situation has the potential to become darker still because if he can recognize his current tragedy, he can fathom a course of events that would leave him even worse off. He phrases this sentiment by feeding imaginary lines into the mouths of imaginary people which, alongside his switch from first person to first person plural, demonstrates the ubiquitous applicability of his perception. This shift from individuality to universality is reminiscent of Gloucester and Lear's similar notions that fate is cruel to all people and not to them in particular. Edgar's invocation of the gods at the start of his speech is also redolent of Gloucester and Lear and their belief that, in Gloucester's words, "As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods"; there may be a higher power watching them, but that power is sadistic (4.1.41). Yet, in Edgar's interpretation, his ability to determine the magnitude of his suffering seems to give him a modicum of control over his situation, implying that there may be some hope amidst all the misery.

Edgar's optimistic streak is brightest just after he has tricked his father into taking a tumble down a hill rather than throwing himself off a cliff. When Edgar meets Gloucester at the bottom, Gloucester laments that his suicide attempt was unsuccessful, but Edgar tells him to "Think that the clearest gods, who make them honors / Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee" (4.6.90-91). This line is one of the few instances in

King Lear where gods are referred to favorably, although these gods are “clearest” and therefore are set apart from the cruel deities that the characters typically invoke. Edgar is reminding Gloucester that miracles or “men’s impossibilities” such as his survival from what he believes to be a precipice so high that “The shrill-gorged lark so far / Cannot be seen or heard”, are examples of how the gods occasionally smile upon mankind (4.6.72-73). But Edgar’s words are ironic because Gloucester is alive not because of a special favor from above but because of the cunning of his son.

Edgar’s line is one of the most optimistic of the play, yet his interpretation of the role of fate is unfounded because of the role that he himself played in the safeguarding of Gloucester’s life. Although his words are intended to bolster Gloucester’s spirits, he also winds up providing another example of how the gods can be apathetic to people and, as with many of the events in *King Lear*, humans must decide their own fate, for better or worse.

As *King Lear* reaches its cataclysmic conclusion, Shakespeare’s intention of creating a landscape devoid of hope is fully realized. Even Edgar’s eventual triumph and promotion fail to illuminate the bleak tableau of five dead bodies, four of them connected by “property of blood” (1.1.126). In the final lines, Edgar attempts to reconcile these shocking circumstances: “The weight of this sad time we must obey, / Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say. / The oldest hath borne most; we that are young / Shall never see so much nor live so long” (5.3.392-395). He is already slipping into his leadership role and endeavoring to soothe his subjects through the promotion of a healthy grieving process. But his final two lines, which would have been a prime opportunity to provide consolation, are somewhat out of character because they

complete the pessimistic arc of the play, as though the voice delivering this final message is not Edgar's but Shakespeare's.

These words are somewhat optimistic in their implication that impending generations will not suffer a tragedy paramount to *King Lear*, but they also suggest that no subsequent story will ever live up to *Lear* in resonance or intensity. This closing line leaves the audience aching both from the harrowing drama and for the prospect of the future, two aspects that combine to form the ultimate pessimistic experience.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the overwhelming pessimism in *King Lear*, this play was Hemingway's favorite of all of Shakespeare's works. He claimed to reread *Lear* every year to cheer himself up. Hemingway was probably being facetious when he made this assertion; the article containing this comment is full of instances where he provides the interviewer with glib answers. But there may be some truth to his statement. After experiencing the deep sorrow of *Lear*, the brightness of ordinary life is as blinding as walking out of a dark theater onto a sunlit street. Even someone like Hemingway, who had plenty of darkness in his life, could not say that he had the hardest lot compared to *Lear*'s tragedy. Shakespeare, as the undisputed champion, proves that the worst is not so long as we can say that *Lear* is the worst.

Chapter 2

King Lear contains enough material thematically referencing Elizabeth that the character of Lear could be a fictional representation of the queen. Queen Elizabeth I is represented as a fictional character in a variety of texts from her era. Perhaps the most notable of these works is Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590-1596) where she features briefly as the eponymous queen and more prominently as the virgin huntress Belphoebe and as Britomart, a female knight. What makes Spenser's text such an important example of fictional representations of Elizabeth is that he not only dedicates the entire poem to her, but he also uses part of his introduction to state that any resemblance to her majesty is intentional:

Great Lady of the greatest Isle, whose light
Like Phoebus lampe throughout the world doth shine,
Shed thy faire beames into my feeble eyne,
And raise my thoughts, too humble and too vile,
To thinke of that true glorious type of thine,
The argument of mine afflicted stile:

The which to heare, vouchsafe, O dearest dred, a-while. (1.4.30-36)

Spenser does not refer to Elizabeth by name, preferring to poetically call her the "Great Lady of the greatest Isle". As soon as he invokes her presence, he carefully notes his own "feeble eyne" (eye) and his "thoughts, too humble and too vile". His self-deprecation means that even though he is going to use her image, he makes sure that she knows that he does not perceive himself as her equal because his inferiority is evident to all. This genuflection also gives Spenser an excuse for any mistakes that he makes in his portrayal of Elizabeth and protects him from her potential wrath, a smart decision given

Elizabeth's notorious temper. While he does explicitly state that he is writing about Elizabeth, Spenser proceeds with caution to guard himself and his work.

Shakespeare was not as prudent when crafting his most overt portrayal of Elizabeth, the fairy queen Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595). Although Titania is unlike Elizabeth because she is married, her first lines in the play renounce her marriage to Oberon based on her suspicions of his unfaithfulness. Titania is also similar because of her close relationship to her ladies-in-waiting as shown when she refuses to give Oberon a child because his mother "was a vot'ress of my order" (2.1.127). Additional similarities include high status, lack of children, and perhaps the inability to reproduce. Even Titania's name connects her to Elizabeth because Shakespeare took this appellation from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* where it means "daughter of Titans", and Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, was a force equivalent to a titan throughout his reign, both politically and personally.

The character of King Lear does not represent Elizabeth the way that Titania does, but there are parallels between the two figures. Though Lear, unlike both Elizabeth and Titania, has heirs to leave his kingdom to, the topic of succession remains a crucial issue throughout the play as it was during Elizabeth's reign. There is also the connection of madness late in life; Lear spirals into insanity as his story progresses and Elizabeth is believed to have exhibited similarly unstable behavior as her health waned. Some reports say that she refused to go to bed in her final days and instead "met her end fully dressed, silently staring at the floor with one finger in her mouth" (Dobson and Watson 14). When told to go to sleep, she reportedly told her chief advisor, "Little man, little man, the word *must* is not to be used to princes" (qtd. in Dobson and Watson 14).

This quote is reminiscent of Lear because of Elizabeth's desire to maintain authority even as she is no longer capable of doing so.

We can perceive thematic similarities between Elizabeth's reign and *King Lear*. The issue of succession has already been touched on, but there is also the related topic of relationships between parents and children. Throughout her reign, Elizabeth attempted to emulate aspects of her father's leadership. She believed that aligning herself with Henry would rebuke the critics who claimed that she was unfit to rule because she was a woman. On one occasion when discussing foreign policy, she remarked, "Although I may not be a lioness, I am a lion's cub, and inherit many of his qualities", implying that she was not as vicious as her father, but she would not hesitate to use his brutal tactics if necessary (qtd. in Ridgway). Elizabeth viewed herself not as a female version of her father but as his heir, which relates to the most important theme of her reign: The relationship between her sex and her ability to rule. This theme is also significant in *King Lear* with regards to the expectations placed on Lear's daughters because of their gender and the ways they fail to meet these expectations. There is no direct correlation between Lear and Elizabeth as there is between Elizabeth and Titania, but many of the ideas in *King Lear* seem almost to have emanated from the motifs of Elizabeth's reign.

Connecting *King Lear* to Elizabeth strengthens the affiliation between Elizabeth and *A Farewell to Arms* because of Hemingway's reverence for Shakespeare and *Lear* in particular. One of the most relevant connections between *A Farewell to Arms* and *King Lear* is the overarching pessimism of both works with regards to war, fate, and a general lack of faith in human nature. Despite their disparate chronology and subject matter, the dark atmosphere that permeates both of these texts draws them together.

One of the first notes of pessimism in *A Farewell to Arms* occurs shortly after Frederic and Catherine first meet and the two are discussing the current situation of the war. Catherine remarks, “People can’t realize what France is like. If they did, it couldn’t all go on” (20). Her words imply the overwhelming tragedy of war and show that the only way humans can commit such an atrocity is through ignorance. Catherine does not say that people would not start wars if they understood the reality of fighting but rather that they would lose their minds. Her phrasing suggests the belief that humans are destined for suffering no matter what their level of understanding is.

Catherine’s words are one of several occasions throughout *A Farewell to Arms* where Hemingway has characters voice the idea that people would become insane if they completely understood war. Another example is when Frederic is conferring with the Italian ambulance drivers and one of the men, Passini, says, “There is nothing as bad as war. We in the auto-ambulance cannot even realize at all how bad it is. When people realize how bad it is they cannot do anything to stop it because they go crazy. There are some people who never realize... It is with them the war is made” (50). Although Passini and Catherine never meet, his words echo hers almost perfectly, and with Hemingway, a man who chose his words with exceptional care, such an echo is almost certainly intentional. Passini’s speech furthers Catherine’s earlier ideas because he shows that even those closest to the tragedy of war cannot understand how awful the fighting is. He then states more explicitly what Catherine has already expressed, that a complete understanding of the war only results in insanity. He also echoes her sentiment that people can only participate in a war if they lack a full understanding of the terrible actions they are undertaking. The repetition of these ideas about war emphasizes the strong pessimism that runs throughout *A Farewell to Arms* and

indicates how similar Hemingway's brand of melancholy, bitterness, and grief is to Shakespeare's in *King Lear*.

There is a striking similarity between the two texts just before Passini's speech when the same character notes, "It could not be worse... There is nothing worse than war", to which Frederic responds, "Defeat is worse" (50). These remarks mirror Edgar's famous line from *King Lear*: "The worst is not / So long as we can say 'This is the worst'" (4.1.30-31). Both Edgar and Frederic are somewhat optimistic in their quest to prove that their current situations could easily become darker still. Passini declares that they are currently in the worst possible situation and Frederic shows that their lives could indeed be worse. But he adheres to Edgar's advice and does not proclaim that defeat is the worst, only that it is worse than fighting a war which, however terrible, has the potential for victory. Given Hemingway's careful word choice and passionate response to *Lear*, this connection appears consequential not only for the parallel phrasing but also for the thematic connection of characters struggling for hope in a text that is full of tragedy.

Another connection between the brands of pessimism expressed in *King Lear* and *A Farewell to Arms* is the way that both texts treat the role of fate. In *A Farewell to Arms*, Frederic attempts to help a soldier who is trying to get to a hospital instead of returning to the front line. This plan fails when the man is picked up by a different ambulance, presumably one that will patch him up and send him back to fight. Frederic arrives just in time to watch the soldier being loaded into the ambulance and the wounded man cries out, "Nothing to do. They come back for me", a line which demonstrates how powerless Frederic truly is despite his initial plan (36). This vignette

shows that although he has good intentions, Frederic is ultimately unable to influence the outcome of the war and, like the characters in *Lear*, is subject to the whims of fate.

Frederic's experience with the soldier recalls Gloucester's line: "As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods; / They kill us for their sport" (4.1.41-42). In Frederic's case, the higher power is not "gods" but World War I, which kills men like the soldier he attempted to rescue. Gloucester's lines imply that men can be killed for sport because there are so many of them and they are easily replaced. This idea holds true for Frederic's experience where the individual casualties, however horrific, are inconsequential in the face of the larger goals of the war.

Connecting *A Farewell to Arms* to *King Lear* serves to characterize the nature of the representation of Elizabeth in the former text. Hemingway's work is not like Spenser's poetry where the reference to Elizabeth is explicit, nor is it like Shakespeare's in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* where the reference is thinly veiled. Instead, the connection is perhaps most similar to that between Elizabeth and *King Lear* where the queen and the text relate not through specific aspects of Shakespeare's characters but mostly through the broader themes that these characters generate. Because this connection is less rooted in a particular personage, we can glimpse Elizabeth in both Catherine Barkley and Frederic Henry. Catherine draws obvious comparisons, but the more subtle connections between Elizabeth and Frederic are equally important.

Catherine Barkley bears a surprising and striking resemblance to Elizabeth in the simple facts of her character. One of the most overt connections is that Catherine is a virgin when she meets Frederic Henry. She discusses this matter with him during their first meeting when she refers to her first love, who died in the war: "He could have had anything he wanted if I would have known. I would have married him or anything. I

know all about it now. But then he wanted to go to war and I didn't know” (19). Catherine's tone in these lines is cryptic, presumably because of her emotional sensitivity and her sense of decorum. She reveals to Frederic that, had she known how her first relationship would end, she would have been more receptive to marriage or “anything”. This vague term refers to sexual relations between Catherine and her lover and although her speech is intentionally unclear, Frederic and we as readers can surmise that she is a virgin.

The number of times that Catherine describes herself as being without knowledge in this passage supports this inference. Her dearth of information could also be described as innocence or naivete, terms that are both associated with stereotypical depictions of virgins. Catherine's sexual experience at this point in the novel also parallels Elizabeth's because, although Catherine is a virgin, her speech to Frederic shows that she once had the opportunity to consummate a relationship. Elizabeth had many similar opportunities throughout her life but, for a variety of reasons, made the decision to remain famously unwed and chaste.

Another intriguing connection between Catherine and Elizabeth is that both women are English. On Catherine's end, this observation initially seems trivial, but readers should remember the importance that Hemingway places on nationality throughout *A Farewell to Arms*. Frederic Henry is an American who works for the Italian army and aids in their fight against the Austrians and the Germans. Each character's country of origin influences their role, from the Italian ambulance drivers who provide Frederic with new insights into the nature of war to the English doctors who give Frederic special treatment when they learn that he is American. Catherine's homeland is also notable because both the women who form the basis of her character,

Agnes von Kurowsky and Pauline Pfeiffer, were Americans. The importance of Catherine's nationality is emphasized throughout the text when Rinaldi, the Italian surgeon who works closely with Frederic, refers to her as "the British" and "your English girl" on multiple occasions (32, 67). Though Catherine's citizenship is not essential to the plot, Hemingway makes sure to bring her country of origin, the same country that Elizabeth reigned over, to our attention.

Catherine is British, but her coworker Miss Ferguson is Scottish. For the reader, this fact parallels Elizabeth's fraught relationship with Mary Queen of Scots. Though Catherine and Ferguson are not enemies as Elizabeth and Mary were, the interaction where Frederic discusses Ferguson's nationality has similarities to the latter pair of women. When asked about Scotland's relationship to England, Ferguson baldly replies, "We do not like the English", but when Rinaldi asks if that means she dislikes Catherine, Ferguson responds, "Oh, that's different. You musn't take everything so literally" (21). Ferguson initially states absolutely that her nationality dictates how she feels about the English. But when Rinaldi gets more specific, she claims that Catherine is an exception.

These sentiments are remarkably similar to the complicated connection between Elizabeth and Mary. Though their countries opposed each other, the two women themselves frequently claimed to get on amicably. Mary was a threat to Elizabeth throughout her reign both because of her proximity to the throne and because of her religion. The Catholics in England after Elizabeth reverted the country back to Protestantism saw Mary as their true queen, and there were several attempts to stage a coup in her name. In the letters that Elizabeth and Mary wrote each other (they never met in person), they formed a pretense of friendship, but there was never any love lost

between them. In Hemingway's novel, Ferguson's line recalls the careful diplomacy of this relationship because she places the blame on Rinaldi for insinuating that she does not like Catherine. The way that she shifts the responsibility for her own words is analogous to one of Elizabeth's favorite diplomatic maneuvers. Perhaps the most notable case of Elizabeth employing the same technique was when she blamed one of her men for Mary's death.

Mary was forced to flee Scotland at the end of her reign when her subjects became outraged because she had married the man who was accused of killing her husband. When she arrived in England, she begged Elizabeth for help, but Elizabeth was naturally suspicious; Mary was her cousin but she had also attempted to usurp her several times. Though many of her councilors and subjects called for Mary's execution, Elizabeth instead chose to keep Mary as a glorified prisoner for the next nineteen years, moving her between several estates and always making sure that one of her courtiers kept a watchful eye over her tricky cousin. But in 1586, the Babington Plot forced Elizabeth to make a final decision about Mary's fate.

Anthony Babington, the mastermind of the infamous scheme, joined with thirteen other men under the sanction of the Spanish government in an attempt to assassinate Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne. The plot failed because Walsingham, Elizabeth's spymaster, intercepted correspondence between Babington and Mary, and all the men involved were hanged on September 20th and 21st. But despite the many orders from Parliament for her death, Mary still lived because of Elizabeth's conflicting feelings. According to William Camden's detailed history of Elizabeth's reign, she outlined her thoughts thus:

But I must tell you one thing, that by this last Act of Parliament you have brought me to a narrow straight, that I must give order for her death which is a Princesse most nearly allied unto me in blood, and whose practises against me have stricken me in so great griefe... But forasmuch as this matter now in hand is very rare and of greatest consequence, I hope you do not looke for any present resolution; for my manner is in matters of lesse moment then this, to deliberate long upon that which is once to be resolved. In the meane time I beseech almighty God to illuminate my minde that I may forsee that which may serve for the good of his Church, the prosperity of the Common-wealth, and your safety. (Camden, 1586, 77-78)

Like most texts that give us Elizabeth's speeches, these words are filtered through their author and perhaps should be read with some skepticism because a copy of the actual speech does not exist. Nevertheless, Camden's account provides valuable insight into Elizabeth's thought process regarding Mary's guilt and the momentous decision that she had to make.

This speech is a masterful example of Elizabeth's ability to frame events based on the image she wished to project. The content of her words expresses the conflict she felt about condemning her cousin to death (even though Mary was a traitor) and she uses her inner turmoil to buy herself some extra time before delivering her verdict. Yet while Elizabeth notes that she will order Mary's death, she subtly assigns responsibility to various other parties and ensures that she has other people to blame for her choice. At the beginning, she correctly states that Parliament has put her in this difficult position and shows that, no matter what comes next, they have forced her hand. Then Elizabeth

notes that she will ask God for guidance, meaning that her final decision must be attributed to divine providence, which further diminishes her own responsibility. She ends her remarks with the caveat that, whatever she chooses, her intentions will reflect her greatest desire: the safety of her people. But this sentiment also erases Elizabeth's culpability; though she cannot blame her subjects, she can certainly use them as an excuse.

Elizabeth remained conflicted about Mary's death, but potent rumors about more Spanish plots to put the Scottish queen on the throne caused her to give in and sign Mary's death warrant. However, shortly after ordering one of her secretaries to draw up the documents, she changed her mind and requested that the warrant be withdrawn. Misunderstandings between her secretary and council ensued and, in the confusion, the warrant was sent through and Mary was executed on February 8th, 1587.

When Elizabeth heard of Mary's death, she became enraged at her secretary, whom she believed had acted too hastily, and was overcome with grief. She wrote to Mary's son, King James of Scotland:

My dearest brother, would God that thou knewest, yet feltest not, with what incomparable griefe my mind is perplexed for this lamentable event which is happened contrary to my meaning... I pray you that as God and many others can witness my innocency in this matter; so you will also believe that if I had commanded it, I would never deny it... I will never dissemble my actions, but make them appear in their true colours.

Perswade your selfe for truth that as I know this is hapned deservedly, so if I had intended it, I would not have layd it upon others. (Camden, 1587, 17)

This letter, like Elizabeth's speech, has an overt meaning but is also subtly intended to shape her image in the wake of Mary's death. She expresses her grief, but she quickly moves from consoling James to proclaiming her own innocence. Through several declarations of her own honesty, Elizabeth repeatedly says that if she had meant for Mary to die, she would have owned up to her actions. Perhaps this letter was sufficient for James, who had already allied himself with Elizabeth against his mother, but to a modern reader, the queen appears to protest too much for someone who is as blameless as she claims.

Despite her letter to James, Elizabeth must have had a hand in Mary's death or else there would have been no order to begin with. The indecision expressed in her speech was likely real, but for more complicated reasons than she disclosed to Parliament. Killing her cousin would cause trouble for Elizabeth on two fronts. Her subjects could perceive her as lacking the familial tenderness that was an essential component for females of her era, and her Spanish enemies could construe Mary's death into an act that threatened their Catholic empire. Elizabeth must have known that the order for the execution was imminent, but she waited until she could contrive circumstances that rendered her virtually innocent and gave her a scapegoat for her cousin's execution. The name signed on the death warrant was her own, but through her exceptional skills of manipulation, Elizabeth exempted herself from all responsibility.

This account of Elizabeth and Mary may seem to have taken us far from *A Farewell to Arms*, but the story of Mary's execution highlights the most important connection between Elizabeth and Catherine: Their ability to manipulate the people around them to achieve their goals. For Catherine, this skill is apparent throughout the novel as she shapes her relationship with Frederic Henry through subtle maneuvers in

their conversations. In several instances, she makes statements such as “There isn’t any me any more. Just what you want,” which, to the reader, is an alarmingly submissive idea (106). But there are many other instances where Catherine uses her words to show the power that she has over Frederic—she is not as submissive as she appears. Like Elizabeth, Catherine has an image that she strives to maintain. Both women face instances where they need others to perceive them as weak though the reality is the opposite. Elizabeth protected her public persona throughout her reign and the Babington Plot is one example of how she shaped the course of events in her favor. Catherine uses similarly subtle manipulations to preserve her own power, an objective that is contrary to her demure, subordinate tone. Elizabeth provides the lens that allows us to view a clearer image of Catherine’s character.

In one of her first meetings with Frederic, Catherine is already running the show without Frederic realizing that she has the upper hand. As they walk in the garden near the hospital where Catherine works, he comforts her and appears emotionally superior even though she is the one feeding lines into his mouth. Frederic does not understand the control she has and instead believes that “This was a game, like bridge, in which you said things instead of playing cards. Like bridge you had to pretend you were playing for money or playing for some stakes. Nobody had mentioned what the stakes were. It was all right with me” (30-31). There is more than a hint of superiority to Frederic’s thoughts. He knows that he and Catherine are playing a game, but although she has just professed her love for him, he lies when he says he loves her back. He admits to having no knowledge of the “stakes” that he plays for so the game means nothing for him because winning or losing will leave him unchanged. Frederic can afford to be nonchalant because he has no personal investment and because he believes that, since

there has been no mention of the stakes, Catherine does not understand the game. But Frederic quickly finds out that his interpretation of their meeting is incorrect.

Catherine understands the course of the conversation better than Frederic does because not only does she know about the game, she knows that Frederic knows. After a pause, she asks him, “This is a rotten game we play, isn’t it?” (31). Frederic pretends not to know what she means but she tells him, “You’re a nice boy... And you play it as well as you know how. But it’s a rotten game” (31). Shocked that she has just read his mind, Frederic asks if she always knows what people think to which she responds, “Not always. But I do with you. You don’t have to pretend you love me. That’s over for the evening” (31). If the pair of them have been playing cards as Frederic claims, then Catherine has just delivered a winning hand after exhibiting an excellent poker face.

Catherine reveals that she understands the rules of the game, but she also knows that Frederic lied when he said he loved her. Catherine has maneuvered her way through their conversation with complete awareness of Frederic’s feelings. She has controlled their interaction until she no longer felt like playing, at which point she exercised her power and ended the game. Frederic believed himself to be the only player, but Catherine has both declared her winning hand and stacked the deck.

Her prudent authority, which knowledge of Elizabeth’s manipulation delineates, continues after Frederic finds himself wounded in the hospital. One evening, Catherine interrogates him about the women he has been with and how prostitution works. From the beginning, she knows that he is lying to her, but she proclaims, “It’s all right. Keep right on lying to me. That’s what I want you to do” (105). This statement gives Catherine complete control over the rest of the conversation. If Frederic tells the truth, then he is obeying her commands. If he lies, Catherine will know and he will still be obeying her

commands. Whether he realizes or not, there is no way for Frederic not to do what Catherine wants as she pursues answers to several personal questions.

The sensitivity of the subject matter compels Frederic to keep lying, but Catherine does not grow frustrated, presumably because she knows that he is lying. Although he says that he has never been with a prostitute, she knows that his words are false and she tells him, “You’re just mine. That’s true and you’ve never belonged to any one else. But I don’t care if you have. I’m not afraid of them. But don’t tell me about them. When a man stays with a girl when does she say how much it costs?” (105). These sentences are complicated because Catherine thinks Frederic has been with other women so she is lying to herself when she says that he is only hers. Her final statement implies that she is attempting to cancel out his promiscuous past with her ignorance. But the following question shows that she is actually curious about Frederic’s history and that the previous sentence is a lie. Her double-edged words once again make Frederic unable to disobey her; if he does not tell her, he follows her overt meaning, and if he does, then he obeys the implication of her statement. Once again, Catherine has complete power over their conversation even though they are discussing Frederic’s sexual history.

If her final statement has two meanings, then Catherine’s previous statements require further examination. Because Frederic has admitted through his lies that he has experience with other women, her first two sentences are automatically false. But Catherine’s deliberate use of the word “true” reveals that her definition of belonging extends beyond physical interaction and refers to a deeper truth about her relationship with Frederic. She means that he has never loved anyone as completely as he loves her, and although Frederic’s entire romantic history is never announced, the overwhelming

nature of his love for Catherine is a sufficient indicator that he has never held such regard for another woman. When Catherine states, “But I don’t care if you have. I’m not afraid of them,” she refers to the outward meaning of her first declaration because such an idea has no relevance to her hidden meaning; there is no reason to care about women who do not exist. She has successfully cloaked her thoughts in enough complications to preserve the power she has over Frederic without entirely obscuring her meaning. Once again, the novel’s titular connection to Elizabeth unveils the queen-like diplomacy of Catherine’s manipulations.

Catherine shows her control over her relationship with complex methods, but sometimes her processes are simpler. An example of transparency is during her rounds when she offers Frederic distractions: “Can I do anything to please you? Would you like me to take down my hair? Do you want to play?” (116). Catherine makes an effort to appear pliant so that Frederic will view her as the subservient half of their relationship. But when he says that he would like her to come to bed, she replies, “All right. I’ll go and see the patients first,” (116). She will come eventually, but Catherine is quick to let Frederic know that she has concerns that she prioritizes above him. The sentiment here is clear: Frederic matters to Catherine, but maintaining her power over him matters more.

Catherine and Elizabeth are both successful in retaining power, but such authority comes at a cost. Elizabeth had to make many sacrifices throughout her reign, the most notable being that she never married and never had children. Her courtiers and subjects worried about the risk of mortality associated with childbirth during her era, and Elizabeth must have considered that she would lose power if the focus shifted to her heir. Remaining childless, in a sense, was a strategy; Elizabeth could avoid the issue

of succession until the last possible moment which kept the focus of the nation and, consequently, the concentration of power centered on her.

Unlike Elizabeth, however, Catherine does give birth and both she and the baby perish in the process. She loses both her life and her accumulation of power in one fell swoop. Catherine dies because of the terrible hemorrhages that she suffers because of her Caesarian section, but we could say that her demise comes from the power that she loses while giving birth. With the introduction of the baby, she must share her control over Frederic with someone else, and because her character cannot adapt to this change, she dies. In the midst of giving birth, Catherine laments the situation that the baby has put her in: “Oh, I wanted so to have this baby and not make trouble, and now I’m all done and all gone to pieces and it doesn’t work... I don’t care if I die if it will only stop... Don’t mind me darling. Please don’t cry. Don’t mind me. I’m just gone all to pieces” (322). Her words are the anguished ravings of a woman experiencing the extreme pain of childbirth, but like many of Catherine’s speeches, there is truth below the surface. She recognizes that the baby is tearing apart the fibers of her body and of her character to a point where neither can function and death is the only solution. Still, she tries to comfort Frederic, an act that appears selfless but is really an attempt to gain control over a situation that is rapidly spiraling far beyond her power.

Frederic tries to keep Catherine’s morale high, but she keeps repeating phrases such as “I’m all broken. They’ve broken me” which signify that giving birth has damaged her beyond repair (323). Losing her power over Frederic to their child destroys the essence of her character and Catherine already recognizes that she cannot recover. Yet she still attempts to regain control over Frederic in some small way. When he takes her hand, she says, “Don’t touch me... Poor darling. You touch me all you want” (330).

Catherine tries to remind Frederic that she holds the power in their relationship, but she quickly remembers that her time is limited and her authority is rapidly dissipating so she relents and gives him free rein. There are no consequences for giving away a power that she no longer has.

If Catherine represents the authoritative side of Elizabeth, then Frederic is the part of her that remained subject to intense pressure from society. The bounded element of Frederic's personality becomes evident in the first few pages when he gets drunk with the priest and laments that "we did not do the things we wanted to do; we never did such things" (13). His words evoke one of the key themes underpinning Elizabeth's reign: Restraint. She could not afford to act without considering the implications of her behavior, and her awareness of constant scrutiny and responsibility prevented her from following her personal desires. The concept of restraint is equally essential for Frederic as he moves through *A Farewell to Arms*. He wants to be with Catherine, but his responsibilities force him to split most of his time between recuperating from his injury and working as an ambulance driver. When Catherine dies at the end, the things that Frederic wants to do are permanently closed off to him, and he thus unknowingly predicts his future unhappiness when he remarks that "we never did such things" (13). Frederic wanted to live the rest of his life with Catherine, and Elizabeth, it seems, also had a particular suitor in mind, but a complicated set of constraints prevents them both from finding a happy ending.

Although compliance marks Frederic's character, he does not always adhere to a strict moral code. But when he breaks a set of rules, he does so covertly because he is conscious of the repercussions of his actions. One case of deviant behavior is when Frederic gets various people to buy him alcohol while he is in the hospital even though

he is not supposed to be drinking. Rather than keeping the bottles near his bedside, he hides the forbidden alcohol in the closet so that the head nurse will not see that he has broken the rules (143). Another example of Frederic's disobedience occurs during his trip back to the front line when he and his men stop at an abandoned cottage and look for food. Breaking into another person's house is normally unacceptable, but such action is necessary because of the extreme circumstances of the war. Yet when one man attempts to remove a clock from the house, Frederic tells him to put it back (200). He recognizes that he and his men must steal food to survive, but he also understands the illegal nature of their behavior and attempts to minimize wrongdoing. In this scenario, his law-abiding nature closely follows his survival instinct.

Frederic prominently displays his regard for society's rules during his interactions with the priest. All of the Italians in the regiment mock the priest but Frederic listens to him politely and shows him kindness and attention. Hemingway never provides a reason for the contrast between Frederic's behavior and that of the other men. However, the major's remark that "All thinking men are atheists" combined with his jeers regarding the priest's lack of knowledge about women suggest that the men make fun of the priest because his religion sets him apart from the rest of the group and makes him an easy target (8). Despite the pressure from the soldiers to treat the priest with derision, Frederic maintains a friendly relationship with the other man because he enjoys the priest's company and because society has taught him that religious men deserve esteem.

Frederic proves his respect for the priest's position during a discussion at the hospital when the depth of his friend's religious fervor astounds him:

'Well,' I said. I did not know what to say. 'You are a fine boy,' I said.

‘I am a boy,’ he said. ‘But you call me father.’

‘That’s politeness.’ (72)

Frederic recognizes that the priest is a person as well as a religious figure, which is why he makes the distinction of calling the priest a “boy”. But he also understands the deference that the priest’s position requires so he is careful to be respectful as well as friendly. Although finding the balance between camaraderie and veneration must complicate their relationship, Frederic’s sense of propriety necessitates this extra work.

Even in the moment that Frederic breaks the constraints of the army and deserts the war effort, he is still bound to social customs. The metaphor that he uses to justify his decision shows that he feels tied to convention:

You had lost your cars and your men as a floorwalker loses the stock of his department in a fire. There was, however, no insurance. You were out of it now. You had no more obligation. If they shot floorwalkers after a fire in the department store because they spoke with an accent they had always had, then certainly the floorwalkers would not be expected to return when the store opened again for business. They might seek other employment; if there was any other employment and the police did not get them. (232)

Frederic’s references to stores, stocks, and employees mean that he needs to connect with traditional structures to justify his deviation from those same structures. His metaphor of the fire and the lack of insurance eliminating obligation fits his situation well, but when he starts thinking about shooting the floorwalkers for their accents, his metaphor loses traction. Suddenly, he is trying to rationalize his decision through an irrational scenario. His mind is likely addled from the combination of the trauma of almost being shot and swimming in an icy river so he does not recognize that his

thoughts have gone off the rails. But from an external perspective, Frederic's thinking is bizarre. He is so accustomed to living based on convention that he clings desperately to any train of thought that makes his desertion socially justifiable, even if that way of thinking is crazy. As long as Frederic can reason his way back to convention then he can accept his decision to abandon his usual customs.

Frederic's adherence to custom is so established that those who know him best can use his faithfulness to influence him. Rinaldi appeals to Frederic's devotion to social mandates to get his friend to come and meet Catherine for the first time:

'You will come with me to see Miss Barkley.'

'No.'

'Yes. You will please come and make me a good impression on her.'

'All right. Wait till I get cleaned up.' (17)

Frederic is unwilling to go meet Catherine until Rinaldi reminds him that his presence will help Rinaldi with the courtesies involved in getting to know someone. Rinaldi's understanding of Frederic's regimented character sets the novel's love story in motion, and without the weight that Frederic places on social compliance, he might never have met Catherine at all.

Frederic's steadfast personality does not always lead to favorable outcomes. Even his relationship with Catherine, which began because of his belief in convention (In the form of a favor to his friend), leads to pain when she dies in childbirth. While she is struggling in the hospital, Frederic contemplates the inevitability of death and remembers an occasion where he watched ants fall off a log and die in a fire:

I remember thinking at the time that it was the end of the world and a splendid chance to be a messiah and lift the log off the fire and throw it out

where the ants could get off onto the ground. But I did not do anything but throw a tin cup of water on the log, so that I would have the cup empty to put whiskey in before I added water to it. I think the cup of water on the burning log only steamed the ants. (328)

In this story, a set of rules still confines Frederic, but here he is beholden to the laws of nature rather than those of society. If death is coming eventually, Frederic will not try to combat this overwhelming force even if he sees chances to ameliorate pain (He could have removed the ants from the fire). But he is not idle either; rather, Frederic adds water to the log and unintentionally participates in killing the ants while avoiding watered down whiskey. This anecdote shows that trying to follow the rules of society or the rules of nature cannot prevent death. The ants die, and Catherine dies too, and Frederic is left alone with the rules that govern his behavior. He fervently adheres to the literal and unspoken laws that define society's moral code, but his compliance does not exempt him from the consequences of natural laws. No amount of obedience exempts Frederic from the pain of the death of a loved one.

Although Queen Elizabeth made many of the rules, she, like Frederic, was beholden to society's laws and was not necessarily rewarded for her good behavior. She was the highest-ranking person in English society for the majority of her life, yet she was not always free to behave as she pleased. Her every action contained implications that affected the fate of her people and her civilization and she often had to put aside her personal desires in favor of the greater good. Elizabeth cared for her subjects as though they were the children she never had. On one of the many occasions when the House of Commons begged for her to marry, she responded, "I have no children: for every one of you, and as many as are English, are my children and kinsfolks" (Schweizer, 39).

Throughout her reign, she acted according to society's definition of a good mother and put her children before herself even though such behavior cost her the love of her life, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

Elizabeth and Leicester were never married and there is no evidence that their relationship was ever sexual, but the amount of documentation showing Elizabeth's unusual favor for Leicester proves that, if she was ever in love, she loved Robert Dudley. The time that they spent together as prisoners in the Tower of London, both fearing for their lives, allowed them to form a bond that was under scrutiny as soon as Elizabeth took the throne in 1558. Count de Feria, the ambassador to Spain, wrote to King Phillip II shortly after the start of Elizabeth's reign that "During the last few days Lord Robert has come so much into favour that he does whatever he likes with affairs and it is even said that her Majesty visits him in his chamber day and night" (Chamberlain, 101). Another account from Baron Mitterburg of Austria, dated several years later, calls Leicester "most affectionately disposed and devoted to your Imperial Majesty" (Chamberlain, 410). The nineteenth-century historian James Froude, who studied Elizabeth's life intently, drew the conclusion that Leicester "was the only person for whom she really cared", while another historian, Conyers Read, writes, "No man ever quite replaced Leicester in Elizabeth's affections" (Chamberlain, 105).

Despite the exceptional nature of Elizabeth's attachment to Leicester, she never married him. Prominent reasons underlying this decision include the debate surrounding whether Leicester was fit to be king and Elizabeth's need to maintain power, but there was another significant reason: Leicester was a socially unacceptable match for the queen.

The first indicator of Leicester's unsuitability was the behavior of his predecessors. His family history of treason extended back to his grandfather, Edmund Dudley, who enjoyed a distinguished political career during the reign of Henry VII. But as a member of the king's council, he used his office to sell government positions, his vote on the council, and pardons for a variety of offences including treason, sedition, and murder. After Henry died, Edmund was imprisoned in the Tower of London for his role in the oppression that occurred during Henry's reign. He was convicted of treason shortly thereafter and Henry VIII executed him a year later based on reports of the corruptness of his father's councilors. Edmund's crimes were numerous, but his son John (Leicester's father) managed to outdo his treasonous behavior.

At the end of Henry VIII's reign, his sickly son Edward took the throne and John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, was one of many people who saw a political opportunity. The new king would not last long, and the question of his successor was up for debate as long as his half-sisters Mary and Elizabeth were still considered illegitimate. When Edward collapsed, all that was left to designate the next ruler was his notion of passing the crown to the unborn son of his cousin, the duchess of Suffolk. No one wanted her to be queen, and Edward's words were altered so that her eldest daughter, Lady Jane Grey, could become queen until she bore a son who could take over. Jane was the wife of one of Northumberland's sons so he would have immense control over her as she ruled. He advocated strongly that she should become queen and that Mary's advances should be ignored. In the confusion following Edward's death, Northumberland's case for Jane was unpopular because most people supported Mary's claim to the throne and believed that his advocacy was unlawful. He was convicted of high treason for acting on Jane's invalid authority and Mary had him executed. Between

Edmund and Northumberland, Leicester had two generations of men committing crimes against society, and their treasonous activity made him an unsuitable match for Elizabeth.

Family history aside, Leicester himself generated a reputation that made him an unfavorable suitor. While a member of Elizabeth's court, he inspired myriad rumors of attempted poisonings, political corruption, and promiscuity. Whether or not all of this gossip was true, one event from early in Leicester's career marked his reputation and forever ruined his chance to marry Elizabeth. His first wife, Amy Robsart, fell down the stairs of their home and died suddenly. Historians have examined her death from all angles, searching for evidence that she was murdered so that Leicester could marry Elizabeth, which was the popular belief at the time. Some reports say that he was guilty while others say that the lack of definitive evidence means that the death was not a murder but a tragic accident. Leicester's letter in the immediate aftermath does not help either case:

The greatnes and the suddenness of the misfortune doth so pplex me until I do heare from you how the matter standethe, or howe this evill shuld light upon me; considering what the malicious world will bruyte as I can take no rest. And, because I have no waie to purge my-selfe of the malicious talke that I knowe the wicked worlde will use... I Do praie you, as you have loved me, and do tender me and my quietnes... That wou will use all the devises and meaned you can possible for the learning of the trothe. (Chamberlain, 37)

Leicester is quick to consider how Amy's death reflects on him, which may imply his guilt. Conversely, his desire to know the truth of the situation could show that he is

innocent because he would want to cover up the truth if he were guilty. The reality of Amy's demise remains speculative, but what Leicester correctly observes is that, regardless of the truth, rumors of guilt would spread. Some people would believe that he killed Amy while others would suspect that Elizabeth had her murdered so that she could marry Leicester. Society's gossip thus would ensure that the affair cast them both in an unfavorable light and prevented them from pursuing matrimony.

There was no way that Elizabeth could marry Leicester after Amy's death, but her position as the most eligible woman in the world combined with the favor she continued to show Leicester gave her councilors reason to fear that he might still become king. They had many reasons to harbor ill will towards him: He had the queen's ear, he relentlessly pursued his own agendas, and he was a rumored criminal. This animosity is well documented. A letter from the diplomat Hubert Languet reports on relations between Elizabeth and her advisors: "The English leaders have made it plain to her that her too great familiarity with my lord Robert Dudley displeases them and that they will by no means allow him to wed her" (Chamberlain, 93). An earlier missive from the Spanish ambassador, de Quadra, also notes this bitterness: "I think this hatred of Lord Robert will continue, as the Duke and the rest of them cannot put up with his being King" (Chamberlain, 117). de Quadra later shows that some men would rather have committed murder than bow down to Leicester: "Lord Robert... is very vigilant and suspicious, as he has again been warned that there is a plot to kill him, which I quite believe for not a man in the realm can suffer the idea of his being King" (Chamberlain, 117). The antipathy of Elizabeth's advisors towards Leicester was another reason why, despite their close connection, she remained unwed.

Elizabeth was almost certainly in love with Leicester, but he was a problematic match for her, and she could not marry him because of her position in society. As the queen, her choice of husband was of the utmost importance because whoever she married would subsume her power and take control of the British Empire. That man could not have a family history of treason, be suspected of murder, or fail to curry the favor of her advisors, and in all of these respects, Leicester fell short. Though she was the most powerful woman in England, society held too much hostility towards Leicester to allow her to marry him. Even the queen was subject to the rules of society; as the historian Froude observes: “Surrounded as she was by a thousand malignant eyes, she could not have escaped detection had she really committed herself” (Chamberlain, 412).

Social pressures functioned for Elizabeth in much the same manner that they function for Frederic Henry despite the differences in their respective social statuses. In both cases, these pressures prevent them from pursuing a fulfilling relationship with the person they love and force them to live alone. For Elizabeth, the importance of her rank in society combined with Leicester’s reputation meant that she could not marry him. Likewise, the laws of the army temporarily separate Frederic from Catherine and then the laws of nature permanently separate them. She dies giving birth to their child and “Frederic survives, but, as Hemingway noted on an unpublished manuscript page of the novel, ‘the position of the survivor of a great calamity is seldom admirable’” (Comley and Scholes, 39). Frederic is careful to consistently adhere to social convention throughout *A Farewell to Arms*, but his obedience provides him no respite from death and the associated pain. But Frederic does have extramarital sex and desert the army. Unlike Elizabeth, he has the freedom to make decisions based on a heightened emotional state without leaving a country hanging in the balance.

Elizabeth's acquiescence to the duties of her position did not give her the freedom to marry whomever she chose, but her conformity did allow her to retain her crown. Mary Queen of Scots was overthrown in part because she made an unpopular marriage, and Elizabeth was clever enough not to repeat her cousin's mistake. Her decision not to marry also meant that she maintained her status as the most powerful person in England instead of transferring that power to her husband. Social convention profoundly affects both Frederic and Elizabeth's romantic endeavors, but Elizabeth's political abilities and the power she enjoys both outweigh the negative aspects of living alone while Frederic has no such compensation.

Frederic and Catherine together represent opposite sides of Elizabeth's personality. Catherine's influence over Frederic illustrates how extensive Elizabeth's control was. Additionally, the subtlety with which Catherine operates relates to Elizabeth's complicated position as a woman in power. Both women rely on the covert nature of their manipulations to avoid compromising their femininity. Meanwhile, Frederic represents how Elizabeth's place in society bound her to her subjects and transformed her most personal decisions into matters of national welfare. But while Frederic's compliance to society's rules does not prevent Catherine's death and his subsequent loneliness, Elizabeth's compliance allowed her to retain her power. This splitting of Elizabeth's representation between a male character and a female character corresponds to Hemingway's interest in exploring gender stereotypes and sexual identities in his writing. The duality also increases the accuracy of Elizabeth's depiction because of her need to float between genders to fulfill her political role.

Elizabeth chose to alternately refer to herself as male or female in part because of the belief in separation between the body natural and the body politic. Elizabeth's actual

body was that of a woman, but the spirit that inhabited her body and allowed her to rule was thought to be masculine because this spirit was passed down through men from a male God. Though this idea was never written into law, Elizabeth's subjects, courtiers, and the queen herself believed in a division between her flesh and blood and her spirit which gave her the capacity to rule. The body politic was a useful diplomatic tool in marriage negotiations. If Elizabeth liked a suitor but recognized that marriage to him would be disadvantageous, she could say that she loved him with her body natural while rejecting him with her body politic. Thus she could avoid marriage without hurting the suitor's feelings and causing ill will between countries. Her emphasis on her dual gender was often politically beneficial.

Elizabeth made a concerted effort to prove that she was male as well as female to enhance her reputation as a ruler. She began this campaign from the start of her reign when, during her coronation procession, she stopped at a church and voiced a prayer comparing herself to the Biblical figure Daniel rather than to a female Biblical figure. This association is ironic considering how Elizabeth later frequently allied herself with the Virgin Mary to ease her subjects' transition from Catholicism to Protestantism. Her people were reeling from transitioning from Protestantism under Edward's reign to strict Catholicism under Mary and back to Protestantism with Elizabeth. Aligning herself with the Virgin Mary allowed Elizabeth to smooth the transition and make the switch more palatable. The case of Elizabeth's religious counterpart is an example of how "her self-representations as both male and female were used throughout her reign depending on their usefulness in particular situations and with particular audiences" (Levin, 132). Elizabeth was always careful about her public image and gender was an

aspect of her persona that she could craft to ensure that she delivered a powerful impression.

Portraying herself as a man gave Elizabeth more respect from foreign parties than she would have received if she expressed herself as a woman. As tensions with Spain grew in the latter half of her reign, she reportedly said “that although she was a woman and her profession was to try to preserve peace with neighboring princes, yet if they attacked her they would find that in war she could be better than a man” (Levin, 140). Perhaps Elizabeth was especially insistent on this point because war was the one area where she was notably inferior to the kings who had come before her. Unlike her father, she could not lead men on the battlefield so she made up for her lack of combat skill with verbal sparring. Presenting herself as male strengthened her connection to her father and increased her legitimacy, which some people questioned long after she was coronated.

The best way for Elizabeth to emphasize her gender for the public was through her speeches, which were published and disseminated throughout her empire. She delivered one of her most famous orations to her troops at Tilbury as they prepared to take on the fearsome Spanish Armada:

I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare invade the borders of my realm; to which, rather than any Dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up Arms, I myself will be your General. (Levin, 144)

Elizabeth used the separation between her body politic and her body natural to explain why, although she was a member of the supposedly weaker gender, she was fit to rule

and capable of defeating all foreign powers that challenged her. She could not display any physically military activity although she expressed the ability to do so. Perhaps she meant that she would take on these responsibilities as a last resort to prevent “Dishonour”. She proved that she was willing to give everything for her country earlier in her speech when she remarked that “I am come amongst you... in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust” (Levin, 144). Elizabeth knew that her subjects were afraid that invaders would take their country and she wanted to assure them that she would take all possible measures to protect them. She effectively communicated that she was a woman, but if provoked, she could fight like a man.

There was no single group responsible for printing Elizabeth’s speeches so many versions of her words exist. One of the alternate speeches that she gave at Tilbury purports that she told her troops that “the enimie perhaps may challenge my sexe for that I am a woman, so may I likewise charge their mould for that they are but men” (Levin, 144). This speech seems improbable because Elizabeth was conscientious of her audience and would have known better than to question masculinity while making a speech to a group of men who were about to fight for her. Nevertheless, this version expresses an understanding of gender roles that surpasses the stereotypes of the period. Elizabeth identifies herself as a woman but says that she is equal to or greater than the men who challenge her. Her femininity was often detrimental to her legitimacy, but she was eloquent enough to make her sex appear advantageous.

Hemingway also used his words to explore gender stereotypes, but he did not have any political objectives in mind as he wrote. His greatest goal was to create

literature that would captivate a global audience after his death and questioning and exploring established gender roles enhanced his work. One of the best examples of Hemingway subverting conventional ideas about gender is his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, published in 1926. The protagonist of this work, Jake Barnes, receives an unspecified sexual injury during World War I and cannot consummate his relationship with his great love, Brett Ashley. Brett, married twice before, has a fiancé, but she also has an intimate relationship with Jake, cheats on her fiancé with other men, and always appears to have the upper hand. As Jake and Brett pull apart and reunite throughout the novel, Brett often remarks how Jake is different from the other men she knows. Her distinction raises the question of whether Jake still qualifies as a man when his injury prevents him from having a complete sexual relationship with Brett. Hemingway does not provide a clear answer, preferring to deliver the tip of the iceberg and let his readers peer below the surface.

The theme of gender exploration continues in *A Farewell to Arms* when Catherine initially appears deferential to Frederic but later assumes control over their relationship. At first, she represents the submissive female that Hemingway is often known for, but Catherine's development is necessary for the quality of the novel as Comley and Scholes note: "The girl, as a character type, is usually fatal to Hemingway's writing unless he is able to move the character away from a fantasy of compliant gratification toward womanhood" (Comley and Scholes 52). If Catherine is only a foil to prove Frederic's masculinity, then her character loses the depth that makes her death so heartbreaking. These same scholars propose a theory for how Hemingway expanded Catherine: "One solution that he found—possibly the most important one—was to make his women more like himself and to make his men... more feminine" (Comley and

Scholes, 62). Hemingway is difficult to locate in Catherine because while she is completely attached to Frederic, Hemingway was notorious for his promiscuity. But Catherine is compelling because of her ability to give herself away to Frederic while maintaining control over their relationship. Finding Frederic's feminine side is a simpler task. Conventional gender roles support the idea that women are dependent, and Frederic is dependent on Catherine from his injury onward. He depends on her physically when she tends to him in the hospital, and the strength of their bond causes him to depend on her emotionally for the rest of the story. The universality of dependence makes Frederic a highly relatable character and elevates the quality of the novel as a whole.

My close examination of Catherine's and Frederic's characters is possible because of the connection that I have suggested between Hemingway and Queen Elizabeth. Her fluid gender, careful handling of power, and understanding of societal obligations highlight these same qualities in *A Farewell to Arms* and provide a deeper understanding of Catherine and Frederic's relationship. The most important link to Elizabeth is the George Peele poem, written for the queen, that Hemingway selected for the title of his novel. Another connection is *King Lear*, one of Hemingway's favorite works and the Shakespeare play that he esteemed the most. *Lear* is Jacobean Shakespeare, but the play was written shortly after Elizabeth's death and bears many of the themes that accompanied the end of her reign, including the madness of old age, the idea of women holding power, and the best way to provide a legacy. Hemingway makes use of *Lear*'s pessimism as well as the second and third of these themes in *A Farewell to Arms*. His work relates to both the facts and the motifs of Elizabeth's reign.

Connecting *A Farewell to Arms* to Queen Elizabeth I complicates and elevates themes of power, legacy, and gender stereotypes. The connection also leads us to ask whether Hemingway meant for his work to be strongly linked with Elizabeth. His admiration for Shakespeare, the deliberation involved in his title selection, and his consideration of other titles from sixteenth and seventeenth-century poets all indicate that the connection is not unfounded. But Hemingway was not attempting to represent Elizabeth in *A Farewell to Arms* in an overt manner as in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* or even in a looser manner as in *King Lear*. Hemingway's writing is largely based on his own life; *A Farewell to Arms* was meant to describe his experiences in World War I, not Elizabeth and her reign. His choice of title was likely intended to signify that the bond between Catherine and Frederic is similar to the rapports between courtiers and the queen because of the devotion and service that marks their relationship. He also may have meant for the title and the corresponding poem to emphasize the conflict that Frederic faces when he chooses between service to an individual and service to a country.

While Hemingway's intentions are important, interpreting his work as I have done in this thesis is also valuable because of the essential role that readers play for any work of literature. Comley and Scholes, scholars who have reexamined the gender in Hemingway's work, believe that reinterpreting his writing is necessary for him to maintain his status as a great American writer:

We believe that Ernest Hemingway remains an interesting writer because it is possible to read him in more than one way. We believe, even, that it is necessary to do so if his works are to maintain their place in the literary canon. Literary works survive over time because they continue to be part

of a cultural conversation... we do not believe that authors are fully in control of their intentions or ever fully aware of them. (Comley and Scholes, ix-x)

Using Elizabeth as a lens to view Hemingway allows for the reinterpretation that Comley and Scholes propose. Elizabeth has Hemingway's same endurance in the "cultural conversation", but her appeal lies with a different audience. Hemingway is known for stoic men who hunt and drink and return home to submissive women, while Elizabeth is often seen as an emblem of female agency and is frequently touted as an example of a woman who ruled the world all by herself. Neither of these conceptions are entirely correct, but they do affect a reader's decision to examine either figure in further detail. If Hemingway is associated with Elizabeth, perhaps female readers might choose to read his work when they would otherwise not be interested.

Although Hemingway did not write *A Farewell to Arms* with the intention of representing Elizabeth, traces of her exist throughout the text. She is present in Frederic and Catherine's characters and in the relationship that forms between them. She exemplifies the decision between pursuing personal desires and serving one's country. Elizabeth did not make the same choice as Frederic; for a myriad of reasons, she could not say a farewell to arms. Instead, she continued to lead her people. Perhaps Hemingway appreciated her stoicism, or perhaps he appreciated her sacrifice. His specific thoughts about Elizabeth are unknown.

What Hemingway did appreciate was true sentences. Here is a true sentence: Three hundred years separate Hemingway and Elizabeth and yet she is latent in his writing, rising out of blood and dust.

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