

Irony in *The Cask of Amontillado* by Edgar Allan Poe and “A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Mary Flannery O'Connor

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المفارقة في القصتين "راقود الامونتيلادو" و"من الصعب العثور على الرجل الصالح"

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الخلاصة

ان الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو توضيح تعابير المفارقة في القصتين "The Cask of Amontillado" للكاتب الاميركي Edgar Allan Poe و" A Good Man is Hard to find" للكاتبة الاميركية Mary Flannery , يعتمد المفارقة في اي قصة على اسلوب وانطباق الكاتب لموقف معين. ان هذه الدراسة تناقش ثلاثة انواع من المفارقة ،اولا اللفظي ، ثانيا الظرفي و وثالثا الدراماتيكي . المفارقة اللفظي هوان تقول الشخصية في القصة شيء و تقصد شي اخر، اما التهكم الظرفي فهو التناقض بين حقيقة الموقف وطريقة رؤيا الشخصية لهذا الموقف ، وفي التهكم الدراماتيكي يكون القارئ اكثر ادراكاً ووعياً بمجريات الامور من الشخصية نفسها في القصة . كما و يتناول هذا البحث كيفية التمييز بين المفارقة و السخرية. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** المفارقة اللفظية ، المفارقة الظرفية والمفارقة الدراماتيكية .

Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to bring out the irony in the two selected stories of Edgar Allan Poe “The Cask of Amontillado” and Mary Flannery O’Conner “A Good Man is Hard to find”. Irony in any story depends on the author’s tone and attitude toward his specific situation . In this paper ,situational, dramatic and verbal ironies ”are discussed. Situational irony depends upon a discrepancy between how characters see a situation and the true nature of the situation. While in the dramatic irony readers knows something which characters in the story do not. The Third type is verbal irony it can occur through dialogue, when the character says something but he means another thing. Also the difference between sarcasm and irony will be explained.

Key Words : Situational irony , verbal irony , dramatic irony.

1-Introduction

Irony ,First recorded in Plato’s Republic (4th c. bc), where it has nearly the meaning of ‘a glib and deceitful way of taking people in’. In the Platonic dialogues, Socrates himself takes on the role of ‘dissembler’, asks seemingly innocuous and naive questions which gradually undermine his interlocutor’s case and trap him into confronting the truth. There are many definitions for irony, one of them being that irony is a figure of speech which is a contradiction or incongruity between what is expected and what actually happens . Most of the irony definitions however conform that irony involves a contrast between actual reality and appearance. It is a contradiction between what is seemed to be true and what is actually true. For the Roman irony is a rhetorical figure ,it has a double-edged nature. Modernist “irony is more nihilistic, despairing over the possibility of transcending or changing the status quo. While postmodern irony is indirect, multilayered, preemptive, cynical, and above all, nihilistic. It assumes that everything is subjective and nothing means what it says. It rejects tradition, but offers nothing in its place”¹.

In the nineteenth century, the irony becomes known as a way of life. According to this thought, the ironic attitude arises from an awareness of discrepancy, cross-purposes, and ridiculousness in life².

Irony in any one of its kinds is so bound up with the emotional response of the writer to a created situation, and of his readers both to the situation and to the resulting irony, as to be very difficult to isolate³.

According to John Peck and Martin Coyle, The effect of irony is one of detachment, with the reader being placed in superior position of judgement, able to see the full play of events and made aware of the complex nature of life where all views are partial or faulty⁴.

To be able to reveal the discrepancy between the sentence and the underlying meaning first the distinction between sentence and speaker meaning needs to be clarified. To understand the meaning of the sentence the interpreter needs to understand the dictionary meaning of the words that are related to the grammatical devices used in the sentence and to understand the meaning of the speaker it is not enough to know the meaning of the words used in the utterance. The speaker meaning contains two parts: utterance meaning and force⁵. The utterance meaning is "what the speaker actually does mean by these words on this particular occasion"⁶ while "the term force refers to the speaker's communicative intention"⁷.

Authors use irony as a literary device to make readers think about something or to emphasize a point in the story. They will keep on reading to find out what happens next, and if it is something that they don't expect at all, it will be more interesting and fun. The reader's role in realizing the difference between what is said and what is normal or expected is essential to the successful use of irony. Moreover, real life is full of ironical expressions and situations. Therefore, the use of irony gives reality to literary work⁸.

1.1-Kinds of Irony

According to A Glossary of Literary Terms by Abrams, Verbal irony "is a statement in which the meaning that a speaker employs is sharply different from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed. The ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one attitude or evaluation, but with indications in the overall speech-situation that the speaker intends a very different, and often opposite, attitude or evaluation"⁹. The verbal irony could be distinct from other different types of irony since it is used by a speaker intentionally. It occurs in a conversation where a person aims to be understood as meaning something different from what his or her words literally mean¹⁰.

Most works of arts such as stories, poems and plays deal with dramatic irony. It occurs when the readers are aware of something that the characters in the story are not aware of. According to J.A.Cuddon, a dramatic irony occurs when the reader guess the implication and meaning of a situation in the story, or what is being said, but the characters do not know¹¹.

According to John Peck and Martin Coyle, a situational irony depends upon a discrepancy between what is expected to happen and what actually happens¹².

The situation irony occurs when something leads a person to think that a particular event or situation is unlikely happen. Sometimes the reader might be confused whether it is a situational irony or dramatic, that will be clarified later in this study¹³.

Verbal irony is distinguished from situational irony and dramatic irony in that it is produced intentionally by speakers. For instance, if a man exclaims, "I'm not upset!" but reveals an upset emotional state through his voice while truly trying to claim he's not upset, it would not be verbal irony by virtue of its verbal manifestation (it would be considered as a situational irony). The reader realize the irony by the attitude and the behavior of the speaker, but if the same speaker says the same words and intends to communicate that he will be upset by claiming he is not, the utterance will be verbal irony. This distinction illustrates an important aspect of verbal irony, speakers communicate implied propositions that are intentionally contradictory to the propositions contained in the words themselves. Sometimes in the situational irony both the characters and the readers are fully unaware of the implications of the real situation. Some readers might be confused between dramatic irony and situational irony. The best way to distinguish between both ironies is by the role of the readers. In dramatic irony, the tension is created by what the reader knows and what the character knows. In

situational irony, the knowledge of the reader develops along with the character. Situational irony develops not from the contrast between their levels of knowledge (dramatic irony), but from the contrast between the assumptions both made to begin with and the situation that emerges¹⁴.

Irony can be found in every line in both stories, "*The Cask of Amontillado*" by Edgar Poe and "A Good Man is Hard to Find" by Mary Flannery O'Connor, actually irony plays a very large role in showing the irony of the situation. The titles and the names of the characters were not given by accident, but they have an ironical purpose. Words or phrases gives the reader a clue of what is to follow. It is important to mention that every author has his /her own purpose in using irony, for example Poe's purpose in using irony is to challenge the modern readers to think and to interpret not only to read, he never use short simple sentences, but often uses long, formal, complex sentences in his stories. While O'Connor purpose of using irony is to convey and emphasize the concepts that we each experience reality, her irony contains a moral message. Through these ironies, Poe and O'Connor make the stories more interesting and comprehensive for the readers.

Irony and sarcasm has got a lot of attention. The task of irony identification is not just interesting. Many studies especially those that deal with opinion mining and sentiment analysis, can improve their performance given the correct identification of sarcastic utterances¹⁵. It is agreed that many cases of sarcastic text utterances can be understood only when placed within a certain situation or within a broader text context. Sarcasm is often treated as a special case of irony, "Ironic insults, where the positive literal meaning is subverted by the negative intended meaning, will be perceived to be more positive than direct insults, where the literal meaning is negative"¹⁶.

However there is a clear distinction between the two. Sarcasm sometimes can be used in discriminative and racism conditions and that could lead to anger, frustration, negativity. While irony is not used in such issues.

The Cask of Amontillado

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49) was known first as a poet but turned into writing short fiction. His career in fiction officially began in 1833. When Poe appeared on the literary scene the puritan prejudice against fiction disappeared. He regarded short story writing as the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent in prose. His famous stories include "*The Gold Bag*", "*The Fall of the House of Usher*", "*Mr. found in a Bottle*" and many others. He was the first to develop a new fiction of psychological analysis and the first to express the aesthetic tradition in arts¹⁷. Poe never used short simple sentences, but often uses long, formal, complex sentences that are especially challenging to modern readers. He wanted his readers to think and interpret not only to read.

Although this story begins during a time of carnival festivities, the setting soon shifts to the dark, cool burial vaults under the narrator's palace, where he also stores his wine. The story is suspected to have stemmed from several sources and events surrounding Edgar Allan Poe's life. It could be possible that Poe was interested by another similar work as "*A Man Built in a Wall*", by Joel T. Headley in 1844. It is also theorized that Poe received the idea from his personal experiences with two men who wrote for a New York literary publication. Hiram Fuller and Dr. Thomas Dunn English were two critics who purposefully mocked Poe's image, and his writing. Poe was angered by these remarks and he decided to take a revenge upon those who have done him wrong. This literary battle was called the "War of the Literati," which consisted of several attacks against each other in writing. Poe possibly mirrored himself to Montresor, the character Fortunato to Thomas Dunn English, and Luchresi¹⁸. In *The Cask of Amontillado* the narrator is a character looking back on events. Critics in such stories call the narrator a first person. And because he is the novel's first person narrator we sympathies with him¹⁹.

2.2-THE THEMES IN THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

The Oxford English Dictionary defines revenge as "both an act and a desire. In the act of revenge, individuals respond to a wrong by harming the transgressor. Revenge can also refer to the urge to pay back wrongs; thus, a person can have 'revenge in his heart'. In this story the most important

reason that drives Montresor (the main character) to commit the awful murder of Fortunato is his strong desire for revenge"²⁰. That is obvious in his words in the beginning of the story "The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as best I could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge"²¹.

Montresor will not rush to act, he says " at length I would be avenged" (C&A,3).He determined to punish with impunity. The terms of revenge are quite clear in Montresor's mind. He will not feel fully revenged unless Fortunato realizes that his punishment comes at Montresor's hand; a wrong is not redressed "when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong"(C&A,3). In seeking revenge, Montresor is acting out the motto of his people, as it appears on the family coat of arms " Nemo me impune lacessit" (C&A,6).Which means no one provokes me with impunity. A number of critics have pointed out, the nature of the injuries and offenses is never revealed. The focus in this story is on the revenge itself, not on the reason and the behaves that drives Montresor to revenge ,but only on the act of revenge . Poe does not tell the reasons that urge Montresor for the crime, other than to identify it as a crime of revenge, neither does he share with his readers his response when the deed is done. Montresor appears as if he is telling or writing his story to someone who has more knowledge than Poe's reader "You, who so well know the nature of my soul"(C&A,3), and who may be assumed to know something of Fortunato's conduct before the fateful night. Unlike Montresor's reader, however, Poe's reader has no basis for judging the extent to which Montresor's actions are reasonable. May be Montresor felt better once Fortunato has paid for his insult , or he may be sorry for committing murder near the end of his life and he looks at God for forgiveness²².We are more with the idea that Montresor is talking with God in the ending, because its only God who knows the nature of the souls very well.

Poe has taken the revenge and reversed the whole thing by a pervasive irony, he established an ironic parallel between Fortunato and Montresor, so that by the end they are virtually identified. In the beginning Fortunato, mimics Montresor with his repeated "Amontillado!" but by the end the roles are reversed and Montresor plays the mimic. As Fortunato approaches the edge of madness, the mad Montresor re-echoes his yells and the identification is complete²³.

Another important theme ,is the theme of disguise ,in the story "*The cask of Amontillado*" disguise is used metaphorically and literally .Disguise allows the protagonist to achieve his crime. Both characters are literally disguised because there is a carnival, that makes it logistically possible for Montresor to take Fortunato to his doom. Metaphorical disguise is seen through Montresor .He very successfully disguises himself and his intentions to murder Fortunato. Montresor shows his concern about Fortunato's health telling him to go back .Fortunato unfortunately fail to realize Montresor's real attention²⁴ .

Pride is known as man's greatest sin since it was pride that gave Adam and Eve's the motivation to eat from the forbidden tree. It is also the sin of Montresor and Fortunato in Poe's short story . Montresor has been insulted by Fortunato, and his pride leads him to seek revenge. He cunningly plays upon Fortunato's pride and leads him to his end with the false promise of tasting the Amontillado. Through the actions of the characters, Poe communicates his theme that pride leads to a man's downfall. Pride is obvious in the character of Montresor. His pride in his family name is so clear that when Fortunato ventured upon insult, Montresor vowed revenge he carefully plans his revenge . He cannot let himself appear as a weak and inferior man . His desire to punish Fortunato is related to his family motto. Fortunato's pride leads him into the trap that Montresor cunningly plans for him. Montresor knows that Fortunato has "a weak point, He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine" (C&A,3), to insure that, Montresor goes even one step further and teases Fortunato's pride by saying that he plans to have Luchesi taste the wine because if anyone has a critical turn, it is he . Fortunato cannot imagine that anyone is better than him in tasting wine, so he insults Luchesi by saying, "He cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado" (C&A, 4). Fortunato has great pride that he does not see the insults effect on Montresor; he believe that he can say and do anything because of his superior skills. Little does he know that his pride is leading him into Montresor's trap. Montresor continues to

play with Fortunato's extremely pride as he leads him to his death. Several times Montresor offers to turn back with Fortunato because of his cough and the dampness of the catacombs but Fortunato insists, "Let us go on" (C&A,7). He cannot admit to any physical weakness to stop him tasting the Amontillado. The pride of both men leads them to this terrible moment. Montresor's pride causes him to commit murder without thinking for a moment about its immorality, and Fortunato's pride blinds him to the effects of his insults and to his murderer's intentions. His pride leads him like a lamb to the slaughter. In fact, Montresor's pride is so great that after fifty years he is bragging about his perfect crime. He is so blind to see how pride led him to an evil and wicked act. Poe's use of pride and revenge as driving forces behind a man's actions in "*The Cask of Amontillado*" reflect the same motivational forces that drove real life people to do things they might not ordinarily do²⁵.

2.3- A Good Man is Hard to Find

O'Connor (1925 –1964) was an American writer and essayist (an important voice in American literature). She tells her stories in a very straightforward manner with short sentences, generally using simple grammatical structures and dominated by statements of action and dialogue. She gradually leads the reader on, hinting and foreshadowing what is to come, and then the big climax occurs. Her writing also reflects her own Roman Catholic faith, and frequently examined questions of morality and ethics. Through her literature, she hopes to depict "the action of grace in territories largely held by the devil"²⁶. One of the more common comments made on O'Connor's work is that can be analyzed as a "psychoanalytic narrative" because her stories often suggest Freudian psychological theories, although O'Connor herself rejects Freud and his ideas because she believed he stood in opposition to religion, some of her works can be interpreted as reflecting his ideas. Wehner calls her the "defender of the faith in twentieth century American literature"²⁷. Her objectivity in her work can be called according to Flaubert *impassibilite* which means an unmoved or an unimpassioned feeling toward the characters²⁸.

A Good Man is Hard to Find One of O'Connor's most widely read stories, without doubt it is also her most shocking. The ending of the story raises fundamental questions about good and evil. It can be considered as one of the most famous examples of Southern Gothic literature which, focuses on violence, deceitful characters, horror, and death in the context of everyday life. Many critics, such as Kats and Mellard, see the violence in O'Connor's stories as "purposeful" and serving to "stabilize social hierarchy and positions of dominance"²⁹.

2.5-THEMES IN "A GOOD MAN IS HARD TO FIND"

The theme of prejudice vs. tolerance is very obvious in this story that it is clear in the grandmother attitudes she reveals racial and class prejudice through her words and deeds. She is vain and self-interested. She believes that only the wealthy people are good people. When she sees an African-American child unclothed, she says, "Oh, look at the cute little pick niny!"³⁰. She continues, "Wouldn't that make a picture, now?" (G&M,139). When her granddaughter comments on the child's lack of clothes, the Grandmother says, "He probably didn't have any Little niggers in the country don't have things like we do." (G&M,139). Believing that she is better than those poor people, she is born in a good family, from a time when people did right, the Grandmother possesses a discrimination and racism sense. She confess to a restaurant owner, who is called Red Sammy, that she believes that Europe should be blamed for the problems that happened to the United States. She says 'the way Europe acted you would think we were made of money'(G&M,142). In her ignorance of others' lifestyles and points of view, the Grandmother is one of O'Connor's numerous characters who reveals their prejudice. Early in her encounter with the Misfit, she tries to flatter him, telling him that he does not look common, and therefore could not be a bad person, her words: "you're one of my babies!"(G&M,152), are ironical she wants to save her life³¹.

O'Connor's has a religious side that is why she deals with religion in most of her stories. She creates characters and put them in situations which convey her message that human beings are trapped in their own deeds and often overlook chances for connection; they miss out on love. O'Connor's believes the idea of grace, that means God's mercy and forgiveness are available to human beings

when they seek for it. critics define grace in O'Connor's fiction as the moment in a human being's life when a power from the outside intervenes in a situation. There is always moral message by negative example in O'Connor's stories, her characters are often too superficial or unobservant to see the acts of grace in everyday life. She used violence in her stories to attract and wake the characters' attention, because she believed there is no connection between the modern and God as if they are in a coma so violence is only way to make them notice God's presence. She shocked readers into understanding that people cannot survive alone in the world they can do nothing without God. In "*A Good Man Is Hard to Find*" the grandmother and all of the characters are concerned only with their own needs and desires. There is no love or real connection between them until they encounter the Misfit. The Grandmother exclaims at the end, "You're one of my children!" (G&M,152), that is her first statement of connection in the story. At this point she receives grace as she understands her place in humanity. In O'Connor story all are sinners, but all are capable of being saved.

There is always violence in O'Connor's stories, in here point of view violence gives reality to the story and it is necessary to attract readers' attention. So violence has a purpose, therefore; she claimed that the world in general would not appreciate God's power and greatness unless something monumental occurred.

In "*A Good Man Is Hard to Find*", the Grandmother needs to be shocked out of her vain and judgmental views by the barrel of a gun. Only when she is put in hard possession, her entire family is killed and the grandmother herself faces her own death, that makes her think for the first time and the last time to connect with another human being. She says to The Misfit (the murder), "You're one of my own children!" (G&M,152), and recognizes her own mortality, her own sinfulness, and her relationship to other children of God. She realized that all people are same O'Connor believed that God's grace often came into people's lives specially when they are not seeking for it³².

3- Irony in "*The Cask of Amontillado*":

Throughout the story, Poe uses verbal and dramatic irony to build suspense, foreshadow the ending, and adds a touch of macabre humor. There is a Verbal irony drips from every word when Montresor, apparently worried about Fortunato's cough and the effect of the nitre-covered walls of his wine cellar, says, "You will be ill and I cannot be responsible" (C&A,6). Montresor pretends to be concerned about Fortunato's hacking cough, He says, "We will go back. Your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, and beloved; you are happy, as I once was. You are a man to be missed" (C&A,6). Fortunato then tells Montresor not to worry: "The cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I will not die of a cough." (C&A,6). Montresor agrees with him and they both continue their way. The reader at this point can almost see a devilish gleam in Montresor's eyes, for he knows exactly how Fortunato will die. Later, Montresor opens a bottle of wine and toasts Fortunato: "To your long life" (C&A,6) he says.

Verbal irony is a figure of speech in which what is said is the opposite of what is meant. There are many examples of this kind of irony through this story. The first irony is the names of the characters. Fortunato's name suggests good fortune, or a lucky man, but he is exactly the opposite, his bad fortune leads to his death. Another irony is when Montresor runs into Fortunato he says, "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met" (C&A,4). However, he actually means that he himself is happy to see Fortunato because he will profit from this meeting, not Fortunato. Fortunato question to Montresor if he is a mason, meaning a Freemason, and Montresor's answer is yes. Yet, Montresor means that he is a craftsman, since he will be entombing Fortunato with stone and mortar. Later, Montresor appears to be worried about Fortunato's health as they travel deeper into the catacombs and says, "We will go back, Your health is precious You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible" (C&A,5). Fortunato replies, "I shall not die of a cough" (C&A,6). Montresor knowingly replies that what he says it true. However, he has no intention of going back and is not worried about Fortunato's health. He is actually using reverse psychology to lure him further in. Readers know from

the beginning of the story, Montresor only wants to kill Fortunato. Then Montresor brings out some wine to toast to Fortunato's long life. However, he actually means to toast to his inevitable death. Fortunato gets more and more coughing, and Montresor shows his concern to Fortunato's health but in fact he was not "Come, we will go back ere it is too late" (C&A,7). Montresor knows that the more he acts as he cares Fortunato, the more Fortunato wants to reach Amontillado-his dark fate. Montresor is playing on Fortunato vanity and pride. Fortunato is a man who is being blindly led to his death by someone who he feels as near and dear friend, but this friend is actually a person in searching for his own revenge.

The second type of irony used in this short story is a dramatic irony. In this type of irony readers know more about the situations, the causes of conflicts and their resolutions before leading characters know. Fortunato appears with an ill-looking "He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted but the conical cap and bells" (C&A,3). Fortunato feels really exciting about tasting a rare wine and keeps looking for Amontillado. But Fortunato does not know that Amontillado is something created by Montresor to put Fortunato to his unfortunate death. But he is the only person who thinks that Amontillado does exist in the vaults of Montresor family. "I encountered my friend" (C&A,3). Fortunato also refers to Montresor as his friend only the readers know that Montresor is not a friend, but his murderer. Later Fortunato mentioned that he almost forgets cold "The cold is merely nothing" (C&A,4). Unknowingly, he is right. The cold will have no effect on him because his death is in close. He toasts many people buried in the catacombs, but he does not know that he will become one of them in few moment. Montresor's answer that he is a mason he meant that he is a craftsman, because he will be entombing Fortunato with stone and mortar. of course Fortunato has no idea only the reader knows what going inside Montresor's mind. Dramatic irony is used heavily throughout the story, it creates more interesting, humorous effects to the work. Fortunato never realized that his death is predicted several times. He believed that Montresor is a dear friend, and imaginary Amontillado is things he dreams for along time. Everything is almost perfect, except one thing that is no thing is real to him.

The third type of irony in this short story is called "situational irony". In this type of irony what happens is exactly the opposite of the audience expected. First, the word "cask" means "wine barrel," but *casket*, in this story means coffin. Fortunato believes he will ultimately reach a cask of wine, he actually meets his casket. Next, The name "Fortunato" teems with irony, because despite his name meaning "lucky" or "fortunate" in Italian, he ends up imprisoned behind the walls of the catacombs. In most of the stories the character's name refers to his personality, so it is expected that Fortunato is a lucky man but what happened is exactly the opposite of the readers expectations. The whole time Montresor continues to smile at Fortunato, though, he is planning for Fortunato's doom. When Montresor greets Fortunato, saying, "You are luckily met" (C&A.4), the luck that Montresor feels is not due to Fortunato's expertise. The costumes that both men are wearing is a situational irony. Another situational irony is when Fortunato asks Montresor whether he is a mason, Montresor replies yes, and shows him a trowel as a clue. "With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche" (C&A,9). He uses his trowel to build a wall that will burry Fortunato forever.

Readers thought Montresor is going to lead Fortunato to the Amontillado, but instead, Montresor chains Fortunato to the wall "A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite.... Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess" (C&A,8). Amontillado is nothing more than a fake.

Finally, after fulfilling the crime, Montresor says that his heart as growing sick, that is because of the "dampness of the catacombs"(C&A,10). He doesn't bother about the murder he has just committed, but he is worried about what is going to happen to the weather outside the catacombs.

4- Irony in “ *A Good Man is Hard to Find*”

O'Connor used the literary devices of irony (dramatic, situational, and verbal) in her short story "A Good Man is Hard to Find" to convey and emphasize the concepts that we each experience reality, however skewed, through the unique, sometimes morally-distorted lens of individual perception.

She starts the foundation of the irony in the very beginning of the story, through the grandmother's behavior, she was concerned about her out said form in case an accident happened and if she died people would know at once that she was a lady³³. At many points in the story, the grandmother thought wealthy people are good, her judgements were based on her very quick assessment of how people look and behave. "A good man is hard to find" (G&M,142) the speaker is Red Sam he is restaurant owner he tells this phrase to the grandmother when he was speaking with her about life became difficult, Just before that, however, Red Sam has described his willingness to allow some strangers to charge gas, and he asks himself why did he do that?³⁴. The grandmother immediately response "Because you're a good man." (G&M,142). Her judgement or assessment is based on the simple information she knows about Red Sam, not on the base of meaningful and logical knowledge about the character.

After the car crash and the Misfit with the other men appear, the grandmother almost screamed, ""Listen, I know you're a good man. You don't look a bit like you have common blood " (G&M,147) from this quote the reader can understand that her judgment on The Misfit is based on his physical appearance more than anything else .

The great irony at this point is that the grandmother has completely ignore to read the nature of The Misfit who, is an absolute sociopath / with a dash of the psychopath thrown in to the mix³⁵.

Another ironic twist occurs at the end of the story when, the grandmother touched The Misfit shoulder telling him that he is one of her children, "Why you're one of my babies. You're one of my own children!" (G&M, 152)

This act of compassion, however, is rewarded with three bullets to her chest. This is, perhaps, the greatest irony in the story: just when the grandmother becomes truly compassionate, she signs her own death warrant because The Misfit is not interested in compassion and understanding his goal is survival, and the grandmother is a danger to that survival.

There are many examples of Verbal Irony in this story .First , when the grandmother was trying to persuade her son not to travel towards Florida but perhaps go to Tennessee instead. This is based on the grounds that The Misfit, an escaped criminal is on the loose somewhere in Florida. The Ironic part is the grandmother who was trying to prevent them from going to Florid was unknowing leading them to the same direction that The Misfit was moving on.

Next ,the grandmother proudly wore her selected dress and hat, in case an accident happen ,people would realize at once that she was a lady. The grandmother gave more attention to her outside form more than anything else. She is completely artificial and narrow minded, she couldn't understand that death is truly the end .The grandmother fails to realize the reality of her own mortality, in spite of her old age.

Another major point of irony happens as the story revolves around the grandmothers traditional southern values of respect for other people; especially elders, respect for home and country. The grandmother rebukes John Wesley (her grandson) for not having more respect for his home state, at the same time when she sees a young negro boy she describes him as a little pickaninny!.The grandmother never turns her critical eye on herself to inspect her own hypocrisy and selfishness³⁶.

Another example of irony in this story, was The Misfit description to his family .He mentioned that his father and mother were a good people and their hearts were just like pure gold, He said "God never made a finer woman than my mother and my daddy's heart was pure gold"(G&M,147) .But it is The Misfit who killed his own father, so coming from 'good people' doesn't mean that he's good.

O'Conner uses the verbal irony , in both grandmother dialogue and that of the Misfit, to expose them to the reader. The grandmother to save her life says the opposite of what she means. She says "I

just know you're a good man...You're not a bit common"(G&M,147), the grandmother really sees the Misfit as common, and not coming from good people .She asks to pray and she Knows that such a man religion means nothing for him, she is like a drowned person who would hang on a straw to help himself. She never begs him to release or spare her family .The grandmother doesn't believe that the Misfit would shoot a lady .She seems certain that he'll recognize and respect her. She tries to pull him into her world by assuring him that he's a good man, but even though he agrees with her assessment, he doesn't see it enough to release her. He says "I found out the crime don't matter. You can do one thing or you can do another...sooner or later you're going to forget what you done and just be punished for it"(G&M,11) .The Misfit knows he is not a good man, but he also knows that he isn't the worst, there are many others worse than him. The Misfit has a steady view of life and acts according to what he believes is right. His beliefs and actions are not moral in the conventional sense, but they are strong and consistent and therefore give him a strength of conviction that the grandmother lacks. The Misfit understands concepts about original sin, salvation and damnation while the grandmother never understand such concepts ³⁷.

The title of the story itself is ironical , the grandmother keeps describing the Misfit as a good man many times ." I know you're a good man... I know you must come from nice people" (G&M,147) .The Misfit is not what society would call a good man. He has escaped from prison .He killed many people .So the concept of "goodness" is ironical in this story (*A Good Man is Hard to Find*).

In this story there are many examples of dramatic irony .First , it can be observed through the characters names. For example, June Star is the little girl who, for all intents and purposes, is not shining star at all. She is snobbish, spoiled and vain .She doesn't care about the people around her. The boys name is "John Wesley", it is the name of a missionary priest who came from England to Georgia in the early eighteenth century and fell from grace when he loved a woman from the south. John Wesley is just like his sister . O'Connor left the grandmother and the mother without names to show the reader that they could be any southern woman . The Misfit, a serial killer, he suffers from mental disorder, and he is the story's villain, is also appropriately named to invoke a sense of ironic justice³⁸ .

Furthermore, when the grandmother wears her nice clothes in case of an accident happen, anyone seeing her dead on the highway would realize at once that she was a lady. This is ironic because the old lady doesn't know that she will be killed by The Misfit , while readers can get a hint of trouble would happen, firstly from the newspaper article ,and secondly from the grandmothers requests not to take the family to Florida.

Also, the grandmother's conversation with the restaurant owner about the world and the people is ironic, her negative thoughts led the whole family to their impending doom.

Another dramatic irony is found at the last part of the story when The Misfit orders the other men with him to take Bailey and his son into the woods. The Misfit deliberately apologizes for being shirtless, the grandmother tells him that her son has 'an extra shirt in his suitcase. The readers can realize that the shirt with bright blue parrots' that Bailey was wearing, would soon come into the hands of The Misfit.

Furthermore, the grandmother's recognition of herself is an example of dramatic irony. In the story she views herself as a loving, selfless person. However, her actions shows that she is the opposite side of recognition . She does not tell anyone that she secretly brought her cat, create a story about "secret panel" to attract the children and go to the house that she wants to visit, uses racist language, carelessly points out one of approaching men as "The Misfit". it can be easily recognize that the grandmother is actually a selfish, careless woman from many details ,so a dramatic irony is obviously here.

The most important dramatic irony in this story occurs where the grandmother completely misjudges The Misfit ,she feels sympathy to him .In the whole story we can see that her views were based on illogical reasons to judge other people as a "good man" since she met Red Sam at the restaurant³⁹. Readers can obviously know that The Misfit is a psychopath and a serious murderer

although the grandmother thinks he is a good man even after recognizing him as The Misfit, may be because she wanted to save herself, but that is not enough to describe a murderer as “good man”.

The author uses numerous situational ironies to add more suspense to the story . First of all, the grandmother’s decision to bring a cat secretly, acts as a major factor of irony. She knows very well that her son will not allow her to bring the cat , which later becomes the indirect cause of their calamity. Next, after the car accident nobody was harmed there was no injury . June Star says “But nobody’s killed” This is ironic because at first readers might think that something bad happened to the family⁴⁰ .Moreover, the car which appears to help the family, actually contains three dangerous killers in it who lead the family to death.

A situational irony is also applied when the grandmother believes that The Misfit is a “good man” and he will not kill here. She tells him that he is good and he came from a nice people , She touch’s his shoulder and cries asking him whether he would shoot a lady . " Jesus, you ought not to shoot a lady "(G&M,147).

The grandmother wanted to save herself even if that means changing her assessments and views. The occasions of the grandmother's protestations of The "goodness" seems to be just a ploy to get herself freed, and "goodness" itself hence less meaningful to her than to The Misfit

The reader expect that The Misfit will not kill the old lady .But what happens is the opposite. Unfortunately The Misfit is extremely sociopath. He kills the grandmother without any mercy .The grandmother dies with smile on her face .The Misfit makes her realize her sins and weakness, it can be called as a self-realization .He allows her to redeem herself by casting off her selfishness, she became a good woman before it was too late .At that moment she was ready to leave .

5-Conclusion:

This study picks up the three types of irony in the two selected stories and it is very clear that there are different advantages of using irony .Irony is essential as it shed light on the themes and purposes of the story itself. The first type was “verbal irony” which helps to gain insight into each character's personality, also it can be used by one character to condemn or draw out the flaws of another. The second type is “dramatic irony” which can stimulate strong emotions in a reader because the reader knows what is waiting for the character and how the character acts against his own well-being. The third type is “Situational irony” it makes a plot twist more interesting, the character faces an unexpected situation. This study also ,shows that the purpose of using irony can be different from one author to another .Poe in his story “*A cask of Amontillado*“ uses the irony to challenge the modern reader to think and interpret ,not only to read. While O’Conner in “*A Good Man is Hard to Find*” uses the irony to communicate her message about the human condition .Also this study makes distinction between irony and sarcasm. Sarcasm could be used for discriminative and racism attitude more than irony.Irony place the reader in a superior position of judgement, able to see the full events and be aware of the complex nature of life where all views are partial or faulty .

Notes

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4. John Peck and Matin Coyle. *Literary Terms and Criticism* ,(Palgrave Macmillan , 2002) 3^{ed} edition , pp160-161.
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23. <http://library.wcsu.edu/people/reitz/ENG130/eng130-3.pdf>
24. [/www.owleyes.org/text/cask-amontillado/analysis/themes](http://www.owleyes.org/text/cask-amontillado/analysis/themes)
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27. David Z.Wehter, *Pulverizing The Idols: Flannery O'Connor's Battle With Sigmund Freud And Carl Jung*,(*Mississippi Quarterly*,2004)p 300.
28. Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of fiction* ,(The university of Chicago press,1961), p81
29. Doreen Fowler, *Flannery O'Connor's Productive Violence*,p128.
30. Mary Flannery O'Connor ,*A Good Man is hard to Find*. Collected Works the library of America",(1954), Henceforethn, the text will be referred to parenthically within text .as (G&M).
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