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WYCHE, LOIS MOORE. The Archetypal Dark Woman in Hemingway's Fiction: The American Bitch Versus the European Dark Lady. (1969) Directed by: Dr. Robert O. Stephens pp. 68

This thesis attempts to correct the widely accepted critical theory that Hemingway's fictional women belong to one of two opposites--angel or devil--and are therefore unrealistic caricatures instead of real women. On the contrary, the archetype of the dark woman who has mysterious knowledge and power over men not only links all of Hemingway's women but is vital in his creation of "true" women, "true" in that they possess mythical mystery and power traditionally attributed to women throughout time.

After examining the literary tradition of the dark woman to establish the universality of the archetype Hemingway uses, this paper discusses the dark attributes of each of Hemingway's fictional heroines, using a close reading of the texts and available critical commentary. As Hemingway's central male characters are all American, the discussion is limited to the women's power over American men. There are separate discussions of the Anglo-Saxon, American "rich bitch," who has social power and who deliberately causes her lover's destruction; the British demi-bitch, who plans no destruction but nevertheless ruins; and the European dark lady, whose power comes from her link with the darkness, mystery and experience of the Old World and who chooses to use her powers to strengthen, not to destroy. While these

women seem different from each other to the casual observer,  
because of the varying ways in which the women find and use  
their strengths, they are inextricably bound together by  
the mythological, emotionally-appealing archetype of the  
dark woman.

THE ARCHETYPAL DARK WOMAN

THE MYTHOLOGICAL DARK WOMAN

John W. Sprad

A Thesis Submitted to  
The Faculty of the Graduate School of  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
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of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

Greensboro  
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Approved by

*Robert D. Stephens*  
Thesis Advisor

THE ARCHETYPAL DARK WOMAN IN HEMINGWAY'S FICTION:

THE AMERICAN BITCH VERSUS

THE EUROPEAN DARK LADY

by

Lois M. Wyche

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Thesis Adviser



# APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser

Robert O. Stephens

Oral Examination  
Committee Members

James Ellis

William E. Hux

Arthur W. Dixon

April 25, 1969

Date of Examination

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## INTRODUCTION

"I suppose I'll end up a bitch. Maybe I'm one now. I suppose you never know when you get to be one.... You don't read it in Mr. Winchell. That would be a good thing for him to announce. Bitch-hood.... I suppose we all end up as bitches."<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Hollis, an American woman in To Have and Have Not, mentions one of the two extreme categories into which Hemingway critics assign his fictional women. The accepted critical position is that Hemingway either portrays his women as destructive devils or as unrealistic angels, with no intermediate type.<sup>2</sup> Leslie Fiedler observes

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not (New York, 1963), pp. 244-245. Henceforth all quotes from this novel will refer to this edition and will be footnoted in the body of the paper.

<sup>2</sup>Philip Young, in Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1952), p. 81, classifies Hemingway's women as "bitches" or "daydreams" and states that they are never persons. Tom Burnam agrees with Young in "Primitivism and Masculinity in the Work Of Ernest Hemingway," MFS, I, iii (August 1955), 21, stating that there is a clear line between Hemingway's witches and good women and that none of the women have a personality of their own. Leslie Fiedler, in an excellent section of Love and Death in the American Novel, rev. ed. (New York, 1966), p. 24 (orig. ed. 1959), states that Hemingway's women, like those of other American novelists, are "monsters of virtue or bitchery." Carlos Baker finds Hemingway's women to be either "deadly" or "submissive dreams" in Hemingway: The Writer as Artist (Princeton, 1963), p. 109; and John Edward Hardy finds the Hemingway female either totally good or bad, in Man in the Modern Novel (Seattle, 1964), p. 125. Hemingway's angel-like, undemanding woman is described by

that Hemingway reverses the archetype of the strong Dark Lady and the passive Fair Lady, for Hemingway's dark women, usually from foreign countries, are the angels and are merely subservient bodies to satisfy man's sexual urge, while the fair Anglo-Saxon women are the devils, the destroyers of men.<sup>3</sup> No Hemingway critic has found a connection between the strong Anglo-Saxon bitch and the subservient, submissive European woman in Hemingway's fiction.

I suggest that there is a strong link joining all of Hemingway's fictional women: the mythic appeal and attributes of the archetypal dark woman, who has dark knowledge and power. Although several critics have observed various mythological symbologies in Hemingway's fiction,<sup>4</sup> no critic

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Earl Rovit in Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1963), p. 65; while Hemingway's American bitch is discussed by John Atkins in The Art of Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1953), p. 222.

<sup>3</sup>Love and Death, p. 318.

<sup>4</sup>Baker (The Writer, p. 146) and Atkins (The Art, p. 155) note Hemingway's mythology of the bullfight, while Young (Hemingway, 1952, p. 230) feels that Hemingway's hero is an Adam of the "American myth." Fiedler writes that Hemingway's heroes hunt and fish in a ritual action (Love and Death, p. 257). Rovit (Ernest Hemingway, p. 69) connects Catherine of A Farewell to Arms with the Oedipus myth, and R. W. Lewis, Jr., sees her in relation to the myth of Iseult, in Hemingway on Love (Austin, 1965), p. 49.

Baker (The Writer, p. 87), Lewis (On Love, p. 31), and Sheridan Baker in Ernest Hemingway: An Introduction and Interpretation (New York, 1967), p. 27, all comment on Brett's identification with Circe and Brett's role as a pagan goddess in The Sun Also Rises. Atkins (The Art, p. 153) and Young (Hemingway, 1952, p. 59) connect Jake with Eliot's Fisher King. Baker (An Introduction, p. 49) notes

has commented on the mythological archetype of the dark woman as the basis for almost all of Hemingway's fictional women, European or American.<sup>5</sup> Because of their dark knowledge and power, the American and European women of Hemingway's stories, far from being exact opposites, all have a power over the American hero, a power to which European men are generally immune. (In The Sun Also Rises, Mike Campbell is already self-destroyed and ruined by drink and financial irresponsibility before he meets Brett, and is therefore not destroyed by Brett, although he seems to be under her power).

This paper will contrast and compare the American

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that there are mythological symbols throughout The Sun Also Rises.

Rovit (Ernest Hemingway, p. 144) examines the Mary and the fertility myths connected with Maria in For Whom the Bell Tolls, and agrees with Baker (The Writer, p. 253) in calling Pilar a witch. Baker also comments (The Writer, p. 248) that the novel is similar to the Achilles epic, and he points out the use of the magic number three in the novel. Atkins (The Art, p. 153) states that Harry Morgan is spiritually reborn in To Have and Have Not, and Baker (The Writer, p. 283) points out that both Renata and Col. Cantwell of Across the River and Into the Trees are surrounded by rebirth symbolism. This list of sources which point out Hemingway's use of myth is far from exhaustive; however, I have found no critic who links the European woman in Hemingway's fiction to the archetype of the dark lady or who uses mythic criticism to show that the generally accepted angel/devil characterization of Hemingway's women is incorrect.

<sup>5</sup>The dark woman archetype used by Hemingway concerns women with mysterious and dark knowledge and power, and does not relate to the women's races or hair color. Leslie Fiedler is correct in asserting that the real bitches in Hemingway's fiction are Anglo-Saxon, but incorrect in assuming that the European women are merely angels and have no connection to the bitches.



bitch with the European dark lady, as seen in Hemingway's major novels and short stories, showing that Hemingway's view of women as mysterious and powerful is pervasive throughout his work. Although his view of women was probably partially affected by his own life and by existing social conditions, Hemingway, in using the recurrent archetype of the dark woman, strikes in the reader an emotional chord of mythic appeal, and thus adds richness to his fiction.

Chapter One traces the literary heritage of the fatal woman and the dark woman, demonstrating the universality of the archetype that Hemingway employs. This chapter also briefly connects Hemingway's life and the social conditions of the early twentieth century to his view of women as dark. Chapter Two examines in detail the American Anglo-Saxon, middle-class or upper-class bitch, the word "bitch" referring to the depriving, socially powerful American woman whose men are shown as weak and impotent. This chapter will also account for the one American woman character not depicted as bitch. The third chapter deals with Hemingway's European dark women. Part One describes the two English heroines, Brett of The Sun Also Rises and Catherine of A Farewell to Arms; these women have the dark knowledge and mystery of Europe, yet being Anglo-Saxon they share a fatal and destroying tendency with their American bitch-sisters. Part Two examines Maria and Pilar of For Whom the Bell Tolls and Renata of Across



the River and Into the Trees, showing their dark mysterious knowledge and their power over the American heroes. The concluding chapter of the thesis compares and contrasts the women already discussed and demonstrates that Hemingway's developing but one-dimensional view of women in his fiction was that they are universally dark and powerful. Hemingway's use of the archetype of the dark woman adds the dimension of truth to his fictional women and makes them into people instead of characters.

I offer a new reading of Hemingway's fiction by showing that his women are linked by their dark knowledge and by their power over American men. Hemingway's women can no longer be viewed by critics as monstrous, caricatured extremes when understood in the terms of the archetype of the dark woman which Hemingway employs consistently in portraying women in fiction.

## CHAPTER I

MODELS FOR HEMINGWAY'S DARK WOMAN  
IN LITERARY TRADITION AND IN  
HEMINGWAY'S EXPERIENCE

Hemingway's dark woman is a descendent of the femme fatale, one of the oldest and most widespread of archetypes, portrayed in literature as the biblical betrayer, mythological temptress, and the archetypal dark lady. This archetype has an emotional, primordial appeal to all men because, according to Carl Jung, the view of women as dark, mysterious and powerful is one of the basic archetypes found in man's unconscious. He writes:

Archetypes may be considered the fundamental elements of the unconscious mind, hidden in the depths of the psyche....They are systems of readiness for action, and at the same time images and emotions. They are inherited with the brain structure---indeed they are its psychic aspect.<sup>1</sup>

Jung's theory is the basis for later assertions of critics who have used myths to categorize and label the archetypes found in the psyche of all men. Northrop Frye, for instance, in the chapter "The Archetypes of Literature," places the fatal woman into the third and fourth (autumn and winter) phases of the solar myth of the hero. As

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<sup>1</sup>Carl Jung, "Mind and Earth," Contributions (New York, 1928), p. 118, in Literature in Critical Perspectives, ed. Walter K. Gordon (New York, 1968), p. 37.

siren and witch, the fatal woman always encounters the hero in these phases of his quest,<sup>2</sup> and thus her place in all literature, which, according to Frye, is centrally concerned with the quest-myth,<sup>3</sup> is inevitable.

Examples of the literary heritage of the fatal woman archetype are innumerable. Greek mythology contains many destroying women; the Greek religion itself is based on the concept of the castrating mother-goddess who gives both life and death to men. Examples of fatal women from classical Greek literature include Scylla and the sirens, who lure sailors to their doom; the vampire lamias; and the enchantress Circe, who changes men into swine.

Christianity invested mortal women with prestige; the division of pure soul from the evil body, with women symbolizing fleshly temptations and the evil of carnal desire, led to the inclusion of mortal women into the fatal woman mythology.<sup>4</sup> Christian legends of fatal women include those of Lilith and Eve, who first brought evil to mankind, and of Bathsheba and Delilah. Delilah's betrayal of Samson to those who subsequently destroyed him inspired both Chaucer ("The Monk's Tale") and Milton (Samson Agonistes); Paradise Lost is but one of many famous literary works chronicling Eve's temptation of Adam.

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<sup>2</sup>Fables of Identity (New York, 1963), p. 16.

<sup>3</sup>Frye, Fables, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans. H. M. Parshley (New York, 1964), p. 167.

The archetype of the female demon found new momentum in the Middle Ages. Before the twelfth century there was no literature with the main theme of love, and no reverence for women.<sup>5</sup> The courtly love tradition, which began in Provence in the twelfth century, began the cult of the Idealized Woman. Provençal poetry had the main theme of a courtly lover and a beautiful lady who refuses him her favors. The lover is always an humble servant to his mistress, who may order him to gratify any whim of hers. The participants in the cult of the Idealized Woman were persecuted by the Catholic Church so that the cult was greatly distorted and the mystical part of courtly love was lost and a perverted love remained.<sup>6</sup> Medieval literature portrays the courtly mistress as cold, cruel, and demanding, as Guinevere is in Chrétien de Troyes' Lancelot;<sup>7</sup> this literature shows the men who loved in the courtly tradition as being unmanned by their mistresses,<sup>8</sup> who were therefore in the tradition of the fatal woman.

The myth of the inherently immoral and destructive woman evolved during the Middle Ages. This immoral fatal woman is best seen in Cressida, portrayed by Boccaccio,

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<sup>5</sup>C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (New York, 1958), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>Denis de Rougement, Love in the Western World, trans. Montgomery Belgion (New York, 1956), p. 251.

<sup>7</sup>Lewis, The Allegory, p. 29.

<sup>8</sup>Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (New York, 1966), p. 48.

Chaucer, and later, Shakespeare.<sup>9</sup> In the Renaissance, Spenser portrayed such fatal women as the "faire Witch" Acrasia of The Faerie Queene; Acrasia is a temptress who uses sexual lures to distract the knight Guyon from his search for the ideal maiden. Mario Praz thus characterizes the fatal women of the Italian Renaissance:

...figures such as Vittoria Corombona, Lucrezia Borgia, and the Comtesse de Challant-- 'white devils' and 'insatiable countesses'... [had] reckless passions,...lecherous loves which spread ruin and perdition among men.<sup>10</sup>

These figures inspired Elizabethan dramatists, and the same fatal heroines appeared on the English stage.<sup>11</sup> By Shakespeare's time the fatal woman in literature was known as totally immoral. She held man a slave to his desires, as seen in Antony and Cleopatra, in which Cleopatra keeps Antony with her for the passion of the moment and finally causes his destruction.<sup>12</sup>

The European Romantics renewed the courtly idealization of women and spread the myth of the fatal women, elaborating on the tradition of the female witches, magicians, vampires and lamias. Keats's *Lamia* is a serpent with magical and sexual

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<sup>9</sup>H. R. Hays, The Dangerous Sex (New York, 1965), p. 107.

<sup>10</sup>The Romantic Agony, trans. Angus Davidson (London, 1933), p. 190.

<sup>11</sup>Praz, Agony, p. 191.

<sup>12</sup>Hays, Sex, p. 150.



power over Lycius, whose death she causes. Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* causes the men who worship her to suffer, "Alone and palely loitering." The fatal woman portrayed by the later Romantics reflects the writers' obsession with beauty mixed with horror and pain. Shelley's poem on the Medusa, states Praz, "amounts almost to a manifesto of the conception of beauty peculiar to the Romantics." Thus, states Shelley,

...Its horror and its beauty are divine.  
Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie  
Loveliness like a shadow, from which shine,  
Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,  
The agonies of anguish and of death.<sup>13</sup>

Death and beauty became one to the Romantics, as seen in their portrayal of the woman whose beauty is fatal.

Lewis's Matilda, the destructive enchantress who seduces Ambrosio in *The Monk*, was the first of the Romantics' "fatal woman type," and who, states Praz, developed into Velléda in Chateaubriand's *Les Martyrs*, Mérimée's *Carmen*, and Flaubert's *Salammbô*.<sup>14</sup> *Carmen* is called "un diable" by Don José, who robs and murders for her; *Salammbô* is a cold, heartless woman who causes her lover, suffering from desire, to fall at her feet.<sup>15</sup> The Romantic fatal woman is also seen in Gautier's *Cléopâtre*, who murders her lovers on the

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<sup>13</sup>Agony, pp. 25-26.

<sup>14</sup>Praz, Agony, p. 191.

<sup>15</sup>Praz, Agony, pp. 195-96.



morning following their stay with her; in Swinburne's destructive Lucrezia Borgia and Mary Stuart; in Wilde's Sphinx and Salome; and in D'Annunzio's Fedra, who rules and conquers men who are weak.<sup>16</sup> Baudelaire's fatal women are also connected with horror and death, and show the later Romantics' connection of desire and horror, love and hate. The attraction of his "Black Venus," the torturer who drinks the blood of the world, is the attraction of death.

In the mid-nineteenth century in America the archetype of the blonde woman as sexless and innocent and the dark woman as passionate and experienced came into literature as a natural offspring of the fatal woman myth.<sup>17</sup> The American Romantics, laboring under the Puritan myth of the desexualized American woman, portrayed sexually aggressive and strong-willed women coming from a foreign country or from other than Anglo-Saxon origins (these dark women, therefore, were often also literally dark). This American dark woman is usually not destructive of men, but is doomed by her sexuality, and is accompanied in literature by a sexless, blonde ideal woman who eventually marries the hero.

James Fenimore Cooper was the first author to give symbolic meaning to the light/dark, sexless/passionate contrast in American literature, and began the practice of linking

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<sup>16</sup>Praz, Agony, pp. 204 and 246.

<sup>17</sup>Frederick Carpenter, "Puritans Preferred Blondes," New England Quarterly, IX (1936), 253.

the dark woman with a pure, blonde one, as seen in Cora and Alice of The Last of the Mohicans. Cora, the dark, passionate woman stained by Negro blood, has a dark sexual power over men like Magua and Uncas, and represents past sin and exotic experience. Alice, her blonde and pure half-sister, represents innocence; Cooper's novel re-established the myth which became popular among American writers. To the Puritans, who considered woman the instrument of the devil, the dark woman was both beautiful and terrible, as, for example, Hawthorne's Beatrice Rappaccini--dark, exotic, and sensual. Zenobia of The Blithedale Romance is another dark woman with a mysterious and possible guilty background. An exotic temptress who is linked with Eve, Zenobia is another American dark woman who is doomed to die for her sexuality (as is Cora). Miriam of The Marble Faun, a third dark and doomed temptress in Hawthorne's fiction, is mysterious and sensual, and, linked with Eve, Cleopatra, and Beatrice Cenci, leads Donatello to his fall.

Inspired by Hawthorne, Melville created Isabel, the "bad angel" in Pierre, a dark woman who stands for dark and mysterious experience, who is also Pierre's half-sister and therefore represents the potential sin of incest.<sup>18</sup> Isabel, as a temptress, has qualities which can destroy Pierre's understanding of the truth offered to him by the blonde and

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<sup>18</sup>E. L. Grant Watson, "Melville's Pierre," New England Quarterly, III (April, 1930), 195-96.

pure Lucy.<sup>19</sup> Dark-skinned Hautia of Mardi is a villain and a Circe<sup>20</sup> who tries to tempt Taji from his quest for the blonde, ideal maiden Yillah. Hautia is both dark from experience and a destructive, fatal temptress (and an exception to the usual American non-destructive dark lady).

After Hawthorne and Melville, the light/dark contrast became well-used in American literature. Poe added horror to the archetype of the dark woman; his conception of women is more similar to the European than to the American Romantics.<sup>1</sup> Poe, like his disciple Baudelaire, linked beautiful women with death, as seen in the mysterious, raven-haired Ligeia and in the deadly Lady Madeline of The Fall of the House of Usher, in which Lady Madeline's dying embrace is fatal to her brother. Later American writers turned the light/dark contrast into a stereotype, as characters like Laura and Ruth of Twain's The Gilded Age and Rowena and Roxana in Pudd'n'head Wilson demonstrate.<sup>21</sup> The dark woman maintained a constant role in American fiction, reappearing in such characters as the castrating Mrs. Newsome in James's The Ambassadors or Kate in The Wings of a Dove.

A new type of dark woman appeared in American fiction at the turn of the twentieth century; the non-destructive,

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<sup>19</sup>Watson, p. 225.

<sup>20</sup>George C. Homans, "The Dark Angel: The Tragedy of Herman Melville," New England Quarterly, V (October, 1932), 710.

<sup>21</sup>Fiedler, Love and Death, p. 300.

foreign woman was rivalled by the socially powerful, destructive Anglo-Saxon bitch. The transitional figure between the blonde, pure maiden who accompanies the dark woman of American literature and the fair American bitch is Daisy of James's Daisy Miller.<sup>22</sup> Other fictional fair American women with social and sexual power over men are May Welland of Wharton's The Age of Innocence and Celia Madden, the red-haired temptress of Frederic's The Damnation of Theron Ware. According to Leslie Fiedler, the first completely drawn Fair Bitch of American letters is Daisy of Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby.<sup>23</sup> The mythological archetype of the femme fatale, the cliché of the American dark woman, and the newly emerging Fair Bitch of American fiction are bases on which Hemingway could have drawn for his portrayal of dark women. He was perhaps also partially influenced by the newly emancipated woman of the 1900's, the figure who was the model for the fictional Fair Bitch.

The social conditions of the beginning of the twentieth century ushered in a "new woman" in America and Western Europe. The new woman became emancipated in the professions, politics, and finally, with birth control, in the bedroom.<sup>24</sup> In America in particular, this emancipation

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<sup>22</sup>Fiedler, Love and Death, p. 311.

<sup>23</sup>Love and Death, p. 312.

<sup>24</sup>Eric J. Dingwall, The American Woman (New York, 1957), p. 129.

twisted some women into dominating roles; their attainment of all their demands for equality caused American women to become tyrants and the American men to become, in many cases, the weak and dominated marriage partner. American women of the early 1900's also gained an increased purchasing power, and men often became merely the money-makers and doormats for their powerful wives.<sup>25</sup>

American men allowed women to dominate them partly because of their misplaced and archaic romantic idealization of the "softer" sex.<sup>26</sup> The "new woman" exploited this advantage to the limit, and in the early part of the twentieth century became, according to Dingwall, not a lovely creature to be idealized but "cruel, coquettish, and vampiric."<sup>27</sup> The newly emerging bitch in America and the emancipated woman in Western Europe in the beginning of the twentieth century may have influenced Hemingway's view of women as dark and powerful and his portrayal of American women as destructive. His European heroines, although having dark power over American men, prefer to remain womanly and do not try to destroy men (an exception is the mannish Brett, who will be treated in a later chapter).

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<sup>25</sup>Dingwall, Woman, p. 130.

<sup>26</sup>Hemingway's stories may also be an indictment of the weak, romantic American male who so rarely follows the rules of a "code" (to be discussed) which could have prevented women's initial rise to power over men.

<sup>27</sup>Woman, p. 249.



Hemingway's view of women was also drawn partially from personal experience. As several critics point out, Hemingway's works are partially autobiographical, and his heroes an extension of their author's personality.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, such a bitch-character as Nick Adam's depriving and destroying mother is modeled after an actual person, in Mrs. Adam's case Hemingway's own mother.<sup>29</sup> Hemingway's fictional dark women may also have traits from Hemingway's four American wives<sup>30</sup> or from the many other powerful and

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<sup>28</sup>i.e. Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1952), pp. 37, 55, 62; Earl Rovit, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1963), p. 18; Joseph W. Beach, "How Do You Like It Now, Gentlemen?" Sewanee Review, LIX (Spring, 1951), n.p. Reprinted in Hemingway and His Critics, ed. Carlos Baker (New York, 1961), p. 230. As Young points out, these characters are simplifications of Hemingway's personality and are covered by a "fictional mask" (p. 62). Therefore, although Hemingway's works are considered autobiographical, fictional events cannot be read as biography and characters who resemble actual persons are not drawn strictly from life.

<sup>29</sup>Hotchner quotes Hemingway as stating, "...my mother was a bitch," [Papa Hemingway, (New York, 1966), p. 231], and stating that she cheated him out of his inheritance with the words, "Don't disobey me, or you'll regret it all your life as your father did" (p. 118). Hemingway believed that her bitchery drove his father to suicide.

<sup>30</sup>Hemingway was divorced three times, and Hotchner (Papa Hemingway) relates many examples of the bitchery of Hemingway's second and third wives. Pauline, Hemingway's second wife, moved in on his happy life with Hadley with the intention of marrying him, and broke up their marriage (related in A Moveable Feast, pp. 207-8). Hemingway suffered from impotence during part of his marriage to Pauline (Papa Hemingway, p. 51), perhaps partially because of her jealousy and domination. Hotchner also relates the tricks Pauline pulled after her divorce from Hemingway, such as telling their son that Hemingway had abandoned him when the boy was



mysterious women he knew.

The link between actual persons and literary characters is not a simple one, however; the bitches whom Hemingway knew were only one factor in his shaping the dark characters in his fiction; as before stated, perhaps his greatest influence came from the literary archetypes of the dark woman, supplemented by the emergence in American literature of the "Fair Bitch" who has social power over men. Hemingway's actual experience seems not to have been a direct source of his fictional women so much as a verification of insights available to him from the literary tradition, and in using the tradition, Hemingway touched a primordial emotional chord in the reader (as explained by Jung) and therefore greatly enriched his fiction.

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delirious, when in fact Hemingway had stayed constantly by him (p. 126). Hemingway's third wife, Martha Gelhorn, was, according to Hetchner, "the most ambitious woman who ever lived" (p. 133), a woman who made more money than Hemingway and who left him because she felt she could succeed quicker without him (p. 125).

311.e., the Red Cross nurse who jilted Hemingway, as related in "A Very Short Story," the model for the lesbian in "The Sea Change;" the prototypes for Margaret Macomber and Brett Ashley, both based on real persons. One of the dark and powerful women Hemingway most disliked was Gertrude Stein (seen in A Moveable Feast). The fictional representation of Stein is an author who must feel superior, a masculine woman in "strange, steorage clothes" (AMF, p. 20) who embodies to an extreme the taking on of masculine attributes and dominating personality which the American and European emancipated women have.

## CHAPTER II

## THE AMERICAN BITCH

The femme fatale tradition in literature, coupled with the figure of the emancipated woman of the Twenties, provides a rich heritage of ancestors for Hemingway's fictional American bitches. "Hopeless and unmitigated bitches,"<sup>1</sup> as Fiedler calls them, Hemingway's American dark women do not have to rely upon mere sexual allure to aid them in destroying men, as fatal women did; the modern bitch has the added advantage of psychological and social superiority over man, and can destroy him because he allows her to dominate sexually and socially.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, rev. ed. (New York, 1966), p. 307.

<sup>2</sup>The American man is greatly censored by Hemingway; he portrays few American male characters who follow any code of manners and integrity, a code which would prevent them from allowing women to reach the social position of domination. This paper will not examine in detail the Hemingway "code" [see Earl Rovit, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1963), pp. 55 and 107-115; and Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1952), pp. 55-63]. Robert Penn Warren, in "Hemingway," The Kenyon Review, IX, 1 (Winter 1947), 2, explains Hemingway's code heroes as men who "have maintained, even in the practical defeat, an ideal of themselves, some definition of how a man should behave,...by which they have lived. They represent some notion of a code, some notion of honor, which makes a man a man, and which distinguishes him from people who merely follow their random impulses and who are, by consequence, 'messy.'" The "code" includes such characteristics as dignity, integrity, code of manners

The American Anglo-Saxon bitch<sup>3</sup> appears in Hemingway's fiction with his first short stories, and is

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(including enduring pain courageously and quietly).

Hemingway does not explore the cultural reasons for his American characters' weakness and lack of a code of manners (a code which most of Hemingway's European heroes have and risk even death for--see "The Undeclared," "The Capital of the World"). The weakness of American men may stem from the facts that frontiersman strengths were no longer needed with the closing of the American frontier, and the rise of Big Business, with its inherent fraud, cheating, and lack of honorable dealings, did away with the businessman's need for integrity. In addition, in America there is no national sport with a code of honor (as bullfighting in Spain), no nobility to set the example of a code of manners, no men's retreat from the world of women. American men developed few interests outside of the making of money, which was often corrupt, and therefore developed no code of manners, courage, and integrity to protect them from the insurgent wave of American bitches.

Hemingway's American bitch-characters realize that their men are lacking in initiative and a code of manners, and are quick to take the advantage to dominate and destroy the men. (The women may wish that men dominate, but since they do not, the women punish them for their weakness). Hemingway never makes clear whether the weakness of the men caused the women to become bitches or vice versa; however, by the time of Hemingway's later fictional heroines (i.e. Margaret Macomber), the social situation in America is fixed and the American bitch will not tolerate or allow an American man to assert himself or to take on a code of integrity and courage.

<sup>3</sup>This discussion does not treat Trudy, the half-Indian (and only non-Anglo-Saxon American) girl who initiates Nick Adams into the mysteries of sex. She is merely an instrument for sex ["plump brown legs, flat belly, hard little breasts, well holding arms, quick searching tongue, the flat eyes, the good taste of mouth"-- p. 497 of Ernest Hemingway, The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1953)], and is the only example of what Fiedler believes to be the role of all of Hemingway's dark women, "painless devices for extracting seed without human engagement" (Fiedler, Love and Death, p. 306.) Since Trudy is not developed as a character, nor shown in any role except specifically sexual, her two short appearances in "Ten Indians" (1927) and "Fathers and Sons" (1933) do not weaken my argument that all of Hemingway's women characters have a dark power over American men.

generally shown as the castrating wife, the bitch who uses pregnancy and motherhood to deprive men of freedom, or the smothering mother who does not wish to let her son become a man. The character of the American bitch develops through Hemingway's fiction, becoming more destructive, and by Hemingway's last works is narrowed down to a rich, beautiful, sexually alluring and fatally destructive Anglo-Saxon woman.

Hemingway characterizes the American bitch as primarily a depriver and destroyer, a castrator of the already socially weak American male. An early example of the depriving, smothering, emasculating American bitch is Nick Adam's mother ("The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," 1925; "Now I Lay Me," 1927). She cannot bear not knowing everything about her husband, Dr. Adams, and questions him about an argument he had with Dick Boulton in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife:"

"What was the trouble about, dear?"

"Nothing much."

"Tell me, Henry. Please don't try to keep anything from me."<sup>4</sup>

She also destroys Dr. Adams's pleasures. When he is on a hunting trip ("Now I Lay Me") she cleans out the basement and burns "everything that should not have been there" (p. 366; emphasis mine). She almost completely destroys

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<sup>4</sup>Hemingway, Stories, p. 102. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in the text of the paper.



Dr. Adams's collection of Indian artifacts, which is obviously valuable to him because of the care he takes in preserving the charred remains. The artifacts, a pleasure Mrs. Adams cannot understand or allow, are symbolic of all of Dr. Adams's possessions, including his manhood. Dr. Adams has no code of courage and integrity, as shown by his passive, weak acceptance of her destruction; he does not complain, but merely sorts out to keep what remains after the fire. Dr. Adams will steal (lumber, for example--"The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife") but does not want the theft mentioned; his honor therefore concerns only the visible and spoken matters. His further weakness--sexual inability--is suggested in "Fathers and Sons" by his incomplete and prudish explanations of sexual terms to Nick. Mr. Adams tells his son only that "mashing" is "one of the most heinous of crimes" (p. 491), and that "masturbation produces blindness, insanity, and death, while a man who went with prostitutes would contract hideous venereal diseases" (p. 491). Another hint of Mrs. Adams's dominance in the marriage is given in Nick's remark that their new house was "designed and built by my mother" ("Now I Lay Me," p. 365).

According to Joseph DeFalco, Nick's mother is a "fatal or terrible mother figure who would lure her son back to the womb to be smothered by her protective nature."<sup>5</sup> DeFalco

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<sup>5</sup>The Hero in Hemingway's Short Stories (Pittsburgh, 1963), p. 36.

compares Mrs. Adams to the traditional femme fatale: "The mother, like Circe who would turn men into swine, represents a romantic refusal to accept the realities of life."<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Adams cannot believe that Dick Boulton would start an argument to keep from paying a bill, and she wants to protect Nick from the world in which such evil occurs. She tries to deprive Nick of growing into manhood for fear that she will lose control over him; she is thus shown to be a complete American bitch, both a smothering mother and a depriving wife.

Carlos Baker writes that "Soldier's Home" (1925) is another Nick Adams story, and that Mrs. Krebs, like Mrs. Adams, is unable to face the reality that her son has become a man.<sup>7</sup> Krebs feels that she dominates his father; she tells Krebs:

"Your father has felt for some time that you should be able to take the car out in the evenings whenever you wished but we only talked it over last night."

"I'll bet you made him," Krebs said (p. 149).

She also tries to reduce Krebs to the status of child, whom she can control, as shown in her words to him:

"Don't you love your mother, dear boy?"  
..."I'm your mother," she said. "I held you next to my heart when you were a tiny baby" (p. 152).

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<sup>6</sup>The Hero, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup>Hemingway: The Writer as Artist (Princeton, 1963), p. 130.



To keep her from crying, Krebs plays the child-role and gives up the manhood and seeds of a code of self-reliance which he found in the war:

"I know, Mummy," he said. "I'll try and be a good boy for you" (p. 152).

The ultimate in smothering mothers is seen in Mrs. Elliot of "Mr. and Mrs. Elliot" (1925), who finally converts her husband, a "pure" young man who is fifteen years younger than her forty years, into a baby. Mr. Elliot's lack of sexual power is shown by his "keeping himself pure" (p. 161), his learning to kiss from a story, and his building of sexual ardor through a shoe fetish (p. 162). Mrs. Elliot destroys whatever remnants of manhood he has; the codeless Mr. Elliot complacently accepts Mrs. Elliot's friend living with them and usurping his place in the marriage bed. (DeFalco points out the pun on the older meaning of "conversation," which Mrs. Elliot and her girlfriend engage in<sup>8</sup>). Mr. Elliot finally regresses into the child that Mrs. Elliot wanted but could not have; he lives apart from them and takes to drinking white wine (which suggests milk to DeFalco<sup>9</sup>). Mrs. Elliot is eventually both the destroying wife and the smothering mother, and her destruction and emasculation of her husband/son is complete.

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<sup>8</sup>The Hero, p. 157.

<sup>9</sup>The Hero, p. 157.

In the early Hemingway stories, women are also shown to be destructive of men's freedom and the pleasures of masculine companionship. For example, in "Cross-Country Snows" (1925), Nick's pure enjoyment in skiing is dampened by the knowledge that he must return to the States because his wife is pregnant; he may never be able to return to the happy companionship of George.

At least once in his early stories, Hemingway gives an indication that the American bitch is not happy in her dominating role. The frustrated wife of "Cat in the Rain" (1925) yearns for all the symbols of the feminine sexual role she has lost, the symbols her emancipation has taken away.

"I want to pull my hair back tight and smooth and make a big knot at the back that I can feel..." (p. 169).

"And I want to eat at a table with my own silver and I want candles. And I want it to be spring and I want to brush my hair out in front of a mirror and I want a kitty and I want some new clothes" (p. 170).

However, her husband does not care for her lost femininity, does not care whether she lets her cropped hair grow, and suggests only that she be quiet and find something to read.

The bitch in Hemingway's fiction develops from a generally depriving, smothering female in the early stories<sup>10</sup> of 1925-27 into a specifically cruel, domineering and wealthy

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<sup>10</sup>"Fathers and Sons" was published in 1933 but does not concern a bitch character (the story only hints at a "trap" which Nick's father died in, a trap perhaps set by Nick's mother).

woman in the stories after 1936.<sup>11</sup> As Hemingway himself

<sup>11</sup>Two further stories deserve mention. Although the characters' origins are never specified, the couples in "Out of Season" and "The Sea Change" follow the American pattern of domination and emasculation of the male who has no protective code of courage and integrity by the female; thus the two stories, while not applicable to an "American" or "European" section, are further examples of the dark power of women in Hemingway's fiction.

The husband in "Out of Season" does not have the courage to turn back from an illegal and unenjoyable fishing trip. His wife, who does turn back, taunts him about his fear and lack of initiative:

"Of course you haven't got the guts to just go back" (p. 176).

The husband cannot even bring himself to tell the guide that he will not go fishing the next day:

"I may not be going," said the young gentleman, "very probably not. I will leave word with the padrone at the hotel office" (p. 179).

Joseph DeFalco explains a pun in the story which further points to the young man's impotence. When Peduzzi, the guide, asks for money, he says, "Geld" (The Hero, p. 165). In addition, he suggests that they drink marsala, which the husband thinks is the sort of drink that Max Beerbohm, a writer characterized by "preciosity and gentlemanliness," would drink [according to DeFalco (The Hero, p. 165)]. The guide's remarks are clues to the young gentleman's unmanliness; the husband has been "gelded" by a sullen, bitchy wife who whips him with words.

The heroine of "The Sea Change" deprives her lover of his pride, and degrades him, forcing him to accept the fact that she is going off with a lesbian. Although she is beautiful, the girl's short hair, tweed suit and lesbianism suggest that she is changed into something a woman is not supposed to be; like the American bitches, she has lost her womanliness. Her male lover calls her lesbianism "perversion" and "vice" (p. 399), but finally acquiesces to her leaving him; he feels himself change because he has given up a part of his manhood in letting her go to a lesbian:

His voice sounded very strange....

He was settled into something....

He was not the same-looking man as he has been before he had told her to go (pp. 400-401).

The lover is changed by the modern woman into something other than what his masculine role allows. The title, "The Sea Change," comes from Shakespeare's poem, "Full Fathom Five:"

"Nothing of him that doth fade,

pointed out in 1950, his writing developed in stages: "I have moved through arithmetic, through plane geometry and algebra, and now I am in calculus!"<sup>12</sup> The finely developed "rich bitch" (Stories, p. 58) of the later American stories may be part of the advanced "calculus" of his writing.

Hemingway's two African stories, written in 1936, center around the corrupting power of money and American women, and show the narrowed concept of Hemingway's fictional bitch as rich, beautiful, and destructive. The wealthy wife in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" has taken the writer-protagonist on as a "proud possession" and has "kept him well" (p. 60). He cannot decide whether she is the "destroyer of his writing talent" (p. 60), or whether he himself destroyed his talent, since he "had sold vitality, in one form or another, all his life" (p. 61). Harry has betrayed his manhood for the financial security of Helen's money; he slips into the "familiar lie of love" (p. 58) to earn his keep by his domineering wife. Harry faces death without having expressed the truths he had wanted to write, because Helen and other rich women have channeled off his artistic energy and vitality. Harry is the perfect example of the

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But doth suffer a sea-change  
 Into something rich and strange."  
 (quoted in Philip Young, Hemingway, 1952, p. 236).

<sup>12</sup>Robert W. Lewis, Jr., Hemingway on Love (Austin, 1965), pp. 5-6.

weak American male, a "kept" man who has gone from dominating woman to woman instead of accepting the male role of financial responsibility. Harry's lack of a code of honor, courage and integrity is shown by his acceptance of rich women's domination, by his passive decision not to assert himself to use his talent, and by his constant complaining about pain and death. Unlike the "code hero," Harry dies badly, ending his life quarreling and talking about his cowardly and useless life.

Burnam suggests that Harry's leg wound is symbolic of castration;<sup>13</sup> Harry has finally become only a gigolo to the dominant American bitch, Helen; she has even taken over the masculine role of hunter, while Harry waits passively for her in the camp. Earl Rovit writes that Helen is a "wicked mother" figure and that the screaming hyena is an extension of Helen in the story.<sup>14</sup> Although this description may be too strong, Helen does show herself in "Snows" to be a financially dominating bitch who, having bought Harry, destroys whatever is left of his manhood and talent by her "keeping" him, and thus deserves the title "rich bitch."

Very few American men are able to escape for any

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<sup>13</sup>Tom Burnam, "Primitivism and Masculinity in the Works of Ernest Hemingway," MFS, I, 111 (August, 1955), 23.

<sup>14</sup>Ernest Hemingway, p. 73.



length of time from the clutches of the American bitch, as seen in "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber." The story concerns a typically subjugated American male, married to one of the most vicious of Hemingway's bitches, Margaret Macomber.<sup>15</sup> She does not use her beauty and charm to destroy Francis, as her ancestor femme fatale would have done, but her beauty does keep him bound to her by marriage, a marriage which is based on the facts that "Margot was too beautiful for Macomber to divorce her and Macomber had too much money for Margaret to ever leave him" (p. 22).<sup>16</sup> Their sex roles are partially reversed; she is an "extremely handsome" (p. 4) woman who dominates the marriage, and he is one of the "great American boy-men" (p. 33) whose name is effeminate. Margaret is sexually promiscuous, a role usually played by a man, and Francis is a coward.

Macomber's lack of a protective code of courage and manners is established early in the story, when he follows the initiative of the guide, Wilson, in the ordering of drinks and in tipping. Macomber does not know "the thing to do" (p. 3), and makes the error of asking Wilson not to mention

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<sup>15</sup>The examination of this story will be more detailed than those preceding because Margaret's actions typify the American bitches' and because Margaret shows the extent of the American woman's determination to overpower her man.

<sup>16</sup>They are typical, writes Lewis, of the "professional American wife, the feminine husband, and the materialistic standards that give their marriage its continued existence" (Robert Lewis, On Love, p. 83).

his cowardice, which he has shown on several occasions.<sup>17</sup> In addition, Macomber accepts the most humiliating insults from his wife with a weak proposal that she "let up on the bitchery just a little" (p. 10).

Margot is the queen of the verbal bitches; her insults are even cattier than those of the wife in "Out of Season." Margaret refuses Macomber's order to stay in camp while he hunts for buffalo, and taunts him about his flight from the lion: "'I wouldn't miss something like today [his show of cowardice] for anything'" (p. 9). She is the typical depriver and destroyer; her constant taunts deprive Macomber of any remnants of self-respect he might have had, and also serve to show others that she controls him. Margaret continues to pick at Francis, constantly referring to the lion episode or pointing out that the eland he has killed is not dangerous.

Margaret also displays her bitchiness in actions; she refuses to obey any of Francis's requests, and acts pettish about the trip (she cannot understand why he would enjoy killing animals so she wants to deprive him of the opportunity; failing in that, she taunts him so as to make

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<sup>17</sup>Macomber is frightened by the lion's roar, wants to shoot animals from the protection of the car, asks to leave the wounded lion alive in the brush or send unarmed boys in after it, and cannot even "tell Wilson to go on and finish off the lion without him" (p. 18). Macomber constantly speaks of his fear and cowardice, instead of stoically holding the pain inside of him as a code hero would.

him miserable). After Macomber's shameful flight from the lion, Margaret kisses Wilson on the mouth to express her disgust for Francis. That night she sleeps with the guide, and displays some more of her hideous bitchery when she returns to Francis's tent. He says:

"You are a bitch....You think that I'll take anything."

"I know you will, sweet" (pp. 22-23).

Margaret can do anything she pleases to Macomber; Francis will "take it" and not leave her because of her beauty and because he has accepted his weak, passive role in their marriage. She is a typical American fatal woman-bitch, who overpowers her husband and strips him of his manhood. The couple, married for eleven years, have no children; this fact suggests Francis's impotence. He knows about sex only from books, and his poor sexual performance is shown by Margaret's confidence that he will not leave her because he is not "better with women" (p. 21). A further suggestion that Macomber has sexual problems, states Lewis, is Wilson's references to Macomber as a "beggar" and a "sod," words referring to homosexuals.<sup>18</sup> Francis and Margaret's marriage is based on the material values of beauty and money; these sterile attributes are their "children."

The guide, Wilson, is limited in perspective to the

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<sup>18</sup>On Love, p. 83.

wealthy class of people who go on safaris, and his code of integrity covers only the sport of hunting.<sup>19</sup> However, his hunting code makes Wilson a code hero qualified to comment on the Macombers' situation, and his indictment of the weak American husband and domineering wife fits all of Hemingway's American bitches and their men. Wilson, who thinks Margaret is a "five-letter woman" (p. 30), says of American women:

They are, he thought, the hardest in the world; the hardest, the cruelest, the most predatory and the most attractive and their men have softened or have gone to pieces nervously as they have hardened (p. 8).<sup>20</sup>

Later Wilson says of Margaret:

"She's damn cruel but they're all cruel. They govern, of course, and to govern one has to be cruel sometimes. Still, I've had enough of their damn terrorism" (p. 10).

During the course of the story, however, Macomber changes; he finds a sudden "pure excitement" (p. 32) and

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<sup>19</sup>Wilson is not above the illegal whipping of his boys (p. 6), illegal chasing of animals from cars (p. 30), sleeping with his clients; however, "He had his own standards about the killing and they could live up to them or get some one else to hunt them." (p. 26) Wilson's code of courage in hunting comes from a quote "he had lived by" from Shakespeare: "'By my troth, I care not; a man can die but once; we owe God a death and let it go which way it will he that dies this year is quit for the next'" (p. 32). Wilson also has a code of manners, for he knows the correct things to do, and knows not to talk away the pleasures of hunting: "'No pleasure in anything if you mouth it up too much'" (p. 33).

<sup>20</sup>This reference to a "hard" woman and a "soft" man further indicates the Macombers' reversal of sex roles.

lack of fear as he succeeds in shooting buffaloes well the day after the lion hunt. He is unafraid when he has to go in the brush after a wounded animal: "He expected the feeling he had had about the lion to come back but it did not. For the first time in his whole life he really felt wholly without fear" (p. 31). Macomber finally realizes part of the courage and self-reliance of the "code hero," and seems ready to assert himself, both in the hunting field and in his marriage. Wilson comments on Macomber's change:

It's that some of them stay little boys so long, Wilson thought....The Great American boy-men.... Beggar had probably been afraid all his life.... But over now....More of a change than any loss of virginity. Fear gone like an operation. Something else grew in its place. Main thing a man had. Made him into a man. Women knew it too. No bloody fear (p. 33).

Macomber's change undermines Margaret's power; she does "know it too" and feels sick because for once she is not in control of either Macomber or the situation. She had been anxious to watch the kill and Macomber's further cowardice, but now: "'I hated it,' she said bitterly. 'I loathed it'" (p. 32).

According to D. H. Lawrence, Macomber has regained his manhood and his "ithyphallic authority" over Margaret.<sup>21</sup> Her social power gone, Margaret cannot rely upon her beauty to overpower Macomber. She therefore shoots him at the

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<sup>21</sup>Discussed in Philip Young, Hemingway, 1952, p. 42.



moment of his greatest ecstasy, when he faces the charging bull unafraid. Wilson believes she has murdered Macomber willfully: he asks, "'Why didn't you poison him?'" (p. 37). Whether she planned murder or was only trying to save Macomber from the bull, Margaret's shooting is an effort to regain her lost dominance; had she saved Macomber from the bull she would again have "something on" him (p. 30). Macomber's "happy" life (of manhood) lasts only a few minutes, because his bitch-wife has to assert herself and, in this story, to destroy him. When physical and social advantages are not enough to bring man into subjection by women, Hemingway shows that the modern American woman will go to an extreme in completing the destruction of man.

Hemingway's indictment of the wealthy American bitch continues into his later works, To Have and Have Not (1937) and Across the River and Into the Trees (1950).<sup>22</sup> Colonel Cantwell, in the later novel, lives by a code of integrity and courage, but has been sexually dominated by American women. He bitterly tells his Italian sweetheart, Renata:

"They teach them [American women] how to count and keep their legs together, and how to put their

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<sup>22</sup>It is also found in his 1938 play, The Fifth Column, which is not treated in this paper. For example, Philip Rawlings points out the American woman's deprivation of men by asking the bitch Dorothy: "Is it true that the first thing an American woman does is to try to get the man she's interested in to give up something? You know, boozing about, or smoking Virginia cigarettes, or wearing gaiters, or something silly?" [quoted in John Atkins, The Art of Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1953), p. 222].

hair up in pin curls...to be beautiful tomorrow.  
Not tonight. They'd never be beautiful tonight"  
(p. 179).<sup>23</sup>

Cantwell's wives are kin to Margaret Macomber; because of the American social situation, the American bitch does not respect the infrequent American code hero, but tries to dominate and destroy him along with the weak males. Cantwell is contemptuous of the majority of American men:

"My countrymen sit down, or lie down, or fall down. Give them a few energy crackers to stall their whimpers" (p. 197).

Yet, Cantwell is unable to control the American bitches he knew, and therefore might have been destroyed by them had he remained in America. To Hemingway, the American woman has developed into such an assiduous destroyer that even the code hero is unprotected.

Hemingway's only American code hero who is able to control his wife is Harry Morgan of To Have and Have Not; Harry is a true code hero who follows the code of courage and self-reliance. Marie Morgan, Hemingway's only Anglo-Saxon non-bitch, is also Hemingway's only fictional American woman who enjoys sex with her husband. Marie's lack of desire to dominate and destroy is the result of her own lower-class status; by the time of writing To Have and Have Not, Hemingway had developed the concept of the American bitch to

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<sup>23</sup>Ernest Hemingway, Across the River and Into the Trees (New York, 1950). Subsequent references to this novel are from this edition and will be cited in the paper's text.

include only the rich and socially prominent women. Marie, the only lower-class American woman portrayed in Hemingway's later works, realizes that she has a rare commodity in America, a real man; she says,

...Anything about him I don't mind. I've been a lucky woman. There ain't no other men like that. People ain't never tried them don't know. I've had plenty of them. I've been lucky to have him.<sup>24</sup>

Marie knows that, in America, "good men are scarce" (p. 261).

In contrast to Marie and Harry, the upper-class American bitches in To Have and Have Not are totally destructive, the men weak and codeless.<sup>25</sup> To the bitch Helen Gordon, love

"...is just another dirty lie. Love is ergoapiol pills to make me come around because you were afraid to have a baby. Love is quinine and quinine and quinine until I'm deaf with it. Love is that dirty aborting horror that you took me to. Love is my insides all messed up. ...To hell with love"(p. 186).

Hemingway suggests more strongly in this novel than in any previous American story that the women's destructiveness is increased by the weakness of the men; Helen's pride in her father ("He was a man"--p. 187) suggests that her bitchery is caused or increased by Gordon's failings.

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<sup>24</sup>Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not (New York, 1965), p. 115. All subsequent references to this novel are from this edition and will be cited in the paper.

<sup>25</sup>i.e. Tommy Bradley allows his wife to whore; Henry Carpenter lives off his mother's money; Richard Gordon is a playboy novelist who has sold himself out, as did Harry in "Snows."

Helene Bradley, a more destructive bitch, thinks only of herself and slaps Richard Gordon when he is unable to satisfy her sexually after her husband walks into the room where they are making love. Dorothy Hollis, a narcissistic adulteress, is a striking example of Hemingway's fictional American rich bitch. Her open admiration of herself and masturbation show the extent of her self-love; Dorothy's bitchiness is shown by the anger she feels at Eddie for falling asleep without making love to her. Dorothy speculates that "we [women of her class] all end up as bitches" (p. 245). Hemingway suggests that Dorothy's speculation is correct, for he portrays all the rich American women in his fiction as socially powerful, dominating and destructive bitches.

Hemingway's American fatal woman succeeds in destroying American men with her dark power which stems from social superiority. These women do not have to employ the traditional feminine wiles alone to destroy; they can crush men psychologically by depriving them of the remnants of former male prerogatives: privacy, peace, respect, and sexual domination. The bitches are also suffocating mothers, destroying their sons' masculinity before the sons are grown. American fatal women control the family and the pursestrings, forcing the men to accept humiliating terms of existence and to relinquish masculine superiority for passive inferiority. Hemingway suggests that American women's power is

complete because their men have no code of integrity and manners to protect them from women's first demands for power and to prevent the women from seizing power. As Hemingway shows in the later stories, the social situation becomes too fixed for the men to take on a code of manners, for the rich bitch dominates and destroys the men who attempt to regain their lost manhood.

The American bitch develops in Hemingway's stories until she is a finely-drawn character who is rich, beautiful, powerful, and destructive of American men. She differs from Hemingway's fictional European heroines in that she uses her power for destructive purposes and does not respect the man who lives by a code; however, whatever the use given the power, the American bitch is related to the European woman since both have a dark and powerful influence over American men.



## CHAPTER III

## THE EUROPEAN DARK LADY

## 1. The English Demi-Bitch

The English women in Hemingway's fiction, being Anglo-Saxon and so related to the American bitch, have a fatal and destructive power over American men. However, these English heroines are only "demi-bitches,"<sup>1</sup> as Fiedler calls them, for theirs is not purposeful and insidious destruction as is Margaret Macomber's or Mrs. Adams's. Although Catherine Barkley's romantic and isolating love finally unmans Frederic Henry in A Farewell to Arms (1929) and betrays him to a lonely, trite existence isolated from the larger concerns of life he wishes to pursue, she never determines to destroy him. Lady Brett Ashley of The Sun Also Rises (1926) likewise does not choose her role of destruction, and rejects her one chance to corrupt a European code hero, Romero (Mrs. Macomber destroys Francis completely because he had become a code hero, independent and self-reliant). Brett and Catherine are also linked to Hemingway's nondestructive Spanish and Italian heroines since all have the knowledge, experience and power of the European dark lady. Through

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<sup>1</sup>Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, Rev. ed., (New York, 1966), p. 319.

their dark knowledge and their power over American men, therefore, Brett and Catherine fit into the dark woman archetype of Hemingway's heroines.

In his portrayal of Lady Brett Ashley, Hemingway is at his most obvious in employing the mythological archetype of the dark woman. Brett is a bitch-goddess, a Circe who turns men unprotected by a code or by European experience into swine, an emancipated woman who takes the pleasures and privileges of men. Her power is not only that of a temptress, for Brett is linked to the European past by her dark powers as a witch. European men are protected from her destructive powers by their experience and code of behavior (unless, like Mike Campbell, they are codeless and already ruined); Brett is able to destroy only the unprotected man, the man without a valid code of behavior, such as Robert Cohn.

Brett has been defeminized by the war<sup>2</sup> and so takes on the masculine roles of appearance (she wears tweed and a man's hat, bobs her hair, and calls herself and the others "chaps") and sexual domination (she decides whom

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<sup>2</sup>During the war her "own true love...kicked off with the dysentery" [Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises (New York, 1954), p. 39. Subsequent references to the text will refer to this edition and will appear in the text of the paper]. Jake, whom she calls "my own true love" (p. 55) was sexually incapacitated by the war, and her husband was so war-shocked that he forced Brett to sleep on the floor and continually threatened to kill her (p. 203). These shocks, plus others she probably had as a war nurse, have "wounded" Brett and caused her to lose her femininity.

she will have affairs with and when the affairs will terminate). Brett's switching of sex roles is seen in her first appearance in the novel, when she enters a bar with a group of male homosexuals: "she was very much with them" (p. 20). She immediately attracts Robert Cohn, who cannot recognize her loss of womanhood and who has grown tired of his American bitch mistress, Frances Clyne.<sup>3</sup>

Cohn's lack of a code of manners, his complete innocence and romantic, courtly view of love and life, shown early in the novel, render him particularly susceptible to Brett's sorcery. Jake remarks, concerning a very romantic novel Cohn is reading: "Cohn, I believe, took every word of 'The Purple Land' as literally as though it had been an R. G. Dun report" (p. 9). Cohn believes the promiscuous Brett to be "'absolutely fine and straight,'" (p. 38) and cannot believe that she would marry a man she did not love. When Cohn falls in love with Brett, he does so very romantically, and "his tennis game went all to pieces" (p. 45). As Robert Stephens points out, Cohn reveals his courtly view of women in his thinking that he has obligations to his wife

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<sup>3</sup>Frances is "very forceful" (p. 5), and when her looks went, "her attitude toward Robert changed from one of careless possession and exploitation to the absolute determination that he should marry her" (p. 5). Frances is restrictive of Cohn's pleasures (p. 6) and openly bitches at him in true Margaret Macomber style (pp. 47-51). Although a very minor character in The Sun Also Rises, Frances is another good example of the American bitch, and her domination and belittling of Cohn help demonstrate his American weakness.

and to Frances, who feel no obligation to Cohn. As Frances says, however, Cohn wants everyone to know that he has a mistress in the courtly manner, and to marry her would be to lose his mistress.<sup>4</sup> Although Brett discards Cohn after a short affair, he enjoys his courtly suffering for love, and even enjoys being taunted because everyone knows of the affair:

Cohn sat at the table. His face had the sallow, yellow look it got when he was insulted, but somehow he seemed to be enjoying it. The childish, drunken heroics of it. It was his affair with a lady of title (p. 178).

Cohn likes to talk about his pleasures, and values the exterior and verbalized, whereas the code hero knows that talking about a pleasure will spoil it. Cohn also speaks often of his suffering, demonstrating his lack of a code of manners for bearing pain well and quietly.

Robert Cohn is a medieval, courtly lover, "ready to do battle for his lady love" (p. 178), willing to make an "honest woman" (p. 201) of Brett by marriage, and believing the romantic dream that "true love would conquer all" (p. 199). As Harvey tells him, Cohn is a case of "arrested development" (p. 44), a mooning adolescent whose romantic views of women leave him vulnerable to destruction by the unwomanly Brett. Cohn demonstrates the innocence and weakness of the American men whom Hemingway indicts throughout the American stories,

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<sup>4</sup>Robert O. Stephens, "Hemingway's Don Quixote in Pamplona," College English, XXIII, 111 (December, 1961), 217.

the codeless men who are destroyed by American bitches.

Brett is more complex than the American bitch because of her European background. The central clue to Brett's mythological role is given by Cohn: "'He calls her Circe,' Mike said. 'He claims she turns men into swine'" (p. 144). As Carlos Baker points out, Brett's being turned away from the church she tries to enter with Jake suggests the "attempt of a witch to gain entry into a Christian sanctum;"<sup>5</sup> once in church she is unable to pray, and confession is "in a language she did not know" (p. 151). The Spaniards recognize Brett in her true role as bitch-goddess of the fiesta. As Brett is turned away from the church, the San Fermin riau-riau dancers circle her and begin dancing:

They were all chanting. Brett wanted to dance but they did not want her to. They wanted her as an image to dance around. When the song ended with the sharp riau-riau! they rushed us into a wineshop.

We stood at the counter. They had Brett seated on a wine-cask.

...They had hung a wreath of garlies around her neck (pp. 155-156).

Several critics write that the dancers are pagan;<sup>6</sup> Brett,

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<sup>5</sup>Hemingway: The Writer as Artist (Princeton, 1963), p. 89.

<sup>6</sup>I am unable to discover any material concerning either the riau-riau dancers or the garlies (other than the mention in folklore dictionaries that garlies are "magic"), so I must depend on the critics' conclusions that these are pagan. Carlos Baker (The Writer, p. 89) calls the dancers "pagan," and R. W. Lewis, Jr., in Hemingway On Love (Austin, 1965), p. 31, calls Brett a "pagan fertility bitch-goddess," referring perhaps to the garlies as symbols of fertility



the witch refused entry into a church, is embraced as a pagan goddess by the Spanish dancers and thus finds her true role.

European men are protected from Brett's destruction by their experience and code of manners.<sup>7</sup> Count Mippipopolous is an "insider" (which the codeless Cohn can never be) because the Count has learned to "know the values" (p. 60) and to pay for everything he receives. Pedro Romero, the "code hero" of the novel, is protected from Brett's enchantment by his European bullfighter's mystique of integrity, self-reliance, and courage;<sup>8</sup> he too "pays" (the hotel bill) when Brett sends him away.

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(again, I am unable to document this assertion). Sheridan Baker (Ernest Hemingway, p. 49) mentions the dancers and garlands in the paragraph explaining Brett's mythological tracings as a sorceress and a goddess. Carlos Baker (The Writer, p. 88) states that Hemingway's mythologizing in The Sun Also Rises is psychological and "does not require special literary equipment to be interpreted." Since the literary equipment is unavailable, the psychological conclusion that the circling dancers are pagan must suffice.

<sup>7</sup>As already mentioned, Mike was already ruined before he met Brett, and is content for their relationship to remain on a strictly sexual plane; he remarks repeatedly, "'Isn't she a lovely piece?'" (pp. 79-80). Hemingway portrays very few European men who do not live up to the code or who are not protected from dark women by experience. (A notable exception is the failed bullfighter in "Capital of the World," who is bullied by a prostitute). The few European exceptions are not central to the problem of the dark woman as powerful over American men, and will not be treated in this paper; however, these men show Hemingway's continuing belief in the power of the dark woman over the unprotected man.

<sup>8</sup>European men learn the code of courage and self-reliance early in life, and will risk even death for it (i.e. see the young waiter in "Capital of the World").

Romero is one of the few uncorrupted bullfighters left in Spain, and his fighting is "straight and pure and natural in line" (p. 167). He is nineteen, fifteen years younger than Brett, and to her is "'just a child'" (p. 167). He symbolizes youth and immortality "'I know it,' Romero said. ['I'm never going to die'" (p. 186)]; Brett falls for him, realizing that she is a "bitch" (p. 184) to go to him and thus perhaps to corrupt his purity.<sup>9</sup> However, although given sexual experience by a temptress and although physically beaten by Cohn, Romero is not destroyed; he retains his code of personal integrity and courage. The day after being beaten by Cohn for his affair with Brett, Romero performs superbly in the bull ring:

Everything of which he could control the locality he did in front of her all that afternoon. Never once did he look up. He made it stronger that way, and did it for himself, too, as well as for her. Because he did not look up to ask if it pleased he did it all for himself inside, and it strengthened him, and yet he did it for her, too. But he did not do it for her at any loss to himself. He gained by it all through the afternoon (p. 216).

The fight with Cohn had not "touched his spirit but his face had been smashed and his body hurt. He was wiping all that

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<sup>9</sup>Spilka points out that Brett robs the town of a communal strength when she accepts the ear of the bull which had gored a man to death; she stuffs the ear into a drawer and forgets it. "In effect, she has robbed the community of its triumph, as she will now rob it of its hero." Mark Spilka, "The Death of Love in The Sun Also Rises," Twelve Original Essays on Great American Novels, ed. Charles Shapiro (Detroit, 1958). Reprinted in Hemingway and His Critics, ed. Carlos Baker (New York, 1961), p. 90.

out now" (p. 219).

Romero, protected from the femme fatale by his code, is yet ignorant enough to believe that Brett is capable of being womanly, of playing the feminine role, symbolized by long hair. She is too much a product of her emancipation; as Spilka remarks, "when Brett refuses to let her hair grow long for Pedro, it means that her role in life is fixed: she can no longer reclaim her lost womanhood; she can no longer live with a fine man without destroying him."<sup>10</sup> Although Brett says she sends Romero away because "'I'm not going to be one of these bitches that ruins children,'" (p. 243) a more basic reason is that, in her fixed identity as sorceress, Brett cannot remain with a man who is completely invulnerable to her as a fatal woman. Pedro, Spilka writes, is the "Code Hero" pitted against Cohn, the "Romantic Hero."<sup>11</sup> While Cohn, the innocent American man, is completely enchanted by Brett and is turned into a groveling and suffering "swine" (p. 181), Pedro emerges spiritually unbeaten, a real man.

Jake Barnes, the narrator of the novel, is a combination of the code hero (p. 11) and the romantic hero (p. 55). He loves Brett, and is hurt by her promiscuity (p. 84); he becomes a pimp and a "steer" for her, disgracing himself with Montoya and possibly corrupting Pedro. Yet Jake is

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<sup>10</sup>Spilka, "Death of Love," p. 91.

<sup>11</sup>Spilka, "Death of Love," p. 88.

saved from a final fall to Brett's powers by his emasculating wound, a mark of European war experience, and is thus granted time to realize that his illusions about Brett were false:

'Oh Jake,' Brett said, 'we could have had such a damned good time together.'  
 ...'Yes.' I said. 'Isn't it pretty to think so?' (p. 247)

Brett, Jake finally realizes, cannot ever regain her womanhood, for her role as a temptress and a Circe is fixed.

Although she does not set out to destroy men, Brett is doomed to a life of destroying codeless men who have romantic visions of love. She changes Cohn into a swine and would enchant the other men were they not protected in some way from her powers. Brett therefore fits into the tradition of Hemingway's fictional dark woman, who has dark and mysterious powers over American men.

Hemingway's second British heroine, Catherine Barkley, is considered by many critics to be an "angel"<sup>12</sup> who is saved from bitch-hood by her early death, called "rigged and timely" by Spilka.<sup>13</sup> (Catherine and Brett have very similar backgrounds,<sup>14</sup> and so Catherine could logically have

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<sup>12</sup>i.e. Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1952), p. 66; Theodore Bardacke, "Hemingway's Women," in Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work, ed. John K. M. McCaffery (New York, 1950), p. 345.

<sup>13</sup>"Death of Love," p. 83. Fiedler (Love and Death, p. 318) agrees with Spilka, and Bardacke ("Women," p. 346), feels that Catherine's death saves her love from disintegrating as in the similar story of Luz in "A Very Short Story."



turned into a Brett had she lived). However, although Catherine is very womanly and attempts to be all-sufficient for Frederic Henry, she is a dark and destructive "demi-bitch" who ruins her lover even though she dies young. Catherine has dark and mysterious knowledge of their doom, and also has emotional power over Henry. Although she does not destroy Henry on purpose, Catherine's selfish and isolating love causes him to give up both his manhood and his concern for interests in life beyond himself and Catherine.

Catherine and Henry's world is romantic; they believe that they can renounce the outside world and exist only for each other in an isolated romantic paradise of love.<sup>15</sup> The European Rinaldi does not attract Catherine and is not susceptible to her destructive love because his European experience protects him from her romanticism. Rinaldi is

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<sup>14</sup>Both are nurses whose lovers are killed in the war; Catherine plans to cut her hair and to become a "new woman" for Henry after the baby is born.

<sup>15</sup>Henry, like Cohn, wants to make an "honest woman" of Catherine by marriage; Henry too feels that if he and Catherine love truly that everything will work out for them. Henry, also like Cohn, does not have a code of self-reliance and integrity which could save him from Catherine's domination (i.e. Henry does not seem to mind stealing Rinaldi's girl, pretends to love Catherine in order to seduce her, and breaks his promise to the priest and visits whorehouses instead of the clean land of the priest's family). William A. Glasser, in "A Farewell to Arms," Sewanee Review, LXXIV, 2, Spring (1966), 453-469, argues that Henry is completely self-reliant because he remains selfish and a sensualist almost to the novel's end. Aware of little but his own desires, Henry finally comes to love Catherine for her soul only as she is dying (Glasser, p. 458, 467). Since Henry feels "trapped



the "snake of reason,"<sup>16</sup> he tells Henry, and is a man who prefers the "simpler pleasures" (p. 42) of prostitutes to a demanding relationship with the sexually inexperienced Catherine, whom he calls a "lovely cool goddess" whom one can only "worship" (p. 69).

In a very unobtrusive manner, Catherine takes over the relationship with Henry and begins isolating them from others. At first Henry enjoys the seclusion, spending a great deal of time beneath the isolating tent of Catherine's long, beautiful hair, but he soon begins to miss contact with others. At the races, he answers "'Yes.'" when Catherine asks, "'Don't you like it better when we're alone?'" (p. 138), but then admits, "After we had been alone awhile we were glad to see the others again" (p. 138). Henry is also forced to keep playing games to feed Catherine's romantic illusions; even after she has recovered from the "craziness" caused by her fiancé's death, she requires Henry

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biologically," however, had he been completely selfish, he could have escaped from Catherine and her pregnancy. He wishes to return to the war, and to see other people, but is prevented from doing so by Catherine. Henry finally admits his lack of inner resources to sustain him when she is away:

"My life used to be full of everything,...Now if you aren't with me I haven't a thing in the world."  
 "...Don't think about me when I'm not here"

(Catherine says).

"That's the way I worked it at the front.  
 But there was something to do then!" (p. 266).

If Henry had a code of integrity and self-reliance, he would not have allowed a woman to prevent him from the larger concerns of life and to isolate him from the source of his strength, his occupation. Deprived of all but Catherine, Henry is subject to ruin when she is taken from him.

to play with her:

'How many people have you ever loved?' [she asks]  
 'Nobody.'  
 ...'How many have you--how do you say it?--  
 stayed with?'  
 'None.'  
 'You're lying to me.'  
 'Yes.'  
 'It's all right. Keep right on lying to me.  
 That's what I want you to do. Were they pretty?'  
 'I never stayed with anyone.'  
 'That's right. Were they very attractive?'  
 'I don't know anything about it.'  
 'You're just mine. That's true and you've  
 never belonged to any one else.' (pp. 108-9)

Catherine clings to the security of these illusions partly as a reaction to her dark vision of the future: "'I'm afraid of the dark because sometimes I see me dead in it'" (p. 131), she says, "'And sometimes I see you dead in it'" (p. 132). Catherine feels that she is powerful enough to protect Henry, but does not believe that he can protect her: she says, "'I can keep you safe. I know I can. But nobody can help themselves'" (p. 132). She is also powerful enough to seduce Henry away from his duty, causing him to keep from returning to the war, as he feels he should, after his desertion.<sup>17</sup>

Robert Lewis points out that Henry is finally reduced

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<sup>16</sup>Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms (New York, 1957), p. 176. Subsequent references to the text of this novel refer to this edition and will appear in the text of the paper.

<sup>17</sup>Henry initially flees to escape death, but Catherine assuages his guilt feelings about not returning (saying, "'It's only the Italian army'" --p. 260) and keeps him from what he feels is his duty.

to a domestic existence by Catherine,<sup>18</sup> after she becomes pregnant, and they find that, because of the baby, they are "trapped biologically" (p. 144) and are unable to live the romantic and irresponsible life they planned. Henry's fear of the "numbers above two" (p. 334) on the gas dial reflects his fear of the responsibility of a third member in their family<sup>19</sup> (he operates the dial during Catherine's labor pains). Catherine finally assumes the male role<sup>20</sup> in their relationship, deciding to cut her hair after the baby is born although Henry objects. Catherine's possessiveness and their isolation finally drive the couple to a restless, boring relationship.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>On Love, p. 49.

<sup>19</sup>Lewis, On Love, p. 53.

<sup>20</sup>See Sheridan Baker, An Introduction, pp. 66-70, for several examples of Henry's femininity and the general confusion of sex roles in the novel.

<sup>21</sup>Bardacke, in "Women," p. 346, comments on the couple's restlessness in Switzerland, and John Hardy, in Man in the Modern Novel (Seattle, 1964), p. 125, finds their conversation trite. For a more complete discussion of Catherine and Henry's boring existence before and during the Switzerland trip, see Lewis, On Love, pp. 49-53. Lewis finds Henry to be "reduced to banalities" (p. 50) and bored. Lewis also writes that Henry's life is ritualized to the simplest of possible lives (p. 53) but does not suggest that the trite conversation between Henry and Catherine is part of this ritual. Blanche Gelfant, in "Language as a Moral Code in A Farewell to Arms," Modern Fiction Studies, IX, ii, Summer (1963), 173, comments on the ritual use of language in Henry's monologue on Catherine's possible death, stating that Henry's use of clichés reflects his ritual avoidance of the truth and that the clichés are "familiar rather than expressive." Henry and Catherine's banal conversation in Switzerland might also reflect their ritual avoidance of the truths that they are restless and unfulfilled.

Their banal existence in isolation is reflected by their trite comments about the joys of Switzerland:

'Isn't this a grand country?'

...'Isn't this a fine square?'

...'Isn't the rain fine?' (p. 287).

'It's grand' (p. 288).

'Don't we have a fine time?' (p. 303).

'Don't we have a good life?' (p. 309).

'It was a fine country and every time that we went out it was fun' (p. 313).

Catherine and Henry would like their life to be "fun," but find that not only are they beginning to bore each other, but also that their individual lives have become tragically empty whenever the other leaves for a short time. They have so isolated themselves from the rest of the world that their whole strength and resources lie in the other. Yet instead of realizing that their isolation is hurting Henry, Catherine insists that he stay continually with her so that she will not be lonely, and continues to be satisfied by him even though he craves life beyond the little world they have created.

As a consolation for his isolation, Catherine suggests that Henry grow a beard for something to do, and later tells him that the beard appears "'stiff and fierce and it's very soft and a great pleasure'" (p. 314). Sheridan Baker suggests that the soft beard, which only appears stiff and

which pleases a woman with its softness, represents Henry's unmanliness,<sup>22</sup> and further states that A Farewell to Arms is the story "of a man unmanned in trying to serve the charming fey."<sup>23</sup> Henry continues to be concerned with the war throughout his exile with Catherine (pp. 301, 302) but is not allowed to return to the war or to feel guilty about deserting; even when Henry wants to leave Catherine for an hour of billiards she tries to entice him to stay by brushing her hair, an act which she knows excites Henry:

"Will you be away a long time?" Catherine asked. She looked lovely in the bed. "Would you hand me the brush?"

I watched her brushing her hair, holding her head so the weight of her hair all came to one side....I felt faint with loving her so much.

"I don't want to go away."

"I don't want you to go away" (pp. 267-68).

Although Catherine is very womanly and does not want to destroy Henry, her completely selfish, isolating and demanding love finally ruins him. Robert Lewis states that Catherine's death:

...carries with it the hope of the destruction of her destructive love that excludes the world, that in its very denial of self possesses selfishly, that leads nowhere beyond the bed and the dream of a mystical transport of ordinary men and women to a divine state of love through foolish suffering.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>An Introduction, p. 67.

<sup>23</sup>An Introduction, p. 70.

<sup>24</sup>On Love, p. 54.



Catherine is powerful over Henry because she uses her beauty to lure him into a romantic dream and to cause him to give up the world for her. She isolates them because of her knowledge of their doom; through her dark knowledge and her power over the American Frederic Henry, Catherine fits Hemingway's dark woman archetype. Although she perhaps escapes a further loss of womanhood because of her early death, Catherine is no less a dark, destructive woman, for she uses her womanly attributes themselves to entice her lover into isolation, which leads to his ruin. Catherine and Brett, Hemingway's two British "demi-bitches," are destructive of men and also have dark European knowledge. They differ from their Italian and Spanish sisters in that, although unintentionally, the English heroines ultimately ruin the men who love them romantically.

## 2. The Spanish and Italian Woman of Dark Knowledge and Non-Destructive Power

Although they may berate and even partially dominate a man who has failed his code of behavior (i.e. Pablo and Pilar), Hemingway's Spanish and Italian women do not destroy their lovers; therefore Maria of For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940) and Renata of Across the River and Into the Trees (1950) are the women most frequently misinterpreted by critics as dreams,<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>See note 2 of "Introduction." Renata is described

although Pilar of For Whom the Bell Tolls is usually correctly interpreted as the gypsy witch of mysterious powers. These three dark European heroines embody the wisdom, experience and darkness of the Old World, and by their identification with Europe and the earth itself have mysterious knowledge and power over American men surpassing that of the British heroines, whose Anglo-Saxon heritage waters down their European inheritance of dark knowledge.

The American men portrayed in these two novels, Robert Jordan of For Whom the Bell Tolls and Richard Cantwell of Across the River and Into the Trees, are code heroes,<sup>26</sup>

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as a "Rugby player's pipe dream" by Sean O'Faolain, in The Vanishing Hero (Boston, 1957), p. 134; and as a dream devoid of personality by Horst Oppel, "Hemingway's Across the River and Into the Trees" in Hemingway and His Critics, ed. Carlos Baker (New York, 1961), p. 216. Philip Young, in Hemingway, 1952, p. 80, states that Maria is "far too good to be true," and Carlos Baker (The Writer, p. 109) and Robert Lewis (On Love, p. 178), agree.

<sup>26</sup>Had these heroes no code of conduct, the European women could represent the potential of love which can become as restrictive as Catherine's, although Hemingway does not portray this situation. The basic difference between Hemingway's fictional American bitch and European dark lady is that the European woman respects the domination by the man who keeps to his masculine code, while the American upper-class bitch, who sees very few men with a code, will not give up her domination and will destroy the man who tries to live up to a code and to assert his masculine rights. [Richard Cantwell, although adored as a code hero by the Italian Contessa Renata, has had three unhappy marriages to American wives who have denied him part of his manhood by withholding sex and by such an act (symbolic of their disdain for him) as sleeping in rollers (Cantwell remarks, "'They'd never be beautiful for tonight'"--Across the River and Into the Trees, p. 179). Macomber's attainment of manhood in "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" simply spurs his wife on to

as are most of the European men Hemingway portrays, and are respected by the European women they meet. Robert Jordan is actually strengthened by the two dark women he knows in Spain; Pilar, the gypsy witch, knows of Jordan's doom, and Maria is an earth-goddess who becomes life itself to Jordan.

Pilar is inextricably tied to the Spanish life and past; Jordan is constantly reminded of her past links with the Spanish people and the Republic, which she believes in, she says, "'...with the fervor as those who have religious faith believe in the mysteries.'"<sup>27</sup> A gypsy, Pilar has the dark power of divining the future: she knows it will snow in May (p. 177); she can see and smell death:

"I saw it death of that one with the rare name in his face as though it were burned there with a branding iron."

"...And what is more he smelt of death"  
[Pilar tells Jordan (p. 251)].

"...I could tell thee of other things, Ingles, and do not doubt what thou simply cannot see or cannot hear" (p. 252).

Pilar reads Jordan's fate in his hand, and tries to deny her knowledge of the future by ignoring what she reads:

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further destruction]. The two English "demi-bitches," having combinations of American and European traits, dominate only men who do not follow a code of conduct. Catherine and Brett are like American bitches in their destructiveness and their possible rejection of men they cannot dominate (Rinaldi, Romero), like European women in that the British heroines respect the code hero and do not actively attempt to dominate or ruin their lovers.

<sup>27</sup> Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York, 1940), p. 90. Subsequent references to the text of this novel will refer to this edition and will appear in the paper.

"Let me see thy hand," the woman said....  
 "What did you see in it?" Robert Jordan asked  
 her....  
 "Nothing," she told him. "I saw nothing in  
 it" (p. 33).

Just before they blow the bridge, she says to Jordan:

"In that thing of the hand---"  
 "What thing of the hand?" he said angrily.  
 "Nay, listen. Do not be angry, little boy.  
 In regard to that thing of the hand. That is  
 all gypsy nonsense that I make to give myself  
 importance. There is no such thing" (p. 387).

But Pilar cannot deny her dark knowledge, and Jordan is  
 left waiting to die at the novel's end.

As Maria says, Pilar has "'great and varied wisdom'"  
 (p. 349), for she has knowledge about the future, courage,  
 psychology, warfare, and love. Pilar, having learned about  
 fear and courage from "three of the worst paid matadors in the  
 world" (p. 55), is a "hundred times braver than Pablo" in  
 Rafael's opinion (p. 26). She instructs the guerillas in the  
 use of weapons, and becomes their leader when Pablo fails.  
 Although ugly at forty-eight, Pilar has had a very full love  
 life and knows much about love and sex. Thus she instructs  
 Jordan and Maria (pp. 73, 170, 324, 349), and as Maria's  
 "psychiatrist" (p. 137) knows that Jordan's love will benefit  
 the girl.

Pilar is jealous of Jordan and Maria's love, and  
 lives vicariously through them; the gypsy reminds them of  
 her former sexual powers and states that when young she could  
 have taken one of them from the other (p. 156). Pilar has  
 a great power over Maria, and forces the girl to tell her  
 about Jordan and her lovemaking. This forcing, Jordan feels,



is not evil but is a domination; Pilar makes Jordan and Maria's love into something that is hers, a "gypsy thing" (p. 176). Pilar lives through Maria; Jordan thinks, "It was only wanting to keep her hold on life. To keep it through Maria" (p. 176). Although Pilar is far more experienced and wise than Maria and has mysterious knowledge of the future, Maria is shown to be life itself even for the gypsy.

Pilar tries to dominate Pablo, former leader of the guerillas, a man who breaks his European code of conduct through his cowardice and dishonor (i.e. stealing the band's explosives when he deserts them). Even when she takes over the band, however, Pablo is "neither dominated by her nor seemed to be much affected by her" (p. 57). Pablo is greatly weakened by his fear of death (pp. 90, 185) and thus loses his leadership of the men. But he has a great pride in himself as a Spaniard (he is even disappointed in the cowardly death of a priest because the priest is Spanish, p. 127) and therefore sticks to the remnants of the European code of courage in spite of the fact that his fear has ruined him. Pablo finally returns to blow the bridge, saying (for his own benefit as well as the others'): "'At bottom I am not a coward'" (p. 389). Pilar has an opportunity to kill Pablo, through Jordan, but does not choose to do so (p. 68). Her dark knowledge and experience allow her to take over the band, but she, being Spanish, is not compelled to destroy either Pablo or his remaining masculinity.



Robert Jordan shows himself to be a code hero in For Whom the Bell Tolls by keeping his integrity and self-reliance throughout the novel. He feels that his father was a coward to commit suicide to "avoid being tortured" (p. 67) by Jordan's mother: "...if he [Jordan's father] wasn't a coward he would have stood up to that woman and not let her bully him" (p. 339). At the novel's close, Jordan bravely decides not to kill himself to avoid capture and possible torture, but stay alive to aid the others to escape.

Jordan also keeps his integrity concerning the war, and never allows Maria to interfere with his primary concern, his duty to Spain. He makes the personal decision to blow the bridge even though the task will probably accomplish nothing and will cost several lives. He reasons:

...should a man carry out impossible orders knowing what they lead to?...Yes. He should carry them out because it is only in the performing of them that they can prove to be impossible (p. 162).

Thus Jordan chooses his larger duties to Spain over his love, a choice opposite to that of the non-code hero, Frederic Henry. Jordan feels he has "no time for any woman" (p. 25), and after he falls in love with Maria, he allows her to strengthen him but not to interfere with his work. After their lovemaking he thinks of his work, and when his duty intrudes upon his love, as when he must shoot a man while Maria sleeps beside him, she has "no place in his life now" (p. 267).

Jordan "fought for what he believed in" (p. 467), and his adherence to his code is actually strengthened by Maria because of Jordan's identification of her with the Spanish cause and finally with life itself. He tells her:

"...I love thee as I love all that we have fought for. I love thee as I love liberty and dignity and the rights of all men to work and not be hungry. I love thee as I love Madrid that we defended and as I love all my comrades that have died" (p. 348).

Because Jordan follows a code, Maria's love cannot isolate and destroy as does Catherine's; and because Maria is a dark woman, she offers Jordan more support and strength than could any mere "dream."

Earl Rovit points out the significance of Maria's name as associating her with Spain and the Virgin (symbol of life), and of the images of regeneration (wheat, rabbit) used to refer to the girl.<sup>28</sup> She is linked to the Spanish earth (her shaved head is symbolic) which has also been raped but which has the potential for regeneration. Maria is also symbolically the youth of Pilar<sup>29</sup> and in this connection is also tied to the Spanish past. Jordan has seen love connected with death (his father's suicide), and finds in Maria a love connected with life and regeneration. Maria becomes many things to Jordan--wife, mother, and daughter--for, as Jordan finds, Maria is "all of life" (p. 264). Jordan remarks that Maria

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<sup>28</sup>Earl Rovit, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1963), p. 144.

<sup>29</sup>Bardacke, "Women," p. 351.

has taught him about life:

...I wish that I were going to live a long time instead of going to die today because I have learned much about life in these four days; more, I think, than in all the other time....

"You taught me a lot, guapa," he said in English (p. 380).

Maria's body has a "magic" (p. 161), and through Maria, Jordan discovers a mystical experience in sex, that of "time absolutely still and they were both there, time having stopped and he felt the earth move out and away from them" (p. 159). Maria has sexual understanding that even Pilar has not learned (p. 349); the girl offers Jordan a type of regeneration and immortality through sexual union. When Jordan faces death he tells Maria that they are now completely one:

"As long as there is one of us there is both of us."

"...if thou goest then I go with thee" (p. 463).

"Now stand up and we both go."

"...Thou art all there will be of me" (p. 464).

Rovit states that Jordan finally merges with the earth-mother Maria and becomes the earth;<sup>30</sup> at the novel's close, "He was completely integrated now" (p. 471). Maria, the woman of regeneration and rewarding love, the "rabbit" who strengthens her lover for his duty through the "magic" of her body, becomes for Jordan a symbol of the Spain he is fighting for. Linked with the darkness of the Spanish land and people, Maria finally becomes an earth-goddess in the novel. She

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<sup>30</sup> Rovit, Ernest Hemingway, p. 145.

and Pilar, dark women of experience and power over the American hero, aid Jordan to a self-realization and to a keeping of his code, and are therefore very close emotionally and symbolically to Hemingway's final European dark lady, Renata of Across the River and Into the Trees.

Renata's lover, Richard Cantwell, is a code hero who lives and dies by his code of manners and integrity. He is courageous about his war wounds and his impending death (and therefore deserves membership in the "Order of Brusadelli"); he keeps the proper code for ordering food, hunting, or making love to a countess; he settles his debts before death (his account with Italy is settled when he relieves himself on the spot where he was wounded, and then leaves the amount of the pension he received from the wound); and dies well and without bitterness, after a day of doing well all the things he has wanted to do. Cantwell recognizes that few American men abide by a code of conduct, and proudly stands when offered a chair, remarking:

"I can rest on my feet, or against a God damned tree. My countrymen sit down, or lie down, or fall down. Give them a few energy crackers to stall their whimpers."

..."It has something in it that keeps you from getting erections. It's like the atomic bomb, only played backwards."<sup>31</sup>

Because of his code, Renata's love does not isolate Cantwell

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<sup>31</sup> Ernest Hemingway, Across the River and Into the Trees (New York, 1950), p. 197. Subsequent references to the novel refer to this edition and will appear in the text of the paper.

from the world nor destroy him.

Renata represents the darkness, past, and experience of Europe. She is Roman Catholic and a countess, so her own life is secure in the fixed tradition of the Venetian aristocracy, in one of the most complex and tradition-filled stations of life. Her valuable heirloom emeralds and portrait, fixed and static, emphasize her link with the tradition and past of Venice. Carlos Baker suggests that Renata, less than nineteen years old, is symbolic of Col. Cantwell's past youth, and therefore helps him towards a union with the past (her name means "reborn").<sup>32</sup>

Renata may represent both Venice and Venus, the Queen of Love who was born from the sea. Sheridan Baker states that Renata's portrait (Renata describes it as "My hair is twice as long as it has ever been and I look as though I were rising from the sea without the head wet"-- P. 97), is similar to Botticelli's painting of the birth of Venus.<sup>33</sup> Renata's "disappointment" for Richard (p. 110) may be that she is pregnant, which further links her to the Goddess of Love. Cantwell asks Renata to run for "Queen of Heaven" (p. 83), which suggests both the Virgin of Catholicism and Venus.

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<sup>32</sup>The Writer, p. 283.

<sup>33</sup>An Introduction, p. 124.



As Robert Lewis points out, Renata becomes Cantwell's spiritual guide and his mentor in love.<sup>34</sup> Her love is past his understanding; instead of being a predator and destroyer, like his American wives, Renata prepares Cantwell for a "happy" death, a death without bitterness. Renata continually encourages Cantwell to speak of his war experiences which he has held inside for so long. The telling of the experiences becomes almost religious to Cantwell: "...he was not lecturing, he was confessing" (p. 222). Renata is his priestess, advising him to "'Just tell me true and hold me tight and tell me true until you are purged of it'" (p. 225), and asking "'Don't you see you need to tell me things to purge your bitterness?'" (p. 240).

Cantwell shares his war experiences with the girl, and finds great comfort in the confession. He finally begins to talk to Renata even when she is asleep, because through telling what has been so long bottled up in him, Richard rids himself of its terror. Renata's function as a priestess allows Cantwell to purge himself of bitterness and, in Horst Oppel's words, to free himself from "the constant preoccupation with his ego--self-centeredness.... Now he speaks for the suffering of the world."<sup>35</sup> Renata,

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<sup>34</sup>On Love, p. 182.

<sup>35</sup>Horst Oppel, "Hemingway's Across the River and Into the Trees," p. 222.

the embodiment of the oldest and darkest religious and social traditions of Europe, uses her dark powers to aid her lover to a happy, not bitter, death.

The European dark lady, in Hemingway's vision, is a woman whose power over the American male arises from her link with the Old World of decadence, experience, darkness, and mystery. The European woman respects the "code hero," although the British fictional women inadvertently ruin the man who does not live up to a code. Hemingway's European dark lady is much more mysterious than the American bitch, and the European woman is often portrayed in his novels as a mythical goddess (Brett as Circe, Maria as an earth-goddess, Pilar as the gypsy-witch, and Renata as Venus). However, her dark power and knowledge link the European dark lady with the socially powerful American bitch in the mythically appealing archetype of the dark woman.

## CONCLUSION

Edmund Wilson observes that one never meets the type of women portrayed by Hemingway because the writer does not present real, objective women in his fiction, but portrays subjective, extreme characters.<sup>1</sup> In arriving at this conclusion, Wilson makes the usual critical mistake of dismissing Hemingway's women as either destructive devils or colorless angels. Although Hemingway's heroines are not average, everyday women, and are therefore subjective, they have a mythical element of "truth"--the traditional, archetypal truth that women are mysterious and powerful--which makes them people, not extreme characters. Hemingway himself states that a good writer should create real people in his fiction, not caricatures like the "devil" or "angel" stereotype; past truths, experiences, and archetypes may help an author create a "true" person. He writes in Death in the Afternoon:

When writing a novel a writer should create living people; people not characters. A character is a caricature....People in a novel, not skillfully constructed characters, must be projected from the writer's assimilated experience, from

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<sup>1</sup>"Hemingway: Gauge of Morale," The Wound and the Bow (Oxford, 1947), n.p. Reprinted in John K. M. McCaffery, ed., Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work (New York, 1950), p. 236.

his knowledge, from his head, from his heart and from all there is of him.... A good writer should know as near everything as possible.... 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.<sup>2</sup>

Hemingway's women are shown subjectively because they are people in special, not average, situations which make up Hemingway's view of the "actual world" and the "world as it could be." The American and British heroines, beautiful and destructive, are women in the actual Western world, as reflected in Hemingway's personal experience. The European heroines, beautiful, understanding, and strong, show women as they could be, strengthening agents to help a man live a meaningful life and die a happy death. In spite of their subjective treatment, these women possess the mythical element of truth which makes them true people, not caricatures.

As this paper has demonstrated, almost all of Hemingway's fictional heroines have mysterious and dark knowledge and power linking them to the traditional archetype of the dark woman. This new reading of Hemingway's women as dark adds a dimension--that of the archetypal truth that women are powerful and mysterious--to his heroines. (Hemingway remarks in the Green Hills of Africa that, in writing,

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<sup>2</sup>(New York, 1932), p. 191.

"There is a fourth and fifth dimension that can be gotten."<sup>3</sup> By employing the archetype of the dark woman throughout his work, Hemingway elicits an emotional response from the reader and reaches an added dimension in his fiction).

An understanding of Hemingway's women is important to an understanding of Hemingway's central male characters, all of whom are American. Many of the American men depicted in the stories are pitifully weak, romantic, and are lacking in a code of behavior and integrity; their weakness is demonstrated further by their passive obedience to the American and British bitches and demi-bitches. The "code hero," on the other hand (usually a man who has escaped the American bitch), is a lone man heroically struggling to live and die by the code of courage and integrity. Suffering because the explosive world Hemingway depicts is often without values, the code hero must nevertheless suffer quietly and without show. Properly understood, the European women in Hemingway's fiction are strength-giving lovers who are also symbols of the past, of rebirth, and of the earth itself; and who help the hero keep to his code in dying as well as in living. Through the love and strength of the European dark lady, the hero is able to transcend hate and to die "well" and "happily" (Francis Macomber dies "well" and "happily" without the love of a woman; however, he is the

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<sup>3</sup>(New York, 1935), p. 26.



only Hemingway character who does so, and he has no period of suffering quietly before a foreseen death, as have Robert Jordan and Richard Cantwell). The European woman in Hemingway's "world as it could be" therefore strikes an optimistic note, for she demonstrates Hemingway's feeling that women's power could be used for supporting and strengthening the men living by a code of honor.

Hemingway's view of women as dark in his "actual world" is frightening and pessimistic, as shown by his portrayal of destructive, dominating American bitches and European demi-bitches. The male characters' escapes from these women--to the sexless comradeship of other men and to sports--are made as often as possible; Hemingway suggests that these "men without women" in the actual world are better off than those with women. The tragedy of the bitches is that they will not surrender to male power; Western women's social superiority is so established that they will destroy men who try to assert themselves or to discover a code of courage and integrity.

Carlos Baker approaches possible reasons for Hemingway's portrayal of women as dark in a discussion on the Hemingway femme fatale.<sup>4</sup> Baker writes that Hemingway's women are treated subjectively because (1) Hemingway was

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<sup>4</sup>Unfortunately Baker, too, fails to realize that his arguments could apply to the European heroine who is also dark and powerful, and therefore interesting.

not interested in the "prosaisms of the female world," (2) Hemingway's characters are not in average situations but are in a "special kind of accelerated world," and (3) the fatal woman is a more interesting character than the normal, average woman,<sup>5</sup> simply because the fatal woman demonstrates the universal "truth" that all women are powerful. Baker's third point, expanded to read that the mythological dark lady is more interesting--because she embodies a universal truth--than the "average" woman, is perhaps Hemingway's reason for portraying all women as mysterious and powerful. By using the archetype of the dark lady, Hemingway adds a dimension of truth to his fictional women.

Hemingway uses literary tradition in his portrayal of women; his dark woman is a descendent of the femme fatale archetype, the American dark woman tradition in literature, and the prototype of the Fair Bitch. Although subjectively drawn, Hemingway's women are all "true" people because they all possess the mythical mystery and power attributed to women throughout time.

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<sup>5</sup>The Writer as Artist (Princeton, 1963), p. 111.

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