

The missing person by tobias wolff essay examples

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In this story Wolff comes up with several passages of irony which can be defined in several different ways and manners. Principal of them one finds what can be termed as Faustian irony where the author creates a web of deceit and expectation on what could have been. The story which focuses on the goings on between a priest and his community has other aspects of irony as it is intriguing to note that those who think they are achieving some sort of success are quite far off the mark.

Fr Leo is an intriguing character and there are other aspects of intrinsic irony in the story. Firstly, Fr Leo is a bit of a dupe to allow his fundraising director Jerry to accompany him to Las Vegas where this irresponsible chap fritters away all the congregation's money in one fell gambling swoop. Wolff's strong Catholic background is evident here although one has to say that there is a bit of irony in the sense that the Church is always interested in increasing its coffers while it itself ended up being swindled here.

However the changing facets of the story are also intrinsically imbued with irony as out of what seems to be a hopeless situation, Fr Leo creates redemption when he meets a lonely woman who is in need of tender and loving care. Through her suffering and his help he actually discovers the mystery of his vocation which is perhaps the greatest irony and moral of the story. Wolff manages to weave this web of beauty of redemption not in an ironic way but also in a manner which definitely shows his prowess at coming up with positive aspects from negative ones. That can be said to be the greatest irony of them all.

Desert Breakdown 1968

This is another great short story by Tobias Wolff which is truly full of irony and sheer desperation. Basically it describes a young couple driving around California as the husband attempts looking for work with his wife pregnant and a toddler son. The husband who is called Mark is already planning to leave his wife in the lurch, demonstrating how irony plays an important part in people's lives. The fact that Mark eventually leaves the car to look for his alternator and meets up with a film crew who eventually encourage him to live the good life is the best case of irony which one could imagine.

The fact that Mark's pregnant wife is left in the lurch is a sad commentary on social affairs where men abandon their wives without any thought or care. However, Krystal who is the wife of Mark finds solace and comfort with the proprietor of the gas station who is called Hope and who offers consolation and solace. This is the complete irony of Wolff's stories, the characters seem to find their solace from the least expected of persons and this is an added boost to their attractiveness.

The hollow values of mark are laid bare when he cringes at the difficult life which he is about to face, obviously one cannot really blame him either. But that is the irony of life, one can perhaps be dealt a bad hand and make the most out of it, others may be dealt a good hand and loose everything. Wolff's skilful weaving of the storyline is full of ironic touches especially the part when Hope shows Krystal her 'love nest bedroom' which is full of garish touches and really weird apparel. Desert Breakdown is probably one of the finest modern stories around and is deserving of every sort of recommendation.

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