Quang Huynh, Evan Schmidt

1. On what simple ironic reversal is the plot of the story based? What two meanings has the title?

During the beginning of the story, Rainsford is the prey, while Zaroff was the hunter. The general was doing things such as killing people and hunting animals, but on the other hand, Rainsford disliked the murderer of men. But as the the story comes to an end, the ironic part is when Rainsford gets the best sleep of his life, and Zaroff becomes food for his own dogs. One of the meanings of The Most Dangerous Game is that General Zaroff believed that the most dangerous animal to hunt is mankind. Furthermore, another meaning of the Most Dangerous Game is that hunting is a risky game to play because hunters could end up injured or dead.

1. How important is suspense in the story? In what ways is it aroused and sustained? What part do chance and coincidence play in the story?

Suspense is an important aspect of the story because the element of suspense assists progression of the story. For instance, when Rainsford heard his traps go off, he would assume that it was the General, but was afraid to investigate as he could reveal his location. Some ways that the suspense is aroused and sustained during the story are when Rainsford heard an audible noise around his traps, and then he would think it was Zaroff who fell into his trap, but it always turned out to be somebody else, or something else who got caught into his trap. Chance and coincidence play a gigantic part in the story as something else was always in the wrong place at the wrong time, so they would get caught in Rainsford’s traps instead of his main target, General Zaroff.

1. Discuss the characterizations of Rainsford and General Zaroff. Which one is more fully characterized? Are both characters plausible?

The descriptions of both Rainsford and General Zaroff are that they are excellent hunters. However, Rainsford is content with his hunting, while General Zaroff has become bored hunting. This would lead to General Zaroff eventually hunting humans. Zaroff’s mind becomes twisted, and this would make him hunt humans. Both characters are plausible, as Rainsford could have been a rich individual who enjoyed the game of hunting as a pastime. Zaroff however, could have come to be in a certain time period if he in fact lived on an isolated island and was so arrogant that he believed he is the best.

1. What purpose is served by the “philosophical” discussion between Whitney and Rainsford at the beginning of the story (paragraphs 7-24)? What limitation does it show Rainsford to have? To what extent is his character illuminated during the course of the story? Does he change his idea?

The purpose of the philosophical discussion between Whitney and Rainsford at the beginning of the story is to show that Rainsford does not believe that animals can show fear or other emotions. This shows Rainsford is unable to sympathize with the animals he hunts, for he believes they are too primitive and different from humans.

1. In what ways is the discussion between Whitney and Rainsford paralleled by the after-dinner discussion between Rainsford and Zaroff (paragraphs 68-145)? In these discussions, is Rainsford more like Whitney or Zaroff? How does he differ from Zaroff? Does the end of the story resolve that difference?

During the conversation between Whitney and Rainsford, Rainsford is acting more like Zaroff. This is because Rainsford didn’t care about the animal’s emotions. Rainsford differs from General Zaroff because Zaroff is a cruel person who kills humans for enjoyment. At the end of the story, Rainsford allows Zaroff to be fed to his dogs. This is a result of Rainsford turning into a twisted person and becoming more like Zaroff.

1. Is the principal emphasis of the story on plot, character, or theme? On escape or interpretation? Support your answer.

The principal emphasis of the story is on the character, as the plot isn’t that deep. The plot involves traps and is very fast paced, while the theme is about sustaining from being arrogant. This is because General Zaroff was very arrogant, which led to his injures and failure. On the other hand, the author of the story focused on the characters, since the General and Rainsford are very well developed and intricate. This is an escape literature, because the story shows an aspect of entertainment. The story is plot-driven and had a lack of metaphorical language.