Analysis Of The Poem The Fish By Elizabeth Bishop

The most hideous thing might have the greatest significance in people’s life. The poem,’’The Fish’’ by Elizabeth Bishop establishes a poem full of victory and happiness. Bishop's use of imagery, allows readers to visualize the fish and create a bond. This is a bond in which the observer has a great deal of admiration for the fish’s condition. Throughout the poem, the narrator describes the fish as beautiful. The narrator describes ‘’The Fish’’ with much reverence and admiration because of the incredible journey reflected on its skin.

Respect and admiration toward the fish are themes in the poem. The narrator refers to him as venerable, which means someone who is very much respected, especially because of wisdom, age, or character. People might expect a soldier or rather an old war veteran to be described as battered and venerable, not a fish. The fish was a survivor who had survived five battles and has the 'five big hooks, grown firmly in his mouth' to prove it. It’s inspiring that the narrator had a moment of realization and was able to see this in the fish and wanted to give it another chance to fight. She had a moment of insight where she 'stared and stared' and realized that the fish had been through. Suddenly, she catches the fish and observes how the fish has the scars of battle to prove its worth. aaaaaaWhile the language blends admiration and growth together, as she starts to see the beauty in this old fish, she notices the likenesses between him and the boat she has rented. 'from the pool of bilge where oil had spread a rainbow around the rusted engine to the bailer rusted orange’’ and 'sun-cracked thwarts'. ‘’rusted engine’’ could imagine she was looking at the fish and saw how the fish was looking old and deteriorated by time. The boat is rust color like the rosettes on the ancient wallpaper skin of the fish, Bishop's choice of the word 'ancient' rather than plain old makes it seem more grand. All this talk of old ancient things goes back to the description of the fish as venerable. The word choices enhance the feeling that the fish is kinda ugly but worthy of respect. The rainbow bleeds new color into her rainbow world. Victory is coming from the unpleasant bilge water where a rainbow has formed. In a single moment, after seeing the beauty of the environment around her, she starts shouting 'rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!' She lets the fish go. This is a great example of compassion in Bishop's poem because the reader also gains respect and sympathy for the old fish and hopes that he will ultimately be set free.

Ribbons aren't shiny and new, they're 'frayed and wavering,' more like battle scars than decorative ribbons. ‘’Like metal frayed and wavering with their victory of the fish’’ she has a sincere admiration towards the fish. She starts comparing fish with medals, objects that reflect the glory, which is only owned by champions. The author considers the fish a glorious animal with ribbons. She appreciates beauty. Furthermore, she says the fish has a ‘’five-heard beard’’ of wisdom, suggesting that it has seen so many things on his wanderings journey, that it has become a source of wisdom.

Literary tools were often seeing throughout this poem repeatedly. One of them is the use of simile and word choice to give the reader a clearer picture of the situation at hand. The simile is an ideal literary tool to use when the author is trying to convey a sensory description of an object or idea. When Bishop describes the pieces of broken fishing line hanging from the fish's mouth as medals with their ribbons frayed and wavering, she is using a simile to give the impression of pride and honor. This comes at a point when the narrator is developing admiration

and respect for the fish and the experiences it has been through.

In the Fish, readers are drawn into the fish becoming attached to it, and are concerned about what happens to it. Despite the many words used to describe her thoughts, one can imagine that all the details and feelings about the fish go through the narrator's mind very quickly and this whole incident is over within a matter of seconds. It felt like there is a lot more to many objects and circumstances than may first appear. The message sent in this poem is a good one. On the whole, one would believe that the message is about respect, admiration, growth, the sanctity of life and the acceptance between human beings and nonhuman beings.