

The Old Man and The Sea

I read this book for the first time in high school and I remembered it just as well as if I had read it yesterday. As I read it again I remembered some of the same language, especially the old man talking to his hands. Cursing his left hand when it cramped up on him like it was a separate part of himself and had a mind of its own was particularly interesting.

We can see immediately in the beginning of the book that this old man is in a struggle to catch fish and hasn't done so for eighty four days. He leaves early on the eighty fifth day and by himself which is important because it defines the journey. He seems to be the pinnacle of the Hemingway hero, a culmination of a life time of writing that comes together in the portrait of Santiago. He is old, unlucky, humble despite is glorious past of fishing and el champion, trying to do the most he can from his weathered body. He has lived so much that he does not need to dwell on the past events or people he shared it with and is perfectly happy reading about baseball and dreaming about lions on the beach in Africa.

The struggle between the marlin is a beautiful depiction of courage and resilience, but I begin to wonder who is hooked into who. The old man and the fish are one and their lives become connected through that line as they live each moment according to the other's actions. Even the old man is not sure who is better, him or the marlin, and he mentions several times they are not that different. And whether or not the sharks ate his fish, it only matters that the old man brought him to the boat and defeated him.

