**Man's Relationship With Nature in *The Old Man and the Sea***

Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* is an intriguing short story that revolves around the relationship between man and nature. The story, published in 1952, depicts the importance of nature to human beings' survival and how it is the only source of life. However, the novel also reveals the cruelty of nature and how it can be daunting, especially if human beings do not appropriately take care of their immediate environment. The protagonist, Santiago, is an old man who has lived depending on the sea his entire life. It is evident that Santiago lives in abject poverty but perseveres and works hard to survive. Despite his struggles, he is still hopeful of making ends meet by relying on nature. Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* efficiently reveals the importance of nature to human survival and the cruelty of the universe through Santiago's battle with nature.

**Importance of Nature**

Hemingway effectively depicts the importance of nature to humanity by showing how it keeps Santiago alive and hopeful. Santiago is old and without any surviving family members to help him at such a weary age. It is apparent that Santiago's life is full of difficulties and obstacles that he must overcome to survive. The narrator states, "The old man was thin and gaunt with deep wrinkles in the back of his neck" (Hemingway, 2022, p.1). According to Mamurova (2021), although Santiago has gone for almost eighty-four days with no single catch, he still sets out into the seas, hopeful that he will be lucky. His vast knowledge and experience in the sea make him strong because he understands that he will eventually catch a fish. After all, the sea is his source of life. The old man perseveres through hardship despite his age and luck starting to become against him in the wake of a rough sea environment (Masruddin, 2013). When Manolin says that his father does not have much hope, he replies, "But we have. Haven't we?" (Hemingway, 2022, p.2). Santiago's belief in nature's provision strengthens his hope and resilience.

**Man Versus Nature**

Similarly, Hemingway' illustrates the struggle between man and cruel nature to show the value of resilience. The story's primary focus is Santiago's battle with nature, depicted through the obstacles and challenges he must overcome to survive. Despite being overwhelmed by the struggles because of old age, he still overcomes the cruelty of nature (Nuriadi & Melani, 2021). When he eventually comes across the giant fish, the Marlin, a product of nature, he must show his strength and battle it for his own survival. Marlin tests Santiago beyond his endurance through a three-day struggle that exhausts and almost kills him. The author personifies the giant fish to show his interaction with Santiago as a fierce battle of strength and resilience. The narrator states, "But what a fish to pull like that. He must have his mouth shut tight on the wire. I wish I could see him" (Hemingway, 2022, p.17). Santiago's thoughts reveal Marlin's strength and determination to survive as much as Santiago. Although he finally reels it into the boat, he is yet to face another battle with nature. The shovel-nosed sharks symbolize the destructive laws of nature as they attack his catch, only to leave him with the skeleton.

Overall, Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* effectively reflects the battle for survival between man and nature, as depicted through Santiago's struggles. Notwithstanding the cruelty and obstacles thrown at him by nature, Santiago is determined to overcome the challenges. His resilience, perseverance, and patience reveal nature's importance to humans' survival, as it is almost impossible to win the battle against nature. Santiago has depended on the sea for his entire life and continues to have hope even though luck and age seem to be against him amid nature's cruelty. The story presents a universal lesson about man's inherent battle with nature and the need for persistence and patience.

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