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PRE AND POST WAR RELATIONSHIP OF HUMAN AND NATURE AS SHOWN  
IN ERNEST EMINGWAY'S "A FAREWELL TO ARMS"

**Abstract:** A Farewell to Arms is Hemingway's first major war story. It is divided into four parts. It is largely based on his own war experience at Fossalta and Milan. In the story, Lieutenant Frederic Henry was wounded at the Italian front and he was given treatment by a nurse named Catherine Barkley. He falls in love with her. Soon after their friendship ripens, they become lovers. Finally, the lieutenant recovers and was ready to return to the front where he was captured and barely escapes with his life. Unable to bear the war situation in Italy, he sets out to find Catherine so that he can find peace, settle down to love and marriage with his love. He finally finds her and escaped secretly to a neutral country Switzerland. They enjoyed there for few months happily until Catherine dies while giving birth to a stillborn son and then the lieutenant walks out alone into the rain. Some of the themes include love, rain and destruction, diversions, abandonment and journalistic style of omission.

**Keywords:** Brown and bare, Gorizia, two hospitals, dead wet leaves.

**Main Paper:**

In the book "*A Farewell to Arms*" the author talks about the destruction of nature due to war, love and affection of humans with fellow mates. The beautiful description of nature before and after the war could also be seen clearly. The books also describes about the effect of the war not only to nature but also to the humans who were waging wars. Moreover it is largely based on his own war experience at Fossalta and Milan.

"The plain was rich with crops; there were many orchards of fruit trees and beyond the plain the mountains were *brown and bare*." (3) The above lines describe the difference between the plain and mountains. Human activity seems to be more in plains than in mountains as the Lieutenant describes that the plains was filled with crops and orchards and further the mountains were brown which shows that there was change in the season of the place and bare

due to human intervention in the natural habitat. The mountains were left bare due to cutting down of forest and leaving as it was without any thought of conserving them.

The quoted lines also implies that human being shows selfish character as one could see the developmental change in the plain side and nothing is done in the mountain side after the forest resources are being used up. Through this the author is trying to show that humans need to change their intention against nature for it is nature which is satisfying the needs of the humans. And further humans' needs to care for the environment as without them we would not be able to survive.

“The mountain that was beyond the valley and the hillside where the chestnut forest grew was captured and there were victories beyond the plain on the plateau to the south and we crossed the river in August and lived in a house in *Gorizia* that had fountain and many thick shady trees in a walled garden and a wisteria vine purple on the side of the house.” (5) The lieutenant's unit were victorious in the war and stayed in a beautiful place called Gorizia. The house was surrounded by many natural elements. It had flowering plants on one side of the road, thick shady trees in a walled garden and a fountain. Further the Lieutenant (Henry) and his unit were victorious in capturing the hills and the mountains from the enemy.

The above lines show human beings are crazy over one another for power and supremacy. Further the habit of humans waging war against one another without thinking the consequences that it will have not only to the humans but also to the environment is clearly seen. War destroys the scenic beauty of the environment. The quoted lines show that war victorious persons were happy and had nothing in mind for the natural environment that had been destroyed. This shows how human thinks about the environment and this nature of his should be corrected before it gets too late.

“The fields were green and there were small green shoots on the vines, the trees along the road had small leaves and the breeze came from the sea. I saw the town with the hill and the old castle above it in a cup in the hills with the mountains beyond, brown mountains with little green on their slopes.” (10) The arrival of spring season is beautifully described in the above lines. The lieutenant saw the brown mountains with little green on their slopes suggest that heavy human activities are performed in the mountains. The slopes in the mountains are made by the humans for transportation, carrying down goods or for other purposes which will make their work easier. Further Henry, could feel the fresh breeze coming from the sea. The fields nearby were green due to planting of grains and green shoots on the vines.

Henry had a great time watching all this beautiful phenomenon of nature. This shows that he had some thought about nature and the author wants the readers to experience the beauty of nature so that one could have a good relationship with nature.

“We went on and passed the regiment about a mile ahead, then crossed the river, cloudy with snow-water and running fast through the spiles of the bridge, to ride along the road across the plain and deliver the wounded at the *two hospitals*.” (34) The above lines show a beautiful short description of nature seen while the lieutenant was carrying the wounded to its destination. They were passing above the fast flowing rivers through the spiles of the bridge. The above lines shows the dominance of human over nature as for the convenience transportation human have built bridge over rivers for better communication. But the constructions of the bridge are too made from the woods which again show the dependence on the natural environment. Thus the author believes that human and nature should go hand in hand to survive together as without nature human cannot survive alone.

“After dinner we walked through the galleria, past the other restaurants and the shops with their steel shutters down, and stopped at the little place where they sold strawberries; ham and lettuce sandwiches and anchovy sandwiches made of very tiny brown glazed rolls and only about as long as your finger.” (102) The Lieutenant and his lover Catherine Barkley were having a romantic time in Milan. They were having a post dinner walk nearby and came across various restaurants and shops. They stopped near a place which sold strawberries and various types of sandwiches. The above lines show that human beings rely on plants and other living creatures for food. Other living creatures mainly pigs in the form of Ham and small fishes are consumed in large quantities. Natural products like strawberries and lettuce are also a choice of food items in Milan. They use it for making varieties of sandwiches. So the author tries to get attention of the readers that we depend on nature and other lower order animals for our food. Thus, the message to conserving nature is clearly shown in the quoted lines.

“There were villas with iron fences and big overgrown gardens and ditches with water flowing and green vegetable gardens with dust on the leaves. We could look across the plain and see farmhouse and the rich green farms with their irrigation ditches and the mountains to the north.” (115-116) From the above lines beautifully describe the picturesque countryside of Milan. There were green vegetables gardens, green farms and mountains to the north. The green vegetable gardens with dust on it implies that roads nearby are not fully developed and lots of transportation work is going on. From the above lines one can easily suggest that the

closeness of human towards nature is seen in the outskirts than in the town areas. People in the town are busy in their usual work while people in the outskirts are busy in planting and taking care of plants which is a sign of relation of human and environment in a negligible way.

“In September the first cool nights came, then the days were cool and the leaves on the trees in the park began to turn color and we knew the summer was gone.” (120) Henry and his lover knew that the summer was gone by seeing the changing pattern in the color of leaves of the trees. The above line shows the departure of summer and arrival of winter season. Nature always has an indication of its seasonal changes in the surrounding environment. Here, in the above lines too by September in Italy the arrival of winter starts by the cool nights, less hot days and lastly the turning colour of the leaves in the park suggest the arrival of winter season. Thus, the author believes that nature has various signs to show that it needs attention or not. So, he wants the readers to examine the changing patterns of the environment and act according to it.

“The mulberry trees were bare and the fields were brown. There were *dead wet leaves* on the road from the rows of bare trees and men were working on the road, tamping stones in the ruts from piles of crushed stones along the side of the road between the trees.” (147) The lieutenant was travelling and on the way he saw the brown fields, leafless mulberry trees and further could view the leaves of the rows of trees on the road. There were various men working to mend the road with piles of crushed rocks in between the trees. The above line shows that during the war the more effect is seen in the natural environment rather than the human beings. The mulberry trees were left with leafless and the lush green fields turning brown suggest that heavy exchange of firing have taken place and moreover the workers are tirelessly mending the road in between the trees shows that they are looking for their own benefit of making the roads so that they could transport easily. They do not care for the environment is easily proven by the unchecked wet leaves on the road. This shows that humans think only about themselves.

Thus the author tries to show that we should not neglect natural environment and should take proper care as it is they who are satisfying almost all our needs.

“That day I crossed the Venetian plain. It is a low level country and under the rain it is even flatter. Toward the sea there are salt marshes and very few roads. The roads all go along the river mouths to the sea and to cross the country you must go along the paths besides the canals.” (203) The above lines describe the scenic beauty of low level country. Henry crossed

the Venetian plain to reach another side of the country and the roads that lead to the different parts of the country are shown such that by following the description of how to lead to the country one could easily cross the country and leads to another one without any difficulty. Here too nature plays an important role in guiding a person to another part of the same country through its sources. Without the help of the sources of nature Henry could not have figure out to cross the plain.

**Conclusion:** Thus, the author shows the effect and affect of war on nature as well human beings. He further believes that war can only cause destruction and further explains that human cannot neglect nature as it is they who can act as our saviour in times of danger and so human should have a good relation with nature. Good care of nature and fellow humans should also be taken properly not from the view of the present scenario but also from the perspective of future.

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