THE BONES OF THE OTHERS
THE HEMINGWAY TEXT
FROM THE LOST MANUSCRIPTS TO THE POSTHUMOUS NOVELS
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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction: The Hemingway Text 1

1 The Personal Stories I (Paris, 1923–1925) 15

2 The Personal Stories II (Paris and Provence, 1926–1927) 28

3 The Necessary Danger: Writing The Garden of Eden 55

4 A Pilgrim’s Progress into Hell: Death in the Afternoon and the Problem of Authorship 92

5 Hemingway’s Lost Manuscripts 119

Appendix: The Problem of Authorship and Textuality 129

Notes 137

Bibliography 146

Index 154
An author cannot of course remain wholly unaffected by his experience, but the ways in which a story-germ uses the soil of experience are extremely complex, and attempts to define the process are at best guesses from evidence that is inadequate and ambiguous.
—J. R. R. Tolkien

J. R. Tolkien’s assertion that in understanding a writer’s creative process the best one can do is “guess” from evidence that is “inadequate and ambiguous” makes a kind of comfortable sense, and it is a wise reader and critic who heeds its implicit warning: “You can’t know; don’t bother to try; that way lies madness.” Hemingway’s published works seem to support Tolkien’s sage advice. For decades, readers have found themselves curious but confounded in their desire for straightforward generic classifications. To cite only the latest example, Hemingway’s most recently published full-length work, True at First Light, is subtitled A Fictional Memoir, yet the scholarly edition of the same work, Under Kilimanjaro, has been described as an autobiographical novel. Madness indeed. . .

However, the implicit assumption in Tolkien’s statement—that any investigation of “the ways in which a story-germ uses the soil of experience” has as its primary objective definition—is intrinsically prescriptive. Reading Ernest Hemingway’s early works in light of the posthumously published novels, and vice versa, while granting equal privilege to published works and to archival material, allows readers and researchers alike to challenge assumptions such
as Tolkien’s regarding how much of a writer’s creative process one may be able to understand.

The publication of Hemingway’s posthumous works and the opening of related archival materials provide researchers with a better quality of evidence than that which Tolkien describes. This in turn may locate scholarly “guesses” regarding how Hemingway transformed experience in writing with much greater proximity to the Platonic ideal of accuracy than was dreamt of in Professor Tolkien’s Cartesian philosophy.

The evidence in Hemingway’s case differs in both quantity and kind from the usual sources of evidence for the reconstruction of a writer’s creative process. The difference in quantity stems from Hemingway’s pack-rat tendency to save seemingly every scrap of paper he ever touched—what Charles Baudelaire called “the horrors that make up the sanctuary of art” (xxx). Furthermore, his last wife, Mary, knew Jacqueline Kennedy socially, which made it possible for his papers to be preserved in the John F. Kennedy Library. Finally, a revolution froze many of his ephemeral assets, entombing them in a time capsule as the property of the people of Cuba and thus precluding their dispersal and probable disposal.

Access to the posthumous novels and their archival matrices provides evidence that also differs in kind, enabling readers to not only read individual texts but also perceive the fluidity of their intertextual relationships and investigate the lines of connection Hemingway himself drew between textual incidences of oft-recurring structures, images, and phrases. One can thus begin to identify the teleological fluidities in his work, something he analogized as “autobiography by remate,” remate being the jai alai term for a pass that bounces off not one but two walls between players (quoted in Burwell 203n). Although he used the term in 1958 to describe what he was doing with his Paris sketches (published posthumously as A Moveable Feast), much if not all of his writing was composed thus: his present emotions evoked recent memories, which in turn evoked older ones, including memories of previously written stories. All these sources would emerge, transformed, in sets of apparently unrelated but intricately interwoven texts. These multidirectional, intertextual fluidities liberate scholars from the specific strictures of various critical schools and methodologies—textual and literary scholars need not work backward in order to reconstruct an evolutionary model, and psychoanalytic and cultural scholars are not obligated to construct an atemporal authorial persona that is impervious to change over time in order to pursue specific lines of inquiry.
By the time Hemingway was writing *The Garden of Eden*, he had come to understand his writing as a single, fluid text, despite his having published discrete, apparently unrelated portions of it under separate titles. His understanding of his creative process provides focus for inquiries into “the Hemingway Text,” broadly defined by Nancy Comley and Robert Scholes as the entirety of his published oeuvre, archival material, and (for their purposes) “a cultural matrix that we share with Hemingway, as this matrix appears when we imagine Ernest Hemingway at the center of it” (x). Although Comley and Scholes put “the questions of gender ahead of all others” (ix), their general concept of the Text is amenable to other kinds of critical inquiry, especially textual investigations of creative process, writerly subjectivity, and the social construction of authorship.

Every Hemingway work challenges readers to consider his texts’ relationships to each other. Although there are several excellent critical studies that consider evidence from the conjunction of multiple works, few scholars realize the potential radical redirection of textual inquiry made possible by access to the posthumously published material. Many critics use the early short story “The Sea Change” as a lens through which to read the late work *The Garden of Eden*. They note associative resonances between the two—the mirror behind the bar, the bisexuality of the protagonists—but none follow the implicit argument to its logical conclusion: that the early story may be considered a kind of microcosmic draft of the much later novel. Paul Smith, in a move nearly unique in Hemingway criticism, reverses the usual chronological direction of textual inquiry and proposes *The Garden of Eden* as the lens through which to read “The Sea Change.” This approach lends credence to the conclusion that the protagonist of “The Sea Change” is, like his descendant in *Eden*, a writer and also supports Robert Fleming’s argument that the story’s psychosexual effect is complicated by the protagonist’s compulsion to publish intimacies that for most people remain private. Smith stops shy of calling *Eden* a later draft of “The Sea Change,” but, again, that would be the logical extension of his argument.

Smith’s reversal of the usual teleology of textual inquiry is profoundly interesting for the possibilities it opens for a similar consideration of the Hemingway Text as a whole. Using manuscript evidence to investigate how the late and early works may specifically inform each other reveals a cycle of textual dialogics in which chronological linearity must finally be subordinated to Hemingway’s own fluidity, wherein patterns resembling the fractals of mathematical chaos theory emerge. These patterns reveal much about the
inadequacies of assumptions concerning the boundaries that published titles place around “individual” Hemingway works.

From a vantage point beyond those illusory boundaries, Hemingway’s writing is revealed as a lifelong exploration of the public and the private. His works, collectively and individually, explore the productive tensions between paired concepts: fertility and virility, vocation and occupation, short fiction and novel, and writer and author. Each of these conceptual pairs reveals some nuance of issues surrounding publishing, or “making public.” For Hemingway, the public-private boundary marked the salient difference between fertility and virility (fertility seems for him to have had a private nuance, and virility one of public performance) and between vocation and occupation (occupation being the public performance of vocation). More obviously, publication marks the professional boundary between writer and author. Viewing Hemingway’s works retrospectively reveals a fluid overarching unity that provides a useful critical lens through which to examine finite moments and broader trends.

In the early 1920s, of course, Hemingway could not know that the permeability of the public-private boundary would occupy and preoccupy him throughout his life. Nor could he suspect that the ideas, locations, and even the very words of his early work would evolve and reappear, transformed, in much of his subsequent writing. He did, however, distinguish between two kinds of stories he planned to write, labeling them “Personal” and “Authentic.” He appeared to assign these categories according to his distance from his subject and the roles he played in relation to it: Personal refers to things he had done and experienced, in which he had played an actively participatory role, Authentic to things he had heard or witnessed, in which his role was that of the journalist, the observer, the voyeur. These categories would broadly inform his writing throughout his life, evolving into ever more overt explorations of private, subjective experience and public, objective observation.

As a writer still hoping for publication, Hemingway could not yet appreciate how authorship was a public role and, in relation to the published texts on which it depends, a static one; nor could he predict that he would later question and complicate that role to which he still only aspired. He could not yet anticipate that, as a writer, his relationship to his works would remain fluid and that he would return to them decades later, when, as an author, celebrity, and icon, he would again wish for what he didn’t have—to be only a writer, unencumbered by his public roles. And he could not yet have the perspective on his own creative process to articulate what in retrospect would become obvious: that in his Personal writing, he would always represent his
emotional response to his current situation by refracting it through his past, finding emotional points of contiguity between his present and his past, and using this doubled emotional intensity to make his readers “feel more than they understand,” the purpose of Hemingway’s “theory of omission” (*Moveable Feast* 75).

In the early 1930s, in *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway offered his iceberg theory of writing: “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 iceberg [sic] is due to only one-eighth of it being above water” (*Moveable Feast* 192).

The seven-eighths of the story that remained submerged was not comprised of coyly withheld information about the events represented in the story, as many have understood the iceberg theory, in part because of Hemingway’s assertion in *A Moveable Feast* that the thing omitted from “Out of Season” was Peduzzi’s suicide, which the reader was somehow supposed to “feel” (75). What was left out of the words, if not the writing, of his Personal fiction was its pertinence to his current situation. The Personal fiction was all immediately autobiographical but in a way that only his intimate circle—his wives and closest friends and, later, his children—could possibly understand. Only they would know what current situation prompted him to write a particular story at a particular time.

Hemingway’s early stories appear to be full of gaps in which much of what happens is not represented explicitly in the text; it is tempting to locate the seven-eighths of the iceberg in those gaps. The characters’ interiority—their emotions, their thoughts, and their impetus toward change—is rarely, if ever, explicit in his early fiction, thus prompting reader responses like “But nothing happens in this story. All he does is go fishing,” or “All they do is have an argument, and then the maid comes in with a cat.” These emotions, however, are the point of contiguity between why Hemingway wrote what he did when he did and what he actually wrote about. By implying his characters’ emotional realities, he risked exposing his own response to his immediate situation.

This risk, which Hemingway located in the tension between the conceptual pairs (Personal/Authentic, public/private, fertility/virility, etc.) that overtly or implicitly informed his writing, provides a key to understanding his creative process. The reader’s first challenge is to determine how the immediate context of writing is manifest in his texts; the second, to determine points of contiguity between immediate context and past events and, later, stories. The latter is the greater challenge, especially when examining his late
works. Because the mature Hemingway’s memories included the experience of writing earlier stories, memories of that writing would necessarily rekindle the complex emotional resonances from which these earlier stories arose.

When one considers Hemingway’s works as they have appeared in print, it is nearly impossible to discern Hemingway’s larger creative and writerly purpose and to understand his works within the context of this purpose. The order in which the short fiction was presented in collection (In Our Time, 1925; Men Without Women, 1927; and Winner Take Nothing, 1933) impedes contextual inquiry, and no collection since has privileged composition order. The posthumously published Personal works, Islands in the Stream and The Garden of Eden (and the less Personal A Moveable Feast and True at First Light), not only appeared out of composition order but were heavily and invisibly edited, finally “authored” by someone other than Hemingway. But composition order is crucial to understanding the Hemingway Text, because nearly everything he wrote was in some way autobiographical, and the more material one has to work with, the better. This is especially true of the Personal writing, in which the context of composition is often the single most important determinant of what a single work is about—and the least obvious.

Examining the dates of composition for Hemingway’s early short fiction reveals a pattern of two twinned trajectories that are currently understood, separately, as the so-called marriage tales and selected Nick Adams stories. These labels are complicated slightly by the revelation that the stories—more accurately identified as “fertility tales” and “virility tales,” respectively—do not end in the late 1920s and are not limited to his short fiction. They reappear, doubled, in the novels Hemingway began after World War II: Islands in the Stream and The Garden of Eden.

Recent larger psychosexual critical projects, such as Spilka’s Hemingway’s Quarrel with Androgyny and Eby’s Hemingway’s Fetishism, tend to focus primarily on The Garden of Eden. The reasons for this are perhaps obvious; The Garden of Eden is nothing if not a sensual novel, one in which cross-gendered, androgynous, and homosexual eroticism is central to the plot. The mental illness evinced by two of its female characters, only one of whom appears in the published version, renders it particularly rich for feminist and gender-based inquiry as well, as demonstrated by Comley and Scholes in Hemingway’s Genders: Rereading the Hemingway Text and by Comley in “Madwomen on the Riviera.” The novel invites readers and critics alike to revise or reconfirm their impressions of “Hemingway the manly man” based on the work’s status as partially autobiographical. Although neither study references the Personal-Authentic list, they both focus primarily on works in the Personal cat-
category. Neither project addresses what this unfinished novel may reveal about Hemingway as a writer with a consistent and identifiable long-term project dating from his earliest work; this writer had a far different relationship to his writing and a far more sophisticated understanding of the ways in which publication complicates creativity, whether textual or sexual, than has yet been suspected or addressed.

As published, *The Garden of Eden* proposes a kind of later edition of many of Hemingway’s own earlier Personal works. As it was written, however, it is also deeply indebted to the more Authentic *Death in the Afternoon*, with its overarching concerns with the necessarily destructive mechanisms whereby art is made public. The idea of the dangers of publication links all the novel’s concerns, from androgynous haircuts to distinctions between literary genres to the tensions between identity and role: gender roles, sexual role-play, and the role of the writer/author.

Taken together, both of these works ask and answer a question that has lingered in the minds of reviewers, readers, and critics since the appearance of *Death in the Afternoon* in 1932: What happened to Hemingway in the 1930s? The answer may be found in the ways in which the strands of his writing began to entwine around the concept of publication.

None of the works published during that decade received anything like the positive critical reception his earlier work had generated. Between *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), his new work—*Death in the Afternoon* (1932), *Winner Take Nothing* (a collection of short fiction, 1933), *Green Hills of Africa* (1935), *To Have and Have Not* (1937), and *The Fifth Column* (a play, which opened in 1940)—received mixed reviews at best. Literary critics ranging from historicists to Marxists argue that Hemingway was, by 1930, a dinosaur, out of step with the Great Depression and the socially minded 1930s. Other critics argue that during this decade Hemingway simply did not do his best work (other than a brief glimmer in 1936, with “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and “A Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber”). Still others argue that the problems of fame were beginning to take their eventually tragic toll on Hemingway and his work (Raeburn). There is merit in all these positions, but the question of what happened to his writing in the 1930s may be refined and answered through the study of the contiguity between his early and late work. Something was different after *A Farewell to Arms*, certainly, and something got (momentarily) better with *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, but what, exactly, has yet to be explained from a textual perspective.

What was different was his understanding of the paradox of publication as a necessary danger for him as a writer and a dangerous necessity for him as an
author. An understanding of The Garden of Eden in the larger context of his oeuvre reveals that between A Farewell to Arms in 1929 and the stories of the late 1930s, Hemingway consciously decided to abandon his Personal writing in favor of the Authentic. As the Personal writing disappeared, so did his practice of writing the fertility and virility narratives in pairs, so did the marriage tales, and, finally, so did Nick Adams. Coincidentally, Hemingway also largely abandoned fiction in favor of journalism and short fiction for longer forms.

Consideration of the Hemingway Text in its changing compositional contexts—in the context of other texts he was working on simultaneously, in addition to the obvious immediate and past biographical contexts—offers readers the opportunity to approach Hemingway’s own understanding of his life’s work. Combining elements of textual, biographical, and psycho-analytic inquiry produces a reconstruction of the writing moment, and this reconstruction facilitates a more complete understanding of a writer’s creative process: a writer’s relationship to his texts, the texts’ relationship to the writer’s present, and the texts’ relationships to each other.

In this book, I trace the contextual evolution of three creative threads that make up one late work, The Garden of Eden. Two of these threads stem from Hemingway’s earliest Personal short fiction and form something like a double helix comprised of the early so-called marriage tales and the Nick Adams stories that Hemingway paired with them, working on a pair of stories contemporaneously and thereby examining gendered aspects of a single thematic concern.

These Personal stories form a single strand in another kind of double helix, the other strand being what Hemingway called his Authentic works, which were more journalistic in tone, less concerned with heterosexual and homosocial relationships, more concerned with artistic questions examined in an objective tone that belies his implication in the systems under his scrutiny. The relative distance Hemingway perceived between himself and his subjects in these two categories is so problematic as to be nearly useless as a critical tool but not so as fictional object. Like all efforts predicated on paradox, Hemingway’s efforts to erect and maintain boundaries between his personal and public lives, between his experience and his fiction, ultimately failed. But the permeability of those boundaries, and the boundaries that a single title inscribes around a work, constitutes the object in his late work The Garden of Eden.

To illustrate the problem of that permeability and its teleological fluidity within the Hemingway Text in greater specificity, and in plainer language, I offer a brief narrative skeleton, which will be fleshed out in the chapters that follow.
Just beyond the midway point of *True at First Light*, Hemingway pauses to invoke Dante in a backhanded aside designed to frustrate his wife Mary’s artistic creativity. When she proposes writing a long poem about Africa, the Hemingway character/narrator counters that “Dante only made crazy people feel they could write good poetry.” He then lets Dante drop until, in what would become chapter 16, the Hemingway character takes his solitary night walk, in which he encounters the three animals from the Book of Jeremiah (5:6): a wolf, a lion, and a leopard. These three animals figure prominently in William Faulkner’s story “The Bear,” which also alludes to the Book of Jeremiah and to the opening of Dante’s *Inferno*. In *Inferno*, these animals achieve allegorical significance as the She-Wolf of Avarice—figured in Africa as the hyena, associated with the feminine scapegoat for artistic death in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”; the lion of Ambition, figured here as Hemingway’s latest sally against his rival Faulkner; and the spotted panther of Worldly Pleasure, figured in *True at First Light* as Mary Hemingway’s Nairobi shopping trip. Hemingway’s retroversion of details from the Bible, “The Bear,” and *Inferno* does not bring him closer to the divine but rather discloses his reassessment of the terms of his contract with the secular—he finds them “expensive” (271), but because he has proven himself still capable of providing and appreciating material and physical pleasure, acceptable. “So far,” he says, “it has been worth the price.”

What price?

Keeping Dante in mind, one may find an answer to that question in *Death in the Afternoon*, in which, at the end of chapter 6, a “low dark passage” is opened at the sound of a trumpet by a man named Gabriel. Through these gates two characters enter the text: an Author and an Old Lady. Hemingway’s *True at First Light* references to Dante and to Faulkner’s story “The Bear,” combined with Mary and Patrick Hemingway’s separate assertions that Hemingway rarely traveled without his copy of *Inferno*, now allow for the speculation that Dante figures earlier and more centrally in his thinking than critics have considered. Reading *Death in the Afternoon* through the lens of Dante sheds light on the Author–Old Lady dialogues as a morality play on authorship—the business of publication—and its attendant dangers to the private craft of the writer, dangers that are figured specifically, if generically, as female.

The price Hemingway paid for the *True at First Light* safari was the exploitation of his celebrity to make it possible. While the Hemingway character embarks on his solitary night walk into the divine mysteries of the aging writer, Mary is shopping and having her hair done in Nairobi. Mary’s creativity, like Catherine Bourne’s, is limited to that of a small short-haired animal.
with which to achieve nocturnal ecstasy. In the daytime she becomes an exploitative parasite, endangering her husband’s artistic vocation by requiring it to become a lucrative profession. Her role as muse is thus, like everything else in Africa, “true at first light” but “a lie by noon.” And as soon as she suggests that she too might like to write, she is labeled “crazy”—a prophecy fulfilled for her in The Garden of Eden by the character of Catherine Bourne.

Catherine Bourne’s desire to play “great publisher” to her writer/husband’s already abandoned account of their honeymoon in The Garden of Eden begins to echo the deleterious effect the Old Lady has on the narrator and the character of the Author in Death in the Afternoon. Meanwhile, The Garden of Eden’s “other woman,” Marita, functions as David’s muse in a way that Catherine does not but very much wants to. Marita’s function as such in The Garden of Eden thus cements the connections throughout the Hemingway Text between sexual and artistic creativity and fulfillment.

Reading “The Sea Change” through the lens of the posthumous The Garden of Eden raises the possibility that other early Hemingway stories figure rather centrally in moments of extreme tension in the later novel in a way that reciprocally illuminates similar moments in the earlier fiction. For instance, David and Catherine Bourne’s first marital spat, in Madrid, variously echoes several of the early short stories: “Ten Indians,” “Hills Like White Elephants” (David’s lines), “Cat in the Rain” (Catherine’s), “The Sea Change,” and, obliquely, “Cross-Country Snow.”

One section that was cut from the published version of The Garden of Eden repeats the associative path through the Personal fiction, outlined above, but depends on works in the Authentic category. The writer Andy, cut by the uncredited editor Tom Jenks, is, like David Bourne, another version of Ernest Hemingway. Dismissed by Mark Spilka as “square” because he has no interest in androgynous haircuts (“Barbershop” 360), Andy nonetheless emerges specifically as an echo of the Hemingway who wrote Death in the Afternoon, the book Hemingway’s critics had least understood. Andy’s description of his own book encapsulates the two final versions of the last chapter of Death in the Afternoon—the excised chapter 20 from the galley proofs and the chapter as published.

Finally, back to Catherine. Catherine dismisses Andy’s writing—and Andy himself—as didactic. The fact that she has not read his book does not bother her, a characteristic she shares with many of Death in the Afternoon’s detractors. Echoing the limitations of the Old Lady, she flatly declares that you cannot learn to like things from a book. Catherine makes the assumptions Hemingway’s critics had been making since The Sun Also Rises, the same as-
sumptions David’s critics make in the reviews his editors send him, the same assumptions that the Old Lady makes: that book and man are interchangeable and that the public representation of identity was an accurate reflection of identity. Despite all that has been written about Hemingway and the effects of celebrity on his art, his allowing such assumptions to continue was the price that the Hemingway of *True at First Light* finally decided had not been too high after all.

The challenge the Hemingway Text thus poses to readers and scholars is to hear all its parts simultaneously—to appreciate its intricacy as a kind of literary eight-voice fugue that ends with a gunshot. The challenge is not, finally, to our understanding of Hemingway, but to our own marriage to linear thinking as scholars, researchers, and readers. The body of Hemingway’s work stops seeming a catalog of discrete, easily consumed pieces and instead is revealed as a lifelong project, both fictional memoir and autobiographical novel of excess.

The fractal-like patterns of the Hemingway Text necessarily render the ordering of the sections and chapters herein somewhat arbitrary. Because one’s career as a writer necessarily initially predates the publication that denotes authorship, the first three chapters follow that professional chronology, beginning with a consideration of Hemingway’s very early short fiction and ending with the composition of *The Garden of Eden*. The fourth chapter focuses specifically on a middle-period work, *Death in the Afternoon*, and more specifically on the metacritical inquiry into authorship he embedded within the Author–Old Lady dialogues. The fifth returns to his preprofessional years in Paris. But such organization is for convenience only; the only accurate representation of the Hemingway Text as he conceived, wrote, and understood it would be hypertextual. When describing a fractal system, a starting point is arbitrary; one must, however, start somewhere.

The first three chapters focus primarily on Hemingway’s Personal writing and reveal that a writerly text may differ strongly from an authorial text (although they are linguistically identical) and that a writer’s relationship to text does not necessarily change at the boundary of publication (the point at which he becomes, additionally, its author) he may revisit this text at other points in his career. Hemingway’s revisitation of his texts reveals much about both early and later versions, even if they are conceived years apart.

“The Personal Stories I (Paris, 1923–1925)” traces Hemingway’s early creative process, before his understanding of the writer-author difference began to emerge in his writing, and establishes the baseline to which he would try
to return in the writing of The Garden of Eden, twenty-five years later. This chapter considers the early short fiction within its compositional contexts, and thus in order of composition, and establishes that during this period Hemingway worked his so-called Personal stories (the marriage tales and selected Nick Adams stories) in pairs. This compositional pairing is obscured by publication order, but understanding this pairing is necessary for two reasons: to understand individual stories, and to perceive his larger Personal and writerly projects in the years before he could count on publication: to master his craft, to achieve publication, and to explore and enact dually gendered aspects of his immediate, intimate, domestic situations.

“The Personal Stories II (Paris and Provence, 1926–1927)” traces the beginnings of the schism in Hemingway’s professional subjectivity and locates the earliest cracking within the writing of slightly later, but still intertwined, marriage tales and Nick Adams stories. This chapter notes the beginnings of a shift in his writerly project as his professional status began to change (from hoping for publication to assuming it). These later stories, especially their drafts, reveal that Hemingway was beginning to manipulate his texts to capitalize on his new professional role, but still, at this time, toward purely personal ends. This chapter also positions two of the least understood marriage tales—“A Canary for One” and “Hills Like White Elephants,” and by association their paired Nick Adams stories, “In Another Country” and “Now I Lay Me” (originally “In Another Country II”) and “Ten Indians”—as touchstones to which Hemingway would later return, suggesting that these stories represented for him the high point of his early creative career, the point at which he had mastered his craft.

Understanding these texts as the writer did at their time of composition (rather than retrospectively or as isolated texts within larger collections) corrects critical misinterpretations of “Hills Like White Elephants” and “A Canary for One.” Within their compositional contexts, these stories may be understood as narrative palimpsests. They were written to achieve multiple objectives; both stories support dual, simultaneous, and mutually exclusive interpretations—one writerly, one authorial.

“The Necessary Danger: Writing The Garden of Eden” identifies this posthumous novel as Hemingway’s textual autobiography, his fictional representation of his early creative process (specifically, the writing of the last of the paired stories discussed in the previous chapter, which were written in the time and place of The Garden of Eden’s setting). After situating the novel in its biographical context, this chapter delineates specific intertextualities among The Garden of Eden, these early stories, and—strangely—Death in the
Afternoon. The references to these earlier works are so overt that The Garden of Eden may be considered a later, highly evolved draft of them all. Although The Garden of Eden has contributed much to recent work on Hemingway and gender, androgyny, and fetishism, for Hemingway, these issues comprised but one side of a double helix similar to that in his earlier writing, the other side of which concerned writing, authorship, professionalism, and genre. What connects these two strands is the question of publication—of the boundary at which private roles (whether artistic or sexual) undergo a sea change, and at which perceptions alter irrevocably.

“A Pilgrim’s Progress into Hell: Death in the Afternoon and the Problem of Authorship” locates Hemingway’s metacritical project, his theoretical intervention, in the book’s Author–Old Lady dialogues. Understood in this light, these dialogues reveal that, to Hemingway, his identity as a writer was relatively more important than his role as author, the role of author being the Hemingway on whom public and critical attention had been fixed since A Farewell to Arms, and the perception of which he had mocked in Death in the Afternoon: a dialogic social and legal construct, and therefore not real.

In the Author–Old Lady dialogues in Death in the Afternoon, the Author is as much a character as the Old Lady, and thus the Author in the book is not the author of the book. Three factors suggest that Hemingway constructed the Author character to criticize the critics (then reviewers): the generic distinction of the Author–Old Lady dialogues in the text, the timing of the composition of these dialogues within the context of correspondence Hemingway received from editors, and the book’s initial critical reception. By waving the red cape of authorship at the critics, Hemingway was able to distract them from their legitimate business of addressing his works and thus to undercut the validity of their criticism when they instead attacked or applauded his personality—contemporary reviewers universally misidentified the Author character as Ernest Hemingway. Death in the Afternoon, understood in this light, presents Hemingway’s overt realization and first textual representation of the schism between his writerly identity and authorial role, and of their relative value to him as a writer, if not as a man.

“Hemingway’s Lost Manuscripts” reconstructs Hemingway’s creative process within biographical, creative, and professional contexts, revealing that in the 1930s he began to focus on his Authentic writing, returning only intermittently to the Personal writing that had brought him early success. After World War II, however, he returned to the Personal writing in ways that both echoed and expanded upon his earlier work. For Hemingway, all the publication issues at play in his Personal writing (creation and transformation, intimacy and
exposure, and fertility and virility) and in his Authentic writing (writer and author) centered finally on the issue of genre. He came to believe that his best artistic experiences were writing short fiction; he came to a sophisticated understanding of his creative process; and he would also come to understand that his process had evolved and demanded so much of him that he would never again achieve the perfect control of form that had distinguished him among other aspiring writers in expatriate Paris.

Paris was where he consciously reconstructed his creative process after the loss of his manuscripts in 1922. His first story written after that loss, “Out of Season,” is a cross-gendered rewriting of one of the few stories that survived the loss, “Up in Michigan.” Because of his lifelong creative process of regendering and revision, and because of the extent to which he gendered questions of private and public creation and transformation, of writing and authorship, he could no more give up the lost stories than could a mother stop seeking a lost child. I conclude, therefore, that the earliest Nick Adams stories were, in all probability, Hemingway’s own revisions of the stories that were “lost” in 1922.

For those readers interested in the theoretical debates surrounding the problems of authorship and textuality, as well as a situation of this project’s intervention therein, I include that discussion as the appendix.