

Identify the setting
and atmosphere in
flannery o'connor's a
good man is hard
to ...

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



' A Good Man Is Hard to Find' finds its place among the most eminent of Southern Gothic literature and aptly creates an aura with bizarre events in addition to the eccentric nature of the characters and the flavor of the local land. This genre of literature portrays a sullen and rattling representation of life in the land of American South. The haunting gloom of the tragic history of slavery and the lingering repercussions of a thwarted pride following the Civil war looms over the story. The isolated locales bear testimony to the existence of people and occurrences of events that apparently seem to be normal, but finally perturb the reader unfurling as queer and even dreadful. O'Connor excels in the genre with her mastery in simultaneously expressing a tone of realism in her short story. In order to add the aura of reality, the writer accentuates the spooky and carking tone of the backdrop. She also focuses on the events and relationships which thrust the narrative of the story.

The story begins in Georgia, in a nameless city where the family resides. The story narrates the travels of this family with much of local scenery with descriptions of the old plantations that get passed and also Red Sammy's roadside barbeque joint.

The next part occurs in the ditch which is situated in the middle of nowhere. The family lands into this ditch after they run off the path. This ditch is about ten feet below the surface of the path and is situated in the middle of the road and a tall, dark and deep wood. The vivid imagery of the woods on either sides of the road hulks thunderously in the description of the author. It almost seems as if the ditch is the stage of actions with the looming woods at the backstage adding to the striking aura of the sequence. Characters are

taken to the 'backstage' with the readers' hearts cringing with the noises people make. Gunshots and screams make chills run down the spines of an avid reader.

The label "good" is used indiscriminately by the grandmother, thus blurring its definition. The label loses its semantic significance in the context of the story. By humbly accepting Jesus Christ, any person can become righteous and gain redemption. Thus happens with the old woman who goes on to address The Misfit as her child. The self-centered lady is readily forgiven of the sins for being a liar and racist.

A conversation in the story goes like this: "These days you don't know who to trust", are the words uttered by Red Sammy. The grandmother goes on to reply, "People are certainly not nice like they used to be." Both of them seem to believe in the gradual and continuous process of moral degradation of human nature. They zero in on the decay in the southern culture and in manners as the root causes behind this.

The Misfit denounces Christ as the Messiah as he lacks empirical proof of the divinity he is attributed with. He goes on to argue that there is no God or moral order. He believes that he may act in whatever manner that pleases him, even if it means committing a murder.

The atmosphere and setting situate focus on the alienation of the self from the cultural roots which finally leads to sheer destruction. The gloom, the chills, and bizarre accentuate the aura of the story to strike the innermost core of the reader's heart and symbolize the impending doom. Human values are held at the receiving end in the baleful hands of the individual's complacent omnipotence. Selfish 'ideals' overshadow moralities and

conscience to place the human soul in an abstract plane of vacuum devoid of religious teachings. The predefined norms are put to question and the values that have led us to the present time are deconstructed and misconstrued. The eerie setting and the mood are integral parts in the portraiture of the dark disoriented era of cultural degradation and moral subjugation in the hands of selfish pursuits. Although the tone of writing is apocalyptic and phantasmagoric, the work portrays optimum credulity. O'Connor aptly puts forth this timeless theme in the context of the Southern American milieu. The moral message goes beyond any geographical constraint when imagined in the global context and is omniscient across cultures and lands.

Works Cited

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