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Papa Hemingway in Cuba

By Denne Bart Petitclerc

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In the way of things,
fathers are by tradition in compassion
supposed to leave their sons
at least a little legacy
of wisdom to help them get through life.
But I don't remember my father
ever saying anything memorable.
Except those seven words
he said that Christmas season,
when I was four years old.
Wait here, son.
I'll be right back.
I grew up an orphan,
like many other children
abandoned during the Depression.
And as a young boy, I ran off
to pursue my dream of becoming a writer.
It was that dream that gave me hope
during those dark years.
That, and a bigger-than-life writer
and adventurer...
By the name of Ernest Hemingway.
Many years later, I was working
as a reporter at The Miami Globe.
I had written Hemingway a letter,
but I couldn't get it right.
It had to be perfect.
Heartfelt and genuine.
What do you say to the man
that changed your life...
And never even knew you?
I needed to tell him
how much he had meant to me.
Copy!
Scotch, rocks.
How's it going, Jimmy?
Don't ever get married, Eddie.
Did you get into another fight with Maxine?
Yep, she was so pissed off
she ripped all the wires out
from under the dash of my new Chevy.
Wow!
The things we put up with

just for that micro-second of ecstasy.
A man should never marry.
Yeah, don't worry,
it's my goal in life not to.
- I got to go, Eddie.
- All right.
I was due home hours ago.
Adis!
Deb, what are you doing?
This is a beautiful letter.
Well, look at you, the Nosey Nancy.
Do you always read other people's mail?
No, I saw the address on the envelope.
"Ernest M. Hemingway.
"Finca Vigia, San Francisco de Paula, Cuba."
Okay, I know what it says.
"You gave me hope
when I thought there was none left.
"In my darkest moments, you were my friend."
Deb, that's a personal letter.
If I got this letter,
I'd fall in love with you instantly.
Well, it wasn't addressed to you.
You're just afraid to send it, aren't you?
Okay, I'm...
I'm not afraid to send the letter.
That's too bad.
It's none of your business,
I mean, it's a personal letter.
You're a Nosey Nancy, too.
City desk, Myers.
This is Ernest Hemingway.
Oh, really? This is Ernest Hemingway?
I got your letter.
Hello?
Hello?
- Uh... Yes, sir.
- And it's a good letter.
Well, thank you.
I've read it about 10 times.
Mr. Hemingway,
your work has meant so much to me...
I, uh...
My whole career is...

I don't think you're old enough
to have a whole career yet, kid.
I've been reading your stuff in The Globe,
you have a tendency to underwrite.
- Which is good.
- Well, thank you.
- You covered the Korean War?
- Uh...
Are you really talking to Ernest Hemingway?
I... Yeah, from 1951 to '52, yeah.
Yeah, that's what I did.
An honorable profession if you do it right.
Yes, sir. Yes, sir.
"Sir" not necessary.
You can call me Papa, everybody does.
- Okay.
- Like you said in the letter...
I'm your friend.
It's a good letter, kid.
You like to sh?
I don't know the first thing about fishing.
I've never been fishing.
I don't even know what to wear.
- What do you wear on a boat?
- A hat.
Okay, I don't want to wear the hat.
Why? It's a great hat.
- I don't want to wear a hat.
- It's a great hat.
It is a great hat.
Did you get this hat for me?
Yes, I got you the hat.
It's going to block the sun.
Thank you for sending the letter.
You're welcome.
Hola.
Good morning.
Whoo!
- Ed Myers.
- Gregorio.
Mucho gusto.
Okay.
Flight okay?
They fed me rum daiquiris on the plane,

I'm half bombed.
Not a bad way to start the day, huh?
Come on.
Let's go find you a fish.
Now, watch the tip of your rod.
When it goes up,
then you can get some line back.
Easy.
That's it.
Feels like a fucking whale.
Nah, it's a tuna, a little one.
Ah! Now. Now, he's turned around.
Now you can get some line back.
You've got to ease the rod back.
If you jerk the rod like that,
something's got to give.
Usually, it's his face.
Ah, cheer up, kid.
No virgin does it right the first time.
It's a good day, you'll get another chance.
And up! Here we go! Reel it in!
Here we go. Easy.
And up! Reel!
Oh, she's a beauty! Look at her!
Beautiful!
Keep working.
Now you're fishing, kid. Now you're fishing!
Okay, okay. Now reverse the engine.
- Turn the wheel a little.
- You know, I think you better do this.
Look, kid.
The only value we have as human beings
are the risks we're willing to take.
Now, fuck it. Dock her.
That's it now. Easy. Ease in.
All right. Now put her in reverse.
That's it.
- Nice job.
- Thank you.
You could turn off the engine anytime.
Oh, right.
Ah, what the hell, kid.
You know all this, I talk too much.
- Boring.

- I wouldn't say you're boring.

I'm just so fucking shy.

You're among friends here.

It's the power of less.

Pick a number

between one and ten.

Six.

Complete short story.

Six words.

"For sale, baby shoes, never worn."

Seor Hemingway?

- Ah...

- Please.

- You're quite a pretty young lady.

- Thank you.

- Excuse me?

- Okay.

Can I get one as well?

Yes.

I couldn't find your sugar.

I read an AP article that said he's
the biggest tourist attraction in Cuba.

It said thousands of tourists
come from all over the world
just to get a glimpse of him.

Yeah, I've never seen anything like it.

He draws a crowd wherever he goes.

Thank you.

The only place he gets
any real privacy is at sea.

Must be awful to be that famous.

What's his wife like?

Oh, I haven't met her yet,

I'm supposed to meet her this weekend.

Oh, this weekend? I got the weekend off.

I was hoping maybe we could go to the Keys.

Well, they've invited me to the Finca.

It's their house.

I'm gonna go to their house.

Oh, wow! That's great.

- Yeah.

- We'll go another time.

God.

Gracias.

Papa working.
Miss Mary swimming.
Oh!
Oh, hello.
You must be the kid.
Uh, yeah. I guess I am.
Edmund, isn't it?
Eddie.
Hello. I'm Mary Hemingway.
Yeah, I know.
Hi.
Ah, Papa showed me your stories.
You write very well.
We're both impressed.
Thank you.
I didn't embarrass you, did I?
No, no, no. No, no.
How God made me.
My perfect pocket Rubens.
Why, thank you, kind sir.
We do have a generally
good alliance, don't we?
Based upon your great beauty
and the wondrous blondness of your hair.
Deeply rooted in his system of values,
Papa has a secret mysticism
about blonde hair.
You'd be ecstatic in a world of
female dandelions, wouldn't you, love?
Sure.
Come and have a drink.
I confess it is artificial.
It used to be a color people call titian.
But I liked to call it a nice, peanut brown.
Oh, Papa. I do believe
we've embarrassed the kid.
He'll get used to it.
I was just an ignorant bum who read a lot
at libraries to stay out of the rain.
You know, mostly
day labor jobs and flophouses.
And then, after years of hustling,
I finally managed
to weasel my way into

a job on the sports desk
of a local paper in northern California,
which was a dream,
it's just, the only problem was,
I didn't know how to write.
I mean, I could read okay, but to actually
type out sentences and spelling
and punctuation...
I didn't know anything.
In the newspaper business,
this could be a problem.
Yeah, the city editor
found it particularly amusing
when I spelled the word "maybe," M-A-B-E.
Ooh.
He called me a liar and then he fired me.
So, what did you do?
Well, I knew that I wanted to be a writer.
And the only thing I could do
was go and beg for my job back.
So, after about three days of begging,
he finally said, "Okay, fine.
You have two weeks, no pay.
"Maybe you can learn to be a writer."
Hmm.
So I worked at the paper during the day
and then at night I stayed,
typing over your short stories.
I copied them word for word.
It taught me how to type,
it taught me the English language,
it taught me spelling and grammar
and how to write dialogue.
It taught me how to see.
Smart.
It changed my life.
And did you get your job back?
Yeah.
A year later, I was on my way to Korea
as a war correspondent.
Didn't I tell you what kind of kid he'd be?
Did you ever find your parents?
Yeah. I met my mother for about...
For about 10 minutes once.

Yeah.

- No good, huh?

- Yeah. She just had other agendas.

Yeah. I had a mother like that myself.

You know, my father killed himself.

He couldn't take it anymore.

We'll be your family, huh, kid?

I'm not sure if the kid knows
what he's getting himself into.

Hemingway really said that to you?

Isn't that what you've always wanted,
to be a part of a family?

Yeah, I guess so.

You ever think about

having a family of your own one day?

Come on, let's go swimming.

I didn't bring a swimsuit.

It's how God made me.

Copy.

Such great news, I'm so happy for you both.

- Thanks.

- Thank you.

Eddie, what happened to that story,
you know, about

the kid hobo riding the rails?

Oh, yeah, well, I sold it actually. Yeah.

- First sale?

- Yeah.

Wow.

Who to?

Well, it wasn't exactly

The New Yorker, you know.

All right. So, who?

I'm embarrassed to say, I don't want to say.

Oh, come on, kid, you're among friends here.

No, that's exactly... That's why

I don't want to say anything.

Uh... Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine.

Oh! Well, congratulations,

how much did they pay?

Uh...

- It wasn't that much.

- How much was it?

Come on, how much "wasn't that much"?

\$42.

How much?

Uh, it was \$42.

How much do you get

for a short story now, Papa,

\$100 a word?

42 bucks, that's swell, kid.

Christ, I sold Big Two-Hearted River for 15.

Ernie, that's an American classic,

Jesus Christ, you sold it for 15 bucks?

At the time, it was all the money there was.

Makes you 27 bucks better than me.

Hey, kid.

Congratulations.

- Oh, thank you, Evan.

- Cheers.

- Cheers.

- Cheers.

I guess, right?

Mike Shayne. Cheers to Mike Shayne.

Hey, a friend just called.

Do you want a good story?

- Yeah.

- All right.

Juan's bringing the car around. Come on.

What's going on?

I think they got inside.

Think they got Batista?

I don't think so. Come on, kid.

Let's get closer.

Go to the truck, we'll make it!

- You all right?

- Yeah.

- All right, let's go.

- No, no, no. Wait, wait, wait.

Come on, let's go!

Get down!

Goddamn war.

I hate it.

Fucking lousy way to settle politics.

The faces of the dead are always the same.

Just fucking kids.

"No remedy."

Toughest phrase I know in Spanish.

My entire life, I'd idolized a legend,
an intangible hero.

And now he had become my mentor.

The father I never had.

And he had shown me Cuba
was going to be the next big story.

Hmm...

Yeah, I was there.

Hey, give me some background
on this Castro fellow.

All right. All right, bye.

This is really important
to Mr. Hoover, Eddie.

We know you took the next three days off.

We know Hemingway's invited you
to go fishing with him down in Havana.

We want to know what he thinks about
Castro and Batista.

Look, all we ask is
you find out where he stands.

Is he a rebel sympathizer?

How does he feel about the Bureau?

What's he say about Mr. Hoover?

You know, John,
if I didn't know you for so long,
I'd tell you to go fuck yourself.

Not a good idea.

Nice work.

Debra Hunt, this is John Fletcher.

He's with the FBI.

Ah. Well, hello.

See you, pal.

Nice to meet you, too.

FBI jerk.

He here on business or social?

No, he's recruiting me
because of my big muscles.

Your big muscles, huh?

I guess the FBI is bird-dogging Hemingway.

- Why?

- I don't know. I told him to go fuck himself.

Good job.

Wait, were you just
about to kiss me, just then?

Mmm-mmm.

You make me blush.

Is your place as hot as mine is?

No, don't. Don't answer.

- Sorry.

- Are you kidding me?

- Hello.

- Eddie, hey, love.

Sorry, did I wake you?

No, uh... No, Mary, no...

- No, you didn't wake me.

- Papa's worried you're not going to make it.

But you are, lamb, aren't you?

Yeah, is everything okay?

Evan's here.

You remember Evan Shipman, the poet?

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

It's just the two of us here,

we're dancing with Mr. Black-Ass.

I'm afraid he's very depressed, Eddie.

I don't mean to burden you

with our personal problems,

but, well, you really seem

to lift his spirits.

We're going fishing,

you're gonna come fishing with us, yeah?

Oh...

Um, I have to go, don't mention

this call to Papa, all right?

Uh, Juan, I'm staying at the Ambos Mundos.

I think you just missed the turnoff.

Miss Mary wants you to come to the house.

Is everything okay?

All right.

I just need you. Why did you have to die,

God damn it!

I need you!

Son of a bitch!

Why did you leave me?

- Hi, Evan.

- Hello, kid.

I look that bad, huh?

Uh...

Do you need help with that?

Yeah, it's not an easy task.

No, no, no. It's okay.

- Are you sure?

- Yeah, yeah.

- No, no, sit down...

- It stinks, it smells.

- No, it doesn't bother me, sit down.

- That's very kind of you, kid.

I've been using penicillin powder
for the infection,

but I want to try the iodine.

It's going to sting.

Well, it's only pain.

- How did this happen?

- Old war wounds.

You shoot at people,
they tend to shoot back.

The damn things heal and then
break open again every once in a while.

It's just an awful nuisance.

What do the doctors say?

Nothing very amusing, I'm afraid.

What do I do now?

Bandages, please.

Ah...

Here.

All right.

All right. Thank you.

Okay.

I need the clean shirt.

Okay.

Yeah. You want a beer?

Yes, please.

You know, I...

I came in and I overheard
Ernest talking to himself.

It's been going on for weeks.

Listen, kid.

Hem may be crazy.

But no way do we want him cured.

He's a great writer.

True genius.

That's rare in this world, huh?

Maybe all our geniuses are crazy.

Maybe it comes with the territory.
I've known him for over 30 years.
Since we were kids in Paris,
back in the '20s.
Hem can be the meanest son of a bitch
you've ever seen.
I've seen him at his best and his worst.
But he's the only true friend I've ever had.
Kind, loyal, gentle.
You can't judge him like an ordinary man
because he's not ordinary
in any sense of the word.
A hundred years from now,
people will read his work
and know his name.
Kid, you should know
what's going on around here.
This character, is he a good guy?
Yeah, you know, he's a political reporter,
Pulitzer winner.
Pulitzer doesn't make you a good character.
I'm living proof of that.
So, she left him to be with you, huh?
Yeah.
Do you love her?
Yeah.
What do you want?
I don't know.
I'm trying to write about Hadley.
My first wife.
The only true love I ever felt was from her.
I'm trying to get one, true sentence
to start it, you know.
The fun we had,
loving each other in a warm bed
in Austria that winter.
And then I had to go back to New York
to deal with publishers.
And when I came back the next spring,
I stopped off in Paris
to fuck the woman
that would later be my second wife,
my rich wife.
And then on to Austria.

Seeing Hadley at the station with our son...
How beautiful she looked.
Unforgivable.
When you make a decision, kid,
make it carefully.
Know what you truly want.
Consider every possible consequence,
or you'll wind up at 59
wondering what the hell happened.
Did the cab come?
Not yet.
What are you reading?
Reading about your new friend Hemingway.
I can see that.
Eddie, what's California like?
California? You know,
it's like here, but, without the humidity.
I want you to run away
to California with me.
Don't go to Havana, Eddie.
Deb, I got...
They're waiting for me, it's his birthday.
The flight's about to leave, I'm late.
What are you afraid of?
Will you listen to something?
It's Hemingway.
"The celebrated develop a technique to
deal with the persons they come across.
"They show the world a mask,
but take care to conceal their real selves.
"They play the part
that is expected from them..."
- I gotta go.
- "...but with practice play it very well."
- Let's talk about this later.
- "But you are stupid
"if you think that this public performance
of theirs corresponds with the man within."
I'll be back Tuesday.
Deb certainly deserved someone
who could commit to her.
Even though I loved her,
how could I give her something
I had never known?

I guess it started about a month ago.
Papa started to complain
that he's living with his "deads,"
as he calls them.
Every morning he'd go to work
and there they are,
all his dear old dead friends,
talking to him, as if they were alive.
I guess they're real enough in his mind,
but that's plenty close to madness.
Oh...
This water's glorious.
Oh...
I'm so glad you're here, lamb.
Oh, yes, yes, yes.
Dunhills.
Every day he's just become more depressed.
You know, more moody.
When I
saw him at his desk this morning
with that pistol...
I've never been that terrified in my life.
I didn't know what to do.
He just sat there staring at the gun.
So, I got angry and I said,
that if he was going to do
such a stupid, idiotic thing
to at least go outside where
I wouldn't have to clean up the mess.
I've been waiting all morning
to hear a shot.
Evan said that he has
threatened suicide before.
Yeah, but this is different.
It's very different.
The other times, he's always been able to
get himself out of
the dark places he goes to.
But, this time...
He doesn't even want to
celebrate his birthday.
But I do. I want to have a party.
You know. Lots of people and good talk,
good booze, good food.

Lamb, can you help me?

Whatever you need.

I have a plan.

Eddie, you will play General Buck Lanham,
a commander of the 22nd Infantry Regiment
in France during World War II.

And Evan, you will play Papa's
African white hunter hero.

Philip Percival.

We'll be reinforced at lunch
by Papa's old Cuban friends.

There's Sinsky. He's a Basque seaman
who now captains cargo ships
between New Orleans and Havana.

The Herrera brothers. Roberto and Luis.

Luis was a surgeon for the loyalists
during the Spanish Civil War.

Paxtchi Ibarlucia and Fernando Mesa,
both Spanish Civil War veterans
exiled in Cuba.

Oh, and one other survivor
of that crew, I know only as Lucas.

He's Cuban,

he's a very mysterious character.

Only Papa seems to know him.

Colonel Buck Lanham

and the 22nd Infantry Division wishing you
a happy birthday, Ernie.

Jolly good, Bob.

Down, good lion. And happy birthday
from you know who, huh?

You've all gone crazy.

Oh!

So, we're sitting on the steps of
San Cristbal Cathedral in Havana,
Sinsky and I get drunk.

So I said, "Papa, when was
the last time you went to confession?"

Oh, 15, 16 years at least. Maybe more.

"Let's go!" Papa says.

The priest began sweating immediately.

It took eight hours.

Eight hours? Oh, poo.

It couldn't have taken that long.

Oh, you don't understand.
No, eight hours. No one can have
that much sin, you made it up.
The priest fainted.
Yeah, I tried to revive him
with some Napoleon brandy,
but he just passed out
before he could give his absolution.
Miss Mary, you were
a correspondent in the war?
Oh, yes. For Time Magazine.
And before that the Chicago Daily News.
Yeah, I was in Paris when the Germans
took the city.
And in London during the Blitz.
London's where I met Papa.
So, after the Normandy Invasion,
you know, I decided to stay with the troops
all throughout France.
I had a good life on my own.
Okay, Papa.
So this was just after the war started?
Oh, yes, Eddie.
U-boats were everywhere out there.
Nothing would stop them.
From my house in Havana, at night,
you'd see tankers burning, out at sea.
Ooh! I wanted to get me a U-boat.
Oh, so did I. We all did.
Yeah, but you never even got close
to a U-boat.
What the hell do you know about it?
We were the ones out there.
We had Pillarrigged
like a real U-boat. Right, Papa?
Hell, yes!
Oh, we had bazookas, .50 caliber
machine guns,
and M1 rifles, Thompson's, grenades,
short-fuse bombs!
But you never saw... You never saw one?
We came this close, didn't we? Remember?
Oh, yes!
But we gave that bastard a chase.

He took off like a pig with a pole
up his posterior!
Yep, like a bunch of schoolkids
playing at war.
Fucking IRS just hit me with income tax.
40,000!
Everything I had in savings
after all these years.
They knew exactly what I had in my accounts.
Government's out to get me.
For God's sakes, stop being so paranoid.
Fucking FBI will be after me next.
Don't be so ridiculous.
How does government taking \$40,000
translate to "ridiculous"?
You're exaggerating, but you always
exaggerate when you're drunk.
I'm not drunk.
At least not yet.
Fact is, you're drunk.
If you don't love me, mama
I don't care at all
'Cause I can get more womens
than a passenger train can haul
One more for the road, gentlemen.
We'll drink to Operation Friendless.
We were the best.
We did it for free.
I've never seen them like this.
Yeah, well.
Now we have the evening to look forward to.
At least he's laughing.
Well, I'm certainly not.
How much money do you need?
Oh, no, no, no, Papa. You don't have to.
I'm not asking.
Excuse me, Ernest.
Only way I can help is with cash.
Now tell me, how much?
Maybe \$4,000, but you got taxes,
you're hit with taxes. Don't. I won't...
- Ernest, excuse me.
- I have credit.
Your daughter's life.

Money is not important.
You go to New York. I'll work it out.
Ernest?
Listen to me!
I'm your wife, look at me!
I deserve a certain amount of courtesy!
You seem to have decided that I alone
am inaudible to you.
Why do you always wait
till I'm having a good time to ruin it?
Why are you always such a bastard?
I'm not trying to be a bastard.
Well, if you're not trying, you're certainly
making a very good imitation of one.
I'm trying to enjoy!
You are rude and you are inconsiderate!
You insult me and my dignity
as a human being, God damn it!
You get back what you just put out.
What I put out?
I went to a great deal of effort
to make this a pleasant lunch for you!
Yeah, and ruined it by being a bitch!
I can't believe how much
you're like my mother.
Oh, I'm not like your mother!
You want someone to kiss your ass,
then you go back
to your sweet, lovely Hadley!
Why don't you just call her up?
I'm sure she'll leave her husband
and come back to you!
Call her up, like you do
all your other whores!
You go to hell!
I don't need to, I'm already here!
So why in God's name did you marry me?
Another mistake I made.
Maria.
You apologize to me, or so help me God!
I'll take "so help me God."
How do you like it now, gentlemen?
You have the feeling they're not
telling funny stories out there?

Yeah. Whatever it is,
it seems pretty serious.
I feel like we missed something.
If we did, I don't wanna know about it.
Had enough for one day.
- Leaving, Luis?
- No, Evan.
I'm going to get my bag.
I want to take Ernesto's blood pressure.
It's probably normal.
A lot of killing now.
At night in Havana, the streets are deserted.
Few tourists still come
from the States, but very few.
Everyone is scared.
We're thinking of leaving to Miami.
Well, who knows?
We may have to pull out of here, too.
So...
How is it, el doctor?
Ernesto, you're going to live to be 100.
At least 100.
Yes, but will I still be able
to make love every day?
Drink what I want, have good conversation
with my friends and not bore anybody?
It would probably do for you
not to drink so much.
Sure. Birthdays excepted.
Evan, why don't you have Luis look at you?
Maybe he can help.
No, thank you, I'm fine.
Yeah, Evan, come on.
Not fine.
It's not necessary. Thank you.
Let me take a look, Evan.
Only take a minute. Unbutton your shirt.
Go on, Evan, do it.
You know what this is?
Yes.
Gangrene.
I can change your bandages for you,
if you wish.
That's very kind of you, Doc, but...

I enlisted a medic,
and he does a marvelous job.
This should be changed soon.
Yes, we'll take care of it.
- For pain.
- Thank you, it's not necessary.
It will be very soon.
We go, Papa.
- Adis.
- Adis.
Adis.
Adis.
Well, that cat's out of the bag.
How long have you known?
Three months.
How long do they give you?
Not long.
Why I came to see you.
Wasn't sure I'd get another chance.
But how it is, no regrets.
It's been a decent life.
I've been such a prick!
Oh...
You know...
I...
I never gave a damn about our Lord.
But we'll pray, truly.
I'd like that, Hem.
- It's all right.
- Yeah.
To friends.
To friendship.
Who is it?
It's Eddie.
Uh, come in.
Will you shut the door behind you?
I, uh, brought you some water.
Oh, love.
You have to forgive my temper.
You okay?
I used to be able to control it better, I...
Used to be a lot tougher.
When I was a little girl,
I loved my father so much.

I thought that he was the greatest man
on the face of the earth.
I watched my mother just
nagging him unrelentingly,
bitching from the corner.
She broke him. She destroyed his spirit.
I promised myself that
I'd never be like that.
I don't want to be a bitch.
But I can't seem to stop myself.
It's okay.
- Hello.
- Eddie.
Hi.
You said you'd call me.
I've been waiting all day.
I know. I know. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.
It's been a long day.
Eddie.
I'm in love with you.
And I believe you feel the same way,
but I need you to tell me.
Eddie?
I felt like I was falling
into a world of madness.
And somehow, it was up to me to stop it.
Eddie told me about Evan.
I'm sorry.
People dying
that never died before.
Do you wanna come in and talk?
Sure.
Seor.
You have a telephone call.
He say it is very important.
Hello?
Mr. Trafficante wants to see you.
We're sending a car to pick you up.
Rene, tell them not to wait for dinner.
I have to go to Havana.
Good evening, Mr. Myers. I'm Sal.
Mr. Trafficante is waiting for you
at the Ambos Mundos Hotel.
Hey, why would the head of the mafia

wanna see me?
Get in.
Ooh.
Mr. Trafficante?
Lupe.
Why are we here?
I make it a rule to pay my debts.
That's why we're here tonight,
why I'm taking my time to see you.
You understand?
You don't owe me anything, Mr. Trafficante.
Yeah, I do.
That article you wrote
about the FBI framing Sal Lopez?
Well, he's a friend of mine.
You saved his ass.
I appreciate that.
I hear you're a friend
of Mr. Ernest Hemingway's.
Good guy?
Absolutely, yeah.
Tough?
Uh...
Yeah, I think so.
Not like most people think though, you know.
He's actually very shy and gentle...
I understand you had a visit from an
FBI agent named John Fletcher in Miami.
Not much happens on my turf
I don't hear about, kid.
He wanted you to inform on your friend,
Mr. Hemingway.
And you told this FBI guy
to go fuck himself.
I'm not sure what you're getting at,
Mr. Trafficante.
Somebody very high up,
a person who is very powerful
in the United States government
has a hard-on for your friend, Hemingway.
They want him publicly discredited.
They want him out of Cuba.
Oh.
Why?

You don't need to know why.
Let's just say that this individual
doesn't like what your friend knows.
Doesn't like what he does or how he thinks,
Or how important a celebrity he is.
He's out to burn Hemingway's ass.
It's personal.
The IRS just sandbagged your friend,
didn't they?
40 grand.
Yeah.
I'm telling you it isn't over.
They're talking at the bar.
And we're sure it's Trafficante?
Yes, I am.
Looks like we're gonna get a thundershower.
Good.
Cool things down.
This heat is brutal.
- We're square?
- Yes, sir. Thank you.
You did a good thing, kid.
Sally Lopez is a straight-arrow guy.
Good, honest, union man. Big family.
If it wasn't for you,
the fuckin' FBI would have let him
hang in the wind.
They're all pricks.
Uh, one more thing.
Tell Mr. Hemingway I admire his books.
Ah, you darling boy.
Wow, it's really...
It's really raining out there.
Ah, we were worried about you, lamb.
Oh...
Yeah, I just... I just met with...
With the mafia.
Santo Trafficante.
Yeah.
Yeah, you're pretty tight with
this mafia character, aren't you, huh?
Who else are you tight with?
Papa, let him explain.
I don't know what you mean.

You know damn well what I mean!
You're fucking double-crossing me.
Eddie, get out of here.
Papa? Eddie, just get out!
Get out of here!
Papa, stop it before you say or
do something that you will regret.
Last time you were here, you met
with your FBI contact
- at the Ambos Mundos, didn't you?
- Stop it.
No, no, no. I know that guy.
He's a friend of mine.
Fucking Judas!
Eddie!
Oh, my God!
You stupid, gullible fat man.
Because you think it's my job.
Is that what you're doing?
You think we're all gonna double-cross you!
Get off me!
Trafficante says...
Trafficante says that...
That they want you out of Cuba.
He says that the FBI and Batista's secret
police are working together to, uh...
To set you up.
They think you're smuggling weapons
for the rebels.
Someone high up
in the US government is out to get you.
He said that it was a personal
vendetta.
Physical pain is nothing compared
to the pain of a lost bond.
For the second time in my life,
I felt completely alone.
You really think
that boy would betray you?
Did I hurt you bad?
No, you didn't hurt me. I'm fine.
How's it feel?
Feels like you punched me in the face.
Well, maybe we should go

get some ice on it, huh?
No, I'd rather just go.
Don't go.
I was wrong, kid.
Full apologies.
I was potted, bad in the head.
Being a prick.
I'm sorry.
Truly.
How's it feel now, kid?
It's just numb.
It feels like a mule kicked me in the face.
No mule, just a dumb ass.
Is it broken?
No, just swollen. Here.
Put that on. It'll help.
So why is the government out to get you?
This was back during the war.
A young FBI character I met.
I liked him.
Trusted him.
We all did.
Even went on patrols with us.
We'd go to the Floridita
afterwards, have a drink.
One night, it was just me and him.
Very drunk.
And he told me a story that made me feel
hollow sick in my gut.
A party.
Basement of J. Edgar's house in Virginia.
Mr. J. Edgar and his pal, Mr. Tolson,
dressed in women's clothes.
Wow.
Got Mr. FBI kid very drunk.
J. Edgar made him take off his pants...
And played with him,
while bosom buddy Tolson
shot moving picture photos.
You could tell he was giving it straight.
He cried.
He was very scared.
And do you think that Hoover knows
that he told you this?

My fault.

You remember the yacht club celebration
after we won the Nobel?

Oh, dear God, Papa.

Not that yacht club party.

Lot of wet talk.

Me, worst of all.

Just after the African plane crashes,
you know, my cracked skull
was not working very well.

With the booze, not working at all.

Yeah, dumb.

By this time, Mr. FBI was dead.

Heart attack.

So I figured the obligation of silence
was over, you know?

And then this creep starts talking about
what a great man J. Edgar is.

And I told him what a great man

J. Edgar wasn't.

Got pissed.

Called me a liar.

Ran out of there fast.

So, that's it?

Yeah.

So, what now?

I mean, I vote that we get out of here
as soon as possible.

- And go where?

- Why, anywhere.

Just don't fancy spending any time
in La Cabaa Prison, thank you very much.

Well, you don't get run out of your house,
you defend it.

Papa, we have nothing to defend it with.

These people are very powerful!

They're ruthless.

I'm gonna cancel the fishing trip.

No.

I want to go fishing on my birthday.

I told Gregorio I'd meet him

at Cojimar at 7:

All right. Then you two go,

and Evan and I will stay here
and guard the homestead.
No. We need you.
Who needs me?
Me.
You need me?
We like this.
Hola.
Papa.
They ambush Lucas.
They shot him to pieces.
Ambushed?
He had more than 30 bullets in his body.
You have to move your account, Papa.
They ambushed Lucas last night.
Shot him to pieces.
What?
I haven't told Miss Mary yet.
Don't want to worry her.
It's a fucking black dog day, kid.
And I am doing my best to get through it
without killing anybody.
Especially me.
Papa! Papa!
Small school of mullet.
Under two-prong attack.
The bonito coming up from below,
the birds hitting them from above.
Gregorio, why isn't the bait in the water?
We're not going fishing today, are we?
Oh, my God.
Gregorio!
Papa!
Papa!
Coastguard cutter coming right at us.
What do we do?
Put her ahead. Trolling speed.
Our bow right on theirs,
so they can't see the stern.
To them it'll look like we're fishing.
Ah, shit.
We have to work faster. Rpido.
He's fishing.
Good. It means

he hasn't dumped the weapons yet.
Mr. Hoover will be pleased.
Soon as we have them
in custody, radio Havana.
I want the press informed.
We'll bring him
into the yacht club docks in handcuffs.
That'll make a good picture
for the front page of The New York Times.
What if we fail to find weapons?
You got weapons aboard this ship, don't you?
Pilar!
Cut your engines immediately
and prepare to be boarded.
Since you've just put my future in jeopardy,
would you mind telling me
how these armaments got aboard?
Sinsky.
He's been running them for Lucas
in his Havana operation.
I got these for the kids in the village.
Our village?
Small gift for the country and people I love.
Why didn't you tell me?
Didn't want you to worry.
Oh, isn't this swell?
Small visit, courtesy the Feds.
Mr. Hemingway.
I'm a great admirer of your work.
I've read all of your books.
I'm very flattered.
I apologize for this intrusion,
but I have orders
to search this boat for illegal weapons.
Your presence aboard this ship
is highly annoying.
We are out fishing
for Mr. Hemingway's birthday.
A peaceful enough endeavor,
wouldn't you say?
I have my orders, seora.
Well, then, execute them
and be quick about it.
It's getting late and Mr. Hemingway

wishes to capture marlin.
Just as soon you didn't irritate him.
Given the present circumstance,
best to keep our mouths shut.
Oh, shit.
There are no weapons
aboard the Hemingway boat.
You absolutely sure of that?
Absolutely sure.
Fletch, we've got a problem.
No sweat.
Put together an evidence package.
A nice selection.
Tommy guns, BAIs, ammo, grenades,
not too much.
Just enough to show intent.
That's not gonna solve our problem.
Take a look.
What are you talking about?
Son of a bitch.
Gregorio, take her in.
No, no, no.
Here he is.
Oh, Lordy.
Y'all look just like the old man of the sea.
Doesn't he, Charlie?
Just like the old man of the sea!
Happy birthday, Papa!
It'll be okay if we can get a drink.
Number two.
You keeping track?
Sure.
Record's 16.
I might just break it.
Happy birthday.
Don't ever let yourself get famous, kid.
You let your work get famous, that's okay.
This celebrity shit is deadly.
Nobel thing's even worse.
You work all your life,
and you get that prize,
as a writer, you're finished.
I mean, all my life has been about writing
as well as I could.

Sometimes, better than I could.
It's all I cared about.
It's not coming anymore.
What do you do about that?
- Quite the party.
- Mmm.
Everyone who's anyone in Havana is here.
Must have cost a fortune
to close this place down.
Well, it's only money, lamb.
There is an old Cuban saying.
"Some people are very poor,
they only have money."
Always loved Paris.
Liked sex, too.
Henry Miller made both seem dirty.
I met Henry Miller when I was working
at the Chicago Daily News.
Oh, he was this intensely charismatic...
What did you think of Thomas Wolfe?
Oh...
Confused size
with writing.
He was a large man, wasn't he?
Well, how do you like it now, gentlemen?
Excuse me.
Well, that was another hugely
successful evening, wasn't it?
Though I have to say if I hear
those hackneyed phrases one more time,
I think I'm gonna go insane.
What was it again, Papa?
"Ooh, how do you like it now, gentlemen?"
Or the classic.
"When the chips are down."
Oh, gosh! What has happened to your
vaunted wit, your incredible charm?
Oh, I must say, it didn't seem
to go down too well with...
What was his name's daughter?
The one you were all over?
I hate to say it, but you're leaning
towards being a big, bloody bore.
What? Excuse me!

Would you mind with the door, old man?

I want to thank you
for working so diligently
to cheer me up on my 59th birthday,
dried-up old bitch.

I heard that.

I am not the limp-dick,
impotent one in this marriage!

Mary.

What are you doing?

Don't walk away from me
when I'm talking to you!
You're not talking to me,
you're screaming at me!

What happened? This used to be paradise.
Surely it seems like they have everything.

This gorgeous place.

Plenty of money.

Good looks, good health, fame.

But there's something missing
for both of them.

Love and friendship.

A willingness and a desire
to put aside your own ego
to enrich the day-by-day experience
of your beloved.

That's what they're missing, kid.

It's like being under siege.

Most marriages are.

Mine sure was.

Evan once wrote a poem.

"Maybe the peace we all seek
is but a dream."

No!

- Papa!

- Hey, give it to me!

Eddie, take it!

- No, Papa. Come on. Stop.

- Give it!

No! No, you stop.

There's nothing for me in life anymore.

I can't write.

I can't fuck!

I can end this shitty life, my choice.

- Give me the gun.
- No, Eddie, don't.
Give me the gun, kid.
You don't have to do this.
You know I can take it from you.
Be a good boy.
Give it to me.
If I give it to you,
what're you gonna do with it?
What I have to.
You don't have to do this.
Listen to him, Papa. Listen to him.
We're all gonna die sometime, kid.
What does it matter?
Give me the gun!
No.
I don't want to hurt you.
You're gonna have to kill me.
What the fuck right do you have
to say no to me?
Who the fuck are you?
Hey, I love you.
I love you, Papa.
There's another one here, Hem.
I'm another guy who loves you.
We're not gonna let you do this, Hem.
Hem!
- Stop it! Stop it!
- Damn it!
Give me the gun!
Don't... Don't do it.
Lamb...
I want you to stop this now.
This has all gone too far.
No good now.
You're not being rational, love.
I'm completely rational.
My head is good.
Clear.
I know what I'm doing.
I want to die.
Before it all turns to real shit,
and it will, believe it.
No, I won't believe that.

We've had times of great
and good happiness, haven't we?
Sure.
Good old times.
We can still have fresh,
brand-new good times, right?
I'm just a worthless, impotent, old man.
You said it.
But I didn't mean it.
I'm sorry that I said that, I...
We both say things in anger
that we don't mean.
I'm your wife.
And I love you.
And I couldn't live without you.
You never said that before.
Haven't I?
I'm different from other people, I...
I can't. I couldn't.
Understood.
Me, too.
We're two pretty fucked-up people.
Let's never get married again.
Certainly not to each other.
You make a decision, kid, make it carefully.
Know what you truly want.
Consider every possible consequence,
or you'll wind up wondering
what the hell happened.
Go away.
I have to tell you something.
I don't want to hear it.
I don't want to talk to you.
You may think I'm an accessory in your life,
but I'm not.
I don't need you. I'm fine.
I don't need anything from you.
I don't want to hear from you.
I just want you to leave me alone.
I love you.
I love you.
Most of what I learned
about how to live life
I learned from Papa.

One thing he once told me
became that little legacy of compassion,
this wisdom I had so desperately wanted
from my father.
And I've lived by it.
He said, "The only value we have as human
beings is the risks we're willing to take."
Papa committed suicide with a shotgun
at his home in Ketchum, Idaho
18 months later.
July 2nd, 1961.
There was no suicide note
since Papa could no longer write.
After it all,
I guess what he really wanted
was to have true love.
He once wrote,
"A man alone ain't got no chance."