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# Analysis Of Literary Devices In The Most Dangerous Game By Richard Connel

To fully understand someone, you must first walk in their shoes. There are things you will never truly comprehend until you experience them for yourself, such as genuine failure or even being pursued by an inevitable threat. Richard Connel emphasizes this theme in his short story, "The Most Dangerous Game", by having a hunter named Sanger Rainsford experience how it feels like to be the prey instead of the predator. Initially taking place on a yacht in the Caribbean, Rainsford accidentally lunges overboard after hearing gunshots in the distance. While maintaining a certain coolheadedness with no other option left, Rainsford makes it onto the shore of a nearby island, where he finds General Zaroff, a Cossack hunter who is insanely passionate to the point where he even hunts down humans. Faced with constant terror of pain and death, Rainsford has to survive General Zaroff's twisted game for three days until midnight. In doing so, Rainsford is forced to reconsider his position on how a hunted animal feels. By applying foreshadowing, irony, and metaphors, Connel is able to reveal that holding onto one's ideals only takes them so far.

Firstly, Conel uses foreshadowing, the use of hints that suggest future events, to alert the readers of how Rainsford's arrogance will get him into trouble. Foreshadowing allows the reader to infer what is in store for Rainsford as he refuses to accept what his fellow crewmate has to say. Whitney mentions to Rainsford about the superstition regarding 'Ship-Trap Island' and how great of a sport hunting is. However, she doesn't forget to consider hunting from the opposite end. Rainsford, on the other hand, completely disregards the so-called philosophy about prey. He states, "Don't talk rot, Whitney," said Rainsford. "You're a big-game hunter, not a philosopher. Who cares what a jaguar feels?". Rainsford also goes on to say that the 'Ship-Trap Island' superstition is "pure imagination." Though Whitney is wary of a hostile presence of evil in the air, Rainsford fails to recognize any meaning in what she has to say. Furthermore, he is oblivious to the warning behind the infamous name of 'Ship- Trap Island,' which is reasonably the most noticeable form of foreshadowing throughout the whole story. The peculiar name foretells Rainsford's predicament as he is stranded on a remote island with no means of escape. While Rainsford's pride as a hunter continues to cloud his judgment, foreshadowing allows readers to sense the incoming danger. As foreshadowing omens the root of Rainsford's problems, irony highlights the incongruity between Rainsford's beliefs and actions.

Another literary device that shows how contemplating things hold value is irony, which occurs when expectations of something differs from reality. In this particular case, situational irony

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demonstrates how Rainsford was wrong in being quick to judge the hunted as weak during the exposition. 'Nonsense,' laughed Rainsford. '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.' Rainsford categorizes himself as a hunter and asserts to Whitney that a jaguar is unable to sense anything emotionally. He proclaims that such trivial things shouldn't be pondered upon, especially when it relates to prey, which we can assume Rainsford deems as weak and inferior. Later into the story, however, Rainsford is treated as the prey. Though he is at a great advantage, he manages to prevail and outsmart General Zaroff at his own game. Rainsford finally realizes how the hunted feels as he used his resources and prior knowledge to escape General Zaroff's confrontations. By doing so, he disproves his argument that the hunted lie at the mercy of the hunters, which he refers to as superior. Irony helps display how Rainsford was wrong in neglecting what could have happened because General Zaroff was defeated by his own "prey." While irony refutes Rainsford's claims, metaphors allow readers to grasp the consequences of neglectance to a greater extent.

Lastly, Connel strengthens the reassurance obtainable through exploring different alternatives by implementing metaphors, a figure of speech that is used to make a comparison between two things. Metaphors clarify the dire situation Rainsford carelessly gets himself involved in by specifying an indirect similarity between two things. During the rising action of the story, Rainsford suddenly realizes, "The Cossack was the cat; he was the mouse. Then it was that Rainsford knew the full meaning of terror." As fear occupied Rainsford's mind, he immediately makes the connection comparing himself to a mouse and General Zaroff to a cat, which is known to hunt mice due to their natural hunting instincts. After becoming aware of how skilled of a hunter General Zaroff is, Rainsford can only think of running away to find a temporary safe zone exactly as a mouse would. If Rainsford were to take notice of the situation beforehand, he wouldn't have gotten himself in such a life-threatening situation. Now he has no choice but to subject himself to the perils affiliated with the affairs on 'Ship-Trap Island'. Metaphors allow the reader to understand what could've been possible if Rainsford were to take another course of action. One can't help but feel relieved knowing they have escaped the hands of distress and anxiety. With that said, Connel is able to elaborate on how we should keep an open mind even if we are faced with ideas that challenge our own.

Given these points, one can conclude that Connel's use of foreshadowing, metaphors, and irony throughout "The Most Dangerous Game" helped reveal that those who rely on their instincts alone can only go so far. By utilizing foreshadowing, the readers were able to conceive a sense of danger that Rainsford fails to recognize due to his ignorance. Whereas irony allowed one to see that always sticking to your gut will not always end the way you expect it to be. Furthermore, metaphors display what Rainsford could have avoided, only if he was to act with more heed. Most importantly, Connel conveys the dangers and risks associated with not keeping in mind other possibilities. At times, you might find it hard to believe others, but their

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words may actually hold some truth. Though you may seem reluctant to agree with them at first, there's no harm in taking a leap of faith in others

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