

Lecture 3 Literary Analysis of Old Man and The sea (from P.5 to P.10)

Title : Old Man and The sea

The title's connection to the major themes of the story, including man vs. nature, isolation, age, and struggle. Titles of newspapers and magazines, like books, typically give us some insight into what we can expect when we open their pages. The significance of the title in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* is multifaceted, at once providing a straightforward glimpse into the book's subject matter and also representing various themes throughout the story.

Hemingway's tale of an aged man battling the elements (the sea and its inhabitants) is an enduring classic and award winner. Like everything Hemingway wrote, the **simplicity**, or straightforwardness, of the title not only tells you directly about the central idea of the book but requires the reader to look deeper for symbolism in the book's **themes** (or the main ideas behind the story) and relationships.

Hemingway, himself, has said that writing should be direct and personal with simple word choice and sentence construction. It stands to reason, then, that Hemingway would follow his own advice in naming his work something as uncomplicated as *The Old Man and the Sea*. It simply makes sense for Hemingway's writing personality, something many relate to his days as a reporter, where dialogue is king and short, concise sentences rule over lengthy and wordy ones.

The title **illustrates the old man's central purpose in life**—his battle, sometimes winning, sometimes losing, against nature, the sea, and its inhabitants. The title may also symbolize the man's harmony with his environment.

Another idea of the title is that Hemingway's title, *The Old Man and the Sea*, references the novella's protagonist, Santiago. The specific diction, "and," connotes an intimate, symbiotic relationship; both Santiago and the sea are bound together. Hemingway specifically does not use the words "or," "conquers," "endures," or "fights," because these words imply that Santiago and the sea are separate entities. Where, in Santiago's mind, man and sea are inextricably connected. This precise title portrays Santiago's deep-rooted, brotherly connection to the sea, and conveys that they are not adversaries, but partners in a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship.

<https://blog.gopeer.org/the-old-man-and-the-sea-by-ernest-hemingway-critical-essay-7a1184e152c5>

What is the message of Old Man and the Sea?

"A man is not made for defeat."

A man continues to do whatever he must do to the best of his ability, no matter what tribulations befall him. While challenges and setbacks can strip a man of all outward signs of success, still his spirit can remain undefeated.

Summary

Analysis

Santiago is an elderly fisherman who has gone 84 days without catching a fish. For the first 40 days, a boy named Manolin worked with Santiago. But Manolin's parents forced him to leave Santiago and start working on a "luckier" boat. Even so, at the end of every day Manolin still helps Santiago carry his empty skiff (boat) in from the water.

Santiago's face and hands are deeply scarred from so many years of handling fishing gear and heavy fish. Everything about him is old, except his eyes, which are the same color as the sea and are "cheerful and undefeated."

After Santiago's 84th unsuccessful day, Manolin once again helps him to bring in his skiff and gear. Manolin tells Santiago that he has made a bit of money working on the "luckier" boat, and offers to rejoin Santiago. He says that his father lacks faith, which is why he forced Manolin to switch to the other boat. Santiago advises him to stay with the luckier boat, but the two agree that they have faith that Santiago will catch something soon.

Manolin offers to buy Santiago a beer on the Terrace, a restaurant near the docks. The other fishermen at the restaurant make fun of Santiago's troubles, but Manolin disregards them. He reminisces with Santiago about the time they first started fishing together, when Manolin was five years old. Manolin says he still wants to help Santiago and offers to get Santiago fresh sardines for bait. Santiago initially refuses, but then finally agrees to accept two pieces of bait.

Over their beers, Santiago tells Manolin that he will be fishing far out in the sea the next day. Manolin says he will try to get the man he is fishing with to go far out as well since the man has bad vision and will follow the boy's recommendations.

Manolin wonders how Santiago's vision can be so good after so many years of fishing. Santiago replies, "I am a strange old man."

After they finish the beer, Manolin helps Santiago carry his equipment up the road to Santiago's sparsely furnished shack. On the wall are two paintings: one of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which belonged to Santiago's wife, and another of the patron saint of Cuba. Santiago has taken down a photograph of his wife that used to hang on the wall because it made him too lonely to see it.