

DISCLAIMER: Kata, I appreciate that you give me an outline to go off of, but I tend to flow in my writing off onto something that seems unrelated, and then bring it back into perspective. That is not the case with this paper, but it may be in the future, so please do not mark off points for such a lapse in writing that doesn't follow a silly rubric. After all, it is an essay, and I feel that such a rubric is a unnecessary boundary. Also I don't have a copy of the book, so I just freestyled a little bit.

Olek Yardas

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English 12

Kata Solow

Summer Reading Essay

The boundaries we place on ourselves are the ones that will shape who we are and who we will be. This boundary can be a limit, a maximum, or it can be a “safety net,” a minimum of sorts. But these boundaries are only as strong as the motivation behind them. If we are not diligent, we may soon be far outside of the boundaries we placed on ourselves.

Early in *A Farewell to Arms*, Catherine Barkley places one such boundary upon herself, stating that she will not allow herself to be the target of Henry's then lust for her, and reflecting that, Henry bounds himself from developing feelings for Catherine. However, we humans are easily convinced otherwise, and over time, the two grow to genuinely and passionately love each

other. It is as if they were trying so hard to not like each other, and in the process thinking so much about each other that they unintentionally develop feelings. This type of dissolution of boundaries is present in the real world, and so is its reciprocal.

That type of mindset - “I won’t, I won’t, I won’t” - will only work if the person possessing such a mindset has the integrity to support it. Thinking about what one *won’t* do all the time gives rise to questions; *Why not? Why am I trying so hard to not do this? What good will it bring?* Often, this person will get so caught up in the “I won’t” part of the boundary, that they forget why they placed that boundary in the first place, and let fall down. It is the same scenario for “I will,” and other mindsets of that ilk. So if all boundaries will wear down, then how can they shape us so. Simple: by letting them bound, and then going on with the rest of your day. Letting go of what *might* happen if you overstep such a boundary is the first step, followed by trusting that you will recognize when you have overstepped, and will take the appropriate steps to get back inside.

On a personal level, I have experienced such dissolution of boundaries I set for myself. It is all that I was thinking about, “I must, I must, I must,” and then the critical moment came. “Why,” I asked myself, “do I try so hard to do this?” I did not have an answer, and let myself lapse. Fortunately, this was only over the course of several days, and I managed to get out of my head and fixed what had went wrong before any permanent damage was done, but I also learned that I needed to let go. I needed to enjoy myself, as my boundary that I had set was only in effect for a small portion of the day, and I was giving a disproportionately large amount of attention. I

guess the point here is, that if you try so hard to get something outside of when you can actually attain it, it will fall away from you. And that is what happened to Henry.