
John Desmond's View On O'Connor's Short Story A Good Man Is Hard To Find

John Desmond gives his view on O'Connor's short story, 'A Good Man is Hard to Find.' He does so from a religious and philosophical perspective in his article 'Flannery O'Connor's Misfit and the Mystery of Evil.' Desmond focuses on 'good' and 'evil,' which seem to be the two main categories in the story. The story has to do with the nature of good and evil and the degradation of society over time. One thing that marks it is the vividness of the characters the smart-alecky children who you know sort of represent how you know kids these days are terrible. The Grandmother aims to bring peace to the criminal's mind and take him out of the wickedness. The Misfit has been evil for so long that he even does not remember why he started.

I think that Desmond is saying that the Misfit balances between good and evil, which seems to be evident from O'Connor's story. Desmond realizes this, approaching his argument with debatable and insightful observations. Sometimes, the author contradicts the debate, claiming that the Grandmother is not good and innocent. She has lied to her son about a 'secret panel' in the house to persuade him to go there. Although she is the main reason why the family has detoured and encountered the Misfit's gang. The wrong address of the house was given to her son because the house isn't Georgia, but it's in Tennessee. So, one can hardly blame the old woman for being nostalgic. Desmond claims that this shows the Grandmother's sinful selfishness, which has killed her whole family (Desmond 133); hence, the woman cannot be considered 'good.' However, the Grandmother is the one who tries to understand the Misfit's feelings and makes him look at his life differently. When talking to the Grandmother about his life, the Misfit is starting to experiencing agitation, and we see a glimpse of emotion. When there is a chance that the Misfit would abandon the world of evil and become a prophet (Desmond 135-136). However, even at the end of the story, he continues to deny the good.

Desmond focuses primarily on the correlation between good and evil here. However, Desmond compares the plot and religious stories. O'Connor never referred to this biblical story directly, but Desmond has including this aspect into his analysis. In one instance, the author indicates that the Grandmother's words about the Misfit's goodness are wrong according to Jesus Christ, who once told one of his apostles that 'no one should be called good' (Desmond 129). In general, the author uses religious information rather skillfully in his work, going beyond the general biblical facts and delving into the story's main problem. What he does is draw parallels between fiction and reality, engaging the reader and teaching them a lesson. This is an overall exemplary analytical reading that exceeds the given plot and the critic's speculations about it and involves information from other spheres, which makes the writing more profound.

In general, Desmond approaches his article's argument philosophically, mentioning religious facts. He deliberates on the Grandmother's impact on the Misfit and his behavior, etc. The reading includes both events and the author's thoughts, substantiated by quotations from O'Connor's story. Using religion as the primary tool in his critical analysis to support the idea that the Misfit is evil, whereas the Grandmother is good. Besides, the critic engages psychology in his text, as he analyzes the criminal's reluctance and stubbornness to accept the Grandmother's words (Desmond 135-136). Also, Desmond (131) mentions O'Connor's other short story, 'Good Country People.' Desmond parallels Hulga Hopewell and the Misfit. Desmond

draws a conclusion about O'Connor's writing style and the themes of her short stories.

Because the Misfit has questioned himself and his life so closely, he reveals a self-awareness that the Grandmother lacks. He knows he isn't a great man, but he also knows that there are others worse than him. He forms fundamental philosophies, such as 'no pleasure but meanness' and 'the crime doesn't matter.' Misfit claims that he does not remember why he was sent to the penitentiary and how he became a murderer. However, he was officially accused of murdering his father.

Interestingly, the Misfit claims that the flu killed the man and does not understand what he has done wrong. In his analytical work, Desmond (131) asserts that the Misfit is searching for justice. However, the reality is, he kills people and children who have not done anything wrong so, he is not pure nor innocent. Do you think the Misfit lies about not remembering how he murdered his father, or do you believe that he began killing people due to the unjust sentence? Would you call him revengeful? If so, in what way does the Misfit want to achieve justice?

Works Cited

1. Desmond, John. 'Flannery O'Connor's Misfit and the Mystery of Evil.' *Renascence*, 2004, pp. 128–137.