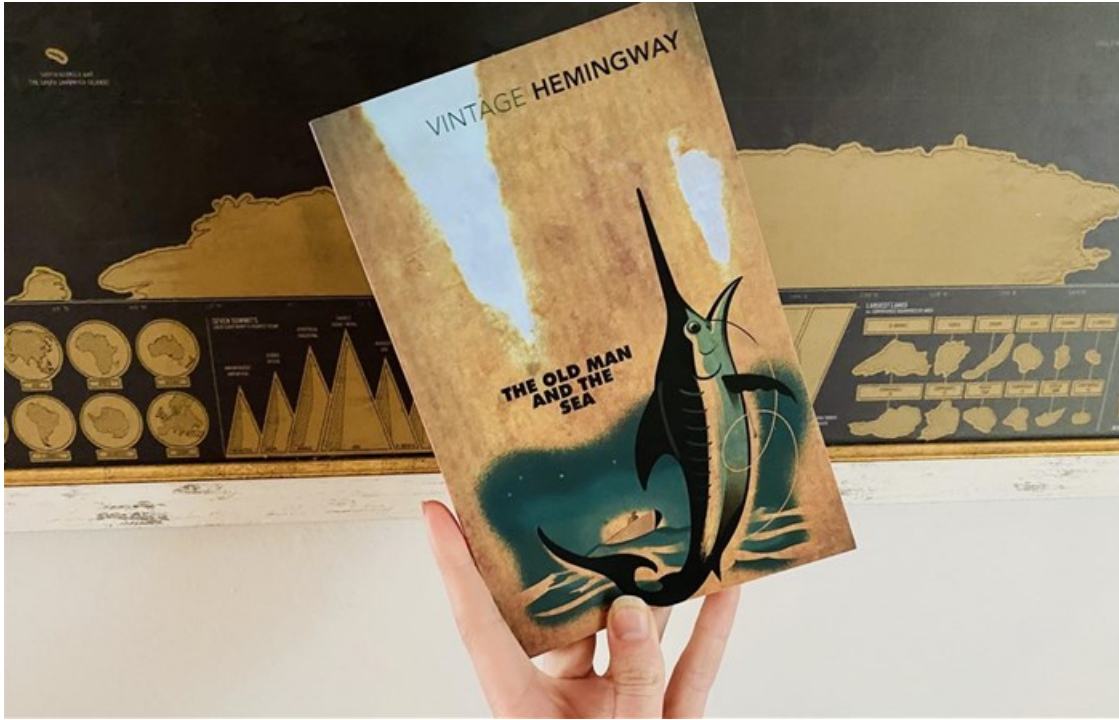


You're only impressing yourself

By  Bronwyn Williams

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"Man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated." - Ernest Hemingway



Ernest Hemingway's prose is undeniably enduring and *The Old Man and The Sea* is some of his finest work, for good reason. Every word is carefully considered. There are enduringly quotable quotes on almost every page. The text is rich with metaphors and lessons about the human condition.

*"There are many good fishermen and some great ones. But there is only **you**."* ~ Ernest Hemingway

One of those lessons revealed through the old man's solitary struggle with that great fish in the open sea, is a study in how our biggest battles are often with ourselves; and how, as a result, our greatest wins so often take place outside of the public eye, with no witnesses to help us celebrate our success and no company comfort us through our struggles. Even our ultimate deaths, one day, will, ultimately, be alone.

But let us park those thoughts of our own mortality for a moment and rather focus on the challenges of *living*, which is also,

largely a solo journey.

This is especially true for entrepreneurs and creatives, who set out on a very lonely path, many times with slim chances of success and little encouragement, with no one but themselves to drive them onwards when things get tough. It's hard to persuade anyone, especially yourself, to take on a challenge driven by nothing and no one but your inner will. All writers know that. Hemingway knew that. At some point, it's just you and the blank page, staring each other down.

"There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed." ~ Ernest Hemingway

All start-up founders know this too - it's lonely at the top and it's lonely *along the way* to the top too.

Because that is the reality, if we want to create anything new, or anything of deep and lasting value for ourselves or for society at large, someone has to go first. That first step, however small (indeed very often a lot more than that first step!) has to be taken by someone *acting alone*.

If it was easy, everyone would do it.

It's not. But that doesn't make taking that first step and testing your own resolve (whether you are ultimately successful or not) any less meaningful, or any less worthwhile. The battles we fight with, for and by ourselves have the highest stakes and the greatest rewards.

"Now is the time to think of only one that. That which I was born for." - Ernest Hemingway

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