Been working every day and going good. Makes a hell of a dull life too. But it is more fun than anything else. Do you remember how old [Ford Maddox] Ford was always writing how [Joseph] Conrad suffered so when he wrote? How it was un métier du chien [a dog's trade] etc. Do you suffer when you write? I don't at all. Suffer like a bastard when don't write, or just before, and feel empty and fucked out afterwards. But never feel as good as while writing.¹

By the time Hemingway wrote these words to critic Malcom Cowley in 1945, one could imagine that Hemingway had been feeling good for quite a while, given his prolific publication record: four novels, one lengthy satire, six short story collections, one play, a travelogue of his expeditions in Africa, and an account of the art and sport of bullfighting. The charged statement Hemingway makes here offers us a glimpse into the psyche of the author, a man in the midst of a traumatic recovery. Recall from Chapter One of this thesis Dominick LaCapra’s ideas about the aftermath of the traumatic experience. First, that “working through is an articulatory practice: to the extent one works through trauma… one is able to distinguish between past and present and to recall in memory that something happened to one (or one’s people) back then while realizing that one is living here and now with openings to the future.”² Thus, the act of telling the story of a trauma—whether that means actively working to recall the details of the event, writing about the event, or relaying the account aloud to another—situates the victim firmly in the present and establishes the future as a possibility. Secondly, LaCapra fits working through into Freud’s model of cathexis and overstimulation in the traumatic neurosis. He notes:
Trauma brings about a dissociation of affect and representation: one disorientingly feels what one cannot represent; one numbingly represents what one cannot feel. Working through trauma involves the effort to articulate or rearticulate affect and representation in a manner that may never transcend, but may to some viable extent counteract, a reenactment, or acting out, of that disabling dissociation.

What is so critical about LaCapra’s assertion, and the most telling insight into Hemingway’s sentiments on the practice of writing, is the idea that verbalization offers a stabilizing and hopeful force in the consciousness of the articulator. Negotiating the landscape of trauma in a narrative affords Hemingway the opportunity to realize his own place in the present, separate and away from any traumatizing stimuli. Furthermore, situating the trauma as a historical point of reference permits a future to be considered: by no longer miring the victim in the struggle of repetition for pieces of understanding, relating the experience opens the path towards recovery and true mastery – a future ruled by the victim, not by their experience. LaCapra indicates that articulation offers a counteracting force to the destabilizing and disabling effects of a trauma, but he does not establish it as a “cure.” Rather, giving voice to the ordeal, or navigating a narrative of traumatic experience, orients the victim and offers them a mode of representation to the public sphere. Re-examining Hemingway’s last two sentences to Cowley quoted above suggests this notion: articulation is itself a relief.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the process and extent of Hemingway’s traumatic recovery as demonstrated through the timing and content of his written work—the evolution of his articulation. Essentially, I will employ the trauma theory delineations specified in the first chapter of this thesis to analyze
Hemingway’s work on two levels. First, at the primary level of the text of the Nick Adams short fiction, and secondly by utilizing the biographical information outlined in the second chapter and the chronologies of publication and composition set forth in the third chapter to consider what Hemingway was able to write about when. The scope and progress of the author’s articulation from the short story format to the novel, most important to this thesis *A Farewell to Arms*, lends itself to a study of Hemingway’s establishment as a public figure and his place in his community, a benchmark of the traumatic recovery process.

Though it would be a valid and interesting project to evaluate Hemingway’s traumatic recovery aligned with all 24 of the Nick stories collected in the 1972 Philip Young text, given the author’s abhorrence of critical consideration of unpublished work[^4] and the unwieldy volume such an exercise would produce, in this chapter I have elected to focus on three stories, published during the author’s life, which are particularly indicative of Nick’s traumatic experience (in his direct injury, later at the warfront, and finally in his time at home) and Hemingway’s recovery.

Nick Adams made his published debut in the seventh chapter of the 1924 Three Mountains Press *in our time*. The untitled vignette, commonly called “Nick Sat Against the Wall...” was later included in the expanded Boni & Liveright *In Our Time*. Hemingway composed the text between March and June of 1923[^5]. The short but resonant vignette depicts Nick[^6] immediately after he is grievously wounded in a battle on the Italian front: “Nick sat against the wall of the church where they had dragged him to be clear of machine-gun fire in the street. Both
legs stuck out awkwardly. He had been hit in the spine.” Rinaldi, lying face down against the wall is seriously wounded as well and having difficulty breathing. Two Austrians lie dead nearby, and Nick notes there are more dead—he does not designate soldiers, civilians, or nationalities—up the street. As he surveys the destruction around him, Nick comments to an unresponsive Rinaldi, “You and me, we’ve made a separate peace... We’re not patriots.” The line, more than providing fodder for Frederic Henry six years later in A Farewell to Arms, sets up Nick as a complicated protagonist: a young man, fighting for a country that is presumably not his own and relieved to be out of the war.

Though succinct, Hemingway’s first Nick Adams story is rife with glimpses into where the author is in his own traumatic recovery and how this can potentially impact the development of Nick. The tone of Hemingway’s writing is significant in this sketch. He writes of Nick’s injuries in an abrupt, nearly clinical way: “Both legs stuck out awkwardly. He had been hit in the spine. His face was sweaty and dirty.” With the knowledge that Nick has been hit in the spine and the image of his legs skewed uncomfortably on the ground, the reader can conjecture just how grave Nick’s wound is: he would appear to be facing potential paralysis and even death. Contrasted with this image, however, is Nick’s attitude and ruminations on the state of the battle. First, Nick appears defiant in his injured state. While Rinaldi lies face down, “still in the sun, breathing with difficulty,” Nick seems very much alive and prepared to take in the nuances of the situation in which he is so immersed. Rather than turning away from the battle, “Nick looked straight ahead brilliantly.” Similarly, he does not avert his
gaze from his friend; instead he “turned his head and looked down at Rinaldi,” only turning away when Rinaldi does not respond to his speech (presumably because he is too injured to speak) and is revealed to Nick to be “a disappointing audience.”

Nick’s proclamations to Rinaldi also strike a dissonant tone with his injury. First, the narrator notes, “It was going well.” The implicit question is, of course, for whom? Certainly not for Nick and Rinaldi, we have to wonder if the two will ever leave the side of the church alive, and certainly not for the two dead Austrians in Nick’s line of sight. Though Hemingway notes the battle was “getting forward in the town”, we do not know what the cost of this apparent Italian victory will be. We do know there are more dead bodies up the street, but we do not know if they are bodies of Italian civilians in this Austrian-held town, Austrian soldiers, or Italian soldiers.

Regardless of the outcome of the battle, will it even matter for Nick, who as he tells Rinaldi, has “made a separate peace”? Though Nick seems confident stretcher-bearers would arrive momentarily to remove him and Rinaldi, he has no assurances of this fact nor of their survival after they leave. Furthermore, this declaration of their separate peace and lack of patriotism implies Nick and Rinaldi had some agency in their incapacitation. Unlike Frederic Henry in A Farewell to Arms, Nick Adams and Rinaldi did not choose to make their separate peace in the text of this story. Instead, the act is forced upon them. We can, however, conjecture that this injury and subsequent separate peace has spurred a sense of relief in Nick, he smiles at the scene’s
end. We do not know why an American soldier is fighting with the Italians to win back an Austrian-held town, but we can understand how liberated Nick must have felt in knowing that he was out of the war, at least temporarily.

For Hemingway, this seemingly incongruous beginning to a protagonist’s oeuvre, as a young man in the middle of a war fighting alongside a country that is not his own, is actually inevitable. As Cathy Caruth notes in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, “the story of trauma is inescapably bound to a referential return.”

Caruth proposes that, “Through the notion of trauma… we can understand that a rethinking of reference is aimed not at eliminating history but at resituating it in our understanding, that is, at precisely permitting history to arise where immediate understanding may not.” The traumatic experience offers a point of reference for an individual’s history, and in LaCapra’s terms situates the victim in the present. Because the traumatic event, depicted as a fall in Caruth’s terminology, may not be readily available through language, the impact or immediate aftermath of that fall is the logical point of reference, the point of origin for a story.

Notice in this brief scene that Hemingway does not describe how Nick was injured. He does not narrate the scenes of the fight or the mechanism of his wounding. Rather, he describes the immediate aftermath of the trauma: Nick’s moment of impact and the moment where historical reference for this character becomes possible is up against the wall of the church, stewing in the aftermath of his injury and defying it’s potential consequences. As Caruth indicates, the story of trauma is linked with a *referential return*. Such language implies that this
vignette will serve as Hemingway’s point of reference in his articulation of his own trauma. In other words, Nick was not the only one up against a wall, here. Hemingway, too, seems in a situation with only one possible path to take: in order to engage with the writing process as an act of working through his traumatic experience, he must begin with the referential moment of trauma both for himself and to develop his character.

While Hemingway might have been consciously ready to confront violence on the page, the details, or lack thereof, in “Nick Sat Against the Wall…” point to his hesitancy and discomfort in articulating a narrative of traumatic experience. First, there are no identifying details that would mark this particular stand as different from any other. Nick could be in any Austrian-held town on any date—the battle is unnamed and the time is unstated. Such indeterminacy maintains the inaccessibility of Hemingway’s psyche being read onto the character of Nick, but it also restricts our understanding of the full nature of Nick’s primal trauma. The lack of specificity keeps things from getting too personal for Hemingway and sets Nick up to be potentially less affected by this singular experience (as we will discover, however, that seems to be an unfulfilled wish).

Secondly, the brevity of the account is significant. Recall that Hemingway wrote the vignette in the spring of 1923. He was less than six years removed from his own injury at Piave, and his home life was going well. At this time, Hemingway and Hadley were awaiting the October birth of their first child, and he was generally concentrating his writing efforts on his fiction, only writing for the *Toronto Star* as often as the bills required. It is not difficult to imagine that
Hemingway would not want to spend too long articulating horrific experiences. The text glosses over Nick’s injury. Nick is sweaty and dirty, but we have no indication that he is bleeding. Likewise, Rinaldi is facedown next to the church, his equipment askew, but that is the only suggestion in the opening lines of the vignette that anything is amiss with him. The trauma seems tidy and it offers both Nick and Rinaldi a way out of the war. They have made their separate peace and it would appear that Nick is certain since they are “not patriots,” that they will not fight again. At this particular moment in Hemingway’s life, when he is at peace, albeit a tentative one, he has not yet gained the mastery over either his craft or his own traumatic experience to write about violence and the tragedy of war in a sustained and direct fashion. As we will see, the changes in his personal life directly affect this ability.

On a critical level, “Nick Sat Against the Wall…” has sparked a few debates over the years. First, there is the question of whether or not the Nick in the story is the Nick Adams of Hemingway’s later short stories. Milton A. Cohen notes in his 2005 study of the Three Mountains Press in our time:

Further problems arise if we assume Nick begins a unified Nick Adams experience, continued and developed in the stories. Here, Nick is wounded in the spine. In “Cross-Country Snow,” he has a bum leg, presumably from a war wound. “Big Two-Hearted River,” where he hikes briskly shouldering a heavy pack makes no reference to a physical wound at all but hints strongly of a mental one.18 Cohen supports the possibility that this is not the same Nick when he notes that the character is only identified by first name, never is he called “Nick Adams” in the brief vignette. Howard L. Hannum also calls attention to the inconsistencies
in Nick’s injuries in an article published in 2001, though he does not doubt the protagonist of the sketch is in fact Nick Adams. Philip Young, on the other hand, makes the case that the character is one in the same. In his 1966, Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration, Young writes,

The sketch, Chapter VI, which immediately follows ‘The Battler’ is the only place in the book [In Our Time] where the interchapter material meets with the stories, and this crossing unmistakably signals the climax of In Our Time: X marks the spot as a short paragraph reveals that Nick is in the war, tells us that he has been hit in the spine, and that he has made a “separate peace” with the enemy, is no longer fighting the war for democracy.

Young insists that the Nick of the sketch is the same Nick Adams who appears in seven short stories in In Our Time, and he insists that this vignette is the climactic text of the character’s development.

I am firmly on the side that the “Nick” of this vignette is the Nick Adams who appears in the longer stories of In Our Time, Men Without Women, and Winner Take Nothing. If anything, I think this debate reinforces the disservice Young’s 1972 collection did to Hemingway’s construction of the Nick Adams character. When a casual reader takes in the collected Nick Adams stories in chronological order and without consideration for the author’s publication choices, it clouds the lens with which a reader interprets the character. The Nick Adams Stories has the potential to be read like a quasi-novel with Nick as the central hero. In such a format, the glaring variations on Nick’s wound degrade the integrity of the narrative experience of the protagonist.

If, however, we respect Hemingway’s style and original genre of short story, the inconsistencies are less important. Although each Nick Adams story
offers further insight into the development of the character and demonstrates the trajectory of Hemingway's traumatic recovery, the short story trope enables us to read each story independently of any other and notice similarities on a theme, not discrepancies in narrative detail. As Cohen concludes in his description of the problematic wounding, "We have, therefore, not one Nick Adams experience, but rather variations on a theme of wounding." This multi-faceted trajectory for a single character is evocative of the complicated path of traumatic recovery for a victim. As Freud and Caruth indicate in their theories on the traumatic experience, the latency prescribed by the event can skew a victim's perception of what actually happened, which may result in variations on what occurred when it comes time for the story to be told.

The year 1924 proved to be a productive time for Hemingway’s development of Nick Adams. He began to expand on the character’s history, beginning with the story “Indian Camp,” which opened the 1925 In Our Time and along with “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife” offered glimpses into Nick’s childhood in Michigan. Hemingway’s next forays into Nick’s fictional experience were the stories “The End of Something” and “The Three Day Blow.” Each of these stories, written during the spring of 1924, shares an account of Nick’s return to Michigan after the war and it’s effect on his personal life. In 1924, Hemingway wrote two more Nick Adams stories, “Cross-Country Snow” and “Big Two-Hearted River,” which were both included in In Our Time. Hemingway was still unable to write about the events of the war in a lengthy fashion. “The End of Something,” “The Three Day Blow,” and “Big Two-Hearted River,” however,
demonstrate the author’s own recognition that things cannot simply return to the way they once were after an individual experiences a situation such as war, and “Cross-Country Snow” displays the long-term physical effects of Nick’s injury.

Hemingway’s writing did not return to the Italian front until the late summer of 1926, with the two stories “In Another Country” and “Now I Lay Me,” which were to be included in 1927’s *Men Without Women*. Recall from Chapter Two that Hemingway met Pauline Pfeiffer at a party with Hadley in March 1925. The two carried on a casual friendship for the remainder of the year, but in the spring of 1926, Hemingway and Pauline began spending more and more time alone together. On August 12, 1926 Hadley decreed she and Hemingway take up separate Paris residences. The so-called “hundred days separation” culminated with Hadley and Hemingway’s divorce, which was finalized on April 14, 1927 and sharply punctuated by his marriage to Pauline on May 10, 1927. Hemingway wrote “In Another Country,” a short story about Nick’s time recuperating in a Milan hospital, during the hundred days separation, and submitted it for publication to Scribner’s on November 22, 1926. “Now I Lay Me,” which recounts Nick’s sleeplessness at the front was written in the spring of 1927 and was completed by the end of May in order for it to be included in *Men Without Women*.

The two stories frame the Nick fiction within the larger volume: “In Another Country” is the second story, and first of the five Nick Adams stories, in *Men Without Women* and “Now I Lay Me” is the final offering of the collection. Though separated by a hundred pages or so, the stories are closely related and offer
variations on the theme of Nick’s physical and psychological wounds he received at the front. In “Big World Out There: ‘The Nick Adams Stories,’” Philip Young alerts us to the fact that these stories “were originally two parts of a single one, as the manuscript shows.” Hemingway’s decision to separate the two stories calls attention to a progression in the protagonist’s differing focus on his physical injuries in “In Another Country” and his psychological ones in “Now I Lay Me.”

“In Another Country” opens with one of the most memorable and oft-quoted lines of Hemingway prose: “In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more.” Instead, Nick goes to the hospital in Milan to receive treatment in a “machine” on his leg, which had been injured at the front: “My knee did not bend and the leg dropped straight from the knee to the ankle without a calf, and the machine was to bend the knee and make it move as in riding a tricycle. But it did not bend yet, and instead the machine lurched when it came to the bending part.” In Milan, Nick goes around to the Café Cova with a group of three Italian men who are also receiving treatment at the hospital for their war injuries. Nick feels the men cannot accept him because he earned his medal by “accident” while they had earned theirs through acts of valor. Nick admits, “I would never have done such things, and I was very much afraid to die, and often lay in bed at night by myself, afraid to die and wondering how I would be when I went back to the front again.” Nick’s fear offers a sharp contrast to the decorated bravado of his Italian comrades.

A major, and former fencer, completes his hand rehabilitation in a machine near Nick’s. The two men share conversations on grammar, marriage, and loss.
The major admonishes Nick to never marry, because “If he is to lose everything, he should not place himself in a position to lose that. He should not place himself in a position to lose. He should find things he cannot lose.” Nick learns the major’s anger and bitterness arise from the recent unexpected death of his wife, and the two continue with their treatment, although the major seems not to believe it will have any positive effect on his injured hand.

Nick’s fear of death in the night echoes his sentiments from “In Another Country” and runs on through the story “Now I Lay Me”: “If I could have a light I was not afraid to sleep, because I knew my soul would only go out of me if it were dark.” Rather than letting his mind wander dangerously in the dark, Nick has a few ways of occupying his thoughts through the night. First, he considers trout streams he had fished back home, and occasionally he imagines new streams he has not yet fished. Some nights, Nick cannot concentrate on his fishing memories and instead he recites childhood prayers, prays for everyone he has ever known, and tries to remember everything he can from his earliest memory up until the time just before he left for the war. Even this proves to be impossible some nights, and on those evenings when his personal memory fails him, Nick strives to remember facts of the world—animals, cities, food, and street names. When that fails, he simply listens. One of those evenings, Nick hears another man awake in the dark, and the two have a discussion. The second soldier, John, had spent some time in Chicago before the war, and Nick—even though he has heard about the experiences before—asks John to tell him about his time there. The discussion shifts, and John urges Nick to get married, “A
man ought to be married. You’ll never regret it. Every man ought to be married.”

On later nights when it is dark and he cannot sleep, Nick tries to think about the women he has known and their potential as a future wife, but that proves to be too difficult, and instead he keeps on with his prayers.

Both stories directly confront Nick’s fear of death and posit it as a direct result of his experience leading up to “Nick Sat Against the Wall…” Though Hemingway is not yet writing in a sustained fashion about the actual traumatic event which causes Nick such anxiety, he is giving more attention to the manifestations of the traumatic experience on his protagonist’s psyche. Hemingway’s initial stories about Nick’s life after he is injured focus on the external symptoms of trauma, or “constriction” defined by Judith Herman in Trauma and Recovery as the numbing response of surrender. Examples of constriction within the text include Nick’s excessive drinking in “The Three Day Blow” and “Cross-Country Snow,” breaking things off with Marjorie in “The End of Something,” and his aversion to tragic adventure in “Big Two-Hearted River.” For the first time in the two bookends of Men Without Women (the so very closely connected wartime stories “In Another Country” and “Now I Lay Me”) we see Nick exhibiting the nervous system responses to trauma Herman delineates as “hyperarousal” or the “persistent expectation of danger”—demonstrated in Nick’s fear of death and the dark and going back to the front—and “intrusion,” the indelible imprint of the traumatic moment—Nick’s shame in his medal and the more complex psychological reason for his insomnia.
The fear of death Nick speaks to, more directly in “Now I Lay Me” than in “In Another Country,” gives weight to just how serious Nick’s situation in “Nick Sat Against the Wall…” was. In the vignette, Hemingway does not give voice to the possibility that Nick could die. Rather, he focuses on the injury and Nick’s defiant attitude in the face of danger. On the other hand, in “Now I Lay Me” his fear of death is apparent:

I myself did not want to sleep because I had been living for a long time with the knowledge that if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body. I had been that way for a long time, ever since I had been blown up at night and felt it go out of me and go off and then come back. I tried never to think about it, but it had started to go since, in the nights, just at the moment of going off to sleep, and I could only stop it by a very great effort. So while now I am fairly sure that it would not really have gone out, yet then, that summer, I was unwilling to make the experiment.33

In this moment, Hemingway’s protagonist demonstrates the growth of a man who is beginning to assimilate his traumatic experience into his psyche (by admitting his very real fear and the cause for it), and Hemingway himself is taking a step forward in the working through process. Actually articulating this fear of death in a very real and tangible description offers us a glimpse into the interior landscape of Hemingway’s own trauma. He is now beginning to write about the debilitating effects such an experience can have, rather than actively pursuing constrictive activities with his character to avoid articulating such consequences.

During the time Hemingway wrote these two stories, he was in a much more tenuous place in his personal life than he was when he began writing the first of his Nick stories. Hemingway openly admitted his love for Pauline before his marriage to Hadley had ended. Jeffrey Meyers’s 1985 *Hemingway: A*
Biography offers a detailed look into the demise of Hemingway and Hadley’s marriage and his love for Pauline. Meyers writes: “Though committed to Pauline, he was guilt-ridden about his cruelty to Hadley. She tried to remain stoical and indifferent, but was deeply hurt by his betrayal. ... ‘Our life is all gone to hell,’ Hemingway told Fitzgerald in September 1926, ‘which seems to be the one thing you can count on a good life to do.’” Hemingway further revealed his distress at the demise of his marriage in a November 1926 letter to Pauline. He wrote:

I’ve felt absolutely done for and gone to pieces Pfife and I might as well write it out now and maybe get rid of it that way. It was certain that your mother would feel badly about your marrying some one who was divorced, about breaking up a home, about getting into a mess... All I can think of is that you, that are all I have and that I love more than all that is and have given up everything for and betrayed everything for and killed off everything for, are being destroyed and your nerves and spirit broken all the time day and night and that I can’t do anything about it because you won’t let me... But I'm not a saint, nor built like one, and I’d rather die now while there is still something left of the world than to go on and have every part of it flattened out and destroyed and made hollow before I die.

Hemingway’s gut-wrenching proclamations of love and guilt and his uncertain morality at this stage in his life seem to have primed the pump, so to speak, for his articulation of a more direct approach to fear, death, and the violence of the war in the text. Certainly, his acknowledgement of distress and his assertion that writing about his emotion may help him “get rid of it” indicate that Hemingway is starting to use the practice of writing to handle his emotions. One hopes that with maturity he will not write simply to “get rid” of emotion, but to understand and learn from each emotional encounter—good or bad.
Furthermore, the competing echoes of marriage as a holy grail for Nick in “Now I Lay Me” and as something to be avoided entirely according to the grieving major of “In Another Country,” evoke the personal struggles the author was enduring at the time. Meyers points out that, “Hemingway was a romantic at heart. Every time he fell in love with a woman, he sincerely believed that he had to marry her and would remain married to her forever.”36 “In Another Country,” which Hemingway wrote in the midst of his heart-wrenching hundred days separation and submitted to Scribner’s only ten days after he wrote the above letter to Pauline, the Italian major bitterly rails against the institution of marriage to Nick. He insists that the gravity of loss marriage sets a man up for is far too much to bear, especially during wartime. Contrarily, “Now I Lay Me,” finished right around Hemingway’s May 1927 wedding to Pauline posits marriage as the solution to Nick’s worries. John assures the Signor Tenente that marriage would, “fix up everything.”37 Nick, however, appears ambivalent to this end.

The dissolution of his marriage was a secondary trauma for Hemingway that gave him the recourse to begin to write in a more direct and in-depth fashion about the far-reaching wounds and effects of war. We see the potential impact Nick’s wartime experience will have on his future relationships with women (it helps that we already know from “The End of Something” that he broke things off with Marjorie after returning to Michigan). Moreover the absence of a companion for Nick at this juncture, coupled with the marriage frame of these two stories, highlight just how alone he is in his traumatic experience. At this point, Nick has
no one to bear witness with him to the story of his trauma. Instead, he must fight for his own recovery.

These two stories also offer a marked shift in point of view from the earlier Nick Adams stories. Both “In Another Country” and “Now I Lay Me” are written in the first person. All of the Nick stories from In Our Time are in the third person omniscient voice. The change in point of view helps reinforce the notion that Nick is now more mature and can handle more serious manifestations of his traumatic experience in the narrative. As Joseph M. Flora indicates in his article “Saving Nick Adams for Another Day”:

The marked change in handling of point of view in the second collection reinforces the conviction that Nick can now explore territory he earlier found too treacherous… war and violence, depicted directly in the interchapters of In Our Time but not in stories, come more directly under scrutiny in the framing Nick stories [of Men Without Women]… In other words, the first-person stories suggest a Nick now experienced enough to portray directly his own experience.  

This passage serves to reinforce the idea that this is wholly Nick’s narrative experience, not Hemingway’s. However, the treatment Hemingway was willing to give more mature, “treacherous” material in these two later Nick stories demonstrate that he is on his way to working through his own experiences.

After finishing “Now I Lay Me” in May 1927, Hemingway put the character of Nick to rest for a short while. Men Without Women was published in October of that same year, and during the later fall months he turned his attention towards a new project. In November, he mentioned to F. Scott Fitzgerald completing 50,000 words of a new novel (provisionally to be called A New Slain Knight or Jimmy Breen). In a March 17 letter to Max Perkins, however, Hemingway
notes he has considered abandoning this book to “go on with the other one I am writing since two weeks that I thought was only a story but that goes on and goes wonderfully.” Hemingway did decide to abandon the former to concentrate on the latter, and by June of 1928, when his son Patrick was born, 279 pages of A Farewell to Arms were complete, and the first draft was finished in late August. I will address the composition, publication, and implications this novel had on Hemingway’s career in detail in the final chapter of this thesis, and offer a general trajectory of the text’s formation to understand the final evolution of Nick Adams in print and the navigation of the author’s road to traumatic recovery.

3 La Capra, 42.  
4 Recall Hemingway’s 1952 letter to Charles Fenton, cited in Chapter 3.  
6 The protagonist has no last name in the text, and is only called "Nick". Critics generally agree, however, that this is the first manifestation of Nick Adams.  
8 Hemingway, The Nick Adams Stories, 143.  
9 Hemingway, The Nick Adams Stories, 143.  
10 Hemingway, The Nick Adams Stories, 143.  
12 Hemingway, The Nick Adams Stories, 143.  
13 Hemingway, The Nick Adams Stories, 143.  
14 Hemingway, The Nick Adams Stories, 143.  
16 Caruth, 11.  
18 Cohen, 154.  
21 Cohen, 154.  
22 Baker, A Life Story, 175-77.
Notably, Nick’s injury in this story is not evident to be in his spine, as was made so clear in "Nick Sat Against the Wall..." One can assume, however, that this is a variation on the theme of wounding, which Cohen speaks to, or interpolate the significant impact spinal injuries can have on the lower extremities. It may be, in fact, that Nick is receiving treatment for a manifestation of his spinal injury in his leg.


Herman, 32.


Meyers, 178.


Hemingway, *The Only Thing that Counts*, 57.