

# The jilting of granny weatherall essay



**ASSIGN  
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Parker's short story, "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall" is steeped in the discomfiting emotional states of an old woman in response to her jilting, which happened during her youth. The antagonist, George ushers Granny into a depraved life when he jilts her during their planned wedding day while she is in her twenties. The story goes that George did not go to the altar where Granny and the priest were waiting for him. It is stated just as it happened to her, "What does a woman do when she has put on the white veil and set out the white cake for a man and he doesn't come?" (Parker). Granny's conduct is an unconscious response to the jilting though it is a thing that happened to her long ago during her youth. Analysis of the story shows that, after George jilts Granny Weatherall, he causes her to adopt a lifestyle that is characterized by denial, hard work, and harshness to her caregivers.

George causes a conflict in the story in that Granny gets to attribute to herself a sense of self sufficiency as she faces life without the person she loved. Granny attributes these positive states of being to herself as a means of survival. This forms her attitude where she does not want people to take care of her even in her deathbed. On the contrary, Granny is wishing that the man who married her after she had been jilted, John was around to see how she had managed to raise children albeit singlehandedly. Concerning her success, Granny remarks, "-well, the children showed it. There they were, made out of her, and they couldn't get away from that" (Parker). Her desire to have John see her having succeeded is seen in the successive statement that, "Sometimes she wanted to see John again and point to them and say, Well, I didn't do so badly, did I?" (Parker). Additionally, Granny wishes

George witness her achievement; as she desires to prove her inner strength to him. Granny tells Cornelia, “ I want you to find George. Find him and be sure to tell him I forgot him. I want him to know I had my husband just the same and my children and my house like any other woman” (Parker). This desire to have a mean lover see her succeed is the ultimate proof that she took pride in her capability to do things on her own. Her actions are, however, out of spite for the memory of her jilting.

From the moment of her jilting, Granny adopted denial to face her life. Her lingering love for George is certain, but she attempts to deny it. Though she says she had forgotten him, she is at pains to admit she loves him anyway; “ there was something else besides the house and the man and the children... Something not given back” (Parker). Certainly, Granny here is referring to her love that was not given back by George, but she is dying to forget the matter. She is in this denial to make it through her widowed life where she has a lot to take care of. As Granny seeks a sign from God in her last moments and gets none, it is the sad memory of the jilting event that captures her imagination with brutal candidness; “ For a second time there was no sign. Again no bridegroom and the priest in the house” (Parker). Denial helps her to stay out of touch with reality and at least enjoy her life the way it is. Denial of reality, taken to an extreme level, can be detected in her words while she is seriously sick when she refuses to accept her condition as bad. This is expressed in her statement to Doctor Harry; “ Get along and doctor your sick,” said Granny Weatherall. “ Leave a well woman alone. I’ll call for you when I want you...(Parker).

In response to the conflict, Granny dedicates her life to hard work that besides rearing her children involves attending to patients as a nurse and a midwife. It is stated that her career involved, “ Riding country roads in the winter when women had their babies ...: sitting up nights with sick horses and sick negroes and sick children and hardly ever losing one (Parker). The incidence of the jilting, sitting at the back of her mind, coerces her to dedicate her energies to impact positively on her society. Absence of the man she loved left her free to accomplish many good deeds, and she held on to the value she had to others. This fondness of her actions is evident in that she remembers her daughter and son consulting her on child rearing matters and business issues respectively; “ She wasn’t too old yet for Lydia to be driving eighty miles for advice when one of the children jumped the track, and Jimmy still dropped in and talked things over: “ Now, Mammy, you’ve a goodd business head, I want to know what you think of this?” (Parker). In spite of her hurtful motivations, Granny achieves a lot through her commitment to serving others selflessly up to her last days. Even in her deathbed, she muses, “ there were a great many things left undone on this place. She would start tomorrow and do them” (Parker). Due to her passion of hard work, she wished to help Cornelia around.

The conflict makes granny adopt an unhealthy attitude to caregivers where she is harsh to them. Due to her superwoman illusion created by her survival past the jilting, Granny feels that nobody should spend time caring for her as she could overcome any challenge that comes her way. This is confirmed by her attitude towards Cornelian, a daughter who is taking care of her in the house. It is stated, “ Cornelia was dutiful; that was the trouble with her.

Dutiful and good: "So good and dutiful," said Granny, "that I'd like to spank her"" (Parker). This shows that Granny never wished anybody to care for her after losing George on the fateful wedding day sixty years ago. Granny's attitude towards the Doctor Harry and priest Connolly further proves her desire to be left to her own struggles. At the first instance, she tells the doctor, "Get along now. Take your schoolbooks and go. There's nothing wrong with me" (Parker). When the priest comes to bless her the last time she wards him off saying, "I went to Holy Communion only last week. Tell him I'm not so sinful as all that" (Parker). Granny's refusal to accept the care frustrates the three, but they have to endure since they are dutiful in their respective roles.

Denial, hard work and harshness to her caregivers are the characteristics that Granny exhibits in the story, "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall," as a response to the conflict created by George by the act of jilting her. The antagonist's actions are difficult for the protagonist to overcome even after sixty years, Granny still remembers her jilting by George with a great sense of loathing. Granny believes she can handle everything else just as she had survived the jilting to have a good life. However, the strong memories of her jilting in her deathbed make all her other achievements fade.