

# Free a good man is hard to find research paper sample

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



A good man is hard to find by Flannery O'Connor is a novel that deals with a very enigmatic character. The misfit, as he is known in the novel, is a character that keeps the audience guessing if he really is the culprit or not till the very end of the novel. However, the author has written this particular novel in a very ironical pattern, and it lays down many clues that the misfit is the culprit suffering from psychological problems. The main character, the misfit, is shown as a person suffering from many psychological problems trying to seek the truth about the son of god so that he could put an end to his sufferings and the sufferings of others caused because of him.

The misfit managed to escape the prison he was held in and claimed that he was innocent of the crimes that were charged against him. In the words of the misfit " The doctor said that I had killed my dad but for a fact I know that is not true. It is a lie as daddy died of an epidemic flu, and I had nothing to do with it" (O'Connor 117). The misfit says that he did not remember when he was admitted to the penitentiary. He says, " I can't recall to this very day when I was sent to the penitentiary" (O'Connor 113). When grandmother asked him if it was a mistake, he replied " no it wasn't, it couldn't be a mistake as they had the papers on me (O'Connor 115).

It shows that the misfit was well aware of his wrong doings, and he was guilty from inside. He was going through the problem that psychologists define as denial. Denial is defined as a defense mechanism in which an individual tends to avoid the truth by completely denying it. The truth could be traumatic or something of the sort that a person is unwilling to accept (Cohen 71). The problem with denial is that the person avoiding to accept his wrong doings might repeat it in the future. If he does not admit that his

actions were weak, illegal or a threat to someone then there are always chances that an individual might repeat the actions (Weiner 31).

It is obvious that the misfit is suffering from denial. He does not take the blame for the killing of his parents nor for any other such crimes. At one point in the novel he says “ Do you think it’s correct that one is punished and the other is not?”(O’Connor 130). The misfit sees himself as a victim. He does not only think that he hasn’t committed a crime but also thinks that the authority has been unkind to him. He feels that they have wrongly convicted him for a crime that is not committed by him. It makes it totally acceptable for him to repeat the actions or the crime he was convicted for. In his case, it becomes legal for him to kill other people just the way he killed his parents. Later the misfit is found saying, “ Enjoy the limited time you have left by killing someone or bringing down his house or by doing any meanness to him” (O’Connor 134). The sentence only penetrates the motive of the misfit. It shows that he enjoys killing. It shows that he takes pleasure in hurting people. Psychologists define this act as human hunting. When a sadist person goes to the extreme of killing people then, it is referred to as human hunting (Leyton 117).

The sentence spoken out of the misfit establishes the fact in the novel that he is a sadist that has no bounds or limits. He accepts that man has a limited amount of time to enjoy in this planet and to him enjoyment is destruction and killing other people. He calls this life on earth as limited and one should fully look to enjoy it. The misfit believes he does just that. He fully enjoys his life by killing people.

The misfit says “ The type of crime you do does not matter. You can do

anything, kill a man or take a tire out from his car it is all the same thing. When they catch you they will punish you" (O'Connor 123). The lines show that the misfit fails to distinguish between crimes. To him all crimes are equal. He is of the opinion that there is no small or big crime as the authority is always ready to punish a person. Katharina Elder analyzes this statement very well. She believes that the misfit has become accustomed of committing crimes. It has become a part of his nature to harm other people. However, the misfit prefers killing people rather than causing the small amount of pains and trouble to them. He reasons it out by saying that small or big, the authority would punish him. The misfit is also shown as a person who has no feelings or emotions for other people. He enjoys killing, and that is just about it (Eder 166).

Flannery ' O' Connor leaves religious themes in the novel and associates those themes with the misfit. " Jesus is the only one with the potential to raise the dead and to be true he should not have done that. If he did what all, he said then probably you wouldn't have anything to do and if he didn't then you should enjoy the little time you have" (O'Connor 134). It is the most important statement by the misfit in the novel. The sentence invites the audience to study his psychology and his belief about life.

The misfit is of the opinion that everything in the world rotates around the all or nothing question about Jesus. The misfit thinks that if Jesus existed and if he is the real son of God then there is a point in living. There is a point of life, and that is to follow the teachings of Jesus and live in harmony. However, if Jesus did not exist then there is no point in life. There is no right or wrong in the world, and life is limited. The misfit is constantly found saying that life is

limited, and one should enjoy every bit of it. It indicates that he does not believe that Jesus exists and continues with his brief moment of enjoyment. It seems that the misfit wants to believe that Jesus is the son of god, and he wants to live in harmony. It is like the rest of people but somehow he cannot gather the clues that there ever was a Jesus who is the son of god. He would continue to commit the crimes he has done until and unless he is not sure about the existence of Jesus. He would only stop when it becomes known to him that his life is eternal.

He believes that he has a limited time in the world and no life after that so he continues to do the crimes as no one could tell him for sure that there is another eternal life after this. He is questioning the life described by Jesus to his followers that life is eternal, and this world is just a temporary place.

However, the misfit wants evidence of that eternal life. He will only give up his addiction of killing people if he has proof of it.

It is evident because he kills the grandmother and her family. He does it so calmly that it does not feel he resented it even for a minute. Moreover, it also proves all the psychological problems associated with him. He shows the audience that he is accustomed of killing and does it for fun. He also shows that he does not have any need or reason to stop it. He needs evidence to know that life is eternal, and he will be paid the fruits of following the teachings of Jesus.

The novel has a very deep meaning attached to it. It shows the meaning of religion through a psyche and psychological problems of a person. The misfit has become a menace to society because no one can give him the answer to his questions. He is living his life to the fullest by killing innocent people as

no one can prove him that he will go to heaven or hell after he is done with his life. In order for him, to redeem he must know if Jesus was the son of God or not. It is the key to curing him of his psychological problems.

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