

The old age concept
in o'connor's "a good
man is hard to find"
essay



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In the article, "A good man is hard to find", the concept of old age is pictured from its negative side. The loneliness that a grandmother experiences on growing old can be observed from the old woman. She wishes that her grandchildren stayed. She also tries to convince her son to stay.

The old woman has a different perspective to life. She relishes the practices of the past. This is evident from her utterances about the respect they had for their native lands.

The old woman is not pleased that the children are dismissing her homeland as boring. While the children consider material wealth to be an important aspect of life, the grandmother dismisses this. She admires the scene that a Negro boy creates against the countryside landscape. In addition, she wishes that the scene could be preserved through a painting.

The children have interests that are contrary to those of the old woman. This shows the change that takes place in a person's mental status when one grows old. The children are uncompromising towards the Negro child they come across in their journey.

On the other hand, the old woman understands the predicament of the child who does not have much wealth. In addition, the old woman shows a sense of mental maturity in her reasoning. When the family passes by a farmhouse, the grandmother notices that there are graves on the farmyard.

The number of graves on the farm, and the desolate look of the whole plantation surprise her. She understands the grim situation that the family

that owned the farmland must have faced. In contrast, the children are not concerned with the graves. Death and burial is not in their focus. The first thing the children are interested in is the plantation, while the old woman is interested in the burial ground.

Apart from her attitude, the old woman exhibits physical aspects of growing old. She is described as having thin hips. This shows that she is withering due to old age. Furthermore, the face of the woman is compared to that of the baby she is curdling. The article says that the grandmother's skin is leathery while that of the child is bland.

The grandmother has a sense of responsibility that comes with age. When the children finish eating their lunch, they want to throw the napkins out of the car window. They have a carefree attitude towards any decision. Their grandmother is more responsible and does not allow them to do this.

This shows the changes that old age has brought to the grandmother. It also gives an accurate picture of what happens when a person grows old. When the grandmother tells a story of her maiden times, she reminisces of her affair with a man who brought her a melon every day.

She values love in her old age. On the contrary, a child says that she is not interested in actions that express love, but she is more interested in wealth. The story shows the diminishing regard for wealth with old age.

The old woman is sympathetic with the poor people, she quarrels her granddaughter when she utters mean words to Red Sam's wife. June, the

granddaughter, has contempt for those with little wealth, and says that she could not live in Red Sam's house for any gift.

The old woman is as talkative as the children are. Her argument with the children makes her son, Bailey, lose control of the vehicle. The grandmother's talkative nature makes the family car crash. Her combativeness with the children distracts the driver of their vehicle.

When Misfit captures them, the grandmother does not seem to reason. She tells Misfit that she knows him. Misfit has no option but to kill them for his own safety.

When misfit has killed all her family, she still tries to please him with her talking. At old age, the woman wishes she could live more. She begs for her life more than for any of her relative's life. Throughout the story, it is evident that the grandmother wished she could live more. This shows how reasoning is affected by old age.