

Old man and the sea code hero



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In Ernest Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea*, Santiago is a classic example of a Code Hero, a man of action who accepts death as a part of life, possesses a high degree of skill, and is in a constant state of alertness, having trouble sleeping or resting. First, Santiago is a highly skilled fisherman, who knows his job well and performs it with precision and accuracy without having to give it much thought. He continually demonstrates his skill during his adventure on the ocean, as he initially prepares his lines, lands an albacore tuna, and then works to land the great fish.

Next, he has trouble muting his senses which is apparent throughout the novella. Santiago stays awake for most of the three days that he is out at sea, without giving in to the extreme tiredness that he faces. He is always aware of what is happening and responds to the different changes that occur as he is towed by the fish. Finally, Santiago cheats death and takes risks to perform his livelihood, doing whatever is necessary to get the job done.

He doesn't spend time thinking about the dangers involved; he just focuses on whatever task is in front of him. From allowing himself to be pulled far out to sea, to struggling to land the fish, and then battling with the sharks, he accepts that he may be destroyed in the process, but he will not allow himself to be defeated. By effortlessly performing his job with flawless skill, maintaining an active frame of mind throughout his ordeal on the sea, and continually taking risks that challenge death, Santiago proves he is worthy of the title of Code Hero.

In considering the characteristics of a Code Hero, Santiago is an excellent example of a man who possesses a high degree of skill which he

demonstrates on his excursion UT on the ocean, baiting his hooks with precision, capably landing a ten pound albacore tuna, and knowingly predicting the weather. Santiago rows far out into the ocean, past all the other fishermen, in hopes of catching a great fish. As he prepares to fish, he carefully strings sardines on each hook, making sure " each sardine was hooked through both eyes there was no part of the hook that a great fish could feel . (31). Through experience, Santiago has learned the importance of making sure the bait is firmly attached to the hook so that it cannot be stolen by a passing fish and also assuring that the hook is completely camouflaged so as to lure a fish to his line. He is able to accomplish this quickly and with little effort based on the skill he has acquired over the years. After dropping his lines and maneuvering his boat to an area where the dolphins were running, it is not long until he hooks an albacore tuna. He held the line firm and commenced to haul it in he swung him over the side and into the boat" (38). It is obvious from this passage that Santiago knows what he is doing. He shows his competence as a fisherman in his flawless execution of the tepees required to land the fish without a problem. As Santiago excursion continues and he enters the second night on the water holding the line with his great fish, he takes notice of the sky.

Clouds were moving in and he predicted that " there will be bad weather in three or four days but not tonight and not tomorrow' (80). His experience on the water had taught him how to read the signs in nature to accurately predict the weather. As the story continues, his prediction turns out to be correct, highlighting his ability. In everything that Santiago does, from baiting a hook, to lulling in a fish, to forecasting the weather, Santiago

exhibits a high degree of skill in all aspects of his Job, a key element in the characterization of a Code Hero.

Another characteristic Santiago possesses which leads to calling him a Code Hero is being very alert and having trouble resting or sleeping, which he demonstrates before and on his excursion out on the ocean, by waking up very early every morning without assistance, struggling to take a short cat nap at night when the fish is resting, and not giving up to the tremendous tiredness that overtakes him in the middle of he final struggle between him and the fish.

After Santiago comes back from his day of fishing, Mammalian helps to carry his supplies up to his little shack and they share a dinner provided by Mammalian. Before Mammalian leaves, Santiago tells him he will wake him in the morning because " Age is my alarm clock... M (24). Santiago sleeps lightly and rises early each morning, ready to start a new day. Over the years Santiago has trained himself to be mindful of what is happening around him, even as he sleeps, and to wake up very early without being aroused by anyone or anything.

After Santiago has been out on the ocean for two days, allowing the fish to tow him along, he considers sleeping to rejuvenate his energy. At first he thinks he " could go without sleeping... " (77), but then he decides to sleep in a way in which he will wake when the fish starts the final fight. Santiago needs rest but initially fights it off and only gives in because he knows it will be necessary to perform the task at hand.

Because Santiago is very dedicated to his job and is committed to landing the fish, despite personal hardship, he is unwilling to succumb fully to the need for sleep, mistreating his internal drive to stay alert. Santiago does drift asleep, but is suddenly roused by the marlin as it begins to circle the skiff, requiring a final surge of energy from Santiago to land the enormous creature. After many hours of working the fish, it is revealed that he " had been seeing black spots before his eyes and... He had felt faint and dizzy," (87).

This shows that Santiago is working very hard and is unwilling to give in to his body's demanding need for rest. Despite being tremendously sleep deprived, Santiago remains alert, knowing he cannot rest cause of the job he must finish; he must remain completely focused to bring in the fish. From rising early each morning to wrestling with the thought of taking a short nap on the sea to fighting his body's overwhelming need for rest during the last battle with the fish, Santiago demonstrates a consistent high level of alertness, a quality that defines a Code Hero.

Finally, Santiago accepts death and is willing to take great risks that challenge death, a trait that helps guide him in being called a Code Hero, when he stays with the fish as it pulls him far out to sea, out of reach of help, when he refuses to give up the fight in the face of great personal suffering after days of little food or water or sleep, and when he takes on the shark attacks rather than cutting the fish free. Four hours after Santiago hooked the great fish it is still pulling him out to sea. Realizing that he must be very far out, " he looked behind him and saw no land was visible.

That makes no difference, he thought" (46). Although he is well beyond the limit most fishermen would go in a boat the size of his, with no one even remotely nearby that could help IM in the event of a problem, he is not willing to let the fish go and return to shore. He knows he is completely on his own but is not scared; he accepts the inherent risks in order to earn his livelihood. The marlin continues to pull the boat for two days and now Santiago is beginning his third day on the water, in great pain and completely exhausted from the ordeal, with the creature circling the skiff, indicating the fight is almost over.

Santiago tries to urge himself on when he says " I have no cramps He'll be up soon and I can last. You have to last. Don't even speak of it" (88). Santiago realizes that he is in very bad shape and that the final fight could kill him, but he won't give it up; instead he tries to pull together what little strength he has left to finish the job he started. He knows that he could die and that continuing is a tremendous risk, but it is a risk that he accepts without hesitation.

Then, after Santiago successfully kills his prey and has tied the fish to the side of the boat, a large make shark attacks and takes a huge chunk of meat out of the fish. After hat happens, Santiago is feeling down and says that WA man can be destroyed but not defeated" (103). Santiago knows that more sharks will come and that with each he will face possible destruction, but he is ready for the challenge. He is able to keep his morale up even in such a tough situation and he will not let anything discourage him, not even the fear of death, for he is ready to take on the challenge.

Santiago displays tremendous courage and a willingness to do whatever he needs to in order to do his Job, taking on many risks from sailing out of sight of land, to fighting the fish spite great physical pain and mental fatigue, and finally to taking on repeated shark attacks, without worrying about the danger, but because it is what he needs to do; it is his Job in life and he is at peace with the knowledge that death will happen when it is supposed to, a true characteristic of a Code Hero.

Everything Santiago does, from skillfully performing every aspect of his Job, to maintaining a constant state of alertness, and finally to taking risks that challenge death, highlights how he exemplifies the characteristics off Code Hero. First, Santiago demonstrates a high degree of skill throughout his adventure at sea, through his actions of proficiently baiting his hooks to lure the fish, to easily catching a ten pound albacore tuna, and finally knowingly predicting the weather while out at sea.

Next, Santiago has trouble resting and sleeping, always being in an alert state, which is exhibited when he wakes up early each morning without assistance from anyone, considers not sleeping at sea even though he has been awake for two straight days, remaining attentive, and continues to fight the fish even though he is hysterically and emotionally exhausted.

Lastly, Santiago repeatedly takes substantial risks that greatly challenge death, from venturing far out to sea, losing all sight of land, to refusing to give up the fight with the fish despite his deteriorated physical condition, and not cutting the great fish free even when the sharks are attacking it.

Santiago actions and character prove that he is a man who concentrates on

the task at hand and is willing to do whatever may be necessary to get the Job done, by all accounts earning him the title of Code Hero.