**“A Good Man is Hard to Find” Flannery O’Connor**

*THE GRANDMOTHER didn't want to go to Florida. She wanted to visit some of her connections in east Tennessee and she was seizing at every chance to change Bailey's mind. Bailey was the son she lived with, her only boy. He was sitting on the edge of his chair at the table, bent over the orange sports section of the Journal.*

**Grandmother**: "Now look here, Bailey, see here, read this."

*She stood with one hand on her thin hip and the other rattling the newspaper at his bald head.*

**Grandmother**: "Here this fellow that calls himself The Misfit is aloose from the Federal Pen and headed toward Florida and you read here what it says he did to these people. Just you read it. I wouldn't take my children in any direction with a criminal like that aloose in it. I couldn't answer to my conscience if I did."

*Bailey didn't look up from his reading so she wheeled around then and faced the children's mother, a young woman in slacks, whose face was as broad and innocent as a cabbage and was tied around with a green head-kerchief that had two points on the top like rabbit's ears. She was sitting on the sofa, feeding the baby his apricots out of a jar.*

**Grandmother**: "The children have been to Florida before." You all ought to take them somewhere else for a change so they would see different parts of the world and be broad. They never have been to east Tennessee."

*The children's mother didn't seem to hear her but the stocky eight-year-old boy did. John Wesley, a stocky child with glasses. . .*

**John Wesley**: "If you don't want to go to Florida, why dontcha stay at home?"

**June Star**: "She wouldn't stay at home to be queen for a day.” (*little sister stated without raising her yellow head*).

**Grandmother**: "Yes and what would you do if this fellow, The Misfit, caught you?"

**John Wesley**: "I'd smack his face!”

**June Star**: "She wouldn't stay at home for a million bucks. Afraid she'd miss something. She has to go everywhere we go."

**Grandmother**:   "All right, Miss. Just remember that the next time you want me to curl your hair."

**June Star**: “It’s natural curly.”

  *The next morning the grandmother was the first one in the car, ready to go. She had her big black valise that looked like the head of a hippopotamus in one corner, and underneath it she was hiding a basket with Pitty Sing, the cat, in it. She didn't intend for the cat to be left alone in the house for three days because he would miss her too much and she was afraid he might brush against one of the gas burners and accidentally asphyxiate himself. Her son, Bailey, didn't like to arrive at a motel with a cat.*

*She sat in the middle of the back seat with John Wesley and June Star on either side of her. Bailey and the children's mother and the baby sat in front and they left Atlanta at eight forty-five with the mileage on the car at 55890. The grandmother wrote this down because she thought it would be interesting to say how many miles they had been when they got back.*

 

*It took them twenty minutes to reach the outskirts of the city. The old lady settled herself comfortably, removing her white cotton gloves and putting them up with her purse on the shelf in front of the back window. The children's mother still had on slacks and still had her head tied up in a green kerchief, but the grandmother had on a navy blue straw sailor hat with a bunch of white violets on the brim and a navy blue dress with a small white dot in the print. Her collars and cuffs were white organdy trimmed with lace and at her neckline she had pinned a purple spray of cloth violets containing a sachet. In case of an accident, anyone seeing her dead on the highway would know at once that she was a lady. She said she thought it was going to be a good day for driving, neither too hot nor too cold, and she cautioned Bailey that the speed limit was fifty-five miles an hour and that the patrolmen hid themselves behind billboards and small clumps of trees and sped out after you before you had a chance to slow down. She pointed out interesting details of the scenery: Stone Mountain; the blue granite that in some places came up to both sides of the highway; the brilliant red clay banks slightly streaked with purple; and the various crops that made rows of green lace-work on the ground. The trees were full of silver-white sunlight and the meanest of them sparkled. The children were reading comic magazines and their mother had gone back to sleep.*

**John Wesley**: "Let's go through Georgia fast so we won't have to look at it much."

**Grandmother**: "If I were a little boy, I wouldn't talk about my native state that way. Tennessee has the mountains and Georgia has the hills."

**John Wesley**: "Tennessee is just a hillbilly dumping ground, and Georgia is a lousy state too."

**June Star**: “You said it!”

**Grandmother**: "In my time, children were more respectful of their native states and their parents and everything else. People did right then. Oh look at the cute little pickaninny!" *(pointing to a small black child in the doorway of a shack along the road).* "Wouldn't that make a picture, now?"

**June Star**: "He didn't have any britches on.”

**Grandmother**: "He probably didn't have any. Little niggers in the country don't have things like we do. If I could paint, I'd paint that picture.”

 *The grandmother offered to hold the baby and the children's mother passed him over the front seat to her. She set him on her knee and bounced him and told him about the things they were passing. She rolled her eyes and screwed up her mouth and stuck her leathery thin face into his smooth bland one. Occasionally he gave her a faraway smile. They passed a large cotton field with five or six graves fenced in the middle of it, like a small island.*

**Grandmother***:* "Look at the graveyard! That was the old family burying ground. That belonged to the plantation."

**John Wesley**: “Where's the plantation ?”

**Grandmother**: "Gone With the Wind. Ha, Ha."

*When the children finished all the comic books they had brought, they opened the lunch and ate it. The grandmother ate a peanut butter sandwich and an olive and would not let the children throw the box and the paper napkins out the window. When there was nothing else to do they played a game by choosing a cloud and making the other two guess what shape it suggested. John Wesley took one the shape of a cow and June Star guessed a cow and John Wesley said, no, an automobile, and June Star said he didn't play fair, and they began to slap each other over the grandmother.*

*The grandmother said she would tell them a story if they would keep quiet. When she told a story, she rolled her eyes and waved her head and was very dramatic. She said once when she was a maiden lady she had been courted by a Mr. Edgar Atkins Teagarden from Jasper, Georgia. She said he was a very good-looking man and a gentleman and that he brought her a watermelon every Saturday afternoon with his initials cut in it, E. A. T. Well, one Saturday, she said, Mr. Teagarden brought the watermelon and there was nobody at home and he left it on the front porch and returned in his buggy to Jasper, but she never got the watermelon, she said, because a nigger boy ate it when he saw the initials, E. A. T.! This story tickled John Wesley's funny bone and he giggled and giggled but June Star didn't think it was any good. She said she wouldn't marry a man that just brought her a watermelon on Saturday. The grandmother said she would have done well to marry Mr. Teagarden because he was a gentleman and had bought Coca-Cola stock when it first came out and that he had died only a few years ago, a very wealthy man. They stopped at The Tower for barbecued sandwiches. The Tower was a part stucco and part wood filling station and dance hall set in a clearing outside of Timothy. A fat man named Red Sammy Butts ran it and there were signs stuck here and there on the building and for miles up and down the highway saying, TRY RED SAMMY'S FAMOUS BARBECUE. NONE LIKE FAMOUS RED SAMMY'S! RED SAM! THE FAT BOY WITH THE HAPPY LAUGH. A VETERAN! RED SAMMY'S YOUR MAN!*

*Inside, The Tower was a long dark room with a counter at one end and tables at the other and dancing space in the middle. They all sat down at a board table next to the nickelodeon and Red Sam's wife, a tall burnt-brown woman with hair and eyes lighter than her skin, came and took their order. The children's mother put a dime in the machine and played "The Tennessee Waltz," and the grandmother said that tune always made her want to dance. She asked Bailey if he would like to dance but he only glared at her. He didn't have a naturally sunny disposition like she did and trips made him nervous. The grandmother's brown eyes were very bright. She swayed her head from side to side and pretended she was dancing in her chair. June Star said play something she could tap to so the children's mother put in another dime and played a fast number and June Star stepped out onto the dance floor and did her tap routine.*

**Red Sam’s Wife***:* "Ain't she cute? Would you like to come be my little girl?"

**June Star**: "No I certainly wouldn't. I wouldn't live in a broken-down place like this for a million bucks!"

**Red Sam’s Wife:** *(with a strained smile)* "Ain't she cute?"

**Grandmother**: *(hissing to June Star)* "Arn't you ashamed?"

*Red Sam came in and told his wife to quit lounging on the counter and hurry up with these people's order. His khaki trousers reached just to his hip bones and his stomach hung over them like a sack of meal swaying under his shirt. He came over and sat down at a table nearby and let out a combination sigh and yodel.*

**Red Sam**: (wiping his sweaty red face with a handkerchief) "You can't win. You can't win. These days you don't know who to trust. Ain't that the truth?"

**Grandmother**: "People are certainly not nice like they used to be."

**Red Sammy**: "Two fellers come in here last week driving a Chrysler. It was a old beat-up car but it was a good one and these boys looked all right to me. Said they worked at the mill and you know I let them fellers charge the gas they bought? Now why did I do that?"

**Grandmother**: "Because you're a good man!"

**Red Sammy**: "Yes'm, I suppose so.”

**Red Sammy’s Wife**: (balancing their food orders) "It isn't a soul in this green world of God's that you can trust. And I don't count nobody out of that, not nobody.”

**Grandmother**: "Did you read about that criminal. The Misfit, that's escaped?"

**Red Sammy’s Wife**: "I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he didn't attact this place right here. If he hears about it being here, I wouldn't be none surprised to see him. If he hears it's two cent in the cash register, I wouldn't be a tall surprised if he . . ."

**Red Sam**: "That'll do. Gi bring these people their Co'-Colas. A good man is hard to find. Everything is getting terrible. I remember the day you could go off and leave your screen door unlatched. Not no more."

**Grandmother**: “In my opinion Europe was entirely to blame for the way things are now. The way they acted you would think we were made of money.”

 **Red Sam**: “It’s no use talking about it, you’re was exactly right. “

*The children ran outside into the white sunlight and looked at the monkey in the lacy chinaberry tree. He was busy catching fleas on himself and biting each one carefully between his teeth as if it were a delicacy.*

*They drove off again into the hot afternoon. The grandmother took cat naps and woke up every few minutes with her own snoring. Outside of Toombsboro she woke up and recalled an old plantation that she had visited in this neighborhood once when she was a young lady.*

**Grandmother**: “The house had six white columns across the front and there was an avenue of oaks leading up to it and two little wooden trellis arbors on either side in front where I sat down with my suitor after a stroll in the garden. I can recall exactly which road to turn off to get to it. There was a secret panel in this house and the story went that all the family silver was hidden in it when Sherman came through but it was never found . . ."

**John Wesley**: "Hey! Let's go see it! We'll find it! We'll poke all the woodwork and find it! Who lives there? Where do you turn off at? Hey Pop, can't we turn off there?"

**June Star**: "We never have seen a house with a secret panel! Let's go to the house with the secret panel! Hey Pop, can't we go see the house with the secret panel!"

**Grandmother**: "It's not far from here, I know. It wouldn't take over twenty minutes."

*Bailey was looking straight ahead. His jaw was as rigid as a horseshoe.*

**Bailey**: "No.”

*The children began to yell and scream that they wanted to see the house with the secret panel. John Wesley kicked the back of the front seat and June Star hung over her mother's shoulder and whined desperately into her ear that they never had any fun even on their vacation, that they could never do what THEY wanted to do. The baby began to scream and John Wesley kicked the back of the seat so hard that his father could feel the blows in his kidney.*

**Bailey**: "All right!"

He drew the car to a stop at the side of the road.

**Bailey**: "Will you all shut up? Will you all just shut up for one second? If you don't shut up, we won't go anywhere."

**Grandmother**: "It would be very educational for them.”

**Bailey**: "All right. But get this: this is the only time we're going to stop for anything like this. This is the one and only time."

**Grandmother**: "The dirt road that you have to turn down is about a mile back. I marked it when we passed."

**Bailey**: (groaning) "A dirt road.”

*After they had turned around and were headed toward the dirt road, the grandmother recalled other points about the house, the beautiful glass over the front doorway and the candle-lamp in the hall. John Wesley said that the secret panel was probably in the fireplace.*

**Bailey**: "You can't go inside this house. You don't know who lives there."

**John Wesley**: "While you all talk to the people in front, I'll run around behind and get in a window.”

**Mother**: "We'll all stay in the car.”

*They turned onto the dirt road and the car raced roughly along in a swirl of pink dust.*

**Grandmother**: “There was a time when there were no paved roads and thirty miles was a day's journey.”

*The dirt road was hilly and there were sudden washes in it and sharp curves on dangerous embankments. All at once they would be on a hill, looking down over the blue tops of trees for miles around, then the next minute, they would be in a red depression with the dust-coated trees looking down on them.*

**Bailey**: "This place had better turn up in a minute, or I'm going to turn around."

*The road looked as if no one had traveled on it in months.*

**Grandmother**: "It's not much farther.”

*A horrible thought came to her. The thought was so embarrassing that she turned red in the face and her eyes dilated and her feet jumped up, upsetting her valise in the corner. The instant the valise moved, the newspaper top she had over the basket under it rose with a snarl and Pitty Sing, the cat, sprang onto Bailey's shoulder.*

*The children were thrown to the floor and their mother, clutching the baby, was thrown out the door onto the ground; the old lady was thrown into the front seat. The car turned over once and landed right-side-up in a gulch off the side of the road. Bailey remained in the driver's seat with the cat -- gray-striped with a broad white face and an orange nose -- clinging to his neck like a caterpillar.*

*As soon as the children saw they could move their arms and legs, they scrambled out of the car.*

**June Star**: "We've had an ACCIDENT!"

*The grandmother was curled up under the dashboard, hoping she was injured so that Bailey's wrath would not come down on her all at once. The horrible thought she had had before the accident was that the house she had remembered so vividly was not in Georgia but in Tennessee.*

*Bailey removed the cat from his neck with both hands and flung it out the window against the side of a pine tree. Then he got out of the car and started looking for the children's mother. She was sitting against the side of the red gutted ditch, holding the screaming baby, but she only had a cut down her face and a broken shoulder.*

**June Star**: "We've had an ACCIDENT! But nobody's killed."

*The grandmother limped out of the car, her hat still pinned to her head but the broken front brim standing up at a jaunty angle and the violet spray hanging off the side. They all sat down in the ditch, except the children, to recover from the shock. They were all shaking.*

**Mother**: "Maybe a car will come along.”

**Grandmother**: "I believe I have injured an organ.”

*Bailey's teeth were clattering. He had on a yellow sport shirt with bright blue parrots designed in it and his face was as yellow as the shirt. The grandmother decided that she would not mention that the house was in Tennessee.*

*The road was about ten feet above and they could see only the tops of the trees on the other side of it. Behind the ditch they were sitting in there were more woods, tall and dark and deep. In a few minutes they saw a car some distance away on top of a hill, coming slowly as if the occupants were watching them. The grandmother stood up and waved both arms dramatically to attract their attention. The car continued to come on slowly, disappeared around a bend and appeared again, moving even slower, on top of the hill they had gone over. It was a big black battered hearse-like automobile. There were three men in it.*

*It came to a stop just over them and for some minutes, the driver looked down with a steady expressionless gaze to where they were sitting, and didn't speak. Then he turned his head and muttered something to the other two and they got out. One was a fat boy in black trousers and a red sweat shirt with a silver stallion embossed on the front of it. He moved around on the right side of them and stood staring, his mouth partly open in a kind of loose grin. The other had on khaki pants and a blue striped coat and a gray hat pulled down very low, hiding most of his face. He came around slowly on the left side. Neither spoke.*

*The driver got out of the car and stood by the side of it, looking down at them. He was an older man than the other two. His hair was just beginning to gray and he wore silver-rimmed spectacles that gave him a scholarly look. He had a long creased face and didn't have on any shirt or undershirt. He had on blue jeans that were too tight for him and was holding a black hat and a gun. The two boys also had guns.*

**John Wesley**: "We've had an ACCIDENT!"

*The grandmother had the peculiar feeling that the bespectacled man was someone she knew. His face was as familiar to her as if she had known him all her life but she could not recall who he was. He moved away from the car and began to come down the embankment, placing his feet carefully so that he wouldn't slip. He had on tan and white shoes and no socks, and his ankles were red and thin.*

**Freckled Man**: "Good afternoon. I see you all had you a little spill."

**Grandmother**: "We turned over twice!"

**Freckled Man**: "Oncet. We seen it happen. Try their car and see will it run, Hiram.”

**John Wesley**: "What you got that gun for? Whatcha gonna do with that gun?"

**Freckled Man**: (to the Mother) "Lady. Would you mind calling them children to sit down by you? Children make me nervous. I want all you all to sit down right together there where you're at."

**June Star**: "What are you telling US what to do for?"

*Behind them the line of woods gaped like a dark open mouth.*

**Mother**: "Come here.”

**Bailey**: "Look here now, we're in a predicament! We're in . . ."

**Grandmother**: (shrieked) "You're The Misfit! I recognized you at once!"

**The Misfit**: (smiling)"Yes'm, but it would have been better for all of you, lady, if you hadn't of reckernized me."

*Bailey turned his head sharply and said something to his mother that shocked even the children. The old lady began to cry and The Misfit reddened.*

**The Misfit**: "Lady, don't you get upset. Sometimes a man says things he don't mean. I don't reckon he meant to talk to you thataway."

**Grandmother**: "You wouldn't shoot a lady, would you?"

*The Misfit pointed the toe of his shoe into the ground and made a little hole and then covered it up again.*

**The Misfit**: "I would hate to have to.”

**Grandmother**: "Listen. I know you're a good man. You don't look a bit like you have common blood. I know you must come from nice people!"

**The Misfit**: (smiling) "Yes mam. Finest people in the world. God never made a finer woman than my mother and my daddy's heart was pure gold.”

*The boy with the red sweat shirt had come around behind them and was standing with his gun at his hip.*

**The Misfit**: (squatting down to the ground) "Watch them children, Bobby Lee. You know they make me nervous."

*He looked at the six of them huddled together in front of him and he seemed to be embarrassed as if he couldn't think of anything to say.*

**The Misfit**: "Ain't a cloud in the sky. Don't see no sun but don't see no cloud neither."

**Grandmother**: "Yes, it's a beautiful day. Listen you shouldn't call yourself The Misfit because I know you're a good man at heart. I can just look at you and tell."

**Bailey**: "Hush! Hush! Everybody shut up and let me handle this!"

*He was squatting in the position of a runner about to sprint forward but he didn't move.*

**The Misfit**: "I pre-chate that, lady."

*He drew a little circle in the ground with the butt of his gun.*

**Hiram**: "It'll take a half a hour to fix this here car.”

**The Misfit**: “Well, first you and Bobby Lee get him and that little boy to step over yonder with you.

*The Misfit turned to Bailey.*

 **The Misfit**: “The boys want to ast you something. Would you mind stepping back in them woods there with them?"

**Bailey**: "Listen. We're in a terrible predicament! Nobody realizes what this is.”

*His eyes were as blue and intense as the parrots in his shirt and he remained perfectly still.*

*The grandmother reached up to adjust her hat brim as if she were going to the woods with him but it came off in her hand. She stood staring at it and after a second she let it fall on the ground. Hiram pulled Bailey up by the arm as if he were assisting an old man. John Wesley caught hold of his father's hand and Bobby Lee followed. They went off toward the woods and just as they reached the dark edge, Bailey turned and supporting himself against a gray naked pine trunk.*

**Bailey**: "I'll be back in a minute, Mamma, wait on me!"

**Grandmother**: "Come back this instant!"

*But, they all disappeared into the woods.*

**Grandmother**: "Bailey Boy!"

*She was looking at The Misfit squatting on the ground in front of her.*

**Grandmother**: "I just know you're a good man," she said desperately. "You're not a bit common!"

**The Misfit**: "Nome, I ain't a good man, but I ain't the worst in the world neither. My daddy said I was a different breed of dog from my brothers and sisters. 'You know,' Daddy said, 'it's some that can live their whole life out without asking about it and it's others has to know why it is, and this boy is one of the latters. He's going to be into everything!' "

*He put on his black hat and looked up suddenly and then away deep into the woods as if he were embarrassed again.*

**The Misfit**: "I'm sorry I don't have on a shirt before you ladies. We buried our clothes that we had on when we escaped and we're just making do until we can get better. We borrowed these from some folks we met."

**Grandmother**: "That's perfectly all right. Maybe Bailey has an extra shirt in his suitcase."

**The Misfit**: "I'll look and see terrectly.”

**Mother**: (*screaming*) “Where are they taking him?!"

 **The Misfit**: "Daddy was a card himself. You couldn't put anything over on him. He never got in trouble with the Authorities though. Just had the knack of handling them."

**Grandmother**: "You could be honest too if you'd only try. Think how wonderful it would be to settle down and live a comfortable life and not have to think about somebody chasing you all the time."

**The Misfit**: (*scratching in the ground with the butt of his gun*) "Yes'm, somebody is always after you.”

*The grandmother noticed how thin his shoulder blades were just behind his hat because she was standing up looking down on him.* **Grandmother**: "Do you ever pray?"

*He shook his head. All she saw was the black hat wiggle between his shoulder blades.*

**The Misfit**: "Nome.”

*There was a pistol shot from the woods, followed closely by another. Then silence. The old lady's head jerked around. She could hear the wind move through the tree tops like a long satisfied insuck of breath.*

**Grandmother**: "Bailey Boy!"

**The Misfit**: “I was a gospel singer for a while. I been most everything. Been in the arm service, both land and sea, at home and abroad, been twict married, been an undertaker, been with the railroads, plowed Mother Earth, been in a tornado, seen a man burnt alive oncet (*looking up at the children's mother and the little girl*) I even seen a woman flogged.”

**Grandmother**: "Pray, pray. . . pray, pray . . ."

**The Misfit**: "I never was a bad boy that I remember of, but somewheres along the line I done something wrong and got sent to the penitentiary. I was buried alive.”

**Grandmother**: "That's when you should have started to pray. What did you do to get sent to the penitentiary that first time?"

**The Misfit**: "Turn to the right, it was a wall (*looking up again at the cloudless sky*). Turn to the left, it was a wall. Look up it was a ceiling, look down it was a floor. I forget what I done, lady. I set there and set there, trying to remember what it was I done and I ain't recalled it to this day. Oncet in a while, I would think it was coming to me, but it never come."

**Grandmother**: "Maybe they put you in by mistake."

**The Misfit**: "Nome. It wasn't no mistake. They had the papers on me."

**Grandmother**: "You must have stolen something.”

**The Misfit**: "Nobody had nothing I wanted (*he pauses*). It was a head-doctor at the penitentiary said what I had done was kill my daddy but I known that for a lie. My daddy died in nineteen ought nineteen of the epidemic flu and I never had a thing to do with it. He was buried in the Mount Hopewell Baptist churchyard and you can go there and see for yourself."

**Grandmother**: "If you would pray, Jesus would help you."

**The Misfit**: "That's right.”

**Grandmother**: (*trembling with delight*) “Well then, why don't you pray?"

**The Misfit**:  "I don't want no hep. I'm doing all right by myself."

*Bobby Lee and Hiram came ambling back from the woods. Bobby Lee was dragging a yellow shirt with bright blue parrots in it.*

**The Misfit**: *"*Thow me that shirt, Bobby Lee.”

*The shirt came flying at him and landed on his shoulder and he put it on. The grandmother couldn't name what the shirt reminded her of.*

**The Misfit**: "No, lady, (*buttoning up the shirt*) I found out the crime don't matter. You can do one thing or you can do another, kill a man or take a tire off his car, because sooner or later you're going to forget what it was you done and just be punished for it."

*The children's mother had begun to make heaving noises as if she couldn't get her breath.*

**The Misfit**: "Lady, would you and that little girl like to step off yonder with Bobby Lee and Hiram and join your husband?"

**Mother**: "Yes, thank you."

*Her left arm dangled helplessly and she was holding the baby, who had gone to sleep, in the other.*

**The Misfit**: "Hep that lady up, Hiram, and Bobby Lee you hold onto that little girl's hand."

**June Star**: "I don't want to hold hands with him. He reminds me of a pig."

*The fat boy (Bobby Lee) blushed and laughed and caught her by the arm and pulled her off into the woods after Hiram and her mother.*

*Alone with The Misfit, the grandmother found that she had lost her voice. There was not a cloud in the sky nor any sun. There was nothing around her but woods. She wanted to tell him that he must pray. She opened and closed her mouth several times before anything came out.*

**Grandmother**: "Jesus. Jesus," (*meaning, Jesus will help you, but the way she was saying it, it sounded as if she might be cursing).*

**The Misfit**: "Yes'm. Jesus thown everything off balance. It was the same case with Him as with me except He hadn't committed any crime and they could prove I had committed one because they had the papers on me. Of course, they never shown me my papers. That's why I sign myself now. I said long ago, you get you a signature and sign everything you do and keep a copy of it. Then you'll know what you done and you can hold up the crime to the punishment and see do they match and in the end you'll have something to prove you ain't been treated right. I call myself The Misfit, because I can't make what all I done wrong fit what all I gone through in punishment."

*There was a piercing scream from the woods, followed closely by a pistol report.*

**The Misfit**: "Does it seem right to you, lady, that one is punished a heap and another ain't punished at all?"

**Grandmother**: "Jesus! You've got good blood! I know you wouldn't shoot a lady! I know you come from nice people! Pray! Jesus, you ought not to shoot a lady. I'll give you all the money I've got!"

**The Misfit**: "Lady, there never was a body that give the undertaker a tip."

*There were two more pistol reports and the grandmother raised her head like a parched old turkey hen crying for water and called,* **Grandmother**: "Bailey Boy, Bailey Boy!"

**The Misfit**: "Jesus was the only One that ever raised the dead, and He shouldn't have done it. He thown everything off balance. If He did what He said, then it's nothing for you to do but thow away everything and follow Him, and if He didn't, then it's nothing for you to do but enjoy the few minutes you got left the best way you can -- by killing somebody or burning down his house or doing some other meanness to him. *(His voice had become almost a snarl)* No pleasure but meanness.”

**Grandmother**: "Maybe He didn't raise the dead."

*Not knowing what she was saying and feeling so dizzy that she sank down in the ditch with her legs twisted under her.*

**The Misfit**: "I wasn't there so I can't say He didn't. (*Hitting the ground with his fist*) I wisht I had of been there. It ain't right I wasn't there because if I had of been there I would of known. Listen lady, if I had of been there I would of known and I wouldn't be like I am now."

*She saw the man's face twisted close to her own as if he were going to cry.*

**Grandmother**: "Why you're one of my babies. You're one of my own children!"

*She reached out and touched him on the shoulder. The Misfit sprang back as if a snake had bitten him and shot her three times through the chest. Then he put his gun down on the ground and took off his glasses and began to clean them.*

*Hiram and Bobby Lee returned from the woods and stood over the ditch, looking down at the grandmother who half sat and half lay in a puddle of blood with her legs crossed under her like a child's and her face smiling up at the cloudless sky.*

*Without his glasses, The Misfit's eyes were red-rimmed and pale and defenseless-looking.*

**The Misfit**: "Take her off and thow her where you thown the others.”

**Bobby Lee**: "She was a talker, wasn't she?"

**The Misfit**: "She would of been a good woman if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life."

**Bobby Lee**: "Some fun!"

**The Misfit**: “Shut up, Bobby Lee. It's no real pleasure in life.”