

Ernest Hemingway: A Clean, Well-Lighted Place (the end of the story) (CD Track 5, Bridge p. 33–35)

T The main theme of the story is the nothingness that Hemingway believed fills all of our lives. It's written in a style of existentialism, the idea that there is no higher power or larger meaning in life so we must find purpose and happiness in our own world. The post-war generation of writers was very disillusioned by the death and destruction they had seen on the battlefield. Many felt that the world no longer made any sense, and everything had lost its value. In such a world, the only thing one could hope for was to be able to drink in a clean, well-lighted place. (Hemingway also suffered from depression, which we can see reflected in the story.)

I. Listen to the end of the story and fill in the missing words. Then listen again and choose which speakers say each sentence.

A Old waiter B Young waiter C Barman

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|---|---|---|---|
| 1 An _____ is the same to everyone. | A | B | C |
| 2 What are you trying to _____ ? | A | B | C |
| 3 Everything except the _____ . | A | B | C |
| 4 When we get _____ nothing really matters anymore. | A | B | C |
| 5 Great. Another _____ one. | A | B | C |
| 6 You know, this place has nice _____ | A | B | C |

II. After reading the comic in the magazine and listening to the recording again, answer the following questions.

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| 1 Compare the two waiters: How are they similar? How are they different? | 3 The old man prefers cafés that are clean with good lighting. What kinds of things are important to you when choosing a restaurant / pub / café? |
| 2 The young waiter gets angry when the old waiter says his wife will be surprised. Why? | |

Ernest Hemingway: The Old Man and the Sea (Bridge p. 32)

"A man can be destroyed but not defeated."

T *The Old Man and the Sea* was a great success for Ernest Hemingway when it was published in 1952. At first sight it's a simple tale of an old Cuban fisherman called Santiago, a young boy, Manolin, who loves him and looks up to him, and a battle with a giant marlin fish.

Although it's a small, slim 'novella' (a short book), it became known as an 'epic tale'. It helped secure Hemingway's status as a renowned writer and later he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Beneath the surface of the simple story is an allegory – a second story full of meaning or messages. Santiago is a mentor, a spiritual father to Manolin, who is his pupil or like a son to him. The novella explores youth, age and friendship. It is also the story of a struggle between man and nature. The old man and the marlin respect each other and Santiago loves the fish for fighting to be free. But ultimately it is a tale of resisting defeat and Santiago represents the every man's struggle to survive – for 84 days he hasn't caught a fish, and yet he sails farther into the ocean than ever before. He battles with the fish and even fights off sharks, even though it's hopeless. The marlin represents an opponent that brings out the best in Santiago.

I. Read the comic and answer the questions:

- 1 What do you think will happen to the old man and the marlin fish?
- 2 If the sharks could be a symbol – what could they be a symbol for?
- 3 Can you describe the boy and the old man's relationship?
- 4 How would you describe the old man's relationship with the great marlin fish?

II. What adjectives does the old man use to describe himself?

III. Complete the descriptions used to describe the story:

Young versus _____
 Nature versus _____
 Strength versus _____