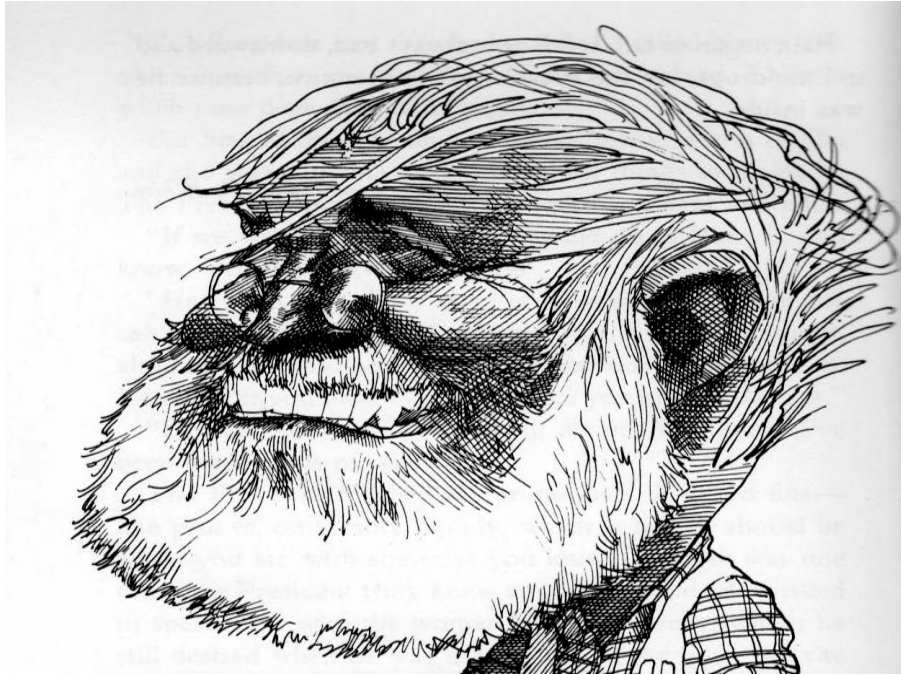


PARODIES OF HEMINGWAY



Ernest Hemingway

(1899-1961)

“Hemingway is undoubtedly the most parodied American writer since Walt Whitman.... A word about the contests, which, alas, after eleven years have run their course: the first Hemingway competition took place in 1978, six years after Harry’s Bar & American Grill, a replica of Harry’s Bar in Florence, Italy, opened in Century City, adjacent to Beverly Hills.... Hemingway never went to the Harry’s Bar in Florence but...his attachment to the original Harry’s Bar in Venice was known worldwide.... In the eleven years of the competition more than twenty-five thousand Hemingway parodies were received. Rarely has the saying ‘imitation is the sincerest form of flattery’ been as truly exemplified.” (George Plimpton, *The Best of Bad Hemingway*, 1989: xiii, xviii-xix) [Most parodies of Hemingway are parodies of the popular stereotype rather than of the real Hemingway as expressed in his writing]:

We Were in a Back-House in Juan-les-Pins

We were in a back-house in Juan-les-Pins. Bill had lost control of his sphincter muscles. There were wet *Matins* in the rack beside the door. There were wet *Eclairers de Nice* in the rack over his head. When the King of Bulgaria came in Bill was just firing a burst that struck the old limeshit twenty feet down with a *splat-tap*. All the rest came just like that. The King of Bulgaria began to whirl round and round.

“The great thing in these affairs--” he said.

Soon he was whirling faster and faster. Then he was dead.

F. Scott Fitzgerald

It Was Now Morning and He Was in the Bathroom Shaving

It was now morning and he was in the bathroom shaving, shaving for the first time that day but not the last, no, never the last; the hairs kept coming, tiny hairs and black and there was nothing for it, nothing for it at all but shaving, razor bright-edged clean on skin and cutting through the hairs and the soap and the

dead dried cells of epidermis in that clean well-lighted place. There were the hairs and he was shaving because a man shaves. Main thing a man did. Made him into a man. No bloody hairs.... He saw his hand trembling in the glass and he felt the white-hot, blinding flash of metal, and that was all he ever felt. He had cut himself about two inches up and a little to one side of the base of his chin. He was bleeding now...and he was afraid. She turned, lifting her thin American lip over those thin white perfect American teeth in that thin American sneer. "It's only a nick, Adams," she said.

Gordon Carlson

A Clean Well-Sighted Ace

What was it he feared? It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and man was a nothing and the American's score was a nothing which in tennis is love. When you have love, you have nothing, Nick thought. When you finished a match with nothing, you received no money. Except endorsements. There are always endorsements, Nick thought. The Swede served very hard. The ball was a white flash. It reminded Nick of the soft puffs from the Austrian guns in the woods on the ridge near Milan. The ball hit the line. The linesman held both hands together, palms down. It was a clean well-sighted ace. The left-handed American began to cry. "I am utterly unable to resign myself," he said and choked. He threw his racket into the stands.

"I was sure the ball was going out. How could it have been good?"

"The earth moved," Nick said.

Jay Jennings

Into the River and Up to Your Knees

That spring the Italians were very brave. They came across the river in red shorts waving passports and we shot them.... But in Paris I had a Visa card. Brat came in from Gertrude's garage sale.... Brat had nice buns. They stuck out. She loved the bulls. She stole English raincoats, liked champagne, loafers, and punchy novelists.... Then the barman said bad things. He knew he would die. He was good. As he poured, his hands never left his body. He was damn good. I knew he would die....

It was good to be in Paris without a Guggenheim. Life felt very clean. Fitzzy arrived in a suit.... "Cuddle?" said Brat. "Go take a bath," I said. That was Paris in spring. It felt very good thinking about food and writing... Life was semi-sacred if a man kept one hand in his pocket and smiled a lot. When the rains stopped I stayed good in the head and fondled my rabbit's foot. Despite the other thing we were very poor and very happy. I grew a mustache.

Philip Daughtry

In Paris Then You Could Walk Down the Rue de Casserole

In Paris then you could walk down the rue de Casserole to a clean well-lighted café that reminded me of Harry's Bar & American Grill where I had eaten the good *tortellone di magro*. On that morning I found Scott drinkily earnestly at the bar.

"You are drinking earnestly," I said.

"No," Scott said, "you drink earnestly. I drink absinthe"...

A tall girl came into the café. She had long legs and small feet.

"You are like a racehorse," I said. I was betting that year.

"Yes," she said. "I am a girl of unbridled passion. Also, I am one of a Lost Generation, and I have no illusions"....

We left the café and went to her room and we felt the earth move.

"You are a big two-hearted lover," she said.

But afterward I felt the sadness that I did not understand. In the afternoon I went fishing in the Seine. I fished truly and well, with a long pole and a curved hook, but all I caught that day was an unmentionable condition from the girl of unbridled passion.

Charles Lansdown

The Question Hung in the Air

“Why do you do it the way you do?”...

“Keep it short,’ the style book said.”

She lit a cigarette... “Well,” she said. “You certainly took that advice to heart”...

When she awakened, he explained about the running of the oysters. It was not a sport for young men. They are too impatient. They want to taunt the fry while they are still in their beds.

“I didn’t know oysters could move, much less run.”

He smiled his sad wise smile and stroked his beard. “Ah yes, they move. Before they set their beds where they will live. And die.”

Lee Ewing

She Is Truly One of Magnificent Spirit

She is truly one of magnificent spirit, thought Ricardo, as the American woman called Louise broke a bottle of Campari over his head. She had short blonde hair and was a bitch. It had not always been so. Once she had long red hair and was a bitch. She drank Gatestro from mason jars. It had been good then when they made love sweating and sweatingly on the pool table at Harry’s Bar & American Grill and the balls had gone everywhere.

“Did you make the table move?” the bartender asked.

“Yes,” Ricardo replied.

“Then you must move it back where it came from. There are others who want to make love”...

“Good-bye,” he said to the American woman Louise. “You have been my life. Truly, life is a bitch.”

Dave Eskes

The Market Also Rises

That fall we lived in a brownstone in Manhattan and our love was stronger even than the Great Bull market which was our life and our joy. Although I spent many hours at the Street, we drove our BMW in the countryside on the weekends, and saw many shows and ate at fine restaurants and lived a life we hoped would never end....

“May the Great Bull rise forever,” I said, “and may we always work close to the Bull and never lose our quickness and nerve.” But I knew it was a lie, for the world someday would break even the Great Bull, and if it could not break it then it would kill it, and perhaps it would kill us too but there would be no special hurry. The day of the meltdown dawned bright and fair, but as it passed and the Great Bull lay in its blood in the sand...it wasn’t any good and I went out and left the Street that evening and walked back to our apartment in the rain. When I returned, she knew not of the greatness of our loss. “For whom did the closing bell toll?” she asked.

Mark A. Sherouse

The Grunion Still Ran in Santa Monica

The grunion still ran in Santa Monica, but we did not go there anymore. Before the English came and the rich Americans who talked too loud, it was good. The grunion came up on the beach and loved and died and no one made jokes about it. The true grunion *aficionados* stood on the wet side of the high tide line and drank the local beer and watched the grunion make love. Then the rich tourists came to sit on the dry side and drink the imported wine from San Francisco and laugh at the wrong time....

There is a mountain between Santa Monica and the Avenue of the Stars. The old ones say that a grunion once climbed it, far above the high-tide line and died there, and when the smog lifts in the winter you can see it shining in the chaparral. No one knows why the grunion came so far from the ocean to a place where there is nothing to eat and no one to love. The old ones say it was going home to God. The young ones laugh and say it was going to Harry’s to meet a woman. I see nothing humorous in the death of a grunion.... The mountains of Santa Monica are impartial and kill all the ones that try to climb higher than Route 1. The others die on the beach.... The grunion at the top was not even defeated. It was going somewhere and it only ran out of time, the least thing we have of.

M. R. Montgomery

Arriba y Abajo

We were drinking at a bar in Irun watching the bartender and the bartender was leaning over his bar and saw us looking at him and he smiled.... *Borrachera* means the deep drinking. It is a ritual. It lasts many days. People come to drink and to see the new bartenders. There is music and noise and much drinking. It is a ritual and it lasts for many days...

Juan was working a *borracho*. *Borracho* means drunk. Juan worked his *borracho* smoothly and suavely, keeping him close, keeping him from counting his change, making him consent with his body to more and more of the drink. In the end the *borracho* would lie supine and his toes would curl and the ritual would be fulfilled. I loved the bartending deeply. "You have *corazon*," someone told me. *Corazon* means heart. If you have heart you love the bartending deeply.... If you are a *corazonado* people know you have the love for the great purity of bartending.

In the bartending there is the terrain of the bartender and the terrain of the *borracho*. Juan worked the terrain of the *borracho*. The terrain of the *borracho* is more difficult. Juan always leaned far over the bar and worked with absolute purity of line in unbroken glides that would not leave the *borracho* wasted or discomposed. I think Juan had the greatness.

Walter N. Trenerry

Death in the Rumble Seat

Most people don't like the pedestrian part, and it is best not to look at that if you can help it. But if you can't help seeing them, long-legged and their faces white, and then the shock and the car lifting up a little on one side, then it is best to think of it as something very unimportant but beautiful and necessary artistically. It is unimportant because the people who are pedestrians are not very important, and if they were not being *cogido* by automobiles, driving a car would be just like anything else.... If you drive a car, and don't like the pedestrian part, then you are one of two kinds of people. Either you haven't very much vitality and you ought to do something about it, or else you are yellow and there is nothing to be done about it at all.

If you don't know anything about driving cars you are apt to think a driver is good just because he goes fast. This may be very exciting at first, but afterwards there is a bad taste in the mouth and the feeling of dishonesty. Ann Bender, the American, drove as fast on the Merrick Road as anybody I have ever seen, but when cars came the other way she always worked out of their terrain and over in the ditch so that you never had the hard, clean feeling of danger, but only bumping up and down in the ditch, and sometimes hitting your head on the top of the car. Good drivers go fast too, but it is always down the middle of the road, so that cars coming the other way are dominated, and have to go in the ditch themselves. There are a great many ways of getting the effect of danger, such as staying in the middle of the road till the last minute and then swerving out of the pure line, but they are all tricks, and afterwards you know they were tricks, and there is nothing left but disgust.

In the golden age of car-driving, which was about 1910, the sense of impending disaster, which is a very lovely thing and almost nonexistent, was kept alive in a number of ways. For one thing, there was always real glass in the windshield so that if a driver hit anything, he was very definitely and beautifully *cogido*. The tires weren't much good either, and often they'd blow out before you'd gone ten miles. Really, the whole car was built that way. It was made not only so that it would precipitate accidents but so that when the accidents came it was honestly vulnerable, and it would fall apart, killing all the people with a passion that was very fine to watch. Then they began building the cars so that they would go much faster, but the glass and the tires were all made so that if anything happened it wasn't real danger, but only the false sense of it.... It is the same way when any art gets into its decadence.

Wolcott Gibbs

Only More So

It was a dark wet night. Gerty Stein would have called it a dark dark wet night. But I'm not Gerty. I'm Nick. I entered Harry's Bar. It was dark and wet. In my last story it was clean and well-lit. I never repeat myself. I ordered a banana daiquiri. "Make it a double; I'm depressed," said Nick.

"Catch any big fish lately, *amigo*?" It was Lardo. Lardo fought bulls. His skin was the color of meatloaf. His hands were as supple as a steelworker's.

"No," I replied.

"I see," said Lardo.

Lardo saw. I did not. I punched him in the mouth. It was a good punch. A big punch. A punch as big and good as the haunches of a female elk in rutting season. Lardo fell. He fell well. All Spaniards fall well. "Why did you do that, *amigo*?" he said.

"I don't know."

It was good I don't know. I sat down at the bar like any other man, only more so, and chugged my daiquiri. "Oh hell," I muttered and threw the straw away.

Lardo got up from the floor.... He struck my unshaven writer's chin with his supple bullfighter's fist. As he did, I could hear a bell toll in the distance. My body hit the floor hard. I wondered who the bell was tolling for.

"Whom," said the bartender.

Steven Spivak

Well I Suppose I Have It Coming to Me

Dear Max,

Well I suppose I have it coming to me and I've already contacted my lawyer but never meant for Gertrude Stein to take off her shirt. The eye is healing swell and it feels good not to feel bad anymore. I guess I owe you the lowdown.

I had had a fine meal at Harry's in Florence... Naturally, I ended up on a stool at Harry's bar with the local *patonos* and was enjoying my third Pernod when John Dos Passos, Gertrude Stein, and Alice B. Toklas walked through the door, creating a buzz among the cognoscenti. Dos Passos was wearing a dark suit and looked like a flatfoot and a short stumpy one to boot. Gertrude, heavy, stout, and imposingly dressed in a man's jacket and slacks with short cropped hair led Alice to a table near my spot at the bar. Alice, birdlike and wearing an ugly pillbox hat but rather handsome mustache, looked at me like I was a week's worth of soiled laundry... Now I'm a sonofabitch and have never gotten on with old Dos since the war in Spain and should of kept quiet but didn't and not even sure I'm sorry, even now. "A sissy like you sees the whole war from the Prince Edward suite of the Madrid Hilton and thinks he knows what he's talking about," etc. I sure laid it on. Gertrude interjected: "Hem, you're getting abusive" as she heaved her massive shoulders in my direction....

Everyone in the bar was tense as hell. "Hem, you have no understanding of true masculinity" (Gertrude, taking off her coat and rolling up her sleeves). Dos balked, said he wouldn't bare his chest unless everyone in the bar followed suit. At that moment we were all standing when Dos's sweeping gesture caused my fourth Pernod to be knocked over. I was about to pummel him when all eyes turned on Gertrude who was standing too and had taken off her shirt. And all hell broke loose. It all came so quick I don't remember exactly what happened but everyone was pounding on everyone and I got in a few good right crosses (Gertrude decked a sailor with the best return left I ever saw) and somehow Alice got the stuffed Marlin off the wall and was swinging it around and caught me in the face and all went dark and I felt the cool wood floor. Anyway, here I am picking up the pieces with a cake of ice to my eye and sorry about it but not sorry because it was a damn good fight and got a good right fist to Alice before passing out (always wanted to). Best to you always.

Papa.

John Geirland

Rest in the Afternoon

The old man sat at the bar, stalking his drink.... The writing was a bitch. The old man confided this to his drink. It was a lioness bitch that waited for you in the deep grass of your own thoughts and dared you to wade into the grass. In the grass there was fear and confusion and if you approached it badly the lioness would destroy you. You had to enter the grass straight and clean, with sentences that were simple and

declarative and they could never be pretty. If you did not write it this way then they would say that you were cheating. So you had to get rid of the flowery prepositional phrases and the big comfortable words and go in stripped naked except for the one weapon you were allowed to take in with you: the word *and*. You were allowed to use that to make a sentence longer if you wanted to and then it would look braver and more able to survive. You could, if you really wanted to, put in a lot of *ands*, they didn't count, and with luck the sentence never had to end, you could go on and on, and tell the story that a man had to tell and say what had to be said about birth and love and death and whoring and women and whiskey, and do that with grace or arrogance or cynicism or however you wanted to do it...because ultimately the middle of a long sentence is like the middle of an ocean, you will have lost sight of both the shore that is behind you and the one that is ahead of you... That is why it is best to keep the sentences short, he thought. A really big sentence could get away from you and then you would have nothing to show for it. All that would be left of your writing would be the big stench of your effort. The beast that waits for you in the grass knows the stench well. That is why we will not write more for today. It's safer now to drink.

Richard S. Simons

A Farewell to Lunch

He was an old restaurant reviewer who ate alone at a corner table and always gave a different name when he called for reservations. For twenty nights now he had eaten nothing that deserved more stars than the nachos of 7-Eleven, and he wondered when his luck would change.... When he was strong again and in a fine mood, he took the girl to La Testosteroni for lunch...

"It was not so bad," she said after a while.

"No," he said. She was not like the ones who smell a man's hurt like the sharks smell blood in the sea.

"The lettuce. The arugula. It could have had more snap."

"Yes," he said....

She looked at him. "Let's go to Harry's for a drink. We always laugh at Harry's."

"No. I must write the review."

When she left he sat alone at the table and slowly chewed a few bites of her cheesecake. It made him think of Milan so he ordered a separate piece. *Nada. Nada.* Nothing had been zesty or succulent and he did not feel like people-watching.

"*Nada. Nada,*" he said.

"*Nada* is off tonight, sir," the waiter said. "She only works weekends now."

The thing to do was to leave.

After a while he paid the check and walked back to the newspaper in the rain.

Chris Tucker

The Snooze of Kilimanjaro

He had come with the woman to Kilimanjaro to gather ideas for a cycle of haikus he was writing. The woman had suggested, in the aristocratic manner of the rich, that living on a diet of dried bark and dirt would toughen something inside him that had gone soft and prevented him from creating. Instead it softened him further, and now he was dying of severe dysentery complicated by writer's block. Now he would never write the things he had saved to write until he learned to spell them.... She knew how to hurt him, this woman, this female being, this person of the nonmale persuasion. And he would have hurt her back, at least challenged her to a thumb wrestle, if he hadn't felt it just then. The cold stale breath.

Death.

Mark Silber

"Elena. Come Here, My Little Gerbil..."

"Elena. Come here, my little gerbil," Max Winchester said, and his arms were strong. He knew he would be the first but he would teach her of love. He saw her looking in fear of the lumpy form in a corner of his room. "That is only old Primitivo, a man of the ages. Just ignore him," Max said.

"Ah, *Ingles*, before the dew comes I must go. There are rules here at the 'Y'." She knelt and nibbled his femur....

Across the room Primitivo sucked his teeth, as a certain kind of man will do.

“Ah, Max, you are a man. Let us do quickly the things that we must.”

“Stand, my little gerbil,” Max Winchester said. “Stand and come to me.” Now as they stood and held and stood and pressed and fell to the woven mat... “Tomorrow I will take you to Harry’s,” he said....

“I am, then, your woman? You will take me to Harry’s and perhaps we will share some *scampi grigliati* and the night will be new and we will be new and you will stay with me forever and we will have a blender and a Jacuzzi?”....

A man can be wrong about a woman.

“How do you know of the *scampi grigliati*,” he asked, and he heard her sob and he knew that she had already been to Harry’s with a man.

“Yes, yes, *Ingles*, it’s true, and now you will never want me and you will stay here with that old swine who mucks me with his eyes.”

“Come Primitivo,” said Max Winchester. “Come with me to Harry’s and we will share a liter of Chianti and we will speak of the...women for whom we were the first...”

Patricia Traxler

In the Late Summer of That Year We Lived in a Condo

In the late summer of that year we lived in a condo in North Dallas that looked across the tollway to the discos and honky-tonks of the rue St. Bubba. We were young and our happiness dazzled us...

“Pass the Doritos,” I said and her eyes shone like the stars over Amarillo.

I could not tell the girl about the woman of the tollway, of her milk-white BMW and her Jordache smile. There had been a fight. I had punched her boyfriend, who fought the mechanical bulls.... And when we finished there were no winners, just men doing what men must do....

“Stop the car,” the girl said.

There was a look of great and terrible sadness in her eyes. She knew about the woman of the tollway. I knew not how. I started to speak, but she raised an arm and spoke with a quiet and peace I will never forget. “I do not ask for whom’s the tollway belle,” she said. “The tollway belle’s for thee.”

Peter Applebome

Harry’s Bar & American Grill Is a Clean Well-Lighted Place

Harry’s Bar & American Grill is a clean well-lighted place. You can buy a moveable feast there for under fifty grand when you’re paying in lira. And with a crowd truly it feels like the capital of the world. Outside if the weather is nice, the sun also rises as it does each day across the green hills of Africa and above the snows of Kilimanjaro.... Inside I was deciding whether to have or to have not. I had bidden my farewell to arms... I was sure there would be no more death in the afternoon. And for me no more men without women.... From my seat I imagined the old man now at sea... He had become a way you or I would never be, a winner who gives and who takes nothing.

Sitting in Harry’s I recalled the old man’s short happy life and the fishing we did in our time up in Michigan when he was a real battler before the killers came and chased him up the big two-hearted river and then cut out to sea...among the rocks that were shiny and very smooth and like small islands in those streams. Suddenly I stopped remembering. I could hear a bell tolling. For whom it tolled I couldn’t tell. It could have been tolling for thee.

Chet Seymour

The Snow Spiraled Down Like Dandruff

The snow spiraled down like dandruff, flaking the head and shoulders of hatless Angelenos. It was strange weather for L.A.—especially strange for August. The man came into Harry’s Bar & American Grill. He shook snowy pearls from his matted hairpiece. The woman wore leather pants. She twisted around on her stool. It made a noise like stepping on a frog.

She looked at the man, oddly. “Dandruff?”

“Nay, but my name is Robert Jordan.” He spoke in the pure dialect of bullrings the world over. “I know naught of a sucker called Druff”....

He spat an oyster at the spittoon. It missed. The shiny opalescence put him in mind of the eye of a slaughtered bull, left overlong in the sun. "And what of the girl," he said, "the close-cropped one?"

"Nay, but the earth moved for her twice more, *Ingles*. Then it stopped."

"It is a matter of small wonderment. After forty-two years."

Norman Lessing

Across the River and into the Grill

The girl was near enough now so he could smell her fresh receptiveness, and the lint in her hair. Her skin was light blue, like the sides of horses.

"I love you," he said, "and we are going to lunch together for the first and only time, and I love you very much.

"Hello, Mr. Perley," she said, overtaken. "Let's not think of anything"....

"Shall we go to the Hotel Biltmore...?"

"Let's go to Schrafft's," said the girl, low. "But first I must phone Mummy." She stepped into a public booth and dialed true and well, using her finger....

Botticelli led the way to the table in the corner...

"Schrafft's is a good place and we're having fun and I love you," Perley said.... "The stockroom men were very brave," he said, "but it is a position where it is extremely difficult to stay alive.... The hell with it. When you make a breakthrough, Daughter, first you clean out the baskets and the halfwits, and all the time they have the fire escapes taped. They also shell you with old production orders, many of them approved by the general manager in charge of sales. I am boring you and I will not at this time discuss the general manager in charge of sales as we are unquestionably being listened to by that waitress over there who is setting out the decoys"....

When they went down the elevator and out and turned in to the old, hard, beat-up pavement of Fifth Avenue and headed south toward Forty-Second Street, where the pigeons were, the air was as clean as your grandfather's howitzer.... I commute good, thought Perley, looking at his watch. And he felt the old pain of going back to Scarsdale again.

E. B. White

There are No Trout in the Martinis

He was an old man and he had not had a martini in eighty-four days.... "There are no trout in these martinis," he said to the young couple at the table next to him. He did not know them, but he knew they were young and would not understand what it was like to have fished and then not be able to fish.... He looked at the woman. Women reminded him of boats. Some women were like expensive yachts or cruise ships. Others, beautiful sailboats with full white sails. There were the wrecks, too, sunken and covered with barnacles and seaweed and wormy. The woman at the table next to him reminded him of a speedboat.... The couple finished their martini in the wrong fashion, the old man thought. You did not drink the martini in Harry's Bar as they did. You drank such a martini slowly. Otherwise it was the same as entering the bull ring and killing the bull with a tommy gun. He started to tell the couple about how wrong it was to use a tommy gun in the bull ring, but after drinking their martinis in the wrong fashion, they left and he was now alone with his memories and the martini in this clean well-lighted place.

Robert H. Robinson

The Old Man and the Seal

He was an old man who fished alone when he fished by himself. For 358 days now he had been fishless. Maybe if I used bait, he thought. And a hook. The last fish he caught was still in his pants pocket, forgotten.... Maybe the great DiMaggio talks to himself too.... Then he saw the Big Fish.... It jumped through the air, its black fur shining like the coat of a seal. In fact, it was a seal. "Now I know why the boy made me bring the ball," the old man said, tossing it overboard. "Fish, this is for you." While the seal was distracted, the old man slipped a rusty handcuff around its flipper. "Fish, now we are truly linked." He laughed and wheezed and coughed. They stayed handcuffed for a week. Then the seal began to tease the old man. It bounced the shiny red ball off the old man's old fisherman's nose, dry and callused

from centuries of fishing. “A man can be destroyed but not defeated,” the old man said to the seal.... “Or was it the other way around? The boy told me but I forgot....” When the old man was talking, the seal climbed aboard and tossed him into the sea.

Mark Silber

Michael Hollister (2014)