

Grandmother gifts nora with pennies; who deserves and who doesnt deserve the argu...

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The narrative *First Confession* by O'Connor Frank is set in the 1930s Catholic environment revolving around the lives of; Jackie, his sister Nora, their parents and grandmother who recently moved in with them (O'Connor). The story depicts children's behavior and how they are rewarded or discouraged by the older people. My essay analyzes who of the two children was more deserving of the rewards.

Children should receive rewards for good deeds and not evil things they do to hurt others for selfish gains. Grandma favor Jackie's sister Nora. Nora pretends to like grandmother and sides with her so she can get favorable treatment and the weekly penny on Fridays when grandmother receives her pension. It is not justified for the grandmother to reward Nora's unruly behavior.

Nora is devious and succeeds in deceiving her grandmother and changing her perception of Jackie who is good. Instead of encouraging Nora, grandmother should correct her mistakes and teach her how to love and take care of her little brother. This would ensure love and connection stays between the sibling and in the entire family. Jackie, on the other hand, has a characteristic honesty that does not allow him to pretend when around grandmother. He openly shows his dislike for grandmother's character and drinking habit. The quality of honesty should be rewarded. The fact that Jackie is only seven years old should be considered. He is too young and cannot understand the reasons for some of grandmother's habits such as drinking porter beer and peculiar eating style.

Subsequently, Nora has a habit of constantly trying to get Jackie in trouble so he can be punished. On one occasion, she tries forcing him to touch the

dinner prepared by grandmother, but he refuses and crawls under the table with a bread knife to keep her away. At dinner, she reports this to their father and earns him a beating. This is wrong. Jackie gets punished whenever Nora accuses him of doing something wrong when instead he should be congratulated for not giving in to Nora's demands.

The mother knows of Nora's unacceptable behavior and discourages it while defending Jackie who constantly finds himself on the receiving end of Nora's evil. To avoid corrections from her mother, Nora sides with her grandmother who defends her.

Lying should be discouraged. We see Jackie making up lies about tooth aches so he can avoid confession. This is as a result of his dilemma between admitting his thoughts about killing grandmother to the priest or the consequences of making a false confession. This is corrected when Mrs. Ryan realizes his absence and ensures he attends confession.

Coincidentally, Nora happens to be accompanying Jackie to confession and instead of support, she scares him. The highlight of the significance of good behavior occurs in the confession box. Nora is the first to go in, and she lies to the priest about her sins. Jackie in his honest nature tells the priest all his sins; how he tried to kill his sister with a bread knife and thoughts of killing his grandmother. The priest is compassionate and advises Jackie. By telling the truth to the priest, Jackie gets less penance.

The story focuses on the need for good behavior. Though Jackie suffers in the beginning, in the end he is happy and gets rewarded for being a good and honest boy. Nora, on the other hand, is enraged when she realizes her lies are not rewarded by the priest.

Works Cited

O'Connor, Frank. "First Confession". *My Oedipus Complex and Other Stories*, 1939. Print