

Tillie olsen's i stand  
here ironing by susan  
cahill's



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Model Paper 273863 I found Tillie Olsen's short story, " I Stand Here Ironing," to be a very honest and sad tale of a mother that is too stressed out to focus on what actually matters in her life. The joy of life is eked out by the concerns of children, no husband, no secure job, no real source of income, the stress of poverty, babies, bills, and life. At the end of the story, I was motivated to rethink what matters in my life and focus on those people and things rather than allow myself to become wrapped up in small issues that do not matter.

One of the reasons this is a sad commentary on life is the mother's attitude. She seems to be worn down by life and does not care about much anymore. I was touched by how the mother in the story is so neglectful of her children. It seems her oldest daughter taught her much about herself, life, and parenting. However, with her knowledge, the mother still does very little to change her life. She thinks that her oldest daughter is basically a lost cause because she is older and tainted by the world. The girl is talented and has much potential but the mother simply looks at her and thinks that it is a shame that her girl will never fully blossom. This is a defeatist attitude and a sad one because the mother is simply too tired to care. The mother seems content with the fact that there is nothing she can do about her situation. It is also sad that the mother finds ways to blame her children when she can. She claims that Emily did not want to be touched and that she was " too much to herself, her life was such that she kept too much in herself" (Olsen 590). In addition, she sates, " My wisdom came too late . . . she is a child of her age, of depression, of war, of fear" (Olsen 590). Here I see the mother simply giving up because she is tired and all she wants to do is take a nap. This mother has more control and influence than she wants to believe. To <https://assignbuster.com/tillie-olsens-i-stand-here-ironing-by-susan-cahills/>

turn things around, it might take some hard work. However, she should do this for her family and the fact that is not compelled to do so is simply sad. This story is a sample of how not to live, if nothing else. After I read this, I wanted to make sure that I did not make the same mistakes this mother did. Her mistakes not only made her miserable but the misery spread to her children, especially Emily, who never had a chance at a decent life before she was born. This story also makes me believe that we are more in control of our lives than we think we are. "I Stand Here Ironing" is motivation for living a life of worth and not becoming wrapped up in the weight of mistakes and worry.

#### Works Cited

Olsen, Tillie. "I Stand Here Ironing." *Literature and Society: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, Nonfiction*. Ed. Pamela J. Annas, ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2000.