

# Characters in O'Connor's stories



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## ' Grandma' and Mrs. Turpin - comparison

The characters of the grandmother in O'Connor's story 'A Good Man is Hard to Find' and Mrs. Ruby Turpin in 'Revelation' are similar to a great extent. Grandma, a widow lives with her son's family including grandchildren while Mrs. Turpin lives with her husband only. Both are in need of Catholic Grace and they belong to the Afro-American population. Both the characters are overconfident about their image, beliefs and traditions.

The characters like giving their rigid opinions about others and are always cynical about their surroundings with strong notions of good and bad. For instance, Grandma remarks about the current generation, saying, "In my time... children were more respectful of their native states and their parents and everything else. People did right then" (O'Connor, 4). On the other hand, Mrs. Turpin gets satisfaction in nomenclature - "white-trash woman", "the pleasant lady" etc (O'Connor, 199-200). She likes scrutinizing people around her and derived at conclusions about them. She also contemplates what she could be if she is not herself. She always thanks Jesus for making her what she is and she also feels that Jesus is good to her. In contrast, Grandma believes that the finest lady God has made is her mother and does not directly talk of God's blessings on herself. However, both retain their pride and feels that God's has some extra favor on them. Unlike Mrs. Turpin, the latter however does not live in a world of fantasy or dreams and in contrast, she is more practical as she knows the ways and directions and keeps herself updated with the news of the Misfit. However Grandma does not trust a "single soul" in His (God's) world. People belonging to the young generation bring Catholic Grace to both the characters. For the Grandma, the Misfit whom she could not accept as her son owing to his criminal ways brings her

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to apologize and realize her mistake. In the case of Mrs. Turpin the ugly teenage girl brings consciousness in her. The difference is brought out by the fact that in the former's case she dies immediately after realizing the truth and grace is brought upon her by her own son. In contrast, a stranger teenage girl who is impolite from the very beginning teaches the later. Both the young people seem to be God's messengers in some way or the other and sends their message about the omnipresent and impartial God to whom everyone is equal. The Misfit holds the gun to Grandma's head to make her accept the truth and the ugly young girl (Mary Grace) with impolite behavior hits Mrs. Turpin to make her realize that she actually came from hell as she says in her angry message where she calls her an "old wart hog" (O'Connor, 207). In this manner both the women realize the Grace of God and the superficiality of their pride and rigidity.

#### References

O'Connor, Flannery. "Revelation", *Everything that rises must converge*,

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965

O'Connor, Flannery, "A good man is hard to find", In, *A Good Man Is Hard to Find and Other Stories*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1992