

Sadie Schwarz
Mr. Pace
English IV
Book Essay
5/15/19

Predator Becomes Prey

While humans are the most intelligent beings on earth, the tendency to underestimate the possibility of becoming any less than that is still great. Having a greater intelligence grants permissibility of becoming a predator to other species no matter the physical strength. But what if mankind was not the most intelligent? Like many other Michael Crichton books, *Prey* is a story of scientists falling prey to a higher species in a foolish attempt to prove themselves. Crichton expresses his opinion through the eyes of the main character, Jack Forman. His thoughts--if the predator is not careful, it will end up switching roles with its prey.

Julia's and Ricky's denial of something catastrophic happening is perhaps what gets everyone in trouble. They don't want to tell anyone they released the nanobots on purpose because they know people would think they are crazy and stupid. They are, in fact, crazy and stupid for believing they could befriend a self-organized, mechanical swarm. Even after the swarm proves deadly, they do everything they can to make sure it is not destroyed. They risk lives in order to prove a point. In this moment, the swarm outsmarts them and becomes the higher species. Julia and Ricky fully allow this to happen which is why they want to see it through to the end. They allow themselves to become prey.

The nanobots may not have become such a big problem if the Xymos team had realized sooner that they are making a mistake. The suspected prey is not as much in their control as they think. The team's false sense of domination led the nanobots to know they have been underestimated. They take their chance to officially become a predator to the humans.

Jack receives a delayed request for help because the Xymos team wanted to make sure it was out of their hands first. They know that Jack would disagree with their ideas and deep inside, they know he is right. They are embarrassed of their mistakes and they still use him to clean up their mess. Jack is only one with enough knowledge and experience to stop the swarm and they know that. They hate admitting that they've become prey.

As Crichton repeatedly states in his books, humans are responsible for the choices they make and should step up to their mistakes. Playing with unpredictable creatures should not be taken lightly. Humans cannot always assume that they are higher species and then blame others when it is no longer true. Prey-predator role reversal is a very real possibility and should be treated as such.