

# Good country people

Countries



In the short story " Good Country People," Flannery O'Connor utilizes the characters Joy Hopewell and Manley Pointer to expose how believing in nothing makes a person isolated and spiritually empty. Joy Hopewell is a well-educated, thirty-two year old atheist with an artificial leg. Joy's lack of belief causes her to lose all the human civility and decency she has. She even changes her name to Hulga. Flannery O'Connor's use of the mythological Trickster persona to seek, attract, and repulse the protagonist Joy-Hulga leads to her spiritual enlightenment. Manley Pointer through the Trickster persona seeks out the Hopewells, specifically Hulga.

From the beginning the Bible salesman uses the svelte and persuasive words used by the Trickster. Pointer maneuvers himself inside when he tells Mrs. Hopewell, " Lady, I've come to speak of serious things. " He continues, using her own thoughts and feelings to manipulate her, telling her, " I know you believe in Chrustian service" and " People like you don't like to fool with country people like me. " The Trickster knows that Mrs. Hopewell is just being polite, but he persists, taking advantage of her desire to avoid all conflict and her love of " good country people. " Manley craftily gets himself invited to dinner out of sympathy.

Knowing that Joy-Hulga has a heart condition, the Trickster deceives Mrs. Hopewell by telling her, " I got this heart condition. I may not live long. When you know it's something wrong with you and you may not live long, well then, lady..." Through deceit and smooth talking, Pointer guarantees he'll spend the evening at the Hopewell's home. The Trickster has found his way inside and can now focus on his target Hulga. The Trickster has found his target and continues to use his mythological persona to attract Joy/Hulga.

Pointer uses his silver tongue to convince disagreeable Hulga to accompany him on a picnic the next day.

The con-artist tells Hulga, " I think you're brave. I think you're real sweet" and then later asks her, " Don't you think some people was meant to meet on account of what all they got in common and all? Like they both think serious thoughts and all? " Manley is establishing a connection between Hulga and himself to make himself seem more attractive. Manley Pointer further personifies the mythological Trickster persona when he shows up the next day for their picnic in a broad-rimmed hat, and he's also described as very tall, " Then suddenly he stood up, very tall, from behind a bush on the opposite embankment.

Smiling, he lifted his hat which was new and wide-brimmed. " These are two physical traits of the mythological Trickster persona. As they reach the barn, Pointer tricks Hulga and baits her into climbing up to the second floor where the climax of the story occurs. The Trickster fools Hulga by acting innocently as he " pointed up the ladder that led into the loft and said, 'It's too bad we can't go up there,'" implying that she can't do it because of her handicap, so she quickly proves him wrong.

Hulga's pride and feeling of superior intellect blind her from seeing that she's being duped by the Trickster. Flannery O'Connor uses the Trickster persona to repulse the protagonist bringing her to spiritual enlightenment. After Manley Pointer lures Hulga up into the loft of the barn, he becomes more demanding, using Hulga's feelings for him to manipulate her into giving him what he wants, he says, "'I known it,' he muttered, sitting up. 'You're just playing me for a sucker. " The Trickster starts to show his true character

more and more now that he has Hulga where he wants her. Manley manipulates Hulga into giving him her fake leg which symbolizes Hulga/Joy's soul. As the Trickster takes Hulga's leg, he starts to bring her back into the light and give her a new start. You see it happening when Hulga says, "When after a minute, she said in a hoarse high voice, 'All right,' it was like surrendering to him completely.

It was like losing her own life and finding it again , miraculously, in his. " Pointer takes Hulga's leg and leaves her there stranded in the loft to ponder her new spiritual enlightenment. Flannery O'Connor uses the Trickster persona to seek, attract, and repulse the protagonist, thus bringing her new enlightenment on her life. Hulga/Joy had lost all human civility and decency in her life using her intellect as an excuse. As Hulga sits in the loft, she is finally forced to realize the error in her ways.