

# The Most Dangerous Game

By: Richard Connell



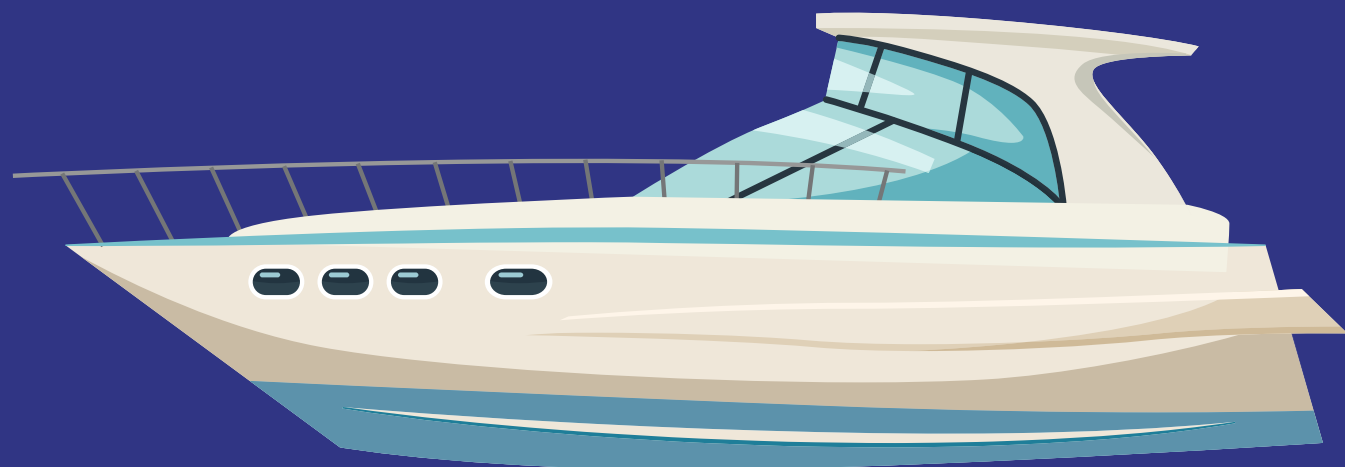
# Introduction



The characters that we are introduced to at the beginning are two hunters, Rainsford, and Whitney. Whitney expresses sympathy for the animals they hunt, but Rainsford disagrees on the grounds that "They've no understanding" and that "The world is made up of two classes--the hunters and the hunted" (Connell 1).

## Characters

# Setting



On a yacht at night where Rainsford and Whitney are talking about the island that they are passing by on their way to go hunting in the Amazon.

Whitney explains, "The old charts call it "Ship-Trap Island," and sets up the idea that the island is dangerous: "A suggestive name, isn't it? Sailors have a curious dread of the place. I don't know why. Some superstition--" (Connell 1).



# Mood

The mood is calm, yet uneasy. The crew had been acting strange because of the island's reputation as Whitney brought up to Rainsford by asking: "Didn't you notice that the crew's nerves seemed a bit jumpy today?" (Connell 2).



# Initiating Incident

Three shots are fired and because of this, Rainsford leans out of the boat to see what happened. He falls when his pipe is knocked from his mouth and he reaches for it, losing balance. Rainsford is then stranded on the island because of this, which leads to his encounter with General Zaroff.

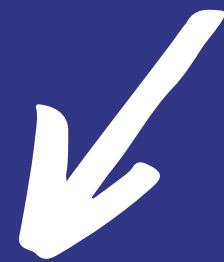
## Rising Action

1. Rainsford knocks on the door of General Zaroff's house and meets Ivan and Zaroff.
2. Rainsford finds out that General Zaroff hunts people and he refuses to join him in his hunt.
3. Rainsford, being hunted, sets a trap killing Ivan and escapes.

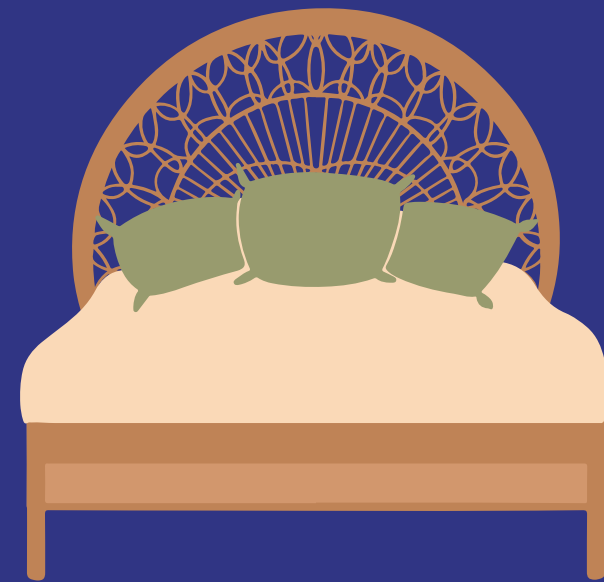


# Climax

The climax is when Rainsford jumps off the cliff and we don't know whether or not he survived or if he'll make it off the island.



*Falling action*



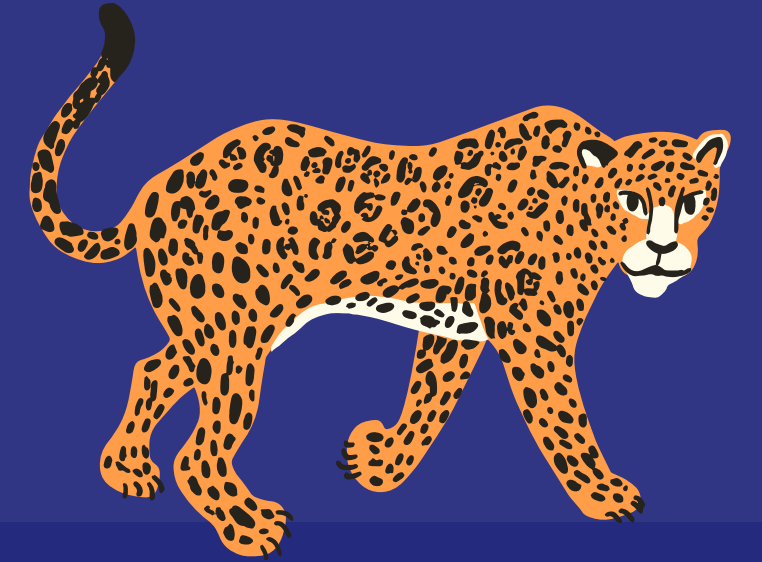
*Conclusion*

Zaroff finds Rainsford in his bedroom and congratulates him on winning the game, but Rainsford wants to fight and kill Zaroff.



Rainsford sleeps in the General's bed, having killed him.

# Types of Characters



Rainsford

Rainsford is the main protagonist in the story. He is a dynamic and round character, since he has many sides to his personality and we get to know him as a person, especially his passion for hunting. He also changes his perspective on the game of hunting from his traumatizing experience on the island. At the beginning, he doesn't feel any remorse for the animals that he hunts: "You're a big-game hunter, not a philosopher. Who cares how a jaguar feels?" (Connell 1). This is then quickly changed after he switches positions and becomes the prey.

# Types of Characters



General Zaroff

Zaroff is the antagonist, and he is a static character because he doesn't change in the course of the story. As, he probably would've continued killing more people if he wasn't killed by Rainsford. Throughout the whole story he also always needed a challenge: "Hunting tigers ceased to interest me some years ago. I exhausted their possibilities, you see. No thrill left in tigers, no real danger. I live for danger, Mr. Rainsford" (Connell 6). Also, his hungry power personality stayed throughout.



# Types of Characters

## Minor Character



Ivan

There's limited information about Ivan, but he is a flat and static character because he doesn't change in the course of the story since his personality is the same until his death. The author also doesn't mention much about his personality only that "... he has the misfortune to be deaf and dumb ..." (Connell 5). He isn't as developed and described as the main characters in the story. He is also a stock character, since he is the stereotypical character that carries out all of the duties or "dirty work" for his master.

# Symbols

## Blood and the Colour Red

There are a few mentions about blood and the colour red when Rainsford is on the island and in the “. . . blood-warm waters . . .” (Connell 3). This could be used to symbolize the amount of violence and death that has occurred on that island due to Zaroff hunting humans for a living or foreshadowing the dangerous situation Rainsford will be in.



# Symbols

## Gunshot



The gunshots are crucial symbols in the story because it could represent the approaching trauma Rainsford would endure on the island. It was also the sound that lead him to enter the island: "Where there are pistol shots, there are men. Where there are men, there is food," he thought (Connell 3). As, there he meets a very interesting and psychotic individual with a game that he wouldn't expect to partake in.

# Symbols



*The Island*

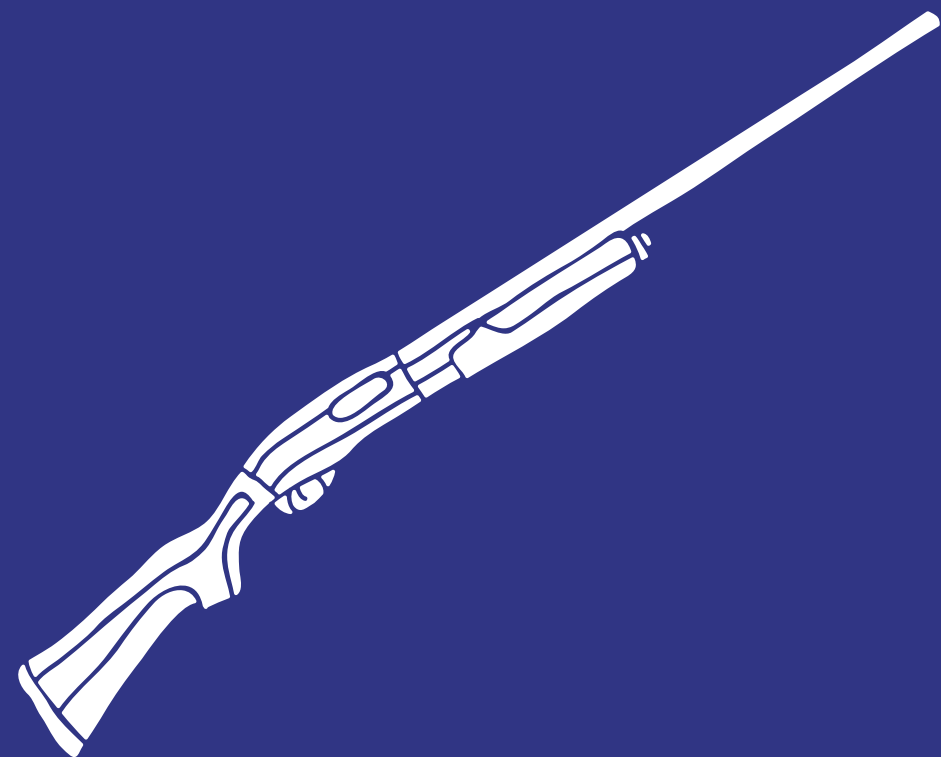
The island symbolizes how Zaroff is isolated from any real civilization and source of humanity. As the author mentions, "OFF THERE to the right-- somewhere-- is a large island," said Whitney." It's rather a mystery-" (Connell 1). It could also represent how Zaroff is separated from the world and is living with his own values and beliefs. His lack of empathy and violence allows for individuals to stay far away from him, so he's isolated from people like the island.

# Themes in the Story

When individuals are put in a stressful situation, they often choose to act based on instinct instead of rationality. Another theme in the story was determination as Rainsford didn't give up since he wanted to stay alive in order to leave the island. He was very keen on surviving and thought of many different strategies such as his traps in hopes to do so.



Humans have difficulty feeling empathy and putting themselves into other people's positions, until they find themselves in that situation. An example was Rainsford believing animals have no feelings: "Bah! They've no understanding" (Connell 1). His perspective changed around once he became the prey and experienced the immense fear of being hunted.

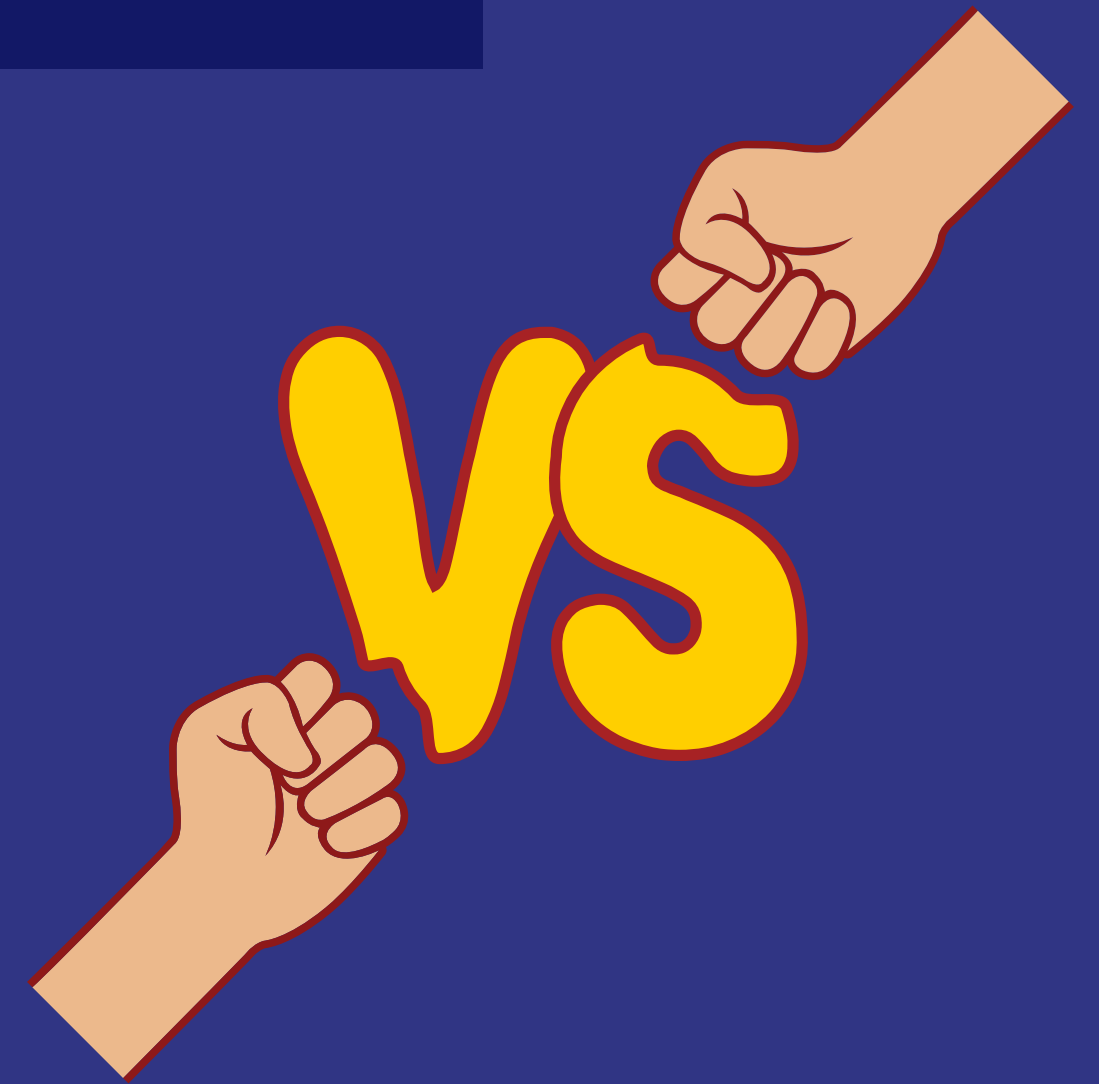


# Conflicts

There are three conflicts in this story which are person vs person, person vs self, and person vs nature.

## Person vs Person

Rainsford had to survive being hunted by Zaroff, so he could leave the island. As Zaroff mentioned, "Tonight," said the general, "we will hunt--you and I" (Connell 12) when they encountered each other on the island.



# Conflicts

## Person vs Nature

Rainsford had to survive being inside the jungle for 3 days. He encountered many obstacles such as the, "Death Swamp and its quicksand" (Connell 15).

## Internal and External

External: Had to survive being hunted by Zaroff.

Internal: Had to use his hunter skills and try to remain calm/strategic to stay alive. At points he struggled with his emotions such as fear.

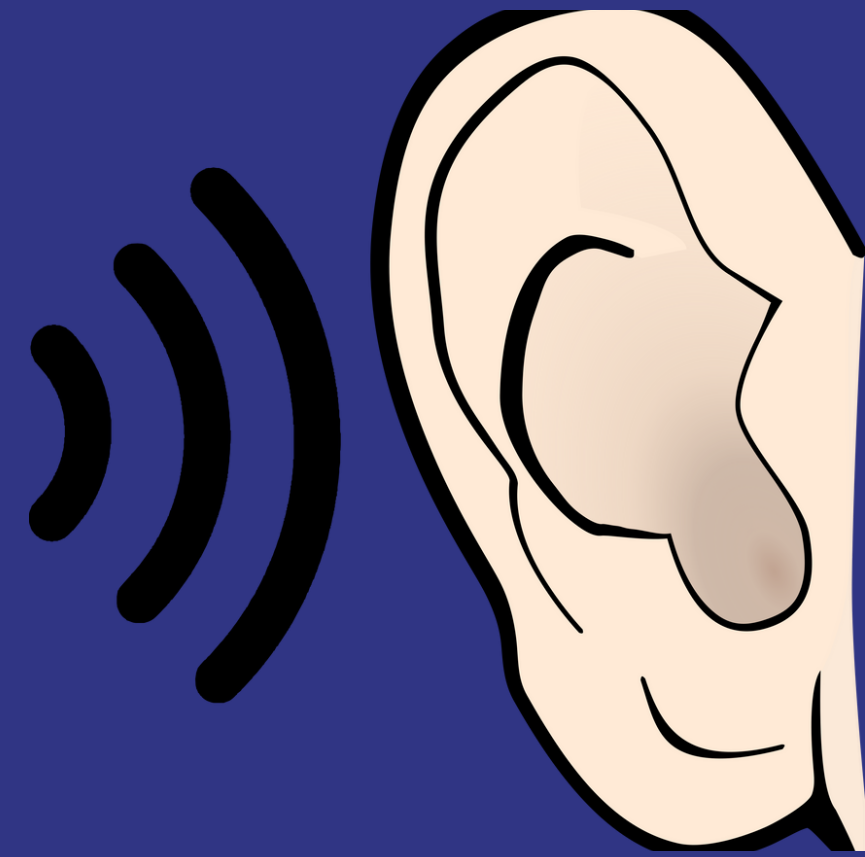
## Person vs Self

Rainsford had to use his skills obtained from hunting and other strategies to survive being the prey instead of the predator. For example, the trail he created to trap Zaroff: "He executed a series of intricate loops; he doubled on his trail again and again, recalling all the lore of the fox hunt, and all the dodges of the fox" (Connell 13).



# Foreshadowing

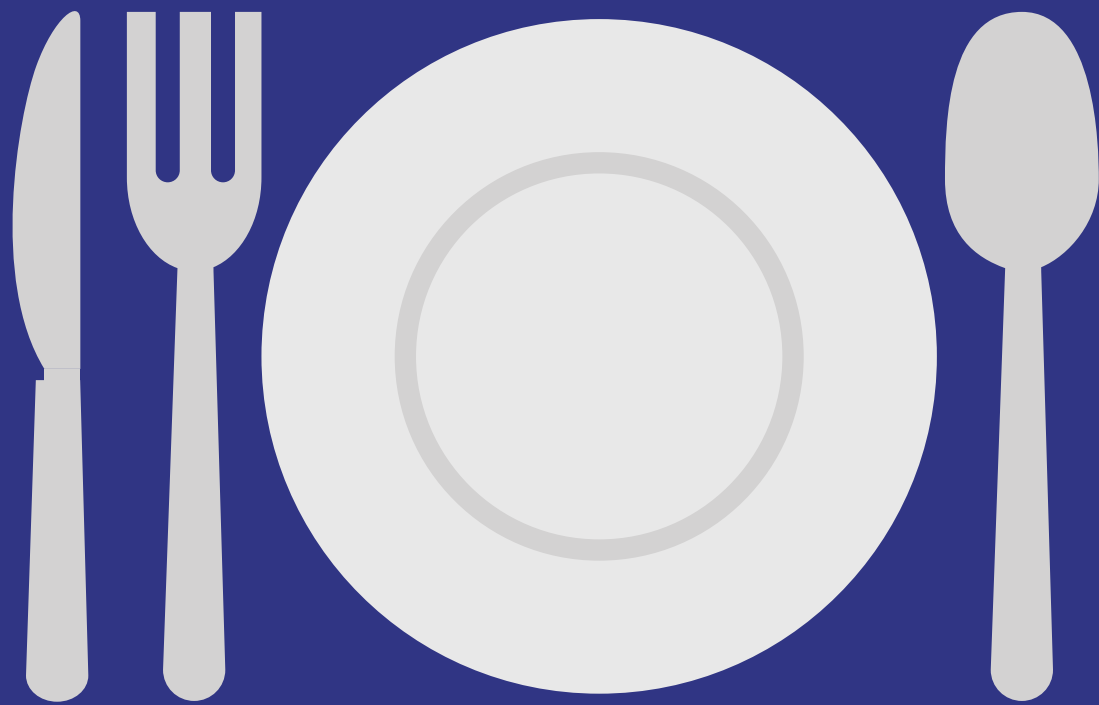
When Rainsford heard a "high screaming sound, the sound of an animal in an extremity of anguish and terror" (Connell 3) from somewhere on the island, but didn't recognize what kind of animal made the noise.



This foreshadows that it's a person being hunted, since an experienced hunter didn't recognize it as an animal.



# foreshadowing



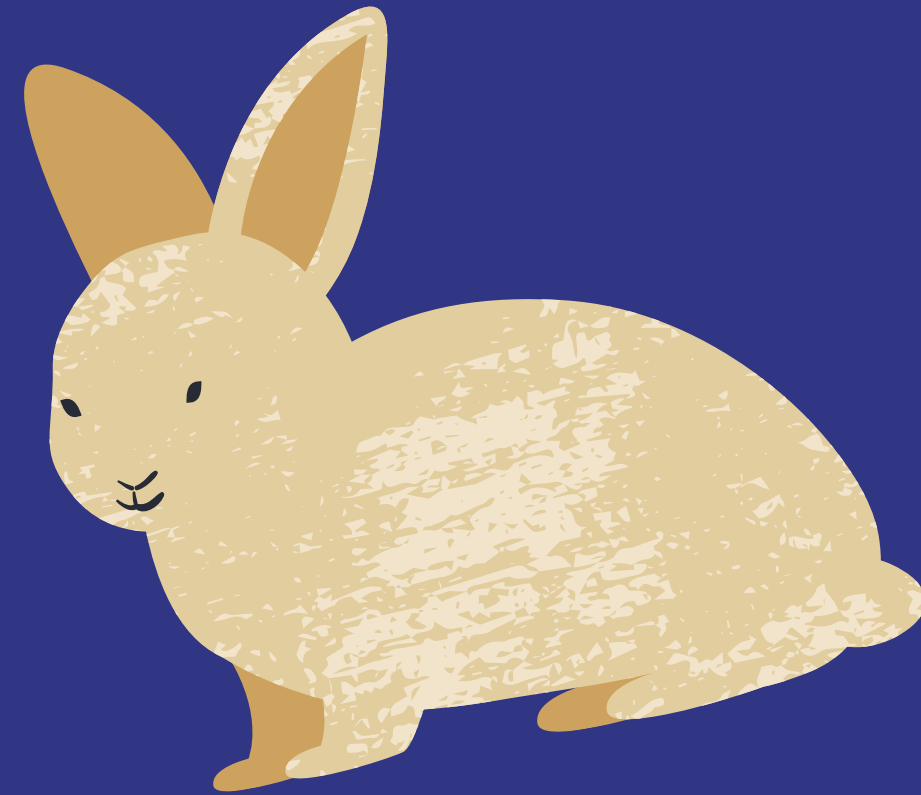
During dinner, Rainsford expresses a belief that Cape Buffalo is the most dangerous game and "For a moment the general did not reply; he was smiling his curious red-lipped smile. Then he said slowly, "No. You are wrong, sir" (Connell 6).

Zaroff's smile foreshadows that what he has in mind instead of Cape Buffalo is sinister, and gives another hint that he is hunting people.

# Irony

*Rainsford was the hunter and becomes the hunted.*

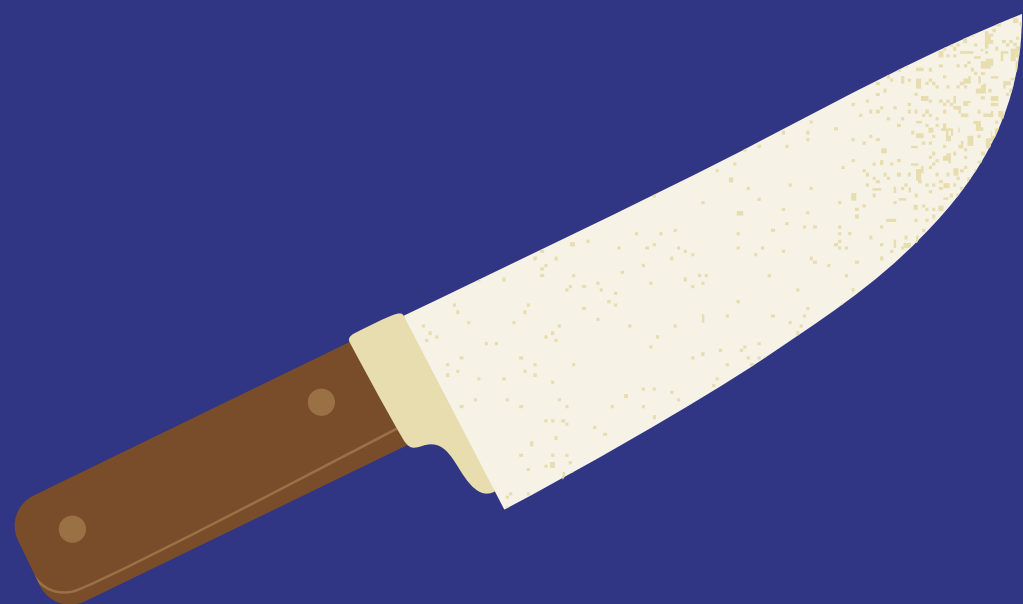
Rainsford doesn't care about the position the animal is in as long as he's in a good position himself: "This hot weather is making you soft, Whitney. Be a realist. The world is made up of two classes--the hunters and the huntees. Luckily, you and I are hunters" (Connell 1).



It's ironic when he is put in the place of the animals and experiences being on the other end of the hunt. This is an example of situational irony.

# Moral

The moral of the story is that it's important to know when to draw the line and recognize when killing is justified and when it isn't.

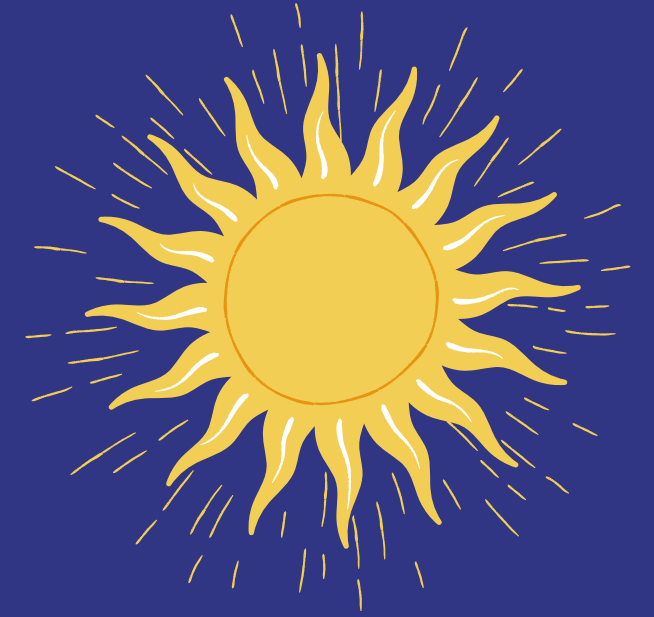


General Zaroff doesn't see what he is doing as murder, saying, "Why should I not be serious? I am speaking of hunting." Rainsford recognizes that Zaroff has gone too far and replies, "Hunting? Great Guns, General Zaroff, what you speak of is murder" (Connell 8-9).

At the end, Rainsford makes the decision to kill General Zaroff, which was a situation in which he recognized that killing was justified under the circumstances.

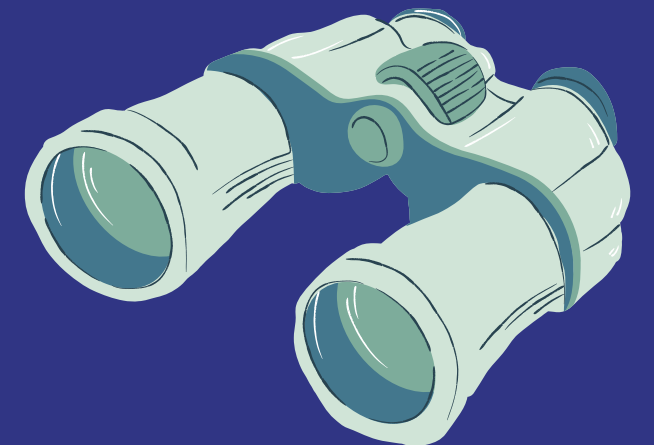
# Importance of these elements

These terms were effective in this short story because they give more depth to the characters and give more meaning to the plot and its details.



For example, character types are important because they show whether or not there is growth, and elements such as symbols and foreshadowing make the story more impactful because they are setting expectations and themes in advance.

The theme and moral of the story give insights into real world issues and are thought provoking for the betterment of society.



# Sources

1. Connell, Richard. "The Most Dangerous Game." 1924. Mr. Barrington's blog. Accessed 11 Feb 2022. <http://myriverside.sd43.bc.ca/pbarrington/english-11-honours/english-11-honours-novel-unit/>
2. Pichel, Irving, and Ernest B. Schoedsack. The Most Dangerous Game. RKO Radio Pictures, 1932