

Significant theme of
love in "a farewell to
arms"



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms*, one of the most significant themes Hemingway emphasizes on in the novel is love. He showed this theme through the novel by descriptively describing Lt. Henry and Catherine Barkley's relationship.

Although in book one of the novel, Hemingway's view on love is very cynical. He expresses this cynical idea on love through describing Lt. Henry and Catherine Barkley's relationship as a game where Lt. Henry must plan each action out like moves in a chess game to get what he wants from Catherine. Early on, Lt. Henry thinks he is playing this game alone. However, later in their relationship Catherine to his surprise reveals that she is also playing what she refers to in the text as a rotten game we play. This indicates that they both were playing a game with each other in which they were both trying to get something out of one another.

At first sight, Catherine Barkley was attracted to Lt. Henry, it was also the same attraction that Lt. Henry had for Catherine. After first meeting Catherine, Lt. Henry promised to come and see her every day or as often as he could, which is what he does. Their seeing each other leads to their somewhat fake relationship leading to a very serious and meaningful relationship over time. Lt. Henry's leg injury later in the book also strengthens their relationship even more when he gets to see her again at the hospital in Milan after being moved there to treat and have his leg operated on. In fact, when he first saw her come into his hospital room, he described his feelings for her upon seeing her as I was in love with her, everything turned over inside of me. Given these feelings, the current state of Lt. Henry and Catherine's relationship is very meaningful and strong.

Although Lt. Henry has been in many relationships over the years of his life, none of them have been prolonged enough or meaningful enough to him to be considered as anything more than the same game he plays with Catherine early on in their relationship. In fact, in the text he even states that I had never been in love with anyone and then again later in the text he states that I had not wanted to fall in love with her, but I had as he referred to Miss. Barkley. This shows that although he may have told Catherine differently, all he had wanted their relationship to amount to was nothing more than a game or as he describes it a good time. Despite his original plan, Catherine ends up being his perfect match and he ends up falling in love with her.

Catherine's story on the other hand is much different from Lt. Henry's. Prior to their relationship, we only know of one other relationship she had been in, which was with her deceased boyfriend. They had been engaged for nearly eight years until he was killed in a battle called the Somme. Although, Catherine's view on their relationship seemed more serious even from the start, she too had been just looking for someone to play games with.

However, as with Lt. Henry, she too eventually falls deeply in love with him and they soon become inseparable.

Ultimately, Lt. Henry and Catherine Barkley's relationship has been through a lot of different things. Some of these, include the two of them being fake at first and Lt. Henry getting a horrible injury causing them to be separated for a while. However, given all these trials and tribulations, they seem to have only strengthened their relationship to become an unbreakable bond that will likely continue to grow as the text goes on and the plot develops.