

# Depiction of dysfunctional family in oconnor's novel



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This paper is intended to talk about overall research on a short story A Good Man is Hard to find written by Flannery O'Connor. Basically, it gives an overview on the story and also made arguments over the topics. The paper is written for fiction essay deliverable.

Adversity is a good discipline. A good man is hard to find is one of the famous short stories written by Flannery O'Connor. In this short story A good man is hard to find. Though not complicated at least on the surface, is rather difficult to understand for readers who have little knowledge of the author's religious and philosophic ideas. It talks about a family's vacation tragically ended by a murderer and his gang. After a meddling Grandmother tries to insist that the family go to Tennessee instead of Florida, it was in fact through her own insistence that prompted the family stray from the main path in search of some false, lost treasure. This deadly decision caused the family to fall prey to the Misfit.

A Good Man is Hard to Find The Grandmother, who is the one and only dynamic character, represents all of us who have repented. The Grandmother is obsessed with everything worldly and superficial; she cares far too much about how others perceive her. And the Misfit is a wanted criminal who stumbles upon the family when they crash their car in the woods. Also, he does not see himself as a terrible person. His two henchmen kill the entire family, and the Misfit shoots the grandmother himself. There are three phases of thought for the Grandmother. During the first phase, which is in the beginning, she is completely focused on herself in relation to how others think of her. The Second Phase occurs when she is speaking to The Misfit.

In the story, The Misfit represents a quasi-final judgment. He does this by acting like a mirror. He lets whatever The Grandmother says bounce right off him. He never really agrees with her or disagrees, and in the end, he is the one who kills her. His second to last line, " She would of been a good woman," The Misfit said, " if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life,. Might be the way O'Conner felt about most of us alive, or how she felt that God must feel about us. The Misfit observes this shift and seems to realize what it means, if the grand mother could have lived her life at gunpoint, so to speak, she could have gained the self-awareness and compassion that she would lacked. The third and final phase of

The Grandmother is the moment of redemption. She finally sees The Misfit for who he really is, a person just like her. He is not someone who was made by his social class. He is a simple human being just like her. At this point she sees herself in relation to everyone else. She finally realizes that she is not made by her class. Society makes the class, and she just fits into it. She shows this by claiming that The Misfit could be one of her own beloved children.

OConnorr's symbolism throughout the story represents faith and death. The fact that the family had strayed from the main path onto an unimportant side road, where they were killed, symbolizes how people often stray from Jesus and follows the wrong path spiritually. It was in this town that the grandmother thought the old plantation was. This was where she became sidetracked, again like her faith in Jesus. In the car, John Wesley and June Star were playing a game by guessing the shape of the clouds in the sky. The clouds represent the grandmotherr's superficial faith. She dressed

herself with the purple spray of flowers just in case she died. It was as if she were taking death lightly. It was when she knew she was going to die that the grandmother started to desperately preach the gospel to the Misfit. At the end of the story, there were no clouds. The Misfit commented, Arent a cloud in the sky, Dont see no sun but dont see no cloud neither. The clouds had faded away and the sky was empty, just like the grandmother's faith was empty. The graveyard in the plantation is a concrete symbol of death, and the quote, It was a big black battered hearse like automobile, symbolizes that their transportation to death had arrived. The grandchildren, the Misfit and in the end Jesus Himself support this theme.

At the beginning of the story the grandmother states, I wouldnt take my children in any direction with a criminal like that a loose on it. I couldnt answer my conscious if I did. Suddenly she is put in the situation of trying to answer her conscious by falsely trying to convince herself and the Misfit that he is a good man. When the Misfit plainly admits, Nome, I aint a good man, she resorts to Jesus. The Misfit then blames Jesus for his actions. He tries to compare Jesus to himself by commenting that Jesus threw everything off balance and was punished for sins he didnt commit just like the Misfit was punished for crimes he didnt commit. But in the end the theme carries on that even A Good Man is Hard to Find in Jesus because the Misfit's unworthy comparison of himself with Jesus caused the killing rampage. The grandmother's false hope in Jesus seemed to crumble when He did not save her again, thus showing in a religious sense that A Good Man is Hard to Find

In the story A Good Man is Hard to Find by Flannery O'Connor starts out by giving a look at a dysfunctional family on a vacation, but ultimately, gives  
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insight into ourselves as well as the nature of good and evil, how they can clash, and how they can co-exist, even in the same person, In my opinion, O'Connor taps into the subject of religion and if everyone would find Jesus, the culture's morals, values, respect and humanity could again become intact.