

OLD MAN AND THE SEA

By Ernest Hemingway

Sub : American and
Postcolonial Writing
(FE 2)
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EARNEST HEMINGWAY

- Born on July 21 1899 in Oak Park Illinois.
- Started his career as a reporter at the age of 17.
- During first world war he got enlisted with the US RedCross to drive ambulances in Italy.
- Then he worked as a freelance reporter , later he travelled to France and took to serious writing.
- Got associated with experimental writers like Gertrude Stein And Ezra Pound.

- First novel : Sun also rises(1926) and A Farewell to Arms (1929) established him as a reputed writer.
- The experiences as a reporter during Spanish Civil war provided the framework for his novel For whom the Bell Tolls.
- Other works: The Torrents Of Spring, Winner Take Nothing, To have And To Have Not, The fifth Column and the First fortyNine stories, Across the Rivers and into The Trees, A movable Feast, Islands in the Stream, The Dangerous Summer and The Garden Of Eden.
- Hemingway's last years were spent in pain and alcoholism and he committed suicide on 2 july 1961.
- Sparse in language, skilled in his use of silence, dialogue and action, he deliberately broke away from the flowery language of the past.
- He has depicted war as a great calamity and has portrayed death a distress in his novels.

LOST GENERATION

- The term was coined by Gertrude Stein to address the group of American writers who belonged to the period which followed the WW I .
- Sherwood Anderson, Scott Fitzgerald, John Dos Passos, William Faulkner were the major writers.
- Most of these writers had first hand experience in the war and their works reveal a sense of disillusionment, alienation , disintegration of the old values and revulsion from the horrors of war.
- It was Hemingway who popularized this term by using it in his epigraph to his novel *Sun Also Rises*.

SUMMARY

- *The Old Man and the Sea* is the story of an epic struggle between an old, seasoned fisherman and the greatest catch of his life. For eighty-four days, Santiago, an aged Cuban fisherman, has set out to sea and returned empty-handed. So conspicuously unlucky is he that the parents of his young, devoted apprentice and friend, Manolin, have forced the boy to leave the old man in order to fish in a more prosperous boat. Nevertheless, the boy continues to care for the old man upon his return each night. He helps the old man tote his gear to his ramshackle hut, secures food for him, and discusses the latest developments in American baseball, especially the trials of the old man's hero, Joe DiMaggio. Santiago is confident that his unproductive streak will soon come to an end, and he resolves to sail out farther than usual the following day.

- On the eighty-fifth day of his unlucky streak, Santiago does as promised, sailing his skiff far beyond the island's shallow coastal waters and venturing into the Gulf Stream. He prepares his lines and drops them. At noon, a big fish, which he knows is a marlin, takes the bait that Santiago has placed one hundred fathoms deep in the waters. The old man expertly hooks the fish, but he cannot pull it in. Instead, the fish begins to pull the boat.
- **Summary Plot Overview**
- *The Old Man and the Sea* is the story of an epic struggle between an old, seasoned fisherman and the greatest catch of his life. For eighty-four days, Santiago, an aged Cuban fisherman, has set out to sea and returned empty-handed. So conspicuously unlucky is he that the parents of his young, devoted apprentice and friend, Manolin, have forced the boy to leave the old man in order to fish in a more prosperous boat. Nevertheless, the boy continues to care for the old man upon his return each night. He helps the old man tote his gear to his ramshackle hut, secures food for him, and discusses the latest developments in American baseball, especially the trials of the old man's hero, Joe DiMaggio. Santiago is confident that his unproductive streak will soon come to an end, and he resolves to sail out farther than usual the following day.
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- Unable to tie the line fast to the boat for fear the fish would snap a taut line, the old man bears the strain of the line with his shoulders, back, and hands, ready to give slack should the marlin make a run. The fish pulls the boat all through the day, through the night, through another day, and through another night. It swims steadily northwest until at last it tires and swims east with the current. The entire time, Santiago endures constant pain from the fishing line. Whenever the fish lunges, leaps, or makes a dash for freedom, the cord cuts Santiago badly. Although wounded and weary, the old man feels a deep empathy and admiration for the marlin, his brother in suffering, strength, and resolve

- On the third day the fish tires, and Santiago, sleep-deprived, aching, and nearly delirious, manages to pull the marlin in close enough to kill it with a harpoon thrust. Dead beside the skiff, the marlin is the largest Santiago has ever seen. He lashes it to his boat, raises the small mast, and sets sail for home. While Santiago is excited by the price that the marlin will bring at market, he is more concerned that the people who will eat the fish are unworthy of its greatness.
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- As Santiago sails on with the fish, the marlin's blood leaves a trail in the water and attracts sharks. The first to attack is a great mako shark, which Santiago manages to slay with the harpoon. In the struggle, the old man loses the harpoon and lengths of valuable rope, which leaves him vulnerable to other shark attacks. The old man fights off the successive vicious predators as best he can, stabbing at them with a crude spear he makes by lashing a knife to an oar, and even clubbing them with the boat's tiller. Although he kills several sharks, more and more appear, and by the time night falls, Santiago's continued fight against the scavengers is useless. They devour the marlin's precious meat, leaving only skeleton, head, and tail. Santiago chastises himself for going "out too far," and for sacrificing his great and worthy opponent. He arrives home before daybreak, stumbles back to his shack, and sleeps very deeply.

- The next morning, a crowd of amazed fishermen gathers around the skeletal carcass of the fish, which is still lashed to the boat. Knowing nothing of the old man's struggle, tourists at a nearby café observe the remains of the giant marlin and mistake it for a shark. Manolin, who has been worried sick over the old man's absence, is moved to tears when he finds Santiago safe in his bed. The boy fetches the old man some coffee and the daily papers with the baseball scores, and watches him sleep. When the old man wakes, the two agree to fish as partners once more. The old man returns to sleep and dreams his usual dream of lions at play on the beaches of Africa.