

The issue of cruelty
of humankind in "a
very old man with
enormous wings" by
gabr...

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" Cruelty is the offspring of an evil mind and a coward heart," Ludovico Ariosto. These words accurately convey the meaning of A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings. In most of his stories, Gabriel Garcia Marquez combines the elements of fantasy and reality. Modern achievements of philosophy, symbolism, and Spanish mythology are a great part of his enormous success. A brilliant example of such a fusion can be uncovered all over his story A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings. According to Khan, " using sublimity, Garcia Marquez elevates the story above the ordinary through the portrayal of various characters and symbols". While reading this story, readers feel the commonness and cruelty of the world and its' people. Therefore, the cruelty of humankind is the main theme of the work. The author highlights the inability of people to stop and look at their lives, and an incontrollable aspiration of human nature to overlook things, and not see their essence. We will engage on the individual's lack of values, the irregularity of faith in society and judgments towards others.

Defining the moral of the story seems to be a difficult task. " One of this story's difficult aspects is the sense of uncertainty it creates by leaving important facts unresolved and seeming to offer several possible interpretations for its events". The most important lesson that can be learned from this story is the importance of respect in treating those who are disabled or different, because of their unknown value to the surrounding world. A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings examines the loss of values in societies. We can see the " blindness" of society from the very beginning of the story, " The light was so weak at noon that when Pelayo was coming back to the house after throwing away the crabs, it was hard for him to see".

Even though it was noon, the light was “ weak”, this represents that Pelayo cannot see reality. Additionally, their neighbours are blinded by their own actions, as they treat an “ angel” disrespectfully. After the baby appears to get better, Pelayo and Elisenda decide to “ leave him (an angel) to his fate on the high seas”. It is difficult to imagine what kinds of people the main characters were, that they abandoned an old injured man so effortlessly.

The inconsistency of faith in individuals is another important topic illustrated in the story. The fact is, the true belief is to have faith in the unseen.

However, many people, like the villagers, are sceptical, even when they have the evidence in front of them. Such people are usually driven by stereotypes and general concepts. They do not want to see deeper in something they do not understand. “ The more the angel has in common with the townspeople, therefore, the less they are able to treat him with compassion or reverence”.

It should be mentioned that the current story reflects the weakness of not only Latin-American faith, but the world’s faith. We are living in an era where it is easier to take out our phones and record what is happening, rather than helping each other out in moments of great distress. “ The opinions of the villagers reveal an idealized view of religion as government; their treatment of the angel, however, betrays their reaction to rule by religious authorities”. Despite the overwhelming evidence of the presence of an angel, they notice the old man’s characteristics and treat him like a beast. “ Then he noticed that seen close up he was too much human”. After a mysterious “ spider woman” appears, villagers prefer to believe and favour her story over the old man’s. They lose interest in the old man because the “ spider woman”

explains her transformation. This detail states that the society in which the old man accidentally lands was tremendously unfaithful.

Another significant topic of the story is the societies judgments towards others, before analysing what is really going on. Although, we can see that the villagers are religious, they do not act in a faithfully religious way. " Nothing about him measured up to the proud and dignity of angels". Furthermore, many village residents and the whole district meeting an " angel" was like going to the zoo. Some threw the remains of food in the cage of the old man, others plucked feathers from his wings, believing that they would be helped from any illnesses. No one in the village stood up for the old man with enormous wings, not even Father Gonzaga, who is supposedly the representative of God's church on earth. Once Father Gonzaga was unable to understand the language in which the angel was speaking, he automatically disregarded him as being a possible angel.

A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings by Gabriel Garcia Marquez does not review childish problems, even though it was written as a fairy tale. Pragmatism along with cynicism adjoins the miracle and mystery in this work. The lack of moral values contributes to the mistreatment and disrespect in today's societies. Individuals such as the old man with enormous wings, are judged by their appearance rather than what they can really offer to society. Both of these issues result in the variation of faith in our society. This fairy tale establishes how uncommon the privilege of faith is, and how very few possess it. Gabriel Garcia Marquez's story, A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings is a very profound philosophical tale, which makes

us rethink who we are, what we would do in a situation like this, and how much we desire to be and do better.