

Phoenix jackson



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In Eudora Welty's short story "A Worn Path" we are introduced to the main protagonist, Phoenix Jackson, an old, weak, and poverty-stricken "Negro woman" who describes her journey from her home to the city to get medicine for her sick grandson. Throughout the story, her love of her grandson enables her to overcome various physical, emotional and psychological obstacles but also, gives her a great courage, motivation and determination. As she takes this prolonged walk across the woods, many of her characteristics are revealed Phoenix attempts to proceed on a long and treacherous journey through the woods to Natchez. During the trip having many obstacles in her way such as her old age, the cold weather, ditches and hills, thorns, wild animals and a hunter with a gun, she falls, gets back up and keeps on toward the goal of getting her grandson's medicine. She does not flinch in the face of these potentially dangerous situations because of her love and dedication to her sick grandson. Amazingly, old Phoenix can go about her journey nearly without her sight and she depends solely on the steps of her feet for direction.

Although she walks alone, she does not feel lonely or feel sorry for herself and she tells the animals to stay out of her way. Also, Phoenix knows well enough to change her habits and pull herself together upon entering the big city, where she is always polite and courteous to the town's people. For a woman of her age, she manages to pull herself through all the tangles she gets herself into. Phoenix keeps her faith, by enduring to the end and surviving through the love she has for her grandson. Nothing frightens Phoenix, not even a scarecrow in the dark of the woods. Walking across a log

with her eyes closed is one of the daring things she does. A hunter along the way approaches her and tries to use his gun to undermine her.

He is impolite to her by referring to her as granny. The hunter unknowingly loses a nickel, then immediately old Phoenix devises a scheme to scrape up the shiny coin. She has already determined in her heart what she will purchase with this windfall. Phoenix would rather not purchase something of need. She has attained some money along her journey and she has in mind to return with a gift for her grandson, who is ill and all alone back home.

Phoenix perseveres despite obstacles of every kind, physically her journey is arduous, emotionally she must accept the abuse of the white hunter, and spiritually she must deal with the heartache of a sick grandson. Phoenix's determination is immediately visible throughout the story.

She has made the journey selflessly, for someone else's sake. " We are the only two left in the world," she says, revealing her strong commitment to her grandson and her sacrificing nature.