



The Stakes of Success **Krisztina Nagy**

Hemingway was more than a dreamer. Seemingly the epitome of a great man, Hemingway had everything desired by Fitzgerald's Gatsby, recognition for his "heroic deeds" in war and the love of his golden girl. In *A Farewell to Arms* Hemingway portrays himself as Frederick Henry, an ambulance driver on the Italian front who falls in love with a beautiful nurse named Catherine Barkley. Much of Hemingway's life after the commencement of World War I mirrors the experiences of Henry in his novel.

Gatsby would agree that Henry, much like himself, was a young boy trying to forget the horrors of war. Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899 in Oak Park, Illinois. When World War I broke out and the US joined the Allies to fight against Germany and Austria, Hemingway enlisted in the army as an ambulance driver for the Red Cross. After leaving Paris for Milan, Hemingway soon discovered the horrors of war when a Munitions factory exploded, severely injuring many. Later, when he pursued his job as an ambulance driver, Hemingway was wounded by an Austrian mortar shell. Hemingway recovered in a hospital in Milan where he fell in love with a nurse named Agnes Von Kurowsky, depicted by Catherine in *A Farewell to Arms*. During his lifetime he also wrote *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* and *The Sun Also Rises*

Like Gatsby, Hemingway's life ended tragically. Fatal injuries from a plane crash were only the beginning of the deterioration of his health. Hemingway started to suffer from depression and paranoia. Like his father he committed suicide by shooting himself in the head on July 2, 1961.

Gatsby would find *A Farewell to Arms* to his satisfaction. Gatsby's claim, "Then came the war, old sport. It was a great relief and I tried very hard to die but I seemed to bear an enchanted life...I was promoted to become a major and every Allied government gave me a decoration-even Montenegro," (70), gives credence to the fact that he would enjoy reading the novel because his experiences are similar to those of Frederick Henry. Both of their late teen to young adult years are spent in the midst of the Great War. Each also obtains war glory. Henry is given the silver medal of valor and Gatsby receives promotions. Another reason why Gatsby would especially like reading Hemingway's novel is because of

their aspiring love. Jordan admit to Nick, "When I came opposite [Daisy's] house that morning her white roadster was beside the curb, and she was sitting in it with a lieutenant I had never seen before...his name was Jay Gatsby," (79). Gatsby desires to recreate his past with Daisy. Unlike Henry's Catherine, Daisy does not return his feelings. Reading A Farewell to Arms would show Gatsby that not everything works out the way you want it to. It will help him to relinquish his wasted feelings on Daisy and perhaps find someone else. While dreams are important, they must be realistic.