

# the drunkard by frank o'connor



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

"The Drunkard" is, at first glance, a comedy about youth and unintended drunkenness, and a grateful mother. It is also, however, a glimpse into the personalities of the members of a dysfunctional family: egotistical father, demeaned mother and ignored and/or abused child. Think about the story and choose a focus of your essay. It could be humor, family dynamics or the individual characteristics of the father or son. Once you have your theme, consider the points that you will relate to support your idea.

Develop the five-paragraph essay BEFORE you write so that you know 'where you are going'. The Use of Irony and Humor of "The Drunkard" In the story, "The Drunkard" the author Frank O'Connor uses a point of view to primarily reveal humor and irony. In the story, O'Connor uses first person point of view. First person point of view is told through the eyes of the main character in this story. The main character is named Larry. Larry is a young boy who has to go along with his father one day to a funeral.

Larry's father Mick is the person referred to as the "drunkard". Larry seems to know what will happen when he goes with his father but is hoping that his father might consider his presence and not drink. Since the story is told through little Larry's eyes and thoughts the reader mainly focuses on how Larry feels about his dad being a drinker. The Irony and humor that is found in human nature is revealed through Larry, first person point of view, and what happens on his outing with his father Mick.

Irony, the incongruities between the expected and actual results of events and humor, the quality of being laughably ludicrous are interweaved in this story. In the short story, "The Drunkard" Frank O'Connor uses first person point of view to reveal the humor and irony that is created in this amusing

<https://assignbuster.com/the-drunkard-by-frank-oconnor/>

story. Humor is seen many times in the story after Larry and his father Mick reach the bar following the funeral. Larry is thirsty and takes a drink of his father's beer. Larry finishes his father's drink and becomes drunk afterwards.

While this is occurring his father is talking away with a man named Peter Crowley who is also a drinker. When Mick realizes Larry is drunk he knows he must take him home immediately. This scene is described as, " They all stopped gabbling to gape at the strange spectacle of two sober men, middle aged men bringing home a drunken small boy with a cut over his eye"(301). This could not be better told than through the eyes of Larry who at the time is observing all he sees happening around him. Two usually drunk men carrying home but a young boy who is not sobers enough to walk.

This humorous scene described by the main character reveals more enjoyment because little Larry is the one who is drunk. It is also a bit ironic that the two grown men are carrying a drunken young boy home and it is not the other way around. Larry is watching all the people around him and knows how ridiculous he must look in between the arms of his father adepter Crowley. The humor is revealed in an entertaining way from the first person point of view because of the situation the main character is in and how he is describing it.

Irony seems to occur in a few instances since Larry is setting up the reader with certain expectations. Larry tells us how his father is and knows exactly what will happen after the funeral. His father will wind up in a bar drunk like he had been described doing since his best friend passed away. Larry's first conclusion about the circumstances that are likely to occur is, " I know I

might have to bring him home, blink drunk, down Blarney Lane, with all the old women at their doors, saying: ' Mick Delaney is on it again'" (302).

This is Larry's prediction to how the day would end up. To the reader's hilarious surprise, this is not what happens. Larry's thirst at the bar gets him in to an unusual situation and bewilderment from the liquor he has drunk. Larry as he realizes he is drunk says to himself, " But, drunk and all as I was..." (301). both the Larry and the reader are surprised by this ironic event. Larry's prediction is reversed. He no longer has to take his drunken father home down Blarney Lane. Now Larry's father has to take Larry home blind drunk.

The twist of events that Larry the main character is going through mainly reveals the irony also in a more humorous way. Humor through the eyes and words of Larry, the main character, provide the reader with more enjoyment as his day continues. As the men carry Larry by the arms he knows he is going to stroll down Blarney Lane drunk. So as Larry is proceeding down the lane he cries out to the women laughing, " I'll make ye laugh at the other side of year faces if ye don't let me pass...Go away ye bloody bitches...Take care or I'll come back and show ye!" (302).

This scene described by Larry is very comical. He knows he father usually passes down this same lane drunk but does not get to realize what it is like until now. It's especially worse for Larry because he is not a grown man yet who is allowed to drink. It is ironic also because Larry never thought he'd be the one walking down this lane drunk after the funeral. The humor being revealed is more amusing through the words of Larry who is telling the story from the first person point of view.

Using the first person point of view is more appropriate in order to reveal humor and irony as the main elements in this story. The main character Larry who is telling this story adds a more entertaining view. He gives the story irony from his own words and predictions. He also gives the story more humor because of his actions. Despite what he thought the day would be like with his father after the funeral he ends up being mistaken in an amusing way. The story told from the first person point of view reveals a more enjoyable story, regardless of whether the story's incidents were actually true or not.