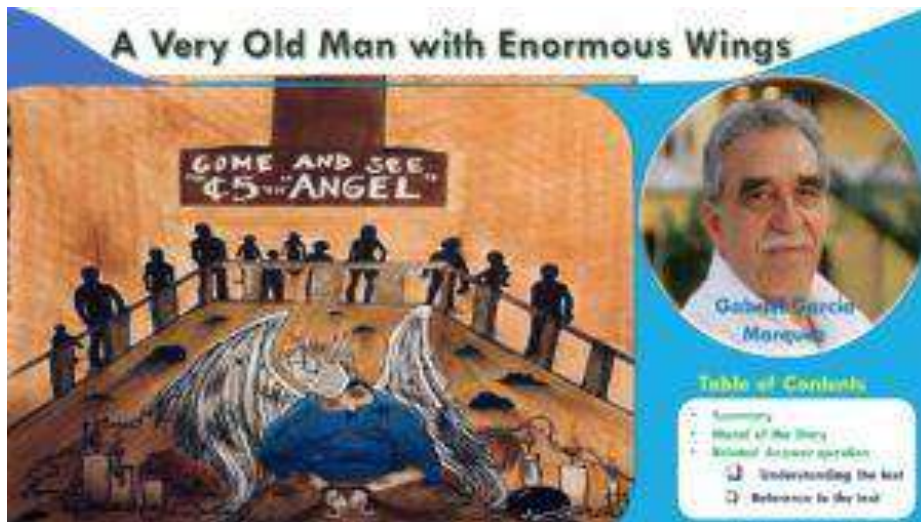


# A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings Summary

## About Writer



**Gabriel Garcia Marquez** (1927-2014) was a Colombian-born Spanish American journalist, novelist, and short-story writer. He was regarded as the literary volcano of the nineteen sixties and **an exponent of a new narrative style known as magical realism. His novel One Hundred Years of Solitude (1967) is taken as a classical example of magical realism. Marquez is one of the best novelists in world literature and perhaps the best in Spanish literature.** For many readers, Gabriel Garcia Marquez and magical realism are synonymous with each other. **Magical Realism is a mode of narrative in which real and fantastic, natural and supernatural, are coherently represented in a state of equivalence.** Marquez's other best-known novels are No One Writes to the Colonel (1961), Love in the Time of Cholera (1985), and Memories of my Melancholy Whores (2004). The story 'A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings' was first published in 1955.

## Characters

Characters	Roles
Pelayo	A person who saw an old man/angel at first in his courtyard.
Elisenda	Wife of Pelayo
A neighbor woman	A woman who knew everything about life and death. Pelayo and Elisenda called her to see an old man.

<b>Father Gonzaga</b>	A local priest
<b>An old Man</b>	A person who had Enormous Wings and looked like an ‘angel‘.
<b>A spider Woman</b>	A woman who changed into a spider for having disobeyed her parents.
<b>A child</b>	Child of Pelayo and Elisenda who fell sick due to the stench (bad smell of crabs) and for whom an angel came to treat and save him.

## Summary

A story ‘**A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings**’ written by **Gabriel Garcia Marquez**. He was a Colombian-born Spanish American journalist, novelist, and short-story writer. He was regarded as the literary volcano of the nineteen sixties and **an exponent of a new narrative style known as magical realism**. It is a magical realist story that examines the human response to those who are weak, dependent, and different. The story shows human nature-related curiosity, greed, and cruelty.

The story begins with a picture of a rainy day. The rain continuously falls for three days and pours all the land rainwater including the house. Many of the crabs enter Pelayo’s house so Peloyo is killed and throws them into the sea because he thinks that a newborn child had a temperature all night due to the stench (bad smell of crabs). During rainy, the sky and sea were changed into an ash gray color and the sand of the beach glimmered like powdered light, which had become a stew of mud and rotten shellfish. The light was so weak and hard to see. Pelayo saw a very old man, lying face down in the mud in his courtyard who couldn’t get up in spite of his tremendous efforts. He also had enormous wings.

Peloyo was afraid after seeing it. Then he ran to his wife, Elisenda who was taking care of his sick child. He took his wife to the back of his courtyard. They saw an old man who was in a state of unconsciousness. He was dressed like a [ragpicker](#). There were only a few faded hairs left on his bald skull and very few teeth in his mouth, and his condition was pitiful. His huge buzzard wings, dirty and half-plucked were forever entangled in the mud. When they first encounter an old man, they are afraid of him but at last, they found him familiar. Then they dared speak to him, and he answered in an incomprehensible dialect(**meaning**: a particular form of a language that is peculiar to a specific region or social group) with a strong sailor’s voice. They couldn’t understand his language.

Then they called a neighbor woman who knew everything about life and death to see him. After seeing the old man, she called him the “**angel**” who came for their child, but the poor fellow is so old that the rain knocked him down. Pelayo dragged him out of the mud and locked him up with the hens in the wire chicken coop. In the middle of the night, when the rain stopped, Pelayo and Elisenda were still killing crabs. A short time afterward the child woke up without a fever and with a desire to eat. Then they felt magnanimous and decided to put the angel on a raft with fresh water and provisions for three days and leave him to his fate on the high seas.

On the next day morning, they found the whole neighborhood in front of the chicken coop having fun with the angel, without the slightest reverence, tossing him things to eat through the openings in the wire as if weren’t supernatural creatures but circus animals. From here we can also see the human response to those who are weak, dependent, and different. They treated the supernatural creature “**angel**” like a circus animal.

Different onlookers provided various kinds of opinions about the angel. One should be said, he should be named mayor of the world. Others of sterner minds felt that he should be promoted to the rank of five-star general in order to win all wars. Some visionaries hoped that he could be put to stud in order to implant the earth in a race of winged wise men who could take charge of the universe.

When Father Gonzaga (priest) came, he order him to open the door of the chicken coop so he could take a close look at that pitiful man. When Father said Good Morning in Latin, he murmured something in his dialect that father couldn’t understand. Father Gonzaga was not sure about the old man being a celestial messenger because he(the old man) did not understand the language of God or know how to greet His ministers. He looked much too human, he had an unbearable smell of the outdoors, the backside of his wings was strewn with parasites, and his main feathers had been mistreated by terrestrial winds, and nothing about him measured up to the proud dignity of angels. So Father told to the onlooker that an old man who has wings wasn’t an angel. But the crowd didn’t pay attention to Father Gonzaga.

The news of the captive angel spread like a fire. The courtyard was full like a market. Elisenda got the idea of charging five cents admission to see the angel and earned from it. From this, the writer wants to show us the greed of humans through this story. Pelayo and Elisenda were very happy because, within less than a week, they had crammed their rooms with money.

The people who came to see, tease and misbehave with the old man. They threw stones, and burned his side with an iron. An old man became motionless after people burned his side with iron like he was dead but after an hour, he awake and start yelling (चिच्याउदै) and also his eyes were full of tears. He became the rage (प्रचण्ड क्रोध) but, no one paid attention to him. They just made fun of it. The author shows human cruelty against others. One should make fun of others pain.

After some days, other carnival attractions arrived in the town showing the woman who had been changed into a spider for having disobeyed her parents. The admission fee to see the spider woman was less than an angel. Not only that but also people could be asked any manner of questions about her absurd state and to examine her up and down so that no one would ever doubt the truth of her horror. She was a frightful tarantula the size of a ram and with the head of a sad maiden.

She told all her story, how she changed into a spider. In his childhood she had sneaked out of her parent's house to go to a dance, and while she was coming back through the woods after having danced all night without permission, a fearful thunderclap rent the sky in tow, and through the crack came the lightning bolt of brimstone that changed her into a spider.

When the old man first arrived, different miracles happened like the blind man who didn't recover his sight but grew three new teeth, or the paralytic who didn't get to walk but almost won the lottery, and the leper whose sores sprouted sunflowers. The old man built his reputation but now when spider woman arrived, his reputation was ruined. Now no one wants to see the old man.

Pelayo and Elisenda built a two-story mansion with balconies and gardens and high netting from the money they got as in the form of charge to see an angel. They live a luxurious life but they didn't pay any attention to the old man now. Once his child went inside the chicken coop to play. After that, he fell ill and has chickenpox. A doctor came to treat him.

The chicken coops collapse due to rain and sun. Then the angel went dragging himself about here and there like a stray dying man. Due to the carelessness of Elisenda and Pelayo, an old man became weak and sick. His all feathers were fallen down. But quickly his feathers regrew again. He again starts to sing sea [chanteys](#) at night. One morning Elisenda saw the angel who was trying to fly from the window. After doing many attempts at

flying, he managed and flew in the air. Then Elisenda felt relief for the old man and herself also.

### **Moral/Theme of the Story**

The story 'A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings' is a magical realist story that examines the human response to those who are weak, dependent, and different. The story shows human nature-related curiosity, greed, and cruelty.