

A FAREWELL TO ARMS

BY
ERNEST HEMINGWAY



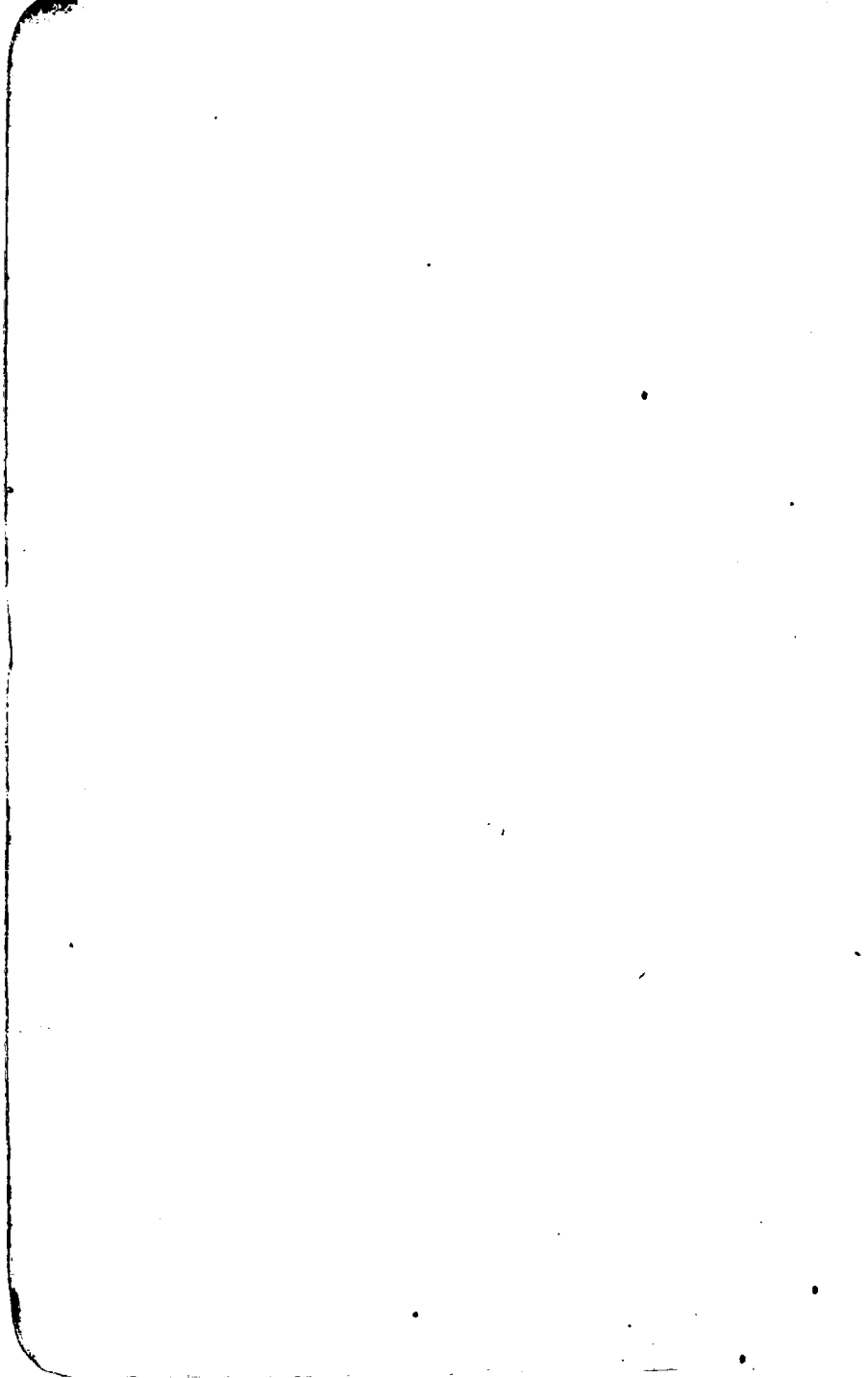
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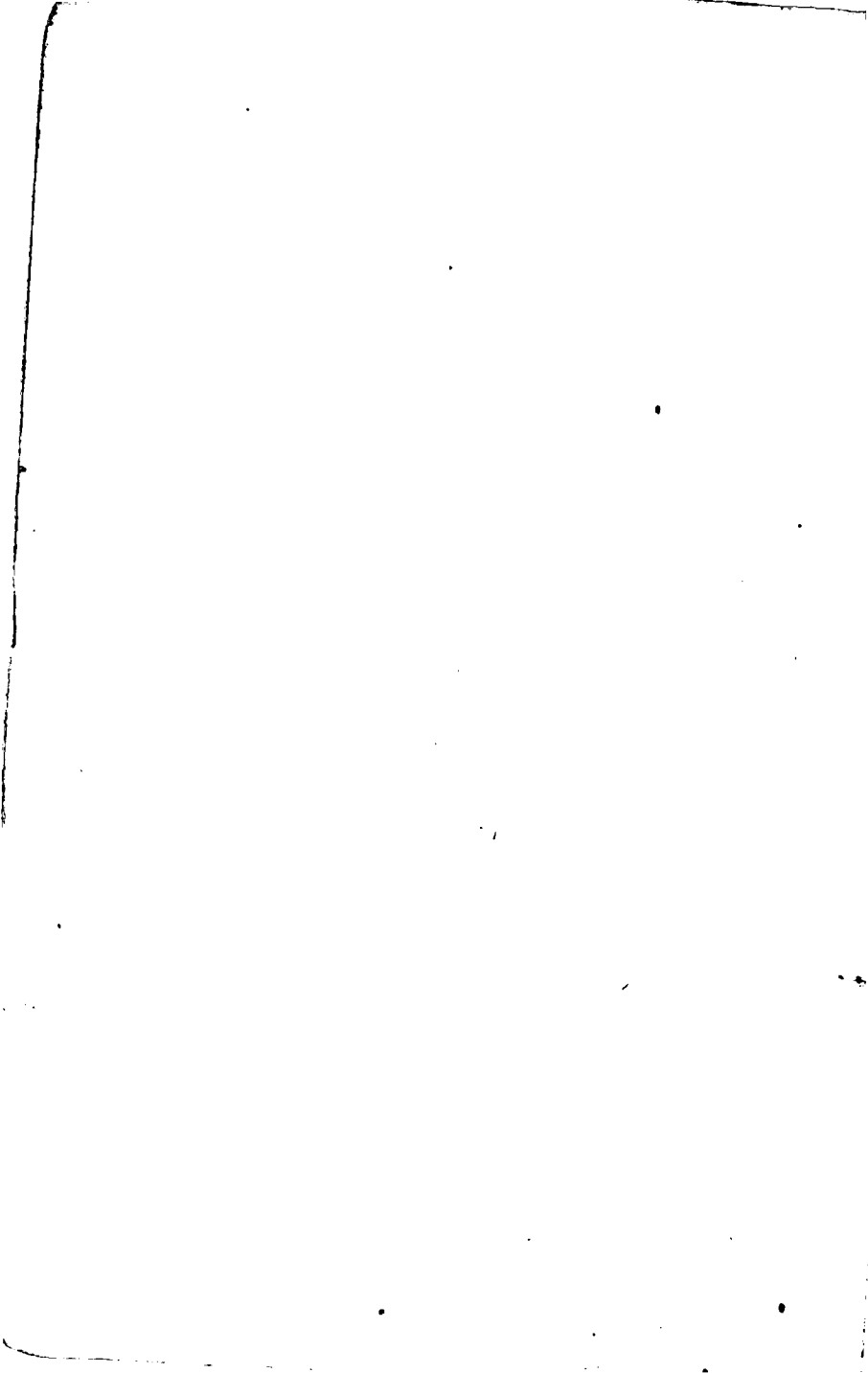


FIRST PUBLISHED 1929

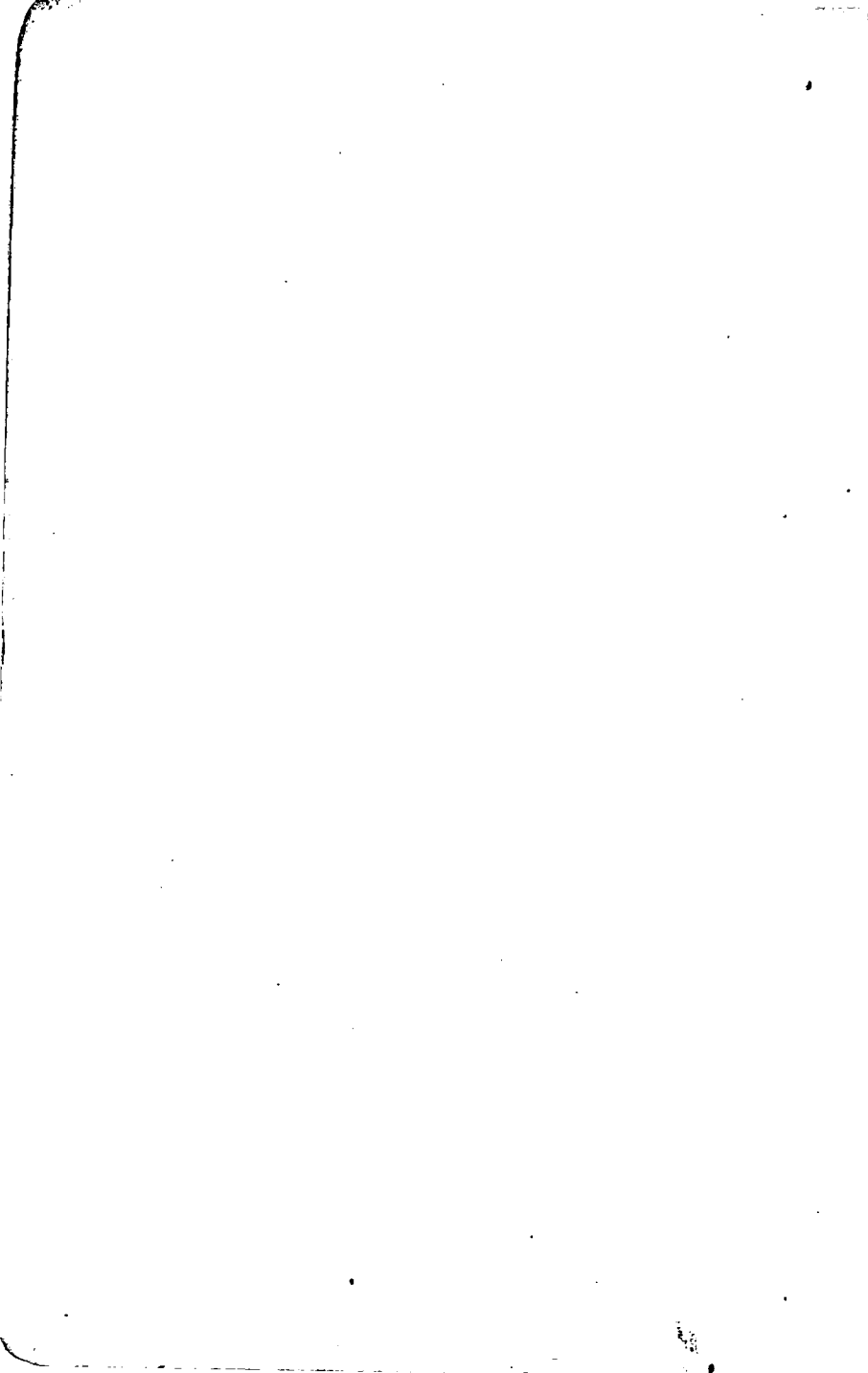
PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY J. AND J. GRAY, EDINBURGH

NONE of the characters in this book is a living person, nor are the units or military organizations mentioned actual units or organizations.

E. H.



TO
G. A. P.



BOOK I

CHAPTER 1

In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees too were dusty and the leaves fell early that year and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling and the soldiers marching and afterwards the road bare and white except for the leaves.

The plain was rich with crops; there were many orchards of fruit trees and beyond the plain the mountains were brown and bare. There was fighting in the mountains and at night we could see the flashes from the artillery. In the dark it was like summer lightning, but the nights were cool and there was not the feeling of a storm coming.

Sometimes in the dark we heard the troops marching under the window and guns going past pulled by motor-tractors. There was much traffic at night and many mules on the roads with boxes of ammunition on each side of their pack-saddles and grey motor-trucks that carried men, and other trucks with loads covered with canvas that moved slower in the traffic. There were big guns too that passed in the day drawn by tractors, the long barrels of

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the guns covered with green branches and green leafy branches and vines laid over the tractors. To the north we could look across a valley and see a forest of chestnut trees and behind it another mountain on this side of the river. There was fighting for that mountain too, but it was not successful, and in the fall when the rains came the leaves all fell from the chestnut trees and the branches were bare and the trunks black with rain. The vineyards were thin and bare-branched too and all the country wet and brown and dead with the autumn. There were mists over the river and clouds on the mountain and the trucks splashed mud on the roads and the troops were muddy and wet in their capes; their rifles were wet and under their capes the two leather cartridge-boxes on the front of the belts, grey leather boxes heavy with the packs of clips of thin, long 6.5 mm. cartridges, bulged forward under the capes so that the men, passing on the road, marched as though they were six months gone with child.

There were small grey motor-cars that passed going very fast; usually there was an officer on the seat with the driver and more officers in the back seat. They splashed more mud than the camions even and if one of the officers in the back was very small and sitting between two generals, he himself so small that you could not see his face but only the top of his cap and his narrow back, and if the car went especially fast it was probably the King. He lived in Udine and came out in this way nearly every day to see how things were going, and things went very badly.

At the start of the winter came the permanent rain and with the rain came the cholera. But it was checked and in the end only seven thousand died of it in the army.

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CHAPTER 2

THE next year there were many victories. The mountain that was beyond the valley and the hillside where the chestnut forest grew was captured and there were victories beyond the plain on the plateau to the south and we crossed the river in August and lived in a house in Gorizia that had a fountain and many thick shady trees in a walled garden and a wistaria vine purple on the side of the house. Now the fighting was in the next mountains beyond and was not a mile away. The town was very nice and our house was very fine. The river ran behind us and the town had been captured very handsomely but the mountains beyond it could not be taken and I was very glad the Austrians seemed to want to come back to the town some time, if the war should end, because they did not bombard it to destroy it but only a little in a military way. People lived on in it and there were hospitals and cafés and artillery up side streets and two bawdy-houses, one for troops and one for officers, and with the end of the summer, the cool nights, the fighting in the mountains beyond the town, the shell-marked iron of the railway bridge, the smashed tunnel by the river where the fighting had been, the trees around the square and the long avenue of trees that led to the square; these with there being girls in the town, the King passing in his motor-car, sometimes now seeing his face and little long-necked body and grey beard like a goat's chin-tuft; all these with the sudden interiors of houses that had lost a wall through shelling, with plaster and rubble in their gardens and sometimes in the street, and the whole thing going well on the Carso

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made the fall very different from the last fall when we had been in the country. The war was changed too.

The forest of oak trees on the mountain beyond the town was gone. The forest had been green in the summer when we had come into the town but now there were the stumps and the broken trunks and the ground torn up, and one day at the end of the fall when I was out where the oak forest had been I saw a cloud coming over the mountain. It came very fast and the sun went a dull yellow and then everything was grey and the sky was covered and the cloud came on down the mountain and suddenly we were in it and it was snow. The snow slanted across the wind, the bare ground was covered, the stumps of trees projected, there was snow on the guns and there were paths in the snow going back to the latrines behind trenches.

Later, below in the town, I watched the snow falling, looking out of the window of the bawdy-house, the house for officers, where I sat with a friend and two glasses drinking a bottle of Asti, and, looking out at the snow falling slowly and heavily, we knew it was all over for that year. Up the river the mountains had not been taken; none of the mountains beyond the river had been taken. That was all left for next year. My friend saw the priest from our mess going by in the street, walking carefully in the slush, and pounded on the window to attract his attention. The priest looked up. He saw us and smiled. My friend motioned for him to come in. The priest shook his head and went on. That night in the mess after the spaghetti course, which every one ate very quickly and seriously, lifting the spaghetti on the fork until the loose strands hung clear then lowering it into the mouth, or else using a continuous lift and sucking into the mouth, helping ourselves to wine from the grass-covered gallon flask; it

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swung in a metal cradle and you pulled the neck of the flask down with the forefinger and the wine, clear red, tannic and lovely, poured out into the glass held with the same hand; after this course, the captain commenced picking on the priest.

The priest was young and blushed easily and wore a uniform like the rest of us but with a cross in dark red velvet above the left breast-pocket of his grey tunic. The captain spoke pidgin Italian for my doubtful benefit, in order that I might understand perfectly, that nothing should be lost.

'Priest to-day with girls,' the captain said looking at the priest and at me. The priest smiled and blushed and shook his head. This captain baited him often.

'Not true?' asked the captain. 'To-day I see priest with girls.'

'No,' said the priest. The other officers were amused at the baiting.

'Priest not with girls,' went on the captain. 'Priest never with girls,' he explained to me. He took my glass and filled it, looking at my eyes all the time, but not losing sight of the priest.

'Priest every night five against one.' Every one at the table laughed. 'You understand? Priest every night five against one.' He made a gesture and laughed loudly. The priest accepted it as a joke.

'The Pope wants the Austrians to win the war,' the major said. 'He loves Franz Joseph. That's where the money comes from. I am an atheist.'

'Did you ever read the *Black Pig?*' asked the lieutenant. 'I will get you a copy. It was that which shook my faith.'

'It is a filthy and vile book,' said the priest. 'You do not really like it.'

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'It is very valuable,' said the lieutenant. 'It tells you about those priests. You will like it,' he said to me. I smiled at the priest and he smiled back across the candle-light. 'Don't you read it,' he said.

'I will get it for you,' said the lieutenant.

'All thinking men are atheists,' the major said. 'I do not believe in the Freemasons however.'

'I believe in the Freemasons,' the lieutenant said. 'It is a noble organization.' Someone came in and as the door opened I could see the snow falling.

'There will be no more offensive now that the snow has come,' I said.

'Certainly not,' said the major. 'You should go on leave. You should go to Rome, Naples, Sicily -'

'He should visit Amalfi,' said the lieutenant. 'I will write you cards to my family in Amalfi. They will love you like a son.'

'He should go to Palermo.'

'He ought to go to Capri.'

'I would like you to see Abruzzi and visit my family at Capracotta,' said the priest.

'Listen to him talk about the Abruzzi. There's more snow there than here. He doesn't want to see peasants. Let him go to centres of culture and civilization.'

'He should have fine girls. I will give you the addresses of places in Naples. Beautiful young girls - accompanied by their mothers. Ha! Ha! Ha!'

He looked at the priest and shouted, 'Every night priest five against one!' They all laughed again.

'You must go on leave at once,' the major said.

'I would like to go with you and show you things,' the lieutenant said.

'When you come back bring a phonograph.'