“The Most Dangerous Game” - Richard Connell

Annotation 2

In “The Most Dangerous Game,” the notion of human superiority over other animals is questioned by taking a typical scenario of a hunting island resort, where the human hunts for *normal* quarry, and changes it to the uncommon and culturally unacceptable practice of hunting fellow humans. At the beginning of the story, Rainsford, the main character, is on a yacht with fellow hunters in the Caribbean heading for Rio. He and a man by the name of Whitney are having a discussion about the morality of hunting. Using a jaguar as an example, Whitney argues that hunting, while possibly enjoyable for the person who practices the sport of hunting, is not necessarily enjoyable for the animal being hunted. To this, Rainsford responds “You're a big-game hunter, not a philosopher. Who cares how a jaguar feels?” The nonchalance toward any natural thing other than human life is a characteristic of the human psyche that prevails even today, though not at as harsh of a degree than at the time this story was written. As the yacht is sailing past Ship Trap Island, Whitney says that “sailors have a curious dread of the place,” and that the name is rather curious. Later, as Rainsford is about to fall asleep, he hears three gunshots come from the direction of the island. He gets up and tries to secure view of the island through the fog of the “dank tropical night” by standing on the rail of the deck. He falls in, and because he cannot swim as fast as the yacht, he tries to swim to the dreaded island. Upon arriving, he is welcomed inside a seemingly out of place house by its owner, General Zaroff. For a while, everything seems normal until Zaroff explains his boredom in hunting *normal* animals. This leads to the rest of the story, where Rainsford gets hunted by Zaroff, and ends up outsmarting him. The discussion of power regarding nature and