

Christina Slovink is a freshman at Suffolk Community College. She lives in Yaphank with her parents and three younger brothers. Her grandfather has lived with them for two years after a fall left him paralyzed.

Christina was never close to her grandfather; nor is she close to him now. He does not leave his bed; he barely speaks, except to order her mother around. Christina sees him, feels disgusted by him, feels sorry for him, loves him, but only because he is her father's father.

Christina's mother takes care of him. Christina feels that the old man's presence is sucking the life out of her entire family, but she admires her mother for what she does.

Christina has an active social life. She sees a group of friends almost everyday and texts them all the time. By working ten hours a week in a phone store she earns enough money to hang out without asking her parents for money.

Now the family is in crisis. Her father is a roofer, and business has been bad for the past two years. Her mother's sister helped her mother find a job, but that would take her out of the house and leave no one with her grandfather.

Christina knows her mother will not ask her to take care of the old man, but she feels obliged to volunteer.

She obsesses about what she should do. Maybe she could get over her distaste for the smell of his room and get used to his constant demands, but maybe not. She imagines that she could become almost saintly - like a Mother Theresa taking care of lepers. Her mother and father would be overjoyed; and some of their financial burdens would be relieved.

On the other hand, she cannot imagine not seeing her friends every day - coming home immediately after class so her mother could leave for work. She would have to fix dinner for her brothers, do the dishes, mop the floor. Her life would be nothing but going to school, working at the phone store, and taking care of her disgusting grandfather.

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How does Christina *feel* about her grandfather? How does she *feel* about taking care of him?

Does Christina have a moral *duty* to take care of her grandfather? What reasons might she have for thinking she is obliged to care for him? Are there any moral *rules* that say she should take on his care?

What *purposes* would Christina achieve by taking care of her grandfather? What would she have to give up in order to do it? Do you think that taking care of him is likely to promote Christina's happiness in the long run?

Would it be morally *virtuous* of Christina to take on the care of her grandfather? What virtues would this demonstrate?

What do you think Christina should do? Why?