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**IDENTITY OF NATURE AND ITS ELEMENTS TO HUMANS AS SHOWN IN  
ERNEST EMINGWAY'S "THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA"**

**Abstract:** Ernest Hemingway, a renowned novelist all around the globe was a great lover of nature. He has written many books and the novel "The Old Man and the Sea" is remembered by everyone even today. The book had won him "The Nobel Prize" in 1954 and "The Pulitzer Prize" in 1953 respectively. The book is filled with useful information about the teaching of nature and its elements to humans. Further, the lone hero "Santiago (the old man)" and his undying courage to travel in the vast sea are marvellously portrayed by the author. The words employed by the author are quite simple and easy to understand. Further, the importance of nature to the human's is also beautifully portrayed by the author.

**Keywords:** Fish, Universe, Water, Marlin.

**About the Book:** It is the story about the indomitable human spirit. It also represents the struggle between an old man named Santiago and Marlin (the giant fish). The story also talks about the bond of friendship between the old and the young boy by the name Manolin. The old man had gone eighty four days without catching a fish that gave him the tag of an unlucky man. Then on the eighty fifth day, he had caught a Marlin and fought with it for two days with great amount of courage until he wins. But to his dismay, the Mako sharks attacked the fish and the old man tried all the measures to stop them. He could stop a few but the sharks overpowered him and ate up his prized catch. He finally reached the shore, went to his shack and sleeps very deeply. The next morning the other fisherman and the boy was amazed and gathered around the skeletal remains of the fish and talked about heroism of the old man. The tourist nearby observes the Marlin and mistakes it for a shark. Manolin was happy to find Santiago sleeping safely in his bed. He went to fetch some coffee and daily newspaper for the old man. When the old man woke up, the two agreed to be partners in fishing. Then, the old man returns to sleep and dreamt about lions playing on the beaches of Africa.

**Main Paper:** “The Old Man and The Sea” was the masterpiece of Hemingway which fetched him both the prestigious Pulitzer and noble prize in the year 1953 and 1954. The hero of the story was an aged Cuban fisherman named Santiago. He was more than a hero and can be compared to a superman. Though he was very old, his physical strength was that of a young man and the spirit was that of an absolutely indomitable. Everything about the old man was king-sized: his age, cheerfulness, strength and not to forget the run of extraordinary bad luck he has at the start of the book – he has gone eighty-four days without catching a fish. When on the eighty-fifth day he does catch one, it is record breaking, a sixteen-hundred-pound marlin, so large, powerful and symbolic structure of nature.

The book was a remarkable one for its stress on what man can do and on the world as an arena where heroic deeds are totally possible. Like Hemingway’s other protagonists, here too the old man was confronted with a vast universe filled with the tragedy and pain but these are transcended and the affirming tone was in sharp contrast with books such as “The Sun Also Rises” and “A Farewell to Arms”.

In the **Universe** we lived in, changeless and unaffected by divinity, everyone has a fixed role to play. In the book too, Santiago’s role was to pursue to the great Marlin. “That which I was born for,” he reflects. The great Marlin was supposed to be found in the deepest part of the sea and escape from the dangers of the outside water world especially from the pursuit of man. Then, the two of them struggle with each other to the death, but without animosity or hatred. One was escaping from the other while the other was after them.

On the contrary, Santiago suddenly feels a deep affection and admiration for the **fish**. He admires the great Marlin for the great strength it has. The pulling of the skiff of the old man by the Marlin out to sea, and becomes conscious of its nobility as the two grow closer and closer together, in spirit as well as that of space, during the long struggle between them on the Gulf Stream. In the final struggle of the two, Santiago’s hand was bleeding, his whole body was endowed with fatigue and pain, the old man reflects in his exhaustion:

*You are killing me, fish... But you have a right to.  
Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful,  
or a calmer or more noble thing than you, brother.  
Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who.*

An emotional sense of brotherhood and love, in the world in which everyone was killing or being killed, binds together the creatures of nature, establishes between them a unity and a beautiful nature which transcends the destructive pattern in which they are caught along the journey on the sea. In the endless universe, each living thing man, trees, plants and animal, acts out its destiny according to the drives of its species, and in the process becomes the profound harmony of the natural universe.

This harmony takes into account the hard facts of pursuit, violence, and death but sometimes reached a state of feeling beyond them, was a primary aspect of Hemingway's viewing of the world we are living. Even the different species of sharks have their own place. They are largely of scavenger type, but the one with the great Mako shark which makes its way out of the deep part of the sea, shares the grandeur of the great Marlin. The Old man killed him but feels identified with him as well:

*But you enjoyed killing the dentuso, he thought.  
He lives on the fish as you do.  
He is not a scavenger nor just a moving appetite  
as some sharks are. He is beautiful and noble  
and knows no fear of anything.*

The natural surrounding which we live not only has its own harmony but also has integration and the degrees of value. In the Old Man and the Sea, the above idea is contained in the ideas of depth. The deeper the sea gets, the more valuable the creatures living there and the more intense the experience deriving from it. The day Santiago caught the great Marlin; he goes out much further into the sea than the other fisherman and casts his bait in much deeper **water**. The great Marlin is itself shows that it is the native of the profounder depths. Even the Mako sharks lives in the deep parts of the sea water and its speed, power and directness are the qualities associated with depth.

*"I shouldn't have gone out so far, fish," he said.  
"Neither for you nor for me. I'm sorry, fish."*

The evolution of the experience of greatness and the inevitability of the wilderness are bound up together. Nature provides us with the boundless and numerous opportunities for the great experience if men have within itself to respond. The experience carries with it its heavy tragic price, but it was worth it. When the old man returns to the island with the skeleton of

the **Marlin** still lashed to the skiff. He then falls asleep exhausted in his wretched hut, falls asleep and dreams his usual dream of the great African lions.

Then, in the morning, the other fishermen of the area was amazed to see the huge size of the Marlin, they made measurement out of it and believes it as a record-breaking; while the sad feeling of Manolin for the old man was strongly reinforced. However, the tourists in the last scene of the story have mistaken the Marlin for a shark, but they too are awestruck by the sense of extraordinary.

The account of the natural vast sea coming to life at the dawn was one of the most moving passages in the story, supplemented later with the drama of the great pursuit. This comes when the old man saw the huge size of the Marlin for the first time. Here, the author too plays very close attention to the movements of the currents of the wind, the rippling of the water, the movements of the turtles, birds, fishes, the rising of the stars, moon and the sun. The author has employed simply not the sense of nature's vastness but also her enhancement. This magic enhancement has added an aesthetic dimension to the adventure of Santiago whose heroism invests it with moral meaning and whose invocation of comradeship and the supply of identity with emotional grandeur.

Within the universe which we live in, there is no limit to the depth of experience with our natural surroundings, learning how to function is of great importance. It is the power of will that one enable to live and the use of various kinds of technique is what enables one to live successfully. In the story Santiago was not just a common and ordinary fisherman, but a superb craftsman who knows about his business thoroughly and put into practice with great skill. He keeps his lines in straight while other fisherman allows them to drift with the natural flow of the sea current.

The simple reason that most of Hemingway's stories are so crammed with the technical details about fishing, hunting, bullfighting, war and boxing is because of his belief that professional technique is the quickest way of getting into the world of literature. He believes that men should study the natural world into which they are born as the most serious of all subjects; they can live the world successfully only when they are able to handle themselves with the skills. To him, life was more than an endurance of contest. It was also an art which contains various rules, rituals and methods that if once learned, leads to mastery. In most of his stories, the stripping down of existence to the struggle between individual man and the natural world during the course of one's life is beautifully portrayed.

The author through “The Old Man and Sea” make a realisation to the readers that man is a part of the whole universe. Further, man, fish and all other creatures in nature are similar from the cosmic point of view. Though man may not treat other creatures as same, but to the universal conscience that treats man and other creations of nature as equals. The story is a presentation of life as a struggle against the indestructible and unconquerable forces in which a kind of victory is possible. With the novel, Hemingway had written an epic metaphor for life. The fish is the creation of the natural world with its ambiguous and unbreakable essence. It can't be taken home as a trophy of some tournament. In the struggle between life and death, the problem of right and wrong seems meagre.

**Conclusion:** Thus the author proves that nature and its elements teach a lot to humans. In the novel, the old man is taught how to mend a bond of compassion with the fish (Marlin). Further, we as humans have a lot to learn from the vast natural surroundings. To understand what nature is trying to us, we should have a good time with nature and try to imagine ourselves what it is trying to show. Further, the novel also shows us how man and nature are closely related to each other.

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