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Ms. TRM

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### The Effect of Irony in Short Stories

In the short stories “Just Lather, That’s All” by Hernando Tellez, and “The Possibility of Evil” by Shirley Jackson, irony is utilized a lot. Irony is a very important part of both the stories. This can be shown in the short story “Just Lather, That’s All” in the forms of fake dramatic irony, and situational irony. It can also be seen in the short story “The Possibility of Evil” in the forms of dramatic irony, and situational irony.

In the short story “Just Lather, That’s All”, irony is an important piece of the story. In the story there is fake dramatic irony since the reader knows the barber is a rebel, but does not know the captain is aware the barber is a rebel. The reader would think that they knew something big that one of the characters did not, which would be dramatic irony, but then at the end, it was revealed that the captain did know. If the fake dramatic irony was not there, it would take a lot away from the story. The entire story is based on the fact that the barber thinks he is the only one that knows that he is actually a rebel. He gets very nervous since he is dealing with an important figure on the enemy side. The irony also adds a big shock at the end for the reader since they think that they know something important that the captain does not, but in the end, the reader finds out that the captain actually knows about it. There is also situational irony in the story since the reader would think that the captain would know nothing about the barber being a rebel, but actually he did know all along. That is the opposite of what the reader would think. The

situational irony is important since it helps characterize the captain. Since the captain is so calm when he is getting shaved, even though the barber could easily kill him, he must have a calm personality. The reader also learns that the captain finds his job hard, when the captain leaves the barber shop. Therefore, irony plays an important role in the short story “Just Lather, That’s All” by Hernando Tellez.

In the short story “The Possibility of Evil”, irony is also an important piece of the story. In the story, there is dramatic irony since, when Miss Strangeworth is delivering the letters, the reader knows that she dropped one, but she does not know. Only the reader knows that Miss Strangeworth has dropped the letter and that Linda has picked it up. If the reader had not known that Miss Strangeworth had dropped the letters, they would have been confused about how Miss Strangeworth receives her letter back at the end. The situational irony helps show the reader how the Cranes know that Miss Strangeworth had sent the letter. There is also situational irony since the reader would not expect a kind old lady to have another completely different personality who writes rude letters to all of the residents of, what she considers to be, her town. Having this situational irony helps to add a shock to the reader since most people would not expect an old lady, who was just described as very kind, to be writing rude letters to citizens. It also helps show more about her personality since it shows that she knows that she would be perceived as wrong, if people find out she is writing the rude letters. Therefore, irony was very important in the short story “The Possibility of Evil” by Shirley Jackson.

In conclusion, irony is used a lot in these two short stories and it plays a crucial role. Without it, the stories would not be nearly as interesting and well-written. In “Just Lather, That’s All” by Hernando Tellez, irony helps to shock the reader at the end using fake dramatic irony by revealing that the captain did know that the barber was a rebel. The author also uses situational

irony to help characterize the captain as calm, and not liking his job. In “The Possibility of Evil” Shirley Jackson uses dramatic irony to help explain an otherwise confusing situation. Situational irony is also used in that story to further characterize Miss Strangeworth, and to shock the reader with her personality.

## Works Cited

Jackson, Shirley. "The Possibility of Evil".

Tellez, Hernando. "Just Lather, That's All"