**Gabriel Garcia Marquez is described as writing in the genre called Magical Realism**

This style combines Fantasy with Realism

Fantasy = symbolism, written in matter of fact way

Realism = true to life

In the story you have a common home of Pelayo and Elisanda – and then a flying man and spider woman enter their life.

The narrative like the following is an example of magical realism: “swarms of crabs invading home”

**Themes in the Story:**

* How we respond to the weak, dependent and those that are different
* The family is living in poverty and crabs invade their home
* There is cruelty in how they treat the old man
* Their child is ill
* Pelayo and Elisanda consider putting him on a raft with provisions for three days instead of killing him
* They decide to showcase him and make a profit
* The old man eventually becomes a member of the family
* The money they makes allows them to buy a new home and business
* The old man is allowed in the house after the chicken coop collapses

Pelayo and Elisanda put him in a chicken coop outside and imprison him.

Strangers look at him and throw stones at him, they burn him with a branding iron

**Characters:**

Pelayo ------🡪 a little kinder to the old man, he decides to charge people $ to see the old man, he allows the old man to stay and invites mystery, wonder and magic into his own life

Elisanda -------🡪 she is practical minded, wants to also charge to see the old man, is annoyed by old man, after novelty gone she sees the old man as a nuisance, says her new home is a “hell full of angels”

Spider Woman ------🡪 tells a heartwrenching story, easy to understand lesson in morality, you can pity the spider woman more than the old man.

Old Man -------🡪 is filthy and diseased, lives in squalor, his appearance as an angel brings him down to earth and he has no heavenly qualities, he can do consolation miracles like cause sunflowers to grow from a leper’s sores

**Symbols**

Wings: represent power, speed, freedom; however in this story wings represent aging and disease; yet the wings attract crowds and sightseers; the doctor notices how the wings seem a natural part of his body.

The old man is both natural and supernatural; he has wings of a heavenly messenger and the frailties of an earthly creature.

**Satire in the Story**

The story may mock the Catholic Church

Father Fronzaga write Rome about the old man and they aren’t in a hurry to solve the mystery.

They tell him to study the old man’s language and try to determine if it’s Aramaic

They conclude he may be a Norwegian sailor.

It makes the Church seem out of touch with reality and Marquez suggests the Church may be narrow minded.

**Notes: This section is where you, the student writes notes:**